Towards A New Era - Reshaping & Redefining Britain's Place In The World

BreXit & Self-Determination
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If you would like to comment or contribute on this issue please write to NLP, PO Box 4217, Hornchuch, Essex RM12 4PJ or email us on natliberal@aol.com
Editorial

The results of the UK’s EU Referendum (see our view in the lead and two-part article on page 4), and Italy’s Constitutional Referendum, excited and shocked European political and media commentators in equal measure.

Populism

These commentators blame the results, which political and media elites predicted couldn’t happen given the one-sided establishment narrative, on ‘Fake News’ or Populism. The latter, once a neutral label for groups that claimed to represent the ‘Peoples Voice’ rather than other specific interests e.g. big business, banks, media elites etc., is now often used as a pejorative term (see page 7). This is either an accusation that, for undisclosed ulterior ends, certain groups are simply using simplistic appeals to the average citizen, or alternatively, they are misguided in actually believing in such simplicities.

Opposing the Orthodoxy

Yet those who coalesced around the ‘opposition to the orthodoxy’ (especially on Brexit and Italy) came from varied political backgrounds and might otherwise disagree on other matters. If ‘populism’ was simply siding with the people against the elites, is that such a problem? If it were a case of rejecting ‘experts’ or established figures for the sake of it one could understand the negatives but if one believes that the elites’ actions are self-serving and often out of sync with the average citizen then opposition is perfectly understandable and necessary.

Opposing the designs of the wealthy 1% should not be considered an act of jealousy or a fit of pique but rather a logical attempt to restore the balance the benefits a state should aim to deliver i.e. for all its citizens and not just a few.

Common-sense

Of course, there are demagogues and extremists that may play upon the people’s fears but that itself doesn’t demean or eviscerate those same fears. The alternative is for those fears to be alleviated by parties that do not offer extreme solutions but rather ones based upon common-sense, balance and an application of the appropriate policies whether from the right, left or centre. The ‘new kid on the block’ that will seek to do so is the cross and non party campaigning and electoral coalition, the Centre Alliance. The National Liberal Party will support such a coalition. The role of the party is discussed on page 10.

Centrism

What the Centre represents in this alliance is discussed on page 8. In short it suggests that, rather than each single policy being a synthesis of left and right, it is instead a synthesis of the median of all policies, both left, right, and centre that overall balances out as the centre.

We have also opened our pages to foreign correspondents. On page 12 there is an article from India reflecting on the UK’s reputation as the International centre of crime! On page 19 there is an article from Russia promoting a revolutionary, consensus driven, multi-party system. Whilst we would rather any consensus system be organic and chosen rather than imposed, it does provoke discussion.

Finally, we continue our series of Liberal Trade Unionism with a look at the philosophy of the Italian Lujo Brentano (see page 24).

If this issue inspires you to comment or even write an article please contact us at natliberal@aol.com.
READERS of New Horizon – NH - will be aware that on 23rd June 2016 the UK and Gibraltar held a Referendum to determine our relationship with the European Union. One of the most popular elections of all time (which recorded a national turnout of 72%) saw 51.9% of voters voting in favour of leaving the European Union.

The vote to leave the EU – commonly known as Brexit – was a historic decision. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the effect of Brexit has the potential to reshape – and redefine - our place in the world. One thing is for sure, the vote shook the political and financial elite to the core, both at home and abroad.

National Liberals were in support of and campaigned for a Brexit vote. Our main reason was because the whole ideological raison d’être of National Liberalism is its support for self-determination.

This is the first of a two part article examining the subject of Brexit and self-determination. The second part will appear in issue 5 of New Horizon.

BreXit and Self-Determination
(Part 1)

The disconnect between professional politicians and the people has never been greater. The decisions taken by the former are more often viewed as self-serving in the eyes of the latter.

Professional politicians, often labelled as so-called ‘elites’, are largely divorced from the everyday experiences of the great mass of people. Thus, we should not be surprised that they are often seen to take political positions and decisions at odds with most people.

The answer to this gulf between the present day ‘rulers’ and ‘ruled’ is found in the principle of Self-Determination; i.e. Putting decision making into the hands of the individual rather than ‘others’.

PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION

This principle can be applied largely in three areas; National, Political and Economic.

- National Self-Determination seeks to ensure decisions affecting the collective future of a nation are taken by ALL the people via referendum. This may be ‘External’, for example: the creation or maintenance of a nation-state, or ‘Internal’ framing/updating a constitution to reflect how a people should rule themselves. (We favour independent nations and liberal, democratic, states).

- Political Self-Determination seeks to ensure that the collective will of the people as well as the variety of political opinion is reflected in decision making. Thus, for example, we favour greater use of referendums to meet the former, and PR to reflect the latter (we favour a system close to the Swiss model of ‘Direct Democracy’).

- Economic Self-Determination seeks to distribute ownership as widely as possible and as close to the individual as practical by favouring home ownership, self-employment, small businesses, cooperatives and employee shareholdings. (We believe that ownership is the key to economic and social health: where workers obtain a just reward for their labour and gain a feeling of well-
being through their having a genuine personal stake in society.)

The above principles underpin many National Liberal policies but others are rooted in common sense and usually aim to strike a balance between conflicting opinions, as befits a centrist party.

- National Liberal Party statement concerning the principles of Self-Determination.

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AT THE very heart of National Liberalism is the desire for self-determination. And as the above quote – taken from the National Liberal Party’s (NLP) web-site www.nationalliberal.org – notes there are three principle strands of self-determination: national, political and economic. National Liberals believe that all three forms of self-determination are as important as each other - and that they are all interlinked. For a nation or a people to have true freedom all three strands of self-determination have to be in place.

New Horizon – NH - feels that last year’s EU Referendum met two of the criteria relating to self-determination. Firstly, political self-determination was achieved via the simple act of actually holding a referendum. Secondly, national self-determination was exercised by virtue of the successful Brexit vote.

The economic freedom we seek will not come about under the present capitalist system – nor will it be achieved under any future socialist system. However, for now, that will have to remain the subject of a future NH article.

Let’s examine Brexit as an act of political self-determination in a little more detail here.

Ex-Prime Minister David Cameron will forever rue the day that he finally promised a referendum relating to the UK’s membership of the European Union. However, for freedom lovers it was a day to celebrate. Those who believe in self-determination feel that referendums should be the order of the day. Preferendums – where three or more options are offered – and thus are even more democratic, will have to remain another subject for a future issue of NH.

(Cameron dressed up his decision to go to the polls as responding to and respecting the ‘will of the people’. In reality, however, it was seen an ultimately disastrous attempt to stop the growth of the United Kingdom Independence Party – UKIP - from eating into the Tory euro-sceptic vote. When the EU Referendum went against Cameron he was probably left with no option but to resign as Prime Minister in July 2016. In September 2016 he stood down as the Member of Parliament for Witney in Oxfordshire. Many people feel that time had caught up with the cynicism and opportunism of ‘Dodgy Dave’ and that he jumped before he was pushed. The popular and well-known saying that ‘Karma is a bitch’ springs to mind here.)

