

A political-economic perspective on climate justice within the alter-globalization movements

Resistance to 'shifting, stealing and stalling' from Kyoto to Copenhagen to Cancun

By Patrick Bond

Centre for Civil Society and School of Development Studies,
University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban – <http://www.ukzn.ac.za/ccs>

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ABSTRACT:

After roughly two decades of growing activist interest in the climate problem, the deadlocked politics of formal climate change negotiations generated such division within civil society that a formal global network of radical proponents of 'climate justice' emerged. Outside the failed Conference of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in Bali in December 2007, Climate Justice Now! was founded to transcend earlier technicist, market-oriented, insider strategies by environmental NGOs. One site where climate justice politics reflected the top-down lack of political will and growing bottom-up anger is South Africa. The spatial and scalar visions of climate justice activists at both global and local levels are worth considering in detail, given the importance of this work for planetary sustainability and the living conditions of future generations, as well as for transnational activism more generally. The article suggests routes of analysis, strategies, tactics and alliances that can be compared between global and local levels.

1. Introduction

This article draws together lessons from recent global and South African episodes in climate politics which I believe reveal core insights into radical analyses and activism against climate change. Combating greenhouse gas emissions is a formidable challenge, and the first two decades of environmentalist awareness about the coming climate catastrophe obviously did not establish sound principles for social and state interventions. For critics, the scalar and spatial nature of the challenge is rarely strategized rigorously. However, the recent fusion of the 'global justice movement' with radical environmentalism may result in a decisive mix of 'red' and 'green' politics.

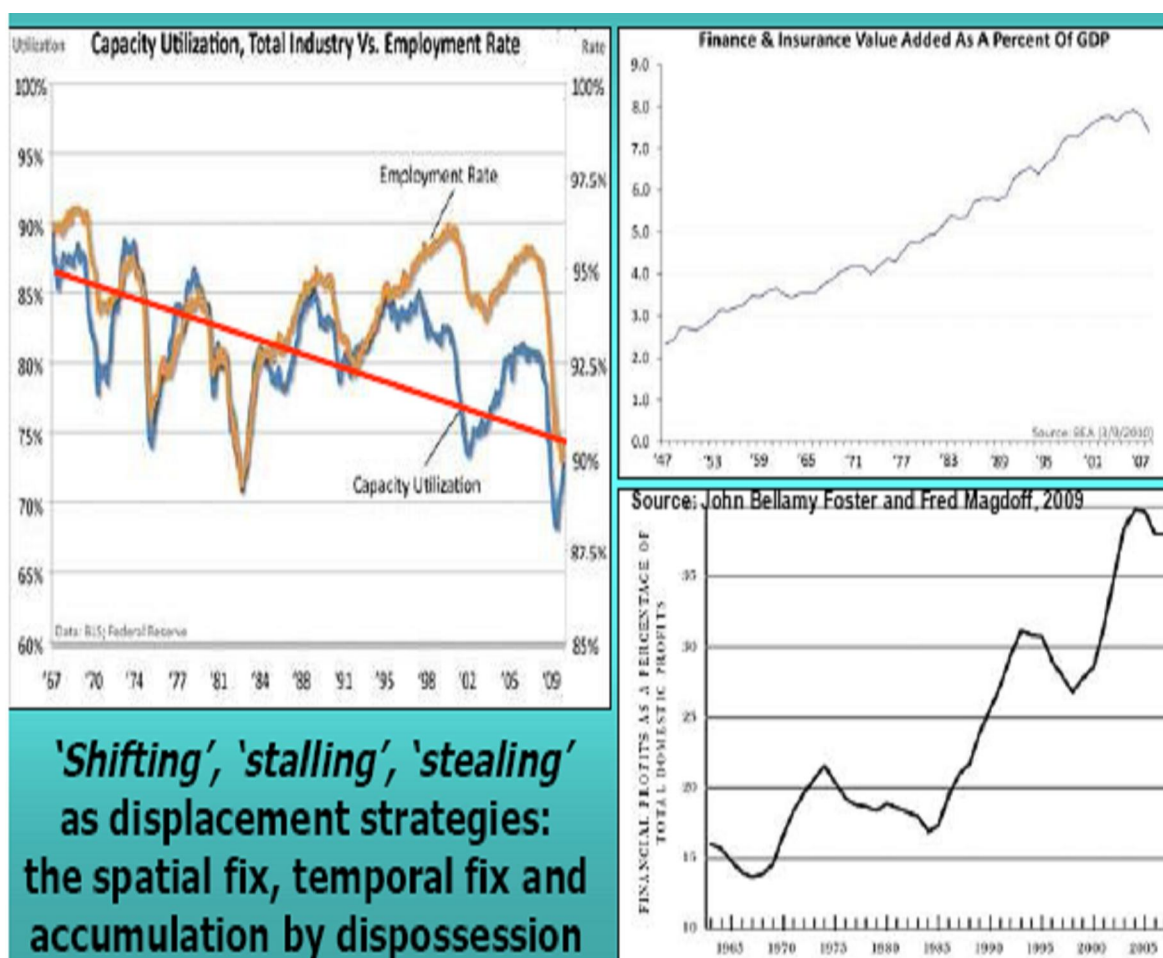
One reason for failure to date, is that an inadequate understanding has existed amongst environmentalists regarding capitalist imperatives, in part because of overly generous viewpoints regarding global elite *bona fides*, a mistaken sense of the balance of forces in global-scale negotiations, a naïve belief that market mechanisms can work to solve (rather than exacerbate) the crisis, and a lack of sensitivity to North-South relations. In some cases too, the Big Green groups – especially National Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense, Conservation International, the Nature Conservancy, World Wide Fund for Nature and Sierra Club - turned to corporate partners for financial support, and as a result, turned their backs on climate science. ‘I find the behavior of most environmental NGOs to be shocking,’ James Hansen recently stated. ‘I [do] not want to listen to their lame excuses for their abominable behavior’. The Climate Action Network, representing Big Green and similarly-minded smaller groups, has long supported emissions markets, for example, to the point that extreme conflicts of interests emerged when Network leaders began earning side profits from the carbon trade (Bond 2009a).

For these reasons, a movement that became known as Climate Justice (‘CJ’) emerged during the 2000s, drawing for inspiration on currents such as US anti-racist politics associated with environmental justice organizing dating to the 1980s, the incipient radical environmentalism that regularly attempted to break out of stifling United Nations negotiations, and the Global Justice movement that symbolically began in Chiapas with the Zapatista uprising in 1994 and took stronger form during the 2000s internationally, catalysed by the Seattle protests against the 1999 World Trade Organisation millennial summit. One marker of this new approach was the 2004 founding of the Durban Group for Climate Justice, a loose network largely aimed at building up the critique of carbon trading. It was only at the Bali Conference of the Parties in December 2007 that the Climate Justice Now! network got up and crawling, and two years later, jogging if not running, against the Copenhagen climate summit. In the wake of Copenhagen, a return of the same forces to Cancun will very likely see a repeat of the elite failure in December 2010, amidst militant protest outside. The same can be expected in South Africa when the Conference of the Parties reconvenes in late 2011.

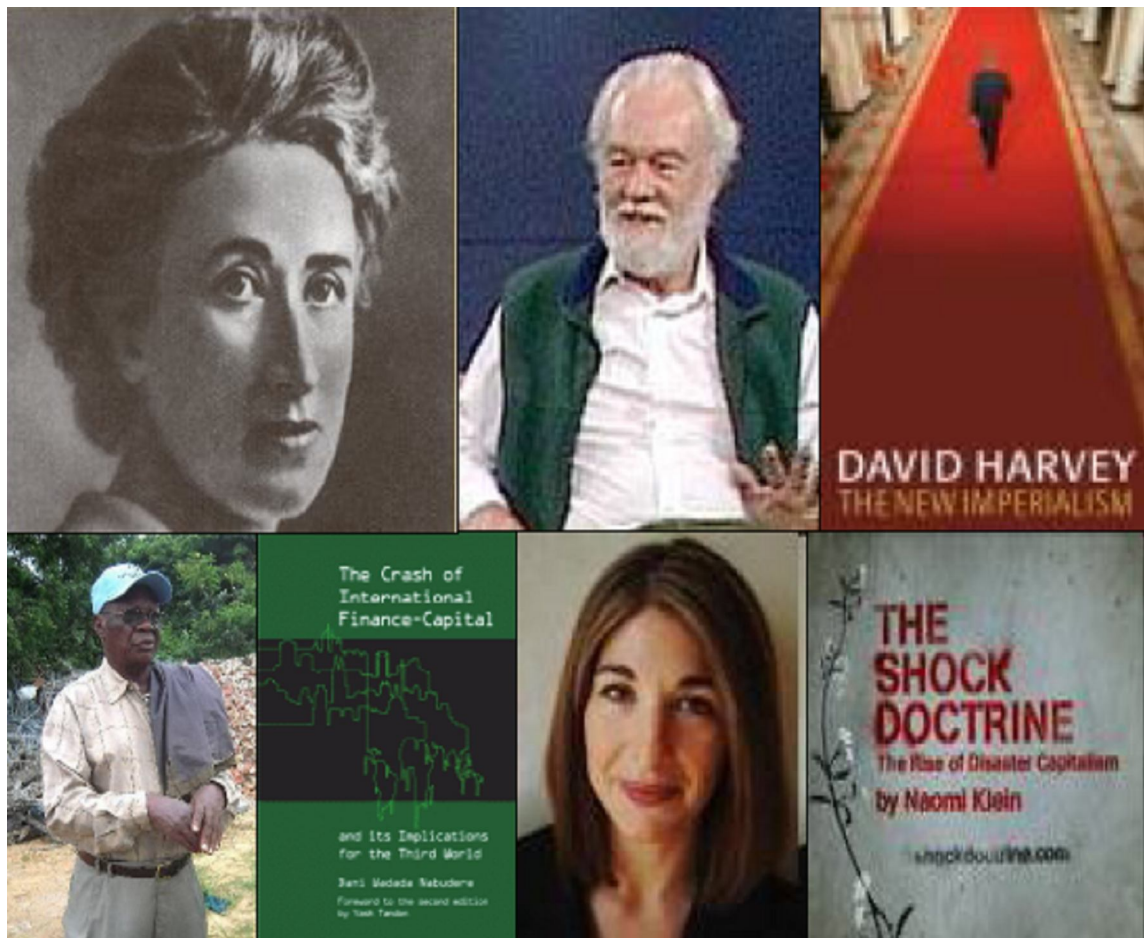
Although the trajectory of elite failure seems inevitable given the balance of forces, some important new developments should inform CJ politics. The most important are the demise of the carbon market as a serious vehicle for mainstream environmentalism, and the emergence of campaigns that relate to both the spatial and scalar challenges of global and local climate politics. The case studies in this article are drawn from South Africa, but there are similar processes elsewhere that bear consideration.

