World Government – the context of shared sovereignty

Nikola S Georgiev
WORLD GOVERNMENT – THE CONTEXT OF SHARED SOVEREIGNTY

By Nikola Georgiev
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I. Introduction

The main question researched and analyzed in this paper is the subject of forming a world government. The general idea behind this is relatively straightforward. Individual states, as well as international bodies, such as the United Nations, have not been able to resolve problems concerning global warming, world poverty, war and crimes against humanity and many other problems that seem to be affecting the world. The question is what should be done and if it is necessary to establish some sort of a global political entity, capable of handling these problems. On the other hand, it is evident that it is not easy to say what a world government means. World government, world governance, world state, world federations are all terms that are used in the discussion below, but sometimes it is very hard to understand what is exactly meant by them. Thus, the first chapters of this paper are an attempt to describe what a world government is. Hence, three approaches to this subject has been analyzed, two of them on world government and world state and the third one on world governance and shared sovereignty, the ideas of Tannsjo, Nielsen and Held.

The following chapters evaluate and analyse an additional question that was present in all of the three approaches - the question of democracy. From all materials evaluated and used in this paper, it is evident that a world government must be a democratic one; hence the arguments analyzed both in favor and against Tannsjo’s proposal on world government are directed into the democratic approach. It has also been argued that the basic idea of shared sovereignty is more favorable in promoting democracy (Held’s).

Starting with a general question if there are good arguments in favor of establishing world government, the approach to the question has been switched as to evaluate what system would be more democratic. Two answers are presented with different problems:
- The democratic world government with monopoly on violence that still holds some threat of tyranny (of majority at least)
- A proposal of a confederation with shared sovereignty is potentially unstable.

Following rigorous analyses and debate evaluation, a conclusion on the topic has been made with some thoughts as to what would be more realistic to be achieved.
II. Three approaches to world government and governance

Two of the theorists whose work is analyzed, Tannsjo and Nielsen, have similar vision that a sovereign government of the world with complete control over legitimate means of violence is a desirable political goal. On the other hand, David Held even though acknowledging many of the reasons that both Tannsjo and Nielsen give for their global political framework, offers a different perspective, taking a stand that a political change of the current global order while necessary, should not lead “all the way” to one world state and government. He suggests a more complex system of global governance with shared sovereignty on different levels, and not one supreme government or one state but a democratic world confederation.

III. Tannsjo- World Government as a solution to global problems

Tannsjo (2008)¹ argues for the necessity and desirability of a global sovereign political power. The idea behind the world government is straightforward, thus he states that: “there are many problems facing humanity which seems to be intractable if tackled on a less than global level. We need, therefore, a world government.”² Tannsjo recognize that it is far from obvious that a world government is a solution to any global problem. In fact, proponents of the world government have always been in clear minority and the political philosophy of the 20th century with John Rawls, have been more inclined to follow Kant’s view on the matter and his rejection of such a government, while holding that what is needed is a better international cooperation of more or less independent nation states.³ On the contrary, Tannsjo believes that a world government is the best political option for resolving global problems and that it is not an ideal form, but a real political possibility that should be pursued.

1 See: Tannsjo T, 2008.
2 Ibid. p. 1.
3 See: Tannsjo 2008, p. 2 and John Rawls 1999, p. 36: “[…] a world government referred to unified political regime with the legal powers normally exercised by central governments – would either be a global despotism or else would rule over a fragile empire torn by frequent civil strife as various regions and peoples tried to gain their political freedom and autonomy”.
Tannsjo argues that a world government is both necessary and sufficient for obtaining global peace, justice and good environment. Similar to nation state governments, a global government would be an absolute sovereign power with the sole monopoly on the use of violence all over the globe and not one state. There would be no higher authority than the government and its decisions would be final.

