

## Fourth World News



Global **climatic change** is occurring faster than previously thought, according to European scientists. • Chlorine in swimming pools could be linked to the surge in childhood **asthma**. • **Breast-feeding** may be able to compensate for the harmful effects of smoking during pregnancy. • **Doctors** are to be given more say in how to run the NHS. • 'The **"war on terror"** has made the world a more dangerous place,' according to Amnesty International. • Airbus has signed a £14 million contract for 180 **military transport planes** for Europe. • The London-based weekly *The Spectator* is urging the government to abandon railways and build more **roads**. • **Weapons of mass destruction** have yet to be found in Iraq; meanwhile the British and US governments are busy deploying their own weapons of mass deception and mass distraction. • 3,000 **teachers** are set to lose their jobs as a funding crisis hits schools in Britain. • **Hospices** in Britain are being forced to rely on lottery handouts and charitable donations in order to care for the sick and dying. • A £9 million campaign by the British government to discourage parents from **driving** their children to school is having little effect. The campaign hoped to combat child obesity and traffic congestion. • A Moroccan journalist has been jailed for four years after **insulting** King Mohammed VI. • Doctors are claiming that **masturbation** helps to prevent cancer of the prostate. • Three years after removing the Taleban from power, Afghanistan is once again the world's biggest **opium** producer with 3,400 tonnes a year, 75% of the world's supply. • According to *The New Statesman*, Tony Blair ignored advice from his own government that the **occupation of Iraq** by British and American troops is illegal. • The US government has overturned a ban on research into mini-battlefield **nuclear weapons**. • Six times as many

people in Britain are dependent on **alcohol** than are dependent on Class A drugs. • President Bush has blasted European nations for opposing **GM crops**. • The **European Union** continues to grow unabated, with Poland and the Czech Republic voting in favour of joining. • The latest reports show that between 5,500 and 7,000 **Iraqi civilians died** during the war on Iraq. • President Musharraf of Pakistan has said that India's rising **defence spending** could cause a dangerous military imbalance in the sub-continent. • An American **snack food** company is reducing the size of its portions in order to avoid being sued by overweight Americans. • **Television advertising** aimed at children has been banned in Sweden. In Britain there are more adverts shown during children's programmes than at any other time of the day. • Scientists say multinational food companies have known for years of research that suggest many types of **junk food** trigger chemical reactions in the brain which lead people to overeat. • Teenagers are risking their eyesight by following the latest fashion of wearing brightly coloured cosmetic **contact lenses**. • The British are at the top of the European league for making **obscene gestures** while driving. • During the first weekend of the school holidays in France, holidaymakers heading South faced **traffic jams** of more than 150 miles. • More than 20% of **universities** in Britain are in financial trouble and risk being closed down or taken over. • People using **mobile phones** while driving cause more accidents than drink-drivers. • A well-known **chocolate bar** company has introduced a scheme in which children eat lots of chocolate and sweets to earn sports equipment to help them get fit, and thus counter the growing trend in child obesity. – **Sam Hains**

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# FOURTH WORLD REVIEW

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



**SMALL IS POWERFUL**  
THE ALTERNATIVE TO GLOBALISATION  
Kirkpatrick Sale

*Editorials:*  
**THE REAL REVOLUTION**

**APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup> 2003:**  
**A DATE IN HISTORY**

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# FOURTH WORLD REVIEW

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## The Fourth World

PO Box 2410  
Swindon SN5 4XN.  
Tel: 01793 772214;  
Fax 01793 772521;  
Web: [www.4thworld.co.uk](http://www.4thworld.co.uk)

Editor: JOHN PAPWORTH  
Sub-editor: SAM HAINS  
Mailing: ANNE FEALDMAN  
Distribution: ROBERT POCOCK

## Local offices

Australia: JACQUES BOULET  
India: Dr MADHUKAR B. NISAL  
New Zealand: HELEN DEW  
USA: ZACH STEWART

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Kirkpatrick Sale,  
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Zach Stewart,  
Will Sutherland,  
Shann Turnbull,  
Tracy Marchioness of  
Worcester, Jeff Ubois.

Typesetting: GEOFF ELLIS  
(01858 464771)

Printing: INSTANT PRINT WEST  
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THE UN UNIVERSAL DECLARATION of Human Rights is not by any means universal since I strongly differ on the prescriptive manner of much of its pronouncements, even if I am only one against those billions of the rest of the people in the world. I am moreover left in a state of utter bewilderment by one sentence in Article 26, which stands out like a dog's flea on a butter pat. 'Elementary education shall be compulsory.' I do not understand how something proclaimed as 'compulsory' can then be regarded as a 'right', but at any rate let us take comfort from that source of comfort where discomfort seems to swell from the fact that it 'shall be' compulsory and apparently is not yet compulsory.

WHEN TALKING to Teddy Goldsmith on the phone recently, he suddenly began to refer to Mr Blair, (the man at No. 10), in the most opprobrious terms. It occurred to me that in my adult lifetime I have lived under about ten different prime ministers, and in almost every case, perhaps Churchill was an exception, they have ended their period of office by being an object of extreme execration by large sections of the public. It suggests that this odium is really related to the office rather than to any particular person occupying it, and that there are certain pressures working on it which makes the eventual unpopularity of the occupant inevitable. Whatever the policies on which prime ministers have been elected these pressures are in fact far more powerful than anything the electorate at large can expect to control. Indeed the reverse situation prevails, for the popular will is clearly just one of the weapons in the armoury of these powerful forces. They may not always get their way directly, as the growing hostility to the EUroplot may indicate, but the popular will is fitful, spasmodic and all too often only transiently attentive to

any mischief that may be afoot, whereas these forces – the arms, oil, engineering and other industries – never slacken the grip of their focus for an instant. The unpopularity of successive prime ministers arises in large part from the need to kow-tow to the wishes of these forces, even at the cost of electoral unpopularity, and if ever one of them decided to oppose their wishes he or she will be ditched, as Mrs Thatcher was ditched after making clear in her Bruges speech her opposition to the EUroplot, or assassinated, as Kennedy was after the Bay of Pigs fiasco and his declared intention to clean up his corrupt government finances. So I do not waste my breath by execrating any of them, rather do I reserve my surprise for when they do anything remotely sensible or constructive, knowing that whenever they lose office it is simply a matter of one political bastard replacing another.

CHRIS WRIGHT sends me a note to assert, '...there is a place for both action and theorising and, maybe, FWR errs too much towards the latter', which rather sounds like telling a man dying of thirst he overoccupied with water.

It appears to overlook in any case that to assert there is a superfluity of emphasis on anything, even on theorising, is itself a theory. So the essential question seems to be whether any given theory is good or bad. Is a theory that urges a modest bi-monthly seeking to establish some degree of theoretical clarity in a world awash with confusion and with multitudes of good people devoted to 'action' of one kind or another, (even though such 'action' appears to be having no discernable effect on our current headlong rush to disaster), to focus more on 'action', a good or a bad one? ■

crete block structure I call the Berlin Wall, and beyond is one of the most resplendent views of the English Wiltshire countryside any home could hope to have. I sit here possibly because my desk has a plastic 'leather' top whereas the table surface is a natural pine wood, and because when I look up from moving my pen around I can watch the birds. Just now a flight of finches has moved in; exquisitely minute creatures whose flight and other movements represent a miraculous feat of biological engineering. In the midst of watching them peck away at plants and even at raindrops on an iron railing, Ezzy, Marie's cat, jumps on the table to demand his mead of attention. Whilst I stroke between his ears and under his chin, causing him to purr like a second-hand motorbike in need of servicing, Tempé, the sort-of border-terrier dog, gets jealous and pushes her way forward. I suddenly realise I am one of the most fortunate people in the world; I have a solid Cotswold stone tile roof over my head, space to move around in an ancient farmhouse with stone-flagged floors, I am able to accommodate the production needs of a magazine which reaches people in many parts of the world in an attempt to create some theoretical clarity which can counter the evil drift of current events before we are undone, I have a cooking range, a clothes washing machine, plenty of water, light and heat, a comfortable bed, excellent food so

