



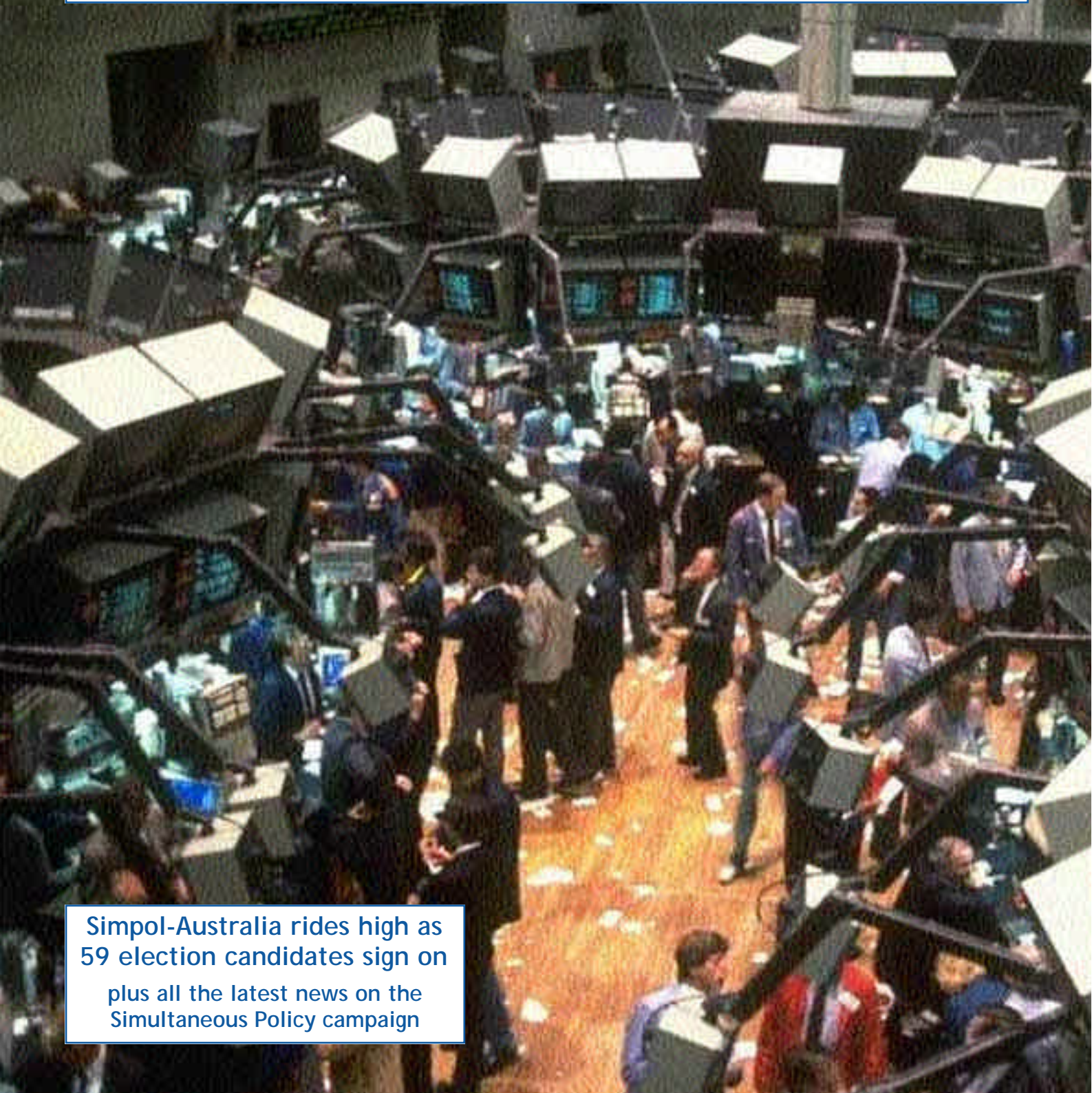
It's Simpol !

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Curbing Corporatocracy and Monetocracy Power

One of the key measures proposed for global agreement within the Simultaneous Policy development process

Peter Challen tells us why corporate and money autocracy comprise serious threats to the global commons. Page 4



Simpol-Australia rides high as 59 election candidates sign on plus all the latest news on the Simultaneous Policy campaign

It's Simpol !



The Simultaneous Policy

International Simultaneous Policy Organisation

The International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (ISPO) brings together national Simultaneous Policy Organisations to promote the Simultaneous Policy (SP).

It is free to join the SP campaign by registering as an SP Adopter. SP Adopters can take part in developing, and ultimately approving, the Simultaneous Policy. SP Adopters are welcome to participate in their local SP Adopters' Group.

SP Adopters are additionally invited to apply for membership of their national Simultaneous Policy Organisation. There is an annual fee for membership. Membership is conditional on accepting the Founding Declaration, which is sent to all successful applicants (and can also be found on the ISPO website). Extract from the Founding Declaration:

"We at ISPO believe that the greatest barrier to bringing about the necessary changes is destructive competition between nations to attract capital and jobs. The resultant divisiveness not only drives us apart, setting person against person and nation against nation, it also permits each to justify the continuance of such behaviour. Co-operation, by contrast, can bring us together to solve our problems in the knowledge that all of us are jointly responsible for our predicament. But we also recognise that co-operation to solve humanity's problems will not come about by chance. A practical method of achieving it is required and the gravity of our current situation necessitates speed. The changes must therefore take place within our existing framework of world politics and international relations."

How do you want the world to be?

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Surge of support

The really encouraging news in this issue is the "surge of support" for the **Simultaneous Policy** shown by 59 candidates in October's federal election in Australia (see Brian Jenkins' contribution under Campaigning Updates). And, following the initial pledges received during the European elections in June, more have been received in the pre-2005 election public awareness campaign currently under way among MPs at Westminster.

What accounts for these welcome successes? - particularly when some politicians will have heard about SP for the first time only on receipt of these campaign letters. Deductions about the answer to this question are instructive.

First, it suggests that SP is increasingly seen as a new and convincingly argued political initiative acceptable in its own right.

