

# PLAN<sup>x</sup>B FOR ARKADIANMÄKI



**Juha Huuskonen:  
Plan\*B and Public Opinion**

Public Opinion is a contradictory term. 'Opinion' refers to something that is private and personal while 'Public' is something that is common and shared. Therefore the definition of public opinion is constantly under debate. One approach used by researchers is to make a distinction between public opinion and mass opinion.

Public opinion is based on rational reasoning and collective analysis. It is based on open and active discussion, generating various choices which all have their own supporters. In order for one to have an opinion about the subject, one needs participate the discussion in order to learn about the options.

Mass opinion is not based on discussion but rather a common focus of interest or attention. Examples of masses in contemporary life are those who are excited by some national event or those who are interested in murder trial which is reported in the press. The mass is composed of anonymous individuals and is marked by very little interaction or communication among its members. The mass merely consists of an aggregation of individuals who are separate, detached, anonymous and who act in response to their own needs.<sup>1</sup>

PLAN\*B FOR ARKADIANMÄKI project is dealing with democracy and various forms of government. The project is exploring how we can influence the world around us. Our opinions - the Public Opinion - is an essential factor in this and also the web address of PLAN\*B project. The choice of the web address was inspired by a similar project which took place in Stockholm in 2002, [www.publicopinion.nu](http://www.publicopinion.nu).

In important national and global decisions, is it possible today to reach the optimal state of public opinion – an opinion based on rational thinking – or is the public opinion equal to

mass opinion? How good tools are Referendums and opinion polls for measuring the public opinion? Would there be some new and better models for public discussion and decisionmaking? The PLAN\*B Referendums and Project gallery can hopefully offer some new perspectives to these issues.

**Aura Seikkula:  
Why would you not Govern?**

According to the Finnish constitutional law, the national government belongs to the citizens. The right to vote is a direct form for every individual to participate and govern in the development of the representative democracy. Objective to the Finnish national government is to provide opportunities for active civil participation between the elections.

PLAN\*B FOR ARKADIANMÄKI offers an alternative view to the democracy through several projects that guide us with our opportunities to participate in the national policy-making. All of the projects influence actively in the cultural sector and ambitiously challenge the conventional patterns of the representative democracy. Every project is asked to present a question for the Finnish citizens. These questions form the referendum in the Internet. There is not any kind of limitations concerning the questions or any kind of demand to answer to the current situation of the national government and media.

The voting period for PLAN\*B Referendums was 24th Jan-6th Feb 2005. The local audience was able to follow the progress of the Referendums from a large-scale outdoor video screen. During the voting period, several discussion sessions and other public events took place at the museum of contemporary art Kiasma. The final results of the PLAN\*B Referendums were submitted to the Finnish Parliament in the form of this Referendum Report.

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<sup>1</sup> *The definitions of public opinion and mass opinion is based on information from book Communication Concepts 4 : Public Opinion (Vincent Price, Sage Publications 1992).*

## REFERENDUMS

The PLAN\*B Project Gallery presents projects created by artists and activists. Each project has chosen a question for a PLAN\*B Referendum.

Utopian World Championship is a worldwide competition in visionary thinking. For PLAN\*B FOR ARKADIANMÄKI, they have decided to present one of the competition entries from this year; an experiment in direct democracy called Demoex, which has become a part of the local decision-making process in the Vallentuna municipality of Sweden.

The Long Now Foundation hopes to provide a counterpoint to today's "faster/cheaper" mindset and promote "slower/better" thinking. The foundation has initiated a series of ambitious real world projects to creatively foster responsibility in the framework of the next 10,000 years.

Amorph!03 Festival gathered together the official representatives of the Micronations for the very first time. Micronations are 'do-it-yourself nations', nations which have been established by individual people or artist groups.

2000.katastro.fi project collected the thoughts of the Finnish people during the last weeks of the previous millennium.

The Yes Men and Kaulbach Society use creative means to criticize national and global power structures.

Homokaasu.org is a mystifyingly popular website, which features projects requiring collective participation, such as the Kill Everyone Project.

1. Public Referendum:  
In English: **Should all countries in the world join the Kyoto agreement?**  
In Finnish: **Should the sustainable development be a priority above the economical growth in our political system?**
2. Amorph03: **Should everyone have a right to create a sovereign**

**microstate? Shouldn't we have the absolute right to select the political society in which we want to live and to depend only upon it?**

3. The Yes Men: **Should the "coalition of the willing" withdraw military forces from Iraq? A few years ago, a big country called the United States and some other smaller countries invaded the country of Iraq. Now, Iraq's a wreck, and there are lots of bullets and bombs and beheadings all the time. What should they do next?**

Demoex & Utopian World Championship: **The development of AI - Artificial Intelligence? Twenty years from now will the computer be smarter than man, according to scientists. This will probably change our relationship, but how?**

4. The Long Now Foundation: **How can we best instill long term thinking in the democratic political process? The process of holding regular elections is by definition time limited. This can cause the problem of short sightedness as there is no benefit to making changes past an elected officials term. Conversely lengthening terms too much can cause even more stagnation and cronyism.**
5. 2000.katastro.fi: **Impressions of good life - how do they affect your life?**
6. Kaulbach-Seura: **What is a good form of government? Human history has produced various different forms of government and some of them function a little better than others.**
7. Homokaasu: **Why is the media not an objective information carrier? Why do we allow media to have too much influence and create false impressions of the society? Why is nobody complaining about this?**

## **SUGGESTED PUBLIC REFERENDUMS**

### **POLITICS**

- 1. Should the sustainable development be a priority above the economical growth in our political system?**

*"If the human kind answers this question wrongly, all the other questions are irrelevant."*

*"Prioritizing sustainable development could truly bring welfare and growth to the whole human kind."*

- 2. Should Finland accept more applications for the asylum seekers?**

*"A very crucial question for the nation's future. Mathematically, the birth rates will not keep the population alive. "*

- 3. Should the sexual minorities have the right to adopt children?**

*"It has got nothing to do with sexuality. A good parent loves and respects ones own child."*

- 4. Should the Plan\*B referendums take place on a regular basis?**

*"Bring out the public opinion!"*

*"In my opinion, Plan\*B could be an annual project that could grow little by little to a forum for the public opinion!"*

