

The Simultaneous Policy

The New Global Politics of Right Livelihood and Right Human Relations

Policy Proposals and Strategy Briefing

It is assumed that the reader has read the introductory leaflet, *“The Simultaneous Policy. Breaking down the barriers to solving world problems.”* The Simultaneous Policy is a new global politics of international community and consensus based on Right Livelihood and Right Human Relations: Right Livelihood representing our need for a lifestyle more consistent with Nature and human nature; Right Human Relations representing the recognition that sustainability cannot be achieved without the cooperation and unity of all peoples. The Simultaneous Policy (SP) consists of a range of measures to be implemented by all nations simultaneously and is being campaigned for by the International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (ISPO). The purpose of this briefing is to outline the measures SP would consist of and to explain ISPO’s plans to bring about its implementation.

Why do we need SP?

As the introductory leaflet explains, the nations of the world are locked into competition with one another for capital, jobs and ever-scarcer natural resources; a competition engendered by the ability of capital and corporations to cross national borders at will. As a result, politics – regardless of the party in power – has been paralysed by that competition into a state of pseudo-democracy; a state in which, whatever party we elect, the policies delivered inevitably conform to market and corporate demands. A continuing agenda of policies characterised by weak environmental and labour protection and an increasing gulf between rich and poor therefore remains unavoidable unless all nations act together. Furthermore, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), being the one institution with supra-national authority in trade matters, has the remit of *preserving* the free movement of capital and corporations: the very forces which serve to subvert democracy and undermine the power of nation states. That politicians support the very institution that not only undermines their own power but also democracy itself, serves to demonstrate the extent to which party politics has become substantially obsolete as a means of achieving beneficial change. The subversion of democracy through corporate and market domination is not, however, some kind of ‘evil conspiracy’ but merely the natural result of competition: a global vicious circle even business leaders are powerless to control.

Global competition is also the reason why international agreements on reducing global warming emissions or other such targets are unlikely to prove successful for, to be successful, they would require far-reaching structural changes to industry across the world; changes which cannot be contemplated when nations continue to compete with one another. Far from a glorious ride to global prosperity, therefore, “we stand on the brink not of the era of plenty that free-marketeers project, but a tragic epoch, in which anarchic market forces and shrinking natural resources drag sovereign states into ever more dangerous rivalries. ... The likelihood must be that the laissez-faire regime will not be reformed. Instead it will fracture and fragment, as mounting scarcities of resources and conflicts of interest among the world’s great powers make international cooperation ever more difficult. A deepening international anarchy is the human prospect.”¹

More of your comments on the Simultaneous Policy:

“...well argued and well thought out. It goes against our bias for the human scale but may be necessary.”

- Nicholas Albery
Chairman – Institute for Social Inventions

“Your main theme is a crucial one and I hope it will be heeded. ...your approach is unusual because most authors concentrate on ‘what’ first and leave ‘how’ as a secondary consideration – or duck it altogether.”

- David Griffiths
Author of *“All this and Unemployment too”*

What Aims does SP have?

SP has as its aim the transformation of the international economy such that it operates in a manner more compatible with the global natural environment and with the needs of human nature. This entails, firstly, the re-regulation of global financial markets and transnational corporations such that genuine democracy can be restored to nation states. Secondly, it entails the transformation of those components of the capitalist system which can be described as global, large-scale or over-sized in such a way as to reduce their power and impact. Those components may be financial markets, corporations, institutions, technologies, etc. Thirdly, SP aims to achieve an equitable consumption of natural resources amongst all people of the world and an overall level of consumption that is sustainable. SP also has the wider aims of world peace and security. Last but not least, SP is to be implemented by the consensus of all nation states.

What is the Scope of SP?

The measures of SP are restricted to those which, if implemented unilaterally by any nation or group of nations, would have adverse consequences for their competitiveness, employment levels or capital markets. These are the policies the world so urgently needs but which nations cannot risk implementing for fear of the adverse consequences of capital or corporate flight. Policies which have no adverse impact on national competitiveness, on the other hand, are clearly matters only concerning internal national affairs which consequently do not require global simultaneous implementation and which would therefore not fall within the scope of SP. SP therefore maintains national sovereignty and represents the synthesis of both unity and diversity.

