

# *Liberal Aerogramme*

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## *Liberalism and Fundamentalism*



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# Editorial

## Liberalism and Fundamentalism

This issue deals with Liberalism and Fundamentalism. The background for all discussions of fundamentalism is the historical process of secularisation through which both society and individuals have moved away from the dominance of religious institutions. At the state level, this has taken the form of the formal separation of religion and state, and the abolition of religious laws and prohibitions.

In developed societies today, religion - which was once uniform, collectivistic, public, ascribed, and inherited, is today pluralist, individualistic, privatised, and often freely chosen. In traditional cultures religion is experienced in the collective sphere. The possibility of choice and preference is a modern phenomenon, interpreted often in traditional cultures as a symptom of the decline of religion.

The fundamentalist rejection of modernity is not necessarily the rejection of modern technology but of the ideals of individualism, pluralism, and the equality of women.

LI President Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck in her article points out that fundamentalist ideas religious or not, are dangerous because the people who are in favour of them do not want to submit themselves to human laws, because they think they only have to obey a higher force.

Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade, politician of Muslim faith, looks at the important question: does the evolution of countries known as Muslim indicate a direction towards confrontation or towards a convergence of values?

Canadian Senator Mobina Jaffer in her article "Fundamentalism - regression for women", specifically looks at the down-grading or repression of the progress of woman in fundamentalist societies.

LI Deputy President Lord Alderdice in his article from the early nineties discusses fundamentalism from a psychoanalytic perspective. This analysis is still very much relevant today. Israel's Interior Minister Avraham Poraz explains that Shinui's electoral success had for a great deal to do with its stance against Israeli fundamentalism.

Congressman Acosta and Dr Ronald Meinardus both deal with the issue of Mindanao in the Philippines outlining that it's not merely a religious conflict, offering a liberal solution to the conflict. Lord Dholakia, leader of the Liberal Democrats (UK), sees the rise of Hindu Nationalism and Muslim Fundamentalism as the cause for conflict for many years on the Indian subcontinent.

Former German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and European Parliamentarian Graham Watson both look at the role of Europe at the international stage after the political developments of the last months.

Nicaragua's Vice President José Rizo Castellón explains how he wants to bring government closer to the population.

Werner Hoyer MP, President of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party compares the socialist, conservative and liberal paradigms.

Once again we are excited to bring this publication to you and would like to thank all the contributors. Likewise we are eager to get your feedback or comments on it.

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# Fundamentalism is inherently flawed

This article is taken from the book 'Annemie in Wonderland' by **LI President Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck**

Personally I think any form of fundamentalism is wrong. Any ideology or religion you radically embrace or put into practice will lead to unacceptable excesses. One does not only find that in religions. Also in politics there is a type of religious fundamentalism. The reactions of the Bush government are reminiscent of a form of moral fundamentalism which is more like the basic part of some protestant churches, congregations or sects, who think they can force their will upon others.

Through a perverse kind of democratic game playing, a president elected with the support of Americans holding fundamentalist opinions, carries out actions that are inspired on those convictions, not only for his own electorate but also affecting the rest of the world. Those American circles of society, where the theory of evolution is not taught because of the literal interpretation of the protestant bible, hold exactly the same attitude as those Muslim groups that pretend their interpretation of the Sharia, and nothing else, is the law.

President Bush's comments such as "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" and "who is not with us, is against us" derive directly from that old fashioned religious background.

In Europe we have learnt to be less dogmatic. Certain countries and institutions however are of the opinion that there is something like a western point of view on human rights, which does not apply elsewhere. So equal rights for women would be a mere cultural phenomenon and we would not have the right to demand these from non-western societies. It goes without saying that women's role and place in society is partly culturally determined, but at the same time it is a purely humanitarian question: it is not acceptable that half of the population is being oppressed.

There are several points of discussion similar to this, which, among others, have to do with sexual morals and procreation. This way, alliances are formed between the Vatican, conservative Muslim countries and conservative American Protestants,

brought together by a fundamental conservatism in spite of all their enormous cultural and political differences. Because of that alliance the text about women's rights has been one of the most difficult



Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck

ones of the Summit for Lasting Development in Johannesburg last August and September 2002.

## **Human laws are primary**

Again, any form of fundamentalism is detestable. That also goes for any form of market fundamentalism. I am not impressed by comments like "state intervention is always bad and private enterprise is always good", because they are not true. Nobody is perfect, and I am glad this is the case; otherwise the world would be exceedingly boring. The consequence is, that you have to strive for an attitude of moderation, which may seem weak and dull. There are of course basic rules that I think everybody should live by, like "Thou shalt not kill", but all in all there are only a few.

All in all fundamentalist ideas are also dangerous because the people who are

in favour of them do not want to submit themselves to human laws, because they think they only have to obey a higher force. That is also not only the case with religiously inspired points of view.

There are politicians, now less than there used to be, that think that people's behaviour should be determined by a higher plan. That is exactly the drama of Marxism when first Lenin, and then Stalin, thought the whole population should submit themselves to the Marxist view, Marx who himself never would have wished for such a thing, as he was talking about the end of the State. As soon as you lean towards a sort of transcendence, something that is not human anymore, and something that surpasses people and which people have to submit to, you are on the wrong road.

Then the practical question arises how far a western democracy can go on tolerating fundamentalism and its manifestations, and in fact tolerating the seed that can smother a democracy. It is a difficult and delicate question. I am inclined to agree with the famous comment of Voltaire in his *Traité sur la tolérance à l'occasion de la mort de Jean Galas* from 1774: "I totally disagree with what you are saying, but I will keep on fighting until I die, for you to be able to keep on saying it."

That is the ideal situation. For me the limit lies between words and actions. I think everybody can say what he wants, but from the moment on that he starts to act according to it, the situation changes. You should fight ideas with ideas and to prohibit them is not the best way to get rid of them. The delicate area starts with incitement to act.

One could, as an exaggeration, say that all Arabs are lazy and that all Europeans are sacrilegious, that does no harm. But he who says: "All Arabs are lazy and we should throw them out", is going one step too far. And he who says: "We are going to demonstrate in front of that mosque because all Arabs are lazy", is also overstepping the mark.

*From: "Annemie in Wonderland"*

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# Islam and the West

President Abdoulaye Wade, LI Prize for Freedom speech at the Executive Committee Meeting, Casablanca, Morocco

Let me first of all express my pleasure for being able to participate in today's Executive Committee Meeting of my Liberal family after an absence of several years, due, as you know, to my numerous other activities at home and abroad, which left me no choice. My party, however, has continued to be involved in your activities.

It will soon be 25 years since I became a member of Liberal International, after having been an observer of its activities for one or two years.

I am firmly convinced that liberty is one of man's attributes and that all political and economic development must be built on this principle. Therefore, I quickly turned away from national and international organisations that gave supremacy to the masses over the individual, or to the State over economic groups.

Political liberty and market economy together constitute the basis of an ideology, or a doctrine to say the least. It is a set of values that results in guidelines adopted as the basic premise of the relationship between man and the universe and between man and his own kind. Individualism is the foundation of political liberalism that advocates a society whose pillars represent a number of different liberties: freedom of conscience; of expression; of movement; of opinion, and property rights. Therefore, the liberal society stands apart from all those systems that deny freedom or that are willing to compromise these liberties. History has proven that man best fulfils his talents and most develops his creativity in open societies that do not stifle the human being.

The affirmation of the pre-eminence of the individual is at the basis of free enterprise, the foundation of the liberal economy as opposed to communism and state socialism. History has proven the pertinence of the liberal option, since a society based on market economy has demonstrated its superiority in satisfying freely expressed needs. The 21<sup>st</sup> century is unquestionably the century of the triumph of liberalism, because, on a political level, its model of pluralist democracy has become a universal model in spite of the difficulties of adaptation and resistance. And, on the economic level, the market economy has spread to all four corners of the globe. Communism has all

but disappeared, whereas democratic socialism only survives by borrowing from the liberal model.

Of course, as not all people have the

buried communism at the same time, the world has lived under the banner of three principal ideologies: democratic socialism - a remote survival of Marxism even if it denies it - liberalism, and conservatism. Then come the two extremes, left and right.

However, we have seen that the humane and democratic liberalism of Liberal International is not the right-wing liberalism that positions itself to the left of the conservative right.

The point in bringing up these factors is to show that the West, in spite of its diversity, is founded on a common basis of freedom, which brings us straight to our subject and to the question of its compatibility with Islam, such as it is understood by the majority of Westerners. Let us face these questions frankly. For the West:

1°) Islam is perceived as an intolerant religion capable of leading its followers into a Jihad in order to impose itself if needed

by the sword, through terrorism linked to integrism<sup>1</sup> and fundamentalism.

2°) The Islamic society is against the principle of individual liberty. The Islamic law is harsh, with immutable sanctions for certain crimes and behaviour, such as the stoning of adulterous women and amputating the hands of thieves, etc.

3°) The Islamic society is not a society of justice.

We could discuss the notions of "just society" and "society of justice" for a long time.

The notion of a just society is already a judgement relative to an ideology, a doctrine, or a moral; this is why this notion is purely subjective. On the other hand, a society of justice could be a society that applies laws and rules familiar to all its



President Abdoulaye Wade, Senegal

same intellectual aptitude or the same advantages depending on their social origin, absolute liberalism can become a danger leading to anarchy and even to the complete opposite of liberalism.

The limits of liberalism have therefore become a concern for the members of Liberal International at a time when everyone professes to be a liberal. It is a question of establishing limits with regard to uncontrolled liberalism, the dynamics of which always lead to extremes such as de facto domination, imperialism or monopoly, all of which are contrary to the very spirit of liberalism.

## ***The perception of Islam in the West***

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, which

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members in an impartial way. In this sense, let us remember that Islam refers to social justice as an imperative for judges, since justice is the act that is "closest to piety".

The Koran also reminds judges of the existence of a Supreme Judge who is above earthly judges. It would not be prudent to answer these three considerations lightly and oppose them with a simple denial.

The difficulties for Muslims to practice their religion in countries of immigration is due to intolerance and ostracism by western society even if, as often happens, only a minority are involved. The debates that have taken place for some time due to the abuse of Islam, especially by certain extreme branches or Muslim groups that claim to be representative of fundamentalism, quite rightly lead westerners to question the profound nature of Islam and its compatibility with democracy.

### **Islam in the 21st century**

By asking me to deal with this question you know that I am neither an Ouléma nor a theologian, but quite simply a politician of Muslim faith. I am the leader of a country that is 95% Muslim, but that is also a secular republic. Because a politician makes decisions - whether he wants to or not, even if he is ignorant of many things - his opinion is never negligible. It is because the fate of the community, whose destiny is in his hands, depends on his decisions.

For my part, if I am Muslim, it is because my parents were and because they raised me in this religion. But, if I am a faithful practising Muslim, I believe I owe it to a personal commitment that led me to believe that I have espoused the most beautiful religion in the world.

You may tell me that the Christian, the Buddhist and the Jew do the same. But I know that each of them regards their religion as the best. This is the reason why I am tolerant. This is why, in fact, I am not completely ignorant.

Returning to Islam, specialists will excuse me for having to make incursions into their reserved fields, but I would like to explain my view of the religion that I have espoused. As in all religions, individuals in power or in search of power have often abused Islam. These individuals make use of personal interpretations and sources that often contravene with other sources.

I will try therefore to respond to the fundamental question: confrontation or convergence? I will do this by successively examining a few questions whose answers will greatly help us.

- The rapid advance of Islam from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to this day worries the West, where many residents adopt the Islamic faith. Why?

- What is the value of the theological practices of those that we Islamic republicans consider as extremists?

- Does the observation of the current situation in countries referred to as Muslim corroborate a fundamentalist or rather a "liberal" evolution?

Does this evolution predict total incompatibility that could lead to confrontation or, on the contrary, to a convergence of values with western society?

This evolution of the world appears to be splitting the human community in two. The rapidly developing North is satisfying, not to say over satisfying, the needs of its population. And the increasingly poor of the South are ruthlessly turned back when they feel the need to try their luck in the North. The injustice is all the more felt as the North pursues a systematic exploitation of the South by means of economic domination, resulting in an unequal trade balance and a structural and technological disparity between North and South. This long-term evolution is transforming our world into a world of exclusion: 80% of the riches are detained by 20% of the world's population. The South is finding itself increasingly excluded from scientific knowledge transmitted by information networks that are lacking in the South.

This observation led me to recently propose the concept of numerical solidarity at the Visionaries Round Table Talks in Geneva. The Talks brought together some 3,000 participants from all five continents to prepare the World Summit on the Information Society, which was to be held in the same city in December. I am pleased to tell you that it was wholeheartedly accepted.

It has already resulted in the establishment of a Solidarity Foundation and of a World Solidarity Fund with its headquarters in Geneva. This Fund will be sustained by painless voluntary contributions - for example, 1 cent for every telephone call or \$1 for every computer purchased. Moreover, it will have the special feature of being totally transparent, as banking secrecy will not apply, and consultation will be possible at any time (See details in *Le Monde*, 07/03/2003).

### **The advance of Islam**

The advance of Islam is the result of increased conversions. It would take too

much time here to try and analyse the causes of these conversions of Westerners to Islam. But it is a fact, and it has already softened the severe judgement of Islam. This is because these converts have obviously come in search of spiritual peace rather than to engage in subversive activities.

It appears evident that the advance of Islamic parties is due to the spread of poverty that leaves the population open to any message that promises a decent life in this world. They take refuge in the idea of a just society that Islam claims it alone can build. They make this claim by waving the Holy Book and by referring to a paradise for the most humble people, who are thereby politically manipulated. But let us not simplify things too much as they are far more complex.

There are four sources of Islam: the Koran and the Sunna (the practices of the Prophet) that together complete the interpretation of the Koran. There is also the *Ijtihad* or personal reflection, that can lead to reasoning by analogy. The fourth source is consensus. The notion of consensus has enabled many dogmatic interpretations to be rejected.

### **Confrontation or convergence?**

This brings us to the second question: Does the evolution of countries known as Muslim indicate a direction towards confrontation or towards a convergence of values?

I will attempt to respond to the question by first examining other questions and considerations that will lead us towards the answer:

-What is the nature of the regimes in countries with a Muslim majority and their compatibility with present-day ideas of liberty, democracy and free trade?

- What is the true nature of extremists and the problem of their legitimacy with respect to religion?

- How do the regimes that claim to follow Islam evolve?

- Are there common values between the western world and countries with a Muslim majority?

Today, there are about two billion Muslims in the world, spread out in many countries that are relatively simple to classify:

- Countries where the only source of law is Islam and where the Shari'a applies.

- Countries where the only source of law is Islam, but which are non-fundamentalist and where the Shari'a does not apply.

- Countries with a Muslim majority having several sources of law, there is primarily the Constitution, followed by the

law, jurisprudence, analogy, etc. These are the countries that have adopted a republican form of government with a secular constitution.

One can see that the question of compatibility should only be raised for the countries in the first category, and it should be recognised that there are only a few. A distinction must be made between interior policy (Shari'a) and foreign policy (rather liberal), which does not seem to be influenced by religious considerations.

As far as I am concerned, I believe

Syria.

A very clear evolution is now taking place. We even speak of the secularisation of Muslim countries, defining secularism according to its original meaning, as the separation of Church and State—not atheism.

### **Integritism and fundamentalism**

To tackle the second point, the groups that refer to the Koran, it seems to me that I need to distinguish integritism from

if it means being in opposition with the form of jurisprudence that the Prophet (PSL) and his companions left us. For example, the practises of polygamy and stoning, though set forth in the Koran, are practically inapplicable, if one respects the conditions under which they are applicable. Besides, let us remember what Jesus said when he found himself faced with the case of the stoning of an adulterous wife condemned in the name of a principle prescribed in the Gospel of St. John: "If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her" (8:7). The poor woman was therefore spared.

1°) Islam is a religion of peace. Islam is the only religion in which the first contact with another person takes place with a greeting wishing peace. 'Assalamou Alaikoum', may peace be with you.

The Prophet (PSL) never pursued Jihad and he never went to war to impose Islam. He fought only to defend himself. The Prophet had a cult of peace with his neighbours to the point of asking himself if they did not have a right to a part



President Wade, LI Prize for Freedom acceptance speech, Casablanca, Morocco, 28 March 2003

of his inheritance. that the school of consensus was a factor in the evolution of Islam through the successive adoption of universal values. I am speaking of an evolution, which I think is a reality. From the point of view of democracy, liberties, and human rights, some regimes such as Morocco, Algeria, Egypt and Tunisia are not fundamentally any different from democratic African countries.

As an opposition leader, I often backed up my demands by referring to Morocco. For example, the access to State media, radio and television outside of electoral periods, which is a reality for the opposition in Morocco, was a continuing demand of the opposition in Senegal.

In many Muslim countries there is now democracy. In those countries we find elections and changes in the Heads of Government or State. Even the countries of the Gulf are in the process of evolving in this respect with the adoption of an elective assembly: Kuwait, Bahrein, and

fundamentalism. On this distinction there is obviously a lot of confusion.

Fundamentalism could be a doctrine that refers to the foundations, in this case to the Koran and to the principles that it decrees. However, everyone knows that the Koran - although unchanging in its foundations - is the subject of different interpretations. It is not in its essence that it changes, but in its implications and in its relationship with society. One could almost say as much about the interpretation of the Shari'a, which is the deposit of customs and jurisprudence.

