

STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY:

VOLUNTARY WORK IN

EASTERN AND

WESTERN EUROPE



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PREFACE

Volonteurope organised a workshop on 'Volunteer work and the State' on July 2, 1989 within the International Council for Social Welfare's 15th European Symposium "Work and non-work in the 90's - Economic, social and human dimensions" in Noordwijkerhout, the Netherlands, July 2-7, 1989.

During this workshop, led by L.Hoekendijk and J.Houben, three lectures were given on volunteerwork and the state in Hungary, Denmark and Italy. These texts, supplemented by an interview with S.Yourilin held by L.Hoekendijk on the situation in the Soviet Union, have been combined in this journal.

In the introduction the circumstances in the different countries and in the Netherlands are discussed, hoping we can learn of each other's experiences on this current and very alive subject.

We wish you pleasure reading this journal and hope it provides food for thought.

J.H./J.H.

INTRODUCTION

State and volunteer work: participation and democracy

Joost Heinsius/Jo Houben

The texts in this journal touch on the the problem of the relation between the state and voluntary organisations. Texts which involve such diverse countries as Hungary, Italy, Soviet Union, Denmark and the Netherlands.

But in all of them changes are occurring which make it necessary for everyone involved in volunteer work to rethink their positions, to evaluate their plans and goals and to redefine their notions and ideas.

In Eastern Europe the changes brought by perestrojka and glasnost consequently lead to a series of related problems: democratisation can only grow if there is a lively middle-field in society in which independent and often voluntary organisations can play their necessary role. But each country has its own specific history in that respect which produces different perspectives on their way to democracy.

In Denmark and Holland the crisis of the welfare state has led to a re-definition of the importance of the middle-field and the importance of volunteerwork, although, again, in a different way.

In the contribution on Italy the general problem is discussed whom you are working for as a volunteer organisation and it clearly states one of the main tasks of a volunteer organisation: in this case, to defend your target group against the state.

The social middle-field

It is often forgotten but organisations are not only present in public life but they also co-organise it strongly, they are the driving force

behind it. They are not only the cement of society, but also give it vitality. This produces the open Western societies in spite of their flaws and shortcomings. The world of the socialist countries, on the other hand, always felt superior to Western democracies because of her strong social slant. 'In the East the society means nothing, the state everything', Antonio Gramsci wrote, when he tried to analyse the weaknesses of Sovietcommunism. Perestrojka and glasnost may try to salvage what can be salvaged, but for the time being developments in Poland and Hungary seem to be the most promising. Here we will only deal with Hungary.

What is going on is important, not only because of the political changes that take place, but because there is a civil society, a lively space between state and individual, coming into being. The way is cleared for some kind of free enterprise. The pressure is off a little bit, people can breathe more easily and can unite themselves. This gives pre-eminently room for organisation and (informal) education. It seems the government does not have to do anything but stimulate. Or doesn't it?

The Dutch culture-sociologist Zijderveld words it as follows:

'There exists a powerful social middle-field, when people in all kinds of groups - associations, organisations, parties, types of societies - undertake all kinds of things together and when all these connections possess a decent degree of autonomy vis-à-vis the state. If, for whatever reason, this middle-field becomes a continuation of the state, it loses its functions as a buffer and a filter vis-à-vis the power of the state and the influence of the state on its citizens. Power of state and influence of the citizen then lose their mediation, their arbitration. They become direct, harsh and impertinent.'

A thorough definition of the social middle-field can and should not be given here because its content and significance depend on the historical context, the society it is embedded in and the kind of state it is related to.

Eastern Europe: the Soviet Union

In Eastern Europe this middlefield, this civil society as opposed to the state, has generally been crushed. In the Soviet Union since 1918, which means there are hardly any traces left of really independent organisations, except maybe for the churches. A centrally organised system controlling almost every detail has left little or no room for private and spontaneous initiatives. In the Marxist-Leninist view there

is no room for separate independent organisations because there does not exist a conflict of interest between the state and the people.

The small group of the communist party, supposedly the vanguard of society, ruling the country necessitated a massive educational task force to convince the people of the right ideology. Not only by traditional schooling but also by adult education.

In the Soviet Union large adult education institutes have been set up, which in name are independent, but are in fact controlled by the communist party. The two main ones are the Knowledge Society, which specialises in single lectures on political and scientific subjects, and the People's Universities, which offers longer programs up to four years.

Their programs have a massive attendance. In 1980, for example, the Knowledge Society had more than three million lecturers give a total of some 28 million lectures to more than one billion people. This is the equivalent of the entire population attending six or seven lectures annually. In 1982 the People's Universities had more than 56,000 programs with some seventeen million people enrolling. Important criteria for selection of the lecturers are party affiliation and social activism. Constantly transferring the right ideology and beliefs is indeed thought to be very important.

But the extensive and massive ideological indoctrination has for a large part failed. Soviet citizens have learned to behave a certain way in public and to shut that off at home to behave differently. Taken together with the very visible and concrete economic failures of the system this means the legitimacy of the system, its ideology and its power are at stake. New answers have to be found. By glasnost and perestrojka the system tries to change and at the same time save itself.

Organisations, usually voluntary, are springing to life and abounding. But for them there is no tradition to fall back on. A new civil society must be built by the people and the state, in a system where the state traditionally distrusts its people (why else this massive ideological effort?) and the people have learned to distrust the state (just remember the atrocities of the Stalin period).

Of course, one can wonder if the state is capable at all of creating a civil society. Because a civil society, by definition almost, must be created by the people themselves, organising, getting together, voicing their interests. Also, as long as the state, with an one-party system, defines its goals to be harmonious and identical to those of the people, there is no room for any civil society to move in. Because the concept

of civil society assumes people can voice their own, different interests. This could lead to the conclusion that a civil society is incompatible with a one-party system. So, how far will and can a monopolist communist party go in creating a civil society? At this moment in Poland and Hungary it seems they have reached the conclusion the communist party indeed has to give up its monopoly for a civil society to establish itself. In the Soviet Union the party is more under attack and apt to lose its monopoly through the problem of the different nationalities, which claim more independence and whose interests are often violently clashing. In some parts the regional communist party even wants to be independent of the national party.

There is also another aspect to volunteer work closely connected with Marxist-Leninist ideology. People have no rights independent of social conditions, moreover they also have duties. One of those duties is volunteering. As Yourilin points out in his contribution, volunteer work is often an obligation, a honour you can not refuse when asked. The Soviet Union has a habit of asking its citizens to work 'voluntary' and give up pay for good causes. What defines a good cause is usually decided by the communist organisations. This kind of volunteer work is done on a massive scale but probably can hardly meet Western definitions of volunteer work.

The pedagogical climate has to change too. Just transferring ideology from the top on down must give way to stimulating independent and democratic thinking.

This suggests on the one hand there are enormous possibilities for independent organisations for adult education and volunteer work in the Soviet Union when the changes launched by glasnost and perestrojka become effective, but on the other hand there is a long way to go to overcome decades of old traditions and lack of experience in independent organising.

Eastern Europe: Hungary

Hungary's history is different. Compared to the Soviet Union Hungary at times has known pluralism of some sort, has known a rich and diverse cultural life with all kinds of organisations and clubs.

Hungary has a centuries old tradition of centralisation and paternalism, but also of aspirations for decentralisation and pluralism. Just before the Second World War and afterwards until 1948 different political parties and a strong organisational life existed, as Katus points out in

his article. These have all been eliminated when the Stalinist model of society was introduced, but in the second half of the Sixties a certain economic decentralisation has developed and a limited amount of pluralism in the cultural sector came into being.

So at least Hungarians have some experience with pluralism and self-organisation, however limited, compared to the inhabitants of the Soviet Union.

Recently various political opposition groups have evolved, but the communist party has a massive apparatus and large funds available for use, while the opposition consists of almost exclusively voluntary groups with no paid staff, which often have no more than a rented room and one telephone to work with.

Although the party has its resources, it totally lacks credibility and has lost any election it held recently. So it has written a new concept program in which the word 'communist' appears only once in the sense that communist and social-democratic values should be united. And accordingly the party has re-established itself at a recent congress as a socialist party of which it is not at all clear yet if it will be a really new one. Because, of course, party and state are still closely intertwined and the thousands of bureaucrats and party members do not change their habits so easily. They have to unlearn their reflexes built in forty years and realise the country and its people can no longer be planned according to program.

While in theory the party gives room to develop a middle-field, the actual possibilities are not great. The state has swallowed civil society, so voluntary activities were kept mostly within the confinements of public institutions, which one could join on a voluntary basis. There is a lack of independent and well organised organisations. That is not the only problem. The economy is very poor, so funding for public institutions has dropped drastically in the last decade. These institutions and other voluntary associations that exist or will come into being will have to rely for a large part on other sources for their finances, such as earned income. (There is also a good side to this: they will have to offer what people really want and are willing to pay for and are at the same time less dependent on the state.) But wages are very low, many people have to work a second job in their leisure time to survive or at least reach some standard of living. This leaves them little time, energy and money to donate to volunteer groups and to organise themselves.

