

## **Simpol – lobbying for Simultaneous Policy.(SP)**

Simpol is an international political lobby group, which is rapidly gaining traction around the globe. There are many individuals and organisations that advocate measures designed to address global problems such as climate change, weapons proliferation, human rights abuse, unfair trade and unsustainability. These are the adverse symptoms of global mal-governance. Many of them require urgent remedial policies that cannot be implemented under the present competitive system. Simpol advocates the putting in place of a system of global governance that would offer a realistic opportunity to have these policies implemented simultaneously by a collaborating group of nation states. These policies would therefore become Simultaneous Policy, (SP.)

The first premise of Simpol's advocacy is based on the observation that ever-increasing economic globalisation is occurring in the absence of any equivalent political or social globalisation. The fragmented political world of sovereign national states remains, in essence unchanged, since the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia. Economic globalisation, forces these states into increasingly frantic competition with each other as they vie for the favours of powerful un-democratic players – be they private investors, corporates or economic or military superpowers. In the face of the growing international crisis facing humanity, and the urgent need for countervailing political action, it is tragic but true, that national political leaders dare not allow their own nations to be the first-mover in implementing urgently needed measures, lest the economy of their nation be placed at a competitive disadvantage.

Simpol argues that the way around this first-mover disadvantage (an excuse many NGO's must have heard from their governments) is to ensure that policies are implemented simultaneously by a sufficient group of nations.

The second plank of Simpol's advocacy is the mechanism by which this can be brought about. Simpol argues that under pressure of economic globalisation, major political parties are forced to converge to the point that their policies become almost indistinguishable. Under these circumstances, it is not the party faithful, but the swing voters who determine electoral outcomes. Statistically, all things being equal, these swing voters will tend to distribute their favour equally between the parties. Consequently, in many constituencies the outcome is very close run.

Were a lobby group able to guarantee to put a small bias into the swing in favour of candidates who adopted policies it viewed as favourable, it would be able to exert huge leverage. From Simpol's experience to-date, one can say that were just 0.5% of the NZ electorate to Adopt SP, it could make a very significant impact on electoral outcomes.

Simpol has devised a proven and effective mechanism by which, with your help, through inserting such a bias into the swing vote, it can ensure that the desired global policies are implemented once sufficient MPs, in sufficient countries, are committed to implementing SP. Just what those SP measures should be, is determined by democratic process within the SP movement, with everyone, who has "Adopted" SP (adoption is free to all registered voters) being able to contribute.

It should be noted that the mechanism referred to above, does not have to rely on the voluntary goodwill of national political leaders to invest time and energy in the prolonged negotiation of complex international treaties. Instead, it compels them to implement the policies that have been democratically decided by their constituents – or to face serious electoral penalties.

“It’s ambitious and provocative. Can it work? Certainly worth a serious try.” Since Noam Chomsky passed that judgement on the Simpol proposition, the movement has come a significant distance towards demonstrating that it can indeed work. Though only launched three years prior to the 2005 UK General Election, Simpol’s UK affiliate already has twenty-three MPs, from all major British political parties, pledged to implement SP.

To summarise; Simpol has within it, the potential to provide the mechanism by which the dream policies of NGO activists come to be written and implemented. For NGO activists, Simpol’s ultimate success could resolve most, if not all, of the consequences of global mal-governance with which they are struggling. With the support of NZ’s NGO activist community, New Zealand could become the first country in the world in which the majority of MPs are pledged to implement Simultaneous Policy measures when the time comes. This example would give an enormous boost to the other SP movements around the globe. Thus, perhaps in as little as twenty or so years, humanity could be on the road to solving so many of its most pressing problems. It is worth a try.