Returning to the importance of political self-determination, NH feels that it can do no better than by extensively quoting from issue 4 of Nation, the Newsletter of ‘Nations without States’. Many National Liberals will be aware of the work of ‘Nations without States’ – NwS – a pressure group sponsored by the NLP which works to secure freedom for what it terms the ‘captive nations’ of the world (1).

This is how Nation describes the importance of political self-determination:

‘Political Self-Determination seeks to ensure that the collective will of the people as well as the range of political opinions are reflected in decision making. Thus, for example, we favour greater use of Preferendums and Referendums to meet the former, and Proportional Representation to reflect the latter. We favour a system close to the Swiss model of Direct Democracy.

Preferendums and Referendums are necessary when consulting with the public about major decisions.

A Preferendum is a multi-option voting process for use in decision-making. It is particularly useful when voting on a ‘controversial’ issue as it ensures a political outcome with the most widespread political support. It allows voters to ‘weight’ their support for all the options and thus ensures...
majority support for the ‘winning’ option.

Of particular interest to Nations without States was a preferendum held late last year by the Liverpool Guild of Students relating to support for the Palestinian led BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) movement. Three different options were offered with the BDS option winning by over 300 votes.

EU REFERENDUM

Referendums offer a simple ‘Yes/No’ vote for a law or proposal on a particular issue. The EU Referendum – held on 23rd June is a classic example. Here over 33 million people from England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Gibraltar had their say – with a majority of the electorate (nearly 17 1/2 million people representing 51.89%) voting to leave the European Union.

We believe that popular and ongoing participation is essential to a healthy democracy. Therefore Nations without States encourages Proportional Representation, a ‘None Of The Above’ (NOTA) option on election ballots and Voter Recall.

Proportional Representation (PR) is more democratic than the ‘First Past The Post’ (FPTP) system which allows for a party to get elected with a minority of the overall votes cast. PR reflects real voting patterns. Voters are able to elect representatives in proportion to their number. Under PR, all votes count, thus giving voters greater motivation to become involved in the decision making process.

An earlier missed opportunity would have been the inclusion of a Devo-Max option in the Scottish independence referendum of 2014.

None Of The Above (NOTA) means that the electorate can disapprove of – and reject - all candidates in an election. If NOTA receives more votes than any ‘live’ candidate various options are open. They include re-opening nominations and/or holding another election. This would ultimately result in political parties having to respond to voter interests and putting forward a higher-quality selection of candidates. This represents a win-win option for democracy.

Voter Recall means that voters can remove – normally via a petition - an elected official from office through a direct vote before their term has ended. Officials shouldn’t be able to veto a valid voter recall petition.’

1) According to the Facebook site of Nations without States - https://www.facebook.com/groups/184919468292372/ - the organisation seeks to ‘highlight the plight of peoples who aspire to nationhood. These might be based on tribes based within a state or even across borders that may or may not have been independently organised in the past. They might have a linguistic or historical separateness from their neighbours or fellow citizens. All will aspire to recognition, autonomy or independence.

As self-determinists, the group NwS will support the right of all such peoples to determine their future whatever they wish that to be. This includes for example, the Kurds, Flemish, Sikhs and Tamils. A genuine self-determinist supports the right of self-determination globally where it is based upon a sound and just position and is supported by the majority of its ‘national’ community. The slogan ‘what is right for me is right for you’ simplifies why genuine nationalism is actually an inter-nationalist creed, quite separate to chauvinism which seeks advantage for one nation at the expense of others.

If you a member of a dispossessed national community or would simply like to help this pressure group, please let us know of your cause on our wall or contact the group’s NWS Committee by e-mailing natliberal@aol.com
Back in the early months of 2011 a group of people rose up and shook the (Middle East) establishment to its very core. And it spread. What started in Egypt (with earlier foundations in Tunisia) quickly took hold in varying strengths in Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Libya and Jordan. This was a new populist movement. The so-called ‘Arab Spring’ was a movement of people revolting against the elite; ‘power to the people’ they called it. Sound familiar? Fast forward just five years and we have seen what is now deemed a new movement with the exact same anti-establishment principle at its core. Except now this type of movement and populism itself has become a dirty word.

Since the British voted to leave the European Union and America voted in President Trump the printed media and social media have been awash with negativity and doom laden predictions for what is to come. This is the complete opposite to the optimism and revolutionary fervour following the Arab uprisings. This is the media’s narrative despite the legitimate means of change in Britain (and the US) via the ballot box compared with an assassination attempt in Egypt and a civil war which still continues in Libya.

POPULISM IS NOT AN IDEOLOGY

Unlike other ‘isms’ Populism is not an ideology but describes any political movement reflecting the popular view of the ‘man in the street’. This might include movements/parties exhibiting a few but firm convictions and others perhaps adopting popular positions largely to win support.

Classically, populism became a term applied to a democratic movement or government whose policies were seen to be disadvantageous to the elites and corporate interests (see Donald Trump’s mantra ‘draining the swamp’). More generally, Populism is now used as a pejorative term by the elite and their sympathisers in the media to disparage a political movement whose manifesto is seen as opposed to their interests.

PRESERVE OF THE EXTREMES?

There is a danger that Populism is now being viewed as the preserve of the extreme right or left and thus tarnished as negative and an evil set of principles, when in actual fact it can and has been reflected and implemented across the political spectrum. The ‘establishment’ is however creating a narrative for what is and what is not acceptable when it comes to populist movements although this has been seen throughout history. Take the French Revolution, from which the left derives - it is widely recognised as the most infamous public uprising with over 40,000 lives being taken in one of Europe’s bloodiest domestic affairs. Yet this moment in history is widely regarded as necessary for the French to progress. Why then are the most violent movements viewed positively yet democratic ones not? Should we not be praising nations which seek change via the polling booth over action on the streets?

BRANDED

At a time when social media has accelerated and reinvigorated people’s interest in politics and political activity, surely movements which inspire and motivate the general public to become active in politics are a good thing? Why is there an underlying narrative being pursued to dissuade the general public from forming a general consensus and proceeding to create large movements?

Frankly, it seems that movements that threaten the establishment’s stranglehold on political power are now likely to be branded as ‘populist’ regardless of their nature with the name itself demonised.

The NLP does not view itself as a populist movement but rather an idealist one - but that doesn’t mean our positions are unpopular but rather they are grounded on principles. The danger for all movements that seek fundamental political change however is that they will still be dismissed as ‘populist’ and thus beyond the pale. This should not deter people from speaking out and trying to force change. There has to be a point where the ‘ruling class’ listens to the general populous otherwise it will result in further shock results and those small movements will explode into a tidal wave of popular thought and action.

