

# Parallel Polis and Parallel Societies: If you can't beat them, ignore them

## Philosophy Discussion

Sunday 10 July 2022

Host and presenter: Elizabeth Harrop  
[elizabeth.willmott.harrop@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.willmott.harrop@gmail.com)

The Philosophy Club <https://www.meetup.com/the-philosophy-club/events/285129115/>



Photo by [Mathilda Khoo](#) on [Unsplash](#)

- **noon PST (8pm BST):** arrivals
- **12.05: Philosophy club events coming up** – Mike and Victor
- **12.10:** 15 minute presentation by Elizabeth on the **Czech origins of parallel polis and current examples of parallel societies**
- **12.25:** 40 minute discussion
- **1.05pm:** 15 minute presentation by Vince on **1960s counter culture**
- **1.20-2pm:** 40 minute further discussion
- **2pm PST (10pm BST):** close  
(with option for discussion to continue for those that want to stay longer)

## "PARALLEL"

From Greek

"para-" alongside

"allēlos" one another

"never meeting, however far extended;"

but "have the same direction"

Does not mean alternative ... but existing alongside – is there a difference?

## "POLIS"

Phenomena of ancient polis appears around 800 B.C.

Basic social structure, community, "city state"

Personal identification Tribe -> Polis

Autonomy (army - laws - gods)

A city-state, or *polis*, was the community structure of ancient Greece

**Credit to:**

**Martin Leskovjan, Institute of Cryptoanarchy, Origin and history of parallel**

**polis** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROx9WAvz3rY>

<https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/greek-city-states>

# “Parallel Polis” the term ... 1970s Czechoslovakia

- Not well known **pre-2014**
- Parallel Polis **coined by Václav Benda, Czechoslovakia in the 1970s**: after Russian occupation 1969 – 1980 “normalization”/ Communist rule
- An **umbrella term for strategies for self protection and survival** in the context of totalitarianism
- Strategies seek to **not be in direct clash with government** (keeping under the radar)
- Creates **own social strictures** that work beside the official ones

Paralelní polis - where it comes from?

Václav Benda

Mathematician and philosopher

Key person of Charter 77

Catholicism - politics - philosophy

Aspired to be the leader of opposition



Pillars of parallel polis

Creating autonomous social and other structures beside official regime and authorities

Education - Economy - Culture - Active civil rights protection - Information system - International relationships

BUT CAN VARY ACCORDING TO NEEDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES

The articulated goal is “independent society”

# “Parallel Polis” 1970s Czechoslovakia

## Islands of freedom during normalization

“Second culture” (musicians; theatres)

Forming of unofficial education and publication structures  
(academics fired; formed “apartment universities”; continued with teaching and publications)  
Different currents of thoughts and political positions

Christian groups and churches

=> **1977 - Charter 77**

as a result of growing influence of (small but multiple) protest movements and  
reaction to arrests

# “Parallel Polis” not universally tried/applied

## Different strategies in other countries

(operating within state structures/using legislation)

### Poland:

Independent Self-governing Trade Union "Solidarity" (1980), role of catholic church  
Lech Wałęsa; 10 million Polish workers and farmers - national federation of unions under the name Solidarity (Solidarność)

