Progressive Inter-nationalist Nationalisms. The Return of Transformative, Anti-imperialist Traditions1

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Introduction
Corporate elites in Canada no longer want a sovereign country in North America. Many work for foreign trans-national corporations and get their marching orders from Houston, New York, or London. They continually pressure Canada to join the U.S. in foreign aggression in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, so capitalists in Canada can retain ready access to the giant U.S. market. They also pressure Canada to adopt U.S.-style, for-profit health care, U.S. immigration and refugee policies, and guaranteed exports of Canadian oil and natural gas to the U.S., even if it means that Canadians could face shortages at home. These policies are embedded in NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Polls consistently show that Canadians want an independent, pro-peace, more "caring and sharing" country than they perceive the U.S. to be (Adams, 2003). "Overwhelmingly, Canadians believe that we view the world differently if not in opposite terms than Americans" stated pollster Allan Gregg. "So there is a little bit of sabre-rattling out there that we have not seen historically, a truculence on the part of Canadians vis-à-vis America that probably is not reflected in our business or political leadership" (Taber, 2005). Canadians elected Stephen Harper's Conservatives to two successive minority governments, beginning in 2006. This was despite, not because of, his pro-American stance. Canadians tend to punish politicians who promise to privatize, or "Americanize" health care, or explicitly advocate that Canada be America's "deputy sheriff" abroad. The

question we face is this: if Canadians lack sovereignty, how can its citizens deepen democracy, and social and environmental justice? The issue is not unique to Canada. Corporate elites, the rich and their political allies are not really part of Latin American nations either. They are anti-nationalists, who seek to remove the sovereignty of citizens (McCaughan, 1997: 166-7). As Jorge Castañeda (1993: 276) put it: Even in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay, which ... constitute the continent's most socially [and ethnically] homogeneous societies, the sense of belonging to a national community that has been confiscated or sequestered by the "foreigners" and the elite amalgamated into one is undeniable. The real nation in these lands is perceived by the poor as theirs, while the rich – the landowning aristocracy in Argentina and Uruguay, with their continental or upper-class vocation ... belong elsewhere. In a similar vein, Manuel

Castells (1997: 30) argues that nationalisms these days are more often than not, reactions against cosmopolitan elites.

Almost everywhere, corporate elites have disengaged from their fellow citizens, live in "segregated communities secured by armed guards and electronic surveillance" (Sklair, 2001: 20-1), express a distinct trans-national class consciousness, share similar lifestyles, and attend the same educational institutions. Not all elitists are Western, but their shared culture is Western, largely American (Cox, 1987: 358-60; Huntington, 2004). Corporate elites move in the rarefied air of frequent travellers, with allegiance to a global elite and the universality of capitalist greed. They seek political influence as much as ever, particularly to protect their property interests through state guarantees, bail outs, and international investment pacts. But, in many weaker countries, elites rely as much on U.S. power as their own state, for protection against popular rule.

Disengaged elites battle rooted citizens over who should lead the nation. Under the surface, these are struggles over class power, colonialism, and popular sovereignty.

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Adversaries clash about the terrain over which the principles of popular democracy and the commons should expand, versus the spheres over which the logic of capitalism and commodified markets should expand. Not-for-profit health care either expands to include more health services for all citizens regardless of ability to pay, or it gives ground to more for-profit health care aimed only at those who can afford them. This is a zero-sum struggle. The expansion of one, contracts the other. Since the mid 1970s, many writers on the political Left have essentialized nationalisms, much like many writers on the Right essentialized socialism.2 In this chapter, I argue that not all nationalisms are alike and not all should be dismissed. On the contrary, in an era in which the United States reasserts its claims to a new form of empire, progressive internationalist-nationalisms are being retrieved, in struggles for national and popular sovereignty. This is especially true in Latin America, Caribbean and Canada, the regional periphery to the American Empire.

The revival of positive, internationalist nationalisms,3 appeal more than ever to international norms,4 rather than go-it-alone strategies. They usually search for allies against imperial domination and support popular sovereignties for all countries. A good example was the way the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) was defeated at the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1998. The MAI was called an agreement for "corporate rule." Citizens' movements that opposed the MAI, first organised around international non-government organizations (NGOs), many of which had little ability to mobilize many citizens for their cause. Soon, effective opposition emerged around nationally-based citizens movements. The national ones became more important, because they effectively contested their own government's policies. Why would governments listen to foreign citizens who cannot vote them out of office?

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An inter-national advocacy network of a few leaders coordinated the nationally-based campaigns. A Joint NGO Statement was endorsed in over 70 countries by over 600 citizens groups, most of which organise nationally. The Joint Statement emphasized the "right of countries...to democratically control investment into their economies" and criticized "the broad restrictions [the MAI] places on national democratic action" (Johnston and Laxer, 2003: 56). I use the term inter-nationalist to stress bonds between people in different nations. Nations are imagined political communities (Anderson, 1991: 6),5 and those are not necessarily states.