First, however, the context is crucial for us to establish properly. As argued in more detail below, drawing on David Harvey’s insights into the laws of motion of capital, the climate debate fits well within what might be called a *shifting-stalling-stealing* strategy at the heart of contemporary capitalism. This stage arrives when capital

exhausts the options it usually has to address periodic 'overaccumulation crises' - such as 1973-75, 1980-82, 1989-92, 1997-2001 and 2007-09, with more to come - through traditional means. The crises stem from excessive productive capacity and gluts of markets, commodity stocks, labor pools and financial assets unable to achieve deployment in a manner that generates profits (Harvey 1982). As a result, the traditional strategies include work speed-up and lowered wages (what Marx termed absolute surplus value); replacing workers with machines (relative surplus value); shifting the problems around geographically (Harvey's term is the 'spatial fix' - or 'shifting'); and building up vast debt and blowing speculative bubbles so as to stall crises until later (Harvey's 'temporal fix' - or 'stalling').



At this stage, capital needs to also loot the non-capitalist spheres of society and nature through extra-economic, imperialist techniques, in the manner Harvey (2003) termed 'accumulation by dispossession' (or, 'stealing'). Rosa Luxemburg (1913) described this process so well a century ago in *The Accumulation of Capital* and Naomi Klein (2007) updated in *Shock Doctrine*. The leading argument from Africa about capital's tendency to 'financialization' as part of this process was restated recently by Ugandan political economist Dani Nabudere (2009) in his *The Crash of International Finance Capital*.



Can the capitalist strategies of shifting, stalling and stealing also inform our understanding of environmental dynamics associated with accumulation? Core insights drawn from Harvey's amendments to Marxist theory include the shifting of the geographical framework for climate (with the South and East bearing increased responsibility) as the crisis hits home in the North; the stalling of its resolution through recourse to financial markets – e.g. the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme - no matter how dysfunctional; and the 'stealing' of the right to emit pollutants from the more vulnerable countries of the South. As discussed in more detail below, this shifting-stalling-stealing strategy of powerful Northern actors (and supplicant Southern elite allies) recurs in capitalist crisis displacement and climate negotiations (Section 2).

A case study of South African national climate policy is reflective of how intermediate terrain has been won by the global elite, including the specific cases of a World Bank carbon trading project in Durban and a \$3.75 billion loan to South Africa's electricity parastatal Eskom are revealing (Section 3). This rounds off the argument that a serious ideology and strategy crossing space and scale will invariably embrace anti-imperialist, eco-socialist politics, and that the roots of this strategy have been planted in the movement now known as Climate Justice (Section 4).

2. Kyoto-Copenhagen-Cancun

The simple three steps required to escape the greenhouse-gas governance gridlock between global and especially US elites are easy to see, though United Nations officials and nearly all the world's climate negotiators refuse to take them:

- Make dramatic emissions cuts - 45% below 1990 levels in the advanced capitalist economies within a decade, so as to reduce the temperature rise to less than 1 degree centigrade in line with scientific demands and the calls of climate change victims.
- Acknowledge the vast climate debt the wealthy North owes the under-emitting South - estimated at \$400 bn/year by 2020.
- Decommission the destructive carbon markets - which have proven incapable of fair, rational and non-corrupt trading.

The elites prefer other routes: shifting, stalling, and stealing. These represent three moves we can use to characterize both contemporary economic crisis management and climate malgovernance. The routes correspond to the ways capitalism dealt with its deep-rooted problem of overaccumulation, dating to the 1970s, using what Harvey terms the 'spatial fix,' the 'temporal fix,' and 'accumulation by dispossession.' In the field of political economy, these concepts refer, respectively, to

- Globalisation's ability to shift problems around spatially, without actually solving them.
- Financialization's capacity to stall problems temporally, by generating credit-based techniques - including securitization of toxic loans - that permit the purchase of products today at the expense of future arrears and defaults when the upside-down pyramid topples.
- Imperialism's compulsion to steal from weaker territories via extra-economic extractive systems, variously termed 'articulations of modes of production,' 'primitive accumulation,' 'uneven and combined development,' the 'Shock Doctrine,' and accumulation by dispossession.

The mismanagement of capitalist crisis, most spectacularly in 2008-09, included vast taxpayer bank bailouts during bursting financial bubbles, which in turn set the stage for another coming round of subprime disasters (next time, sovereign debt defaults combined with commercial real estate) as well as more rapid devaluation of the dollar. No matter how much shifting, stalling, and stealing has been accomplished, more is required than US Treasury and the Fed have accomplished - but there are limits now emerging into plain view.

One crucial limit to capitalist political economy is political ecology. Shifting, stalling, and stealing on behalf of world capitalism, by the likes of Larry Summers - when he arranged Wall Street bailouts in 1995 (Mexico), 1997-98 (East Asia) and 2008-10 through extreme devaluations visited upon vulnerable countries and people - hark

back to a similar insight in December 1991. At that point, as World Bank chief economist, Summers (1991) wrote (or at minimum signed a memo Lant Pritchett wrote) that 'The economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste on the lowest-wage country is impeccable and we should face up to that,' and 'African countries are vastly underpolluted'. By this, I think Summers meant that the US and other ultra-polluters should:

- Shift problems associated with environmental market externalities to the South.
- Stall a genuine solution to the problems by instead opening up the field of pollution-trading for a future market solution, using financialization techniques and imaginary 'offsets' ostensibly aimed at building tomorrow's sinks so as to mop up today's dangerous forms of Northern pollution.
- Steal more of the world's environmental carrying capacity - especially for greenhouse gas emissions - and perhaps pay a bit back through commodification of the air (resorting to mythical carbon markets and offsets) while denying climate debt responsibilities (as the US negotiating team did in Copenhagen, especially chief envoy Todd Stern: 'The sense of guilt or culpability or reparations - I just categorically reject that') (Bond 2009b).



Joined by Washington's Big Green lobby, European elites were initially encouraging, setting up the EU Emissions Trading Scheme along the lines Al Gore requested in 1997 when he falsely promised the US would sign on to Kyoto if it included carbon markets (and which has made him, personally, even more wealthy, as a pioneer salesman). But the route from Kyoto to Copenhagen was one Washington declined to travel, as the Senate voted 95-0 against Kyoto and the Bush regime only showed up near the endgame, in Bali in 2007, with a vague commitment to join future post-Kyoto talks, but only if China and India were compelled to make deep cuts.



Then in Copenhagen, Washington 'broke the UN,' as 350.org leader Bill McKibbin put it on December 18, by invoking a WTO-style Green Room strategy of divide-and-conquer (Bond 2009b). In a microcosm of last-minute shifting-stalling-stealing, the Copenhagen Accord brought together the US with the Brazil, South Africa, India and China (BASIC) bloc so that five leaders-of-color - Barack Obama, Lula da Silva, Jacob Zuma, Manmohan Singh and Wen Jiabao - could cement, for future decades, the untenable profits and lifestyles enjoyed overwhelmingly by white-owned capital and white overconsumers.¹



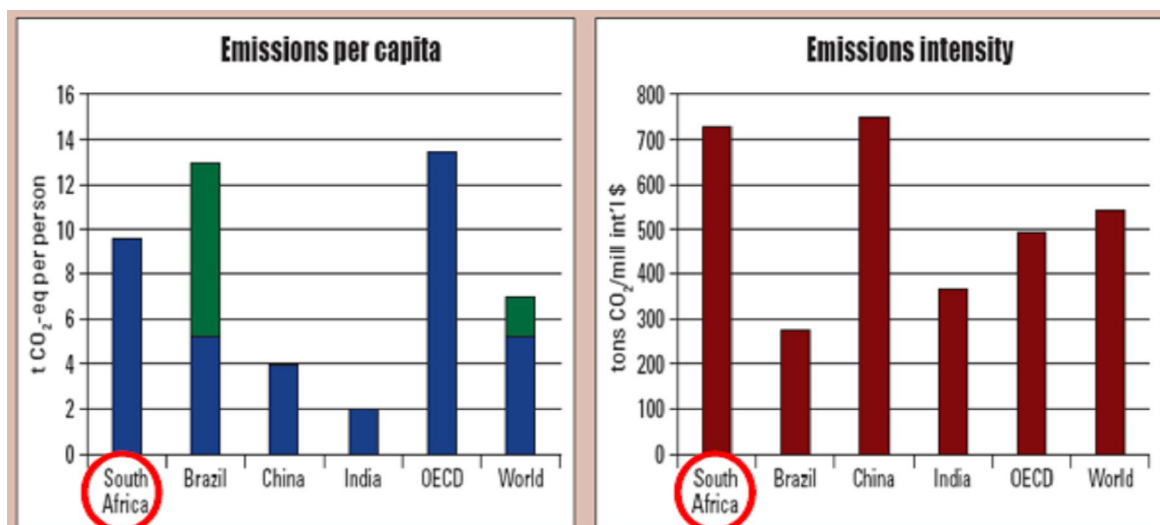
¹ Tellingly, amongst the first groups of rural Africans to be fatally affected by the extreme climate change that the Copenhagen Accord locks in, are the Luo of Kenya and the Zulu of KwaZulu-Natal: Obama's and Zuma's closest kin. Nine of ten African peasants will not be able to produce if the 2 degrees centigrade mark is breached this century, according to UN experts (Pachauri, 2007).