The majority of the recently organised voluntary groups are aimed at political pluralism and democratisation. But of course they can not do without education in this respect. The Hungarian Folk High Schools are an example of an, originally traditional, organisation which is involved in just that. For years they have been openly and administratively persecuted but they restarted their activities in the early Eighties synchronically with the new social changes.

In recent years the folk high schools offered a forum for new democratic groups to present themselves and discuss with people. Several leaders of those groups originated from the folk high schools. Now those groups have become more independent and local associations have taken over some of the social functions the folk high schools fulfilled.

In the near future the emphasis of the programs of the folk high schools will be more on civic education. This involves the support of elected representatives of self-governing bodies or of lay people involved in representative activities based on spontaneous actions. But also the acquirement of knowledge and expertise necessary for the organising and functioning of associations, civic groups, actions and campaigns.

The folk high schools have clearly taken sides in favor of a pluralistic, autonomous and democratic society. They also see their role as supporting these trends by their adult education. They think it necessary because large numbers of people still mistrust what is going on, live in a sense of fear and helplessness and lack the practical expertise of organising a community and social culture.

The national Hungarian Folk High School Society became a legal independent organisation in 1989 but of course still has few facilities and not much money. They now want financial support from the state for their functioning. It almost sounds as any other ordinary democratic society, but in fact it is quite amazing.

Although the communist, now socialist, party has declared it will give up its monopoly, it does not mean a civil society will flourish automatically. Voluntary associations may originate, adult education may play an important role, there are also economic and other organisational conditions to be met. It is necessary to stress here that the autonomy of organisations regarding the content of their work is important and essential in a well-functioning social middle-field even when they are subsidised by the state.

But as long as people are struggling to survive it is hard to create room for an independent social middle-field. Of course that also de-

pends on the kind of opposition and the degree of resistance people can summon.

Western Europe: Denmark, the Netherlands and Italy

A lively middle-field has been in existence for a long time in Western Europe, although its process of origination is quite different for each country. Here we will compare the Netherlands and Denmark more extensively.

The Netherlands has the religious groups who - building upon centuries old clerical structures - mainly gave the impulse for a rich organisational life with their ideas about 'organic society' and 'autonomy in your own group' already in the second half of the previous century. Until deep into the Sixties the social structure was dominated by pillarisation and by a conservative and confessional ideology.

Pillars can be described as a coherent network of social, cultural and political organisations based on one (religious) ideology. Each pillar displays a cross-section of the Dutch population. The pillar structure was so strong that in that era the religious and ideological distinctions for the most part pushed back the class differences. The Catholic part of the population fitted perfectly in this description of the pillars. Next to the Catholic pillar one had in Holland a socialist, a protestant and a liberal pillar.

The system of pillarisation produces a special type of social organisations: the pillars and the pillar-organisations had a hierarchical structure, where the communication inside the pillars and their organisations went from the top on down. Only the top level took care of the communication between the pillars but

the rank and file of the different pillar-organisations were strictly kept away from each other and images of each other as enemies were widespread. Schooling and education consisted of transferring the beliefs of the top and were in fact a form of propaganda.

A far-reaching knitting of beliefs, daily life and pillar-organisations is characteristic for the pillarised society. The pillar-system ran on the huge voluntary efforts of large parts of the population. For those involved it organised their participation in public life completely. In the case of the Catholics for example one had Catholic schools, hospitals, unions, libraries, soccer clubs and so on.

So an extensive culture of volunteer work and organisations existed in the Netherlands before the crisis of the welfare state.

In Denmark things are quite different as one can read in Habermann's article. Social-democratic ideology has been a dominating force. This results in the idea 'the welfare state must take care of the weak'. Even voluntary initiatives for new kinds of services were meant to be taken over by the state. Although volunteer groups existed and still exist and a considerable part of the population is taking part in them, volunteer work does not 'exist' within this social-democratic ideology. It is not noticed as such and volunteers are not seen and do not see themselves as such.

Another factor contributing to the view of the state as caretaker is the large proportion (70%) of the women working. Some of the tasks of housewives (caring for the children, the elderly, sustaining family and neighborhood networks) disappeared and others were taken over by the state.

Changes occurred in the Sixties in the Netherlands which affected the pillar structure a great deal. Technical innovations, urbanisation, mass lay-offs, emancipation and increasing government interference give room to forms of organisations which do not have any consideration for the rules of the past. New possibilities for communication open up for the rank and file of pillar-organisations who get in contact with each other. In the beginning of the Seventies facilities are created outside the pillar-structure which were financed by the government and run by professionals in contrast to those from the pillars which were run by volunteers. Extensive efforts were aimed at democratisation and the welfare state expanded.

Crisis hit the welfare state of both Denmark and the Netherlands. The economy went down, unemployment rose to a postwar record high. The welfare state could not finance itself any longer. Cuts had to be made. The belief in the omnipotence of the state slowly disappeared. In Denmark as well as in the Netherlands this led to a renewed appreciation of volunteer work, although in a different way because of their different history.

In Denmark one of the criticisms of the welfare state is the poor (human) quality of the professional services, so the discussion centers on solutions in which the welfare state is either partly substituted by volunteer work or by privatisation and commercialisation, according to Habermann. To prevent the latter it is necessary to uplift the image and status of volunteer work.

In the Netherlands, where volunteer organisations traditionally play a bigger role, government cuts led to a stronger role of the professionals in organisations, where they directed and coordinated the volunteers, but also to a cut-back in services by the welfare institutions.

In the mid-eighties the government has introduced a decentralisation of welfare planning to lower authorities. This is making it harder for local branches of national volunteer organisations to obtain the funds and the education they need to keep on functioning and organising and fulfilling national goals. Adult education is reorganising itself more efficiently to cope with the new circumstances.

At the same time the middle-field is revitalizing. One has become aware that having organisations in the middle-field of society is essential. Volunteers are back in the spotlight and the professionals are being pushed back into the role of 'support'. Of course, this process of change is not running smoothly. Old (pillar-)structures are tough and resilient and do not die so easily. But still, the image of society has become a lot more complex the last decades. Next to the old pillar-organisations new groups and new forms of organising presented themselves. In social and political life single issues (environment, emancipation, (un)employment, peace) often displace the familiar discourses based on an all-embracing ideology. Organisations based on single issues often work in new ways, fast, with expertise and without the dead weight of old forms and ideologies.

4 The welfare state of Italy never really worked as intended. The state is at the same time extensive and bureaucratic but also politicised to the extreme and weak. Consequently voluntary organisations have to complement the state where it is not working either by providing services the state is not capable of rendering or by implementing services contracted by the state in exchange for subsidies, as Petrucci relates in his contribution. Volunteer organisations have to fight the state to protect its target group, the weak, while at the same time working with the state to develop at least a minimum of welfare services. As the state is politicized, so is civil society.

In all three countries the social middle-field is blooming again. In Denmark voluntary organisations must save the welfare state, in the Netherlands the role of voluntary organisations is much stronger, while

in Italy they are necessary just to keep the welfare state working at a minimum.

Participation, democracy and voluntary organisations in East and West

Is the forming of organisations only important to keep society in balance? It is a degrading thought. Individuals participate in public life in different ways, just remember the process of individualisation.

Organisations are essential. They are a necessary but not sufficient condition for participation in society. They can enrich the social environment, but only on condition they open up.

Some people participate in society if angered or wanting to support a good cause. Because they stand for something and go for the unknown. Others choose to stay within boundaries they feel safe in. Informal adult education - because it functions within organisations - can play a pivotal role in realising participation. It teaches people to compose their own travel guide and time-table.

The sources of power are unevenly divided in this world. Participation in daily life is diverse, but usually mirrors the power set-up in society. Social inequality is often also expressed - next to income - by the way people are capable to word their own situation and participate in public life. Participation in society in an emancipating perspective concerns the activities of people who do not submit unquestioningly to the limits they face in their daily life. It concerns democratisation and is a vital part of any democracy.

Particularly in a society that strongly emphasizes individuality and privacy the public sphere has a principle meaning; in this sphere one can stand up for one's interests. Here the confrontation with other groups is taken up.

It is the obligation of the state to give room to the people, to their organisations, to voice their interests. It is one of the basics of democracy. And because the facilities for doing so are unevenly divided people have the right to learn to organise themselves and to learn to voice their interests. Adult education and informal adult education are thus necessary in a democracy, in a civil society.

