

# HUMAN GOVERNANCE AT THE TURNING POINT

A Paper by Senator Mike Gravel Presented to the Committee:

“Global Governance and the Future of the United Nations”

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Either humanity will evolve into an new democratic paradigm of human governance — locally and globally for all levels of government — as we advance into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, or society will devolve into techno-autocracies where the majority of peoples will be forcibly controlled by institutionalized personal and corporate wealth.

Peace and the worldwide harmony of governing institutions are not possible without global governance. The United Nations Charter articulates the rhetoric necessary for global governance. Unfortunately, the U.N. does not have the power to implement its charter; and its structure is grossly undemocratic. The U.N. cannot be reformed within itself or by exterior forces dependent on the sovereignty of nation-states.

The U.N. is controlled by the five original powers on the Security Council and, more particularly, the awesome military and economic power of the United States. As an American citizen with some experience in the workings of the upper levels of political power, I am convinced that there is no likelihood the elites who control the U.S. government will tolerate the strengthening of the U.N. unless it is to support U.S. foreign policy. This same critique would hold true for the other four veto powers of the Security Council.

Sincere and well-meaning people the world over, attempting to reform the U.N. into a meaningful global democratic governing body within the context of existing nation-state control, engage in futile exercises. **There is a way beyond nation-state regimes.** Any system of global democratic governance must rest on power directly conferred by the sovereign national constituencies of the people; and not rest on power conferred by nation-state governments.

In order for the people of nations to confer their sovereign power to a democratic global governing body, they must first remove the monopoly of representative governments by bringing the people into the operations of nation-state governments as lawmakers — creating a governing partnership of the people and their representatives in governments, where the primacy of the people over elites is unquestioned. This cannot be done from the global level, but only at the nation-state level, where real governing power exists. It must be done nation-state by nation-state. For credibility purposes, leadership in this enactment process must come from the United States, “the only superpower”— a position maintained by military expenditures equal to the combined expenditures made by the rest of the world.

This task of empowering the people need not be completed in the U.S. before it is commenced in other countries. However, the American people must agree to

their own empowerment, along with the empowerment of peoples of other countries, if there is to be any chance at democratic global governance.

The process of empowering the people as lawmakers is a huge undertaking made even more difficult by the refusal of government officialdoms to empower their people at the expense of their own power. Of necessity, the people must circumvent existing governments in order to enact the legal structure to become lawmakers.

Historically, dreamers and visionaries have sought to effect fundamental change within the context of representative government — only to fail. These activists must be persuaded to seek reform directly through the people, and not through their leaders. This requires new thinking by the clear evidence, at least in the U.S.. The only important structural amendments made to the U.S. Constitution in the last 225 years have been to expand the voting franchise. Yet, more than 50% of registered voters refuse to vote — a glaring admission that voting for politicians doesn't seem to be worth the effort for many people.

The legal and moral basis underlying this empowerment process is the self-evident supreme sovereignty of people, whenever and wherever they are collectively assembled as a constituency. The prerequisite to implement the people's sovereignty is a detailed legislative proposal (a constitutional amendment or law) that asserts the right of the people to exercise their legislative power and that sanctions with each affirmative vote the non-government sponsored national election and the threshold number of votes required for enactment. In essence, the people with a specific legislative proposal self-enact their own empowerment in statutory law.

Depending on the legal regime of a nation, a law can be incorporated in the above manner or added as a separate law to detail specific legislative procedures permitting people to legislate in an intelligent, deliberative manner. An agency, independent of representative government, is created to administer those legislative procedures on behalf of the people.

The proposal described above is embodied in the “National Initiative for Democracy,” which the Democracy Foundation introduced in the United States. Information about this legislative proposal and its voting procedures can be found at: [www.ni4d.us](http://www.ni4d.us) on the Internet. The National Initiative is now being presented to the American people in a national election conducted by Philadelphia II on behalf of the American people.

The National Initiative legislative package includes an amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the **Democracy Amendment** that 1) asserts the constituent sovereignty of the People to make laws, 2) outlaws monies in initiative elections not from natural persons, and 3) legalizes the self-enactment process of the Philadelphia II election; and a proposed federal statute, the **Democracy Act** that sets up legislative procedures and creates an administrative agency (the Electoral Trust) to implement those procedures on behalf of the American People, independent of representative governments. Of course this proposal comports to the American legal regime; but very little change would be required to harmonize it to the legal regime of any country that calls itself a democracy.