It is time to clean up our language when talking about popular movements. If this engages the general public and spearheads activism we must encourage this otherwise there is a danger of alienating a population merely on the basis of what they say rather than what they actually do.
"For the left, an obsession with the state. For the right, a worship of the market. But as liberals, we place our faith in people. People with power and opportunity in their hands. Our opponents try to divide us with their outdated labels of left and right. But we are not on the left and we are not on the right. We have our own label: Liberal. We are liberals and we own the freehold to the centre ground of British politics. Our politics is the politics of the radical centre." – Nick Clegg (2011).

Whilst we might quibble with Clegg’s assertion that “we place our faith in people”, given the Liberal Democrat rejection of the outcome of the EU Referendum, we would not disagree with his criticism of traditional left and right. His description however of him/them being of the ‘radical centre’ is more problematic.

What for instance is ‘centre’ and what is ‘radical’?

A description of radical is hard to pin down for it is often used to ‘spice’ up a political position without real or multiple meanings but it might at least reflect a willingness to reform an existing system in order to implement centrist policies. But what are those policies?

A GEOGRAPHIC POSITION?

Nick Clegg’s description of the centre, at its crudest, is to position himself between ‘left’ and ‘right’. This is the usual position adopted...
by most (social) Liberal parties around the
globe. Whilst this might make sense on the
subject of political economy (which he alludes
too), where is his ‘position’ on devolution,
sovereignty, industrial ownership, migration,
democratic reform, energy policy,
environment, law & order etc.? Does centre always mean taking the middle
position between left and right? Does that
mean it is a literal, almost geographic
(equidistant to left and right), political position?
Is it realistic and possible to hold such a
position on all topics? Is it even desirable?

HOLISTIC CENTRISM

Alternatively, can one view a holistic centrist position as one that combines both left, right
and centrist ideas/policies? Thus one might,
for example, take a more left-wing position on industrial ownership e.g. more
nationalisation, whilst taking a more right-
wing one (although it was once a left-wing position in the 19thC) on sovereignty e.g.
protecting nation-states? One could argue that such a ‘pick & mix’ can be viewed as centrist on the balance of averages.

Are there existing parties that might stake a
claim to such a ‘centrist’ position? What about
the libertarians who support small government
(Right?) and civil rights (Left?) above all else
or Italy’s Five Star Movement that would echo
much of the Centre Alliance’s five core principles?*1 There are other parties that
specifically say they are ‘neither left nor right
but …’. There is a growing thirst to break out
of the left/right straitjacket.

Indeed one can argue that humans are
complex and are not naturally drawn to
‘extreme’ positions but rather multiple ones based on life-time experiences and innate
feelings. One could argue that adopting
absolute left or right-wing positions as dictated
by ideological teachings is much less natural.

NOT A SYNTHESIS BUT HOLISTIC

Thus a Centrist does not have to be a
synthesis of left and right on particular issues
(although sometimes that would be the better
position) but rather a holistic combination of
all individual positions/policies that best reflects the opinions of the common man. Some
of those might be labelled left, right AND
centre but all combined within one ‘manifesto’.

Indeed many citizens bemoan the false choices of the party system which works against cooperation nor allows one to ‘pick & mix’ policies from all on offer.

They are tired of the three-way choice an elitist system offers i.e. left, right, OR (synthesised) centre. Many would like to support policies that best reflect their beliefs but which presently cut across all (or some or no) parties. The new Centre Alliance however, being a cooperative group of varied
parties, was designed to overcome the present
impasse promote an holistic centrist solution to the UK’s (indeed most Western states)
problems.*2

*1 The Five Central Themes of the Centre Alliance coalition are:

1. Social Justice e.g. introducing a meaningful Living Wage.

2. Democratic Renewal/Electoral Reform e.g. a campaign on making
referendums part of the political system e.g. 'Initiatives' as in Switzerland.

3. Anti-Globalisation e.g. opposition to TTIP

4. Anti-Corruption e.g. a campaign against the honours system per se
or how constituted.

5. Consensus Politics e.g. encouraging pacts, coalitions and the
Swiss style of government (cross-party National Council).

*2 See also article on the Centre Alliance p10
A new political force is to emerge in the British political system, a force unique in that it represents an example of consensus politics whilst promoting a set of campaigning ideas that will fill the remaining niche within UK politics.

The new force is called the Centre Alliance, founded as a campaigning and electoral coalition.

There are over 400 political parties registered with the Electoral Commission. Many would view themselves as broadly Centrist or as a ‘common-sense’ party. When operating independently however their influence is negligible.

In an initial statement from the Centre Alliance it says: “The Centre Alliance is a body of like-minded small parties, groups and independents co-operating together to reclaim the country for the benefit of the ordinary citizen.

This can only be achieved if the UK’s many, presently minor, centrist political parties come together in a campaigning and/or electoral coalition. This coalition, which we entitle a ‘Centre Alliance’ (CA) is to encourage all ‘centrist’ and ‘inclusive’ minor parties, independents and individuals looking for change but rejecting extremist solutions, to work together on common issues”.

Central themes

The Five Central Themes of this coalition are:

1. Social Justice e.g. introducing a meaningful Living Wage.

2. Democratic Renewal/Electoral Reform e.g. a campaign on making referendums part of the political system e.g. ‘Initiatives’ as in Switzerland.

2. Anti-Globalisation e.g. opposition to TTIP

3. Anti-Corruption e.g. a campaign against the honours system per se or how constituted.

4. Consensus Politics e.g. encouraging pacts, coalitions and the Swiss style of government (cross-party National Council).

It bills itself as a force of the centre, combining both traditional left, right and ‘centrist’ ideas and frankly many which cannot be so easily pigeon-holed. In any event, putting greater store on popular sovereignty through the use of referenda, it will allow citizens to choose their destinies regardless of political ideology/bias.

Indeed the belief in Democratic Renewal is
quite central to its \textit{raison d’etre} as most of the countries ills can be laid at the feet of our so-called elites. It is they who have imposed an unrepresentative, corrupt, and divisive system e.g. pitting red vs blue - a system that is in thrall to Corporations and their wants. We might call the CA’s fundamental aim to be a ‘Democratic Revolution’.

The Alliance hopes to promote campaigns of mutual interest and ultimately stand at least 108 candidates at the next General Election (currently in 2020). This would entitle it to at least one party broadcast across the various major broadcasters (TV and radio).

This will expose the Alliance to a national audience and promote a credibility and substance normally denied to new parties/movements.

What is the NLP’s role in the CA?

