

Fragment from the Future

Tenday, Tertia, Decade 8

I, Fortunata Smith (called 'Lucky' by my friends), having drawn a five-year ticket as Public Relations (External) Exec, have been allocated an immense task – no less a task than to prepare the voiceover for the new in-flight videdisk which will be played to visiting foreign dignitaries travelling here on the orbishuttle. My commentary must inform them frankly and honestly of all that is best in our social and political system. My last two allocations, as a plumber and as community relations animator in the Northern sector of the London floodplain, have scarcely fitted me for this ambitious endeavour, but I was lucky enough to draw a polyversity place in my youth, and I hope that my studies of logic and rhetoric will aid me now. But it is with great humility and trepidation that I embark on this enterprise, and I hope that the eminent visitors (and my own superiors!) will look leniently on any shortcomings in my commentary. Forsfortuna help me!

Esteemed visitors, welcome aboard the superspeed orbishuttle flight to Aleatoria. Aleatoria is an island off the west coast of Europe, with a population of 200 million. Most of its inhabitants are devotees of Forsfortuna, but there is a substantial Muslim minority. The Christian and Hindu sects were suppressed long ago because their tenets about reward and reincarnation were incompatible with the prevailing ideology. Aleatoria is a republic. It used to be called the United Kingdom, until the signs of disunity became too pressing to ignore. The social cleavages which abounded under the then system of liberal-democratic capitalism eventually brought about a change of political system, and with it a change in our dear country's name. The Official Chronologers have recorded all these changes and how they came about, and when you disembark you will be presented with a Souvenir Posterity

Videdisk which will show you more of our history. But I am going to describe our present state to you. I should say, however, that the Changes involved great disruption. There were periods of dictatorship and oligarchy in the late twentieth century and early this century, interspersed with intervals of complete chaos. After many years of these vicissitudes, a member of the then ruling junta discovered, quite by chance, a revolutionary text in the dusty diskstacks of the National Library — a book called *Justice by Lottery*. At that time, people in general wanted to go back to a democratic form of government, and they favoured some version of neo-socialism which would be more socially just than the crypto-fascism that had oppressed them for some years. In fact, the junta was very happy to abdicate because the housing riots had reached anarchic proportions and the paras were rampaging all over the country, and making the junta very unpopular. When Adolfa Qdfi (as the junta member was called) described the lottery system proposed in the article to her co-juntees, they agreed that it pointed them to an excellent escape route from their unpalatable situation. They immediately announced that there would be a referendum to approve a new constitution which would save the country from ruin. Then they saturated the population with pro-lottery propaganda. For months, the streetscreens and airwaves were monopolized by mathsisists, philos and juntees explaining how just and impartial a lottery society would be. When the referendum was finally held, the great majority agreed that the new Constitution should be the Total Social Lottery. (Those who disagreed were given compulsory exit visas.) So that is how the Great Change came about. To celebrate the new Constitution, we renamed our country Aleatoria. You can see, then, that the system that I am about to describe is the direct result of the people's choice.

You would probably like to know about our political system first of all. We call it 'neo-democracy' because it differs in important respects from the representative democracy of earlier, liberal times, and from the one-party democracies which still survive in some backward — I mean, high-potential — parts of the globe. The idea of a representative body chosen by lot came from the book which had started the Change, which now forms the preamble of our revered Constitution, and from another book called *A Citizen Legislature*, which was found on the same disk. The authors of that, as every schoolchild knows, proposed that there should be a randomly selected

House of Representatives in what was then called the United States of America (now Luckyland). Such a body would — they said — represent all the pressure groups and interest groups which existed in those days. They also said that selection by lot would give fairer representation to women, blacks, Hispanics and other groups which were politically marginalized by their money-dominated political system.¹ The whole book was based on a notion of 'typical representation', rather than representation via electoral choice. Perhaps I should explain what that means, for the benefit of those of you from high-potential countries. If someone were typical of a number of groups in society (for example, if she were a parent, a keen spaceball player, a manual worker, a pro-Earth agitator, and so on) then she would be likely to promote the interests of those sorts of people spontaneously, even though no one had elected her to do that. Most importantly, the authors of the book said, she would not have to spend her time trying to extract money from corporations for her next election campaign, or pandering to voters. She would have more time to spend on thinking and debating, and she could freely promote the policies that she believed in, and be truthful about her views. The juntees found all these arguments so convincing that all the proposals were incorporated into the new Constitution. Aleatoria adopted a neo-democratic system where typical representatives are chosen randomly. These photos of our current Lotreps officiating at the summer Forsfortuna festival show you that we have representatives of every age and race.

The Lotreps serve for a five-year period and cannot be reselected. In the House of Lots, they determine the policies in the context of which the various distributive lotteries will operate. They make decisions on the economy, population levels, pest and dustbowl control, and all the other issues that concern governments — and very little, we hold, is not the concern of government. They can introduce new lotteries for the distribution of scarce luxuries, like the recent one for dog ownership, and eliminate or reconstitute lotteries which are failing to distribute justly. They could indeed decide to abolish the Total Social Lottery itself but, given its constitutional status and the wide dispersal of political and executive power in

[1] E. Callenbach and M. Phillips, *A Citizen Legislature*, Berkeley, CA: Banyan Tree Books/Clear Glass, 1985.

Aleatorian society, they would not succeed in doing this unless it were universally desired.

The Lotreps' power is circumscribed by the general decentralization of powers to regions and villages and by their non-reselectability, so the possibilities of abuse of power and corruption are restricted. The 'Hindu putsch' and the episode when a group of Lotreps tried to fix the next draw to give themselves all the zillionaire tickets were firmly suppressed by the Lotpolice and are now regarded as ancient history. In some ways, our system resembles that which we are told existed in Athens in classical times, and we regard this as a new Golden Age.

