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# FOURTH WORLD REVIEW

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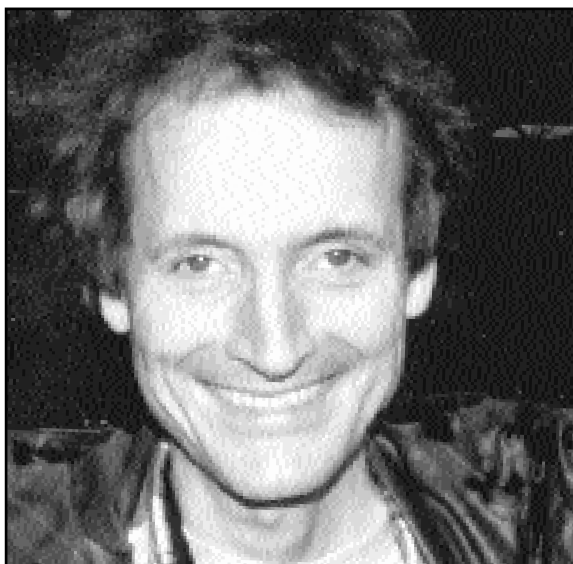
*For Small Nations  
Small Communities  
Small Farms  
Small Shops  
Small Industries  
Small Banks  
Small Fisheries  
& the Inalienable  
Sovereignty of the  
Human Spirit*

**No. 108**

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## **NICHOLAS ALBERY MEMORIAL ISSUE**



*Editorial:*  
**The War To End War?**

# FOURTH WORLD REVIEW No. 108



## Contents

<i>Editorial:</i>	<b>THE WAR TO END WAR?</b>	3
<i>Features:</i>	<b>Fuel Supply Mirage – EVAR D NERING</b>	6
<i>Forum:</i>	<b>Colin Graham                      Stephen Eades Barbara Clearbridge            Jerzy Wielunski Gordon McLellan</b>	8
<i>Books:</i>	<b>The Biotech Century – JEREMY RIFKIN</b> <i>Reviewed by Nic Fleming</i>	11
	<b>Empowering the Earth – ALEX BEGG</b> <i>Reviewed by John Papworth</i>	12
	<b>The Future of Money – BERNARD LIETAEER</b> <i>Reviewed by J Walter Plinge</i>	13
<i>In Memoriam:</i>	<b>NICHOLAS ALBERY 1948–2001</b>	14
<i>Column:</i>	<b>FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR</b>	16
<i>Item:</i>	<b>Fourth World News</b>	20

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## THE WAR TO END WAR?

**WHEN THE HISTORY** of our time comes to be written it will tell us, no doubt, of immense public concern for the ecological perils we are so impetuously promoting, of the moves being made towards economic globalisation, of concern for human rights, of the mass-motoring mania being sustained by a constantly expanding consumption of finite fuel resources, of the non-stop expansion of human numbers in an already overcrowded planet and much else besides.

But what will surely amaze any future historian and his readers, assuming there will be any of either category living, is the incredible degree of passivity that currently prevails over the proliferation of monster weapons of mass destruction.

In 1945 the USA was the only country to possess nuclear weapons and it proceeded to destroy a huge area of two Japanese cities with them. Why did it not drop them at sea or in open country to show their potential, instead of on inhabited cities? One writer has suggested that the decision had nothing to do with the Japanese war but with a US intention to intimidate the Soviet Union. Stalin appears to have been duly intimidated, enough to proceed with production of similar weapons of his own.

Today twenty countries, probably more,

possess these awesome weapons and even these have to be seen in the context of other weapons, such as microbiological bombs capable of obliterating the human life of a continent.

Governments, at least some of them, are alive, if only partly so, to the dangers; hence the non-proliferation treaty. Part of the monstrous passivity with which these developments are generally viewed springs from an assumption that the consequences of using them to the users are so terrible they will never be used. Another ingredient of this passivity springs from a conviction that there is nothing the ordinary citizen can do to halt such developments. Both assumptions have, of course, no validity, which in an era dominated by mass forms of reasonlessness, does nothing to lessen the grip they may hold on the untutored mind.

The treaty has in any case now been repudiated by the USA. And what doctrine now governs the USA? The mightiest war machine in all human history? On this we need to look at its own most recent enunciation of its objectives:

*'The ultimate goal of our military force is to accomplish the objectives directed by the National Command Authorities. For the joint force of the future, this goal will be achieved through full spectrum dominance – the ability of US forces,*

*operating unilaterally or in combination with multinational and interagency partners, to defeat any adversary and control any situation across the full range of military operations.*

*“The full range of operations includes maintaining a posture of strategic deterrence. It includes theatre engagement and presence activities. It includes conflict involving employment of strategic forces and weapons of mass destruction, major theatre wars, regional conflicts, and smaller-scale contingencies. It also includes those ambiguous situations residing between peace and war, such as peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations, as well as non-combat humanitarian relief operations and support to domestic authorities.*

*“The label “full spectrum dominance” implies that US forces are able to conduct prompt, sustained and synchronised operations with combinations of forces tailored to specific situations and with access to and freedom to operate in all domains – space, sea, land, air, and information. Additionally, given the global nature of our interests and obligations, the United States must maintain its overseas presence forces and the ability to rapidly project power worldwide in order to achieve full spectrum dominance.”*

United States Department of Defence:  
*Joint Vision 2020. 30 May 2000.\**

This is not the utterance of an inebriated GI in some tavern, it is the considered view of the officials controlling the war machine! It needs to be seen against the global background of the Arab/Israeli conflict, the Indo/Pakistan conflict over Kashmir, or the confrontation of the US with China, to say nothing of the burgeoning military power of a united ‘Europe’.

The cause of ‘Europe’ is being sponsored not only by business interests which seek to make a packet, but by numerous starry-eyed idealists who are convinced it will bring peace to the continent. Perhaps it will, as the US enjoys internal peace even as it becomes involved, as it has been involved, in every major war in the globe for well over 100 years. These and many other developments need to be seen against the general unpopularity of war, coupled with the prodigious expansion of what is politely called ‘the arms trade’.

