



Most Americans now believe the invasion of Iraq was a mistake. • Domestic cleaning chemicals are believed to be causing an increase of asthma in infants. • Sick Americans are advertising on the internet for donation of body parts for transplant. • Some Fallujah citizens have been allowed to return after its 'liberation' by US forces. This huge city has no electricity or running water and is almost completely destroyed. The American authorities say it is still not safe. • Schools in Britain have been given powers to search schoolchildren suspected of carrying weapons. • Iran has refused to abolish its nuclear weapons programme, claiming it is a peaceful one. The US and UK, who also have peaceful nuclear weapons programmes, have reacted angrily. • US scientists have claimed it may be too late to stop the inevitable effects of global warming. • A car-pool lane is to be introduced on the M1 in England to try to reduce congestion by encouraging people to travel together. • A 'separatist' bomb in the south-west Pakistan province of Balochistan killed at least 45 Muslim pilgrims. • Research in Europe has shown an increase in cancer among the young of about 1.5% each year for the past 30 years. • At least ten people were killed when Kyrgystan nationalists demonstrated for free elections and independence from Russia. • Canada and New Zealand are set to legalise gay marriages. • A third of UK schoolchildren are obese. • Two teenagers were flogged in the Saudi capital Riyadh for graffiti supporting Osama Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein. • Liver disease numbers have more than doubled in 30 years, with a

marked increase among younger drinkers. • Sardinian protesters invaded the estate of the Italian Prime Minister to demonstrate for re-establishing sovereignty for the island. • The Pentagon is giving \$12 million to a research project to develop unmanned battlefield robots to perform surgery on wounded soldiers. Could they enter the White House? • The Swiss are spreading huge sheets of plastic on their ski-run glaciers to protect them from the sun! The glaciers are retreating 5 metres a year owing to global warming. • There is increasing rivalry between China and Japan over gas reserves in the oceanic waters between them. • Sex, cryptic crosswords and a good run could help ward off dementia and other degenerative conditions by stimulating new brain cells, an Australian researcher has said. • The Master of the Queen's Music, Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, says classical music faces extinction because of musical illiteracy among teachers and the effects of pop music. • A group called 'White Dot' is campaigning to curb TV in public places by promoting a device which can turn off TV sets. • UK farmers are protesting against the high price of fuel. • According to a professor of criminology at the London School of Economics, UK schools are in the grip of a job culture of violence, bullying and foul language: 'The children may never become adults, but end up in a permanent adolescence, with no idea of work discipline and deferred gratification'. • 20% of the UK population is functionally illiterate. • Rover, the last major UK car firm, has gone bust with the lost of 5,000 jobs and probable ruin for many small dealers. – SAM HAINS



FOURTH WORLD REVIEW

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The Real Price of Power

JOHN PAPWORTH
An Alternative Press

Editorials:
**POWER
THE IRAQ WAR**

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	SAM HAINS	

night, there is no opera, theatre, literature, poetry or great music, simply an endless succession of cultural cornflakes which simply ignore the great questions of human life and existence. The medium which might be using the great results of cultural endeavour to set the senses tingling with concern is simply creating a void. As these words are written there is much talk about an election. It is an event which will determine and change nothing of significance. Whichever group emerges or re-emerges to grab the reins of power will do so on the same terms as now prevail. Science has given us gifts fit for the Gods, and we bring to them the mentality of a schoolboy or a savage.

MARIE, MY DAUGHTER, tends to be rather an eccentric character and has taken to a new pastime. We arranged to meet at a sports centre in central London's affluent West One; I wandered in and the first room off the long corridor was a squash court where two men were swiping a small black ball against a wall with blue murder written all over them. Then there was a huge swimming pool where men and women, all wearing goggles, swam endlessly up and down marked lanes in the pool. It looked too boring to be true. Why weren't they enjoying themselves? Why not having playful tussles in the water, tickling one another, perhaps getting up to all sorts of hanky panky that semi-naked bodies might indulge? Instead, up and down, it was all as sedate as a Tory Party tea party. There seems to be a strong streak of masochism in a lot of people. In the next large area about two dozen people in skin tights were going through some sort of arm waving, waist gyrating, leg lifting activity at a very slow tempo, like tortoises in the grip of mari-