Every two years, the Lotreps create a new executive committee which is called the government. This is also chosen by lot, and its leader is chosen in the same manner. The formation of allegiances and parties is, of course, minimized by the lottery-selection method, and this encourages a genuine debate and voting according to conscience in the House of Lots. On occasion, the Lotreps choose to take a decision by lot, rather than by voting. Sometimes a political question has no right answer because you cannot weigh up the pros and cons and possibilities and probabilities. For example, the decision not to declare war against the Lotnik of Randomia, who was overrunning his neighbours in order to capture the world's nubrium supplies was taken by a throw of the dice. (It may in fact have been the wrong decision, as we cannot afford to make nubrium-activated cosmoscopes any more, but it saved a lot of agonizing debate.) One last point about the Lotreps is that the Constitution has recently been changed so that one-fifth of them are elected each year, which prevents an entirely new and untried legislature assembling every five years, and gives continuity to its deliberations.

The same sort of arrangements apply to regional and village government, naturally, and we believe that our neo-democratic institutions are more truly representative of the population than any so-called democratic system of past times. One great advantage is that the Lotreps do not have time to become professional politicians, or to develop into an elite. Furthermore, most of them have already experienced the various effects of the social lotteries, and so they are well equipped to criticize and change these if they seem to be operating unjustly.

The Cassandras with which even the most utopian society is infested predict that some day our Lotreps will vote to opt out in favour of a randomly selected dictatorship, or lot-oligarchy. But it seems to me that the egalitarian purpose of our society is better served by random democracy, because this brings about a fair distribution of political goods and burdens, and gives everyone the chance to participate in government bodies. In any case, nobody finds participation particularly irksome because a five-year stint in the House of Lots or the Village Assembly is a lot more fun than many of the allocations of the Joblottery.

The Aleatorian system is nothing if not consistent. Just as the task of government is allocated randomly, so are the various public duties which any state requires to be carried out. The bureaucracy, the judiciary, our juries, the police, and our fighting forces are all composed of people chosen by lot for a five-year period. The advantages are similar to those which we enjoy in our Lotrep system. No one holds office long enough to develop a professional ethos, or to invent professional secrets, or to be corrupted. The principle which one of our State Heroes, Aristotle, thought characteristic of democracy — ‘rule and be ruled in turn’ — makes the individuals who fulfil these functions far more responsive to the needs of the rest of the population, from which they themselves are only temporarily set aside.²

I admit that we are not totally innovative in this approach to universal public service. In the past, the United Kingdom and some other countries had jurors chosen at random. This apparently reflected the aspiration that people should be judged by their peers, although it never lived up to this in reality. There was also a small, mountainous country in Central Europe, now part of Lotteria, which had a people’s army, in which everyone served annually for a limited period. This and the other conscripted armies of the last century — the Age of Warfare, as we call it — foreshadowed our Lotarmy, although the principle involved in those days was rotation of this disagreeable burden by age rather than by random selection. Luckyland used random selection for the draft during the Vietwar, I believe, but only those who were young were eligible. How superior our system is! Everyone runs an equal risk

[2] Aristotle, *Politics*, transl. T.A. Sinclair, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1962, pp. 236–7.

of the call to service, unless ill-health or good luck disbars her. This film of the great military parade last Septua shows how smart our Lotsoldiers are, even the octogenarians. Of course, the officers in the Lotarmy and the sea, air and space forces are all chosen by lot for a two-year period, which prevents any hierarchy from developing — although some critics allege that our near disaster in the second war against our inveterate enemy *Voluntaria* was due to incompetent and inexperienced commanders.

Our Lotpolice also consists of people chosen at random. The idea of a people's police force was sometimes advanced by radical critics of the police in the Bad Times; they thought it a preferable alternative to the highly professionalized and unaccountable police force of their time, which acted according to private norms and was suspicious of — and generally disliked by — the public which it was intended to serve. As we have discovered, policing becomes a very different activity when it is carried out by people who will soon revert to being members of the general public. When they return from a spell in the Lotpolice to ordinary life, they maintain their old law-enforcing habits, and make sure that their neighbours keep up to scratch. Of course, it sometimes happens that an ex-criminal draws a Lotpolice ticket: this has resulted in some great triumphs of detection (like the smashing of the global babyporn industry) but also in some rather spectacular crimes such as the Great Space-Shuttle Heist.

Bureaucrats were like policepersons in the old days. They used to follow rules which largely served to promote their own interests and protect them from criticism. We have solved that problem in the same way: we have randomly chosen public or 'civil' servants. The limited nature of their tenure makes them far more civil. Apart from jurors, who serve for two months, each public servant is chosen for five years. The outgoing office-holders train them in post for the first three months, or less if the job is routine.

One other point which I forgot to mention earlier is that there is no gender discrimination in the selection of our public servants: women can be soldiers, suicide pilots and astro-navigators. The same is, of course, true of the Joblottery and all other lotteries, except of course the Maternity Lottery.

The major achievement of the Total Social Lottery system (usually called the TSL) is the demystification of all our state

institutions, the dispersal of power and the breakdown of elites. An incidental benefit has been the abolition of the old oppressive principle of confidentiality which used to bedevil state institutions, although some intemperate critics would say that this hampers police and military operations and has impeded the Lotpolice's drive to eliminate subversives. However, no one could deny that the executive, judicial and defensive branches of the state are far more 'typically' representative than those of the past, and closer to the people. At the start of the TSL, the public services underwent deprofessionalization on a large scale. (In fact, the word 'professional' is now rather archaic, and usually refers to someone who is very enthusiastic about a hobby, or a hobby horse.) To take one example: the selection of judges and advocates by lot produced a radical change in the legal system, since legal principles and arguments had to become comprehensible to people with no training at all. The same was true of the principles of administration, policing and warfare. At the same time, the educational effect of mass participation in the country's vital institutions has been considerable. Most adults now understand how all the organs of state work, through their own experience and the shared experience of friends and relatives who have performed these various public duties. Our citizens are not alienated from any of the state's institutions, although a few mysteriously continue to harbour grudges against its operations. I think that the Lotpolice's handling of the recent anti-lottery demonstrations expressed the general public indignation against such carping nuisances.