What Proposed Measures does SP consist of?

Three stages are proposed, grouping measures which would be implemented in all countries simultaneously over, say, a 10-15 year period. These measures could include, but not necessarily be restricted to, the following:

SP Policy Proposals

1st Stage -Stabilisation Measures

1.1: Re-regulation of global financial markets with the objective of bringing about far greater stability and making the global financial system 'safe' for further changes to be applied to it. Such measures would likely include the Tobin Tax and measures to abolish all tax havens and other means of avoiding tax.

Regulations covering corporate 'transfer pricing' would also likely form a part of such measures.

1.2: The complete cancellation of Third World Debt.

1.3: Stabilisation is also required in politics. Measures would be implemented to abolish political funding of any kind by business in order to restore independence and public accountability with funding coming instead from public funds on an equitable basis.

1.4: Measures would be implemented to control the research and the practical application of potentially dangerous new technologies. The 'precautionary principle' would thus be enforced on a worldwide basis.

1.5: Stabilisation is also required in the field of armaments. One such measure would be the dismantling and banning of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass-destruction.

"...compelling and provocative. The structure and progression of the [book] fit your argument perfectly."

- Moises Naim
Editor-in-Chief,
Foreign Policy

"...the financial world order has become quite cancerous to both people and the planet and what is needed are intelligent and creative solutions appropriate to the situation. Your proposal to create a level playing field for all that incorporates environmentally sustainable policies is just such a creative solution."

Richard St. George
Director, Schumacher Society
(in his personal capacity)

2nd Stage-Access Measures

2.1: Measures to provide the necessary publicly accountable access to the boardrooms of major institutions and corporations. The decisions causing our problems are formulated and executed in the boardrooms of major corporations and institutions. To achieve such access, measures could be implemented to abolish corporation tax and substitute it with governments holding a percentage (say 30%) of shares in all major companies worldwide. Corporation Tax revenue would thus be substituted by dividends. By dint of its shareholding, a government would be entitled to appoint a similar or possibly greater percentage of "special directors" to the board. This would be done in such a way that a veto could, if necessary and after due process, be exercised by them on actions likely to have an adverse affect the company's impact on either the local or global environment. Similarly, "special directors" would also be appointed to major financial and other institutions with the same powers.

In this way, the 'special directors' would have a direct, dynamic and meaningful influence on many issues, ranging from environmental restraint to social issues and from ownership to development issues. In the case of arms manufacturers, for example, 'special directors' by their power of veto could ensure that all sales were strictly consistent with an appropriate global code of conduct. In contrast to regulation, therefore, the direct involvement in the boardroom decisions of all major corporations and institutions of the proposed 'special directors' would thus ensure that potentially harmful activities could be restrained even before they occur on the principle of 'prevention is better than cure'. 'Special directors' would not, however, be responsible either to their corporations or to governments.²

3rd Stage-Change Measures

Having implemented the 'stabilisation' and 'access' measures allowing actual change to be safely and effectively applied to the capitalist system, the adoption of a wide variety of 'change measures' could transform major corporations and institutions into bodies which are more compatible with a healthy society and environment. These widely varying measures will need to be implemented, step by step, in 'sub-stages', simultaneously - in all countries.

3.1: One such measure could be a tax on all major corporations, called the 'Development Tax'. Its proceeds could be used exclusively to fund development in the world's poorest and least developed countries on a debt-free basis. In exchange for canceling their debt mountain, these nations would have to commit themselves as a matter of national policy to a development programme carried out by professional organisations such as Intermediate Technology Development Group or others who are committed to helping such countries achieve economic growth that is geared to their future self-reliance rather than growth geared to dependency. Additional taxation could also be levied to improve health and public services in all countries including the provision of a Basic Income for all, etc. Major corporations would thus be made to perform a valuable service to world society as a whole instead of only to shareholders.

