

## Fourth World News



The USA has earmarked \$75 million for putting Saddam Hussein on trial. • Significant increases in premature sexual development in children, (breast development and pubic hair in 1% of girls under 8 years), is thought to be linked to the prevalence of modern endocrine-disrupting chemicals in 'toiletries' and inorganic farming. The same phenomena is increasingly apparent in land and sea animals. • The UK Co-op movement has banned all GM foods and ingredients from its stores. • Shop assistants in Austria complained they are being driven crazy by non-stop muzak in stores and are threatening to sue employers for 'psychological terror'. • Russia has joined the USA in refusing to ratify the Kyoto Treaty, drafted to curb industrial emission and halt global warming, because it claims this would limit economic growth. • Heavy rain and flooding put southern France on a war footing and closed two nuclear power plants. • The stink of corruption is reported to infect the new EUrope. • Global warming is threatening to shut Alpine ski resorts. • The Washington Worldwatch Institute reports 1.7 billion people – one quarter of the global population – have now joined the high consumer culture, creating acute environmental dangers. • Denmark's hippie colony CHRISTIANA, independent and self-governing, is threatened with closure by government moves; its 1,000 citizens are struggling to resist. • A pensioner who saved his junk mail for a year accumulated a six-foot pile weighing 70lbs. • President Bush has already stashed up \$120 million for his re-election campaign. • The Japanese Government is planning to ditch Article 9 of its constitution which renounces war as an instrument of policy. • Rossendale (Lancs) councillors have decided to reject proposals to medicate their water supply with fluoride. • An American research institute has warned that Scottish farmed salmon is so full of toxics that it is unsafe to eat more than three times a year. • A study at the Aberdeen Fertility Centre has shown that sperm counts have dropped by almost a third in a single decade. • Russia is to phase out conscription,

currently a two year-stint notorious for corruption, drug shenanigans, beatings and ritual humiliation of new recruits. A Committee of Soldiers' Mothers says over 350,000 young soldiers die every year from malnutrition, physical abuse and disease. • The Iranian earthquake which destroyed the ancient city of Bam killed over 30,000 people and made more than 100,000 homeless. • Mass protests in Hong Kong have demanded the speedy introduction of 'full democracy'. • Israel plans to double the number of settlers in the Golan Heights it captured from Syria in the six-day war. • The Iraqi Oil Ministry (sic!) is reviving an oil deal worth \$3.7 billion with Russia's second largest oil company after President Putin promised to cancel more than half of Iraq's debt to Russia. • Obesity is blamed for an increase of 15,000 in UK cancer cases; the government is now funding a £2 million campaign to persuade children (and parents) to eat more sensibly. It is still perfectly legal to sell junk food. • The new leader of the first Conservative Party says he believes, 'People are most likely to be happy when they are masters of their own lives.' He has not yet subscribed to *Fourth World Review*. • Tony Blair, the leader of the second, still believes that one fine day weapons of mass destruction will be discovered in Iraq. At any rate he has not yet resigned. • The huge Italian industrial combine Parmalat has gone bust, so too has over £7 billion (about 0.8% of Italy's GDP), the biggest commercial financial scandal to date. • The Pope has called for a new international order 'to save the world from catastrophe by promoting human dignity and reducing the gap between rich and poor'. He gave no indications how. • Prince Edward has urged the lesser classes to donate blood. He admits he doesn't donate it himself. • Fifty-five days of programming on BBC digital channels went completely unwatched last year. • This year 200,000 Britons plan to quit the rat race for less high-pressure jobs. • Indian and Pakistani leaders are talking. There is even a possibility of a cricket match between the two countries. — SAM HAINS

Fourth  
World News



# 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



## DEFECTIVE GENES: SHIFTING THE BLAME

Edward Goldsmith

Editorial:  
The Ship of State

No. 125

2004  
Notional price £2/\$4

# FOURTH WORLD REVIEW

**FWR** is an offshoot of The Nicholas Albery Foundation (Registered Charity No. 283040). It is published bi-monthly (except for a double summer issue).

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Printing: IN TOUCH SERVICES  
(01793 770648)

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## THE AGE OF HEALING

### JOHN SEYMOUR

Of all the planets in the sky not one is half as lovely as our Earth.

I thank the fates that chose it for my home.

In all the mighty firmament how lucky was I here to have my birth.

And from this orb I never wish to roam.

My spirit went a'wandering through the infinity of galaxies and stars.

But none of this my restless soul could please.

I look with awe and horror at the bareness of Venus and Mars.

I love the world of rain and mists and trees.

I love a world where mighty whales and dolphins leap in sparking  
seas to play

And birds in thousands cruise the Autumn skies,

Where little song birds sing and flowers and grasses carpet fields of May

And happy laughing children please my eyes.

So I will swear a solemn oath and keep it with a firm and equal mind

To bring this Age of Plunder to an end,

To fight against the men of wealth and power who pillage this

my only home

And bring the age of healing in to mend.

December 2003

moving belt carrying a load of odd looking edibles in bowls and you just take what you fancy and eat it with chopsticks. What a carry on! I sat on a tall stool and took one bowl, it was a sort of seaweed rice and delicious, so I took something else which was ditto and then some more. A Japanese lady with unblinking black eyes gave me the bill, and I gasped.

"Why is it so much?"

"Because you ate so much!"

"But then don't I get a reduction for bulk purchase?"

"No."

"It is the New Year, my wife's a widow and I'm an orphan!"

"No."

When I threatened to tell my mum she was as unblinking as ever, so I paid up.