Nations such as 1Québécois, Scottish or Catalan may or may not coincide with the boundaries of a sovereign polity. As political communities, most nations control some level of government, whether it is a central government or a regional one, such as a province or state. But not always. Inter-nationalism differs from trans-nationalism. In the latter, nationality plays little or no role in people's connections across borders, whereas in the former, such ties are mediated by people's embeddedness in organizations or contestations that are largely nationally-constructed. Throughout the chapter, I spell it "inter-nationalism," to underscore its people-to-people solidarity meaning, in contrast to state-to-state relations among governments representing corporate elites and their allies (Benner, 1995: 171-208).

Varieties of Nationalism.
Nationalism is a misnomer. Nationalism has such a variety of meanings and a history of association with most kinds of politics that it is both facile and incautious to be categorically for or against "it." There is no "it." There are only "them." Despite its nominal form, "nationalism" is not an "ism" like socialism or liberalism. It has no set of theoretically coherent propositions, nor a universal vision. This is why intellectuals usually treat it so condescendingly (Anderson, 1991: 14). Nationalisms that are associated with the political Right are often profoundly racist, exclusionary, authoritarian and expansionist, while many Left, inter-nationalist nationalisms seek to transform global corporate capitalism into its opposite by working with anti-colonial, democratic, socialist,

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feminist, ecological, anti-racist, and union movements. Rather than generate content, all nationalisms get much of their ideology from the friends they keep (Lloyd, 1995). It is important that people identify with all humanity, protect other species, and the planet's biosphere, exchange ideas and friendship, and strengthen solidarities. But, people need to also identify with, and be active citizens in, political communities much smaller than

six and a half billion people. In many nations and countries, there are contestations over what binds people to such communities. Do residents share the bonds of actively belonging as citizens to a national political community or through ethnic notions of sharing kinship or blood ties? Most countries have such diverse populations that they cannot, even mythically, be credibly construed as springing from the same ethnic stock.6 Politics that work across differences nationally are as important, as those that do so trans-nationally.

Countries such as Canada and India are not nation-states, but plurinational states, is a term used by indigenous movements in Ecuador, Mexico, and several other Latin American countries (Egan, 1996). In plurinational countries there is more than one internal nation. In November 2006, Canada's parliament passed a bill recognizing "that the Québécois form a nation within a united Canada." Many internal nations such as the Scots and the Kurds struggle for greater autonomy within one or more countries, for complete separation, or both. Plurinationality represents far deeper diversity than the multicultural idea of many ethnic groups and several races within one nation.7 Ethnic groups do not seek self-government. Only those that perceive themselves as internal nations do.

Coherence and unity are contentious issues in many nations today. In countries with strong democratic traditions, the citizenship that people share is crucial in creating a sense of affinity and connectedness with fellow residents of diverse backgrounds. In plurinational countries, national affinity emerges on at least two levels. The first is a sense of belonging to one's own nation, while the second level is a bond with those in other nations in the same country. Developing bonds at both levels can be contested and

problematic, but a Francophone Quebecker may simultaneously identify herself as a Québécoise, and a Canadian. At the same time, feeling connected at two levels of nationhood does not preclude the Québécoise from having multiple other identities, and forging strong bonds abroad. Positive nationalisms have vigorous competitors in ethno-cultural nationalisms (Smith, 1986). Myths about blood ties and narrowly-defined cultural conformity based on ancestral ties to the homeland are other ways to identify with national political communities.

The dominance of neoliberalism in the 1980s and 1990s tilted the balance towards exclusivist, ethno-cultural nationalisms and away from common bonds of citizenship. Emphasis on capitalist markets and consumerism promoted individualism. Where successful, they tended to break down a sense of solidarity amongst citizens of heterogeneous ethnic or racial backgrounds belonging to the same nation. In a hypothetical world of pure consumerism in which citizenship and national bonds meant nothing, owners of Nike shoes would have as much in common with those in distant

lands as with fellow Nike owners in their own nation. Common brand ownership does not form meaningful bonds. As well, neoliberals such as those in the corporate-led Trilateral Commission, attacked an "excess of democracy" and national sovereignty. To the extent that such initiatives loosened citizenship ties through privatizing and narrowing public life, they created conditions for people to recoup a sense of belonging in exclusive ethnic, religious, or cultural identities and nationalisms (Laxer, 2000).

Exclusivist nationalisms are best counteracted not through disengaged cosmopolitanism and abstractions called global civil society or global citizens, but through positive, inter-nationalist nationalisms. By positive nationalisms, I do not mean the civic nationalisms of the French and American revolutions.8 The French revolution slogan, "a nation one and indivisible," was immortalized seven decades later by Abraham Lincoln during the U.S. civil war. Such calls for uniformity have been widely used to crush heterogeneity, and the rights of internal, minority nations. It is the opposite of plurinationality. Also, from the

outset, the leading civic nationalisms assumed that expanding the borders of say France or the U.S., widened the sphere of liberty in the world, denied the self-determination of other nations and countries, and justified imperialist expansion.