Secondly, it may indicate that candidates and parliamentarians are beginning to realise their public support for SP sends a message to voters that they understand citizens' concerns are now both global and local at the same time.

Thirdly, it's possible that politicians of the left may regard SP as an organisation prepared to participate in international boycotts, as advocated by such writers as Arundhati Roy and Naomi Klein and supported by many activists worldwide. (See, for instance, *The Role of Boycotts in the Fight for Peace* by Paul Rockwell at <http://www.commondreams.org/views04/1118-24.htm>. And Hazel Henderson's assertion in her newsletter of 30/10/04 that "all corporations face the challenge of the world's newest superpower: global world opinion".)

And, fourthly, politicians may be painfully aware of the low esteem in which they are universally held, as confirmed by a poll claiming to represent the views of 1.2 billion people in 60 countries published in November by Gallup International for the World Economic Forum. This reported "a massive vote of no confidence in political elites worldwide" because "almost two out of three people considered their leaders to be dishonest, ... 60% said they had too much power, and 52% said they were unethical" (Ian Traynor in *The Guardian*, 19/11/04).

So it follows that a win-win situation can develop for SP and politicians as each new election approaches. Adopters can campaign confident that SP has now progressed from being a Book and a Big Idea to an emerging political reality. And **politicians can for the first time feel empowered to support measures involving simultaneous global cooperation** because of SP's growing international outreach among voters.

Thus much is to be gained when both parties discover common ground in achieving their different objectives.

To this end, a Learning Forum has been launched on the Yahoo-group list 'simpol', available to all Adopters. Its purpose is to share and cross-fertilise campaigning



Simpol-UK is a member of the Trade Justice Movement, a network of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) campaigning to change trade rules. Adopters took part in a rally of 6,000 people in September, also taking the opportunity handing out leaflets to promote SP to a sympathetic audience.

experience in all countries where SP groups are active.

What works? It is perhaps no coincidence that the first pledges from candidates and sitting politicians in the UK came from the regions where local groups were raising awareness with leafleting, policy fora and stalls. Yet we have seen that direct-mailing candidates in Australia and MPs in the UK has also brought in pledges. SP stalls and events are steadily increasing the number of Adopters, but perhaps time and resources also need to be found for advertisements and leafleting to reach those not already interested in global justice issues to ensure SP is a truly democratic, open and inclusive movement.

Your views on these and additional campaigning activities are awaited with interest, either in Learning Forum exchanges, or by Letter to the Editor if you have not yet become an Adopter.

The lead article in this issue on corporate and monetary autocracy is recommended for attention because Peter Challen gives us a lucid explanation of why these are serious threats to social justice and sustainability. Indeed, though he doesn't say so explicitly, the world's current debt-based monetary system can be described in plain language as a despicable and unnecessary scam that unfairly favours the rich - unnecessary because it is a human construction and therefore reversible, given the political will to reform it.

Readers will also be interested to know that Peter's quote from *Gaia Democracies* by Madron and Jopling provides a link with the extracts below from John Bunzl's Preface to foreign editions of *The Simultaneous Policy*. These three authors foresee the need for our political thinking to move on in evolutionary terms towards "a higher order of complexity", for they agree that "our present modes of governance ... are no longer capable of functioning properly". John's conclusion in this brief update to his original book is that, as a guide to the means by which change can be implemented, SP "has strong parallels with all the previous transitions in past evolution".

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Exposing Corporate and Money Autocracy to Public Scrutiny as Major Threats to the Global Commons

Peter Challen describes “corporatocracy and monetocracy as ogres bestriding the globe”. He has accordingly compiled this assessment of the threats they pose because he considers our ignorance of how they function to our detriment in a globalised world prevents us from finding the political will to replace them with achievable alternatives. The aim of this article is thus to increase public awareness, correct popular misconceptions, and provide an informed basis for future action.

As Canon Emeritus of Southwark Diocese in London, UK, he is currently chairman of the Christian Council for Monetary Justice and a co-founder of the Forum For Stable Currencies. He presides over meetings of the London Global Open Table on Economic Justice, is a trustee of Simpol-UK, and is co-author with Rodney Shakespeare of *Seven Steps to Justice* (New European Publications, 2002).

Why are they ogres? Their sway is ubiquitous, with obfuscations and deceptions, and their effects amount to what Galbraith calls 'innocent fraud'. Their power rises to highly influential levels, where most people feel them to be beyond criticism or correction. And even governments are subject to their constant pressures and outright demands.

Corporate autocracy

This stems from the legal status and identity of a corporation as a 'person', a person greater than each and all of its participants, with powers that create, interpret or rise above the law, almost at will. Research by Corporate Watch under the following headings exposes the roots of the problem (see *Corporate Law and Structures*, www.corporatewatch.org.uk).

Ownership: A company is owned by its shareholders and controlled by directors. Directors have a duty to act in the best interests of shareholders' investments and are not permitted to consider any other interests. A corporation is an artificial person permitted to do most things a person can do in terms of business. Corporations



Adopters have participated in discussions on some of these issues at special screenings of *The Corporation*, a Canadian film by Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott and Joel Bakan. See the 'events' report and www.thecorporation.com for details.

regularly make use of legal precedents that originally related only to real people. Under the 1998 Human Rights Act, corporations can claim rights to a fair trial, to privacy, to freedom of expression, and to property.

Who is responsible? Liability and the 'veil' of incorporation: Corporations have 'limited liability', which means shareholders are not responsible for the debts of the company or for civil or criminal offences. This also applies where the shareholder is another company - a parent company is largely protected from responsibility for its subsidiary. Making companies liable for criminal offences such as manslaughter is extremely difficult.

The effects of these unjust current structures: Corporations' economic power, and their lobbying power over governments, makes changing company law very difficult, though lawyers generally refuse to see this power. Companies are in some ways legally obliged to use their power because their sole motive is to protect and enhance their profits.

The corporate mind: The corporation is run as a centrally planned dictatorship. However, there is no dictator: neither shareholders nor directors have ultimate responsibility for the company's actions and purpose. This allows the corporation to plough on regardless, acting single-mindedly in its own best interest.