When fundamentalists refer to the Koran, it is to underline the values that are in opposition with certain bad practices of the modern age. In a way, the fundamentalist contrasts religious moral with injustice, with all that is condemned by religions and by all moral philosophy. Sometimes this leads to integritism. Integritism appears to me as a rigorous interpretation of the texts, even

of his inheritance. Islam is therefore a tolerant religion, even if intolerant individuals and extremists claim its absolute superiority and have taken it as a justification to attack the rights of others through Jihad. On this point there is not absolute agreement because if it is certain that the principle was expressed in the Koran, then the conditions for its practice are extremely harsh. Be that as it may, Jihad at the present time is out of the question. This is because an alternative also exists in the Koran: persuasion, which must never be aggressive and which only takes place when a non-Muslim solicits a Muslim.

2°) Islam is a religion tolerant by nature.

The Prophet (PSL) instructed that the new converts of Mecca be treated with indulgence, and not verbally abused or mistreated. Is this not the affirmation of what we today describe as freedom of worship?

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The Prophet (PSL) cultivated cordial relations with Jews and Christians, common descendants of the family of Abraham. The Koran itself cites numerous references to these religions. We should not forget that Jesus is also our prophet and is recognized by the Koran, even if he is not the last Messenger. This is why a Muslim recognises all the prophets whose names he pronounces with deference and respect.

When receiving in 631 a delegation from Najran, the Prophet (PSL) authorised them to celebrate Mass in the mosque of Medina, thus raising tolerance to a level never equalled.

3°) Islam advocates the equality of all races since it proclaims that, "An Arab is not superior to a non-Arab".

4°) The Prophet (PSL) engaged in inter-religious dialogue before it was invented. His entourage included Arabs from various tribes of the Hedjaz, Blacks, Persians, Jews, and Byzantines. Beginning in 617, he made contact with both the Blacks and the Christians of Abyssinia.

5°) The Position of Women  
The Prophet (PSL) abolished the right of life and death over women. He abolished the pre-Islamic practice of murdering female babies at birth. The Prophet (PSL) entrusted the management of the Medina Market to a woman, defying the convictions of his time, an era in which the woman was an inferior being.

Allow me a digression here to congratulate Liberal International for its role in providing a place for women. We have our first woman president of a Political International in the person of our friend Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck. At present we also have a female Secretary-General.

In Senegal, we had a female Prime Minister who possessed rare competence and rigour. Due to the change of government she vacated her position to a politician of my party. Today, I have 8 women out of 32 ministers in my Government, probably a record for Africa. I would add that, at the level of the African Union, an amendment by Senegal at the Summit last July resulted in absolute parity (5-5) in the Commission that runs the Union.

Let us return to our subject. As religions are not under the control of political powers, I believe that Christians and Muslims should always search for the common values that bring them closer together and that enrich the international community in so far as they do not affect their own essence. This seems to me the duty of men of good faith who should devote themselves to fair and enlightened interpretations of the Koran and Bible.

In any case, I believe that integrism, whether Muslim or Christian, appears heretic. It is true that Muslim integrism seems to be more extreme at present. It constitutes a minority, but it is an active minority often manipulated by money and the prospect of power. Instead of conducting its extremist struggle on the basis of its own ideology, it finds it easier to erroneously consult religion.

The strategy of integrism consists therefore in fraudulent exploitation of religion and poverty in order to establish itself and spread, since it is relatively easy to speak to the underprivileged about the paradise that must be achieved on earth through violence, and about the duty to attack secular institutions.

What is occurring today in Islam has happened in all religions. Let's not forget the Christian Crusades of the Middle Ages under the sign of the Cross against the Crescent, the Inquisition, the women accused of sorcery burned at the stake, the Wheel of Torture, etc. But Christianity has had time to leave behind its "barbarities". Islam, as we have seen, is purifying itself. But the extremists are quite strong and well organised, fuelled by the great injustice that rules in this world, creating an island of abundance in an ocean of misery.

### **Islam in Senegal**

You are probably going to ask me: "Where in the world exists the tolerant, altruistic, peaceful and generous Islam I am describing?"

My answer is, in a small country called Senegal that has had a Christian President for 20 years. It is a country where Christians and Muslims live so well together, sometimes even within the same family, that one can say the difference between them is unrecognisable until death comes and one is taken to the Church and the other to the Mosque. Cemeteries were only separated fairly recently. At the cemetery of Saint-Louis, the former capital, you can from time to time discover a cross on a tomb. In Ziguinchor (capital of southern Casamance), Christians and Muslims are buried in the same cemetery. In Senegal, neither stoning nor the amputation of thieves' hands is practised.

I will not go so far as to present Senegal as a model. Simply realise that this nation whose spirit of tolerance is often cited, was the work of men, particularly of its leaders, over time. For this is a country in which the Jihad was practised more than a century ago. If this was possible, it is because the population

accommodated Islam through the brotherhoods (les fraternités) whose tolerance is well known and which plunges its roots in the Senegalese culture.

Today, as President of Senegal, I am striving to consolidate these achievements as well as the mutual respect among the citizens of Senegal of different faiths. This is why I have just introduced the facultative teaching of all religions in primary schools.

This brings us to the conclusion. I belong to a Black African civilisation whose ruling class is abandoning, in all conscience, certain attitudes because they are incompatible with modern life and the humanist ideal. There is nothing to be ashamed of in recognising this since the people of Europe, to speak of only one region, also had barbarian practices they have abandoned. I have banned sexual mutilation and forced marriages. Even though the traditional inclusion of religious freedom was in the Constitution, I reinforced it with State protection for the rights of religious minorities.

In Senegal, we do not consider ourselves Christian or Muslim, but simply Senegalese. This means that the effect of evolution towards nationhood and citizenship is the decline of all integrisms to the advantage of a humanism that starts first of all within the national communities.

It has been said that it is ideas that lead the world. This is why certain theories are dangerous, as dangerous as they are superficial. The theory of the clash of civilisations is nothing other than anti-humanism concealed by an intellectual facade but which has as little justification as the instinctive reactions in the same direction. There is no clash of civilizations. There need not be a clash of civilisations if Muslim intellectuals prevent false believers and politicians disguised as preachers from imposing a dis-torted view of religion on us by circumventing us through the poor-est fringes in our societies.

Nothing is unalte-rable in this world, not even the whole set of values of a civilisation that, at any time, can be enriched with contri-butions through an internal process of changing external contributions.

This is why, in fact, it is man that makes history. Now that a lengthy historical process is leading humanity towards a universal civi-lisation while enhancing the characteristics and contributions of different cultures, the world will be largely what we do with it now and in the future. The view of Islam and its contribution also depends on us, the Muslim intellectuals, who must defend our religion against a monopolising of power under the pretence

of religion. We must advance towards the West with the positive values of our religion and our cultures, which must meet those of the West for mutual enrichment.

Until now I have spoken more to the Muslim intellectuals, adding my voice to others who have already come forth. We also know that the same approach exists among Christian intellectuals who are trying to distinguish our religion from present-day deviations. And they appeal, just as we do, to the ideal of a single humanity, with free men and women, different but enriched through their diversity. We hope that they too, within their societies, will carry on their efforts for mutual understanding, just as we are now doing inside Liberal International.

I would like to extend my deepest thanks to His Majesty, King Mohamed VI, whom young Senegalese adopted when they gave him the name, 'King of the Youth', for the friendly welcome that he has accorded to us, my small family and I, honouring Senegal and the Senegalese people. At the same time, I thank the people of Morocco and its Government for the warm welcome given to the delegation that is accompanying me.

Allow me to congratulate Liberal International for having had the courage to open a debate on such a burning and pressing issue. A heavy dose of tolerance and clarity is needed. By doing this, you open the way to the convergences that will save the world by reducing supposedly unconquerable antagonisms.

### ***Liberal International in Senegal***

Senegal is delighted to host the Liberal International Congress on the 23-25 of October. We are also delighted because the victory of the PDS at the presidential elections of 19 March 2000, over a Socialist Party that has run the country without a break for 50 years, was also your victory. During my 26 years in the opposition, your moral and political support has never failed me, especially during the numerous periods of my imprisonment. You have always supported me in spite of the serious accusations against me. Liberal International has always mobilised itself and has constantly mobilised our friends in Europe, Canada, and the United States for my release. And arbitrary power was reversed every time by the acquittals of the tribunals that nearly always sanctioned my arrest.

It will not surprise you that Annemie Neyts, our President, was always in the centre of the circle of my tireless friends. She understood the difficulties of a democratic party in an African context as in the de facto and de jure one party state of Senegal.

My demands for the right of assembly and freedom of speech were always legally based, but so numerous that the Ministry of Interior at the time said to me:

"Maître Wade, you want to pass from a lawless state to a legally constituted state in 48 hours! Give us time to catch our breath!"

By holding the Liberal International Congress in Senegal, you are simply and rightfully sharing a political arena that you have greatly helped to conquer by democratic means. It is appropriate that the occasion is also one to celebrate our common victory.

My dear Annemie, I willingly accept the Liberal International Prize for Freedom, although I am well aware of the part that you and the members of Liberal International have played in the work that I was able to do for the progress of democracy and freedom.

I would like to say one last word to the one who really deserves this prize, who must share it with me at least, my wife Viviane. She has courageously lived by my side during the long 26 years of opposition in the blind and intolerant African environment of the time, without ever complaining, always determined, and believing unperturbedly in my destiny. One day perhaps she will explain to me why. Thank you for your attention.

*1. Definition provided by Liberal International: Integrism is defined as the indivisibility of faith and law. The integrist society is one that is "corporatist in arrangement", a society that is placed "under the strict control of a despotic clergy who apply law and authority together. Usually this type of political organisation is known as totalitarianism."*



*LI President Annemie Neyts, President Wade and Senegal's First Lady Viviane Wade*

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# Fundamentalism - regression for Women

Liberalism - Progression, a step towards equality says Canadian Senator Mobina Jaffer

Fundamentalism and liberalism are both political concepts although when fundamentalism is mentioned, there is a perception of religion while with liberalism there is a perception of secular politics. As fundamentalism is based on doctrines that are often derived from religion, and liberalism is structured on political thought, both concepts guide the way society sets out rules of conduct. This is especially true of the rules of conduct that are set out for women.

## ***The collision of liberalism and fundamentalism***

The dictionary definition of fundamentalism is: 'Opposition to modernism or hard-line orthodox beliefs.' The effect fundamentalism has on women is to literally hold us back – fundamentalist doctrine does not advocate equality for women. Women are to be controlled, and held in traditional roles, and in this sense, all countries are facing the challenge of fundamentalism vs. liberalism. Liberal values of equality for women are perceived as a threat to the hierarchical social and gender order in traditional patriarchal societies, as they constantly throw the continued relevance and validity of that order into question.

Some of the values of liberalism that can be brought about by education and democratization are equality, worldwide dignity, and freedom of thought and expression. Liberalism has started to create new possibilities of equality and dignity for women as democracy has started to give women an opportunity to share power in political institutions. Perhaps even more importantly, it has also given women the opportunity to make decisions that affect them that comes from this sharing of power.

These changes, particularly in patriarchal societies, create fear and resistance to openness. Sadly, control and domination of women and their confinement to traditional roles can become a powerful means of resistance and rejection of liberalism. This sort of resistance leads to a reversion to the fundamentals of religious dogma, and a vision of a traditional religious cultural

ethos.

The fundamentalist/liberalist collision is not the only cause for the rise of fundamentalism in our times. Fundamentalists in both western and non-western societies have seized upon the emerging social problems in their respective spheres of influence as the basis for religious and/or political agitation. In some countries where fundamentalism has taken root, there are sometimes unique problems and cultural perspectives that can become political tools for fundamentalists seeking power or prestige. In the liberal western world, new problems can also lead us to question our place in society and whether



*Mobina Jaffer, Peace Envoy, the Sudan*

there is a need to revert to something more based on traditional roles.

In non-western societies colonization, western domination, lack of power and a growing sense of the loss of identity might be examples of issues fundamentalists can use to their advantage. In western societies, a feeling of social and moral disintegration and alienation could provide the same type of resistance, even if it is not as widespread. There is absolutely no doubt that these concerns have considerable validity, but the resolution of these problems should not be at the cost of women's progress – it is not necessary to have women's rights walking backwards into the future if these problems are to be addressed.

The emancipation of women through primary education, higher education, employment, and equality and dignity in

the family and society are attributed to trends of liberalism. Fundamentalists seek a reversal of these trends in the revival of a religious and cultural ethos tied to the fundamentals of religion.

Fundamentalists impact on women across all religious boundaries. The fundamentalist's agenda for control and coercion of women exists in Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, and Confucian fundamentalist movements. All of these types of fundamentalism are on the rise across the world - the religion may be different, but the result is the same: the down-grading or repression of the progress of women.

Fundamentalism promises stability and order as liberalism begins to give women political and social rights. Fundamentalism erects boundaries, rules, and laws to keep order. Fundamentalists use religious doctrines to impress on society the idea that liberalism is anti-religion. Though we might mainly think of fundamentalist states, and most especially Islamic

fundamentalist states, when we imagine this scenario, this inter-action between liberal values and fundamentalist dogma is by no means limited to those areas.

The World Health Organization has established that none of the world's nations treats its women as well as it treats its men. Less gets spent on women's health and education in every country, and the income of women everywhere is below that of men. No religion affords its women the same leadership as it does its men. Women are always placed at the bottom of the totem pole.

## ***Woman in Islamic societies***

In the world's oldest Islamic fundamentalist state, Saudi Arabia, the Quran is cited as the constitution and a strict Sharia law is enforced. It is illegal for a woman to

drive a car, or go outside without a male supervisor – though that male may himself be only a child. Women are also barred from all jobs in which they might work in close proximity to men, and they require the written permission of their father, husband or guardian before they can obtain a passport. All of these restrictions are in addition to the visible and well known fact that a woman is not permitted to leave the house without first covering her body from head to toe.

In Afghanistan, it was not until the Soviets began to impose their revolutionary ideologies on the society that the islamists of the Mujahideen began to resist. Social reforms such as the education of women and the elimination of 'bride price' were seen as shocking changes in Afghanistan, and the apprehension was seized on by the nation's mullah's, providing the spark that lead to jihad against the anti-religious Soviet communists.

In Iran, after he was begged by the country's mullahs to become the Shah of Iran, Reza Shah I introduced a wide range of social reforms including the abolition of the veil and the participation of women in public life. Reza Shah II went even further, giving women access to education and the right to vote or even run for office. Khomeini called this a sin against God, and the fundamentalist revolutionaries vowed to remove these western corruptions in order to restore the woman to her rightful place of honour she had held in Islamic society.

Even in more secular societies, fundamentalists are capable of bringing their considerable powers to bear. In India, for instance, there is the case of Shah Bano, a divorced woman who was denied alimony beyond the period of waiting by her ex-husband on the pretence that sharia does not provide for it. Though the Supreme Court of India eventually awarded Shah Bano alimony, pressure from fundamentalists led her to attempt to withdraw her case entirely, and caused the resignation of some more secular Muslim Ministers from the government of Rajiv Gandhi. Gandhi's government was eventually pressured into amending the nation's constitution to allow Muslims the right to be governed by their own Islamic laws in personal matters.

Many Islamists have responded to western criticisms against their treatment of women by noting that Islam gives women more privileges than any other religion, and that the Prophet was an extremely progressive individual who gave women rights that were unheard of at the time. This is indeed very true, but it

ignores the question of what position women actually hold in Muslim societies, and what rights they actually have.

Fundamentalists might also point out that in Muslim countries, women have held the highest office more times than in any other society. Specifically three women have been leaders of Muslim countries, and two of those in countries where Islam was the state religion: Khalida Zia in Islamic Bangladesh, Benazir Bhutto in Islamic Pakistan, and Tancu Ciller in secular Turkey. This does not mean that fundamentalists in those countries accept women's full and equal participation in society, and in fact fundamentalists feel it is against God's law to place a woman in a position of leadership over a man, and none of the women in question would have dared oppose the fundamentalists on religious issues. Regardless of the circumstances, however, that these women were able to attain the positions they did ought to be enough to force western societies and institutions to examine their own commitment to equality.

Liberal regimes promote equality, individual rights, and an open and accepting society. Liberal regimes advocate freedom of choice, expression, dissent and mobility. Maybe most importantly, Liberal governments believe in the rights of women to be full participants in public life, to make their own choices and follow their own ideas.

Fundamentalist regimes, on the other hand, such as the recently deposed Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the hard-line regime in Iran, and the dictatorship in Libya, rule through fear, advocate strict discipline, unquestioning obedience and extreme measures, most notably violence against innocent civilians.

### **Fundamentalists suppress womens rights**

Within fundamentalist regimes, women's voices are never heard. The vast majority of decision makers are men who interpret the scriptures and laws according to their best interests and advantage. This translates into the development of discriminatory, unjust laws and decrees that cannot be questioned because the women have no power.

Once Khomeini's forces deposed the Shah and took control of Iran, they began to implement draconian laws and decrees, specifically against the fairly liberated women of Iran. Iranian women were forced to veil themselves and they were segregated, their basic rights such as mobility were taken away, and their dignity was destroyed as they were no longer allowed to work and their voices

were silenced.

Under the regime's Family Protection Act- Iranian women lost all their personal rights in regard to their families, their rights within marriage were marginalized and child custody was given immediately to the male. Iranian women became subject to lifelong discrimination; they lost their basic human rights, and the condition of Iranian women has been considerably worse since the revolution.