Trade? This is a trade in death. Death of countless mothers and children, to say nothing of horrible degrees of burning and maiming of millions more. So Britain sells tanks, guns, bomber planes, sophisticated devices of germ warfare, battleships, submarines, and other instruments of murder to all and sundry. After all it is all part of ‘growth’, it creates ‘jobs’ and results in a favourable balance of trade. What government seeking re-election could ask for more?

No doubt it is also busy exporting coffins, as well as medicines, blankets and stretchers for the injured victims, providing more ‘growth’, and more jobs and even better export figures. The USA does the same, so does Russia and other great powers, demonstrating that great powers can also be moral pygmies.

But when does ‘trade’ become war? ‘A nation armed and prepared for war can no more help going to war than a chicken can help laying an egg’. So Russia sells arms to Arab powers, the USA sells arms to Israel. China sells arms to Pakistan and Britain sells arms to India.

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\* Quoted by Ken Coates in the current issue of *The Spokesman*, the journal of The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, obtainable from Russell House, Bulwell Lane, Nottingham, NG6 0BT, England, £5.

What is happening under our noses is the creation of a global tinderbox in which madmen are wandering around with flaming torches. Madness on a gigantic global scale does not cease to be madness and this particular form of insanity cannot fail to create conditions which are unpredictable and uncontrollable and which may well result in the demise of the entire works of civilisation.

### **Inevitable road to war**

As sure as mass motoring results in a high level of fatal crashes, so the mass development of weapons of death cannot fail to lead to war. At the dawn of a new century we have to face the brute fact that the third world war is an event waiting to happen as surely as storm clouds presage rain.

What do we do? A Pope doing his job would at once excommunicate every government official in sight, an Archbishop of Canterbury or of anywhere else would organise mass protests and lead them with a hunger strike, Jewish Rabbis and Muslim Imams would join forces to save the world from this commercialised infidelism, the Dalai Lama would be leading a global pilgrimage of protest and peace, accompanied no doubt by the leading dignitaries of the Sikh and Hindu communities. Perhaps the Zoroastrians and the Millennium Dome spiritualists might join them. Perhaps even the Quakers would disturb their organised silences and feel impelled to act...

These people and others are the largely self-appointed moral spokesmen of mankind, but where are they? Here is the gravest moral crisis ever to have erupted in human history and collectively their impact on it has about as much effect as a damp let-

tuce leaf on a tornado.

Is there no fundamental sense of right and wrong which might prompt all of them to join forces to insist that this global march to universal death must stop? Beside the prospect of a general Armageddon what does it matter what absurd qualms people may have about the ordination of women priests, or disagreements about divorce, about family breakdown, about gay marriages, about adultery or a hundred other issues which absorb so much apparent moral fervour?

If morality has a function it is first to avert the all-too-human tendency of people to plunge into fratricidal forms of strife, and instead to promote peace and security; it is, secondly, to secure that base so that the way is open to the development of human nobility. On both counts all religious leaders today are betraying their own trust and that of their followers. Trade in war proceeds unchecked and governments everywhere are promoting a life-pattern which is wiping out of existence the remotest prospect of any form of human nobility. If the silence of religious leaders is not acquiescence what then is it?

Is there no move from any quarter anywhere that might alert all these leaders to the dangers now in train? A move which might bring them all together in a global moral crusade to halt the march to death and human degradation to which at present they are showing all the insouciant irresponsibility of professional strumpets? Perhaps enough to make them insist that their governments abandon insanity and take the path of peace? A collective voice of sanity from them would alert the peoples of the world.

How long, O Lord, how long? ■

# FUEL SUPPLY MIRAGE

**Evar D. Nering**

*The author is Professor Emeritus of Mathematics at Arizona State University.*

**WHEN I discussed the exponential function in the first-semester calculus classes that I taught, I invariably used consumption of a non-renewable natural resource as an example.**

Since we are now engaged in a national debate about energy policy, it may be useful to talk about the mathematics involved in making a rational decision about resource use.

In my classes, I described the following hypothetical situation. We have a 100-year supply of a resource, say oil – that is, the oil would last 100 years if it were consumed at its current rate. But the oil is consumed at a rate that grows by 5% each year. How long would it last under these circumstances? This is an easy calculation; the answer is about 36 years.

Oh, but let's say we underestimated the supply, and we actually have a 1,000-year supply. At the same annual 5% growth rate in use, how long will this last? The answer is about 79 years.

Then let us say we make a striking discovery of more oil yet – a bonanza – and we now have a 10,000-year supply. At our same rate of growing use, how long would it last? Answer: 125 years.

Estimates vary for how long currently known oil reserves will last, though they are usually considerably less than 100 years. But the point of this analysis is that it really doesn't matter what the estimates are. There is no way that a supply-side attack on

America's energy problem can work.

The exponential function describes the behaviour of any quantity whose rate of change is proportional to its size. Compound interest is the most commonly encountered example – it would produce exponential growth if the interest were calculated at a continuing rate. I have heard public statements that use 'exponential' as though it describes a large or sudden increase. But exponential growth does not have to be large, and it is never sudden. Rather, it is inexorable

Calculations also show that if consumption of an energy resource is allowed to grow at a steady 5% annual rate, a full doubling of the available supply will not be as effective as reducing that growth rate by half – to 2.5%. Doubling the size of the oil reserve will add at most 14 years to the life expectancy of the resource if we continue to use it at the currently increasing rate, no matter how large it is currently. On the other hand, halving the growth of consumption will almost double the life expectancy of the supply, no matter what it is.

This mathematical reality seems to have escaped the politicians pushing to solve our energy problem by simply increasing supply. Building more power plants and drilling for more oil is exactly the wrong thing to do, because it will encourage more use. If we want to avoid dire consequences, we need to find the political will to reduce the growth in energy consumption to zero – or even begin to consume less.