If civic nationalisms have deficiencies, what are positive, inter-nationalist nationalisms and nations? Here I summarize criteria I developed for evaluating existing nationalisms (Laxer, 2001: 15). No nationalism is wholly positive or negative. The following features are continuums with recurrent movement along each dimension:1) Inclusivity. All countries restrict who enters them and who receives full citizenship rights. Stateless nations such as the Kurds, also determine who belongs to them, by using social rather than legal sanctions. While all nations are restrictive, the degree and criteria of inclusivity vary greatly. Do they readily welcome and include immigrants into the national community? Does a particular nation base citizenship on ethnic descent or long-term residency?2) Deep diversity. How much respect is there for "deep diversity" in Charles Taylor's (1991) sense of recognition for a plurality of ways to belong to a country? Some people belong as individuals in a multicultural mosaic, unmediated through membership in an internal national community. Other people belong to the same country primarily as members of internal nations such as the Cree or the Québécois (Taylor, 1991: 75-76). Is there recognition for the right of internal nations to democratically secede? Are unity and conformity compulsory, and in which social-political areas?3) Deep democracy. Is a nation's democracy largely based on voters choosing elites who go on to make most of the decisions, or is it much more grass-roots or bottom-up based?4) Self- determination. Is a nation largely expansionist, sovereignty seeking or neither? Does it respect the self-determination of other nations and countries?

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5) Outward looking. Is a nation largely inward-looking, or is it strongly inter-nationalist in promoting people-to-people ties with those in other countries and nations? Positive, inter-nationalist nationalisms come closest to inclusiveness, embracing deep diversity, being substantively democratic, refraining from expansionism, and supporting inter-nationalism. The main challenge in each nation and country is to turn its corporate-oriented state into a citizen-oriented state. This formidable task is seriously being waged currently in only a few places, notably the Latin American countries of Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Paraguay, and Uruguay. The solidarity of positive, inter-nationalist nationalisms, enhances the potential for the state to regulate or control capital and provide public services for all. Gilberto Gil is a Grammy award-winning Brazilian singer and song writer. He is also Brazil's Minister of Culture. At a meeting on South American integration that I attended in Porto Alegre in 2005, Gil electrified the crowd with this speech, which he started by singing a capella. Gil (2005) articulated best the new inter-nationalist nationalisms: "We need sovereignty so we can interact with other people to maintain cultural diversity and share our distinct cultures with the world," he declared. "In constructing the new society we want, we must maintain, in tension two contradictions, sovereignty and mutual dependency on all humanity. Both must be held up at the same time. The new sovereignty is a beautiful thing.

"Poor states usually have less capacity and less autonomy than rich ones.9 They often lack the resources to gain legitimacy through providing public services and redistributing wealth. Consequently, many governments in poor countries base their power on one ethnic group, giving rewards inordinately to its members. This way of ruling often leads to ethnic tensions. Most countries are ethnically and racially diverse. They are ideal sites for both confronting the American or other empires, and corporate rule, and for building citizen ties across ethnic and cultural boundaries.10 There is a trade-off between small size which

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enhances the potential for bottom up democracy, and large scale which enhances the potential for autonomy. Citizens are most likely to gain power from elites in small rooted communities, such as those among the Zapatistas in Chiapas Mexico, than in most countries. Scale matters for bottom-up democracy to have a chance. But, sovereign polities, and especially large ones, are potentially more equal adversaries of the U.S. empire and trans-national capitalism, than any other institution. Democracy means little if nations lack considerable autonomy. What does it mean to vote if your government has not got the power to decide on much? Thus, there is a trade-off between having a

scale small enough to encourage genuine democracy and a scale large enough to gain substantial autonomy.

Daniel Bell (1987: 14) famously contended that "the nation-state is becoming too small for the big problems of life, and too big for the small problems of life." He got it wrong. While there are huge variations in the population of countries,11 many are big enough to effectively challenge trans-national, corporate-power, but still small enough to foster effective, grass roots democracy.ii. Sovereignty-Seeking, transformative nationalisms. More writers support the content of positive, inter-nationalist nationalisms, than are happy to wear the nationalist label. They may advocate national and popular sovereignty, as many did in campaigns to defeat the MAI, or defend Venezuelans' sovereignty to retain their elected President.12 But writers such as American environmentalist and author Paul Hawken, condemn all forms of nationalism and pointedly avoid the nationalist label, presumably because of its associations with racism (Laxer, 2001). To reach democratic aspirations, Hawken (2000) supports national sovereignty, but opposes nationalism. He wrote that in the Battle in Seattle, in which 50,000 people from many countries protested against the elitist World Trade Organization in 1999: [T]hose who marched and protested opposed the tyrannies of globalization, uniformity, and corporatization, but they did not necessarily oppose internationalization of trade ... Globalization refers to a world in which capital and goods move at will without the rule of individual

nations ... Nations do provide, where democracies prevail, a means for people to set their own policy ... Globalization supplants the nation, the state, the region, and the village. While eliminating nationalism is indeed a good idea, the elimination of sovereignty is not. Will citizens actively participate in their own nation, if they have no attachment to it? What do you call such attachments if not nationalisms? Despite his protestations, Hawken's formulation is a good example of positive, inter-nationalist nationalism.

