



Just Say No

To the WTO – again!

On Nov 30 the World Trade Organization will host a “restart” meeting in Geneva to resuscitate the WTO and implement the Doha Round Declarations of 2001. Ironically, these negotiations are scheduled to begin on the 10 year anniversary of the Battle in Seattle, when protestors from around the globe joined together to shut down the WTO.

Why should you care? The WTO, through corporate globalization, aka neo-liberalism, creates rights for capital that limit the ability of governments to protect their citizens and the environment. The rights of people and the environment are diminished in direct proportion to increases in the rights of money.

Given the current global financial crisis, for example, there has been a call for regulation of the banking industry. However, the WTO Financial Services Agreement, promoted and signed by the U.S., limits the ability of policy makers to regulate banks, insurance companies and other financial services providers. This ban on regulation specifically includes trading of securities and derivative products, the very type of products that led to the current global financial meltdown. In addition, implementation of the WTO Doha Round would require more financial deregulation, including new limits on accounting standards. While ordinary people suffer home foreclosures and job losses, their governments are prohibited from enacting laws that could curb the ability of banks and insurance companies that are “too big to fail” from engaging in new speculative ventures.

And this is just the tip of the iceberg. The Doha Declaration listed 21 subjects that need further implementation including Agricultural Agreements that would limit the ability of nations to protect their own domestic food industry; General Agreements on Trade in Services that seek to promote the privatization of public service like water, health care and education; and Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights which give corporations control of food and medicine by granting patents on seeds and genes.

The mantra of corporate globalization is growth. Since 1950 global trade has increased 20 fold. Instead of global prosperity, this has led to increasing global inequality and debt. Currently two and a half billion people live on less than \$2 a day. A billion people suffer food shortages and malnutrition. The global south transfers \$200 billion dollars annually to financial institutions in the north to service their debts.

Growth in trade has not resulted in growth in jobs. In addition to exporting jobs to low wage non-union countries, technology replaces labor in all nations. Real wages are flat or declining as the profits from increased productivity are pocketed by corporations.

Growth means that each year we consume 30 percent more than the planet produces in renewable resources. Oil and natural gas production have peaked. Ocean fish, forests and wetlands are depleted. Carbon emissions change our climate.

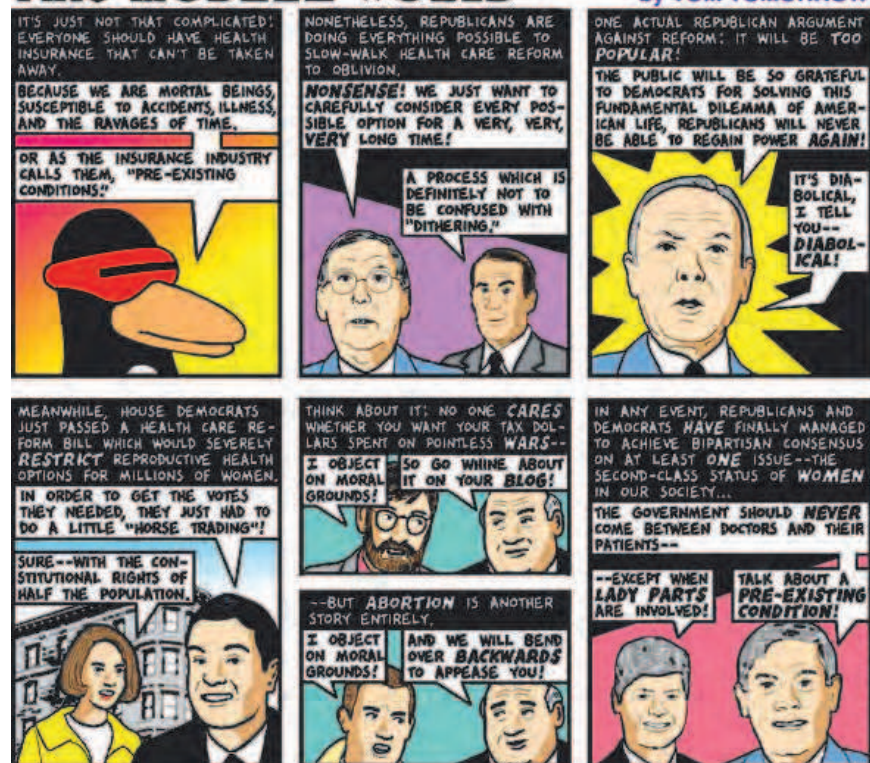
A new direction is needed. We must prevent the WTO from implementing the DOHA Declaration in the upcoming trade negotiations in Geneva. We can send a clear message that we place people and our Earth before corporate profits. Global social movements led to failed negotiations rounds in Seattle in 1999, Doha in 2001, Cancun in 2003 and Hong Kong in 2005. The political ground has shifted in the U.S. Our representatives are increasingly questioning the wisdom of unfettered “free trade.” Make your voice heard. Contact the White House and your congressional representatives to let them hear your opposition to new WTO agreements.

