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**DEATH OF DISTANCE OR TYRANNY OF DISTANCE? THE INTERNET, DETERRITORIALISATION, AND THE ANTI-GLOBALISATION MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA**
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**ABSTRACT**

Much of the analysis of the anti-globalisation movement has focused on the degree to which the Internet has played a crucial role in contemporary social movements. It is commonly argued that the net helps create 'virtual communities' that use the medium to exchange information, co-ordinate activities, and build and extend political support. Much of the commentary on the web as a means of political mobilisation stresses the degree to which the net compresses both space and time. Equally important in this view is the deterritorialised nature of on-line protest and diminution in importance of 'place' in current anti-globalisation campaigns. Our examination of the anti-globalisation movement in Australia leads us to a different conclusion. while the Internet does indeed compress time, it compresses space in a different and indeed quite variable way. This paper examines the way in which Australians protested against the MAI and the WTO meetings in Seattle and shows the differences in the nature of protest in each case. We conclude that crucial to an understanding of the differences was the considerable difference in the importance of 'place' in each case.

# DEATH OF DISTANCE OR TYRANNY OF DISTANCE? THE INTERNET, DETERRITORIALISATION, AND THE ANTI-GLOBALISATION MOVEMENT IN AUSTRALIA[*]

*Ann Capling[1] and Kim Richard Nossal[2]*

## Introduction

One of the significant developments in the evolution of the global political economy in the post-Cold War period has been the progressive way in which global social movements have become increasingly embedded in the processes of world politics, constituting what Lester Salamon (1994:109) has called an 'associational revolution'.[3] And nowhere has the 'revolution' been more marked than in the realm of global negotiations on trade and investment. During the Cold War era, the various rounds of global negotiations held under the auspices of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) were strictly state-centric affairs, involving only representatives of governments of sovereign states. If non-state actors were involved in the process during this period, it was indirectly and mainly in the context of domestic politics, as some (and by no means all) national governments brought societal actors, or 'stakeholders,' into the process of formulating a 'national' position that would then be taken 'out' into the international realm.

In the post-Cold War period, by contrast, non-state actors have increasingly been brought into the process of global negotiations. Some have been brought into the process via state governments, usually by being given positions on national delegations to such global bodies as the World Trade Organization (WTO). But others have been involved in the process in their own right, via the increased practice, adopted by some international economic institutions, of engaging civil society organisations directly in the multilateral negotiating process (Scholte, O'Brien and Williams 1999). Other groups still have not sought to engage international multilateral economic institutions from the inside. On the contrary, these groups have expressed concern about the processes of globalisation and its impact on a range of political, social and economic issues. The protests against the spread of globalised capitalism involved an often inchoate critique that included concerns about the impact of globalisation on local sovereignty, on the rights of workers, and on the

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[3] There is a huge and burgeoning literature on this facet of contemporary world politics. See, for example, Mathews 1997, Spiro 1995, Lynch 1998, and O'Brien, Goetz, Scholte and Williams 2000.

global environment. But this burgeoning anti-globalisation social movement spread across the globe over the course of the late 1990s, and directed its protests against a range of multilateral institutions, including the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the WTO, the World Bank, the Organization of American States, the World Petroleum Congress, and the World Economic Forum.[4]

It is somewhat ironic that the emergence of a global social movement against the forces of globalisation was greatly facilitated by a revolution in communications and information technology that was itself a quintessential icon of globalisation: the Internet and its various components, including the World Wide Web. Much of the analysis of the Internet's role in political mobilisation focuses on the impact that digital-electronic telecommunications technology has on distance; a common conclusion is that the Internet, more than any other feature of globalisation, has meant the 'death of distance' (Cairncross 1997). In this view, one's location—or 'place'—loses much of its importance.

To demonstrate the 'death of distance' of work, it has become common to point to the case of the global protests against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) in 1997 and 1998; many analysts argue that the Internet was crucial in bringing the international negotiations on the MAI to an end (Smith and Smythe 1999, Kobrin 1998).[5] Likewise, in the wake of the various anti-globalisation protests in the wake of the MAI—particularly the 'J18' and 'N30' protests in 1999[6]—it was often noted that the Internet played a key role in the galvanising of the protestors and organisation of the protests themselves. Certainly the protests centred in Seattle during the WTO ministerial featured the use of the Internet, including, reportedly, the use of Palm Pilots connected via cell-phone modems to the Internet to direct protestors on the streets.

However, while the anti-MAI and anti-WTO protests offer some evidence that new technologies have changed the face of global social movements, how general are the conclusions we can draw from these cases? While there is widespread recognition of the 'digital divide' between those who have access to the communication and information technologies and those who do not,[7] there is nonetheless a tendency for 'death of distance' enthusiasts to apply their argument universally—that is, because the Internet is, by definition, a globalised technology that creates a virtual political community among all

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[4] For a good exploration of the movement that takes the analysis beyond Seattle, see Van Rooy 2000.

[5] It should be noted, however, that the common view that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) brought the MAI down remains contested. See, for example, Dymond 1999.

[6] The protests are colloquially known on the Internet by abbreviations based on day and month: 'J18' was the day of global protests against capitalism on 18 June 1999 <http:///www.j18.org>; N30 was the anti-WTO protest (see the archive at <http:www.mayday2k.org/n30/>); A16 refers to the protests against the World Bank in Washington in April 2000 <http://www.a16.org>; S11 were the protests planned against the World Economic Forum in Melbourne which began on 11 September <http://www.s11.org>; and S26 were the protests against the meetings of the IMF and World Bank in Prague later in September <http://www.inpeg.org>.

[7] And even then, those who do have access to these technologies may face unequal costs. See the discussion of the 'full costs of electronic travel' in Davis 1998.

those who are connected to it, distance must necessarily suffer the same mortality everywhere.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the assumption that distance dies in such a universal way. We explore the relationship between anti-globalisation protests, the Internet, and geographical space by using the case of Australian reactions to the MAI and the WTO ministerial in Seattle. We contrast the vigorous anti-MAI campaign that spread across Australia in 1997 and 1998 with the absence of significant public opposition or protest that greeted the Seattle meetings in 1999. The significant differences in the ways in which the anti-globalization movement in Australia mobilized in each of these cases suggests that, depending on the issue, 'place'—meaning both physical distance and location in the world economy—continues to matter. Far from dying at the hands of Internet technologies, 'place' continues to exert an impact.