### Hungary:

"Democratic Opposition" - reformatory political opposition

### Slovakia:

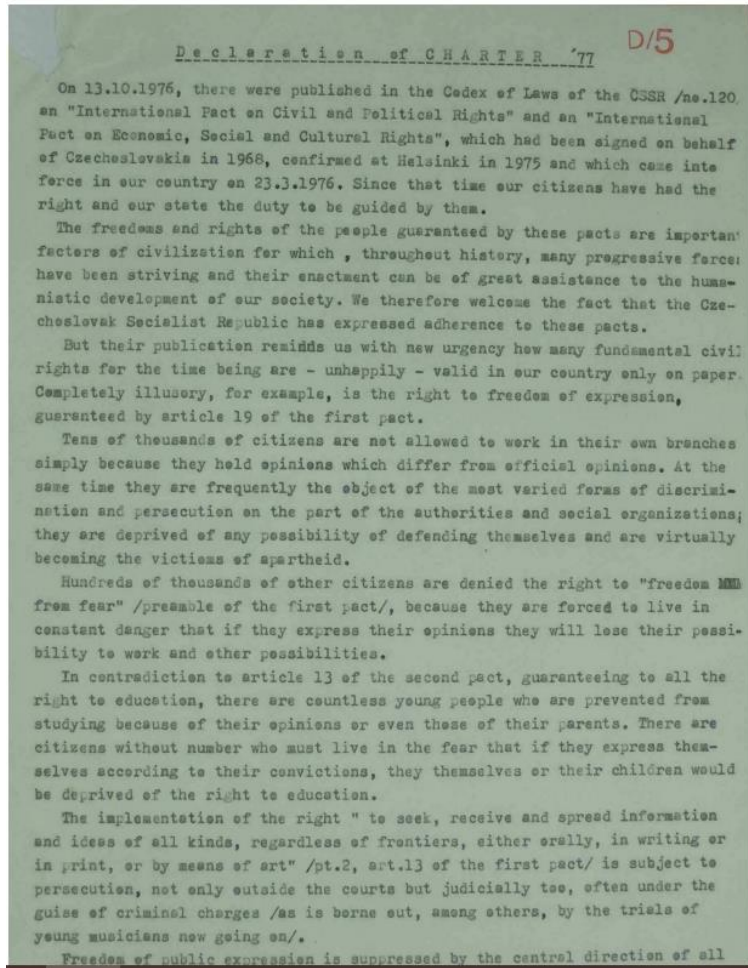
Catholic protest groups, environmental activists, disseminated individuals



Martin Leskovjan, Institute of Cryptoanarchy, Origin and history of parallel polis <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROx9WAvz3rY> (Lek Wulensa; Solidar-nosht)  
Photo: [Krugerr](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ostrowiec_Solidarnosc_20100815.jpg)  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ostrowiec\\_Solidarnosc\\_20100815.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ostrowiec_Solidarnosc_20100815.jpg)

# Czechoslovakia: Charter 77

- Sought **direct dialogue with government**;
- Simply **asked the State to keep the rules which it had already accepted** as part of Czechoslovakia's ratification of ICCPR and ICESCR – UN human rights treaties
- Written at **family table of Václav Benda**



## Charter 77

Petition and civil initiative appealing to comply with human rights treaties

"Where organizations or individuals, in the interpretation of their rights and duties, come into conflict with such directives, they cannot have recourse to any non-party authority, since none such exists."

"civic rights, ... are seriously vitiated by the various forms of interference in the private life of citizens exercised by the Ministry of the Interior, for example by bugging telephones and houses, opening mail, following personal movements, searching homes, setting up networks of neighborhood informers (often recruited by illicit threats or promises) and in other ways."

Refers to:

ICCPR: right to life; liberty; fair trial; freedom of expression, religion and association and freedom from slavery and torture.

ICESCR: labour rights and the right to health, the right to education, and the right to an adequate standard of living.

Martin Leskovjan, Institute of Cryptoanarchy, Origin and history of parallel polis <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ROx9WAvz3rY>  
[https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/125521/8003\\_Charter\\_77.pdf](https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/125521/8003_Charter_77.pdf)  
<https://www.baylor.edu/library/index.php?id=978385>

# Charter 77: The State did not react well

Deemed "Sedition," "Subversion," and "Harmful to National Interests Abroad" by Czechoslovak Communist Authorities in 1977

## Charter 77

Always represented by 3 spokesmen (Jan Patočka, Jiří Hájek, Václav Havel)

Represented different professions, currents of thought and philosophies -> NON POLITICAL movement

Did not achieve mass influence as Solidarity in Poland but established a more complex underground social structure

Protagonists were chased, deeply monitored and criminalized

(arrested by the secret police on charges of "subversion" and "hostility to the socialist state and social system" before they could deliver the original Charter to the Federal Assembly; But the Chartists had already arranged for publication of their manifesto in the Western press)

## Regime reaction

Václav Benda (1986):

