

DISCUSSION PAPER 25

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South Africa and Global Apartheid

Continental and International Policies and Politics

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Abstract

This presentation covers a variety of political and economic aspects of Africa's and South Africa's relationships to the world. We consider the context of global apartheid, in terms of international stagnation, uneven development and African marginalisation, and evaluate the South African setting as a telling site of worsening inequality. This allows us to ask where the New Partnership for Africa's Development stands on the largest economic and political problems. We then take up South Africa's other proposed global reforms. Finally, we record an emerging ideology based not on commodification via globalisation but on decommodification and deglobalisation, and the strategies, tactics and alliances required for African and international progress.

Indexing terms

Africa

South Africa

Post apartheid

NEPAD

International economic relations

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Globalization

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The context of global apartheid

The most intractable problem that contemporary Africa faces, ‘global apartheid,’ was posed as follows by Thabo Mbeki in his address to the Welcoming Ceremony for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in August 2002:

We have all converged at the Cradle of Humanity to confront the social behaviour that has pity neither for beautiful nature nor for living human beings. This social behaviour has produced and entrenches a global system of apartheid. The suffering of the billions who are the victims of this system calls for the same response that drew the peoples of the world into the struggle for the defeat of apartheid in this country ... Our common and decisive victory against domestic apartheid confirms that you, the peoples of the world, have both the responsibility and the possibility to achieve a decisive victory against global apartheid.¹

Fourteen months later, the theme was repeated immediately following Mbeki’s return from the Socialist International gathering of social democratic and Third Way parties in Sao Paolo, where he aimed to ‘engage all progressive forces in our country, in Africa and rest of the world’:

The critically important task to end the poverty and underdevelopment in which millions of Africans are trapped, inside and outside our country, cannot be accomplished by the market. If we were to follow the prescriptions of neo-liberal market ideology, we would abandon the masses of our people to permanent poverty and underdevelopment ... Poor as we might be, and precisely because we are poor we have a duty to contribute to the elaboration of the global governance concept ... opposing the neo-liberal market ideology, the neo-conservative agenda, and the unilateralist approach.²

Even if we contest Mbeki’s rhetoric as dishonest, the basic propositions are not controversial. The phenomenon of ‘global apartheid’ – defined by Washington-based Africa advocates Salih Booker and Bill Minter as ‘an international system of minority rule whose attributes include differential access to basic human rights, wealth and power’³ – is the outcome of the specific political power associated with late twentieth century capitalist economic crisis, and of the accompanying ideology of neo-liberalism. The neo-liberal approach to state policy, especially during the 1980s and 1990s era of intensifying globalisation, continued to exacerbate the contradictions of capitalism, especially historically unprecedented inequality between countries (as measured by the Gini coefficient, whereby 0 is perfect equality, 1 perfect inequality – in Figure 1, types of countries (as measured by Gross Domestic Product per person in Figure 2, and people (Figure 3).

Rising inequality follows logically from global apartheid’s internal systems of primitive accumulation, as David Harvey explains:

A closer look at Marx’s description of primitive accumulation reveals a wide range of processes. These include the commodification and privatisation of land and the

1. Mbeki, T. (2002), ‘Address by President Mbeki at the Welcome Ceremony of the WSSD,’ Johannesburg, 25 August.

2. Mbeki, T. (2003), ‘Letter from the President,’ *ANC Today*, <http://www.anc.org.za>, 31 October.

3. Booker, S. and W. Minter (2001), ‘AIDS is a Consequence of Global Apartheid,’ *The Nation*, July 2.

forceful expulsion of peasant populations; conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc.) into exclusive private property rights; suppression of rights to the commons; commodification of labor power and the suppression of alternative (indigenous) forms of production and consumption; colonial, neocolonial and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources); monetisation of exchange and taxation (particularly of land); slave trade; and usury, the national debt and ultimately the credit system as radical means of primitive accumulation.¹

Beyond such ‘accumulation by dispossession,’ capitalism survives through the ‘shifting and stalling’ of the contradictions of over-accumulation, which is at the root of today’s uneven development process,² in part because of sometimes debt, sometimes brutal control by Washington. While the rise of financial power and the influence of the Washington/Wall Street axis have slowed and in some ways reversed, we are still in the dying and most dangerous days of the bankers’ world. Capital’s vulnerabilities, even in the US, remain extremely serious, and there appears little scope for genuine lasting reform of international capitalism.

To this argument must be added the need to counter the rise of right-wing military power emanating from Washington, especially since the 11 September (and subsequent) ‘clash of fundamentalisms,’ as Tariq Ali puts it, between the US Empire and Radical Islam.³ The anti-war and social justice movements responded with an impressive show of street heat on 15 February 2003, when more people around the world came out to demonstrate for a single cause, peace, than at any time in history. The movement lacked sufficient clout to shake George W. Bush off his manic trajectory. Nevertheless, there do remain opportunities to withstand Washington’s debilitating economic and geopolitical aggression, potentially through alliances that may emerge from the various forces opposed to the dominant power bloc that today combines neo-liberalism (the ‘Washington Consensus’) with the White House’s petro-military imperialist project, as indicated in Table 1.

How does Pretoria relate to the five core ideologies? Mbeki and his top political aides have adopted strong (but as we will show, profoundly hypocritical) opposition to the *Rightwing resurgence*, especially the 2003 war against Iraq. With regard to the *Washington Consensus*, Pretoria has not hesitated to implement the full range of neo-liberal policies at home, and worse, seeks to re-legitimise the WashCon across the continent via the New Partnership for Africa’s Development. At the same time, Mbeki, Manuel, Erwin and others offer rhetorical support for the *Post-Washington Consensus* – yet, as demonstrated below, can point to no obvious progress when they lead elite processes, including international summits.

1. Harvey, D. (2003), ‘The “New” Imperialism: On Spatio-temporal Fixes and Accumulation by Dispossession,’ in L. Panitch and C. Leys, *Socialist Register 2004*, London, Merlin Press and New York, Monthly Review Press.

2. For details, see Harvey, D. (1999)[1982], *The Limits to Capital*, London, Verso, especially the analysis of spatial and temporal fixes to over-accumulation. The theory is reviewed in Bond, P. (2003), ‘Potentials for African Anti-Capitalism: Uneven Development and Popular Resistance,’ presented to the conference on The Work of Karl Marx and the Challenges of the 21st Century of the Institute of Philosophy of the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment, the National Association of Economists of Cuba, the Cuban Trade Union Federation and the Centre for the Study of Economy and Planning, Havana, 5 May 2003, reprinted as Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung Policy Paper 3, 2003.

3. Ali, T. (2002), *The Clash of Fundamentalisms*, London, Verso.

There is, as well, a residual commitment within the ANC Alliance to the Third World nationalist tradition of enlightenment and liberation – although as Frantz Fanon anticipated,¹ a degenerate, exhausted nationalism is also often on display in Pretoria.

As for the *Global justice movements*, Pretoria exhibits mainly genuine fear and loathing (and periodically labels activists as ‘ultra-leftist’) – and vice versa. Indeed, of enormous interest to international observers is the fact that the particular circumstances of South Africa’s recent history pit the Global justice philosophy firmly against Third World nationalism. Many possibilities for unity and cooperation were not merely ignored, but were actively sabotaged throughout the period during which Pretoria most strongly desired domestic harmony. Indeed, this paper concludes that the period immediately prior to and after 11 September 2001 was a time of *conclusive failure* for Pretoria’s international reforms of global apartheid, on the one hand, and on the other, the moment at which South Africa’s *new left opposition* emerged as a formidable social force.² In just the year following the terrorists’ attacks on New York and Washington, Thabo Mbeki’s strategy came unhinged, and civil society activists – labelled by the ANC as ‘ultra-leftists’ – rose to take advantage of this failure in a manner that began to shake up the local political scene. It is a new movement whose success, however, ultimately relies upon material grievances, and therein lies one of the many tragedies of South Africa’s elite transition.

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1. Fanon, F. (1961), *The Wretched of the Earth*, New York, Grove Press, Chapter Three: Pitfalls of National Consciousness.
 2. The argument about domestic politics is treated in more depth in an update of *Elite Transition*. Bond, P. (2004)[2000], *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa*, London, Pluto Press and Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press. More importantly, I highly recommend several websites (<http://www.nu.ac.za/ccs>, <http://southafrica.indymedia.org> and <http://www.aidc.org.za>) and numerous books written mainly by independent leftists over the last few years that give a strong flavour of the depth and breadth of the radical critique: Legassick, M. (forthcoming), *Towards Socialist Democracy*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press; Saul, J. (forthcoming), *The Next Liberation Struggle*, London, Merlin Press, New York, Monthly Review Press and Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press; Kimani, S. (Ed.)(2003), *The Right to Dissent: Freedom of Expression, Assembly and Demonstration in the New South Africa*, Johannesburg, Freedom of Expression Institute; Alexander, N. (2002), *An Ordinary Country*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press; Jacobs, S. and R. Calland (Eds)(2002), *Thabo Mbeki's World*, London, Zed Press and Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press; Hart, G. (2002), *Disabling Globalization*, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press and Berkeley, University of California Press; Desai, A. (2002), *We are the Poors*, New York, Monthly Review Press; McDonald, D. (Ed.) (2002), *Environmental Justice in South Africa*, Cape Town, University of Cape Town Press; McDonald, D. and J. Pape (Eds)(2002), *Cost Recovery and the Crisis of Service Delivery in South Africa*, London, Zed and Pretoria, HSRC Publications; Duncan, J. (2002), *Broadcasting and the National Question*, Johannesburg, Freedom of Expression Institute; Bell, T. and D. Ntsebeza (2001), *Unfinished Business*, Cape Town, RedWorks; Adams, S. (2001), *Comrade Minister*, New York, Nova Science Publishers; Marais, H. (2000), *South Africa Limits to Change*, London, Zed Press and Cape Town, University of Cape Town Press; Bond, P. (2000), *Cities of Gold, Townships of Coal*, Trenton, Africa World Press; Bond, P. and M. Khosa (Eds)(1999), *An RDP Policy Audit*, Pretoria, HSRC Publications.

Class apartheid in South Africa

South Africa has witnessed the replacement of racial apartheid for what can be accurately described as 'class apartheid.' Consider some of the more obvious manifestations.

A government agency, Statistics South Africa, released a report in October 2002 confirming that in real terms, average black 'African' household income had declined 19 per cent from 1995 to 2000, while white household income was up 15 per cent. The average black household earned one-sixth as much as the average white household in 2000, down from one-quarter in 1995. Households with less than R670 per month income – mainly black African, coloured and of Asian descent – increased from 20 per cent of the population in 1995 to 28 per cent in 2000. Across the racial divides, the poorer half of all South Africans earn just 9.7 per cent of national income, down from 11.4 per cent in 1995. The richest 20 per cent earn 65 per cent of all income.¹ Matters did not improve after 2000, it is fair to assume.

Part of the explanation lies in the fact that the official measure of unemployment rose from 16 per cent in 1995 to 30 per cent in 2002.² Add to that figure frustrated job seekers, and the percentage of unemployed people rises to 43 per cent. Youth unemployment is 47 per cent. Moreover, suffering from worsening poverty and from rising water and electricity prices (which together accounted for 30 per cent of the income of those earning less than R500 per month),³ ten million people reported having had their water cut off in one national government survey, and ten million were also victims of electricity disconnections. In addition, two million people have been evicted from their homes or land since liberation in 1994.⁴

As a result, alienation and discontent are obviously increasing. Shockingly, 'the number of black people who believe life was better under the apartheid regime is growing,' according to a late-2002 survey conducted by the Institute for Democracy in SA.

More than 60% of all South Africans polled said the country was better run during white minority rule. Only one in ten people believed their elected representatives were interested in their needs and fewer than one in three felt today's government was more trustworthy than the apartheid regime. Black people were only slightly more positive than white and mixed-race groups about the government, with 38% deeming it more trustworthy than before.⁵

In addition to the indicators of growing inequality, Pretoria's neo-liberal approach to development and environment despoils the entire ecosystem. The evidence is

1. Statistics South Africa (2002), *Earning and Spending in South Africa*, Pretoria; *Business Day*, 22 November.

2. Statistics South Africa (2001), *South Africa in Transition*, Pretoria, for 1995, and Statistics South Africa (2003), *Labour Force Survey, September 2002*, Pretoria, p.iii for 2002.

3. Statistics South Africa (2002), 'Database on Expenditure and Income, 2000.'

4. <http://www.queensu.ca/msp>. Although government has disputed the figures, they may actually be understatements.

5. Carroll, R. (2002), 'More Blacks believe Apartheid Country ran Better', *Mail and Guardian*, 13 December.

obvious when it comes to water and electricity, but extends into other spheres as well. South Africa suffers water scarcity, yet continues to generate extreme inequality in its distribution, in the location of natural surface and ground water (due to apartheid land dispossession), and in consumption norms, with wealthy urban (white) families enjoying swimming pools and English gardens, and rural (black) women queuing at communal taps in the parched ex-'bantustan' areas for hours.