But there is a fly in every soup-tube. There are still critics who think that sortition should not be used to choose officials at the highest levels. They want them to be recruited according to aptitude or skill, and to hold office permanently — in other words, to be transferred to the category of 'experts', which I shall describe later. I personally believe that such critics are Voluntarian infiltrators, and should be liquidated. Luckily, however, the people's enthusiasm for the TSL makes it unlikely that these counterlotarians will carry the day.

Most of our distinguished visitors are particularly interested in how we organize our highly successful economy and our employment lottery. The vidscreen will show you a selection of our factories and workplaces while I describe the system. The vast majority of jobs are allocated and regularly

reallocated at random by the Joblottery. Once again, each new job includes a training period of something between a few days and six months. The initial introduction of the Joblottery was contentious; it almost produced a counter-revolution because people in those days were convinced that in an advanced industrial economy many jobs, especially high-income ones, required people with credentials, expertise, and a certain level of intelligence. But, to their amazement, many of the jobs which had formerly been considered 'expert' or 'professional' were found to be capable of performance by people of so-called average intelligence and ability, after an intensive training period. We also discovered that people performed better in jobs of limited duration — no one holds a job for more than five years, of course. In fact, they get greater work satisfaction, because they actually enjoy the learning process. So all non-expert jobs are distributed in this way. The Joblottery also allocates leisure opportunities which people can use for creative activity — these are sometimes called 'sabbaticals' after an antique custom of Camford Polyversity. The sabbatical allocation is a useful way of ensuring that the 'burden' of unemployment is spread fairly if the state decides that the economy is in an underemployment phase. You will remember that in the Bad Times, by contrast, unemployment was the permanent fate of a downtrodden section of the population.

In due course, the Joblottery was refined in various ways. 'Blocking' was introduced to prevent anyone drawing the same ticket twice. This helps to achieve the lottery's purpose, which is to ensure a rich and varied spread of jobs per individual per lifetime. Some of the jobs allocated are public duties, some are necessary but unexciting work, some unpleasant but essential work, and some vocational and interesting work. The Aleatorian system overturns the system of lifetime job allocations which used to be common in industrialized societies, which meant that some people were destined from birth for comfortable and lucrative professions, while others suffered a lifetime of manual drudgery or routine clerical monotony. So as to achieve a varied spread of work for each individual, her number is blocked from certain categories of draws after she has served a stint in that sort of occupation. Our Official Economists take an overview and calculate what proportion of the average individual's life should be spent in the various categories of occupation (manual, clerical, and so on) in order to guar-

antee a fair spread for each person and an adequate supply of labour for the needs of the country. Of course, since the state manages the economy, it can vary the kinds of work required.

Various counterlotarians have stigmatized our utopian work system as a nightmarish form of forced labour, no different from the sort of system that oppresses the wretched people of the vile empire of Compulsatoria. Pay no attention to them! The TSL was initially the people's choice and it continues to be most people's choice, as we see from the fact that they endorse it in a constitutional referendum every five years. Admittedly, the TSL was at first a rather clumsy adaptation of the existing industrial system to the lottery principle, and it engendered some disparities and unfairnesses. Even so, a large section of the population welcomed it as an improvement on the former system, which had condemned them to permanent work dissatisfaction. Contrast this footage of the sad chain gangs of Compulsatoria, driven off to the calendium mines by thugs with whips, with these shots of a modern Aleatorian factory, where the workers are enjoying a game of poker in the Raffleraunt during their caffeine break. The TSL is the best of all possible worlds for these ionization operatives — who could doubt it?

The Joblottery was inspired by the writings of another State Hero, Charles Fourier, a nineteenth-century socialist. He imagined ideal communities where people would do only 'attractive work' — jobs to which they were temperamentally attracted — and would do twelve different jobs in a day. He believed that if there were jobs which no one wished to do, the community should simply abandon those kinds of economic activity.³ Aleatoria has been purged of many unpleasant kinds of work on this basis — for example, we abolished all abattoirs early on, and people have become quite resigned — happy, I mean — to forgo meat. Many monotonous jobs were automated, too. At first, this innovation was condemned by the workers, especially by those who belonged to what were called trades unions. It's astonishing to remember that the main purpose of these unions was to preserve jobs, however boring. In Aleatorian society the disappearance of a particular kind of job does not put individuals out of work. It simply means that different job tickets are substituted or that more

[3] J. Beecher and R. Bienvenu, transl. and eds, *The Utopian Vision of Charles Fourier*, London: Cape, 1971, pp. 139–50.

'creative leisure' tickets are inserted into the draw. Since income has no connection with work, no one is put at risk by the elimination of unpleasant or unnecessary jobs. (We have, incidentally, eliminated a huge number of unnecessary jobs, especially in what used to be called the service sector.) You won't be surprised to learn that a few years after the Aleatorian revolution, the unions died a natural death.

So — the TSL has rationalized the economy and eliminated the tasks which everyone hates doing, except where such work is essential. Work which used to be considered degrading has ceased to be so because everyone takes a turn at it and it is no longer linked automatically to the lowest income level. As Clause 159 Subsection 3(ix) of our Constitution states, 'the rotation of unpleasant work is an important step towards the achievement of equality'. For myself, I wish someone would abolish the job of community relations animator — what a futile, unnecessary excrescence!