- 5. Should there be a system at the parliament that obligates the decision-makers to hear and take into account the persons concerned before determination?**

*"We need an ethical board of some sort to collect the information needed from the persons that the decision concerns and through this it would have an effect to the whole society. "*

- 6. Should the Finnish foreign policy aim to join Russia to the EU?**

*"It is the only way to secure our national safety."*

- 7. Should all countries in the world join the Kyoto agreement?**

*"That's required, or we'll kill the world in a few decades. Actually, it's already too late, so we better agree and wait for the end in peace, while we can."*

- 8. Is it ok that there are dictators ruling in various nations around the world? Or should 'we' try to force them all to a democratic system?**

*"Not sure 'we' ourselves have a better option - and to force someone to freedom does not lead to freedom."*

- 9. Should one know what to suggest?**

### **EDUCATION**

- 1. Should Swedish become a voluntary subject in schools?**

*"Swedish speaking are a minority in Finland, which is why I wouldn't want my children to study it, but rather something more important, like mathematics."*

- 2. Should there be established high schools for ethical specialization, e.g. for empathy, good will and love?**

*"This kind of knowledge we are going to need in the future in the whole world. Through these specializations we would be able to give rise to the ethical talents as well!"*

- 3. Should there be a subject of ancient Finnish religions?**

*"Is our christian world view that has been given us by the state, comprehended? Is it finally the of tolerance and understanding? Is it finally the time for our own ancient world view?"*

### **MILITARY SERVICE**

- 1. Should the military service be voluntary for all?**

*"Our system has gone past its time and fighting wars has changed a lot."*

- 2. Should women have an identical education period as the military service is?**

*"The politics should know the opinions of the citizens concerning military service in the Finnish society."*

### **PUBLIC SERVICES**

- 1. Should the public transport be free of charge?**

*"No. It should be cheaper. Even small amounts make a difference on a longer perspective. Lower price would guarantee a bigger amount of users."*

- 2. Should the city of Helsinki support small cultural organisations instead of putting all the money to the 'Stop the Smudging'-campaign?**

*"In most of the cities, the posters of event organisers and organisations are a daily view in the city scene."*

- 3. Should there be more bicycle paths and lanes, allow cycling on the pedestrian zones or be satisfied with the actual state?**

*"Biking in the city center is extremely difficult, especially in the winter."*

- 4. Should the tv-licence be removed?**

**AMORPH!03**  
www.muu.fi/amorph03

The Amorph!03 performance art biennale hosted the first »Summit of Micronations«, where the kings, presidents and representatives of "self made" countries met each other for the first time. Micronations possess state symbols such as passports and flags. They have also proclaimed constitutions, established their own laws and monetary systems. Each micronation differs strongly of the requirements of Statehood: population, territory, government, legality, independence, sovereignty and the capacity to enter into relations with other states.

The concept of a 'self made' nation provokes us to consider the societal and democratic conflicts of our time. Micronations demonstrate the mechanisms of nation-building and the functioning of national histories. The real-life examples such as Ladonia prove that micronation-projects can lead into an intervention within the political arena which the state might regard as problematic.

The Swedish public authorities are demanding the founder of the Ladonia Lars Vilks to tear down the massive wood and stone constructions that form the micronation on an abandoned beach. This battle is continuously being fought on different levels of the bureaucratic system. Lars Vilks has, for instance, saved one of the constructions by registering it as a book and by giving every stone a 'page number'.

## REFERENDUM

### Should everyone have a right to create a sovereign microstate?

The question is, if the most fundamental freedom is not missing, the freedom to be free or not free, according to one's choice. Shouldn't we have the absolute right to select the political society in which we want to live and to depend only upon it? Would it be possible to conceive a system, in which those who are dissatisfied with their government could choose either another one or if none of the existing governments represents them optimally, could just create their own microstate?

Micronations are 'self-made' nations, established by individual people or small(artist) groups. Amorph!03 performance art biennale hosted the first »Summit of Micronations«, where the kings, presidents and representatives of "self made" countries met each other for the first time.

### Options

- *We need microstates as enclaves of difference in which model societies can be tested.*
- *I want to choose for myself which laws are governing me.*
- *There should be free competition between governmental systems.*
- *The Finnish Government does not represent me.*
- *If everybody could create their own country the public domain would disappear.*
- *Microstates are nothing more than gated communities.*
- *Instead of supporting the "balkanization" of the world we need to enforce a unified system of world government.*
- *The system of the EU is the most promising experiment of governance.*

### **Comments from the Voters**

*"Micronations are not dystopian utopias, as the male voter commented before. They are reaching back to the utopian communities of the 19th century and even further. And why this should not have a relevance here; just think about where many ideas, we take for granted today, where most radically put into practice, such as equal rights for men and women. They were precisely tested in those early experimental communities, which for me form a part of a micronational counterculture. I see micronations as test labs."*

Selection: We need microstates as enclaves of difference in which model societies can be tested. (Male, 32 years)

*"Micronations are dystopian utopias... just confusing in this context"*

Selection: Instead of supporting the "balkanization" of the world we need to enforce a unified system of world government. (Male, 25 years)

*"i want to be a human not a citizen. a state is a prison!"*

Selection: I want to choose for myself which laws are governing me. (Female, 20 years)

*"Countries used to be microstates formed of tribes."*

Selection: We need microstates as enclaves of difference in which model societies can be tested. (Male, 41 years)

### **Republics of Choice Oliver Kochta**

The Internet has provided a practical and cheap platform for a great variety of communities of interest: from big bellied men to ufo freaks, from space colonizers to donkey lovers etc. Micronations are just one among those communities, but they differ in one important aspect. They boldly suggest that the whole concept of national identity might be shifted from an imposed territorial to a voluntary non-territorial mode.

To become a citizen of a nation which does not have a territory, that would make it possible to develop alliances which would exceed borders and linguistic barriers. It would be rather original, carrying hope for humanity.

(Frédéric Lasserre:: Les hommes qui voulaient être rois - Principautés et nations sur internet, Analyses et perspectives No 1, 2000)

Three features of non-territorial micronations are important. Citizenship is voluntary, that means that the option of exit is given at any moment, which leads to a competition between the different governments. The third feature is the option, that anyone dissatisfied with all existing choices can start their own micronation.