I must emphasise that reducing the growth rate is not what most people are talking about now when they advocate conservation; the steps they recommend are just sticking plasters. If we increase the gas mileage of our automobiles and then drive more miles, for example, that will not reduce the growth rate.

Reducing the growth of consumption means living closer to where we work or

play. It means telecommuting. It means controlling population growth. It means shifting to renewable energy sources. It is not, perhaps, necessary to cut our use of oil, but it is essential that we cut the rate of increase at which we consume it. To do otherwise is to leave our descendants in an impoverished world. ■

*Monitored by Vincent Rossi.*

## **FIRST THINGS FIRST 2000**

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, ARE GRAPHIC DESIGNERS, ART DIRECTORS AND VISUAL COMMUNICATORS who have been raised in a world in which the techniques and apparatus of advertising have persistently been presented to us as the most lucrative, effective and desirable use of our talents. Many design teachers and mentors promote this belief; the market rewards it; a tide of books and publications reinforces it.

Encouraged in this direction, designers then apply their skill and imagination to sell dog biscuits, designer coffee, diamonds, detergents, hair gel, cigarettes, credit cards, sneakers, butt toners, light beer and heavy-duty recreational vehicles. Commercial work has always paid the bills, but many graphic designers have now let it become, in large measure, what graphic designers do. This, in turn, is how the world perceives design. The profession's time and energy is used up manufacturing demand for things that are inessential at best.

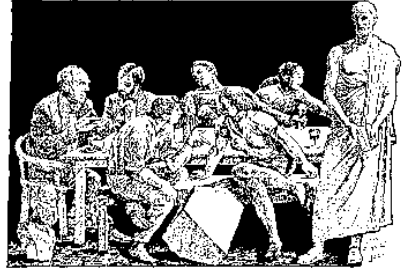
Many of us have grown increasingly uncomfortable with this view of design. Designers who devote their efforts primarily to advertising, marketing and brand development are supporting, and implicitly endorsing, a mental environment so saturated with commercial messages that it is changing the very way citizen-consumers speak, think, feel, respond and interact. To some extent we are all helping draft a reductive and immeasurably harmful code of public discourse.

There are pursuits more worthy of our problem-solving skills. Unprecedented environmental, social and cultural crises demand our attention. Many cultural inventions, social marketing campaigns, books, magazines, exhibitions, educational tools, television programmes, films, charitable causes and other information design projects urgently require our expertise and help.

We propose a reversal of priorities in favour of more useful, lasting and democratic forms of communication – a mindshift away from product marketing and toward the exploration and production of a new kind of meaning. The scope of debate is shrinking; it must expand.

In 1964, 22 visual communicators signed the original call for our skills to be put to worthwhile use. With the explosive growth of global commercial culture, their message has only grown more urgent. Today, we renew their manifesto in expectation that no more decades will pass before it is taken to heart.

*With acknowledgements to the radical Canadian journal **Adbusters** – 1243 West 7th Ave, Vancouver, BC, V6H 1B7, Canada – whose editors and volunteers published this declaration with over a thousand signatures.*



## FORUM

### GROWTH

In 1998 the Worldwide Fund for Nature teamed up with two statistical organisations and found that between 1970 and 1995 the world had lost nearly a third of its biological productivity, thanks to economic growth, population increase, and pollution. When William Rees and Mathis Wackernagl perfected their now widely accepted ecological footprint analysis, they found that the developed world is already using up 100% of the earth's renewable resources, while the rest of the population is using a further 30%. In other words, we are in a state of 30% overshoot.

In its millennial survey GEO-2000, the United Nations predicts that, if things go on as they are, the global economy will quadruple in size over the next 50 years. In other words a lot more overshoot.

Thus, instead of the endless growth favoured by the high priests of the free-market economy under the aegis of the World Trade Organisation, we need to recognise that prudence dictates a reduction in the size of our economy. When morality enters the picture we find that our economy should contract still further, so that the two billion people now existing on less than two dollars a day can have a fairer share of the earth's resources.

Under these circumstances are there *any* bits of the rich world's economy that can safely grow – apart, that is, from recycling and restoration ecology?

**Colin Graham**

*598 Meldram Drive, Sidney BC, V8L 5V8*

### LOVE OFFERING

Thanks so much for the sample issue. I was feeling panicked – after all, if people are growing stupider, more violent, sicker, and crazier, as studies show they are, how in the world could problems be solved and planetary disaster be averted? Then there you are, and all the sources you quote, still trying, still hopeful, still seeing ways through the mess. I'm breathing a little easier...

As to your subscription rates: though I do have a second-hand car, and have not yet lost my teeth, I am an ex-busker, who now works as an energy practitioner and teacher entirely by love offering. I mean payment is by love offering, my small way of contributing to a solution. Though I am rich in blessings, \$40 is a bit steep for me, so here is \$25 for a subscription. I'm spreading the word about your journal.

**The Rev Barbara Clearbridge**

*PO Box 599, Port Hadlock, WA 98339, USA*

## BIOREGIONALISM

I thank you for bringing me regular enriching doses of good common sense with a different world view.

With reference to your bioregional notes in *Fourth World Spectator* (FWR No. 107), yes, indeed, what happened to the vision? I've been wondering that for nearly two decades. Strange, only yesterday, did *Dwellers in the Land* arrive on inter-library loan – you can't buy a copy anywhere!

The only outfit I can find talking the cause in these islands is, I think, in Suffolk and essentially concerned with promise – singing the wonders of hemp. Do you know of others or a website?

**Gordon McLellan**

*1 Greyhound Lane,  
Heol Sticil-y-Beddau, Llantrisant,  
Mid Glamorgan, South Wales, CF72 8BU*

## SIMULTANEOUS POLICY

The structures of society, particularly political and economic, have grown too big and urgently need to be diminished. And yes, metaphorically speaking, villages are the blood cells of society and all power should originate from them. And, although you do not specifically say so, the key to the future structure of society is its complete and total infusion by the principle of democracy. Where I am still puzzled is on the question of how this democratic restructuring of society is to be achieved.

