

**RÉSUMÉ**

**L'avenir du mouvement des consommateurs:  
Vers un nouveau militantisme du mouvement  
syndical international dans l'industrie mondiale  
du vêtements**

Monina Wong & Dae-oup Chang

*Cet article évalue les stratégies syndicales et les campagnes internationales dans l'industrie du vêtement. Il revient sur les origines de l'incapacité des syndicats à s'ajuster dans l'environnement des mouvements de capitaux qui a cours dans cette industrie. Pour cela, les auteurs s'attardent sur les diverses réactions suscitées par le mouvement ouvrier face aux mouvements de capitaux à partir de l'émergence du protectionnisme dans les années 60, en passant par les âpres débats qui ont lieu autour de l'Accord Multifibres de 2004. Ce travail sera suivi d'une revue des campagnes internationales des consommateurs et de la réaction des entreprises face à celles-ci, qui a eu comme résultat l'introduction de Codes de bonne conduite et de la Responsabilité sociale des entreprises. Ces programmes sont un défi de taille à la solidarité internationale du mouvement ouvrier qui est entrain de se construire. A travers l'analyse d'exemples de campagnes de consommateurs dans l'industrie du vêtements, cet article démontre la nature individuelle de ces campagnes face aux rapports sociaux capitalistes et que ces campagnes créent le risque de nouvelles divisions du travail, tout en renforçant les vieilles divisions. Ceci risque aussi de rendre les organisations du mouvement ouvrier plus dépendant des capitaux transnationaux.*

*Nous concluons que c'est seulement l'utilisation d'une approche par le bas (bottom up) que le mouvement ouvrier peut bâtir une nouvelle solidarité ouvrière, tant dans la mobilisation à l'intérieur qu'à l'extérieur des usines, et tant des les pays en voie de développement que dans les pays industrialisés, plutôt que de se fier sur une approche par le haut (top down) qui reposerait essentiellement sur la force du marché des pays industrialisés ou sur l'effet de levier institutionnalisé des syndicats internationaux.*

## **After the Consumer Movement: Toward a New International Labour Activism in the Global Garment Industry**

Dae-oup Chang & Monina Wong<sup>1</sup>

### *Abstract*

*This article critically evaluates trade union strategies and the international consumer campaign in the garment industry. It looks at the origin of the trade union inability to deal with the movement of capital that recaptured 'labour' in the global garment industry, by tracing labour's reaction to the movement of capital emerging around protectionism in the 1960s, all the way to the debates around the 2004 Multi-Fibre Arrangement. This is followed by a critical review of the international consumer campaign and the corporate reaction that saw the introduction of company Codes of Conduct and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) that challenged the international solidarity-building undertaken by the trade union movement. We draw on examples from the consumer campaign in the garment industry to argue these new campaigns take an individualistic approach to capitalist social relation and risk creating new divisions of labour, while reinforcing older one. Moreover, they risk driving the labour movement towards increased dependence on transnational capital for protection. The conclusion is that building a new labour solidarity is possible for the labour movement only if it is engaged in organizing from the 'bottom-up', both inside and outside factories, in developing as well as developed countries, rather than taking a top-down approach based on the market power of developed countries or the institutionalized leverage of international trade unions.*

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<sup>1</sup>Dae-oup Chang is the research coordinator of Asia Monitor Resource Centre. Monina Wong is the executive director of Labour Action China. They are involved in building up an Asia-regional labour network, Asian Transnational Corporation Monitoring Network, which consists of more than 20 labour NGOs and unions working for theories and practices of organizing labour against mobile capital.

## **The Movement of Capital and Capitalist Labour**

### *The Origin of Capital Movement*

It is not an exaggeration to say the mobility of capital is rewriting the labour movement. In many labour disputes, employers repeatedly emphasize their readiness to relocate factories. The freedom and ease with which corporations can relocate is the greatest fear for worker organizations. It also provides a good excuse for governments to introduce *anti-labour* policies in many countries. People are repeatedly told that firms and national economies will be in deep trouble if they undermine investors' confidence. For external labour monitoring groups, capital mobility gives a temporary nature to their findings and makes it more difficult to trace the movement of the capital group responsible for leaving workers behind.

The huge increase in foreign direct investment in recent years illustrates the greater cross-border capital movement. Asia is no exception. FDI in Asian developing countries increased from \$396 million in 1980 to \$147,545 million in 2004 (UNCTAD 2004). The relative significance of the investment flow into Asian developing countries also increased. FDI inflow into Asia's growing economies accounted for a mere 0.7 per cent of global FDI in 1980. In 2004, this figure had increased to 22.7 per cent. Foreign investment from Asian developing countries also grew significantly from \$11.4 billion in 1990 to \$69.4 billion in 2004 (UNCTAD 2004).

Although the intensified international movement of capital is a recent phenomenon, the movement of capital itself is nothing new as capital always moves in search of greater profit. The origin of capital mobility lies in the very nature of capital accumulation that inevitably develops in competition with other individual capital and in conflict with labour. The competitive pressure is not something from which individual capital can escape. Rather, it is based on the basic reproductive mechanism incarnated in the commodity-form (Marx 1990). Commodity has a dual nature: it has value as a product of useful labour, while it also has socially recognized 'value' as a product of abstract labour (Marx 1990). It is the nature of commodity to be a product of (homogeneous and commensurable) abstract labour that makes products as real commodity, exchangeable in the market. Therefore, a particular nature of 'capitalist' labour is that it is and must be value-producing labour (Clarke 1991). Other than value-

producing labour, labouring activities are not socially recognizable. Value is to be understood as a basic form of capitalist social relation between commodity owners, through which a particular form of social labour is organized and mobilized towards production of value (Marx 1990). In the capitalist labour process, this value relation takes the form of a relation between owners of money-commodity and owners of labour power, through which living labour is subordinated to the process of abstract labour extraction. Concomitantly, the production of social needs (living labour) is subordinated to the need for capital to make profit (abstract labour), i.e. the subordination of the production of useful things to the production of commodity. Social need will only attract investment when there is an opportunity to make a profit while profit-making ventures attract too much capital. Therefore, it is the destiny of capital to be caught in a vicious cycle between competition and overproduction. While many new firms can compete, many collapse and disappear. Furthermore, continual investment in the means of production, in an attempt to dominate markets, results in the *over-accumulation of capital* at all levels - industrial, national and international, which results in general falling profits. If the market is not expanding fast enough to consume the products, or if domination over the existing market is not secured, accumulated productive forces cannot avoid becoming idle. Under this pressure, capital has to move.