Process aside, the Accord's content was nearly universally condemned, for four reasons:

- inadequate emissions cuts imply a catastrophic 3.5 degree centigrade increase by the end of the century, with options for vague 'pledge and review' commitments and offsets so that Northern polluters can outsource the cuts;
- no clear sources of financing and explicit commitments to pay the North's 'climate debt' to the South (estimated by even the World Bank at \$400 billion/year by 2020), owed for taking too much environmental space and doing massive climate damage (such as the current 300 000 premature deaths annually, escalating much more quickly as climate chaos worsens);
- the deal's departure from Kyoto Protocol and Bali Action Plan principles which set out much more ambitious targets for richer versus poorer countries; and
- no legally binding components or compliance mechanisms.

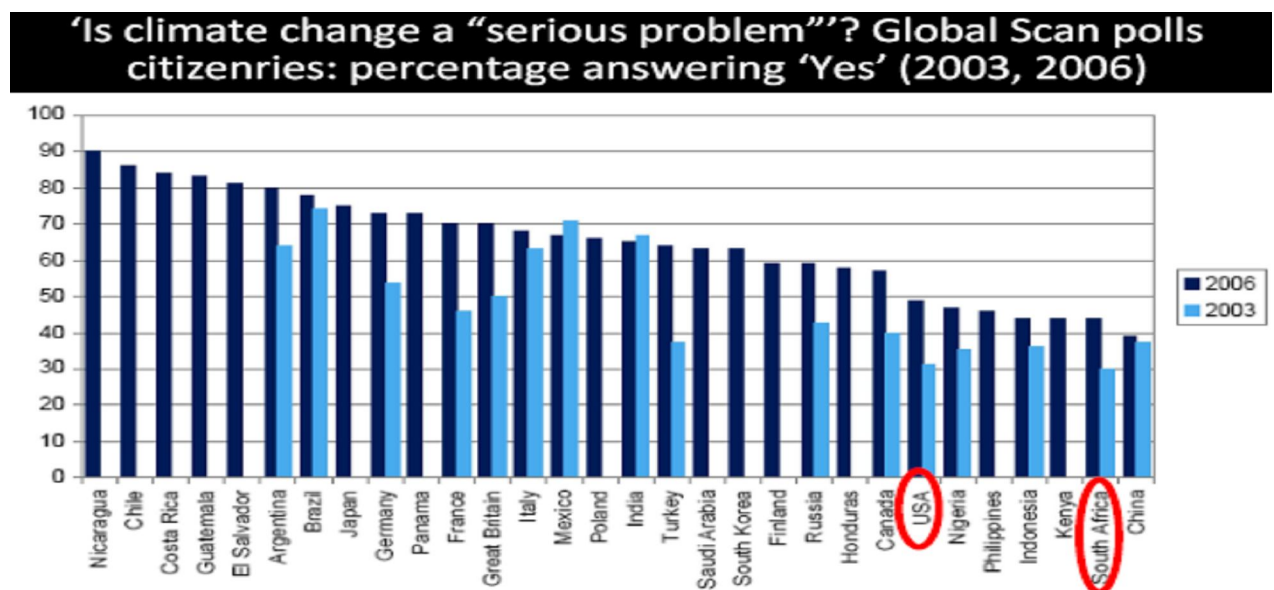
In Cancun in November-December 2010, we can expect what happened in the same place exactly seven years earlier, at the crashed WTO ministerial summit. The configuration could well entail protests outside and a walk-out and consensus-denial by insider elites representing desperate victims. In 2003 it was a brave African delegation, opposing South Africa's Alec Erwin, who desired further progress on a deal (Bond 2006). But in 2010 the Cancun critics will probably include a mix of small islands, a few Africans, and the Bolivarians of Bolivia, Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. They will be cheered on by tens of thousands of red-green activists outside the Cancun talks, a group far more militant than the 100,000 in Danish civilized society who marched last December 12, we might predict based upon the 2006 World Water Forum in Mexico City where 10,000 protested the global water elites. We take up these alterglobalisation movements' strategic options, following a discussion of South African climate politics.

3. South African elite interests and climate injustice



In part because of South Africa's vast CO₂ emissions – carbon intensity per capita GDP output is thus amongst the world's highest - the Pretoria government occupies one of the most important positions in global climate politics. As noted above, Brazil, South Africa, India and China – the BASIC countries – and the United States sponsored a climate deal at Copenhagen in December 2009 condemned by Klein (2009) as 'nothing more than a grubby pact between the world's biggest emitters: I'll pretend that you are doing something about climate change if you pretend that I am too. Deal? Deal.' When South Africa's environment minister Buyelwa Sonjica returned from Copenhagen, even she expressed 'disappointment' in the Copenhagen Accord that Obama persuaded SA President Jacob Zuma to sign at the last minute on December 18 (Bond 2010b). Not only did it fail on its own terms, as key deadlines slipped past, but Obama's gambit meant that the World Trade Organisation's notorious divide-and-conquer politics – controversially endorsed by SA's then Trade Minister Alec Erwin at the 1999 Seattle, 2001 Doha and 2003 Cancun summits but vetoed by the African delegation at the first and third – would become the norm for UN climate negotiations, to the obvious detriment of climate victims, especially in Africa (Bond, 2006). The cuts in South African emissions promised by Sonjica just before Copenhagen were labeled by Earthlife Africa as a 'public relations stunt' because of the 'fantasy' baseline projection (Bond 2009b). In reality, emissions cuts promised in Pretoria's Long-Term Mitigation Scenario will not begin until after 2030.

The failure to prevent government from agreeing to the Copenhagen Accord can be blamed in part upon the weak state of civil society organizing and social consciousness. Amongst major countries surveyed in 2006, only China had a lower awareness of climate change than South Africa. The same problem had been evident when South Africa last hosted a major environmental conference, in Johannesburg in 2002, when the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development did not even consider climate change worthy of discussion.





Moreover, one of the most obvious strategic orientations of the South African government is carbon trading (Bond, Dada and Erion 2009). To illustrate the controversies, in April 2010 the Medupi power plant was proposed by Eskom officials as a potential Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project, in spite of the enormous eco-social resistance that arose to its financing by a World Bank loan (Newmarch 2010). In the same spirit, in 2009, an attempt by Sasol to claim that a gas pipeline investment was 'additional' to existing plans (hence deserving emissions reductions credits) was ridiculed by the Johannesburg activist group Earthlife (2009), and did not pass muster in the UN vetting process.

But the most controversial was South Africa's single largest CDM project, a methane-electricity conversion at Bisasar Road landfill in Durban's Clare Estate residential neighbourhood, which processes 5000 tonnes of solid waste a day. As SA Energy Minister Dipuo Peters explained during a January 2010 visit and formal unveiling of the CDM, 'As I understand it, the development of this project began as far back as 2002 when the Department of Cleansing and Solid Waste here in eThekweni municipality was approached by the World Bank encouraging the municipality to consider participating in CDM initiatives' (Bond 2010c).

Durban bureaucrats believed the Bank and marketed Durban methane far and wide. But opposition arose from a local community activist, Sajida Khan, who lived next to the site until she died in 2007 of cancer, a disease she blamed white municipal officials for. The dump had been imposed on the Clare Estate community in 1980, in one of the world's extreme cases of environmental racism. Many neighbours also succumbed to cancer. Because of Khan's activism, profiled on the front page of the Washington Post the day the Kyoto Protocol became operational in February 2005, the Bank retreated from Bisasar, but did offer CDM status to two other small Durban landfills in August

that year. During the 1990s, Khan organised thousands of her neighbours to call for the closure of the Bisasar Road site but apartheid bureaucrats refused, as did the post-apartheid city manager, Mike Sutcliffe, during the 2000s. He ordered the dump to stay open, contradicting ANC campaign promises in 1994, because Bisasar is extremely well-located and the valley – once a nature reserve – could take many years' more worth of rubbish before filling up, hence more methane-electricity CDM monies.