3.2: Further changes including alterations to the financial (debt-money) system could also be included along with a complete reappraisal of capitalism's incorrect assumption that God-given natural resources, land and intellectual property should accrue solely to the benefit of their owners. Any such changes would not, however, mean that such resources were to be controlled by the state but that their owners would become trustees of those assets on behalf of society as whole.³

What In-put can I have to Formulating the Measures of SP?

The above measures and timetable represent merely *proposals* which serve to provide an idea of the measures SP could consist of. Based on the premise of a global consensus of all nations, almost anything can be achieved. Therefore, whilst the actual measures of SP are likely to conform broadly to those set out above, the formulation of policy is open to all who adopt SP.

What is ISPO's Implementation Strategy?

ISPO takes the view that global problems require global – and simultaneous – solutions. Without them, the world can only remain locked in its present vicious circle of competition, leaving its leaders unable even to talk meaningfully of cooperation because they lack both the will and a strategy for finding a way out. Moreover, since so many nations or governments are wedded to the idea of economic growth and free markets, why would they see the need for change in any case? Indeed, ISPO assumes that they do not see any such need. It is for this reason that ISPO has been established both to define the measures of SP and to secure its adoption by all nations of the world.

Simultaneous Implementation

The concept of global simultaneous implementation – all nations acting together – is crucial. In a globally competitive context this now remains the only method through which the vicious circle of competition can be escaped and meaningful change can ensue. Whilst its achievement may seem highly ambitious, it nevertheless remains the only appropriate basis upon which a responsible and secure transition can be made from international competition to the cooperative, global implementation of measures to solve world problems. The vital concept of global simultaneous implementation eliminates any difference of policy between nations. It also eliminates any difference in the time of implementation. Therefore, any institution or corporation, transnational or otherwise, can and need take no steps to circumvent the eventual effects of implementation by attempting to relocate because no other country would offer them any advantage.

Global simultaneous implementation could be regarded as a logical extension to the methods being used in the EU to implement new policy, be it the single currency or other measures which are, as far as possible, being implemented simultaneously. With global communications and economies as integrated as they are today, global simultaneous implementation is not only feasible, it is absolutely vital. Persuading all countries to adopt SP sounds like an incredibly tall order, and indeed it is. Such is the enormity of world problems, however, that anything less will simply fail because, like individual corporations, no country or group of countries or their governments would ever be naïve enough to risk their economic competitiveness, jobs and votes, unless all other countries were in the same boat.⁴

ISPO's implementation strategy is based on a set of immutable principles which must be properly understood, for they are the bedrock upon which SP is founded:

Principles of the Simultaneous Policy

The ethos of SP is the acceptance of people, organisations and nations for what they are, without judgement, in the interests of the sustained future of the planet and in the interest of the common future and well-being of mankind. This should not imply that change is not required; on the contrary. It recognises that no state is perfect and, proceeding from this, that all states should strive, in their own way, towards open and truly democratic societies. The principles governing SP's adoption and implementation are:

“Your [book] eloquently describes the crucial problems facing the world today. It explores the inadequacy of the nation state in dealing with these problems and the inability of the United Nations to move beyond its current constraints. Simultaneous Policy is an elegant theory which takes many ideas from different places. We must all work to bring these ideas from theory into practice.”

- Simon Burall
Executive Director,
One World Trust
(In his personal capacity)

1. The Distinction between Adoption and Implementation

Since *implementation* is to be simultaneous amongst all nations, it can only occur once *adoption* by all nations has been achieved. It is therefore clear that a gradual process of adoption or ‘adoption campaign’ must take place first: person by person, party by party and nation by nation. Be they an individual, an NGO, a political party or a government, everybody knows that in adopting SP, they risk little or nothing because implementation can only occur when *all* nations do likewise. In a competitive world, most policies are objected to on the grounds that their unilateral implementation will be detrimental, causing capital flight, job losses, etc. But if all nations implement the same measures together, those objections evaporate.

