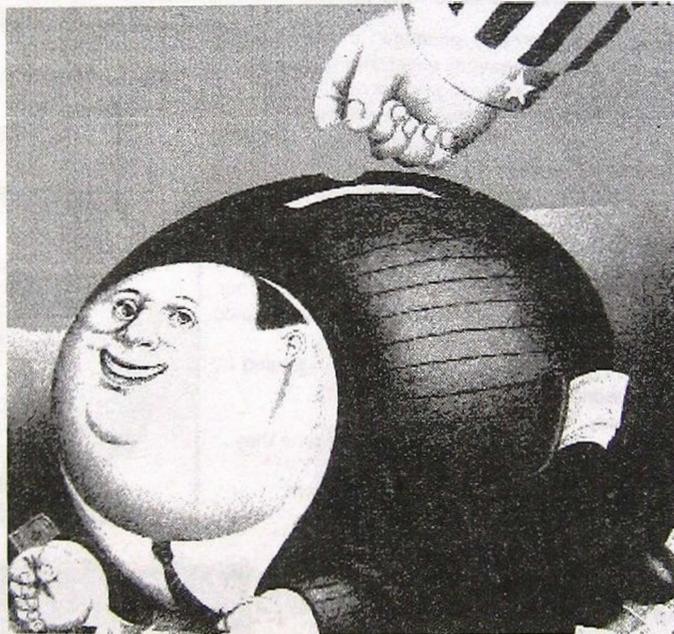


**Why we should be concerned
about globalisation
and the
World Economic Forum**

- Decline of the Australian economy
- Loss of more jobs and businesses
- Further decline of rural and regional Australia
- Dismantling of environmental controls
- Attack on the democratic rights of all Australians



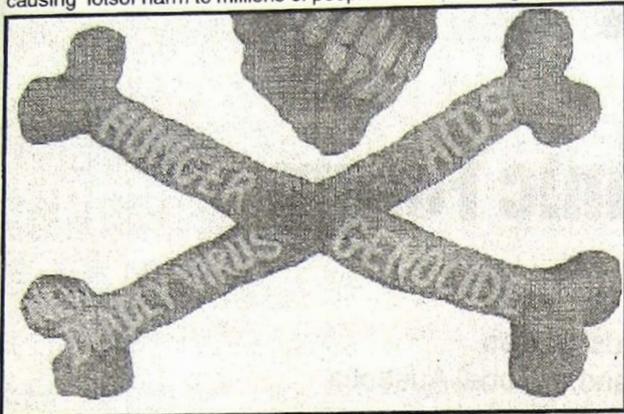
The World Economic Forum (WEF) is a private club, set up by and for the biggest corporations in the world. It's purpose is to bring its members together to work out a common agenda based on their shares interests and to make sure that this is conveyed to the political structures. To this end, summits are organised around the world. Politicians are invited with a view to recruiting them to apply the WEF agenda. Journalists are invited with the aim of recruiting them as the WEF's propagandists.

The problem is, what suits the members of the WEF does not necessarily suit everyone else. They use their money and influence to put their case and those who oppose what they are doing are denied a voice.

Consequently, ordinary Australians must stand up and be counted.

Growing poverty for most

No matter how often we are told about Australia's booming economy, it still remains that too many people are worse off than before. Deregulation of capital flowing into and out of Australia and the type of trade liberalisation that is being put into place, are causing lots of harm to millions of people. Jobs are being destroyed



and community values are being eroded.

These policies are connected to the ongoing cut backs in government service provision and privatisation of public assets.

We don't need a free for all for the richest. We need regulation and planning to develop a sound and balanced economy, one in which the majority, share in the benefits.

But multinationals have moved in, are taking monopoly control and are transforming the economy to suit only themselves. As a result the very rich get richer and everyone else pays the price.

All around the world we see the same thing. Monopoly control of products, finance and markets, this is the real face of globalisation. It is what drives the push to further knock down barriers, to further open the doors to the free flow of capital and trade.