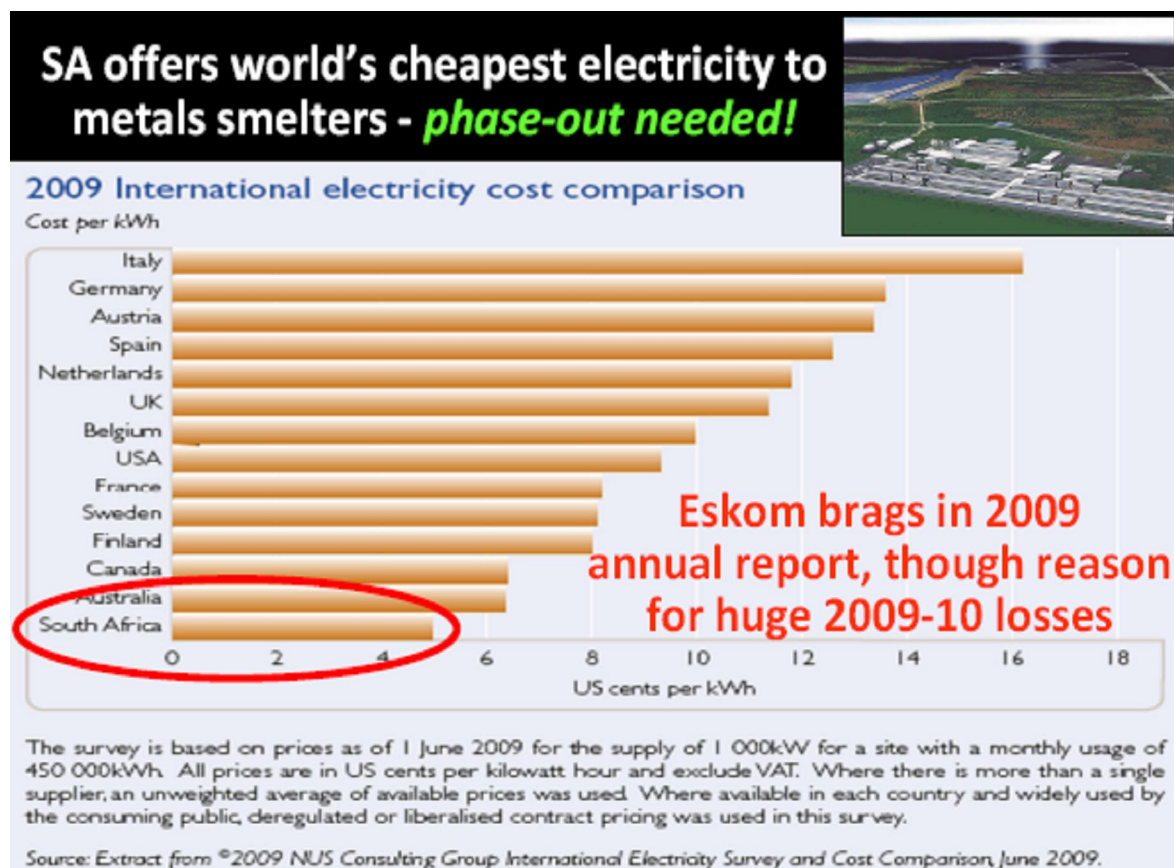


For Khan, that meant the Clare Estate community would be forever stuck with waste, stink and toxins. Perfume rods along the fence sickened the air's smell, instead of cleaning it. Gaps in the thin cement wall separating the dump from Kennedy Road (and thousands of shackdwellers) illustrated how little maintenance support the city provides. The methane-electricity conversion requires burning and flaring, which meant putrid fumes from rotting waste have a much higher level of lethal chemicals and metals. Ideally, Khan argued, the dump should be shut, a municipal 'zero-waste' strategy adopted, and methane piped out of Bisasar to a site (for industrial usage) not so densely packed with housing and schools in the immediate vicinity. But that would have cost the city a bit more.² Instead, the project went ahead, although due to the

² The adverse consequences of Durban waste strategies are not limited to Bisasar Road. In the Indian-African suburb of Chatsworth, the Bul Bul Landfill emits toxic fumes, and in October 2009, a particularly bad eruption left more than 100 nearby schoolchildren hospitalised. According to Lushendrie Naidu of the Dumpsite Action Committee, 'We are protesting, demanding the dump be closed. For the past five years, chemical waste has been stored at Bul-Bul, yet there is no disaster management plan.' Instead of a sensible disposal strategy, Durban's bureaucrats are turning to waste incineration, using the energy/climate crisis as an excuse, and borrowing outmoded technology from Oslo. Yet as one official Norwegian document concedes, 'Incineration and landfill are seen as the least desirable forms of waste management and represent the last resort within Oslo's strategy.' Because the super-carcinogenic chemical dioxin is produced in the process, the Norwegian group Aksjon Steng Giftfabrikken demands that the two Oslo incinerators be closed. Yet Mayor Obed Mlaba cheerily announced in the September 2009 city's newsletter, 'Residents of Oslo in particular, are generating electricity directly from solid waste. The way it's done is that waste is simply fed into some transformer machine, where it is literally burned with the end product being electricity. Well, the good news for

international uproar over Bisasar's explicit environmental racism (the subject of a front-page *Washington Post* report in 2005), the World Bank was compelled to drop out. Khan died in July 2007, of cancer which she believed was brought on by the extension of dumping.

Another South African climate justice campaign – also unsuccessful in the short term - entailed fighting the World Bank's coal portfolio. On April 8 2010, the Bank Board approved a \$3.75 billion loan to the South African electricity utility Eskom, to build the world's fourth largest coal-fired power plant, Medupi. Paying for Medupi will require a 127% real price increase from 2007-12 for ordinary South Africans (to nearly \$0.15/kiloWatt hour). Meanwhile the world's biggest metals and mining houses – especially Anglo American Corporation and BHP Billiton which signed 'Special Pricing Agreements' during apartheid - still get the world's cheapest electricity from Eskom (less than \$0.02/kWh), whereas the overall corporate price is around \$0.05/kWh. In exchange for the cheap power, there are very few jobs and economic linkages because locally-sold steel and aluminum cost far more than the same products which are sent abroad.



you and I is that we could soon have the same method right here on our doorstep. Once available, it would perfectly complement the methane-based power process,' putting Durban 'well on track to playing its part in curtailing global warming through the reduction of greenhouse gas emission into the atmosphere.' The reality is much more dirty, dangerous and destructive.

As a result of these critiques, more than 200 organisations across the world, representing communities, environmentalists, labour, churches, NGOs, academics, endorsed a tough statement against the loan. The strong showing for climate justice contrasted with prior South African experiences in which 'green' and 'red' social forces were split, such as the Johannesburg WSSD in 2002.

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Civil society (Climate Justice Now!SA) opposes Medupi, Eskom pricing/privatisation, carbon trading: demands *conservation/renewables* and *electricity-as-a-right*

Otherwise this danger:



4. Conclusion: The logic of Charleston-Cochabamba-Caracas

In addition to protesting climate injustice in the case of the World Bank loan to Eskom and South Africa's main CDM project, as well as at global-scale sites like Copenhagen and Cancun (and no doubt at its 2011 follow-up in South Africa), what, then, is the optimal route mapped by the CJ movement? Is anything to be learned from the South African experience in linking a variety of red and green issues within a single campaign?

We can answer in the affirmative if we recall the political-economic logic of CJ, in relation to the way capitalist crisis has unfolded so as to amplify climate injustice (Bond 2010d). To sum up, I believe coming to grips with climate politics requires CJ organizers to:

- Halt elite shifting of the problem, by expanding our own spatial and scalar political lenses from the local to the national and global (as was often accomplished in 2000s global justice organizing and activism).
- Halt elite stalling by telescoping long-term climatic processes into the present, but without getting so carried away by urgency that we endorse dubious deals (this is one of our most serious challenges because the most adverse impacts are years away for many, and some of the most opportunistic of false solutions are being imposed through rush-job environmental assessments).

- Halt elite stealing - not only of an unfair share of the planet's environmental space, but also of multilateral political processes - by asking tough questions not only about mitigation and adaptation, but also about climate justice.

We have already explored the terribly adverse balance of forces associated with global governance processes from Kyoto to Copenhagen to Cancun. The last solution to a world-scale problem, after all, was the 1996 Montreal Protocol banning ozone-hole endangering CFCs. As a result, the CJ movement must not only contest but also circumvent the elites in order to escape their climate cul-de-sac. Such a process starts elsewhere, in unlikely places like Charleston, West Virginia, where the scale-challenge has taken groups like Coal River Mountain Watch and Climate Ground Zero from their localized mountaintop removal protests - including tree-sit microsites - to the state capital, where they locked down at the WV Department of Environmental Protection in June 2009. Their demand was a handover of responsibility from local bureaucrats captured by Big Coal, to the national Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

But at the same time, the EPA also became the subject of intense climate protest, beginning in late March 2010 because of the EPA's slovenly attitude towards West Virginian mountaintop removal. Activists blockaded a Washington headquarters entrance, and within days, the EPA issued a sufficiently tough ruling – based on water law - that it appears West Virginia mountaintop coal removal may become a practice of the past. But the agency needs more direct action to reverse EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson's February 2010 announcement that her agency would delay substantive implementation of its 2009 'endangerment finding' on coal until 2013 (curiously timed to avoid the Obama reelection campaign).

Indeed it is in *national* state regulation (in the US and every other country) that climate accountability has been most obviously missing. Direct command-and-control regulation of emissions sources - far beyond current EPA plans for imposition of better coal-burning technology - must be higher on the agenda in 2010, since the Senate is unwilling to pass a genuine climate bill. Gridlock in the Senate is rather useful, in this context of adverse power relations. As climate scientist Hansen and activists at Climate SOS and Rising Tide point out, the cap-and-trade strategy adopted by Senators Kerry, Boxer and Lieberman will do far more harm than good (Leonard 2009). As in Copenhagen, it is better to have no deal than to have a bad deal which locks in a 'false-solution' climate strategy, such as the May 2010 Kerry-Lieberman bill.

However, of greatest importance is that the tide turned against carbon trading in early 2010. The entire carbon trading apparatus – once projected to grow to \$3 trillion annual trades by 2020 - is now in question, having failed to cut emissions in the main pilot project, the European Union's Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS). Due to overallocation of permits, the ETS will face further declines in price, and the failure of the Copenhagen Accord to confirm financing was a major blow to the market, which crashed by 10% from December 17-21 2009 as it appeared there would be a serious

legitimacy deficit. The ETS was itself delegitimised in September 2009 when the UN's main verification contractor was disqualified for repeated procedural violations, and in December 2009 when Europol discovered that up to 90% of trades in some EU countries were flagrant tax scams.

The problem lies not only with the particular project, an explicit example of environmental racism. More generally, to make such landfill methane-electricity conversions highly profitable, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol needed to accomplish four things:

- impose a cap and reduce emissions so as to generate scarcity (the Protocol didn't),
- thus continually raise the price of carbon (but it fell 60% from peak in mid-2008 to today's 13 euros/tonne),
- thus rapidly escalate emission market trading volume (stagnant at \$130 billion/year since 2008), via
- the establishment of markets across the rich world (but though Europe has an Emissions Trading Scheme, the US refused entry, Canada also dropped out, and Australia tried last November but gave up) along the way to a post-Kyoto Accord that would build a global market (but the Copenhagen breakdown terminated this vision).