The idea that only the world government should have sovereignty entails that current nation state would have to be politically degraded. The nation governments and parliaments would still have political role, but their power would not be greater than the political authority of municipalities in current day states. Tannsjo’s rejects the idea of a confederation of more or less sovereign states, because this “compromise position”, would not be a stable solution. He also claims that even if it could be established, it would not last for long. Searching for solutions to global problems through voluntary agreements between independent nation-states is that, such agreements cannot be found with respect for many pressing global problems facing humanity. Furthermore, even if solutions are found, these will be temporary and unstable unless a world government is established.4 New “municipalities” would not enact laws, would not have their own arm forces and would have to work in compliance with the central global government, especially in measures that have to be taken to provide worldwide peace, justice and good environment. Even though the world government could confine itself on solving global problems, leaving the rest of the political decisions to the local administration, it is the world government that will remain sovereign to delegate decisions to the appropriate levels.5 Tannsjo believe that there are two conditions that a world government has to satisfy. First it has to be realistic - it has to gain global support. Secondly, it has to be competent in solving global problems previously mentioned. He further argues that “nothing less radical than a populist global democracy would be considered worth striving for.”6

4 Tannsjo 2008, p. 4.
5 Ibid. p. 74.
6 Ibid. pp. 78-79
Not only a world government should be democratic, but it is only feasible as democratic. Forming the world parliament and the world government is a crucial part, thus the method used guarantees that, if there is a unique will of the people, then it will be the prevailing one. The most obvious way of overseeing this is perhaps to meet „under the oaks“ [...] to have everybody putting forward his or her proposals, to have a public discussion about them, and then take a vote where the majority, will succeed.\(^7\)

Given the number of people living today, meeting „under the oaks” is not a realistic option. That is why we have the representative method in democracy, where people choose their representatives, put forward ideas, discuss and reach decisions. The most appropriate way to achieve these objectives, as Tannsjo suggests, is not by elections, but by taking a statistical sample of the group, in the case of a world parliament - a statistical sample of the whole population of the world. Proposal like this may not be accepted as it looks too drastic. This is why we have political parties and professional politicians in nation states, thus we will have to rely on this system of representation too. What is important, is that on the world scale, a strict proportionate electoral system has to be established, which “allows the various different parties to be represented in a way that is similar to how the preferences are distributed between voters”.\(^8\) The current national-states could play the role of electoral constituencies. Global political parties would be present in the political life, with different views on how to solve global problems. What Tannsjo rejects is “elitist” democracy. We must not allow a system (that is usually represented by a two political party system) in which a representative that is disliked by the majority could still be elected. In a democracy a representative that does not have a majority could (and should) be elected but only as a representative of a certain minority.\(^9\)

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7 Ibid. p. 72.
8 Ibid. p. 73.
9 Tannsjo uses the term „elitist democracy” in a somewhat unusual manner. What is usually criticized under this notion is the bureaucratic organization of political parties. See Held, 1995. 270.
As Tannsjo observes: “The median voter in the world population is relatively and absolutely speaking a poor person”¹⁰ and if we manage to replicate this picture of the world to the global parliament and consequently to the government, than there would be no possibility for rich minority to control the world and shift the burden of solving problems (or really not solving) mainly on to the poor. If the “elitist type of democracy” is put to power in the world under this Tannsjo’s argument, there would be no popular support from the poor, nor is it likable that this government would make necessary moves toward the solution of pressing global problems.

**ii. Global problems and solutions**

There are three global problems that, Tannsjo sees a world government would be able to provide answer for. If a global government could provide world peace, global justice and safe environment, then we would have good reasons for pursuing it. He suggests that “unless a world government is created, there will be another world war.”¹¹ Important question arises as to how a world government will stop wars. In the same way as nation states are securing peace within their borders, a world government would do the same. However, this analogy between nation state governments and a world government has its drawbacks. Nation states have been usually established in a forceful manner while in Tannsjo’s opinion, current distribution of power between countries suggests that a world government could be established in a peaceful manner. Is the world government the only solution for world peace? With or without a world government or even without any form of federation among states, if all the countries in the world were democratic, would they fight each other? Tannsjo gives a two-way answer to this question. It is not evident that democratic countries do not fight wars with other countries, even other democratic countries. And even if there is a relation between democratic government and non-violence, a global peace could only be secured if all nation states become democratic states. The number of states that are becoming democratic, at least in some sense is rising, hence this does not guarantee that this positive trend will continue and reach every country in the world.