Participation and education

An important condition in this respect is adult education being able to stimulate from a relatively autonomous position the maturity and

independent thinking of her participants. This way the concerned forces in society (for example associations and movements) themselves can become a focus of debate. And education can also contribute to change instead of reproducing the existing situation.

In this context three characteristics of informal adult education stand out, which can not be viewed separately.

First, informal adult education does not work with a fixed curriculum, a learning process planned in advance with a fixed ending. In this she pointedly distinguishes herself from regular adult education. Thinking and acting, reflection and action can thus influence each other optimally.

A second given is that informal adult education takes place on the interface of individual and society, where people participate.

Third, informal adult education chooses its goals in strengthening participation in society, especially through other channels than paid labour. It should aspire to help conquering the divisions in social life, which are characteristic of this society, 'opposite' domains like work and time off, economy and culture. These divisions have consequences for the way people learn. Informal adult education should contribute to the reinstatement of the coherence of different aspects of reality now lived in isolation.

This leads to the following thesis: adult education is a collective process aimed at learning to word in public common interests and views and to enlarge the related capability to act. This type of education, and that is what makes it special, is in fact one continuous, organized debate.

And that is exactly what democracy needs. A lively social middle-field with an ongoing public debate, in which all kinds of people participate and are able to participate. This applies to all the countries mentioned here and therefore it is important to reflect on the relation between state and volunteers and the role civil society could play within each nation, however different their history.

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VOLUNTEER WORK IN THE USSR

Serguei Yourilin

The changes in my country take place rapidly. It is now a common thing to have criticism of the party, but only a year ago it was very new. Here is an example:

The City of Moscow decided (in 1987) that a new road would be built, which would go through a very old and historical part of the city. A strange and new thing happened: young people, unorganised, got together at the endangered location, they sat down on the road and thus prevented the bulldozers from going ahead. This was an absolutely new phenomenon. The work was ordered to be stopped. When Komsomol heard about it they rushed to the scene of action and offered help. The young people were surprised: they had not expected bureaucrats of the party to support citizen actions. It was the opposite: the Komsomol was glad to have an opportunity to show they wanted to get in contact with the young people and to be on their side. The whole thing grew bigger and bigger because, now that the plan for the new road had been stopped to save the historical site, it appeared that its buildings were so old and neglected they almost came down by themselves.

So, renovation was the next goal. The same young people decided they would try to start the renovation in their free time. But they needed tools, material and expert advice: the Komsomol mediated to obtain these and get them delivered. More volunteers were needed: an ad was put in the papers and many volunteers appeared on the job, people of all ages. Reports about this movement appeared into the national papers

and since then this type of work has been started in many other towns. It spread like wildfire. A central person in this new development- which for a long time not even had a name - was Alexander Frolov.

But there are more movements like that. The ecology is a matter of nation-wide concern. We have several ecological movements but these never had any power. This has changed drastically. In December 1987 a National Council of Ecological Movements was formed, and it now is a group to be reckoned with.

Its first success was the prevention of a plan of the national government under which the course of some large rivers in Siberia would be changed. The official idea was that - since too much water is running north and there are dry spells in the south - the plan would be beneficial to agriculture. However, this drastic measure would disturb nature in an unacceptable way. The protest led to a change of plans, and other ways to irrigate the fields were developed.

There were also strong objections against the establishment of a cellulose plant. Calamities like in Bhopal could happen. The protest was successful. However, I have not heard about protests against nuclear energy plants after the Tchernobyl disaster.

Initiatives

When there are new developments, the people's mentality also changes. Activities arise in many different ways. One example here is the following: the government developed a policy to make it a special effort to put young people in charge of small companies. By young people were meant people of around thirty, who have all the diplomas but formerly hardly had a chance to become manager of a large store. And look what happened: these managers saw the problem of old people who could not queue for hours to wait for their turn. They went to the schools, asking the young people to help as volunteers by going to the houses of the elderly, take their lists and deliver the groceries to them at home.

Students developed their own initiatives. In some neighbourhoods there are no play-grounds: students have made them, as volunteers, in a primitive way first, with more technical sophistication later on. This

work is now extended to the upkeeping of parks and the support of building youth centres.

We always had NGO's (non-government organisations), but they were not very active. The Red Cross is not active, and the churches are introvert - only dealing with spiritual matters. Associations of ethnic groups are quite active and the Temperance Movement (against alcohol abuse) is rather strong. These are traditional and non-political groups. The labour unions are very strong and influential. Some professional organisations not only work in the interest of their own group but organise free instruction for young people: professional musicians instruct young amateurs.

The people in the USSR are very much against the war in Afghanistan. The common opinion was that military help had been asked by the people of that country, but - like in America - the people only wanted it to stop. There were movements to help the children of Afghanistan. Also support groups for Nigeria and Ethiopia were organised. The people feel friendship towards those far-away countries and identify with their problems.

Some problems meet with fear and renouncement. AIDS is something people are afraid of. Campaigns for prevention - like in Western countries - are not organised. Also the drug problem is dreaded. Officially we do not have it, but everybody knows we do and this 'cover-up' gives even more room to fear. It is treated as a purely medical problem, the sub-culture aspects of it are denied. This medicalisation means no volunteers are involved.

Obligation

There is no official volunteer policy, but you must understand how people feel about this. In my country everybody is expected to bear responsibility for the community. First, of course, it is the task of the local council to see that provisions are made. But the people who live in that area put new needs on the agenda. It may happen that you are called upon to take part in a committee to help organise provisions, and it is absolutely 'not done' to refuse a request like that. It is an honour and an obligation. Companies are also considered to have an obligation in this area. They give material to play-grounds and to clubs.

Schools are considered to be a general provision for the young people, not only for school programs but also for after-school activities. They function like a youth-centre. Participation in leadership for these activities is on a volunteer basis but under a rather strong moral obligation.

Solidarity is not a new thing. After the First World War many women were widowed. They were in a vulnerable situation; their vegetables and corn could be stolen from their land. A movement called 'Timoor' was set up to protect these widows. The Timoor people put a red star on the houses which were under their protection. A book has been written about this story, which was very influential and an inspiration to initiatives all over the country. Even now the Timoor movement asks the Social Security if there are people on their lists who are in great need, and they do something about it.

My own particular interest is in work camps. In summer we get young people from all over the world. Young people in the USSR are very eager to meet people from other countries, and this is a way in which it can be organised without excluding youth which are not so well off.

Paid work for students in summer is also common: many hospitals and farms are understaffed. But even then there is a volunteer element: they set aside four days of pay for a good cause, like a childrens' home, or the peace movement.

**VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS, VOLUNTEERS AND
DEMOCRATIZATION IN HUNGARY:
A VIEW FROM HOLLAND**

Jozef Katus

It is now generally recognized that Hungarian society is rapidly divesting itself of the Stalinist model of the State which was imposed upon it forty years ago. This model was a State which, in the words of Neuman (1989) "intentionally brought about the death of ten to fifteen per cent of its own citizens; which was generally unable to sufficiently feed the rest and which dispatched its critics to Siberia or locked them up in psychiatric clinics. A State, which... has submerged 'civil society' in Russia in lies, deceit, servility and meanness; which has allowed what should have been the world's greatest experiment in 'social engineering' to end in a despondent and pauperised police State".

The emancipation of Hungarian society implies political democratization. Voluntary associations play an important role in this. In what follows, attention will be directed to some aspects of developments in Hungary and special attention will be paid to such organizations.

Crisis

Views such as those of Neuman are also expressed in Eastern Europe. Certainly remarkable in this regard was the recently published evaluation (Történelmi utunk, 1989) by the Historical Working-party of a commission which was appointed by the Central Committee of the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP) to investigate developments since the Second World War and to formulate a new party manifesto. The Working-party points to the disastrous consequences of the Stali-

nist model in diverse fields and to the fact that the accompanying use of terror and dictatorship are not distortions, for which one person or group can be held to be accountable, but are the logical consequences of the system itself (p. 24).

This analysis further reinforces that which attentive newspaper readers already know: Hungary finds itself in a crisis which is primarily the result of Stalinist administrative practices. While the debt to Western countries is approximately 18 billion dollars, the highest per head of the population in Eastern Europe, the country's economic infrastructure is far from promising a rapid recovery. The Hungarian economist Bogár in this respect speaks of "a robbery unknown in peace-time" (Gáti, 1989). He expects an improvement in the economic situation only after the year 2000.

The situation is equally worrying in social terms. According to the above mentioned Working-party (p. 73), at least two million people, that is 20% of the population, live under the poverty level. The sociologist Ferge (1987:104) states that 24% of the population is poor. Whatever may be the case, poverty is in her view "an increasingly serious social problem".

The misery is particularly great among the elderly who have to exist on a small pension. The living conditions of the young are equally unpromising. In addition to growing unemployment and low incomes, they are confronted with a housing shortage which inhibits starting a family or the creation of a more satisfactory family life. According to Fóti (1988:105) 38% of married couples under thirty years of age do not have a home of their own. The situation is even worse in Budapest, where almost 50% of young couples are without their own home.