It is not only affecting jobs and living standards for wage earners. This situation impacts on smaller businesses, which are going broke at a record rate. A steady stream of farmers find that they have little choice but to walk off their land; many country towns and regional centres are dying.

All this because big corporations are moving in to take over every aspect of life, to cut costs to the bone everywhere and to maximise their own profit at everyone else's expense.

We must put a stop to this.

Big business gets the advantage

Globalisation for corporate interests does not only carry economic threats. It takes control out of the hands of Australians and leaves governments as mere administrative arms for decisions which are made in the big boardrooms.

The multinationals and big banks choose their terms to invest in Australia.

If they don't get what they want, they go on an investment strike and pull their money out, regardless of how it might affect ordinary people.

They want to be able to do this without having to answer to anyone.

These corporations use their power to compel the government of the day to offer more and more concessions, otherwise they will pull out and invest in a country where the government complies.

As a result, countries are pushed into a race to the bottom, in terms of cheap labour, tax concessions and government handouts - poverty grows and nations are crippled by foreign debt.

This is the result of economic relations between countries which are regulated by bodies controlled by the most powerful world powers.

What we need is regulation by the majority, for the majority.

Too many of our politicians choose to play the game of betraying those who they claim to represent.

They show by what they do that the people should place little faith in them.

We have little choice but to do something ourselves.



Erosion of democratic rights



The new order is causing a gradual erosion of democratic rights.

A harsher economic regime requires harsher means to enforce the privilege of a few on the whole of society.

We have the right to a decent living, health, education and decent housing. We have the right to access to information collected about ourselves and information which affects our wellbeing.

We have a right to be free from the increasingly pervasive eye of big brother and the shift towards a more repressive form of policing and legal system. Australians have a right to reject cuts to education of health and education, legal aid and other opportunities and the creation of a two separate class system in many of these areas; a private and well resourced one for the better off and a second rate government provided one for everyone else.

There should not be the current level of restriction of freedom of information provisions, commercial confidentiality blankets on government contracts and other dealings.

Greater recourse to using police force, pushing the law and order band wagon, sending more people to prison for minor offenses and even the introduction of mandatory sentencing in some parts of Australia are further restrictions on democratic rights.

Threat to jobs and working condition

The real rate of unemployment in Australia is up to 20 per cent. Another large number of Australians can only find temporary or part-time work and these are estimated to make up about one third of the total workforce.

For those who do have a job, there is increased work pressure, loss of working conditions, including lowering of health and safety standards, longer hours and declining security of future employment.

Australia's closer integration into the globalised world of the corporations has been a significant factor in this.

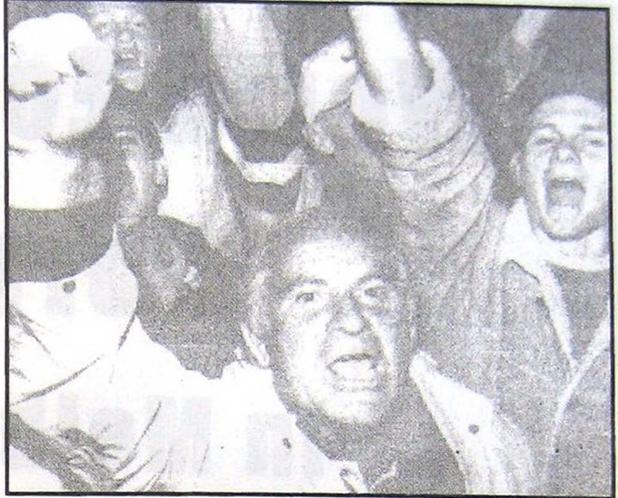
The trend has been justified in terms of "world's best practice" and "international competitiveness." Corporations are exerting tremendous pressure on governments to go further along this road. We are told that is the way to create more jobs.