AFTER WE HAD CHEERED IN the New Year and seen a lot of fireworks exploding above the buildings across the street, Did, my younger son, asked me to recite *The Highwayman*. Well, it is a fine dramatic poem and I duly obliged, but what a way to greet another span of mortal existence on this troubled planet. I must say I loved the party, especially when Marie told me one of her friends had whispered to her, 'I would give a lot to have a Dad like yours.' What have I done to merit such a tribute? And most of the food was eaten, always a good sign of a happy event. Then there was discussion whether the men should repeat what seemed to have been last year's stunt of streaking naked around the block. But it was either too cold or people were too tired. I must say sprinting in the buff along a London street in the winter dark is not altogether my idea of paradise. The next morning I left my bed space in a

friend's flat and suddenly decided to do something I had been promising myself for years, to see a real live performance of ballet. So I perambulated across the West End to the sumptuous magnificence of The Royal Opera House in Convent Garden. It was an eerie New Year's Day walk, London empty! Nobody around, just the odd bus and Oxford Street looked under siege with scarcely a soul in sight, although I did pass a man asleep in a shop doorway; he was quite literally in a large cardboard box. The Ballet was unbelievable. I was uplifted, exhilarated, inspired, transported and given a rare and indescribable sense of profound fulfilment by Cinderella. I am no longer a ballet fan, I am a ballet fanatic. The next day the BBC showed it all on the telly! Why do they not show more wonderful experiences like this, instead of all the customary insulting garbage? In seeking to rival the ratings of the commercial channels the BBC is engaged in a vulgar orgy of competitive mass debasement and sabotaging civilisation. The Director General should be imprisoned in the Tower of London for desecrating our national life with all the demoralising depravity he is inflicting on us with such savage abandon when he should be uplifting, inspiring and ennobling us. He clearly does not understand that in public life you should always aim for the best if you want to avoid wallowing in the worst. But never mind, that ballet was a wonderful New Year experience.

I THINK 2004 IS going to be a much worse year than last year, but if it isn't then just think what a lot we may have to celebrate in 2005! ■

## THE SHIP OF STATE

**O**UR GLOBAL CIVILISATION is confronted with a number of unprecedented problems.

It needs to reduce the all too obvious prospect of another global war, it needs to halt in its tracks the continuing thrust of industrial expansion and to embark on multiple small-scale programmes of localised economic self-sufficiency in every part of the world; it needs to stop wasting resources – not least the waste of oil and water, it needs to stop poisoning people's minds with consumerist propaganda on which more, by way of advertising, is currently being spent than on formal education budgets; it needs to stop the global panic-mongering about 'terrorism', if only because those promoting it are its main practitioners; it needs to reverse the current thrust to destroy our localised social structures in favour of ever larger shopping malls and national 'welfare' and social service schemes which simply undermine democracy, and much else besides.

One main obstacle to any such moves is the widespread refusal to face just what we are doing to the planet and to ourselves and to assume that what is now on track can continue in one way or another, if only we secure this or that reform.

In this regard it is salutary to be reminded of the objective of social reformers in the heyday of the industrial outbreak.

All too often the key to remedying the prevailing evils of poverty, disease, crime and illiteracy that marked the Victorians era was seen as education. With education people would be better informed, wiser, able to do the obvious things that would improve society and themselves. With education, art, literature and music would flourish as never before; people would learn to treasure the good things of life and to reject what was unworthy as they reached out to ever finer realms of experience and fulfilment.

In many ways our Victorian progressives bear a marked similarity to our current reformers who today put their trust in 'green' programmes, in ethical investment schemes, in campaigns for 'peace', to save the whales, the rain forests, to cancel third world debts, and so on. To raise questions about the general effect of all these worthy efforts on the general direction in which we are clearly heading is not to deny the validity of the particular causes they champion, but to seek to relate them to the contingent conditions within which they are being promoted.

Any Victorian education reformer who might use a time machine to survey the results of his efforts today might well be forgiven for wondering, as he surveys the magazine racks of any newsagent, or the newspapers on sale, or the mordant orgy of

competitive mass debasement that passes for television programmes, about the validity of his objectives.

His mistake lay in failing to take sufficient note of the general direction in which the dominant forces at work in Victorian society were taking it. Are current reformers failing to note that if you do not learn the lessons of history you will all too probably repeat them? We are not here questioning the moral validity of their objectives, only the degree of realism in the context in which they are operating.

It may well be worthy to campaign for peace among the fighting crew of the ship of state, to campaign to stop it polluting the waters, to try to ensure that the third class passengers get a fair deal and so on. But what if the ship is out of control? That those in the engine room, regardless of any moral considerations, are bent on making more money by throwing poisonous garbage overboard, by cutting costs by racing full speed through an ice field to meet a newspaper deadline – as indeed did the *Titanic*? What if there is no way, democratic or otherwise, by which you can impel them to change course as the ship heads for the rocks?

Reading the novels of or about that earlier period, and Dostoevsky's *The Idiot* or Jaan Kross's *The Tzar's Madman* are as good as any, one is impressed with the punctilious concern of leading characters of the 19th century for social rank, prestige or behaviour, indicating not a scrap of awareness that they and all they stand for in terms of money, wealth, career advancement, appropriate marriage ties, to say nothing of the entire social framework within which they live, will in a matter of decades be swept into oblivion by historic

forces playing on their lives, but which they resolutely chose to ignore.

We too are being swept along. To repeat, the engine room is in the hands of people we can in no way control, they cannot even control themselves; it is this lack of control which is breeding every conceivable abuse of power that man's mischief can perpetrate. We may seek to combat those abuses with all the dedication and the idealism we can muster, we can even meditate and pray, but in that case always the keynote of destiny sounds above us to ask: what are we meditating or praying for?

### Implacable Demands

What confronts us is an implacable demand to refashion the ship's entire mode of governance; one in which the powers of decision-making are dispersed throughout the ship so that every deck or cabin is in command of one function or another and able to influence the general passage, one that takes moral account of its passage, its working operations and its eventual port of call; a form of governance which looks beyond immediate returns and takes full account of what we are doing and where we are going. It is not so much the *policies* of the engine room on which we need to focus but the powers they wield; not what they *do* but what they *are*.