In addition to poverty and the housing shortage, alcoholism and suicide constitute serious social problems. The number of alcoholists is estimated to be 500,000, which is more or less 5% of the population. Among the male population of over fifteen years of age, which category produces most drunkards, the percentage is closer to 9 (Andorka, 1988:14-15). As far as suicide is concerned, Hungary has long featured among the countries with the highest rates. A sorry record was achieved in the period 1931-35 when the suicide rate reached 32.9 per 100,000 inhabitants. At present the rate is more than 45 per 100,000, while the expectation is that it will rise to 50 in the coming years. Of the coun-

tries publishing suicide statistics, only a few report a suicide rate higher than 20 and not one reaches 35 (Buda, 1988:41-42).

The frequently mentioned Working-party pointed, furthermore, to the decline in health standards and a significant increase in general mortality. Demographic developments can only be described as negative. There is a declining average life expectation and a declining population.

One can obviously ask oneself whether the afore mentioned social problems have been brought about by the application of the Soviet model. They could also be caused, for example, by other factors such as industrialization.

Such a remark is justified. Nonetheless, it may be assumed that innovations according to the Soviet model have had their own disruptive consequences and that they have only served to worsen the consequences of industrialization. The housing problem serves as one example. Fóti (1988:152-153) argues explicitly that the serious housing shortage is a consequence of the Stalinist model. Housing policy involved among other things that private homes were expropriated. The State turned out to be a poor landlord, which led to the decline of the national stock of housing.

The Working-party of the HSWP further refers to the introduction of foreign institutions and practices into Hungarian culture along with the Soviet model (p. 16-18). This involved, among other things, that voluntary initiative more or less disappeared. The consequences of this were not only disadvantageous in economic terms, but were also negative in other sectors. Welfare provision is a good example. While an explicit, more or less co-ordinated, welfare policy is almost totally non-existent in Hungary, there is a marked absence of any network of voluntary organizations which could provide support and help for those in situations of need. Buda (1988:54-55) argues that the absence of organizations capable of providing charitable, social and spiritual support is one of the explanations of the high suicide rate.

Responsibility

There can be little doubt that the communist party, which has enjoyed monopoly power under various names since 1948, is responsible for the crisis. The same applies to the atrocities and other abuses of Human Rights which have marked this period. There is no available, more or

less complete, account of political killings, executions, torture, show trials, incarceration in prisons and concentration camps, enforced individual and collective transportations, and other diverse forms of persecution. With some show of legality, three quarters of a million people, including 100,000 rural inhabitants, were victimized in the period 1950-1953 alone. According to some sources, the total of the persecuted rural population numbered 400,000 between 1948 and 1955 (Zinner, 1989). It is also necessary to remember in this regard that, as a rule, the Stalinist terror often extended to the family of those most directly involved.

Eleven voluntary associations, two of which explicitly refer to themselves as parties, accused the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, notably in the official government newspaper, that it remains silent concerning "the mass of bloody victims" of the State police together with the "ruthless retribution" exacted following the uprising of 1956 (Magyar Hírlap, 18-2-1989).

It is not surprising that there is not only a political and social crisis in contemporary Hungary but also a moral crisis. This crisis has many dimensions such as corruption, the discrediting of Marxist ideology, and the absence of social solidarity partly as a consequence of a vigorous anti-religious policy. The search is on for ways out of the crisis, and it is perhaps indicative that even the church is currently regarded as an institute for adult education in the official journal of the Ministry of Culture and Education. In this context, it is pointed out that research suggests differences between religious and non-religious people, "The religious group has more children, is characterized by a stronger sense of community, and has a heightened sense of social responsibility...". The notion that religion has no place in society is rejected as an outdated prejudice. "Religion is a living (emphasis in the original text -JK) reality in our contemporary society; there are many believers with a clearly defined system of values and view of the world, together with a multiplicity of institutionalized forms and means for their communication". The church is regarded, as already indicated, as an institution for adult education which has to be recognized when it comes to the distribution of public funds (Tomka, 1988).

The moral crisis has naturally not escaped communists. Rádi (1988:3-5), for example, says he recognizes that the 'existing socialism', in whose

service he and many others have worked for decades, "does not even meet the most elementary demands which can be made upon socialism". A socialist society should be democratic; free of moral chaos, voracious materialism, corruption, indifference and servility. And, last but not least: humanity is the highest value in socialism".

Little of this is to be found in the 'existing socialism'. Rádi argues further that this is a consequence of the monopoly of power of a party which cannot in essence be called a real party. Characteristic of a 'real' party is that its members are involved in political activity, that they participate in the formulation of party policy. The members of the HSWP are subjected to the will of a coalition comprising a small elite and an extensive party apparatus. It would be therefore more appropriate to refer not to a one-party system but to a 'non-party system' in Hungary.

The crisis in which the country finds itself has undermined the position of this 'non-party'. While the demand for democratization within the HSWP became sharper, the call for the restoration of parliamentary democracy became louder in the society which it dominated. As is known, the democratization trend has in the meantime become so strong that the party has had to accept the re-introduction of a multi-party system. Developments now tend towards the restoration of parliamentary democracy, which is supported by the progressive wing of the HSWP under the leadership of Imre Pozsgay. And the Parliament, which did not deserve the qualification of 'representation of the people' during the last forty years, shows symptoms of revival. In the light of the growing public discussion, conformists arouse such antipathy that private citizens collect signatures in order to declare them not worthy of their seats. More independent spirits among parliamentarians are enjoying growing popularity.

Among the latter is probably Imre Varga who said, during a debate about the introduction of a new constitution based upon Human Rights, that for the Hungarian people is now perhaps dawning "a life without fear..." (Babus, 1989).

Voluntary associations

Hungarian society is emancipating itself, but although this process has recently speeded up it cannot be said that it runs smoothly. The result is by no means certain. There is without doubt a struggle between

conservative and progressive forces. In this struggle, voluntary associations play an important role.

The significance of such organizations for a society become more clear when one considers their role in a country as the Netherlands.

In a handbook for associations, foundations and the such like (Dijk et al, 1980:I-1, ff.), voluntary associations are defined, following Van der Ploeg (1978), as "organizations established by private citizens, which are neither devoted to the distribution of profits among its members nor to the management of capital".

Abma (1962) dates the beginnings of such associations in the Netherlands in the early eighteenth century. In those days, they purported to encourage a diversity of good causes in the name of progress. As a result of the social differentiation arising from technological developments during the nineteenth century, problems emerged which could not be solved within the traditional framework of family, village and church. As a consequence, there arose a new variety of voluntary organizations which was based upon the equality of ideals or interests. Furthermore, they were able to freely operate following the recognition of the freedoms of association and meeting. From the end of the nineteenth century, there was a rapid growth of voluntary organizations. Some of these pursued explicit political objectives, while others were directly or indirectly successful in exerting influence upon government policy in a specific area. The political significance of voluntary organizations increased as greater welfare, a higher educational level and advanced mass communication led to the awareness of the population. It was no accident that the manifestation of a specific form of voluntary organization, namely the social action groups, coincided with a period of political democratization (cf. Katus, 1984).

The present-day Netherlands is rich with voluntary organizations constituting what is known as 'associational life'. Following Kruithof (1973), one can refer to a conglomeration of collective striving for the satisfaction of individual and collective needs or the struggle against individual and collective problems.

The cited author further refers to the double relation between associational life and democracy. On the one hand it offers people the possibility to participate in self-management, while on the other hand the voluntary basis to associational life can only exist in a democratic society.

The relationship between democracy and voluntary organizations is not only manifest in the Netherlands. In American scientific literature, voluntary organizations are indeed viewed as bastions of democracy (Knoke, 1986:7). According to Kramer (1981:9) voluntary organizations in general perform a variety of functions. They are often to the fore with innovations which are later adopted by the government; voluntary organizations can follow the government critically and exert pressure upon the government with regard to the performance, expansion or improvement of its services; they can support particular values; they can encourage the participation of citizens and support the interests of social, cultural and other minority groups. Voluntary organizations themselves can, furthermore, perform certain services for which the government will or can not assume responsibility.

Democratization

Hoogerwerf (1981:238) understands democracy as a form of policy-making "which is present in the degree to which the members of a group are able to directly or indirectly influence the content, the process and the effects of policy". Quite rightly, nothing is said in this definition about the size of the group. Democracy can involve both the internal relations within a small organization and the quality of a whole society. There can exist, furthermore, degrees of democracy with regard to the measure of political influence over policy.

Democratization involves a process, therefore, in which the possibilities are increased for the members of groups to directly or indirectly influence policy.