Corporate psychology - killing from behind a desk: Most people who work for corporations think of themselves as basically decent and good, even where they are involved in planning or authorising actions that lead to death, disease and impoverishment of people, or destruction of the environment. Psychologists speak of the conflict of 'espousal theory and theory in use', a phenomenon I detected in 40 years of privileged access to economic enterprises and described as 'personal aspirations suppressed by institutional arrogance'.

Size: In law large companies are governed by rules originally intended for small ones. Difficulties therefore arise when lawyers are called upon to distinguish between different sizes and types of corporation in defending claims against transnational corporations whose activities extend beyond many national frontiers.

Money autocracy

This relies on the long assumed freedom and ability of commercial banks to increase the money supply by issuing credit as debt, which demands compound interest in amounts far beyond the value of savings held. The following paragraphs succinctly summarise the nature of the unjust system within which we live, incorrectly assumed to be unchangeable (from p.11 of *Gaian Democracies: redefining globalisation & people power* by Roy Madron & John Jopling, Green Books, 2003).

Using a systems approach, we can see that the huge range of unjust and unsustainable impacts [on life in the 21st century] is not haphazard. The unjust and unsustainable aspects of globalisation stem from the purposes, principles and ideologies of a purposeful human system we have called the 'Global Monetocracy'.

In systems terms, injustice and unsustainability are

'emergent properties' of the system as a whole. As a purposeful human system, the Global Monetocracy is not designed to deliver justice and sustainability. For this reason, we do not attach blame to any specific group or class. Many people, not just the financial and business elites, have prospered immensely in the service of the Global Monetocracy. There are others who defend it ferociously against its many critics. Even so, they are just minor components of a complex system that has evolved over several centuries. To blame them as individuals, or specific groups or classes, is to make a fundamental strategic error. If we want a just and sustainable global system in the future, it is the Global Monetocracy as a whole that must be reconfigured - the totality, not just parts of it.

Our description of today's global system as the Global Monetocracy originates from our identification of its core purpose as a system. Every human system has a purpose that governs the way it works, and this is true of today's form of globalisation. The systemic purpose of the Global Monetocracy is the continuation of money growth in order to maintain the current debt-based money-system.

It is not widely known that almost all the money we use comes into existence, not by governments creating it, but as a result of a bank agreeing to make a loan to a customer at interest. Only about 3% - the notes and coins - is government-made. The other 97% comes into existence as a debt owed by a customer to a bank. We cite authorities such as James Robertson, Richard Douthwaite and Michael Rowbotham to show that the effect of this is that our economies have to grow in order to avoid financial collapse. The debt-money system is thus the driving force behind the Global Monetocracy. The risk of collapse forces governments to give priority to policies that serve the money growth imperative; and in turn, these policies produce the unjust and unsustainable form of globalisation that we have today.

Countering these impostors on a global scale

Corporatocracy: Corporations need to be made actively and formally to take account of the interests of workers, customers, suppliers, people living near their operations and the rest of the world. This would, of course, fundamentally change what corporations do. And, as artificial 'personhood' creations, corporations should not have human rights nor human legal standing as a requirement to protect the interests of real human beings. Corporations should be held responsible for the actions of subsidiaries, or should not have subsidiaries. Reform of limited liability would discourage irresponsible behaviour and risk-taking.

It so happens an innovation in UK law that can now play an important role in such reforms is the creation of Limited Liability Partnerships, currently used by some 7000 enterprises (Antonia Swinson: 'New legal structure that could change the world', *Radical Economics*, Sep/Oct 2004, p.7). "For the first time anywhere in the world it became possible to form a corporate body ... which had both collective limited liability and mutual, co-operative characteristics of partnerships. ... An LLP makes it possible for all stakeholders in an enterprise - staff, management, investors, suppliers and clients - to be members of an Open Capital Partnership which replaces

the usual adversarial contracts of debt- and equity-based models."

These and related ideas are discussed and helpfully expanded in two New Economics Foundation booklets: *Stakes not Shares: curbing the power of the corporations*, Roger Cowe, 2001; *A New Way to Govern: organisation and society after Enron*, Shann Turnbull, 2002. And Ulrich Duchrow and Franz Hinkelammert, in diligently researched evidence presented for the World Council of Churches in *Property - for people not for profit* (Zed Books, 2004), trace the close association of the accumulated acquisition of property and the disproportionate money shares of the rich at the expense of the poor, wherever structural adjustment programmes are in force.

Monetocracy: Stephen Zarlenga, in *The Lost Science of Money* (AMI, 2004), makes clear in research based on original sources, that credit and money are creations of law, not of nature. Thus it is no surprise that, in their book *Monetary Reform: Making it Happen!* (ISPO, 2003) James Robertson and John Bunzl write about a "more pluralistic multi-level-currency era .. to include local currencies to meet the need of local communities ... and a global currency to meet the need of the world community for a means of transnational exchange. One of the principles is that the profit (or 'seigniorage') arising from creating new money in a public currency - such as the pound, euro and dollar, as well as new local currencies and a new global currency - should be public revenue, not private profit. Another is that public currencies should be created debt-free, not as interest-bearing repayable debt".

Other proposals for the creation of an international (or reserve) currency exist. For instance, in *The Future of Money* (Random House, 2000), Bernard Lietaer suggests a commodity-based currency, for which he proposed the name Terra. Richard Douthwaite (*The Ecology of Money*, Green Books, 1999) favoured the creation of the energy-based Ebcu related to special emission rights as the global reserve currency, supported by national or regional currencies and a range of local currencies for community, social and business groups (eg LETS, WIR, Time Dollars, etc.).

But whatever progress is made by specialists and politicians in assessing the risks in opting for unilateral or simultaneous monetary reform, Robertson and Bunzl make it quite clear the primary need is for **campaigning organisations to cooperate in order to build up international public opinion in favour of reform**. And in the case of Adopters of the Simultaneous Policy of course, such pressure for change can be strengthened by the influence they wield internationally as voters in parliamentary elections.

Monetary reform policy forum

Wednesday 2 March 2005

At a central London venue.
With James Robertson & John Bunzl
authors of *Monetary Reform - Making it Happen!*
and Peter Challen of CCMJ.

