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Towards a new Democratic World Order

By Takis Fotopoulos

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At the beginning of the new millennium, in an article examining the theoretical aspects of globalization and the related approaches attempting to interpret this phenomenon, I had drawn the following conclusion:

"I think that humanity faces a crucial choice in the new millennium. Either we continue our present patterns of life, within the present institutions which secure today's huge and growing concentration of power at all levels and the consequent continuous deepening of the present multidimensional crisis, or, alternatively... we embark on a process which would create the

preconditions for the establishment, for the first time in History, of a new and truly Democratic World Order".[1]

At that time, globalization had not yet taken its present dimensions in terms of concentration of power at all levels. In particular, it did not (yet) mean the loss of economic and therefore national sovereignty for those countries integrated into the New World Order (NWO) of neoliberal globalization in a relationship of dependence to the Transnational Elite (TE), i.e. the network of the elites controlling the global economic, political and information processes mainly based in the G7 countries.

It is therefore clear that the fundamental aim of the social struggle today should be a complete break with the present NWO and the building of a new democratic world order which would be founded on sovereign and self-reliant nation-states. The conditions of virtual political and economic 'occupation' we live under today, mean that people resisting it have to form Popular Fronts for National and Social Liberation fighting for economic and national sovereignty through the break with the NWO. Then, once the people of a particular country have broken with this criminal "Order", they should join with peoples from other countries, also fighting for the same aims, to form together new economic unions of sovereign states. As long as the member countries are characterized by complementary production structures, any possibility of involuntary transfer of economic surplus from some countries (usually the weaker ones, as is the case in the EU) to other countries in the Union is ruled out. Therefore, a collective kind of self-reliance could be achieved within the economic area covered by such a union. Needless to add that the peoples in the West (the so-called 'world community') never hear anything about the real significance of globalization and are spoon-fed information that either distorts or is economical with the truth by the TE-controlled mass media.

In this sense, the completion of a Eurasian Union, as originally conceived, i.e. as an economic union of sovereign nation-states, in which nations could secure self-reliance within the Union as a whole and would have the ability to impose whatever social controls on markets they decided, would have been an event of a tremendous global significance for the development of a new democratic global order to replace the present criminal NWO of neoliberal globalization, which has already destroyed the lives of billions of people all over the world. Particularly so if the Eurasian Union could expand to cover also all those peoples in the world who presently fight against the TE for their sovereignty and self-determination, either in the Arab World (Syria and Iran, as well as those who were forcibly integrated into the NWO like Iraq and Libya), and also those in Latin America (Cuba, Venezuela, Bolivia and others) and the rest of the world.

However, this presupposes that the Eurasian Union will not just be an extension of the present NWO into the Eurasian space, as the TE itself and particularly some parts of it like Germany wish, (whose elite even speaks of an extension of the EU into the Eurasian space) and, of course, the 'liberal globalists' within the Russian elite-the 'fifth column' as Putin called it in his Crimea speech. Clearly, the aim of all these elites is simply to expand the geographical area of activity of TNCs even further to areas, which are not yet fully integrated into the NWO. Yet, it is clear that the new democratic order will have to be based on very different values and principles of organization than the present order, otherwise it will not have any *raison d'être* and no sane

person, who does not have any economic or other interests associated with the further expansion of the TE's empire, would fight for it!

The institutional framework that has been established today all over the world, i.e. in all countries integrated into the NWO, consists of a model in which economic growth, sometimes for its own sake, is the fundamental economic aim. In this framework, the continuation of growth depends on a process of further internationalising the economy, a fact which implies a self-perpetuating vicious circle. Thus, the destruction of economic self-reliance, as a result of internationalization necessitates a growing dependence on imports and therefore creates further pressure to expand exports in order to finance them. But greater exports presuppose more competitiveness and therefore corresponding improvements in productivity that, in the end, can only come from more investments in technology, research and development. And who controls world trade and investment in a globalized economy? Of course, the Transnational Corporations (TNCs), which possess the productive and technological base that allows the constant improvement in productivity which is required by the cut-throat international competition. As I showed elsewhere,[2] a core of a few hundred TNCs control the bulk of global revenues! No wonder that by the late 1990s, the fifth of the world's population living in the richest countries in the world from where the TNCs originated (mainly the G7 countries) controlled 86% of world GDP and 82% of world export markets.^[3]