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¹⁰ Tannsjo 2008, p. 84.
¹¹ Ibid. p. 10.
One more problem for nation states is the possibility of civil war. It would be of course possible for a nation or any other group to arm itself (illegally), even in the world state, but any conflict would be far less serious than if there were, today’s, nation armies present. As long as there is a single military power under one direct authority, the peace would be secure and even with some room for conflicts and danger of terrorism, it does not seem probable that a world government could be effectively challenged. However, it is possible that a world peace will be secured without a world government, if all the countries would become liberal and democratic. But how optimistic we should be about this, is a different question. If we could establish a world government this would very much facilitate the foundation of global peace. Hence, with each year of postponement of the project, many innocent people are being murdered. Therefore, the argument arising from peace to world government, if not conclusive, has a lot of force indeed.\textsuperscript{12}

The second argument for world government is that it could provide a solution to the problem of global spread injustice. The world is a very diverse place in terms of living conditions and the distribution of resources. Some statistics show that one fifth of the global population is living on less than one US dollar per day, while almost half live on less than two US dollars per day.\textsuperscript{13} People are dying every day in huge numbers not as much as a result of incurable diseases, but from the lack of clean water and food. What it means to talk about unjust distribution is, in Tannsjo’s view, a way of saying that there should be a redistribution of resources.\textsuperscript{14} There has to be such a redistribution at least to prevent people dying from the lack of basic necessities. There are different approaches to the question how to solve the problem of redistribution. What Tannsjo stresses is that “all or almost all, reasonable moral theories are likely to identify a common feature of today’s world as unjust”.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. p. 26.  
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid. p. 30.  
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. p. 31.
Tannsjo analyses three different approaches to the problem: utilitarianism, egalitarianism and moral rights view, suggesting that a world government would be necessary for obtaining any of the goals they assert. For example, if we accept that under moral rights view, only those who have been wrong have a right for compensation and if we agree upon the fact that people in most poor countries have had their rights violated by the rich countries (usually in the past, but also at present), a redistribution of resources as a compensation is what is right. If a solution could be a *global recourse tax*, as proposed by Thomas Pogge, in both cases there has to be someone who could execute decisions. He states that:

“In principle one could have all sorts of elaborate form of international law and legal adjudication without the existence of a global state […] But when important economic interests are endangered, such international law will have no real teeth unless backed up by a sovereign world government”.

International companies are also one of the causes of low life standard in the world. It is not a secret that many of these companies blackmail governments of poor countries, not allowing them to make policies protecting rights of workers or securing natural resources. The companies usually have a very simple solution – they threat to move to another country and find cheaper labor. Hence, if a world government with power all over the world exists, moving to another country for these companies would not be an option anymore, as the laws protecting workers (and environment for that matter) would be basically the same. The argument once again is not conclusive as there are international laws regarding such issues, however without a world government these laws have no real application. The third argument is the one concerning the environment. One of the biggest problems being discussed in recent years is *global warming*. It seems that there is a consensus between all the governments of the world that something has to be done. Primarily what should be done is to radically cut down the emission of greenhouse gases. The problem is that this would also mean that industrial production has to be halted and in the long runs changing to *green technologies* would become necessary. Both of these things are costly and even though governments do proclaim their promise to work for these goals, little has been done.

16 Ibid. p. 31.
Governments of developed countries are not prepared to burden their citizens with costs of changing to different, more ecological friendly way of living as these measures are usually seen as unpopular. People from developed countries are those who are making the most pollution, yet still not the ones who are drastically affected by environmental changes and still do not see it as their interest to make any change. Tannsjo suggests that a world government would choose a compromising position that would be accepted by every reasonable person in the world regardless where he lives.\(^{17}\) There are different ideas that could be put into practice\(^ {18}\), but as long as there is a global sovereign power that can command global resources it seems promising that it could find a solution that everyone would accept as the fairest one.

