

Bulletin No. 65

June 2022



Europe - Third World Centre
Centre Europe - Tiers Monde
Centro Europa - Tercer Mundo

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**“There is not one developed world
and one underdeveloped world
just one maldeveloped world”**

EDITORIAL

As this issue went to press, the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) took place in Geneva, with food security as one of its main agenda items, in a context of multiple crises (food, armed conflict, forced and massive displacement of rural populations, biodiversity, climate etc).

On certain issues (the temporary suspension, subject to many conditions, of patents on vaccines and medicines for example) a shaky agreement was announced but decision on food security has been postponed indefinitely, given that for certain powerful states the priority is to defend, whatever the cost, the particular interests of agribusiness and to promote liberalization of the agricultural market.

Yet the serious problems caused by industrialized, highly mechanized and chemical agriculture are well known: pollution of soil and water, desertification, monoculture for export, decrease in the nutritional value of food, waste of food and natural resources, high price of food products, rural exodus etc.

In order to disguise these failures, agribusiness now announces with great fanfare, the digitalisation of agriculture as a solution while its aim is to maximize profits, all the while increasing the dehumanization of this sector.

Despite the serious problems caused by industrialized agriculture, certain powerful states (starting with the USA) continue to push for total liberalization of the agri-food sector at the WTO. Their key argument: the promotion of competition! As everyone knows, WTO rules are carefully tailored to favour the interest of transnational corporations. Making small scale family farms compete with entities that are worth billions means, condemning them to death.

Do we need to be reminded that it is small scale family farming that feeds humanity (nearly 80% of world production of food crops) and not agribusiness. Small farmer delegates, members of La Via Campesina, who came to Geneva from four continents, pointed this out warning of the dangers posed by WTO rules and called for the abolition of this entity.

The fact is that a trade organization worthy of the name should above all, respect peoples' food sovereignty and the rights of peasants, if the aim is to provide healthy food for everyone, to safeguard the environment and biodiversity and to tackle climate change.

In the first issue of its new digital review *Lendemain solidaires*, CETIM presented in depth analysis of food systems.

PEASANTS' RIGHTS

WTO, A PILLAR OF THE PREDATORY TRADING SYSTEM

On the occasion of the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference, an international demonstration was held on 11 June in Geneva to denounce the neoliberal policies impacting the peasantry worldwide. A delegation of more than 30 representatives of La Via Campesina from all over the world, accompanied by CETIM, also went to the UN to continue the work of promoting and implementing the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants.



EXTRACT FROM THE INTERVIEW WITH RAFFAELE MORGANTINI OF CETIM ON THE WTO PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPER *VOIX POPULAIRE* ¹

Since its creation in 1995, the WTO has become one of the driving forces of the neoliberal offensive by the rulings cliques against the peoples of the world. It is an instrument in service to the great Western powers to promote unbridled commodification of all sectors of society's activity, by forcing the opening of markets and the privatization of public services. It is a way of entrenching all-powerful neoliberal capitalism, to the detriment of other development models and ways of conceiving of international trade.

From another perspective, it can be seen as a consolidation at all levels of the ideology of the search for immediate and constant maximization of profits for powerful business milieus, and in particular for the great transnational corporations and financial institutions, in opposition to models of collective sharing of wealth based on mutual solidarity. The declared objective of the WTO is to "regulate international trade" – for the benefit of the most powerful.

Regarding the harmful consequences caused by the WTO, they are many, depending on the sectors of activity. Among the areas covered by the CETIM, two are of particular interest.

First, agricultural market liberalization constitutes one of the major points of focus of the WTO. During all of its ministerial conferences, the WTO has advocated for and committed itself to promoting the liberalization and deregulation of the agricultural markets of its member states, to the detriment of the

sovereignty of states and of the peoples in this sector essential for general welfare of all.

The main consequence of the WTO agreements on agriculture is simple: governments are forced to eliminate all protection of domestic markets and all support for their peasantry, them, whose resources are often greatly insufficient for their needs, even more fragile. Thus, the great land owners and the transnational corporations end up taking over the national markets in the wake of the dispossession of the peasant communities.