Different forms of repression were periodically executed:

- Anti-campaigns based on defamation
- Bureaucratic persecution
- Police repression (custodies, wiretapping, terror)
- Constructed criminal trials and imprisonment
- Spreading fear and intimidation

Fake news to dismiss any challenge to authority is nothing new)

**ANALOG  
TOTALITY**

## *In their own words...1 of 2 Havel*

### "The Power of the Powerless" Václav Havel, October 1978

"The greengrocer had to put the slogan in his window... to contribute...**to the panorama ... (that) tells them what everyone else is doing, and indicates to them what they must do as well, if they don't want to be excluded,** to fall into isolation, alienate themselves from society, break the rules of the game, and risk the loss of their peace and tranquillity and security.... **They conform to a particular requirement and in so doing they themselves perpetuate that requirement.**

"... Part of the essence of the post-totalitarian system is that it **draws everyone into its sphere of power, not so they may realize themselves as human beings, but so they may surrender their human identity in favour of the identity of the system,** that is, so they may become agents of the system's general automatism and servants of its self-determined goals....



Czech playwright Václav Havel later became the  
President of Czechoslovakia

Photo Jaroslav Krejčí

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vaclav\\_Havel\\_1965.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Vaclav_Havel_1965.jpg)

## *In their own words...2 of 2 Havel*

“...**something in our greengrocer snaps** and he stops putting up the slogans merely to ingratiate himself. He stops voting in elections he knows are a farce. He begins to say what he really thinks at political meetings. And he even finds the strength in himself to express solidarity with those whom his conscience commands him to support. **In this revolt the greengrocer steps out of living within the lie...He discovers once more his suppressed identity and dignity.**

“... They will **persecute the greengrocer** ... this, in fact, is how things are always done, **particularly if one is not to become suspect oneself.**

“... Individuals **can be alienated from themselves only because there is something in them to alienate.** The terrain of this violation is their authentic existence. **Living the truth is thus woven directly into the texture of living a lie...**

<https://hac.bard.edu/amor-mundi/the-power-of-the-powerless-vaclav-havel-2011-12-23>

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/from-the-archive-blog/2011/dec/19/from-the-archive-vaclav-havel-president-1989>

## **"The Power of the Powerless"**

“...The confrontation between a thousand Chartists and the post-totalitarian system would appear to be politically hopeless. ... **As an existential solution, it takes individuals back to the solid ground of their own identity; as politics, it throws them into a game of chance where the stakes are all or nothing.** ...this conclusion can be reached only by someone who is unwilling to sacrifice his own human identity to politics, or rather, who does not believe in a politics that requires such a sacrifice.

“... A person **who has been seduced by the consumer value system**, whose identity is dissolved in an amalgam of the accoutrements of mass civilization, and who has ...no sense of responsibility for anything higher than his own personal survival, is a demoralized person. The system **depends on this demoralization, deepens it**, is in fact a projection of it into society.

“**Living within the truth, as humanity's revolt against an enforced position**, is ... an attempt to regain control over one's own sense of responsibility...it is **clearly a moral act**, not only because **one must pay so dearly for it**, but principally because **it is not self-serving**: the risk may bring rewards in the form of a general amelioration in the situation, or it may not. ...**it is an all-or-nothing gamble**”

“The main problem facing independent activities and an independent society is **defining the aims of such freedom and independence**. The beginning of all independence is taking our lives seriously, deciding for something that is worth taking responsibility for, being prepared to devote our energy, our work, and our lives to something of value, or, more appropriately, to someone rather than something.

“Independence (and freedom as well) is **not a condition or a beginning but a consequence** and an end for someone who dedicates his entire life to the service of others or the service of something humanly significant.

“Therefore it seems to me that the main long-range goal of independent initiatives and activities should be **a renewal of the general awareness that there are far more important things than personal or group advantage**. Above all, truth, justice, and law must be respected—and then freedom and independence will follow as a direct consequence.”