And in building the new polity let it ever be remembered that since human beings are supremely moral entities, any organisation seeking to express moral imperatives must be dominated by personal relationships between people; if it is not it will inevitably be dominated by power imperatives. It is this which prompted Gandhi to observe, 'You cannot have morality without community.' This, after

away. What is all this fuss about? Has someone been injured? Where on earth has Tempé got to? Why are people asking me so many questions? There seems to be something amiss, I can't even stand up. Slowly it dawned on me that I was hurt and that my head ached abominably. One of the curious features of concussion is a total lack of immediate memory recall. Only gradually did I remember walking through the churchyard, then crossing the road and seeing a cyclist coming round a blind corner at downhill speed towards me. I stepped aside, but he swerved the same way, so that I received a brutal bang on the side of my head from his helmet, which knocked me out for nearly half an hour. I had a lovely black eye, and for about 10 days felt I was suffering from an almighty hangover, (not that any respectable pillar of society would of course know anything at all about such a condition). But here and now I want to take my hat off to the police and the ambulance attendants. When you are dazed, hurt, helpless and vulnerable, and suddenly find yourself in the hands of complete strangers well, they either care or they don't care; they either devote themselves unreservedly with compassion and concern to a fellow creature in need, or they are filling in time doing a routine job until the next shift. These people behaved like saints on earth, they reassured me, gave me a sense of warm security, did all they possibly could to assure me I was in safe hands and to help me to adjust to my predicament. They could not have been more caring and concerned if I had been a close and much-loved relative. Thank you Wiltshire police, thank you Wiltshire ambulance attendants and thank you to the doctor and the lovely

hospital nurses for that beautiful fountain of ordinary humanity you so lavishly showered on me. That Swindon hospital is a brand new one and the casualty ward is a busy place. A long wait in the queue, then an X-ray and another long wait for the results. The lighting is ideal for a busy nursing staff rather than for sick people, and lying on a trolley I was glad to be able to shield my eyes from the glare with my scarf; but nothing could alleviate a dreadful mechanical blare which sounded off every ten seconds or so, and which after twenty minutes had me in a state of frenzy. I pulled some wires from a machine next to my trolley with no effect. Where on earth did that noise come from? I never did discover, but on leaving to return home I was astonished to find it was even louder at the reception desk; but no-one seemed at all aware of it!

TALKING OF NOISE, I have come to the conclusion that the public amplification of recorded noises I find some people will insist can be called music is one of the great evils of contemporary life. Pubs used to be places where you could quietly chat, relax and pass the time of day; nowadays, all too often, one has to shout to be heard and to cup one's ears to hear. I notice there is a pub in Swindon where musical noise is banned. It even has shelves of books around the walls; yet on the odd occasion I call in it is always packed. What can be the attraction I wonder?

THEY INSISTED I come to London for the New Year party in Marie's flat, but when I arrived at Paddington Station I was very hungry, and there on the concourse was this strange sort of circular counter with a

tions, all in one way or another related to 'peace', at least one supposes so, and all breathing the dust of the rock of ages. Examining them made me realise just how intellectually bankrupt the whole leftie scene has become. I confess my heart sank as I surveyed all that antiquated socialist, Marxist, anarchist, libertarian, peace campaigning stuff, all trapped in ideological ghettos into which, for a century or more not a single new idea has been allowed to penetrate; ghettos of the absolute in a real world of dynamic relativities; ghettos of unblinking, totalitarian myopia, of unreflecting theoretical rigidities of adherence to the party line, of unshakable conviction that if only this or that..., (if onlyism), all in a dream world of straight bananas and of quite impenetrable conviction that one fine day one or other of them will govern the world in the name of peace, progress and plenty. If you want an explanation of why so much dedicated idealistic striving has proved to be so futile in its efforts to rescue the world from travail it is surely here on this confused and absurdly overcrowded shelf of dead dogmas, inconsequential great causes and mutually contradictory cornucopias. If the numbers of their members or subscribers doubled, trebled or quadrupled, or if a match were put to the whole lot so that not a vestige of paper or the organisational dedication that had spawned it remained either way, it would not have the merest ripple of effect whatsoever on the general mordant march of the works of our crisis-ridden civilisation to the nemesis that is so obviously approaching it.

Yet this bookshop building, which houses a plethora of 'peace' and other leftist organisations, is really a kind of secular temple to the worship of human goodness;

embodying as it does the selfless ambitions for betterment of generations of decent, dedicated, inspired and even saintly seekers. It all ought to mean something, but it means nothing at all except the extent to which its muddled-minded strivings have played their own part in assisting the power-out-of-control forces to play their own war and social destruction games to ever-greater effect. One wants to take one's hat off to all those noble souls, but then, looking around this dingy, rundown morass of literature and what it means in terms of confusion of mind and meaning, of purpose and comprehension, and reflecting on how, after nearly a century of unremitting effort to promote peace, the war danger today is greater than it ever was, and all too likely soon to prove overwhelming, one wants hurriedly to put it back on, if only because this punctilious Quakerish insistence on perpetually peering through the wrong end of the telescope has played its own part in failing to stop it.

I feel driven at times to conjure up some sort of charismatic figure who will bang all their silly heads together (metaphorically and non-violently of course) and, with no more authority than a clear sense of direction and a decent moral sense give anyone, insist they all come together to take a prolonged study course on how power in the modern world can be tamed and brought under human moral control before it destroys us. I suppose there is no harm in dreaming is there?

IT IS A STRANGE BUSINESS suddenly becoming aware, on a dark December night in a narrow lane, of being assisted into a police car and to see an ambulance drawing up, blue rotating lights on both vehicles flashing

all, is where we are today, with no community power of any determinative significance, with power out of control and why we are in the throes of the greatest crisis that has ever engulfed human affairs.

Can we summon among ourselves the breadth of vision, the sure affirmation of principle, the readiness to focus on this overwhelmingly urgent power emergency,

to establish the journals, the lectures, debates, conferences and the appropriate organisational structures that will meet our need for a new understanding and a new philosophy of action if we are to respond in time? Or shall we be driven to re-register the eloquently despairing cry of Shaw's St Joan, 'Must then a Christ die in every age to save those that have no imagination?' ■

*The reanimation and rebuilding of regions, as deliberate works of collective art, is the grand task of politics.*

**Lewis Mumford**

*The Culture of the Cities*

*It seems to be becoming harder and harder in this age to stick to what we believe – or feel. We are told constantly that we have to live in the 'real world' – but the 'real world' is within us. The reality is that 'truth, Goodness and Beauty' in the outer, manifested world are only made possible through the inner, invisible pattern – the unmanifested archetype.*

**The Prince of Wales**

*The great enemy of life is unawareness. The role of the writer and the artist and the priest and the seer, is to diminish unawareness, to increase and enlarge human awareness, and continually to work at the health and well-being of consciousness. This is the most important thing in life – the universe is a pilgrimage, a cavalcade towards light, to diminish darkness and illuminate shadow ... by creating greater forms of awareness [we] continue the fundamental task of creation.*

**Sir Laurens van der Post**

## SCHUMACHER AND SURVIVAL ECONOMICS

### Kirkpatrick Sale

*In this timely essay our regular feature writer pinpoints the major crisis factors confronting Western civilisation, and indeed the destiny of all humanity. In doing so he draws a vital analytical distinction between those numerous, well-intentioned campaigners who seek to reform our dominant institutions and those who grasp the need to transform, and even supersede, the institutions themselves. In doing so he confronts reformers everywhere with an imperative obligation to reconsider the validity of their reforming assumptions.*

**F**RITZ SCHUMACHER was, we tend to forget, a truly radical man. He was so charming and warm in person, and so smooth and straightforward in his writing, that most people did not realise how far-reaching was the crux of his policies and programmes.