Apart from the fact that much of the five themes are incorporated within the party’s policies they are rooted in our ideology of ‘self-determination’ i.e. National Liberals doubt focus on different ones or campaign on different policies within them. Indeed, rather than each member competing for the same milieus, they should focus on their existing strengths and different opportunities e.g. geographic, social, political, ideological. What might otherwise be seen as either a weakness or a focus of an individual party, that might be unattractive to some or even a majority, it will be a strength to the collective whole i.e. the CA will \textbf{offer something for everyone.}

One of the Pillars

For example, the NLP has a niche amongst self-determinist communities, especially diaspora families relocated from around the world. It can bring these links and resources to the CA. In return the party/members will be able to promote the principle of, and actual, self-determinist causes.

All the members will have their own strengths and skills that can be shared for individual and collective benefit. The concept of synergy i.e. one + one = three, is hot-wired into the CA and if run correctly will help build an alternative political force.

Other ‘vital’ parties must/will become \textbf{pillars} of the CA’s ‘Democratic Revolution’ in their own way. There will be an overlap, of course, but together its members will be strong.

We look forward to the Centre Alliance recruiting others similar parties that can sign up to the five principles and \textbf{build a coalition that take on the system and win!}
Whilst the New Horizon is the ideological magazine of the National Liberal (UK) we believe our ideology of Self-determination (National, Political and Economic) is universal and applicable anywhere. Thus we have attracted interest worldwide.

We publish here two articles written by overseas authors. The first is by an Indian intern of the research based, global criminology firm, Crimophobia. The article highlights the UK's unenviable accolade as the 'Transnational crime capital of the globe', a subject often ignored by mainstream media and in need of pushing up the political agenda.

The second is by a Russian writer Nicholas Popov. A longstanding promoter of a new form of democracy that seeks to avoid the demagogue, the corrupt and the all-powerful elites. Whilst it does have similarities with the Swiss model e.g. Consensus Government via a multi-party ruling National Council, it relies upon a highly structured mechanism as to how it should work and might be best suited to countries with a limited experience in electoral politics. Nevertheless it seeks to liberate the masses from the clutches of all-powerful elites and will provoke debate.

Review of Ms. Mehr Seth’s report on ‘Transnational Organised Crime in the UK’

What hits you first is the frankly disturbing quote from Europol that: “Britain is the Organised Crime Capital of Europe”.

The report goes on to explain what Transnational Organised Crime (TOC) is, how it operates and why it is so strong in the UK.

Clearly there is a problem. Globally, the UK is responsible for some £560bn’s worth of ‘trade’, around 7% of total global exports. Apart from the loss of tax revenue via crime, it is promoting illegal activity such as the trafficking of guns, drugs and endangered species, and the "increasing domestic corruption, extortion, racketeering and violence". The author points out that the most lucrative trade is in narcotics (over a third of the total), followed by counterfeit goods. An issue that the author returns to on a number of occasions is financial fraud, its rise and the authorities failure to combat it.

Whilst such crimes are prevalent everywhere, whether organized or not, the UK is identified as the world’s capital. The reason the author identifies is the UK’s multi-ethnic society which provides the link for overseas criminal gangs to exploit. It rather counter-intuitively suggests Britain is ‘…. more ethnically integrated’ whilst we might suggest it is more diversified (it could be a semantic error?). A lack of integration or rather a proliferation of people coming to the UK, especially London, to work (or commit crime in this case) with no intention of integrating or to settle, may be one explanation.
What makes the UK so ‘special’?

There are allegedly some 7,500 criminal gangs within the UK. How many of them are foreign or ‘home-grown’ is not made clear nor is the level of control exercised from overseas. Of course there are other countries with a similar ethnic mix so it is not clear what is so ‘special’ about the UK (being the financial capital of Europe, speaking the most global of languages and the free movement of peoples within the EU, may provide an answer?).

There is an effort to identify some ‘home-grown’ gangs but the so-called traditional gangs mentioned e.g. the Kray twins and the Richardsons, no longer exist.

The author spends a great deal of time looking at the problems of fighting such gangs e.g. the higher echelons insulation, separate national jurisdictions, corruption and describes the various bodies formed to combat them e.g. the National Crime Agency, the National Criminal Intelligence Service, and the Serious Organised Crime Agency.

Whilst accepting that the UK has a massive problem the report suggests it is not as bad as it could be because the centralization of police power make it harder for criminals to corrupt the police. The relative lack of firearms limits the scope of criminality although it is noted that there has been a flood of cheap weapons from Eastern Europe. It is not noted but the proliferation of these weapons may be going to ‘home-grown’ Black gangs which is a serious enough problem for the Police to create a special unit named ‘Trident’.

Combative Measures?

The report discusses measures to be adopted such as specialized training, state-of-art technology, immigration control (to limit/identify the criminal networks) and welfare expenditure to break any economic dependency upon criminal gangs. I found the latter a little outdated i.e. unemployment is not presently high and benefits, until recently, were relatively generous. Whilst the internet is a great tool it can provide data that is either outdated, superseded or subjective.

The author believes there is no adequate strategy to counter the globalization of crime, largely due to a lack of a global response and the growth in internet and smart phone based crime. As the author puts it ‘The picture of organized crime emerging is that of an evolving, adaptable transnational business model, which clearly points to the need for a fundamental change in the general approach towards policing organised crime in the UK’. Her suggestion of reaching a global consensus on how to combat TOC is promising but is not really fleshed out.

Overall, the report reveals the serious nature of and the level of penetration within society of TOC. A further analysis of their organization and specific proposals to combat them would be welcome. I commend Ms. Seth’s efforts and urge her to continue her good work.

TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME IN THE UK

By Ms. Mehr Seth (New Delhi, INDIA)

“Britain is the Organised Crime Capital of Europe” - Europol.

Definition

Transnational organized crime is organized crime coordinated across national borders, involving groups or networks of individuals working in more than one country to plan and execute illegal business ventures. In order to achieve their goals, these criminal groups utilize systematic violence and corruption. The most commonly seen transnational organized crimes are money laundering; human smuggling; cyber crime; cyber crime and trafficking of humans, drugs, weapons, endangered species, body parts, or nuclear material.

Organised crime is not confined to the boundaries of any one country and has become a transnational problem. This is evidenced in the fields of drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, gunrunning and illegal immigration rackets. Moreover, advances in science and technology enable members of organised criminal groups to operate with high mobility and sophistication, thereby aggravating the already grim situation. No definition of organised crime can be perfect and universally acceptable. The evolution and the forms of organised crime differ from one country to another, which may be the result of different social, economic, historical
The perceived threat of 'transnational organised crime' to Western societies has been of huge interest to politicians, policymakers and social scientists over the last decade. It is argued that while serious harm is often caused by transnational criminal activity - for example, trafficking in human beings - the construction of that criminal activity as an external threat obscures the origins of these crimes in the markets for illicit goods and services within the 'threatened' societies. Can this global crime be controlled through law enforcement initiatives and alternative policy initiatives alone?