juana. In another there were about a dozen or more people all engaged in kicking or punching someone who proved to be their tutor. Did you ever see such madness? I spotted the most beautiful girl in the room by far, and of course it was Marie, who was being encouraged, nay urged, to kick her tutor who had special pads on his hands and knees to absorb the shock. So Marie kicked his padded elbow; 'Harder,' said the tutor, so she kicked harder. 'Harder,' said the tutor, who seemed to be some sort of sublimated sadist, and Marie kicked even harder. She then punched in the direction of his face and then kicked in the direction of his groin, turned about and kicked where his ankle should have been and so it went on and on. I stood in the doorway and gaped in disbelief. Why should a charming, graceful daughter behave like this? Was she planning to practice it on Andrew, or if not on her husband perhaps on me? Well afterwards we were joined by Andrew and by an old school friend of Marie's who, incredible as it may seem, is enrolling for the same course, and went to a sort of fish restaurant in Lisson Grove. For fish dish, I joined Andrew for halibut and it was OK and I found myself enjoying the chips which, like so many things we go for, are reputed not to be good for you. But there seemed hardly any gin in my gin and tonic, but you can't have everything in this mortal life can you? I would have liked to have reported that the conversation focussed on the great problems of the world, but it seemed to centre on the hats worn by the new Duchess of Cornwall in her recent marriage to the heir to our throne. And so to Paddington, to a taxi at Swindon with an eloquent Bangladeshi driver, to Purton and so to bed. ■

FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR

THERE WAS QUITE A RIVETING EXCHANGE in *The Ecologist* between Teddy Goldsmith, its founder, and Claire Short, a Labour Party great, who resigned her cabinet post over the Iraq war. (A prime minister loses two of his cabinet colleagues – one of them his Foreign Secretary – and yet his soul goes marching on. There will no doubt be a day of reckoning.) But the exchange was singular in the way it centred on the fundamental questions hanging over our civilisation.

Official economic policy, argues Teddy, is focussed on transforming the simple self-sufficient economies of non-industrial countries into importers and exporters in ways which denote vast tracts of fertile land to export markets and the bankruptcy of local farmers.

Not so, says Claire, we are helping these poorer countries to develop, and by develop she means helping them to enter the world of mass mechanical travel, of computers, TVs, washing machines, electric gadgets galore, and so on.

Such a world, far from being remotely attainable is already beginning to fall apart in those countries which have attained it;



there is not, in any case, the remotest prospect that global material resources can provide the means of realising it. But at least these two protagonists were arguing about the fundamental material realities confronting us, even if Claire shows very little understanding of the extent to which she is doing so. For her 'development' and the growth of trade is the key to 'progress' in terms of affluence, with no awareness that what to her are answers in reality beg all the questions, whereas Teddy is arguing the need for basic, small-scale agricultural self-sufficiency if we are to confront these realities.

The *Ecologist* has done an enormous service in publishing this exchange for what really emerges is a consideration of the basic objectives towards which leading members of the global society are striving to reach. What in fact are they seeking? Just to pose the question is to be aware of the extent to which it is perpetually ducked.

TELEVISION IS WITHOUT DOUBT the most powerful means of information and education ever devised; millions watch it and their views are shaped enormously by what they see. Yet at key viewing times, night after

POWER

IT IS CURIOUS to note the extent to which problems about the deployment of power and the consequences of doing so in one way or another are discussed, with scarcely any regard to the nature of power itself and how its nature impinges on its use.

Since the global crisis which has largely erupted in the 20th century is of course a crisis of power it may be well to ask what indeed, is its impact on the workings in largely determining the nature of any society, is power?

Essentially it is the power to decide. Such power involves also the power to command – either men, money or resources. It is an element which some people have and which others don't. In societies presumed to be democratic there is the further presumption that all men are equal; but it is obvious that on a giant mass basis, if its working arrangements are to function with any effectiveness, some people will need to be more equal than others.