His was a vision going far beyond just conservation and intermediate technology and worker ownership – in fact the most important part of it saw an economics that was truly liberatory and communitarian, what he called at one point a Buddhist economics.

He didn't think much of traditional economists. In fact he used to tell this story. An architect, an astronomer and an economist were sitting around one day arguing about which of them had the oldest profession. The architect said his was the oldest because it was an architect who must have planned and built the Garden of Eden, humankind's first home. No, said the astronomer, before the Garden there was the creation of heaven and earth, and there must have been an astronomer to study that heaven. Well, said the economist, yes

you're right, but God made heaven and earth out of chaos – and, he said, who do you think created that?

Well, economists have indeed made a chaos, and called it modern industrial capitalism. So chaotic that in one sense, it is not working – it is not providing adequate food, shelter, water, health, longevity for fully a third, perhaps a half, of the world's people, not providing security, harmony, purpose, meaning, justice, or peace for any of the rest but a small minority in the richest nations. And in one sense it is working, working with great speed and power to use up the world's resources – that is, you understand, its fundamental purpose, the fuel of its engine – and in the process exterminate its species, deplete its topsoils, pollute its waters, alter its atmosphere, remove its forests, distort its climate, exhaust its fisheries, and enlarge its deserts. Chaos, indeed.

Schumacher knew the chaos economy very well – he was, after all, chief economist for the British Coal Board for 20 years. He knew how wrongheaded and dangerous it was, and that is why, after a sojourn in

later actually met Hitler and declared he, Buchman, was impressed.

Alpha courses obviously give a lot of relief to a lot of stressed souls and recited mantras, bodily gyrations, limb shaking, eye-ball rolling and finger wagging, have been pretty standard features of the bogus religious scene for generations. There is no doubt that Nescafé spirituality does answer a lot of innocent people's instant needs, but is of course a self-indulgent exercise in feeling, with no concession to thinking or to tackling the many giant problems now threatening to scupper the ship of civilisation altogether. If only some of these Alphaites would embark on a crusade to rid the world of the unspeakable and boundless evil of commercial television, just for a start. Silence today is, as then, its own brand of treason and betrayal.

THE WESSEX SOCIETY sent me this questionnaire from Viki Cleaves, a student in Swansea who is doing a thesis on Wessex. The form asked me to describe the location of Wessex and to define its distinctive landscapes. Well, I fully support the idea of Wessex, especially if it is truly independent and not some scam being funded from the capital of Belgium to promote the EUroplot, but I have to say I could give no satisfactory answers. Is my current Wiltshire home in Wessex? I have no idea at all. I suspect my vagueness is a quality widely shared by all but a few devoted aficionados, such as those who join the Wessex Society and attend its meetings; so I want to give a bit of advice to the Society. In these days of mass living, where we have all been effectively detribalised, a purely political approach to the problem of regionalism really is rather old hat. It is bound to be seen as artificial

and fuddy-duddy and to evoke only a very limited response. But regional power is important and needs to be promoted in the modern context of the prevailing economic crisis and, much more important, in the context of the current environmental crisis. So what does this mean in practice? First promote Wessex as a bioregion. Promote awareness of its rivers and water systems, its forests and agriculture, its flora and fauna. There is an excellent organisation in the USA run by Peter Berg who will fill you in on the background of all this (Planet Drum, PO Box 31251, San Francisco, CA 94131 USA). But be warned; in God's own country a bioregion can be as big as England. Secondly, and no less important, plan for the infrastructure of parish or small community government. How will it organise its energy needs when oil prices, for example, begin to soar, as in due course they will? The new democracy is going to be small, human-scale democracy, not the bogus, mass, centralised façade which is leading us all up the garden path of bureaucratic totalitarianism and environmental destruction which prevails today. In that way the Wessex cause will begin to resonate with a much wider constituency instead of having closed meetings of a brotherhood of the converted. Incidentally there is a UK organisation ready to assist here, it is called The Fourth World.

PEACE NEWS BOOKSHOP is in London's Caledonian Road, hard by Kings Cross Station. On a recent visit I found it sandwiched and almost buried between two major property developments. I have to say it looks in need of a bit of a facelift itself, so too does a lot of its stock, and so too does its 'radical' magazine rack; dozens of publica-

## FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR



**T**HERE IS A FAIRLY NEW phenomena in my dear old Anglican Church called 'Alpha' purporting to be an introduction to the Christian faith. It grows by leaps and bounds and is claiming hundreds of thousands converts.

It is high-powered stuff, well-funded and with lots of PR expertise at its fingertips as it generates a massive momentum of support. For an oldie like me it is eerily reminiscent of the phenomena of the thirties when a fat American evangelical fraud named Frank Buchman started his 'Oxford Group' movement. It was for a time all the rage as it focussed on 'house groups', where a small number would meet, pray, hear some readings and some discourse. In turn each member would confess his or her sins and be assured that with full repentance forgiveness was theirs. At one of two of the meetings to which, at sixteen, I was taken, the mid-twenties man on my right shamefacedly confessed he sometimes engaged in

what he called 'self abuse' (the word 'masturbation' was then still nor heard in polite society). Then it was my turn. I recall being panic stricken; I was certainly not going to tell this group, made up largely of expectant, beady-eyed elderly ladies, what I got up into bed at night, and I sat in silence until they smiled indulgently and passed to the next sinner. Like Alpha it was really a superficial exercise in emotional self-indulgence which opened nobody's eyes to anything; it just made them feel better and otherwise changed nothing. In the real world Hitler was building his war machine and planning the most cold-blooded campaign of genocide in all history, Stalin was murdering people opposing his policies by the million, civil war was raging in Spain, fascism was supreme in Italy and the global economy was staggering out of the collapse of the early twenties by means of heavy programmes of rearmament which could only lead to another world war. Buchman

Burma in the 1960s, he worked out the themes of a righthanded economics based on the Buddha's 'noble eight-fold path', a set of personal goals that includes 'right livelihood' – how does a person make a living in the best way – but also 'right understanding', 'right conduct', 'right effort' and 'right purpose'. Schumacher himself once summed it up when he said 'economics without Buddhism' – that is, without spiritual and ecological values – 'is like sex without love'.