**The death of distance? The Internet and global social movements**
In the view of many analysts, the Internet has altered the landscape of world politics, giving rise, in Ronald J. Deibert's words, to 'new post-modern configurations of political space'. In Deibert's view, this space consists of flows among a 'global non-territorial region' of computer networks', leading him to conclude that 'a 'space of flows' is coming to dominate and transcend a 'space of places' as the defining characteristic of post-modern world order' (Deibert 1998: 24, 35, 39). There can be little doubt that the Internet does indeed compress both time and space, not only accelerating the speed of exchange of information among whomever has access to this technology, but also creating a 'virtual' space for such political projects as anti-globalisation mobilisation. Few students would today agree with Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink (1998:12), who argued that the proliferation of international advocacy networks should be regarded as a puzzle given the high costs of international networking, including 'geographic distance, the influence of nationalism, the multiplicity of languages and cultures, and the costs of fax, phone, mail and air travel …'[8]

On the contrary, most students of contemporary world politics conclude that changing technology has indeed given geographical space, distance, and 'place' (or 'location') increasingly different meanings. W.T Stanbury and Ilan Vertinsky (1994–95:87) are by no means alone in arguing that the new technologies render 'geographic boundaries increasingly meaningless'. Most students of the Internet seem to agree that new information technologies have had the effect of deterritorialising political protest, instead creating 'virtual communities' of individuals and groups who use the medium to exchange information, co-ordinate activities, and build and extend support for political purposes. Stephen J. Kobrin (1998:108) argues that the Internet permits the creation of what in essence is a 'new, global, electronically interconnected civil society … a large virtual community that unites like-minded groups across great distances'. Moreover, the Internet is assumed to connect its 'virtual communities' in a way unmediated by political

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[8] Although published in 1998, this book focuses on events down to the mid-1990s; notable by its absence is any mention of the Internet or the World Wide Web in the analysis of the rise of transnational advocacy networks—even though the authors do credit the Internet with easing the process of co-authoring (xii).

authority. Indeed, Wade Rowland (1997:338–40) argues that the Internet constitutes a 'public space' that is 'owned' and 'governed' by its users, and is thus fundamentally anarchic, even if all of its physical elements—personal computers, modems, servers, network cabling and phone lines—are inevitably located in the territory of sovereign governments.[9]

But what impact does this new technology have at the level of world politics?[10] David J. Rothkopf has argued that the major impact is the capacity of social movements to amplify their concerns

> In crisis situations from the Amazon jungle to Bosnia, from Chiapas to Tibet, Internet technologies have enabled virtual communities to unite to counter government efforts … They have taken their case to the international court of public opinion, whose influence over states has grown as its means to reach an ever greater audience has multiplied (Rothkopf 1998: 329).

And indeed a number of detailed case studies of indigenous protest movements—such as the Chiapas uprising in Mexico or the struggles of the *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru* (MRTA) in Peru—confirm the importance of Internet technologies in the processes of galvanizing public protest (Cleaver 1998, Dartnell 1999).

A similar impact has been noted in the case of global social movements mobilising on behalf of human rights. The analysis of the Burma human rights campaign by Tiffany Danitz and Warren P. Strobel (1999) provides a useful catalogue of the effects of Internet technologies in this case.[11] Although Danitz and Strobel are careful to point to many of the disadvantages of the Internet in political mobilisation,[12] they conclude that the Internet's capabilities enabled a 'relatively insignificant' group of 'cyber-activists' in the United States, 'backed by a loose coalition of activists around the globe, with the modem as their common thread', not only to influence American foreign policy towards Burma, but also to put the issue of human rights in Burma on the agenda of the WTO. In Danitz's and Strobel's (1999) view, the Internet was crucial for the success of the campaign: 'Without the Internet, it would have been virtually impossible … for activists to co-ordinate and bring the pressure to bear that they did.' Burma activists were widely dispersed geographically, but, as Danitz and Strobel note, 'because of the Internet, they might as well have been around the block.' As a result, a 'virtual community for action' was created.

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[9] By contrast, Anthony G. Wilhelm (2000:6) argues that new communications technologies such as e-mail, usenet and the Internet pose a threat to democracy and the public sphere as they are 'unequally distributed, misused and designed to reify asymmetrical power relations'.

[10] For a good case study of the impact of the Internet in the realm of US national politics, see Pal 1998.

[11] It is instructive to contrast how transnational advocacy networks operated in the case of Burma with how advocacy networks operated in the period prior to the arrival of Internet-based communication. See Keck and Sikkink 1998:chapter 3.

[12] Among the many 'disadvantages' cited by Danitz and Strobel are: the tendency of groups to depend on the Internet as the sole means of communication; the ease with which Internet communications can be monitored by authorities, and the concomitant ease with which opponents can mount a sabotage campaign against cyber-activists; and the problem of unmediated information that may be of questionable accuracy (Danitz and Strobel 1999:part3.htm).

Co-ordinating such a campaign via traditional telephone trees or fax machines would have been all but impossible because of the need to act quickly and the sheer physical distances involved. Moreover, because the Internet permits them to rapidly exchange messages or send the same information to hundreds of recipients around the world, activists are better able to co-ordinate with a greater number of individuals and refine ideas. 'Listservs' like BurmaNet are particularly suited for rapid brainstorming, because a single individual can send out an idea in an e-mail and can rapidly receive feedback from many different sources. A handful of organisers can rapidly generate dozens of letters and e-mails to decision-makers, the 'cyber' equivalent of lobbying, with a few well-timed on-line appeals (Danitz and Strobel 1999: part 3.htm).

Comparable findings have been reported by those who have examined the case of the MAI. Writing shortly after the demise of the agreement, Kobrin (1998:98–99) concluded that the capacity of Public Citizen, a public interest group based in Washington, to post the draft of the MAI treaty on the Internet was critical for galvanising opposition,[13] conclusions that have been confirmed in other national contexts (for example, Dymond 1999:49–50, Freitag and Pineault 1999, Goodman 2000). Peter J. Smith and Elizabeth Smythe (1999) have done the most extensive research to date on the role of the Internet in the MAI: their investigation, which included extensive interviews with anti-MAI organisers and activists, revealed that the use of the Internet 'radically altered the context in which the debate took place and how it was framed.' Once the text of the draft treaty was leaked and circulated on the Internet, 'the floodgates were opened. No longer could negotiations be hidden from the spotlight of public scrutiny.' Instead, those opposed to the MAI were able to use the Internet to spread information, attract viewers to websites, and organise local and national protests. In short, according to Smith and Smythe, the Internet galvanised and focused opposition 'by opening up public spaces in which citizens engaged in discourse and by making domestic and international institutions of governance more permeable to the dialogue within these public spaces' (Smith and Smythe 1999: 101).