Unfortunately, this pattern of discrimination and prejudice against women and the destruction of their rights lie at the core of all religious fundamentalist regimes.

In the past year, over a dozen states in Nigeria have instituted "Sharia-based" laws, which severely restrict the rights of women. One Nigerian case in particular caught the world's attention last year. Amina Lawal, a 30-year-old Muslim woman, was sentenced on March 22, 2002 to death by stoning by a Sharia court in Katsina State in northern Nigeria.

Lawal was found to have had a child once divorced. Pregnancy outside of marriage is considered adultery under the Sharia-based penal code of Katsina State. Her partner denied having sex with her so the charges against him were dropped. Lawal's lawyers have appealed the sentence and she is currently awaiting a scheduled June 3, 2003 hearing at the Katsina State Sharia Court of Appeal.

The case raised a furor of protest from around the world but is only one of many cases of discrimination and severe prosecution against women under fundamentalist regimes.

In November 2002, 17 women from the village of Munwashi in Western Sudan received 100 lashes each for adultery simply because they were unmarried mothers. Each of the women had children from the age of 6 months to a year old.

The Islamic code the Taliban instituted while it ruled Afghanistan was so strict that it drove many Afghan women to suicide because they could no longer live under the regime.

This is an extreme reaction to a government but unfortunately for a lot of women under fundamentalist rule, oppression is a daily reality and becomes unbearable.

Ayesha Imam, a renowned human rights activist from Nigeria, has been a very vocal opponent of the "Sharia-based" laws of Nigeria and of the treatment of women under Muslim regimes around the world. "Muslim laws do not require the non-recognition of women's rights (any more than do secular or customary laws)" says Imam. "That so

many (but not all) forms of Sharia and other laws do so is explained by the mindsets and worldviews of the men who constructed, drafted, codified and implemented these laws.”

“Passages specifying and implicitly assuming equality are too often ignored, whilst incidents that do not are taken out of context and then generalized,” Imam says. “Furthermore, very often patriarchal practices are continued (or invented) and attributed in retrospect – quite inaccurately – to Islam.”

Now that Saddam Hussein’s secular Muslim regime has been ousted in Iraq, there lies a great fear that the religious clergy, whose power and influence grows by the day, will seize power and institute rigid laws, laws that would likely persecute Iraqi women and restrict their rights.

Why is this reversion to fundamentalism occurring? It may be because of the fast change that is happening in these societies and across the world in general. There has been a change of the status quo in these areas, which causes some to react with fear and resistance.

Change in almost any form creates apprehension, and the lightning speed with which it has been occurring in the last few decades is threatening the traditional superiority of men. It is no surprise, therefore, that status quo seekers are beginning to hearken for the restoration of “traditional” and fundamental values. In the West, the proponents of traditional values are trying to incorporate them into political slogans. They argue that organized labour and women’s movements erode the traditional Christian values of austerity and hard work. Further, they suggest that this erosion of fundamentalism is the cause of the current economic crisis.

### **Liberalism and the future of equality for woman**

So, where do we go from here? I believe that in this global age at the beginning of the 21st century we should look for universalistic solutions for what may appear private, individual and personal. What I think we need are universal norms to guide and govern human behaviour in all societies.

On December 10, 1979, the United Nations adopted a convention called the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which addressed all aspects of women’s social positions and legal status. It is a multi-lateral treaty binding states that have ratified it or acceded to it. The Convention currently has 170 state parties.

Along with the Universal Declaration

of Human Rights, it is intended to set universally agreed upon norms. These norms were formed by people of diverse cultures, religions and nationalities, hence, the Convention makes no provision whatsoever for a differential interpretation based on “culture and tradition.”

However, we have to be sensitive to the effects that drastic change can have on a society, especially when that change is imposed from above rather than nurtured from a grass roots level. It should also be kept in mind that even the most liberal societies and institutions have a long way



*Female circumcision ceremony in Africa*

It states clearly that all discriminatory laws, regulations, customs, and practices must be abolished by the state parties. In this text it includes religious freedoms and practice of equality. It argues that there is no conflict between freedom of religion and the principle of equality between women and men. Both are consistent in international law.

Religious freedom, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is an exercise of choice, implying freedom from coercion either by the state or by other religious groups. One cannot seek to impose one’s religious beliefs by coercion. Some religious practices, however, encourage and strengthen the de-facto inequality of women in the family and in society. If a woman is coerced to accept an inferior condition on the basis of a religious practice, it would contradict both, the principles of equality and the principles of religious freedom as set out in the international norms.

Many states have neither ratified nor signed the CEDAW Treaty. Those who did sign cannot be legally forced to act upon it, but in the end it is morally binding to them. The status and position of women in a society is a barometer of the civilization and the moral calibre of that society.

In order for women to have equality, Liberal values must be put into practice.

to go before they realise true equality themselves. In Canada, though women have made strides towards equality they represent less than ¼ of all parliamentarians, and continue to be underrepresented at the top levels of government. Even within Liberal International, where we are concerned with the promotion of liberal values around the world, complete equality for women is yet to be achieved.

Though liberal societies have come far in advancing women’s equality, they cannot simply superimpose their values onto other cultures, as even within their own society there has been and continues to be resistance to radical change. Liberal nations also cannot simply expect liberalism to take root around the world without encouraging the spread of its values, and doing so in a way that is sensitive to non-western cultures and ideologies.

The wide acceptance of CEDAW is but one example of the fact that these societies and liberal values of equality are not incompatible, but unless liberal nations are also willing to continue to promote those values in their own societies, and encourage them to take root in others, they will continue to be at risk from the forces of fundamentalism.

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# Liberalism and Fundamentalism

The 1991 '80 Club' lecture delivered by **Dr John Alderdice**, then leader of the Alliance Party of Northern-Ireland

She was late that morning, and being late just wasn't in her nature. German by birth, and by upbringing, she was always on time, and used the sessions conscientiously. Today she was late, not by a mere minute or two, but fully twenty minutes. When she arrived at the door, there were tears running down her cheeks. 'I am late' she said 'and I am not apologizing. Today the Berlin Wall came down, and I just could not drag myself away from the radio.'

Every time I think of what has happened in Europe in the last few years I think of my student on the doorstep. We who have been caught up in our own little hermetically-sealed ancient feud, often lose touch with the significance of the big events of the outside world. But in truth it is almost impossible to think or speak on any major political theme today without some reflection on the collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. For liberals there is a great temptation to attribute this apparent demise to the fact that the people have finally tumbled to the inherent despotism of the system and thrown it to the side. The reality is much more complex, but the development which is of central significance in triggering the collapse of the Soviet regime, is the movement towards European Unity which has gathered pace since the end of the last World War. This is the most important movement of our generation. National currencies, economic independence, and even such previously substantial obstacles as a millennium of island separatism have been unsteadied by the whirlpool. Its eddies destabilized an already shaky Soviet Empire, and the collapse was dramatic. Within months the mighty edifice came crashing down, its fall forever epitomized for those of us who have lived through it, by the Berlin Wall, crumbling at the hands of the people. It seemed a dream come true. Europe uniting, national barriers being subsumed in the larger framework of a free market, and the oppressor, communism, is on the run.

The excitement at these changes has swept aside the conventional wisdom about the mechanism and pace of change in Eastern Europe. But should we not ask questions? Should we not wonder why despite the Intelligence Services, and the probing minds of students and journalists, no-one presented a convincing argument

for this eventuality in advance? Should we be more cautious, or even positively concerned? Certainly it is my conviction that we ought, after an appropriate expression of pleasure, to transform our jubilant energies into an examination of the implications of these profoundly significant events.

When a patient comes along to see me with a history of chronic and long-standing difficulties, I take it as axiomatic that whilst dramatic changes can occur, overall improvement, however uneven its course, will take a good deal of time. It sometimes happens that within a couple of weeks the patient returns with a beaming smile and words of unseemly praise for my therapeutic acumen. Whilst I rarely intervene more than to mildly question the depth of the cure, I inwardly question whether this is a 'flight into health'. That is to say, the patient, rather than slowly and painfully confronting the conflicts and difficulties which plague him, has buried them under a facade of health, which is entirely pathological, but permits him to exit the therapy with a good conscience. The underlying difficulties however remain intact.

## ***The precursor of a new form of oppression***

Once before, in 1917 Russia experienced



Lord Alderdice

a revolution - the overthrow of the Czarist regime. But what was initially heralded by some as a progressive breakthrough, was instead the precursor of a new form of oppression. Could the dramatic collapse of communism be infected with this kind of phenomenon? The way in which I hear some Eastern Europeans speak, fills me with anxiety that a new language has been learnt through which new forms of oppression can be inflicted with a good conscience. It will hardly be a liberal revolution if the republics become servants of nationalistic fervour, dominated by money and populism. In the case of other areas, the talk of freedom of religion may open the gates to a wave of Islamic fundamentalism which will be even more oppressive than its communist predecessor. Confronted with uncertainty we all turn to our own experience to see how we can make sense of the unfamiliar, and I am reminded of the events of twenty years ago in Northern Ireland. In June 1969, when many liberals were rejoicing in the success of the Northern Ireland civil rights movement which had successfully challenged the old corrupt Unionist establishment, Rev Albert McElroy, retiring as the Moderator of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, warned, "The situation is fraught with great danger. Things could so easily return to the tragic conditions of the 20's and 30's. As usual, the innocent, the ordinary people on both sides would pay the price and a new legacy of hatred be created." These were not the words of some anxious conservative unionist, who could see his little world shaken to its roots. McElroy was the Ulster Liberal Party's leading figure, and a scourge of the sectarian fundamentalism of Ian Paisley. What McElroy could see, as few others could at the time, was that the destruction of an old corrupt system is not the same thing as the building of a new and just one. As McElroy would have pointed out referring to the Scriptures, a house left vacant by an evil spirit, may simply become inhabited by seven others which are even worse. The naive optimism which greeted the cataclysm of the late 1960's in Northern Ireland is replaced in the 1990's by little short of despair at the intractable deterioration of society there. I have grown up never really knowing a stable

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democratic political system, always surrounded by violence, and aware of a deepening sense of helpless despair in my community. I have been forced to examine as best I can what makes for progress. In a community where political analysis is in short supply I have found in my psychoanalytical studies a way of looking at these issues which has given some meaning. Let me take three elements in this approach.

Firstly, things are not always what they seem on the surface. We must explore what is going on underneath. Just as with any individual, the surface speech or explanation often hides a contrary motivation, so each situation or event or policy must be examined to see precisely what is the motivation or guiding principle behind it. A principle may work itself out in sharply different policies if applied in differing circumstances. The same policy may be progressive when adopted at one time and place in history, and entirely reactionary at another. Similarly, different policies, taken from different vantage points may be based on precisely the same underlying principle. The second notion is the developmental or evolutionary principle that things grow from the simple, rigid and reflex, to the more complex, pragmatic and unpredictable. (This applies to external structures such as governmental arrangements, as well as to the form and content of political thinking.) The corollary of this principle is that when deconstruction takes place the result is always more or less a return to the primitive, even when it is ultimately in the service of progress. Thirdly, such deconstruction or regression tends to take place in the face of a trauma or threat, and involves a withdrawal from the unacceptable reality into a form of fantasy which may be inwardly reassuring, but can be self-destructive if it becomes the basis for action. The form of thinking in such a situation is primitive, magical and rigid, and the form of relationship is increasingly by identification. That is to say, one becomes increasingly a replica of the other, rather than a differentiating expression of a developing self.

### **Northern Ireland**

Let me now apply these three notions to our political situation in Northern Ireland, and then try to clarify from them some matters of more general application. Generally what the outside observer sees Northern Ireland as a place of conflict between Protestant Unionists and Catholic Nationalists. For the crucial question is, 'Which side is in the right, and should be

given support?' Some analysts will regard this as simplistic. They will point out that neither is right or wrong, good or bad. The problem is simply that the positions and aspirations of the two sides are intrinsically different, and that this is what leads to the conflict. If the first view suggests a solution in which one side wins at the expense of the other, the second proposes the achievement by moderates of a compromise which blurs the differences between the opponents. I would beg to differ from both of these views. My own observations lead me to believe that whilst each group will give an apparently different rationale for its position, the similarities between them far outweigh the differences. It is also my contention that each actually requires the other, as enemy, in order to give meaning to their own political position.

The caricature of Unionism in the person of the Rev Ian Paisley, however simplistic and unpleasant to many people in Northern Ireland, is nevertheless vitally relevant. He may not have been a fully accurate representation of Ulster Unionism in the late 1960's but the regressive effect of the violence of the 1970's ensured that by 1979, the vast majority of unionist people in Northern Ireland indicated in the first direct elections to the European Parliament that Ian Paisley did indeed stand for their views. His position is an avowedly fundamentalist one. He and his followers identify closely with the Protestant fundamentalism which developed in the United States of America in the mid-1800's. It saw itself as a return to the roots of Christian thinking, and like the Islamic fundamentalists of today was sometimes spoken of as radical. However its purpose is not to bring progress from the roots up. Rather it is committed to the destruction of all the more advanced and realistic thinking which has developed since earlier times. What is the process?

In a situation of trauma or threat, there is a falling back to more primitive, rigid, and reflex forms of thinking. Anxieties about the place of the United States in the world, the influx of Catholic immigrants at the time and other perceived threats led to such a falling back of thinking in Protestant America in the mid-1800's. It was characterized in Protestant fundamentalism by a belief that a literal interpretation of the Scriptures should not take into account any subsequent situation or development of understanding. This is even more than just a conservative attempt to keep things the same. The fundamentalist wish is to return from the threat of today to a mythical time when

things were good. People and processes are split into good or bad, and the responsibility of the good is not merely to stand for what is good. The bad must have goodness forced upon them, or may even need to be destroyed, for their own sake. The great danger for the fundamentalist is to be tempted into complex ways of thinking which question the rectitude of his own thinking and impute any element of virtue to the other side. Such thinking is experienced as a profound betrayal. Not only liberals then, but even moderates represent a danger. They must be condemned and gotten rid of, if at all possible. Even those who would appear to be partial allies are enemies. If your eye offends you then it is best to pluck it out. It is less dangerous to lose part of yourself, than to have within you a part that forces you to see anything that threatens the integrity of your ideas.

Until now I have not strayed from the conventional progressive position. 'Ulster Unionism is a primitive conservative reactionary force.' Now we make a departure, for it seems to me that the position of extreme Catholic Nationalism in Ireland is no different, despite its relative respectability amongst some intellectuals.

The central message of nationalism appears to differ radically from unionism. Instead of union with Imperial Britain, the aspiration is towards political union with the rest of Ireland. Instead of a profound hatred of both Catholicism and Communism, there is a fervent espousal of an identity which has powerful elements of both. (This combination, despite all its seeming contradictions, is also found in other places.) There is also a history of oppression, rather than benefit at the hands of the British Government and its surrogates, and an embracing of the republican constitutional model rather than that of a constitutional monarchy. If Unionism is both caricatured as, and explicated by, Ian Paisley, then Sinn Fein takes Irish Nationalism to its illogical conclusion.

Below the surface of the policy differences between the two creeds however, the principle is precisely the same. It might be stated as follows: 'The problems of the world are caused by people who, willfully or otherwise have moved away from The Truth. If we destroy all the illegitimate superstructure and return to the simple truth, all will be well. Those who do not hold to this are profoundly dangerous to themselves as well as to others. Whether willful or misguided they are equally dangerous, and none more so than those who pretend

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to be faithful but are in truth toying with heretical notions.' There are some other natural consequences of such a primitive mode of thinking. It conveys a sense of both omnipotent and persecutory. This could be expressed as follows: "What I am saying is so simply and obviously the truth that I must be close to, if not completely identified with, The Truth. This will of course not be acceptable to those who are bad. They will fight against it, but in the end I will be victorious." Such a feeling is strongly bolstered by opposition. Since it is under constant threat from reality it actually requires opposition for it to be maintained, and will go to great lengths to create opposition. If there is no opposition it becomes more difficult to maintain the fantasy of omnipotence, with its grandiose illusions. All fundamentalist groups are characterized by paranoia, grandiose theories, the creation of opposition outside, and the elimination of questioning or opposition inside.

The similarity between the structure and principles of extreme loyalist thinking and extreme republican thinking is as clear as their respective names are inappropriate. As they become more extreme, loyalists become less and less loyal to the Queen and her ministers. As republicans become more extreme, they become less and less concerned about the wishes of the people for a peaceful and stable life. All meaning and content is destroyed. This was expressed very clearly by a young boy who I heard speak on BBC Radio in Belfast a little time ago. He said: "I am a Protestant and I hate Taigs. We beat up Taigs because they are Taigs. If I was a Taig I would hate Protestants and beat them up. That's just the way it is." Defined in this way both of these positions are fundamentalist. The thinking is primitive, and divides people and processes into good and bad. The existence of the 'bad' is such a requirement that it must be created, in order to be available to be destroyed.

### **Liberal thinking**

The liberal mode of thinking is quite different. Liberals value human personality and rationality. We believe in individual rights and are committed to progress. More than all liberalism seeks to understand and to value difference. For us it is not a cause of bitter division, but a source of creative diversity. The fact that the future is totally unpredictable causes the fundamentalist to regress back to a reality distorting way of thinking where 'I am good, and you are bad'. While for emotional liberals reality may be

distorted to exclude the destructive and unpleasant aspects of humanity, for the liberal thinker unpredictability is a challenge to develop a complexity of thinking which enables him to make sense of and to react appropriately to the real world, as it actually is.

