

The imperative need for popular fronts of national and social liberation in the globalization era*

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***Abstract:** This article puts forward the case that the radical changes in the political and economic structures of countries integrated into the New World Order (NWO) of neoliberal globalization imply the need for a fundamental shift in the strategy for radical social change. This is because, today, even the minimal degree of national and economic self-determination needed for the creation of “popular bases of political and economic power”, either at the local or even the national levels, is simply missing. It is therefore clear that the object of the social struggle in the globalization era has primarily to be about the re-creation of this minimal degree of national and economic self-determination (i.e. of national and economic sovereignty) as a precondition for any radical change.*

The shift of strategy required for the building of a new democratic world order

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

I think that humanity faces a crucial choice in the new millennium. Either we continue our present patterns of life, within the present institutions which secure today's huge and growing concentration of power at all levels and the consequent continuous deepening of the present multidimensional crisis, or, alternatively, we start building a new political movement that would involve the creation of institutions for a sustainable Inclusive Democracy, i.e., we embark on a process which would create

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the preconditions for the establishment, for the first time in History, of a new and truly democratic World Order.¹

At that time, globalization had not yet taken its present dimensions in terms of concentration of power at all levels and particularly did not imply the loss of economic and therefore national sovereignty for those countries integrated into the NWO of neoliberal globalization in a relationship of dependence to the Transnational Elite (TE), as opposed to the relationship of interdependence characterizing the connections between its own members. Therefore, a truly democratic World Order based on Inclusive Democracies (IDs), i.e. societies characterized by the equal distribution of political and economic power among their citizens, was still feasible at that time. No wonder the strategy I was suggesting at the time for the move to a new world democratic order involved the building of a massive programmatic political movement, with an unashamedly universalist goal to change society along genuine democratic lines. That is, a movement that should explicitly aim at an institutional change as well as a change in our value systems, i.e. a systemic change. This strategy would entail the gradual involvement of increasing numbers of people in a new kind of politics and the parallel shifting of economic resources (labor, capital, land) away from the market economy.

As I wrote then, "the aim of such a strategy should be to create changes in the institutional framework, as well as to value systems, which, after a period of tension between the new institutions and the state, would, at some stage, replace the market economy, representative 'democracy,' and the social paradigm 'justifying' them, with an inclusive democracy and a new democratic paradigm respectively".² Furthermore, as I also stressed, the rationale behind this strategy was that, as systemic change required a rupture with the past, which extends to both the institutional and the cultural levels, such a rupture was only possible through the development of a new political organization and a new comprehensive political program for systemic change, which would create a clear anti-systemic consciousness at a massive scale — rather than at the level of *avant gardes* (as in the case of state socialists), or at the community level (neighborhood, commune etc. — as in the case of various libertarian or green groupuscules). That implied that the creation of a new culture, which had to become hegemonic before an inclusive democracy could be launched, was only possible through the parallel building of new political and economic institutions at a significant social scale. In other words, it was only through action to build such institutions that a massive political movement with a high level of consciousness could be built.

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

² *Ibid.*

This was why I proposed that the objective of an ID strategy should be the creation, from below, of “popular bases of political and economic power,” that is, the establishment of local inclusive democracies, which, at a later stage, would confederate in order to create the conditions for the establishment of a new confederal inclusive democracy. In other words, a crucial element of the ID strategy was that the political and economic institutions of inclusive democracy should begin to be established immediately after a significant number of people in a particular area have formed a base for “democracy in action” — preferably, but not exclusively, at the massive social scale that is secured by winning in local elections under an ID program.