**Testing the death of distance: The Australian case**
Australia should provide a good test of the kind of common assumptions outlined above that the Internet shrinks distance for mobilisation against globalisation. First, Australians have been as prone as others in the developed world to worry about the effects of globalisation, not only on their own political community (Capling, Considine and Crozier 1998, Wiseman 1998), but also more broadly on the global system. And Australians have been as prone as others in the international system to voice those concerns.

Second, Australians are as well 'wired' as most others in the international system: connectivity rates are high. In a 1997 survey of Internet hosts, Australia ranked fifth— behind Finland, Iceland, the United States and Norway (Alexander and Pal 1998: 5, Table

[13] Lori Wallach (2000:33–34) of Public Citizen contrasts the speed and ease of circulating that leaked document with the difficulties of circulating a draft of the Uruguay Round negotiating text that had been leaked to Public Citizen in December 1992.

1).[14] There are high rates of Internet and Web usage, particularly among the young. A 1997 Australian Bureau of Statistics survey revealed that some 40 per cent of all Australians regularly accessed the Internet, with access rates increasing to 53 per cent for those aged 25–39, and to 74 per cent for those in the 18–24 year old cohort (Australian Bureau of Statistics 1999).

But in terms of space or distance, the Australian case presents an important paradox. On the one hand, as virtual space, Australia is not at all distant, in the sense that communication between those who are physically located in Australia and those who are not is instantaneous. Moreover, it bears noting that communication with Australia is no more instantaneous today than it was in August 1930, when the inaugural call connecting Australia to the global radio–telephone system was made. What has changed since then is the marked improvement in the quality of transmission, particularly since the laying of the first COMPAC submarine telephone cable between Vancouver and Sydney, completed in December 1963; the massive growth in the number of communication channels and nodes, exponentially increasing with the spread of satellite communications in the 1980s and 1990s;[15] a comparably massive increase in the number of people who can communicate at the same time;[16] the expansion of the kinds and quantity of data that can now be transmitted to and from Australian nodes; and above all, the dramatic reduction in the cost of this communication.[17]

On the other hand, Australia as physical space remains exceedingly distant from other places in the world. In order to get there (or to leave there in order to be somewhere else), one can only travel by air or sea, and flights between the major cities in the southeast of the country and other places are uniformly long-haul. Australia's closest neighbours are several hours' flying time away from the main population centres in the Sydney–Canberra–Melbourne triangle: it is 2200 km to Auckland, 2800 km to Port Moresby, 3100 km to Nadi, and 5400 km to Jakarta. Everywhere else involves much longer flights: nine hours to Southeast Asia, between nine and 11 hours to cities in China and Japan, 12 hours to Mumbai and Johannesburg, and 14 hours—the maximum range of a Boeing 747-400—to Buenos Aires and Los Angeles. It takes 18 hours to fly to points on the eastern seaboard of North America and 22 hours in the air to reach cities in Europe—not

[14] For other comparative statistics on Internet connectivity, see Shapiro 1999:21.

[15] It should be noted that while there is a thick network of telecommunications infrastructure within Australia consisting of coaxial cable, fibre-optic cable, submarine cables, digital radio concentrators, and microwave radio, the telecommunications route into Australia from other parts of the world is concentrated in two buildings in the Sydney area. Every call using satellite or submarine cable passes through either the Paddington exchange or Telstra's facility at Oxford Falls (Cobb 1999: 138).

[16] For example, because the long wave radio–telephone system of the 1930s and 1940s had exceedingly limited capacity, individual overseas calls normally had to be booked days in advance. By contrast, the North Pacific submarine telephone cable between Canada and Australia, laid in the early 1990s, can carry 85,000 calls simultaneously.

[17] When Australia was first connected to the Eurasian telegraph system via submarine cable in 1872, messages had to be manually relayed by operators at the numerous repeating stations located along the length of the overland telegraph route. Not only was this time-consuming—messages between Sydney and London would take several days to be relayed—but also costly: a message of 20 words cost £10, five times the average weekly wage of £2.

including refuelling stops. To be sure, travel between Australia and other places in the world in 2000 is faster and cheaper than it had been in 1950, 1900, 1850—or 1788. But there can be little doubt that what the Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey (1966) has termed the 'tyranny of distance' very much marks Australia's physical location (as anyone who has travelled between Australia and Europe or North America will attest).[18] More importantly, that distance continues to have a significant impact on how the politics of the anti-globalisation movement have evolved.

**Anti-MAI protests in Australia**
Most analyses of the global MAI campaign stress the importance of the Internet and its distance-shrinking capabilities in determining the nature of that protest (if not the eventual political outcome). Do we find that distance was comparably irrelevant in the Australian reactions to the MAI? James Goodman's account of the campaign to stop the MAI that emerged in Australia reveals that the way in which the MAI became a political issue in Australian politics reflected the experience in other places.[19] As in other countries, the MAI negotiations were not a major issue in Australia prior to 1997. Indeed, most Australians, like those in other OECD countries, ignored the announcement of the 29 OECD ministers in May 1995 that they had agreed to try to negotiate an agreement on investment rules by May 1997. In large part this was because the Australian government, like other OECD governments, took the view that these were treaty negotiations and thus should be kept secret. The result was that virtually no information on the position that the Australian government would be bringing to the negotiating table was made public at the outset of the process. Certainly, there was no prior public consultation by the Department of the Treasury, which had been given responsibility for conducting the negotiations, despite Treasury's inexperience in international negotiations (not to mention its lack of understanding about the need to engage broadly with domestic interest groups).[20] In addition, Treasury officials were obsessively secretive about the negotiations, releasing information on a selective basis to pro-MAI business organisations while keeping even other parts of the government in the dark (Goodman 2000:39). Moreover, the minister responsible for the MAI negotiations, the assistant treasurer, Rod Kemp, did not manage to sell the 'benefits' of the MAI, and was slow to respond to public concerns about it. And only limited efforts were made to consult portions of the business community, notably the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Business Council of Australia (BCA) via their membership in the OECD's Business and Industry Advisory Committee (BIAC).