## *In their own words...1 of 1* *Ladislav Hejránek*

### Parallel Polis, or An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe: An Inquiry

BY VÁCLAV BENDA,  
MILAN ŠIMEČKA,  
IVAN M. JIROUS,  
JIRÍ DIENSTBIER,  
VÁCLAV HAVEL,  
LADISLAV HEJDÁNEK,  
AND JAN ŠIMSA

*Introduction by H. Gordon Skilling*

#### **Parallel Polis, or An Independent Society in Central and Eastern Europe: An Inquiry**

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<https://www.hejdanek.eu/Archive/Detail/1521>

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40970497>

**Parallel polis as part of human nature whenever state structures get too much**

**Need for freedom basic to humans (and indeed animals)**

Is some form of parallel polis the  
anthropological constant present  
throughout human history?

**And is state overreach a constant theme in history?**

## A new wave of parallel polis is gaining momentum...

- **Bitcoin, Decentralized Economy & Cryptocurrencies**
- **Parallel Polis 3.0:** The Prague Paralelní Polis has virtualized itself - broadcasts a programme every day, created a parallel media space. **Institute of Cryptoanarchy** (using anonymous tools such as decentralized currencies like bitcoin, and anti-spyware encryption tools)
- **Annual Hackers Congress** “We are entering an era of Chaos. Old rules are no longer valid. ... Chaos is new beginnings. We can shape it for ourselves...Welcome to Chaos.”
- **People’s Health Alliance UK:** A people-led movement that encourages local communities to set up their own local health hubs filled with knowledgeable practitioners



Alternatives to WHO?

- **Dutch MP Simone Kerseboom** and Neil Oliver on GB News: the importance of parallel societies to counter the globalist agenda: “networks of freedom loving people” online and offline  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvCWzLtmstM&list>
- And from our Philosophy Club members: **Egora-ILP.org** (Cezary); and **GetCourageNow** (Gary) – parallel polis? Supporting parallel polis
- **Detroit Agrihub; Belfast Grow:** community collective works in solidarity to improve the nutritional needs of the neighbourhood – benefits beyond nutrition (mental health, GBV etc)



We Stand for personal truth and freedom

<https://www.astandinthepark.org/>

<https://paralelnapolis.sk/paralelna-polis-3-0-transformation/>  
<https://the-pha.org/about-us/#principles>  
<https://chaos.hcpp.cz/>  
<https://www.paralelnipolis.cz/koncepty/hcpp/>  
<https://www.acsa-arch.org/competition-winners/2nd-place-from-agrihood-to-agrihub/>  
<http://www.grow-ni.org/>

# THE FREEDOM CELL NETWORK

“Disconnecting from state institutions they deem unworthy of their support”

<https://freedomcells.org/>

## UK Community Assemblies:

### “YOU are the government”

Community Assemblies are based on direct democracy; ordinary men & women, not elected representatives, independently drawing on some of the practices of a trial by jury, and growing rapidly across Great Britain and in Ireland.

<https://communityassemblies.org/>

<https://www.ca-britishisles.com/>



## NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF COMMUNITY ASSEMBLIES

*Members in Trust*

Your  
Government  
is supposed  
to be staffed  
by you.

Its  
decisions  
are supposed  
to be made  
by you.

### SO WHERE ARE YOU?

There are over 69 national, regional, and local Community Assemblies formed in the UK. They echo the ancient past in their origins, based on direct democracy, operating as non-profit unincorporated associations, members in trust.

# PEACE KEEPERS

Without The Rule of Law There Can Be No Peace

- **Peacekeepers** <https://peacekeepers.org.uk/>
- **The Freedom Hub Network:** “Creating our parallel society.” <https://the-freedom-hub-network.mn.co/>
- **The Freedom Network**  
<https://www.thefreedomnetwork.co.uk/>

# The Network State



**The network state:** a country you can start from your computer, a state that recruits like a start-up, a nation built from the internet rather than disrupted by it.

The fundamental concept behind the network state is to assemble a digital community and organize it to crowdfund physical territory.

(thanks to **Viraj**)

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/60643059-the-network-state>

# Responding to legal over-reach

**Community assemblies** abide by **Natural Law** with all other laws being subservient to it: No harm, commit no fraud, cause no loss, keep the peace.