\textbf{iii. How to form a world government?}

The road to a global parliament and government has to lead from the biggest international institution we have today, the United Nations. First a reform of the General Assembly should take place, making two Houses of parliament - the Lower House, the Global People’s Assembly, which should be elected in a proportionate manner by the citizens of the world and the Upper House that would have representatives of national governments with each country having one representative with a vote. Both houses would then elect, \textit{in some way} \(^ {19}\), a government (with an option that some permanent members could be allowed, at least in the beginning.)\(^ {20}\) In future, the idea would be to discharge the Upper House so that People’s Assembly would take over the whole power and elect the government on its own. If some countries would not want to allow their citizens to take part in the elections, the seats from these regions would stay empty. In Tannsjo’s opinion this would provide a strong incentive for governments to overcome their fear. Hence, citizens of these countries will tend to pressure their governments to be allowed to take part in the governing of the world.

\(^{17}\) Tannsjo 2008 pp. 59-60.
\(^{18}\) The most promising, Tannsjo thinks is the idea of giving individual quota, to every citizen, on how much pollution he is allowed to produce. Then a person could be able to buy additional quota from someone that does not need the full quota. Tannsjo points out to the fact that as much as 40% of carbon dioxide is produced by individuals. See Tannsjo 2008, p. 60.
\(^{19}\) This is in Tannsjo’s opinion.
\(^{20}\) Ibid. p. 97.
However, the question of monopoly on violence has to be taken into consideration. As Tannsjo suggests, a global military force has to be established, replacing the individual national armies, if we want to secure world peace and provide coercive power for implementing laws and decisions. Why would national governments consent to this? The countries who feel secure would give up their military defense for a guarantee that their borders would be respected and defended by the world government. When there is only one superpower in the world, the US, Tannsjo believes, that almost all countries would very quickly agree to this, as there is no point to have armies that could be easily defeated. If he is right and if the countries of the world would be prepared to give up the control of their armies, the US could still in the beginning stay resistant to comply with this. At this point US could keep their forces and stand opposite to the Global military organization. If this happens, Tannsjo suggests that the UN should start disarming its own forces.

iv. Objections to World Government and World State

First objection that Tannsjo examines is that the world government would lack democracy. He agrees that forming a world government is a process that has more than one step and it is true that some of these steps would be less democratic than others. Yet, it is not the case that the government itself formed at the end would lack democracy nor that the road to the government would be as undemocratic as some may think. In the beginning with the reconstruction of UN, there would be three political entities, the Government and two Houses of Parliament; there would be permanent members as in the General Assembly and the Security Council. The resistance from some countries that the US might be too influential and that it would in practice control the world government are misplaced, from the very fact that US is already ruling the world through UN. However, there is an important difference between current situation in the UN and what Tannsjo proposes.

If the Lower House of the Parliament is formed in representing the will of the global population, with the time this Assembly will grow in power as it will have greater support among people. Communitarian tradition in political philosophy points out to a different problem with the world government.
Their objection is that *citizenship*\(^{21}\) cannot be a matter of the whole globe, but that it has to be confined within smaller communities, where people share common history, culture and language. A political unity of the globe would have to presuppose, in their opinion, a closer unity among people. Tannsjo agrees that looking for a close unity among the people of the world is absurd, but this is not what is needed or desired. Different cultures with different values would still be left to flourish. The world government would not require a close unity. Hence, it will deal with problems such as peace, justice and the environment. A world government should deal with such problems, but it should not interfere with all sorts of other problems, which are better left for national and local governments, where they should be delegated to the appropriate levels.\(^{22}\)

Furthermore Tannsjo assume that the basic communitarian assumptions about cultural and national identities and values would in fact go very well with his idea of world state. National minorities in current nation states feel more threatened and more “suffocated” as they are not members of the common culture. A world government would not be interested to promote one culture as individual states do. In a global political community there would be no such thing as a majority culture, and given the experience we have with EU, it does look that minorities would feel more accepted and the local autonomy more capable to preserve their unique identities.