Chantal Mouffe, a respected Belgian political theorist, advocated the recovery of "identification," "allegiance," and the indivisibility of "political association," but she refrains from calling it nationalism. While it is important to defend the widest possible pluralism in many areas - culture, religion, morality - we must also accept that our participation as citizens in the political association cannot be located on the same level as our other insertions in social relations. To recover citizenship as a strong form of political identification presupposes our allegiance to the principles of modern democracy and the commitment to defend its key institutions. Antagonistic principles of legitimacy cannot coexist within one single political association; to accept pluralism at that level automatically entails the [disappearance] of the state as a political reality (1992: 11-12). Mouffe advises placing the political community above all other loyalties, calls members of the political community "citizens," and discusses heterogeneity in relation to the state.

She never calls the political association the "nation," but criticizes principles of legitimacy that would undermine the state. To what association could "citizens" and their state belong if not to the "nation" or country? Currently there is no political community above the level of countries, in which citizens can strongly influence decisions. Even the European Union, that is the strongest association of countries, is not substantively

democratic.13 Mouffe writes a paragraph to avoid being labelled a nationalist. But she implicitly endorses the French Revolution's nationalist doctrine that too strongly places unity and allegiance to the nation above all other forms. Plurinationality and deep diversity cannot grow in such restricted ideas of allegiance. Positive inter-nationalist nationalisms seek deep, democratic transformation, popular sovereignty, and inter-national solidarity with similar movements abroad. In the next sections, we explore historical legacies and current contexts,

Historical Legacies and left anti-fascist nationalisms.

Radical transformative nationalisms had their coming out party in the 1789 French Revolution, which virtually created the terms "nation" and "patriotism" in their modern sense (Hobsbawm, 1962: 92). Revolutionaries asserted their principles as both internationally universal, and as applying particularly to French patriotism and sovereignty. On the one hand, they assumed that the principles of the revolution could and should apply globally because they believed in a universal human nature. Internationalism, cosmopolitanism and imperialism developed from these universalist beliefs. At the same time, the Revolution spawned the particularist principle of national self-determination and the model of a world of nation-states. National defence of the Republic was combined with direct democracy in early socialist and "sansculottist"14 traditions. The latter was the radical, direct democracy fought for by the labouring poor, and embodied in the First Paris Commune. Socialist and sansculottist strands joined during the Revolution, in the united front of French citizens confronting an international ruling-class alliance that attempted to crush their "dangerous," upstart ideas

of equality, and sharing of the land. Emigré aristocrats who fled revolutionary France joined with their upper class counterparts in counterrevolutionary European polities, to reassert their privileged class power, and stage a comeback. The revolutionary nationalism of the poor of France was pitted against the cosmopolitan reaction of the rich. From these beginnings, the political left in Europe and elsewhere inherited the two contradictory positions. They simultaneously, if uneasily, supported revolutionary patriotism and anti-nationalism, alongside internationalism and socialism (Cahm, 1979: 2-8). Nationalist traditions of the French Revolution extended from 1789 through and beyond the 1871 Paris Commune. In theory at least, revolutionary nationalism included

all supporters of radical democracy, and was not restricted to Francophones and those of French descent. The ideal it promoted, if not fully realised, was that of the "citizen-people" pursuing popular sovereignty through direct government of the people (Thomas, 1979: 22-25). Inter-national solidarity meant ties between communities of "citizen-people," not the later dominant meaning of internationalism as relations between states, controlled by elites. The distinction, clear in theory, became murky in practice when states claimed to speak for the citizen-people. The revolutionary nationalist/inter-nationalist tradition is presently being recovered and improved upon especially in Latin America, to break from the fundamentalism of the so-called free market, and the American empire. The latter two forces use determinist

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formulations of the inevitability of globalization, coupled with neoliberalism or the "Washington Consensus," to confound, persuade and crush those who would follow different paths. It is often forgotten that in Allied and occupied countries, the Left reached its peak of popularity in the West during World War Two, when much of the Left was still determined to overcome capitalism. Opponents of fascism forged broad alliances supporting democracy and sovereignty and opposing official racism. Taking a page from sansculotte revolutionary nationalism, anti-fascist resistance movements claimed to speak for "France," "Norway," or "Yugoslavia" against the racist, international alliance of fascists. Major sections of the elites in most European countries formed a trans-national alliance in acquiescing to, or outright supporting fascism (Hobsbawm, 1991: 146).