Schumacher nowhere lays out a complete eight-fold economic path – he concentrates on 'right livelihood' in his core essay on Buddhist economics – but I have constructed from Schumacher's range of writings, mixed with various economic ideas expressed by the Buddha, something of what an economic eight-fold path would be like.

1. All production of goods or services would be based primarily on a reverence for life, a biocentric understanding that life means more than humans – it means animals, birds, insects, plants, trees – above all trees, in Buddha's eyes – it means the living ecosystems, streams and rivers, forests and wetlands, hills and mountains, clouds and rains, and it means fundamentally the living earth – Gaia – herself, understood as the only living, self-regulating planet in the galaxy and one which will not take human abuse indefinitely without striking back.
2. All systems have limits and they must be learned and adhered to in every economic act, and overuse of a resource or species or their depletion and exhaustion would be seen as a criminal act of violence, and overproduction of a resource or a species, such as the

human, would be seen as a criminal act of avarice and greed, not to mention stupidity.

3. The primary unit of production would be the community, within a self-regarding bioregion, which would strive to produce all its needs, shunning long-distance trade except for non-essential objects of beauty, and political and economic decisions would be taken democratically at that level.
4. Consumption would be limited, for it is not a rightful end in itself but merely a means to human well-being, for which only a little is necessary to satisfy vital human needs: the goal of economic life is not the multiplication of wants but the satisfaction of basic needs.
5. Everything produced and the means of its production would embody the four cardinal principles of smaller, simpler, cheaper, safer – that is to say, technology on a human scale, comprehensible, affordable for all, and non-violent.
6. The only jobs would be those that enhance the worker, contribute to the immediate community, and produce nothing but needed goods – and that means goods, not bads.
7. All people who wish to do so would work, for the purpose of work is not to produce things to satisfy wants but rather primarily to nourish and develop the individual soul, aiming at fulfilling the highest nature of the human character.
8. All economic decisions would be made in accordance with the Buddhist principle: 'Cease to do evil; try to do good', and the definition of good would be that which preserves and enhances the integrity, stability, diversity, continuity and beauty of living species and sys-

tems; that which does the contrary is evil.

There is the noble eight-fold path of Buddhist economics.

But I ask you, does anyone think that this has the slightest chance of coming about in the world as we know it? Many people have been saying for many years that something of this sort is necessary, that we must rethink the global economy before it is too late. I do not see that we have had any significant success in planting that rethinking in the minds of the people who run the world's economies or convincing them that a radical change is needed.

We must be very careful about this idea of 'change'. Let me put it bluntly: we must not have the illusion that it is possible to reform the institutions and systems of advanced industrial capitalism. We must not waste intellectual power or time in dreaming of ways of making these institutions perform better – we must not delude ourselves with the limited vision, for example, of the Porto Alegre antiglobal activists, or those liberal economists who think that governments will enact 'green taxes', or those academics who think that the United Nations would have the will and the power to make wholesale alterations in major systems – governing the distribution of water, for example – or the activists who believe that the World Bank and the IMF can be reformed into eco-friendly institutions.

We cannot reform this economic system. The problem, you see, is not in what these governments, institutions and systems do, but in what they are – not in what they do but what they are. They are the instruments of chaos economics and that's all they can be. That's why they exist in the first place. They will not – they cannot – be

turned into instruments of Buddhist economics, or indeed anything approaching the kind of economics of a noble path.. They cannot be expected to have moral, spiritual, environmental values, no matter how many fancy speeches and articles and books implore them to. Chaos economics is clearly incapable of reform.

I don't mean to be Cassandra-ish here, but I think it best that we understand the truth about this system and its inevitable future. It is certain to collapse, perhaps in the next two decades, certainly by the middle of the century, because it will go on doing essentially what it does now. The causes will be multiple and synergistic: environmental degradation, depletion of fresh water and fertile topsoils, climate change, ozone radiation, rising sea levels, deforestation and desertification, overpopulation, exhaustion of oil and mineral resources, resurgent diseases, warfare and rebellion, unabated terrorism and crime, disintegration of nation-states, worldwide depression and the meltdown of major currencies, biological and robotic technologies out of control – and that's just for starters.

Lest you think me an alarmist, let me cite two other sources. The first is the Statement of more than 100 Nobel laureates and 1,600 members of national academies of science around the globe that said that the present rates of environmental assault and population increase cannot continue without 'vast human misery' and a planet so 'irretrievably mutilated' that 'it will be unable to sustain life in the manner that we know'. And that warning was issued in... 1992, more than a decade ago, and the fact is that not only has our assault on the planet not halted or slowed, it has markedly increased since then. Scientists, who study

'breeds parking lot minds: uniform, barren, predictable and devoid of any spiritual or transcendental meaning'. We need to re-inhabit the earth in small earth communities and become human creatures again.

Just two caveats for emptors: the author sidesteps the earth destruction of exponential jet travel, including that of self-styled environmentalists, and their airports, and new runways. Also, while he rightly lambasts the 'stewardship' arrogance of most superficial Judaeo-Christian preachers, he seems unaware of the ecological wisdom in the green depths, the 'quiet jurisprudence', of that tradition, which is very akin to his own. For both caveats, one could paraphrase Chesterton, and say that sometimes one walks all around the earth to find what he seeks back home in his own local bioregion. But Wild Law is a good start. Cullinan knows we must begin with ourselves. May Wild Law, beginning with individuals and local communities, become contagious.

**The Best Loved Poems of John Betjeman.** JOHN MURRAY, 2003. £8.99. ISBN 0-7195-6545-6.

*Reviewed by John Payworth*

BETJEMAN was not only a people's poet, he was a profound observer of the human scene with a shrewd eye for some of the tawdrier realities of our time. He had a sharp moral sense coupled with a matchless gift for vividly illuminating the nuances of individual situations, often in a single word or phrase.

