

Globalization as defined in the West

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These days the world is bombarded with the advantages of the so-called globalisation ideology.

Third World countries are instructed to “globalise”, to “liberalise”, to “open up” their economies to foreign direct investment (FDIs), to remove price controls and subsidies, and to reduce public expenditure by selling to the private sector all state companies and other public businesses.

This, it is said, will bring about the much needed development in these countries, Zimbabwe included. The IMF and the World Bank force down the throats of all developing countries the so-called structural adjustment programmes if they are to be assisted by these institutions, which, by the way, are controlled by the USA and its allies. These structural adjustment programmes have never worked for the majority in any country anywhere in the world. Instead they have made developing countries semicolonised, seen poverty spreading and deepening among the majority, but giving more power, authority and huge profits to the foreign multinational corporations that buy public enterprises in developing countries for their private shareholders back in the USA and the EU for a song.

Thanks to our ancestors, the government of Zimbabwe has since abandoned the structural adjustment, neoliberal globalisation model that it had adopted in the 1990s. I personally have always been opposed to this model because it is a neocolonial model, it is a model that keeps developing countries and families in perpetual poverty while it makes sure that the pockets of the owners of the multinational corporations (the upper classes of the USA and the EU) get larger and larger all the time. This globalisation is a strategy of those who really own the USA and the EU. It is not our strategy, it is not the strategy for any of our provinces to follow, it is a disastrous, criminal strategy meant to keep us in perpetual slavery doing what the masters and mistresses of our economy in the USA and the EU tell us to do.

Kanaga Raja (The Herald, Zimbabwe, 4 January 2006, p. 9) says the International Labour Organization (ILO) has reported that global economic growth is increasingly failing to translate into new and better jobs that lead to a reduction in poverty. The ILO report says “That currently, half the world’s workers still do not earn enough to lift themselves and their families above the US\$2aday poverty datum line.”

‘The ILO report found that for every one percentage point of additional GDP growth, total global employment grew by only 0.30 percentage points between 1995 and 1999 . . . For millions of workers, new jobs often provide barely enough income to lift them above the poverty datum line, or are far below any adequate measure of satisfying and productive work.’

The question then becomes: When are we going to see the so-called globalisation benefiting the workers and their families? And the answer from the sponsors of this new colonialism is most likely that the masses must learn to wait, they should be patient enough. But while the masses take heed of this advice, the upper classes of the USA and the EU cannot wait to pocket as much as they can from the mines, banks and sweat factories in the developing countries. "Prosperity for all is around the corner, the masses are told, but they have to wait. One is tempted to ask why the prosperity that funds wars is ever present with enough left over to finance an assault on outer space. Prosperity unused turns into shackles, longer police truncheons, more spacious prisons and the latest in antipeople weaponry in the form of military hardware or intellectual riff raff. Or it might turn into space stations, roundtheclock surveillance and satellites." (Gazi; 2004:304).

According to Raymond Baker and John Christensen (Mail and Guardian in Business Chronicle, Zimbabwe, 15 December 2005, p. B5), the West allows and encourages huge sums of money to be corruptly removed from the developing countries to developed countries and to be hidden away in safe havens:

'Five trillion dollars has been corruptly removed from the world's poorest countries and lodged permanently in the world's richest countries. Western multinational corporations, banks, governments and individuals are all involved in milking the developing countries dry. They break all the rules and contracts on earth in order to syphon the trillions out of the developing countries. Baker (who himself is a US businessman) is quoted as having said, "Falsified pricing, haven and secrecy structures and the illicit movement of trillions of dollars out of developing and transitional economies break the social contract . . . that Adam Smith incorporated into the core of the freemarket systems."

It was reported in the story that six out of 10 US corporations pay no tax, and the recent Enron scandal demonstrated how cynically major household names in the US exploit the system.

'Enron used about 800 different "Caribbean financial dumps" to hide its debts. Baker argues that the West could break the back of poverty worldwide if there was political will to tackle the abuse of the tax and banking systems. Instead, Western countries have been all too willing to turn a blind eye to the original sources of money.'

Baker says, "Laundered proceeds of drug trafficking, racketeering, corruption and terrorism tag along with other forms of dirty money to which the US and Europe extend a welcoming hand."

But as we all know, capitalism can never fight poverty because capitalism cannot be there without poor people in the first place. For capitalism to exist somebody has to be dispossessed of all means of production first and foremost. Those who dispossess others then have to employ the dispossessed as wage workers. How can a person who owns means of production want to be a wage worker? It is out of the question. So the idea of expecting capitalism to do away with poverty is meaningless, the upper classes of the USA and the EU will not allow it, and their governments will not allow it. For capitalism, it is illogical. Full stop. This will be the case for ever even if it means workers in the USA and the EU are less poor and better organised than their brothers and sisters in the developing countries.

That is why multinational corporations have been taking some of their operations to the

developing countries (where workers are less organised and less powerful), and that is why these corporations and their governments do not want their former colonies to achieve economic independence as well, they must always remain neocolonies, poor countries whose main job in the so-called global economy is to be slave producers of cheap raw materials and importers of expensive manufactured goods.

According to Jeremy Seabrook (New African, IC Publication, January 2006, p. 21) one other reason why poverty has to be there in capitalism, in spite of the fact that the West can wipe it out just like that, is that “. . . the fate of the poor must be maintained, as a warning and example to all who might otherwise be tempted to drop out, to relax the vigilance, to withdraw from the competitive ethos that drives people on to accumulate. It is not ambition that drives the creation of wealth but the coercive fear of this ghastly version of poverty, this humanmade construct that creates outcasts of plenty, human scarecrows brandished as dissenters to urge them to conform to this, the American or Western Dream. An indispensable component of its promise of wealth and affluence is its threat of a desperate contrived and brutal form of poverty . . .”

The Mail and Guardian article (15 December 15 2005, p. B5) says according to John Christensen “more than 50 percent of the cash holdings of rich individuals in Latin America is now held offshore and that about 30 percent of the gross domestic product of subSaharan African nations disappeared offshore in the second half of the 1990s.

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