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***"The fact that the future is totally unpredictable causes the fundamentalist to regress back to a reality distorting way of thinking where 'I am good and you are bad'."***

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The superficial observer's picture of Northern Ireland with loyalists on the one side and republicans on the other, with various shades of moderation in between may well be a valid description of the gamut of policies espoused by the parties, but it is not an analytical or explanatory position. If we look at what is going on underneath the surface, the major difference is between those who take a complex, reality-orientated approach to political life, based on concern about people and their welfare, and those who take an approach in which the welfare of people can be set aside in favour of some 'higher ideal'. Seen in this way the crucial difference is not between extreme loyalism and physical force republicanism, but rather between both these fundamentalist traditions and various degrees of liberalism, or mature thinking.

It is interesting to note the respective attachments of Unionism to British Conservatism and Nationalism to British Socialism. As one moves to the extremes, we may also note the identification of loyalist fundamentalism with the United States in its most McCarthyesque excesses, and of physical force republicanism to the Eastern European pastiche of aggressive Marxism-Leninism and associated Catholic and Orthodox religious cultures. Is it possible to argue an analysis for the bipolar world which we inhabited until so lately? The analysis would say that while

the superficial political manifestations were different in the United States and the USSR for clear historical and economic reasons, each needed the other to be there and to be different on the surface, whilst in reality underneath they were being governed by the same principle. The long history of thinking and reflection in Europe, combined with the utter tragedy of two destructive wars, brought about in this part of the world, no revolution, but rather a slow steady evolution of more mature ways of living and working together. Such healthy growth, as I have previously noted always takes time. The gradual emergence of the European Union as a force with which to reckon, but based on much more liberal principles than either of the others created a major problem. The arrival of a third person into such a simplistic bipolar relationship always provokes major confusion. One outcome may be for both to try to form a special relationship with the newcomer in order to control them, but if this is not possible, efforts may well be made by both, together to get rid of the threat to their simple world. At this point the newcomer is vulnerable. The liberal way of thinking is a very advanced form of thinking which cannot be easily achieved, and provokes powerful envious wishes to destroy it. The primitive fundamentalism of which it is the radical antithesis, can use many forms of words, including even liberal themes to ensnare the unwary, and destroy the growth of thinking.

The oppression and fundamentalism of communism, which itself replaced the despotic czarist regime, had a seductive line in progressive thinking, and captivated most intellectuals for years, despite the disastrous reality of life under the communists. We must, I believe be very wary today for there is a danger that the words 'freedom' and 'people power' will usher in an era of nationalism, with accompanying racism, xenophobia and the oppression of minorities in the Balkans and Eastern Europe. Even more frightening, many of the southern republics like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kirghizia, may move to form, with Iran and the other Middle Eastern and North African states, a focus of militant Islamic fundamentalism, as horrifying as anything that has gone before. The reason that I am so cautious in my welcome for the changes which have taken place, is no relish for what has gone before, but I have lived my life in a province where the slogans of 'Peace with Justice', and 'Civil and Religious Liberty' have marched at the head of some extraordinarily oppressive and sectarian

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campaigns. Liberalism is something organic and growing. It comes through evolution not revolution. The deconstruction brought about when an old regime is torn down leaves open a space for growth, but it also releases powerful regressive forces which can only be restrained by international structural protections. The essential difference in politics is not the difference in surface policies. The difference between the dictatorship of the aristocracy, and the dictatorship of the proletariat, is only a difference in dictator. Both are fundamentalist and neither are liberal. The difference in underlying principles between liberalism and fundamentalism issues forth in some crucial differences in reactions to events and in political theory. As we have already noted, the unpredictability of the future causes the fundamentalist to regress back to a reality distorting way of thinking where 'I am good and you are bad.' For the liberal thinker, unpredictability is a challenge to develop a complexity of thinking which enables him to make sense of and to react appropriately to the real world.

In political theory this means that the fundamentalist of whatever tradition will insist on law and order for the purpose of protecting himself and controlling bad people who will attack him, from inside or outside. The liberal insists on a different kind of law and order so as to protect the vulnerable from exploitation, and to give all of us a firm structure in which we can act freely and grow with confidence. The fundamentalist wants a centralized political structure where someone acting as The Truth, and on behalf of all fundamentalists, will enforce 'good living'. The liberal will want a political structure which enables people to express a diversity of views, so enriching the community which can grow to a better way of living together.

### ***Problems for the Liberal***

Until now in what I have said, it is the fundamentalist who has had the problems. His problem has essentially been that the uncertainty and disappointing nature of reality have caused him to turn away to an absolutist fantasy, which he requires to impose on others. Now however that we begin to come upon certain serious problems for the liberal. Let me take two major dilemmas. Since in any society there will be those who take a fundamentalist position, a position which requires them not only to stand firm for their beliefs but to impose these beliefs on others, how can one give these people

the freedom to hold to their convictions and express them fully in action without the freedom of others being prejudiced?

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***“...for the liberal thinker, unpredictability is a challenge to develop a complexity of thinking which enables him to make sense of and to react appropriately to the real world.”***

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The case of Salman Rushdie raised this question in a very clear way for people in Britain, but the issue is a much wider one. Increasingly in Britain the authorities will be faced with the question of separate schooling, not just for religious groups, but for ethnic minorities. The purpose of this schooling will be to inculcate fundamentalist principles in children. Education can become a tool of primitive prejudice, rather than of liberal learning. This is an issue with which we are already familiar in Northern Ireland. There is the implementation of social policy in national legislation. The Republic of Ireland's position on issues like divorce, contraception and abortion is a clear example. In Northern Ireland one of the great dilemmas for liberals is that to return to Northern Ireland people, through their politicians, a greater element of control over their affairs, either at local government, or even at regional level, would almost inevitably result in the imposition of some very illiberal legislation and administration. It is especially significant to point out that the issues upon which both protestant and catholic fundamentalists can readily agree are the anti-liberal issues, such as abortion, homosexuality. This brings us to the second and related dilemma. When people come together in groups the result is more often than not regressive. People in groups are generally less moral, less tolerant, and less complex in their thinking. They are more compelled by gratification, scape-goating

and slogans than are individual people. Whilst the secret ballot helps to reduce this a little, the power of the political campaign, and the emotional sway of mass communication, tend to produce a relatively primitive response at elections where there is a simple one person one vote arrangement. It is a miserable truth for liberals that whilst they are the greatest supporters and exponents of democracy, democracy rarely rewards them. Even more frighteningly we must accept that some of the most terrible things have happened with popular support. The mass of people can vote for oppression of minorities, and if one is a member of a minority, that oppression can feel just unpleasant as if it was at the behest of a dictator.

### ***A way forward...***

If our model has enabled us to make some different sense of our observations about Northern Ireland, can it also help us to see a way forward? We may assume that the wisest way to act is to base our decisions on the underlying principles rather than on their surface manifestations. We should not listen too carefully to persuasion by unionists or nationalists of the historic justice of their particular case. Rather we should observe how closely and destructively they mirror each other. Secondly, solutions should not come out of a balancing act between two equally primitive creeds. We should be aiming to build a society that recognizes the higher values of people over ideals, appreciating that growth from a primitive and violent society to a healthy and peaceful one will always be vulnerable. Thirdly, unless the threat of trauma is removed, which led to the flight into fantasy, there will be no possibility of growth. Uncertainty is at the heart of this anxiety. Some degree of certainty must therefore be introduced into the system, even if it is not a totally welcome certainty. Indeed given the unrealistic beliefs of the combatants, they will not fully welcome any realistic certainty. Translated into the Northern Ireland context this would suggest that the Government must be prepared to make a clear decision about the structural future of Northern Ireland. This should not be based on satisfying, or compromising with, primitive ideals, but on what is right for all the people of Northern Ireland. It is likely that both groups will be resistant because of the regressive and seductive pull of violence, so an authoritative (but not authoritarian) confidence should be employed. Since the repressive tendencies of groups towards minorities must be

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acknowledged, the protection of all minorities must be achieved through devices that do not require to populist support. An entrenched Bill of Rights, appointed judges, and external (international) frameworks are among the possible mechanisms. These structures must however have popular input. Government only by the great and the good in Northern Ireland has led to a less responsible populace, and to incipient corruption in the establishment.

At an international level the same issues apply. The British Conservative Government dislikes European Union. It is a constant and painful reminder that the Empire is gone, and this is a severe narcissistic blow, for England maintains a false self-esteem based on the greatness of the past. All other European nations have suffered the trauma of two terrible wars, and appreciate more fully the futility of such views, but Britain, like the Ulster Unionists, holds to the myth of having won the war. However the greatest threat to

Europe may lie in any failure to recognize the dangers in trying to cope with the newly emerging Eastern States. If the liberal ideas we cherish are to survive and thrive and be available to spread, it may be necessary to provide a protective structure, and a firm external border may be necessary for a generation. Internal checks and balances against primitive attacks can be provided by the division of power that we are increasingly describing as subsidiarity, and by the external frameworks of conventions of human rights, and suitable enforcement agencies. At a wider level, there is a very great need, in this period of transition, for a stronger United Nations, to provide an international structure which can contain the frighteningly powerful forces unleashed by the break-up of the Soviet Union. These are stirring times. Change, and the threat of violence, have their excitements. But these are times for liberals to exercise to the limit their commitment to human values and the creative and

protective power of rationality. We should not worry that rarely does ours become a majority view. The experience of history suggests that when it does, the dynamic of liberal thinking, is received by the next generation as concrete wisdom. Thinking is then degraded to the learning of rules which bind men. The radicals of one generation become the conservatives of the next. Nor can we be satisfied to be excluded from power and to be mere chatters. Whether in Northern Ireland or further afield, liberal thought has a vital contribution to make. I would turn your minds again to the words of Albert McElroy. In 1973, in his last election campaign, he described the liberal conviction thus: "To be different is a fundamental human right, subject to one condition only. That is that you are prepared to grant to others the rights that you claim for yourself." The problem for liberals in every generation is how to fight to ensure that freedom and difference are protected.

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## Shinui's struggle against fundamentalism in Israel

We must separate religious issues from the running of government says **Avraham Poraz**, Minister of Interior of Israel

In Israel's recent elections in January 2003, Shinui had a strong showing at the polls, increasing its mandates from 6 to 15 Knesset seats. Shinui now has five ministers in the present government formed after the elections.

In addition to our struggle for a liberal economy and free enterprise unchained by bureaucratic impediments, Shinui has been waging a long-term struggle against religious fundamentalism in Israel.

Before the latest elections, Israel had two fundamentalist religious parties: Shas, with 17 Knesset seats, and United Torah Judaism with 5. The ideology shared by these parties was the ambition to transform Israel into a state run by *halakhah*, i.e., the traditional Jewish legal system.

The above parties struggled to ensure that the entire Israeli public, including those who were not religiously observant, would conduct their lives according to the precepts of the Jewish religion. Due

to the great influence of the religious parties in the past, there is no civil marriage or divorce, but only according to one's religion; there is no public bus



Minister Poraz, Budapest Congress 2002

transport on Saturdays, the Jewish day of rest; Israel's national carrier El-Al has no flights on the Sabbath; and there are two Chief Rabbis, who are part of the administration, with salaries funded by the State.

In all public institutions, including the

army, only kosher food is served, and yeshiva students, i.e., theological seminarians, are exempt from the mandatory military service incumbent upon all young men - and young women - in Israel.

Shinui, which defines itself as a liberal movement, has, in the past, been the place to turn to for many Israelis who had become fed up with the large parties - Labour and Likud - who were in constant collaboration with the fundamentalist religious parties.

The new government includes no fundamentalist religious parties: now there is a chance that some of the issues that Shinui has been fighting for will be solved in practice.

Shinui respects religion and religious people, but feels that we must separate religious issues from the running of government. We hope that with our present strength we will be able to accomplish the requisite changes.

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# A Roadmap for Mindanao

Philippine Congressman **Nereus Acosta** outlines a liberal solution for the Mindanao conflict

Our country never runs out of its share of rude ironies. It is a little known fact, for instance, that just about a year before the Philippine military launched new offensives against the MILF in the Buliok Complex in Cotabato last February, the first such overt military action in strife-torn Mindanao under the Arroyo administration, Malacañang issued Proclamation 161 “declaring February 28 to March 6, 2002 and every year, thereafter, as National Peace Consciousness Week.” This proclamation called for all sectors to “participate in relevant and meaningful activities... to instill greater consciousness and understanding among the Filipino people of the comprehensive peace process and the culture of peace agenda.”

What ‘relevant and meaningful activities’ suggested were not made clear, and the new well-meaning edict went the way of many other official exhortations. Such a proclamation ostensibly flies in the face of the new rounds of fighting between separatist Moslem groups and government troops now raging in Central Mindanao.

Just as President Gloria Arroyo unveiled a ten-point plan for Moslem Mindanao (called the Mindanao National Initiative or Mindanao Natin) in the First Muslim Summit, MILF secessionist rebels launched attacks in Lanao del Norte and staged an ambush in North Cotabato. The attacks left 16 people dead and at least 12 injured. The first initiative underscored in the Moslem Summit was ‘substantial implementation of the 1976 Tripoli Agreement’ but a day after the attacks the President indicated that the peace talks “may be doomed.”

All this, of course, is exacerbated by the fact that Davao became a victim to two dastardly terrorist bombings – in its airport and later one of its wharfs – in a span of a month. Reprisals were made, pinpointing MILF involvement, and allegations of torture of suspected perpetrators have surfaced. Two mosques were subsequently bombed.

This is incessant. The rampage, the strife, the decades-old conflict in Mindanao continues. It is a wound that festers in the national psyche. A promise of progress and peace turned sour too many times, and revived and appropriated time and again. Yet, it is

hardly ever understood. To many Filipinos, Mindanao remains a distant ‘other’, emblematic of things at once intriguing, unfamiliar or forbidding. For too long, government has given and has taken away. We’ve talked peace but conducted war. We speak of, if not pay lip-service to, harmony and co-existence but foster a tenacious ‘Islamaphobia.’ We hail Mindanao as a land of promise but the fruits of progress elude many: of the 25 provinces in Mindanao, 18 are classified as most deprived, with five of those, sadly, in the Autonomous Region of Moslem Mindanao. For Mindanao, there have been, indeed, too many harsh ironies.

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Is there, then, a way out of the destitution, inequality, dislocation and strife, to strike at the very roots of conflict, as it were? Will Mindanao ever know peace? If it cannot know peace, how can social capital be built or strengthened, and how can economic and social development be attained and sustained? If a Liberal were President, what would the general policy directions for Mindanao be?

### **Three steps towards peace**

Liberal, Social Democratic, Conservative or whatever vaguely-defined political persuasion, Mindanao needs to pursue, as any idealist would generically aver, dialogue (peaceful resolution of conflict), development (sustainable and just), and

democracy (of the more decentralized/developed type). Or stating it another way, Mindanao has to work untiringly for peace, prosperity and political development. These have been avowed aims for a bruited “land of promise.” For most of its history, however, these have been largely elusive. Perhaps it is time we seriously shifted from conventional approaches to these three thrusts, to a paradigm that looks into comprehensive, interrelated interventions in the economic, socio-cultural and political spheres.

Policy is a distillation of a paradigm, an overarching framework, and the paradigm we have employed in development planning for Mindanao has been largely directed from central authority, defined by those outside Mindanao for Mindanao. From the anti-Moro campaigns of the Spanish and American colonial orders, to the resettlement of insurgents and landless peasants from Luzon, to the waves of migration from the Visayas, the entry of huge plantations and multinational corporations, the resource-extractive industries of logging and mining, the conceptions of regional growth and autonomy, and now the deployment of American forces in Basilan and Sulu, the dominant framework has been to chart Mindanao’s destiny from national, ‘imperial’ Manila.

Foremost, we have to recognize that we cannot invalidate a history of victimization, and systematic oppression in Mindanao. It is easy for those in positions of strength and dominance to define the terms of peace and development and preach that we must move on without the baggage of assorted ‘victimologies.’ Mindanao’s just and lasting peace, however, can never be built on accumulated resentment and persistent exploitation. While we cannot be essentialists and turn the hands of history back, we have to appreciate a complex, tortuous history of the region and see how social unrest and attendant armed conflicts have hardly subsided over time. Root causes of inequity, poverty and distrust constitute fertile ground for such restiveness and rebellion among Moslem, Lumad and migrant or mixed communities. This is where the hard decisions of development, of assets reform and social

justice programs are needed. This may be construed as not entirely liberal in the neo-classical sense of the word, but the sheer forces of the free market are not, I argue, sufficient to alter the context of grossly lopsided development. Yes, we need to modernize agriculture, increase exports given Mindanao's vast potentials, and make land use more efficient, but social, economic and political reform is critical in addressing root causes of armed conflict.

Dialogue should be the hallmark of a policy for Mindanao, bringing the issues to a negotiating table despite the thankless and seemingly futile attempts to reach common ground. So-called hawks, who primarily favor aggressive military action against rebel groups, may dismiss this predisposition as 'bleeding heart liberal naivete.' In the face of fierce secessionist struggles – not to mention forms of Abu Sayyaf-type banditry, kidnapping, smuggling and a million or so loose firearms in the entire island – dogged pursuits of a peace process are derided as forms of appeasement and surrender. But there is still no substitute for peaceful negotiations. Every skirmish and violent encounter deepens the spiral of violence and bears heavy and long term social costs while every attempt at peace talks reduces the costs of war. Many studies have shown that non-government programs at the level of communities for social cohesion – such as inter-religious dialogue, women-centered Moslem-Christian livelihood activities – had high rates of success during times of peace negotiations and ceasefires notably leading to the historic 1996 Peace Agreement. When President Estrada launched his "all-out war" against the MILF in 1999 to 2000, such grassroots peace initiatives invariably faltered and fed into a national deep-seated prejudice towards Moslems and Islam.