There is space for just one quote, the final stanza of his 'Song of a Night-Club Proprietress'. The title alone is a poem in itself, but savour repeatedly each line and what the verse conveys in the tragic circumference of a single life:

*There was sun enough for lazing upon beaches,  
There was fun enough for far into the night.  
But I'm dying now and done for,  
What on earth was all the fun for?  
For I'm old and ill and terrified and tight.*

*It may seem Utopian; but I don't feel sympathy for a great nation, or for those who desire the greatness of a people by the vast extension of empire. What I like to see is the growth, development, and elevation of the individual man. Nebuchadnezzar, and the countless millions under his sway, – there is no more trace of them than herds of buffaloes, or flocks of sheep. But look at your little states ; look at Greece, with its small territories, some not larger than an English county! Italy, over some of those states a man on horseback could ride in a day, – they have left of individual man, where civilisation has flourished, and humanity has been elevated. It may appear Utopian, but we can never expect the individual elevated until a practical and better code of moral law prevails among nations, and until the small states obtain justice at the hands of the great.*

**Richard Cobden**

1862

*Social Sphere:*


*The opening of workshops was seen as an important step, but the people felt that it was more important to keep the kindergarten, school, post office, shop, club and telephone building alive, as these were their social centres.*

*The mock initiative made it obvious that even in far-away villages project technologies could be developed and used. The people worked in groups as if they were working in a huge corporation, not a village club that was discussing theoretical possibilities. The plans that were drawn during the mock business initiative were quite intelligent and realistic. Theoretically, they could have been taken as a foundation for future development. It was still unclear, though, who the plans were made for and who would initiate them. In the course of the mock business initiative, these questions did arise, and it was decided that there should be a leader chosen as well as a group of helpers, i.e. a village development group or TOS organised. Even at that stage the villagers understood that in order to develop, they should have a structured hierarchy of leadership.*

The methodology of development as projected here has its own Russian overtones of people who are emerging from centuries of paternalistic and dictatorial rule. Nevertheless the democratic day when previously passive and acquiescent villagers begin to meet, discuss, to decide and to act is surely dawning. This illuminating account of how people in one tiny corner of the vast Russian empire have proceeded has a host of lessons that people in many other parts of the world, and not least in the overdeveloped world, will find well worth learning.

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**WILD LAW: A MANIFESTO FOR EARTH JUSTICE**, by Cormac Cullinan. GREEN BOOKS, 2003. £9.95 pbk. ISBN 1 903998 35 2.

 Reviewed by Edward P. Echlin

THE thrust of this book is surely true. We need 'wild law', that is laws and governance that recognise that humans and the rest of the earth are a community of subjects, in mutually supportive relationships. In other words we need to disenfranchise the disastrous worldview of governments, media, corporations, and their politicians, which is that humans exist apart from the earth, which is 'resources' for human exploitation, the worldview of Bush's GOP and Blair's New Labour, that is destroying the earth and the future. In the UK, Blair's New Labour, whether in Iraq or in runway building, is unopposed by Tories in what the late Hugo Young called 'the curious me-tooism of British politics'.

'All men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights' says the 1776 Declaration of Independence. America, now grown to a marauding superpower, has never recognised 'rights', or even 'needs' (a more helpful word) of the rest of the earth community as subjects. Beyond humans, all else are objects. Even animals are not legal beings. This dysfunctional, exploitative, cruel, and ultimately disastrous worldview, and concomitant law and governance, must change.

We live, says Cullinan, in a car park culture. I would add 'and groundforce', where Alan Titchmarsh rules OK. Our culture

these things closely, may tell us that we are destroying the planet, but politicians of all stripes, and the corporate and financial interests they serve, have no intention of listening, indeed have no way of listening.

## Water Crisis

The second source is the United Nations' World Water report, issued to thundering silence this past March. In it UNESCO Director-General Koichiro Matsuura says bluntly that 'of all the social and natural crises we humans face, the water crisis is the one that lies at the heart of our survival and that of our planet Earth'. And yet, the report says, 'despite widely available evidence of the crisis, political commitment to reverse these trends has been lacking... Over the past 25 years ... several targets have been set to improve water management but hardly any have been met' – and 'hardly any' is UN-speak for 'none'. The report adds: 'Attitude and behaviour problems lie at the heart of the crisis, inertia at leadership level, and a world population not fully aware of the scale of the problem means we fail to take the needed timely corrective actions'. On this most crucial issue, 'we fail'. Instead, chaos economics goes full-bore ahead with the privatisation, the obscene commercialisation, of public water supplies because that, and not the health of the planet, is in the interest of corporate and financial powers.

And that, I remind you, is the fate of just one of the earth's resources. If we do not pay attention to the loss of potable water, why should we pay attention to any of the other crises? Obviously we will not, or not until it's too late, because they are irrelevant to chaos economics.

Still, I don't think it is advisable to take

to our beds and pull the covers over our heads. I firmly believe it would be a good idea and worthwhile enterprise to work now to fashion a Buddhist economics, or devise the mechanics of one, before it's too late, if only to have something to put in place of chaos economics when the opportunity arises. I am not optimistic, of course, that this can be done. But if it were to happen it would be only if there were an immediate cessation of all reformist programs and policies that keep capitalist institutions in place, and the rededication of all those well-meaning reformist activists and academics to a massive effort to alter the fundamental value systems of the world's populations so as to grow new ones to put in their place. Those values that lie at the heart of Buddhist economics – a precious regard (or perhaps I should say 'love') for the living earth, a fundamentally moral approach to work and production, a rejection of materialism and embrace of spirituality, a vision of a society ordered at a human and communitarian scale – these are the precepts that somehow must be taken into the hearts and minds of our fellow humans everywhere. We cannot change the world until we change its values.

I am not, as I say, optimistic that the values of Buddhist economics will prevail. But I do know that it is in their refinement, development, and propagation that all good work – right livelihood – lies. And to that end I suggest we may each of us dedicate our lives to exactly those tasks, guided by Schumacher himself, who wrote: 'I can't myself raise the winds that might blow us into a better world. But I can at least put up the sail, so that when the wind comes I can catch it.'

## DEFECTIVE GENES: SHIFTING THE BLAME

### Edward Goldsmith

The author is director of Pacific Ecologist, founding editor of The Ecologist, UK, and author of many books, including *Blueprint for Survival*, *The Way: An Ecological Worldview*, and *The Case Against the Global Economy*.