Help “Keep the Spirit of Seattle Alive” at a teach-in from 1 to 4 pm Saturday, Nov. 21, in the UO’s EMU Fir Room, and later that night during a celebration from 6:30 to 11:30 pm at the WOW Hall. For details on those and other events throughout the Northwest, visit www.december5.org or www.seattleplus10.org

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THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PUBLIC LEFT OUT

I applaud EWEB, the city of Eugene, and the architects for creating outstanding public participation opportunities for designing the redevelopment of EWEB’s riverfront property.

In sharp contrast, the UO’s Riverfront Research Park is quietly in the process of developing an office building and large surface parking lots immediately adjacent to the EWEB property with practically no public involvement. The development is based on an out-of-date plan that was recently modified to accommodate a new building. This building will seriously limit options for easy access from the university to the Research Park and EWEB redevelopment.

Since that Research Park master plan was approved in 1989, Agri-Pac was replaced by the new federal courthouse, Hilyard Street was extended north along the railroad tracks and the EWEB property is undergoing a major change of use. In the last 20 years there have also been enormous changes in our awareness and response to environment issues — from global warming to stormwater management and riparian restoration. The master plan does not reflect any of these changes.

Eugene residents are helping to pay for this development because the Research Park is located within the Riverfront Urban Renewal District. Look at your property tax bill to see how much you’ll be paying this year.

The Research Park has an enormous impact on whether or not we can successfully redevelop our precious waterfront into a vibrant public place. As citizens and taxpayers we deserve opportunities for involvement on how this property is developed.

*Allen Hancock
Eugene*

RESIDENTS NEEDED

As the planning stages of the EWEB riverfront project continue, one huge consideration should not be discounted.

For the completed project to maintain year-round activity and vibrancy, it is crucial that a good portion be designated for residential use. Residency is the element that will provide the necessary year-round economic support to sustain the retail side of the development.

The residential portion of the project MUST be carefully planned so as not to repeat other failed mixed-use projects. 1) Future residents need to be stakeholders. 2) The homes must be affordable, at least some of them (not necessarily low-income, but also a consideration).

As stakeholders, future residents of the pre-sold homes will assist in the design of “their” neighborhood. This is a pivotal factor in creating a living neighborhood. It has worked in collaborative communities all over the U.S. The results are a sustainable, aesthetically pleasing community that appeals to the residents, community and future generations.

As for affordability, a successful example in Eugene is the Whiteaker neighborhood — affordable homes, good commercial choices and spirited resident involvement all make this neighborhood shine.

This project could become a successful community and destination; a place that residents of Eugene will enjoy and be proud of, and visitors to Eugene will flock to. Eugene does not need more mixed-use pockets built with a speculative command and control mentality. Simply, if you include future residents in a meaningful way, a meaningful community will emerge.

*Diane Durrett
Eugene*

RITUALS VS. FETISHES

I thought “Fetish Fun” (cover story, 10/8) by Camilla Mortensen was wonderful. In addition to the positive things I’ve heard/read about the issue, there has been plenty (if not more) negative to go along with it. Juana Garcia’s letter (11/5), for example, which claimed that “a fetish is an obsessive-