<https://communityassemblies.org/>; <https://www.ca-britishisles.com/>

**Echos of indigenous culture/norms.** See: <https://libertyandhumanity.com/themes/environment/book-chapter-earth-rights-and-human-rights-in-indigenous-traditions/>

**Sovereign Citizens Movement USA:** the existing American governmental structure, including the courts and law enforcement, is illegitimate and that they, the **sovereign citizens**, retain an **individual common law identity** exempting them from the authority of those fraudulent government institutions.

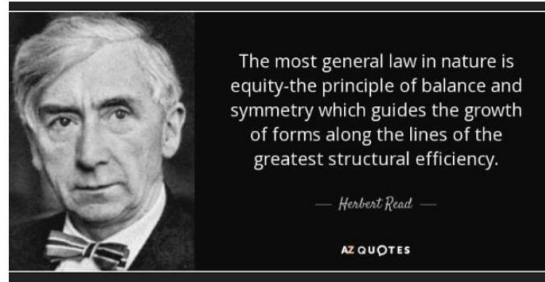
<https://www.sog.unc.edu/sites/www.sog.unc.edu/files/Sov%20citizens%20quick%20guide%20Nov%2013.pdf>

## The Law of Equity - made simple:

The law of equity is all about being open, honest, acting in good faith and with clean hands.  
It exists to ensure that where **common law does not supply** a fair remedy, then equity will do so.

**He who seeks equity must do equity** - in other words, you must behave honourably to receive honourable recompense. Equity relates to a person rather than to property.

<https://peacekeepers.org.uk/equity/>



The 3 most important principles of equity are **honesty**, **good faith** and **clean hands**

Cases in UK of **people having council tax zeroed after challenging on equity law, trust law and Data Subject Access Request (DSAR)**

Examples:

- Gavin Bird <https://awakeningnation.com/category/governmentfraud/>
- Paul Watson [https://www.wearefree.tv/tag/chad\\_manian2/](https://www.wearefree.tv/tag/chad_manian2/)

## ANNEX I - THE LAWFUL AND LEGAL BASIS OF OUR RESPECTIVE DUTIES, RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS

### 1) THE LAW IS DISCOVERABLE AND KNOWABLE TO ALL:

*Ignorance of the law is no excuse* (Natural law will prevail = Truth is Sovereign)  
*All are equal under the law* (no privileges = what one can do all can do)  
*No one is above the law* (no immunity = all are accountable for harm they cause)  
*The law operates without fear or favour* (due process of the rule of law)  
*To lie is to go against the mind* (meeting of minds needed for consent)  
*Innocent until proven guilty* (the claimant must prove their case)

### 2) MY MIND, BEING THE BENEFICIARY OF MY BODY, MAKES ME THE TRUE OWNER OF MY BODY. NOTHING CAN BE DONE TO ME WITHOUT MY CONSENT:

- a) It is my absolute right to choose what I do with my body including medical treatments<sup>15</sup>.
- i) This right of choice what anyone does with<sup>16</sup>, or
  - ii) puts into their bodies,
  - iii) is not limited to decisions which others might regard as sensible...<sup>15</sup>
  - iv) A person is not to be treated as unable to make a decision merely because he or she makes a decision that is deemed unwise by another<sup>5</sup>.
- b) This creates the lawful obligations on ANY provider of medical advice to provide<sup>4</sup>:
- i) quantified risks, and
  - ii) effectiveness, and
  - iii) consequences,
  - iv) including for all reasonable alternative options available,
  - v) for all medical recommendations any person gives.

### 3) NO ONE HAS A HIGHER RIGHT TO CHILDREN THAN THEIR CREATORS, THE PARENTS<sup>17</sup>:

- a) Children are the lawful and legal property of their parents for all purposes including education up to their marriage or the age of 18 years, and should anyone act without parental consent they are liable for trespass to the parents.

<https://peacekeepers.org.uk/notices-first-notice-caution/> - Annex to 20211223 CAUTION-COVID-MASTER word template

**LEGALLY STOP PAYING YOUR  
COUNCIL TAX 100% RISK FREE**

Did you know there is **NO LAW OBLIGATING** you to pay council tax?