Some of you will probably be dying to ask the obvious question: 'What about jobs which really require skills and expertise?' I will give you the Aleatorian answer. In the early debates on the Joblottery, many Lotreps said that they did not wish to be examined by Lotdoctors, still less have their teeth filled by Lotdentists. Initially, the need for people with such specialized skills was a problem for the Aleatorian system, given its strong impetus towards equalization of status. People realized early on that even if they could democratize work and put an end to phoney professionalism, some skilled individuals would still have to undertake lengthy training and spend their whole lifetimes in one kind of work, to meet economic and human needs. Medical practitioners and scientists were the examples always given; looking back now, you can see that the argument reflected contemporary obsessions about the importance of health and scientific innovation. We now regard those obsessions as outdated because of our self-help and self-heal mode of living. But initially the Lotreps decided that some occupations would be treated as specialist, *pro tem*, and that their practitioners should be able to practise them for life.

The best compromise they could devise between this necessity and the lottery principle was that those in the so-called expert professions should spend one year in five or two months in every year doing some randomly assigned,

non-expert work. Videdisks of the House of Lots debates on this vexing topic contain many references to a great Chinese guru called Mowzedoong, who believed that doctors and teachers should spend some time doing agricultural work. Apparently this belief made him unpopular, but it seems clear to me that this Mowzedoong hit on a very obvious antidote to professional elitism — as you can see from the fact that the early Aleatorians came to an identical conclusion.

We find that the time spent in non-expert work does not really disrupt the experts' activities, and it prevents them from becoming too proud or — as I said — elitist. It is healthy for an astro-neurologist to rub shoulders with ordinary people, we maintain. In fact, some experts actually volunteer for one or two five-year spells outside their profession to stop themselves becoming stale. This sort of opportunity was never available in pre-Change times because career specialization was reinforced by ambition and competition for success — more outdated ideas! The Mobility Draw for experts means that they are obliged to move geographically from time to time. Scientists have to change their polyversity every five or ten years, and doctors must go and practise in a new area. This prevents the development of favoured institutions and locales. Of course, the greatest blow to any professional elitism was the separation of rewards from jobs, which I will describe later. That makes some previously favoured specialist careers far less desirable and allows us to assess realistically whether someone really has a vocation for expert work.

As you will guess, the initial selection and training of those who are to become experts is crucial. This cannot take place on an entirely random basis, even though the general level of education in Aleatoria is so high. We usually select young people for expert training on the basis of aptitude at the end of their lower tertiary education. If this creates too large a pool of candidates for the number of expert trainee positions, a further selection takes place by lottery. But there are other routes into the expert occupations. For example, an adult may choose to use her spare time or a creative leisure allocation to train as an expert. I myself am taking evening training to become a sexo-psychologist. You can make a bid to enter an expert occupation at any age. We have completely eliminated the inflexibility of past societies, where people took a job for life and it was very difficult to change occupations in midlife.

We soon found that the competition to enter the expert occupations diminished when they were divorced from high status and wealth. But many people still feel that they have a 'calling' to some expert occupation because of its self-rewarding nature. We try to place such people in suitable jobs so that their talents can benefit the whole community — with the proviso always that they shall spend some of their time as victims of the Lot, like everyone else. Just to illustrate this, you can now see on the screen some shots of Aleatoria's most celebrated genetic ethnologist, Ramesh Windsor, working at a sewerage plant.

By now you will all be wondering about how people are paid for their work. The most contentious and vitriolic debates about the TSL centred on the constitutional principle that resources should be allocated to people randomly, regardless of contribution. The Founding Lotreps agreed that all work was of equal value to society, and that people — except experts — must be treated as fungible — that is, as interchangeable between occupations. One faction in the House of Lots, the Lotlabs, drew the logical conclusion that everyone should receive equal payment. Another group, the Lotanarchs, said that this covertly retained the discredited concept of reward for contribution, whereas the philosophy of the TSL excluded any such notion.

The two factions eventually agreed that there would be economic and social advantages in retaining a range of incomes which would be distributed randomly and reallocated every five years. One advantage was that this would maintain and boost the luxury sector of the economy and also promote the production of an interesting range of goods, thus giving individuals a variety of experiences. In short, their solution was aimed at retaining the 'rich tapestry of life', while ensuring that everyone spent some time enjoying the richer parts. The objection to luxury goods, palatial houses and expensive cars was not simply that they existed, but that they had always been the prerogative of the few. The farseeing Lotreps of the second decade came up with the revolutionary idea of the 'lifestyle package'. The lifestyle package links housing with income and preserves variety through differential allocations which are justly distributed by lottery.

Before the lifestyle package was invented, the Resource Lottery had distributed income on the following lines. It retained

salary differentials (although the maximum and minimum of the range were strictly determined) and the percentage of salaries in each income band was manipulated according to the economy's capacity. Incomes were randomly allocated every five years. Also, a decent minimum income was guaranteed to all, and tailored to take account of any dependants an individual might have. (Later we abolished economic dependency by giving every member of society an income ticket, including children.) So even those who drew a social minimum ticket were comfortably off. The Lotreps also resolved to retain the money economy, so that people could acquire possessions and consumer goods through the markets, according to their tastes and desires. Later on, the lifestyle package elaborated and improved on these basic principles, as I shall explain later.

As you will know, especially those of you from high-potential countries, for most people the most important thing beside income is their accommodation. In the pre-Change days in the United Kingdom it was reckoned that people spent over a third of their income on housing – just imagine! Housing was the greatest single living expense; it was also the strongest reflection of social status, which literally made concrete the class divisions that dominated neo-fascist society. Houses were the archetypal 'positional goods' about which philologists wrote because the supply of houses in attractive or central or pleasant rural areas was limited and inelastic, as indeed it still is, even in Aleatoria. When house prices and rents were market determined, the pattern of income distribution decided who lived where and which areas were desirable. As this archive footage shows, you could guess quite accurately the composition of a particular area in terms of the class, status, professions and incomes of its inhabitants because all these reinforced each other and were mirrored in housing quality. (Just look at those people getting into that vintage Rolls-Royce with a champagne bottle in each hand! The huge house with columns behind them was in an area called Belgravia, now in the London floodplain.) This was precisely the sort of vicious circle which the TSL was intended to fracture. There was also a chronic shortage of housing in the neo-fascist United Kingdom. Many people lived in squalid dosshouses or abysmal hostels, and now you can see people sleeping under a bridge in cardboard boxes. What degradation! No wonder there were riots. The first Aleatorian government put an end to all that

with its crash programme for the mass manufacture of the individualized geodomes in which so many of our citizens now live so happily. If you look down now through the orbishuttle's skypanels, you can see one of our New Model Villages with its cluster of family domes round the Village Assembly Dome, in a pleasing array of rainbow colours.