Statistics

According to UN Reports, Organised international crime is worth up to $870bn (£560bn) a year, estimated at the launch of a campaign against illegal trade in everything from people to guns, drugs and endangered species. The turnover of transnational criminal networks is worth more than six times the global aid budget, or around 7% of the world's legal exports, according to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). There is also a high cost in human lives and economic stability with crime groups bringing "increasing domestic corruption, extortion, racketeering and violence". Criminal groups traffic women for sexual exploitation and children for purposes of forced begging, burglary and pickpocketing. Fraudulent medicines and food products enter the licit market and not only defraud the public but can put their lives and health at risk.

By far the most lucrative trade, well over a third of the total, is in narcotics, which has an annual value the UN estimates at $320bn. Second is the trade in counterfeit goods, which generates around $250bn. Human trafficking generates $32bn a year, with an estimated 2.4 million victims affected at any one time. Police and other security officials needed more sophisticated tools to fight criminal networks that were taking full advantage of technological improvements. More than two-thirds of criminal profits are estimated to be fed through the financial system, but less than 1% were intercepted and confiscated.

Reference: (http://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/jul/16/organised-crime-worth-560bn)

Crime in the UK

The United Kingdom has traditionally been home to homegrown organized criminal groups involved in a multitude of illegitimate businesses. The UK, being a multi-ethnic society, these criminal enterprises come from a variety of different ethnic background finding their origin in the UK, the most dominant of them still being the White British groups. Outside of the indigenous British crime firms, foreign criminal gangs such as the Turkish mafia, Albanian mafia, Triads, Russian mafia, Yardies, Pakistani mafia, Indian mafia as well as Sri Lankan Tamil and Vietnamese organized crime groups operate in parts of the United Kingdom. These criminal organizations are not described as being British crime groups since their organization itself or their main connections originated in a foreign country. The criminal activities being carried out range from racketeering, prostitution, drug trafficking, extortion, assault, gambling, contract killing, arms trafficking, smuggling etc. The whole of the UK is said to host some 7,500 different organized criminal groups that cost the country £100 million a day. ‘British firms’ is a name designated to describe organized crime groups originating in the United Kingdom.


Some organised crime groups based out of UK are the Clerkenwell crime syndicate, Curtis Warren’s Granby Crew, Mcgraw firm and Arif family. Gang-related organised crime in the United Kingdom is concentrated around the cities of London, Manchester and Liverpool and regionally across the West Midlands region, south coast and northern England, according to the Serious Organised Crime Agency. Debate persists over the extent and nature of gang activity in the UK, with some
academics and policy-makers arguing that the current focus of enforcement efforts on gang membership is inadvisable, given a lack of consensus over the relationship between gangs and crime.

A number of the criminal gangs in the United Kingdom specialize in the importation, production and sale of illicit drugs. Britain has a number of traditional organised crime firms or local British crime families. Some of the most well known include the Kray twins, The Richardson Gang and Terry Adams Clerkenwell crime syndicate in London. Sectarian, or 'political' gangs have featured in British cities such as Liverpool in England, Glasgow in Scotland and Belfast in Northern Ireland. These opposing groups in this conflict are now often termed republican and loyalist respectively, although they are also referred to as 'nationalist' and/or 'unionist'.

Reference: (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gangs_in_the_United_Kingdom)

Problems in control efforts & policies

Problems in controlling crimes of such nature can be varied such as Inadequacies in the Legal Structure, Difficulties in Obtaining Proof etc. As organised criminal groups are structured in a hierarchical manner, the higher echelons of leadership are insulated from law enforcement. It may be possible to have the actual perpetrators of crime convicted, but it is difficult to go beyond them in the hierarchy of power. Slow Pace of Trials & Low Conviction Rate, Lack of proper resources & training, Lack of co-ordination, dual criminality are some more antecedents which may inhibit control efforts. The crime syndicates do not respect national boundaries. Certain crimes, particularly drug trafficking, are planned in one part of the world and executed in another. Criminals also move fast from one part of the globe to another. Different nations have different legal structures. A certain act may be a 'crime' in one country but not in another. Some countries have laws against terrorism but others do not. Extradition of criminals from one country to another is possible only when the principle of dual criminality is satisfied.

Criminal, Political & Bureaucratic Nexus is another important factor that interferes with any control effort made. The rate of corruption in different levels of the judiciary aids the growth and spread of transnational criminal units.

The National Crime Agency leads the UK law enforcement’s fight against serious and organised crime. Organised crime and cyber crime are some of the greatest threats to the national security. Their job is to disrupt and bring to justice those serious and organised criminals who present the highest risk to the UK. They have national and international reach and the mandate and powers to work in partnership with other law enforcement organizations to bring the full weight of the law to bear in cutting serious and organised crime. The NCA became operational in October 2013. The NCA has built multi-agency partnerships across police, law enforcement, the public sector, and private industry and internationally to lead, support and coordinate the UK’s response to a wide range of threats.

Reference: (http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/)

It is this concern that has prompted the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) to compile a gangland register. From October six police forces and customs officers will provide details of suspected organised criminals. This pilot scheme will be extended to all forces in April, and will for the first time provide a composite picture of gangland Britain.


The Serious Organized Crime and Police Act 2005 (SOCPA) is an Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom aimed primarily at creating the Serious Organised Crime Agency, it also significantly extended and simplified the powers of arrest of a constable and introduced restrictions on protests in the vicinity of the Palace of Westminster. It was introduced into the House of Commons on 24 November 2004 and was passed by Parliament and given Royal Assent on 7 April 2005.
Almost all organised crime in the UK is bound up in the control and supply of drugs. Police believe this is responsible for more than half of all the illegal activities of these groups. Organised crime is alive and kicking in Britain. But despite the glum predictions, British police have as yet found no evidence to suggest that Britain is likely to be overwhelmed by gangs or run by a 'godfather' figure.

The British state is one of the most centralized and strongest in the world, certainly more centralized than the US. Britain is of course a smaller country. Political power is concentrated in London and local government in Britain does not have anything like the same powers as the separate states of the US or of the Mayors of great cities like New York, Chicago or Los Angeles. The greater concentration of power and decision-making means less opportunity for corruption by organised crime. That is not to say that police corruption by criminal gangs does not exist in Britain: it certainly does, but it rarely extends up to the senior ranks to the Chief Constable. Local government has relatively little control over what the police does. That brings other problems, but it makes it harder for organised crime to have a serious influence over the police through the channel of corrupt local politicians.

The relative weakness of organised crime in Britain can also be attributed to the lack of availability of firearms. This is really an aspect of the power of the central government. There has always been tight central control of the issue of firearms licenses by central government. In America the right of citizens to bear arms is considered a constitutional right and there is a very powerful gun lobby, which opposes any attempt to restrict the right to own weapons. That is not to say that firearms haven't been used throughout the history of crime in Britain, only that there have been fewer of them. This, again, is almost certainly changing at the present time. One result of the changes in Russia and Eastern Europe has been a flood of cheap automatic weapons onto the market.