that I never go hungry, a host of friends in a bustling rural village, a couple of household pets, a large garden full of lovely flowering shrubs and fruit trees, and enjoy all the peace, quiet and seclusion I could wish for. I reflect that most of my own countrymen have never enjoyed this basic security and comfort, and never will. The same is imposingly true of the vast multitudes in other parts of the world, so in material terms I am a member of the global aristocracy. It is true I cannot afford to have a car, and would not have one if I could, nor can I afford to jet around the world from one airport to another, and would not do so if I could; the house cost too much, and has left me with no money to spend on it, which it badly needs, but there we are. It still leaves me with a sense of being privileged beyond reason and wondering how I can use my good fortune to do what I can to improve other people's prospects. In my life I have gone up the social ladder a bit from the days when, at seventeen, a policeman woke me when lying on a bench on the Thames Embankment in London under a pile of newspapers to keep out the November cold, and sent me to a youth hostel, where they gave me some welcome grub and a warm bed, but always I remind myself how easy it is to become insensitive to the needs of people in poverty when one is better off, and all too apt to become absorbed in the problems of one's betteroffness.

*Either the State for ever, crushing individual and local life, taking over in all fields of human activity, bringing with it its wars and its domestic struggles for power, its palace revolutions which only replace one tyrant by another, and inevitably at the end of this development there is... death! Or the destruction of the States, and new life starting again in thousands of centres on the principle of the lively initiative of the individual and groups and that of free agreement.*

*The choice lies with you!*

**Peter Kropotkin**

## THE REAL REVOLUTION

***H****uman Affairs are currently engulfed in a crisis having no precedent in history and which, in both moral and material terms, is threatening the disintegration of the entire corpus of civilised existence.*

The literature detailing the different aspects of the crisis – environmental, social, industrial, military, financial and demographic – is already extensive, so too are the proposals of how it may be tackled. Yet almost without exception these proposals are projected as possible solutions within the prevailing structure of power, a feature which cannot fail to vitiate whatever remedies are urged. Why?

Most of them, world disarmament, economic justice, care for the rainforests, for fish stocks, animal welfare, organic food, intermediate technology, energy conservation, monetary reform and so on and so on, to say nothing of the vast dream world of 'personal development', are assuming that all that is required is an increase of awareness of the dangers into which we are running and a quick-fix, knee-jerk reaction based on ordinary human decency, an honest respect for ordinary limits, and for avoiding any form of excess which is obviously harmful.

What is overlooked is that we are light years away from any effective relationship between the moral judgement of ordinary

citizens and the world of practical politics and economics.

### Common sense?

Why does this gulf exist? Any dispassionate appraisal of the problems, such as the global nuclear war danger now advancing upon us, of the effects of stripping the globe of its remaining rain-forest cover, of exterminating an untold number of natural species, of carbon emissions and global warming, of exhausting the remaining stocks of basic finite resources such as oil, to name but a few, could scarcely fail to evoke common-sense remedies which any sane social order would adopt and apply as a matter of course. But we are not living in a sane world, but one where absolute forms of unreason are wielding power for purposes which are immoral where they are not evil, and which have no regard for the planet or the interests of the general body of its inhabitants.

A recently published book on energy has pointed out with dramatic clarity that oil production is likely to peak within a decade. Again, since oil is the basic energy resource of the entire global industrial complex, it might be thought to be a matter of ordinary common sense to introduce emergency measures for its conservation, to restructure industry, agriculture and transport so as to reduce demands for it, and at

the same time to embark on a wholesale simplification of the general consumerist lifestyle which has been engineered over the last two or three generations to its present inordinately wasteful levels of energy consumption.

No single government anywhere is projecting any such policies; all without exception are actively committed to ever further increases of economic expansion involving ever higher consumption of energy derived from fossil fuels. A leading British newspaper reports, with strong editorial endorsement and approval, that the UK government is going to spend £6 billion on 'road improvements' to accommodate the constantly increasing use of cars. In the UK alone there are now over 24,000,000 vehicles on the roads and car sales continue to accelerate. The same source points out that private transport (by car) is cheaper than public transport (especially by train) because fuel prices are relatively modest; but of course it fails to mention that whilst rail travel prices are expected to cover the cost of the rail track, the main burden of road building and maintenance is carried by all taxpayers whether they are motorists or not.

As in so many other spheres of a consumerist lifestyle the government, if it is to win votes, is the prisoner of the consumerist values which consumerist propaganda pumps out unceasingly. In the Western

**Why is the concept of the cantonisation of Iraq not being explored? Iraq is an artificial creation of British Imperialism embodying several divergent ethnic and religious entities. Any centralised government must inevitably become totalitarian.**

world most people in material terms have never had it so good, even if the price, in terms of the global crisis, makes their embrace of a relatively sumptuous lifestyle not unlike a tea dance on the *Titanic*.

Who then has engineered the dominance of these destructive and suicidal consumerist values? We have here to acknowledge the all-pervasive power of market forces playing on the greed and gullibility of human frailties with the savage mendacity of their consumerist propaganda machine, and its capacity to drown the moral and social message in a perpetual appeal to our baser sense of self-regard.

### Satanic dominance

Advertising today is not a channel of information, it is an industry of persuasion; the apostles of its consumerist religion of the gospel of getting on operate in the higher reaches of the realm of high finance as they deploy all the arts of manipulating unconscious forces of motivation that Freud and others have revealed, towards the single goal of increasing consumption in societies already afflicted with surfeit. In an age when democracy is all too easily supposed to mean government by the free choice of the people, where is the freedom when the forces of commercial indoctrination are at liberty to undermine it on a mass basis in every available channel of information every minute of every day? How can mass exposure to the effrontery of this limitless manipulative mendacity do other than corrupt the values of any society that permits it?

But why have market forces been able to achieve this satanic dominance to a degree where they are imperilling the entire adventure of civilisation? It may be thought that a remedy for the problem of this dominance

promotion of consumerism, civic passivity, moral squalor and ethical indifference in millions of gullible innocents. In matters of high principle our religious leaders are not on the warpath to proclaim righteousness, they are busy practising the everlasting arts of acquiescence and the deadly despotism of unendingly discreet silence.

THE EDITOR OF ANY RADICAL JOURNAL seeking to grapple with global affairs must expect to be targeted as a matter of course for every initiative that may surface from a variety of sources proposing to solve our problems. What seems somewhat repetitively to happen is that somebody, often with a private income, is sitting in the bath and is suddenly afflicted with an inspired vision of how the world might be reformed; he rushes naked in the street crying 'Eureka! Listen to this! The salvation of the world is at hand! If only people will adopt my solution! Non-violence! International co-operation! Save the trees! The whales! Equality! Debt cancellation! A week of prayer for Christian Unity! And an International Advisory Committee for the Simultaneous Abolition of Bombs! Of drugs! Of meat! Of barbed wire! Of American Presidents and British Premiers!'

They launch leaflets, send e-mails and circulars; they harness prominent names who assure the world that, if only people will listen, this is the answer that will put us all on the royal road of progress. An organisation is established with a board of patrons of quite the most impeccable respectability, membership subscriptions are canvassed and all systems are set to go.

After a lapse of time our inspired world transformer becomes aware that no one is listening, no one is joining and no one is

taking the least notice. So perhaps he gets drunk and then goes to bed and leaves the world to darkness and to me.

The trouble is that I am another world transformer of much the same ilk; I have had my moment of inspiration in the bath and have done my share of shouting Eureka, even if I lack the income to sustain it. The difference seems to be that my Eureka is not a solo but a chorus, it is linked to others of similar inspiration who in a multitude of different ways are joining forces and slowly but surely beginning to have an impact. The trouble is I tend to fall out with these other world changers; I tell them their particular Eureka will change nothing because they are not grappling with the demon forces which are bent on destroying the world; and, because I am devoid of the gifts of diplomacy and soft soap, I tell them they are not proposing a solution but promoting a distraction and, of course, naturally enough, because they are human and all that, they go off in a huff and thereafter give me the cold shoulder. Which is sad of course, but where would the world be without all this colourful ego-tripping, even if it does continue despite the overall downswing?