Political scientists are by no means in agreement about the methods for assessing the democratic qualities of a society. Some have attempted to develop indicators which can be used in making comparisons between different societies. White et al (1987:272 ff.) present a table based upon the works of Dahl (1971), Bollen (1980), and the World Human Rights Guide of Humana (1986).

According to Dahl, the characteristic of democracy are that citizens possess the opportunity to express preferences, to make these known to their fellow citizens and the government through individual or collective action, and that the government takes account of these preferences in policy decisions. Bollen's index of political democracy is based upon indicators of political rights and of popular sovereignty. Political rights include press freedom, the available space for collective opposition and

the presence of government sanctions to restrict the political activities of one or more groups. The World Human Rights Guide examines regimes throughout the world in the light of their respect for Human Rights.

Given that the comparison made by White et al., is only intended as a rough indication, it is reproduced here in a simplified form with the qualification that the table below shows only the averages for a number of European countries.

INDICATORS OF POLITICAL DEMOCRACY (%)

GB	SU	DDR	PL
93	17	19	26

Source: Stephen White, John Gardner and George Schöpflin (1987). *Communist Political Systems*. Houndsmill: Macmillan.

A reassessment of these percentages in the light of 'glasnost' and 'perestroika' in the Soviet Union and the current course of events in Poland would probably lead to higher scores for these countries. Despite this it cannot be denied that, while England with its democratic traditions is not entirely democratic, much has yet to be democratized in Eastern Europe.

Hungary does not appear in the table above, but Poles and Hungarians would probably not disagree with a comparison between their countries in this respect. It is not insignificant that Gati (1989:101) mentions Hungary and Poland in one breath when he refers to the Eastern European countries which support Gorbachev.

One could add to this that voluntary associations play a significant role in the current process of democratization in both countries. With regard to Poland one can rest one's case with a reference to Eastern Europe's most well-known voluntary organization: Solidarnosc.

Voluntary associations in Hungary

When one makes a global comparison between voluntary organizations in the Netherlands and Hungary some surprising similarities and one essential difference become apparent.

On the one hand, Hungary also had a rich associational life until 1948, a considerable part of which was organized along confessional lines. On the other hand, associational life in the Netherlands has been able to develop relatively undisturbed and in harmony with the character, possibilities and needs of society. In contrast, the introduction of the Soviet model in Hungary involved "the withering away of a social structure made up of circles, associations and organizations". Organizations which survived, such as trade unions, lost their independence, status and importance (Rádi, 1984:4).

In general, there remains much to learn about voluntary organizations, and this is even more true of Hungary. An important phase in their development in this country was the first half of the nineteenth century when the progressive Count Széchenyi established a 'National Club' where well-educated noblemen and citizens could discuss together and have access to important publications in the fields of politics, economics, sciences and arts. This example was rapidly followed and within a short period there were two hundred of such clubs. They were very important with regard to the shaping of public opinion on politics. Their members came to learn this and that, could exchange opinions with others, and in this way disseminate informed ideas in their own direct environment. These clubs played a very important role in forming the national consciousness of Hungarians which resulted in the revolution of 1848 and the subsequent war of liberation against the Habsburgs. The kaiser repressed the Hungarians with Russian help. Later he found it, however, necessary to arrive at an Ausgleich with them which was achieved in 1867. In the resultant Austrian-Hungarian monarchy, associational life developed rapidly. Many religious organizations were established, while the farmers and workers created their own associations for furthering their interests, education and recreation.

Associational life developed significantly between the two World Wars. In 1932, voluntary organizations numbered fourteen thousand with some three million members. This means that one third of the population participated in their activities. The purposes of these associations varied from furthering their interests to providing information. The confessional organizations were very active in the educational field.

Following the Second World War, Hungary experienced a short period of democracy during which many political parties and other voluntary organizations were active.

The introduction of the Soviet model, as already mentioned, put an end to this. Harangi (1986: 147-148) has illustrated the implications of this for the town of Miskolc. While the population of the town tripled between 1928 and 1982, the number of associations declined from 165 to 71 and the total membership fell from 43,000 to 31,500. What remained comprised mostly sport associations.

As was remarked earlier, much remains to be learned about voluntary organizations in Hungary. This is certainly the case with regard to the confessional associations. The intriguing question is how some managed to continue functioning in very difficult circumstances. Noteworthy in this regard is Bokor (Bush), a Roman Catholic organization which was set up during the late 1940s in response to increasing repression (Bercsi & Telkes, 1988: 15-16). It successfully struggled to maintain a network of communities devoted to gaining theological knowledge and passing this on; communities which stand for pacifism as the symbol of love for God and mankind. Bokor experienced a serious setback in 1952 when its founder, Father Bulányi, together with many other members, was arrested. It was only in the mid-1960s that it managed once again to develop systematic activities although it was frequently hindered by the government. It experienced not only opposition from the temporal government but also from the leadership of the Roman Catholic Church in Hungary. An explanation of this is, among others, the fact that the members of Bokor refused military service on the grounds of their pacifism, which was problematic in the relationship between State and church. This voluntary organization has nonetheless undoubtedly contributed to the current recognition of conscientious objection in Hungary and that objectors are no longer sent to prison.

During the last two or three years numerous voluntary organizations have been established in Hungary including relatively many environmental action groups (Bercsi & Telkes, *passim*). Partly responsible for this is the building of a dam at Bős-Nagymaros in the Danube valley, which was decided upon in the traditional authoritarian manner and which, thanks to the work of the Hungarian 'greens', has aroused much opposition among the population. The greens demanded the stoppage of construction work and agitated for a popular referendum to decide its

future. The Hungarian government has since in fact decided not to build the dam.

The Federation of Young Democrats (FIDESZ) was created last year, and expresses extensive political demands such as parliamentary democracy and explicit welfare and youth policies. FIDESZ, which comprises approximately fifty groups, strives, in its own words, with all available legal means to achieve its objectives and says it will make use, when necessary, of civil disobedience, demonstrations and strikes in its struggle. The League of Free Democrats was also established in 1988. This voluntary organization wants an "independent, democratic welfare State". In the same year, the Network of Free Initiatives was established for the purpose of preventing the splintering of democratic forces by means of the exchange of information. The National Publicity Club was also established in 1988. It is committed to encouraging the freedom of expression and press freedom. The Hungarian Democratic Forum is probably the most important oppositional group. It came into existence in the autumn of 1987 as a result of a meeting of some 160 prominent and most concerned intellectuals. It wished primarily through open discussions to promote the expression of opinion about the economic situation, parliamentary democracy, publicity, public information, the freedom of the press and the position of the Hungarian minority in Rumania. The last was found necessary because the Hungarian authorities themselves had neglected to pursue an adequate policy regarding the oppressed Hungarians there.

Another example of voluntary organizations is the Hungarian Society for Folk High Schools. This organization supports initiatives for the establishment of folk high schools and the operation of such autonomous institutions for adult education. A significant aspect here is that these educational activities are intended to promote the political and bureaucratic competencies of the participants. The assumption is that they can play an important role at the local level where democratization is concerned (Szigeti Tóth, 1988).

Of a different character is the Independent Service for Legal Protection, also created in 1988. This gives advice and provides support in situations where Human Rights are at issue or where the citizen finds himself in a weak position with regard to the State or State organizations.

The Raoul Wallenberg Association was also established in 1988 and is named after the Swedish diplomat who helped many Hungarian Jews in 1944 and later disappeared in a Soviet concentration camp. Inspired by Wallenberg, the Association defends the rights of minority groups, such

as the gypsies, and pleads for the development of a welfare policy which corresponds with these rights.

The in 1988 established Committee for Historical Justice cannot be ignored. Its members are relatives of the executed leaders of the 1956 anti-Stalinist uprising and those who were persecuted for their involvement in it. The Committee wants to ensure that the crimes committed against the Hungarian people since 1945, and particularly following the uprising, are brought into the limelight, and that both the dead and living victims are morally, politically and legally rehabilitated. The rehabilitation and reburial in June last of Imre Nagy and other leading personalities of the uprising of 1956 is undoubtedly a major achievement of this voluntary association. The reburial was, as Seibert and Meyer (1989: 14-15) write, a "catharsis that had been forbidden to the people of Hungary for more than three decades". And they add to this that when the Hungarian nation finally paid its last respects to Imre Nagy, the mourners had not come merely to bury him. "They were there to resurrect his spirit. A parade of speakers pledged themselves to the ideals he died for - democracy, neutrality and national independence...". Among the speakers were representatives of FIDESZ and other voluntary associations.

Volunteers

As was pointed out elsewhere (Katus, 1986:161) with regard to Dutch voluntary associations, their functioning is often entirely dependent upon the work of volunteers. The functioning of the Hungarian voluntary associations in question is entirely dependent upon the work of volunteers, as they do not have paid staff.