On a per capita basis, South Africa also contributes more to global warming than nearly any economy in the world, if CO₂ emissions are corrected for both income and population. By that measure, the greenhouse gas emissions are twenty times higher than even the United States, and the figure has actually been worsening, not improving over the last decade. Notwithstanding good solar, wind and tides potential, renewable energy is desperately under-funded. Instead, vast resources are devoted to nuclear energy R&D (including huge irrational investments in pebble-bed nuclear reactors) and the construction of Africa's largest hydropower facilities. These are just two indications of how serious South Africa's environmental problems have become under conditions of neo-liberal management, and there are many others.¹

Certainly, the African National Congress and its Alliance partners – the SA Communist Party and Congress of SA Trade Unions – retained the loyal core of a self-reinforcing hegemonic political bloc (no matter what the occasional squabbles). Beyond the immediate core could be found some church leaders, NGO officials and a section of the community/residents' movement, not to mention those in the middle class and wealthier communities who gradually realised that ANC policies were broadly favourable to their interests, and who provided tacit support so that the ANC genuinely achieved 'hegemony' over many of South Africa's crucial socio-political-cultural processes.

Meanwhile, South Africa's numerous left civil society forces, often in close contact with international networks, challenged Pretoria's orientation.² One crucial terrain of struggle was the Treatment Action Campaign's (TAC's) ongoing attempt to acquire anti-retroviral medicines. Tragically, that struggle continued after it should have ended, in April 2001. The government and TAC won a symbolic life-saving international fight against pharmaceutical companies in local courts, but then Mbeki and his health and trade ministers failed to substantively change policy, or to override patents for generic production or inexpensive imports. With approximately five million HIV-positive residents, South Africa still suffers because a reluctant government refuses to make available safe anti-retroviral medicinal treatment.³

1. Bond, P. (2002), *Unsustainable South Africa: Development and Social Protest*, London, Merlin and Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press; McDonald, D. (Ed.)(2002), *Environmental Justice in South Africa*, Columbus, Ohio University Press; Clarke, J. (2002), *Coming Back to Earth: South Africa's Changing Environment*, Johannesburg, Jacana.

2. Bond, P. (2003), 'Labour, Social Movements and South African Foreign Economic Policy,' in P. Nel and J. van der Westhuizen (Eds), *Democratising South African Foreign Policy*, New York, Lexington Books and Cape Town, University of Cape Town Press.

3. See Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*, Chapters Eight and Nine, and *Elite Transition*, second edition.

The other high-profile challenge from the left, the Social Movements Indaba (SMI), is a network-coalition formed in August 2002 to draw together critics of government from across a variety of philosophies, activities and issue areas. The SMI used the WSSD and subsequent events to link global neo-liberalism to a variety of local manifestations, in order to blame and shame Pretoria. Periodically, they united with international critics of neo-liberalism to de-legitimise the South African, African and international establishments.

On 31 August 2002, the ANC-Alliance and SMI narrowly avoided meeting in the streets of Alexandra Township as they both marched up to the Sandton site of the WSSD. The latter demonstrated against what they termed the 'W\$\$D,' while the former marched in favour of stronger UN-mandated actions of the sort Mbeki, finance minister Trevor Manuel and trade minister Alec Erwin had helped initiate. The WSSD's opponents in the SMI gathered at least 20,000 participants. Most observers estimated the pro-WSSD, pro-Pretoria bloc as around one-tenth that size by the time their march began two hours later.¹ This was just one of the reflections of the nascent new left's success in recent years, and there are many others.

To make sense of all this global and local damage, we need to combine an understanding of the forces of capitalist globalisation with admiration for increasingly active globe-trotting reformism. But our respect for the energy and ambition officially arrayed against global apartheid must be tempered by a clear balance sheet assessment of victories and – mainly – defeats along the way. We go next, hence, to a review of the highest-profile initiative launched by Mbeki to address adverse international power relations, namely the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

1. See the report by Michael Goldman in *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, December 2002.

NEPAD economics and global apartheid

From the outset, it is important to locate the political-economic philosophy that informs Mbeki in his African and international reform strategy. What is the most appropriate narrative of globalisation, from the standpoint of Africa's elites? Consider the viewpoint offered in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD):

31. While no corner of the world has escaped the effects of globalisation, the contributions of the various regions and nations have differed markedly. The locomotive for these major advances is the highly industrialised nations ...

39. We readily admit that globalisation is a product of scientific and technological advances, many of which have been market-driven.

Hence, we have an impressionistic painting in which globalisation is essentially productive, combining power, dynamism and success. The picture comes into rather different focus, however, in this alternative viewpoint from within Mbeki's African National Congress:

The present crisis is, in fact, a global capitalist crisis, rooted in a classical crisis of overaccumulation and declining profitability. Declining profitability has been a general feature of the most developed economies over the last 25 years. It is precisely declining profitability in the most advanced economies that has spurred the last quarter of a century of intensified globalisation. These trends have resulted in the greatly increased dominance (and exponential growth in the sheer quantity) of speculative finance capital, ranging uncontrolled over the globe in pursuit of higher returns.¹

Here, the perspective is based upon crisis, economic vulnerability and capitalist desperation.

By explaining the challenge of globalisation in much more accommodationist language, NEPAD buys into the main premises of global apartheid: '1. ... The Programme is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world.' Hence, NEPAD begins by framing the problems using phrases such as 'exclusion' and 'a globalising world' – instead of critical language and concepts traditionally used by great African analysts: 'neocolonialism,' 'dependency,' 'imperialism.' The automatic presumption is that the 'poverty' and 'backwardness' of Africa are as a result of 'exclusion' and 'marginalisation' from 'globalisation.' A different presumption, not even considered, is that worsening poverty for the masses is an intrinsic feature of globalisation, much as it was a corollary of apartheid in South Africa.

If Africa is 'marginalised,' does the continent require more globalisation? The answer is yes, according to NEPAD: '52. Africa, impoverished by slavery, corruption and economic mismanagement is taking off in a difficult situation. However, if her enormous natural and human resources are properly harnessed and utilised,

1. ANC Alliance (1998), 'The Global Economic Crisis,' Discussion Document, Johannesburg, September, p.1.

it could lead to equitable and sustainable growth of the continent as well as enhance its rapid integration into the world economy.'

But consider, instead, the evidence that 'equitable and sustainable growth of the continent' and 'rapid integration into the world economy' are mutually exclusive. 'Rapid integration' destroyed Africa's terms of trade, because the continent's share of world trade declined during the 1980s and 1990s, while export volume increased (Figure 4). Marginalisation occurred not because of lack of integration, but because other areas of the world – especially East Asia – moved to export manufactured goods. Meanwhile, Africa's industrial potential declined, thanks to excessive deregulation and austerity associated with structural adjustment (i.e., excess financial integration).

On the one hand, reasons for declining terms of trade include G8 subsidies and dumping of farm products. However, even were market access to be granted, trade still causes inequality in most of Africa, it is now apparent. According to World Bank econometrician Branco Milanovic, 'at very low average income level, it is the rich who benefit from openness ... It seems that openness makes income distribution worse before making it better.'¹

Moreover, thanks to rapid financial integration, Africa's debt crisis worsened during the era of globalisation. From 1980 to 2000, sub-Saharan Africa's total foreign debt rose from \$60 billion to \$206 billion, and the ratio of debt to GDP rose from 23 per cent to 66 per cent (Figure 5). Hence, Africa now repays more than it receives (Figure 6). In 1980, loan inflows of \$9.6 billion were comfortably higher than the debt repayment outflow of \$3.2 billion, so the Ponzi scheme continued: by 2000, only \$3.2 billion flowed in, and \$9.8 billion was repaid, leaving a net financial flows deficit of \$6.2 billion.²

Meanwhile, (already-corrupt) donor aid was down 40 per cent from 1990 levels. There is convincing documentation that women and vulnerable children, the elderly and disabled people are the primary victims, as they are expected to survive with less social subsidy, with more pressure on the fabric of the family during economic crisis, and with HIV/AIDS. All of these are closely correlated to structural adjustment.³

The other source of outflows that must be reversed, if Africa is to overcome its systematic underdevelopment within the circuits of international finance, is capital flight. The two leading scholars of the phenomenon, James Boyce and Léonce Ndikumana, argue that a core group of sub-Saharan African countries whose foreign debt was \$178 billion had suffered a quarter century of capital flight by elites that totalled more than \$285 billion (including imputed interest earnings): 'Taking cap-

1. Milanovic, B. (2002), 'Can we Discern the Effect of Globalisation on Income Distribution?, Evidence from Household Budget Surveys,' World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 2876, April.

2. World Bank (2002), *Global Finance Tables*, Washington.

3. See, e.g., Elson, D. (1991), 'The Impact of Structural Adjustment on Women: Concepts and Issues,' in B. Onimode (Ed.), *The IMF, the World Bank and the African Debt*, London, Zed; Longwe, S. (1991), 'The Evaporation of Policies for Women's Advancement,' in N. Heyzer et al. (Eds), *A Commitment to the World's Women*, New York, UNIFEM; Mahmoud, F. (1996), 'Building a Pan-African Women's Movement', in T. Abdul-Raheem (Ed.), *Pan-Africanism: Politics, Economy and Social Change in the 21st Century*, Trenton, Africa World Press.

ital flight as a measure of private external assets, and calculating net external assets as private external assets minus public external debts, sub-Saharan Africa thus appears to be a net creditor vis-à-vis the rest of the world.¹ Capital flight by African elites is not taken seriously in NEPAD, for a crackdown would conflict with the programme's commitment to further financial liberalisation.

In contrast, NEPAD's call for more 'rapid integration' includes ongoing debt repayments (and conditionality): '149. ... Countries would engage with existing debt relief mechanisms – the HIPC (High Indebted Poor Countries) and the Paris Club – before seeking recourse through NEPAD. The Debt Initiative will require agreed poverty reduction strategies, debt strategies and participation in the Economic Governance Initiative to ensure that countries are able to absorb the extra resources.'

Hence, another key impact of debt is the widespread imposition of austerity policies throughout Africa. In South Africa, for the sake of achieving macroeconomic 'stability,' a 1996 'Growth, Employment and Redistribution' (GEAR) strategy broke from the more Keynesian Reconstruction and Development Programme. This entailed several predictable neo-liberal strategies. Pretoria cut corporate taxes dramatically, maintained the deficit/GDP ratio at below 3 per cent and imposed the highest interest rates in South Africa history. Financial liberalisation included removing the main exchange controls in 1995, and allowing the financial headquarters of South Africa's biggest companies to flee to London from 1998 to 2001. These factors were responsible for three crashes of the currency of 30 per cent over several weeks (early 1996, mid-1998 and late 2001).

The way NEPAD explains and critiques such experiences of neo-liberalism in Africa is telling: "24. The structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s provided only a partial solution. They promoted reforms that tended to remove serious price distortions, but gave inadequate attention to the provision of social services."² By failing to analyse neo-liberalism critically, NEPAD's macroeconomic

1. Boyce, J. and L. Ndikumana (2000), 'Is Africa a Net Creditor? New Estimates of Capital Flight from Severely Indebted Sub-Saharan African Countries, 1970–96', Occasional Paper, University of Massachusetts/Amherst Political Economy Research Institute.

2. The paragraph begs several questions, however. For example, what if structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) represented not 'a partial solution' but, instead, reflecting local and global power shifts, a profound defeat for genuine African nationalists, workers, peasants, women, children and the environment?

What if structural adjustment programmes were the result not of Africans searching honestly for 'solutions' but, instead, mainly reflected the shift in power relations at both a global scale (where financial and commercial circuits of capital were ascendant) and within individual African states: away from lobbies favouring somewhat pro-poor social policies and (at least half-hearted) industrial development towards cliques whose strategies served the interests of acquisitive local elites, Washington financiers and transnational corporations?

What if 'promoting reforms' really amounted to the IMF/WB imposing neo-liberal policies on desperately disempowered African societies – without any reference to democratic processes, resistance or diverse local conditions?

Likewise, what if 'removal of price distortions' meant, in reality, the following conditions of worsened economic crisis across Africa:

- repeal of exchange controls (hence allowing massive capital flight),
- subsidy cuts (hence pushing masses of people below the poverty line), and
- lowered import tariffs (hence generating massive de-industrialisation)?

What if 'inadequate attention to the provision of social services' in reality meant the opposite: excessive attention to applying neo-liberalism not just to the macroeconomy, but also to health, education, water and other services?

And what if the form of IMF/Bank attention included greater cost recovery, higher user-fees, lower budgetary allocations, privatisation and even the disconnection of essential state services to poor people?

policy recommends business as usual: '49. ... African leaders will take joint responsibility for the following: ... Restoring and maintaining macroeconomic stability, especially by developing appropriate standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies, and introducing appropriate institutional frameworks to achieve these standards.' Yet virtually every structural adjustment programme in Africa generated instability.