I HAVE A LARGE ROOM WITH A DESK, bookshelves, files, telephone and a big fireplace for log fires in winter, yet I find myself doing most of my scribbling at a kitchen table alongside a large window. It looks on to my vegetable patch, just now rich with runner beans, potatoes, cucumbers, peas, tomatoes, peppers, cauliflower (the worse for attack by beautiful white-winged moths) and lettuce. Sideways is a herb garden with parsley, oregano, chives, marjoram, sage, thyme, basil, horseradish and, beyond, a large bay tree. The garden dips down to an ugly con-

reflects that this is despite the arrogant bossiness of all centralising political freaks and the patronising indifference of their bureaucratic, auntie-knows-best administrators, it gives an inkling of what local power will accomplish when it is restored to its rightful place in the scheme of things.

ON ONE HISTORIC DAY in my orphanage childhood there was a revolution. One of the bare, painted walls received an adornment, a large, brown coloured disc about 18 inches wide was hanging there. The centre projected outwards to a point which was needle sharp. It was a radio! Each 'cottage' was so furnished and controlled by a central switchboard and suddenly, for the first time, I heard the carefully cultivated, apparently educated voice of a BBC announcer reading the news. I was astonished by his voice and at once declared I wanted to talk just like that.

My attempts to emulate that BBC mode of speech were apparently successful. Strangers I met would later assume I had been to a public school and perhaps wonder why I was working in a cookhouse. As a young man I was ashamed of my origins and embarrassed by any reference to them. Such is the stuff of which we are made and the nature of the social assumptions of that time. Incidentally, is it really true that in the earliest days of broadcasting the announcer would say, 'Good evening ladies and gentlemen, this is the BBC Home Service, here is the news. There is no news this evening.'?

However that may be, in my childhood the BBC set standards; today, especially with television, it is busy sabotaging whatever standards survive the assaults on greatness from the commercial channels. I suppose TV is just about the most powerful

medium for influencing people's minds and conditioning their attitudes and values that could be devised; it is certainly far more powerful than any of the organised religions in their authoritarian heyday. Any society that would even dream of putting the medium in the hands of people who quite blatantly and openly seek to use it just to make money, and to do that with a non-stop barrage of propaganda promoting contempt for God's creation and a remorseless promotion of consumerism, is surely simply cutting its own throat.

There is no moral leadership being given here. The Catholic and Anglican churches are currently in a tizzy about homosexuality, as though it is not an integral factor of mammalian biology, or is one which can be legislated against or bullied out of existence by papal decree. Since *homo sapiens* has become, by the sheer proliferation of its numbers, a global virus which is now proceeding to sink the ship of civilisation altogether, one might have thought our great leaders would be trying to make homosexuality a precondition for promotion to any senior post, not least since the original proscriptions were largely inspired by a conceived need for more boys as potential warriors in the intertribal wars which figure so largely in the Old Testament. I find it simply perverse that our leaders are content to ignore that Jesus ignored the subject, and content too to ignore that the only recorded occasion when Jesus resorted to physical violence was when he threw the banking fraternity out of the temple. Today it is that fraternity rather than homosexuality that dominates our affairs, and with television as their main weapon they are busy tearing the fabric of civilisation to shreds by their satanic

may be essayed through the established democratic political processes, and it is indeed an attempt made by numerous well-intentioned reformers. But reform is not revolution, and at the risk of lapsing into 19th century political jargon, nothing less than a revolution is called for today. Not a revolution which simply changes one set of great leaders for another, who then find themselves compelled by the mundane mechanics of mass power to repudiate the objects of the revolution simply in order to maintain their power in terms of mass support and all that is involved in mass manipulation.

What is required above all else is a revolution in values and assumptions, one which repudiates the dictates of consumerist propaganda in favour of sufficiency rather than surfeit, and which safeguards the planet and its people.

Many may perhaps be tempted to rush in to agree with such sentiments without grasping what is involved. Morality does not hang in midair; it is emphatically a function of personal relationships, which is doubtless expressed in the cardinal laws of Christian belief to love God and to love one's neighbour. In this light to love one's car or one's corporation is simply a form of blasphemy.

But if such moral sentiments can only take wing on the basis of personal relationships it is important to grasp the essential evil of any force in society which undermines such relationships. Personal relations in the market between buyer and seller have largely been negated by supermarkets

and shopping malls, and the same process of depersonalisation is evident with the growth of giant centrally controlled bureaucracies, in government, in the technologies associated with entertainment, in leisure activities such as sports and team games and so on. Even churches are increasingly manned by 'team vicars'. Relationships with other people have become transmuted into relationships with organisations. Which of course means moral questions are being largely determined by those who run the organisation, and the bigger the body the bigger the power and the bigger its capacity to determine peoples' values. Hence the overriding significance of advertising.

How then can we challenge this evil power in order to establish a decent social morality? What above all is required is the utmost clarity about the nature of the problem, and that problem is not one of any particular political creed or economic policy, nor is it one of any particular moral or ethical belief; it is a problem above all other problems confronting human societies and it is emphatically one of size. If we fail to tackle that problem, however intense our concern for any of the multiple evils our mass, centrally controlled, consumerist dominated minority societies are proliferating, like any sick body racked with disease and robbed of its vital disease resistant forces, we are neglecting the really essential means we have to hand to advance any effective remedy. ■

#### OBITUARY NOTICE

**We record with sadness the death of Sri C.R. Ramanathan (Ramanna) on July 20th 2003. He was a staunch supporter of Fourth World concerns and at the time of his death was planning a regular Indian imprint of Fourth World Review. We miss his ardent devotion to our common cause.**

## APRIL 12<sup>TH</sup> 2003: A DATE IN HISTORY

**F**EW PEOPLE, and few even among those with any deep, disinterested concern for current trends in public affairs, appear to grasp the importance of April 12th 2003 and the ensuing Anglo-American invasion of Iraq.

The 20th century was scarred by several monster wars of global significance, if not of global extent; in nearly every case there was a substantial body of opinion opposed to the idea that modern states should settle their differences by war rather than by peaceful negotiation, but in every case that opinion was a minority one and was quite unable to prevail.

The First World War of 1914–18 was a long-drawn out tragedy in which the cream of the youth of several nations was massacred. In the end, as casualties and privation mounted, popular anti-war feeling mounted with them, but to little effect. The war became a colossal battle of material and psychological attrition, a race against exhaustion which no one won and which ended because one side collapsed somewhat sooner than the other.

The consequences, both immediate and generational, were horrendous beyond any measure and have still, even as they continue, not been understood adequately and no lessons learned. One immediate result was the Russian revolution, which resulted in an iron dictatorship leading to such a welter of cold-blooded terror and the deaths, by state bullets, forced labour and starvation, of millions of luckless inhabi-

tants of the Soviet paradise, a monstrous tragedy of which history can show no equal.

Another result, from the mass economic privations of war collapse, was the emergence of dictatorships in Germany, Italy and Spain. Once in control of state power the German one, led by a gang of economic outcasts, social misfits, moral pygmies and psychopathic criminals, proceeded to embark on nothing less than a programme of world domination; it was a thrust neighbouring countries had such little choice but to resist, a choice of such pressure that even the anti-war and pacifist voice was largely silenced by the nature of events themselves. It is one of the more ferocious ironies of history that to defeat the Nazi movement other countries were compelled to ally themselves with the Soviet communist twin brother of Nazi civic terrorism to do so.

It might be thought that the anti-war spirit, especially in the USA, was responsible for the end of the Vietnam war; certainly it was unpopular and anti-war feeling increased with the casualties. But the fact remains that the war ended because the USA was defeated in the field.