Second, there is the matter of intellectual property. In this regard, the WHO agreement on aspects of trade-related intellectual property rights (TRIPS) is highly problematic for the peoples of the Global South in that this agreement rolls out the red carpet for the transnational corporations aiming to impose proprietorial regimes (patents) on all sorts of products, including life itself, for the benefit of these businesses and their share-holders. By means of these perverse mechanisms, these entities unduly appropriate to themselves resources, knowledge and traditional practices of peoples and communities.

Moreover, by patenting certain knowledge, the corporations – pharmaceutical and agri-food, for example – can monopolize them in order to develop medicines and seeds and sell them on the global markets, often at prices that are beyond the means of the persons and communities dispossessed by these very corporations. These actions are rightly characterized as biopiracy.

The social movements and all the organizations committed to the struggle to change the world must continue to make their own the questions linked to the WTO, to deconstruct and expose its dark underside and to equip themselves with the means to advance alternative models. More than ever, a structural overhaul of the WTO is necessary, in order to build a democratic organization oriented to solidarity in service to the peoples of the world.

Read the full article in French: <https://www.cetim.ch/interview-lomc-pilier-du-systeme-commercial-predateur/>

Read the press release of La Via Campesina: <https://viacampesina.org/fr/les-dispositions-de-lomc-a-geneve-une-veritable-rupture-ou-le-business-as-usual/>

¹ Published in French in June 2022, <https://voixpopulaire.ch>

RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS ON THE DRAFT CONVENTION ON THE RIGHT TO DEVELOPMENT

The 23rd Session of the UN Intergovernmental Working Group on the Right to Development was held in Geneva (16-20 May 2022) in the context of growing inequalities, wars and multiple crises (political, economic, social, ecological, and health), exacerbated by Covid-19.

The draft, legally binding Convention on the Right to Development, in negotiation since 2019¹, offers solutions to these multiple crises, such as international cooperation based on the freedom of peoples to choose their model of development and the obligation of states to create a national and international environment to enable this.

The text aims to contribute to the elimination of the flagrant violations of human rights due to neo-colonialism and imperialism in particular and also to the reduction of inequalities and the prevention of armed conflicts.

The revised version of the Draft Convention on the Right to Development, presented at this 23rd Session, undeniably provides solid foundations upon which to advance. In this regard, the drafting group², commissioned by the president of the Intergovernmental Working Group³ is to be congratulated on its work. Certain parts of the text may need a little work and there remain some gaps to be filled but it is a well crafted text compared to the initial version.

As in previous sessions, CETIM actively participated in the discussions and made concrete proposals to improve content.

The Non-Aligned Movement and China also participated actively making constructive proposals.

The European Union and Japan reiterated their opposition to the development of a Convention on the Right to Development and did not participate in the discussions.

These countries continue to oppose the Sustainable Development Goals relating to the Right to Development, by (deliberately?) confusing development aid with the right to development. Development, development aid and economic growth are notions that must not be confused with the right to development, as we have stated on many occasions.⁴

Furthermore, it is clear that the Sustainable Development Goals, just like the Millennium Development Goals, will not be met, as the UN Secretary-General fears.⁵

Although the USA and Switzerland did not participate in the discussions, their position is similar to that of the European Union.

Mexico, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay expressed reservations about the adoption of a Convention on the Right to Development. Argentina and Uruguay actively participated in the discussions but their proposals aimed

to ensure that the future international instrument would fit with their domestic concerns.

Although Russia participated actively in the discussions, certain of its proposals also aimed at ensuring that the future instrument further its national interests.

The Intergovernmental Working Group aims to complete work on the Proposed Convention during its next session, to be held in 2023.

In a world in which certain political leaders work only towards destruction, discrimination and the domination of others, it is ever more urgent to advance towards the objective of the right to development, that is: the self-determination and sovereignty of all peoples allowing them to choose their own model of development, in a spirit of equality and mutual respect.



¹ See CETIM Bulletin No 59, June 2019.

² Including Mr Mihir Kanade (India), Ms Diane Desierto (Philippines), Mr Koen de Feyter (Belgium), Ms Margarette May Macauley (Jamaica) et Mr Makane Moïse Mbenque (Senegal).