Unworkable

But if the democratic ethic is to be sustained at all, it follows that the power of command must be as widely shared as possible; yet a glance at the arrangements of nearly all modern governments indicates that it is exactly the opposite which prevails. Far from being shared power is concentrated in a few hands at the centre.

In Britain, for example, it would take a volume to detail all the power of command which is exercised by its prime minister. Much of this power covers every main channel of command of its national life, the armed forces, ambassadors, judges, cabinet ministers, archbishoprics, chairman of

national boards, the BBC, the award of titles and honours, the speakership of the House of Commons, the head of the Bank of England and so on and indeed so on.

It is a situation that has developed gradually from historic periods when the population was very much smaller, far more dispersed, when economic and other arrangements were much simpler, and when real power was exercised by parish, district, county and city councils.

Today in the UK alone, human numbers have tripled in little more than 100 years, mechanised agriculture has impelled millions of rural workers to congregate in giant cities, adopting a lifestyle based on cheap travel, motoring, telephones, tinned and factory-processed foods, computer technology and the mass production of footwear, on clothing from artificial fabrics, on households equipped with electric cookers, dish and clothes washers, refrigerators, freezers and central heating. Like many items of household furniture, they are all produced by factories seeking to cater for multi-million markets, in doing so they have made life infinitely more complex (and stressful); even more imposing is the way many of the powers formerly exercised by elected local government authorities have been absorbed into the government machine in Westminster.

Far from making democracy more effective this development of concentrating more and more power at the centre, has made it unworkable; today there is no way at all the individual can have an effective decision-making role over the many factors determining his life.

Power is extremely dangerous when in the hands of over-large government, and the larger the numbers governed the

greater the problem of control. So great in fact it leads to global wars, global economic disasters, to unrestrained scientific research leading to anti-social results such as the production of nuclear and biological weapons or to genetically modified growth developments. It should be obvious that to maintain a balance the greater the numbers governed the greater should their powers of local and self government, and the more sparing and restricted should be the power of the centralised forces.

At present, as Rousseau noted, the reverse is happening, as the political unit grows in size instead of the power of decision at the centre being reduced it is increased, and instead of the power of the individual increasing to reflect the increased power of the entity as a whole, it is proportionately reduced.

This factor of the relative strengths between the individual and the centre in terms of size of the unit is the heart of the kernel of the modern crisis. No aspect of its multifaceted problems can begin to be resolved unless it is confronted, and no easing of the tensions and stresses being created can be eased until it is attended.

Today our peace movements, our ecologists, our 'fair-traders', our money reformers, our anti-EUroplotters, our anti-global warmers, our education changers and many other ardent and idealistically inspired reformers are united on a common platform of utter ineffectuality. Despite all their efforts the momentum of the global crisis marches remorselessly on, and will continue to do so until the power to control the lives of vast masses of people from single centres is dispersed and restored to people in their localities everywhere. ■

THE IRAQ WAR

WE APPEAR to have evolved a condition of public opinion of total surreality.

British and American forces have illegally invaded Iraq, ostensibly to counter a supposed threat of weapons of mass destruction, which have proved non-existent. Instead of withdrawing their troops and apologising for their gross error of judgement they have proceeded to use the excuse of removing a tyrannical head of state they themselves engineered into power and providing him with a vast array of destructive modern weaponry in the first place, as an excuse for staying.

A number of suspects with criminal records have now been appointed by the US forces as an interim government with a

date targeted for an election which will confirm them in power. Meanwhile the Iraqi people have responded with a total repudiation of the process, so that what prevails now is a war between the forces of an illegal army of occupation and the Iraqi people.

The stakes here are Iraqi oil. So oil wells are being set on fire and oil pipelines which stretch for hundreds of miles and are utterly beyond effective defence, are being destroyed. The occupying forces are encountering the law of unintended consequences and achieving results the opposite of their intentions.