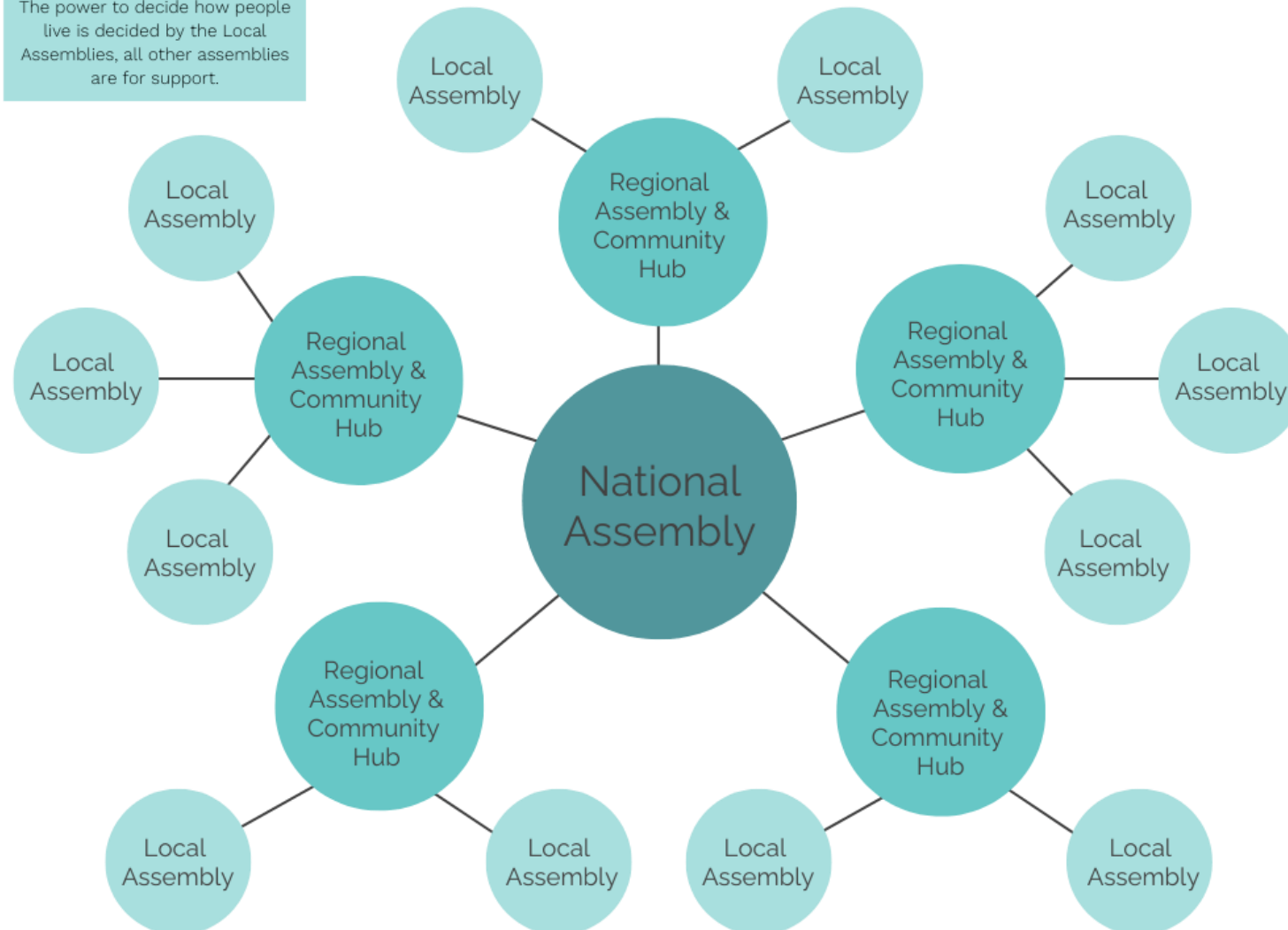
**Join The Challenge Today!**

<https://noc.peacekeepers.org.uk/>

# Community Assembly of the British Isles

Connectivity and information flow between assemblies

The power to decide how people live is decided by the Local Assemblies, all other assemblies are for support.