We just have to ask, what has happened last 10 years?

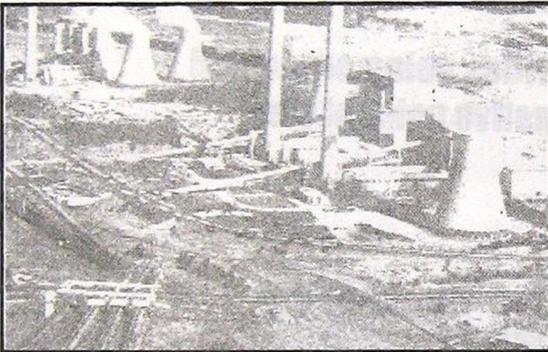
The situation has gone backwards. The market is shrinking because people have less to spend and can only maintain their way of life by going further into debt.

How long can we go on like this?

Economic development is not just about more output and money. It is about improving the total quality and of life for all members of society



Environment protection downgraded



Because measures to protect the environment are seen by the corporate world as costs and a drain on profit, pressure is applied to do away with existing safeguards. Indeed, any attempt to add new protection measures is fought against tooth and nail.

Consider unregulated land clearance, pollution of rivers and air and efforts to dump toxic wastes near populated areas.

We should be very worried about any further relaxation.

Imagine what will happen if the polluters are allowed a free hand to get their wish.

Direct opposition is used against opponents of environmental damage.

Further liberalisation of capital and trade flows will have the same effect by outlawing environmental safeguards as discriminatory to business.

The truth is more safeguards are needed, not less.

Attack on Aboriginal rights

Aboriginal people have been fighting for their rights since white settlement. Most Australians are on their side.

The main force against Aboriginal rights are mining and pastoral companies which seek to extinguish land rights, in order to take up disputed territory as their own private asset. Shifting to a global economy, dominated by the biggest corporations, will make it that much harder to enhance Aboriginal land and other rights, for these measures will be deemed as a barrier to competition and business interests.

That Aborigines are compelled to live in Australia in Third World conditions, with high mortality rates and the almost non-existence of the many services which rest of us take for granted, is a disgrace.

As a nation, we must act to right these wrongs.



Opposition to the action of the WEF in Melbourne takes the form a loose alliance of organisations and individuals concerned about the anti-people process of globalisation which is enmeshing Australia. We do not accept that it is inevitable. We can make decisions about our future and carry them out. Those associated with this broad alliance are also opposed to the Asian Pacific Regional summit of the World Economic Forum in Melbourne. We seek to encourage all movements, organisations and individuals who agree with us to carry out their own independent activities, as well as working together wherever possible.

World Economic Forum in Melbourne 11-13 September 2000

**Take part in the many activities being organised
to put forward an alternative point of view**

Timetable of events

Thursday, 7 September - ACFOA Forum

Friday, 8 September - ACTU Forum

Saturday 9 September - People's Conference

Sunday, 10 September - Jubilee 200 Celebration Day and Union forum

Monday 11 September to Wednesday 13 September - activities of community, church and other groups

Tuesday 12 September - union rally

Get involved: raise the issue within your organisation and amongst your friends.

Phone Public First on (03) 9662 9688

Endorsed by

Australian Meat Industry Employees Union, Australian Manufacturing Union (National and Victorian branches), Australian Nurses Federation, Communications Electrical and Plumbing Union (Plumbing, Electrical, Telecommunications divisions), Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union (Construction, Timber, Fedfa divisions), Finance Sector Union, Health Services Union of Australia, Maritime Union of Australia (Victoria and Federal branches), Australian Services Union, Rail Tram and Bus Union, Brian Pound, Victoria Branch Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance (Equity Section), Public First, South Movement, PUMA, Global Action Network, S11 Alliance, Centre for International Cooperation and disarmament, Campaign for Economic Justice, Womwn for a Basic Income.

Further endorsements in progress