Preface to Foreign Language Editions of *The Simultaneous Policy*

John Bunzl writes: With the opportunity provided by the translation of my book into other languages, there was some temptation to rewrite certain parts of it because the events of 9/11 and all that followed indicate a radically more unstable world than the one I described.

But these events, I contend, serve only to reinforce the book's underlying argument. Furthermore, they also make the successful implementation of the Simultaneous Policy (SP) both more necessary and even more likely. So rather than rewrite the book, I am instead simply adding a preface which, apart from reflecting on recent world events, also provides an opportunity to update readers on SP's progress as a campaign. (Contact: jbunzl@simpl.org) [What follows are key extracts from that preface editorially selected for readers of *It's Simpol!*. *The Simultaneous Policy* was originally published by New European Publications, London, in 2001, 212 pages.

"Simple solutions" [to current global problems have been proposed] but cannot succeed in restoring social stability and moral security because they effectively misdefine the problem. What is really required is not a regressive "going back" to a separatist past which, even were it possible, would be totally inappropriate for today's interconnected world. Instead, a wholesale shift in the way our world's economy and governance are organized is required: a shift to a new, higher level. After all, it is precisely *because* present modes of governance - our political parties and nation states - are no longer capable of functioning properly in today's globalised world that a transformation to a global level of human social organisation is now needed.

Such a shift does not mean doing away with existing structures or traditions, however. Rather, genuine evolutionary change seeks instead to *transform*. For just as molecules transformed atoms by transcending and including them in a higher, more integral level of organisation, so, in turn, cells did the same for both molecules and atoms. Thus, this procession to ever higher levels of complex organisation continues; and so it has also been with organisms, societies of organisms and the evolution of our social and political institutions.

Seen in this way, the next shift does not therefore mean doing away with, or somehow side-lining existing political parties, nation states or local differences, but instead transcending and including them into a wider, more inclusive and more integral global embrace that is genuinely adequate to meeting the global challenges we now face; an integral, simultaneous, global transformation "through which runs the blood of a common humanity and beats the single heart of a very small planet struggling for its own survival, and yearning for its own release into a

deeper and a truer tomorrow" (Ken Wilber, 2000).

"Every crisis is an opportunity" indeed. And it is that fact of life which I had not fully appreciated when writing the book in 1999/2000. For it is only as a result of crisis and pressure that a move to a new higher level of organisation - a higher order of "complexity" - is achieved. This became clearer only when one or two evolution biologists approached me to point out that the change process proposed by SP has strong parallels with all the previous major transitions in past evolution.

On further investigation I found, firstly, that from an evolutionary perspective and for all its good and bad sides, globalisation is, above all, a *natural* part of our evolution. Indeed, evolution biology tells us that similar potentially catastrophic crises preceded all the major shifts in evolution. The detrimental effects of globalisation which now threaten human civilization itself - global poverty, global warming, global economic instability and so on - merely represent humanity's greatest crisis - but also its greatest opportunity.

Secondly, that since such crises occurred not just in human evolution but in *all* evolution, the struggle humanity is presently undergoing is, in essence, no different to what other societies of organisms have gone through as they gradually fumbled their way through destructive, competitive crisis towards cooperative species maturity. We are, therefore, truly a *part* of nature. This more holistic understanding we now have of evolutionary processes (which goes well beyond Darwin) and our ability to locate our present position in them only serves to show us that this is true. We are coming home after all.

... ..

The era of conscious evolution has thus arrived. In the context of globalisation, SP is, so these evolution biologists tell me, the first practical mechanism they have encountered that has this vital potential.

All that is not to say, however, that I stand rigidly by everything I have written. For example, I am now quite prepared to agree with some critics who pointed out that some of the detailed policy proposals listed in Chapter 5 for inclusion in SP's range of legislative measures are not appropriate. But what the detailed policy measures of SP might eventually be was never the main point of this book. Instead this has always been a *guide* book: a book primarily about *how* desirable global policies could be implemented, not so much about *what* those policies should actually be.

..... ..

As to the progress of the campaign itself, at the time of writing (August 2004) it continues to grow especially in the UK and, to a lesser extent, in other English-speaking countries. This has largely been due to a great deal of activity on the part of many campaigners who are working hard to develop SP around the world and with whom it is my joy and privilege to collaborate. The first national SP organisation, Simpol-UK, has been established as a non-profit membership organisation to take the campaign forward in the UK. And, during recent elections, a number of political party candidates from different parties officially pledged their support for SP [representing a breakthrough for the SP campaign from proposition to political reality].

Simpol-Australia rides high as 59 election candidates sign on

Brian Jenkins, Australian National Coordinator, reports on the successful campaign organised by his small team of volunteers before the Federal Election in October, and anticipates SP Adopters can now make a difference in future elections because of tight margins in numerical support for contending parties.

Australia's October 2004 federal election resulted in the return of the pro-corporate Howard Government for a fourth term in Canberra. This has been explained as much by workers' appreciation of good economic times as by a lack of effective opposition. Either way, it is bad news for social and ecological values.

Because of the steady convergence of the major parties' policies, Australian elections are increasingly being contested by independents and minor parties, which numbered well over 30 in this election. And it was mainly from among them that SimpPol-Australia managed to sign up 59 candidates pledging to implement SP. It is noteworthy that one signatory (John Cherry, Australian Democrats, Queensland) is a sitting senator; another (Tom Wilson of Victoria) belongs to a major party, the ALP; and, above all, that Rachel Siewert of The Greens (WA) has been elected to the Senate with the backing of SP voters.

The national contest was essentially between John Howard's conservative Liberal Party (in coalition with the smaller rural National Party) and the Australian Labor Party (ALP) which has pursued its own pro-corporate agenda for two decades and which, in fact, launched programmes of trade liberalisation, privatisation and, for instance, harsh treatment of refugees, when in government during the 1980s.

Issues included the Government's 3-term incumbency (since 1996), Australia's disproportionate membership of the "willing" Middle-East invasion forces and the growing domestic gulf between the incomes and opportunities of rich and poor. However, the Howard government cleverly reduced the choice to one between productive economic management and Labor's unhappy track record of having driven interest rates to between 15% and 20% when in government. Besides, the ALP lacked credible leadership and frontbenchers with experience in office.