³ Since 2015, the Working Group is chaired by Ambassador Zamir Akram (Pakistan).

⁴ See CETIM Bulletin No 58, December 2018.

⁵ See for example UN reports on the Sustainable Development Goals 2020 and 2021 and the report entitled *Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals*, E/2021/58 dated 30 April 2021.

HUMAN RIGHTS

CETIM'S INTERVENTIONS AT THE UN

As an association acting as an interface between partner organisations and the UN international system, CETIM has continued to make use of the UN's mechanisms for the protection of human rights in relation to different situations and specific violations. Here are some extracts.

REPRESSION, RACISM ET RIGHTS VIOLATIONS OF INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES IN BOGOTÁ

CETIM and Z-Dok.org, in collaboration with representatives of the indigenous communities of Colombia, have brought a complaint to different United Nations human rights protection mechanisms.

This procedure aims to condemn repression, racism, and human rights violations of indigenous communities living in the national park in Bogotá since September 2021. The majority are people who were displaced during the armed conflict in Colombia or as a result of exploitation projects for natural resources on their ancestral land.

The situation of the people living in the national park in Bogotá has been condemned in Colombia for the past several months, and around the world.

CETIM and its partners are worried that to date, the dialogue between the district and the 15 indigenous communities living in the park has had no positive outcome. After six months living without decent accommodation, the people are living in the park in deplorable conditions, violating their rights as indigenous people, but also their economic, social and cultural rights (food, healthcare and accommodation in particular), they are quite simply exhausted.

In light of this situation, our organisations have decided to make use of the UN mechanisms to demand assurances of dialogue, a dignified life, and respect for human rights, as well as immediately seeking to find a solution that is favourable to these communities.

Read the press release: www.cetim.ch/repression-racism-and-violations-of-the-rights-of-indigenous-communities-in-bogota/

VIOLATION OF PEASANT RIGHTS IN COLOMBIA

FENSUAGRO, la Via Campesina, CETIM, Friends of the Earth International and FIAN International submitted a report to human rights protection mechanisms aiming to condemn the violation and repression of the Colombian peasantry and more precisely, persecution targeting the National Federation of Agricultural Farming Unions (FENSUAGRO).

In fact, despite a peace process that was initiated in 2016 to end armed conflict in Colombia, the issue of land access and its use is still unresolved, perpetuating the cycle of violence in Colombia.

Since 2019, the country has been experiencing an exponential increase in the number of representatives of social movements being killed by paramilitary groups.





These executions are primarily linked to conflicts over land, territory and natural resources; it is estimated that around 80% of homicides are of social leaders in rural areas.

Since the peace treaty was signed (2016) up until March 2022, approximately 1000 peasant leaders have been killed.

Read the full press release: www.cetim.ch/colombia-complaint-to-un-mechanisms-about-the-violation-of-peasants-rights-2/

ADVOCATING FOR A FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM ON THE DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEASANTS

Invited by CETIM, Morgan Ody from La Via Campesina addressed the Human Rights Council to request the creation of a new follow-up mechanism for the UN Declaration on the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas (UNDROP).

In fact, since it was adopted in 2018, the UNDROP has given the communities, and humanity as a whole, a historic impetus. This new instrument could play a key role in tackling inequality and discrimination affecting rural areas, which make rural communities an extremely vulnerable population.

Since this instrument was adopted, efforts have been made to implement the Declaration at all levels.

A new special procedure to monitor the implementation of this

instrument is essential to support its tangible implementation on the ground, but also internationally.

Read the statement from Morgan Ody from La Via Campesina: www.cetim.ch/wp-content/uploads/Dec-o-GD5-peasants-FIAN-CET.pdf

Read the release from LVC and CETIM: www.cetim.ch/advocating-for-the-creation-of-a-new-un-special-procedure-on-the-undrop/

VIOLATIONS OF THE RIGHT TO WATER IN THE NORTH AND EAST OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

The population in the northern and eastern regions of the Syrian Arab Republic are suffering as a result of systematic and generalised human right violations, which are primarily the result of a proxy war in the form of a foreign military presence and the involvement of major powers.

In the framework of this current contribution, CETIM has

looked at the issue of water rights in the north and east of Syria.