With all these problems to solve, and the scars of the recent riots still glaringly visible on the Gothic façade of the House of Lots, you can well imagine that the Founding Lotreps considered every possible proposal for ending the housing crisis. The first step was the crash programme. Then came the problem of allocation. Some wanted to communalize the housing stock and allocate rent-free accommodation randomly, taking account of family size. Incomes could then be lowered, since housing would be free. Existing housing stock, with its variations in size and quality, could be used unchanged, at least in the short run. Another group proposed to communalize and then standardize the old housing stock by dividing larger houses into similar-sized units. These could then be allocated by lot and occupied rent-free like the new geodomes, while all future homes would be built as identically sized units. Some leftist Lotsocs (they were more extreme than the Lotlabs) favoured this because it had been tried in the one-time USSR, today's Commielotland, but most Lotreps were against it on ideological grounds. You can see what strong feelings the discussion engendered from this sequence filmed in the House of Lots, where one Lotlabrep appears to be attacking a Lotsocrep with a ceremonial rod.

The Lotconreps, who secretly favoured the status quo, proposed to retain house-ownership and rented accommodation as before, and to allow people to buy or rent houses according to their income in each lottery period. Not many people favoured that. One of the simplest and most elegant solutions proposed was to include housing in the lifestyle packages and allocate both housing and income by lottery every five years. A more subtle – and less aleatory – plan was to allocate houses along with jobs. This would be geographically convenient, and could be contrived so as to ensure that the best houses went with the least pleasant jobs by way of compensation. In the end, the House of Lots decided by a throw of the dice to adopt the last option, and the Joblottery was coordinated with the Lifestyle Package Lottery. Of course, all this

required strong state action. The housing stock was communalized and devolved to the Village Assemblies, and certain kinds of housing were associated with certain job categories. It may all sound a bit complicated, but when the whole system started to operate there was a welcome simplification of the property laws. This was just as well, since property lawyers were by then an extinct breed.

Finding a solution to the housing problem was particularly important because housing, as a positional good, is intrinsically anti-egalitarian in its social effects. The Lotreps' purpose was to counteract these effects by random allocation. In the long term the result of the housing lottery, as those wise legislators foresaw, was a great equalization of housing conditions. There was also a spectacular improvement in the slums which had been our legacy from the Bad Times because, of course, they were no longer inhabited exclusively by the poor. Nobody wants to live in a slum, and that includes Lotreps, so they took pains to modernize and beautify even the most dismal high-rise housing estates. Enlightened self-interest works, you see.

Now I'll tell you something about how the random resource allocation system works. The basic necessities are distributed equally to everyone. You get a monthly book of kilojoule tickets for food, which you can spend at the shops according to your taste. Everyone gets the basic necessities — a holovision, a hoverporter and two domestic robots. We also provide free education and healthcare, so these don't come into the lottery at all. Every five years, you get a Joblottery allocation in your area (unless you've requested a transfer elsewhere) and then your number goes into one of several Lifestyle Package draws, depending on whether the type of job that you've drawn is categorized as interesting, boring or indifferent. Every LP Lottery contains a number of Luxury Lifestyle Packages too.

Each lifestyle package consists of a houseunit and a debit card plus a certain amount of credit at the Bank or Lottomat, as we call it. The amount of credit given differs randomly, of course. What sort of things do people spend their money on? Most of them like to buy the usual futuretech vidionic equipment, home-use spacesport pitches, fashionwear, and biosimulators, or else they spend money on visits to the cleromancers to get their cleroscopes cast, and on holidays. Some people save up for a holiday in Voluntaria and, I'm sorry

to say, they don't always return. People don't spend much on their houses because all the units have basic furniture which is often quite tasteful; also we don't want to have too many possessions because of having to move every five years. So a lot of money is spent on various forms of entertainment — some people go out to random-order restaurants, or to expensive clubs like the Ectoplasmic Ecstasy, while others like to go to a Shakespeare historithon. Some are just happiest with a quick session at a roadside Blissifix. Of course, the Lottomarkets are universally popular since you can buy any number of tickets for each hourly lottery at a standard price and watch on telelink as your Sur-Prize Shopping is selected and packed by Lotrobots. When the old churches and temples were closed, they were turned into Rouletterias, and those are always crowded with people with money to spend, as you can see from this shot of the main casino at Salisbury Rouletteria.

The other thing that people spend money on is the Rarity Lotteries. The Lotreps decided long ago that things in absolutely scarce supply ought to be distributed randomly — and later on it occurred to somebody that the state could make a profit out of the process. So it runs Rarity Lotteries for all sorts of scarce things — seats for the Aleatorian State Opera, printed books, emigration visas, garden allotments, nubrium cosmoscopes, and so on. You can enter these for a small fee. It's well known that there's a grey market (which used to be called the 'black market') in rarities after each draw, but the government turns a blind eye to it. Of course, though, it's a very serious crime to try and change or sell your Joblot ticket or Lifestyle Package, because those aren't transferable. That sort of behaviour subverts the whole purpose of the TSL, so it is punishable by life imprisonment or consignment to one of the experimental labs. Earlier I mentioned Luxury Lifestyle Packages. If you're lucky enough to get one of these, you may be able to run a yacht for five years, or take an orbicruise, or take up permanent residence in the Brent Hilton: but you still have to work. As you will gather, we still allow markets to operate in our economy for some purposes; this helps to maintain the rich tapestry of life. But our motto is 'choice for trivial matters, but the lot for weighty ones'.