A world government would not interfere in all sorts of problems and it would be confined in resolving global problems, hence shared *sovereignty* between the world government and nation states is not an alternative for Tannsjo. He opposes the idea that it is enough that national sovereignty is given up only on some issues. The world parliament and consequently world government should have absolute sovereignty and be the only ones that could decide on what level a certain decision should be taken. Tannsjo argues that the reason behind this extreme is that no methodical decisions to the appropriate level can be provided. Thus, it is unclear which questions are international and which are national. And the idea “that those who are affected by a decision should make it is far too vague to be of much help.”\(^{23}\)

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\(^{21}\) Citizenship, here, could be defined in general as a status of individuals granting them equal political right, liberties and constraints in a political community.  
\(^{22}\) Tannsjo 2008 p.117  
\(^{23}\) Ibid. p. 125.
In case there is a conflict of interests and opinions on what has to be done, a final authority must exist in order to make the ruling and implement the decisions. Only one sovereign political power may exist delegating questions downwards in the hierarchy, as it cannot be known in advance what questions should be dealt on which level. If nation states are left with power to claim their own individual (political) interests and enact laws, the structure will collapse. The world government would still recognize different interests of nations and groups and there could be different decisions put in practice in different regions of the world. One of the most used arguments against world government is that it may turn into tyranny. Referring to Kant and Rawls, Tannsjo accepts that there could be a dilemma to accept an association of independent democratic states than one power with the whole control of means of violence. Waiting for independent states to become democratic and establish some sort of mutual agreement seems irrational, based on the importance and significance of the problems discussed.

But are there any guarantees that a world government would not become totalitarian? As recalled what Tannsjo said about the steps toward forming one global military force, the last step was the acceptance of US to surrender the command of its arm forces. Tannsjo however, suggests that the US would not surrender its forces unless it is certain that this new army will not be powerful and that the world government is democratic. Only after they are sure that there is no danger from the world government or their military the US would accept such agreement.

Even if this is true a democratic world parliament could in future turn into a non-democratic one. Tannsjo accepts the fact that no system is resistant. It could be possible than one interest group take over the global parliament. However, if the parliament is established in a way as described with true representation of interests of the whole world population, the possibility of one interest group taking the power is very unlikely. This possibility is much more feasible in a nation parliament than in a global one.
IV. Nielsen- World government as an ideal

Kai Nielsen is another scholar, who has put some arguments in support of a world government. He is not optimistic about the possibility of forming a global government. However, he depicts a theory “which does not ask how we get from here to there, but asks what it is, ideally and generally, we would like to see accomplished”.24 Based on this approach, various questions analyzed in the previous section will be left aside. In the paper “World Government, Security, Global Justice”,25 Nielsen is defending the desirability of a world government as “a single final authority, a court of last appeal, in a fraternal, worldwide, cantonal system”.26 He further states:

“We would like for human beings everywhere, such that this world would provide people with the security and meet their needs, would be just and humane, and would be a place where human flourishing could be maximized. One feature of such a world is that it will have a world government”.27

The world that Nielsen describes, should be a free federation of cantonal type, with a constitutional democratic government that would have an absolute control over legitimate resources of violence and last authority in any dispute. In addition, there will be diverse political programs, values, cultures and opinions altogether, in nation states, the same would be within the world government. The cantonal system would be an instrument to preserve differences around the world, whilst still having a central political power as the final authority that could implement decisions and make rulings on disputes between cantons.