Those people are considered as volunteers who work without compulsion or payment in an organized fashion in the interest of others or of the society (cf. Beleidsnota, 1985:2-9). Applying this definition to the Hungarian situation, we may say that everybody involved in this way in activities of voluntary associations, is a volunteer. Who the volunteers in Hungary are, and how many people are engaged in voluntary work, has, at least to our knowledge, not yet been thoroughly investigated. So if we want to have any idea about them, we must confine ourselves to sketches of some profiles of volunteers and to a few personal observations.

Father Bulányi, the leader of the above mentioned Roman-Catholic association Bokor has, for instance, spent many years in prison after the seizure of power by the communists. When he was released, he started to earn his living as an unskilled workman. After a while he preached and taught again, pleading for a society free of violence and oppression, educating fellow Christians to learn to be subjects in God's kingdom rather than of a Stalinist State. Father Bulányi not only challenged the secular authorities, but also those of the Church by teaching his followers that the Church is a whole of small communities living according to the lessons of Jesus Christ, and not above all a hierarchical structure of priests and dignitaries, similar to the State itself. Nor the Church authorities, neither those of the State were very pleased with him. But he is still there, and the number of his dedicated followers amounts to two thousand (Bálint, 1989:12-15).

Recently a study by Bossányi has been published (1989: *passim*), containing the outcomes of interviews with, not necessarily leading, representatives of voluntary associations in Hungary. According to one of the interviewees, Father Miklós Blanckenstein, parish priest of Örökimádás at Budapest, the hard core of different basic communities like Bokor and other ones, functioning more in compliance with the Church authorities, comprises about fifty thousand persons, while the number of those who are less actively involved amounts to another fifty thousand. Bossányi's study shows, among others, that the authorities of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party, and, naturally, those of the State itself, have tried persistently and in many ways to prevent the development of voluntary associations for environmental protection. János Vargha, for instance, a graduate biologist, was fired as a science writer because of his involvement in the opposition against the building of the above mentioned flood-control dam in the Danube. He now has a study grant of the Soros Foundation, created by a Hungarian-born American businessman, and does research into possible responses of Hungarian society to the ecological crisis.

One of the initiators of FIDESZ, László Kövér, is now also a Soros scholar. He studied law, but in the course of time he became sick of the contradictions between what he was taught, and reality, the latter being the everyday life in a Stalinist State. He is now concerning himself with a study of social movements, national self-consciousness and nationalism in East-Central Europe.

Rudolf J6o, one of the representants of the Hungarian Democratic Forum (MDF), is a scholar of political sciences. As said above, this voluntary association came into being in the autumn of 1987, when about one hundred and sixty prominent intellectuals held an informal meeting in order to discuss the crisis faced by the Hungarian society. The MDF had at the end of 1988 more than ten thousand members, and about four hundred local branches. Among its members there are workers, peasants and tradesmen, but the majority consists of intellectuals.

The number of workers' voluntary associations is estimated by Istv6n Vass at ten to twelve. Vass himself, a fitter, is a representative of the approximately three thousand strong Workers for Democracy Group, which does not consider the HSWP as a party of the Hungarian workers. The sociologist Ferenc Miszlivetz is considered as one of the spiritual leaders of the Hungarian peace movement, strongly influenced by the peace movement in Western Europe. He also participates in the East-West Dialogue, whose Hungarian network contributed in co-operation with Bokor to the furthering of the recognition of conscientious objectors, and maintains relations with peace groups in other countries in Eastern Europe and in the Soviet Union. They plead for disarmament of the NATO as well as of the Warsaw Pact. This is why the authorities molested them, till Gorbachov himself started to plead for disarmament on both sides.

Personal observations in the Hungarian countryside inform us, furthermore, that in some places elderly people play an important role in the revival of voluntary organizations. They themselves are, of course, volunteers like the younger men and women who they teach about the functioning of the local society before the introduction of the Stalinist model. Their experience is particularly valuable, as generations grew up without learning how to work together freely for a cause they themselves consider to be noble. And they also did not have the chance to learn how to manage a voluntary association in a democratic way.

Concluding remarks

Notwithstanding the fact that among the volunteers in Hungary there are workers, peasants and the elderly, it is hard to avoid the impression that volunteers, participating in the activities of the voluntary associations in question, are for the greater part young urban intellectuals. Voluntarism could be considered, however, as an innovation, and the spreading of an

innovation normally takes some time. This is certainly so when persecutions and other negative experiences in the past have taught the people to be cautious. So we have to wait and see how voluntarism is spreading.

But it in Hungary is not always easy to be a volunteer even for those who want to associate and work for others or for the society. Life was already hard for many before the present economic crisis. If one wanted one's own home, if one wanted to live a decent life, then one had to work more than eight hours a day, and often have more than one job. There was not much time left for leisure, not to mention voluntary work. Now the economic situation is grave, the perspectives for voluntary work are even less favorable.

But all that does not alter the fact that there are volunteers and voluntary associations in Hungary, and that their number is growing. The cause, for which they are striving, is above all democracy. Voluntary associations function as fora, where people can exchange ideas and information, articulate their political opinions, and formulate political demands. Voluntary associations already influence the government's policy in different fields, like, for example, environmental protection. They even want to transform the State from a Stalinist into a democratic one. If this happens effectively, then we may be the eyewitnesses of the last convulsions of a dictatorship, and, at the same time, of the birth of a democracy in Europe.

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VOLUNTARY WORK IN A NORDIC WELFARE STATE

Ulla Habermann

The volunteer sector in Denmark has for many years been looked upon as an old-fashioned and not important factor in social policy. But this attitude is now slowly changing, and the idea of voluntarism is becoming still more accepted.

In 1983 the Ministry of Social Affairs set up a committee whose task it was - and is - to take a closer look at the voluntary sector and to promote a better relationship between the voluntary and the statutory social services.

I chose to present you several short points to give you an impression of the background, the ideas and the actual work this Committee for Voluntary Work is working on.

A brief history of the Scandinavian/Danish Welfare State.

It is a historic fact there has always been family, voluntary organisations (often the churches) and the state involved in the provision of care and welfare. The voluntary efforts have never been the only welfare-source outside the family. But during the last 100 years the balance between these three - family, volunteers, state - and their roles have changed dramatically. This change is due partly to the ideology of the social democratic party - "the welfare state must take care of the weak", and this ideology has been largely adopted by the whole population and by other political parties. In a way you could say the Danes for generations have been born into this way of thinking - "The state is the home of the people" - as the prime minister of Sweden put it in the early 1930's. And we are brought up to be proud of the Welfare State and its

citizens' rights which are based on citizenship and not dependent on ability (or chance) to enter the labour market.

Secondly the change of balance is due to the developments on the labourmarket. During the Sixties and Seventies the women in large numbers went from the families out to work in the labourmarket. In 1960 the number of housewives was 820.000. Twenty years later - in 1981 - there were only 250.000. Now 70% of all women are employed - and if you look at the younger women with small children - the percentage is round 90%. The reason the employment of women is so important here, is of course that the very important tasks of the housewife - the care for the children and the old people, the keeping together of the family and neighbourhood networks - partly had to be provided by the state and partly disappeared. The state took its paternalistic role very seriously, and did its best to provide all the services needed. Often initiatives for new kinds of services were started as a private/voluntary idea - but quite soon the state would take over. And this "take-over" was in fact built into the strategies of the voluntary organisations. They did not want to stay voluntary - they saw all welfare activities as the responsibility of the state. And to remain voluntary was not considered "good taste", the ambitions were to go "stately".

The present crisis.

The somewhat naïve belief in the omnipotence of the state has slowly but surely disappeared during the last 10 - 15 years.

Time has shown the state cannot provide all the wanted welfare - and well-being. Needs are infinite - also economically unending, and the people's satisfaction with the statutory services is often low.

The present situation is one of crisis:

bad economy - cuts are necessary

unemployment high (10% in average)

less service - long waiting lists, higher payment

difficult to get higher education, etc.

less quality - the stress on the professionals is enormous - and standards hard to keep.

But the main reasons for the crisis in the nordic Welfare States are - firstly the very high tax-levels, which have blurred the principle of

solidarity and made the idea of the welfare state less popular than before (although very few as yet want privatisation).

secondly the awareness that it is very hard for statutory services to live up to the expectations of the quality of human relations and citizens-participation.

This crisis calls for development and new ways of thinking - and this process has started on many levels in the society.

Work and non-work.

In view of the unemployment and the admission the state can not bring the people happiness, different ideas of work have emerged. The word "work" does not only stand for paid labour, but also for many voluntary activities. Work has not only a meaning financially but also socially.

In the old nordic language there was no word for "work". The Vikings differentiated between slave-labour and free man's activity. And this discrepancy between forced labour and free activity is still haunting the debate of "work".