However, it is now obvious that the radical changes in the political and economic structures of each country integrated into the NWO in a dependent position with respect to the TE made this strategy non-feasible — a fact, which necessitated a radical shift in strategy. These changes are not simply related to the 2008 financial crisis as Paleolithic Marxist approaches suggest. In fact, the financial crisis, which functioned as the catalyst for the present economic catastrophe imposed on peoples like the Greek one,³ was simply a symptom of neoliberal globalization, as I tried to show elsewhere.⁴ Similarly, it was not the scarcity of resources (particularly of energy resources) that caused the crisis, as correspondingly irrelevant ecological approaches suggest, like, more recently, the de-growth approach, which relies on the basic premise that growth for growth’s sake is unsustainable as it pushes the limits of the biosphere.⁵

In fact, the scarcity of resources argument has been transcended by the new global consumption and production patterns being imposed by globalization, which are not based anymore on a “growth economy” relying on a mass consumer society as before but, instead, on a new dual consumer society. In other words:

- a “normal consumer society” covering the needs of the privileged social strata that benefit from globalization in both the old “North” and the old “South” (a small minority of the world population) — most of these “needs” being created by the consumer society itself;

³ Takis Fotopoulos, *Ukraine: Attack on Russia and the Eurasian Union* (published shortly by Progressive Press), ch. 3.

⁴ Takis Fotopoulos, “The myths about the economic crisis, the reformist Left and economic democracy” *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol. 4, No. 4 (October 2008). <http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol4/vol4_no4_takis_economic_crisis.htm>

⁵ See for a general critique of de-growth theory, Takis Fotopoulos, “Is degrowth compatible with a market economy?”, *The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy*, Vol.3, No.1 (January 2007).

<http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/vol3/vol3_no1_Takis_degrowth.htm>

- a “subsistence consumer society” covering the needs (mostly basic needs) of the rest of the population, which is condemned to permanent unemployment or extremely low wages/ salaries/ pensions, zero-hours contracts or at most part-time work, etc.

In other words, a kind of “de-growth,” so much promoted by the relevant ecological trend (and directly or indirectly supported by the TE’s institutions!), is already being implemented by the TE, although of course in a distorted way, i.e., minus the irrelevant (to the system) elements of sharing, co-operation, etc.

But, the de-growth discussion is not only irrelevant today, given that today’s “growth economy,” as we just saw, has little, if any, resemblance to the post-second world war growth economy that gave rise to the entire debate on the limits to growth etc. It is also disorienting, especially for the victims of globalization, in the sense that it indirectly justifies the various austerity policies imposed by the NWO of neoliberal globalization, adding a supposedly ecological dimension to the need for such policies, on top of the usual economic rationality justifying austerity. Although of course the ideologues of neoliberal globalization do not dare to justify austerity policies on the basis of ecological rationality, still, many people in the middle class worrying about the ecological crisis (having sorted out, first the survival problems for themselves) would surely find less growth as a result of such policies as something not necessarily wrong. This could function as an additional reason persuading them to vote for the parties on which the various parliamentary juntas in the NWO rely for their power base.

However, it is not only the “limits to growth” or correspondingly the de-growth approaches as such that become irrelevant, if not disorienting, in the NWO. Their transitional strategies, which were based at the local level in order to build an alternative ecological society (or in the case of the ID approach, an ecological democracy) have also become utterly irrelevant today. Radical decentralization within the market economy institutional framework — whether this is effected through eco-villages, or urban villages, or even local “IDs in action” — is impossible today. Economic localism, i.e., the change in relations of production in terms of creating self-sufficient or even self-reliant communities, is impossible as long as the transnational corporations and their subsidiaries and branches are spread into every community of the countries integrated into the NWO. If economic self-reliance is impossible today even at the national level unless national and economic sovereignty is restored, one could imagine how feasible such self-reliance is at the local level (unless one talks of survival in a Robinson Crusoe kind of remote island!)

In conclusion, the radical changes in the political and economic structures of countries integrated into the NWO in a dependent position require a shift in strategy. This is because of the fact that, today, even the minimal degree of national and economic self-determination needed for the creation of

"popular bases of political and economic power" is simply missing. It is therefore clear that the fight today has to be primarily about the re-creation of this minimal degree of national and economic self-determination, as a precondition for any systemic change.