Significance of the Senate

For social reformers, the worst news is that the Government has achieved majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, enabling unencumbered passage of its neoliberal agenda and, undoubtedly, future revision and repeal of past measures representing the views of a 'hostile' Senate whose balance will be reversed on 30 June 2005. Unlike the House of Lords, the Australian Senate has power to reject or amend money bills and to delay or block supply bills. It has authority over its own procedures, including a powerful inquisitorial committee system. Except in the event of a 'double dissolution' of both houses, senators are elected for a 6-year term at half-Senate elections conducted 3-yearly.

Democrats and Greens

The brave enterprise of the Australian Democrats as a third party formed in 1977 (preceding the UK's Liberal Democrats) started to self-destruct during the 1990s because of its members' inability to retain control of what had been a very promising policy agenda. The party's senators, at one time numbering nine, made very astute use of the committee system and professed to exercise a "balance of reason". At times, the Democrats were able to amend or block extreme measures with the support of the ALP. Alas, earlier leaders of stature gave way to others more susceptible to seduction by major-party players, exposing the Democrats to erosion of independence and, finally, to active support for a regressive, pro-corporate taxation regime. Voters have justly savaged the party for this, resulting in defeat of all three senators who were re-electable in 2004.

On 1 July 2005, the Democrats will lose party status in the Senate, being reduced to only four senators with terms ending in 2008, at which time the party will undoubtedly disappear. The resulting vacuum in the progressive side of politics is being filled by emergent Greens under the federal leadership of long-term Tasmanian stalwart Bob Brown. The Greens picked up two new Senate seats, after confidently expecting to win three or four. Notably, they narrowly failed to secure the Queensland seat lost by Democrat Senator John Cherry, which passed to the Coalition, thus sealing a Senate majority for Mr Howard, the first obtained by either major party since the mid-1970s.

Preparing an SP campaign

The 2004 election was for 150 House of Representatives vacancies and 40 (of a total 76) Senate seats. Each would be contested by a field of seven or more candidates, making for a total 'target audience' in the order of 1400. Several months before the election was called, we had three active SP coordinators covering the eight vast states and territories. Since contact details for all federal parliamentarians are available online, we resolved to seize the moment and start lobbying all parties and candidates rather than await the next opportunity three years later. It was decided, as a minimum, to target each candidate by direct mail and follow up with other contact methods according to opportunity and resources. Of equal importance to securing pledges was the goal of spreading the word about SP through direct, party and media avenues.

Our lack of 'official' SP policies caused us some doubt about whether election candidates could commit generally to SP. For this reason, we also invited them to sign up for a particular local initiative, viz, that Australian citizens be empowered to petition directly for specific constitutional change. As it turned out, 59 candidates pledged to implement SP as against 24 who were prepared to sign the constitution pledge. Full details of the pledges and respondents are posted at <http://members.iinet.net.au/~jenks/simpol/fedelect.html>

Greens prominent in SP adoption surge

The first completed SP pledge was received from Senator John Cherry (Australian Democrats, Queensland) with

whose office there had been some earlier special communication. Soon after, Senator Len Harris (One Nation Party, NSW) returned a signed pledge for the constitution initiative (but not for SP). There was no other positive response from a sitting member, though some gave their reasons in letters of reply.

The Western Australian Greens undertook to circulate our material to all their 19 candidates, which resulted in the Stop Press announcement of four returned pledges in the last (Autumn) issue of 'It's Simpol'. But, soon after, a blanket pledge was made out for the entire party by its lead Senate candidate Rachel Siewert. The Greens (WA) thus became the first Australian political party to sign on to SP. (In Australia, Greens are primarily organised at State level, and subscribe to a federal affiliation with The Australian Greens.)

Though currently without a federal parliamentarian, The Greens (WA) provided the party's first-ever senator in 1987 and had two other senators in 1993-99. Now, Rachel Siewert was successful at the October election and will take her place in the Senate on 1 July 2005. There are five Greens in Western Australia's Legislative Council (Upper House), so the party's pledge is very significant for the establishment and prestige of Simultaneous Policy throughout the world.

Late in the campaign period, I spoke with the Australian Greens' leader, Senator Bob Brown and gave him a copy of John Bunzl's *The Simultaneous Policy*. It was unfortunately too late for our message to directly impact on every Greens candidate, but this will certainly happen before the next federal election. Another Greens Senate seat has been narrowly won by Christine Milne in Bob's home state of Tasmania. Other possible seats have been narrowly lost, notably in Queensland.

The tight margins make it a certainty that SP voters will be making a difference in future elections. The experience has also shown that incorporation of Simpol-Australia may be achievable in 2005.

SP's participation in the European Social Forum in London

Protecting the Right to Water was the theme of the Autumn 2004 newsletter, with Franklin Fredrick, member of the Citizens for Water Movement in Brazil and Coordinator of the International Free Water Academy, writing on this policy measure in process.

This became the theme of ISPO's involvement in the European Social Forum, which brought together over 20,000 global justice campaigners in London from 15 to 17 October. ISPO had a stall, where volunteers signed up Adopters from around the world, and participated in two events. The first was a seminar on 'Water: Power-politics and public services' conducted in partnership with the following organisations:

- Attac Switzerland;
- Baby Milk Action;
- Campaign for the Reform of the World Bank, Italy;
- Citizens Movements for the Water Circuit of Minas

- Gerais (Brazil);
- CEO (Corporate Europe Observatory), The Netherlands;
- EPSU (European Public Services Union);
- PSI (Public Services International);
- Simpol-UK/ISPO (International Simultaneous Policy Organisation);
- TIN (Transnational Institute), The Netherlands;
- WEED, Germany;
- War on Want, UK;
- WDM (World Development Movement, UK).

Franklin spoke on the proposed Free Water Academy and the possibility of giving such an institution status through the Simultaneous Policy and the specific issue of the environmental impact of exploitation of ground water for bottling by Nestlé in Brazil, which Citizens for Water has been involved in tackling with legal action.