Such ideas have been formulated long before the Internet era, for example by DePuydt (1860). His text was largely ignored but later re-discovered by Max Nettlau (1909) and made public under the heading Panarchy.

DePuydt and Nettlau suggested that the law of free competition does not only apply to the commercial world but would have to be brought also into the political sphere. They lamented, that the fundamental freedom is missing, the freedom to be free or not free, according to one's choice, the absolute right to select the political society in which one wants to live and to depend only upon it.

In each municipality a new office would be opened for the POLITICAL MEMBERSHIP of individuals with GOVERNMENTS. The adults would let themselves be entered in the lists of the monarchy, of the republic, etc. From then

on they remain untouched by the governmental systems of others. Each system organizes itself, has its own representatives, laws, judges, taxes, regardless of whether there are two or ten such organizations next to each other.

There may be people who do not want to fit into any of these organisms. These may propagate their ideas and attempt to increase the numbers of their followers until they have achieved an independent budget.

Freedom must be so extensive that it includes the right not to be free. Consequently, absolutism for those who do not want it any other way.

There will be free competition between the governmental systems. "You are dissatisfied with your government? Take another one for yourself" - without any revolution or unrest. (Max Nettlau: Panarchy- A Forgotten Idea of 1860, 1909)

In the classic of libertarian literature *Anarchy, State and Utopia* Robert Nozick describes a libertarian vision of Utopia. He of course has to reject the idea of the classical utopia, of a unified system of order. He therefore projects a meta-utopia, in which each person is allowed to choose her own version of an ideal community from a broad menu of possibilities. This is Nozick's own list of the range of communities that might flourish in a meta-utopian world:

Visionaries and crackpots, maniacs and saints, monks and libertines, capitalists and communists and participatory democrats, proponents of phalanxes (Fourier), palaces of labour (Flora Tristan), villages of unity and cooperation (Owen), mutualist communities (Proudhon), time stores (Josiah Warren), Bruderhof, kibbutzim, kundalini yoga ashrams, and so forth

Within Nozick's framework for utopia, it is also possible to design and create your own utopia if you can convince a sufficient number of people to join you. Such colorful mix of communities was intended to exist within the framework of the minimal state, or the invisible state, which should only appear to protect citizens from violence, theft, and breach of contract. Nozick was at pains to demonstrate, that a minimal state would

inevitably arise from a supposed anarchy (or state of nature) without violating anyone's rights. He furthermore tried to prove, that any extension of state power, for example by taxation for welfare purposes is breaking individual's rights and therefore can not be justified.

A more recent project taking up similar ideas is the Transnational Republic (TR), which also participated in the Helsinki Summit of Micronations. The TR was proclaimed in March 2001 in Munich. They suggest to create transnational governments which would work more like transnational corporations. They say that we should learn from Coca-Cola how to represent citizen interests on a global scale. There would be many different transnational republics competing for citizens by providing the best solutions to global problems. Their approach has some similarities to the open source movement, but instead of improving the system software of a computer it's about designing a better political system of governing the world.

The Yes Men have performed with false identities at conferences, on the web, and on television. In various situations they have represented multinational corporations and organizations, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). As the WTO representatives they have claimed controversial views of the future, e.g. complimented Hitler's ideas of the free-market and proposed that there ought to be a market in human rights abuses.

The aim of these presentations has been to explore the limits of WTO's credibility. The Yes Men have tried to come up with such radical and controversial statements that someone in the audience would start to oppose or realise that they are fake. The result of these experiments is alarming - so far The Yes Men have always been accepted as official WTO representatives.

The projects of The Yes Men show that people do not question information given by the authorities. Are newspapers the modern Bible, is everything you see in the news true and factual? Alternative media sources may broaden your view on the world!

## REFERENDUM

### Should the "coalition of the willing" withdraw military forces from Iraq?

The big country called the United States (and the smaller countries they call "the willing") have trashed the small country of Iraq using weapons. Some of the weapons are big bombs, others are smaller bombs, and then there are also bullets, of course. People in Iraq are in turn trying to hurt the "the willing" by using small bombs, and rocket-propelled grenades, and swords to cut off heads live on videotape.

If the USA and "the willing" leave the country now, anything could happen. If they don't leave, anything could also happen. If they do leave, the USA corporations would probably not get the spoils of war, like owning oil wells

or construction contracts to make things the army destroyed. Also, the Iraq people might start shooting each other even more since the USA wouldn't be there to shoot. But maybe they would shoot each other less. But still, some very angry people would be happy to see "the willing" leave willingly or unwillingly.

### Options

- *The willing" should leave Iraq today*
- *"The willing" should leave Iraq in three years*
- *"The willing" should never leave Iraq*
- *"The willing" should invade Iran as well*

### Comments from the Voters

*"They have first got to guarantee some sort of a safety for the locals to live in before leaving the country."*

Selection: "The willing" should leave Iraq in three years (Female, 22 years)

*"They should not have even gone there!"*

Selection: "The willing" should leave Iraq today (Female, 40 years)

*"Specially true after the elections. It would probably be impossible to withdraw the coalition forces "today", but they shouldn't stay as long as three years!"*

Selection: "The willing" should leave Iraq today (Male, 40 years)

*"The coalition of the U.S. and other "willings" in the E.U. should be named U.C.S. ("United Criminal States)."*

Selection: "The willing" should leave Iraq today (Male, 41 years)

*"If necessary, maybe send in some reluctant forces instead. "*

Selection: "The willing" should leave Iraq today (Female, 28 years)

*"better soon than never"*

Selection: "The willing" should leave Iraq in three years (Male, 30 years)

**The Utopian World Championship**  
www.soc.nu/utopian

The Utopian World Championship is an open worldwide competition in visionary thinking. The competition has been running since 2001 and the current second championship is now in its final phase. The winner of the competition, who will receive 1000 Euro, will be announced at the Utopian W.C. Gala in March 2005. On the project's website [www.soc.nu/utopian](http://www.soc.nu/utopian) you can read all the competing entries, get detailed information about the competition and discuss with fellow utopians.