In Denmark different solutions and ideas have been discussed - some are more realistic than others: But unfortunately the most realistic are not always the most creative. Some of the ideas I shall mention here.

The "citizen-wage" means that as a citizen you are entitled to a minimum amount of money (which in fact you already are now through social security benefits). But the "citizen-wage" doesn't make you a client, and doesn't demand of you to be available for the labour-market. If you want more money - earn it. If you are satisfied, there are no more claims on you - be a volunteer!

The "time-share-work" means a division of paid jobs in a way that might fit better into the individual's life. May be you want time off, when you have small children, and may be you do not want an early retirement.

The right to a "sabbatical year" and the possibility to return to a labour market career without too much of a setback.

A proposal from the trade unions for possibilities of paid leave for adult education.

And last - but not least - there is the discussion of voluntary work - the satisfaction it gives people, its compensatory/complementary roles, and its opportunities for many young people to obtain experiences of different kinds.

In this process towards new social values and a new concept of "work", it is clear that creative, vital "free man's activity" has a high priority in the discussions, but unfortunately a low status. There is very little free time left for volunteer work, when you have done your paid work, your housework and had some time to sleep and eat.

The three-dimensional network

The fact that the volunteer sector in Denmark has for decades been almost invisible - and to some people even a bit embarrassing to talk about - is a paradox in itself.

Because Denmark has a long and sturdy tradition for citizen-involvement, anti-authoritarian movements, cooperatives and so forth. Especially in education, in farming, and (in later years) in alternative housing this has been the case.

But in social and health welfare the state provisions and the ideological picture of the parent-state have clouded the scene - and this has meant an almost total blindness to voluntary efforts and a very high degree of professionalisation (which followed, when the women left their caring work at home).

The many-sided tasks of society cannot be viewed in an one-dimensional way. Not one model can solve the problems - neither the state, nor the families nor the voluntary organisations can do the job on their own. If we want to save the welfare state from the market of privatisation and profitmaking companies the three social networks - the state, the family and the volunteer effort - need each other. Having realised this, many people have taken a new interest in voluntary work aspects, seeing that this voluntary sector - building on people's involvement and priorities - can be complementary to both state and family - can act as a mediator between the two, and can take the burden away from families and friends, who cannot cope alone.

Each network has its strengths and weaknesses, but together they are very strong.

There are some points to be remembered, though, before we can let volunteer work "loose" in a Danish setting. It is very important to remind politicians as well as the authorities, that volunteer work is not free. It does cost money to run an organisation or even to run small group meetings.

Also the volunteers are not a "work force" you can move around as you please. The volunteers choose themselves where and how much they want to work. And lastly - the volunteer work can not replace professional jobs. The two may have similar goals, but their way of working, their knowledge and their advantages are different and give their efforts a qualitative distinction.

Facts about volunteering in Denmark

One of the myths in Denmark - as well as in the rest of Scandinavia - is: "Yes, we might have some voluntary organisations, but we certainly do not have any volunteers".

Recently we had a visitor from Scotland, who had been told by the Danish consulate in Edinburgh, that in Denmark the state provided all social services, therefore there were no volunteers. And as she by chance found our Committee, she was surprised to hear of the great amount of volunteer activity going on in this country.

What we have done during the last 6 years is - in short - to try to make the invisible volunteers visible again. And to draw a map of the volunteer sector in our country. Because you can not relate to or not at all cooperate with a ghost. And in the process of doing this research we were ourselves surprised to see how enormous and stabile the activities are.

The volunteer organisations are not a dying race. In fact they are slowly increasing in number, and the welfare state has not stopped them from growing. Another myth "when the state takes over there is no need for volunteering" is not true. On the contrary, the more unified the state behaves, the more the need shows for alternatives and volunteering. In social welfare there are now 250 - 300 national organisations - and thousands of local groups. 1)

A 1986 survey 2) showed that 24 per cent of the adult population had participated in some form of voluntary work within the last 12 months. And I estimate that 25 per cent of these volunteers participate in social welfare and health activities.

Proportion of volunteers who participate in the below mentioned areas of voluntary work. Figures from Britain 1981 and Denmark 1986 2).

	Denmark	Britain
	per cent	per cent
Leisure-time organisation (Youth/children's activities outside of school. Education, sports, hobbies)	42	30*)
Local community and neighbourhood groups (Politics, environmental)	26	11*)
Children's education and institutions	22	30
Religion, church organisations activities	12	23
Social welfare (health and safety)	11	25
International social welfare organisations (citizenships - international)	8	18
The elderly	7	10
Justice and human rights organisations	2	0

*) Minimum figures.

The population in Denmark is approximately 5 million people. This means that 1.250.000 are involved in volunteer activity of some kind, and that roughly 315.000 take part in social welfare and health activities.

The only good explanation for the invisibility of the volunteers is therefore that people do not see themselves as "volunteers". They give a hand, they participate, they have fun organizing - but the word "volunteer" (in danish "frivillig") apparently has a somewhat strange and alien sound. The volunteers in Denmark look much alike the ones you find in most western European countries and even in the United States and Canada. They participate in general 4 - 6 hours a week. Half are women - half men (but in social welfare you find more women. And whereas the women do the caring and coffeemaking the men often sit on the committees). They have an average age of 35 - 40 years. Most are married and have children. Most are fully employed (there are some pensioners especially working with the elderly - but very few unemployed). And the majority is most likely to come from the upper middle classes.

Government policy concerning volunteering

As the government six years ago set up the "National Committee for Volunteer Work" the intention was to promote a better relationship between the statutory and the voluntary sector and to find ways to a partnership. The process to find ways to fruitful relationships - locally and centrally - is going on all the time. And it has actually become quite "fashionable" to talk about "the third network", the volunteer sector, decentralisation, selfhelp, citizen-participation and so forth. Only when it comes to decision-making the voluntary organisations or the ordinary citizens have very little or no influence. There is still a long way to go to reach real partnership.

Looking at legislation, there are no legal barriers to support volunteer organisations, but there are also no legal rights. When voluntary organisations want financial - or political - support, it is all a matter of negotiations which central and/or local authorities. Only in adult education (free time activities) there is a legislation which "automatically" releases financial support.

There is some doubt about the rights of unemployed people to participate in volunteer work - especially among officials administering the unemployed insurances. This gives the unemployed an insecure position - but in general nothing forbids the unemployed to participate as long as he/she is still "available" for paid work.

Some small signs of "work-fare" have shown themselves - people (especially the young) are asked to do some work in return for their

social benefits. If this tendency goes on, it might be a difficult task to advocate volunteering, and efforts must be made to stress that people can only volunteer by their own free will.

In Denmark at the moment the debate about changing/renewing the welfare-model is very "hot". One often hears that the model of solidarity is outworn, that we need a subsidiary-model instead, that people have to take responsibility for their own lives (and insure themselves), that privatisation is the best way out. This discussion is of course a threat to the welfare model, and up till now there has surely been down-cuts, but no actual plans to alter the model. My estimation (and hope) is, there is not enough political support in the population to demolish the welfare state; but I certainly know that new ways of thinking are needed to adjust the model of the thirties to the present situation. And it is important the volunteer sector can convince the government they offer a better partnership than the profitmaking private market.

In practice - what do we do

Our efforts to stimulate, support and make the volunteer efforts visible is of course in many ways a matter of values and new ways of thinking. And in order to avoid an undue theoretical approach we certainly try to use our research in as many practical matters as possible. The Committee has initiated different activities:

- negotiations with the government to guarantee the voluntary organisations.
- giving advice and consultancy to organisations and smaller groups of citizens.
- organising conferences and seminars.
- organising an annual meeting for Volunteer Work.
- setting up relations and cooperation with the schools of social work and the trade unions to promote a better understanding of volunteer work among professionals.
- building up a library of documentation on the subject of volunteer work.
- publishing papers and smaller surveys and reports 3).

And last but not least - three new projects started this year:

1. a Volunteer Bureau (Frivillighedsformidling) has been set up in three different towns. The project is sponsored by government funds, and the coordination and evaluation is carried out by the Committee. But the daily work is based purely on local activities and is connected closely to the

local Self-Help activities. The projects started in february with one full-time paid worker at each place.

2. In April an Information- and Advice-center opened. It is open to the general public on matters of volunteer work and is meant to do some very active campaigning on the volunteer issue. A contract has been made with the Danish Broadcasting Cooperation to do one program a week. The center staffs one full-time person, and works in close partnership with the Committee. It is sponsored by government-funds.

3. In August a National Selfhelp Network will start working with two consultants to encourage the work of local self-help groups and to develop nationally an awareness for the need of support for self-help groupes. Also the centre should act as a clearing house.

Volunteers and professionals

This is an example of how we work.