Better intelligence methods need to be developed through the training of more specialized law enforcement units, which should be equipped with state-of-the-art technology. Organised crime adds to an increase in public spending for security and policing and undermines the very human rights standards that many countries strive to preserve and thus, countries need assistance in building their capacity to counter these threats.

British society as a whole has become more ethnically integrated over the past three decades, while business has expanded its global reach. But nowhere have these changes been embraced more enthusiastically than among organised criminals. Migration needs to be checked and precautions need to be taken to control the influx of migrants into the country. Most organised crime groups become more accepting of outsiders as they grow in size and ambition. The benefits that accrue from networking and increased openness more than compensate for the extra dangers.

The massive expansion of international trade and markets, bring with it the mobility of individuals and groups. New immigrant groups from former colonial territories: the Caribbean, India, Pakistan settled in British cities during the 1960s and 1970s. Though in an increasingly globalized world the connections outside the locality e.g. with relatives abroad, become much more important aspects of criminal activities. Meanwhile European integration has increased the movement of people and goods. The predominant force at work is globalization and internationalization of crime, and this is most obviously illustrated by the drugs trade.

These groups mainly join together in an orientation to make profit through trafficking...
of illegal goods or to establish their superiority and power over a given area, so as to extract a profit from the local inhabitants. The government needs to implement policies that check the goods being traded in and out of the region and protective measures need to be implemented toward the local populace. Since these groups mainly comprise of migrants, they also utilize the national resources meant for citizens of the nation for their benefits. This too needs to be checked, perhaps by providing for separate segment of resources and opportunities for the migrant population, after a thorough background check.

The welfare state needs to provide for better work opportunities, unemployment benefits, and education. Unemployment has steadily risen from the mid-1970s onwards, and welfare benefits have been cut back. On the side of demand for the services of organised crime, the point is that with a comprehensive system of social security, poor families do not need to look to local criminals to help them, provide them with an income or sort out their problems by recruiting them into their groups. The welfare state or the Citizen’s Advice Bureau would do that. This is different to the fact that there will be a demand for illegal goods and services by those who are interested in drugs, pornography or other illegal commodities. The point here is that there would be fewer bases for organised crime to penetrate local communities and neighbourhoods by providing services - to the extent that welfare benefits are administered by central government, rather than local authorities then they are less open to influence by organised crime groups.

Serious and organised crime is a global phenomenon, which cannot be tackled in isolation. The world is slowly waking up to the enormity of the threat of transnational organized crime, but it has not adopted a global strategy to counter it. In the absence of a strategy, TOC continues to grow.

The transition of much of the world’s activities to the internet and mobile phones has opened up a wealth of opportunities for TOC to profitably expand its activities from drugs and human trafficking to all aspects of personal and business life. The online market in illegally obtained data and tools for committing data theft and other cyber crimes continues to grow, and criminal organizations are offering online hosting of illegal applications. The financial crisis and the bankruptcy of financial institutions have opened new infiltration routes for TOC crime.

It is time for an international campaign by all sectors of society to develop a global consensus for action against TOC. OECD’s Financial Action Task Force has made forty good recommendations to counter money laundering, but these crimes continue unabated. Two conventions help bring some coherence to addressing TOC: the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which came into force in 2003, and the Council of Europe’s Convention on Laundering, which came into force in May 2008. Possibly through an addition to one of these conventions or the International Criminal Court, a financial prosecution system could be established as a new body to complement the related organizations addressing various parts of TOC.

Conclusion

The mere mention of the term ‘organised crime’ instantly conjures up brutal imagery of a criminal family going about its day-to-day business to the tune of Coppola’s ‘Godfather’. One of the ironies here is that life began to imitate art as US and Italian Mafia families, reportedly, imitated the mannerisms of the over-stylized characters in the movies. But this imitation was mostly aesthetic, because research is revealing a very different picture of organised crime to the close-knit family ties of the silver screen classics; one of a complex and shape-shifting world of career criminals. Drug supply, organised fraud and organised immigration crime are all thought to have major impacts on the UK economy, but also on society more broadly. Child sexual exploitation and abuse, criminal use of firearms, cyber crime, economic crime and organised theft are identified as key threats.
These constantly adapting organised crime groups are shifting towards less risky and less violent – but still lucrative – market niches where detection of organised crime is more difficult. Fraud, drug trafficking, counterfeiting and tobacco smuggling are currently the largest organised illicit markets in the UK. Other profitable markets are trafficking for sexual exploitation and organised vehicle crime. Alongside traditional markets of organised crime such as drugs and human trafficking, there is growing evidence of its presence in the financial sector, renewable energy, and waste and recycling.

The picture of organised crime emerging is that of an evolving, adaptable transnational business model, which clearly points to the need for a fundamental change in the general approach towards policing organised crime in the UK. The current hierarchical and rigid model is perhaps more suited to target traditional socio-geographical mafia type organizations, but 21st-century organised crime requires a bit more thought. It must be based on a better understanding of the threat of organised crime and of approaches to harm reduction, and be supported by a stronger evidence base.


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A new, MULTIPOLAR political system

A new, MULTIPOLAR political system, as a revolution in governance, would be capable at last of bringing peace to the world and of opening new horizons for the development of a modern, fast-changing society.

The nation is open to development if its thinkers are capable of creating their own ideas while perceiving and using the ideas of others. The technological and economic advantages will always belong to a political system implementing world achievements and the creative potential of the whole nation beyond any ideological speculations and prejudices.

Development and new technologies are impossible without freedom of thought and creativity. The more freethinkers there are in the country, the closer it gets to achieving diversity, competition of views, sanity and thus to a democratic and civilized governance system. True democracy as a higher rung of the organization of society is possible and would work only if it has free and free-thinking citizens. People with a limited intelligence and outlook on the world (the 'barbarians') are unable to think and behave sensibly being disorganized and seeking patronage from above and are therefore suitable only as slaves under the control of their master and his stick - as it was in ancient Rome.

Demagogues

And the current political monopolies assiduously encourage and speculate on a barbaric cult of absolute bellwether for the biggest, but not the most enlightened and discerning part of the population, simultaneously suppressing dissent and creative alternatives in the society thus hindering its fully-fledged development. In doing so a shameful anachronism leaves the door wide open for another Hitler, Pol Pot, Mao or other 'Great Teacher' and admirers of their own greatness and superiority over the feral masses culminating in inevitable ruins. 'Leaderism' is a religion of slaves and monarchists, the birthplace of dim-witted fanatics and the road back to barbarism!

The mass unwillingness (or the inability?) to think is the main reason why true democracy still doesn't exist in any country. This applies to both a politically inert and submissive majority and to those who see themselves as the intellectual elite and vanguard.