With elites widely perceived as traitors to the nation, national resistance movements tapped into deep wells of support for their courage in fighting Nazi rule. Resistance movements, predominantly led by communists and socialists, gained credibility by claiming to fight for "the nation." These were left, inter-nationalist nationalisms. Even the great historian Eric Hobsbawm, whose contempt for "nationalism" is readily evident (1990), and whose implicit model of nationalisms is the ethnically-based, reactionary one (pp. 9-10), concedes that the appeals of socialism and nationality are "not mutually exclusive" (pp. 123):It is important to distinguish between the exclusive nationalism of states or right-wing political movements which substitutes itself for all other forms of political and social identification, and the conglomerate national /citizen, social consciousness which, in modern states, forms the soil in

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which all other political sentiments grow. In this sense, 'nation' and 'class' were not readily separable. If we accept that class consciousness in practice had a civic-national dimension, and civic-national or ethnic consciousness had social dimensions, then it is likely that the radicalization of the working classes in the first post-war Europe may have reinforced their potential national consciousness (Hobsbawm, 1990: 145). Anti-colonial

struggles in the mid 1900s almost universally used the language of "national liberation," or "national and social liberation." Mohandas Gandhi was killed by a fellow Hindu because Gandhi affirmed the value of all religions in India. Gandhi was an anti-imperialist, Indian nationalist of the positive, inter-nationalist sort.

The first great wave of Third World decolonization began with India's and Pakistan's independence in 1947. It had won almost everywhere in the Global South by the 1960s. The momentum continued into a second wave of independence struggles, this time against neo-colonialism, or economic control by corporations headquartered in the Global North, international financial institutions, and supportive Northern states. We now turn to second wave of decolonization, and the Right's counteroffensive.ii. Anti-colonial nationalisms and the neoliberal backlash. The early 1970s was another peak for left, inter-nationalist nationalisms,15 coming thirty years after the highpoint of popular support for anti-fascist nationalisms during World War II. The radicalism of the 1970s resulted from the confluence of two movements: citizens struggles for universal public services and greater equality in the North, and anti-imperialism in the South that confronted foreign economic rule. A number of progressive governments mobilized citizens by appealing to democracy, socialism and nationalism, couched in anti-Western,

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or anti-American discourses. Conservative nationalisms of traditional elites, such as those in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting countries (OPEC), joined with progressive, anti-colonial nationalisms to confront rule by trans-national corporations (Terzian, 1985). In the global North, the "generation of 1968," made up of radical university students and workers, pushed beyond the compromises of the Keynesian state and universal public services, to campaign for radical participatory democracy, public ownership, workers control over work places, and gender and racial equity (Katsiaficas, 1987).

The confluence of Northern and Southern movements led to serious contestations against corporate capitalism. In newly liberated areas like Africa, Western Asia, and in semi-peripheral countries such as Chile, Mexico, Canada, and Australia, some of the radicalism took shape as economic nationalism, that often joined with conservative nationalisms. The result was that 336 trans-national corporations were taken over by governments16 in the first half of the 1970s, the most prominent of which were transnational oil companies in OPEC countries (Stopford et al., 1991: 121). When a government takes over a trans-national corporation, not only is it removed from the private, for-profit sphere, it is also deglobalized, or renationalized. Chile's democratically-elected Socialist President, Salvador Allende successfully pushed for the creation of the United Nations Centre on Trans-national Corporations (UNCTC). In 1974, the General Assembly approved, in principle, a Code of Conduct on Transnational Corporations. Clauses included giving states the right to regulate the

establishment of trans-national corporations, and to nationalize or expropriate their assets (Dunning, 1993: 588-96).

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Opposition to first wave colonialism upset those with vested interests in positions within state apparatuses and similar other privileges, but did not threaten capitalism. In contrast, opposition to second wave colonialism struck at capitalism's nerve. The trans-nationals and their allies counterattacked by setting up institutions in the early 1970s to advocate for neoliberalism and globalization (Marchak, 1991: 93-115). Neoliberal doctrine soon became dominant. One such institution was the Trilateral Commission that targeted two main enemies: nationalisms, and an "excess of democracy." Partly because of such efforts, the weakening of nations and states became central themes in globalization discourses. Many on the Left were taken in by these formulations, begotten in corporate funded think-tanks. U.S. strategists have long attacked national sovereignty as a concept and political movement because it threatens their imperial power. At a Western Hemisphere conference in 1945, Noam Chomsky (1999) observes, the U.S. was deeply concerned with "the philosophy of the new nationalism" that was overspreading Latin America and the world. That philosophy aimed at gaining a wider distribution of wealth and at raising the masses' living standards. "Radical" or "economic nationalism" operated on the heretical principle that the first beneficiaries of a country's resources are the people of that country rather than U.S. and other foreign investors, and locally allied elites.

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Washington's might prevailed at the conference, which condemned all economic nationalisms (Chomsky, 1999: 21-3). Those who expect Barack Obama to break from the bourgeois mode of thinking that got the United States and other countries into the meltdown of speculative capitalism, will likely be let down. He appointed Lawrence Summers as his Director of National Economic Council. As Obama's chief economic guru, Summers is an unreconstructed advocate of unregulated capitalism and the U.S. empire. In 1996, five years before September 11, Summers was Clinton's Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. In a speech meant for the ears of Washington's elite only, Summers updated America's anti-nationalist theme. Stating that "our ideology, capitalism, is dominant everywhere," he disparaged critics of Washington's globalist consensus, calling them "separatists." He was not referring to Québec sovereignists, but to economic nationalists, or "rogue states" (those not following the U.S. line) anywhere in the world (1996: 1-8). Summers argued that promoting integration around the world under U.S. leadership was America's deepest security interest. He implied that Washington would use all means necessary to bring economic nationalist governments to heel.