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[18] As Michael Crozier (1999:626) notes, there is nothing quite like the 14 and a half hour flight from Sydney to Los Angeles to demonstrate the essential ethnocentricity of pop assertions by contemporary American and European scholars that 'space is infinitely minute' and 'all is simultaneity': 'The [traveller] from the Antipodes (body aching, head throbbing) would beg to differ …'

[19] It is instructive to compare Goodman's account (2000) of how the MAI became an issue in Australian politics with Elizabeth Smythe's (1998) account of the same process in Canada.

[20] By contrast, New Zealand was represented by the Department of Trade and Industry, Japan by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and the United States by the State Department, the Office of the United States Special Trade Representative, and the Treasury.

As in other OECD countries, opposition to the MAI began to emerge in Australia in early 1997 when the text of the draft treaty was leaked and immediately posted on the World Wide Web. This leak occurred at the time when a dispute between MAI negotiators and a number of NGOs began to escalate. A number of NGOs had been pressing for greater access to the negotiating process, requests that the OECD resisted. The leaking of the draft treaty helped to galvanise NGO opposition; in October 1997, selected NGOs were finally given an opportunity to meet with the negotiators. However, the refusal of the MAI negotiators to accede to the NGO demand that the negotiations be suspended prompted the NGOs to organise a global campaign to stop the MAI.

In Australia, anti-MAI protests gathered steam somewhat later than in some other OECD countries. A formal national campaign—the Stop-MAI Campaign—was not launched until late January 1998, two months after the October NGO meeting resulted in the launching of a global campaign, and many weeks after a national ABC radio program on the MAI that was broadcast on 30 November 1997. The Australian campaign sought in the first instance to put the treaty on the political agenda. It tried to do so in a number of ways, including public meetings, letter-writing campaigns, advertisements in newspapers, and a national petition.

The campaign had to work against two important obstacles. First, the ascendancy of neoliberal ideology (in Australia called 'economic rationalism') meant that ideas that contradicted the dominant ideological perspective were routinely ignored by the national media and the major political parties. Second, the anti-globalisation movement in Australia (unlike its counterpart in Canada but similar to the movement in the United States) involved strange bedfellows. Concerns about the MAI were not only expressed by those who might be characterised as broadly on the left, but also by those on the conservative-populist side of politics in Australia. Among those who opposed the MAI were Pauline Hanson, the independent MP for Oxley in Queensland, who gained national attention after her maiden speech in the House of Representatives in September 1996, which was a wide-ranging critique of all the ills that she believed beset Australia: policies that were too soft and too generous towards aboriginals and too unfair to white Australians; policies on multiculturalism that threatened to break apart 'the Australian nation'; policies on immigration that threatened to turn Australia into a 'mini-Asia'; and policies towards globalisation and international organisations, which threatened the ability of Australians to make their own decisions (Australia 1996). This speech generated such support from across Australia that Hanson was prompted to create a political party, One Nation, in April 1997. Espousing a populist—and economic nationalist[21]—ideology, One Nation enjoyed a brief success in Australian politics in 1997 and 1998 before disintegrating in 1999 (Leach, Stokes and Ward 2000a, Crozier 1997).

One reason for One Nation's popularity, particularly in the rural hinterland of Australia, was its critique of the effects of globalisation on Australia. As Michael Leach, Geoffrey Stokes and Ian Ward note, the rise of One Nation can be best explained by 'the

[21] Indeed, the economic nationalism of One Nation had long historical roots in Australian politics. See Capling 1997a.

pace and nature of the changes to Australian political economy': the embrace of 'economic rationalism' by both federal and state governments—and by both the major parties, the Liberal/National Party coalition and the Australian Labor Party (ALP)—which had led to a growing divide between urban and rural Australia (Leach, Stokes and Ward 2000b: 8–9). For Hanson, cause and effect was clear: the reason why Australia had lost its way was that too many decisions that affected Australians were being made by international financiers and international organisations to which Australia belonged. As she put it to the House of Representatives in June 1998, international treaties 'take power and choice from the majority of our own people and place that power and freedom of choice in the hands of foreigners and self-seeking minorities … internationalists with no loyal commitment to our country' (quoted in Hanson 2000:226). One Nation supporters— and Hanson herself—sought to make common cause with the Stop-MAI Campaign, and the national media initially characterised the anti-globalisation position of the members of the international NGO campaign as a variant of Hansonism. Much embarrassed by being associated with what was widely denounced in Australian political discourse as a racist movement,[22] those involved in the international NGO campaign had to work hard to marginalise their would-be allies in One Nation (Goodman 2000:48).

In large measure the efforts of the Stop-MAI Campaign to distance itself from One Nation worked, as over the course of 1998 there was less and less equation of the anti-MAI forces with One Nation, and more and more 'establishment' voices expressed growing skepticism about the agreement. Of particular importance was a speech by Sir Anthony Mason, a former chief justice of the High Court castigating the OECD and the Australian government for having tried to negotiate the MAI under a 'veil of secrecy' (Goodman and Ranald 2000: 49).

Likewise, the campaign's efforts to place the MAI on the parliamentary agenda worked relatively quickly. In March 1998, the issue was referred to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties (JSCOT). To be sure, the Stop-MAI Campaign was fortunate that it had the support of members of minority parties and independents in the Senate, and also that the Coalition government of John Howard was in a minority in the upper house. A coalition of Democrats, Greens, independents, and the ALP outvoted the Liberal/National coalition to widen the scope of the JSCOT enquiry. The committee held hearings in early May and issued an interim report later in the month that urged the government not to sign the MAI until it was clear that it would be in Australia's 'national interests' to do so (its final report was delivered in March 1999, long after the coup de grâce had been delivered to the negotiations. See Australia 1999). The JSCOT enquiry was crucial, since it focused attention on the agreement via some 900 submissions and testimony, the vast majority of which was negative. Of particular note were the significant concerns raised by peak associations representing local governments and some industry sectors, such as the

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[22] For example, an Anti-Racist Campaign was launched against One Nation in 1996 which drew the support of thousands of Australians (Leach 2000: 53).