Economic and national sovereignty as a precondition for radical change

Clearly, in the era of globalization, it does not make sense to talk about how to build IDs at the local level, as the basis for ID confederations at the national or international levels, or, generally, to talk about any radical social change that will come about from the local or the community level. The present complete and unprecedented control of economic, political, and cultural life by the Transnational Elite (mainly the western elites based in the G7 countries) makes the building of such institutions completely non-feasible today and has decisively shifted the social struggle terrain from the local to the national level, and from it to the international one, with economic and national sovereignty becoming a precondition for any kind of systemic change, in the form of an ID, an ecological society, a socialist society, etc.

Therefore, the fundamental aim of the social struggle today should be a complete break with the present NWO and the building of a new democratic order in which economic and national sovereignty have been restored, so that peoples could then fight for the ideal society, as they see it. The conditions of occupation we live under today, as we shall see next, mean that people resisting it have to make broad political alliances with everybody concerned who accepts the aims of a Popular Front for National and Social Liberation, and particularly the basic aim to break with the NWO. Then, once the people of a particular country have broken with the NWO, they should join with peoples from other countries, who have already achieved their economic and national sovereignty, and form together new economic unions of sovereign states to sort out, between them, on a bilateral or multilateral basis, the economic problems arising from trade and investment. Then and only then, the crucial issues of the form that a future society should take, and of the strategy to achieve it, could be raised.

In this sense, the completion of a Eurasian Union, as originally designed, (i.e. as an economic union of sovereign states having the ability to impose whatever social controls on markets they decide), would have been an event of a tremendous global significance for the development of a new democratic global order to replace the present NWO of neoliberal globalization, which has already destroyed the lives of billions of people all over the world.

Elsewhere,⁶ I examined the necessary and sufficient conditions that have to be met for economic sovereignty to be achieved, so that peoples can start building up a new Democratic World Order like the one I described above, in place of the existing NWO. Today's crucial issue is, therefore, whether the Eurasian Union, as it has developed following the effective integration of Ukraine into the NWO (as a result of the TE's successful coup d'état and the almost pathetic Russian stand on the matter), could provide the institutional framework for this new democratic order, or, at least, whether it could function at least as a catalyst for the end of the present world order. However, irrespective of the final outcome of the present (so far diplomatic and economic), conflict between the NWO and Russia, the crucial issue for the peoples of the world wishing to regain their national and economic sovereignty, as a precondition for national and social self-determination or liberation, is how to develop a means of effective social struggle to achieve this aim. Particularly so, as it is now obvious that this conflict will either end up with the final subordination of the latter to the former — as the "+1" member of "G7+1" it used to be — or instead with the Russian elite being forced to break with globalization and begin a long overdue program of self-reliance (which is the necessary condition for a meaningful Eurasian Union). To my mind, under conditions of effective occupation, as many describe the present situation, this is impossible today, without the creation of a Popular Front of National and Social Liberation in each country, as I will try to show next. But first, are we justified to talk about an occupation today?

The meaning of occupation in the New World Order and the fight against it

Today, peoples who are fully integrated into the NWO as subservient states are in a state of occupation, in relation to the Transnational Elite that controls it. This is an "occupation," however, which is not simply military, but multidimensional, in tandem with the dimensions of globalization as economic, political, ideological and cultural. We may therefore describe this "occupation" as follows:

- Economic occupation, in the sense that, with the exception of the countries in which Transnational Corporations (TNCs) originated — mainly, the "G7" countries, the elites of which constitute the Transnational Elites that design global economic policy through the international institutions they control (WTO, IMF, European Commission, etc.) — the other elites just play an executive role with respect to the TE's decisions.
- Political occupation, in the sense that local parliamentary juntas elected through pseudo-democratic processes, have as their basic mission the

⁶ Takis Fotopoulos, *Ukraine: Attack on Russia and the Eurasian Union*, ch. 10.