April 12th 2003, let the date never be forgotten, was altogether different. The threat of war was clearly coming not from some powerful belligerent set on a policy of military expansion, but from the all-powerful USA and its British satrap. Why? Iraq was declared to be harbouring something called Weapons of Mass Destruction. Despite the

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## FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR

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**M**Y VILLAGE, with its four thousand occupants, is really a small town. It began round an ancient church, or perhaps the church followed. The 14th century Black Death prompted people to move to higher ground, leaving the church a bit on the edge of things. Then developers moved in one direction and subsequent developers developed farmland even further afield, so the village stretches at both ends of its High Street, where I live, leaving the church still very much on the edge of one end.

What dominates much of village life today is a number of quite remarkable personalities. The Parish Council may be a mere shadow of its rightful powers and responsibilities, but some of its members have the sense, the self-assurance, the command of language and the ability to master

endless bureaucratic detail that would make them the match of any leading politician anywhere. They have their equals in any case in the leading personalities who run the astonishing number of voluntary organisations. In Purton there are nearly 80, not just for darts, cricket or bowls, but for a wide range of charitable or social concerns. Dogs for the Blind, youth organisations, Cancer Research, Age Concern, history society, gardeners' guild, mothers' union, carnival committee, environment body and so on. It all represents an astonishing input of dedicated effort, and those noting the general drift of the global crisis and who seem to trumpet it as a natural product of the irredeemable negative aspects of human nature might do worse than reflect on the abundance of concern and goodwill that is manifested in local communities in this way up and down the country; and when one

handle, and...’ (you can sense the twinkle in his eye as he pauses for effect before adding with impeccable timing) ‘...and it makes revolutions.’ Perhaps it will revolutionise your own dodgy status in the eyes of your respectable neighbours? Leave a copy on your coffee table the next time a doubting Thomas comes to tea. Little actions can speak louder than the biggest and brightest words.

**THE ‘POP!’ ANTHOLOGY**, edited by Michael Horovitz and Inge Else Laird. £7.99 (+£1 p&p). **THE ‘POM!’ ANTHOLOGY**, edited by Michael Horovitz. £5.99 (+£1 p&p). **WORDSOUNDS AND SIGHTLINES**, by Michael Horovitz. £6.99. NEW DEPARTURES, PO Box 9819, London W11 2GQ.

Reviewed by Simon Seligman

FOURTH WORLD REVIEW’s review of the previous ‘POW!’ Anthology in 1997 (issue 86) makes the timely assertion that Michael Horovitz is one of the great unsung heroes of our time. With reference to his having doggedly kept a flame burning for The Movement and The Beautiful People, I’d say it was true.

Since the publication of ‘POW!’ in 1996, further inroads have been made on the public poetic consciousness in a similarly delightful manner by the release of three new books under the imprint of New Departures, Michael’s own company.

*The ‘POP!’ Anthology*, edited with Inge Else Laird, published in 2000, is of note not just for the great number of his celebrated friends, literary, visual, and musical, that it contains, but for the touching photograph of Michael’s Jewish family, looking happy, and its immediate displacement by a grim, caustic piece on would-be lovers at Dachau from Paul Weller, ex of *The Jam* and *Style*

*Council*; in which he displays singular virtuosity. Many of the poets here are repeated from ‘POW!’, and as such are a mini-directory of people from the avant-garde underground scene of the post-tremendous-60’s psychedelic boom years.

*The ‘POM!’ Anthology* is the least expensive and, at 80 pages, shortest of the three. Personnel included are of a likeness with the other two volumes; also, for sixties aficionadi, the name of Caroline Coon, delicate and soft, appears on the back cover, to be represented within by a stark, chilling painting of a less recent Gulf War than this last. Individual performances in this book are perhaps best in the series – particularly in respect of three virtuosi pieces on a theme of Orpheus and Eurydice, by John Hegley, Adam Horovitz, (Michael’s son), and by his late, extremely beautiful wife, Frances, whose haunting little poem on Eurydice is for me the best in the book. Other selections of note are Paul McCartney’s *Standing Stone*, Adrian Mitchell’s *We Bomb Tonight*, Breasts by Frieda Hughes, and Gregory Corso’s *The Whole Mess... Almost*.

Finally, in a book of new and selected poems, *Wordsounds and Sightlines*, a companion and sequel to *Growing Up: Selected Poems and Pictures 1951-1979*, Michael has put his own selection of hitherto unpublished pieces in which his debt to and appreciation of jazz is made abundantly apparent. Grateful as I was for the discovery of a wonderful new word, ‘floculent’, my admiration turned to ecstasy when in the next poem, *Journal of a Lovesick Parrot*, I found the phrase ‘Soft Machine’, coined by Burroughs, it conjures up so much of late sixties superculture that Michael’s place in it is resoundingly confirmed. ■

absence of any clear evidence for their existence, full-scale preparations were made to launch what might well have been yet another global military holocaust, and as these preparations mounted, and with them a global barrage of tendentious claptrap in support, so too did popular opposition, which reached its peak on April 12th when millions took to the streets of major cities and other urban centres across the world to protest at what was afoot.

It was the largest anti-war demonstration ever staged. Those millions were not demonstrating for bread, or jobs or higher wages; they represented, as never before, the conscience of humanity in its desire for peace and could claim to be part of an overwhelming majority of literate, informed and concerned people the world over.

## Oil

It is not our concern here that the Iraqi military forces collapsed like a pack of cards once the assault was launched, nor that a monstrosity evil government and its leader were toppled. There were some who supported the move to war in order to achieve just this, and their number has increased considerably by many who now urge, *post facto*, that this in itself justified the attack. In this they are even joined now by the aggressor governments whose forces, many months after the event, have yet to find a single WMD. What is still at work are giant weapons of mass deception and mass distraction from the brute and obvious fact that the USA now controls the vital strategic resource of Iraq’s oil, which was its objective throughout.

Important as these matters are, they should not be allowed to obscure the infinitely more important lesson the decision to attack conveys. The lesson is simply

that human affairs are out of control, that the wishes of the majority of those people who care anything for the public weal were simply ignored as monster military machines were set in motion. It indicates that the people in key positions are prepared to follow their own bent of economic aggrandisement regardless of any moral or ethical restraint. April 12th represents a key date in human history, for unless people everywhere become fully alert to its lesson of their powerlessness and their inability to exercise any constraint over these dominant forces, it is a date which future historians may well judge it to be the beginning of the end of Western Civilisation.

## Bogus dream

If military machines can run amok in this way in defiance of any moral principle or any citizen attempt to maintain it, we have to recognise that the same factor of concerned citizen powerlessness relates to nearly all other major political and economic activity in a modern mass society. April 12th is important for the way it has made this powerlessness clear beyond any measure of doubt and in doing so poses a challenge to many prevalent assumptions about effective means of responding.

The major assumption that April 12th blows to smithereens is that faith in democracy on mass terms is justified. It shows clearly that what determines the shape of events is not the degree of citizen concern but the nature of those forces that now bestride the world like a colossus and which seem bent on leading vast masses of ill-informed, passive acquiescent and totally conditioned and manipulated millions into a bogus and unrealisable dream of affluence to their damnation. ■

## RADICAL RELOCALISATION

Zac Goldsmith

The author is Editor of *The Ecologist* and features frequently in radio and TV discussion programmes.

**T**HE WTO meeting in Cancun, Mexico, ended in a shambles, with Third World countries' representatives walking out. But on the question of alternatives there is a deep divide. Is the global industrial economy inherently flawed, or can poor nations, given fair conditions, trade their way to prosperity?

It's hard to see how the latter could be possible. Massive material consumption in the North has been possible because of our historic ability to plunder colonies in the South. Even if it were desirable, it would be mathematically impossible for the Third World to emulate us.