As we begin this undertaking, it is more than apparent that mainline media, controlled by elites, will not publicize the National Initiative, nor will financial support be forthcoming from wealthy interests and the foundations they control. To succeed the Democracy Foundation must command sufficient resources to inform Americans that a specific legislative proposal, not dependant on government, exists for their empowerment. Support will have to come from the people who vote for the National Initiative and choose to back up their vote with a modest contribution. The number of votes established in the enactment standard exceeds 50 million affirmative votes. If only two percent of those voting were to contribute \$1 per month on a recurring basis we would have more than sufficient funds to enact the National Initiative within two to three years. Seed money contributions or loans would accelerate the process.

At some point Americans will become aware of the National Initiative, creating a “critical mass” exploding upon the political scene as no issue has since our founding in 1776. Opposition to the National Initiative by elites questioning the people’s right and ability to govern themselves will be overwhelmed (if national polls are to be believed) as American vote in droves to empower themselves as lawmakers.

Are the people up to the task of direct self-governance? The experience of Switzerland is instructive. Switzerland, a poor, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, hardscrabble country without natural resources, decided 150 years ago to adopt a constitution that brought the people into the operation of government as lawmakers. Even the acclaimed Alexis de Tocqueville, at the time, had serious doubts that this Swiss experiment in direct democracy would work. The result is without precedent in human history; Switzerland has evolved into the most successfully governed and wealthiest nation in the world.

The only other experience of note is the record of the last 100 years in 24 of American states where the people have been making laws by initiative. In those states the people have legislated responsibly, and many times more so than their elected representatives. Civil service, campaign finance reform, and women’s right to vote are but a few examples of the progressive legislation initiated by the people. Studies show that states where people enact laws by initiative are measurably better governed than non-initiative states.

The National Initiative does not propose to alter the existing operation of representative governments; however, it does add a significant check on the power of governments — the people — while setting up a working legislative partnership between the people and their elected representatives. Americans and the peoples of other countries who choose to enact the National Initiative will experience the responsibility of legislating and governing themselves directly. People taking on the responsibility of governance will experience the benefits of greater civic maturity individually and as members of society. In point of fact, the structure of representative government, giving one’s power away on Election Day to a gaggle of politicians, denies the people the opportunity to mature by taking responsibility for one’s actions. Representative government’s structure maintains the people in civic adolescence.

The maturation of citizens by taking responsibility for their self-governance in the polity will have a direct effect on the family unit of natural governance. Religions from the beginning of time have sought to inculcate moral values in family governance. Parents raise children to mature adulthood by wisely giving more freedoms as children demonstrate an increasing sense of responsibility. The gains moral teaching secure in the family are assaulted and dissipated the moment children leave the family as adults and go out into the dysfunctionally operated polity.

History shows that religions in seeking to engage in their spiritual mission have too often fallen prey to the corrupting influences of temporal power by aligning themselves in codependency with nation-state power. Religion should mediate the spiritual growth of individuals regardless of their political venue and forsake the temptations of aligning themselves with the state's coercive powers to facilitate its spiritual mission. This is not to say that religion should be neutral to dysfunctional politics; rather, they should extend their influence to interest their adherents to seek political empowerment as sovereign lawmakers mature enough to take on civic responsibilities. The attendant growth of individual maturity will strengthen both the spiritual and temporal venues.

The growth of human maturity better equips the people in their role as moral and physical stewards of the world. Real solutions to human governance can only come from those to be governed, guided by majoritarian decision-making principles.

Once empowered at the nation-state level, the people can legislatively address governance at the global level by convening a global convocation with delegates directly responsible to the people — circumventing the minority-controlled governments of nation-states. The peoples of twenty nations, to include the OECD group of nations, would be sufficient to bring about binding democratic global governance, the body of which could be called the United Nations.

General Dwight Eisenhower on leaving the presidency warned of the undue influence and dangers of the growing military-industrial complex. Unfortunately his advice went unheeded; and the abundance of armaments in the world now threatens our very existence. Eisenhower also presciently predicted that some day the people will want peace so badly that they will push aside their governments to secure it.

The National Initiative for Democracy is the tool available in the United States, and any other country which chooses to take it up that will permit the people to push aside their governments and secure peace.

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