Not least of those consequences is the enlargement of war. If the US and British forces do not withdraw we are seeing the opening stages of World War III.

meals, hospital conditions, local transport, housing, planning and so on.

- Don't forget local events, football, cricket, tennis, bowls, etc.
- Report fund-raising events for local good causes.
- Births, deaths and weddings.
- Not least; reports on national and global crisis factors as they affect local people. Rising oil prices, the EUroplot, environment, war etc. Important to keep main focus local.

We are planning an e-mail linked editorial group to prepare a monthly journal format of crisis news from a radical perspective which can be e-mailed to local editors who can then fill in with their own local material.

Alternatively they can use the material from the format to complement a local journal of their own title and format. The aim is

to present a view of local events within a context of non-local events of importance which the mass media either tends to distort or ignore, such as rising oil prices, war preparations, the EUroplot, imperial weights and measures, independence struggles, peace actions, radical conferences and events and so on.

The Radical News Service will also establish a national/international network enabling local editors to establish contact with each other.

If you would like to be a member of the editorial group or to use its service for your own work please signify to:

Fourth World Review, Box 2410, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN5 4XN, UK so that we can send you the e-mail address.

Come on!

Our lack is nothing but our leave!

Today the press is still legally free; but most of the little papers have disappeared. The cost of wood-pulp, of modern printing machinery and of syndicated news is too high for the Little Man. The early advocates of universal literacy and a free press envisaged only two possibilities: the propaganda might be true, or it might be false. They did not foresee what in fact has happened, above all in our Western capitalist democracies – the development of a vast mass communications industry, concerned in the main neither with the true nor the false, but with the unreal, the more or less totally irrelevant. In a word, they failed to take into account man's almost infinite appetite for distractions.

Only the vigilant can maintain their liberties, and only those who are constantly and intelligently on the spot can hope to govern themselves effectively by democratic procedures.

A society, most of whose members spend a great part of their time, not on the spot, not here and now and in the calculable future, but somewhere else, in the irrelevant other worlds of sport and soap opera, of mythology and metaphysical fantasy, will find it hard to resist the encroachments of those who would manipulate and control it.

In their propaganda today's dictators rely for the most part on repetition, suppression and rationalization – the repetition of catchwords which they wish to be accepted as true, the suppression of facts which they wish to be ignored, the arousal and rationalization of passions which may be used in the interests of the Party or the State. As the art and science of manipulation come to be better understood, the dictators of the future will doubtless learn to combine these techniques with the non-stop distractions which, in the West, are now threatening to drown in a sea of irrelevance the rational propaganda essential to the maintenance of individual liberty and the survival of democratic institutions.

Aldous Huxley, 1958 (monitored by Jeff Ubois)

geared to those values their advertisers find most acceptable, values which, in one guise or another, centre on consumerism, now the dominant religion of modern societies.

Another result is a need, in order to command higher advertising revenues, to pursue higher circulations regardless of the effects on the quality of the paper. Indeed it is noticeable the extent to which reports of circulation figures themselves now feature as news. But a pursuit of greater numbers inevitably implies subscribing increasingly to the values and the tastes of those numbers if their allegiance is to be secured. Quantity thus becomes the enemy of quality and the decline in the quality of *The Times*, which could once claim justifiably to be one of the world's greatest newspapers, is its own confirmation of the decadent nature of the path it has chosen.

Even those of an essentially politically non-literate disposition are now becoming aware that in this first decade of the 21st Century the world is enveloped in a crisis the like of which mankind has never before confronted. But our press giants cannot even acknowledge in their news presentation that this crisis exists at all. This general awareness is not the result of press activity but despite it. But how can a media devoted to capturing the allegiance of a mass market be expected to pose questions, or to present news items, in a way which poses questions, which challenges the basis of its quest for a mass readership?

To put the point in a particular context, the Astronomer Royal, the Archbishop of Canterbury and a certain Mr Tony Blair have joined an involuntary league to declare that global warming is now one of the biggest dangers we confront. OK, but we all know that global warming is caused

by industrial effluents and by the love affair modern man and woman is having with the motor car. But which mass circulation journal dare risk a massive drop in circulation by projecting this as news, or of campaigning to save our environmental bacon by stressing the immorality of car driving?

