

Inventing the Future (of football): Qatar 2022 and The Shock Doctrine.

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“Football is not just a simple game. It is also a weapon of the revolution.” - Che Guevara



Research questions:

Despite a vast increase in the amount, quality, and popularity of critical research on sporting organizations and mega-events, why has so little fundamentally or substantially changed? Is this relative stasis or pseudo-activity structurally connected to a more general pattern in neoliberal societies?

NAOMI
KLEIN



THE
SHOCK
DOCTRINE



'IMPASSIONED, HUGELY INFORMATIVE,
WONDERFULLY CONTROVERSIAL,
AND SCARY AS HELL' JOHN LE CARRÉ
THE NO.1 INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

SOURCES

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**Inventing the
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**Postcapitalism
and a World
Without Work**

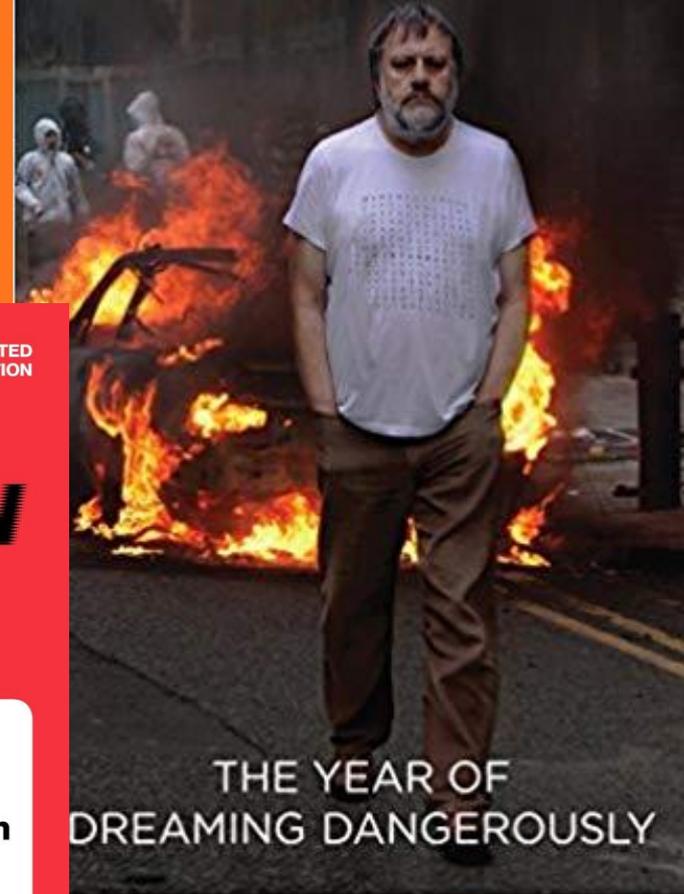
**Nick Srnicek
Alex Williams**

'A conceptual launch pad for a new
socialist imagination' Mike Davis,
author of *Planet of Slums*

'A must-read' Paul Mason, author of
Postcapitalism



SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK



THE YEAR OF
DREAMING DANGEROUSLY

How do we find ourselves in this neoliberal Utopia?

- Paris 1938: Walter Lippmann Colloquium
- Leads to formation of Mont Pelerin Society (MPS) in 1945
- April 8th 1947: Inaugural ten-day meeting of MPS
 - Agreed statement of aims and, crucially, strategy/tactics

Friedrich von Hayek on the purpose of the MPS:

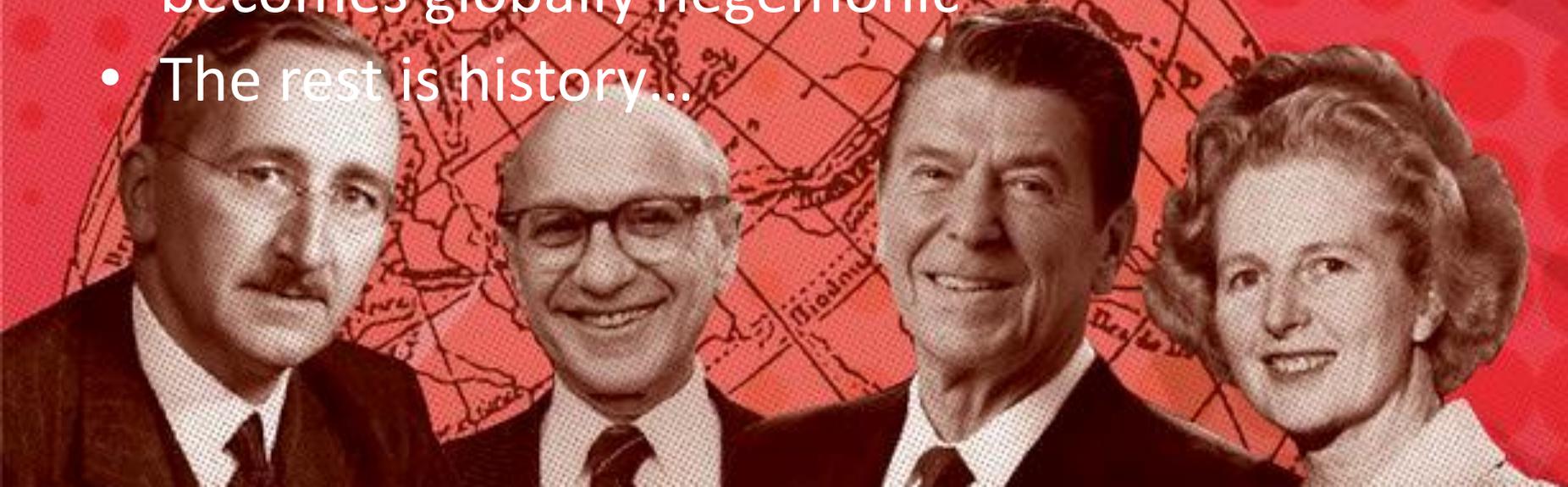
- “[T]o enlist the support of the best minds in formulating a programme which has a chance of gaining general support. Our effort therefore differs from any political task in that it must be essentially a long-run effort, concerned not so much with what would be immediately practicable, but with the beliefs which must gain ascendance if the dangers are to be averted which at the moment threaten individual freedom.”