SOC.Stockholm (the artist organisation behind The Utopian W.C.) decided to invite one of the competitors in the 2004 championship to make a question for the PLAN\*B Referendum. The invited competitor is Per Norbäck, a 35-year-old teacher who has put direct democracy through the internet in practise in his home town Vallentuna, located north of Stockholm. After an intensive discussion about democracy he and his students decided to start a non-partisan political party that would make all their decisions with the help of a specially developed e-democracy solution for the internet. They called this party Demoex that stands for "Democracy Experiment". The Demoex internet system is open for all the inhabitants in the city of Vallentuna to join. Amazingly enough, Demoex took one seat in the local community council of Vallentuna in the elections of 2002.

## REFERENDUM

### The relationship between man and the computer in future?

The Turing Test is a test for Artificial Intelligence. Suppose you are connected to one person and one machine only via a terminal. You can chat with them, but you can't see them. If you can't find out which of the two candidates is the machine and which is the human, the machine is intelligent, according to Turing. We have already come this far. Visit the Turing test page to be convinced. Soon the computer will become an oracle - more intelligent than any man. And after that?

#### Options

- *The computer will take over.*
- *Man will enslave computer.*
- *Man and computer will become one.*

#### Comments from the Voters

*"Machines have replaced humans in many fields where automation has once been seen as unlikely. The trend will continue and humans will continue to help the machines take over as they become flawless citizens."*

Selection: The computer will take over. (Male, 29 years)

*"If we want control over our destiny, we better control our tools."*

Selection: Man will enslave computer. (Male, 41 years)

*"Computers will remain the tools for man for as long as they exist"*

Selection: Man will enslave computer. (Male, 40 years)

*"When the interface between computer and man are optimized, there will be no distinction between human thinking and computation."*

Selection: Man and computer will become one. (Male, 37 years)

**Report from the Plan\*B Seminars**  
**Jon Brunberg**

Plan\*B for Arkadianmäki is indeed a very ambitious project about democracy development which took place at Kiasma Contemporary Art Museum in Helsinki from the 24th of January to the 6th of February.

The core element of the project is an online voting system to which artist groups and projects were invited to pose questions to the Finnish people, which resulted in nine different referendums. "Plan\*B" is presented by the organizers as "an alternative Parliament house that offers opportunities for the citizens to voice their opinion and govern".

A series of seminars were held at Kiasma in connection with the voting, an extremely well chosen location since the museum is located just across the road from the impressive parliament building.

A video sequence advertising the project was projected onto the facade facing the Parliament with the message to vote in the referendums, directed both to by passers and politicians. It could be interpreted as a warning to the MP's to take notice and adapt to contemporary society to avoid being overrun by alternative governing systems in the future. Plan\*B is a concept created by Finnish artist Juha Huuskonen who has developed it in cooperation with program coordinator Aura Seikkula.

We were invited to formulate one of the questions for the referendums and present the Utopian World Championship at one of the seminars and decided to pass our question on to Per Norbäck of the Swedish direct democracy experiment Demoex.

Per Norbäck is taking part in the Utopian W.C. with the story of how this non-aligned political party was created and we found his project to be very suitable for the Plan\*B project - especially since Finnish media has reported about it. Demoex is according to Mr. Norbäck the only online direct democracy party that has entered a regional parliament in Europe.

I arrived in Helsinki on Friday the 4th, right in time for Per Norbäck's presentation of Demoex. These were the last days of a full week's program with public lectures and debates. This night the toughest debate came to be between Finnish politician Paavo Arhinmäki - who is actively working for a referendum in Finland on the EU-constitution - and Per Norbäck about the possibilities and limitations of direct democracy. Jiri Räsänen presented the project Leader of The Free World which includes some unique online voting features.

On Saturday 5th I started the seminar by presenting the Utopian World Championship, which was followed by a presentation of Attac Finland by the organisation's vice president Kaisa Eskola, a short lecture about the project Micronations/Amorph03! by Oliver Kochta and finally a very personal and vivid speech by member of the Finnish Parliament for the Green Party, Irina Krohn. An engaged discussion with the participants and the audience followed.

It is very rare that artists and politicians can come together under the same roof to debate with each other in a relaxed manner, without having to defend their respective professions, or getting locked in positions, as I found the discussions at Kiasma to be on this weekend. I would say that this atmosphere was facilitated by the choice of speakers but also by the nature of the project, in which artists are given the possibility to relate to politics and politicians are given the possibility to see art occupied with social and moral issues.

**Plan B till Finland**  
**Per Norbäck**

Juha Huuskonen och Aura Seikkula, två unga finska konstnärer, bjöd in Demoex till ett konstprojekt om demokrati. Jag representerade Demoex på ett seminarium i Kiasma museum of contemporary art mitt emot riksdagshuset i Helsingfors.

Projektets namn "Plan B for Arkadianmäki" anspelar på det geografiska läget. Arkadianmäki är platsen där de betydelsefulla byggnaderna finns. Plan B är vad som återstår om Plan A, det traditionella politiska systemet, av någon anledning misslyckas. Vad finns det då för alternativ?

Alternativen som presenterades i projektet var olika internetexperiment med demokratisk potential. Förutom Demoex fanns bl.a. Homokaasu, Micronations och The Utopian World Championship på plats.

Trots en elak förkylning gav helsingforsresan många intryck. Det starkaste var att konsten kan fungera som en frizon för demokratiska experiment, ett demokratiskt avantgarde. Projekt som vore omöjliga att genomföra i politiska sammanhang är legitima så länge de betraktas som konst. Konstnärer fungerar ofta som inspiratörer och vägvisare.

Bland de elever som startade Demoex var påfallande många esteter. Demoex tog steget över från konceptkonst till politisk verklighet, och det skapar naturligtvis intresse. Jag berättade om våra erfarenheter av lokalpolitiken och mina tankar om fortsättningen. Jag betonade särskilt att Demoex är beroende av övriga politiska partier och önskade mig ett fördjupat samarbete med dem.

En finländsk vänsterpolitiker nickade instämmande. Via en artikel i Helsingin Sanomat har Demoex blivit omskrivet i Finland. Tids nog måste även finska politiker förbereda sig på att dela inflytandet med direktdemokratiska initiativ. Hoppas vi kan skapa en god samarbetskultur i Vallentuna innan idén går på export.