Essentially, this is a political task. And yet, you make no sustained reference to this mechanism. Surely, the principle agent at the present time of this form of politics is the Green Party. And yet, I see no suggestion that this political party is to be asked to play an active part in the Radical Consultation in September (I am not a

member of the Green Party). It is vital that this dimension is included. Without it, there is no mechanics of organisation for the fulfilment of the Radical Declaration.

Reform of the UK's constitutional structure along truly democratic principles is surely a primary task of the September meeting. If the ecological movement is to become an active reforming entity, then we have to devise new constitutional structures for politics and economics. Should not the Radical Consultation be providing this blueprint for the Green Party and the wider ecological movement? If we do not, are we not simply theorising and, at worst, pointlessly pontificating?

I enclose a copy of the Simultaneous Policy which has been pioneered by John Bunzl. I know little more about the Simultaneous Policy but it seems to me that the Radical Consultation in September has to take place in the context of such initiatives, and be prepared to respond positively to them.

**Stephen Eades**

*Allington House, Allington, Chippenham,  
Wiltshire, SN14 6LN*

## SOVEREIGNTY

Would you mind explaining what made you publish the article *Europe, Nation-State and Globalisation* by Jurgen Kronig (FWR 107)? I read most of the Polish dailies and what they write is exactly what Mr Kronig says in this article.

In consequence, I am going to give up reading the review, which ceases to be a precious periodical in favour of the small nations, small communities, and small forms. It becomes one more title making deplorable propaganda of the anti-human ideas of neo-liberalism (also known as

ultra-liberalism, anarcho-liberalism or libertarianism).

The United States of America is interested in globalisation: neo-liberalism was born there in the 1860s and 1870s. Mr L von Mises, Mr T Machan, Mr R Hamowy, Mr D Friedman, Mr A Reynolds are the leading libertarians.

In the US, UK, Germany and Poland, everybody should learn what exactly this non-liberalism is. Then, we, the simple people, could stop, once and for all, any further progress of globalisation. Otherwise, 20% of us survive; the rest (80%) is going to starve for long years before death liberates them from the pleasures of neo-liberalism.

Such publicists as Kronig make us think there are nations or just denied nations, worse ones because less numerous and weaker. The same Saxon people, coming from Jutland, conquered the Slavic country

of Lusatia between the river Elbe and Oder, and the Celtic countries of Cornwall and Wales. Where is Freistaat Lusatia, today? It is nowhere. It is about to die, after more than a thousand years of German occupation.

This is a dangerous path. But this very path is what we are persuaded to follow.

The Welsh and Scottish people who think about a free and independent Wales or Scotland within the *IV Grossdeutsches Reich* (for the moment, it is called the 'European Union') are badly mistaken.

That is why I back the idea of a *federation* of the sovereign European states, I back up Lionel Jospin and his idea. United Europe – yes! United Europe under the command of Deutsche Bank, of Mr Krupp, Mr Siemens, Mr Bosch, Mr Junkers, Mr Thyssen *et al.* (all represented in Lublin, again) – NEVER!

**Dr Jerzy Wielunski**

*Tristana 38, 20-713 Lublin, Poland*

## THE RADICAL CONSULTATION

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Spread the word! Additional copies of a special leaflet about the consultation available on request.

THE  
**Ecologist**



**Friday 14<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2001**

**The Pilgrim Centre, Swindon**

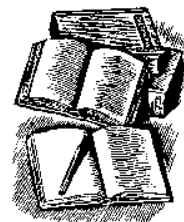
## BOOKS

**THE BIOTECH CENTURY**, by *Jeremy Rifkin*. PHOENIX, 1998, ISBN 0 75380 848 x.  
& *Reviewed by Nic Fleming*

HUMAN babies gestate in artificial wombs outside the body to avoid the unpleasantries and dangers of pregnancy. Parents can, at a price, tinker with unborn foetuses not only to correct diseases, but to customise the intellectual and physical attributes of their offspring.

The image of the farmer in his field is consigned to history as food is produced in giant indoor bacteria baths. Human-animal hybrids are used for medical research and as organ donors. A new global caste system has emerged in which vital life decisions are reached by examining our genetic make-up. Ugly, stupid and bad people will not be allowed to breed.

Nuclear weapons have been abolished in favour of far more deadly genetically-engineered biological warfare agents. New animals are genetically customised and mass produced to secrete cheap drugs and chemicals. The transporter room of Star Trek fame has become a reality because Man is, after all, just a finite amount of data.



Welcome to planet Earth in the year 2025. The deluded rambling of a conspiracy theorist? The plot of the next science fiction blockbuster? Unfortunately not. In 1980 Rifkin, and co-author Ted Howard, published *Who Should Play God?* predicting the advent of test-tube babies, surrogate babies, fabrication of human organs, animal clones, transgenic species and human gene surgery by the year 2000.

At the time their claims were dismissed as far-fetched and alarmist, and their call for an urgent debate on the environmental, economic, social and ethical implications ignored. Their predictions came true. The debate has started, but on a scale dwarfed a million times over by the implications of what is around the corner.

The marriage of computers and genetics has brought us to the cusp of a new epoch in human history. Charles Darwin's theories on nature were used to defend the capitalism and imperialism of the Industrial Age. Life, once thought of as God's handiwork, more recently viewed as a process guided by the invisible hand of natural selection, will be increasingly thought of as just a col-

lection of genetic information. On this basis, what is wrong with a bit of tinkering? No need for teenage spots, let's get Scunthorpe United playing like Manchester United, champagne and caviar all round and no-one as stupid as George Bush born ever again.