But the general insanity of current news presentation is reflected with some emphasis in its business comment columns. Any contraction of market activity is seen not as a sane reaction to the dangers attendant on global warming, but as a disaster; any increase in economic growth is greeted not with concern for remaining stocks of oil or rain forest timber but lauded in large print as welcome signs of progress.

The need to create an alternative press, one that is small-scale, local, non-centralised and which reports the realities of our disintegrating economic and political structures, has become the radical challenge of our time.

A RADICAL NEWS SERVICE: ACTION THIS DAY

Mass newspapers are mischievous, misleading, mendacious and monstrously wasteful. Do we have to put up with them? Thanks to computers and the internet it is now very easy for anyone to produce a local community journal. This is the soft underbelly of the system. A worldwide network of local 'homegrown' journals is a sensible organic answer to mass information imperialism.

- Start in a modest way, say 1,000 four-page copies; kick off monthly or quarterly; it can increase frequency later.
- Canvas local shops and businesses for adverts to fund it.
- Collect items of local interest, school

US EMPIRE COLLAPSE KIRKPATRICK SALE

The author has written 12 books, including Human Scale, The Conquest of Paradise, Rebels Against the Future, and The Fire of His Genius: Robert Fulton and the American Dream.

IT IS QUITE IRONIC: only a decade or so after the idea of the United States as an imperial power came to be accepted by both right and left, and people were actually able to talk openly about an American empire, it is showing multiple signs of its inability to continue. And indeed it is now possible to contemplate, and openly speculate about, its collapse.

The neocons now in power in Washington, those who were delighted to talk about America as the sole empire in the world following the Soviet disintegration, will of course refuse to believe in any such collapse, just as they ignore the realities of the imperial war in Iraq. But I think it behoves us to examine seriously the ways in which the US system is so drastically imperiling itself that it will cause not only the collapse of its worldwide empire but drastically alter the nation itself on the domestic front.

All empires collapse eventually: Akkad, Sumeria, Babylonia, Ninevah, Assyria, Persia, Macedonia, Greece, Carthage, Rome, Mali, Songhai, Mongol, Tokugawaw, Gupta, Khmer, Hapsburg, Inca, Aztec, Spanish, Dutch, Ottoman, Austrian, French, British, Soviet – you name them, they all fell, and most within a few

hundred years. The reasons are not really complex. An empire is a kind of state system that inevitably makes the same mistakes simply by the nature of its imperial structure and inevitably fails because of its size, complexity, territorial reach, stratification, heterogeneity, domination, hierarchy, and inequalities.

In my reading of the history of empires, I have come up with four reasons that almost always explain their collapse. (Jared Diamond's new book *Collapse* also has a list of reasons for societal collapse, slightly overlapping, but he is talking about systems other than empires). Let me set them out, largely in reference to the present American empire.

1: Environmental degradation.

Empires always end by destroying the lands and waters they depend upon for survival, largely because they build and farm and grow without limits, and ours is no exception, even if we have yet to experience the worst of our assault on nature. Science is in agreement that all important ecological indicators are in decline and have been for decades: erosion of topsoils and beaches, overfishing, deforestation, freshwater and aquifer depletion, pollution of water, soil, air, and food, soil salinisation, overpopula-

tion, overconsumption, depletion of oil and minerals, introduction of new diseases and invigoration of old ones, extreme weather, melting icecaps and rising sealevels, species extinctions, and excessive human overuse of the earth's photosynthetic capacity. As the Harvard biologist E.O. Wilson has said, after lengthy examination of human impact on the earth, our 'ecological footprint is already too large for the planet to sustain, and it is getting larger'. A US Defense Department study last year predicted 'abrupt climate change', likely to occur within a decade, will lead to 'catastrophic' shortages of water and energy, endemic 'disruption and conflict', warfare that 'would define human life', and a 'significant drop' in the planet's ability to sustain its present population. End of empire for sure, maybe end of civilization.