faithful implementation of each directive coming from the TEs, deceiving the citizens of each country that these decisions are supposedly theirs, as, theoretically, they also have taken part in the decision-taking process! However, it is a bad joke to assume that the Greek or Portuguese vote in the European Commission decision-taking process is of equal weight to the German or British one, unless we believe the myths of representative “democracy” that the vote of a worker or a small farmer is of equal weight to that of a media tycoon, or of a ship-magnate! Clearly, for each vote to represent equal political weight there should be an equal distribution of economic power among all voters, or, to put it in another way, as a genuine political democracy presupposes an equal distribution of political power, economic democracy is inconceivable without an equal distribution of economic power,⁷ while political democracy is meaningless if not accompanied by economic democracy;

- Ideological occupation, in the sense that the values and ideas that define the ideological hegemony in each country fully integrated into the NWO, are those associated with the ideology of globalization (ideology of individual human rights, identity politics, etc.). This ideology is systematically used by the TE in order to strengthen non-class social divisions (e.g. religious, cultural, ethnic, etc.) with the aim to perpetuate its dominance.
- Cultural occupation, in the sense that the same multinationals that control the economic, political and ideological processes, also control the cultural process, through the direct or indirect control on international media and the production and distribution of cultural products — which in the NWO are just commodities.

It is exactly this state of occupation under which the vast majority of the global population lives in the era of globalization, which creates the need for new tools of social struggle for liberation and self-determination. Particularly so as, historically, peoples fighting for their liberation against occupation (colonialist or military) had always faced a serious dilemma: should they fight first for their national liberation and then for social liberation, or, alternatively, for a simultaneous national as well as social liberation? The former implies that national liberation is a precondition for social liberation whereas the latter implies the opposite. Resistance movements against military occupation during the Second World War had a similar dilemma and the answer given by every important such movement in Europe was the former one. This was dictated by the need to unite everybody opposing the occupation (apart, of course, from the

⁷ Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy* (London/NY: Cassell /Continuum, 1997/1998), chs 5-6.

social groups collaborating with the occupiers) against an all-powerful enemy. Therefore, the Popular Front for National Liberation was the usual political subject, which was playing the role of the avant-garde in this struggle. It was clearly understood at the time by most in the Marxist Left that the issue of the desired systemic change would divide not only capitalists from proletarians but also the working people themselves, given the highly uneven levels of consciousness, the significance of nationalism etc. In sum, the necessary, though not the sufficient, condition for social liberation was considered to be national liberation, whereas a socialist revolution was considered to be utterly utopian under occupation conditions, when, inevitably, the social struggle was much more difficult both subjectively and objectively.

Citizens who wanted to fight the occupation at the time were joining en masse such popular resistance fronts all over Europe, with the aim to get rid first of the occupying powers, in the form of the Nazi and fascist armies, and then, once liberated from occupation, with the broader aim to achieve social liberation in terms of the desired systemic change. No wonder that it was only some extreme Trotskyite currents, and similar pseudo-libertarian ones, which, completely isolated from popular feelings, were urging the proletarians of the opposing armies to unite in a class war and fight together the capitalist elites behind the opposing armies — something which in effect implied that people should not resist the occupation until a socialist revolution occurred! No wonder clever occupiers in the past and the Zionists today in Palestine have implicitly promoted similar “Left” stands, which of course are very useful in perpetuating their domination over the occupied peoples.

Yet, at that time, it was much easier than today for peoples to decide what the answer to the above mentioned dilemma should be. The enemy, in the form of a foreign occupying military power, was obvious to everybody, irrespective of one’s aspirations for a future ideal society. But, this is exactly the missing element today. People do not find it easy today to understand who their real enemy is. In fact, many find it difficult even to grasp the very idea that they live under occupation in the first place. In other words, in the globalization era, national and social liberation are much more interconnected than in the past, as the very meaning of occupation is very different today and implicitly interlocks the issue of social liberation to the issue of national liberation. However, the very fact that social liberation is much more interconnected to national liberation than in the past makes the struggle for social liberation not easier but, in fact, even more difficult than in the past. This is because in the past it was obvious to everybody that the issue of social liberation had to wait for national liberation, while at the same time, apart from a few collaborators with the occupiers, the vast majority of the occupied population was against the occupiers. Today, not only is the occupation an invisible one (unlike the past military occupations), as only those with a high level of consciousness can

grasp this crucial fact, but also significant parts of the population are in favor of the occupation, as they benefit from globalization.