The current offensive against the economic and cultural sovereignty of countries and their citizens is waged through globalization babble. It is much more effective than previous attacks, partly because much of the political Left and Centre concur with one aspect of neoliberalism—that globalization is an objective outside force that diminishes the importance of nations and states.

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The Left's alternatives are often the mirror image of neoliberalism. Mirroring your opponents' images is understandable, but myopic. You let opponents shape the debate. "If they globalize capital, we will globalize dissent." "When they globalize from above, we will globalize from below."17 "When they push for a borderless world for capital and trade, we will push for a borderless world for people. There are three reasons such talk presents unrealistic and misleading visions. First, it tends to accept the corporate capitalist policies as long as the "good" kind of globalization is realised alongside bad. Second, mass participation is predominantly national and local and is never likely to go global. And third, such formulations undermine the strongest potential opponent of corporate rule—the sovereignty of existing states.

Why do neoliberals attack popular nationalisms so vehemently? Hobsbawm argues the ideal world for trans-nationals is to have thousands of mini states,18 none potent enough to resist their power (quoted in Nairn, 1995: 97). Trans-national corporations need the protection of the U.S. Empire, whether or not such corporations are headquartered in the United States. But, when the U.S. blatantly acts like an empire, as it did by invading Iraq, it sparks popular nationalist reactions. Contemporary Context: Hegemon or Empire? After September 11, the U.S. boldly asserted its right to pre-emptively strike against potential rivals and threats. Its truculence reawakened older debates about empire and the

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nature of resistance. Is the United States a superpower which plays by the rules, or an empire which does not? Thomas Risse, a political scientist at the Free University of Berlin, defines hegemonic power as resting on "the willingness of the superpower to sustain an international order, on its preparedness to commit itself to the rules of that order, and on the smaller states' acceptance of the order as legitimate." In contrast, imperial power rests "on the willingness of the superpower to sustain world order, but the superpower only plays by the rules of its own making when its suits its interest ... imperial power is above the rules of the order, while smaller states are subjected to them" (2003:3). Whether the U.S. is a hegemon or an empire is a continuum, not an either/or issue, with the U.S. tilting toward the empire side of it.

Critics who called the U.S. imperialist were regularly denounced as extremists. Now even its supporters call it an empire. Zbigniew Brzezinski was National Security Advisor

to Jimmy Carter and a staunch anti-communist. According to Pilger (2002), Brzezinski's 1997 book, The Grand Chessboard, had "biblical authority" in George W. Bush's regime of 2001-2009. Harking back to ancient Rome, Brzezinski argued the U.S. should follow "the three grand imperatives of imperial geo-strategy ... prevent collusion and maintain dependence amongst the vassals, to keep tributaries compliant and protected, and to keep the barbarians from coming together" (Pilger, 2002: 40). Founded in a war for independence from Britain, then the world's great Empire, the U.S. and most of its people have long rejected the idea that their country is, or should be an empire. But the 2002 Bush Doctrine was the radical antithesis of the Declaration of Independence. Announced on September 20, a year after September 11, the Bush

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Doctrine declared the U.S. an empire, in all but name. Official theory had finally caught up with long-time U.S. practice of behaving as the great, albeit perhaps informal, empire. As John Ralston Saul (2004) observed, unilateralism is another word for US nationalism. It is also another word for imperialism. We saw it when the U.S. invaded Iraq, ripped up the nuclear test ban pact, refused to sign a number of international treaties, and fiercely opposed the International Criminal Court extending jurisdiction to try Americans as war criminals. By promoting "economic freedom beyond America's shores" and asserting "respect for private property" as a "non-negotiable demand," the Bush Doctrine preached "pre-emptive war" (Bush, 2002). It asserts the U.S. can invade any country it sees as a military or even a merely economic threat. This is in clear violation of international law. Only two grounds exist for the legal of use of force, or threat of force, against another country: 1) United Nations Security Council approval; and 2) self-defence against invasion, or an imminent threat of invasion. The Bush Doctrine sweeps away recognition of other countries' declarations of independence (see pp. 17 and 3).