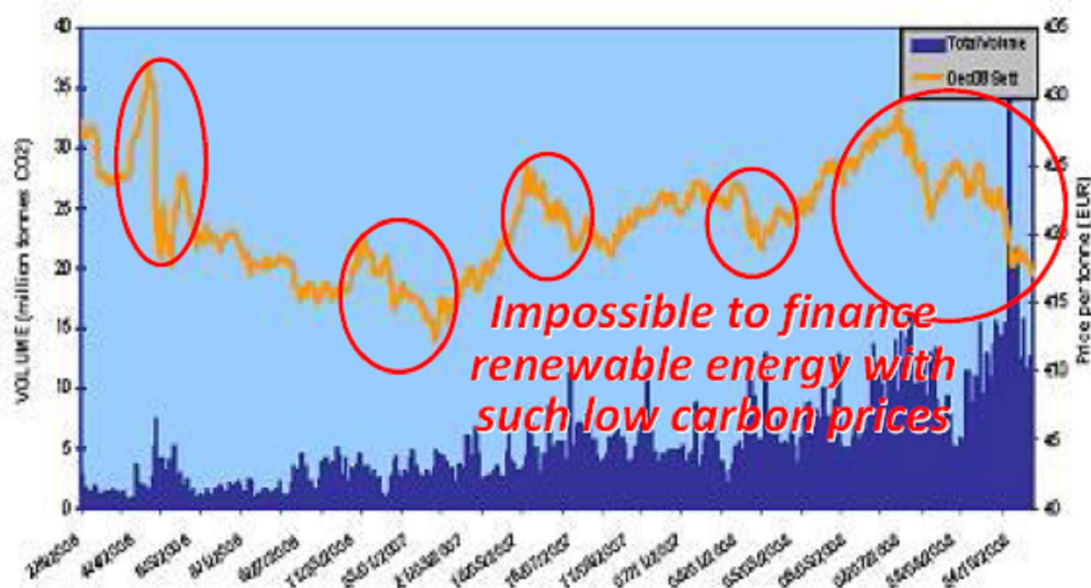
Likewise in Europe, *The Guardian* reported in January 2010, 'Banks are pulling out of the carbon-offsetting market after Copenhagen failed to reach agreement on emissions targets.' As Anthony Hobley of the law firm Norton Rose put it, 'We are seeing a freeze in banks' recruitment plans for the carbon market. It's not clear at what point this will turn into a cull or a rout' (Webb 2010). By March 2010, as the *New York Times* reported, 'The concept is in wide disrepute. Obama dropped all mention of cap and trade from his current budget. And the sponsors of a Senate climate bill likely to be introduced in April, now that Congress is moving past health care, dare not speak its name... It was done in by the weak economy, the Wall Street meltdown, determined industry opposition and its own complexity.' According to Senator Maria Cantwell (a Democrat from Washington State), cap and trade was 'discredited by the Wall Street crisis, the Enron scandal and the rocky start to a carbon credits trading system in Europe that has been subject to dizzying price fluctuations and widespread fraud.'

One example of brand new fraud was the Hungarian government's resale of carbon credits, which when exposed, drove the price of a tonne from €12 down to €1 and crashed two emissions exchanges. According to a BusinessGreen.com reporter on March 18, 'Europe's carbon market descended into chaos yesterday as fears over "recycled" carbon credits sparked a collapse in the price of Certified Emission Reductions.' A week earlier, the Global Forest Coalition accused the European Union of promoting 'highly volatile carbon markets that jeopardize forest-dependent peoples' livelihoods'. Four days before that, on March 3, Reuters reported: 'Investors are becoming less convinced that a global carbon market, estimated to be worth about

\$2 trillion by the end of the decade, can be established as uncertainty over global climate policy persists.’ The report went on, ‘Participants at a carbon conference in Amsterdam were equally downbeat, as carbon prices in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme are weak and range-bound and expectations are low for a climate pact being agreed this year at the talks in the Mexican city of Cancun’ (Bond 2010b).

Carbon market's 5 crashes, 2006-09

Figure 1. ECX CFI Futures Contracts: Price and Volume



Somewhat less objectionable than Kerry et al's efforts on behalf of the fossil fuel and financial industries, was a bill introduced by Senators Maria Cantwell and Sue Collins in late 2009, which some progressive US climate activists are now actively supporting. Yet this effort, the Carbon Limits and Energy for America's Renewal Act, is also fatally flawed, because of inadequate emissions cuts (around 8% from 1990-2020), the lingering presence of carbon trading and offsets, the lack of revenues earmarked to pay the US' fair share of the Climate Debt, its inadequate strengthening of the command/control regulatory mechanisms/mandates for EPA, utility boards and planning commissions, and its nonexistent mandate to assure economic transformation so as to generate new production, consumption, transport, energy and related systems. Also, if it passes the Senate, the likelihood is that the House will insist on many of the objectionable features of Waxman-Markey (offsets, carbon trading, oil/nuke/agro subsidies, EPA neutering, etc).

In contrast to the Capitol Hill quicksand, California provides more radical grassroots insights into jumping space and scale, with Chevron headquarters a special target of the vibrant Movement for Climate Justice-West (the most active group of CJ activists in the US), AmazonWatch, and Global Exchange. Californians and Alaskans who have previously fought to 'leave the oil in the soil' - halting offshore drilling and tundra

destruction, respectively - will obviously need to remobilize against Obama. Amidst eco-catastrophe from Florida through Texas and beyond, British Petroleum's April 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill is one potential consciousness-raising opportunity for the CJ movement to address the utterly captive character of regulation.

Everywhere, organizers can find excellent local climate change targets to raise consciousness and effect emissions cuts, with direct action against major greenhouse gas sources or large-scale corporate fossil-fuel consumers. Two particularly good sites for climate activists are, first, the public utility commissions which control pricing and electricity generation techniques (and hence coal-fired and nuclear power plants); and second, the municipal or regional planning commissions which give the go-ahead to suburban sprawl and all manner of other climate-threatening projects.

This brings us to the global scale, where in Cochabamba, Bolivia from April 19-22 (Earth Day), Bolivarians led by host Evo Morales and grassroots indigenous, community, feminist, and environmental movements were joined by genuinely solidaristic labor and NGO forces. This meeting potentially sets in motion a much more serious transnational CJ strategy, based not upon the illusion that the UN will address the climate crisis anytime soon, but instead upon more serious, pragmatic strategies. These can come only from a much richer merging of social and ecological rights discourses (for what such narratives are worth), and choices of unifying targets (such as fossil fuel companies, carbon traders, and the World Bank).

Meanwhile, from Caracas, the 'Fifth International' began slowly gathering steam, and could become the crucial meeting ground between red-green activists on the one hand, and on the other, the region's petro-socialists (e.g. Hugo Chavez) and petro-Keynesians (e.g. Rafael Correa). At issue is whether the latter can face up to contradictions in their own political ecologies, because in one of the world's most important sites of struggle, Ecuador's Yasuni National Park in the Amazon, an official presidential threat has been made that oil drilling will commence in June 2010, unless countervailing pressure by the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador and Accion Ecologica is successful.

The situation elsewhere in Africa is similar, since so many of the extractive industries are the sole beneficiaries of electricity grid expansion. Red-green campaigns aim to 'leave the oil in the soil' and 'the coal in the hole,' exemplified in Nigeria where Delta activists have intimidated oil companies through both non-violent and armed struggle. In the former category, Environmental Rights Action in Port Harcourt insists on an end to extraction and exploration on grounds of the climate threat, and the descendants of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight of his Ogoni movement comrades won a precedent-setting out-of-court-settlement with Shell in June 2009 that may scare off other oil firms. In the latter category, even after an amnesty in 2009 had a divide-and-conquer effect, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Mend) continued to kidnap foreign oil workers, demanding they vacate the Delta for good.

After a combined struggle of this type, Shell was evicted from Ogoniland in June 2008, 13 years after the company arranged for Saro-Wiwa's execution, and a year later, Saro-Wiwa's family (and those of eight others executed at the same time) won \$15.5 million from Shell in an Alien Tort Claims Act case settled out of court, a large amount of which was recommitted to movement building. An estimated 1.5 million tonnes of oil have spilled since Delta drilling began in the late 1950s, the equivalent of an Exxon Valdez spill each year, costing more than \$5 billion in annual environmental damage. In his closing statement at the trial prior to his execution, Saro-Wiwa demanded that Shell vacate the area: 'The military dictatorship holds down oil-producing areas such as Ogoni by military decrees and the threat or actual use of physical violence so that Shell can wage its ecological war without hindrance.' At the time, Shell executives met with the Nigerian High Commission in London, stating that if the 'Ogoni virus' spreads to other areas in the Delta it would be the end of the oil business. In court, the plaintiffs had alleged that Shell hired Nigerian police for internal security; that Shell purchased vehicles and arms for the military; that Shell requested military support to build a pipeline through Ogoni land; that Shell assisted and financed the Nigerian military to repress the resistance of the Ogoni people; and that the firm participated in the arrest of Saro-Wiwa and others on fake murder charges and bribed witnesses to produce false testimony (Bond and Sharife, 2009).

Most remarkably, rather than letting such destruction rest at the scale of the local, the Port Harcourt NGO Environmental Rights Action (ERA) led the climate justice movement in Nigeria, West Africa and globally at Copenhagen to a much deeper critique of ecological responsibility. In opposition to the shifting, stalling and stealing that characterizes economic and environmental commodification in their own region, and in relation to world financial and oil markets, ERA and its visionary leader Nimmo Bassey jumped scale to demand that the oil be left in the soil and under the Gulf of Guinea water, given the threat to the planet. It has been estimated that only 20 per cent of the Niger Delta's oil is being extracted, thanks largely to the Mend insurgency.