Rifkin is neither for or against biotechnology. He does not see it in such simple, black and white terms. His main point is the same as it was in *Who Should Play God?* The changes we are overseeing will make the invention of the wheel and the splitting of the atom pale into something approaching insignificance, so perhaps the crucial decisions should not be left to those with short-term economic interests and their political puppets.

The author restricts his own opinions to just 10 sides of a 270-page book. He opposes 'hard path' biotechnology such as engineering super crops and transgenic animals, and permanently altering human genetic make-up. He believes there is a 'soft path' which could be taken to pursue such goals as more environmentally-friendly agriculture, more humane animal husbandry techniques and new health care practices.

Wake up and smell the GM coffee. And read this book.

**EMPOWERING THE EARTH**, by Alex Begg. GREEN BOOKS. \$10.95. ISBN 1-870098-92-7.

& *Reviewed by John Papworth*

WHEN someone has taken the trouble to write a book, especially one with as challenging a title as this, any reviewer will ordinarily want to commend it. Unfortunately this volume belies its title. Early chapters discuss 'power' largely in terms of speculative hypothesis and an abundance of complex diagrams, and later

ones come down to the author's rather restricted concepts of brass tacks and positive action. LETS (Local Exchange Trading Systems) are given an approving nod and then, wait for it, we are shown how elected members of parliament of a minority party, in this case the Green Party, can adopt strategies which will actually result in legislative change.

No doubt they can and they do, but so what? These MPs are members of a parliament busy surrendering Britain's nationhood to a gang of ruthless and unprincipled power mongers in Brussels. This sort of Green Fabianism which accepts the inevitability of gradualness is rather akin to a horse-drawn fire engine seeking to cope with a nuclear war.

We badly need some guidelines on how we might empower the earth and ourselves, ones which indicate how we can reject mass politics as a means of liberation, how we might tackle the imposing problems of land ownership, of finance and taxation, of military power, of the gathered menace of corporate power and global capitalism, and not least how we counter the mortal cultural and ideological assault now formidably mounted by the power of television in commercial hands.

There is a whole range of books waiting to be written here but regrettably this is not one of them. It makes not a single reference to the pivotal issue of size and scale. Of the numerous authors cited there is no mention of Kohr or of Schumacher, for example, and there seems to be an unconscious readiness to accept that it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive. It is not surprising that the author provides no answer to the general crisis that now engulfs us all; he clearly does not understand the problem.

**THE FUTURE OF MONEY: A NEW WAY TO CREATE WEALTH, WORK AND A WISER WORLD**, by Bernard Lietaer. CENTURY/RANDOM HOUSE, 2001, ISBN 0 7126 8399 2

& *Reviewed by J Walter Plinge*

'UNLESS precautions are taken, there is at least a 50–50 chance that the next five to ten years will see a dollar crisis that would amount to a global meltdown.'

Right. Global Economic Meltdown. Well we are well aware of the alarmist theories of the militiamen of the midwestern United States but the citation above is from Bernard Lietaer, an ex-senior executive of the central bank of Belgium, from *The Future of Money*. His message is clear. This is not a book loaded down with economic mumbo-jumbo; the text is in plain English and easy for the layperson to understand but economists will not be disappointed either.

So, for people who are generally concerned with social and environmental issues, why bother with economics? Lietaer's answer is that social and environmental breakdown are directly associated with how currencies are designed. Most of us never consider the 'design' of money because we think of money as something that just exists in the environment like air and water. But for Lietaer, who was on the team that designed the euro, and has devoted considerable thought and research to the design of money systems, money is designed with features that affect how societies and communities function and their relationship to the environment. See Lietaer's website: <http://www.transaction.net>.

Here are some design features of modern money worldwide.

- ◆ It is all fiat money: created from nothing;
- ◆ All money is lent into existence;

- ◆ All money is created with interest;

- ◆ Money is the tool of nation states

These design features lead to:

- ◆ Scarcity of money; leading inevitably to poverty and bankruptcies;
- ◆ Encourage systematic competition;
- ◆ Fuel the need for continuous economic growth;
- ◆ Concentrates wealth into the hands of a few individuals;

People concerned with social issues and the environment would do well to note the last four items. Each carries severe consequences. For a single example, the need for continuous economic growth, carried to its logical conclusion, means that environmental and social devastation will continue unchecked until the earth, in its entirety, looks like New York City... at which time we presume the system will collapse for any number of reasons.

Says Lietaer, 'The world's 200 largest corporations now control 28% of the global economy, yet need to employ only 0.3 percent of its population to achieve that'. How is that possible? The design of the money system actively promotes it.

Lietaer describes how community breakdown is caused by a single major factor: '...both the cause of the problem and its solution can be found in money systems'. Of course. Money systems of yesteryear were designed with features that served the creators. Lietaer suggests the resolution is to be found in the 'new monetary experiments' that have been cropping up all over the world: Community Currencies, designed by people interested in their local communities. 'My view is that these innovations offer realistic possibilities for gradually correcting the excesses and imbalances of the current system without revolutions or violence.' ■

## NICHOLAS ALBERY 1948–2001



Nicholas Albery, one of the most innovative and prolific social inventors and thinkers of his age, died in June. His energy, drive and genius for lateral thinking helped spark a myriad of initiatives, including the Institute for Social Inventions, the apprentice-master alliance and the Natural Death Centre. He was also pivotal in helping to organise the early Fourth World Assemblies. Nicholas, aged 52, an enthusiastic walker who never owned a car, died in a road accident.

### A LIFE OF IDEAS – AND ACTION

Born St Albans 28 July 1948. Son of Sir Donald Albery, impresario and theatre owner, and Heather Albery. Survived by his wife Josefine Speyer and son Merlyn ( born 3 January 1976).

#### Education

French Lycée, London  
St Peter's, Seaford, Sussex  
Stowe School, Buckingham  
St John's College, Oxford  
North East London Polytechnic

#### End of school to Frestonia

Spent two summers in San Francisco while studying at Oxford, becoming involved with the psychedelic and spiritual movements there. Having dropped out of Oxford, he joined the anti-university in London and his alternative methods of learning and living began to fully take shape.