2: Economic meltdown.

Empires always depend on excessive resource exploitation, usually derived from colonies farther and farther away from the centre, and eventually fall when the resources are exhausted or become too expensive for all but the elite. This is exactly the path we are on; peak oil extraction, for example, is widely predicted to come in the next year or two, and our economy is built entirely on a fragile system in which the world produces and the US, by and large, consume (US manufacturing is just 13 per cent of our GDP). At the moment we sustain a nearly \$630 billion trade deficit with the rest of the world, it has leapt by an incredible \$500 billion since 1993, and \$180 billion since Bush took office in 2001, and in order to pay for that we have to have an inflow of cash from the rest of the world of about \$1 billion every day to pay for it, which was down by half late last year. That

kind of excess is simply unsustainable, especially when you think that it is the other world empire, China, that is crucial for supporting it, at the tune of some \$83 billion on loan to the US treasury.

Add to that an economy resting on a nearly \$500 billion Federal budget deficit, making up part of a total national debt of \$7.4 trillion as of last autumn, and the continual drain on the economy by the military of at least \$530 billion a year (not counting military intelligence, whose figure we never know). Nobody thinks that is sustainable either, which is why the dollar has lost value everywhere – down by 30% against the euro since 2000 – and the world begins to lose faith in investment in the US. I foresee that in just a few years the dollar will be so battered that the oil states will no longer want to operate in that currency and will turn to the euro instead, and China will let the yuan float against the dollar, effectively making this nation bankrupt and powerless, unable to control economic life within its borders much less abroad.

3: Military overstretch.

Empires, because they are by definition colonisers, are always forced to extend their military reach farther and farther, and enlarge it against unwilling colonies more and more, until coffers are exhausted, communication lines are overextended, troops are unreliable, and the periphery resists and ultimately revolts. The American empire, which began its worldwide reach well before Bush II, now has some 446,000 active troops at more than 725 acknowledged (and any number secret) bases in at least 38 countries around the world, plus a formal 'military presence' in no less than 153 countries, on every continent but Antarctica – and nearly a dozen fully armed courier

AN ALTERNATIVE PRESS

John Papworth

WHEN THE TIMES suddenly went from broadsheet to tabloid I was suddenly jolted into an awareness that its consolidated size ran to 128 pages. This is not a quarterly magazine but a daily newspaper, and it provoked questions. I am old enough to recall wartime single sheet newspapers of four pages. How on earth did we get by? Since then they have grown and grown, indicating the human physique is not alone in registering the effects of obesity.

Newspapers began to have sections devoted to particular subjects; then the sections became supplements, and the number of supplements continually increased to the extent that a weekend newspaper can now run to over 400 pages as it spews out a supplement on Sport, Money, Business, Property, Travel, Holidays, Housing, Education, Culture and Styles, to say nothing of Radio and TV. Perhaps one day they will have one on Farming, perhaps another on Health, and even perhaps, who knows, one on Religion.

In economic terms, and I am referring not to money but to the wise disposal of resources, in this case of newsprint supplies, of available talents and of reader time, it has become the economics of the madhouse. Perhaps the press is conveying more accurately than it might wish or intend, some of the fundamental signs of the sickness of our times. The press has become a derelict area of waste, profligacy, excess and futility as tons of timber are trans-

formed into newsprint conveyed at prodigious transport expense before being skimmed and largely unread en route to the recycling bin.

This is not freedom, it is the power to abuse freedom indicating that power is out of control. The printed word in conditions of freedom is a servant to people's needs for news and informed comment; in their present inflated size they have become a massive intrusion into public consciousness and an obstacle to enabling people to ascertain what news is at all.