ISPO prepared an 'ideas sheet' capturing different approaches to 'Protecting the Right to Water', including the Free Water Academy, a proposed international convention (to be discussed at the Alternative Water Forum in March 2005: see www.fame2005.org) and a human rights approach (see www.righttowater.org.uk). The sheet can be downloaded from the Simpol-UK website and is a useful resource for SP Adopters' Groups planning a policy forum on this topic.

The seminar at the ESF also examined the impact of privatisation policies which are being forced on governments through bi-lateral aid agreements and multi-lateral debt relief and trade agreements. Campaigners from Spain, Germany and the Philippines joined Franklin in relating their experiences, good and bad, in opposing such pressure. At the same time, there is pressing need to address the lack of water experienced by 1.1 billion people and the 2 million deaths that occur annually due to water-related diseases. ISPO will keep a close watch on developments and bring proposals into the SP policy development process.

The second event involving ISPO was a workshop on holding corporations accountable, taking Nestlé as a case study, conducted with Baby Milk Action, Corporate Watch and Ethical Consumer and guest speakers. SP-supporting MEP, Caroline Lucas, chaired. Baby Milk Action spoke on aggressive marketing of baby foods. Attac-Bern spoke on trade-union-busting activities in Colombia. Oxfam spoke on its campaign to secure a living wage for coffee growers. Franklin spoke on the exploitation of water. John Bunzl, ISPO director, spoke on how SP could include measures to hold corporations accountable, recognising that the system of competition in a globalised world pressures business leaders into driving down standards to maintain their dominant position. The workshop was repeated the following week in Edinburgh, chaired by Mark Ballard, a Green Party Member of the Scottish Parliament, where Josie Sawers spoke on the role of SP.

The theme of the European Social Forum was 'Another world is possible'. The challenge is how to distil the proposals for what that world should be into a coherent whole which global justice campaigners can collectively work towards. SP provides a strategy to do this and involvement in the Social Forums is a useful way to draw in the experiences of people from around the world to the policy development process.

SP Adopters' Group activities in the UK

Reading

Simultaneous Policy's volunteer group in Reading, Berkshire held an event as part of Reading International Festival (RIF), an annual festival in the last half of October. RIF is organised by a Reading International Solidarity Centre and such organisations as Amnesty International, The Nepal Kingdom Foundation, Oxfam, Baby Milk Action, and is supported by many national and local organisations concerned with human rights and all manner of ethical matters with an international aspect.



SimPol Reading obtained permission to set up a stall in the busy open-air shopping area of Broad Street on Saturday 23 October. People's attention was grabbed by The Sustainable Theatre Group (STG), which represented the competition between nations with an exciting horse-race-type commentary as five people pushed shopping trolleys in a race to dominate world economics. They had costumes and various props (a cardboard engine and other things) and acted the parts of various nations, vying for the dominant role. So simple, yet very effective. Although there were strong winds and heavy rain, passers-by were still persuaded to sign up as Adopters on the spot. For further information in using theatre to promote SP see the Simpol-UK website and campaign DVD/video. Contact Mo Adshead for information on future events on mo@nkf-mt.org.uk or 018 950 2281.

Cambridge

Cambridge SP Adopters' Group (CAMSPAG) joined Corporate Watch and local global justice groups at a special screening of the Canadian documentary *The Corporation*. This entertaining film examines how corporations have the same legal rights as individual people and asks, 'If corporations are people, what type of people are they?' Through case studies and the testimonies of corporate leaders, whistle blowers, spies and campaigners they conclude that traits such as disregard for impact on others, putting their own wellbeing first, refusal to admit wrong-doing, etc., fit the medical diagnosis of a psychopath. So what can be done to change these traits? The film offers possibilities, as did speakers after the film. If you are interested in conducting your own event, you can obtain a free kit via the website www.thecorporation.com, including an 18-minute summary DVD, and can link in with screening events at your local cinema. CAMSPAG is running street stalls on occasional Saturdays. Contact mikebrady@simpl.org.uk or 07986736179 for details.

Penzance

Simpl-Penzance street stalls continue to increase the number of Adopters in the area, and the group was pleased to receive a pledge to implement SP alongside other governments from their MP (see below). Contact Barnaby Flynn at barnawasp@hotmail.com or 07951 905396 for details of future events.

Bristol

Coordinator Rob Wicke: rw3075@bristol.ac.uk

Hull and Humber

Coordinator Richard Speight: r_d_speight@hotmail.com

Other regions

A meeting on SP was held in Glasgow in November, following the workshop on holding corporations accountable in Edinburgh in October (see page 8). Green party MSPs attended both events and are interested in supporting SP, but would like to hear the views of constituents. So if you live in Scotland, please write to your MSP of whatever party encouraging them to sign the pledge to implement SP alongside other governments. A suggested letter and pledge form are included in the Campaign Pack available on the Simpol-UK website. A meeting was also held in Northampton in October.

If you are interested in making contact with Adopters in these or other regions, or would like to hold an event to promote SP, please contact Local SP Adopters' Group Coordinator, Mike Brady, mikebrady@simpl.org.uk or 07986 736179.

Campaign resources

A campaign pack including information sheets and resources can be downloaded from the Simpol-UK website. A film on campaigning for SP has been produced by Cambridge SP Adopters' Group. It lasts 55 minutes and topics include: running a stall, holding a policy forum, campaigning at elections, working with the media and presenting SP (with a theatre piece and a talk by John Bunzl, author of *The Simultaneous Policy*). Printed copies of the campaign pack and DVDs and videos of the film can be ordered via www.simpl.org.uk or contact mikebrady@simpl.org.uk or 07986 736179.

National and local group events

In addition to regular meetings and street stalls, the following events are scheduled.

Simpl-UK

2 March: Monetary Reform policy forum. See page 5

Cambridge Simultaneous Policy Adopters' Group

1 February: Policy forum on *Holding Corporations Accountable*.

More Westminster MPs respond to invitations to pledge their support



Early in November, thanks in part to personal approaches made by Barnaby Flynn, Coordinator of Penzance SP Adopters' Group, **Andrew George**, Liberal Democrat MP for St Ives, Cornwall, since 1997, wrote to pledge his support of SP in principle, endorsing Noam Chomsky's comments that "It's ambitious and provocative.