## So What Does 'Community Hub' Mean?

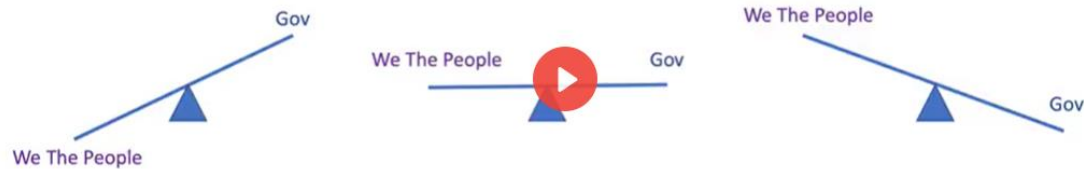
- “A centre of high value expertise and resources, being utilised by a local community, for free !!!”
- The choice to join a local community that looks out for each other
- The ability to consume from and contribute to the overall resources being created and shared
- The choice to step away from overbearing government controls and unlawful demands



The Community Hub Model



## Changing the Balance of Local Control & Self Determination – Community by Community



Current State

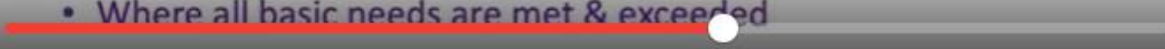
Transition

Future State



# The Heart Based Economy

- The new psychology & energy dynamics of the Heart Based Economy is...
  - The more You give, the more You receive
- Doing what you love means experiencing more freedom
- No taxes or corrupt 'govern-mental' systems & constraints
- The 'work' is to find and live in your authentic self
- The 'work' is to live your highest purpose
- Creating responsible self-expression in community (common unity) with others...
  - Where all basic needs are met & exceeded



14:14



# Other examples

- **1960s counter culture** (Vince)
- **Amish:** believe that community is at the heart of their life and faith, and live separate from the world
- **Indigenous peoples / reservations** – right to self determination (Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) – *but indigenous communities pre-date the State so which is actually the parallel?*
- **Zapatista indigenous peoples in Mexico:** incorporation of right of self-determination into the Mexican constitution. Administrate their own territories in relation to their traditional ways of governance
- **North Korea sentenced to death** a man who smuggled and sold copies of the Netflix series “Squid Game”



<https://www.amishvillage.com/blog/the-4-core-values-of-the-amish-culture/>  
<https://www.rfa.org/english/news/korea/squidgame-11232021180155.html>  
<https://www.internationalaffairs.org.au/news-item/the-zapatista-movement-the-fight-for-indigenous-rights-in-mexico/>

Photo [Randy Fath](#) on unsplash

# When is a parallel society not a parallel society?

- ReGen Villages builds regenerative and resilient communities, with **integrated life support systems of food, water, energy, education, economic, transportation and waste-to-resource management**.
- New communities are connected to each other and to existing communities in **smart bioregions, through the Village OS AI platform**. This creates a border free autonomous system to optimize and improve our lives, and mitigate our challenges.
- ReGen Villages is one of the few organizations **recognized by the UN as aligned with all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- 'Systemic greenwash': **Scientists call on UN to ditch SDGs**.

The "**parallel state**" term coined by American historian Robert Paxton. **State-like structures**, but are not officially part of the legitimate state or government. **Serve primarily to promote the prevailing political and social ideology of the state** and endorsed by the prevailing political elite.

<https://smartvillage.ca/regenvillages/>  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/un-sustainable-development-failure-b2088465.html>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallel\\_state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parallel_state)

# Discussion...

## Parallel Polis and Parallel Societies Philosophy Discussion

Download this presentation here: <https://libertyandhumanity.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Anarchist-philosophy-presentation-Elizabeth-Harrop-20-Jan-2021.pdf>



Photo: <https://www.thealternative.org.uk/dailyalternative/2021/9/5/parallel-polis-czech-native-american>