

■ Tekst 5

GLOBALISATION

Local must replace global

Colin Hines argues that globalisation cannot be tamed; it must be stopped in its tracks

We have seen them on the streets in Seattle, London and Melbourne. We shall soon see them in Prague. But it is time for the anti-globalisation protesters to move from opposition to proposition. What is it that will achieve all the goals – job security, a less polluted planet, the relief of poverty – sought by the disparate coalition that mounts the protests? The answer, I believe, is to replace globalisation with localisation.

This alternative insists that everything that can sensibly be produced within a nation or region should be so produced. Long-distance trade is reduced to supplying what cannot come from within one country or geographical grouping of countries. Technology and information would still be encouraged to flow, but only where they can strengthen 14. Under these circumstances, beggar-your-neighbour globalisation would give way to the potentially more co-operative better-your-neighbour localisation.

Globalisation cannot be tinkered with. Campaigns for labour standards or “fair trade” or voluntary ethical codes 15 the nature of the trade liberalisation beast. These attempts are like trying to lasso a tiger with cotton. We should aim, instead, to return the tiger to its original habitat.

International trade was originally a search for 16; Europeans went to India for spices and other exotics, not for coal. That is precisely the “localisation” approach, but without the disastrous social effects of colonialism. Long-distance trade should be only for acquiring what cannot be provided within the region where people live.

We must play the 17 at their own game. They have a clear goal: maximum trade and money flows for maximum profit. They frame policies and trade rules that will achieve this. Those who want a more just, secure, environmentally sustainable future must have an equally clear goal and equally detailed policies for achieving it.

The policies for localisation 18 the reintroduction of protective safeguards for domestic economies (tariffs, quotas and so on); a “site here to sell here” rule for manufacturing and services; the development of local currencies so that more money stays within its place of origin; local competition policies to eliminate monopolies from more protected economies; increased democratic involvement at local level; the introduction of resource taxes.

This will not be the old-style protectionism that seeks to protect a home market, while expecting others to remain open. The global emphasis will be on 19. Any residual long-distance trade will be geared to funding the diversification of local economies.

All opponents of aspects of globalisation should recognise that this is the only way forward. It is no use their fighting the specific issues that concern them. Trade unionists must recognise that “labour standards” are an impossibility under globalisation, because countries have to lower standards to compete. And 20 should see that globalisation, and its commandment that every nation must contort its economy to outcompete every other nation, blocks any chance of dealing with climate change, the greatest threat to the planet. High taxation on fossil fuels will always be trumped by threats from big business to 21. Under localisation, that would not be an option, for companies would not be allowed to sell their goods in a region they had deserted.

The 20th century was dominated by conflict between the left and the right. The big battle of the 21st century should be fought between the globalists of today’s political centre on one side, and an alliance of localists, red-greens and “small c” conservatives on the other. Only if the latter win will we have any chance of a fairer, greener world.

The writer’s Localisation: a global manifesto is published by Earthscan (£10.99)

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Kies bij iedere open plek in de tekst het juiste antwoord uit de gegeven mogelijkheden.

1p **14** ■

- A clean production processes
- B international trade
- C local economies

1p **15** ■

- A fundamentally mistake
- B irreparably change
- C seriously harm
- D warmly embrace

1p **16** ■

- A expansion
- B novelty
- C prestige
- D profit

1p **17** ■

- A globalisers
- B local entrepreneurs
- C protesters

1p **18** ■

- A counterbalance
- B include
- C replace
- D undermine

1p **19** ■

- A international competition
- B local trade
- C long-term effects
- D removing trade barriers

1p **20** ■

- A anti-globalisation protesters
- B environmentalists
- C multinationals
- D the rich countries

1p **21** ■

- A cut wages
- B move away
- C raise prices