The Syrian populations' water rights, and in particular the peasant communities that depend on water for agriculture, are being systematically violated in the context of military occupation of the land by Turkey and pro-Turkey militias.

This situation has had devastating consequences for the fundamental rights of populations, and particularly for their economic, social and cultural rights.

Read the written statement: www.cetim.ch/wp-content/uploads/Satement-Syria_EN.pdf

Read the oral statement: https://www.cetim.ch/wp-content/uploads/Dec_o_Syria-N-S.pdf

Read the report of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic: www.cetim.ch/wp-content/uploads/G2225152_EN-comprese.pdf



HUMAN RIGHTS

MERCENARISM AND THE DRAFT OF A UNITED NATIONS INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENT REGARDING PRIVATE MILITARY AND SECURITY COMPANIES (PMSCs)

Since the 1960s, mercenaries have been widely used to prevent colonized peoples from attaining independence, to destabilize newly independent states and to counter legitimate governments whose political orientations do not coincide with those of the colonial powers.¹



It is worth noting that states are not alone in using these entities. Today, certain transnational corporations use them for the repression of local civil populations and organizations acting in defense of their habitat by opposing the exploitation of natural resources.

The very existence of PMSCs is not only a violation of the state's

Over the past three decades, a new form of mercenary activity has developed in the form of private military and security companies PMSCs. Their activities are not limited to providing security guards and logistics but extend to direct participation in armed conflicts as well as training, intelligence, demining etc.

By employing PMSCs, some states seek to camouflage their responsibility for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights committed in the course of their military interventions on various continents. The use of these entities tends toward the privatization of war, with states no longer feeling accountable to their citizens, but also in order to prevent peoples' revolts by allowing the killing of mercenaries on the battle field instead of military recruits drawn from the population.

sovereign function in the military and security areas but also a threat to the exercise of democracy and the enjoyment of humans rights.

Logically, the creation of PMSCs should simply be prohibited. This is what the African Union has tried to do with its Convention for the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa. This has met with little success so far, for these entities are used by the great powers of the day, such as the United States, the countries of Europe, Russia, Israel and Turkey, powers that very often flout international law.

For two decades, initiatives have been undertaken within the United Nations, under the leadership of South Africa, in an attempt to regulate the activities of PMSCs through the drafting of an international legal instrument. The first attempt failed. The second, launched in 2017, is still under way, and the intergovernmental working group entrusted with this task met for its third session in Geneva from 25 through 29 April 2022).

The discussion focused on the nature of the future instrument: voluntary code of conduct or legally binding convention? It comes as no surprise that the PMSC "users" (the European Union, Russia, Japan et al.) pressed for a voluntary instrument along the lines of the Montreux Document.²

The biggest user of PMSCs (the United States) did not participate in the discussion, whereas the majority of the countries of the Global South that participated (South Africa, Pakistan, Venezuela...) demanded a legally binding convention. No formal decision was made in this regard.

However, the purpose of the new legal instrument is quite modest. It is a simple matter of recalling the international norms in force so that the states concerned regulate the activities and personnel of these entities, by providing avenues of redress for victims in case of violations of international humanitarian law and human rights.³

CETIM participated in the talks on this document, amking concrete proposals to reinforce the text. In our view, in default of prohibiting PMSC activities, the future international instrument should, in particular:

² www.montreuxdocument.org/about/document-content.html. For further information, see Critical Report N° 8, *Mercenaries, Mercenarism and Human Rights*, Melik Özden, ed, CETIM, November 2020, www.cetim.ch/legacy/en/documents/report_8b.pdf

³ See *Revised zero draft instrument on an international regulatory framework on the regulation, monitoring and oversight of the activities of private military and security companies*, www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/revised-zero-draft-instrument.pdf

¹ Critical Report N° 8, *Mercenaries, Mercenarism and Human Rights*, Melik Özden, ed, CETIM, November 2020, www.cetim.ch/legacy/en/documents/report_8b.pdf

- hold PMSCs directly responsible for their actions, in addition to states and other entities that use them;
- clarify the matter of sub-contracting in order to make it possible to establish the chain of responsibilities, taking into account the complex legal montages and contracts among multiple entities;
- clarify the criminal sanctions to which PMSCs are subject as entities per se, as well as their directors and managers, not only at both the national and international level;
- clarify the matter of contracts between PMSCs and transnational corporations active in the mining sector, both in production and services;
- provide an implementation mechanism for the future instrument in order to evaluate its efficacy.