Freethinkers and Trailblazers

Once freethinkers and trailblazers created a civilization and humanized it. Their discoveries and technologies determined a modern way of life and were the driving force of progress. But now, in the absence of a critical view and new ideas, democracy itself, as a guiding star, habitat and creative workshop for homosapiens, became merely another dogma and a subject of ideological

Nicholas Popov
speculations.

The democrats and revolutionaries of different countries fight against tyrants and autocracy, actively participate in political revolutions and the elections of presidents, and create new universities in which they preach to the gullible students their own illusions about democracy. And shortly thereafter the ‘winning’ democrats again take to the streets with protests to the next ‘guarantor of democracy’, if he will allow it. The opponents of democracy and the protectors of their own privileges blame it for all the wrongs and ills of the present society. Some are clearly disingenuous, others don’t notice the obvious thing – all modern ‘democratic’ systems are unipolar and each political imbalance and injustice has its ‘Gaddafi’, ‘Putin’ or ‘President Trump’ in the foreseeable future. While common sense tells us that a political system with one ruler, even if he is elected by the ingenuous and suggestible majority, is a ‘temporary’ monarchy with a tendency to be continued (today’s Russia, for example). It’s the elective monarchy of those who really serve the interests only of the dominating class with all its inflated self-importance, hereditary parasitism and pretensions to the national and world dominance and resources even despite shaky democratic superstructures. And the outdated unipolar governance, as in ancient times, plays into the hands of only a few thousand egoists, but to the detriment of millions of other people.

It’s worth noticing that objectivity and justice cannot be unilateral while the democracy controlled by the hereditary elite suggests of the collective sleep of reason.

100 years ago, the October Revolution in Russia proclaimed communism as the only right teaching, has got rid of dissenters and announced the building of a new society, free from any forms of inequality and exploitation. The ‘shortest path to a brighter future’ inspired a wave of imitations in other countries (including Cambodia 1975). But the Bolshevik revolution of ‘leaderism’ over the 80% of simply unlettered majority hadn’t rid the world of autocracy and tyranny. It merely confirmed that in the absence of open and vivifying competition any political monopoly and empire loses dependence on society and the ability to develop, getting bogged down in corruption and inter-clan intrigues and disintegrating under a weak leader. And after the fall of feudal communist regimes with lifetime monarchs, a caste of nomenklatura vassals with special privileges, fictitious elections of one appointed candidate and equality in poverty for the rest of the population, their former serfs are turning to the democratic experience of more successful and technologically advanced Western countries with competitively elected and regularly updated government.

Which modern political system is actually democracy and capable of working for the whole society?

The old-fashioned periwigs of ‘respected lords’ (as in the House of Lords) served as a democratic system of checks and balances for absolute rulers and were primordially designed just to protect their own interests within feudalism. In addition, the over-crowded and unstructured nature of parliament is not conducive to the discipline, quality and speed of decision-making.
making as well as an effective fight against corruption. In spite of subsequent modernization, this bulky and amorphous superstructure ‘under the big boss’ still is deprived of the opportunity to choose priorities and is not motivated by the inter-group competition for leadership or for the voices of voters. At last, under proportional representation the minority political party can’t have any significant influence on decisions. These innate defects do not allow ‘democratic parliamentary government’ to effectively represent the interests of all parts of the population thus making it unable to adapt to a modern multicultural society. By origin – it is a rookery for loafers who raise their own social status at public expense.

A lot of today’s democracies act as the ‘Big Brother of everyone’ while promoting their own elites version of ‘democracy’ to the countries of ‘the third world’. Is that really democracy? Or this is merely the export of hidden corporate claims to world economic and political domination and resources of other countries with the servile support of local vassals? To export democracy, it would be nice, at minimum, to have it. More to the point, even bipartisan 'dueling' (the two-party political system) is indeed a fascinating spectacle for the politically naïve who do not understand how it merely serves as a distraction from any kind of serious critique (dare we say ‘panem et circenses’?). The resulting winner will invariably favour the impresario, backed up by the money of the millions of simple-hearted sponsors. Everything becomes outdated without renewal. What were once useful past political movements with a working inter-party competition have degenerated into a huckster’s trick in today’s modern socially developed societies. Now, with little effective difference in approach, this cunning 'business model' connives at maintaining the financial status-quo of the ‘Big Money’, and is also cautious not to allow 'strangers' into the powerful ‘club’. This ‘closed joint-stock company’ is intended not for ‘the rabble’ who are creating the nation’s wealth but only for the business elite that is appropriating it ‘on legal grounds’ by its own laws; with that, the degrees of their freedom are separated by the thickness of a purse. The monetization of laws, health care, education, pre-election campaign, etc. puts citizens in obviously unequal conditions. But what about a declaration for the ‘democratic society of equal opportunity’? A truly healthy and intelligent nation is again, only possible when honest competition and equal access to a nation’s resources is granted to all citizens.

With all due respect to the US founders, the large size of corporations and their dominating influence on government was unforeseen by most of them. But this is hardly the same Democracy, as Abraham Lincoln said: ‘government of the people, by the people and for the people’! However, the slyness of a two-party system is a matter of political sanity and civic choice of Americans themselves.

Today the voices about the crisis of democracy are increasingly heard in the West itself as its inspirer and founder. It is not a crisis of democracy that hadn’t existed before. This is just merely inevitable old age, the sunset and twilight of an era of precursors, of a strange mix with the monarchy, inflexible and inadequate for a modern dynamic society in the absence of new ideas.

Unipolar political systems based on the principle of ‘the one is the winner, the rest are the losers’ were thought up not in the interests of the people but only for the elite-hereditary domination over it. They do not represent equally the various parts and subcultures of the nation, are deprived of the working competition for interests (the voices) of voters within power, are prejudiced and unjust from the start and will never be able to bring freedom, peace and stable equilibrium to a diverse and continuously changing society. Under any ideological monopoly, be it the cult of money, a belief in the equality of the professor and scrounger, paradisaical life after death or other political religion as an opium to stupefy and enslave the masses.
The injustice and oppressions of the monopolists in power are prompting freethinkers to seek new forms of government without anyone’s domination, up to the ochlocracy and anarchy. (And with the inevitable subsequent dictatorship, because history and nature show that less-organized forms will always be subjugated by better organized ones.)

How can a nation-state government be unprejudiced and actually work for all its citizens, be flexible and adequate to the changing society, without rejecting but using the organizing power of leadership and political parties? How can a purposefulness, rapidity and decisiveness of one-man rule be combined with the diversity and breadth of views of democracy? The answer is the idea of

A new, MULTIPOLAR self-balanced political system.

Obviously a new form of government should consist of as few as possible independent participants, each one being motivated by the interests of his or her group of voters. The governance system would be one where the ‘permanent leader’ or president aren’t present any longer. While the decision-making process must become permanently adversarial.