The basic social relation of capital results not only in pressure from competition between individual capital, but from workers as well. In an ideal capitalist system, the relationship between workers and capitalists is in balance, with a free exchange between capital and commodity labour. They appear as two different sources of revenue or two different individuals who own the functionally differentiated sources of revenue, namely commodity labour power and money-commodity. However in reality, the 'labourer is no longer free, for the reproduction of capital depends on the capitalist controlling the process of production and compelling the labourer to work beyond the necessary labour time' (Clarke 1991: 191). This inherently precipitates spontaneous and, if more developed, organized forms of struggle by workers that leads to the increasing social cost of exploitation, which again forces capital to move

### *Avoiding the Pressure*

One of the most common ways for capital to survive these pressures is by squeezing workers – by lengthening the work day or intensifying labour (absolute surplus value exploitation). However, these are limited by the absolute limit of human capacity and, if it goes too far, workers would protest against it. Therefore, while trying to squeeze workers, individual capitalists continually compete with each other to introduce more effective means of production, a new organization of work and more effective control over the work process. If individual capitalists are striving to enhance their control over labour and the productivity of that labour, there are two benefits. First, they are able to reduce their production costs, thereby increasing profits. Second, general improvements in labour productivity in industries that produce goods for workers' living will reduce the living costs for those workers, thereby releasing collective capital from the pressure of increasing real wages. This is the production of relative surplus value, a way in which capital moves due to pressures.

Among the many business strategies used to enhance capital's capacity to extract both abstract and relative surplus value, two were favoured - relocation and outsourcing. These marked the development of the global garment industry in recent years. The relocation of capital enables individual capitalists to enjoy: firstly, non-regulated and non-unionized labour in capital-importing countries (absolute surplus value for the capital investing in developing countries); and secondly, a release from the pressure of real wage increases for collective national capital in the capital-exporting countries since a growing number of workers can consume cheaper imported goods (relative surplus value for collective capital in capital-exporting countries). However, to exploit better conditions of production, it is not even necessary for individual capitalists to physically move to other places. They can outsource production to productive capitals located where favourable business conditions are found. By outsourcing production, capitalists can shift the whole cost of production to other productive capitalists.

### **The Making of the Global Garment Factory**

#### *In Search of Cheaper Social Cost of Exploitation*

Global restructuring of the garment industry is based on individual attempts of commercial and productive capital,

through relocation and outsourcing to developing countries, to maximize profit at the expense of workers. Transnational corporations (TNC) claim it is not their intention to exploit workers. The argument is that not all capital goes to areas with the cheapest labour cost. There are other important factors, for instance the size of the market, infrastructure, corruption and so on. TNCs also argue that the labour cost of production is only a small part of the total cost and, therefore, the cheapest wage is not necessary for cheap and competitive production. This is echoed even within some anti-sweatshop movements that use the argument to ask for higher wages for workers. However, the argument is true only when it comes to a narrowed-down concept of labour cost. Indeed, the cheapest labour cost might not be the absolute aim of relocation and outsourcing. For individual TNCs, relocation and outsourcing are ways of becoming better businesses and this is accomplished not necessarily with the cheapest wage. More profit is guaranteed by less production and procurement cost on the one hand, and better sales on the other. Sometimes it costs more time and money to train workers who have not yet been fully integrated as wage labourers. Skill levels are one thing and attitude is another. However, this does not mean that capital moves without regard to labour. Rather, capital moves not because of 'labour cost' but because of labour.

This means that although individual capitalists' decisions can be based on a number of different variables with an eye to efficiency, as discussed above, the movement of capital is provoked by attempts to avoid the increasing pressure imposed by the basic contradiction of capitalist production, which manifests itself in the form of increasing competition and the social cost of exploitation (see Holloway 1996). The direct cost of labour is dwarfed by the indirect cost. The social cost of exploitation includes the indirect cost that capital has to pay, either in terms of paying money or spending time (which is money for capital) to sustain its production under the constant pressure. This includes health care, child care, income tax, corporate tax, severance payment, and donations to political parties that would secure the interests of certain capitalists, and so on. Therefore, even when the exploitation of labour, in terms of low formal wages, appears not to be the 'main' factor, there are huge indirect costs that capitalists can avoid by relocating capital or outsourcing production to developing countries. Now, the question is whether, in order to

run their businesses, capitalists have to pay all of these indirect costs, or some of them, or none. In the case of outsourcing, commercial capital pays no indirect costs, while productive capital does have to pay some. The feasibility of capital to move, particularly to developing countries, is a gift to capital despite the fact that it has to move in order to survive competition, which is also a curse in itself.

#### *Restructuring of the US and Global Garment Industry*

The continual restructuring of the global garment industry is a clear example of how capital restructures industry by moving to places with cheaper social cost of exploitation. As capital moves, labour in the garment industry is *recaptured* at the global level, while the industry becomes internationalized. The US garment industry initiated its relocation by moving its production facilities to the US South, which offered a “favourable business climate, which included low wages, low rates of unionization, right-to-work laws, cheap resources and community subsidies” (Collins 2003: 34). In addition, the conservative social context of the South helped companies to be union-free (Rosen 2002: 101). In the North, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) and Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) promoted unionization to counter the loss of craft control after the introduction of piecework in the 1930s, thus creating barriers for capital to move freely and reorganize their operation. On the other hand, newly introduced immigration laws gradually undermined the continual supply of cheap immigrant labour.

Global outsourcing started in the 1950s. The first destination explored by US buyers was Japan, which was quickly rebuilding its industrial production to pre-war levels. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, the industry was still dominated by manufacturers who owned most of their factories in the US and employed US workers. Indeed, the major market was the US. In the case of exports, the market relation was a simple trading relationship from the US to other countries. By the 1960s, large-scale relocation meant the garment industry in the South had become as big as its northern counterpart. It was in the 1970s when corporations started seriously abandoning business strategies that relied primarily upon national labour forces. Since then, global outsourcing has become a common business practice. At the same

time, an increasing number of US manufacturers have also relocated their production to other developing countries.