Australian Business Chamber, the Australian Industry Group, and the film and television production industry.[23]

As Goodman's account makes clear, the Stop-MAI Campaign in Australia was deeply Internet-based. First, the existence of numerous anti-MAI websites, and the tendency of these sites to be connected via hypertext links,[24] allowed Australians protesting the MAI to tap into a rich vein of global information and opinion as well as the Australian Stop-MAI site <http://www.avid.net.au/stopmai>. The overall campaign was co-ordinated by Richard Sanders, an academic in Brisbane. It was set up nationally via e-mail, with a co-ordinator for each state who agreed to organise state campaign committees. However, there were no offices or premises. Activities such as formulating positions, organising 'days of action', and putting out press releases were conducted by e-mail. Likewise, the Internet was crucial for the organisation of Stop-MAI's national petition, calling on the Australian government to endorse suspension of the MAI negotiations and tabled in the Senate on 31 March 1998. The Internet was also critical for co-ordinating state-based campaigns, which focused on raising the MAI issue with state and local governments.

In short, between the beginning of the international NGO campaign in October 1997 after the collapse of the Geneva 'consultations' and the formal end of the MAI, there was a sharp and vigorous campaign conducted by a network of NGOs and a large number of individual activists. It should be noted that we are not arguing here that the anti-MAI protests in Australia in any sense *caused* the demise of this agreement. For the MAI was in trouble even before the public protest campaign began. David Henderson has noted that

> … the range of topics for negotiation proved too wide, and the initial goals too ambitious. Governments were unready to allow their hands to be tied in the ways that had been originally sketched out, nor were they able to find a basis for compromises where disagreements emerged (Henderson 1999: 8).

This became evident when governments began to list their exemptions from the draft agreements; as these exemptions mounted, the value of the agreement correspondingly declined. In addition, the time frame for negotiation was completely unrealistic given the complexity of the task. During the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, it had taken highly experienced trade negotiators eight years to complete two much simpler agreements on investment: the code on Trade-Related Investment Measures (TRIMs) and the General Agreement on Services (GATS). That MAI negotiators seriously believed that such a complex and controversial agreement could be completed in a much shorter period clearly demonstrated the OECD's inexperience in drawing up international agreements. This too was a factor in the demise of the Agreement, and may also help to explain the OECD's failure to establish consultative processes from the outset. But it is clear that by the middle of 1998, support for the agreement in Australia was diminishing. As an editorial in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, itself a strong defender of the MAI, acknowledged, the treaty was opposed by 'the hard right, the hard left, the soft right and

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[23] The submissions of these groups to the JSCOT inquiry are reproduced in Goodman and Ranald 2000:chapter 4.

[24] For a discussion of the importance of links in the MAI case, see Smith and Smythe 1999: 96.

the soft left, and by distinguished former judges' ('Explain the MAI treaty', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 June 1998:12).

**Anti-WTO protests in Australia**
The collapse of the MAI negotiations in 1998 raised the fear that the issue of devising rules for investment would simply be passed over to the World Trade Organization, which was scheduled to meet in Seattle in November 1999 to launch a new round of global negotiations. For many anti-MAI activists, opposing a new round under WTO auspices was thus a natural and logical extension of the campaign against the MAI. And indeed, in the United States, the two movements were often fused: many of the activists who had galvanised against the MAI had been active in the anti-WTO movement that dated back to 1994 and the congressional debate on the Uruguay Round; and many of those in the anti-MAI movement helped to organise protests against the WTO ministerial.

The global anti-WTO campaign was organised in a way similar to the anti-MAI campaign. Considerable use was made of the Internet as a tool to galvanise opposition to the new round; listservs played a crucial role in attracting participants to the protests; and e-mail was extensively used in the actual process of organising the protests. The major goal was the same—to close down the international negotiations that would make an agreement possible.

In this, the anti-globalisation movement was in large part successful (at least in the short run).[25] Huge numbers of people made their way to Seattle for the protests, and those numbers made a difference to the way in which the ministerial unfolded. That there were thousands of highly organised activists[26] made it easy to block access to the conference venues—the Westin and Sheraton hotels, the Seattle Convention and Trade Center and the Paramount Theater. Moreover, the police were out-organised by the protestors, who were able to take up crucial positions early on the first morning of the protests that allowed them to encircle the conference venues with a sit-down peaceful protest. The delay in opening the meeting was caused not only by this blockade but also by a 'security breach' that prompted the closure of the convention centre for most of the morning. Eventually the police were prompted to try to clear some of the streets, but their decision to try to disperse the protestors by firing rubber pellets and using pepperspray and concussion grenades rather than by arresting them en masse triggered a series of running street battles. The collapse of the non-violent protest was exacerbated by the arrival of anarchist protestors, who set about trashing businesses on Sixth Avenue deemed to be

[25] We tend to agree with Robert Wolfe and John M. Curtis (2000) that the role of the street demostrations have been mythologised since December 1999. See, however, Wallach's (2000: 46) acidic response to suggestions that factors other than the No New Round Turnaround campaign were responsible for the outcome in Seattle: 'And … God had heartburn that day. I mean, these are ridiculous, *post hoc*, revisionist spins of people who lost.'
[26] One small indication of this was the number of reservations in Seattle hotels that were immediately snapped up by anti-WTO activists in the hours after the announcement that the ministerial would be held there. Wallach (2000: 49–50) estimates that by maxing out their credit cards, the NGO community had guaranteed 400 hotel rooms before the United States Trade Representative, which was chairing the meeting, had made its first calls to hotels.

emblematic of globalisation, such as Nike, McDonald's and Starbucks. And to this mix were added a large group of street people from the area around Seattle Central Community College who made their way downtown and did battle with the police—and indeed with some of the peaceful protestors. The National Guard was called out, a 'protest-free' zone around the convention centre was created, a night-time curfew was imposed, but the WTO meetings were irreparably disrupted, and on 3 December the Director-General of the WTO, Mike Moore, and the US host, US Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky, announced that the ministerial would take a 'timeout' and reconvene in Geneva.

While the anti-WTO protests in Seattle were organised on a global basis—with representatives from a number of NGOs from around the world attending the Seattle meetings and N30 protests organised in other cities around the world—what is noteworthy about the Australian case was the absence of the same kind of vigorous campaign that we saw in the case of the MAI. While the official Australian delegation to the WTO ministerial included representatives from eight non-government groups, they were all business groups. Moreover, many of the producer groups were able to finance large delegations to the Seattle meetings: for example, the Queensland Sugar Council sent a delegation of 13 of its members to the WTO meetings.