A new, multipolar democratic political system of five independent political parties with a movable centre of joint decisions would be better organized, more broad-minded, competently enterprising, protected by party’s sovereignty and by collective intelligence and would fit into society more adequately. The five (different viewpoints on common issues and challenges) make up the minimum for self-balance. A 5-pointed star is a symbol of wisdom and protection in power.

(An increase in the number of participants is possible, but it worsens the expeditiousness and controllability of the system. Besides, opposition parties ‘beyond a fence’ are the necessary catalyst and a source of renewal.)

Collective interests of the whole society are presented in the governance of five independent political parties simultaneously. In everyone there is a group of advisory experts in different fields; the role of the party leader consists in creation of a professionally competitive team, preservation of its sovereignty and coordination of work and above all, the representation of voters’ interests. The favorite of most voters will have an initial two votes out of six, but the two-votes advantage will be ‘floating’. The accepted decisions are the result of a balance of contradictions and compromises among the independent political leaders within a new democratic decision-making system.

Odd quantity (5) of participants and ‘floating’ two-advantage in a new government system are necessary for flexible and prompt change of the leader for the purpose of an exception of ideological tendentiousness, and for blocking a ‘bad’ political decisions (for decision-making the initiator should make a compromise at least with one more participant, but their joint decision can be blocked by three other participants: the 2-votes advantage +1 = 1+1+1). The blocking means that the question should be
reconsidered from other positions or is closed till ‘the best of times’. But leadership can move only between two largest political parties with the greatest quantity of voters in order not to harm the majority of the population. In so doing the threat of negative evaluation (see below) and competitive survival (someone will leave the team in any case) compels any of the leaders not to forget about interests of another big part of voters. The three smallest parties, taking one direction or another, play a stabilizing role and enrich the accepted decisions. The minority party will finally get the opportunity to earn their popularity by means of actual work done for the good of the society.

**Decision making system in a new democratic governance.**

The right to decisions doesn’t belong to anybody individually! Any participant of five has the right of initiatives. The realization of suggestions impels seeking allies and forming compromises. The decision can be taken by at least half of the votes. If the solution is blocked by another half, the right of the new edition and the two-votes advantage goes to the leader of the second (regarding the number of voters) party.

Advertising of the ruling parties’ is prohibited in the new democratic elections, their campaign can be supported with the work done only, opposition may publish an unaccepted version through the mass media. The advertising campaign of new candidates cannot be financed from private sources and state funds are distributed equally among the contenders.

**A new democratic electoral system.**

A ballot paper has 2 columns: Ruling Parties in descending order and new ones, each presents its three basic purposes. If nobody from the offered list doesn’t suit the voter, he is free to add a name of one’s own candidate to a ballot paper. Attention: this candidate is an indicator of an openness and democratic character of a new governance form!

The multipolar democratic rule and five Independents in power means freedom of initiatives and invigorating competition; extended field of variants and informed decisions; mutual control; continuity in the policy and the openness to renewal! A minimum of participants and stages makes the decision-making process dynamic and manageable.

This know-how would be able, finally, to minimize the eternal problems of unipolar power such as corruption, infringement of rights and freedom under imperfect legislation, etc. They are solved by a cross check of several competing parties within a new, multipolar government: any blunders of the contender raises the other participants’ chances for survival in power. And the mutual competition of several competitors is more objective and a constantly active motivation for the fight against corruption etc. than the whim of any one ‘National Leader’ or the news interest of mass media. Thus the health-enhancing competition of political movements can be of benefit to the whole society.

... The multipolar governance would not allow Stalin to “miss the boat” of Hitler’s invasion, there would not have been "conditions for" and the 'messiahs' themselves, World War II and Vietnam War, the Iroån Curtain and “Khrushchev’s shoe” …

PS: Today five-pointed stars can be found on the flags of many countries and groupings. What do they mean? A simple and useful meaning of a five-pointed star is here: a multipolar democratic system.

Nicholas Popov, Russia – 2016
Influences on Liberal trade unionism – Lujo Brentano

Whilst the first Liberal unions in Germany were inspired by the economists Hirsch and Duncker, later ones (and political figures) were attracted to the theories of Lujo Brentano (1844-1931).

Born into a Catholic family and university educated in Law and Economics he, like Max Hirsch, visited the UK and studied its Trade Unions and attempted to influence fledging trade unions in Germans. A professor of political economics at the University of Breslau and later Leipzig he was also an avid author.

In short, he believed workers (or any citizen) could/would achieve necessary social reform via negotiation and compromise rather than revolution. He like earlier liberal trade unionists recognised the difference between Continental and British unions. The former wished to use unions as a vanguard of a socialist society whilst the latter, according to Brentano, were the successors to the medieval guilds\(^1\) and thus more interested in protecting the economic and working conditions of their members rather than involving themselves in party politics.

A leading economist in his time he felt nevertheless that trade unions had a valuable role in a country’s political economy by representing the workers perspective. Unlike socialists however, who believed in that period that Trade Unions should be part of a phalanx of organisations, including political parties, striving to overthrow a government, by violence if necessary, Brentano believed their role was in the workplace (although they could lobby Parliament from outside to introduce appropriate legislation).

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES

Although liberal unionists had never been interested in using their Trade Unions, which they created independently rather than working within existing, more socialist, trade unions, for political agitation beyond workplace issues, the original liberal unions operated more as ‘friendly societies’, looking after the welfare of their members inside and outside of work, rather than as collective bargainers.\(^2\)

For Brentano, Trade Unions have their place within industry to represent the collective views of workers in a workplace in the boardroom and will bargain accordingly (the individual workers’ perspective, in or out of a union, and Management were also part of an ‘industrial circle’). Working together rather than against each other was the ultimate aim. His views influenced a whole generation of liberal politicians, especially post-WW2, and lay the grounds for the mutually beneficial relationship in Labour relations that Germany enjoyed.

Times of course have moved on. In the UK, the Trade Unions’ position in the ‘Labour Movement’ is no longer sacrosanct and a class based party is neither appropriate nor electable (class difference and identity being seriously loosened). The days of Trade Union’s dictating Government policy are likely over and indeed their membership is declining and powers have been severely curbed.

At the same time or even as a consequence (?), individual worker’s rights have been eroded e.g. extending the service requirement for unfair dismissal to two years, and the threats increased e.g. zero hour contracts.

UNIONS BACK TO THEIR ROOTS?

As history turns full circle, as trade unions have lost their political power and influence and shrink their horizons back into the workplace (the proliferation of industrial strikes is no coincidence),\(^3\) the time for liberal unions therefore is now; protecting individual members and the working conditions of all employees through negotiation and lobbying (this was something that UK Liberal unions successfully carried out in the latter part of the 19th century).

\(^1\) Brentano, Lujo. 1872. Workers’ Guilds of the Present.
\(^2\) See New Horizon II, article ‘Liberalism and Trade Unions’ (p. 18-20)
\(^3\) On the Continent there is even a growth in so-called discount TU’s which simply offer individual employment protection.