Democracy in its fuller decentralized and devolved forms must be allowed to evolve and take root. The creation of an Autonomous Region of Moslem Mindanao has had its share of setbacks, fueling fear and mistrust among a number of Christian communities. The initiatives towards some form of Moslem self-rule, however, still augur well for the future of Mindanao's survival and stability. Some Mindanao leaders go as far as arguing for a clearer framework of economic and political autonomy by way of federalism, addressing the core issues of region-based development, integrating informal sectors of Mindanao's economy,

exploring the dormant possibilities of Mindanao's prospects as the country's food basket, and taking the avenues of mutual accommodation among the peoples of the island. A functional federal system needs to be seriously considered if only to ensure that Mindanao at long last can begin to revisit its own complex history and define its own future.

### **Strengthening social capital**

The strategies for Mindanao's development must, in keeping with the paradigm shift mentioned earlier, hew closely to what economist Fermin Adriano calls "an analysis of" social capital manifested in the combined dynamics of poverty/inequality, social exclusion and indignity." Poverty/inequality, social exclusion, indignity, poor governance, and lack of preparedness to the adverse consequences of market penetration, as Adriano would argue, are manifestations of weak social capital, a root cause of violent conflict. For much of government's work and presence in Mindanao, social capital – or the social and cultural structures and relations between and among peoples and groups – and its effects on social cohesion, peace and development has hardly been factored in. Underdevelopment is seen as mainly economic and thus, interventions take the form of programs and projects that are economic in nature. In rehabilitation and relief work in conflict areas, displaced families are made passive recipients of

assistance rather than active participants of a rebuilding process. In such a setup, how many future MILF soldiers will come from the ranks of today's displaced children and youth in the cramped refugee camps of Pikit, Cotabato and elsewhere?

In Mindanao, the index of social trust as a function of social capital is low. No amount of government programs and projects – from poverty alleviation schemes to the luring of foreign investments and new capital – will work if instruments for intervention will not include policy reforms, institutional reforms, reforms in the legal system, asset reform, support for civil society initiatives, innovative donor community schemes and effective private sector involvement and assistance. For the many that are marginalized in Mindanao, the threat of armed conflict becomes the ultimate recourse and articulating principle for preserving identity. The disenfranchised majority is losing their trust and confidence in government's capacity to respond to their demands. The social fabric of Mindanao has long been torn and tattered. We need to painstakingly mend that with dialogue, with fuller participatory democracy, and a with a development paradigm founded on the building of social capital. Only then can we perhaps be freed of the cruel ironies that have long beset Mindanao and its people.



*Dr Ronald Meinardus (left), Congressman Acosta (right)*

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# War without end in the Philippines

By **Dr Ronald Meinardus**, resident representative of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Manila, Philippines

Political violence and terrorism have once more become a depressing routine in Southern Philippines. More than eighty people, many of them civilians, have been killed through bombs and indiscriminate fighting since early March.

The politically motivated bloodshed in Mindanao, the nation's second biggest island, began in the early seventies. Following decades of systematic relocation of mostly Christian settlers from the Northern parts of the country to Mindanao, Muslims took up arms to fight for what they perceived as their historic homeland. Ever since, the demographic and political marginalization of the Moros, as the Philippine Muslims proudly call themselves, constitutes the root cause of hostilities in the South.

Ideologically, the call for a separate Muslim state in this predominantly Roman-Catholic country has been inspired by outside influences. In the fifties and sixties, the government in Manila sent a large number of Moro students to Arabic universities in the Middle East. Instead of becoming supporters of the government, however, many of the Muslim academics upon their return to the Philippines turned into militant agitators of Islamic separatism.

Often, the Philippine civil war is portrayed as a religious battle between a Christian majority and a Muslim minority. While there is some truth to this perception, the reality, as in most cases of civil strife, is more complex. In the past three decades, periods of intensive warfare have alternated with phases of political and diplomatic interaction. On more than one occasion, prominent Muslim leaders have crossed the lines to join forces with the Christian-dominated central government. On the other hand, Christian individuals and groups have taken sides with the Muslim rebels, even forging strategic alliances.

The search for a political settlement is complicated by divisions among the Muslim separatists. Nowadays the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is politically and militarily the most influential rebel organization. The MILF is a split-off-organization of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), which after years of arduous guerrilla warfare in the jungles of Mindanao opted for a political deal

with the Manila government. Today, senior members of the MNLF rebel movement hold office in Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), a semi-autonomous area covering some areas of the island. Whether the deal with the government has met the expectations of the Muslim population remains a highly contentious issue. Even the government in Manila doesn't dispute the figures indicating that the autonomous region belongs to the least developed in the nation.

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*“Often, the Philippine civil war is portrayed as a religious battle between a Christian majority and a Muslim minority. ...the reality, as in most cases of civil strife, is more complex.”*

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While over the years the central government has engaged in a series of negotiations with the MILF and the MNLF in an effort to reach a political settlement, official political talks with the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) are considered taboo. The bandits, as the ASG members are termed in Philippine media, have also aroused international attention, as some of their victims have been foreigners. The group's brutality and ruthlessness – on more than one occasion abductees were beheaded – have made them a key target of the government's anti-terrorist drive. Some weeks ago, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ordered the military to wipe out the Abu Sayyaf within three months. Meanwhile, the army has admitted that it is not in the position to meet the deadline: “There is this switching of membership”, Defense-Secretary Angelo Reyes recently explained. “Sometimes they are Abu Sayyaf, sometimes they are MILF, sometimes they are criminals – so it's difficult, it's not a homogenous group.”

Last year, military instructors from the United States assisted the Philippine

armed forces in their battle against the Abu Sayyaf. According to military sources, that program was so successful that a repetition is planned this year. So far, the joint-war games in Mindanao could not get off the ground, since Washington and Manila have not agreed on the exact extent by which the U.S.-soldiers should get involved. Earlier in the year, the Pentagon suggested that it would like the Americans to actually engage in military operations. Following an outcry in the Philippine public, Manila told the U.S. that the Philippine military was capable of doing the fighting by itself.

In spite of United States' military assistance, the government has failed to crush the armed rebellion in the South. In fact, rebel forces continue to control some areas. The erosion of government authority in parts of Mindanao and the impoverishment of large segments of the population are breeding-grounds for uncontrolled and politically motivated violence.

The recent escalation of violence has had major political implications. Practically all efforts to arrive at a negotiated settlement have stalled. Originally, the Philippine government and the MILF had planned to hold talks in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur in early May. But Manila cancelled its participation after the MILF accepted responsibility for an armed attack on the predominantly Christian City of Siocon in Western Mindanao that left 22 dead and many others wounded. “The conflict has developed into a war in which civilians are no longer peripheral but central victims”, noted a commentator in a Manila newspaper.

In an atmosphere of growing apprehension, demands for branding the MILF a “terrorist organization” are becoming louder day by day. The U.S. government, who has blacklisted the Abu Sayyaf and the Communist Party of the Philippines as “terrorist organizations” last year, is openly advocating to include the MILF in its incriminating list. On the other hand, more cautious Filipinos warn that such a measure would effectively block future negotiations. With every new terrorist attack, the advocates of a hard-fisted policy in the Philippines are gaining ground. These are not good prospects for peace in Southern Philippines.

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# Fundamentalism in India

India could be in a state of conflict for many years says **Lord Dholakia**, leader of the Liberal Democrats, UK



Lord Dholakia

The term “fundamentalism” was first used with regard to a group of US Protestant churches that arose in the United States of America in the 1920s. In modern usage the term is used for all religious movements that seek a return to the ‘fundamentals’ of their religion and to any movement seeking political power for the purpose of governing according to religious values, as a consequence, some religious movements with political implications are described as fundamentalist movements. Fundamentalists in various traditions teach that there was an ideal world and they endeavour to recreate that idyll. Fundamentalism is often closely aligned with nationalism and popular reaction against what are felt to be foreign cultural and religious traditions.

In the Indian subcontinent, fundamentalism has arisen in the chronic national and ethnic conflicts, which have marred the country’s history. The rise of fundamentalist forces in other countries has certainly helped revivalists in India gain popular support in the 1980s. Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan and the Middle East made a definite impression on Indian Muslim leaders, and this in turn further strengthened the morale of religious revivalists. Islamic fundamentalism began in about the 12<sup>th</sup> century when the ultraconservative interpretations of the Koran triumphed over more moderate interpretations. Most of the world’s religions have a fundamentalist element but Islamic fundamentalism is the most pronounced and widespread.

When India gained independence in 1947 from the British, it was decided to create a secular democratic state in order to create a state free from the turmoil of caste and religious violence, however this aspiration has long been undermined by sectarian rivalries. Eighty percent of the population in India is Hindu as a result the Islamic minority have often felt marginalized, giving rise to the Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Jamaati-Islami.

However, despite the fact that Hindus have long been the majority community ruled by minority rulers since the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D, there has not been a major uprising in any part of the subcontinent against any of the foreign rulers. Islam has always been considered a threat to the complacency of Hinduism. It threatens Hindus spiritually, socially and ultimately politically as well as in terms of classical Hindu values of tolerance, freedom of expression and individualism.

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*“Despite the secular government, politics and religion are very much intertwined in India particularly with the existence of political parties that appeal to particular religions.”*

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## **Development of Hindu Nationalism**

The evolution of Hindu Nationalism is not very old, despite forceful conversions to Islam, imposed on the Hindus during the

reign of Mughals in general and Aurangzeb in particular, only small numbers of groups such as the Sikhs rebelled against the harsh treatment. When the Indian National Congress was put in place, aspirations for self-rule and independence were channelled along a non-violent path. Under Gandhi’s leadership the agenda was set for political goals to be achieved by non-violent means.

The arrival of the Muslim League on the political stage, advocating a separate homeland for the Muslim Indians awakened the nationalistic cause in the Hindu population and they rose up against the idea. The events leading up to the partition of the Indian subcontinent after independence such as the Hindu-Muslim riots and the trans-border movement that followed the assassination of Gandhi by a Hindu fundamentalist were the catalysts for a definitive Hindu nationalist movement.

Although Hindu nationalist organisations were active in some parts of India since independence, their growth and rising popularity has been closely linked to the rise and increased activities of Islamic fundamentalists and vice versa. Until the mid 1980s, political parties in India moderated the impact of Hinduism on politics to try to maintain a secular democracy. However since the late 1980s, there has been increasing popular support for Hindu nationalist parties among the people of India.

The rise of Hindu Nationalism along with Islamic Fundamentalism means that India could be in a state of conflict for many years. Despite the secular government, politics and religion are very much intertwined in India particularly with the existence of political parties that appeal to particular religions. The decision to make India a secular state was an attempt to create a communal identity, a sense of being an Indian, whatever a citizen’s religion.

Fundamentalism has threatened the stability of many countries in South Asia, it has created intolerance towards minorities within populations thus creating violence and political turmoil. The causes of religious fundamentalism should be recognised and addressed to ensure peace in India.

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# Forms of Fundamentalism

Professor **Rajiva Wijesinha**, leader of the Sri Lankan Liberal Party

Michael Ondaatje has a wonderful poem about watching old movies with his son, in which despite the generation gap and years of what seems alienation, both can share a sense of triumph at the end of 'The Prisoner of Zenda'. I suspect George Bush Jr used to watch films like that in his youth, and perhaps, now that he has overcome Saddam Hussein, he feels a sense of kinship with his old father who somehow failed to finish that little problem off when he had the opportunity ten years ago.

Ten years ago I have to admit I was rather sorry the United Nations did not finish the job, and ensure a change of regime. Saddam Hussein's rule was really so awful, that at first I had been totally bemused that the Americans were backing him so wholeheartedly against the Iranians. A glimmer of understanding reached me when, teaching on the Semester at Sea programme, I heard the dogmatic distinction the Americans made in those days between Sunni and Shia Islam. The Shias were emotional and violent and fundamentalists, otherwise perfectly intelligent American professors would pronounce, whereas the Sunnis were moderate and decent. I mentioned the oppressiveness of Saddam Hussein's regime and was met with blank bemusement.

But in those days Sunni fundamentalism was a tool to be used. Jolly chaps calling themselves the Taleban were attacking the evil empire of the day, with American money and guns. There could certainly be no harm in slipping young Mr Hussein a few of these if he could keep the dreaded Ayatollah at bay. Indeed, he was so loveable that it seems the American ambassador actually allowed him to think he might take over Kuwait with impunity.

The lady may have thought Kuwait would make a nice bulwark against Iran, but fortunately George Bush senior was not so silly. But after Kuwait was regained, the United States decided to let Saddam carry on, on what grounds we will never know. United States foreign policy is such a mixture of devious subtlety and silly ignorance that the reason could be anything from diffidence about what others thought to conviction that he could be made use of later.

And so too we shall never really know

why he had to be got rid of now. Association with the Taleban is dubious, given that Saddam was never a religious fundamentalist even though, by dint of American opposition, he has turned into an icon for Muslims all over the world. The weapons of mass destruction seem to have vanished, both in themselves and as excuse, with the stress now on the need for regime change. Rather, it would seem that all these together, with the excuse for aggression that September 11th provided, gave George Bush and the cold warriors who surround him a reason for flexing American muscle.

Unfortunately, as C S Lewis showed us, once such infernal machines start to operate, they do not stop, until they have destroyed the putative others as well as those who set them going. Certainly the noises that have begun to emerge about Syria - rather than the other two nations the silly man first identified, in possibly his final tribute to his father, as belonging to the axis of evil, North Korea and Iran - suggest a different sort of agenda. Once again we are treated to the idea of chemical weapons, plus providing refuge to Mr Hussein. More tellingly, we are reminded of support to terrorists, not now the egregious Mr bin Laden, but rather the Palestinians who are opposed to Mr Arafat's attempts at accommodation with the less extreme Israelis. It has been argued indeed that what Mr Bush is at is fulfillment, not of the Israeli agenda, but that of the more extreme Israeli fundamentalists, who are inspired less by Judaism than by the apocryphal thunderings of the American religious right. This is a far cry indeed from the secular Jewish movements that wanted to establish a country in which Jews would not be persecuted. Now however, with some help from Christians who find the tolerance of the New Testament abhorrent, extremist Israeli politicians seem determined to hold on to what they see as the Promised Land, the whole Promised Land, and nobody else anywhere on the Promised Land.

For this agenda Syria and Iraq seemed problematic in a way that the more compliant kingdoms, Saudi Arabia and Jordan, never were. In Egypt, without violence, given Sadat's pragmatism when it lost its influence over the Arab world, regime change was accomplished, and

peace reigns. If more complaisant rulers were installed in Iraq and Syria too, the Palestinians could easily be reduced to a postage stamp of two, with water courtesy of that nice Mr Netanyahu, who is certain to inherit the throne of David.

Underlying all this, I fear, is a fundamentalism that is as pernicious as that which Mr Bush thinks he needs to combat when it is exhibited by Muslims. It is the view that one's own perceptions are right, and god given. Religion, for such people, is not an individual matter, it is about the position the divine has decreed, for oneself and all the faithful, in opposition to all those outside the pale.

Such conviction may seem admirable in the face of persecution. One can even have some regard for it in the face of opposition, though I would be careful even then, because it could lead to justification of any form of resistance, ie the terrorism that ought not to be countenanced. But when it is evinced by those who are all powerful, it degenerates into simple bullying. I don't suppose George Bush understands this. But certainly those around him see nothing wrong in turning him into the sort of extremist they condemn. His approach now, flitting as it does from one justification to another, is not very different from Saddam Hussein's attitude to the Kurds or the Marsh Arabs, beings beneath him and his tribe in the pecking order decreed by fate. It is not very different either from the destruction by the Taleban of the Bamiyan Buddhas, or their restrictions on women.

What is so infinitely sad is that, had a modicum of the resources wasted now in Iraq been used to rebuild Afghanistan, the social changes needed to bring about the sort of regime change George Bush wants could have commenced. What the contemporary world needs after all is infrastructure and education, especially for women, and skills that would create opportunities that could be made widely available. This in turn would foster the openness and toleration that would restrict authoritarianism and alienation. Instead, as can be seen from the initial chaos in Iraq, and the public response to it, George Bush has perpetuated bitterness and divisions. There can be no better way of ensuring that the 21st century will evince even more restrictive fundamentalisms than the century that preceded it.

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# A New Chance for Germany and Europe

Washington must recognise its mistake to sideline NATO says **Genscher**, former Foreign Minister of Germany

The government's statement on foreign policy gave the coalition and the opposition an opportunity to see where Germany and Europe stand in this important and dramatic stage of European as well as international politics. It concerns the framework of a new world order, Germany's role in Europe, Europe's role in this new world order and, no less important, the relationship of Europe and the USA. It was likewise urgent to concentrate again on the Franco-German partnership. Berlin's efforts for a rapprochement with London are commendable, as are PM Tony Blair's most recent activities for strengthening the UN.