**THE LONG NOW FOUNDATION**  
www.longnow.org

Civilization is revving itself into a pathologically short attention span. The trend might be coming from the acceleration of technology, the short-horizon perspective of market-driven economics, the next-election perspective of democracies, or the distractions of personal multi-tasking. All are on the increase. Some sort of balancing corrective to the short-sightedness is needed - some mechanism or myth which encourages the long view and the taking of long-term responsibility, where 'long-term' is measured at least in centuries. Long Now proposes both a mechanism and a myth.

The Long Now Foundation hopes to provide counterpoint to today's "faster/cheaper" mind set and promote "slower/better" thinking. We hope to creatively foster responsibility in the framework of the next 10,000 years through a series of ambitious real world projects: Such as a 10,000 year all mechanical Clock, and information services on the same time scale.

The 10.000 Year Clock measures time extremely slow: instead of every second, the monumental scale clock ticks once a year. The idea of the Clock is to encourage long-term thinking where 'long-term' is measured at least in centuries. The development of the Clock is being formed in the building of prototypes. The aim is to produce a large-scale structure that would symbolize the deep time for people.

The Rosetta Project is a global collaboration working to build an online archive of all documented human languages. Fifty to ninety percent of the world's languages are predicted to disappear in the next century, without any significant and centralized documentation.

Long Bets hopes to promote long term thinking through a public arena for enjoyably competitive predictions, of interest to society, with philanthropic money at stake. Some examples: "At least one human alive in the year 2000 will still be alive in 2150"; "By 2030, commercial passengers will routinely fly in pilotless planes."

**REFERENDUM**

**How can we best instill long term thinking in the democratic political process?**

One of the driving forces at the inception of The Long Now Foundation was how to balance the short sightedness of next election thinking. While many countries in the world now enjoy a democratically elected government, that same government can limit long term success. There is a paradox in the process of regular elections that currently removes reward for good long term thinking. Any project that is longer than an election term, is by definition not in an elected officials best interest. Yet if we lengthen terms too long, the danger of stagnation and cronyism looms even larger than it does today. So how do we enter long term thinking into this process?

How do we solve problems like hunger, education, poverty and environmental damage when the returns on these problems are so far out?

***Options suggested by the Voters***

- *By extending the constitution with a political plan that can be re-negotiated after say 10 years*
- *More public referendums*
- *Anarchism*
- *Trough Meritocracy*
- *The problem will disappear by itself when humans become immortal*

### **Comments from the Voters**

*We need to let the people to decide over their own and their children's future."*

Selection: more public referendums  
(Female, 32 years)

*"Meritocracy is probably the most efficient way of instilling long term thinking in the political process, apart from dictatorship. Simply put: the most experienced rules. It resembles the traditional model of a council of elders. Please note that I do not myself support such a model."*

Selection: Trough Meritocracy (Male, 40 years)

*"Except for anarcho-capitalism, most forms of anarchism are defending collective freedoms and are against oppressive violence. This is applied democracy at any organisational level."*

Selection: anarchism (Male, 41 years)

*"The proposal suggests that a new set of long term political plans should be voted on every tenth year, which could be seen as a updateable amendment to the constitution. This vote is in praxis a long list of referendas which outlines goals that should be achieved by the end of that ten year period. Each goal needs f.ex. 60% of the votes to be valid. Traditional parliament elections can be held every fourth year but they are accountable for the people to acheive these goals."*

Selection: By extending the constitution with a political plan that can be re-negotiated after say 10 years (Male, 40 years)

*"The politicians must change the approach and become adviser instead of decision-makers. More public referendums gives more responsibility to the people and, thereby a better long term thinking."*

Selection: more public referendums  
(Male, 36 years)

### **Reflection on the Referendum Alexander Rose**

In looking over the comments it seems that only a couple people engaged the question fully. I think it points to an inherent issue in democracy and voting.

Many people who even bother to vote, do so flippantly. Perhaps a better question is simply "how do we take our own democratic processes more seriously over the long term?"

***The Long Now  
Juha Huuskonen***

Alexander Rose, the executive director of the Long Now Foundation, visited PLAN\*B in Helsinki on Thursday 27 January 2005 to give a lecture about the purpose and current activities of the foundation.

The 10 000 Year Clock is a clock that measures years instead of seconds and centuries instead of hours. The challenge is to design a clock in that will function reliably over the time period of 10 000 years. The first prototype of the project requires attention from people on a regular basis - it has to be manually wound like old-fashioned clocks. This is one of the strategies the foundation is recommending for projects with a very long time span. If a project requires maintenance, there is a higher probability that it will function over a time span of several generations. The idea is that it's better to build solutions where a small problem can be solved on a regular basis, instead of creating a longer term solution (and possibly a much greater problem) for the future generations. For example it is better to design a storage space for nuclear waste that will be safe for 100 years instead of a trying to design one that would stay safe for 10 000 years.

The long term goal of the 10 000 Year Clock project is to build a large scale clock which would be a symbol for long term thinking. It would be an attraction that people could visit, just like the Big Ben or the Statue of Liberty. Recently the Long Now Foundation purchased a mountain in Nevada desert where the clock will be placed together with a 10 000 Year Library. The site is located in a national park and should be safe from earthquakes, nuclear warfare, etc. Another advantage is that the visitors will have to reserve some time to visit the site, since it is 5 hours away from the closest airport.

Another initiative by the foundation is the Rosetta project, inspired by the famous Rosetta stone. The Rosetta stone contains the same text written in three ancient languages and has been an important tool for understanding early languages and writing systems. The goal of the project is to create a new version of the Rosetta stone, a public

archive which contains the same text written in as many languages as possible. The project has crucial timing since it has been predicted that as many as fifty to ninety percent of the 7000 languages on the planet will disappear during the next century, with little or no significant documentation. The Rosetta project is currently the most extensive online language archive of all languages.

The Rosetta Project is archiving ten components for each language including a parallel text, an audio file, word lists, grammars and more. The parallel text which was chosen to be documented in this project was the Genesis from the Old Testament. It was chosen because it is the most translated text ever in the history of humankind. This choice made the process of collecting the languages easier but has also brought up some difficulties since there are many people who would have preferred another text.