In sum, given the forces in play in South Africa, the nine years of experience with economic liberalisation there and two decades of structural adjustment in Africa, it is useful to consider next the politics of NEPAD, to determine whether this status quo strategy can win hearts and minds and overcome the most obvious contradiction: that between free markets and free politics.

Whose NEPAD?

Having explored NEPAD's political-economic orientation, we can consider other quirks that disqualify it as a substantive attack on global apartheid. The problem was stated most forcefully by Erwin just as Robert Mugabe was stealing a presidential election in early 2002: 'The West should not hold the NEPAD hostage because of mistakes in Zimbabwe. If NEPAD is not owned and implemented by Africa it will fail and we cannot be held hostage to the political whims of the G8 or any other groups.'¹

The opposite problem – only seven African presidents showing up at the 2003 Heads of State Implementation Committee meeting – was recorded by Mbeki a few weeks later at the World Economic Forum's Durban meeting: 'We must insist that our fellow heads of state attend the meetings.'² The application of the Washington Consensus to Africa in its first phase (1980–2000) – known as 'structural adjustment' – was a multifaceted tragedy. In its second, as NEPAD (2000–), it would become a farce, as conceded even by its own secretariat management.

Erwin's outburst revealed a great deal. Washington and the rest of the West had no problems with NEPAD's neo-liberalism. *Institutional Investor* magazine quoted the chief Africa bureaucrat for the world's main rogue regime, Walter Kansteiner: 'NEPAD is philosophically spot-on. The US will focus on those emerging markets doing the right thing in terms of private sector development, economic freedom and liberty.'³

This was a common reaction from Washington and other imperial power centres. An IMF *Working Paper on the New Partnership for Africa's Development* termed NEPAD 'visionary' and promoted 'the active selling of reforms' through national marketing and advice centres, such as the African Regional Technical Assistance Centre in Dar es Salaam. African governments should 'use PRSPs [Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers] to translate NEPAD's framework into operational blueprints.'⁴

Critics on the left therefore alleged that NEPAD was a sub-imperial project, influenced by the elite team of 'partners' who helped craft it in 2000–01. NEPAD surfaced only after extensive consultations with:

- the European Union president and individual Northern heads of state (2000–01);
- the World Bank president and IMF managing director (November 2000 and February 2001);
- major transnational corporate executives and associated government leaders

1. Cited in Taylor, I. (2002), 'Obstacles to Change in Africa: NEPAD, Zimbabwe, and Elites,' *Foreign Policy in Focus* Commentary, <http://www.fpif.org/outside/commentary/2002/0204nepad.html>.

2. SA Institute of International Affairs (2003), 'NEPAD and WEF,' *eAfrica*, July, p.11.

3. Gopinath, D. (2003), 'Doubt of Africa,' *Institutional Investor Magazine*, May.

4. <http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org>, May 2003.

- (at the Davos World Economic Forum in January 2001); and
- G8 rulers (at Tokyo in July 2000 and Genoa in July 2001).

What was civil society's input? In late 2001 and early 2002, virtually every major African civil society organisation, network and progressive personality attacked NEPAD's process, form and content.¹ Until April 2002, no trade union, civil society, church, women's group, youth group, political party, parliamentary or other potentially democratic or progressive forces in Africa were formally consulted by the politicians or technocrats involved in constructing NEPAD.²

Tough critiques of the 67-page base document soon emerged from intellectuals associated with the Council for Development and Social Research in Africa.³ By the time of the July 2002 Durban launch of the African Union, more than 200 opponents of NEPAD from human rights, debt and trade advocacy groups from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and Zimbabwe were sufficiently organised to hold a militant demonstration at the opening ceremony.⁴

Reacting to the growing pressure from the political left, Mbeki began holding civil society consultations in mid-2002 with the assistance of a nationalist faction of the SA Council of Churches and the Africa Institute, although not without controversy.⁵ As Mbeki prepared to present at the Kananaskis G8 meeting, *Business Day's* (pro-NEPAD) reporters Jonathan Katzenellenbogen and Vuyo Mvoko reported that,

NEPAD is under fire from African experts ... The group, which met in Pretoria recently and was addressed by Mbeki, panned several aspects of the blueprint for Africa's economic recovery, referring to Mbeki and members of NEPAD's steering

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1. See Bond, P. (Ed.) (2002), *Fanon's Warning: A Civil Society Reader on the New Partnership for Africa's Development*, Trenton, Africa World Press and Cape Town, AIDC; Bond, P. (2003), 'Can the New Partnership for Africa's Development Work?', in K. Wohlmuth (Ed.), *African Development Perspective Yearbook: African Entrepreneurship and Private Sector Development*, Bremen, Institute for World Economics and International Management; and Bond, P. and T. Ngwane (2003), 'African Anti-Capitalism,' in R. Neumann and A. Hsiao (Eds), *Anti-Capitalism: A Field Guide to the Global Justice Movement*, New York, New Press. See also the discussion of 'subimperial partnership' in Bond, *Unsustainable South Africa*, pp. 368–75.
 2. I was fortunate to attend the first such consultation, where Wiseman Nkuhlu – head of the Johannesburg-based NEPAD secretariat – apologised to eighty top officials of the Congress of South African Trade Unions for having been 'too busy' beforehand. Alec Erwin and Pretoria's main public relations bureaucrat (and leading intellectual), Joel Netshitenzhe, warded off angry critiques from Cosatu, but I asked Netshitenzhe if there was any chance the base document could be edited to reflect the hostility to neo-liberalism so evident there and in all the other commentaries from civil society. He replied, simply, 'No.' The NEPAD team had not even brought copies of the document for the union leaders.
 3. The most rigorous studies in 2002 were conducted by highly experienced political economists: Adedeji, A. (2002), 'From the Lagos Plan of Action to the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and from the Final Act of Lagos to the Constitutive Act: Whither Africa?' Keynote Address prepared for the African Forum for Envisioning Africa, Nairobi, 26–29 April; Adesina, J. (2002), 'Development and the Challenge of Poverty: NEPAD, Post-Washington Consensus and Beyond', Paper presented to the Codesria/TWN Conference on Africa and the Challenge of the 21st Century, Accra, 23–26 April; Anyang'Nyong'o, P. et al. (Eds) (2002), *NEPAD: A New Path?*, Nairobi, Heinrich Böll Foundation; Nabudere, D. (2002), 'NEPAD: Historical Background and its Prospects,' in P. Anyang'Nyong'o, et al. (Eds), *NEPAD: A New Path?* Nairobi, Heinrich Böll Foundation; Olukoshi, A. (2002), 'Governing the African Political Space for Sustainable Development: A Reflection on NEPAD,' Paper prepared for the African Forum for Envisioning Africa, Nairobi, 26–29 April.
 4. *Business Day*, 9 July 2002.
 5. Several church people told me how upset they were that, in spite of strong efforts by some in the SACC to circulate a powerful critique of NEPAD, the mere presence of Mbeki in the room seemed to shake the more lethargic, unprepared and conservative forces into a patriotic pro-NEPAD fervour.

committee as 'a small group of political elites' and saying the nature of NEPAD would ... 'perpetuate and reinforce the subjugation of Africa in the international global system, the enclivity of African economies and the marginalisation of Africa's people.' Responding to the criticism, Mbeki's spokesman, Bheki Khumalo, said: 'Ideology and slogans don't feed people. That has been the problem in the past.'¹

At the Durban AU summit, trade unions also met with Mbeki. On the one hand they repeated the criticism that NEPAD as a 'paradigm and model does not depart fundamentally from previous programmes designed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.' On the other hand, after resources were offered by Pretoria, the union leaders agreed to establish a corporatist structure that would allow ruling parties 'to hold formal talks with African trade unions and business about NEPAD' which, according to Cosatu's spokesperson, 'could possibly be along the lines of the National Economic Development and Labour Council' of South Africa.² Likewise in Nigeria, a corporatist fraction of civil society was organised by an NGO, the Shelter Rights Initiative, in October 2002 to take advantage of NEPAD. The group denounced the lack of activity by Mbeki's main NEPAD co-promoter, Obasanjo: 'There appears to be no high-ranking, middle-level or articulate support staff or bureaucracy to support their work. The situation creates doubt as to whether NEPAD will outlive the present government.'³

Nevertheless, NEPAD was the veil behind which a great deal of political activity occurred. At first blush, the most hopeful set of recent interventions via the African Union and NEPAD was a set of 'peace-keeping' interventions in West African hot-spots and the Great Lakes region. However, the particularly difficult Burundi and DRC wars were driven by deep-seated rivalries and socio-economic desperation, which Pretoria did not comprehend, much less help to resolve. In 2003, prominent South African officials (Mandela, Mbeki, Dlamini-Zuma and deputy president Jacob Zuma) facilitated two power-sharing peace deals in these countries, but they left the underlying contradictions intact. The papering-over efforts did not, as a result, halt massacres of hundreds in the northeast of the DRC the day the celebrated Sun City deal was done, nor even succeed in bringing two crucial rebel armies in Burundi to the table. Millions had died in the DRC, and hundreds of thousands in Burundi, and yet Pretoria's interventions were characterised by shoddy elite pacting, top-down decisions from the SA presidency with insufficient consultation with even the SA National Defence Force or Foreign Affairs (much less parliament and the broader society) and a lack of formal mandates from the UN and African Union.

Most importantly, trying to police the global capitalist periphery required more common sense in relation to the root causes of conflict, because without making provision for total debt cancellation in Burundi, for example, the massive drain on that country's resources was a recipe for conflict. In 1998, as conflict became endemic, Burundi spent nearly 40 per cent of its export earnings on debt repay-

1. *Business Day*, 27 June 2002.

2. *Business Day*, 3 July 2002.

3. *Business Day*, 23 October 2002.

ment – in the same league as only two other countries, Brazil and Zimbabwe. In Brazil the people's anger at the economic oppression associated with this level of drainage was directed towards taking state power through the Workers' Party a few years later. In Zimbabwe, the state panicked and turned to brutal repression. Burundi, meanwhile, was led, slowly and painfully, first by Julius Nyerere and then Nelson Mandela, towards a fake power-sharing deal that was meant to sort out ethnic divisions but that instead would exacerbate the crisis because of the lack of root-cause problem solving.

There was, nevertheless, hope that the good-governance rhetoric in the NEPAD base document might do some good: 'With NEPAD, Africa undertakes to respect the global standards of democracy, which core components include political pluralism, allowing for the existence of several political parties and workers' unions, fair, open, free and democratic elections periodically organised to enable the populace to choose their leaders freely.'¹

While South Africa under Mbeki's rule still permits free and fair elections, the other main NEPAD leader, Nigeria's Obasanjo, certainly does not. This was obvious during the April 2003 presidential poll, which resulted in what a United Nations press agency termed 'the threshold of total one-party dominance' by the ruling People's Democratic Party. As one example, according to official records, a near 100 per cent turnout occurred in the southern Rivers State, with 2.1 million of 2.2 million registered voters supporting president Obasanjo. Yet electoral observers reported a low turnout.² In the telling case of Obasanjo's home state of Ogun, the president won 1,360,170 votes against his opponent's 680. The number of votes cast in a simultaneous race in the same geographical area was just 747,296. Obasanjo's explanation, by way of denigrating the European Union's electoral observers, was that 'certain communities in this country make up their minds to act as one in political matters ... They probably don't have that kind of culture in most European countries.' International observers found 'serious irregularities throughout the country and fraud in at least 11 (of 36) states.'³

According to Chima Ubani of the Civil Liberties Organisation, 'It's not the actual wish of the electorate but some machinery that has churned out unbelievable outcomes. We've seen a landslide that does not seem sufficiently explained by any available factor.' The opposition All Nigeria People's Party called the vote 'the most flagrantly rigged in Nigeria's history.' Harsh complaints also came from the Transition Monitoring Group and the Catholic Church's Justice Development and Peace Commission, which together had 40,000 monitors documenting abuse.⁴ In contrast, Mbeki's weekly ANC internet *ANC Today* letter proclaimed, 'Nigeria has just completed a series of elections, culminating in the re-election of president Olusegun Obasanjo into his second and last term. Naturally, we have already sent our congratulations to him.' Naturally, Mbeki had to register, but then dismiss, the

1. NEPAD, paragraph 79.

2. IRIN news service, 12 May 2003.

3. *Mail and Guardian*, 26 April 2003.