But physical constraints aside, is it wise to equate consumption with wealth? Analysts often point to the high consumption levels of rich nations as proof of their unfair advantage. But if developed-country citizens consume too much, it is because they live with a system that requires them to. When local production is undermined and basic goods are shipped thousands of miles, northerners cannot (unless they are rich or ascetic) be anything other than rampant consumers. Does that make them better off?

It's a big assumption to make, particularly in the light of what we know to be true – that multinational corporations are profiting at the expense of everything else (both North and South), and that the very nature

of industrialisation turns luxuries like cars into necessities. To pitch 'rich' countries against poor countries is to ignore the fact that people everywhere (and their environments) are being undermined by large, mobile corporations.

Very few people argue that the global economy has been a resounding success. And no doubt its rules could be made fairer. It's absurd that developing countries should be expected to abandon protections for their fledgling industries while developed countries build barriers of their own. And for countries whose people have already been pushed into overcrowded cities, and have lost their diverse food-producing base and been made dependent on the volatile commodity markets relocating large factories, for example, would provide some short-term relief. But it would also cause massive vulnerability. Markets fluctuate, factories move.

So the question is: can the global economy be maintained on a fair and ecological basis? George Monbiot believes it can – with fundamental reform through an international institution. Companies could then be forced to behave well in host countries, and the indirect costs of their business – so often shouldered by taxpayers and the environment – could be fully internalised.

But the problem with global institutions

Nobody could read this volume without becoming more aware of the enormity of the problems confronting tribal peoples everywhere, of the tortuous complexity of the legal process in which they are frequently involved, or the degree of oppression under which they are so often compelled to live. And the question of awareness is so often the key to their fate; IWGIA's work thus has its own innate importance. As a body it is doing nothing less than helping to create the world of tomorrow, and no one of the remotest radical concern can afford to be without this invaluable volume, and no public library – civic, academic or professional – is doing its proper job if it fails to find room for it on its shelves.

**A PAIR OF CRANKS: LEOPOLD KOHR & E.F. SCHUMACHER**, by John Papworth. NEW EUROPEAN PUBLICATIONS, 14-16 Carroun Road, London SW8 1JT. £10.95. 125 pages. ISBN 1-872410-18-9.

*Reviewed by Peter Etherden*

I HAVE oft-berated John Papworth for his monomania about the human scale, arguing that he accuses the world of giantism and then hunts around for the evidence. In the face of such an assault Papworth would retreat behind his sources, claiming that Leopold Kohr and Fritz Schumacher were of similar mind. Unconvinced, I would insist that these two venerable scholars wrote of many different things and that while hedgehog Papworth's selective use of the evidence might convince the true believer, the doubting Thomases would read quite different things into the writings of these two foxes... to appropriate Isaiah Berlin's categories.

But this slim volume of Kohr and

Schumacher essays has seriously weakened my position. Papworth has marshalled his evidence. This is not the first book to describe the Schumacher Mind: Satish Kumar has done a first-rate job with his compilation of the best of Schumacher in *This I Believe*, published by Green Books. Nor is it an insight into Kohr Thought... Ivan Illich has come closest in his 1994 US Schumacher Society booklet *The Wisdom of Leopold Kohr*, available from [www.schumachersociety.org](http://www.schumachersociety.org) But what is here convincingly demonstrated is the fact that Kohr and Schumacher agreed with Papworth about the human scale. On this at least these three radicals – and indeed their colleague from early *Resurgence* days John Seymour – are singing from the same hymn sheet.

In Schumacher's case the evidence comes in four articles: A Man Need Not Starve, The New Economics, Healthy Development and Buddhist Economics – that great corrupter of the alternative movement which is about economics and not about Buddhism. Upon examination Kohr gives us A Pair of Cranks, Disunion Now, Size Cycles, The New Radicalism (which defined the 'radical' in our own Radical Consultation in September 2001) and the classic re-statement of aristocratic populism, The Duke of Buen Consejo. And not to be outdone, John Papworth, the third crank within this single set of covers, rises to the occasion with a scholarly 3000-word introduction that is deserving of its own review.

Why cranks? Let Leopold have the last laugh. Quoting Schumacher's response to a suspicious heckler, Kohr asks, 'What is a crank?' And answers: 'A tool that is simple, small, cheap, economical, efficient, easy to

tion between 2006 and 2015. So for another decade we can continue our tea dance on the *Titanic* lifestyle, but then?

Each year population rises and demand rises, but oil production rises less and will go on rising less. The end is nigh in several senses, since oil is the precondition of most of whatever else we are doing.

Anyone aware of these facts of life and wishing to persuade others of the evident social breakdown towards which we are heading will find this a marvellous gift volume. But increasingly numbers are already clued up on all this and want to see the dawn. Where is it? What can we do? What must we do? On this the author lapses into pre-Kohrism instant fixes; he seems unaware of the nature and the power of the forces which are driving human life to excess in almost every direction, and no grasp of the mechanics of mass societies which, simply because of their scale, render individuals powerless to affect their course.


This is a pity because there is a limit to how much of the woe, woe message people can take without either giving up in despair or seeking a positive response; assuming that is, they do not opt for those wide-ranging areas of esoterica and 'personal development' which, whilst yielding boundless degrees of intense gratification, tend to leave the mechanics of world destruction untouched.

Even so this book does give a detailed, clearly expounded understanding of the reasons for its title and as such makes a tremendous educational gift tool for presentation to the happy-go-lucky brigade.

The author has a riveting few pages on population. He calls it one of humanity's greatest problems, but I rather incline to

Edward Goldsmith's view that in material terms it is *the* problem. In less than a century our numbers have soared to utterly unsustainable degrees so that the population of China today is bigger than was the total world population sixty years ago. And it is still growing. China has tried compulsory abortion with results difficult to assess. Meanwhile the churches, steeped in admonitions about sexual behaviour enunciated at times when human numbers were negligible and young males were a highly valued military asset for tribal wars, are in a tizzy about sinfulness of homosexual marriages. They want to take on board an ever-growing human cargo when the ship is already sinking.

**THE INDIGENOUS WORLD 2002-2003**, *International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) Yearbook*. \$50. ISBN 87-90730-74-7.

 Reviewed by John Papworth

THE number of tribes and indigenous peoples around the world must number many thousands. No single volume seeking to report on their affairs can hope to cover more than a small proportion of them and when one considers the immense range of problems confronting them – land, water, resources, language, sacred places, culture, industrialisation, war, globalisation, legal rights, to name but a few – the restrictions on a single volume are all the more imposing.

Yet even given these constraints the 60 or more authors of these reports have done a superb job in highlighting some of the problems confronting indigenous people, especially what Diana Vinding, the coordinating editor, refers to as the struggle for land and resource rights as being the major concern of the past year.

has always been that they are more effectively lobbied by big business than local communities. They are invariably co-opted by vested interest. Were a new institution to take fair-trade considerations seriously, what would be the chances of it being respected by the US or the European Community?

Even so, if such an institution were initiated (and respected) its effect would be radical relocalisation of global economic activity – exactly as proposed by localists everywhere. Without infrastructural support and direct subsidies, a company like Wal-Mart would not be able to justify sourcing food from sites thousands of miles away. The global economic landscape would be altered, ending at a stroke the advantage big business enjoys over smaller operators.

The effect of a genuine fair trade organisation would, therefore, be a world where trade comes second and localisation comes first. That means a return to the human scale – the only hedge we have against con-

tinuing corporate power and ecological destabilisation. In other words, such an institution – if it were possible – would logically lead to the end of the global economy as we know it.

So in real terms, the issue is not about ends but means. At what level should we pursue relocalisation? If we start at the top, we are advocating the replacement of one massive centralised authority with another form of massive centralised authority, with all the risks that that entails. It would require persuading the entire establishment to radically alter its priorities.