Alexander also spoke about the 'Digital Dark Age' which our generation is currently living in. The current information storage mechanisms will leave very little information for the future generations to explore. This is due to the quick pace in which digital storage formats are becoming obsolete and impossible to access. Another factor is that within the digital production process, people often save only the final versions, not the drafts and the files created in the working process. 'If Leonardo Da Vinci were alive today, his notebooks would not be preserved for the future'.

Alexander finished the presentation by talking about the foundation's approach to democracy. The democratic political process is by definition time limited through elections with the consequence that long term projects are not prioritized and/or realized. In PLAN\*B FOR ARKADIANMÄKI project, the Long Now Foundation is asking people to propose solutions for the lack of long term thinking in politics.

## **2000.katastro.fi**

2000.katastro.fi project took place at the end of year 1999, close to the dawn of a new millennium. The mainstream media was listing Most Important Persons of the preceding millennium and creating different horror scenarios related to the Y2K bug.

Despite of the public fuss, the attention of the 2000.katastro.fi-project was concentrated to other aspects of life: familiar and common issues which will remain equally essential in the present millennium. The project gathered Finnish reflections on such matters as: Age, Beauty, Breeding, Consumption, Crime, Death, Power, Work, Faith, Freedom, Laziness, Love, Nature. The members of the authors' club Nobelistiklubi wrote short essays on every issue and each essay was connected to a relevant question. The millennium changed already a few years ago but the answers that people gave still remain actual.

## **REFERENDUM**

### **Impressions of good life - how do they affect your life?**

(This question is based on a story, written in Finnish. It is unfortunately impossible to translate the story without losing much of it's meaning.... Sorry about this!)

#### **Options**

- *I aim to reach the good life of my dreams.*
- *I question the ideas I have about a good life because I'm afraid that they are based on ideas and influence from outside.*
- *I live the kind of life I want to live on every moment of my life.*
- *I choose personal relationships based on the kind of life people have to offer.*
- *I have no idealistic impressions of what is a good life.*

- *Something else, what?*
- *Impressions of a good life offer a good balance to common everyday life.*
- *I don't have the possibilities or energy to aim for the good life I dream about.*
- *I often make economic choices based on how I associate lifestyles to certain products.*

#### **Comments by the Voters**

*"Our impressions are always connected to the outer side of our worlds. We can never be free from the reflections."*

Selection: I question the ideas I have about a good life because I'm afraid that they are based on ideas and influence from outside. (Female, 27 years)

*"I aim to not fulfil my visions of a good life, as I believe that it will make me unengaged with living, lazy and in the end unhappy. I prefer to be dissatisfied on an everyday basis."*

Selection: Something else, what? (add your comment in the next phase) (Male, 40 years)

*"Or I'd be dead already. Suicide should be a human right."*

Selection: I live the kind of life I want to live on every moment of my life. (Male, 41 years)

*"but not sure how I know the good life of my dreams are really good - this is a trick question, right..."*

Selection: I aim to reach the good life of my dreams. (Female, 28 years)

## Kaulbach Society

The Kaulbach Society was founded in the lighthouse of the Kaulbach Island on 14th of January, 1875. The founding members were Dr Margareta von Olivers and extreme anarchist Inessa Grigorjevna.

Margareta von Olivers was a thinker ahead of her time, nowadays she would be called an equality activist. In the early 20th century, her daughter Rosa Luxemburg co-founded the Spartacist League, a Marxist revolutionary group, and became a celebrated leader of the league.

Inessa Grigorjevna was one of the most visible members of the Russian Nihilist movement at the end of the 19th century. But contrary to the nihilists, she didn't support the plans to murder Tsar Alexander II.

Margareta and Inessa met in Berlin 1873. The labourers of the Berlin based leather factory 'Lederhosen' were on strike in the hope of better labour conditions. The owner of the factory did not accept labourers' demands but attacked them with fireweapons. Margaret was nursing the injured strikers and supported their claims that the factory should stop using fatal toxic substances. Margaret met Inessa amongst the strikers. After the massacre, Margaret and Inessa were accused in participating in planning the revolt. They fled in the fear of a cruel imprisonment to the peaceful Kaulbach Island in Nova Scotia.

Margareta and Inessa shared views of violence being a weapon only for the mentally impotent.

### Ideologies of the Kaulbach Society

- Violence is not a way to govern
- Lust for power leads to disasters
- Change starts from small deeds
- Family embodies more than relatives
- Responsibility over fellow men and nature is the only acceptable form of governing
- Helping the weaker is the most important guideline of all

### Kaulbach Society today

Only two members belong to the Kaulbach Society at a time. The members select successors for themselves and the membership cannot be inherited through a family connection. At the moment the society is in its third generation. The members of the society have to change their names to Margareta von Olivers and Inessa Grigorjevna.

The activities of the society are constantly being developed to match the current world political situation. Generally the society functions by tormenting the leaders in power and catalyzing grassroots movements.

The current activities of the society are manifested in following ways:

- Ecological way of life
- Small deeds and Big thoughts
- Incisive columns in widely-read news papers
- Youth work especially amongst media (criticism) education
- Extension of art over the borders of elitism
- Using money and technology as means rather than goals of life
- Appraising thought: Brains are for more than just counting money

### Slogans of the Kaulbach Society

Globalization = a double-edged sword  
American car roams with Arabic blood!  
Cogito - ergo sum irritans (I think, therefore I irritate)

Stop shop!

No comments?

What effects do you want to grow in your green house?

## REFERENDUM

### What is a good form of government?

How do you want to be governed? Who is running the society? Who or whom are behind all the decisions? Is democracy more than voting? What would you do, if you were given the authority to govern? Would you share it and if, with whom? Human history has produced various different forms of government and some of them function a little better than others.

Kaulbach Society will develop its own functions and aims according to the voting, which could even have an effect to the choosing of the members.

### Options

#### 1. Corporate Rule

The Government lies in the hands of the five most influential corporations e.g. Nokia, UPM-Kymmene. The influentiality is defined by their share of the GDP.

**Benefits:** The ruling corporations know how the global financial markets function. They also know how many people to employ and how much to pay as a salary.

**Defects:** The welfare state will collapse and the people will start to protest.

#### 2. Interest Group Rule

The Government lies in the hands of all the different interest groups, e.g. the professional and industrial life unions and the organizations for sport, youth, artists, handicapped etc.