It is therefore clear that the social struggle today cannot just take the form of national liberation. But, by the same token, the social struggle cannot just take the form of social liberation either, i.e. in the form of a popular front for social liberation, which explicitly raises the issue of the desired socio-economic system. It is clear to me, especially after the collapse of actually existing socialism (which, as I mentioned above, has been one of the two main factors leading to the rise of the NWO), that any popular front aiming simply to revive the socialist project today is doomed. This implies that any new liberation project will have to be a synthesis of the two major historical traditions, the classical democratic one (direct democracy) and the socialist one, as is the Inclusive Democracy project. However, as the struggle for social liberation is impossible today unless people have already achieved economic and national sovereignty, it is obvious that the only effective form of social struggle today is the Popular Front for National and Social Liberation, as I will try to show below.

Why a front for social and national liberation

It is therefore clear that the social struggle in the era of neoliberal globalization can no longer be just a struggle for social liberation, as obsolete Marxists still believe today and some Trotskyites have always believed. This becomes obvious when one considers the fact that, as soon as a country (not belonging to the Transnational Elite, i.e. mainly the "G7") is integrated into neoliberal globalization, it loses every trace of economic and, consequently, national sovereignty, either because it has to obey the EU rules (in Europe) or the WTO and IMF rules in the rest of the world. This is why the struggle for social liberation today is inconceivable unless it has already gone through national liberation. The occupying troops that are now destroying and plundering Greece (or Portugal, Spain, Argentina etc.) and its weakest social strata (with the full cooperation of a small, local privileged elite which controls the media, the political parties, the "Left" intelligentsia etc.) are not a regular army in uniform with lethal weapons of physical violence at their disposal, but an economic army in suits, possessing equally lethal instruments of economic violence, as well as the means to justify it.

So, at this crucial historical juncture that will determine whether we shall all become subservient to neoliberal globalization and the transnational elite or not, it is imperative that we create a Popular Front in each country which will include all the victims of globalization among the popular strata, regardless of their current political affiliations.

In Europe, in particular, where the popular strata are facing economic disaster, what is needed urgently is not an "antifascist" Front, as proposed by the parliamentary juntas in power and the Euro-elites, supported also by the degenerate "Left" (such as Die Linke, the Socialist Workers' Party in UK and its subsidiaries in Greece and elsewhere) which would, in fact, unite aggressors and victims. An "antifascist" front would simply disorient the masses and make them incapable of facing the real fascism being imposed on them by the political and economic elites, which constitute the transnational and local elites. Instead, what is needed is a Popular Front that could attract the vast majority of the people who would fight for immediate unilateral withdrawal from the EU — which is managed by the European part of the transnational elite — as well as for economic self-reliance, thus breaking with globalization.

To my mind, it is only the creation of broad anti-EU Popular Fronts, which could effect the exit from the EU, with the aim of achieving economic self-reliance in each country. Re-development based on self-reliance is the only way in which peoples breaking away from globalization and its institutions (like the EU) could rebuild their productive structures that have been dismantled by globalization. This could, also objectively, lay the ground for future systemic change, decided democratically by the peoples themselves. To expect that the globalization process by itself will create the objective and subjective conditions for a socialist transformation, as some "Paleolithic Marxists" believe, or alternatively, that the creation of self-managed factories within the present globalized system will lead to a self-managed economy, as a variety of life-style "anarchists" suggest, is, in effect, to connive at the completion of the globalization process, as planned by the elites.