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24 Nielsen 2003, “Even though there is no movement toward a world where a global government could be possible, he does hope that "unfoldment of the dialectic of the Enlightenment and the development of the forces of the production will eventually make such a world"; Nielsen 2003, p. 270/80.
26 Ibid p. 270.
27 Ibid p. 270.
There would be “an [world] army, world state executives, a world parliament, and a judicial system, all not creatures of any individual canton or clique of cantons, representing wider interests.”  

Although Nielsen projects the government as a definitive sovereignty, he talks about a (loose) world federation where cantons would have wide political independence.

V. Held - Shared Sovereignty

British political scientist David Held acknowledging many points as the two previous theorists, offered a different political framework for a new international world order. He does not see a „one world state” and a „one world government” as desirable political goals, but advocates for a complex system of shared sovereignty between a global and regional parliament as well as nation states.

i. Globalization and Democracy

Held in general shares the same opinion as Nielsen that globalization is a threat to a nation state and democracy. The range of decisions individual countries, their governments and consequently people in these countries have, is constantly being diminished. The idea of a community which rightly governs itself is a very problematic nowadays. Decisions in one state can make a difference in the lives of people far away, without their own consensus. The main claim is that a democratic political order within a political community requires a democratic order in the international sphere as well. On one side, there is an influence from one nation state to the other(s), while on the other, there are also different international organizations that are diminishing the range of options available to the people in a state.

28 Ibid p. 277.
29 Held 1995, p. 17.
30 Ibid. p. 226.
“Some duties and functions of the state must be performed at and across different stages.”\textsuperscript{31} If there is a desire for the idea that people should have a vote and a say about their lives and future, than they must be presented with an opportunity to control all sources of power that are influencing them and not only the ones present in their own country. What is needed is a whole range of transnational political bodies that could be controlled and governed by the people, but also a democratization of non-governmental international agents. \textsuperscript{32} With transnational political entities, individual governments would no longer be the legitimate power within their boundaries”, \textsuperscript{33} however they would also not be overhauled of their sovereignty like in Tannsjo’s proposal. As noted before, Held’s opinion takes into account a path between the situation that is present with „sovereign” nation states and the idea of a world state and government.

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. p. 234.
\textsuperscript{32} Institutions like the IMF or WTO would have to be more influenced by the smaller countries, and not just by big economical powers.
\textsuperscript{33} Held 1995, p. 232.
ii. Held’s proposal for new global institutions

Even though there should not be an absolute sovereign world parliament and a world government, global institutions must be created. What has to be done so that people would have a vote and a say in these global bodies? It is necessary that a respectful body of all democratic states is being recognized”.\(^{34}\) Held’s further argues that the United Nations is basically being controlled by big political powers, and is not a good representative of peoples and movements of the world. Very similarly to the proposal of Tannsjo, Held proposes an independent assembly that would be directly elected. The question in which way should the voting be done is not something that will be solved easily. Countries with big population would definitely oppose to the idea that their vote is the same as of a much less populated country. A middle ground would have to be found that would respect the number of citizens in states while still protecting smaller countries as well.\(^{35}\) The assembly at the beginning would be an addition to the UN, hopefully over time replacing the current General Assembly. This would not conform with Tannsjo’s framework to be the only sovereign political body, still it would be the body dealing with global problems similar to the ones mentioned before, like food supply and distribution to third world countries, environmental problems, questions on reducing the risk of nuclear or chemical warfare, and similar. A whole number of regional parliaments has to be established, while keeping national parliaments in place as well, making even smaller governmental bodies in nation states. Referendums - national, regional and even global would have to be made possible on different issues, where voters would be able to raise issues (and vote for or against) concerning specific problems.\(^{36}\) However, this is the main criticism by Tannsjo. His proposal referred that the world government should decide in every case to what level should the question be address, as being the highest authority. Hence, this is the main difference between the idea of shared sovereignty and world government.