– *SP is low-risk or no-risk; it eliminates fear and distrust.*

2. Universal Inclusiveness: SP may be adopted by anyone

Any individual, any organisation, any political party or any government may adopt SP provided it is adopted in full. For political parties or governments of any kind, adoption is on the strict understanding that its measures are accepted in full and that they will start to implement them in a coordinated fashion as soon as universal adoption has been achieved. Adoption could therefore be described as an open ‘declaration of intent’ to implement its measures when all other nations do likewise. Unlike many other initiatives, appeals and charters calling for global change, SP is different in the crucial respect that it separates ‘adoption’ from ‘implementation’ and provides a secure basis upon which implementation can occur. This renders it capable of official adoption by political parties and governments. It therefore possesses the political and practical framework other initiatives lack and explains why, even when widely supported, those initiatives are rarely if ever put into practice.

– *SP is universally inclusive; it’s practical and political, and anyone can adopt it.*

3. The distinction between current and future policy contexts

Since global simultaneous implementation refers to a point in time in the future at which all nations implement the same measures, this creates what could be described as a ‘future context’ of co-operation amongst nations – the new era of international global community. This ‘future context’ is clearly entirely different to the ‘current context’, as we have it today, which is one of competition amongst nations. Arising from this, policies that are unworkable and consequently undesirable in the current competitive context – like re-regulating capital markets, for example - can, in a future context in which all cooperate, become entirely workable and desirable.

– *SP transforms sterile into fertile; it provides the cooperative basis that allows necessary policies to be adopted.*

4. The Principles of Openness and Challenge

Nations can still engage in an active policy of competing with one another whilst, at the same time, advocating cooperation in the form of their adoption of SP; these two policies can continue in parallel for as long as is necessary until all nations agree. However, the open adoption of SP by individuals, organisations, businesses, political parties and governments also crucially serves as a challenge to others who have not yet adopted. As the numbers adopting increase, so will the moral force of the challenge. In the context of our current world problems, such openness and challenge are surely just what the world needs.

– *SP challenges everyone to adopt it. Anyone not adopting can have no good reason for refusing.*

5. The Principle of SP being Non-party political

Whatever the current politics of a person, organisation or political party, if they consider the measures of SP as desirable in a future context in which all cooperate, that is sufficient for their adoption. Because it relates only to the future context of cooperation, SP becomes a non-party political issue in the current context of competition. This allows it to be adopted by any person, organisation or party of any political leaning. Instead of dividing people along party-political or other lines, SP therefore unites them behind a policy for which there is already widespread support; support which, until the advent of SP, had no means of effective, political expression.

- *SP is not right, left or centre but a policy for the whole world.
SP unites us instead of dividing us.*

6. The Principle of National Sovereignty

Since SP depends on the consensus of all nation states, no question of usurping state power arises. Furthermore, in addressing itself purely to global issues, SP can be considered as complementary to regional, national or local initiatives and not as an alternative to them. SP therefore allows us to come together to act in consensus on global issues whilst maintaining national and local diversity.

- *Unity and diversity: SP allows us to “Act Globally, not just Locally!”*

Why will Political Parties around the world want to adopt SP?

That SP is *low, or no-risk* when it comes to be implemented; that it is *universally acceptable* and that its adoption *cannot validly be refused* are all good reasons why it will succeed. But there is a further reason: because today pseudo-democracy means that, whatever party we vote for, and in whatever country we happen to be, the policies delivered remain substantially the same. Whatever they may promise prior to elections, today's political parties once in power – including Green parties - cannot deviate from market and corporate demands as a result of financial markets' ability to quash any public policy they dislike by the threat of capital, corporations and jobs moving elsewhere. Democracy has thus been subverted into pseudo-democracy in which political parties can offer no prospect of substantive reform. Instead of providing a mechanism through which our democratic rights can be expressed, political parties have therefore become substantially obsolete as a means of change. Because virtually all countries are part of the global economy, we are all subject to pseudo-democracy. It therefore simply no longer matters which party we vote for, or whether we bother to vote at all.

As more and more people come to realise this, they will increasingly be prepared to vote for ANY party that adopts SP, seeing it as the only way to restore genuine democracy, economic and environmental security and peace around the world. Furthermore, we must remember that in most countries it takes only a relatively small number of people to influence the 'swing' or 'floating vote'. The target, therefore, is to get that 'critical mass' of people in each constituency of each country to adopt SP. When political parties realise that a critical proportion of the electorate is prepared to vote for *any* party that adopts SP, they are going to find adoption rather difficult to resist.