Jumping to the global scale, the Climate Justice Now! network has shown a conceptual ability to confront world capitalism's shifting, stalling and stealing with demands for Northern accountability for emissions, for decommissioned carbon markets so as to avoid the stalling of emission cuts, and for climate debt payments to reimburse the stealing associated with the North's externalization of its emissions. Recall the five demands made in Bali, in December 2007:

- Reduced consumption.
- Huge financial transfers from North to South based on historical responsibility and ecological debt for adaptation and mitigation costs paid for by redirecting military budgets, innovative taxes and debt cancellation.
- Leaving fossil fuels in the ground and investing in appropriate energy-efficiency and safe, clean and community-led renewable energy.

- Rights-based resource conservation that enforces Indigenous land rights and promotes peoples' sovereignty over energy, forests, land and water.
- Sustainable family farming, fishing and peoples' food sovereignty.

No matter that the CJN! component-movements are disparate; so too are the forces that moved from sophisticated critique of carbon trading in South Africa to a broad-based campaign against the World Bank's largest project loan, that shook the energy establishment. These are the kinds of organizations and arguments that link spatio-temporal resistances amongst diverse eco-social forces during a period of austerity, civil society weakness, and repression. The agents of social and environmental change can take advantage of neoliberalism's still-discredited ideological status and demand from the next global and national negotiations a strategy for justice, not one based upon commodifying carbon.

But to do so the CJ activists still need to generalize an innovative critique, one that emerged over time as the global emissions trading strategy rose from birth in 1997, peaked in 2008, and attempts a last-gasp resurrection after the economic crisis and climate negotiations breakdown. The frenzied failure of elite climate politics stretching narrowly, in 2009-10, from the UN to the US Senate and G20 in June 2010 should make bottom-up alternatives much easier to advocate, including globally-coordinated actions against destructive projects (such as the World Bank's loan in South Africa). Perhaps the Detroit Social Forum in the US in June 2010 and the Dakar World Social Forum will be additional sites in which to share the lessons and build wider alliances.

Meantime, from the wider, deeper, and increasingly common critique of the Kyoto-Copenhagen-Cancun cul-de-sac, will come more confidence in the types of analyses, strategies, tactics and alliances associated with CJ politics. The challenge is to aggregate experiences from the Charlestons of the world, so as to move into alignment with the Cochabamba conference, and in turn, to generate a formidable red-green force uniting radical governments and the popular movements that will keep them accountable within global-left initiatives such as represented by Caracas's Fifth International. The case of South African national interactions in the global climate negotiations reinforces a sense of how the politics of scale and space can be distorted, so that policies patently against the interests of a country's mass-popular constituencies are adopted. But likewise, South African CJ politics from below suggest ways forward that, while not yet sufficiently strong to declare victory, really do offer the only hope for the way forward.

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APPENDIX: MORE CJ POLITICS

Climate justice, climate debt, and anti-capitalism: An interview with Patrick Bond

Upping the Anti, #10

Patrick Bond is a political economist and activist living in Durban, South Africa, where he teaches political economy and eco-social policy at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). Before the African National Congress came to power in 1994, he was active in the international anti-Apartheid movement as well as the US student movements and community movements in the 1980s. He continues to be active in labour, ecology, and anti-racist struggles in South Africa and internationally, and has written prolifically on neoliberalism, imperialism, ecology, the politics of global justice movements, structures of racism in global political economy, and on various aspects of South African and Zimbabwean politics. Bond's books include: *Climate Change, Carbon Trading and Civil Society: Negative Returns on South Africa's Investments* (co-edited with Rehana Dada and Graham Erion for Rozenberg Publishers and UKZN Press, 2008, 2007); *The Accumulation of Capital in Southern Africa: Rosa Luxemburg's Contemporary Relevance* (co-edited with Horman Chitonge and Arndt Hopfmann for CCS and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, 2007); *Looting Africa: The Economics of Exploitation* (Zed Books and UKZN Press, 2006); and *Trouble in the Air: Global Warming and the Privatized Atmosphere* (edited with Rehana Dada for CCS and TransNational Institute, 2005). Chandra Kumar interviewed him in February 2010.

CK: Why have you been critical of what's been called the 'cap and trade' approach to dealing with carbon emissions and climate change – a strategy that has even been endorsed by people on the left such as Robin Hahnel?

PB: For the tiny group of left environmentalists who genuinely support carbon trading – and Canada has its share – there are two problems: first, believing your own progressive politics will fail against the neoliberal enemy and hence adopting mainstream logic, which is the main reason for most of the controversies with pro-market greens (such as Robin); and believing the claims of neoliberal hucksters that a carbon market can work.

Those claims have been systematically debunked since October 2004, when the Durban Group for Climate Justice gathered activists and intellectual critics from around the world and began networking and expanding our critique. Serious climate activists have made opposition to carbon trading a fairly central plank, such as in the global critique of Kyoto's market provisions and various national legislative debates, as well as at the Third World coalface in Clean Development Mechanism projects and forest campaigning, led there by indigenous peoples. Carbon market conferences are now regular scenes of protest.

This stance contrasts with most of the Big Green groups – though not Friends of the Earth – whose leadership think carbon trading is the last best hope for legislation in North America, for stronger implementation in Europe, and for the buy-in of big Asian and Latin American polluters on the basis of complex market incentives.

But it turns out that due mainly to right-wing opposition, the cap and trade legislation supposedly ready for passage in the US and Australia in 2009 was defeated. So there's really no hope for a coherent global market, with carbon priced sufficiently high to fund renewable energy (at \$50+/tonne), which is what these light-green advocates had expected would be in place by now. It turns out that the pragmatists hoping to cut a deal with more enlightened fractions of capital – such as allegedly far-sighted financiers – overestimated the level of support for pricing carbon. They also assumed that widespread fraud would be eliminated instead of spreading, as we saw with the

Hungarian government's resale of carbon credits that wrecked European prices in March.

As a result, with the gridlock at Copenhagen and on Washington's Capitol Hill, as well as in Ottawa and Canberra, the carbon market is dead. Of course, we've argued that it was already dead as an ecological project, for the purpose of financing renewable energy. After all, from mid-2008 to early 2009, the price fell from more than €30/tonne to less than €9/tonne. And this was the third such carbon market crash.

Market chaos is helpful, though, because genuine climate activists – even some who still work, however uncomfortably, within Canada's Climate Action Network – are now able to more readily jettison vain hopes of climate policy alliances with liberals, bankers and corporations. That leaves us better able to seek direct caps on polluters through regulation, as well as direct-action strategies and tactics to keep the oil in the soil, coal in the hole and tar sand in the land. Plenty of excellent Canadian and US activists are leading these battles, such as indigenous people in Alberta, networks of anarchists, radical greens and eco-socialists.

CK: Climate talks broke down at Copenhagen. The G77, representing 130 countries, suspended talks because they felt the countries of the North – with the US and Canada being the most glaring culprits – were unwilling to accept responsibility for their emissions. We heard the phrases 'climate debt' and 'climate justice' coming from representatives of the South. What do these concepts refer to and how do you think activists in countries such as Canada should take them up?

PB: 'Climate Justice' is the phrase that was popularized as a movement slogan at the December 2007 launch of the network Climate Justice Now! in Bali. The idea of climate justice brings together radical environmentalism with global justice currents such as those forged by Zapatismo, and by the protests in Seattle, Quebec City, Soweto, Bhopal, the Narmada Valley and several other cases of recent indigenous activism and anti-capitalism. The indigenous, small island, African and Andean leadership we've seen is vital, given this movement's need to take direction from those most adversely affected, and it has been aided by political-strategic inputs from inspiring organisations like Focus on the Global South, whose best-known intellectuals, Walden Bello and Nicola Bullard, are influential critics of neo-liberal, Northern-dominated 'multilateralism'.

Another great boost came from the research and eloquent reportage of Naomi Klein, who in late 2009 assisted many in the North to realise how much they owe the South in damages for taking up too much environmental space: 'climate debt'. The phrase is most closely associated with Quito-based Accion Ecologica and its advisor Joan Martinez-Alier of Barcelona, but Jubilee South chapters from Manila to Buenos Aires have also made this a campaigning issue.

Last April, in an inspiring statement to the UN General Assembly, the Bolivian government played a leading role in putting climate debt on the UN's agenda. In September the World Council of Churches endorsed the idea, in spite of some Northern member opposition. And then we figured the big breakthrough in the last half of 2009 was the willingness of the Ethiopian tyrant, Meles Zenawi, to demand a Copenhagen commitment of up to \$100 billion/year by 2020 for Africa, without which the Africans would walk out. They even did a November dress rehearsal at a preparatory meeting in Barcelona.

Hearing this, our Durban guru Dennis Brutus replied, 'Then we should "Seattle Copenhagen", with the left outside protesting and African elites inside denying consensus, so as to delegitimize the process and outcome, just as we did in 1999.' That was a logical trajectory for climate politics, especially when even the establishment scientist James Hansen cogently argued in the *New York Times* in December that because of carbon trading, no deal at Copenhagen would be better than a bad deal. No one I met in the CJ movement in Copenhagen had any illusions that an agreement worth endorsing would emerge.

Exactly a week before Brutus died, on December 19, the Copenhagen circus imploded because, as Bill McKibben of 350.org put it, 'Obama blew up the UN.' This news pleased Dennis immensely, given the contours of a bad US-driven deal: insufficient CO₂ cuts, unwillingness to pay the climate debt, and inability to break from the centrality of a carbon market.

After signing on, the South African president Jacob Zuma looked like a hapless mugging victim staggering drunkenly home from a pub. He really didn't know what hit him in the negotiating room on

December 18, and along with everyone else, his environment minister shook her head the following week and said, 'I'm disappointed' – because the SA ruling class, like Canada's, needs legitimacy for ongoing mineral-based plunder, and they didn't get it. Three of the last words Dennis said to me were, 'Serves them right!'