4. IRIN news service, 12 May 2003.

obvious: 'It is clear that there were instances of irregularities in some parts of the country. However, it also seems clear that by and large the elections were well conducted.'¹

A similar lack of respect for democracy was evident in Zimbabwe.² Ironically, after opposing NEPAD at the AU meeting in Durban, Mugabe and foreign minister Stan Mudenge were visited by an extremely humble Dlamini-Zuma in October 2002. A few days later, finance minister Herbert Murerwa used his budget speech to parliament to confirm that it is 'critical that Zimbabwe remains part of this (NEPAD) process.'³ Meanwhile, the increasingly cosy relationship between Pretoria and Harare alienated the democratic (albeit neo-liberally-inclined) opposition. Morgan Tsvangirai, at the time framed by Mugabe's henchmen on a ludicrous treason charge, concluded that Mbeki had 'embarked on an international safari to campaign for Mugabe's regime. Pretoria is free to pursue its own agenda. But it must realise that Zimbabweans can never be fooled anymore.'⁴

A February 2003 gambit by Mbeki and Obasanjo to readmit Zimbabwe to the Commonwealth represented, according to Tsvangirai,

... the disreputable end game of a long-term Obasanjo-Mbeki strategy designed to infiltrate and subvert not only the Commonwealth effort but, indeed, all other international efforts intended to rein in Mugabe's violent and illegitimate regime. Through this diabolical act of fellowship and solidarity with a murderous dictatorship, General Obasanjo and Mr Mbeki have now openly joined Mugabe as he continues to wage a relentless war against the people of Zimbabwe. They are now self-confessed fellow travellers on a road littered with violence, destruction and death.⁵

Most in Zimbabwean civil society were just as cynical. In a foreword to a booklet subtitled *Why the New Partnership for Africa's Development is Already Failing*, Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development chairperson Jonah Gokova wrote of

... the more profound rejection of NEPAD by Zimbabweans from important social movements, trade unions and NGOs within our increasingly vibrant civil society ... Above all, we now call on Africans to rally around an African People's Consensus inspired by a vision of the development of the continent that reflects more genuine African thinking – instead of NEPAD, that 'homegrown' rehashing of the Washington Consensus augmented by transparently false promises of good governance and democracy.⁶

Did Mbeki and Obasanjo deserve the derision? They termed Zimbabwe's 2002 presidential election 'legitimate,' and repeatedly opposed punishment in the Commonwealth and UN Human Rights Commission. In February 2003, Dlamini-Zuma stated, 'We will never criticise Zimbabwe.' The NEPAD secretariat's Dave

1. <http://www.anc.org.za>, 25 April 2003.

2. The story of Pretoria's bizarre relationship with the Zanu-PF regime is told in Bond, P. and M. Manyanya (2003), *Zimbabwe's Plunge: Exhausted Nationalism, Neoliberalism and the Search for Social Justice*, Harare, Weaver Press, Pietermaritzburg, University of Natal Press, London, Merlin Press and Trenton, Africa World Press.

3. Murerwa, H. (2002), 'The 2003 National Budget Statement,' Presented to Parliament, Harare, 14 November.

4. Tsvangirai, M. (2002), 'President of the MDC's Speech to MDC Parliamentarians,' Harare, 18 December.

5. Cited in Manyanya, M. (Ed.)(2003), *NEPAD's Zimbabwe Test: Why the New Partnership for Africa's Development is Already Failing*, Harare, Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development, Foreword.

6. Manyanya, *NEPAD's Zimbabwe Test*, Foreword.

Malcomson, responsible for international liaison and co-ordination, openly admitted to a reporter, 'Wherever we go, Zimbabwe is thrown at us as the reason why NEPAD's a joke' (*sic*).¹

Suspicion from democratic, progressive forces across Africa appeared validated again when, in October 2002, political-governance peer review was nearly excised from NEPAD. African elites didn't want such leverage located in Pretoria or anywhere else, naturally, so the March 2002 decision by AU leaders meeting in Abuja to adopt the peer review mechanism was only actioned fourteen months later, when the names of six African peers on a 'Panel of Eminent Persons' were released at another Abuja conference, three days before the Evian G8 meeting. Most revealingly, perhaps, the South African peer was Chris Stals, the former Reserve Bank governor whose African credentials included the publicly stated concern, in late 1993, about the 'huge burden' the region presented South Africa.² *Mail and Guardian* columnist Richard Calland commented, 'NEPAD's Declaration on Democracy, Political, Economic and Corporate Governance says precious little about development and poverty, and even less about socio-economic rights. Given that he must now oversee compliance, it is hard to know whether to laugh or cry at the fact that the declaration is full of the language that Stals will understand and has very little of that which he would not.'³ During the 1990s, Stals had been embroiled in several serious governance controversies that should have disqualified him from being a 'peer' to any but the most rancid of African dictators.⁴

As a result of such shenanigans, who could blame the G8 rulers for an increasingly cautious, reserved attitude to their African visitors? When Pretoria's delegation flew to Kananaskis in June 2002, expectations were high, not least because of

1. *Business Day*, 28 March 2003.

2. Bond, P. (1993), 'If and When the New South Africa Looks North,' *Financial Gazette*, 22 November.

3. *Mail and Guardian*, 27 June 2003.

4. A list of disqualifying characteristics would include the following:

- as a member of the exclusive, racist Afrikaner Broederbond beginning in 1974, he participated in venal National Party apartheid politics;
- he threw away R33 billion in SA's hard currency reserves one weekend in mid-1998 trying to defend the Rand fruitlessly, during one of its periodic crashes (even winning criticism from the IMF for incompetence, a few weeks later);
- he shifted Reserve Bank monetary policy dramatically to a tight-money, deregulatory financial regime, which put real interest rates on SA government bonds at more than 10% by the mid-1990s, compared to less than 5% in Britain and Germany, and approximately 3% in the US, Japan and Australia;
- he assisted with the National Party project of making the Reserve Bank 'independent' in the 1993 Constitution, so that his job would not be subject to influence from parliament or any other democratic input;
- he was Reserve Bank governor during several bank failure scandals, including the 1992 Cape Investment Bank and Commuter Corporation pension fund bankruptcies (doomed by a premature Reserve Bank withdrawal) and 1993 Masterbond crash, as well as numerous other bank closures during the mid- and late-1990s in which ordinary depositors lost their savings, with no Reserve Bank deposit insurance (as had regularly been proposed by consumer advocates);
- he bailed out the failing large Afrikaans banks (subsequently merged as ABSA) in the early 1990s with an extremely generous low-interest loan, which cost taxpayers more than a billion Rand;
- his reign as Reserve Bank governor included the early 1990s onset of bank redlining against black neighbourhoods, as well as the dramatic 1993 relaxation of the *Usury Act* which increased interest rates to loan-shark levels for small borrowers; and
- he was embarrassed by a 1994 report by the Witwatersrand Attorney General investigating late-1980s foreign exchange activities of SA banks. The report alleging fraud in every major transaction approved by banks and the Reserve Bank, where Stals served as a senior official.

a front-page *Time* feature on 'Mbeki's mission: He has finally faced up to the AIDS crisis and is now leading the charge for a new African development plan.'¹

In reality, as *Institutional Investor* reported, the G8's 'misleadingly named' Africa Action Plan represented merely 'grudging' support, for the main donor countries 'coughed up only an additional \$1 billion for debt relief, failed altogether to reduce their domestic agricultural subsidies (which hurt African farm exports) and – most disappointing of all to the Africans – neglected to provide any further aid to the continent.'² In the same tone, a journalist from South Africa's *Sunday Times* confirmed that 'the leaders of the world's richest nations refused to play ball.' But Mbeki simply refused to accept reality: 'I think they have addressed adequately all the matters that were put to them.' Kananaskis was 'a defining moment in the process both of the evolution of Africa and the birth of a more equitable system of international relations. In historical terms, it signifies the end of the epoch of colonialism and neocolonialism.'³

The epoch of neocolonialism continued unabated, actually. When the World Economic Forum returned to Davos in January 2003, Manuel angrily told journalists, 'Africa didn't really shine here. There is a complete dearth of panels on Africa.' One wire service report revealed, 'Among the many snubs Africa received here was the decision by former US president Bill Clinton to cancel his presence at a press conference on Africa today to discuss NEPAD. Forum officials said Clinton did not give reasons for not attending.'⁴

By the time of the 2003 G8 meeting in Evian, France, world elites had become well aware of NEPAD's lack of street credibility, and not only because of the repeated Zimbabwe and peer review fiascos. *Institutional Investor* captured the tone: 'Like other far-reaching African initiatives made over the years, this one promptly rolled off the track and into the ditch ... Almost two years after NEPAD's launch, it has little to show in aid or investment. Only a handful of projects have fallen within the plan's framework.'⁵

Evian provided only a few (inadequate) concessions on the UN Global Fund for Health, as well as what the *Financial Times* termed 'year-old pledges to provide an extra \$6 billion a year in aid to Africa,' a tiny fraction of the amount spent on the Iraq war a few weeks earlier.⁶ In addition to an estimated 120,000 activists protesting the G8 in the Swiss cities of Geneva and Lausanne, civil society leaders from six African social movements meeting nearby were scathing: 'The outcome of the 2003 Summit of the G8 reveals that the political will of the eight most powerful nations to meet their obligations to Africa has simply dried up ... One or two

1. *Time*, 10 June 2002.

2. Gopinath, 'Doubt of Africa.'

3. *Sunday Times*, 30 June 2002; *Business Day*, 28 June 2002.

4. Interpress Service, 28 January 2003.

5. Gopinath, 'Doubt of Africa.'

6. *Financial Times*, 2 June 2003. That very day, according to Reuters (2 June 2003), 'Ismaila Usman, an executive director of the IMF and former Nigerian finance minister, said late on Saturday some creditors are obstructing debt-relief efforts by selling poor countries' debts to litigious third parties rather than forgiving them.'

drops of aid out of Evian amounts to a small patch for the haemorrhaging economies of Africa.¹

Northern NGOs were also surprised at the lack of progress. Oxfam complained: 'Not only are there no firm commitments, even their rhetoric is watered down compared with last year.' The health advocacy group *Medicins sans Frontiers* correctly put the G8's failure in geopolitical terms: 'Just to get a pat on the back from Bush, Chirac has sacrificed the right for millions of people to have access to medicines they need to survive. He abandoned his widely publicised commitment to improving access to life-saving medicines, and the rest of the G8 are merrily going along for the ride.'² University of Toronto G8 Research Group academics noted that, thanks to commitments worth just one-tenth the \$27 billion mobilised at Kananaskis, 'Evian fell victim to the UN-created divisions over Iraq that had proliferated during the first several months of 2003.'³

Meanwhile, as at Kananaskis, Mbeki's response was to distract attention from the drying drops of aid. In 2002, his rebuttal to civil society complaints about the G8's failure to fund African debt cancellation and aid was that they were 'easy, routine, uninformed and cynical.'⁴ In 2003, the tactic for denial of failure was far humbler: 'I think we have bitten off more than we can chew. If we had tried to take a bigger bite ... we would not have been able to absorb it. What would happen is that we would produce disappointments. With all these resources committed, [people would ask] what are these Africans doing now? They are not using it.'⁵

Unlike Mbeki, who faked pleasure at the G8 'partnership,'⁶ Africa's finance ministers issued a joint statement after Evian expressing 'deep concern that negotiations on the key elements of the Doha development round have achieved little.'⁷ Brazilian president Lula da Silva declared that the G8's 'incoherency between words and acts cannot but breed skepticism and distrust.'⁸ Specifically mentioning South Africa, Lula remarked, 'I noted that the presidents of the poorer countries spend their whole time complaining that the United States does not give us that to which we think we have a right ... It does not help to keep crying to the European Union for it to reduce the subsidies it pays to its agriculturalists. No one respects a negotiator who cries or who walks around with his head low.'⁹

Lacking Lula's self-confidence, Mbeki and his African colleagues were 'apparently intent on selling out the continent under the rubric of a plan crafted by the same technocrats who wrote Pretoria's failed Gear economic programme, under the guidance of Washington and the corporate leaders of Davos,' according to

1. African Women's Communication and Development Network et al., 'Joint Statement.'

2. *Guardian*, 4 June 2003.

3. *International Herald Tribune*, 4 June 2003.

4. *Cape Times*, 4 July 2002.

5. *Business Day*, 4 June 2003.

6. See, e.g., Mbeki's reportback letter to the ANC, 6 June 2003 (<http://www.anc.org.za>).

7. *Business Report*, 8 June 2003.

8. *Le Figaro*, 4 June 2003.

9. Agencia Folha, Alto Araguaia (translation T. Oppermann), 7 June 2003.

anti-globalisation strategist Dennis Brutus in a mid-2002 *Business Day* article. 'It is past time for us to insist that President Thabo Mbeki rise off his kneepad and assume the dignity of an African leader, or face ridicule.'¹ But dignity was not achieved in Mbeki's dozen or more other recent attempts to reform global apartheid.