You can keep all the possessions that you get from lottery allocations, and people accumulate things during their lives, of course. When they die, they leave these things to their

friends or relatives, or sometimes they offer them to a charitable Legacy Lottery. But because people cannot put money into property or financial assets, they don't accumulate unequal amounts of wealth and inheritance isn't really an issue in Aleatoria.

The Official Economists suggest that the system of random resource allocation may disappear soon. They say that since income is no longer related to skill or productivity, it's patently absurd to retain income differentials, whether these are distributed randomly or otherwise. I hardly dare to contradict the Official Economists, but I think that Aleatorians will continue to prefer the lifestyle package system because they enjoy variety and excitement — and we all live for the chance of a Luxury Lifestyle Package!

Speaking of the economists, I should tell you something about how our economy works. The TSL requires a collectivized, state-managed economy with considerable planning. The House of Lots and the government are in charge of planning decisions, aided by the Official Bureaucrats. Because each current Lotrep risks being subjected by a later lottery to the results of any unjust arrangement or an economic decision which neglects people's welfare, such decisions are almost never taken. This is why, as I mentioned, industries requiring hazardous or degrading work have been phased out.

In firms and corporations, managers are appointed by lot, so there is no great gulf between managers and workers. The tasks in a workplace are often allocated each week by sub-lotteries, and this variety makes most workers more enthusiastic and productive. Since the TSL guarantees each of us 'jobs-for-life', our attitude to any particular job is less possessive and more constructive and innovatory than it would have been under the previous system. On a related topic, the post-capitalists among you will wish to know how Aleatoria functions without explicit economic incentives. Initially this was a thorny problem, and a huge conference of our Official Theoreticians was called soon after the Change to discuss it. The trouble was that they couldn't agree; the Official Anthropologists came up with numerous examples of societies which had worked successfully without economic incentives, and the Official Economists just laughed at them. The whole controversy seemed to turn on whether human beings were acquisitive by instinct or not, and nobody could prove it either

way. In the end the Lotreps became impatient and simply announced that it would henceforth be official policy not to use incentives, since these were outmoded and unnecessary. In a capitalist society, employers and employees had an exploitative attitude to each other; there used to be a constant struggle to pay less than a fair day's pay for a day's work or to get more pay for less than a fair day's work. No such struggle occurs in the TSL economy. We are all workers, and we all see ourselves as contributing to the social whole. Of course, there are no unions and there are no strikes, because our work is divorced from our livelihood. And the absence of managerial elites means that there is no resentment such as workers used to feel towards their superiors.

I should perhaps add that, despite these transformations, incentives have occasionally been found necessary to achieve a desired level of production, and so incentives are integrated into the lottery during economic emergencies, even though it detracts from our ideal of fair, random distribution. We have also experimented with the Reincarnation Lottery, which links a worker's new job allocation to her performance in the previous five-year period. This device has to be used with care, lest someone should get into a vicious downward spiral — boring job, poor performance, even more boring job, even worse performance. But notoriously lazy people who have shirked in job after job are eventually relegated to the Minimum Lifestyle Package Lottery until they mend their ways. Of course, we hope that the use of incentives and disincentives will wither away very soon, since they militate against the 'equality through randomness' policy which is the very purpose of the TSL — and they have also been known to lead to dissatisfaction and even social unrest.

The Aleatorian idealists argue that human nature is not competitive, possessive and self-interested, and that new circumstances will produce a new, social and cooperative kind of human being. The Founder of what is now Commielotland, Lenin, chastised utopians for putting off the revolution until human nature had changed — that is, for ever. He misunderstood the utopian way of thinking. We utopians believe that the revolution is itself a process of changing human nature. As the TSL improves in its operations, so will people's motivation, and then no more will be heard of self-interest or the profit motive. On a related issue, it may interest you to know

that the Aleatorian economy is tax-evasion-proof. The needs of the state and the cost of all the services are calculated annually, and this sum is deducted from the state's expected income for the year: the remainder is then available for distribution in lifestyle packages. People pay no separate taxes. The prior deduction method means that when the economy is in a downturn everyone suffers fairly and equally. But, as you have seen from the film sequence of our busy factories and well-filled shop windows, our economy is far from depressed. The recent adoption of the TSL by those three great countries Commielotland, Lotteria and Luckyland has improved our economy greatly, because now our competing industries have the same efficiency coefficient. The more the lottery principle pervades the international community, the better it is for Aleatoria.

Shortly we shall reach the outer edge of the London floodplain. If you look down then, you'll see many famous landmarks sticking up out of the water – the Post Office Tower, Centrepont and the ill-fated hundred-storey United Europe Tower. When the water level started to rise, any buildings of architectural merit were removed and rebuilt in the new governmental complex at Brent. On the right, as we de-orbit at Brent Shuttleport, you'll see the famous clock tower of the House of Lots, which was renamed 'Big Ten' after our revolutionary metrification of time. But during the last few minutes of your flight I would like to tell you about how we organize family life and education in Aleatoria.

