

The Future Is Local, The Future Is Not Monsanto

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Theme: [Biotechnology and GMO](#), [Global Economy](#)

The US as a nation consumes more than anyone else, virtually at the expense of everyone else. The petrodollar system has ensured that imports into the US have been cheap and readily available. Post 1945, Washington has been able to take full advantage of the labour and the material resources of poor countries.

Consider that 'developing' nations account for more than 80 percent of world population but consume only about a third of the world's energy. Also bear in mind that US citizens constitute 5 percent of the world's population but consume 24 percent of the world's energy. On average, one American consumes as much energy as two Japanese, six Mexicans, 13 Chinese, 31 Indians, 128 Bangladeshis, 307 Tanzanians and 370 Ethiopians [1].

The US is able to consume the way it does because of high demand for the US dollar: it is the world reserve currency. This demand for the dollar is guaranteed as most international trade is carried out using it. The international monetary system that emerged from the Bretton Woods Conference near the end of the Second World War was based on the US being the dominant economic power and the main creditor nation, with institutions like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund eventually being created to serve US interests.

Ever since, the US has been able to lever the trade and financial system to its advantage. For example, in the seventies the spike in the price of oil allowed a huge flow of Saudi Arabia's oil profits to Washington through that country purchasing US treasury bonds. At the same time, countries that were attempting to escape from the yolk of European colonialism in Africa were hit hard by the rising cost of oil. It was a win-win situation for Washington. The US could lend the Saudi-invested oil profits to these cash-strapped nations and thus ensure their continued servitude (especially when interest rates increased), this time to Washington [2].

Despite the ongoing emergence of the BRICS and both Russia and China conducting bilateral trade and energy deals in their own currencies, the dollar retains a hold over the global monetary system, at least for the time being. Once the dollar loses this role, the US economy will experience a sharp decline and the cost of its imports will increase markedly.

How does the US try to avoid this? We can witness the answer to that question all around. From Syria and Iraq to Ukraine and current attempts to devastate the Russian economy, the powerful families and oligarchs that control the US are trying to destroy their rivals, including any attempt to move off the dollar. As a result, the prospect of nuclear war involving the US and Russia (and China) is a real and immediate concern.

The only real alternative is to move away from militarism and resource-driven conflicts by reorganising economies so that nations live within their economic and environmental

means. Key to this involves a major reorientation regarding agriculture and food production.

However, Monsanto and the agribusiness cartel it belongs to continues to colonise areas of agriculture and offer 'more of the same' in terms of being tied to a military-industrial complex that fuels an imperialist US foreign policy. The 'green revolution' was exported courtesy of the oil-rich Rockefeller family, and poorer nations adopted petrochemical-dependent agriculture that required loans for inputs and infrastructure such as dam building. This was underpinned by the propaganda that these countries would earn dollars to repay the loans by adopting mono-crop, export-oriented policies. It entailed uprooting traditional agriculture and trapping nations into a globalised system of debt bondage, structural adjustment of economies and rigged markets. It ensured the dollar remained king.

Although this system is responsible for producing poverty, dependency and food insecurity [3], we are constantly informed that we must have more of the same if we are to feed an increasing global population. We are told that the solutions for feeding a projected world population of nine billion are more technical fixes: more petrochemical-dependent agriculture, more GMOs and more unnecessary shifting of food across the planet. Of course, throw in a heavy dose of 'family planning' (depopulation) for the 'third world' and we will be just fine.

Such solutions are based on the notion that we can just continue as we are, with an endless supply of oil, endless supplies of meat and the endless assault on soil, human and environmental well-being that intensive petrochemical agriculture entails. This short sightedness ignores the fact that oil will not last forever. Peak oil is on the immediate horizon, resource-driven conflicts are increasing, water is becoming scarcer, humans are becoming more ill due to the food production process and soil is dying.

The genuine answer is to adopt more organic and ecological farming systems that are locally based and less reliant on mechanisation and petrochemicals. This could also mean a shift away from an emphasis on producing meat that places a massive burden on the environment and is highly land, water and energy-input intensive [4].

Visit any supermarket in the US or Europe and there is an abundance of meat and exotic fruits from around the globe. Western consumers have been conditioned to expect this as the norm. What were once regarded as luxuries before are now seen as necessities. People and nations must return to being more self sufficient and not expect others in poorer countries to produce their food: farmers who are robbed of their capacity (their lands, seeds, markets, practices, food security, etc) to properly feed themselves and their local communities. What we see on those burgeoning supermarket shelves is often the result of structural violence arising from neoliberal economic policies in food exporting nations or outright violence arising from the forcible eviction of people from their lands. What we also see is tampered with items pumped with chemicals and hormones to boost profits. Consumers are also victims in the modern food chain.

Self-appointed purveyors of moral rectitude in politics and the corporate media are often all too keen to castigate welfare recipients within their own societies for being 'spongers' or 'scroungers', yet their moralistic bleating fails to obscure the fact that foodstuffs in their cupboards come courtesy of them sponging off the world's poor and destitute who receive a pittance for their agricultural labour or who have now been forced to resort to rummaging on rubbish tips or begging for a living [5].

The current exploitative economic system and the imperialist model of globalisation and development suits the interests of Western oil and banking oligarchs, land and commodity speculators, global agribusiness and other power holders. People want solutions for hunger, poverty and conflict but are too often told there is no alternative to what exists.

There is. According to Daniel Maingi of Growth Partners for Africa, the solution ultimately lies in taking capitalism and business out of farming and investing in indigenous knowledge, agroecology, education and infrastructure and standing in solidarity with the food sovereignty movement [6]. In turn, this is based on rejecting big agritech's current agenda and resisting the US strategy of using agriculture as a geopolitical tool. As is the case with Navdanya in India, it involves challenging the corporate takeover of agriculture and embracing sustainable agriculture that is locally owned and rooted in the needs of communities [7].

(See [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#) for some background information concerning the issues raised in this article.)

Notes:

- 1] <http://public.wsu.edu/~mreed/380American%20Consumption.htm>
- 2] <http://www.globalresearch.ca/controlling-the-global-economy-bilderberg-the--trilateral-commission-and-the-federal-reserve/14614>
- 3] <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/jun/23/1>
- 4] http://www.soilassociation.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=stG942kAT_w%3d&tabid=1807
- 5] http://www.theecologist.org/News/news_analysis/2267255/gm_crops_are_driving_genocide_-_and_ecocide_keep_them_out_of_the_eu.html
- 6] <http://www.seattleglobalist.com/2014/10/14/gates-agriculture-farming-revolution-africa/29493>
- 7] <http://www.navdanya.org/attachments/Navdanya.pdf>

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