The first generation of Asian developing countries, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan and, later Korea, soon became production sites for US commercial capital. Many young women workers migrated from rural areas to urban centres, where garment and sportswear companies produced brand name products. These young workers suffered from extremely long working hours and low wages. Development policies based on export-oriented production in those countries encouraged this migration (Chang 2002). Outsourcing and relocation accelerated in the 1990s partially because of favourable conditions given to particular countries through trade agreements, such as NAFTA. The balance between domestic productive capital and commercial capital in the US garment industry was changed as domestic production could no longer compete with cheaper products from developing countries. Since the 1940s, retailers and mail-order houses had expanded their market and utilized outsourcing more intensively. The final result was the ‘retailization’ of the garment industry in the US on the one hand, and the global division between commercial capital and productive capital on the other. As the social cost of exploitation increased in these countries and competition in the global market intensified, manufacturers in the first generation of developing countries in East Asia started moving to other developing countries in Asia, including Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, and later China.

As growth in the retail business accelerated in the US and elsewhere, it was the retail sector that continually led innovation in the garment industry through the so-called “lean retailing” (Abernathy 1999). Computerized sales and logistics control enabled retailers to minimize cost in between production and sales. Higher production and labour flexibility was in demand as off-shore production was now directly linked to stores in the US through just in time delivery, zero inventory, vertical integration and quick response system for a faster turnaround time. US retailer JC Penny, for instance, cut its previous six-month inventory at its US warehouse to zero, by collaborating with a Hong Kong garment supplier to monitor store sales and organize immediate replenishment from the supplier’s facilities in Asia (Kahn 2003). This strategy goes together with cutting the procurement price through high volume ordering and a more sophisticated global



sourcing network. The result is a retail price that has been lagging behind inflation since 1992, and falling further since 1999 (Oxfam 2004: 27), as well as retailer domination. The top five department stores in the US, led by Sears and JC Penny, controlled 55 per cent of department store sales in 2001 (UNCTAD 2002). Multi-store retailers captured 70 per cent of the garment share in Western Europe and 85 per cent in the US (Oxfam 2004: 25). By 2002, it was estimated that one in every five US customers bought most of their clothes from mass merchants and one in every eight garments in the US came from Wal-Mart (Oxfam 2004: 27). In 2001, domestically produced garments were worth \$23.3 billion while imported products from offshore production reached about \$64 billion, leaving retailers dominant over manufacturers in the US garment industry. Meanwhile, manufacturers introduced few new methods to improve labour productivity in developing countries except to intensify the traditional means of absolute surplus value extraction by extending working hours, not paying workers social security, and introducing more contractual labour arrangements.

### **Labour-In-Motion and Unchanged Trade Unions** *Labour in the Global Garment Industry Recaptured*

While the retailers and advanced capitalists were developing global outsourcing, there was growing discontent from the manufacturing capital in the US, whose response was growing protectionism with the introduction of a quota system, the 1964 Cotton Agreement in 1964 and, later, the Multi Fibre Arrangement (MFA), introduced to protect the garment industry in developed countries. Quota restrictions represented a development strategy based on national capital mobilizing the national workforce. However, the quota system represented only a partial protection over the national market, as the garment manufacturing industry was no longer the leading industry, and that protection for it was no longer promoting the interest of capital in general. The importance of garment manufacturing was declining in terms of the numbers employed, the size of investment and profitability, while the influence of importers and retail capital was growing. Thus, quotas were imposed not to give complete protection either for the industry or the workers, but to soothe the suffering of backward capital (the US garment manufacturers) without hindering the movement of advanced capitalists (retailers and other

newly growing industries such as the high-tech industry).

The real impact of the quotas was reflected in the globalized supply chain as it had been integrated into the social cost of exploitation and thereby affected the decisions on outsourcing and the destination of capital relocation. Lacking any other financial resources or industrial base, many developing countries joined the global garment production by hosting the subcontractors of the brands from both Asia and the West that were seeking to avoid quota control. As a result, more than 160 countries were reported to be involved in global garment production by 2004 (Ferenschild and Wick 2004). Geared toward export-oriented industrialization at different historical times, garment manufacturers from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea were the “beneficiaries” in the first phase of global outsourcing. Together, they provided a model of export-oriented development. It was this model that other developing countries pursued, but with much more reliance on foreign capital, by introducing the liberalization of foreign direct investment, the establishment of export processing zones, and other policies such as tax holidays and union-free production to attract foreign capital at the expense of workers. These measures succeeded in attracting (North) Asian manufacturers together with Western commercial capital to intensify their global outsourcing strategy in the second phase. The result was unity between unregulated vulnerable labour with liberalized capital in the global South (Chang 2005). Over-dependency on a single industry reduces the options for development policies for many developing countries and this makes it even more difficult for the labour movement to fight for decent wages and working conditions against the ever-more influential garment producers. The manufacturers and workers in developed countries as well as workers in developing countries were all “losers”, while commercial capitalists from developed countries and to a certain extent, manufacturing capitalists from the first generation of developing countries were the winners. Together, they collaborated to shape what we now call the global factory of garment industry. The other side of the story saw a sweeping back of urban garment sweatshops in developed countries where migrant or illegal workers are forced to work harder in order to survive the inflow of cheap imported garments. As capitalists moved around the world and established a global factory, labour in the garment industry was *recaptured*. That naturally requires a distinctive strategy for

the labour movement in the industry.

*The Trade Unions Incapable of Capturing Labour in Motion*

During the first and second phase of the globalization of the garment industry, workers in developing countries did not get much attention from the trade unions in the developed world. The traditional trade union movement in the US did nothing but support protectionism. It is obvious that US trade unions did not see the movement of capital as a global labour issue but rather as a movement of “jobs”. The ACWA proclaimed that it would “join employers in the apparel field and other needle trade unions to seek legislative controls over goods produced in ‘sweatshop’ conditions in the Orient” (New York Times July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1959, quoted from Rosen 2003: 107). Jacob Potofsky, President of the ACWA asserted the need to introduce protectionist measures in order to prevent the “important American industry” from being destroyed by “unfair competition from sweated labor abroad” (Rosen 2002:108). The ILGWU also joined the protectionist campaign, calling for import restraints against Hong Kong imported goods (Rosen 2002:109).