As for the climate debt demand, some of us (myself included) were naive to believe Zenawi, who detoured to Paris on his way to Copenhagen, and with the enthusiastic support of Nikolas Sarkozy, promptly cut his demands in half by accepting lower financial transfers and removing the walk-out threat. But now that the climate debt genie is out of the bottle, US officials – in denial of course, refusing to acknowledge the concept – and Europe will continue to be badgered to pay by Climate Justice activists. So will South Africa, which owes the continent a vast amount, given that we emit 42% of Africa's greenhouse gases but have less than 8% of the population.

One of the nuanced debates is whether the debt should take the form of individualized and potentially commodifiable 'Greenhouse Development Rights' or whether instead we can move towards more transformative and collective strategies for claiming debt. Another is what form the climate debt would be paid in, since no sensible climate debt activist trusts the kinds of strategies that the likes of Hillary Clinton offer: 'Clean Development Mechanism' expansion via carbon trading, or traditional corrupt, corporate-dominated and geopolitically-influenced aid, of the sort CIDA is infamous for. We're unsure of the reliability of even the G77 climate financing demands, which include public payments but also market mechanisms.

CK: You were a student of David Harvey. In *The New Imperialism* (2003), he provides an updated Marxian analysis of US imperialism in the context of a neoliberal order bent on 'accumulation by dispossession.' What do you make of the fact that despite his critical analysis, he ends the book by calling not for building socialist movements to actually overthrow the prevailing economic order, but for a return to something like Keynesian social democracy?

PB: Yeah, I love that book, except those last pages. In 2003, having recently moved to New York and possibly envisaging a President Howard Dean – who was then making a good run in the early going and sounding globo-Keynesian in the wake of the world's 1997-2001 financial chaos – David had every reason to hope that a rational US elite would replace the madman Bush. In retrospect, proclaiming such an early death for neoliberalism, was overly optimistic. After all, even the 2008-09 chaos left the IMF's most enlightened minds advocating Keynesianism for the North but increasing austerity nearly everywhere else – even in South Africa in late 2008, where we were running budget surpluses yet had vast unmet social needs.

Still, the times have been ripe for that sort of idealism, and there's probably no harm in making a Keynesian argument now and again, even if just to help provoke Stiglitz, Sachs, Krugman and Soros leftwards. However, my problem with a call for global Keynesianism or global governance is that it distracts us from the harsh reality of power imbalances at the global scale. Since the 1996 Montreal Protocol ending CFCs, and perhaps some subsequent minor advances in the Convention on Biodiversity, it's abundantly clear that the world rulers cannot get their act together. Hoping for meaningful change from these global summits has become an exercise in frustration: from Kyoto (1997) to Copenhagen on climate, from Monterrey (2002) to Gleneagles (2005) to Washington (2008) to London and New York (2009) on global financial reform and development finance, from Seattle (1999) to Cancun (2003) to Geneva (2009) on trade and WTO reform, from one failed Bretton Woods Institution or UN General Assembly and Security Council reform to the next, from the UN Millennium Development Goals (2000) to whatever gimmicks will come next, from the G8 to the G20 (Canada 2010), from Davos to Davos to Davos, from the Washington Consensus and neoliberalism to neoconservatism to an alleged Post-Washington consensus after 2008. What a merry-go-round of grand rhetoric and stultifying inaction.

These guys are desperate for a global solution for even one single global problem, and they are not getting anywhere close. All they really have to offer is stale analyses and then inaction. And that's mainly because their own national capitalist classes are up against the wall. They go into negotiations with a mindset that exacerbates the problems, as was evident in Copenhagen.

Given this adverse balance of forces, which will continue into the foreseeable future, any talk of

global governance is a dangerous distraction, whether of the Keynesian or Giddensian Third Way or neoliberal sort. Instead, I believe our offensives should be planned mainly where the left can generate a genuine change in power relations, such as at the national level and perhaps in regional combinations, as the Bolivarian bloc has sometimes been capable of doing.

Of course, we're nowhere close to the left taking power elsewhere, and so we've come to realize, these past couple of decades, that it's really at the local spheres where movement building can shake the global elites, something Harvey acknowledges by putting 'accumulation by dispossession' at the centre of his recent analysis. Like Rosa Luxemburg's theory of imperialism in *The Accumulation of Capital* in 1913, or Naomi Klein's privileging of extra-economic coercion in *The Shock Doctrine*, or our own race-class debates in South Africa regarding the 'articulation of modes of production,' or Trotskyist (and post-Trotskyist) references to combined and uneven development, the crucial insight concerns the extreme stretch of market power into the non-market sphere during periods of long-term capitalist downturn and amplified financial crisis.

As Polanyi's idea of the 'double-movement' suggests, very serious political resistance can be found in the consequent pushback. Our best case is probably the Treatment Action Campaign's successful demand for access to AIDS medicines, in which local activism joined by ferocious international solidarity beat the Clinton-Gore administration in 1999, the Big Pharmacorps in 2001, and Thabo Mbeki's regime here from 2003-08 – resulting in 800,000 South Africans with AIDS getting free AntiRetroViral (ARV) drugs today. The cost of this war was high, for in the process, 330,000 lives were unnecessarily lost because Mbeki took so long to surrender.

Still, thanks to this precedent, millions are getting access elsewhere in Africa, consuming pills made as generics in African factories, and not paying for patents in New Jersey or Zurich. A decade ago these treatments would have cost \$15,000/year each, and so decommodification and deglobalisation of capital through the globalisation of people's struggles represents the formula needed to defeat accumulation by dispossession in one of the most critical areas: intellectual property rights.

Local resistances to water and electricity privatization offer another set of excellent struggles. Harvey writes encouragingly of the precedents set in Soweto's water wars, which helped kick Suez, the French water company, back to Paris in 2006. These struggles take us through decommodifying 'socio-economic rights' discourses, right up to their limits (in South Africa it turns out to be 25 litres of water/day per person for free but no more), and now – after a Constitutional Court defeat for activists last October – beyond rights-talk into 'commons' narratives, such as mutual aid in the liberation of water from the despised prepayment meters thanks to crafty neighbourhood re-plumbing teams. In Canada, Maude Barlow's Council of Canadians, David McDonald at Queens University, and Tony Clarke's Polaris Institute have come along on this journey with us.

Our challenge remains stitching together these sorts of victories across the expanse of the New Imperialism, and linking them up into a coherent political strategy. We'd hoped the World Social Forum would do so, and when David and I strolled through Porto Alegre in late January discussing this, it was with sadness that we realized there is still too much WSF 'open space' and not enough connecting-the-dots. Maybe the Fifth International project launched by the Bolivarians will help, but let's see.

CK: In terms of climate politics and climate justice, how should we orient ourselves to the emergence of more social democratic language since the financial meltdown of 2009 in the US and the election of Barack Obama?

PB: Simply listen and look at the evidence soberly. It wasn't surprising to me that after a kind of bailout-based financial crony capitalism for Obama's Wall Street friends, Larry Summers would arrange a budget freeze. This merely amplifies the damage being done by what's called 'the fifty Herbert Hoovers' (i.e., all the austerity programs at the state level).

With this sort of evidence, I think you'll end up reacting to Obama's occasional populist bank bashing by replying, 'Talk Left, Walk Right', as we do here in South Africa, and also maybe 'Obummer!' Or even 'You Lie!' as do his rightwing critics.

Then the illusions in US Democratic Party politics will lift, and it will be back to the hard but rewarding task of grassroots and labour organizing.

I spent 2003-04 at York University in Toronto with the single most talented group of English-speaking political economists, and they are really tackling this matter of Washington's excessive power and residual neoliberalism. While I have occasional differences with Leo Panitch and his comrades about interpreting capitalist crises, they know the US state as well as any analysts out there.

As for climate politics, having spent a month in San Francisco after Copenhagen, I was very inspired by the willingness of Climate Justice Movement-West cadre there to tackle Chevron, with dozens of arrests. They also protested at the Danish Embassy, at Senator Barbara Boxer's office and at City Hall, and on Tax Day (April 15) will disrupt an emissions market conference. Carbon traders have also become targets in Chicago and New York. I'm also impressed that activists and lawyers have beaten back applications for nearly all the proposed new coal plants in North America. Most impressively in the US, West Virginia critics of mountaintop removal are doing brilliant activism, including a March sit-in at the Environmental Protection Agency which forced their director, Lisa Jackson, to move towards a ban on coal blasting that destroys those Appalachian streams and rivers.

And most important of all, halting Tar Sands exploitation in Alberta is crucial. Shannon Walsh, our Montreal-based comrade made a film – H2Oil – that teaches us so much, and helps make linkages from Alberta to the community I live in, South Durban, which is Africa's major oil refining site south of Nigeria.

CK: You have written about what you and others call 'global apartheid', signifying a racist global economic order that shares certain characteristics of the apartheid system. How do you relate issues of race to questions of climate change and ecology generally?

PB: The most obvious is waste disposal, including greenhouse gases, with the most adverse impacts occurring in residential areas predominantly populated by people of colour.

Remember the famous December 1991 World Bank memo by its then chief economist Summers - actually plagiarised from his friend Lant Pritchett - saying that 'Africa is vastly *underpolluted*', since 'the economic logic behind dumping a load of toxic waste on the lowest-wage country is impeccable, and we should face up to that.' Once you look at where Obama plans to build his new nuclear plants, you'll see ongoing evidence of environmental racism.