The working group will meet again next year to pursue its deliberations. Stay tuned...

See Critical Report N° 8, *Mercenaries, Mercenarism and Human Rights*: www.cetim.ch/legacy/en/documents/report_8b.pdf

PUBLICATIONS

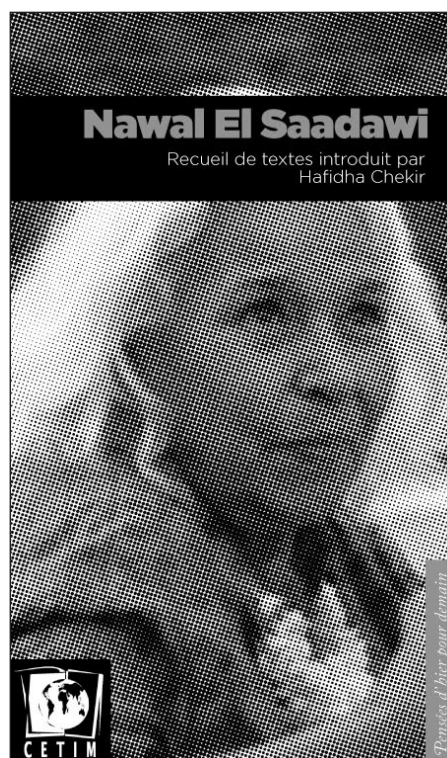
IN THE SERIES PENSÉES D'HIER POUR DEMAIN

Nawal El Saadawi

A collection of writings introduced by Hafidha Chekir

In an enduring double exercise in the clarification of thought covering both theory and militant activism, Nawal El Saadawi was one of the first Arab feminists to break the taboos regarding relations between the sexes and women's sexuality as well as denouncing the various forms of repression and dependence that the patriarchal capitalist order imposes on them.

Her struggles for human rights, for women and for the working classes have made a lasting mark on the world's feminist movement.



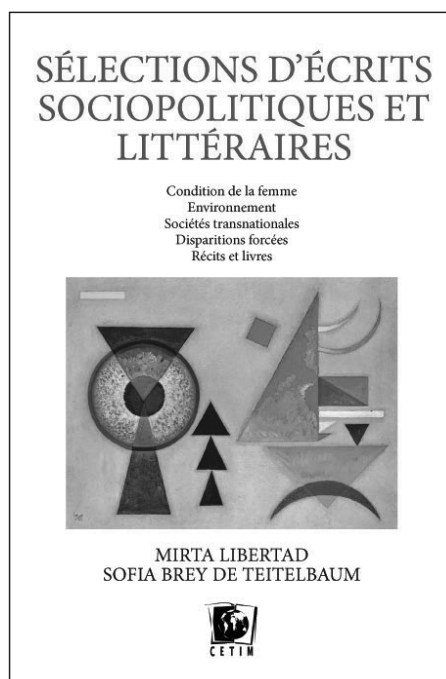
Price:
CHF11 / €8.50
ISBN:
978-2-88053-
143-0

SÉLECTION D'ÉCRITS SOCIO-POLITIQUES ET LITTÉRAIRES

Add this to your reading list! It is a selection of texts in memory of Mirta Libertad Sofia Brey de Teitelbaum.

Teacher and professor of the practice of education, attorney at the University of Buenos Aires law school, specialist in Spanish and Latin American literature, she was exiled to France and became a consultant to UNESCO.

Subsequently, she became a United Nations international civil servant, head of the Working Group on Forced and Involuntary Disappearances and carried out oversight missions on human rights in Chili, Peru, Guatemala, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and in the territories of the former Yugoslavia.