Soon after the Change, when the enthusiasm for the TSL was almost fanatical, a group of Lotreps advanced the proposition that sexual partners should be allocated by lot. The idea titillated their co-legislators and they introduced a twice-yearly Sexlot for partner allocation. I am too young to remember that time, but my mother participated in the Sexlot and she told me that at first they all found the sexual novelty and erotic possibilities it opened up very exciting. For a time, family life almost ceased and children were brought up haphazardly or in state institutions. But after a few years, random promiscuity – as its opponents called it – began to fall out of favour. People started to long for emotional stability, and they would sneak away from home to spend time with some former Lotpartner with whom they had fallen in love. The Lotpolice's enforcement of the decrees of the Sexlot became half-hearted. Two

years later, there was a huge demonstration in Lot Square, where over a million people tore up their Sexlot tickets and ritually burned them. My mother was there, and she says that a number of Lotreps came out and joined the crowd. After that, people just ignored the Sexlot — they started living with their chosen partners, and reclaimed their children from the Childzoos, boarding schools and twenty-hour crèches. The new Lotreps quietly annulled the Sexlot decree, and that was the end of our sexual revolution!

But family life has not remained unchanged. When our population reached saturation point a few years ago, the Lotreps decided that population control was necessary and that any hardship this might involve should be fairly distributed. They introduced the Maternity Lottery (which most people call the Poplot). This allocates the right to have a child to women at random, and the number of 'winning' tickets (or losing tickets, as some women regard them) is altered annually according to population needs. Not every woman of childbearing age who draws a ticket wants to have a child, but most of them do so, out of a sense of duty to the state. The Lotpolice have been diligent to the point of oppressiveness in preventing any grey market developing for maternity tickets, and the system seems to work and to be accepted as the most just solution to our problems. We actually implement the Maternity Lottery in the following way: all our water supplies are impregnated with contraceptive drugs, and the women who draw a maternity ticket are given an antidote for a one-year period. This prevents anyone from trying to break the law by claiming that she became pregnant by accident. I think that the overpopulated high-potential countries might learn a lot from our system.

Aleatoria's economic success rests on its fine education system. Individuals take on multiple roles during their lives, which means that education must be universal, high-level and effective. We cannot, as previous societies did, sub-educate large numbers of people on the supposition that they are destined for dead-end jobs. We endorse the liberal John Stuart Mill's analysis of the close link between education, participation and good citizenship.⁴ We also argue that if people are going to be fungible in adult life with respect to occupation, it

[4] J.S. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, in *Three Essays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1912, p. 278. 'Universal teaching must precede universal enfranchisement.'

is illogical to give them differential degrees of knowledge. It is also true that education is seen as a social and personal good, and the people and their Lotreps want the best of it for themselves and their children. They would not tolerate scarce polyversity places being allocated by lot if we could instead make tertiary education universal. In the old neo-fascist United Kingdom and other elitist societies, the children of politicians were, magically, highly successful in gaining university places, so that the struggles and disappointments of those who failed were not insistently present in the minds of the policy-makers. Now they are: the Lotreps know that to draw a losing education ticket would blight the life of any child — including their own child. So their aim is universal education to the highest level.

The Founders of Aleatoria encountered a motley education system with a mixture of state schools and private schools; the teaching and conditions at the latter were usually far superior. The Lotreps decided that since it was impossible to transform the system overnight, the proper interim measure was to make the exclusive 'public school' education (as private education was called) available to everyone through a special rarity lottery. That used to be called the Pink Tie Lottery, and all sorts of children benefited from an education which had formerly been the exclusive province of the wealthy and the upper classes. After Decade 1, the state had poured so much money into all the other schools that they could offer equivalent facilities. At that point the Pink Tie Lottery was abolished, and the wearing of pink ties was made illegal.

Our current education system works like this: at secondary schools there is minimum differentiation between pupils, and we educate everyone to the same level. We have shown that people's innate abilities are approximately equal, and they can all reach a similar level of achievement if the teaching and learning facilities are good and there are no environmental factors such as deprivation to hold them back. Initially, people thought that universal tertiary education would be too expensive, so polyversity places were allocated by lot. But the Lotreps were worried that this would replicate the old elitist university system. They also worried that their own children might not draw winning tickets. So later, spurred on by enlightened self-interest, they rapidly took steps to introduce tertiary education for all. Our polyversities currently favour

high-level generalist learning in the humanities and pure sciences, on the assumption that intensive in-job training will fill any gaps when someone draws a job ticket requiring special skills or knowledge. Our selected expert trainees, of course, take more specialized courses from the start. After poly-versity, education continues throughout an individual's lifetime, through in-job training and also as a voluntary leisure activity.

One initial difficulty was to decide whether teachers should count as experts. Some Lotreps held that teaching was a vocation, while others maintained that it was just a job, which anyone could do. Eventually, they reached one of our rare Aleatorian compromises and decided that it could count as either expert or non-expert. Dedicated teachers would get extensive training, while others might draw a ticket randomly, and would bring all their other experiences to enrich their teaching. Currently our teaching cohort is about fifty-per-cent expert, but we notice that expert teachers are often glad to take the regular one year in five in another occupation.

The lottery principle is incorporated into school organization so as to familiarize children with the virtues of random distribution. Sometimes children are allocated to subject classes randomly, and sometimes homework is distributed by lot. School tuck shops are run as Lottomarkets. These little examples permeate the children's consciousness gradually. As pupils learn about the history of the TSL and its justification, the rivalry and competition which teachers once thought essential to achievement disappears, because they realize that their talents are not deserved, and that their successes are chance events. In keeping with this educational philosophy, the grading of work ceased long ago, to the delight of both children and teachers.

The education system of the Bad Times created strongly differentiated and specialized adults who went on to take unequal jobs and became progressively more unequal until the cultural and economic gap between different kinds of people became dangerously wide. If adults are considered equally worthy of respect, and are treated as equally capable, they must be equally prepared for adult life. This is the prime aim of the Aleatorian education system.

The TSL has changed society in many ways, but not in all. Free choice still operates, by and large, in the personal and

social spheres such as friendship, partnerships, affiliation to clubs, groups and churches. Community loyalties are maintained because jobs, public duties and houseunits are regularly reallocated to those already living in a particular area. People wishing to move elsewhere enter their names for draws in other regions, and transfers are readily available. We sometimes introduce an element of inducement or compulsion if workers are needed for an essential industry, like the nubrium-substitute industry, in an unpopular area. But the TSL has made different regions and localities more equal. No one wished to be transferred to a down-and-out area devoid of amenities or charm, so the Lotreps took steps to improve such areas. There are no high-unemployment areas these days: people are allocated elsewhere, or suitable employment is created.