In the summer of 1988 the press brought attention to a case of a trade union prohibiting its members to participate in volunteer work. The case did not hold legally, and the trade union had to make a retreat. But the whole matter was very emotional, and the trade union, which unionises home-helpers felt very threatened by the "rise" of volunteers, who were involved in befriending services. The union was sure the volunteers were used as an excuse to cut down the home help-services. The Committee took the initiative to investigate the matter, and a small research-program was set up 4). The union was willing to cooperate. The research shows there is no causality between the cuts in the statutory services and the volunteer befriending service. The size of the volunteer service alone indicates that it in no way could threaten the professionals and their jobs. And it furthermore gives a qualitative description of the work done in the homes, which clearly shows how the volunteers and the professionals have a very different line of approach. The union has taken notice of this, they are still doubtful, but they also have taken the initiative for a joint conference (to take place in August this year) to discuss the matter further and to find possible ways of cooperation with the volunteers. This is a very important step towards a dialogue, and I close with the words of the woman-president of the union. She said: "We now know that the "enemy" is not the volunteers, and we certainly do not want a society where it is forbidden to help each other".

Notes:

- 1) from the study by Ulla Habermann og Ingrid Parsby:
"Myter og realiteter i det frivillige sociale arbejde".
Kontaktudvalget til det frivillige sociale arbejde, 1987
- 2) from a comparative study by Merete Watt Boolsen and Helle Holt:
Voluntary Action in Denmark and Britain.
Socialforskningsinstituttet, 1988
- 3) please ask us to send you a publicationlist if you want to know
more. Our address is:
Kontaktudvalget til det frivillige sociale arbejde,
Slotsholmsgade 6, 1216 Kobenhavn K. Denmark
- 4) the research is published in a book:
Per Norrung og Lise Ravn
Slip omsorgen los!
forlaget ALFUFF, Alborg Universitetscenter, 1989

THE ROLE OF PUBBLICA ASSISTENZA IN ITALY

Patrizio Petrucci

Recent research has revealed that in the year 1982 approximately 3.540.000 citizens of Italy did volunteer work in the social sector, which shows that the volunteer movement is growing. This growth can be interpreted as a growing participation in new levels of political action because three out of four groups are convinced their voluntary work has political implications. This indicates a change. In the past voluntary work was seen in a charitable, complementary and traditional context, it only being a service in itself.

This change will be illustrated by the story of Pubblica Assistenza, which was established over a hundred years ago. This association has lived through the changes and has taken a leading role in this development. Pubblica Assistenza was created at the end of the nineteenth century, when the cooperatives of labourers were started. It was a movement of citizens who, after the fight for the unity of Italy, were excluded from the reconstruction of the new state, even from the fundamental civil rights and the right to vote. Central element of Pubblica Assistenza is building the solidarity towards the weakest level of the population, so they can protect themselves. Unlike the institutions, it has developed different services like primary health, social, cultural and recreative services. These were very innovative for that historical period, with the philosophy of equality and the establishing of civil rights independent of social class.

Growth

These ideas spread rapidly. Local branches of *Publica Assistenza* grew in numbers in the first years of the 20th century in the whole of Italy. The Fascist regime (1922) was convinced that *Publica Assistenza* was spreading these democratic ideas of equality and therefore closed the main part of *Publica Assistenza*. After 1945, the liberation, the local branches of *Publica Assistenza* were re-established and they started the reconstruction together with the political groups and the unions. This was only in the north and in the center of the country.

In the years 1950 until 1960 the health services in Italy were very, very bad. So *Publica Assistenza* concentrated its work in this field, especially running ambulances and disasters relief. In some regions only ambulance work is done. The number of volunteers is growing, and also the support of the citizens, who do not volunteer themselves but become a member and give financial and political support. The link with the citizens is strong and is still growing. *Publica Assistenza* is being assured of the support of the population. It is democratically run and controlled. Each member can be part of the board, regardless of any political or religious background. Thus a network of self-relying services is the counterpart of official institutions - which often even do not exist.

The fact that it is a movement of the people itself is very important in times of calamities, when many people have to be recruited in short time and when technical and human resources have to be organised which usually are not available. This network of solidarity has been built, and it is still growing, a network which is based, centered, on the idea of voluntarism. Such a network, which is popular and is based in the people, succeeds to keep the number of paid staff as small as possible.

The growth of official services of those years has smothered partly the original idea of solidarity. All emphasis was on the growth of official services.

In the Sixties new movements and ideas come to the surface, and these come together with democratic developments and reform of society. There are new ways of citizen participation, new philosophies, and the health services are programmed and controlled in a new way. A new health policy leads to new laws, and volunteers are now recognized by the instrument of 'convention': the government sets up an agreement with an association to give a certain service for a certain subsidy. This

new "participative culture" has been partly established, but there is still some way to go. Against opposition - which is still there - this movement is growing.

Rediscovery

The movement of the Seventies has caused Publica Assistenza to rediscover the old ideals of equality, solidarity and democracy which were part of its roots. They needed to rediscover the need to be close to the people and their social needs. The real new idea was that public institutions rediscover the need to have a relationship with the people, and not to just provide a service. This included a new role towards the volunteer associations, both catholic and non-catholic. Those associations were used to having a separate, independent role. The catholic sector was divided: some wanted to continue in the traditional, charitable way and remain separate and autonomous; others wanted to associate with other movements - both volunteer movements as well as institutions.

At these times a strong basis was established for the modern volunteer organizations, since they overcame the historical limitations. They made a new and clear policy. These thoughts were first formulated by the catholic and non-catholic volunteer organizations but soon there were encounters with the institutional sector. The most important encounters were the bi-annual meetings organized by the Centro Nazionale per il Volontariato, at Lucca. The Centro is also a member of Volonteurope, as well as Publica Assistenza. If we have important new policies, it is caused by these bi-annual meetings. We can now state that the volunteer world has come together more on ideas about voluntarism. It is more united, and this means that institutions and politicians have to take more notice.

National law

The volunteer movement, in unison, has declined the notion that the crisis of the welfare state was caused by the growth of the volunteer movement. This is not true of course, as volunteer initiatives grow more in places where also the institutions are strong and where democratic participation is at its best. The Volontariat also refused to be used as a substitute for official services. It asks for stronger official services, citizens have a right to good care, etc., and volunteers fight against loss of services. This position caused political powers to be not so afraid of volunteers

since volunteers did not want to compete with existing public services and did not want to take away the jobs of professionals. The unions are now much more attentive and supportive than before.

Not all problems are solved yet. The volunteer movement has created, by its attitude, paid jobs. The volunteer work demands at this moment a new attitude towards the institutions because volunteer organizations represent the weakest part of the population and speak for them. The volunteer work demands a more democratic state and new laws to reform the local and regional authorities and social services.

These are not specific demands but fundamental rights for all citizens, to complete the democratic demands of the Constitution. They demand a national law on volunteer work because at this moment there are only regional and local laws. This law is necessary to define the relationship between the institutions and the volunteer organisations because everybody and everything is still too much used to the older institutional thought.

The volunteers wonder if they are not maintaining the bad situation of the poor people just by their actions as volunteers. The logic of the division between rich and poor - in which the rich maintain their own level by exploiting the poor - is not acceptable for the volunteers. The volunteer workers realise it is not enough to only spread the idea of solidarity, but they must try to do something against the causes of this marginalization. This solidarity is now used to get social rights. The volunteer movement asks the government to do their utmost to protect the lower social classes.

Platform

The last issue to be handled is the point of value. The economic growth has led to the appreciation of everything productive, and marginalizes everything that does not lead to profit. The results of this thought are evident in the growth of phenomena such as violence and intolerance. Thus, solidarity has to be seen as a central value, not only in the attitude of an individual but also in the choices of the government. This is particularly important for younger people because by experience in volunteer work they can become more solidary citizens. In our latest congress we decided it is necessary to have united ideas about solidarity, and particularly about the fact that volunteers have to work with the people and not for, or over the heads of the people. The volunteer work now demands greater democratic opportunities with the objective

to develop a system in service of the individual, and not the individual in service of the system.

In order to resolve these enormous problems, the volunteer organizations have to unite and overcome their ideological differences. Publica Assistenza proposes to institute, to create a platform of all the volunteer organizations, not to augment or support the quantity, but in particular to augment and support the quality of volunteer work.

We now live in a historical period of big transformations, and because in all such periods volunteer organizations contributed to the progress of society, it is at this moment the volunteer work can play a great part in the formation of a more advanced and solidary society.

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Within the national Centre for Informal Adult Education (C.I.V.) there are branches working for volunteers, women and associations.

The C.I.V. stimulates organising by volunteers in all areas and on all levels and promotes their expertise.

At the same time the centre supports training and development activities.



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Volonteurope encourages unpaid voluntary action in countries of the European Community. Volonteurope aspires a widespread representation of voluntary organisations of those countries.