**Benefits:** The representatives of these interest groups know their own field and its interests.

**Defects:** The division of powers is even more complicated than in the multi-party system because of the vast amount of the interest groups. The selection of decision-makers will be problematic.

#### 3. One-party Dictatorship

The Government lies in the hands of one party only.

**Benefits:** No compromises or immoderate discussions.

**Defects:** The same.

#### 4. Dictator

The Government lies in the hands of a person alike to Vladimir Putin, a dominant leader. The leader will achieve the position by a battle.

**Benefits:** The members of the nation do not have to think by themselves, but only to follow their great leader, which can make life easy.

**Defects:** The governing becomes one-sided. Dictators become paranoid, because of their lack of trust. Corruption blossoms.

#### 5. Regional Rule

The Government lies in the hands of the administrative districts. The state government decides over only of the foreign and defence policies and divides the taxes.

**Benefits:** Normally things have better possibilities of functioning in smaller units. The members of the nation have better chances to act on the system according to their own will. The state government is simpler and more economical.

**Defects:** If you do not belong to any old chap-networks, life will become unbearable to live.

#### 6. Confederation (e.g. Finland-Sweden)

Both of the states decide to their own issues by the means of parliamentarism. They do have shared foreign policy and defence forces.

**Benefits:** Confederation could have more power in the fields of foreign policy. The maintenance and support costs for the defence forces become low and the forces are more effective as allied.

**Defects:** Only few nations are equal enough to avoid any conflicts or self-esteem issues.

#### 7. Federation of the European Union

The Government lies in the hands of the parliament of the Union. Member nations of the Union have regional rule. The government is clearly centralized.

**Benefits:** Federation of the European Union has more power in relation to e.g. the USA, Russia or China. Byrocracy will be rearranged at some level.

**Defects:** The vast amount of the European nations and cultures complicates the coordination of the Union. The biggest states have the rule of power.

### **8. The Civilized Intelligents**

The Government lies in the hands of six civilized and cultivated persons which are selected by the people. Every one of them has proven strong understanding of history, arts, philosophies and cultures. The rule of every person lasts for ten years. The turn to resign alternates for two persons at a time. In midway there is a vote of confidence for the people to decide their trust to the intelligents.

**Benefits:** The civilized intelligents are the oldest and have received the power and trust for their experience and knowledge. The vast knowledge of history and cultures prevents them from repeating the injustice of the past. There is no unessential byrocracy.

**Defects:** The worst case scenario is that the intelligents will forget the people and use the power for their on benefit.

### **9. Monarchy**

The Government lies in the hands of monarchs that is inherited.

**Benefits:** There is no need for elections. The nation can enjoy and follow the impressive and exciting life of their leaders.

**Defects:** Monarchy is expensive. Additionally, the breeding inside the family will cause serious inherited illnesses.

### **10. Militar Dictatorship**

The Government lies in the hands of the army generals, who act in close connection with the secret service and leaders of economic life.

**Benefits:** Safety and protection guaranteed. The history of mankind is a history of wars, a powerful army equals powerful specialist ruling.

**Defects:** The nation has no rule in their own matters. Corruption blossoms.

**HOMOKAASU**  
www.homokaasu.org

Homokaasu is the greatest mystery of the Finnish Internet. It is an ingenious mixture of democracy and collectivity that is attracting the attention of hundreds of thousands of visitors every month. The visitors can contribute to collectively written stories, follow global stupidity with Global Stupidity Advisory System and enjoy a game of Spastic Chess.

One of the most popular Homokaasu projects is The Kill Everyone Project. The noble goal of the project is to virtually eliminate the entire human population. Every mouse click decreases the population with one person and as unbelievable as it might seem, people have already contributed nearly 4 billion mouse clicks! (November 2004)

#### REFERENDUM

The question for the PLAN\*B Referendum has been collectively decided by the Homokaasu community.

#### Why is the media not an objective information carrier?

Why do we allow media to have too much influence and create false impressions of the society? Why is nobody complaining about this?

- *There is no such thing as 'objective information carrier'. All information transfer is subjective.*
- *We should learn to read the media better.*
- *Media wouldn't be so important if the political systems were transparent. I think they should be.*

*"Participatory or citizen journalism could be a good example on how the longed-for objective corporated journalism is being dismissed by the prevailing subjectiveness."*

Selection: (Female, 29 years)

*"media is just another form of governing people and controlling masses."*

Selection: (Female, 27 years)

*"AMERICAN FOCUS," STUDENT RADIO, WASHINGTON, DC Karine Kleinhou Do you think that you've escaped the ideological indoctrination of the media and the society that you grew up in? Chomsky Do I? "*

Selection: There is no such thing as 'objective information carrier'. All information transfer is subjective. We should learn to read the media better. (Male, 41 years)

#### **The participation of homokaasu.org in Plan\*B for Arkadianmäki** **Matiasa Arje**

##### *About homokaasu.org*

Homokaasu.org (<http://homokaasu.org>) is a web site developed to promote artistic experiments. The site features many experimental web applications and projects and interactive and communal elements.

A very important aspect is the users: a community of 98000 registered users (20th March 2005). Usually 10000 of them are active (visit every week) and 1000 very active (visit every other day). In February 2005, there were 250000 visitors to the site. The title is based on an urban legend, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homokaasu>.

There have been features concerning homokaasu.org or part of it in several very prominent media such as the respected newspapers The Guardian and The Independent, the monthly supplement of Helsingin Sanomat (Kuukausiliite) or TV channels such as BBC and ProSieben.

##### *Background*

During Autumn 2004, the enactors of Plan\*B for Arkadianmäki kindly asked our web community to participate in the project. The project sounded very interesting, hence there was no objections to joining it. We had meetings and a lot of communication with the project organizers and the guidelines for the project were outlined. The crux of the project was to experiment with alternative ways of indoctrination, expression of opinion and voting.

Our participation came down to that homokaasu.org should provide a question that would be subjected to voting and commenting in Kiasma and the project web

site. It was left for the core team of homokaasu.org to determine in which ways this could be accomplished.