You will be interested to hear that criminal behaviour has largely been eradicated by our sane and fair system. The Lotpolice have good relations with the community, and criminals find it hard to escape the scrutiny of their neighbours (some of whom will be Lotpolicepersons themselves), who will certainly inform the authorities about any antisocial behaviour. Detection rates are therefore very high. If someone is found guilty by the jury, she can opt to be sentenced by the Judgeperson, or she can ask for a Lot Penalty. In that case, her number is entered in the Penal Lot, which delivers 'losing tickets' with varying punitive values. She might draw five years in an open prison, or two years' hard labour in a penal factory, for example. Most people opt for a Lot Penalty.

Our prisons are run in the most enlightened way, each being a microcosm of Aleatoria where work, cells, duties and privileges are handed out by weekly lotteries. Although the prison regime is harsh, since we all abhor crime, the prisoners themselves find it just. The Guardians cannot favour particular prisoners or pursue vendettas, and the regular rotation within the system makes the prison experience less monotonous and wearisome. Here you see the interior corridors and tele-scanned cells of an Aleatorian prison, built on the lines of the Panopticon devised by another State Hero, Bentham.

Our crime rate is small compared with that of the Bad Times. Most crimes motivated by greed for property have disappeared, and people are no longer driven to crime by deprivation. People know that if they are relatively unlucky in the current draw, they may be luckier next time. They also know

that those who have drawn the Luxury Package this time will not be privileged indefinitely. Where nothing is fixed and permanent, there is no cause for envy, although a few people protest against their allocations after every draw, and are punished accordingly. In fact, I have to admit that a few recalcitrant criminals and dissidents still disrupt our society with their antisocial or subversive activities. For these persistent offenders we employ the Traitors' Lot, which delivers severe and exemplary sentences, including capital punishment and hard labour for life. The Traitors' Lot is also reserved for those few officials who try to corrupt the lottery process for their own advantage. Here you see the Lotpolice's cinematic archive record of the public hanging of Sortitia Thatcher, a Lotrep who tried to fix the Joblottery to her own advantage. And here is the mass execution by firing squad of three grey marketeers who were caught selling lifestyle package tickets. It is perhaps surprising that the deterrent harshness of the Traitors' Lot has not entirely purged Aleatoria of social enemies, but I regret to say that there are still some heretical enemies who believe that social justice is not paramount and argue that a ruler, even a Lotnik, would make our society more efficient.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are passing Heliogabble House on the left — you can see its chromium battlements shining in the light of both full moons. You are about to de-orbit at Brent Shuttleport. I hope that you have enjoyed this videdisk presentation, and I would just like to make a few final points about the unparalleled advantages of our lottery system. The first is that people suffer the effect of their political choices more certainly and directly, and therefore decide questions of social justice more fairly. The second is that the TSL leads in the long term to a substantial measure of equality.

The effect of the TSL is to make people think: 'There but for the grace of the draw go I. And in the next lottery, I may well draw that unfortunate ticket myself.' This insight makes people more humble and more sympathetic to each other's problems. The Lotreps therefore make every endeavour to solve social problems such as bad housing and, if there are evils endemic to our society which cannot be eradicated, they make sure that these are suffered equally and randomly by everyone and do not always afflict the same unfortunate people, as they did in the past. The cycle of deprivation has been broken.

In a single generation, the TSL destroyed such ideas as status based on birth, breeding, occupation or other accidental qualities. The logic of the lottery is an egalitarian logic. It is blind to attributes such as gender and race, as well as class, and it has eliminated many invidious forms of discrimination which permeated the former system. The TSL has engendered a truly classless society. In Aleatoria, people see their temporary roles as a necessary part of the social whole, rather than regarding their jobs and houses as permanent, private territory, created or staked out by their personal efforts. The TSL has created an 'amateur' society. People no longer believe that, having undertaken professional training, they have an absolute right to follow a particular occupation for their whole lifetime. They are more flexible: their self-image and self-definition rest less on what they do than on how they do whatever they happen to be doing.

We are a well equilibrated society, where the adulation of Forsfortuna is tempered by common sense. By contrast, our neighbouring offshore island, Borgesia, which was the brown wasted land that we passed over during our descent, is run by fanatics and monolunatics. They distribute medical care and euthanasia by lot there, of all things! In the province of Elster, formerly a colony of the old UK, they even allocate punishment to quite innocent people on an entirely random basis.⁵ Such fanaticism is not part of the Aleatorian character. Long may it remain thus!

Esteemed visitors, we have now touched down. Welcome to Aleatoria. Long life and lucky numbers to you all. Goodbye!

Fourday, Duodeca, Decade 8

Where did I go wrong? My Lotboss chanced to be on the orbishuttle yesterday. He saw my videdisk and reported me to his superiors. They said that I had been sceptical and overcritical, that I had dwelt unconstructively on our social problems and had given comfort to our social enemies, as well as gratuitously insulting the visiting ambassadors from high-potential countries. They entered my number in the Interim Reprimand Lot. If only I could have drawn an emigra-

[5] It would be wrong to attribute such a view to Jon Elster, although he discusses random punishment in *Solomonic Judgements*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 101-3.

tion ticket, or even a voluntary euthanasia ticket! No such luck. I have been posted to a sheepfarm in northern Caledonia. How did the computer know that I hate sheep? I could conclude that my Lotboss rigged the ballot, but I have faith that our processes are immune from human interference. So now I must pack my bags and leave the Neasden bed-sit which goes with my job, and travel to my castle in Caledonia.