What is the Alternative?

The only options on offer are the false hope that the resources of high technology serving the capitalist system might somehow find a solution for us, or the view that change will be forced upon us by global economic, social or environmental collapse. In the absence of SP, the most immediate form of collapse is likely to be social. As corporations consolidate employing more sophisticated labour-saving technology in their battle to

maintain competitiveness and increase profits, the result will be a recourse to far-right political parties, the dire consequences of which have been witnessed before. We can wait for that collapse to happen, or we can try to prevent it by pursuing the alternative choice that SP represents. Given the strangle-hold that globally mobile capital and corporations now exert over domestic national politics in whatever country through the subtle imposition of pseudo-democracy, it is hardly surprising that weakening social cohesion and growing xenophobia is today accompanied by the rise of the far-right. In the light of these obvious warning signs, it is vital that appropriate action is urgently taken. That action is to adopt SP.

How do I adopt SP?

Simply fill in the form overleaf and mail/fax it to ISPO – it's as simple as that! Or visit the Simultaneous Policy website to adopt SP on-line and to find out more about how you can become a member of ISPO and help the SP adoption campaign.

The above briefing cannot do full justice to SP and why it is likely to prove successful. A detailed exposition: *“The Simultaneous Policy: An Insider's Guide to Saving Humanity and the Planet”*, is available to those seeking a full explanation. Copies can be ordered using the form overleaf.

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“This is no mystical or impractical program; it does not work through the processes of exposing, undermining or attack; it emphasises the new politics, i.e. politics which are based on the principle of bringing about right human relations. Between the exploited and the exploiting, the warmongers and the pacifists, the masses and the rulers, this group of men [and women] of goodwill will stand in their organized millions, taking no side, demonstrating no partisan spirit, fomenting no political or religious disturbance and feeding no hatreds. They will not be a negative body but a positive group, interpreting the meaning of right human relations, standing for the oneness of humanity and for practical, but not theoretical, brotherhood.”

- *Problems of Humanity*, Alice Bailey, 1947.⁵

I confirm my provisional adoption of the Simultaneous Policy. If, in spite of pseudo-democracy, I still have a party-political preference, I will do what I can to encourage my party to adopt SP. If I have no party-political preference, I will vote for *any* party that adopts it. In provisionally adopting SP, I also secure my right to participate in the formulation of SP's measures :-

Name (Mr./Mrs/Miss)..... First Name.....

Organisation (if applicable).....

Address.....

.....

.....Post Code.....Country.....

Telephone..... Fax.....

E-Mail..... Signed.....

Please tick as appropriate:

Please send me copies of "*The Simultaneous Policy: An Insider's Guide to Saving Humanity and the Planet*" at **£ 12.50** per copy (including p&p in the UK).

Optional: I would like to make a donation to ISPO.

I enclose cheque payable to ISPO for the book and/or donation in the sum of £.....

I would like to become involved in campaigning for the adoption of SP.

I am a member of these other NGOs (please list).....

.....

Optional: I voted for (insert party)..... chose not to vote (delete as applicable) in the last parliamentary/presidential election. This election took place in

(insert country).....on date

Thank you.

¹ *False Dawn*. John Gray. Granta Books, 1999.

² To ensure independence and an even-handed approach worldwide, special directors would be responsible to ISPO or to an appropriate UN organisation and subject to a common code of conduct.

³ Monetary reform generally entails the restoration to state control of the issuing of credit by removing it from the commercial banks. Unilateral national action of this type, ISPO suggests, remains highly unlikely due to the banks threatening to move jobs abroad. For this reason, monetary reform could be included in SP.

⁴ It should not be inferred that ISPO supports European economic and political integration – it does not. It is purely the *method* of simultaneous implementation that we seek to highlight.

⁵ *Problems of Humanity*. Alice Bailey. Lucis Publishing, 1947.