However, there were no delegates from environmental NGOs or labour unions included on the official Australian delegation. The Australian Council for Overseas Aid, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Australian Council of Social Service, Greenpeace Australia, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWFN Australia) all offered to provide 'non-business advice' as part of the official Australian delegation. The NGOs even offered to pick up their expenses. However, the Minister for Trade, Mark Vaile, rejected the offer, obviously neither impressed by their claim that they represented over one million Australians nor particularly worried by their threats of retaliation (ACFOA 1999).[27]

This did not prevent a number of NGO officials and activists from going to Seattle. Doug Cameron, the national secretary of the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union, made his way to the WTO meetings. So did Anna Reynolds, national liaison officer of the Australian Conservation Foundation. Reynolds argued that not only was 'being there' important in order to establish face-to-face contacts with NGO counterparts from other countries,[28] but also that given the massive media coverage, the ACF could more easily get its message out from Seattle than from Canberra. By contrast, Michael Rae, spokesman for the WWFN Australia, abandoned his plans to go to Seattle, deciding in the

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[27] The release claimed that the groups had 'warned the Government that the community would rebel against agreements that are done in secret and only involve certain interests. This occurred with the Multilateral Agreement on Investment and the WTO will suffer the same fate if it is negotiated in the same way.' The release also claimed that the groups 'will be informing other country delegations that the Australian Government has excluded key stakeholders in the development of this crucial international agreement.'

[28] Reynolds' view mirrors Wallach's (2000: 33) perspective that while the Internet made organising the No New Round Turnaround campaign much easier, 'The real organizing … was face to face. It's people I've been meeting with three to four times a year, from around the world, since 1992.'

end that it 'wasn't worth the greenhouse gases' to make the trip since others from the WWFN global network would be there representing the Fund (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 November 1999). However, as far as we could determine, there was no non-official Australian contingent of protestors of any significant size in Seattle. Moreover, while there were some 'mirror' protests by activists in other countries held to coincide with the Seattle protests,[29] such as the 'Carnival Against Capitalism' in London, there were no protests of any significance in Australia during the Seattle meetings.[30]

In short, while the anti-MAI movement in North America morphed almost seamlessly into an anti-WTO movement between the end of the MAI in 1998 and the Seattle meetings at the end of 1999, no such transformation took place in Australia. In 1999 there were none of the vigorous anti-MAI protests that had been seen in 1998. To be sure, many of the activists themselves continued to press their concerns at a series of public hearings organised by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in the run-up to Seattle.[31] They continued to organise against global capitalism and globalisation, using the Internet to galvanise concern through websites (for example <http://www.aidwatch.org.au>), to organise protests and to advertise speakers.[32] Australians also participated in J18, the global day of protests (<http://www.j18.cat.org.au>). But such efforts yielded virtually no response of any political significance: the opposition to the WTO in Australia was simply nothing like the opposition that had been galvanised against the MAI.

[29] For surveys of protests held around the world that coincided with the Seattle ministerial, see <http://www.mayday2k.org/n30/> and <http://www.freespeech.org/inter/world2.html>.

[30] A few protestors gathered outside the stock exchange in Brisbane and a small group of activists occupied the offices of Burson Marsteller, a Melbourne public relations firm associated with globalisation, and chalked anti-globalisation slogans on the sidewalk. Indeed, the protests were so small that they were ignored by the media.

[31] In May 1999, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade invited submissions from the public on what Australia's approach to the Millennium Round should be. Some 200 written submissions were eventually received. Public hearings were also held in all the capital cities and a number of regional towns around the country (Bundaberg, Port Macquarie, Ballarat, Dubbo and Townsville) in September and October 1999. While there were some testy exchanges between activists and bureaucrats at these 13 meetings, attendance was thin: only a few people showed up in rural New South Wales and Victoria, and only 50–70 in the major cities—some 350 people in all. For DFAT's own account of the hearings process, see <http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/negotiations/hearings/index.htm>.

[32] Some Canadians would be amused to learn that Paul Hellyer, who was a minister in Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government three decades ago and is now the leader of his own fringe party, the Canadian Action Party, enjoys considerable credibility in Australia as a spokesperson in the struggle against global capitalism. In 1999 he was invited on a speaking tour of Australia organised by Economic Reform Australia and other NGOs, including the People's Movement, the Australian Coalition for Economic Justice, Stop-MAI, and Friends of the Earth. Hellyer attracted large crowds—well over 600 people in Brisbane—and one of his talks was broadcast on ABC Radio in prime time.

**Explaining the differences**
How can we explain the differences we observe in these two cases of anti-globalisation protests by Australians? Why were so many Australians galvanised against the MAI in 1998—even if only eventually—while so many Australians remained indifferent to the WTO meetings in 1999? We argue that there are five reasons for the difference.

*Apples and oranges: Distinguishing between the MAI and WTO*
First, although it is common for anti-globalisation protestors to treat the WTO as little more than the MAI in a new and more surreptitious garb, it is apparent that Australians did not automatically equate the MAI and the WTO. As numerous analysts have observed, the Multilateral Agreement on Investment was deeply flawed, in both design and execution. One did not need to embrace the discourse of the anti-globalisation/anti-capitalism movement to oppose the MAI. And when the flaws of the MAI were exposed, Australians of all sorts besides anti-capitalism activists expressed skepticism about the MAI—a former Chief Justice, members of Parliament, business people, academics, One Nation supporters, contributors to a debate held in the pages of a Sydney tabloid, the *Sun Herald*, in March 1998, or any number of callers to talk-back radio shows.

Moreover, while the Coalition government of John Howard was committed to the MAI negotiations, it should not be forgotten that Canberra was by no means enthusiastic about these negotiations. Like a number of other governments (such as the Canadian government), the Australian government had wanted new multilateral rules on investment negotiated under the aegis of the WTO rather than the OECD, and, like Canada, had succumbed to intense American pressure to keep the MAI out of the hands of the WTO. Indeed, the Australian government's lack of enthusiasm for the MAI can perhaps best be gauged by the lengthy list of reservations it lodged with the MAI chair.[33]

Thus, closing down the MAI negotiations at the OECD was never regarded in Australian discourse as that kind of utterly unthinkable policy option that automatically consigns the advocate of such a position to the political fringe. By contrast, for reasons we examine in more detail below, the idea of closing down the World Trade Organization, the avowed goal of much of the anti-globalisation movement, *was* widely regarded as an unthinkable option in Australia, even among those, such as One Nation supporters in the bush, who were opposed to the MAI. As a result, Australians appeared to make a careful distinction between the MAI and WTO.[34]

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[33] Sixteen reservations were lodged by Australia, ranging from foreign investment regulations to indigenous persons (<http://www.avid.net.au/stopmai>).