**T**O SOMEONE who only has a hammer, the world is one big nail. To the biotech industry (that will soon have patented almost every modified gene with even a remotely conceivable therapeutic application) the world is one big defective gene.

Not surprisingly, the near completion in June 2000 of a draft map of the human genome was hailed by the industry as a unique scientific, and even religious breakthrough. For President Bill Clinton, a fundamentalist proponent of genetic engineering, it was 'more than just a triumph of science and reason'. 'The code that we are learning,' he piously declared, 'is the language in which God created life.' The map is even referred to by some as 'the book of life', the genes themselves, as Genewatch notes, 'acquiring a godlike status in determining our future'.

In the meantime, scientists are claiming to 'discover' the genes responsible for ever more and less likely afflictions. Thus Professor Robert Plomin, of the Institute of Psychiatry, has discovered the gene for intelligence. Scientists of the Human Genome Project announced in July 1993 that they have identified the gene for homosexuality. Professor Grimley Evans of

Oxford University tells us that he has found the gene for longevity while Dr Robert Freedman of the University of Colorado has discovered the gene for baldness. Also discovered by our eminent scientists is the gene for alcoholism, the gene for adultery, the gene for shyness, and, you would not believe it, the gene for not being able to get out of bed in the morning. All this is great fun – but it is less so when serious diseases are interpreted in this infantile manner.

Thus, some doctors are now telling us that breast and ovarian cancers are of genetic origin, caused by a defect in the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes. Young women endowed with these genes are being advised by cynical doctors to have their healthy breasts removed to avoid breast cancer. However, a defect in these two genes can only possibly be linked with a rare form of cancer that accounts for no more than 5–10% of breast cancers. Nor does the fact of carrying such genes mean that a woman will actually get these diseases. Other factors will necessarily be involved. As it happens, only a very small proportion of diseases can be attributed to single gene disorders (Huntington's disease or beta-thalassaemia, for instance).

What is more, gene therapy; in spite of

remind us, is to provide against preventable ills. And how well Prince Charles exercises his office to do just that! This book is a veritable goldmine of radical wisdom and nobody concerned with public issues can afford to neglect it. The Prince is lucky indeed in his choice of biographer; David Lorimer is a writer who matches his subject in the breadth of his concerns and his ability to express them; he has produced a book which is a virtual compendium of current problems about our increasingly dangerous lifestyle; it is a work of immense importance to us all, not because it is about a royal prince, but because that exceptionally gifted prince happens to share the concerns of any alert-minded person today who is questing for answers and is prepared to speak out.

**VIEW FROM NEW YORKINO**, by Gleb Tiurin. Privately circulated monograph 2003.

*Reviewed by John Papworth*

YORKINO is a village in the Archangelsk region of Russia, and the author of this account is a village development activist who describes how he initiated a number of projects and in doing so was able to gain the enthusiastic involvement of the people in the resurgence of their village life.

One does not resolve problems of village stagnation stemming from centuries of bleak imperial rule and the savage decades of Bolshevik Fabianism overnight, so this is really an account of beginnings, the outcome of which can never be seen as assured. Nevertheless a beginning was made, people came together to talk, to discuss their problems and possible solutions and they went on to adopt positive measures. The author details an interesting list

of proposals for a village business development initiative as decided at village meeting:

1. *The Production Sphere*
  - ◆ to restore the power-saw bench;
  - ◆ to produce timber building materials;
  - ◆ to open a joiner's shop;
  - ◆ to have their own brick-making shop.
2. *The public service sphere. Find a suitable location for:*
  - ◆ A dressmaker's and hairdresser's;
  - ◆ A TV, video, and home appliance repair shop.
3. *Agricultural sphere:*
  - ◆ to develop their own stud farm;
  - ◆ to produce vegetables for sale;
  - ◆ to have sheep and produce meat and wool;
  - ◆ to restore the farm;
  - ◆ to cultivate private lots for money.

Further discussion and criticism suggested ideas related to the priorities:

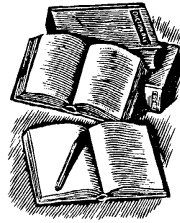
*Production Sphere:*

*They wanted to begin with vegetable cultivation, since there was a demand for them in the district and regional centres. Yorkino has good soil for growing them, so the project would not be difficult to actualise. It would employ people, including school children, and generate revenue.*

*Secondly, they would open a brick making shop, because there was good quality clay near the village that could be easily processed with horse power, again there was demand for them in the district. Brick-making would also provide employment and provide badly needed building material for the villagers.*

*Later timber could be cut, the power-saw bench could be restored, and a joiner's shop could be opened, etc. The stud farm was last on the list.*

## BOOKS



**RADICAL PRINCE**, by *David Lorimer*. FLORIS BOOKS, 2003, £20, ISBN 0-865315-431-X.

*Reviewed by John Papworth*

THE role of royalty in the modern world is unlike anything that has gone before; gone is its power, gone is the deference once accorded it, and gone is much of the mystique. Gone too is the privacy. An intrusive media of all-encompassing vulgarity is now on hand to publicise, analyse and bowdlerise every move, every relationship, every guarded or unguarded comment and to report and generally denigrate any attempt to use the office to make any constructive moves in any direction. So what role is it expected to play? I have to confess an interest; I have come to respect traditions of service, continuity and statesmanship and in this regard Prince Charles, the subject of this absorbing biography, fills the bill for me. I know there are people who think the whole royal business is some sort of antiquated, anti-democratic farce which should be swept away, and that we should do away with all the ornaments on the mantelpiece, but in Britain at least, I think it plays an invaluable role in helping to give people

a sense of roots, of identity and of belonging, and when these things no longer matter I may be prepared to change my views.

Meanwhile, what role can it play in public life? The Prince's Mum plays safe largely by saying nothing; this may be because she has nothing to say, which of course is part of the lottery of life. But the same lottery has produced an heir-apparent who has plenty to say, and my word how he says it! Whether it is organic agriculture, architecture, business, leadership, community, integrated medicine, the environment and the profound spiritual issues of our time, he is urging us to look ahead, to take care and to act with far greater wisdom than that which emanates from any of the current crop of our political and economic mentors.