#### *Voting system and framework*

We chose to explore the relatively unfamiliar and arcane paradigm of gerontocracy and that in terms of participation timespan rather than physical age. Another important rule established at this point was that the proprietors of the web site would have minimal effect on the content of the votings; they would only provide the framework and the voting system. The content would be entirely user-supplied. (It turned out that one important exception to this had to be made.)

#### *Phase one*

The voting system was laid out thusly. In the first phase, effective from 28th November 2004 to 12<sup>th</sup> December, the registered users could suggest questions. There would be no limitations in the scope or number of the questions, except that they should make at least some sense. The web site included a short introduction to the project (both the big picture and the subproject at the site), what the questions were for and what would happen to them. Registered users could fill in a form that contained the following fields:

- The question
- Optional explanation
- Optional reason for asking this very question

The members submitted about 150 different questions, but the questions were not disclosed yet.

#### *Phase two*

In the second phase of the project, the members of the community would rank the importance of the questions according to their own set of values. The aforementioned exception took place here. Since we did not expect that the members would read and rate such a huge amount of questions, we chose 12 questions amongst those suggested.

The selection was done without formal rules, using gut feeling: questions that were suggested several times or that were extraordinary in some manner prevailed. However, we included also a few completely different questions just for further experimentation. The members had drastically unequal number of votes – this was where the gerontocratic principles

chosen earlier took form. The amount of votes of a user was the amount of other users that had registered to homokaasu.org after her.

At the time of the voting there were about 92000 registered users. The 10000<sup>th</sup> registered user had 92000-10000=82000 votes. The penultimate registered user had one vote.

The twelve questions were presented to the members with an easy user interface for ranking the importance of the questions. They users should just click on a bar. The system took care of distributing the votes of the user to different questions according to the ratings the user provided.

The balancing of the voting's was kept simple. The votes were distributed linearly: the ratings were normalized and the distribution of the ratings was also the distribution of the votes. For example, if rated two questions was rated equally important (and there were no other rated questions), they would both get 50% of the votes. If one question was 100% important, and two questions 50% important, the first question would get 50% of the votes and the latter 25% each.

We expected that not all the members would read and rate all the questions. If the users failed to read the last questions, that would bias the voting in favor of those questions represented earlier. This potential flaw was eliminated by listing the questions in random order to each of the members (they did not appear to shift places; the questions were always in same order for a certain user, but the order was different to that seen by some other user). There were votes from 500 different members.

#### *Results of the subproject*

The question that received the most votes and thus was the question provided for Project\*B was

*Why the media is not an objective conveyer of information?*

An elaboration was included:

*Why the media is allowed to influence too much and create distorted impressions of the society? Why nobody complains about it?*

The question was asked by homokaasu.org member vanth

(<http://homokaasu.org/sect/user.gas?69771>). The entire list of questions and their votes can be viewed at <http://homokaasu.org/kysy/results.gas> (though in Finnish only).

*Question subjected to public voting*

The question was then subjected to voting in Kiasma and the web site of Plan\*B similarly to all the other questions. The answer to the question of homokaasu.org that got the most votes was:

*Because there is no absolute objective information.*

While being arguably correct and true to the word of the question, our view is that it is not true to the spirit: the question was about the influence of media, not about the characteristics of information. Maybe the wording should have been different, or the explanatory text should have been more visible, because the meaning was distorted. Ironic, given the question. The answer was scarcely commented. The comments were mostly about how the personal opinion of both the reader and the writer of a news item effect on the outcome.

The second and third answers, *Business is more important* and *The media is too centralized in Finland* evoked a lot more comments. These strongly featured the notion that all the newspapers and tv and radio channels exist primarily to provide income to their owners. It is cheaper and more convenient to consumers to address things in a light manner.

Other noteworthy answers were *Objective information is either what sells the most (commercial media) or conflicts the least with surrounding information (national broadcasting companies)* and *Media tells about things that interest the greatest mass and evades politically sensitive subjects.*

The rest of the answers more or less repeated the notions or content of those presented here.

*Selective demographics*

Though quite obvious, it is noteworthy that the questions and votes provided by the members of homokaasu.org are not in line with the opinions of the great public. The active members of the site are very specifically

selected (even the address of the site filters out certain kind of people very effectively).

The selection process is not proactive – anyone can join the community – but reactionary: it is a secondary effect of the content and style of the web site. Also, the existing community certainly has some effect on the persons who choose or decline to join.

No formal research on the subject exist, but it seems that the archetype of an active user of the site has the following rudimentary characteristics:

- At least some academic education
- 20-25 years old
- More politically active than average person
- Strongly liberal (as opposed to authoritarian – no clear correlance in economic left/right position)
- Very critical towards mass media

The questions and their importance ratings seem to reflect the characteristics of the typical user rather well.

It is very difficult to conclude anything about the user demographics of the public voting, but it seems that the answers reflected the question and the background.

It is possible that the question reached best those already in fetters with the mass media and provoked them to answer, or that the entire Plan\*B project got the best response from a certain, non-representative portion of the population. However, when considering answers and comments to other questions, this does not seem to be the case.

*The result*

Although the single most voted answer was that objective information does not exist, the similarity of several less voted options is in our opinion more momentous.

We deem that the general public answered to the presented question

*Why the media is not an objective conveyer of information?*

with the following:

*There always exists a trade-off between objectivity and personal or political agenda or economical or other aspirations. The distorting elements cannot be eliminated. When receiving information from any source, this must be considered.*

## **PLAN\*B FOR ARKADIANMÄKI**

Juha Huuskonen  
Aura Seikkula  
Tuomo Tammenpää  
Ville Aho  
Antti Ahonen

## **Projects**

**AMORPH!03:**  
Oliver Kochta & Tellervo Kalleinen  
**2000.katastro.fi:**  
Anu Karjalainen  
**homokaasu.org:**  
Homokaasu-yhteisö  
**The Long Now Foundation:**  
Alexander Rose  
**The Yes Men:**  
Mike & Andy  
**Utopian World Championship:**  
Jon Bronberg  
**Demoex:**  
Per Norbäck  
**Kaulbach-Seura**

## **Report for Finnish Parliament**

Aura Seikkula  
Tuomas Laitinen  
Alejandro Pedregal  
Mikko Laajola  
Samuli Waegelein  
Pablo Alvarez

## **SUPPORT**

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