1. Brutus, D. (2002), 'Global Agendas are Set by the Usual Suspects,' *Business Day*, 27 June.

South Africa's frustrated international reforms

NEPAD is one example of the difficulties associated with elite management of durable socio-economic problems in Africa. More generally, when it moves to the world stage, is Pretoria 'punching above its weight'? During 1994-2001 era, South Africa leaders presided over:

- the board of governors of the IMF and World Bank;
- the Non-Aligned Movement;
- the UN Conference on Trade and Development;
- the Commonwealth;
- the Organisation of African Unity;
- the Southern African Development Community;
- the 2000 International AIDS conference;
- the World Commission on Dams; and
- many other international and continental bodies.

Pretoria had even greater chances to attack global apartheid during a two-year period from September 2001 to September 2003, by hosting, leading or playing instrumental roles at the following thirteen events:

1. the World Conference Against Racism – Durban, September 2001;
2. the launch of NEPAD – Abuja, October 2001;
3. the WTO Ministerial – Doha, November 2001;
4. the UN Financing for Development – Monterrey, March 2002;
5. the G8 Summit – Kananaskis, June 2002;
6. the African Union launch – Durban, July 2002;
7. the World Summit on Sustainable Development – Johannesburg, September 2002;
8. the Davos World Economic Forum – January 2003;
9. the opportunity for South Africa specialists to help Iraq with Weapons of Mass Destruction 'disarmament' – Baghdad, March 2003;
10. the G8 Summit – Evian, June 2003;
11. George W. Bush's Africa trip – Pretoria, July 2003;
12. the WTO Ministerial Summit – Cancun, September 2003; and
13. the WB/IMF Annual Meeting – Dubai, September 2003.

What, however, was actually accomplished through these opportunities?

1. at WCAR, Mbeki shot down NGOs and African leaders demanding slavery/colonialism/apartheid reparations;
2. NEPAD provided merely a 'homegrown' Washington Consensus;
3. at Doha, Erwin split the African delegation so as to prevent consensus-denial by trade ministers (as had transpired at Seattle in December 1999);
4. in Monterrey, Manuel was summit co-chair and legitimised ongoing IMF/WB strategies, including debt;
5. from Kananaskis, Mbeki departed with nothing – yet, against all evidence to the contrary, declared that the meeting 'signifies the end of the epoch of colonialism and neo-colonialism';
6. the African Union supported both NEPAD and the Zimbabwean regime;
7. at WSSD, Mbeki undermined UN democratic procedure, facilitated the privatisation of nature, and did nothing to address the plight of the world's poor majority;
8. in Davos, global elites ignored Africa;
9. from Iraq, Pretoria achieved neither prevention nor even delay of the US/UK war;
10. from Evian, Mbeki returned with nothing;
11. for hosting a leg of Bush's Africa trip, Mbeki became the US' 'point man' on Zimbabwe;
12. in Cancun, the WTO collapse caused Erwin 'disappointment'; and
13. at Dubai, with Manuel leading the Development Committee, there was no Bretton Woods democratisation, new debt relief or Post-Washington policy reform.

A few recent cases deserve special consideration. Three examples are a) the Cancun breakdown; b) debt and reparations; and c) the US/UK war on Iraq. The general problem was the failure to confront G8 power and hypocrisy.

First, partially explaining Africa's failure to reform trade rules, Erwin played a highly contradictory Cancun role. Unlike at Doha, he was no longer a 'Friend of the Chair,' acting on behalf of the North. Instead, South Africa joined 'G21,' especially a potentially formidable alliance with Brazil and India called, unfortunately, the 'Trilateral Commission.' However, the G21 was reportedly willing to continue negotiating in Cancun until the final moments. Indeed, only the Africa-Caribbean-Pacific countries (especially Kenya and Uganda) broke consensus and walked out of the negotiations.

Second, in relation to debt and reparations, it must be observed that South Africa remains the world's most notorious 'odious debt' case. Apartheid was the

clearest case of foreign loans directly promoting oppression. Moreover, financial sanctions were demanded by the liberation movements from 1965 to 1993. But Swiss and US bankers were, instead, supportive of PW Botha's regime. Notwithstanding the excellent opportunity to address one of the root causes of Third World poverty, the post-apartheid South African government squandered several chances to challenge the \$25 billion debt inherited from Botha and his successor FW de Klerk.

In October 1993, the ANC agreed to repay \$13 billion worth of apartheid foreign debt to commercial banks, and in December that year agreed that the outgoing apartheid government would receive an \$850 million IMF loan. Subsequently, Mbeki and Manuel claimed, repeatedly, that there was no foreign debt owed by the South African government (by ignoring parastatal and private sector debt, for which Pretoria took repayment responsibilities). More recently, they actively opposed the reparations demand that penalties be paid by international bankers for previous foreign loans made to the apartheid regime. Finally, Mbeki and Manuel endorsed, repeatedly, the HIPC initiative of the G-8, IMF and World Bank, a distraction from the cause of debt cancellation.

Third, we must enquire as to whether Pretoria's opposition to war was genuine. Most constructively, perhaps, a few ANC leaders engaged in occasional pickets at US consulates in Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg. The South African government was formally opposed to the war – or more precisely, to a war without UN Security Council approval. Had Washington's bullying of several Security Council swing votes been successful, Pretoria would have fallen into line. In the days prior to the US/UK bombing, Mbeki deployed deputy foreign minister Aziz Pahad and a technical team to assist the UN with inspections for Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, a canard, as none were located.

ANC leaders announced their own opposition, including Nelson Mandela: 'All Bush wants is Iraqi oil, because Iraq produces 64 per cent of oil and he wants to get hold of it ... Their friend Israel has got weapons of mass destruction but because its their ally they won't ask the UN to get rid of it ... Bush, who cannot think properly, is now wanting to plunge the world into a holocaust. If there is a country which has committed unspeakable atrocities, it is the United States of America ... They don't care for human beings.'¹

Fair points, these. Nor did the US care for international justice, contrary to its rhetoric. A telling conflict emerged on the eve of Bush's first-ever Africa trip in July 2003, when the Pentagon announced it would withdraw \$7.6 million worth of military aid to Pretoria, because the South African government – along with thirty-four other military allies of Washington – had not signed a deal that would give US citizens immunity from prosecution at The Hague's new International Criminal Court (Botswana, Uganda, Senegal and Nigeria, also on Bush's itinerary, did sign immunity deals and retained US aid).²

1. *Independent Online*, 30 January 2003.

2. *Sapa*, 2 July 2003.

In June, after the war, Mandela met French foreign minister Dominique de Villepin and condemned Bush again: 'Since the creation of the United Nations there has not been a World War since 1945. Therefore, for anybody, especially the leader of a superstate, to act outside the United Nations is something that must be condemned by everybody who wants peace. For any country to leave the United Nations and attack an independent country must be condemned in the strongest terms.'¹

Notwithstanding the Security Council's laudable opposition to the invasion, the merits of the UN as a site for adjudicating US power were thrown into serious question after Saddam's regime collapsed and reconstruction control was debated. A commentator in the *Jordan Times*, Hasan Abu Nimah, explained:

The latest Security Council resolution on Iraq, 1483, has been a flagrant betrayal of the UN Charter, a scandalous resultant of power politics and opportunistic super-power compromises, and a dangerous submission to the fait accompli of war and aggression, at the expense of principle and international legality. Earlier, in the weeks leading to the war, the council had stood firm in the face of immense American and British pressure, boldly refusing to prematurely undercut the arms inspection programme in favour of a resolution providing legal international cover for the military action against Iraq which was already planned by the US and Britain ... It is amazing how, on May 22, the council dramatically abandoned its steadfast position by suddenly legitimising aggression, endorsing devastation of an innocent country and its weary people, and by licensing their indefinite, unwarranted occupation.²

Aside from Mandela's perhaps justifiable (if irrational) frustration, there were other manifestations of dubious ANC analysis just prior to the invasion. On 19 February, at a demonstration of 4,000 people at the US embassy in Pretoria, ANC general secretary Kgalema Motlanthe pronounced, 'Because we are endowed with several rich minerals, if we don't stop this unilateral action against Iraq today, tomorrow they will come for us.' Likewise, health minister Manto Tshabalala-Msimang was reported by the *Guardian* to have said, 'South Africa cannot afford drugs to fight HIV/AIDS partly because it needs submarines to deter attacks from nations such as the US.' A US diplomat's response: 'Absurd.'³

To its credit, the ANC Alliance put together a Stop the War Campaign with the SA Council of Churches. One of the campaign coordinators, ANC policy director Michael Sachs, rightly argued the need for 'uniting around the broadest possible alliance in opposition to war and imperialism ... George W. Bush has drawn a line in the sand, and we must all decide on which side we stand.'⁴ The independent left's Anti-War Coalition did far more mobilising for demonstrations, and Sachs told a coordinating meeting that ANC leaders were uncomfortable with the more vigorously anti-imperialist language of the Anti-War Coalition.⁵ Then, once Sachs claimed credit for the upcoming 15 February protest in the media, the Coalition

1. Reuters, 28 June 2003.

2. *Jordan Times*, 28 May 2003.

3. *Business Day*, 20 February 2003.

4. Sachs, M. (2003), 'A Line in the Sand,' *Khanya Journal*, 3, March.

5. Interview, Salim Vally, June 2003.

drew its own line in the sand, refusing – churlishly, some members felt – to allow ANC speakers on the stage at the Johannesburg rally of 15,000.¹

The line was so stark because Pretoria had so obviously decided to stand on the side of war profits, ignoring widespread calls to withdraw permission for three Iraq-bound warships to dock and refuel in Durban, and to halt sales of sophisticated armaments to the US/UK regimes. The state-owned arms manufacturer Denel often stated its vision of being ‘an acknowledged global player.’ In the months before the war, it contracted to deliver R225 million in ammunition shell-casing, R1.3 billion in artillery propellants, and 326 hand-held laser range finders to the British army. Denel also sold the US Marines 125 laser-guidance sights.

As Andy Clarno pointed out, ‘Trevor Manuel wants to privatise 30% of Denel’s Aerospace division in 2003. This commitment to neoliberal capitalism prevents the government from taking a principled stance against imperialism and war. By participating in the contemptible practice of profiting from the war, the South African government has not only refused to challenge imperialism – it has in fact become complicit and is establishing its position clearly within the global capitalist empire.’²

That position solidified in the weeks after the Iraq War ended, as the US found it was not as fit as anticipated to play colonial ruler. Its troops grew despondent with the rise of guerrilla activity and numerous mistakes, and military lines were stretched. On the one hand, as discussed below, the Bush regime’s attitude to the ‘philosophically spot-on’ New Partnership for Africa’s Development was not matched by concessions. The opposite was true: Bush only wanted Pretoria to continue wrenching open the continent’s markets, as he hinted during a June 2003 Corporate Council speech: ‘I look forward to going to South Africa, where I’ll meet with elected leaders who are firmly committed to economic reforms in a nation that has become a major force for regional peace and stability.’³

On the other hand, the need for Pretoria to pick up more ‘peace and stability’ responsibilities for the US empire was just as obvious, given Africa’s hot-spot problems and especially oil reserves. Explains Bill Fletcher of the TransAfrica Forum, ‘The US interest in Africa is in direct relationship to oil in the ground. Angola, yes. Equatorial Guinea, yes. But Democratic Republic of the Congo, no. The international community just doesn’t care. Over two million people dead. So what?’⁴

NATO’s supreme allied commander for Europe, Gen. James Jones, confirmed those US interests in May 2003: ‘The carrier battle groups of the future and the expeditionary strike groups of the future may not spend six months in the Medi-

1. Cooperation between the groups was more civil in Cape Town, and there were apparently no divisions at a Port Elizabeth rally.

2. Clarno, A. (2003), ‘Denel and the South African Government: Profiting from the War on Iraq,’ *Khanya Journal*, 3, March.

3. Bush, G. (2003), ‘Remarks by the President to the Corporate Council on Africa’s US-Africa Business Summit,’ Washington, 26 June.

4. *Socialist Worker* 405, 25 June 2003. For an excellent summary of geopolitical processes and Zimbabwe’s predatory role, see Campbell, H. (2003), *Reclaiming Zimbabwe: The Exhaustion of the Patriarchal Model of Liberation*, Cape Town, David Philip.

terranean Sea but I'll bet they'll spend half the time down the West Coast of Africa.¹ Within weeks, that coast was graced by 3,000 US troops deployed off-shore from Liberia, with potential bases planned for Ghana, Senegal and Mali, as well as the North African countries of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia.² Another base was occupied by 1,500 US troops in the small Horn country of Djibouti. Although Botswana and Mozambique were also part of the Pentagon's strategy, South Africa would remain a crucial partner.