The social subject of a mass popular front representing the aims I have already described, is all the victims of neoliberal globalization: the unemployed and the partially employed, wage-earners on the very edge of survival and starving pensioners, the sick who lack medical insurance (who amount to one third of the population today) and children without education, because their parents do not happen to be "privileged".

As far as the political subject is concerned, this is of course, the Mass Popular Front for Social and National Liberation itself, which all the victims of globalization (namely, the vast majority of the world population) ought to join as ordinary citizens, irrespective of party membership and ideology, as long as they are committed to the ultimate aim of breaking links with the internationalized market economy and neoliberal globalization. This ultimate aim could be achieved through the creation of self-reliant economies joined together in a new internationalism based on the principles of solidarity and mutual aid and with the intermediate target to achieve an exit from the international institutions of the NWO like the EU, so that the victims of globalization can get out of the present process of economic catastrophe.

The popular front as a means of effective struggle

The front for social and national liberation could play a significant role in the struggle itself to bring about such a liberatory society. For example, if such a Front existed in Greece at the time the economic catastrophe began, when the savage austerity measures were adopted on top of various "structural reforms" to liberate the markets according to the prescriptions of neoliberal globalization, the fight against economic violence would have been much more effective. This is because the main weapon used by the parliamentary juntas today against any sort of resistance is to turn one section of the population against the other — mainly, those suffering, as "consumers" from industrial action against those taking the action itself as producers (e.g. transport users against transport workers, pupils' parents against teachers and so on). This way, people were unable to unite as citizens in a political action against the parliamentary junta itself (and indirectly against the Transnational Elite), which is ultimately responsible for the economic violence against all citizens who are the victims of globalization. Yet, there is no greater crime than to condemn someone to slow death through economic violence, whatever the "laws" passed by a bunch of privileged, professional politicians, at the service of the elites and those benefiting from globalization, may state.

Such a Front, therefore, could function as a catalyst for fundamental political and economic change, which is the only type of change that could get us out of the current mire, while also revealing the attempted (and well-rewarded) deception of the degenerate "Left," according to which we could somehow emerge from this catastrophe, even without leaving the EU. Thus, the Front could initially demand an immediate general election, in which it could participate with a program for the realization of the aims that I will describe next. These aims would become feasible if the Popular Front Government convened a Constitutional Assembly (or called for a national referendum) which would cancel all the extortionate and colonialist agreements with the EU, NATO etc., i.e. the various "Memoranda" and the consequent implementation "Laws". Then, a real struggle for economic self-reliance could begin in earnest through the radical restructuring of the productive base, with the aim of meeting the basic needs of all citizens, rather than meeting market demands, as prescribed by the Transnational Elite. Furthermore, citizens could then enjoy the benefits of Social Health, and Education, as well as Social Insurance (through new public organizations that they themselves would control directly) and recover the public assets and social goods, which are currently being sold out to multinational corporations and loan sharks.

Such a Popular Front Government would also create the preconditions for the future democratic solution of the problem related to which socio-economic

system the people would adopt (whether it would be an Inclusive Democracy, State Socialism, or a radical form of Social Democracy etc.). At the same time, such a strategy would also allow a genuine, new form of internationalism to be built from below, which will be inspired by the principles of solidarity and mutual aid rather than the principles of competitiveness and profit-making, as at present.

The aims of a Popular Front (PF) Government

Briefly, we may distinguish three main stages through which the liberation process could go through, following the taking over of power by PF governments.