On the other hand, if we start somewhere in between – with loose international coalitions between nations of similar status, with individual countries actively relocalising their food economies and strengthening their local communities – we would see a process of gradual independence from the corporate monolith that is undermining developing nations... without needing the prior approval of the corporations. ■

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## SMALL IS POWERFUL: THE ALTERNATIVE TO GLOBALISATION

### Kirkpatrick Sale

*The author lives in New York State and is one of the most prolific and widely read radical authors in the USA. His books include The Conquest of Paradise, Human Scale and Rebels Against the Future.*

**WHEN YOU HAVE a bunch of crushed grapes and introduce yeast cells, you produce one of the most energetic and successful events in biology.**

The yeast eats up the sugar of the grape and produces alcohol as a byproduct, and keeps on eating and eating, happy as a, well, yeast in grape – until there is no more sugar to eat. Then, when all its sustenance is gone, it simply dies. And the wine is made.

It is a process ecologists call drawdown – and the next steps are bloom – crash – diedown – and dieout.

That is the process of many successful species. It is the process through which industrial civilization is going today – only we are still in the first two phases of it. Drawdown of the world's resources at an alarming rate – to the point where the distinguished Harvard biologist Edward O. Wilson has declared that 'Earth's capacity to support our species is approaching the limit'. Bloom, though of course not for everyone, but about a fifth of the world's population, and at levels of grandeur never before known to the earth.

But it is obvious that the other three ecological stages are upon us. We can already see that crash is coming. Wilson again: 'The appropriation of productive land – the eco-

logical footprint – is already too large for the planet to sustain' and 'has stressed the earth beyond its ability to regenerate'. That means that unless we drastically change our lifeways, and very soon, our species – the one that calls itself sapient – will crash and die down and possibly even die out, along with a great many other species on the surface of the earth.

It's very simple. There really is no argument about it. Not among serious people.

That's the problem. So what's the solution? Also simple: localism.

Now there are many ways of going about that, and one of the great strengths of localism is that it takes different forms in different places, adapted to its context. But there are two forms that I think hold out some real promise for the future: bioregionalism and ecosterianism.


I won't bore you with a lot of stuff about bioregionalism – I've written a book, still available, that spells it out in some detail. Enough to say that, for all its seven-syllable grandeur, it just means life-place, the way that nature has patterned herself, the scale at which she has organised distinctive flora and fauna, water and climate, rocks and soils. The borders of such bioregions of course are fuzzy, but they are there: the

new dishwashing machine and that our Alfa Romeo is due for servicing, and if you are passing the store do remember to get a copy of our 400-page Sunday newspaper.

It is an attitude of mind based on high-powered consumption promoted by high-powered business interests, an attitude of mind wallowing in ignorance. It is ignorance of the destructive effects our lifestyle is imposing on the environment, on other

countries, on our social structures and ultimately, of course, on ourselves.

That ignorance stems from a lack of awareness that we are living through a transient period of history based on the availability of cheap energy; it is a period rapidly drawing to a close, if only because the energy is derived from oil and other fossil fuels which, the author here tells us in graphic detail, will pass its peak of produc-

 *Reviewed by Goderic Bader*

THIS 'Schumacher Briefing' is a far-reaching exposition of the reasons for our crisis and coins an excellent name for it – Global Monetocracy (GM), defined as 'the continuation of money growth in order to maintain the current debt based money system'.


So I find this No. 9 Schumacher Briefing arguing lucidly how the GM exists and is maintained to serve a system that needs to be 'replaced with a global network of just and sustainable Gaian Democracies (GD).' In spite of the over-complex language that develops one has a growing and very warm feeling for the author's Gaian Democracy concept but nevertheless is left wondering what one would look like. And 'replace' the GM? Is 'replace' the right word? How about 'transform' or even an 'alchemical transmutation'?

Possibly calling it a paradigm shift is nearer the bone, i.e. 'a shift of perception which sparks off new ideas for problem solving'. Clearly, we do not yet have a vocabulary to describe how to bring about such a vast metamorphosis, and whilst systems-thinking helps, I do not find it makes the process any easier to tackle or understand. So, there are new ideas and thinking here towards problem solving – but how to bring it all about?

Reading on I was left with a feeling that GD had almost become a mantra that, repeated often enough, would materialise the concept. Nevertheless there are some useful pointers, in particular the need for leaders who can liberate, and there are a few good examples of ways of restructuring economic work. Yes, the book takes some good steps forward, and yes, there is a growing awareness of the urgent need for environmental consciousness by realising the sacredness of creation. But how to mobilise the people power that is seen as necessary for GDs to spawn?

This is a problem found in other writers, e.g. David Karten's *When Corporations Rule the World*, and John Bunzl's simultaneous policy approach, and of course John Papworth's half-century of propounding local community power. At least John Papworth's ideas bring 'people power' a little nearer, but how do we get the activating people power? Possibly through the way people's thinking will change as they evolve their mindsets in the way this book indicates, and maybe we should have faith in this development and not sit back and over-analyse. So let us join Roy Madron's GD project to ground the dream we all surely have of a 'just and sustainable future for humanity'.


**THE PARTY'S OVER**, by Richard Heinberg. CLAIRVIEW BOOKS, 2003. £11.95. ISBN 1-902636-45-7.

 Reviewed by John Papworth

THIS is a book for optimists; the pessimists (including me) have already assumed the truth of the core of its message for decades. But the optimists, apparently the vast majority of people living in the 'developed' world, continue to believe God's in His heaven,

all's right with the world, that all things are bright and beautiful and are going to go on getting ever brighter and more and more beautiful for evermore; there is nothing to worry about, for God's sake, life is meant to be enjoyed, isn't it? So why all this tripe doomsday talk when life is far better than anything our grandparents ever knew, so honey have you booked those tickets for the Canadian Rockies? Don't forget we need a

**GAIAN DEMOCRACIES**, by Roy Madron and John Jopling. GREEN BOOKS, 2003. £8/\$12.95. ISBN 1-903998-28.

 Reviewed by Leslie S. Pope

THIS slim volume from the Schumacher Society stable is surely a compulsory read for all who believe that the concentration and consequent abuse of power is at the root of humanity's essential task of securing a visible future.

The analysis of the underlying problem, based on systems theory, will be no surprise to our readers, but the basis of a solution, a disciplined use of people-power, is also in tune. Gaian Democracies are not a million miles away from 'Crisis Committees'. Successful examples of people-power, some of which are current, are described, such as the Mondragon Co-operative in Spain, and the Semco Corporation in Brazil. Also cited is ancient Athens, where democracy was introduced by Kleisthenes, 'the inventor of people-power'.

The closely tangled web of financial, economic, commercial and academic interests with national governments, which holds us all in thrall, is defined as the Global Monetocracy. It is a power based on the creation of 'debt-money,' the engine of unsustainable perpetual growth.

Unsurprisingly, working within the

Global Monetocracy system to effect piecemeal improvement is dismissed as a 'no-chance' solution. The way out, it is urged, must be truly radical, 'reconfiguring' the system itself. More explicitly, in the final chapter From Principles to Practice: 'the need to dismantle and replace Global Monetocracy with a network of Gaian Democracies' – thousands of them. A system which works with Gaia instead of treating the natural world as an inexhaustible resource and bottomless dump. Participation and diversity are key components, as are agreed purposes and a set of moral and ecological principles, all essential moves in the right direction.

Some recent developments worldwide are seen as reasons for cautious optimism that the necessary systems shift can be effected within the time available. These are the emergence and interplay of three identifiable and vocal groups, the disaffected insiders, the angry outsiders and the victims of the system, all of whom make known its deficiencies. In this context controlled anger is seen as a useful virtue. Our genetic inheritance for co-operation within small groups, including the instinct for care of others, is seen as a positive factor.

world, the continents, are really made up of small self-defining regions.

As original people everywhere knew, and know. Like American Indians. I have seen a map of Indian tribes' territories in the mid-19th century, when the American government was trying to draw up treaties with them. Almost all the territories are watersheds of large rivers – in other words, bioregions that contain distinctive flora and fauna. That is the way the Indians naturally settled themselves, how they lived on the land.