Therefore, in this process, the victors necessarily are those most competitive ones, who possess the production and technological bases that allow for the continual increase in productivity required by the tough international competition. In other words, in the present globalization era, it is not anymore nation-states fighting among themselves for the division of world markets but transnational corporations who rule the world. It is these huge oligopolies that are always the victors, irrespective of where they base their activities. So, the fact that today China or India look like economic superpowers (or rising superpowers) is not an economic miracle but just an economic mirage. If any of these countries stopped offering the 'comparative advantages' they presently do, particularly in terms of cheap production cost to the TNCs, the economic miracle would end overnight when the latter move to one of the other countries begging them to invest in their own area. The myth therefore that competition is 'good for the people' assumes that people are just consumers looking for the cheapest possible price for what they buy. 'Unfortunately' they are also producers and the continuous suppression of their wages and incomes within the globalization process has already led to the dualist consumer society within a new type of growth economy I mentioned before. So, globalisation is good for a small minority of the world population and too bad for the vast majority of it.

However, although growth (or better development) may be necessary in order to meet the needs of the population, (sometimes even the basic needs), there is no need for a rational society to grow for growth's sake, a process which apart from the obvious ecological adverse effects can be shown to also have catastrophic social and cultural effects, as well as political effects as real democratic processes are impossible in today's centralized societies implied by growth. So, growth for growth's sake is an irrational process imposed by those controlling production, i.e. the TNCs, which do not even hesitate to create artificial needs just to make more profits and expand further. Therefore, as long as the fundamental economic decisions about what, how and for whom to produce are not social decisions taken collectively and directly by citizens themselves

but, instead, are taken by individual consumers through the market, then despite the myths of orthodox economics which are based on an imaginary perfectly competitive world, assuming away the crucial distributional aspects, the resulting allocation of resources is not only far from 'efficient' but also inevitably leads to the present huge and growing inequalities in the world distribution of income and wealth.

So, the new democratic world order of sovereign and self-reliant nations should set the foundations to transcend the historical systems of control over the means of production and distribution. That is, the private vs. the state control of the means of production and distribution. Today, the crucial historical issue is how the conditions could be created for the control of the means of production to be exercised directly by society, through the citizens' assemblies, which will directly determine the economic and political processes. This is particularly urgent today when it is fully realized that the collapse of the Cold war bipolar world, instead of leading to the creation of a mass movement in this direction, led to exactly the opposite: the creation of the present criminal unipolar world and the parallel development of a degenerate "Left" that directly or indirectly, (or 'objectively'), supports it. Thus, part of it adopts the usual reformist approach that effective change from within the system is still possible, despite the fact that historically it has proved to be a total failure in even stopping the reversal of all major social conquests of the last century concerning the right to full employment, working conditions, the rights to strike and demonstrate, let alone the right to a 'social wage' in terms of the social welfare state that was condemned to death by the TE. Similarly, the antisystemic part of the Left has, mostly, not even a clue about globalization as a new systemic phase and of the present struggle of working class people everywhere for national and economic sovereignty, as a precondition for any radical change. Instead, it still talks about intra-imperialist struggles, and still expects a global revolution, presumably some time in the next millennium - given, in this millennium, there has not even been a pan-European workers' strike against the dramatic reversal of historical social conquests!

However, it is clear that the alternative pole I described above for the transitional period, i.e. an economic union of sovereign states, like the Eurasian Union, will not of course establish such direct democratic institutions, as long as the present unipolar NWO is still around. Yet, just by challenging the present NWO and implicitly also questioning the soviet bloc's way of allocating resources, it will inevitably raise again the crucial issue of direct control of resources by society in the new democratic world order to emerge, following the overthrowing of the NWO of neoliberal globalization. In other words, only an economic and political union of peoples resisting today's unipolar NWO would be in a position to create the pre-conditions to transcend the present homogenization and put the foundations for a different, really self-managed society-- something obviously impossible today when the vast majority of the world population, the victims of globalization, live under conditions of effective occupation fighting for their own survival.