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34 Ibid. p. 273.
35 Ibid. p. 274. Held refers here to the electoral process for the European parliament as possibly an adequate option.
36 Ibid. p. 273.
iii. Held’s principal for shared sovereignty

The main principle that is in the background of the proposal for shared sovereignty is that “decisions about public affairs should be dealt with by those who are affected”.37 Thus people should be allowed to decide about their future on local level, as well as on national, regional and global. People would not accept the possibility of all decision-making capacity going to higher levels and to avoid this “principles governing appropriate levels need to be clarified”.38 He proposes a solution how decisions should be taken and implemented. There are some questions that have to be answered. First, the extensiveness, the range of people affected; second - intensity, how much would a group be affected by the specific policy and third - a comparison of different consequences a policy would have on different levels.39 Held acknowledges that this is quite vague and that there would often be disputes over appropriate jurisdiction, making it necessary to institute a whole number of forums and courts dealing with these questions.40

Some core issues would be laws independent of any further negotiations that would be implemented everywhere. He refers these core issues to “democratic rights”. These rights are necessary for having a capacity for self-determination and involvement in democratic decision making.41

On the other hand, many policies would require further discussion on how to be best implemented (or maybe even not implemented) in particular settings giving concern to cultural values or economic conditions.

37 Ibid. p. 237.
38 Ibid. p. 235.
39 Ibid. p. 236. The comparative efficiency should also include questions for instance regarding economic costs.
40 Held proposes juridical bodies that would be composed of people who are “statistically representatives”. Refer to Ibid. p. 237, and p. 206 ff.6.
41 Ibid. p. 275. There are seven of these rights categories and without them no one could equally and freely participate in democratic decision making.
iv. Against World government

Held agrees with the arguments Kant offered against the word government regarding autocracy and further argues against the idea of single world state and government. Held points the attention to the fact that in recent times a desire to establish, regain or maintain sovereignty by nation states and nationalist movements has not diminished. The nation states even with the globalization are still recognized as being able in principle “to determine the most fundamental aspect of peoples’ lifes”. Thus the possibility that governments will not agree to completely surrender their sovereignty is very high. When not knowing on what issues the people will be involved in the decision making process, they will not be prepared to give up their power of self-government to a centralized world parliament. On the other hand, with nation states still present and shared sovereignty on different levels, people would have an opportunity to see their decisions respected and put into practice, while being able to control more easily the elected officials.

Besides, a world government would, in Held’s opinion, suffer from the same problems as a „bureaucratic command government“: “acting presumptuously as if people should know what to do and how they should behave in different situations”. Furthermore, he argues that it would be inefficient from an information overload, given the size and the number of problems it would be dealing with.

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42 Ibid. p. 95.
43 Ibid. p. 230.
44 Ibid. p. 230;
VI. Shared Sovereignty

When talking about shared sovereignty, a principle of “subsidiarity” is at the core of the discussion. The principle has been defined within the EU “as to ensure that decisions are taken as closely as possible to the society needs and expectations”.\textsuperscript{45} Decisions made in areas that do not exclusively fall in competence of the European Community should be left to the lowest level of political authority unless the objective cannot be achieved, and has to be taken to a higher level. The proposed test of Held for determining on what level a policy should be taken is in a similar way used within the EU.\textsuperscript{46}

The idea of subsidiarity is by no means a new one. The 10th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States convey the same idea.\textsuperscript{47} The United States are good example of a federation\textsuperscript{48} of states with shared sovereignty, defined by the Constitution. The US Constitution gives power to the National Government as well as to States and local governments, while the 10th Amendment expresses the idea that everything is retained, which has not been given up. If there is a decision that should be made that is neither delegated to the Government nor prohibited to the State, then the decision should be taken on the lowest level. If there are any disputes, the rulings are being made by the Supreme Court, in accordance to the constitution.

In both cases, in EU and US, there is a constitution that defines the powers of all places of decision making and a principle that every other decision should be brought as closer to the people as possible, given practical circumstances of achieving the desired goal.