As earth scientists know. The latest map from the US Forest Service's Ecosystem Management Division in Fort Collins, Colorado, is of 'Ecoregions of North America', with provinces mapped out by what can only be called a bioregional method, though naturally with an emphasis on trees because that's their charge, and the result is essentially a map of bioregions.

As other professionals know – geographers as long ago as 1985 in the pages of their journals began using the term; landscape architects, too, who were recently enjoined by the president of the American Society of Landscape Architects to operate with a 'bioregional hypothesis' in their work.

As we all know, really, in our heart of hearts, when we stop to think of it. We know that we live in a natural region of some sort, with distinctive natural elements, a river, say, or a lake, or a mountain range. City dwellers tend to overlook this, and cities tend these days to ignore their hinterlands and look to the world. But most other people do see themselves as part of a region of some kind – they know where their water comes from and where it goes, what the typical animal and tree species are, and so on. Industrial capitalism has done much to destroy that identity, and

globalism finds it anathema, but it is there nonetheless for many.

## The Seven Laws

So bioregions are a reality, and bio-regionalism is about trying to think about living, and growing and eating and travelling and using and eventually governing, within them. To put it briefly, the whole concept is simply trying to give people a new way of thinking about nature, and then acting in it, guided by the Seven Laws of Bioregionalism:

- ◆ You can't do one thing. Everything connects, like a spider's web.
- ◆ All life is sacred. The earth, Gaia (or Gaea, as I prefer) is alive, and she is sacred, and all the species on her are equally sacred.
- ◆ There is no away. To throw things into.
- ◆ There is no free lunch. What we do has consequences.
- ◆ Small is beautiful. That is nature's scale. (Remember the story about J.B.S. Haldane, the great English biologist? He once had lunch with a group of distinguished theologians and was asked, because of his immense knowledge of nature, what he could conclude about the nature of the Supreme Creator. He thought a minute, then said: 'An inordinate fondness for beetles.' That's nature's scale: there are more beetles than any other kinds of species.)
- ◆ First, do no harm. That is the start of the Hippocratic oath: *primum non noceris*.
- ◆ Mother knows best. Mother earth, that is.

So that is the first, and the absolute necessary, principle by which we can think about localism. The other principle is what I call ecosterianism, based on bioregional

principles of course but operating within a bioregion on a smaller scale.

I am thinking of an ecostery as a group of men and women who live and work together to devote themselves to the restoration and protection of one small plot of earth, something on the scale of 15 or 20 acres, with a spiritual guidance based upon the idea that the living earth is sacred and should be served, and functioning as a self-sufficient, self-governed, self-regarding community.

Why ecostery? Because I have in mind something like the monasteries of Europe that after the fall of Rome developed small-scale, self-sufficient, spiritually guided communities that kept alive the wisdom of the past, provided models of a new and reverential way of living, became a source of invention and creation, and served as an inspiration for the next thousand years.

After the fall of globalism – and I am convinced it will fall within 20-25 years, with a conjunction of environmental, economic and political collapse – ecosteries would be the units to keep ecological wisdom alive and in practice so that we don't commit the folly of globalism all over again.

But of course we don't have to wait for the fall. We can start now to create such communities – in fact one bunch of nuns in Vermont is creating an 'Ecozoic Monastery' right now, under the guidance of the brilliant 'ecologist,' Father Thomas Berry. Its orientation, it says, 'will be towards the healing and protection of earth from further devastation by modelling ways which support a new pattern of human presence on the planet'. That's ecosterianism in practice.

Now I am not suggesting here that we

are about to see a bunch of successful ecosteries up and down the rivers of self-sufficient bioregional watersheds any time soon. All I can say that some such form of thinking in that direction and some such steps to that process must take place if we are to avert the ecocide we are headed for and assure the continuance of our species. Communities devoted to the saving of the earth are the only things that will save it.

Now I know that getting modern people, especially in the industrial world, to start thinking in bioregional and ecosterian ways may seem impossible. But when I think about that I remember that a lot of things that look impossible are not really, and they often seem inevitable after they are done.

I think about the story of the father who died owning 17 horses, providing in his will that they were to be divided among his three children – the oldest to get one-half, the next to get one-third, and the last to get one-ninth. The three were completely flummoxed. It was not possible to divide 17 horses that way. They went to the local wise man and set their problem before him. He thought a minute and then said, 'Well, what if I give you one of my horses?' The boys were still puzzled.

'That way you would have 18 horses, and half of that would be 9, of course, one-third of that would be 6 and one-ninth would be 2. So there you are.

'And then, you see, you could give me back my horse. Because 9 and 6 would be 15, and 2 more would be 17, and you'd have one horse extra.'

The impossible becomes possible when we add an extra horse. Or understand the ways we can avert crash and diedown and dieoff. ■

## BOOKS

**FEARING SELLAFIELD**, by Colum Kenny. GILL & MACMILLAN, Dublin 2003. ISBN 0-7171-3582-7.

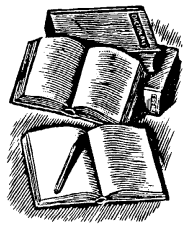
*Reviewed by Roger Franklin*

THIS book is informative, with lots of references, but somewhat repetitious. My main criticism is that it does as much to apologise for the deadly nuclear industry as to warn of the continuous danger.

As a lawyer and reporter, the author has focussed on what can be done through international law to try to force the closure of Sellafield. This needs to be tried, but success is unlikely in an age of nuclear anarchy, where little notice is taken of international law regarding the even greater peril from nuclear weaponry.

There has never been any real sense in the nuclear generation of electricity, with all its problems, let alone reprocessing the waste at Sellafield. It has all been kept going, at incredible cost to taxpayers, to ensure a supply of plutonium for British and American nuclear weapons. Whistleblower Ross Hesketh revealed this nearly two decades ago.

When I encountered Ross recently on an anti-war demo, he was able to point out that Colum Kenny had accepted the official lies about what happened in 1957 when Sellafield was still Windscale. Ross said that



the fire and radiation release was not due, as claimed, to a build-up of energy stored in the graphite – that was a well known hazard. It was the result of secret experiments with sodium in the reactor in an attempt to get tritium for Britain's first H-bomb.

A recent radio programme revealed that the first 'H-bomb' test done by Britain was actually a super-large fission bomb, detonated to fool Britain's enemies – and friends – because the real H-bomb had been delayed, perhaps because of that fire. So the 'civil' nuclear accident at Windscale, which caused an unknowable number of cancer deaths, was actually part of the weapons programme that went wrong.

Feeble, detached books like *Fearing Sellafield* are not what is needed now, although they might help a bit. What we need is more invasions of nuclear sites, as Greenpeace has done at Sizewell. We must demonstrate how vulnerable these places are to terrorists, and hopefully get them shut down before the real terrorists use them to literally destroy our country – and other countries as well.

Even without the terrorists, very nasty accidents can happen in this deadly industry, and our descendents are not going to thank us for the dangers and the mess we are leaving them to cope with.

For several months *Fourth World Review* has been available online, and in the next few weeks more and more back issues should become available to download as we trawl through the archives.

Readers can access back copies by logging on to the radicalweb at [www.cesc.net](http://www.cesc.net), which we share with three other webring: the cescweb, the cinqueportsweb and the marinebureau.

The radicalweb provides an internet presence for the Fourth World movement, the London Academic Inn Association, and the League of Real Nations, which includes the Kohr Online website, and provide a web-based resource for those wanting to know more about Human Scale Values, Crisis Committees, Knights of Gaia and other Human Scale Movement initiatives.

On the Radical Consultation website, online products and services developed initially for the Radical Consultation in Swindon in September 2001 are evolving to meet the needs of radcon forum leaders.

The cescweb is starting to play a key role in the development of a web-based resource for the Open Money Movement by drawing together the disparate strands of monetary theory and practice dispersed across various linguistic and historical divides over the past hundred years.