Context:

- Neoliberal ideas were then hugely unpopular, widely derided
- Post WWII Keynesian consensus held near universal dominance
- Thus, MPS focused on building international networks of think tanks, university departments, media outlets, with which to build an alternative consensus

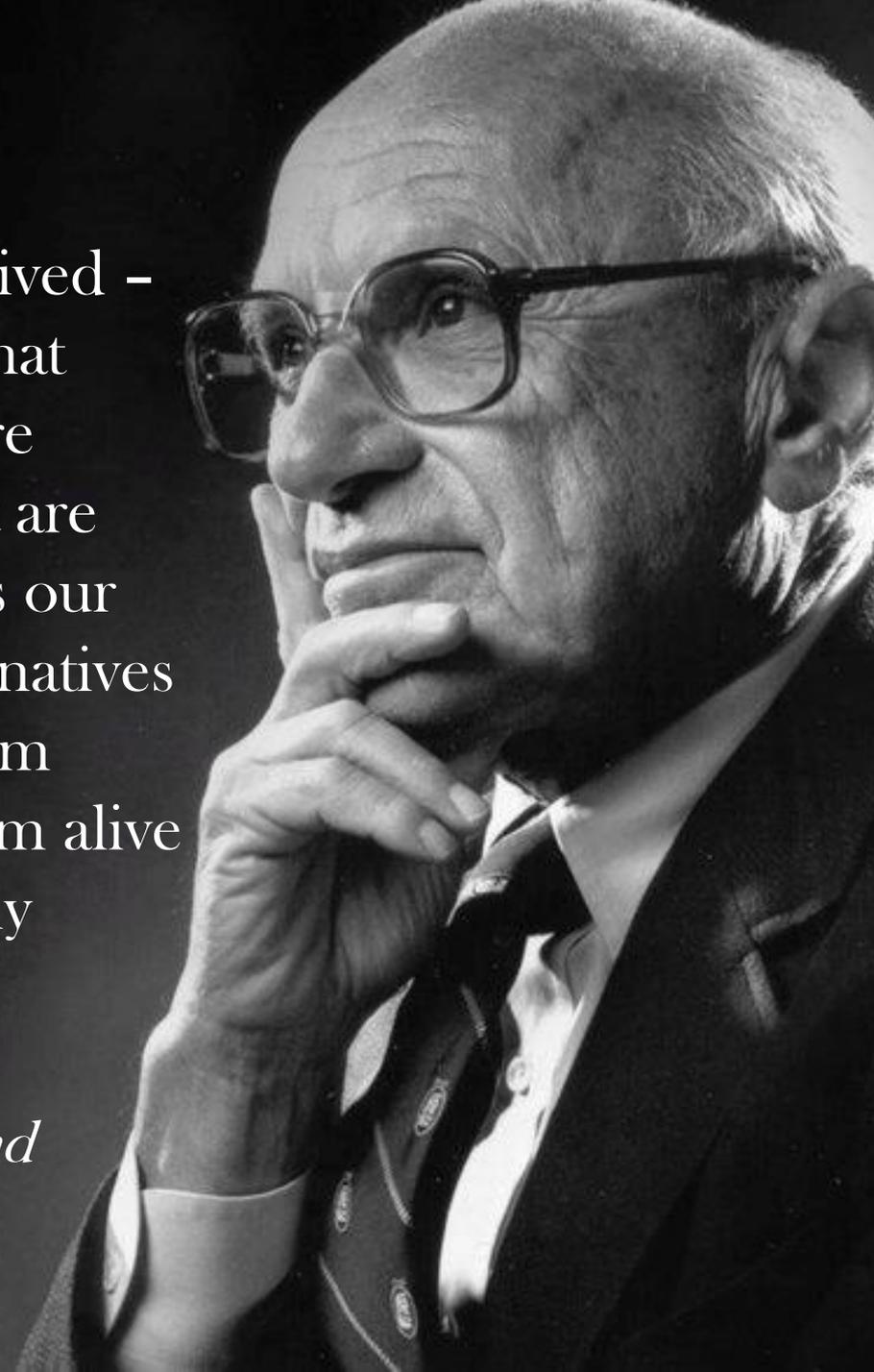
Global economic crises of the early 1970s:

- stagflation signals end of boom period of Post WWII economic expansion
- global economy plunged into lengthy, difficult period of recession
- Neoliberalism offered as credible alternative to Keynesian economics
- Overton window is shifted toward neoliberalism, becomes globally hegemonic
- The rest is history...