Price:
CHF13 / €13
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1257-0

PUBLICATIONS

LENDEMAINS SOLIDAIRES NO 2

In its second issue, *Lendemain solidaires* explores the relation between, on the one hand, “populist”, xenophobic and ultranationalist movements and leaders and, on the other, maldevelopment. From the Brazilian dictator Jair Bolsonaro to the nefarious French polemicist Eric Zemmour and on to the Indian neofascist Narendra Modi, the reactionary wave has continued to swell since the 1980s. Supposedly “anti-system”, these radical ideologies refuse to acknowledge social inequality inherent in today’s income and wealth distribution for the fundamental threat to society that it is. On the contrary, they target with total impunity “domestic” enemies, designating them as foreign to their fantasized, ethnically pure vision of the nation.

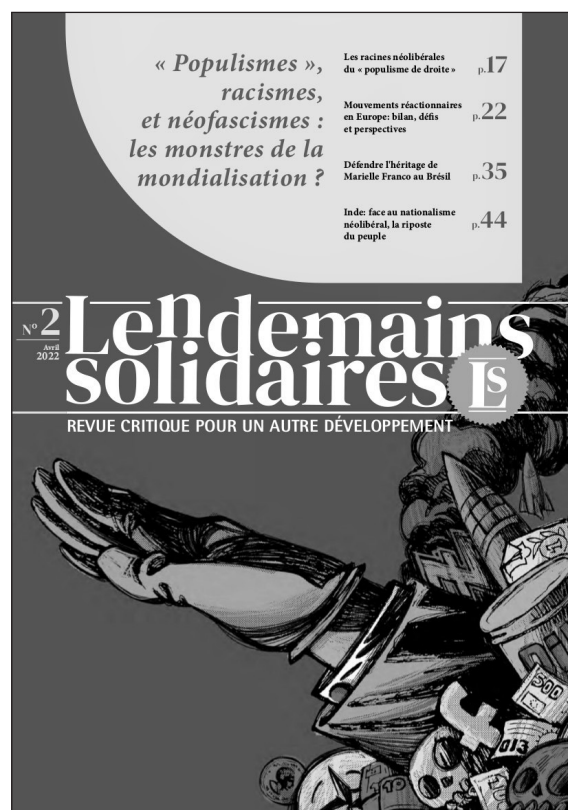
What is behind the ascendancy of these neofascist currents? And what is propelling the ascendancy of neo-fascism in general? Is it all simply a side-effect of globalization or, on the contrary, a logical extension of neoliberal violence? What are its impacts on collective action, on social movements and on electoral dynamics? These are so many questions – among a multitude – deconstructed and analyzed in this second issue of the review.

**LA MONNAIE : DU POUVOIR
DE LA FINANCE À LA
SOUVERAINETÉ DES PEUPLES**

By Rémy Herrera

What is money? Where does it come from? What purpose does it serve? Is it behind the ever greater inequality on the national and international level? What are the initiatives being undertaken by states to resist the supremacy of the United States dollar? What is at stake in the realm of crypto-currencies?

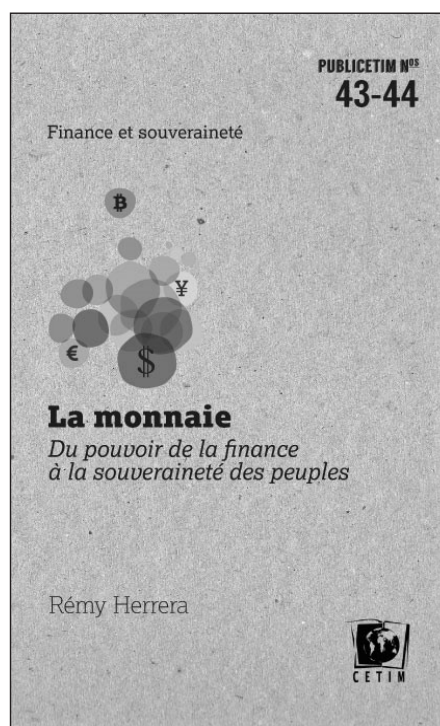
This recent CETIM publication explores all these questions, which some see as technical and many others see as deriving outright from barbarism. As for the economists, they vehemently dispute the meaning to be attributed to money. Nonetheless, its reality, which determines the concrete living and working conditions of all and sundry, including entire peoples across the planet, deserves a thorough airing, nothing less than a broad-based, democratically conducted, in-depth discussion.



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