In July 2003 downloads from the [www.cesc.net](http://www.cesc.net) website exceeded half a million kilobytes for the first time since the site went live two years ago, increasing from 15000 kilobytes in July 2001 to a quarter of a million kilobytes in July 2002. The Download Top Ten is heavily weighted towards the website's Adobe pdf format as these files are much larger than the html files, so the increase reflects in part the increasing availability of e-books and e-journals for downloading.

The recent double issue of *Fourth World Review* topped the charts with a hundred downloads and there was a surprising re-entry at number eight for FWR 113, which includes the Prince of Wales on Skyscraper Architecture, the Charter of Real Nations and the editorial A New Radical Strategy. But the renewed interest was probably prompted by the James Robertson and Thomas Greco book reviews referred to in William Shepherd's recent release, *The Politics of The English Pound*, featured at number six in the Download Top Ten.



## FORUM

### LIFE-SAVER

YOUR *Review* has been, without doubt or exaggeration, a life-saver for me during a period when I succumbed to the pressures of modern life. Coming across *Shut Up and Listen* and *Fourth World Review* your words were so perfect for me then and I admit I had forgotten the debt I owe you.

**Colin Matthews**

31 Hillside Terrace, B Edwas,  
Caerffili, Wales CF83 8AJ

### BREAKTHROUGH

IN THE last issue (Nos. 121/122) I think you got it just right: thus the lesson, however at variance with almost all current theory and practice it may be, is to restore local power, local community structure and the force of the local community moral consensus.

But that is the opening of your last paragraph. Where do we go from there, or, where is the action? Then, in his comparably persuasive article Kirkpatrick Sale says: 'If there is any hope, it will come by asking all the questions... How can we, as a movement, a people, fashion the elements of an ecological society, modest and biocentric,

attentive to nature's laws and purposes, embracing the values of the living earth, and living lightly on the planet as if it were the only one available, and prevent it from happening again?'

That is the end of his piece! Just more questions! But to my certain knowledge we have been asking these questions since *Silent Spring*, forty years ago! So, again, where's the action?

Back in 1987 it came to me that the age of protest in this country was over. (It might survive, and has done so, at the world level). The day of saying 'No' and 'Out! Out! Out!' was over. We had to find a way of saying 'Yes! Yes! Yes!' to positive, constructive proposals.

I launched into the theory of practice of small, single-figure, groups. It took me four years to find half-a-dozen like-minded people in London and we set up 'Values and Vision' (1991-98) that proceeded to investigate the lost community bases of Greater London – 600 villages no longer mapped, but all named and known, from King's Cross to Kilburn, and Holborn to Highgate,

in the Borough of Camden, (where we were situated), we found that all London's 32 Boroughs had some 15 vintage communities, many going back to Anglo-Saxon days. Here was a lost political base that could be rediscovered and restored – beyond divisive party politics.

In 1998, at the instigation of 'V & V', we set up the 'London Alliance for Local Democracy' ten times the size of its progenitor; and 'V & V' dissolved itself. It is a complex story and we still wrestle with unsolved problems, but there is one key message: in the past we have been content with self-centred self-realisation. The new breakthrough is to a 'group realisation' that enhances individuality (in a group or team context) as it confronts mere individualism. This is the next frontier.

**Peter Cadogan**

3 Hinchinbrook House, Greville Road,  
London NW6 5UP

## INSPIRED

I WOULD be grateful if you could send me two copies of the double issue 121 & 122. I already have a copy, but want to be able to distribute Kirkpatrick Sale's article (and the whole issue) more widely. Thank you for producing an excellent journal. I am always inspired and educated by it.

**Laura Deacon**

3 Bond Street, Lancaster LA1 3ER

## SPOT ON

GREETINGS from this end of the world as we move into winter. With the weather having gone haywire here as elsewhere no one knows quite what to expect. Having had an exceptionally dry summer for the past two years we now have a power crisis with our hydro dams only half full. I keep

slogging away to ministers about subsidised solar power for all new houses but they think I'm nuts. They have recently decided to add to our token wind turbines.

Have just received *FWR* Nos. 121/122. Kirkpatrick Sale's article is spot on and I have passed it on to others. We are all in one hell of a mess and frankly I don't see many real signs of improvement.

GE is the big issue here. Parliament's earlier Royal Commission received 11,000 public submissions. Ninety-eight per cent were against the release of GE modified organisms into our country, yet the public's feelings were ignored. They have now called for a further submission in view of the fact that the government moratorium is due to be lifted in October. Officialdom has gone crazy. Here we are exporting GE-free foods in ever-increasing quantities from a country with a 'clean and green' image (it isn't exactly that, but it's a damn sight better than most), and if we go the wrong way we can never, never recover it. Monsanto and others have got their boots firmly on our government's back.

**Derek J. Wilson**

77 Burma Road, Khandallah, Wellington 4,  
New Zealand

## EDGE OF RUIN

I HAVE just read Kirkpatrick Sale's excellent piece (*FWR* 121-122). There is without doubt only a small proportion of the population who share or comprehend Sale's views so it is unlikely that they are ardently putting into practice in any conscious way the mechanism 'to bring the planet to the edge of ruin' that Sale points to in his quote from Jeremy Seabrook. However, their actions could be inevitable in terms of evolution. With the development of artificial intelligence com-

posed of silicone chips and crystals, the non-biological viruses of nanotechnology and perhaps even the co-opting of genes into a non-biological realm, the biosphere is fast becoming evolutionarily redundant. Such an evolutionary stage could eventually be reached to which biological matter and its necessary water component are contaminants in need of elimination. At this point the planet would become a perfect sterile, solid state intelligent entity roaming the cosmos. But I am old-fashioned enough to have an affection for terrestrial life forms and large expanses of water so feel compelled to dedicate my puny efforts to the frustration of this evolution (evolution).

And what a relief on coming to the end of John McClaughry's letter (*FWR* 121-122) to find your response and my blood pressure able to return to normal. One can only conclude that Concord USA does not have a decent bookshop!

**Alan Turner**

Pen Arth, Pennant, Llanon,  
Ceredigion SY23 5JP

## EXHAUSTED

SCHOOL has been out for a month – FREEDOM! To me freedom simply means free time, freedom to do whatever my young heart desires. The school part of college has quickly become the worst part of my life (I can hardly wait for the wonderful world of work: 50 hours a week for 40 years, or until my first heart attack). I thought things were supposed to get better as I grew up, but my second year of college was worse than my first. School is so time consuming that I have had no time (or energy) to even read for pleasure. School has left me so physically, emotionally, (stupidly) intellectually exhausted that I could not express myself.

The core of humanity is the ability to express one's self! I was essentially dead from January through May. I've managed to reclaim my humanity the past month. I've been doing a lot of reading. I've just finished *Deschooling Society* by Ivan Illich, which I was turned onto by *Fourth World Review*. Thank you! It seems that everyone needs freedom from the educational system, too! I have also successfully requested your book, *Small is Powerful*, from some small liberal arts college two-thirds across the State. It should make for a great read.

**Matt Peterworth**

2074 Greenheath Drive, Florissant,  
MO 63033-1215, USA

## HOLDING OFF

I RECEIVED the *Fourth World Review* you sent me and I must congratulate you on an extremely well written and thoughtful magazine on the political issues facing us today. I have not yet read *The Breakdown of Nations*, so I will hold comment until I do.

While I essentially agree with much I have read, (save the letter in Forum from Professor Livingston), I must confess to a gut reaction to the idea of 'smallness'. It sounds to me like a proposal to revert to a 'nation-state' model is the panacea to our ills. I will supply more detail, including what happened right here in Chatham County, North Carolina, when we tried to exert local control, as to why I have problems with the concept as I understand it; however, as stated I'm going to hold off until I have actually read Kohr's book. Thank you, however, for taking the time to send it to me. If I ever make a regular income, I'll become a subscriber.

**Joshua Kricker**

224 Buteo Ridge, Pittsboro,  
NC 27312, USA