From the 1960s onward, American unions could not go much further than giving lip service to sweatshop conditions in the Orient just before calling for protectionist policies. To prevent job losses, they struggled hard. However, they could not help but becoming appendages to the manufacturing capitalists of the US. In fact, the inward-looking nature of US garment trade unions that concentrated on defending jobs against “foreign invasion” was nothing new. In the 1920s, the major unions were focused on defending craftsmanship of the male cutters against the low skilled women workers doing section work (Collins 2003: 33). Facing the threat of capital movement to the South, the ILGWU ended up with a strategy that involved working together with the employers to restrict wage increases in the North. In the 1980s, this line of implicit protectionism continued in instances such as trade union support of quotas and anti-dumping laws, objections to the Most-Favoured Nation Clause to China and union policies such as ‘Buy Union Products’ or lobbying for companies to stay ‘Made in America’. Solidarity with workers in developing countries that were newly integrated into the global garment industry was not a popular option.

Unfortunately, this bitter failure to defend workers’

rights against the movement of capital by building solidarity between the old workers and the new workers reappeared in the 21<sup>st</sup> century around the phase-out of the MFA. It reappeared on an even wider scale in the ‘loser-winner’ framework of analysis shared widely amongst trade unions (both in the West and East and NGOs to a large extent). This loser-winner argument tells us that many least developed countries will suffer at the hands of a few key manufacturing countries. The argument supports itself by listing the loser countries and contrasts the worsening situation there with the ‘winners’, namely India, Mexico and, in particular, China. Misleading enough, the argument focuses on who’s going to keep the job, rather than how to move forward in controlling capital movement on the basis of solidarity building. It encourages speculation and xenophobia amongst workers in many developing countries and thus helps capitalists make workers compete against each other. The loser-winner argument is based on many assumptions and speculations (Chang and Wong 2005). Supporters of this argument speak about the “quota”, claiming that it “was” and “is” better than nothing. They keep silent about the origins and consequences of the quota system that in fact sacrificed millions of lives for corporate profits. The distorted industrial structure in garment-only exporting countries, according to the same supporters, is “better than nothing”, the underlying rationale of which is not so distinguishable from that of the IMF and the World Bank.

Indeed, trade unions and NGOs do mention the suffering of workers in economic processing zones in the “winning countries”, just like US trade unions were worried about the sweatshop condition in the Orient in the 1960s. They started with solidarity and ended up calling for protectionist methods for their own members while lacking any basis to build solidarity with non-organized workers in other countries<sup>2</sup>, and no concrete plan of

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<sup>2</sup>Chinese NGOs (including those in Hong Kong) could not bring any alternative to this China bashing. So far, they could do nothing but defensively argue that Chinese workers will also be victims of globalization that does not give dignity to the workers in China. However, this argument cannot inspire workers in other countries who are losing both jobs and dignity. Once the debate comes down to how to build up solidarity with Chinese workers, many organizations merely emphasize a particular context in China that necessitates a careful approach. From the perspective of outsiders, it may only look opportunistic since they are calling for international support both for jobs and dignity of labour in China while workers in other countries have neither of them.

industrial action for solidarity. This argument of today only echoes the voices of unions at the time when MFA was introduced. Not surprisingly, not a single solidarity strike plan was submitted while everyone was talking about the crisis after the phase out of the MFA. Following their Western counterparts, some unions in Asian developing countries also announced their commitment to cooperate with governments and capitalists to increase their competitiveness in the global market. Panicking about sudden capital relocation, they started identifying the future of the workers in one country with the destiny of the industry, employers and national economy, rather than workers in other countries.

It is of course the role of the international trade union body to unite workers in the global garment industry and submit a plan to challenge the global garment giants in the manufacturing and retailing sector. Unfortunately, the International Textile, Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF) is one of the major promoters of this winner-loser argument (ITGLWF 2005a, 2005b). This prevalent membership-centred and job-centred protectionist strategy of unions in the MFA phase-out debate is a manifestation of the prolonged incapability of international and national trade unions to renew their selves in the process of global restructuring of labour as a result of the increasing movement of capital. As a global factory develops, the new social movement is saying farewell to the working class (as we see below), believing that the centrality of labour as a force capable of challenging the existing forms of development has gone, while the traditional trade union movement tends to believe that the contradiction of labour is still central but only within the traditional factory boundaries – in fact, only the factory boundaries in which the unions have members – and within the immediate employment relations (Neary 2004). In doing so, both movements overlook the expansion, re-composition and metamorphosis of capitalist labour in the development of the global factory.

This incapability makes it further impossible for them to overcome the divided interests between production and non-production workers, formal and informal workers, the employed and unemployed, as well as those between the North and the South in the global factory. This form of trade unionism that prioritizes defending its existing share of the pie to class solidarity only makes it difficult to overcome the deeply rooted social partnership through which unions become a part of the reproduction

of the social domination of capital. Accordingly, most of the solidarity actions become degraded to actions that have no teeth precisely because they don't want to lose their bargaining power and partnership with capitalists at home, for the sake of workers in the production countries or irregular workers at their doorsteps who are not their members. The impotence of traditional trade unions in the last decades has, ironically, opened the space for an emerging movement of a "new" social subjectivity that is not within the union's range: consumers (who are of course workers). This new wave of consumer movement began to swiftly replace trade unions in developing solidarity with the garment workers in developing countries.

### **The Consumer Campaign and Recaptured Labour**

#### *Emergence of the Consumer Campaign*

The consumer campaign emerged in the early 1990s. The first consumer campaign was organized in the Netherlands in 1989 by NGOs over the labour conditions of workers in the Philippines that produced garments for Dutch companies. This initiative was later developed into the Clean Clothes Campaign (CCC) that now has the participation of nine European countries<sup>3</sup>. The CCC is a coalition of various NGOs and trade unions in Europe that aims to improve the working conditions of garment workers and to support local trade unions and NGOs in developing countries by building awareness and mobilizing consumer power over garment companies and retailers. Over the years, the CCC has targeted European retailers such as C&A, H&M, sportswear companies around championship events like the European Cup 2000, the World Cup 2002 and the Olympics 2004, and on a case by case basis by sending urgent appeals on labour disputes or union bustings in developing countries.

In the US, the anti-sweatshop campaign began in the mid-1990s after the media exposition of Levi Strauss' labour abuses overseas. This was followed by more public stories and campaigns launched by various groups such as Sweatshop Watch and Global Exchange (California), the National Labour Committee and the Interfaith Church Corporate Responsibility (New York), Campaign for Labour Rights (Washington) and US LEAP

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<sup>3</sup>The CCC exists in Austria, Belgium (North and South), France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The international secretariat of the CCC is based in Amsterdam.

(Chicago). From 1995 onward, they targeted US brand and retail companies such as Wal-Mart, GAP, Philip Van-Heusen, Liz Clairborne, Nike and Reebok. In universities, students occupied administration buildings demanding anti-sweatshop policies with brand companies that licensed university logos. The United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) came into being in 1998 and it has by now over 200 high school, college and university affiliates (USAS 2005). In Canada, a coalition of faith, trade unions and NGOs, including the Maquila Solidarity Network, formed the Ethical Trading Action Group, which promotes public access to information on labour conditions in the garment sector as well as monitoring and verification of company compliance (Maquila Solidarity Network 2005).

#### *Consumer Campaign Recapturing Capitalist Social Relations*

The emergence of the consumer campaign that focused on sweatshop labour, largely un-organized in the global garment industry, is a reaction to, if not filling in the gap of, the lack of labour solidarity amongst third world garment workers within the traditional trade union movement. The consumer campaign addresses labour exploitation in “new” subjectivity and social relations with NGOs, coordinating different consumer, labour, women, student and church organizations into national campaigns to take actions on labour issues in developing countries. Depicting capitalist social relations in the differentiated moment of consumption, the campaign created “new” subjectivities in class relations. Workers in developed countries are captured as consumers and commercial capitalists are personified as “buyers” in that particular moment of capital circulation now distinguished and known as globalized offshore out-sourcing. These persona known as consumers and buyers are assumed to have relative power over manufacturing capital, which originates mainly from East Asian countries. Labour resistance to the globalization of capital both in terms of geographic mobility and re-organization of work struggles under such divisions and re-alignment of class relations.

Rather than re-integrating the different forms of capital relations in the circulation of capital, the consumer campaign assumes power in the consuming and trading instant and intervenes in manifested moments of the money “power” of buying on a country to country, company to company and consumer to company basis. The CCC for example, “choose(s) major retailers and

the major brands (in Europe) as the focus... because they are strategic players in the garment and sportswear industry;" and the CCC focuses "on sportswear companies because the consumer link is even stronger" (CCC website 2005). By "encourag(ing) consumers to shop with a conscience and buy goods made under fair labor conditions" (Global Exchange website 2005), a certain mystified identity seems to have emerged as capitalists and labourers in developed countries are identified as buyers and consumers respectively. They are both detached from direct labour relations in third world work places and yet they seem to have a common interest in improving the labour conditions there. A new platform of dialogue outside the traditional capital-labour struggle therefore emerged in the form of offshore campaigns.

Since the 1990s, the consumer campaign has been using naming and shaming tactics to link third world sweatshop labour with the commercial logo of individual brand and retailing companies that have a high visibility and share in the western market. Ingrained in the leverage argument around "buying power", the battlefield has been displaced from workplaces in developing countries to the media and trade institutions in developed countries. Capital relations and struggles in the developing countries are further abstracted as the campaign does not distinguish between but appeals to both capital and labour in developed countries to take the "buyers' choice", to buy "clean" not blood-stained products. The US garment union UNITE HERE appeals to consumers and their members, hoping that their pressure would result in improvements in developing countries without big expenditures on the part of the brands and retailers and "these changes could be made possible without changing the retail price of a garment" (UNITE HERE 2005).

#### *Corporate Social Responsibility versus Solidarity Building?*

Put under pressure to take responsibility despite the absence of direct labour relations with third world workers, commercial capitalists therefore sought to capture labour in both moments, as one in sweatshops and one in front of the cashier, in a new language of "Corporate Social Responsibility" (CSR). CSR abstracts capital relation under globalization as a sourcing relation with ethics. The displacement here works through a new kind of contract called a Code of Conduct, passed by individual buyers to individual suppliers. These codes claim to be based on the core



labour principles of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and have detailed standards on labour conditions such as wages, working hours, employment and occupational safety and health. They are drafted, monitored and ruled by commercial capitalists, while the actual implementation is out-sourced to the suppliers.

Codes of conduct are now integrated into the management of supply-chains. Labour standards and labour relations are interpreted by capitalists as measurable indicators in a checklist form and audited in a procedure largely replicating that of quality control. Shopfloor social and labour conditions of the suppliers are monitored by in-house or contracted social auditors through a process of documentation and workplace inspection and, thereafter, ratification. The proliferation of social auditing and codes of conduct as a tool for monitoring offshore workplaces captures international and national labour standards as private “rules” whose ownership lies with (commercial) capitalists aiming largely to minimize business risks and thus costs of production. Control over the workplace was further displaced from workers and trade unions in developing countries. A new business called social auditing was created. Not only is there a technical problem in terms of flawed auditing methodology especially on labour relations and freedom of association (O’Rourke, 2000), there is a problem of capitalists “monitoring” capitalists.

The movement side now needs to balance the otherwise wholly company owned CSR and to show that positive results can be achieved through negative campaigns. A number of Multi-Stakeholder Initiatives (MSIs), which promotes multi-party participation from companies, NGOs and trade unions, was developed to engage with capital. While manufacturing capital sustains itself through absolute surplus value extraction, commercial capital profits on it but with a human face and sophistication through engaging these stakeholders to co-regulate such surplus value extraction. Some of the MSIs, including the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) (UK 1998) and the Fair Labour Association (US 1998), were supported by national governments, namely the British Department for Trade and Industry and the White House under the Apparel Industry Partnership in 1996. They are indeed affirmations of the Blair and Clinton neo-liberal policies. The other key MSIs are the Workers’ Rights Consortium (US 2000), the SA8000 (US), the Clean Clothes Campaign (Europe) and the Fair Wear Foundation (Dutch 2002). All except the WRC and the

FLA have the participation of national trade unions in their home country<sup>4</sup>. The CCC, the FWF and the WRC were formed to develop a civil society “owned” code and alternative monitoring and verification model<sup>5</sup> through pilot projects that engaged with the otherwise excluded labour NGOs and trade unions in developing countries in the auditing and ratification process. Born as an alternative to the FLA, the WRC works from the bottom-up in response to workers’ complaints. The spectrum of these various MSIs is wide ranging, from helping companies do the right thing, by increasing their compliance, develop a reporting system, complaint channels, industrial re-engineering etc., and to enforce the tripartite system in developing countries in the case of the ETI. The CCC and the WRC have clearer positioning, to “create space” to strengthen local organizing through intervention on labour dispute cases in developing countries.

### **Limitations of the Solidarity Model within Consumer Campaigns**

#### *The Non-class Approach of the Action-Alert-Brand-Targeting-Campaign*

The consumer campaign in the past 10 years developed a particular model of giving support to workers’ organizing in developing countries through a case-by-case intervention. We call this model the Action-Alert-Brand-Targeting-Campaign (AABTC). The model is to be understood as a result of the particular form of capital and labour that moves and captures each other in motion. The story usually starts off with a dispute case followed by a call for solidarity from the international campaign organizations, the factory workers or the external monitors. The campaigners then trace down the buyers and put pressure on them through media or publicity actions. The international organizations would demand the buyers and the suppliers to dialogue with the worker representatives and ratify the violations. In cases of union busting such as the Kukdong case in Mexico in 2001, the

<sup>4</sup>The ETI has the participation of Trade Union Congress (TUC) and the International Textile Garment Leather Workers’ Federation (ITGLWF). The Dutch trade union the FNV is on the board of the FWF whereas the ITGLWF is also on the board of the SA8000.

<sup>5</sup>The CCC developed its own code of conduct in 1997 after consulting with trade unions and labour NGOs. The code was signed by the ITGLWF, ETUC/TCL, WCL, Asian organizations and all the NGOs and trade unions in the European CCC coalitions (CCC website 2005).

buyers were asked to force the supplier to reinstate the dismissed worker leaders and recognize the independent trade union<sup>6</sup>.

The AABTC has become a key model in challenging worsening working conditions and trade union rights in the garment industry in developing countries. The model is grounded in the leverage argument, which assumes that local organizations and workers in the production countries are powerless against mobile capital and local governments that rely strongly on FDI for local economic development and job creation. Second, commercial capital can have some leverage to control the labour practices and movement of manufacturing capital when pressure from the “consumers” is strong enough. However, this argument has many flaws.

The intensified mobility and consolidation of manufacturing capital between developing countries requires a better understanding of the exact nature of the relationship between commercial and manufacturing capital. Both commercial and manufacturing capital presuppose and confront each other, circulating and reproducing capital with the aim of profit maximization. The “absolute domination” argument that identifies commercial capital as having the motivation and the power to control the surplus value extraction of the manufacturing capital works only on a one-on-one basis. Indeed, in some cases commercial capitalists like Nike can exercise huge power over individual suppliers but it is not always so. The assumed effectiveness of AABTC is based on the illusion of some successful cases in which the buyers are open to dialogue with the campaign organizations and pressure their suppliers, rather than scientific evidence of better performance and, therefore, better leverage of commercial capital over manufacturing capital. Further examples have shown either the reluctance of individual brand/retail companies to cooperate, or suppliers dropping the buyers rather than giving in to their demands, especially in cases regarding freedom of association and factory relocation. In these instances, even the so-called “good buyers” would say that they are not direct employers to third world workers and stay away from labour disputes. Or, that it is

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<sup>6</sup>The Kukdong case began in 2001 with workers protesting about wages and food and recognition of the independent trade union. It was crushed by factory management and leaders and the participating workers were fired. A number of US and Canadian campaign organizations and trade unions participated in the campaign to pressure Nike, Reebok and the Mexican government.

the “business decision” of the suppliers to relocate investment, not the buyers’ and that direct labour cost is not the most critical factor in relocation. In the case of the closure of PT Daejoo Leports Corporation, an Indonesian supplier to Adidas, Daejoo refuted the WRC’s pressure and Adidas’ recommendation to revert the decision to close down the unionized factory in Indonesia and the factory moved to China (Adidas 2004). Adidas and the licensee Agron said they “have neither encouraged nor supported such a closure.” Moreover, they “fully accept that, as an independent contractor, Daejoo are at liberty to make their own decisions regarding the long-term viability of their business in Indonesia. Neither Adidas-Salomon, nor Agron, have the authority to stop this” (Adidas 2004). A campaign strategy that assumes vaguely homogeneous strategic interests between commercial capital and the campaign, veils the fundamental nature of capital in ultimate profit maximization at the expense of labour, despite its momentary differentiation between commercial and manufacturing capital.

In specific cases, AABTC can be argued as effective, for example, in re-instating dismissed or locked out workers and in recognizing new, independent trade unions. The case of PT Kahatex in Indonesia, Metamoros in Mexico, the Kukdong in Mexico, the Free Trade Zone Workers’ Union in Jaqalanka Sri Lanka, the Gina Form Bra Corporation in Thailand are all such examples. However, arguing beyond individual capital and workers, the intrinsic limit of AABTC is that it gives no room to the ‘class’ issue. Capitalists and labourers exist as a sum of individuals, some of them are good and some of them are bad. This understanding of the relationship between different fragments of capitalists or/and workers, rather than a collective is prevalent in the consumer movement. Therefore, some of the consumer campaign organizations will compare or even award “good” companies with indicators. The individualist approach of the campaign makes it easy for individual companies to re-capture the campaign by collaborating with individual civil society organizations to give good practice cases while continuing to make profit against workers in general. Labour is divided and ruled by companies. Labour organizations are also divided by international funders that support CSR and “good” social dialogue projects that work for win-win situations rather than radical anti-neoliberalism or class-based movements.

*Movement without an Alternative – Consumer Organizing without Organizing Consuming Workers*

Despite cases of “tactical victories” won under the AABTC model, there is a question of how that can be sustained as a movement, not only in developing but developed countries. As capital is succeeding in driving down the price and cost of exploitation of labour as a whole, the moral appeal to workers as consumers is losing ground. The desperate need of the American trade unions and campaigners worldwide nowadays to crack down Wal-Mart is the best illustration of the intrinsic limitation of the non-class approach of the consumer campaign. The pricing down strategy of Sam Walton functions by volumous off-shore sourcing in countries like China, where labour costs are cheap and workers un-organized. China sold US \$12 billion in merchandise or nearly 10 percent of its total exports value to Wal-Mart in 2002. This strategy is supported by systematic violation of labour standards in the US while keeping such a growing poverty-ridden working class “sustainable” by consuming nothing but cheap products sold at Wal-Mart<sup>7</sup>. As Featherstone pointed out:

“The business model is that it really needs to create more poverty to grow...that problem is cleverly solved by creating more bad jobs worldwide. In a chilling reversal of Henry Ford’s strategy, which was to pay his workers amply so they could buy Ford cars, Wal-Mart’s stingy compensation policies, i.e. workers make, on average, just over \$ 8 an hour, and if they want health insurance, they must pay more than a third of the premium - contribute to an economy in which, increasingly, workers can only afford to shop at Wal-Mart.” (Featherstone 2005, p.2).

The American trade unions nowadays put Mr. Sam as the top target of union organizing. The employees of Wal-Mart, however, are mainly migrant workers at the bottom of the American working class who had been abandoned by elitist trade unionism that used to identify its interests with the state and steer for creat-

<sup>7</sup>A 2003 study found that 23 per cent of Wal-Mart customers live on incomes of less than \$25,000 a year. More than 20 percent of them have no bank account. About half of the customers are blue-collar workers and 20 percent are unemployed or elderly (Featherstone 2005).

ing “middle class” jobs for the workers it represented (Buhle 1999). A consumer campaign that exposes the miseries of workers of Wal-Mart even in America, not to mention in a supplier factory in China, may only ring a cynical chord to the Wal-Mart shoppers. To dream of combating corporate power with “consumer power” sanctioning individual companies turns out to be an erosion and de-politicization of the power of the working class in the long run. “A consumer makes an isolated, politically slight decision: to shop or not to shop. Most of the time, Wal-Mart has her exactly where it wants her, because the intelligent choice for anyone thinking as a consumer is not to make a political statement but to seek the best bargain and the greatest convenience.” (Featherstone 2005). Without organizing Wal-Mart shoppers as the working class and addressing the poverty of Wal-Mart shoppers in relation to capital, the anti-Wal-Mart campaign could be talking about the power of Wal-Mart shoppers, which in fact does not exist.

This non-class approach of the consumer campaign, the MSIs and the AABTC model also presupposes that (individual) workers would be happy within the existing system if their jobs are ‘kept’ for the time being and that they would have an external leverage on their employers as far as they can hold onto the international appeal mechanism. It becomes difficult to develop the labour movement into a full movement for an alternative development regime in developing countries. Very often, labour problems are understood as problems contained in one single area of development. However, labour is development itself, not one of the major ‘factors’ of development or human resources. The way in which human labouring activity is organized is the regime of development. In capitalist social relations, human labouring activity is organized as homogeneous-abstract labour, and therefore exploitable commodity labour. This is the way that “development” is imposed on the people. In a labour campaign that relies on the buying capital to “improve” the conditions of abstracted labour rather than challenging the abstraction of labour, it is difficult to challenge the nature of development within the existing capitalist social relations. The AABTC model can be at best a good band-aid approach that demands capitalists treat labour better, as ‘human’ resources with public and private regulations so that workers in developing countries can secure decent jobs for national economic development. This challenge emerges,

as we saw above, in the phase out of the Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) in developing countries such as Cambodia and Lesotho, which have nothing but the garment industry to get them on board the train of capitalist development. The limit of the AABTC model lies in that it builds solidarity with the labour movement in developing countries to improve the conditions of individual labour and capital only, but not solidarity that would empower the local labour movement to challenge the existing social relations toward an alternative development model.

### **Trade Unions as Consumer Movement: Growing Convergence between Consumer Campaigns and Trade Unions**

As it develops, there is a “realization” within the consumer campaign over the limitations of the case-by-case approach, as well as the shortcomings in stopping the mobility of capital. NGO campaigns in the West lack the resources and mandate to give direct support to local organizing at the company, national and international level, in order to control capital as a whole. While the multi-stakeholder initiatives do have trade union participation, they are more restricted to monitoring national capital and promoting voluntary “good practices”. Closer cooperation between the consumer campaign and the international trade unions is deemed important in the hope of building a real international solidarity movement to systematically end sweatshops in developing countries.

On the other hand, western and international trade unions also see their limitations in addressing the global mobility of capital, one of which is the weakened base of representation, especially with regard to the un-organized and newly organized workers in developing countries. There is a burning need to cooperate with the consumer campaign to mobilize international pressure and bargain with TNCs. The campaign also opens the space to get access to the non-affiliates and re-strengthen the existing trade unions. Bargaining International Framework Agreement with TNCs became all the more important. One of the ICFTU resolutions in the general meeting in 2004 was that, “Such framework agreements can offer important avenues for solving problems, including obtaining trade union recognition and organising, and (that) must complement rather than replace or compete with local or national collective agreements” (ICFTU 2004).

The Play Fair at the Olympics Campaign 2004 jointly

launched by the CCC, Oxfam International, the ITGLWF and the ICFTU was a marriage of NGOs and international trade unions in the form of a consumer campaign to overcome the above limitations. The campaign employs the usual tactics of naming and shaming individual companies and mobilizing street actions. The campaign targets particular sportswear companies such as Puma, Asics, Mizuno, Kappa, Umbro, and Lotto that have not been pressured before unlike Nike, Reebok or Adidas, and by so doing would create a critical constituency for a sectoral approach to the industry.

The Olympics Campaign is an integration of the trade union movement agenda and that of the consumer campaign. On the one hand, the campaign follows the logic of targeting institutions that have “the biggest leverage”, in this case the International Olympics Committee (IOC). It is estimated that the Athens Olympics would render the IOC with US\$648 million from company sponsorship and US\$66 million from licensing its logos to sportswear brand companies (Play Fair at Olympics 2004). Adidas and Mizuno, for instance, sponsored the uniforms of the IOC and the organizing committee respectively (Play Fair at Olympics 2004). On the other hand, the campaign also demanded bargaining on labour relations at the global level in a sectoral framework agreement between the International Trade Association, the World Federation of the Sports Goods Industry (WFSGI)<sup>8</sup> and the ITGLWF. The NGO agenda included a variety of demands developed on the basis of previous campaigns, such as requesting the IOC to integrate a labour code and implementation mechanism into its licensing policy. Companies would be pressured on best practices, supply chain transparency, review of the just-in-time purchasing practices of the buyers and engagement with local stakeholders on Freedom of Association and worker education (OC 2004a).

While the IOC discarded the demands from the campaign for integrating a labour code into its licensing policy, the response of the WFSGI is illustrative of the limitations of organizing a trade union campaign as a consumer campaign. The

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<sup>8</sup>The WFSGI is an association formed by the brand companies, national organisations/associations and trading companies. It claims itself as “the authoritative body for the sports industry”, as well as “the official non-governmental association recognized by the International Olympic Committee as the industry representative within the IOC family” (WFSGI 2005).



WFSGI rejected negotiating a framework agreement because it is not an employer (OC 2004b). The trade association insists on more voluntarism by encouraging members and suppliers to continue to implement their CSR programs and engage in dialogue with external stakeholders (WFSGI 2005)

The fundamental problem of CSR is that it de-contextualizes and displaces capitalist social relations with “public” relations that have nothing to do with labour relations. The EU Green Paper on CSR recognizes that the prime responsibility of a company is to generate profits, and CSR does have economic value as it is “a process by which companies manage their relation with a variety of stakeholders who can have a real influence on their license to operate” (EU 2001: 7). CSR has the internal dimension over employees and the environment as “factors of production” and an external dimension which “extends beyond the doors of the company into the local community and involve a whole range of stakeholders in addition to employees and shareholders: business partners and suppliers, customers, public authorities and NGO representatives, local community....” (EU 2001: 14) Ironically, except for the sectoral agreement, a large part of the program of work proposed by the Olympics campaign, (i.e. management infrastructure for compliance, worker education and training, dialogue with stakeholders and greater transparency) falls into the EU line of CSR (OC 2004a). The campaign is caught in a quandary as the WFSGI answers with promises of more CSR but nothing on labour relations (OC 2004).

Around the time when the Olympics campaign was launched, production lines of sportswear suppliers in developing countries were operating as usual despite the mobilization of campaign groups in different parts of the world. The response of the WFSGI shows that a campaign leveraging “buying relations” (of consumers) against “buying relations” (of IOC and member companies of WFSGI), detaching itself from direct labour relations and the local mobilization of workers against employers at the workplace would easily replace capitalist social relations with “public” relations. It does not help and the campaign will not be changed into a real labour or trade union campaign simply by adding the names of two global trade unions to it. To negotiate a sectoral agreement between a business associa-

tion that is not the employer, trade unions, and NGOs that cannot represent and mobilize all the garment workers has proved not to be feasible at the moment.

### **Towards New Organizing: Beyond the Existing Movement and Campaign**

Over the years, the consumer campaign, in collaboration with the local labour movement and coalitions in developing countries, have identified and supported various forms of labour organizations. These include local workers' alliances, workers' forums and workers' cooperatives in Asian countries such as Bangladesh, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, where local legislation outlaws the formation of workers' unions in the EPZs and union busting as well as corporate unions are part of everyday reality for garment workers (CEC at al. 2004). These also include newly formed plant or regional trade unions in the EPZs such as the Free Trade Zone Workers' Union in the EPZ in Sri Lanka and the Kukdong trade union. Most are not recognized by and remain outside the existing national and international trade union structure. Mendez (2002) and Collins (2003) argue, in particular, for the autonomous women's organizations in Central America that sprang into being as a result of the casualization of work and employment as well as unequal gender relations at the workplace. They provide a space for women to discuss these issues outside the workplace. However, they are excluded from "trans-national political space" because of the narrow definition of what constitutes a labour movement as harboured by existing trade unions and northern-based solidarity organizations (Collins 2003: 182). The content is larger than the form. There is the "potential" that this labour activism may become a bottom-up force to challenge the membership and structure of existing trade unions. The ICFTU Millennium Review also recognizes the problem of the Cold War legacy and business unionism overriding the working class movement within the international labour movement.

“... The international labour movement is still battling with its legacy from the cold war. Too often, the international trade union movement relies on boardroom tactics and diplomacy instead of using the power of the working class. It often replaces open and robust debates in struc-

tures with deals between a few, financially powerful national centres, and the continuation of an inner circle of trade unions able to influence the direction of the entire movement, which can undermine internal democracy... Cold war politics, combined with the pressure to make the ICFTU the most representative international movement for workers, have over years compromised the principle of free and independent unionism. A number of the current affiliates would fail a rigorous test of independence, despite this being one of the most important principles of the ICFTU. We must have the courage and leadership capacity to ensure that all affiliates adhere to the basic principles on which our movement is founded” (ICFTU 2001).

The diversity of the new organizing initiatives that embrace different forms of contractual workers, women workers and home-workers both in developed and developing countries also challenges the factory-based-regular-employment-only orientation of the existing national and international trade unions. However, within these initiatives, there exists the possibility that a new unity, based on having similar relations to capital, can be lost and subsumed under fragmented forms of conflicting relations between formal/informal, male/female, unionised/non-unionised labour. That would reinforce their reliance on the external leverage model, whose seeming “success” keeps them losing sight of the fact that their very success is in fact based on labour being re-captured both by capital and itself.

To address capitalist social relations, campaigns that leverage the seemingly “most powerful” actor – commercial capital – are not necessarily the most “effective”. Instead, campaigns are to be developed as an organic ‘moment’ of the on-going organizing initiatives at the factory and community level. More often than not, labour solidarity starts at the local and regional levels, with neighbourhood factories and supporting groups targeting local, provincial or national government, direct factory owners and local business associations. The consumer movement is a moment within an alliance that is to be placed at the level second to local, national, and regional solidarity building. The consumer movement itself is not wrong, but the encroachment of a particular campaign strategy of the consumer movement into the labour

movement risks creating divisions and displacing the working class movement of which the consumer campaign should be a part. To build a working class movement requires retrieving labour, constantly moving in different forms and relations, as the subject and radicalizing the existing trade union movement with solidarity with different forms of organizing in both the East and the West.

### **Conclusion**

In an attempt to critically review the current movement for labour solidarity, we addressed the strategies of the traditional trade union movement and the consumer movement, in reaction to the increasing movement of capital precipitating changes in the form of labour in the globalized garment industry. While the new social movement re-identifies workers in developed countries as consumers and takes an individualist approach to “labour” newly integrated into the global supply chain of the garment industry, the traditional trade union movement has been incapable of going beyond the factory and national boundaries, and thus able to contain labour as a force for social change only within the existing geographical and industrial area of production. There is increasing convergence between the consumer movement and the trade union movement, which, however, comes without overcoming the shortcomings. Rather, we find the possibility of reviving the labour movement in the attempts by grassroots organizing initiatives that are grasping the nature of capitalist labour in motion in everyday struggles in factories as well as the community, i.e. the different dimensions of *society* into which the logic of capitalist reproduction permeates. Solidarity will go beyond being a mere slogan, to become feasible, only by supporting these movements and going beyond the institutional, geographical and national boundaries that are redefined by capital movement that pits one worker against another.

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