Hence, the ANC leaders' anti-war delirium amounted, at the end of the day, to yet another 'Talk Left, Act Right' dance. The best spin on Bush's July 2003 visit to Pretoria was provided by SACP secretary Blade Nzimande: 'At least, let us use this visit to impact as best as possible on the consciences of the American electorate. It would, we believe, be a mistake to press for a cancellation of the visit. But it would be equally mistaken to present the invasion of Iraq as a thing of the past, as something we've put behind us, as we now return to bi-national US/SA business as usual.'³ Not convinced of Mbeki's capacities or inclinations, the Anti-War Coalition replied: 'The ANC and SACP claim to be marching against the war on July 4th, while hosting the chief warmonger, George Bush just days later. The ANC's public relations strategy around the war directly contradicts their actions, which are pro-war and which have contributed to the deaths of thousands of Iraqi civilians.'⁴

In sum, when Mbeki tells world leaders that 'Out of Johannesburg and out of Africa, must emerge something new that takes the world forward away from the entrenchment of global apartheid'⁵ – as he did at the outset of the WSSD – it is only possible to agree ... by agreeing to disagree with his analysis, strategies, tactics and alliances, and offering instead, the ideals of decommodification and deglobalisation.

1. allAfrica.com, 2 May 2003.

2. *Ghana News*, 11 June 2003.

3. *Umsebenzi*, 2, 13, 2 July 2003.

4. Anti-War Coalition Press Statement, 1 July 2003.

5. Mbeki, 'Address by President Mbeki at the Welcome Ceremony of the WSSD.'

Conclusion: African anti-capitalisms?

Since we have asked the question of Africa's highest-profile leaders – will you polish or abolish global apartheid? – and arrived at an unsatisfactory answer, it is appropriate to look to more radical traditions and more realistic vehicles of social change in Africa. Jimi Adesina reminds us of 'Amilcar Cabral's injunction that for the African petit bourgeois class to become one with the people, it must *commit class suicide*. In other words, it must turn its back on its natural instinct to realise its class potential of becoming a bourgeois class and share in the aspiration of the people – not only in nation building, widening of social access, but in the area of resource accumulation and control.¹

Africa was and remains, after all, the world's leading example of accumulation by appropriation and dispossession. But there have been, too, waves of resistance. The anti-slavery and anti-colonial tribal-based uprisings of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were only suppressed by the Europeans' brutal military superiority, ultimately requiring automatic weaponry. Twentieth century settler-capitalism could only take hold through coercive mechanisms that dragged Africans out of traditional modes of production into the mines, fields and factories. Many rural women had the added burden, then, of subsidising capitalism with an infrastructure that reproduced cheap labour, since schools, medical insurance and pensions for urban families were largely nonexistent.

Against such super-exploitation, Africa's interrelated radical traditions grew and intermingled. They included vibrant nationalist liberation insurgencies, political parties that claimed one or another variants of socialism, mass movements (sometimes peasant-based, sometimes emerging from degraded urban ghettos) and powerful unions. Religious protesters, women's groups, students and youths also played catalytic roles that changed history in given locales.

What kinds of globalised resistance can be retraced? Anti-slavery was among the most important international solidarity movements ever. Later, an attempt was made by Marcus Garvey to relocate African-Americans to Liberia. African nationalist movements exiled in London and Paris established even greater Pan-Africanist visions, as well as solidarity relations with Northern critics of colonialism, apartheid and racism. The combined anti-colonial/imperialist phase, from the 1960s through the liberation of South Africa in 1994, gave solidarity activists (from militants like Malcolm X and Stokely Carmichael to church-basement activists) inspiration – although as Che Guevara found out during a hellish year (1965) fighting in what was then Mobutu's Zaire, not all peasant societies proved ripe for the struggle.

To update to contemporary times, we must first note the continent's increasingly desperate and militant labour movement.² Labour and, indeed, much of

1. Adesina, J. (2002), 'NEPAD and the Challenge of Africa's Development: Towards the Political Economy of a Discourse,' Unpublished paper, Rhodes University Department of Sociology, Grahamstown.

2. These are covered well elsewhere, and don't bear repetition: Fisher, J. (2002), 'Africa,' in E. Bircham and J. Charlton (Eds)(2002), *Anti-Capitalism: A Guide to the Movement*, London, Bookmarks; Zeilig, L. (Ed.)(2002), *Class Struggle and Resistance in Africa*, Cheltenham, New Clarion.

African civil society were, by the turn of the twenty-first century, civilised, tamed and channelled into serving neo-liberalism. In recent years, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe have been among the most intense recent sites of conflict between anti-capitalists and ruling parties (some of which played out over differential resistance to the Iraq war). But across the continent, the contradictions between Global justice movements and Third World nationalism are endemic, and the continuation of ‘IMF Riots’ suggests that the leftist critique of neo-liberalism remains intact.

African groups began networking more actively in 2002 when NEPAD was introduced by Mbeki and a handful of other African leaders, as discussed above. The main point to make here is not merely that these and other progressive African movement networks (e.g., labour-related, economic justice practitioners in churches, health equity specialists, numerous types of environmentalists and so on) are advancing strong, mature, ideological statements about the debt, trade and related economic oppression they face. What is perhaps of greater interest is that instead of working merely through NGO-type circuits, they are increasingly tying their work to militant street action, as was evident at the Durban World Conference Against Racism in August 2001 and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development a year later. A major challenge remains, though, in weeding out Africa’s ‘home grown’ (but really alien and systematically imported) neo-liberal philosophy and institutions.

What are some of the more popular themes that are resonating in such intellectual centres, in Africa and elsewhere? To take one example, Samir Amin famously argues for a ‘delinking’ strategy that ‘is not synonymous with autarky, but rather with the subordination of external relations to the logic of internal development ... permeated with the multiplicity of divergent interests.’¹ In 2002, a restatement of Amin’s delinking theme came from Focus on the Global South director Walden Bello, in his book *Deglobalization*: ‘I am not talking about withdrawing from the international economy. I am speaking about reorienting our economies from production for export to production for the local market.’²

There was no question, at this stage, of overthrowing the capitalist mode of production, merely the *scale* at which it operated. The implicit possibility of attracting potential allies among a (mainly mythical) ‘national patriotic bourgeoisie’ still exists in some formulations of delinking, which coincides with reformist tendencies among the African intelligentsia and some currents of anti-capitalism (especially trade unions). The challenge, as ever, is to establish what kinds of reforms are ‘reformist,’ versus those which could potentially be ‘non-reformist reforms’ (e.g., capital controls, inward-oriented industrial strategies, generous social policies and the like). The latter open the door to a stronger contestation of capitalism itself. A first step towards an effective deglobalisation – and here we

1. Amin, S. (1985), *Delinking: Towards a Polycentric World*, London, Zed Books.

2. Bello, W. (2002), *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy*, London, Zed Press.

obviously do not mean the autarchic experiences of Albania, Burma or North Korea, or the chaos of contemporary Zimbabwe – is disempowering Washington.

The strategic formula which the South African left has broadly adopted (which I have elsewhere termed ‘internationalism plus the nation-state’)¹ could begin by removing the boot of the World Bank from Third World necks as a key example of what can and must be done. At the same time, if uneven development is amplified by a scale shift from national to global determination of political economy, part of the anti-capitalist project must be to wrest control of the nation-state away from current ruling elites. As Marx advocated, each working class must first settle accounts with its own (national) bourgeoisies. Both must occur simultaneously, otherwise no matter what the calibre of leadership – Aristide, Lula, Mandela or anyone else – the hand of Washington will prop up the comprador elements in a given state, and in turn those will empower Washington.

Of course, even were policies adopted that were designed to ‘lock capital down,’² a series of national capitalist strategies in a society like South Africa would be insufficient to halt and reverse uneven global development in its current form: over-accumulation crisis, displacement via hyperactive financial and trade circuits, increased accumulation by dispossession, intensified destruction of the environment, reduction of the social wage and community, the shift of the burden of failed states especially to women, the rise of dubious NGO activities, and the accompanying geopolitical rearrangements. Foremost among the problems that must be addressed, simultaneously, is the rescaling of many political-economic responsibilities. These are now handled by embryonic world-state institutions overly influenced by the gun-toting, neo-liberal US administrations. To make any progress, deglobalisation and delinking from the most destructive circuits of global capital will also be necessary.

Cape Town’s Anglican archbishop Njongonkulu Ndungane lays out the deglobalisation threat from the Global justice movement in no uncertain terms:

[If] we must release ourselves from debt peonage – by demanding the repudiation and cancellation of debt – we will campaign to that end. And if the World Bank and IMF continue to stand in the way of social progress, movements like Jubilee South Africa will have no regrets about calling for their abolition. To that end, the World Bank Bonds Boycott movement is gaining even greater momentum. Even a money centre city like San Francisco decided to redirect funds away from Bank bonds into other investments, on the moral grounds that taking profits from World Bank operations contributes to poverty, misery and ecological degradation. More and more investors are realising that profiting from poverty through World Bank bonds is not only immoral, but will not make good financial sense as the market shrinks.³

To be sure, some Global justice movement activists and strategists still hold out hope for those kinds of reforms: transparency, more participation by affected people, a shift towards a Post-Washington Consensus approach, gender equity and a stronger environmental consciousness. Since 2001, however, there have been virtu-

1. Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*, Part Four.

2. Bond, *Against Global Apartheid*, Chapter Twelve.

3. Ndungane, N. (2003), *A World with a Human Face: A Voice from Africa*, Cape Town, David Philip, p.31.

ally no successes on the reform front, and considerable backsliding (such as the Structural Adjustment Participatory Review Initiative and the World Commission on Dams, which the World Bank walked away from).

As a result of such experiences, it has become clear that weakening the Bretton Woods component of global apartheid is an extremely important strategy for South African, Southern African and African justice movements. This insight generated at least one potentially critical tactic. In addition to the unifying work against NEPAD, many Africans especially in the Jubilee movement have long argued the merits of closing ('nixing' not 'fixing') the key Washington institutions, the IMF and World Bank, because they are:

- global neo-liberalism's 'brain' *and* policeman;
- active across the African continent, in nearly every country;
- reliant on unreformed neo-liberal logic, ranging from macroeconomics to micro-development policy;
- responsible for even project-level conditionality;
- capable of commodifying even the most vital public services; and
- already subject to periodic IMF Riots and other activism, and suffering a severe legitimacy crisis.

Already, campaigning against the IMF and World Bank is quite sophisticated:

- several international and local lobbies aim to force the WB/IMF and WTO to stop commodifying water, health, education and other services;
- Global justice movement components such as Anti-Privatisation Forums and environmental justice groups exist in many Southern African cities;
- the Southern African People's Solidarity Network links progressive activists, churches, etc., in an explicit ideological challenge to the Washington Consensus;
- Jubilee movements continue fighting for debt repudiation;
- the African Social Forum is developing tough positions on debt and development;
- most Southern African progressive movements demand that the IMF and World Bank quit their countries; and
- reparations protests and lawsuits are under way against financiers – including, potentially, the World Bank and IMF – that supported apartheid and African dictatorships.

In mid-2003, South African activists began considering how to bring the Bretton Woods institutions directly into court cases, given the difficulty that the institutions give their staff diplomatic immunity. Whether or not suing the World Bank

and IMF to compensate South African society for their generous 1951-82 loans to the apartheid regime will recoup money, it at least provides a good education.

So too does the most intriguing tactic against global apartheid: the World Bank bonds boycott, as mentioned above by Ndungane.¹ US groups like the Center for Economic Justice and Global Exchange continued to work with Jubilee South Africa and Brazil's Movement of the Landless, among others, to demand this of their Northern comrades: is it ethical for socially conscious people to invest in the World Bank by buying its bonds (responsible for 80 per cent of the institution's resources), hence drawing out dividends which represent the fruits of enormous suffering? The boycott impressed a *London Evening Standard* financial markets commentator during the IMF/Bank spring 2002 meetings: 'The growing sophistication of radical activists increases the likelihood that once-accepted fixed-income investment practices can no longer be taken as off limits from the threat of moral suasion.'²

In the short term, the boycott campaign sends a clear signal to the Bank: End anti-social, environmentally destructive activities and cancel the debt! When enough investors endorse the campaign, the Bank will suffer a declining bond rating, making it also fiducially irresponsible to invest – a real threat. In turn, some of the organisers hope, this lays the basis for a 'run on the Bank,' to de-fund the institution entirely, initially through a collapsed bond market and then through taxpayer revolt. The World Bank bonds boycott is only one of a variety of campaigns that could become more explicitly anti-capitalist, or that instead could rest at a comfortable populist, moral level.

The anti-capitalist component of the Global justice movements understands best of all that the World Bank and IMF may have changed their rhetoric but not their structural adjustment programmes. Perhaps most crucially, the rhetoric of 'pro-poor' development does not quite cover up the fact that virtually everywhere the Bretton Woods institutions maintain their commitment to accumulation by appropriation and dispossession, i.e., the privatisation of everything.

The institutions' legitimacy is the only target that the African social movements can aim at. This they do with an increasing militancy that now targets not the World Bank's 'failure to consult' or 'lack of transparency' or 'undemocratic governance' – all easy populist critiques. Now, most of the attention that leading Africans pay to the Washington Consensus ideology is to the core content: *commodification*, whether in relation to water, electricity, housing, land, anti-retroviral medicines and health services, education, basic income grant support or other social services, or ideally, all of them at once.