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*“...forge a new course of action for Europe regarding foreign policy and security - not as a counterweight to the USA, but as an equal.”*

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The disappointment in Paris and Berlin over the stance of several of the new EU member countries on the Iraq question should be sufficient cause to integrate these countries at once into the formation of opinion where EU foreign policy is concerned. It is in any case necessary to take a lesson from Europe's dilemma preceding the Iraq war and forge a new course of action for Europe regarding foreign policy and security – not as a counterweight to the USA, but as an equal. This also means increasing Europe's military capability.

This initiative of four will benefit

Europe only if it is truly open to all. The Bundestag should clarify the issue of more funds for the German armed forces which, as it did in Afghanistan, must shoulder increasingly heavier tasks in the war against terror. The serious miscalculation of the Bush administration of not seeing Europe as a factor in global politics in its new national security strategy calls for Europe to put all its weight behind the transatlantic debate. The new world order must be based on cooperation and equality.

A close cooperation with Russia, China, India and Japan, as well as regional amalgamation, are both necessary and good. They cannot, however, replace the European-American partnership, a fact which ought to be taken into consideration both in Europe and in Washington. Berlin must realise that the German-American relationship is the backbone of the transatlantic relationship. Washington must recognise that it is a mistake to sideline NATO, as it has been doing since September 2001, or even question it. On the contrary, the transatlantic foreign and security policy debate must return to NATO; and, as in the past, be conducted between equals.

NATO, the OSCE and the EU are indispensable for European, transatlantic and global stability. It remains to be seen if foreign minister Powell's visit to NATO and the EU was a step in this direction. Europe must help the United Nations regain its proper right. To be sure, its moral authority is increasing each day. Dead children, women and men in Iraq make it clear what a mistake it was to deny UN inspector Blix an extension of the deadline for the inspections. The UN charter does forbid declaring war without authorisation from the Security Council. A stable world order can only rest on rule by law, not rule by force. The acid test will be whether the fate of post-war Iraq will be truly determined by the UN, and not merely as a cooperation partner or services provider. With the success of the European unification, Europe can set a good example for a world order which the Third World will also see as just.

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*“ A stable world order can only rest on rule by law, not rule by force.”*

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Solidarity and equal rights for the Third World are important in the fight against terrorism. After some irritation and haziness (on more sides than one), German foreign policy now has a new chance to perceive its role in strengthening Europe, to redouble its efforts in seeking improvement of the transatlantic relationship, and to strengthen the UN.

*(Die Liberale Depesche)*



*Hans-Dietrich Genscher*

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# Supranationality is the way forward

Interview by Paul Polgar with **Graham Watson** MEP, leader of the liberal group in the European Parliament

As the leader of the Liberal group, ELDR, in the European Parliament, Graham Watson holds an important position in the EU and its policy formation. The following interview focuses on Mr. Watson's views on the role of supranational action, the idea of an EU community working together to assist developing countries, as well as a discussion on the Iraqi war and its implications for both the EU and the world.

As Graham Watson moves closer to his second year as leader of ELDR in the EP, he believes that issues of supranational action will play an important role in the EU's policy making on the global level. "It is clear that national sovereignty is a thing of the past. We have to apply supranational action to solve the problems of the world" Watson said.

According to Watson, the problems that plague third world countries in particular, such as sustenance, housing, climate change, and organized crime need to be attacked through supranational means. "Responsible nations need to come together to find solutions to the problems that countries which are in need face today," he said. Watson points to the European Union's Euro-Mediterranean dialogue as a good starting point and a guide for the future of any supranational strategic formations.

The Euro-Mediterranean dialogue, including countries of northern Africa and the Middle East, stressed human rights and free trade as well as the strengthening of an intercultural communication between the countries of the Mediterranean when it was first introduced in April of 1995. It continues to operate under these goals although the overall results of its implementation remain uncertain. Watson believes the program has been a positive step in the right direction. "The European Parliament would like to see the idea of supranational action spread because it can be successful," he said.

One of the areas of the world that falls under Watson's criteria for supranational action is Africa. As the continent of Africa seeks to redevelop under a liberal approach with programs such as NEPAD, it will inevitably need

international support in order to achieve its goals. Watson sees the first step in any approach toward assisting Africa as putting more emphasis on the continent and its issues. He says that there is a view in the EP that Europe needs to pay more attention to Africa and he agrees wholeheartedly.

Watson believes the first step towards mending this relationship and achieving a successful redevelopment of Africa is creating an effective dialogue between



Graham Watson MEP

the groups of the continent. "Any successful redevelopment plan needs to start with a sitting down session between the world's three monotheistic religions in order to come to a better understanding and acceptance between the different viewpoints. While the tectonic plates of Islam, Judaism and Christianity rub up against each other, sparks will continue to fly."

However, as the EU looks towards accelerating the redevelopment plan in Africa, there are certain factors that may detract from the effectiveness of its assistance. Watson points to the colonial history between Europe and the Africa as one of these factors. Moreover, "There is a European tendency to think of Africa as Europe's backyard as the US thinks of Latin America as such." The paradox according to Watson is in the nature of Europe's

relationship with Africa. "Although much of our development policy is aimed at Africa there is a feeling that Europe has failed to create a mature relationship perhaps in part due to our history with the continent," he said.

As the ELDR looks for ways to implement supranational action on a larger global scale, the Iraqi conflict creates a contentious form of this approach on the world stage. Watson regrets the outbreak of the war in Iraq and adheres to the stance of the Liberal Democrats (UK) who believe the war would only have been justified as a last resort if weapons inspections had failed. However, Watson does not think that fixating on the failed diplomacy and controversy within the UN is effective now that the war has started. "The reality is that the war is on and we hope it will be short," he said. He wants the UN to take on the leading role in providing humanitarian aid to the Iraqi civilians both during the conflict and in post-war Iraq. Although the US's hard line stance and ultimate invasion of Iraq has caused a large amount of worldwide resentment towards the US, Watson cautions that these apparent rifts should not be over emphasized. "It is true that the Anglo-Saxon world is seen as warlike and aggressive and that this has caused division in the EU and world relations overall. However, the problem shouldn't be exaggerated because we are dealing with a right wing government in the US.

Watson believes that if Al Gore had won the 2000 US presidential election things "would have been clearly different", hinting that the election of George W. Bush was somewhat of an unfortunate aberration. The election of George W. Bush and his pledge to fight religious fanaticism worldwide has also pointed out a huge contradiction in his administration's choice to go to war with Iraq, according to Watson. "The irony of the situation is that the US is supposed to be fighting religious fanaticism even though they are at war with a secular state and are beginning to look more and more like the religious fanatics that they are supposed to be fighting against."

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# What is the commitment of liberals when in government?

Nicaragua's Vice President José Rizo Castellón at the Liberal Forum "Political Parties in Democracy" in Mexico City

I wish to thank the organisers of this event for their kindness in inviting me to this important forum. As Vice President of Liberal International, I feel pleased to see that in Latin America liberal ideas have become stronger, and are firmly taking root in each one of our countries.

I must confess that I also feel very happy to come back to Mexico, a country that has long conjured up feelings of affection and respect in me.

I accepted the idea of coming to take part in this Liberal International Forum, knowing that I must only deal with one question which I will attempt to answer, as best I can, based on my own experience. The question I must answer is: What is the commitment of the liberals when we are in government?

I have only been Vice President of Nicaragua for 15 months, but I believe that, unless I am much mistaken, I at least have an approach to this question. As liberals we must commit ourselves to doing three things 1) We must bring the government closer to the population, with no go-betweens; 2) We must spread the faith in liberal democracy in spite of the slowness of the market mechanisms to respond to people's demands; 3) We must enable the spreading of liberal values to take place through education in schools.

## Introduction

Pablo Neruda once wrote, "The fate of a Latin American writer is to carry the gravestone of his country". If we extend that pessimism to the politician, I do not believe that as the leaders of our nations we should become their gravediggers. I am very optimistic about the future of our countries.

There is much we can do, and it is true that we have already done quite a lot: with the exception of one sister nation, all of the countries in this hemisphere have a recognised democratic system or are in a period of transition towards democracy; there are no armed conflicts in the region; per capita income in the majority of our

countries is now above \$ 2,000 dollars, and in every one of our nations, civilian governments have come into power without disorder or disturbances or any military intervention. These institutional



Vice President José Rizo Castellón

advances are worthy of praise.

However, there is much more to be done to make the most of our time and sort out our circumstances from the position we hold now.

Not long ago I reread the Mexican humanist and politologist Enrique Krauze, who when reflecting on the role played by liberal thinkers in these times of crisis pronounced: "Between the brute force of the right and the ideological sword of the left the humanist liberal has become more and more of a loner"<sup>1</sup>.

And that thought has made me realise that in events such as those of today there are more than a few loners. And that the questions we must ask ourselves about our role, our ideology and our democracy must never cease, until maximum development and welfare is achieved for our people.

I am not thinking about Utopia, but about better prospects. I am not thinking about miracles, but about good and achievable realities. Or as Carlos Fuentes says, "...I am talking about the possibility of making a nation that will never be completely fair, but in which at least the expectations, the possibilities of improvement of individuals and classes, are truly opened up."<sup>2</sup>.

I have seen in Central America the triumph of democratic ideas, the triumph of liberal values and ideals, and how the people (our people!) on not seeing the market act quickly in favour of the most vulnerable, soon become disappointed with the system and come to the

conclusion that liberal democracy is a fraud. Then we see how demagogic and populist leaders emerge, who in the face of the desperation of the people, convince them to throw themselves into their arms.

I fervently believe that democracy should not create discontent, when it has hardly begun to take root. We would have much to be sorry for if we went back to the lost decade – as we call the 80's in Central America - in which Marxist forces held a sword over our fragile democracies, and destabilised the region

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with proclamations of a just, messianic and infallible socialism. Those times should not return, but only if the liberals take appropriate and adequate measures will we be able to be sure that democracy will settle down solidly and that there will be hope for all our people.

### **Governing the population without go-betweens**

From my own experience I have learned that the perception that people have of the governments in our countries is that, once the public authorities have been elected, they isolate and distance themselves from those who have elected them. In other words, democracy is taken away from the people.

This reminds me that to perhaps we have forgotten to some extent the liberal principle which establishes that the authorities must have the consensus of those who are governed in everything they do, and that public officials are there to represent them, not to drive them away.

It is therefore worth asking oneself: Could the distancing between the authorities and their electors have any positive effects?

No. Never. My experience has led me to leave my offices for some time each week, to go where the people are, to get closer to the people, feel them and listen to them. I do this because there is in principle a certain amount of psychological conditioning in this action: the people feel good, just being listened to. Of course, one should also visit the small, rural and distant towns to help to solve problems.

On the other hand, when I travel I always try to ensure that my government secretaries and ministers accompany me so that they can respond 'in situ' to the requests of the people (or at least have them explain what is happening, how something can be solved, or why it has not been possible to solve something).

Another reason why public officials should bring the government and the population closer is because if they do not, then we are taking the "demo" from the word democracy, and that being the case, it becomes unnatural.

We all know that governments, as such, are passing and periodic institutions, which people commit and marry themselves to. The governments in this marriage must therefore be and appear to be loyal, nearby, real and reachable.

However, if one party distances himself from the other, the most likely outcome is a divorce, or a separation with similar results.

### **Introduce good policies**

We have to introduce good policies so that the market works and the people do not lose hope if the market does not respond to their expectations.

It is the duty of liberal leaders in government to constantly strengthen the faith that people have in democracy. Because when the population see that the market is not responding to them or their expectations, they can easily become frustrated with the market and with the system.

In his multidimensional book *'Itineraries'* Octavio Paz said that: "The defeated ideologies return to our debating tables under the disguise of ecology"<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, that speech plagues this liberalism of ours which has allowed markets to grow, borders to be opened, tariffs to fall and free trade treaties to contribute to the boost in development and human welfare for all.

These criticisms have their origin in the neo-Marxists who today wear disguises because they feel ashamed and because the wall that had been built "so strong, prophetic and indestructible" has now almost fallen down on them because they do not know, being naked, how to protect themselves or what mask to put on.

I am sorry that some of the countries that have barely come out of left-wing dictatorships, as is the case of the ex-socialist block countries, have now fallen into discontent, because the market has not been agile enough to share out gains for all, in the shortest time possible. Thus the great division has arisen. To our shame, the "two nations" the British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli spoke about, in the middle of the nineteenth century, have come about as a way of referring to the differences between two classes who are distant and set against each other.

I am not an economist, nor anything comparable, but I believe that there is a similarity to Simón Kuznets curve. It establishes that when countries start to develop and grow economically, this very process hits the most vulnerable groups. This causes discouragement among many and is what is happening with the economies of our nations. The processes themselves may be slow and the people soon become discouraged with the values and promises of liberal democracy. In this way, the populist speeches of the left quickly have an effect.

In the face of these real, historical and proven circumstances, one has to wonder: What should we do?

First of all, when democracy legislates, it gives rights to everyone, while the market

simultaneously creates wealth, but only for a few. But we should not blame the economists for this. The guilt lies with those of us who have not pushed the market enough for it to begin to generate, and therefore produce jobs, wealth, increased private investment, taxes, etc., because we have obstructed the economy itself. A market fits in with and is complemented by the liberal system if the system is open, equitable and fair. That is to say, if you take away the obstacles, you are not showing favouritism towards anyone and you are acting honestly and transparently.

But when the political system starts to work with bribes, privileges and favouritism, this creates unfair competition which is likely to discourage private businessmen who expect governments to refrain from intervening. Governments are not there to compete with the businessmen either. Governments are there to ensure that everything is fluid in the market—a sphere that politicians do not usually tend to know very well. Put in another way, conflicts of interest damage the smooth running of the market.

Nonetheless, why say on the other hand, that the market is failing pGI: the ambition of the businessmen?

We cannot demonise the market by calling it inhumane, degrading or greedy. Both politics and the market are human inventions. So which has the greater responsibility? Or is it that there are some countries that learnt to stimulate the market and we should be happy just knowing that the art of good 'business', is for the Anglo-Saxon and Asian world?

As Octavio Paz himself says, already mentioned above, in his *"Itineraries"*:

*"The market is necessary; it is the heart of economic activity and is one of the engines of history. The exchange of things and products is a powerful joining link between men. It has been the creator of culture and the vehicle for ideas, men and civilisations. History is universal thanks to, among other things, commercial exchange"*<sup>4</sup>.

It is the abuse of political power that we should be afraid of. The market is made to create wealth. The task of the legislator, the politician, the good liberal, is to make sure that this wealth has the highest number of incentives so that jobs are multiplied, taxes are generated, and that it creates greater investment. Wealth generation is not an atrocious act. It is the best method to destroy the scourge of poverty.

If the market, which is a mechanism driven by liberal thinkers such as Smith, Keynes, Friedman and Becker, among others, can respond quickly to the

demands of those who are anxious to escape from poverty, this will be when politics has done the right thing, and as politicians we will have done our duty. Only in this way will the market work well and for all. To do this, clear, predictable and equitable rules are required. Only then will there be greater welfare for all.

Liberal values should be taught from school onwards to prevent people from being tempted by the populist radical left.

One of the ironies of modern democracy is that when the liberals come into power, we assume that our values - freedom, tolerance, democracy, government of the majority, government of the minorities - are going to be automatically accepted by the population.

And this has led people to wrongly believe that liberalism is a capitalist doctrine. And that is not the case; liberalism is a doctrine that makes the middle class grow. And the middle class is the great base and centre of all social democracies. Without the middle class there is no horizontal economic development nor social welfare.

and cannot be limited to simple or crude propaganda. Democracy is not just a periodic turnout at the ballot boxes.

Student governments offer a great opportunity for children and young people to live democracy, feel it, experience it and become familiar with it. And later, when they are citizens exercising their political rights, they put it into practice knowing that they have learnt and lived it at a time of life when knowledge, learning and skills best stay with us.

The student governments are a miniature reflection of what will later be the global and complete world of politics. We are talking about educating not to be the government but to provide a broad education for the whole of political life. The philosopher Hannah Arendt broadens this vision for us when she says:

*"As well as being coactive, political life has heroic, expressive and inspiring dimensions and is not just related to the maintenance of order, but also to action, character development, freedom and public welfare, the collective statement of human dignity and the humanisation of the world"*<sup>15</sup>.

the hands of one or a few and that reason is founded on the consent of the rest, is when democracy becomes a habit, a custom. When children learn that "respect for others rights is peace", is when democracy becomes a tradition and takes root as an institution. Then and only then can we be sure that our liberal creed is going to be spread healthily and can we be surer that the vulnerable groups are going to trust in the "invisible hand of democracy" to bring bread to their table, to guarantee them safety and to give them all equal opportunities.

As liberals we have the responsibility of strengthening our principles, our values and also of spreading them, both among ourselves and among those who today may think differently from us. The responsibility of liberals is to ensure that there is more democracy for all without risks, bread without subjugation and freedom without hunger, in our nations' melting pot of diverse blood and cultures.

I share the vision of the great economist Milton Friedman who said:

*"We have to understand that the wrong means may distort good aims," that trust in the freedom of individuals so that they may control their own lives in accordance with their own values, constitutes the safest path towards reaching the full potential of a great society"*<sup>16</sup>

To refute the position of Enrique Krautze that I quoted at the beginning, we cannot live between the brute force of the right and the fighting sword of the left. There should not be a humanist liberal individual there in the middle, a loner. There should be a crowd there; Latin America should be there, today and for a long time to come.

1 "People and Ideas" by Enrique Krautze; publisher "Vuelta, 1989; page 33

2 "Carlos Fuentes: Territories of Time"; Economic Culture Fund: compilation by Jorge F. Hernández; 1999; page 272.