A case of independence spurned occurred in April 2002, when Pedro Carmona, head of Venezuela's Chamber of Commerce, overthrew Hugo Chavez, Venezuela's democratically-elected president by force. The coup leader dissolved Congress, the Supreme Court, the Attorney General's office, the national electoral commission and state governorships, and suspended the new constitution ratified by voters in 1999. Carmona's actions were the first time the democracy clause of the Organization of American States (OAS) was breached, after its adoption only one year earlier.19 Government leaders who met behind barbed wire in Quebec City in 2001 adopted the

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democracy clause to show that they, not the "anti-corporate globalization" protestors, were the real democrats (Thompson, 2001). The first coup against a democratically-elected OAS government was a test of whether the OAS would act on its words. Latin American leaders quickly condemned the coup and eventually the OAS formally applied

the democracy clause to Venezuela. But, U.S. officials initially welcomed the coup, calling it a "change of government." They acknowledged that they had met with the coup leaders before the overthrow, but denied counselling a coup. This is hard to believe. A few months before the overthrow, Secretary of State Colin Powell called for a transitional government in Venezuela. So did James Wolfensohn, head of the World Bank, and a Bush confidant. A transitional government to replace a president who had recently won a landslide election victory? That could only mean support for a coup (Petras, 2002). The poor of Caracas did not wait for international help, however. They rose up en masse, and in combination with some loyal army units, restored Hugo Chavez to power.

Buttressing coups in Latin America, as U.S. governments did with appalling regularity in the twentieth century, undermines Washington's goal of building a "consensus" around American-style capitalism at the World Trade Organization, and other international fora (Bello, 2003). But, the U.S. did not abandon multilateralism entirely, even under George W. Bush. It still tried to gain allies, as for example when it cobbled together a "coalition of the willing" to invade Iraq, after the United Nations refused to sanction a military

incursion. By gathering allies to legitimate its position, the U.S. acts as a hegemon, not simply an empire. Empires that rely only on force, do not last long.

There is wide agreement in the Majority World (i.e. the Global South) that globalization is another word for recolonization.20 Yet some liberal and Left critics, especially in the Minority World (Global North) are confused about the imperialist nature of globalization and the U.S. role in it. In part at least, this is because many left critics share the cosmopolitanism of the New Right, and essentialize all nationalisms as negative. Many see globalisation as being about capitalism going global for the first time (Reich, 1991: 3). It is an a-historical view. David Held et al. (1999: 3-5) characterize this perspective as hyperglobalist, a view as common on the Left as on the Right.21 Cosmopolitans like Held and Ulrich Beck, a prominent German sociologist, share the neoliberal hyperglobalist view that it is inevitable and positive that capitalism is undermining national borders. They are happy that, as they see it, state sovereignty is irreversibly declining, and that the "nation-state" is withering away (Beck, 2000: 79; Archibugi, 1995: 157). In contrast, proponents of historical continuity emphasize that capitalism had powerful globalizing tendencies from its inception, but that there were also strong countervailing tendencies, in which a wave of globalization has been followed by a wave of deglobalization, followed by another wave of globalization, and so on (Chase Dunn and Gills, 2003). These see-saw movements have typified the past few hundred years (Laxer, 2006). The U.S. reaction to September 11 turned the world away from globalization and toward re-nationalization and empire. "Security trumps trade" was the epoch turning catchphrase

that epitomized the placing of national security above that of global trade. U.S. based corporations were rewarded with the spoils of war in occupied Iraq (Wade, 2003: 5). U.S. imperial resurgence challenged notions of the inevitability of a borderless world and undifferentiated corporate rule. Borders are now more effective than they have ever been. Far from promoting global civil society,22 the American Empire is spawning its antidote, as empires do, by reinvigorating contestations for national and popular sovereignty. It was not a coincidence that after the U.S. asserted the Bush Doctrine, a wave of revolutionary nationalist governments came to power in places like Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and Paraguay. After initial world-wide sympathy for the victims of September 11, anti-Americanism rose around the world (Hale, 2002), with George W. Bush serving as best motivator for sovereignty-seeking nationalisms.

Does Barack Obama's presidency signal a decisive move away from empire, and towards multilateralism? Hopes are high, Obama's speeches are inspiring and heartfelt, and he gives a very different image of America. But it is not clear that Obama can deliver on his image. Most of his cabinet and advisors are the same old Bill Clinton crew. The real sources of power, the U.S. military, the corporate media, corporate elites, and bodies such as the CIA, remain. The record of past Democratic Presidents does not bode well for a change in direction. International agreements that Democratic Presidents did not sign include the UN Convention on Economic and Social Rights, Human Rights in the Organisation of American States, Protocols protecting civilians in times of war, Land Mines Convention (banning the use of anti-personnel land mines), the International Criminal Court, and the Kyoto Accord to reduce hydrocarbon emissions. You have to go

back to Jimmy Carter (1977-1981) to find a Democratic Party president who was as committed to multilateralism as Barack Obama. Yet, Carter issued a statement on intervention in the Middle East afterwards used by the two George Bush presidents to justify two U.S.-led wars in the Persian Gulf. The Carter doctrine declared that "an attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force".23 It is not that Democratic Party presidents have been more imperialist than Republican presidents. They have not. The problem is that they have been essentially the same. George W. Bush's unilateralism was not an aberration. Will Obama break this pattern? Switching his armed forces from Iraq to Afghanistan suggests that he will not deglobalise the Trans-national Corporations.