Can it work? Certainly worth a serious try".



And early in December **Mike Hancock**, Liberal Democrat MP for Portsmouth South, responded positively to John Bunzl's direct-mailed invitation to pledge support, saying: "Anything that helps to break down the bunker mentality of nationalists, wherever they are in the world, is very welcome".

News Briefs

Simpol-UK's first AGM held in London on 16 Oct. John Bunzl, chair of the Board of trustees, welcomed the 19 participants and introduced and thanked the management team that is helping take SimpPol-UK forward. He then presented a report on the progress of the campaign for the adoption of the Simultaneous Policy in the UK and worldwide. There is increasing parliamentary support in the UK and a surge of support in Australia prior to the recent federal elections.

The company secretary, Patrick Andrews, announced the results of the ballot for new trustees, which closed on 11 October. From a list of eight candidates, the following were elected to serve for 3 years:

- Patrick Andrews, lawyer: pdda@btopenworld.com
- John Bunzl, businessman and founder of ISPO: jbunzl@simpol.org
- Peter Challen, Church of England canon-emeritus: peter@southwark.org.uk
- Rachael Durrant, university student: rad46@cam.ac.uk
- Geoffrey Hunt, university professor: g.hunt@surrey.ac.uk
- Brian Wills, development information specialist: brian.wills@wanadoo.fr

John Bunzl then presented the strategy of SimpPol-UK for the next year. This was followed by a presentation on local groups and campaigning by Mike Brady.

In a discussion on policy development a participant suggested that Open Space technology be used to decide how SimpPol should go about formulating policy; and it was agreed that this be discussed at the next board meeting. The meeting closed after Mary Finnigan had given a brief presentation on how to handle the media.

Progress with SimpPol-Cafés. In the Summer issue we announced the inauguration of Café meetings arranged under SimpPol-UK auspices. 'Café' is the term now

popularly used for a meeting lasting 60-90 minutes composed of a few people linked within a city or town through existing networks who are able to convene a Café within a week's notice (at no cost other than the coffee!), in which discussion on a prearranged topic is led by someone who has useful experience or knowledge to share with others who are actively interested.

Simpol-UK has become a leader in convening Collaboration Cafés where we look out for an experienced activist, innovator or policymaker who is visiting locally, and ask for their time and choice of topic. To date, most meetings have been in London where we have hosted SimpPol-Cafés on methodologies, such as conflict resolution, and on causes, eg the democratic challenge of maintaining water as a human right when faced with global corporate opposition.

Readers who would welcome more details on the few steps needed to make hosting a SimpPol-Café easy, at a convenient location and concerning a topic that interests them, are welcome to contact Chris Macrae at wcbn007@easynet.co.uk. "Today's successful worldwide movements", he writes, "need active local project teams with inter-networked communications and open meeting spaces for innovative human dialogues, locally and globally. Setting up a Café isn't particularly hard work, and can have the same networking benefits for you and your causes as that of a conference producer!"

School of Athens Global Governance Group conference, 21-23 October. Some 50 leading governmental, academic and civil society personalities participated in this conference, convened primarily to launch the School of Athens as a centre for global governance research and solutions, and **John Bunzl** was invited to attend and submit a position paper (see www.globalgovgroup.com: downloads section). Six workshops focused on Governing economics and human development, security and environmental sustainability, and on Institutional, corporate and civil society solidarity for better governance.

John writes: "Since part of the task of the conference was to identify ideas for the School of Athens to develop, I suggested they investigate the evolutionary system sciences which, to my knowledge, no other comparable group seems to be using as a means of understanding the process of globalisation and of discovering clues as to what actions are now needed. (My article on Evolutionary Biology and SP came in handy in this respect: see http://www.simpol.org/dossiers/dossier-UK/pdf_UK/EvolutionaryBiology_SP.html). A number of people were interested in the SP approach, particularly because US unilateralism was recognised by all as a key barrier to progress."

Review of The Simultaneous Policy in 'The Ecologist' magazine for Nov 2004. Angie Zelter, winner of the Right Livelihood Award in 2001 and a long-time British peace and justice activist talks about her "Five most influential books". And, to the question "Which one book would you give to all politicians?", she responds:

"In our globalised, corporate, free-market world, politicians do not have much power and they are not helping to deal with the major issues of our time. The

unsustainable consumption and continual competitive economic growth promoted by powerful transnational companies are killing the planet and making our lives a misery, and yet there are solutions.

Although individual nation states are largely impotent and unable to survive for long if they alone make the changes that are necessary, there is a mechanism available for politicians to regain the power to act in the interests of ordinary people and for democracy to blossom. *The Simultaneous Policy: an insider's guide to saving humanity and the planet* by John Bunzl is a must for politicians, their constituents and all those concerned with creating a sustainable global economy."

Sad news of the decease on 10 November of Richard Alden Stimson, National Coordinator for the USA. In appreciation of his support for SP, John Bunzl writes: "As I struggled to get SP recognised and disseminated, Richard responded positively to SP very quickly indeed after we were first in contact and he gave both practical and moral support almost from the outset, while also continuing with other important books and projects. This openness to new ideas and his readiness to help are sure indications of an open mind and a generous spirit. So I shall always be grateful for that as I'm sure will all SP adopters in the US and elsewhere. More broadly, however, by involving himself in globalisation's struggle and in keeping abreast of the latest communications technologies, Richard was like an 'Elder' who, paradoxically, always stayed young, active and concerned - always learning, always in the swim."

Campaign tips



Simpol-UK has produced a campaign pack and film. Politicians are most likely to take SP seriously and sign the pledge to implement it alongside other governments if they see an active campaign in their constituency. The pack and film provide advice on running stalls, leafleting during elections, working with the media, holding policy fora and a host of other ideas (the pack can be downloaded free from

www.simpol.org.uk) You can also write directly to your elected representatives explaining your support for SP and asking them to sign the pledge. The following sample letter may be a useful starting point.

Dear _____

As one of your constituents, I am writing to inform you that I have adopted the Simultaneous Policy (SP). SP is being developed by SP Adopters around the world and is a range of desirable policy measures to deal with global problems such as global warming, excessive corporate power, unsustainability, poverty and so on. It is to be implemented simultaneously, ONLY when all or sufficient governments have first pledged to do so. Simultaneous

implementation removes the fear of putting the country at a competitive disadvantage.