1. <http://www.worldbankboycott.org> Note that the organisations that had endorsed the WBBB included major religious orders (the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Pax Christi USA, the Unitarian Universalist General Assembly and dozens of others); the most important social responsibility funds (Calvert Group, Global Green-grants Fund, Ben and Jerry's Foundation, and Trillium Assets Management); the University of New Mexico endowment fund; other US cities (including Milwaukee and Cambridge); and major trade union pension/investment funds (e.g., Teamsters, Postal Workers, Service Employees Int'l, American Federation of Government Employees, Longshoremen, Communication Workers of America, United Electrical Workers). In late 2003, the world's largest pension fund—TIAA-CREF—announced that it had sold all its World Bank bonds.

2. *London Evening Standard*, 17 April 2002.

With the anti-capitalist focus on neo-liberalism in general, and institutions like the Bank, IMF, WTO and others in particular, the next issue is one of positionality. The fiercest debates that I see in the progressive African movements tend to be over the extent to which co-option is a threat, e.g., in the African Social Forum's potential work within the African Union structures, in Mbeki's attempts to draw South African civil society into NEPAD processes, or in social movements being sucked into World Bank/IMF PRSP processes. At the end of the day, the highest stakes are bound up in maintaining the momentum of these movements, momentum that can be crushed by the repression so commonly deployed by African elites, or that can ebb away after victories.

Who, to conclude, are their most reliable allies? Having reviewed the evidence of Pretoria's floundering international economic policy role, and witnessed the general deterioration in political conditions since September 2001, this paper readily concludes that the fight against global apartheid will continue to come primarily and most forcefully from below: from the social, labour, women's, community, environmental, youth, disabled, indigenous and similar movements aggrieved by neo-liberalism and its parallel oppressions. Unfortunately, that means that the most likely near-future realignment of the global forces discussed in Table 1 appears deeply unsatisfying, if radical social and ecological change is desired in the short- to medium term.

Under the circumstances, it is likely that, as in the 1930s, the *Rightwing resurgence* will continue growing, and will increasingly fuse with economic interests of the *Washington Consensus* (and its US/UK corporate/banking backers), notwithstanding the obvious ideological contradictions. Meanwhile, it is likely that supporters of the *Post-Washington Consensus* will seek closer alignment with more 'responsible' *Third World nationalists* (e.g., Lula), and that both will fight against the more principled, radical forces within the *Global justice movements*.

Is there any chance that the three columns towards the left might unite against the Rightwing resurgence and Washington neo-liberals? Visiting Malaysia just before the collapse of the Cancun World Trade Organisation summit in September, Thabo Mbeki surprised his audience by advocating that Third World governments join forces with global social movements: 'They may act in ways you and I may not like – breaking windows in the street and this and that – but the message they communicate relates to us.'¹ But deeper structural tensions kept Mbeki from making the kinds of concessions at home (e.g., on AIDS medicines, ending disconnection of services, redistributing land, creating jobs, etc.) that would be a necessary corollary to any rehabilitation in international progressive circles.

Most importantly, perhaps, the Global justice movements understand the failure of early twenty-first century reformism, as documented in the pages above. The Washington Consensus neo-liberals and their Washington neighbours who adhere to the Rightwing Resurgence remain too powerful a bloc. Post-Washington reformers have had a desperately unsuccessful recent period, in virtually all

1. *Straights Times*, 4 September 2003.

spheres of activity: preventing the Iraq War; making the bureaucratised and increasingly neo-liberal United Nations relevant and constructive; reforming governance and economic policy at the international financial institutions; solving environment problems with Kyoto-style market mechanisms; establishing genuine anti-poverty programmes; and even protecting traditional bourgeois-liberal civil rights.

Neither can success be claimed by Third World nationalists, who are terribly uneven, with some – like Lula of Brazil and, to some degree, Mbeki – ascendant but only at the cost of their core constituencies. However, most such leaders, especially African elites like Mbeki and Obasanjo, cannot be taken terribly seriously, and are, even on their own limited terms, unable to move a decisive agenda. Usually, the Global justice movements stand resolutely against both exhausted Third Worldist state elites and unimaginative global-scale Post-Washington Consensus reformers.

Myopic alliance-building should be dismissed in favour of empowering the local/national ‘affiliates’ of the Global justice movements, such as the South African social movements and their regional allies. My sense is that this process will occur unevenly in coming years via the World Social Forum decentralisation initiatives now being established. In South Africa, given the split between Cosatu and most social movements, it is not likely that a ‘social forum’ branding exercise will be successful until a wider-ranging challenge to the ruling party occurs (perhaps along the lines of precedents from trade unions in Zambia and Zimbabwe over the past twelve years). Instead, South African social movements will help lead a Southern African Social Forum (in 2004, headquartered at the Lusaka NGO Women for Change). Zimbabwe and Niger appear to be the first countries in Africa to establish genuine national Social Forums, with eThikweni (Durban) as the first substantive municipal-scale effort along these lines. Many, many more will follow.

More generally, the rise of national and regional Social Forums in most parts of the world bode well for more coordinated civil society inputs into global governance. My sense is that nation-state priorities will be seen as overriding, because the balance of forces at the international scale simply does not offer progressive social movements any real scope for satisfying reforms, as efforts on debt, trade, environment, militarism and so many other examples continually prove. Quite intense protests will continue at not only WTO, World Bank, IMF, G8, Davos and similar elite meetings, but also at UN events, if the WSSD is a precedent.

However, all optimistic outcomes depend upon an obvious prerequisite: the hard work of local, then national, then regional and finally global-scale organising. Skipping any of these steps through enlightened top-down interventions will never make more than a momentary dent, and may divert these new and enthusiastic forms of organising into a technicist cul-de-sac. The approach of the South African social movements – thinking globally and acting locally first, while changing the balance of forces nationally and internationally, so that acting globally might one day generate something meaningful – is a wise route towards a final attack on global apartheid and capitalism itself.

In sum, notwithstanding the enormous progress in identifying the source of their problems in the capitalist mode of production, South African (and African and Third World) anti-capitalists must not merely reject the international character of neo-liberalism. They must also confront both its local champions (including state agents) no matter how much the Third World nationalist camp confuses matters by Talking Left, Acting Right, and also its internal logic. I tend to think that this negates prospects for alliances between Global justice movements and Third World nationalists, unless more radically left-leaning governments (e.g., Cuba, Venezuela) eventually invent a model that convinces anti-capitalists that the state won't necessarily repress or co-opt their initiatives.

No matter what the continual reversals, the opportunities to take up these challenges, and link them across countries and sectors of struggle, is now greater than at any time in memory. This is partly because global apartheid is omnipresent, while at the same time the purveyors of neo-liberal ideology and the strategists of imperialism continue expressing their breathtaking arrogance with such resolve. But so too are movements emerging to resist Washington, and to imagine an alternative characterised not by polishing the chains of global apartheid, but based upon breaking them, through deglobalisation and decommodification.

Let us, finally, sharpen the differences to conclude, in a spirit that Mbeki perhaps did not intend with his WSSD appeal that 'Our common and decisive victory against domestic apartheid confirms that you, the peoples of the world, have both the responsibility and the possibility to achieve a decisive victory against global apartheid.' To do so requires knowing whether Mbeki and his allies are serious about fighting the system, *as opposed to joining it*. In short, is NEPAD 'grounded in the full realities of South Africa's relations with the continent, including those beyond its immediate regional neighbourhood in Southern Africa,' as a primary NEPAD author, Stephen Gelb, asserts? Is it, as he continues, 'also grounded in the realities of globalisation'? If so, then observers such as Henning Melber are correct: 'Those vehemently dismissing the blueprint as simply another neo-colonial offensive with some political cosmetics would do better to acknowledge such appeals for thoroughly scrutinising the trade offs and thereby becoming critically engaged – without abandoning their scepticism.'¹

But if Gelb is incorrect and if, as argued above, NEPAD is hopelessly *unrealistic* in assuming that further neo-liberal globalisation will improve Africa's standing, and if the full realities of South Africa's relations with the continent include sub-imperial economic interests, then it is both naive and immoral to support this programme and its explicit strategy of re-legitimising the Washington Consensus in Africa. It is, to be provocative, much the same as South Africa's bantustan elites of the late twentieth century identifying their local consultants and international apologists, and persuading them to argue not for the *breaking* of apartheid's chains but for their *shining* via schemes deemed 'philosophically spot-on' by their

1. Melber, H. (2003), 'South Africa and NePAD: *Quo Vadis?*,' Unpublished paper, Uppsala, Nordic Africa Institute, October. Melber cites Gelb, S. (2002), 'South Africa, Africa and The New Partnership For Africa's Development,' Braamfontein, The Edge Institute, p. 42.

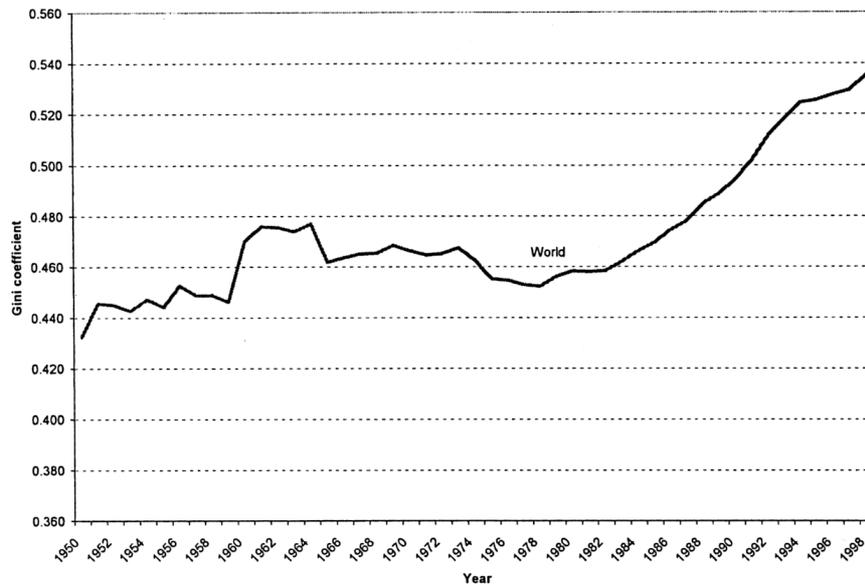
masters in Pretoria. Surely we have not regressed so far in the early twenty-first century that any feeble attempt by African elites to improve their standing purely *within* the untransformed system of global apartheid is to be supported? And surely, with the rise of African Social Forum affiliates across Africa, and their decisive rejection of NEPAD, an alternative political agenda is now easily visible?

In this paper I have merely attempted to show why the alternative is more realistic and attractive than the status quo, but it will be up to Africa's popular movements – and their Nordic allies, among others – to show why it is also the *necessary* future vision to support. Hence when Mbeki tells world leaders that, 'Out of Johannesburg and out of Africa, must emerge something new that takes the world forward away from the entrenchment of global apartheid' – as he did at the outset of the WSSD – it is only possible to agree ... by agreeing to disagree with his analysis, strategies, tactics and alliances, and offering instead, the ideals and practices of decommodification and deglobalisation.¹