Democracies are rooted in territorial communities, cultures of particularity, and political communities of immobile wage-earners. As Benjamin Barber (1995: 278) argues: "democracies are built slowly, culture by culture, each with its own strengths and needs, over centuries." They have succeeded only in vibrant communities where there are

common memories of citizens' struggles and gains against local power structures. Social justice requires a massive redistribution of wealth from North to South, stronger inter-national ties amongst citizens' movements, and an end to racism. But it is naive to think that a "global civil society" of six and a half billion people can act in concert to control corporations and restrain the U.S. Empire. A more compelling and realistic strategy is to de-globalize the trans-nationals, break them into parts, and place the latter under the

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jurisdiction of countries and nations where effective control can pass to the people. "Associations of producers" was Marx's term for economic democracy. Others conceive it as producers cooperatives, workers' control and ownership, wage-earners' mutualist capital funds, and ownership and control by local, sub-national or central governments, run democratically at the enterprise level.

Governments must win the right to take over trans-national corporations and have this recognized in international law along the lines of the 1974 draft United Nations Code of Conduct on Trans-national Corporations. Global integration is not new and has gone in waves and counter waves. Even the World Bank (2002: 14-15), that has done so much to promote and even impose economic globalization, acknowledges that the previous wave of globalization, 1870s to 1914, was reversed. In some respects, global integration was greater then than now, in other ways less.24 Permanent international migration was much greater proportionally than now – about ten per cent of the world's population in 1914 lived in countries they were not born in. Today, a little over two per cent do (pp.10-11). Foreign ownership and control in the "Majority World" was greater in 1914 than it is today (pp. 43). Global communication and travel was, of course, much more primitive then, but that did not prevent proportionately many more people from permanently relocating to another country. Several shocks substantially reversed the last global integration wave: 1) the two world wars; 2) the 1930s great Depression; 3) Russian, Chinese and other communist revolutions repudiated foreign debts, and cut most trade with the capitalist world; 4) massive decolonisation of the Majority World (1946 to 1965) and the "import

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substitution" model of industrialization;25 and 5) the Keynesianism welfare state in the Minority World in which national class compromises greatly enlarged the size and scope of public services. Enlarging government means enlarging the national sphere. What is the likelihood of shocks of the same sort recurring in the twenty-first century and reversing global capitalist integration in the North? Major wars or revolutions are very unlikely, but the reinvigoration of activist governments and welfare states under public provision is highly possible. Indeed, as soon as unregulated capitalist markets stopped working in the Great Recession of 2008-2009, elements of the Keynesian state

returned. Governments took over failed corporations, financed work projects, and made sure that taxpayers got a return on their taxes in the form of domestic jobs. The "Buy American" program was typical of these renationalization tendencies. Outside the European Union, public provision means provision within a country's boundaries.

There are already signs that a radical break from capitalist globalism is emerging in parts of the Majority World, and especially in Latin America. Wars, revolutions, depressions and renewed anti-neocolonial movements may well recur, as the promises of capitalist globalization fail to reach most people. A new scale of environmental catastrophes, perhaps sparking climate wars, are likely in this century (Dyer, 2008). It is crucial to note that national governments assume leadership in times of crises, not trans-national corporations, nor the World Trade Organization. The world is nearing the cusp of oil supply crunches, like we saw in the 1970s. But, this time they will be permanent. The world is running out of easy oil. If there were sufficient

quantities left, would the trans-nationals be in Alberta's tar sands, the deep oceans and the Arctic? The price of oil will skyrocket to new levels, and with it the cost of transportation. Costly transport is like putting a big tariff on goods from distant places. It will renationalize and relocalize economies. It will deglobalize them (Rubin, 2009). Some or all such shocks may lead, as in the past, to politics of renationalising economies. But responses to such shocks can easily lead to authoritarian Right-wing regimes. The Left must be ready to take leadership in such circumstances. Part of being ready includes widespread acceptance of positive, inter-nationalist nationalisms in building alternative kinds of society at local, national and inter-national levels.

Conclusion: Capitalists are the true globalizers, not workers or citizens. Capital is increasingly mobile across borders; labour is not. Most people do not want to emigrate. Most of those who do are forced out by repression or poor economic opportunities (Stalker, 1994). Borders have been stiffened since September 11. The global market is the arena for trans-national corporations, business professionals and the rich, where power rests on the unequal command of property. The political arena for most citizens, wage-earners, and farmers are countries or regions where democratic institutions and culture are well entrenched. Instead of globalization from above to uphold corporate rights, we need not globalization from below, but positive inter-nationalist nationalisms. People's political aspirations

cannot be coordinated at the level of six and a half billion people, the way corporate and political elites can discuss and coordinate their power and influence in exclusive annual gatherings at Davos Switzerland and Bilderberg, the Netherlands. Many people want a future world of great, national and cultural diversity, in which distinct peoples, on scales

much smaller than all humanity, have sufficient sovereignty and leeway to decide their own futures. At the same time, those working toward their own popular sovereignty, must be equally committed to promoting cross-national understanding and support, in order to reverse environmental degradation, bring social justice, and radically redistribute the world's wealth.

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