\textsuperscript{46} For details see: Protocol 30.
\textsuperscript{47} http://www.usconstitution.net/const.pdf, refer to page 14.
\textsuperscript{48} Tannsjo would call this confederation not federation.
The idea behind this kind of thinking is to make those who are affected by the political decisions, to be the people who can control and be involved in the decision making. If the decision concerning political goals is being delegated to the people, the definition on who are the people must take into account the scope of those affected by the outcome of this decision. People do not just have the chance to elect their representatives, but be physically closer to the places of decision making in order to be reassured that their voice is heard and that those political questions that are closest to their everyday life's are under their control. While Tannsjo believes that all these principles cannot effectively work in practice, EU gives signal that it can work on international level.

Shared sovereignty as presented by Held, in the international realm, is a more complex system that it is in a national federation. Thus, a new system of parliaments, courts and assemblies have to be put into practice from the global to local levels. The problems arising with this system is that there would be a great number of overlapping between all these institutions. There might be cases where in the same territory, there are laws and policies contradicting with each other, and while the democratic constitution is a very general framework, courts would have difficulties in making any rulings in possible disputes. Another question would be if in this framework new constituencies have to be formed all the time, given the fact that new questions would have usually different range of people affected.

Held acknowledged the fact that there has to be some coercive power under the command of the world assembly, hence he considers that nation states would not be prepared to give all of their military forces. So even when a decision is made by one of the international courts, execution of the decisions may take time as one of the states could refuse the decisions and interventions by the UN may be made only in extreme situations. On one hand, democracy would have a better perspective in an international system of shared sovereignty. On the other hand, the whole system, as noted by Tannsjo, would be unstable as states would still be able to ignore decisions made on higher level.
VII. Conclusion

A world government has to be democratic and efficient in solving global problems. Thus, it must be the only independent political power with the last say in any dispute. The complete control of all military forces is necessary, hence without it, a complete security and peace or the implementation of laws and policies cannot be provided. To achieve all this, reconstruction of United Nations is needed in a way that the new assembly has to be elected directly by and from the people.

The ideas of Tannsjo and Nielsen, in a way, are very similar. Both of them believe that a democratic sovereign world government is needed as a solution to global problems. Nielsen identifies the problems of security and global justice, as the ones that would need a global government to resolve, whereas Tannsjo additionally considers environmental problems. They both argue that a sovereign world government with monopoly on coercive power could provide peace and real strength and effectiveness to international law and other decisions taken by the government. In addition to this, they do recognize that local autonomy has to be given to communities, enabling them to appreciate their different values and identities. This autonomy would not be sovereign and the world would not be a confederation of states. The range of autonomy of local political assemblies would be determined exclusively by the government. The world government would in both of these proposals serve as a final authority in any dispute.

While Nielsen looks at the idea as theoretical and idealistic, Tannsjo believes a democratic world government is a practically achievable goal. Starting with the reconstruction of the General Assembly of United Nations, in a way that it is directly elected in proportional vote, representing the true will of people, the Assembly would over time take full sovereignty and military control.
On the other hand, Held believes that governments have limited functions and capacities for making people *self-governed*. A more complex system of world governance is necessary if political participation of the people on question that are influencing their lives is involved. He also sees the reconstruction of the General Assembly, in a similar way as Tannsjo’s, as a necessary process. However, he suggests that shared sovereignty has to be allowed and the General Assembly should be provided with a military force under its own power. However, unlike Nielsen and Tannsjo, Held allows national armies, as well. In the same way as Tannsjo, Nielsen believes that a sovereign political power of the world, as it would have control over all the resources, could conduct the necessary transfer and would do so in the fairest possible way.

It can therefore be concluded (agreeing with both Tannsjo and Held) that what is needed, is personal involvement in finding solutions to these global problems. With the democratization of societies and governments, there is hope that a global democratic order and solution to global problems is possible. Accordingly, all acts has to come from individuals and their involvement not only in governmental decisions, but also their involvement in international non-governmental organizations and their work to pressure individual nation governments to accept that there is a need for change in the current world order.
VIII. Bibliography


Online Resources:


Additional Reading: