

**No More Imperial Cities:
On Futurology in Social Science**

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Urban Research Program
Working Paper No.57
September 1996



URBAN RESEARCH PROGRAM
RESEARCH SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

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SERIES EDITOR:
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ISBN 0 7315 2518 3
ISSN 1035-3828

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Australian National University
Canberra, ACT 0200

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Australian National University 1996

National Library of Australia
Cataloguing-in-Publication data:

Gleeson, Brendan, 1964
No more imperial cities: on futurology in social science

Bibliography
ISBN 0 7315 2518 3

1. Forecasting. 2. Social prediction. I. Australian National University.
Urban Research Program. II. Title. (Series : Urban Research
Program working paper; no. 57)

303.49

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Abstract

This paper considers the dangers for social science when the predictive urge extends to prophesy, the conviction that the future is already knowable. Seen from a spatial perspective, futurology frequently relies on the theoretical aggrandisement of contemporary places to press its claim that the future of space has already been foretold in contemporary events. Two cases are essayed as cautionary tales: first, the inflated claims made in the social sciences during the 1980s for Los Angeles as a preview of an inevitable post-modern future for global capitalism; and second, the more recent, and no less extravagant, commentaries which have trumpeted contemporary, neo-liberal New Zealand as the future the world must have. The misleading claims of futurologists are exposed in both instances through empirical analyses of actual events. It is concluded that futurology is a deceptive, and therefore non-scientific, gaze which occludes social and natural contingency.

No More Imperial Cities: On Futurology in Social Science

Brendan Gleeson

There are two futures, the future of desire and the future of fate, and man's (sic) reason has never learnt to separate them.

J.D. Bernal

*California is not what it was
Rome too is not what it was
No more imperial cities
No more crazy societies
Berlin, Vancouver, Samarkand*

Jean Baudrillard

Leaving Los Angeles

'The seers of Los Angeles have become countless...'¹

Who remembers Los Angeles? Of course, we all do — though perhaps now a little vaguely in the gloomy 1990s. But things were different in the heady 1980s when Southern California's famous sun beamed its intoxicating light on all America — indeed, the world — and when it seemed all eyes were captivated by the brilliant glow of the state's wondrously-brash megalopolis. Recall how Los Angeles was carolled by academics, cultural critics, politicians and the global media as the paradigmatic city of a new, Post-Fordist capitalism that would eventually overtake the globe. This anthem of praise was, of course, carefully orchestrated by local political and economic elites whose frequent exhortatory outpourings soon created a sea of self-admiration that many commentators and image-makers wallowed in. Typical of this self-applause was the city-sponsored manifesto, *L.A 2000: A City for the Future* (1988), whose authors were drawn from a carefully chosen cross-section of civic and corporate interests. The report gushed

¹. Soja (1989:223)

shamelessly about the city's axial role in the coming millennium (for example 'leading hub of world trade'), until climaxing with the cry that Los Angeles would be 'THE city of the 21st century' (cited in Rieff, 1993:186 & 23). This and earlier civic hyperbole was breathlessly matched by the global media and domestic and foreign social commentators, all of whom heaped significance (if not always praise) upon Los Angeles.

The fascination with Los Angeles in the media and the academy is understandable (perhaps) if one recalls the popular 1980s assumption that the future of capitalism might be read in the city's myriad social and economic patterns. Many pundits from both spheres were convinced that Los Angeles was 'the place where the American future might possibly be working itself out' (Rieff, 1993:23). Like a crystal ball, Los Angeles was held up to the world gaze by the various media, and was frequently the setting for portentous films and books which predicted the future (not always optimistically) of global capitalism. Academics and artists were particularly entranced by a city which seemed to be the convergence point for an extraordinary array of human experiences and socio-cultural trends — how often did one hear the jingle rejoicing that Los Angeles was 'where it all comes together'?

It was a popular nostrum of political and scientific opinion in the 1980s that Los Angeles would be a — or indeed, *the* — pivot of a new 'Pacific Century'. Geographers joined economists, cultural critics and politicians in a dawn chorus that heralded the birth of a new postmodern age of resurgent capitalism which would centre on the dynamic economies of the Pacific Rim. As Daly and Logan observe, the central claim of this carolling was that:

the axis of the world was passing to the Pacific Basin. The next century, many agreed, would be the Pacific entry; it was inevitable. (1989: 2)

Midway through the decade, the geographer, Ed Soja, intoned that 'securing the Pacific Rim has been the manifest destiny of Los Angeles' (1986:257). Clearly moved by the significance fate had reserved for Los Angeles, he lyricised on the grandeur of 'the epitomising world city, *une ville devenue monde*' (1986:25)5). All, of course, was not harmony — many discordant notes were heard from those who feared the depredations of this new 'sweatshop' capitalism and many scholarly and artistic depictions of Los Angeles focused on the city's spectacular maladies, including crime,

poverty, racial and ethnic polarisation, and homelessness. Nonetheless a unifying refrain of the decade continued to proclaim the *importance* of Los Angeles in a new (Pacific Rim) world order.

Of course the prophetic trance had its strongest hold within the city's own overlapping communities of business people, politicians, academics, journalists and image-makers — many of whom were variously enthralled and appalled with Los Angeles as a vision of things to come. One political commentator, for example, warned that Los Angeles was 'the theme city of post-New Deal America' (Meyerson, 1989:6). Others echoed this anxious warning about Los Angeles as the prototype Post-Welfare city. Rieff remembers that the city then seemed:

a society made up almost entirely of true believers. They had found the future, no matter how much they might disagree about what that future was. They had found the dream. (1993:42)

Whilst utopian and dystopian views of Los Angeles abounded, both Right and Left were united in believing it to be a paradigmatic city. Los Angeles had assumed point position in the march towards a Post-Fordist future. Rieff reminds us that, on the topic of Los Angeles at least, Right and Left were really denominations within a broader faith whose central article was the belief that 'L.A.'s destiny would be grandiose...' (1993:248). Indeed

...even those who favored the *Blade Runner* scenario shared in this [belief] since what could have been more self-regarding, when all was said and done, than to insist that L.A. would be the only dystopia that mattered? (1993:248)

As Davis points out, the prophetic significance of Los Angeles in social science was hardly an invention of the 1980s, and its genealogy can be traced to the writings of the Frankfurt School (and other) exiles who settled in Southern California during the 1930s. Brecht, for example, thought the city represented both heaven and hell, whilst Adorno and Horkheimer regarded it as the dark 'crystal ball of capitalism's future' (Davis, 1990:48). Even then the gloomy significance which the German outcasts attached to Los Angeles found its mirror reflection in the cheery boosterism of business and civic lobbies. As early as 1923, a Chamber of Commerce publication had bragged that '...Los Angeles will become the world's leading city' (cited in Rieff, 1993:186). But the prophetic sentiment was never more popular, nor more passionately felt, than in the feverish 1980s:

Los Angeles had always been a place where expansive rhetoric about the future was a commonplace of civic life, but even by that standard the [1980s] mood was even more unconsciously upbeat than usual. (Rieff, 1993:23)

Amongst local and (some foreign) social critics, a peculiarly Californian futurology emerged which seemed a fusion of the city's traditional identity as the cinematic production house of the American dream and the increasingly prophetic mood of its political and intellectual elites. The future it seemed was a script being written in/by Los Angeles. Many social scientific essays on contemporary Los Angeles read like movie previews of what was to come in capitalism. Notwithstanding his own acute objections to the futurology which pervaded social and cultural criticism of Los Angeles, it must be said that Mike Davis' vividly dystopian (and often thrilling) depictions of the city had a certain cinematic ambience. His efforts to show us what the future should not be, sometimes had the feel of a *Future Show*:

The city bristles with malice. The carefully manicured lawns of the Westside sprout ominous little signs threatening "Armed Response!" Wealthier neighbourhoods in the canyons and hillsides cower behind walls guarded by gun-toting private police and state-of-the-art electronic surveillance systems. Downtown, a publicly subsidized 'urban renaissance' has raised a forbidding corporate citadel, separated from the surrounding poor neighborhoods by battlements and moats...In cities like Los Angeles, *on the hard edge of postmodernity*, architecture and the police apparatus are being merged to an unprecedented degree...*Los Angeles, as always in the vanguard, offers an especially disturbing guide to the emerging liaisons between urban architecture and the police state* (emphasis added 1992:154-7).

During the 1980s, an influential coterie of Los Angeles-based geographers, portrayed the city as a place of extraordinary significance, both as the meeting point of critical socio-spatial flows and the centre of many geographic regions (Davis, 1990; Gregory, 1994). At the end of the decade, Davis noted that the so-called 'L.A. School':

...have made clear that they see themselves as excavating the outlines of a paradigmatic postfordism, an emergent twenty-first century urbanism. (1990:84)

In an already infamous declaration, Soja and Scott, appointed Los Angeles the 'capital of the late 20th century' (1986:249). Elsewhere, Soja's political-

economic map of the Pacific Rim had Los Angeles sharing with Tokyo the role of 'capital of capital' (1989a:21). Meanwhile, Dear and Wolch, lamented Los Angeles' reputation as the US 'capital of homelessness', but still uttered the hope that the city would in 2000 be the 'pre-eminent metropolis of the First-World' (1989:37). As Davis so acutely observed:

By exposing the darkest facets of the 'world city'...the 'L.A. School' ridicules the utopias of *L.A. 2000*. Yet, by hyping Los Angeles as the paradigm of the future (even in a dystopian vein), they tend to collapse history into teleology and glamorize the very reality they would deconstruct. (1990:86)

Geographers, of course, did not give themselves completely to futurology: the diversity and sophistication of their Los Angeles studies made too much room for contingency for that simple criticism to be true. Nonetheless, there was often a strong resonance of the city's civic boosterism in the many analyses which assumed a paradigmatic, frequently global, significance for their empirical contexts.

*'This centrifugal metropolis...'*²

Many influential social critics came from other cities and abroad to pay homage to this apparition of the future which had settled on the central Californian coast. Fredric Jameson and Umberto Eco both paid tribute to the Mecca of a new postmodern age. Eco made an early (1976) pilgrimage to the manger of an infant(ile) civilisation — California, 'where the posturban civilisation represented by Los Angeles is being born' (1987:26).

One of the more fervent pilgrims was Jean Baudrillard, for whom there was 'nothing to match flying over Los Angeles at night' (1988:51). (Indeed, Baudrillard was not the only observer of the city whose rapture seemed to increase with altitude — recall the giddy prose of that other notable aerial survey of Los Angeles (Soja, 1986)). Baudrillard was utterly mesmerised by Los Angeles, and his hypnosis seemed a curious hybrid of scientific and aesthetic stimulation. In *America*, the vertiginous awe of his prose borders at times on stupefaction, revealing, perhaps, the intoxicating power of the city to render the (European) observer insensible with its immense complexity:

². Baudrillard (1988:58)

You will never have encountered anything that stretches as far as this before. Even the sea cannot match it, since it is not divided up geometrically. The irregular, scattered flickering of European cities does not produce the same parallel lines, the same vanishing points, the same aerial perspectives either. They are medieval cities. *This one condenses by night the entire future geometry of the networks of human relations*, gleaming in their abstraction, luminous in their extension, astral in their reproduction to infinity. *Mulholland Drive by night is an extraterrestrial's vantage-point on the Galactic metropolis.* (emphasis added, 1988:52)

Like some local producers of futurology, this foreign seer liked to work with film ('...this town...is nothing more than an immense script and a perpetual motion picture' (Baudrillard, 1983:26)): to see the future, one only had to sit back and watch the(ir) show.

In the closing pages of *America*, Baudrillard further reflects on why Los Angeles was a place of compelling significance:

Why is LA...so fascinating? It is because you are delivered from all depth there — a brilliant, mobile, superficial neutrality, a challenge to meaning and profundity, a challenge to nature and culture, an outer hyperspace, with no origin, no reference points. (1988:124)

It was by California's warm shores that the world-weary, European critic could find repose, and even pleasure, in the society of infinite surfaces and depthlessness — a place where science, the difficult toil of wresting meaning from social contexts (work), appeared meaningless, if not impossible. Nonetheless one could luxuriate in the assurance that everything was so significant.

Los Angeles, as Baudrillard observed, was certainly a centrifuge for social and aesthetic criticism in the 1980s. In 1986, Soja and Scott embraced the throng of 'cultural critics, social and political analysts, theoretical human geographers, and others' who had joined them to extol the significance of Los Angeles (1986:254). It was hard not to be impressed by this ensemble of notables and their infectious refrain: 'It All Comes Together in Los Angeles' (Soja, 1989b).

Who Killed the Future?

The choir of civic visionaries has now fallen strangely silent. The 1990s have not followed its prophetic score for Los Angeles — instead the city has succumbed to a combination of the depredatory effects of free and flexible-markets, the capricious global political-economy and ecological catastrophe. After a softening bombardment of federal military spending cutbacks from the late 1980s (Law *et al.*, 1993), the city's future finally detonated in a series of social and ecological implosions during the early 1990s (Johnson *et al.*, 1993; Davis, 1995a). Los Angeles has survived its trial by recession (from 1989), riot (1992), fire (1993), earthquake (1994) and flood (1995) — but only just (see Davis, 1995a). The city is still shuddering from the economic and social aftershocks of these disasters — most critically, local state finances have deteriorated to the point of penury (indeed Orange County actually defaulted on its debt). In 1995 Wall Street threatened to downgrade Los Angeles' municipal bonds, forcing the County to contemplate a series of socially catastrophic spending cuts in order to avoid bankruptcy (Davis, 1995b). In announcing the planned cuts to vital public services, the County's chief administrative officer observed that 'the age of miracles is over' (Davis, 1995b:76). Indeed, reality has bitten Los Angeles with ferocity — the barbarous caprices of mass society and nature seem to have sacked the 'capital of the late 20th century' of its rich destiny. Now both the global media and cultural critics appear rather reluctant to spotlight this tawdry, former star city.

In social criticism it seems that the city's hinterland of significance has been radically reduced by its dramatic misfortunes. Like the famously callous international credit ratings agencies, many social commentators have responded to Los Angeles' troubles with a sudden and cold-blooded downgrading of its global theoretical rating. Rieff's recent depiction of Los Angeles, for example, abandons the view which was common during the 1980s of the city as simultaneously developed and underdeveloped, the meeting point of the First and Third Worlds. He simply plots contemporary Los Angeles as the 'capital of the Third World' (1993). Davis argues that, following the 1992 riots, the federal administration abandoned the 'city of weary angels' (1993b:54), after wearying itself of Los Angeles' seemingly intractable socio-economic problems (1993a). Even before some of the more recent natural disasters, the urban theorists Friedman and Sandercock

pronounced that 'Los Angeles is now a ravaged city, physically, economically and psychologically' (1992:24).

Los Angeles may be ravaged but it is not destroyed. The hard contemporary truth for the 1980s prophets is that both Armageddon and Abundance have never seemed further away from the city. Today Los Angeles is simply one of an increasing number of global cities that is struggling with the interlocking problems of public fiscal exhaustion, social polarisation and ecological degradation.

In geography, the effervescence which marked certain commentaries a decade ago has subsided, and a new gravity prevails. The sobriety of Law *et al.* (1993) seems to capture the new mood of humility. They describe Los Angeles as 'defense-less territory', a city devastated economically by the reductions in federal military spending. For them, the post-Cold War Los Angeles industrial landscape is far removed from the "'brave new world" of a post-Fordist technopolis' which the city's economic geographers had imagined just a decade before (Law *et al.*, 1993:293).

Elsewhere, many former prophets seem simply to have lapsed into a gloomy silence. Perhaps this hushed atmosphere in social commentary reflects a little embarrassment, a realisation that many were hypnotised during the 1980s by the whirling hype of the city's hucksters. After a decade of luxuriant prediction, it seems that the prophets have fled leaving only a desert of wisdom.

The New Zealand Miracle

A Bad Moon Rising

If capitalism's celebrity city has disappointed its champions (and its critics) by failing to provide the future it promised, the yearning for a new star has not lessened. But it seems that elsewhere, the story is not much better. Indeed, there is a gloomy perception that capitalism itself is in trouble: economic stagnation is undermining European political and economic integration, whilst also inflaming labour unrest and racial tensions; an explosive mix of gangster capitalism and resurgent ethnic and religious prejudices threatens the former Eastern Bloc countries; worsening social polarisation in the USA is encouraging both political extremism and

paralysis; Third World debt is reaching meltdown levels; whilst the 'Asian Tigers' are consuming their own political and ecological habitats. Aspirants for the role of capitalist lodestar seem rather thin on the ground.

But a restive audience is waiting: the capitalist world desperately needs a new vision and indeed there is lately a rising clamour that an image of a prosperous future has once again been sighted. Now neo-liberal prophets are rushing to tell the world of a new apparition, the 'New Zealand miracle'. Word of this disturbing vision is also spreading in waves of alarm and dismay through international labour and social democratic networks. Thus the global oracular gaze is turning from the fading trail of Comet Los Angeles towards a brighter star in the now-unbroken, capitalist firmament. New prophetic hopes have been ignited at a surprisingly marginal point on the pacific Rim, New Zealand — heretofore a rather anonymous, outer tide mark of the British Empire, now numbering only one fifth of the population of greater Los Angeles.

Flavour of the Month

In recent years, New Zealand has added several distinctive offerings to global trade markets, such as its popular 'Hokey Pokey' ice-cream — a unique mixture of vanilla confection and butterscotch crunch. Another export success has been the 'New Zealand Miracle', a sort of rhetorical version of the ice-cream, a rich blend of honeyed financial success stories that can supposedly be attributed to the country's neo-liberal reform program of the past decade. The 'New Zealand Miracle' is the trademark which has been used by local and overseas promoters to sell this neo-liberal reform package — or 'Structural Adjustment Programme' (SAP) — to other national governments and global financial institutions. What is the SAP product that we are being urged to buy?

James (1992) and Kelsey (1995) provide thoroughgoing reviews of the SAP, both describing it as a comprehensive restructuring of New Zealand's public sector and economy that began with the election of a 'reformist' Labour government in 1984 and which has continued to the present day. Castle and Haworth (1993) explain that the SAP has been carefully engineered by a powerful set of bureaucrats (notably in the Treasury), politicians and business interests who set out in the early 1980s to transform New Zealand's debt-ridden welfare state along neo-liberal lines. Other commentators have compared this neo-liberal front to the New Right lobbies

in the USA and Britain (see, for example, Forer (1995)). McLoughlin (1992) describes New Zealand's neo-liberalism as a 'cargo cult', led by local elites who have encouraged an extraordinary political devotion to Chicago School economics.

In brief, the key features of the SAP have been a radical reduction in government spending and regulation, corporatisation and privatisation of state assets and functions, trade liberalisation and labour market deregulation. Besides deregulating the productive and financial sectors of the economy, the reforms have been comprehensive in scope — including central and local government administration, environmental planning, education and social services. The dominance of the ideology of the market place, a search for efficiency in resource use, and the influence of senior neo-liberal Treasury officials have been hallmarks of the SAP (Holland and Boston, 1990).

The results of the SAP have been mixed, a fact not apparent (or convenient) to the New Zealand state and business elites which have pronounced the 'experiment' a resounding success. Nonetheless, a selective review of the more positive economic indicators of recent years makes cheery reading for neo-liberals and exasperated governments with sluggish economies. Public sector debt has been reduced — from 51 percent of GDP in 1992 to 38 percent in 1995, with projections for further falls — whilst the government has since 1994 been able to run impressive budget surpluses after a succession of deficits in earlier years (estimated surplus for 1995-1996 of \$2.49 billion) (Kelsey, 1995). Since 1993, GDP growth has been strong (5 percent in 1994-1995) whilst inflation has remained low by OECD standards since the early 1990s. Perceived 'rigidities' in labour markets (i.e. unions, centralised arbitration and national awards covering salaries and working conditions) have been dispensed with or reduced. Job growth revived in 1993 and by June 1995 the official jobless rate stood at a 'mere' 6.3 percent.

Of course, as Easton and Gerritsen (1996) explain, the 'recovery' in the economy and state finances in recent years has yet to compensate the country properly for the seven years of economic stagnation and social fragmentation which the SAP imposed on New Zealanders. Many key economic indicators, such as public debt, are just now returning to their pre-1984 levels (Easton, 1994). Moreover, there are increasing signs that the recovery is already faltering and that recession looms in the near future

But it seems that both this perspective view of the ‘recovery’ and the increasingly bleak economic outlook cannot dull the lustre of the ‘New Zealand Miracle’. The SAP now has powerful international advocates — in the form of international finance media, influential economists and global institutions, such as the OECD and the World Bank — who have much political capital invested in the New Zealand product.

The ‘New Zealand Miracle’ is an international success story which is steadily attaining the status of popular non(?)fiction in global finance and governance circles — just read the plaudits and testimonies from (neo-liberal) critics on the back cover: the OECD (1994) praises the ‘recovery’ which had to follow years of sensible but painful reform, whilst the powerful international credit ratings agency Moody’s Investors Services enthuses on ‘one of the most ambitious and comprehensive structural reforms undertaken by any OECD country’ which had set in place a ‘virtuous cycle’ of self-adjusting growth (cited in Kelsey, 1995:7). The influential Geneva-based World Economic Forum has proclaimed New Zealand the ‘new star’ of the global, competitive economy (*The Australian Financial Review*, 30.5.96:6). Some of the least restrained tributes have come from the *Economist* which has repeatedly congratulated ‘the most thoroughgoing economic reform in the OECD’ for creating ‘a paradise for free-marketeers — if not for those New Zealanders who have lost their jobs’ (cited in Kelsey, 1995:8). As Forer (1995) and Kelsey (1995) report, the *Economist*’s enthusiasm was matched by the *Wall Street Journal*, Toronto’s *Globe and Mail* and Britain’s *Times* and *Financial Times*. Many of the major Australian newspapers - notably *The Australian* and *The Australian Financial Review* — have also been tireless cheerleaders for the SAP.

Nowhere have the economic prescriptions of Chicago School economists been more vigorously pursued in a developed country than in New Zealand (Haworth, 1994; Whitwell, 1990), and neo-liberal pundits and institutions are anxious to see the experiment proclaimed a success and the SAP ‘treatment’ generalised to other Western countries. Hence, the guardians of the global economy are increasingly heralding the New Zealand SAP path as the *only* way forward for stagnant advanced capitalist economies. Indeed, the trumpeting of New Zealand’s ‘turnaround economy’ has a familiar prophetic tone to it. The *Economist*, for example, insists that the SAP is a set of ‘trail blazing reforms’ which provides other Western nations with a recipe for economic revival (cited in Kelsey, 1995:8). The World

Economic Forum assures us that New Zealand's reforms 'will be widely studied and emulated in future years' (*The Australian Financial Review*, 30.5.96:6).

In 1993, the head of New Zealand's Business Roundtable, a powerful junta of corporate interests, observed that countries with large public sectors, such as Canada, Sweden and Germany, 'have become detached from reality' and would be soon overtaken by economic crisis (*Otago Daily Times*, 16.10.93:34). Their only salvation, he claimed, lay in the immediate adoption of the SAP. Delusions of grandeur flourished as the 'recovery' deoxygenated the country's political (and intellectual) atmosphere. In 1993, the state produced its own version of the *LA 2000* report — the *Asia 2000* strategy — which plots a fabulous economic destiny for New Zealand within the new Asian ascendancy. Sound familiar?

But there is an important difference between the prophetic interest in New Zealand and that futurology which fixed on Los Angeles a decade ago. No-one is saying that New Zealand will be the centre of the new world capitalist system, as many did for the Pacific Rim and its cities. (Although the immodest political cant of New Zealand's ruling elites often shies just short of this fantastic claim.) Unlike the Los Angeles vision, the New Zealand image does not conjure an inevitable geographic re-centring of the world and the diffusion of proto-typical economic and cultural forms. Whereas Los Angeles was held to preview the inevitable — i.e. *future as place* — the New Zealand Miracle is an explicitly normative vision. It is not the divining vision of where things will go, but rather the revelation from-on-high of how things should be; viz., *place as exemplar*. New Zealand is the set of tablets, come down from the mount of economic wisdom. (Although the Left will groan that these same desiderata have in the past made many descents from many mountains.) For its champions, New Zealand's SAP is a prescription of hard economic medicine that must be followed if capitalist countries are to regain growth and fiscal health.

Thus, the New Zealand path is not cast as inevitable by its advocates; rather they explain the SAP as a course that can only be taken through dramatic political choice by nation states. However, it must be said that the model's neo-liberal champions see the SAP as the very embodiment of reason. Thus the quasi-religious faith of neo-liberals in 'rational choice' as a universal human trait encourages the model's advocates to identify New Zealand's SAP with the future of capitalism. On the other hand, the almost

universal political pessimism of the Left nourishes a similar, but melancholic, sense of destiny.

However, as with Los Angeles, the increasing significance accorded to New Zealand in international theoretical and policy realms derives from both critical (i.e. Left) and laudatory (i.e. Right) interpretations. Critics fear that New Zealand's recent history indeed foretells the increasingly impoverished futures of advanced capitalist societies. Thus, a throng of non-believers and apostates are now journeying to foreign lands, attempting to counter the global media's idolatry of the SAP by arguing that the 'New Zealand miracle' is a vision of doom, not prosperity. Not unreasonably, they fear its emulation in the rest of the advanced capitalist world (the World bank has already imposed a similar model of adjustment on many developing countries).

One outspoken critic of the SAP, Auckland Law Professor, Jane Kelsey, has, for example, warned Australians against adopting the reform model in several well-publicised public lectures in that country (see *The Canberra Times*, 26.2.96:13). In February 1995, New Zealand's Association of Non-Government Organisations (ANGO) released internationally a report countering the glowing account of the SAP which the government had delivered to the United Nations World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen. The ANGO report aimed to tell the world 'the story of 10 years of social dislocation that the New Zealand official report ignores' (Kelsey & O'Brien, 1995:i). For several years, leading New Zealand unionists have been warning labour organisations in other countries about the dire consequences for workers of the S.A.P.

But there are reasons to doubt that the hopes and fears of champions and critics alike will be realised. There are reasons to believe that, like Los Angeles, New Zealand will disappoint any belief that it provides a ready preview of the global future. For, as will shortly be shown, the New Zealand created by the neo-liberal revolution of the past decade is an unstable and rapidly fragmenting society which cannot provide the convincing global model of change so desired by the Right and so feared by the Left.

It is probably impossible to convince neo-liberals that the 'New Zealand Miracle' is just a mirage which will evaporate in time, as the reality of the SAP's contradictions and failures becomes more apparent. It may be just as hard to reassure the Left that the SAP is not a new world patent for social

misery, even though the reforms have clearly devastated New Zealand society. The obstinate belief in New Zealand as utopia/dystopia across the political spectrum seems to derive from a common myopia, or more precisely, a failure to examine the detailed consequences of the SAP. A closer look at the facts reveals that the model is disintegrating, and may not survive attempts to secure its generalisation.

The Devil is in the Details

Honey I Shrank the Economy

The first period of the SAP (1984-1990), overseen by two Labour governments, saw economic growth slow to a near standstill (Wilkes & OBrien, 1994; Roper, 1993). In the first few years after its election (1990), the National government imposed a recessionary macroeconomic regime on the country through dramatic public spending cuts (Dalziel, 1992). In 1991 the New Zealand economy shrank by two percent. Although the economy has been expanding since 1992, the country has still not regained its 1985-1986 growth levels. The SAP actually reduced growth for much of the reform era: in the period 1985-1992, OECD economies in total expanded by 20 percent whilst New Zealand's economy shrank by one percent (Easton & Gerritsen, 1996; OECD, 1993). In 1994 the economist, Easton, characterised the SAP as a decade of lost growth, which the post-1993 recovery could not restore to New Zealand (Easton, 1994).

Now New Zealand's 'turnaround economy' seems to be turning on its owners and trainers: the much feted 'recovery' of 1994 appears to have gone before it really got going. Several critical macro indicators have been in decline since early 1995 and the consensus view of economists is that a major recession is imminent (*The New Zealander*, 8.5.96:21). GDP growth is plummeting: by December 1995, the annual growth rate had slumped to just over half (3.5 percent) the 1994 level (6.3 percent). In early 1996, both government and private sector economists were forecasting continuing decline, with the Treasury gloomily predicting a growth rate of just 1.5 percent by mid-year (*The Australian*, 9.4.96:6). Private sector economists argue that the economy is slowing at an even faster rate (*The Australian Financial Review*, 29.3.96:23). The decline in growth has seriously eroded company profits, business confidence and job creation (*The Independent*,

19.4.96:8). Accordingly, the government now expects a rise in the unemployment rate to nearly seven percent in 1997 (many observers regard this as a conservative estimate).

A key feature of the SAP was the Reserve Bank Act 1989 which limited the Bank to the sole objective of pursuing 'price stability' in the economy. Since 1990, the government has defined 'price stability' as an annual inflation rate between zero and two percent. By 1993 it appeared that the Bank had discharged its sole responsibility to the nation with the economy registering an inflation rate of just 1.5 percent (Kelsey, 1995). However, the post-1992 'recovery' saw rising pressure on prices: in 1995 a mild panic erupted amongst the financial community following the release of June quarter figures indicating an annual inflation rate of 4.6 percent. Almost a year later, the Bank's governor was forced to admit that inflation was still above its target range and would likely remain so for the rest of the year (*The Independent*, 26.4.96:30).

The systemic contradictions in the SAP model were further exposed as the consequences of prolonged reductions in infrastructure investment, skills training and industrial research, took their toll on economic activity. Another serious threat to growth emerged in 1995-1996 as the Reserve Bank tightened monetary conditions in an (unsuccessful) effort to bottle the inflationary genie. High interest rates and an appreciating currency drained growth from the economy, and competitiveness from its producers, without bringing inflation back within the target range. The export sector bled heavily through 1995: in the year to February 1996, the country recorded a balance of trade deficit of \$NZ860 million; a stark reversal of the previous year's \$NZ507 surplus. At the same time, the balance of payments went into disastrous decline with New Zealand ending 1995 with a current account deficit of NZ\$3.8 billion. The peak national rural lobby, Federated Farmers, suspected that even this colossal deficit was an underestimate and accused the government of 'cooking its books' in order to conceal a much larger current account problem (*Otago Daily Times*, 16.4.96:11). By 1996, the external sector was still deteriorating with the Treasury predicting that the current account deficit would burgeon to an alarming 5.2 percent of GDP by 1998.

Some blamed the worsening external situation on the privatisation and uncontrolled foreign investment which had been central features of the SAP. By 1996, some 54 percent of shares on the New Zealand stock exchange

were overseas owned (compared with 19 percent in 1989) (*The Australian Financial Review*, 5.1.96:8), and the left-leaning Alliance party argued that 'higher earning by foreign companies have...contributed to the deficit' (Alliance, 1996:2). Others saw the Reserve Bank Act as largely to blame, given that the Bank's relentless pursuit of inflation had rapidly undermined the fragile, post-1992 recovery. As the Council of Trade Unions economist, Peter Harris, observed angrily:

We were told that the reward of price stability was economic growth. But now economic growth has to be reined in because it threatens price stability. (cited in Kelsey, 1995:170)

Kelsey argues that, nearly twelve years after its dramatic inception, the SAP has left New Zealand locked in a 'growth/recession merry-go-round' (1995:169). The 'lean and mean' economy which the SAP's architects had deliberately set out to construct is proving leaner and more vulnerable than anticipated. Deregulation has left New Zealand especially exposed to the vagaries of the global economy: the country's critical rural sector has been especially damaged by a combination of the free-floating (and overvalued) dollar and plummeting commodity prices (*The New Zealander*, 8.5.96:21). Just as worryingly, the economy's main growth pole — international tourism — was flagging by early 1996, as other countries jostled for the 'clean and green' travellers' market (*Otago Daily Times*, 11.5.1996:16).

Even the model's long time friends appear to be wearying of its failure to deliver the long promised 'pain from gain'. In an extraordinary outburst, the President of the neo-liberal Federated Farmers compared the New Zealand economy in April 1996 to Mexico's shortly before that country's recent disastrous economic collapse (*Otago Daily Times*, 16.4.96:11). Further confirmation of the troubles ahead came from a surprising source when the OECD, a long term enthusiast of the SAP, predicted in early 1996 that New Zealand would have the worst current account deficit in the Western world by 1997 (*The Age*, 10.2.96:13). By June 1996, New Zealand's net external debt (private and public) had reached 65 percent of GDP, the highest of any developed economy (*The Press*, 31.5.96:17).

An end of term report card for the SAP confirms two achievements. The economy is evidently (and dangerously) lean, and there is no denying that the reforms have also delivered a meaner New Zealand society.

From Godzone to Warzone

During the 1990s, the country's newly-commercialised media has attempted to conjure support for a new national bonding myth — the ideal of '*Team New Zealand*' — through sporting hype characterised by an increasingly aggressive braggadocio. But in spite of several notable international sporting triumphs, the off-field performance of the campaign has lagged: Team New Zealand is deeply divided, and 'shellshocked from change' (James, 1992:5). Many people imagine a happier time when things were different, when it seemed that New Zealand was the Blessed Country, which translated in lazy Antipodean English as 'Godzone'.

The 'Godzone myth' enshrines the image of a lost New Zealand — a peaceful, egalitarian society, where the common ills of developed nations — high crime, poverty, pollution, racial conflict — were as remote as the outside world itself (James, 1992; McLoughlin, 1992). There is something of the rural idyll in this misty eyed image of New Zealand as an Arcadia of natural abundance where people lived uncomplicated and tranquil lives. The society of Godzone was an intimate and harmonious one, governed by the cultural norms of mutual support and obligation, a legacy of the country's hardy British settlers of the nineteenth-century. The tale of Godzone then relates how these pioneer norms of mutuality and equality were codified during the 1930s in the world's first Welfare State, which eventually established the most extensive network of social support in the English speaking world. Social security was guaranteed both by a high level of organic solidarity and a caring state.

Several observers have argued that the rich embroidery of the Godzone ideal has blanketed the long history of violence, land dispossession and social underdevelopment suffered by the country's indigenous peoples — the Maori — since the colonial era (see for example Spoonley *et al.*, 1991). Others (see, for example Bedggood, 1980; Wilkes, 1994) have debunked the cherished notion of Godzone as a classless society, by demonstrating the existence of both a sizeable proletariat and an impoverished social stratum since white settlement. Whilst these and other criticisms of the Godzone myth are certainly justified, it is nonetheless true that, prior to 1984, New Zealand society was relatively consensual and insular, at least by international standards. Forer (1995:251) characterises pre-1984 New Zealand as 'a notably caring and personal society'. Twelve years of SAP have changed all that.

Public sector restructuring has been, and remains, a critical focus of the SAP. Since 1984, dramatic 'reforms' to all facets of the public sector have aimed to reduce the putative dependency of individual New Zealanders on the state. Generally, this restructuring has involved fiscal cutbacks, restricting entitlement to social support, a shift to regressive, indirect taxation, user charges for public services, reductions in benefit levels, and the corporatisation (and in many cases privatisation) of many state health, education, housing and welfare functions (see Kelsey & O'Brien (1995) and the collection edited by Boston & Dalziel (1992) for a comprehensive overview of these reforms). The 'slash and burn' public sector restructuring reached its zenith with the National government's 1991 'mother of all budgets' which drastically reduced the levels of benefits paid to the unemployed, the ill, and solo parents. The cuts ranged in severity from hurtful to malicious: the young persons unemployment payment, for example, was slashed by a whopping 25 percent in real terms. The 1991 reductions consolidated, albeit dramatically, the cuts to welfare entitlements which had been initiated by the previous, post-1984 Labour governments. Kelsey comments that the 1991 budget 'formalised the stratification of New Zealand society which Labour had begun' (1995:273).

The SAP also attacked the corporatist-welfare model on another critical front by deregulating labour relations. The Employment Contracts Act 1991 entirely swept away the inherited system of centralised arbitration and wage-fixing and replaced it with a liberalised, contracts-based labour market that drastically reduced the authority and role of unions in workplace bargaining. The government's gift to capital had sudden and gratifying results: union membership declined rapidly after 1991, wages and working conditions were eroded and job insecurity heightened. The sustained decline in average real earnings since 1991 has been matched by wage dispersion, further exacerbating social stratification (ACOSS-ACTU Study Program, 1996).

The restructuring of New Zealand's state sector and labour markets has reduced living standards for many (St John, 1994). Indeed, O'Brien and Wilkes (1993) refer to the SAP as a 'pauperisation policy'. Levels of immiseration have risen sharply: government-funded research in 1996 concluded that one in five New Zealanders lived in poverty³ (*Otago Daily Times*, 12.4.96:3). The same study estimated that nearly one-third of New

³ The estimate was based on a poverty line of 60 percent of median household disposable income.

Zealand children lived below the poverty line. Another poverty barometer, demand for charitable assistance — has measured a shocking rise in penury. By 1994, the Auckland urban area had 130 food banks (a relatively new phenomenon in New Zealand) which were distributing around 5000 parcels a month to the desperate — 10 times more than in 1990 (*Otago Daily Times*, 15.9.94:3). In the south island city of Dunedin, one major welfare agency reported in 1995 a 1000 percent increase in the number of food parcels disbursed over the previous six years (*Otago Daily Times*, 11.9.95:4).

There is increasing evidence of the heretofore-foreign evil of 'working poverty' in contemporary New Zealand. A recent Salvation Army survey of food bank users found that nearly 11 percent were employed — in some regions the figure was 20 percent. The Labour Minister shrugged off the survey results, remarking simply that 'some jobs aren't worth much' (*Otago Daily Times*, 24.1.96:10). Some private sector potentates were more helpful. In response to reports from teachers of growing hunger amongst younger pupils, the vice-chairman of the Business Roundtable urged schools to establish sandwich making classes for parents in order to 'improve the provisioning of children coming to school' (*Otago Daily Times*, 26.3.94:4).

In early 1995, Britain's Joseph Rowntree Foundation released an authoritative study on changes in national income inequality for 18 developed countries during the 1980s. According to this study, New Zealand recorded the greatest increase in income inequality in the study period, outpacing even the United States, and the United Kingdom (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1995). Rankin (1995) also reports data which also show a dramatic increase in income inequality in New Zealand since 1984. Even the *Economist* concluded in 1994 that the gap between rich and poor in New Zealand had become one of the highest in the world (*Otago Daily Times*, 9.11.94.:36). Rather worryingly for the SAP advocates, the *Economist* opined that income inequality might actually stifle economic growth. But the government remained unflappable, not to say cavalier, in the face of rising evidence that the SAP was tearing New Zealand society apart. Revealing an extraordinarily callous outlook, the Finance Minister quipped in March 1995 that widening income inequality 'doesn't worry me' (*Otago Daily Times*, 16.3.95.1). But it will.

A range of morbidity and social dysfunction indicators are signalling a potentially explosive malaise in New Zealand's society. The SAP reforms have created both an increasingly marginalised stratum of poor,

unemployed, unhealthy and underhoused people and a flourishing underground economy. Convictions for violent crime increased by an astonishing 50 percent between 1982-1991 (Kelsey, 1995). In 1994, a study by Britain's Home Office concluded that New Zealanders were more likely to be victims of crime than people in any other industrialised nation (*Otago Daily Times*, 22.4.96:3). Unemployment and rising racial tensions fuelled the rise of violent youth and ethnic gangs, many of whom had sophisticated connections both to the alternative economy and foreign criminal associations, such as Asian Triads. By 1996, there were an estimated 70 major youth and ethnic gangs, with a combined membership of around 11,000, and the popular perception was that the problem was out of hand (*The Canberra Times*, 19.5.96:9). Police statements did not help to calm public fears: in May the Police Commissioner admitted that his force was 'close to losing control of gang crime' (*The Press*, 31.5.96:1). Authorities attempted desperate measures — such as town curfews — to counter gang violence as politicians and the popular press wailed about the new 'youth menace'. Amidst the rising national hysteria in mid-1996, gang representatives provided some of the few rational evaluations of the problem by pinpointing the SAP as the source of youth alienation and racial tension. The spokesman for the theatrically-named 'Mongrel Mob' knew precisely what his greatest recruiting aid was:

...gangs are a social barometer. All of a sudden, over a 10-year period, you've had a phenomenal increase in gang membership, and that reflects what society is going through. (*The Canberra Times*, 19.5.96:9)

These sentiments were echoed by the spokesman for the rival Black Power gang who argued provocatively that 'the only crime being committed in this country is by the Government' (*The Canberra Times*, 19.5.96:9).

The dramatic increases in suicide rates during the SAP era have also highlighted social distress:

Between 1974 and 1990 the rate of male suicide has risen by 288 percent, with the greatest increase in the late 1980s. In 1990 New Zealand had the highest rate of suicide for 15 to 24-year-old women in the OECD, and the third-highest rate for young men. (Kelsey, 1995: 295)

The corporatisation of public health has seen, *inter alia*, the levying of user charges for basic services and skyrocketing prescriptions fees (Fougere, 1994). The result has been reduced access to primary health care

for the burgeoning poor (*Otago Daily Times*, 5.9.952), and the chilling reappearance in New Zealand of diseases of poverty, such as rickets, tuberculosis and scurvy (Kelsey & O'Brien, 1995).

Maori and Pacific Islands immigrants have borne the brunt of the SAP. In particular, Maori have lost resources to privatisation, jobs to industrial restructuring, and public benefits to state cutbacks. In December 1993, one third of Maori youth were unemployed, and almost two-fifths of Maori children lived in households in the lowest 20 percent of income (Kelsey, 1995). Maori also fared far worse than the non-Maori on most other negative indicators, such as teenage pregnancy, benefit dependency, and suicide. By April 1995, unemployment amongst Pacific Islands immigrants was just over 21 percent (*Sunday Star-Times*, 30.4.95:A4).

Contemporary New Zealand is for Spoonley (1994:93) 'two-nations' that are 'sharply differentiated along Polynesian/Non-Polynesian lines'. As Kelsey (1995) explains, many Maori see the SAP in neo-colonial terms, as an intensification of the process of dispossession, poverty and alienation that has operated since white settlement in 1840. The extremity of Maori alienation is nurturing a new, and highly militant, politics amongst New Zealand's indigenous peoples. An increasingly influential and radical stratum of younger Maori leaders is demanding complete sovereignty for their people. Tensions between Maori and non-Maori were inflamed in 1995 during a series of dramatic occupations of land and buildings by indigenous peoples. As Kelsey explains, 'the occupations represented a potent threat to the new economy' by undermining the security of property rights and thus alarming investors. In 1996, Maori anger at the reform legacy continues to simmer as foreboding grows amongst social commentators: Trotter (1995) essays the possibility of a violent Maori-led revolution in New Zealand, whilst Kelsey (1995:322) is not prepared to discount 'outright rebellion against the state' in the near future. The sociologist, Shirley, makes the following pessimistic assessment of the SAP's socio-political legacy:

Within our dual society we have established an underclass which no longer has a vested interest in democracy or in democratic institutions and as a consequence we should not be surprised if those ostracised from the mainstream of New Zealand life willingly promote its destruction. (cited in Kelsey, 1995:296)

In spite of heightening social fragmentation and conflict, one political ideal continues to unite a majority of New Zealanders — the abandonment of the SAP. Indeed, ever since the reforms were initiated a majority of voters have opposed the SAP, but this resistance has been checked by the duplicity of the major parties, an anti-democratic ‘First-Past-the-Post’ (FPP) electoral system and the breathtaking, ‘crash through’ strategy of the reformists (James, 1992). The record of both Labour and National in breaking election promises to slow or halt the SAP, and the blitzkrieg approach to implementation, rapidly eroded the New Zealand public’s trust in its electoral system and politicians. (A mid-year poll in 1992 showed that an astonishing 81 percent of voters believed that corruption existed in New Zealand politics (Kelsey, 1995).)

In 1993 the people responded by voting out the entire electoral structure in a national referendum which replaced the FPP system with one based on proportional representation. The first national election under the new system is to be held in October 1996, and it is likely that a combination of parties opposed to key elements of the SAP (including a recentred Labour party) will form the next government. Indeed, Forer (1995:258) describes the new electoral system as ‘the final curtain on radical economic restructuring’. The pre-election run-up has been marked by the spectacular rise in polls of the ‘New Zealand First Party’, a populist newcomer whose charismatic leader has successfully tapped into rising ethnic tensions and voter antipathy for key elements of the SAP, such as privatisation and direct foreign investment (*The Independent*, 19.4.96:8). Already a host of neo-liberal cadres, ranging from industry representatives, and international finance journalists, to credit ratings agents, are warning that ‘electoral instability’ (i.e. the political rejection of the SAP) will bring dire consequences for the New Zealand economy (see, for example *The Australian Financial Review*, 9.5.96:13 and the editorial in *The Australian*, 11.4.96:11)).

Would You Like the Recipe?

The New Zealand Miracle is fast becoming just another parable of capitalist restructuring. The SAP’s significance beyond New Zealand is rapidly diminishing with the model increasingly immobilised by internal contradictions and the contingencies of place. Popular antipathy is about to overtake the SAP as the new electoral system finally places the model within

political reach of the majority — and there are signs that other polities will reject the SAP formula in pure form. Already one market — the Australian electorate — has refused to buy the Kiwi product. In 1993, the conservative Australian Liberal Party attempted to win national office with a thinly disguised, re-packaged version of the SAP ('Fightback!') but was rejected by voters in spite of the deep incumbency problems of the Labour government.

In 1996 the Liberal Party finally won office after carefully distancing itself from the extremities of the New Zealand model. However, with breathtaking duplicity, the new federal government promptly undertook a series of neo-liberal measures, including severe budget cuts and the 'reform' of virtually all public sectors activities (notably, welfare and industrial relations). At the time of writing (September, 1996), several key elements of the new government's reform agenda were stalled in the national legislature's upper chamber (the Senate). Moreover, there were increasing signs that many state governments (all but one of which was conservative) would resist aspects of the federal reforms (especially the plan to introduce New Zealand style changes to public housing). It was clear that the variegated politics of Australian federalism would seriously hinder any attempt to reproduce the SAP in Australia.

Meanwhile other national electorates — for example Britain, France, Sweden, Italy and the USA — seem deeply wary of neo-liberal politics. Even the prophets are now waking from their dreams. One of the chief US apostles of 1980s neo-liberalism, Stephen S. Roach (the 'guru of downsizing'), made a spectacular political about-face in 1996 and now advises a quasi-interventionism for governments (Roach, 1996). At the same time, Francis Fukuyama, author of the famous eulogy for (non-capitalist) ideology, is having second thoughts about the social viability of free-market capitalism (Fukuyama, 1995).

All this is not to say that the New Zealand experiment won't influence political economic change in the developed world. The 'preliminary results' have already impressed the guardians of the global economy and have doubtless affected national restructuring policies elsewhere. But there is nothing so unpopular, nor so historically expendable, as an experiment that simply didn't work. And increasingly the empirical evidence from laboratory New Zealand suggests an experiment racked by unanticipated results and reversals. Whitwell (1990:108) characterises the SAP as a failed 'appeal to an old orthodoxy', and it seems certain that history will footnote

the New Zealand experiment as just another isolated application of the age-old *laissez-faire* model.

From the Prophets Deserts Come...

'The future', as Althusser observed, 'lasts a long time': much longer it seems than the shelf lives of social prophesies. Indeed, the intemperance of human and natural events seems to spoil even the most durable prophecy beyond any value to social science. The 'epitomizing future city' of the 1980s is the battered Los Angeles of today, struggling to overcome the universal problems of economic globalisation, social disintegration and ecological degradation. Already the New Zealand Miracle seems destined to join the rich record of political cargo cults that have flourished since the birth of capitalism.

What is at issue? Not speculation on what is to come — that modest practice is surely a grand hope of social science (cf. Driver, 1993). Indeed, informed and rigorously-debated speculation is a *politicising* duty of social science. Rather, the problem essayed here has been the tendency in social science and cultural criticism for futurology — viz., the conviction that the future already exists here in the concrete present. Futurology is thus the ultimate trivialisation of history and social science — to know the future is to make it inescapable, to record this is to utter prophecy that wearily waits for fulfilment. Indeed, futurology could be described as a variant of positivism — seers always cloak their desires with the mantle of inevitability, and prophecy is very often the aggrandisement of place or moment.

This is not to say that members of the 'L.A. School', for example, ever claimed to be seers, nor would it be fair to characterise the entirety, or even the majority, of their comprehensive analyses as futurology. Rather, as Davis (1990) himself pointed out, there was a tendency for their work to inflate the wider significance of its empirical context, thus unwittingly affirming the hype of local political and civic boosters. There is the same danger pervading the many insightful, critical analyses of the New Zealand Miracle. Kelsey's (1995) exhaustive account of the SAP, for example, portrays the contradictions inherent in the model without addressing their (already demonstrated) potential to undermine the viability of the reform program, both in New Zealand and abroad. Thus her work lends subtle

support to the inflated claims to global significance of the SAP's neo-liberal advocates.

Like positivism, the tendency for futurology is dangerous for its capacity to depoliticise science and must be opposed for this. If we already know the future, then all hope of shaping social events seems lost. Leached of our agency, we are reduced to playing our pre-ordained parts in the social drama which we know as prophecy, be it utopian or dystopian. But who writes the script? And for what personal and social ends? Certainly, scientific fatalism can never serve the cause of social democracy, which is the debate over what future we must choose and struggle for.

Of course, the future is of critical scientific interest: but the future must always be the ground of critical debate; indeed, the leitmotif of contemporary politics. Critical speculation on what is to come, *on what should be struggled for*, is the keystone of a politically-engaged science. Futurology, by contrast, surrenders this political duty to the reactionary authority of prophesy.

Social scientists must resist the temptation to adopt or reflect the perspective of the booster or doomsayer. Futurology is a deceptive gaze that conveniently occludes social and natural contingency, offering instead appealing visions that relieve our anxiety of unknowing with luxuriant portraits of what is to come. But the experience of Destiny inevitably pulls the scales from our eyes, revealing the aridity of prophecy. Would that we had first seen the empty promises of the past and thus spurned the oracles as they spoke. For the history of the future already lies behind us — and it is a desert littered with prophetic carcasses.

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