1. Mbeki, 'Address by President Mbeki at the Welcome Ceremony of the WSSD.'

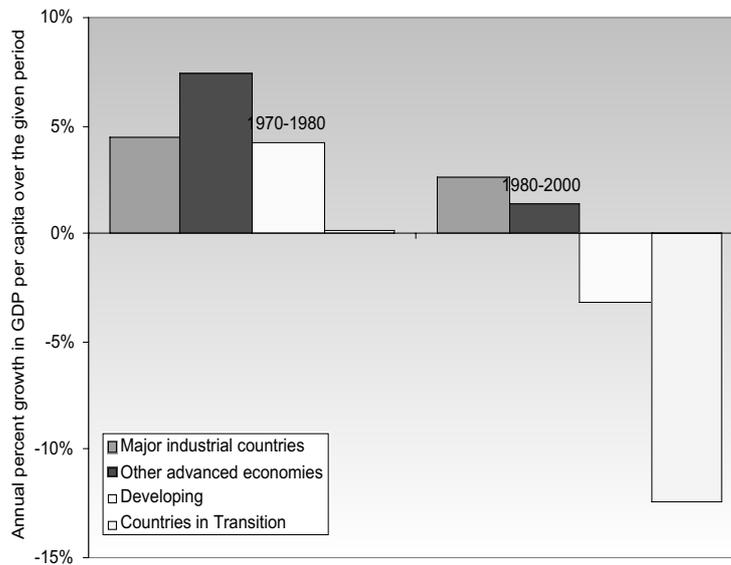
Figures and Table

Figure 1: International Gini coefficients, 1950–1999



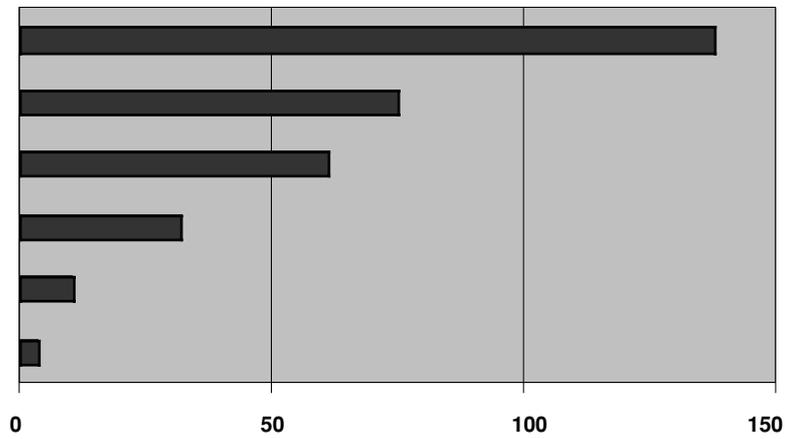
Source: Branko Milanovic, World Bank

Figure 2: Uneven development, 1970–2000



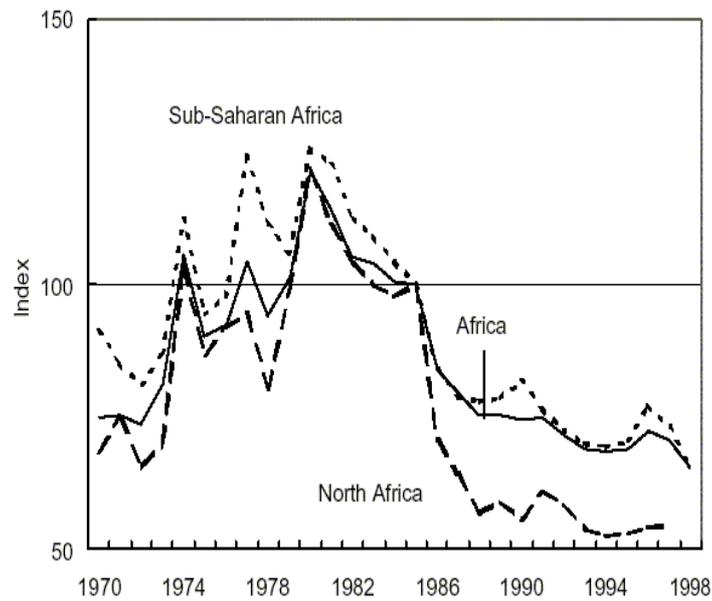
Source: Alan Freeman, Greenwich University

**Figure 3: Individual inequality, 1820–1999:
Ratio of wealth between richest and poorest 20%**



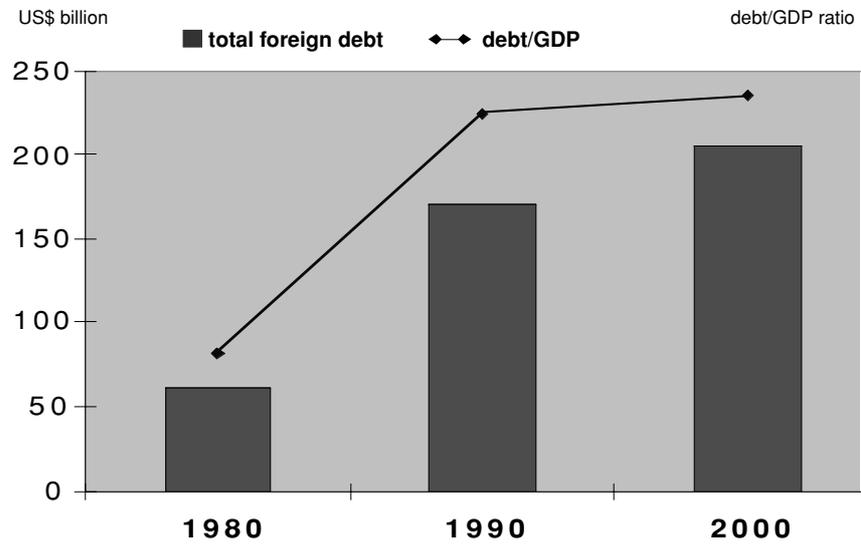
Source: United Nations Development Programme

Figure 4: Africa's falling terms of trade, 1970–1998



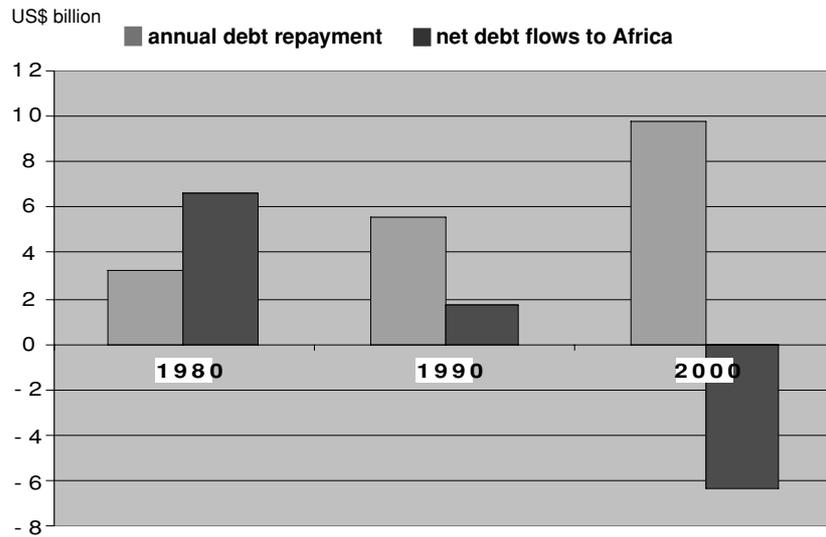
Source: UNCTAD secretariat estimates, based on World Bank database.

Figure 5: Africa's debt crisis during globalisation, 1980–2000



Source: World Bank

Figure 6: Africa's net debt inflows and outflows, 1980–2000



Source: World Bank

Table 1: Five Political Ideologies of Globalisation

Political current	Global justice movements	Third World nationalism	Post-Washington Consensus	Washington Consensus	Resurgent right wing
Ideology	socialism, anarchism	national capitalism	social democracy (lite)	neoliberal capitalism	neoconservatism
Main agenda	'deglobalisation' of capital (not people) and 'globalisation-from-below'; anti-war; anti-racism; ecology; indigenous rights; women's liberation; 'decommodified' state services; radical participatory democracy	increased (but fairer) global integration via reform of interstate system, based on debt relief and expanded market-trading access; democratised global governance; regionalism; cultural ethnocentrism; erratic anti-imperialism	fix 'imperfect markets'; add 'sustainable development' (via markets) to existing capitalist framework via global state-building; promote global Keynesianism (maybe); oppose US unilateralism and militarism	rename neoliberalism (PRSPs, HIPC and PPPs) but with some provisions for 'transparency' and self-regulation; more effective bail-out mechanisms; (hypocritical) financial support for US-led Empire	unilateral petro-military imperialism; protectionism, tariffs, subsidies, bail-outs and other crony deals; reverse globalisation of people via racism and xenophobia; religious extremism; social control
Leading institutions	social movements; environmental justice activists; indigenous people's and autonomist groups; radical activist networks; some leftist labour movements; leftwing think-tanks (e.g. Focus on the Global South, Food-First, GX, IBASE, IFG, IPS, Nader centres, TNI); leftist media and websites (e.g. Indymedia, Pacifica, zmag.org); a few semi-liberated zones (Porto Alegre, Kerala); and sectoral or local coalitions allied to World Social Forum	Non-Aligned Movement, G77 and South Centre; self-selecting regimes (often authoritarian): Argentina, China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Libya, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Russia, South Africa, Turkey, Zimbabwe with a few – Brazil, Cuba and Venezuela – that lean left (but others pro-Empire, e.g. East Timor, Ecuador and Eritrea); and a few supportive NGOs (e.g. Third World Network, Seatini)	some UN agencies (e.g., Unctad, Unicef, Unifem, Unrisd); some int'l NGOs' (e.g., Care, Civicus, IUCN, Oxfam, TI); big environmental groups (e.g., Sierra and WWF); big labour (e.g., ICFTU and AFL-CIO); liberal foundations (e.g., Carnegie, Ford, MacArthur, Mott, Open Society, Rockefeller); Columbia University economics department; Socialist International; and some Scandinavian governments, plus Brazil and occasionally Canada	some of US state (Fed, Treasury, USAid); corporate media and big business; World Bank, IMF, WTO; elite clubs (Bilderbergers, Trilateral Comm., World Economic Forum); some UN agencies (UNDP, Global Compact); universities and think-tanks (University of Chicago economics department, Cato Inst., Council on Foreign Relations, Adam Smith Inst., Institute of Int'l Economics, Brookings); and most G8 governments	Republican Party populist and libertarian wings; Project for New American Century; right wing think-tanks (AEI, CSIS, Heritage, Manhattan); the Christian Right; petro-military complex, Big Pharma and agribusiness; Pentagon; rightwing media (Fox, National Interest, Weekly Standard, Washington Times); and proto-fascist European parties--but also Israel's Likud and perhaps Islamic extremism
Internal disputes	role of nation-state; party politics; fix-it v. nix-it strategies for int'l agencies; gender and racial power relations; divergent interests (e.g. Northern labour and environment against Southern sovereignty); and tactics (especially merits of symbolic property destruction)	egos; degree of militancy; large versus small states; internecine rivalries; and divergent religious and regional interests	Some look leftward (for broader alliances) while others look rightward to Wash. Consensus (in search of resources, legitimacy and deals); debates over which technical fixes might work	differing reactions to US empire due to divergent national-capitalist interests and domestic political dynamics	disputes over extent of US imperial reach and over how to protect national sovereignty, cultural traditions and patriarchy

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Figures and Table

Table 1: Five Political Ideologies of Globalisation

Political current	Global justice movements	Third World nationalism	Post-Washington Consensus	Washington Consensus	Resurgent right wing
Exemplary proponents	M. Albert K. Ainger T. Ali S. Amin C. Augiton M. Barlow D. Barsamian W. Bello A. Bendana F. Betto H. Bonafini J. Bove J. Brecher R. Brenner D. Brutus N. Bullard A. Buzgalin L. Cagan A. Callinicos L. Cassarini J. Cavanagh C. Chalmers N. Chomsky A. Choudry A. Cockburn T. Clarke K. Danaher E. Galeano S. George D. Glover M. Hardt D. Harvey D. Henwood M. Ivins B. Kagarlitsky N. Klein M. Lowy Marcos A. Mittal M. Moore E. Morales R. Nader A. Negri T. Ngwane N. Njeh G. Palast M. Patkar M. Pheko J. Pilger A. Roy V. Shiva J. Singh B. Sousa Santos A. Starr J. Stedile V. Vargas G. Vidal H. Wainwright L. Wallach M. Weisbrot R. Weissman H. Zinn	Y. Arafat J. Aristide F. Castro H. Chavez L. daSilva M. Gaddafi Hu J. M. Khor N. Kirshner R. Lagos Mahathir M. N. Mandela T. Mbeki R. Mugabe O. Obasanjo D. Ortega V. Putin Y. Tandon	Y. Akyuz K. Annan L. Axworthy Bono G. Brundtland S. Byers B. Cassen J. Chretien P. Eigen J. Fischer A. Giddens W. Hutton P. Krugman W. Maathai P. Martin T. Mbeki T. Mkandawire G. Monbiot M. Moody-Stuart T. Palley J. Persson John Paul II M. Robinson D. Rodrik J. Sachs W. Sachs A. Sen G. Soros J. Stiglitz J. Sweeney G. Verhofstadt E. von Weizaecher K. Watkins	T. Blair G. Brown M. Camdessus J. Chirac B. Clinton A. Erwin V. Fox S. Fischer M. Friedman T. Friedman A. Greenspan S. Harbinson H. Köhler A. Krueger P. Lamy M. Malloch Brown T. Manuel T. Mbeki R. Prodi K. Rogoff R. Rubin G. Schroeder Supachai P. J. Snow L. Summers J. Wolfensohn E. Zedillo R. Zoellick	E. Abrams J. Aznar S. Berlusconi O. Bin Laden C. Black Z. Brzezinski P. Buchanan G. Bush D. Cheney A. Coulter D. Frum, N. Gingrich J. Haider J. Howard R. Kagan H. Kissinger W. Kristol J. M. Ie Pen R. Limbaugh R. Murdoch J. Negroponte G. Norquist M. Peretz R. Perle O. Reich C. Rice K. Rove D. Rumsfeld R. Scaif A. Scalia A. Sharon P. Wolfowitz J. Woolsey
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