Stage I: short term measures

The immediate measures that should be taken in this process by a Popular Front government may be as follows:

- a) The unilateral exit from EU and the Eurozone (for a country-member of the Eurozone) or from the WTO the IMF and similar institutions (for any other country) that will create the necessary conditions for economic and national sovereignty;
- b) The unilateral cancellation of all Public Debt and the agreements with lenders, as well as of all laws aiming at further opening and liberalization of markets, privatizations and other "structural reforms" imposed by the Transnational Elite;
- c) The cancellation of sell-outs of social wealth by the parliamentary juntas, followed by expropriation without compensation of social wealth acquired by transnational corporations through privatizations;
- d) Strict social controls on all markets for goods and services (including the markets for labor and capital), which will be allowed in only under exceptional circumstances to cover social needs;
- e) Re-designing of the public sector including a socialized health service, public education service, social insurance and the industries covering social needs (banking, energy, transport, communication and so on). In all these sectors private business activity will be ruled out and social services will be controlled by the assemblies of workers in those sectors under the guidance of the Popular Front Government.

f) Guaranteeing full employment for all citizens as well as a minimum income for all (covering at least the survival needs for food, clothing, housing etc.) through heavy progressive taxation on the privileged social groups (following a proper census of all their wealth and incomes, including deposits abroad); such measures will also finance the Popular Front's government social policies.

g) Finally, a necessary condition for the implementation of all these measures in the short-term, as well as of the measures described below to be taken in the medium and long term, is the radical change of geopolitical relations, so that the "Libyan" or "Ukrainian" examples are not repeated in the countries moving away from the EU and the NWO in general. This presupposes the creation of an international front of all countries presently resisting the NWO, from Venezuela, Bolivia and Cuba up to the countries in the EU periphery that will break with the EU, the peoples in the Middle East (Syria, Iran), as well as the peoples in the broader Eurasian area, and particularly the Russian people who presently, from communists up to nationalists, are united against the NWO.

Stage II: Medium-term measures

The second stage in this process involves the medium term measures that should be taken by a Popular Front government aiming at re-building the production and consumption structure, so that a self-reliant economy could emerge. The aims of the measures to be taken at this transitional period should be the following:

- Regenerating the primary sector and revitalizing the countryside in general, through subsidization of farming, so that a self-reliant primary sector covering most primary needs could be created; this development should be accompanied by the radical decentralization of social services, so that citizens, irrespective of where they live, could enjoy equal quality free social services in Health, Education etc.;
- Creating an industrial sector that would be capable of meeting most basic needs of all citizens, and as many of their other needs through bilateral or multilateral imports financed by exports of surplus goods and services (including tourism);
- Inducing the emergence of a new production structure that encourages the development of a new consumption pattern, which would be determined by the values and needs of self-reliance and in accordance

with traditional cultural values of each people rather than by the values and needs of globalization;

- Developing a mixed system of ownership of the means of production, ranging from small private ownership (e.g. farming, services) to various forms of collective ownership (from socialized industries e.g. in energy, communication, transport to co-ops e.tc) and demotic enterprises in which the people running them will be the workers employed by them, under the guidance of the demotic assemblies, i.e. the citizens' assemblies in the municipalities where the enterprises are based;⁸ and, finally.
- Establishing a new mixed system of allocation of resources for this transitional stage, which will consist of indicative planning, economic democracy and the market.

Stage III: Long-term measures

In this way, the second stage will prepare the ground for the transition to the third stage, at which the crucial decision on the form of the systemic change will be taken democratically by the citizen's assemblies. Such assemblies could well take the form of a Constitutional Assembly that would determine each country's constitution accordingly. In other words, it is at this stage that citizens will decide democratically the form of self-government they prefer for the future. It is hoped that by this stage, both the objective and subjective conditions for systemic change would have been created. Thus, as far as the objective conditions is concerned (e.g. self-reliance), it is assumed that by that stage these conditions would have already been achieved anyway, so that the new system could function properly. As far as the subjective conditions is concerned, as the decision to be taken would be a fully informed citizens' decision on the form of society they want, it has to be based on their own experiences of the various forms of economic self-management. One could reasonably expect that the subjective conditions would have fully been developed by that time for a considered decision to be taken on the matter, rather than one on the basis of the media's brain washing, as used to be the practice in the past.

⁸ Takis Fotopoulos, *Towards An Inclusive Democracy*, ch. 6.