Many problems that seem intractable with the current system of competition between nations for investment and jobs could be addressed through simultaneous implementation. This does not mean other efforts should stop, however. SP is a parallel strategy.

Politicians of all parties are being invited to sign a pledge in principle to implement the Simultaneous Policy alongside other governments when all, or sufficient, governments have made the same pledge (see enclosed SP pledge form). Politicians sign the pledge in their own name, not that of their party. Doing so does not conflict with existing party policy as no change in support for party policy is required. The pledge is only implemented when there is sufficient global support, at which time the nature of politics will change significantly in any case. Politicians in the European, UK and Australian Parliaments have already signed the pledge. The Foreign Minister of East Timor and Nobel Peace Laureate, Dr. Jose Ramos-Horta, has also given SP his support. Please see the SP websites www.simpol.org (global) or www.simpol.org.uk (UK) for more information.

I hope you will consider signing the pledge form. As the policy content is still under development, the pledge is provisional and may be rescinded if you object to the policy content as it is finalised.

SP Adopters are not only developing the policy content of SP, they undertake to vote at elections for any candidate, within reason, who has signed the pledge form or to encourage their preferred party, if they have one, to support SP. This is helping to build cross-party support for the campaign. If you do sign the pledge form Simpol-UK, the UK member of the International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (ISPO), can publicise this to SP Adopters to inform their voting decision at election time. SP Adopters place great weight on support for SP when deciding how they will vote.

If you have any questions about SP, please contact Simpol-UK. Contact details are given on the pledge form.

I would be grateful if you could inform me of your decision.

Yours sincerely,

Imagine a world

Where values matter - Where leaders listen
Where the strongest superpower is *we the people*



The Simultaneous Policy

How can *we the people* get our leaders to listen to us and not just to the rich and powerful? How can we make our values their values, values like:

- fair trade and decent livelihoods
- respect for life, health and environmental sustainability
- true democracy - not "corporatocracy"
- freedom, security and equal opportunity for all
- zero tolerance for terror of all kinds - state terror and domestic tyranny included
- unity in diversity among peoples, nations and cultures
- an end to weapons of mass destruction and to war itself as an obsolete means of conflict resolution

If we the people had a say, would we vote for "money talks" and "might makes right" or for the rule of just laws and the rights of individuals and communities? Would we vote to share and conserve the planet's resources, or to hoard and squander them?

Why aren't governments taking action?

Today, global markets and corporations so comprehensively overpower individual nations that no politician or political party dares make the first move to solve global problems for fear of putting their own nation at a significant economic competitive disadvantage. Though legislators know that serious world problems such as global warming, monopolistic corporate power, poverty and environmental destruction all demand decisive action, they are loath to implement the policies needed to solve them. They legitimately fear that in today's liberalized global economy, investors, corporations and jobs would simply pick up and leave for more congenial destinations. However good their intentions, governments feel bound to conform to a straitjacket of market- and business-friendly

policies. That's why, whoever we vote for in the present system, little, if anything, changes.

The Simultaneous Policy

The Simultaneous Policy (SP) is our "people's globalisation policy": a work-in-progress that all citizens who "adopt" SP are designing with the help of independent expert policy-makers. SP is to be implemented when all or sufficient nations are ready to do likewise - simultaneously. Simultaneous implementation means no nation loses out and all the excuses for inaction evaporate.

Here's how the SP strategy works

By adopting SP, we join with Adopters in our own and other countries who undertake to vote in future elections for ANY political party or candidate, within reason, that signs a pledge in principle to implement SP alongside other governments. Alternatively, if we still have a preference for a particular party, our adoption signifies our desire for our party to support SP.

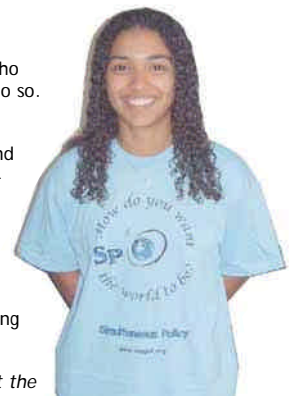
For a politician, signing the pledge to implement SP does not require a change of policies until it is time to implement SP, and so carries no risk. But by moving the world a step nearer to implementation, the politician hastens the day when global politics shifts from competition to co-operation and global problems, about which many care deeply, can be addressed effectively. On the other hand, failure to sign the pledge could cost the politician their seat and hand it to someone who will support SP. With many seats decided by small majorities, the SP voting bloc could make all the difference.

SP is already gaining public and political support. It is not an alternative to other campaigns, but a parallel strategy, enabling us to look beyond fighting to change existing systems to joining with people around the world and collectively answering the question:

How do you want the world to be?

It's free to Adopt!

- I provisionally Adopt SP, and undertake to vote at elections (if I am eligible to vote) for any candidate, within reason, who pledges to implement SP alongside other governments when all, or sufficient, other governments have also pledged to do so. Alternatively, I will encourage politicians in my preferred party to make the pledge.
- I apply for membership of Simpol-UK and enclose my first annual payment of £25 (£10 unwaged/low-waged). Please send me a membership pack and Simpol-UK's Founding Declaration (UK residents or people registered to vote in the UK only - otherwise see the website for details of your National SP Organisation).
- Please send me the representative's/candidate's pledge form (politicians may also tick the other boxes).
- Please send me _____ copies of the leaflet *How do you want the world to be?*
- Please send me _____ copies of John Bunzl's book: *The Simultaneous Policy* at £12.50 each, including postage and packing (UK delivery - contact ISPO for prices outside the UK).
- Please send me _____ large/medium white/pale blue cotton round neck t-shirts with the message: *SP: How do you want the world to be?* at £12.95 including postage and packing (UK delivery - contact ISPO for prices outside the UK).



Mr/Mrs/Ms: _____ Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Tel: _____ Email: _____ Signature: _____

Return form to: ISPO, PO Box 26547, London, SE3 7YT.

Alternatively sign-up on-line.

The Simultaneous Policy

www.simpol.org