Our politicians are trapped in the necessity of winning the next election by getting votes from masses of misguided souls who are wallowing in largely consumerist values which can only destroy us. But a perceptive royal is under no such pressures; he is free to exercise the arts of genuine statesmanship, the supreme function of which, the late Enoch Powell was at pains to

all the hype, has achieved very little. Human trials have been going on since 1990 and there have been over 400 research studies worldwide. The handful of 'life-saving' successes are in doubt, since the treatment is believed to have caused leukaemia in a child in France. In addition, gene therapy has actually killed a number of patients, something that was initially covered up. However, gene testing, i.e. the mapping of peoples' genes so as to identify the defective ones, is now big business. Still more so is the production of 'preventive medicines' that will help prevent someone carrying a supposedly defective gene from developing the associated disease. Worse still, all this is shifting political attention 'further and further from tackling the serious problems, such as poverty and environmental pollution', which as Genewatch notes are 'more important in illness prevention'. This is the case with cancer, often caused by smoking, even more so by exposure to the ever-increasing number of carcinogenic chemicals we are exposed to. This has been well documented by Professor Samuel Epstein of the University of Illinois, though it is hotly denied by the cancer establishment, closely allied as it is to the chemical industry. This is also true of psychological disorders. A team of scientists announced in November 1994 that it had found the gene for manic

depression, while in December 1996 the genetic mutation linked to anxiety and depression was apparently also discovered.

Perhaps, even more irresponsible, is the identification by scientists at Trinity College Dublin in August 1997 of the gene responsible for 'Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder', or ADHD, a term coined ten years earlier by the American Psychiatric Association. Symptoms include 'inattention, inability to make mental efforts, hyperactivity, fidgeting, talking excessively and obstinate behaviour'. But these are also the recognised symptoms of 'emotional instability' – prevalent among children who have been deprived of the requisite discipline and love that only a sound family upbringing can provide. Of course, if this aberrant psychological state is made out to be of genetic origin, then it no longer matters in what atrocious social, economic and environmental conditions our children are brought up, so long as enough money is available to pay for the requisite 'gene testing' and gene therapy. Unfortunately it is much the same with all the major problems that afflict us today. They are almost always attributed to a problem to which some powerful industrial group can supposedly provide the 'solution', leaving the real causes unaddressed – a process that is hardly 'sustainable'.

*If economics is the science of the distribution and use of the earth's resources, every single one of which is derived from a finite ecosphere, why has it come up with nothing but systems that will completely exhaust them?*

**Kirkpatrick Sale**  
*Dwellers In the Land*

## FORUM

### SEND ALL

THANK YOU for publishing *Fourth World Review*. I appreciate the ideas and philosophy, as these are most relevant in present day society in any country.

I liked the article 'Skyscraper Architecture' (FWR No. ) as even in poor countries people are mad for very tall, multi-storey buildings. Your ideas need to be told to all people in our country and as President of the Assam Sustainable Development Institute I am organising seminars on them.

If I can get to UK I will meet all of you and discuss many things. Kindly post all your publications so that we can distribute them here in our meetings and seminars – to stress the need for the small things of life and the inalienable sovereignty of the human spirit.

**S.B. Medhi**

PO Khar Guli, Gurwahati 781004, Assam, India

### COMMUNITY SURVIVAL

THERE are two essential truths that most of us don't want to face:

1) The whole system is killing us all. From



environmental degradation, to exploitation of workers, to driving over the cliff of petroleum dependence, we are just beginning to get clobbered – fatally.

2) We have to get organised. We have to abandon our roles as isolated consumers. Now. Moreover, we need to take collective action and approach this as if we are in a war. We are in a war, but it wasn't declared. That's where the greed mongers, despoilers and corporate spinmeisters tricked us. But it doesn't take a majority to change the world in such a way to dump the old guard.

At this point, however, many domesticated citizens of the affluent US would appear to have to be 'dragged kicking and screaming' to protect their own lives. As crazy as that may sound, we must keep in mind that masses of well-fed citizens (albeit with contaminated food) are to a degree brainwashed and cowed into keeping their heads down, thankful they are not like the folks living on the streets or in Iraq.

Everyday the truth comes closer to hitting home, though it is suppressed by both the corporate state and by 'free' consumers: The cancer epidemic is going to claim you or your close family members, as toxins in the food chain will be moving up for many years even if their production were ceased now. Before the cancer trend goes to its 'logical conclusion' (as in an animal about to be cornered or slaughtered?), those who are healthy enough will sooner or later find their voice and act in outrage. The rebellion will include switching power blocs, but only as a part of changing everything currently being done to our lives and environment. The importance of the next election begins to matter less and less when we ponder the fundamental impulses and changes that people will grapple with.

Once the wrath of the people awakens, it will have to be channelled in a positive fashion in community, if we are to foster mutual survival.

**Jan Lundberg**

SEI/Culture Change, PO Box 4347, Arcata, California 95518 USA

### CONSPIRACY

What do you mean that you are not sure about Free Trade (FWR No. 124)? You ought to be absolutely sure! The avowed purpose of Free Trade is to make goods cheap. If you make goods cheap you end up not paying people more than a subsistence wage, not paying any external costs and therefore ruining the environment. It is an organised conspiracy to buy the votes of the townspeople at the expense of farmers and the fact that otherwise sane and decent people such as Dick Body and my colleagues in the Old Liberal Party fall into the trap of believing in it is not an

excuse for following their example. Not sure about Free Trade indeed!

And what is wrong with getting out of the EU as a first step? Of course you find yourself in the *status quo ante*. But that is life. When you find yourself on the wrong path, you retrace your steps to the place where you went wrong and then start out again on what seems to be the right path.

**Lord Beaumont of Whitley**

(Green Party Peer)

40 Elms Road, London SW4 9EX

### NOT CAPITALISM!

THE most interesting letter in FWR (No. 123), says 'If we go the wrong way, we can never recover it.' True – but we already have! The wrong was established during the industrial revolution in England, (yes, England is to blame), and thus our ill-advised high-tech pathway will, inevitably, lead us all to destruction, after first softening us up with computer-driven dehumanisation.

The greatest environmental threat is not capitalism or consumerism but, put at its simplest, the machine.

One must now be a Jeremiah; it is the only way!

**Peter Quinces**

12 Stephans Close, Faversham, Kent ME13 4SS

### THE BEST

MANY thanks to the whole team of *Fourth World Review* for your extraordinary initiative. It is one of the best publications I know.

**Daniel Rufer**

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