Therefore, the crucial issue today, in the fight for the creation of a new democratic world order, is how we create this alternative pole of sovereign self-reliant nations, in full knowledge that the TE will use any kind of economic or physical violence at its disposal to abort any such effort with all the huge means available to it.

At the outset, it should be clear by now why the creation of self-reliant societies is the necessary (though not the sufficient as well) condition for economic and national sovereignty. Self-reliance here is meant in terms of autonomy, rather than in terms of self-sufficiency, which, under today's conditions, is neither feasible nor desirable. A useful definition of self-reliance is the one given by the 1974 Cocom Declaration of non-aligned countries as "reliance primarily on one's own resources, human and natural, and the capacity of autonomous goal-setting and decision-making".^[4] Thus, although self-reliance implies maximal utilisation of local resources and sources of energy, it should not be confused with autarchy and should always be seen as a necessary condition for autonomy in the sense here of political and economic sovereignty. Needless to add that self-reliance in this sense is impossible within the World Trade Organization framework and the limited degree of import substitution allowed by its rules, whereas it is perfectly feasible within a Eurasian Union built according to the principles described above.

Next, a real struggle for economic self-reliance could begin in earnest by a Popular front for National and Social Liberation like the one I mentioned above, through the radical restructuring of the productive base, with the aim of meeting, at least, the basic needs of all citizens, rather than meeting market demands, as prescribed by the Transnational Elite. Furthermore, citizens could then enjoy the benefits of Social Health, and Education, as well as Social Insurance (through new public organizations that they themselves would control directly) and recover the public assets and social goods, which are currently being sold out to transnational corporations and loan sharks.

Finally, It should be stressed that self-reliance should not be seen in the narrow context of a single country, even a big one such as Russia, but in the context of the alternative pole of sovereign nations I mentioned above. This implies that another necessary condition for the implementation of such a program^[5] is the radical change of geopolitical conditions, so that the 'Libyan' or 'Ukrainian' examples are not repeated in the countries moving away from the NWO. This presupposes the creation of an international front of all countries presently resisting the NWO, from Venezuela, Bolivia and Cuba up to the countries in the EU periphery that everyday get closer to a break with the EU, which has condemned them to mass unemployment of pseudo-full employment and poverty, the peoples in the Middle East (Syria, Iran), as well as the peoples in the broader Eurasian area. Particularly the Russian people who presently, from communists up to nationalists, and from radical social democrats to Christian orthodox are united against the NWO and who by definition will play a leading role in the new democratic world order.

One could expect that once such an alternative pole for a new democratic world order is created there will be a transitional period between the present unipolar world order (which is disguised as a pseudo multi-polar world), and a future new Democratic World Order based on self-reliant and sovereign nations, which is obviously incompatible with it. It seems therefore that the most likely scenario for the transitional period involves a bi-polar world, in which the present NWO will co-exist in tension with the emerging real multi-polar world of self-reliant and sovereign nations, like the one that could potentially be provided by a Eurasian Union--provided of course that the latter functions as a real alternative to the present NWO rather than simply as a complement to it, as the liberal globalists' within the Russian elite wish, supported by at least part of the TE. Needless to add that such a strategy would also allow a genuine, new form of

internationalism to be built 'from below', which will be inspired by the principles of solidarity and mutual aid rather than the catastrophic principles of competitiveness and profit-making, as at present.

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[1] Takis Fotopoulos, "Globalisation, the reformist Left and the Anti-Globalisation "Movement"" *Democracy & Nature*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July 2001), pp. 233-28.

[2] See "The Transnational Elite and the NWO as 'conspiracies'", *Pravda.ru*, 20/10/2014

[3] UN, *Human Development Report 1999* (NY: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 3

[4] Quoted in Paul Ekins, *Trade for Mutual Self-Reliance* (London: TOES publication), 1989, p. 13.

[5] See for such a detailed program, Takis Fotopoulos, *Ukraine, The attack on Russia and the Eurasian Union*, (published shortly by Progressive Press), ch. 11