“Only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable.”

- Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (1962).



The progressive left has historically eschewed this approach:

- MPS Neoliberals are patient: build institutions, networks, consensus, plans
 - Set aside differences, focus on shared transformative principals
- Progressives favor immediacy of folk politics: protest, reaction, critique
 - Often riven by differing priorities and emphases, world views, tactics.

Thus, when in 2007-2008 the global economy experiences its greatest challenge since the great depression, it is met with the Occupy movement, global anti-austerity protests, diverse activisms, critical reporting, books, documentaries, etc.

- None of which fundamentally transformed the neoliberal agenda
- It was quickly back to business as more or less usual



FIFA has had it's equivalent crisis moment

Experienced massive popular, legal, and media/academic criticism of:

- Overt corruption of Blatter, ExCo members, etc.
- Awarding of hosting rights to Qatar in 2022



Yet FIFA remains largely unchanged in all of the ways that really matter

-Reformed yet not revolutionized

-Core economic principles/ business model intact



Good news!

- FIFA's crisis is far from over
- therefore, the window of opportunity remains open
 - Reality of a Qatar World Cup will reopen previous wounds
 - Massive climate crisis impact of WC 2022/2026

Solution: we need a plan (b)

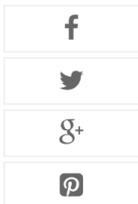
Critical sport activists need an international Mont Pelerin Society of the left to counter the neoliberal tendencies of the contemporary sport industry.

- We need an explicit, clearly articulated, widely endorsed shared alternative vision that can be immediately implemented at the right moment
- Shared foundational principals and tactics
- Must be directed toward structural economic transformation

<http://www.sportingintelligence.com/2016/03/07/inventing-footballs-future-a-10-point-plan-to-revolutionise-fifa-070302/>

INVENTING FOOTBALL'S FUTURE: A 10-POINT PLAN TO REVOLUTIONISE FIFA

MARCH 7, 2016 BY ADMIN



By Tim Walters

7 March 2016

The [recent election](#) of Gianni [Infantino](#) and adoption of a [package of minor reforms](#) has done little to reassure those who closely follow FIFA that football's international governing body is about to fundamentally change its ways.

Indeed, much about Infantino himself gives ample cause for concern that this is a depressingly predictable case of "Meet the new boss. Same as the old boss": an affluent, affable Swiss football administrator and loyal deputy to an influential and corrupt senior member of the FIFA family elected on a crowd-pleasing platform of increasing the size of the World Cup and sending more cash to local associations while defending the legacy of his corrupt predecessor seems an implausible new broom.

The fact that he was born in [a village only 10 kilometres away](#) from the birthplace of Sepp Blatter doesn't help in this regard either. And while many commentators have assumed a cautiously optimistic view – that Infantino was the least bad presidential candidate, and that even cursory reforms are better than none – the emerging consensus rightly appears to be that nothing that happened at the recent Congress in Zurich signals a move toward the kind of root-and-branch systemic transformation that FIFA urgently requires.

The specific ways in which this perfectly reasonable skepticism has been expressed, however, is what has been most interesting, reflecting a persistent and widespread mystification regarding actual solutions to FIFA's woes that has long characterised most discourse on this subject. No one seems to know what the hell should be done about or with FIFA, an organisation that appears so utterly bent that none of us can imagine a way to straighten it out.

If we are potentially amidst a moment of opportunity for real reform, what

FIFA PRESIDENTIAL RACE PROFILE: David Nakhid

REVEALED: USA's \$20m bonus pot - the biggest in World Cup history

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Wales, Bale, Giggs & Co: from historic outcasts to the heart of Team GB

Resurgent Liverpool look forward to hosting generous visitors Tottenham

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Country	Cost
Spain	€4.2bn
France	€3.5bn
Germany	€3.2bn
Italy	€2.8bn
England	€2.5bn
Sweden	€2.2bn
Poland	€1.8bn
Ukraine	€1.5bn
Belgium	€1.2bn
Croatia	€1.0bn
Switzerland	€0.8bn
Slovakia	€0.6bn
Czech Republic	€0.5bn
Portugal	€0.4bn
Denmark	€0.3bn
Russia	€0.2bn
Other	€0.1bn

Euro 2016 squads: cost £2.2bn but worth more than double

“In football we win if we obey the rules. In politics we win if we have the audacity to change the rules.” - Slavoj Žižek

Thank you for listening.

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