The same goes for Africa. Here in Durban, the largest landfill in Africa is Bisasar Road, situated just south of the famous Kennedy Road and its 4000 black 'African' shackdwellers who until last September included leadership of the group Abahlali baseMjondolo, amidst working-class and lower-middle-class 'Indian' and 'coloured' communities. This case of extreme environmental racism began under apartheid in 1980 when the dump was forced onto unwilling residents, who fought it hard and who believed African National Congress promises of closure in 1994. In part because Summers' toxic logic spawned carbon trading, the World Bank and neoliberal municipal bureaucrats came with their own crazy promises, of jobs and university scholarships for the communities, if only the dump could be kept open longer and methane gas from rotting rubbish be turned into electricity, albeit with a massive increase in flaring, with all manner of hot super-toxins released in the process. And from 2009, carbon credits began flowing into Durban municipal coffers at \$14/tonne, so that Northern polluters can keep warming the climate. No, none of the Abahlali members got jobs or bursaries; that was a World Bank and municipality hoax.

Bisasar is South Africa's most famous and largest 'Clean Development Mechanism' (CDM), and the leader in the continent. Thanks to Sajida Khan, who hosted the inaugural Durban Group for Climate Justice meeting in 2004 and in 2007 died of cancer - which she got twice breathing in Bisasar fumes every day - we know more about how CDMs are closely correlated to this kind of global-apartheid climate-racism, and how they cement in local racism borne of state power and capital accumulation.

Still, what we learned from the five stooges who co-signed the Copenhagen Accord last December is a shocking confirmation of global climate apartheid. Quite simply, these five men of colour – Obama, Zuma, Manmohan Singh of India, Wen Jiabao of China and Lula da Silva of Brazil – represented the interests of mainly white-owned industrial capital and mainly white over-consumers, against the masses of climate victims who are predominantly people of colour.

Some of the very worst-off rural victims of the coming climate disaster will be the Luo of Kenya

and the Zulu of South Africa. The sacrifice by Obama and Zuma of their relatives on behalf of big capital and consumer hedonists is especially poignant, reminiscent of the way Fanon described the pitfalls of African leaders' 'national consciousness' in *The Wretched of the Earth*.

CK: In the face of a global capitalism dominated by the most ecologically destructive states, mainly in the global North, how would you suggest that activists in places like Canada and the US form productive alliances with movements in the South that not only challenge ecological destruction but also the rule of capital more generally?

PB: South Africa has an exceptionally vibrant climate justice movement, and we need one because of the extreme contributions that global capital makes to South Africa's climate footprint. Measured by the CO2 emissions in the energy sector per person per unit of output, we're 20 times worse than the US here. And that's so BHP Billiton, Arcelor Mittal, Anglo American Corporation and others can enjoy the world's cheapest electricity – between US\$0.01 and \$0.02/kiloWatt hour, cross-subsidised by low-income consumers who are paying as much as \$0.10/kWh through prepayment meters. The first figure will stay the same thanks to apartheid-era deals locking in cheap power for decades, while poor and working people are facing price hikes of 300% over the last couple and next three years.

So there's a proliferation of community protests, many over 'service delivery' – e.g. excessively expensive electricity or simple lack of access in places like Kennedy Road, hence repeated shack fires and internal respiratory health problems. We've not been successful in connecting the red and green dots, though, and linking these protests, especially to trade union struggles against electricity privatization. I feel that such linkages will occur in coming years. Eskom and the World Bank will be useful targets in the next weeks, given the latter's US\$3.75 billion loan to the former. We have a couple of hundred groups lined up to protest, stretching across the world.

The South offers very serious climate justice leadership, such as indigenous people and environmental and community activists in the Niger Delta and Ecuadorian Amazon. Accion Ecologica persuaded Ecuadorian president Rafael Correa to consider an oil-in-the-soil plan to prevent drilling in the Yasuni National Park in 2007, which by June 2009 was rewarded with a \$50 million/year commitment by the German government, though it appears to be in trouble now.

Most spectacularly, Niger Delta activists keep vast amounts of oil in the soil through both non-violent and armed struggle. In the former category, Environmental Rights Action in Port Harcourt insisted on an end to extraction and exploration. In the latter, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta continues to kidnap foreign oil workers, demanding they vacate the Delta for good. Thanks in part to organising by the Ogoni Solidarity Forum, Shell Oil was kicked out of Ogoniland in June 2008, 13 years after the company arranged for Ken Saro-Wiwa's execution, an act for which they settled an Alien Tort Claims Act lawsuit out of court in June 2009 for \$15.5 million.

Here in Durban, the radical NGO groundWork linked Oilwatch to several dozen anti-oil activist groups from across the continent at a September 2008 conference, and a month later, citing climate concerns, the South Durban Community and Environmental Alliance began a legal appeal to the national government, aiming to reverse a \$2 billion Durban-Johannesburg pipeline investment which would double oil refining in the polluted community.

These are examples of serious strategies in place to halt climate change at the supply side. Proponents believe that though they are still microscopic in nature, these strategies and tactics could be much more effective than carbon markets in stopping emissions. Many have been inspired by Alaskan and Californian environmentalists' ability to withstand US oil company pressure to drill in the tundra and off the coast. The struggles against Chevron in the Bay Area are really good models, including actions at the company's racist Richmond refinery.

CK: How can labour be radicalized on the question of climate change? What about all those workers whose livelihood depends on carbon-emitting industries? With regards to the union movement is the problem with the leadership or is it just something to do with the relatively higher standards of living enjoyed by unionized workers in the global North?

PB: It's a tough question. The leading union on these issues here is the National Union of Metalworkers,

and their leaders know it makes sense to make a 'Just Transition' from these untenable jobs in aluminium smelting to equally skilled and remunerated work doing the construction, installation and maintenance of passive-solar hot water heaters. These are needed atop every home across this country and continent. Lacking is the \$1200 per unit subsidy required, so that's a point of contestation with a government these unions helped to put into power, to replace the neoliberal Mbeki regime in 2008.

It turns out, though, that the Zuma regime is just as bad in most areas, but a communist minister of trade and industry, Rob Davies, is now making the right noises about green jobs. The metalworkers have to keep their eyes on a fast-changing industrial policy, on macroeconomics – where they lead the country in criticising monetarism – and on maintaining leftward momentum in union and Communist Party politics. It's a hell of a hard job.

One of the great inspirations for them is the writing and speeches of Sam Gindin at York University. And they have learned lots about the failings of corporatist strategy from the US United Auto Workers and the more recent foibles of Canadian auto workers.

These problems are partly leadership failure and partly, as you say, a function of the old 'labour aristocracy' defence of living standards. We all need a bigger dose of critical education – such as *The Story of Stuff* and other attempts to address rampant consumerism – so as to organize for more free time and a better quality of life, instead of two McJobs, overpriced real estate, nonstop television advertisements and underpriced consumer goods which do environmental and social harm.

CK: Do you think that the anti-globalization movement has evolved into the global climate justice movement? Do some of the same problems within the global justice movement haunt the climate justice movement?

PB: Climate justice politics are picking up the best lessons from the last fifteen years or so of global justice activism. We saw that with the Climate Justice Action mobilizations in Copenhagen. Climate is an issue that encompasses so many others, like trade did for those Seattle activists in 1999. It will only get stronger, and hence a great deal of time is being spent negotiating good process, such as how to make the Cochabamba meeting called by Evo Morales in late April as effective as possible notwithstanding financing and language challenges. Every so often, a huckster will pop up trying to claim the traditions of climate justice, such as we saw with the tcktcktck campaign, so vigilance about what qualifies as justice is critical, now that the Climate Action Network membership is in disarray with their carbon trading strategies and tactics so discredited.

In addition, we still need every component of the global justice movement to toughen up. There are roughly three dozen fields of action where transnational movements of radical civil society forces have generated formal networks and sites of solidarity, often under severe difficulties, but the difficulty of working out of the silos remains.

CK: What is the significance of the experiments with 'Bolivarian Socialism' in Venezuela and Bolivia for the global climate justice movement?

PB: Of course, the Bolivian indigenous and radical social movements' transition from opposition to state power is inspiring, and we've followed the complexities through the principled stance of the Cochabamba water movement, partly because their April 2000 coming out party and the South African independent left's emergence were so similar (Cochabamba's autonomist Oscar Olivera discussed this so eloquently with Soweto's socialist Trevor Ngwane over coffee in a DuPont Circle bookshop during the World Bank protest mobilization, to mutual benefit).

We're very inspired to hear that Ecuador is moving back to a saner macroeconomic policy with its 2009 default on the foreign debt, ejection of World Bank staff, and its work with the Bank of the South. We're even more inspired to know that indigenous people in the Ecuadorean Amazon and Accion Ecologica are fighting so hard against the petro-Keynesianism of Rafael Correa, who looks increasingly repressive.

Can Hugo Chavez move to a post-petrosocialist vision more motivated by decentralised power and resources? Following dispatches from Marta Harnecker, Edgardo Lander, Michael Liebowitz, Fred Fuentes and Kiraz Janicke in Caracas, and Michael Albert's persistent efforts to inject participatory

ideas into the Fifth International, sure, Venezuela has its ups and downs on this path beyond capitalism.

We're desperately hoping Chavez becomes as serious a climate justice leader as we heard him hint at becoming in Copenhagen. As evidence to the contrary, in September 2008, he sold the idea of a new oil refinery in South Africa to import his junk dirty-shale, and outgoing president Mbeki bought it just before being tossed out of power. So we may be stuck with a white-elephant \$8 billion refinery for the state company PetroSA.

When, a month later in Caracas, Dennis Brutus and I asked Chavez and his environmentalists, could they please keep their oil in the soil, 'si' was not the answer we were given. For now, though, the critique we share of global capitalism is the basis for much more collaboration and debate. And from there to unifying action is inevitable, as we try to keep the coal in the hole in South Africa, requiring a great deal more pressure from the Bolivarians against our ruling party, a process that has already begun when in Copenhagen, Chavez and Morales chastised Zuma for his sub-imperialist climate posture. But as Marx said, each proletariat has to deal with its own bourgeoisie first, and that's still the most critical thing for us to bear in mind before we are sucked into unrealistic alliances aimed at global deal-making.

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