



## avantgarde

### **Direct-democratic-federalistic-sustainable world**

Arguments for a world in which essential resources and emissions would be regulated in a direct-democratic manner, including also federalistically, hence with regionally direct-democratically determined peculiarities and exceptions, up to compensation payments, hence for a model like generally politically implemented and tested with relative success in Switzerland.



Times seems more ripe than ever for such a model: The consequences of climate change, also economically, will be so strong in many places in the coming years that many ears might be more open then. Even if in the end it will not turn out as described here, or maybe *not yet*, I hope I could still contribute helpful thoughts on things that affect practically all.

### **Globalization**

Globalization has brought many good things to the world. But it has also disempowered voters in democratic countries to a certain extent. Large companies have gained many opportunities to circumvent any country that would decide something that could reduce the immediate profit of the respective company. Conversely, the problems that arise from this, partially hardly reversible damage to nature and to some degree also to the population (e.g. with unhealthy nutrition), also become global problems that can often only be solved globally.

The approach under communism had been that if "capital" is international, then workers must also organize themselves internationally (i.e. globally). But the communist model was not democratic and it often undermined self-initiative since no personal benefit could be achieved. In China this is a bit different, and yet not a desirable model, since individuals are largely disempowered.

The main problem is that there are hardly any limits for big companies except the laws of nature, plus that longer-term perspectives or even sustainability are not rewarded. As a result, many things happen that cause damage to nature and are not even optimal for consumers.

What would thus be needed would be a system that sustainably manages resources and emissions, in way that is co-decided by those who are affected by it, i.e. generally by all people on this earth, without, however, penalizing certain groups in dangerous or long-lasting ways, and which nevertheless includes that taking (entrepreneurial) risks is rewarded, both financially and morally.

### **Direct-democratic federalism**

In Switzerland decisions can be made in a direct democratic fashion on roughly three levels: federal (country), cantonal (province) and municipal (city/village). Certain things can no longer be changed at the "lower" levels, but many are regulated in a locally adapted manner. In addition, there are compensation payments between the cantons and also from the federal government to the cantons. For example, a mountain canton with a low population density and little industry, which on the other hand does a lot to preserve nature, is financially supported in compensation, so that overall a similar level of wealth prevails throughout Switzerland. This is also often helpful economically: Citizens with a certain wealth buy things, invest in new things, and also have time and opportunity to get involved in many different ways.

All in all, this is certainly a bit boring compared to the politics in other countries, but especially globally for specifically managing the essential resources of nature and conversely of emissions and environmental damage, such a boring system seems to be something that could help and resolve a lot.

For companies it would simply be as if laws of nature would change gradually. This is not a bad thing: Whenever something changes, you can make a profit; the companies that do this efficiently can grow. And people who commit themselves, who dare to do something, can still achieve a great deal of personal prosperity. Even something on a larger scale, like what Nikola Tesla or Jeff Bezos (Amazon founder) are currently trying to do, would still be possible under conditions decided by direct democracy, i.e. progress in the sense of individual possibilities would be close to unhindered.

It is to be expected that climate change will be partially so drastic in the coming years that many companies, even very large ones, will suffer financial losses. In other words, it will be increasingly in the longer-term interest of companies to help prevent or even reverse climate change. In any case, it may often come to what is called in the USA "if you can't beat them, join them".

## **How to get there. . .**

When you look at the world today, it seems miles away from even just indirect democracy in all countries, let alone direct democracy with the possibility to bring own laws to vote as e.g. in California and in Switzerland.

Well, conversely, there is an Internet, with which in principle everyone can be reached, with which one could conduct global votes. One idea would thus be to set up an organization parallel to existing institutions, which would first organize consultative votes (i.e. not binding for the nations), and then later obtain such binding character and integrate itself into existing national structures as well as into global organizations.

Even very poor people can vote. Voting does not take long, and providing the infrastructure, e.g. a mobile app, plus some organization behind, would not be prohibitively expensive. If most people on earth contributed by voting, this would be a voice that cannot be ignored, even if governments were not formally bound by the result, yet.