[34] This was reflected in how the mainstream press in Australia played the two sets of protests. While the press was clearly in favour of the MAI, editorial opinion eventually reflected some of the criticism that the MAI was attracting. In the case of the WTO, however, the print media was unrelenting in its criticism of those who were advocating abandoning the new round. Editors did not limit comment to editorials under titles like 'Disaster in Seattle', *The Age*, 7 December 1999; they ran news features under headlines like 'Senseless in Seattle', *The Age*, 7 December 1999 and reprinted Thomas L. Friedman's piece from the *New York Times*—with its lead that asked 'Is there anything more ridiculous in the news today than the protests against the WTO?'—as a banner piece across the top of the news pages (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 2 December 1999).

*Australia's 'place': The economic dimension*
Richard Higgott (1999: 23) has noted that 'the "globalisation of the world market" is not
a concept easily capable of uniting a disparate range of interests within a political
community.' On the other hand, there is a widespread consensus in Australia about the
country's 'place' in the contemporary international political economy, and the broad
political implications of that location. While not all Australians are in thrall to economic
rationalism and neoliberal ideology, and while many Australians are concerned about
foreign investment, there does appear to be a broad consensus on the importance of trade
to Australian wealth. Of particular concern is the question of access to the markets of the
world's major economic powers—all of which happen to be Australia's main trading
partners. Because Australia does not enjoy the kind of secure access that comparably
small economies have to the majors—under the North American Free Trade Agreement
or in the European Union—a rules-based and non-discriminatory international order that
helps to discipline the major economic powers is widely seen as crucial for the ability of
Australian products to be sold in American, European and Japanese markets.

This applies in particular to primary products. As highly efficient agricultural
producers, Australian farmers have long been dissatisfied with the continuing
protectionism of the major powers in agricultural products. Indeed, primary producers and
the government in Canberra were hoping that the Millennium Round would correct the
failure of the Uruguay Round negotiations to liberalise agricultural trade; indeed, of all
Australians, no group had more to gain from keeping the WTO alive and well than
agricultural producers.

In short, Australia's 'location' in the contemporary international political economy led
large numbers of Australians to the view that for a small economy not part of a broader
free trade area like NAFTA or the EU, the WTO was a crucial international institution—
despite its flaws (Capling 1999). In such circumstances, opposition to the existence of the
WTO was a particularly hard sell.[35]

*Processing the MAI and WTO differently*
The way in which these two cases were 'processed' also had a bearing on the difference
in outcomes. First, as the case of Australia's negotiating position in the case of TRIMs
suggests (Capling 1997b), it makes a difference which government department is charged
with taking the lead on the issue. The lead department in the MAI was the Department of
Treasury, and all evidence is that their handling of the issue deeply exacerbated relations

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[35] It is indicative that although Australians are prone to attend political demonstrations in large numbers (for
example, hundreds of thousands of people actively protested French nuclear testing in 1995; 30,000 people
in Melbourne alone attended a protest against Hanson's One Nation Party in 1998; and 250,000 marched
across Sydney Harbour Bridge to support aboriginal reconciliation in May 2000) a mere 100 people turned
out to protest against the WTO and global capitalism in Melbourne on May Day 2000. Sean Healy of the
S11 Alliance has argued that one of the reasons for this is simply that Australian anti-globalisation activism
is 'three to four years behind the US version' (quoted in Powell 2000:Review 4-6). We disagree with Healy:
the analysis here suggests that Australians are not 'behind' Americans; rather, Australians worry about
globalisation for markedly different reasons than Americans.

between the state and civil society organisations. Treasury, it is important to note, did not only keep information secret from NGOs and others, but also other government departments, such as Environment Australia. It also tried hard to keep documents out of the hands of one of the NGOs seeking to be heard on the MAI, the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF), which tried to secure information on the MAI by using freedom of information (FOI) legislation. The ACF submitted its FOI request in January 1998; it was not until August that an appeal tribunal ordered Treasury to make some of the documents available (others remained the subject of legal challenges throughout 1999, long after the demise of the MAI) (Goodman 2000:40–41).

The issue of the new round of multilateral trade negotiations, by contrast, was 'processed' by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which clearly had learned a number of lessons from Treasury's missteps. While by no means as 'NGO-friendly' as some other foreign ministries,[36] DFAT did try to open up the policy process somewhat, as we noted above. The consultations held with NGOs and the public hearings certainly did not go as far as most of the NGOs would have liked, but there can be little doubt that they vitiated some of the frustrations that had been created by Treasury's tactics during the MAI negotiations.

The second 'process factor' was the difference in parliamentary involvement in the two cases. As the account above suggests, the willingness of the Australian Labor Party opposition to cooperate in putting the MAI into the spotlight (a somewhat risky proposition, since it had been an ALP government which had succumbed to American pressure to begin the negotiations under the aegis of the OECD in the first place) was crucial in helping to galvanise opposition. In the case of the WTO, there was simply no way that the political mainstream would have participated in a protest that called for the closing down of the new round of trade negotiations.[37]

### Protesting East Timor/protesting the WTO: The regional dimension

A third 'process factor' that affected the level and degree of protest against the WTO was also a function of how Australians defined their 'place' in the region. Since the mid-1980s, Australians have undergone a considerable 'relocation' as political elites in particular have sought to 'reposition' Australia as a country 'in' (even if not 'of') the Asian region.[38] While this relocation has not gone uncontested in Australian political discourse—indeed one of Pauline Hanson's criticisms focused on the supposed

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[36] Such as Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT), which included NGOs openly opposed to the WTO on the official delegation to Seattle and was seemingly unconcerned when two members of the delegation joined the street protests against the WTO. Indeed, DFAIT's attitude towards NGOs causes some heartburn among DFAT officials, because Canada is regularly cited by Australian NGOs as a model of how the Australian government should bring them into the policy-making process.

[37] This, it might be noted, extended to the labour movement too: it is noteworthy that merely days after the Seattle ministerial ended in disarray, the Australian Council of Trade Unions held its annual council meeting. The debate was dominated by discussion of how to bring down the Howard Coalition government; there was no mention of Seattle and the crucial role that organised labour played in the protests (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 December 1999).