In the late 60s, early 70s, Nicholas was involved in community work, think-tanks, communes and publishing (like his guidebook on how

to live for free in London). He also helped set up the Albion Free State, based on the Blakean vision of John Host, as an alternative to England (with love, peace and joy at its core). He also helped organise free weekly festivals in a local cinema under the Albion Free State banner. In 1974, was involved in organising resistance to 800 police at the Windsor Festival and later successfully sued Chief Constable of the area.

He went on to travel more in the States, and to travel with a horse and cart through Wales. He also attended, as a sort of assistant mid-wife, his son's birth in a farm cottage.

#### Projects/achievements:

Nicholas was at the heart of the **Frestonia** Republic in the late 1970s. The residents in Freston Road, Notting Dale, London W10, threatened with eviction to make way for a giant factory, held a referendum. There was a 95% majority in favour of independence from Great Britain. The Free and Independent Republic of

Frestonia was founded on 27 October 1977 and applied for membership of the United Nations. A coat of arms, stamps and a government followed. Nicholas was Minister of State for the Environment. Huge media attention followed, and the Greater London Council was forced to back down and hold a public enquiry. Frestonia won the enquiry (with Nicholas representing them in court), and the area became a mixed-use site for houses and craft workshops. It was rebuilt with foreign aid from Great Britain, and the architecture used was voted upon by the residents. Today Frestonia can still be seen with its overhanging roofs, communal gardens and decorated brickwork. Running rings round the establishment in this manner, with great humour and imagination, is something of which Nicholas was immensely proud.

Author, editor, and psychotherapist. Founded the **Institute for Social Inventions** (ISI) in 1984, and had been its chairman and driving force ever since. The ISI is a think-tank for social entrepreneurs collecting non-technological ideas and projects from around the world that will improve the quality of life. It also gives annual awards to the best ideas for social improvements. **The Global Ideas Bank** has extended this collecting of ideas to the internet, with millions accessing the site every year. He also used to write a column of socially innovative ideas in the *Guardian* Society section for three years (under the title Advance Notice) in 1985–87.

The **Natural Death Centre** was founded in 1991 (by Nicholas, Josefine and Christianne Heal), and it has been advising those wishing to organise green, inexpensive family-organised funerals since then. The book the centre publishes, *The New Natural Death Handbook*, co-edited by Nicholas, has become the reference book for alternative funerals and is now in its third edition.

He also helped set up the **Befriending Network** with Josefine and others; it trains volunteers who visit the homes of those who are critically ill to help relieve the carer. The network became an independent charity in 1998/9.

The **Apprentice-Master Alliance** was founded by Nicholas in 1994, linking graduates or school-leavers wishing to learn a trade with small or one-person businesses for long-term apprenticeships. This is a free service done via a website.

The **Poetry Challenge** has been running for several years, having been launched at the same time as the publication of the incredibly successful *Poem for the Day* anthology. Many individuals and schools took up the challenge to learn poems by heart to raise money for charity.

Nicholas also set up the **www.DoBe.org website**, which lists participatory events in every city in the world, connecting like-minded people.

Having written the *Time Out Book of Country Walks* in 1997, Nicholas has also been running a walkers club (via the above website recently) which walks every Saturday to places just an hour from London by train.

## MAIN PUBLICATIONS:

*How to Feel Reborn? The Varieties of Primal and Rebirthing Experiences.* (Regeneration Press, 1982)

*Social Inventions Journal* (from 1985)

*The Problem Solving Pocketbook* (1989)

*The Book of Visions – An Encyclopaedia of Social Innovations* (Virgin, 1993)

*The New Natural Death Handbook* (1993; now 2001, in 3rd ed.)

*Poem for the Day* (Chatto, 1994)

*Time Out Book of Country Walks* (Penguin, 1997)

*Alternative Gomera* (a walking guide to the Canary Island of Gomera) (1998; in 6th edition)

*Seize the Day* (Chatto, 2001)

Plus the annual compendiums of ideas published by the Institute, and the annual books published by the Natural Death Centre; all since 1993. ■



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## FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR

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**I** FIRST MET NICHOLAS when I was the Green Party candidate for a London bye-election.

I needed help to address 60,000 envelopes. Try BIT information service, a friend urged. The lock on the terrace house door in Notting Hill was broken, litter abounded, and the stairs I climbed seemed far from safe or salubrity. Nicholas was asleep on a mattress on the floor but I had barely sat on a stool to wait when he opened one eye and leapt up to greet me with a hug and a kiss. I was to learn it was his standard way of greeting. In those days his hair was way down below his shoulders and he wore a neck-to-foot kaftan. Appearances notwithstanding, in the literal as much as the metaphorical sense of the word, he was a gentleman, and gentleness, of voice, gaze, demeanour and body language was his most pervasive characteristic. And who was it who said, 'a gentlemen is a person who puts more into life than he gets out of it'?

Of course he would help. He brought a team of half a dozen druggies and dropouts who bivouacked around him in his radical Notting Hill centre. They worked like stink and my election address went out on time. It was the beginning of a long partnership and friendship. He helped me with editing prob-

lems of *Resurgence* and to establish *Fourth World Review*; he was the mainspring of the early Fourth World Assemblies and of establishing the Academic Inn. He helped me to publish my books and with contacts for my journeys abroad and, what was to be his final offer of help, he undertook to chair the first meeting of the forthcoming Radical Consultation. I mention all this because none of his otherwise admirable obituaries in the big papers managed to do so.

A week before he died in a car crash he came with Josefine for a meal in my home. He worried that the size of my garden would absorb too much of my energies (it does). As he left we parted as we first met, with a bear hug and a kiss.

