

Globalization - Mike Moore

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[Mike Moore](#), once new-labor Prime Minister of New Zealand, then Director General of the World Trade Organization, champion of neoliberalism, has written a new book about globalization.

And he has made me think again about our world today, about the big picture.

SAVING GLOBALIZATION

Why Globalization and Democracy
offer the Best Hope for Progress,
Peace and Development



Mike Moore

FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND and
DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION

I wouldn't have looked at the book if I hadn't met Mike in Holland (we are connected with the Economic Development Board of Rotterdam [\[Link\]](#)). Mike joined the WTO when its critics were most violently arguing against its corporatist and pro-capitalist market-centered ideologies; he led the talks from Seattle to the [Doha Development Round](#) and along the way his effigy was burned several times.

I have a great deal of sympathy with the argument that neoliberalism, after Thatcher and Reagan, is a great scourge of our times (see David Harvey's excellent "[Brief History of Neoliberalism](#)"). I have even covered the debilitating impact of this ideology on archaeology and cultural resource management [\[Link\]](#)

But my experiences of new labour in the UK, the necessity of working on changing ideas in changing times, warn me that we should beware of easy judgment. It's too easy to label and libel.

The title of his book is "Saving globalization: why globalization and democracy offer the best hope for progress, peace and development". Mike argues for the virtues of choice in an open society with open government, and, yes, for an open and liberal market in a world focused on growth that should celebrate the achievements of globalization.

It's not that I agree with everything that Mike says. Far from it, actually. He does show a vital commitment to what can only be called fundamental human values, with an infectious, even optimistic outlook. He also reminds us of the vital power of an internationalist outlook such as that which energized the labour movement from its inception in the nineteenth century.

In [Stanford Strategy Studio](#) for the last 18 months Doug Carmichael (Stanford MediaX) and I have been chairing seminars, *conversations* that address current matters of common and pressing human concern, such as regional and global development and environmental change. We are not seeking to share an expert diagnosis of the ills of our times, plotting lines of remedial action, forecasting and strategizing. We are working with a process that allows contemporary concerns to be reframed, to be located in a broad view of humanity and human history that nevertheless allows a place for the individual and the local. As an archaeologist and anthropologist trained in Classical scholarship I believe in the importance of taking a long term view on how we got to be where we are now, tracking trends back deep into antiquity and prehistory. Globalization in the European bronze age. Not because there we will find an answer, but because such a frame prompts a far more creative outlook.

Mike takes just such a long-term view. He plots the genealogy of what he calls the "big ideas of history" - democracy, independent courts, the separation of church and state, property rights, a professional civil service, civil society. Through our conversations with so many concerned people, Doug and I, appropriately both humanities trained, think that it is crucial to ground debate and policy in an explicit address to human values and the qualities of rich and rewarding human living.

With such a perspective we don't have to agree with Mike. It's not about being right or wrong. It's about living with, cherishing difference. Democratic thought and practice, after all, is little about consensus. It's about listening to others and continuing to debate different views of common matters of human concern while being prepared to change even the most dearly held faiths.