[38] For one exploration of this phenomenon, see Higgott and Nossal 1997.

'Asianisation' of Australia—in 1999, we can see a clear manifestation of this relocation in the impact of the conflict in East Timor.

For the vast majority of North Americans, the events in East Timor remained at the periphery of concern throughout the northern fall of 1999; by contrast, the Timorese referendum, and the violence around that event, loomed much larger. The violence of the Indonesian-backed militias sparked huge protests in Australia, and drove the issue to the centre of the national political agenda, to the point that the Howard government was prompted to take the lead in organising what in essence was a multilateral intervention in support of Timorese independence.

How did this issue have an important impact on the WTO protests in Australia? Simply put, there was considerable overlap in membership between those who were active in the anti-globalisation/anti-MAI movement and the East Timor movement. As one activist admitted to us, a degree of 'protest fatigue' seemed to set in over the course of the southern spring of 1999 (exacerbated by the fact that the WTO meetings in Seattle coincided with the end of the university year and the start of summer holidays in Australia).

### *'Place' again: Physical distance*
Finally, the cases of the anti-MAI and anti-WTO protests demonstrate the variable importance of distance in mobilising against the manifestations of globalisation. In the case of the MAI, place was of much less importance than in the case of the protests against the WTO. The mobilisation against the MAI negotiations was not focused on a particular locale, but on decision-makers in national capitals. As a result, the organising power of the Internet played a crucial role. Organisers were able to move large quantities of data, including official reports and analyses accumulated from other sites of protest in other countries, around the country, making it easier to galvanise a 'virtual community' that persuaded some politicians in Canberra to make the MAI a political issue.

By contrast, opposition to the Millennium Round expected to be launched by the WTO in Seattle was all about place. The goal of the anti-WTO protestors was as simple as it was singular: to close the WTO meetings down, and thus make it impossible to start a new round. But the only way to do that was to *be* in Seattle, and do what in essence the protestors did: to surround the conference venue to make it impassable; to engage, and in some cases provoke, the police; and to attract media attention through demonstrations of different sorts, whether through sit-down protests or parading as sea-turtles.

This was action to which Australians, some 11,000 km from Seattle, simply could not contribute in any significant way. Unlike North Americans, who could get to Seattle in any number of cheap and relatively quick ways (hitch-hiking, driving, chartering buses, taking planes, trains, or inter-city buses), those Australians who might have been active in the anti-MAI campaign and who might have wanted to protest against the WTO in person could only get to Seattle by spending approximately US$1500 each, an option available only to the wealthiest Australian protestors, and not an option for those on limited

incomes. Moreover, as James Goodman has noted, if Australian anti-globalisation protests have been somewhat 'tepid', it is because international conferences that tend to trigger these protests are rarely held in Australia (Powell 2000:5).

**Conclusions**
We began by asking whether the nature of 'place' has changed in an age when technology has increased the speed of communication, dramatically lowered its cost, and equally dramatically extended its reach. We can readily see why those who examine the Internet and its effects on global politics might be tempted, as Cairncross was, to declare that these technologies heralded the death of distance, or to argue that in an era of deterritorialisation, place no longer matters.

However, our comparison of Australian reactions to the MAI and the WTO Millennium Round suggests that a more cautious conclusion is warranted. On the one hand, there can be little doubt that the new information technologies played an important role in these protests. The Internet helped move information in huge quantities and to large numbers of recipients in distant locations. It allowed people to copy ideas from elsewhere, and made the organisation of events easier. Moreover, the costs of networking, globally and locally, were virtually nil once the initial investment of a computer and modem had been made.

On the other hand, our exploration suggests that 'place' still matters, even in an era when the Internet can deterritorialise protest. As our analysis above suggests, 'place' in this case continued to matter in different ways. First, it mattered that opposing the WTO was about *being in a specific location*, while opposing the MAI did not at all depend on 'place'; one could work at opposing the MAI from anywhere. And it mattered that, for Australians, the specific location in the case of the WTO protests was 11,000 km, US$1500, and 20 hours of travel time away—a powerful reminder that how dead distance is deeply depends on where one happens to be. And sometimes, 'place' as specific location would have paradoxical effects, as in the case of the ACF's Anna Reynolds, who calculated correctly that the ACF message was more likely to be heard in Australia if it were mediated by the media pack covering an event 11,000 km away from Australia.[39]

But 'place' also mattered in the sense that Australians defined their relationship to both physical location and the more notional concept of 'location' within the global economy rather differently than people in other locations. Thus, it made a difference that Australians identified themselves as 'closer' to Southeast Asia than North Americans, and thus were more caught up in the 'local' politics of East Timor in the southern spring of 1999 in a way that North Americans simply were not. And, obvious though such an

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[39] Van Rooy (2000: 8) notes that location invariably determines the kind of press coverage protest actions will attract. She uses the example of the Inter-Continental Caravan (ICC) for Solidarity and Resistance, a group of farmers from Brazil, Mexico, and Bangladesh who travelled overland across Asia and Europe in 1999, engaging in direct action against global corporations and international organisations on their way to the G8 meetings in Germany. For information on the ICC and its activities, see <http://www.ecn.org/communitas/en/en126.html>. While the ICC was well-covered by the media in Europe, it was ignored by the media (and, it might be noted, the NGO community) in North America.

observation might be, it made a difference that November and December mark the beginning of summer in some places in the world and not others. Likewise, it made a difference that so many Australians, particularly those in the bush, defined their country's location in the international political economy as intimately tied to the WTO, and thus were not at all receptive to the idea that the WTO should be shut down.

In short, if the Internet shrinks time and space—and we would agree that it does—it does not necessarily follow that it also makes 'place' irrelevant. While there are some issues that lend themselves to deterritorialised protest—the Burma campaign examined by Danitz and Strobel (1999) or the campaign against the MAI are two such examples of protests that do not heavily depend on *being* in a particular place—there are others, such as the No New Round Turnaround campaign that heavily depend on location.[40] And while the Internet makes communicating over long distances incredibly easy, it does not eliminate that distance. That means that for those in some places that are somewhat more remote the physical space that lies between here and there will continue to exercise a certain tyranny.

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[40] The Asia–Pacific division of the World Economic Forum meeting in September 2000 was the first time that an international body associated with globalisation met in Australia, affording Australian S11 protestors to experience 'distance' and 'place' as North Americans did in Seattle.

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