**O**N THE DAY of his funeral I travelled across a swathe of Southern England to reach Hazelmere. It involved three changes of trains but I marvelled at the speed and the comfort of the journey. People moan a lot about our train service but, and admittedly I am not a daily commuter, it always seems more than adequate to me; if we had not built all those idiotic motorways and other car essentials we would now all be travelling in super-luxury trains at double the current speed and frequency, and our railway sta-

tions would be marble palaces with free drinks, free videos, free phone calls, with the plus perhaps of free massage parlours and aromatherapy for the elect.

**P**IERRE has taken to an ancient Land Rover of such historic origins that it obviates him from the need to pay road tax. Since he is my eldest I must not question his judgement, especially as I was grateful for the two-mile ride to the funeral. It was a special gathering of about 100 of Nicholas' family and close friends. I found myself, whilst trying to batten down the grief of the cause of the occasion, trying to recognise people I had not seen for years, and sometimes decades, who greeted me. The trouble is that with age the old filing system tends to suffer a bit from overload. We buried him in one of those exquisite settings of woodland, meadow, hill and vale in which so much of the English countryside excels. In keeping with his wishes it was very much a DIY occasion. My two boys had helped Merlyn, his son, and his friends to dig the grave and the coffin was a wicker-work casket set at first on the grass in a ring of flowers, around which we gathered to pay tributes, to read poems and to pray in silence. Then the youngsters carried the coffin to the grave and after some more contributions, and after we had all covered the lid with single flowers, making it look perfectly exquisite, the young men lowered him gently into the sandy space of his final rest. Sometimes it is only when we lose something that we are able to realise its real value, and so it is with Nicholas. Wild rhododendron shrubs in full bloom abounded, the sky was a cool fresh of rain-laden cloud allowing intermitted bursts of sun and warmth, whilst in the woods the

song of the birds was its own anthem of choral salute to the passing of one of the really great souls of the twentieth century.

Later, nearby, someone had thoughtfully lit a fire of logs. Others had erected a sheltering tarpaulin, beneath which was a veritable banquet of goodies. Later, by the graveside we sang songs and hymns, there was more poetry and then we encircled the grave and danced. Nicholas would have loved it.

**T**IM ALBERY is Nicholas' elder brother and I was explaining to him how I thought television should be taken right out of the hands of the commercial people and be controlled by regional boards comprised of elected representatives of parish or village councils. Tim, who is an opera and ballet producer, rather shattered me with his response. It seems governments or elected councils can no longer control the medium in any way. Any commercial body can shoot a satellite into space from which the owners can then beam whatever programmes they wish. The implications here would appear to be that we are entering a new dark ages, dominated by commercial rather than elevated moral values to an extent which cannot but involve the general debasement of whatever standards a civilisation may seek to sustain.

**P**IERRE had had a glass or two of wine, and since John-David was on pain killers from an injured foot from playing football, and which impelled him to abjure alcohol, his brother wisely allowed him to drive his precious mechanical antique. For me the entire motoring experience is simply confirmatory evidence that the human race is in the grip of a transient fit of insanity. Never mind, we reached London in one piece and

passing through Hammersmith we were slowed down by heavy traffic and thus able to view at leisure another sign of the insanity of our times. Hundreds of young men and women were queuing to enter a disco. Nothing remarkable about that you may say, but these youngsters were all dressed as schoolboys and schoolgirls. So the boys wore white tunic shirts and grey short trousers whilst the girls were in white shirts and short grey gym skirts. Marie said they were all harking back to their schooldays, but it struck me they were, unwittingly perhaps, showing their fear of the future.

Since we all now live separately it seemed a good idea for the family to dine together. The restaurant was a former bakehouse and the arrangement of the old fires and ovens, still in sight but no longer used, was exactly as in the orphanage bakehouse of my boyhood. Whilst chewing inedible fish I was suddenly transported to my own fourteen-year status of baker's boy handing the old baker a peel, (a flat, long-handed spade) so that he could retrieve loaves from the deep Dutch oven.

MARIE put me up on her comfortable sofa bed and in the morning, with my hosts still sleeping and with London at my feet, I decided to make my Sunday devotions in Westminster Abbey. It was a novel experience. At the entrance gate a uniformed attendant was saying with magisterial firmness to a Japanese lady, one of hundreds disgorged from nearby giant coaches, 'Madam, you have come as a tourist and you can't come in because we are closed to tourists today.'

It is impossible not to be overwhelmed by the vast, stupefying splendour of the Abbey and I thought, okay, this is full of memorials to the great ones of the land and

this is where the spirit of Nicholas belongs and where I can fittingly pray for him. The service was in the kind of modernised language designed to appeal to young people, even though most by far of those present were over fifty and the young were elsewhere. There was a solemn procession of choristers, all adult men and for some reason called 'lay vicars', and clergy, the latter in drab robes suggesting they may have been in mourning. The sermon was the usual Anglican closed-circuit affair concerned with matters of personal morality most people have absorbed in childhood. At no point did it touch on the problems of the adult world, although in fairness I do not doubt that attempts are made on other occasions to do so.

Anglican clerical voices do tend to lack warmth and spontaneity; all those carefully enunciated vowels seem to be blotting something out. I wondered what the effect would be if that clergy team, in the midst of a resounding choral 'Hallelujah', had suddenly started to dance. The ancient Abbey is of course the high temple of Anglicanism, the place where monarchs are crowned and statesmen and warriors commemorated. But the modernised service language out of conformity to political correctness, does give a rather hollow ring to its rituals.

AFTER the service I wandered along Whitehall, past the Cenotaph to the war dead, and it struck me the most worthwhile memorial to all those butchered young lives would be to establish a special commission to define exactly what caused World War I. It is after all true that if you do not learn the lessons of history you are condemned to repeat them. Leopold Kohr's *Breakdown of Nations* would surely help its

proceedings. Then along the Strand to Covent Garden where the ornate wrought iron halls of the former vegetable market are now teeming with tourists provided for with numerous cafes, fast food restaurants, gee-gaw shops and sideshows by street performers. One of the most popular of the latter was a quartet playing, wait for it, not your thump thump animal stuff, but Mozart and other classics.