3 "Itineraries" by Octavio paz; Economic Culture Fund 1998; page 154.

4 "Itineraries" by Octavio Paz; pages; Economic Culture Fund; 1988 edition. Pages 121, 122.

5 "Contemporary Political Thinkers": published by Bhikhu Parekh; Alianza Universidad, 1982; taken from the Essay "Hannah Arendt"; page 33

6 "Freedom to Choose" by Milton Friedman; Published by Grijalbo; 1980; page 427



Vice President Rizo Castellón (left), Paraguayan Governor Sanneman, Cambodian opposition leader Sam Rainsy (right), Authoritarian Seminar, Budapest, March 2002

In view of this, the liberal governments need to become well established this means making sure that these values last. And for democracies and liberal ideology to last, the precepts I have already mentioned must be widely spread early on: the people have to be educated about them.

Education in democracy from school - be it through civic programmes or student government programmes - makes that work last. Democracy is also experience

When children in their first few years at primary school feel and experience what it means to tolerate others; when children learn to make use of the resources and procedures established by the law; when children learn that there are institutions through which citizens solve their problems; when children learn to debate and to question ideas whilst showing respect towards others and accepting the will of the majority; when children learn that there cannot be too much power in

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# Analysis of Conservative, Socialist and Liberal Paradigms

Dr. Werner Hoyer MP, President of the ELDR at the Conference of Asian Liberals and Democrats in Sri Lanka

When the organisers of this high-level conference of Asian Liberals and Democrats asked me to compare and analyse socialist, conservative and liberal “paradigms”, I asked myself why they should do so. After all, I’m not an academic and I don’t pretend to be a political philosopher. I’m a politician and my metier is “practical politics.” But then I began to think a little further and began to realise that it was not such a bad idea after all. Why?

## **The importance of identifying and belonging**

First, the terms “conservative”, “liberal” and “socialist” are used in political debate. They are labels indicating sets of ideas and convictions. A kind of shorthand, as it was. The label identifies you or your political opponents as part of a community of like-minded people. The label is likely to trigger emotion. An interesting point in this respect: one of the labels most likely to elicit a negative response and negative emotion today is the label “neo-liberal.”

Second, and perhaps more important, the label has a content. I consider myself to be a liberal and belong to a liberal party. When I say I’m a liberal, I have an idea of what it means to be a liberal. I subscribe to certain values that are important for me. I strive for certain objectives in accordance with these values.

Friends and colleagues of mine do likewise and many belong to other parties. There are important reasons for identifying oneself with a political family. Sometimes the reason is environment – family, friends, social conditions you experienced as a child or young person. Often it is an elemental or pivotal experience – something that affects everything you do. A political prisoner, for instance, is likely to value “liberty” much more highly than a civil servant working for an autocratic regime. Sometimes – I would say more rarely – it is the result of debate and intellectual persuasion. You are not likely to become a socialist just because you have read and discussed The Communist Manifesto or Eduard Bernstein’s

book, *Evolutionary Socialism*.

Why is a friend of mine a socialist or conservative rather than a liberal? The reasons must be important ones and there must be considerable differences between things that are important for my conservative and socialist friends and things that are important for me.

The history of conflicts in Europe has had a profound influence on my thinking. Wars and violence as a method of resolving political disputes are plainly unacceptable. If there are differences, conflicts or disputes, between countries or within countries, there are humane and civilised ways of dealing with them: accept differences, don’t exaggerate their importance, listen, discuss, find if there are

different and have different interests

- 2) mutual respect
- 3) a belief that individuals are capable of solving their problems, given the right conditions
- 4) commitment to peace and conflict resolution through peaceful means and
- 5) tolerance (or, to use John Locke’s term, toleration).

Because these things are so important for me, I consider myself to be a liberal. And if you look at the liberal value system, you will find “diversity”, “belief in the individual” and “tolerance” occupy central places therein. We probably all have things we feel very strongly about and these will affect the fundamental choices



Werner Hoyer MP, President of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party

interests you share, try to come up with working solutions with which everyone involved can identify. It is a difficult process, but a very worthwhile one.

What is needed if this is the perspective you are striving for?

- 1) Acceptance that individuals are

we make in politics.

Of course, I accept that there are other purely utilitarian reasons for choosing to belong to a political family or a political party. Expediency is one of them. You can join in sharing the spoils of power. It might be the wish to exert influence come what may. You join the Conservatives because

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they happen to be to most powerful political force in a country. But even in such cases, you cannot do without the labels or ignore the motives other people have when they are involved in politics.

### ***A promise to try to be fair***

You will have discovered by now that I consider myself to be a committed liberal. How on earth can I talk dispassionately and fairly about conservatism and socialism?

Just to put your minds at rest, the organisers have invited a panel made up of distinguished persons representing different political mainstreams to discuss my introductory speech – and some of the issues raised therein. The discussion gives us ample opportunity to put things right in case I fail in my task.

I promise to try to be fair - and, in fact, this promise is a challenge for me as a liberal. One of the preconditions for fruitful discussion or fruitful negotiation is to listen carefully and try to avoid misrepresentation of the views of others. Having said this, I would like to apologise for any misrepresentations I might make during the next forty minutes.

### ***A comparison of fundamental values***

For purposes of clarity I think we should begin with stressing the big differences between liberalism, conservatism and socialism. Things, in reality, are not as clear and straightforward, as I will show later on. When people identify themselves with a political family (or a political mainstream, to use a more technical term), they do so because they share basic values and priorities with the family they choose. All three have a distinct value system. This value system is what it is because of certain central values. For the liberal, the central value is “freedom of the individual” – which explains why choice, tolerance, rule of law, civil and political rights, property and entrepreneurship are so important for liberals. Without them freedom of the individual would be meaningless. The linkages between these values or matters of importance are manifold: Tolerance, for instance, is a precondition for commitment to human rights. Protection of human rights means protection of freedom because freedom may be understood as “the sum total of rights an individual enjoys.”

For conservatives a central value is order. We just have to look at many trouble spots in this world and the plethora of states with potentially explosive social, ethnic and religious tensions, to see why

such a value might be deemed so important. Authority, discipline, a sense of duty and tradition – something that nation-builders always like to emphasise – are important instruments in trying to achieve and maintain order. In recent years law-and-order and zero tolerance campaigns in order to tackle what is perceived to be increasing crime latch onto conservative values.

Conservatives also tend to focus on issues such as “the nation”, “the family” and “morality”. Perceived threats to their integrity stem, so conservatives claim, from disregard for order. At the same time, however, nation, family and a strong sense of right and wrong help to reinforce order.

For socialists I would suggest equality as the central value. In their own self-definition, many socialists would perhaps prefer the notion of “social justice”, but I think if you analyse the content of this term, it will basically boil down to “equality”. In order to decide what is socially just, you need a view of “the common good”, and that tends to imply a vision of greater material equality and a sense of solidarity. If you are serious about promoting social justice, you must be prepared to redistribute wealth and to give up certain privileges.

Rights to liberty – more specifically: economic liberty – and private property are restricted because, seen from a socialist standpoint, they tend to generate or perpetuate difference and inequality. “Collective ownership” and “collective decision-making” are the best safeguards against an unequal and unjust society.

One of the things we see throughout the world is that despite different political histories, we have a common understanding of the basic values of each of these political mainstreams. Few would disagree that the respective values mentioned above are inextricably linked to the mainstreams we are talking about.

Which leaves us with four important questions:

- 1) Are these value systems mutually exclusive?
- 2) Are these value systems specifically “western” in nature or are they universal?
- 3) Do they adequately reflect the realities of political parties and their policies in the “real world” of today – and what about parties with roots in religion or environmentalism? And, finally,
- 4) Do these values help us politicians solve the most important problems facing us today?

### ***Mutually exclusive value systems?***

Let’s take the first of these questions. Are

these value systems mutually exclusive? Yes and no.

In order to enjoy freedom, there has to be some order and freedom depends to a certain extent on equality. It’s difficult to imagine the freedom to elect and be elected if there is no legally defined and sanctioned electoral procedure. This means: in order to enjoy such rights there has to be some order to the process of election that is enforced. Likewise, freedom, to be real, requires a high degree of equality of opportunity.

Experience has taught socialists in China and social democrats in Europe that social justice can only be achieved if there is something to achieve it with, if there is substance on which to build: wealth. Markets, free markets, produce wealth. The experience with command economies is that, after a certain point, they no longer perform and go into demise. That is: markets are a precondition for creating a cake. You need a cake before you can cut any slices.

The Senior Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, makes another link between order and freedom, but a specifically conservative one when he says that

“The expansion of the right of the individual to behave or misbehave as he pleases has come at the expense of orderly society. In the East the main object is to have a well-ordered society so that everyone can have maximum enjoyment of his freedoms”.

Which brings us to an important point: for the conservative, it is order that comes first. This doesn’t mean that a conservative does not value freedom. The commitment is different.

Similarly, a liberal values social justice. But a liberal values self-improvement or, as it is often called, “help for self-help” more, believing that the individual knows what is best for him/her and, given the opportunity, can do more to improve his/her condition than any administration can.

The concept of justice – justice pure and simple, without any additional qualification – is perhaps best suited to explain what liberals and socialists agree upon and where they differ. Any notion of justice, they would agree, contains some element equality; equal treatment, as it were. But if your guiding value is freedom, you will insist that the equal treatment must lie in the rules that govern the competition among conflicting interests (for instance, the competition for a fair share in a society’s wealth). If the rules are just (which implies a level playing field as far as starting conditions are concerned), and if they are abided by, the outcome will be just, because the differences in outcome

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will reflect differences in performance, and thus do justice to those who perform differently.

Not so, the socialists will say: the outcome of competition, even under fair rules, is likely to involve differences which must be corrected. Only an outcome that produces a high degree of equality can be accepted as just. Lack of such "justice of outcome" therefore justifies interfering with the rules.

And there you are: if you put equality first, your notion of justice will be a "justice of outcome" (or "results"); if you give priority to freedom, you will insist on "justice of the rules". Quite a difference!

What remains true is that value systems are not mutually exclusive. But priorities and emphases of each value system are certainly different – and this is what matters. If I were forced to choose, what would I choose? This is the point at which the differences become very clear.

The outcomes are very different as well. Throughout the world the path we have taken in countering terrorism after September 11 is a conservative one. The conservatives would say "yes, we have taken this path in order to protect liberty." The liberal response to this would be "at what cost?" The cost has been: the massive invasion of citizens' right to privacy, increasing disregard for a central principle of rule of law that crimes have to be proven beyond reasonable doubt, interrogation of suspects without proper access of suspects to legal counsel. Socialists would emphasise a completely different aspect of terrorism: the roots and the importance of dealing with the causes.

These differences, I think you will agree, ladies and gentlemen are of a fundamental kind.

Political parties cannot afford to ignore basic values without antagonising their most committed members. We see this in Germany where a social democrat-led government is trying to restructure the welfare state. Many party members find the proposals unpalatable and contrary to fundamental principles of "social justice". They have revolted as a result.

### **Western or universal values?**

Are these values western or universal? Liberalism and socialism, in particular, have been export articles. These mainstreams are identified with thinkers from the West, John Stuart Mill and Adam Smith, Karl Marx and Lenin. The names ring a bell throughout the world. We can go further. When we talk about the "social welfare state" we talk about a European invention of the mid-twentieth century. However, I

believe we shouldn't jump to any premature conclusions. An idea shouldn't be rejected because of its purported origin. It should be rejected because it's bad.

Conservatism by its very nature tends to be a more homegrown affair and some would argue that, as a result, it is more authentic for traditional cultures.

There's tendency today to reject things because of their origin or purported origin. The standards set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and elaborated in the two Covenants that followed, are often said to reflect Western values. Liberal values, yes, but Western values? A well-known Indian author, today head of the UN Department of Public Information, Sashi Tharoor, asked, at a conference organised by the FriedrichNaumann Foundation many years ago, I quote

"What exactly are these human rights that it is so unreasonable to promote?" [because of cultural difference] "If one picks up the more contentious Covenant – on Civil and Political Rights – and looks through the list, what can one find that someone in a developing country can easily do without? Not the right to life, I hope. Freedom from torture? The right not to be enslaved, to be physically assaulted, to be arbitrarily arrested, imprisoned or executed?"

Tharoor, incidentally, also makes the point that the international bill of rights, ie, the Universal Declaration and the two Covenants, were the outcome of work and deliberation that was truly international. Indeed, in the case of the Covenants, the developing world at the time actually made the decisive contribution.

I'm sure that my socialist and conservative colleagues would agree with me that political concepts and ideas exist that are universal in nature and universally applicable. Both social justice and equality are words that strike a chord in the Islamic world just as they do in my part of the world. Law and order and personal security are universal concerns. After all, we wouldn't have Interpol if this were not the case.

Yes, there is a Western tradition in that today's families or mainstreams can trace their origins back to the French Revolution, liberals and socialists to the values of the revolution and conservatives to the opposition to the revolution as such. If we look at the value systems, and forget the historical baggage, I think we would have a more balanced view. For me, Lee Kuan Yew is definitely a conservative, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan was definitely a socialist (it was he who coined the term

"Islamic Socialism") and Kim Dae Jung, former President of the Republic of Korea, was and remains, in substance, a liberal.

Finally, let us not forget the enormous influence that Mao Zedong, Mahatma Gandhi and, more recently, Nelson Mandela have had on political activists in my part of the world. The influences are not one-way.

### **Value systems and today's realities**

Do liberal, socialist and conservative value systems adequately reflect the realities of political parties today?

There's a nice quotation attributed to a conservative film star who became one of the last century's most respected Presidents of the United States of America, Ronald Reagan:

"The government's view of the economy can be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."

I think this is a nice and somewhat pertinent description of the reality of political power all political parties go through if they have a chance to form a government.

It's a challenge for socialists, conservatives and liberals alike. Elections are won by making promises and many, if not most, promises cost money. We are constantly looking for new sources of tax revenue. We have to deal with powerful lobbies with incessant demands – farmers, unions, pensioners, environmentalists, former servicemen, business federations. We have to listen to our party members – sometimes very vocal in their demands. Last, but not least, we think of re-election and of winning votes. Isn't it fair to say, that once in power, most of us tend to do the same thing irrespective of our political convictions?

Many observers talk about convergence in politics. Most European conservatives have begun to embrace minority interests and not reject them out of hand. George W. Bush set the tone of his campaign for the US Presidency using the term "compassionate conservatism." Among socialists we have attempts to reform the milder version of socialism, social democracy, into something milder still. Witness the policy paper Europe: The Third Way presented by Tony Blair, British Labour Party Prime Minister, and Gerhard Schroeder, German Social Democrat Chancellor in 1999. Read the following, taken from the document, for a statement of modern social democracy

"The promotion of social justice was sometimes confused with the imposition of

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equality of outcome. The result was a neglect of the importance of rewarding effort and responsibility, and the association of social democracy with conformity and mediocrity rather than the celebration of creativity, diversity and excellence..."

Socialist, liberal, conservative? I leave it for you, dear friends, to decide!

These examples are the tip of an iceberg. In Poland we have a president, who, formerly a staunch member of the Communist Party, is now a staunch supporter of membership of the European Union. There is nothing socialist about the policies of another former socialist stalwart, the current Prime Minister of Hungary. China and Vietnam, communist countries, have market policies in place that would make European liberals blush.

I think we have to be very careful here. Parties are adjusting to economic realities and one of these realities is that countries with liberal economic policies have better performance records as far as economic growth is concerned than other countries. Regular surveys comparing more than 120 countries, and published by the Canadian Fraser Institute in cooperation with 55 other liberal think tanks worldwide, show that, I quote,

"More economic freedom is strongly related with higher levels of income" and "is negatively correlated with poverty."

Furthermore, there are strong positive correlations between economic freedom and "longevity, knowledge, and a decent standard of living."

I would put it to you that agreement on some basic principles in economic policy may be rational, sensible and desirable. But even so, there are considerable differences. Socialists would emphasise employees' rights. We as liberals would tend to emphasise consumers' rights. Socialists would still tend to emphasise targets and the necessity of intervention in the economic process. Liberals would be wary of formulating economic goals on behalf of others and would tend to rely on enlightened self-interest and self-regulation.

I believe we should not judge things too hastily. I, for one, would be reluctant to put myself in the same boat as my conservative and socialist colleagues in parliament and claim that we see eye to eye. The differences are enormous and they provide one of the main subjects of controversy in our debates.

A very recent example of a profound difference between our view as Free Democrats in Germany and the Liberal Democrats in the UK and those of many European and all American conservatives

concerns the war against Iraq. We believe that the avenues of diplomacy were not exhausted and we fear that the long-term consequences were not thought through properly. The big differences between European liberals and American conservatives are very clear on this particular issue. The idea of a "clash of civilisations" is inherently a conservative one. The violent solution of the problem of Iraq gives credence to the conservative viewpoint that civilisations will and must clash. The idea that conflict and potential conflict must and can be quelled by exerting authority and, if necessary, by using force is also something we tend to find among conservatives. It is an idea that rejects the very premises of liberalism. As liberals, and I believe I am speaking for all liberals, we fear that the Gulf War has ignited a process that will make a liberal vision of a "dialogue between civilisations" and a peaceful solution to the many problems of the Middle East more difficult.

Although there are plenty of examples of convergence as politicians try to tackle economic and social problems, there are definite limits. Fundamental beliefs define those limits.

