

Editorial

The present issue begins a practice that we intend to continue in the future, i.e. to offer a series of dialogues on important issues, which would present the views of various currents within the Left (preferably the antisystemic Left), and the corresponding views of the Inclusive Democracy project. It is planned that the next issue will continue with a dialogue on the animal liberation movement—another significant, as well as topical, issue.

This issue begins with an important exchange between Tom Crumpacker and Takis Fotopoulos on the conceptions of liberal and socialist democracy and politics with reference to the corresponding Inclusive Democracy conceptions. **Tom Crumpacker's** paper focuses on the issue of multi-party vs. single party politics and aptly shows, with reference to the US and Cubanese regimes, the oligarchic nature of US democracy in practice and the reasons why a socialist democracy like that of Cuba has to be based on a single-party system, as it could better express the values of the revolutionary movement that brought it about, as well as the 'positive' conception of freedom that socialist Cuba embraces.

On the other hand, **Takis Fotopoulos** attempts to show that the critical issues which characterise the democratic character of a political system or otherwise is not the number of parties supposedly expressing the general interest but whether it is a statist kind of system based on representation (in which case it does not qualify as democracy), or not. He then goes on to show that both multi-party liberal democracy, as well as socialist single-party democracy, are forms of representative and statist democracy, which take for granted the separation of society from state and the economy and as such can not be the basis for an Inclusive Democracy aiming to integrate society with economy and polity, as well as with Nature. However, as he stresses, one should not make the mistake to put in the same bag the capitalist 'democracy' of USA and the socialist one of Cuba since the latter is shown to be superior in meeting the basic needs of all its citizens compared to the former.

Mary Garden's very interesting paper offers a critical assessment of alternative communities with particular reference to the eco-village movement. Her conclusion, drawn not only out of theoretical analysis but also of personal experience, is that eco-villages are a viable alternative to living in the suburbs or inner city living, in other words, they should be seen as just another place to live, inevitably liked by some and disliked by others. No wonder that her realistic advice is that "there would be far less resentment amongst those who finally do leave, if they had been told the truth at the outset. And maybe some wouldn't have gone there in the first place."

Finally, **Teo Velissaris**, in agreement of course with the above conclusion, attempts to bring the discussion back to the significant exchange in the pages of *Democracy & Nature* between Ted Trainer, a supporter of the view that the eco-village movement could potentially be the basis of an antisystemic movement, and Takis Fotopoulos who argued that, as long as such a movement does not explicitly form an integral part of an

antisystemic movement, there is no chance that it could play such a role. Today, as the author pointedly stresses, “New World Order’s wars, ecological degradation, economic crisis and political apathy will, sooner or later, threaten even the most isolated ecovillage paradises. On the basis of Garden’s realistic assessment of eco-villages, as well as the dwindling significance of this movement since then, it seems that it will be even more difficult today than at the time of the exchange to support the view about the potential antisystemic significance of this movement.

The Editorial Committee

Addendum

The recent developments in Palestine necessitated a late addition to the January issue in which **Takis Fotopoulos** examines the main parameters of the Palestinian problem and the bankruptcy of the two-state solution. In his view, the only democratic way out of the vicious cycle of blood is a single multinational and multicultural state, as the Jewish and European Left in the past, and post-Zionists and progressive Palestinians today, have proposed. Such a solution, the author argues, could not only lead to a form of government which would have no relation at all to the present racist Zionist ‘democracy’ and the authoritarian Palestinian Authority —solving, in the process, the problem of refugees from both sides— but could also represent a crucial move towards a future confederation of peoples in Palestine based on an Inclusive Democracy.