**A**FTER an indifferent lunch I went to a Church fete – a church I had served with Marcelle for twelve years and whose council allowed me to be booted out with no syllable of acknowledgement. The trouble began when, in the vicar's absence through sickness, I gave permission to Nicholas to stage his first 'Day of the Dead' event; trying to show people how to cope with grief, how to be practical about funerals and to do things with dignity but without lavish expenditure, using cheap cardboard coffins and so on. My Church Council was outraged by the proposal but I stuck to my guns and the CC was even more outraged by the event. Well, now the Anglican Church itself has begun to sanction woodland burials and other changes put forward by Nicholas perhaps their ire has become subdued. I hope so. But no hard feelings for that Church Council, they are good people.

Then on to Neal's Yard, a cobbled area, in former days stables for market horses, transformed into a human centre for wholefoods, therapies and meeting rooms, where many people had gathered to pay their respects to Nicholas' memory. More poetry, music, song and dance and one short poem said:

*If you can talk – sing.*

*If you can walk – dance.*

reminding me of the generous spontaneity

of Nicholas' spirit. I felt so depressed I told people jokes to make them laugh. John Coleman drew me aside to ask for many hundred pounds I have not got to publish one of my books, Mary Crowther reaffirmed her belief that a federal Europe is a jolly good idea, strange indeed for one who regularly reads these pages. There were long contemplative silences around candles in London's darkness and then there was more dancing and I returned to my village home with the haunting sense that there was a new vast void in my life and that the world had lost a light; a world enriched by his spirit and now impoverished by his abrupt and tragic going.

It seemed that nothing could come his way, however unpromising, that he would not turn to positive account. That early hippie squat became, when development greed threatened to demolish it, the Independent State of Frestonia. Demolition was halted and out of it grew the Notting Hill Housing Trust which is still very much around.

No church or other body is going to canonise Nicholas and declare him a saint, and if a compound of gentleness, humility, selflessness, dedication to improving life for others in a variety of ways which his abundant talents enabled him to promote, all within a compass of visionary idealism and unremitting outpouring of physical and spiritual energies, does not make him a saint then the word is in need of redefinition.

At least for me he was a saint and I shall always remember him as such. He was indeed of such nobility of soul (and there is nothing remotely stretched by these words), that I marvel he walked the earth among us, and I know from first-hand how he illuminated life for all who were touched by his presence. ■

## Fourth World News



The **US** military has introduced new anti-drug measures when it was revealed that the use of Ecstasy among US soldiers has risen to 12 times the amount it was two years ago. \* An election in the **UK** was contested by three different conservative parties. The one led by a Mr Tony Blair won on a minority vote of those who voted whilst 40% of the electorate did not vote at all. \* A study by psychiatrists at the Imperial College School of Medicine has found that heavy drinking and drug taking has led to an increase of more than 70% in the suicide rate among men aged 15–19. \* **British** turtles face extinction because of intensive fish-farming and litter in the sea. \* The National Statistics Office claims that two-thirds of women prisoners in **England** and **Wales** are mentally ill. \* The UK Independence Party claims that if **Britain** left the European Union we would be £20bn better off. \* A US special envoy is to put forward a deal to allow **China** slightly more long-range missiles than America's planned shield could intercept. \* The **US** Coast Guard seized 13 tonnes of cocaine in the eastern Pacific Ocean, said to be the largest seizure of cocaine at sea. \* The **UK** Monster Raving Loony Party issued an election manifesto consisting of a blank sheet of paper: *The Times* reported it compared favourably with others. \* Fraud against the **European Union** more than doubled to £1.2bn last year after a sharp increase in the smuggling of cigarettes. \* **California** is set to increase the price of electricity by a third due to the state's poor power resources. \* A 25-gram packet of crisps commonly sold in **British** shops contains the following ingredients: Maize, Vegetable Oil, Rice Flour, Pickled Onion Flavour [Lactose (Animal Rennet), Rusk, Flavour Enhancers (monosodium glutamate, Disodium 5 – Ribonucleotide), Flavouring, Sweetener (Aspartame)], Salt. \* Three pupils at a school in **Devon** have been expelled after a sit-down protest over the right

to wear shorts in hot weather. \* Two prison officers and an inmate needed hospital treatment after a six-hour riot at the **Dover** Young Offenders Institution. \* **Rwandan** soldiers were deployed to protect endangered mountain gorillas after Hutu militiamen killed and ate at least two rare silverback males. \* **China's** Communist Party has said publicly that its rule could be undermined by social discontent over the country's free-market reforms. A book circulating in China depicts the hinterland in a state of chronic unrest and rebellion. \* The Labour Government is the **UK's** biggest spender on advertising. \* Five states of the former Soviet Union, **Georgia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan** and **Moldavia**, are uniting to recreate the ancient 'Silk Road' from China despite strong Russian opposition. \* A socialist writer in the English weekly *Spectator* is calling for the restoration of the death penalty. \* Steel cell phone communication towers in the **USA** are reported to kill between four and forty million birds annually. The birds, mostly migrating, simply crash into them. The blinking lights of the towers also mesmerise birds, causing them to circle the towers till they drop from exhaustion. \* **Australian News Report** says governments worldwide are secretly negotiating ways to put an end to all non-profit public services. \* Eight million tons of food packaging was dumped in 1997 alone. \* The food in an average supermarket trolley will have travelled 3000 kilometres. \* 25000 jobs have been lost in a ten-mile radius of 93 superstores over a recent three-year period, an average of 270 in each location. \* The London Institute of Education says that science teaching for children is neglecting ethical questions. \* President Moi of **Kenya** has told all Kenyans that they must abstain from sex for at least two years if the spread of AIDS is to be halted. — **SH**.

## Fourth World News