The methods used to solve problems and achieve objectives have always been subject to change within a political mainstream. Revolution or reform? Big bang or gradual change? Big government or small government? This is one of the reasons why mainstreams are themselves heterogeneous. Among socialists we have a family that spans the area between orthodox Marxism on the one hand and New Labour on the other. Each member of the family represents a specific response to challenges and realities. It is important to note, however, that the underlying value systems are less susceptible to change. No modern socialist would have a problem with the following quotation from the Blair/Schroeder document I have already mentioned:

"Our aim is to modernise the welfare state, not dismantle it: to embark on new ways of expressing solidarity and responsibility to others without basing the motivation for economic activity on pure undiluted self-interest."

We liberals are a motley lot – classical liberals, new or social liberals, libertarians, to mention only a few. Social liberals and social democrats are often difficult to keep apart. Despite the many differences, however, all liberals share a common denominator: they believe in putting freedom and the individual first. Another distinguishing feature of liberalism is that it distrusts decisions made on behalf of

collective entities, whether these entities are nations, classes, [eg, the "working class"], castes, religious groups [Christians, Moslems, Hindus], or whatever. All such decisions tend towards arbitrariness in that they ignore differences within such an entity, overlook individual needs and create new injustices.

This is very different to the socialist approach. Socialists will counter that ordinary people cannot defend themselves adequately against the vicissitudes of modern global economic and social processes. The scale of the solutions required make economic management by government and social engineering an absolute must. A typical statement most socialists would agree with, and conservatives might agree with as well, is Michael Walzer's observation, I quote:

"Consider... the case of public health. No communal provision is possible here without the constraint of a wide range of activities profitable to individual members of the community but threatening to some larger number. Even something so simple, for example, as the provision of uncontaminated milk to large urban populations requires extensive public control."

Walzer is a well-known communitarian thinker. Liberals, by way of contrast, would question the thrust of this observation and would counter that enlightened self-interest will usually ensure that my activities do not cause harm to fellow citizens. But let's leave the debate to later.

So what about Christian Democrats or green parties, which we have in Europe? To a certain extent, all modern political parties are hybrid in terms of their ideological baggage. The bigger the party, the more hybrid it will tend to be. In most cases, however, the main thrust will be identifiable: the Social Democrats of Germany definitely share a reformist socialist tradition. The British Conservatives are, by and large, conservative.

With Christian Democrats and Greens, the situation is a little different. The Greens were initially very much a one-issue affair. They were able to recruit conservatives, liberals and socialists with strong environmental concerns. Problems started to arise when Greens started to address other political issues. Christian Democrats tend either to be socialist or conservative in orientation – or a mixture of both with an addition of liberalism as in the case of Germany. In order to find the reasons for this, one has to look at their respective religious roots. In some countries the idea of "Christian socialism" was an important formative force. In other countries the

Church was traditionally closely linked with a Catholic conservative elite. The existence of such hybrid parties, however, doesn't mean that conservatism, socialism or liberalism as political forces or as value systems are on the wane.

There is one last point I would like to make before proceeding to the last part of my speech.

Why is it that liberal parties are not as strong as they should be? Perhaps they are the victims of their own success? Liberals may be seen as "winners" in the practical sphere of standards and achievements. Various international human rights instruments, starting with the Universal Declaration, are definitely liberal in content. The aims of the WTO – restraining and eliminating protectionism and its negative effects on development – are liberal: The aim of achieving "international rule of law" is as well – as is the general acceptance of the idea that good governance is a precondition for development. Socialism and, in particular, social democracy are perhaps the "winners of the hearts and minds" of ordinary citizens. It's easier to win elections with socialist slogans and promises than with liberal ones. The claim that socialism is closer to the people's day-to-day needs appears credible to many voters. Where there is instability and insecurity, people tend, perhaps more than ever before to opt for conservative solutions. Why should this be the case? Perhaps it's because conservatives have effectively and credibly disassociated themselves from authoritarian baggage, privilege and class-consciousness.

### **Value systems and development**

Finally, do these values help us politicians solve the most important problems facing us today? For many of those present at this conference, the most important problem is how to achieve "sustainable development." I'm only going to make a few comments here because I believe that other sessions will deal with this subject in greater depth.

I have already mentioned the enormous change that has taken place in the field of economic policy. Economic policies today tend to be more pro-market than they were twenty years ago – similarly because the overwhelming evidence shows a) there are no viable alternatives and b) because of the well-documented performance of many countries that have liberalised their economies.

Development cooperation many years

ago was mainly a government-to-government affair: taxpayers' money transferred from one country to another, governments deciding who would get how much for a particular purpose. The purpose itself was defined by government. Interestingly, many major recipients of such aid in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere have seen little or no development. There is a growing awareness that development co-operation in effect meant adopting structures of a command economy: targets were defined not by consumers, ordinary citizens, but by bureaucrats. Success was measured not by the ability to buy and sell products on the basis of supply and demand, but by the ability to disburse funds "efficiently" and "on time" and to cook numbers accordingly. Need was not the criterion, but "the capacity to absorb." Needless to say, a lot of money didn't reach its intended destination.

Today, the approach has changed. The shift is away from development cooperation to opening up markets. Creating opportunities for trade. "Trade, not aid", by the way, is an old liberal slogan. Tearing down the barriers, however, is easier said than done. Think



*Werner Hoyer, ELDR Congress, Bath 2002*

of the powerful vested interests in North America and the European Union that have been effective in upholding barriers against the import of sugar, textiles and steel, to mention some of the most important items, and thus undermining development efforts.

Interestingly, what I have said a few minutes ago on economic and trade policy also applies to development policy. There is a consensus among professionals and among mainstream parties throughout the world on basics. Opening up the world's markets is an important way of promoting development. Agreement goes further: good governance and security are preconditions for development.

Despite such agreement on fundamentals, the differences between the

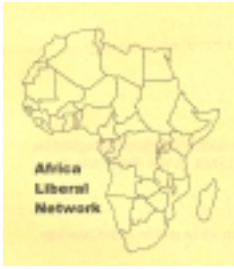
political mainstreams are considerable. I would argue that these differences are fruitful. Liberals will continue to stress the importance of promoting and rewarding entrepreneurship and promoting market-oriented policies radically and from the grass roots upwards. The key to development, whether in the form of freedom and opportunity, education, health and economic and social well-being is the generation of wealth. Conservatives will maintain that there will be no development unless there is a secure environment for development, order, guidance, discipline and hard work. Socialists will stress equity. A process in which some groups benefit and others don't, a process in which the gap between rich and poor increases, such a process is inherently instable. Social injustices will lead to the collapse of development. All three have a point. Debate is necessary and debate will lead to better solutions, a process of development that is sustainable.

As a liberal I believe it's very difficult to define what "sustainable" is – simply because we don't know enough. Technology, for instance, often introduces new variables and new ways of doing things that undermine previous assumptions concerning sustainability. Fuel-cell technology might be one of those developments. But it is a good guess to assume that mass unemployment brought about by structural change is not conducive to development. Put another way: social policy is a way of ensuring that development is sustainable.

One must be aware of the fact that things can easily go wrong. Because we don't know all the right answers, we need to find them. For this we need lively and serious debate, an open political arena and parties representing very different approaches. What we shouldn't do is to question the commitment of each respective side as far as the common aim is concerned – development.

Karl Popper in an essay entitled *Tolerance and Intellectual Responsibility* written in 1987 outlined essentials related to tolerance. I believe that they should also be recognised and practiced in political discourse and in the development of solutions to pressing political problems. They are:

- 1) I may be wrong and you may be right;
- 2) by talking things over rationally we may be able to correct some of our mistakes;
- 3) if we talk things over rationally, we may both get nearer to the truth.



# Africa Liberal Network

The successor to the Organisation of African Liberal Parties was launched in Johannesburg, South Africa, June 2003

The Liberal Democrats from the UK, sponsored a meeting through the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, of African liberal parties from the Magreb down to South Africa and from Senegal to the Seychelles. The parties present adopted the Johannesburg Declaration on 15 June 2003. The organisation was in hands of Ms Ellen Kelly, Africa Network Officer for the Liberal Democrats (UK).

## THE JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION

### LIBERAL DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA

Liberal Democratic parties exist to ensure the freedom and dignity of all people through;

- Establishing political and civil rights, ensuring basic freedoms.
- The rule of law.
- Democratic government, based on free and fair elections with peaceful transition.
- Ensuring religious, gender and minority rights.
- Fighting corruption.
- Establishing free market economies.

THE AFRICA LIBERAL NETWORK, WITH THE CO-OPERATION OF LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL, EXISTS TO;

Facilitate the development and growth of Liberal Democratic parties in all African countries. Encourage solidarity among member parties with the aim of assisting them to achieve power through democratic means; the creation of a Liberal Democratic Africa.

THE AFRICA LIBERAL NETWORK WILL;

1. Establish an alliance of like-minded Liberal Democratic parties in Africa for the sharing of information, experiences, skills and ideas.
2. Assist member parties to promote Liberal Democracy within their own countries and throughout Africa by providing support (either through reciprocal/ bilateral means or from donor institutes) in the areas of:
  - Election support- exchange visits, support through capacity building, identification of campaign issues, and the sharing of physical, financial and human resources.
  - Supporting parties in difficulty, rapidly and appropriately.
  - Policy development / details.
  - Party organisation and development, creation of mass membership and support.
  - Civic awareness, voter education and registration.
  - Media, press and lobbying, training, joint statements to international press.
  - Training, training the trainers.
  - Meetings of the network, regional meetings.
  - Networking between liberal women, youth and local representatives.
  - Establishing information exchange through a website, newsletter, (e-mail) bulletin.
  - Communication among and between African parties.
  - Co-ordination with other institutes.
  - Lobbying and project bids.
3. Seek to expand membership of the network, by existing members supporting inclusion of like-minded parties from their regions who aspire to the terms of the Johannesburg Declaration and are accepted by a majority of existing members.

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# Calendar 2003

## January

- 19 Parliamentary Elections, Cuba
- 20 Isaiah Berlin Lecture, London, UK**
- 22 Parliamentary Elections, Netherlands
- 25 LI Bureau Meeting, Brussels**
- 27-31 Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France

## March

- 02 Parliamentary elections in Estonia
- 02 Parliamentary elections, Belarus
- 14-16 Liberal Democrat Conference, Torquay, UK
- 16 Parliamentary elections Finland
- 28 LI Bureau Meeting, Casablanca, Morocco**
- 28-29 LI Executive Committee Meeting, Casablanca**

## May

- 10 Parliamentary elections Iceland
- 16-17 VVD Congress, Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands
- 17-18 FDP Congress Bremen, Germany
- 18 D66 Congress, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 18 Parliamentary elections Belgium
- 25 Parliamentary elections Armenia
- 29-30 CALD Conference, Colombo Sri Lanka
- 31 CALD General Assembly, Bentota, Sri Lanka
- 31 ANO Congress, Slovakia

## July

- 04 ELDR Council meeting, London, UK
- 05 LI Bureau Meeting, London, UK**
- 05 Parliamentary elections Kuwait
- 06 Parliamentary elections Mexico
- 06 Parliamentary elections Guinea-Bissau
- 27 Parliamentary elections Cambodia

## September

- 12-14 LI/ELDR Fringe at WTO, Cancun (tbc)**
- 13-14 Congress Det Radikale Venstre, Denmark
- 17-18 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 18 Deadlines Amendments Resolutions**
- 21-25 Liberal Democrats Conference, Brighton, UK
- 23-26 World Bank, IMF Annual Meeting, Dubai
- 29-03 Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France

## November

- 02 Parliamentary elections Georgia
- 05 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 06-09 Folkpartiet Liberalerna Congress, Sweden
- 07 Presidential elections Mauritania
- 08-09 Venstre Congress, Herning, Denmark
- 12-14 ELDR Party Congress, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 22 D66 Congress, Maastricht, Netherlands

## February

- 08 D66 Congress, Zutphen, Netherlands
- 15-16 MRF Congress, Sofia, Bulgaria
- 16 Presidential elections Cyprus

## April

- 04-06 Venstre, Congress, Norway
- 03-12 IPU Conference, Santiago de Chile
- 07-11 Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France
- 12 Parliamentary elections Nigeria
- 19 Presidential elections Nigeria
- 20 Parliamentary elections Guinea Bissau
- 27 Presidential elections Argentina
- 27 Parliament and Presidential elections Paraguay
- 27 Parliamentary elections Yemen

## June

- 03 Presidential elections Latvia
- 07-08 Congress Svenska Folkpartiet, Borga, Finland
- 13-15 Africa Liberal Network, Jo'burg, South Africa
- 17 Parliamentary elections, Jordan
- 18 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 19 ELDR Leaders Meeting, Thessaloniki, Greece
- 23-27 Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France
- 25-26 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels

## August

- 03 Alliance Party Conference, Northern-Ireland
- 14 Deadline Candidates LI Bureau**
- 14 Deadline Resolutions LI Congress**
- 27-28 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium

## October

- 29-03 Council of Europe, Strasbourg France
- 08 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 14 Presidential, Parliamentary elections Liberia
- 15-16 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 19 Parliamentary elections Switzerland
- 22 Africa Liberal Network, Dakar, Senegal
- 23-25 LI Congress Dakar, Senegal**

## December

- 03 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 10 Human Rights Day
- 10-11 ELDR Group Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
- 10 CALD 10th Anniversary, Thailand
- 21 Parliamentary elections Russia

# Members & Leadership

## Member Parties

**International Federation of Liberal & Radical Youth; International Network of Liberal Women; ELDR Group in the European Parliament; LDR Group in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe; Andorra:** Partit Liberal; **Angola:** Partido Liberal Democratico; **Austria:** Liberales Forum; **Belgium:** Vlaamse Liberalen en Democraten, Parti Réformateur Libéral; **Canada:** Liberal Party; **Croatia:** Hrvatska Socijalno Liberalna Stranka; Liberalna Stranka; **Cuba:** Unión Liberal Cubana; **Denmark:** Venstre, Det Radikale Venstre; **Equatorial Guinea:** Unión Democrática Nacional de Guinea Ecuatorial; **Estonia:** Eesti Reformierakond, **Finland:** Keskusta, Svenska Folkpartiet; **Germany:** Freie Demokratische Partei, Deutsche Gruppe; **Gibraltar:** Liberal Party of Gibraltar; **Honduras:** Partido Liberal; **Hungary:** Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége; **Iceland:** Framsóknarflokkurinn; **Israel:** Shinui, Israeli Group; **Latvia:** Latvian Cels; **Lithuania:** Lietuvos Liberalu Sajunga; **Luxembourg:** Demokratesch Partei; **Macedonia:** Liberalna Demokraticka Partija; **Malawi:** United Democratic Front; **Montenegro:** Liberalni Savez Crne Gore; **Netherlands:** Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie, Democraten 66, Nederlandse Groep; **Nicaragua:** Partido Liberal Constitucionalista; **Norway:** Venstre; **Paraguay:** Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico; **Philippines:** Liberal Party; **Romania:** Partidul National Liberal; **Russia:** Yabloko; **Senegal:** Parti Démocratique Sénégalais; **Slovakia:** Demokratická Unia Slovenska; **Slovenia:** Liberalna Demokracija Slovenije; **South Africa:** Democratic Party; **Spain:** Centro Democrático y Social, Libertat i Democracia Social; **Sri Lanka:** Liberal Party; **Sweden:** Folkpartiet Liberalerna; **Switzerland:** Freisinnig Demokratische Partei, Parti Libéral Suisse; **Taiwan:** Democratic Progressive Party; **Turkey:** Liberal Demokrat Parti; **UK:** Alliance Party, Liberal Democrats, British Group.

## Observer status

**Bosnia & Hercegovina:** Liberalna Stranka; **Bulgaria:** Liberal Democratic Union; Movement for Rights and Freedom; **Cote d'Ivoire:** Rassemblement des Republicains; **Cuba:** Partido Liberal Democrático, Partido Solidaridad Democrática; **Ecuador:** Fuerza Ecuador; **Finland:** Liberalerna på Åland; **Italy:** Federazione dei Liberali Italiani; **Japan:** Jiyuto; **Kosovo:** Partia Liberale e Kosoves; **Lithuania:** Lietuvos Centro Sajunga, New Union; **Morocco:** Mouvement Populaire, Union Constitutionnelle; **Panama:** Partido Liberal Nacional; **Seychelles:** Seychelles National Party; **Slovakia:** Aliancia Nového Občana; **Spain:** Unió Mallorquina; **Tanzania:** Chama Cha Wananchi, United Democratic Party; **Tunisia:** Parti Social Libéral; **Ukraine:** Liberal Party; **Yugoslavia:** New Democracy.

## Cooperating Organisations

**Caucus of Asian Liberal Democrats; European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party; Germany:** Friedrich Naumann Stiftung; **Israel:** Dr Y. Foerder Institute; **Italy:** Fondazione Luigi Einaudi; **Sweden:** Swedish International Liberal Centre; **Switzerland:** Neue Zürcher Zeitung; **USA:** National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

**Patrons:** Lord Dahrendorf, Al Graham, Steingrímur Hermannsson, Minoo Masani†, Walter Scheel, Helen Suzman, Henry Talsma, Gaston Thorn, Edzo Toxopeus, Simone Veil, Barthold Witte, Zheliou Zhelev, Amnon Rubinstein.

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**Secretary General:** Federica Sabbati

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**Presidents of Honour:** Otto Graf Lambsdorff, Gaston Thorn

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