Important items of news of global importance such as relating to the rapid shrinking of the polar ice terrain, or developments in the supply of oil, are apt to be buried in obscure paragraphs on inner pages whilst the front page banner headlines are devoted to the personal foibles of some prominent person who happens to be prominent because he or she is prominent. They will tend to be accompanied by a large picture of a pretty girl whose basic claim to her transient prominence is that she is pretty. The swollen megaliths of modern newspapers have long ceased to give primary focus to the needs of their readers, they are on an unending binge of the perpetual gratification of their own self-perceived needs. They have largely ceased to function as purveyors of news in an unrestrained pursuit of profit, and this in turn means they are operating largely at the behest of their advertisers.

And of course one result is that their presentation and comment of news is

In the opening sentence of his 1994 address to the American E.F. Schumacher Society, Ivan Illich remarked that it would be a posthumous betrayal of Kohr to see him as an economist. Throughout his life, Leopold Kohr laboured to lay the foundations for an alternative to economics. He had no interest in seeking innovative ways to plan the allocation of scarce goods. He identified conditions under which the good became mired down in things that are scarce. Therefore he worked to subvert conventional economic wisdom, no matter how advanced.


John Papworth realised this after re-reading *The Wisdom of Leopold Kohr* recently and remarked that Illich's address prompted him to see with fierce clarity some of the meaning of the modern architectural disaster which seems to have overtaken our entire civilisation. He continued:

Where once men built from an assured ethical base, as in the Parthenon or in the old thatched cottages of English farm labourers, today they build from a pocket calculator. Perhaps Wren's St Paul's was the last great monument of the old approach whilst the Roman Catholic Cathedral in London's Victoria is, tragically, one of the earlier examples of the new. Conceptually the Westminster Houses of Parliament seems to sit uneasily between the two. The Catholic Cathedral appears not to have lacked resources and its structure abounds with marble and gold mosaic; it is a vast and

impressive structure, with a skyline more suited to an open desert than to be hemmed in by apartment blocks, but, like nearly all modern architecture, it lacks grandeur, proportion or any sense of creative inspiration. The really awesome thing about it is that, like all pocket calculator stuff, it is boring. It will never attract hordes of visitors as does St. Paul's or the great structures of medieval Italy.'

Illich believed that Kohr's day would dawn 'when people awaken from their economic slumbers, when the age of faith in *homo economicus* gives way to a penetrating scepticism, when social theorists carefully read this modest but important thinker'. From a less academic perspective, John Papworth commented that Illich was using Kohr to point to one of the fundamental aspects of our disintegrating lifestyle and that somehow we ought to be recruiting hordes of musicians, architects, poets and others to the Kohr thesis. Kohr is much too important to be left with the economists.

NEXT YEAR IN JERUSALEM, a sequence of poems by Adam Horovitz. HOOHAH PRESS, 2004, 29 Horns Road, Stroud GL5 1EB.

 *Reviewed by John Papworth*

ADAM HOROVITZ is the poet son of parental poets; he registers here in this short volume his appraisal of some of the events and trends of the contemporary scene, some of its horrors, some of its effects and some of its promise.

fleets on all the oceans. Talk about overstretch: the US is less than 5% of the world's population. And now that Bush has declared a 'war on terror', instead of the more do-able war on Al Qaeda we should have waged, our armies and agents will be on a battlefield universal and permanent that cannot possibly be controlled or contained.

So far that military network has not collapsed but, as Iraq indicates, it is mightily tested and quite incapable of establishing client states to do our bidding and protect resources we need. And as anti-American sentiment continues to spread and darken in all the Muslim countries, in much of Europe, in much of Asia, and as more countries refuse the 'structural adjustments' that our International Monetary Fund-led globalisation requires, it is quite likely that the periphery of our empire will begin resisting our dominance, militarily if necessary. And far from having a capacity to fight two wars simultaneously, as the Pentagon once hoped, we are proving that we can't even fight one.

4: Domestic dissent and upheaval.

Traditional empires end up collapsing from within as well as often being attacked from without, and so far the level of dissent within the US has not reached the point of rebellion or secession, thanks both to the increasing repression of dissent and escalation of fear in the name of 'homeland security' and to the success of our modern version of bread and circuses, a unique combination of entertainment, sports, television, internet sex and games, consumption, drugs, liquor and religion that effectively deadens the general public into stupor. But the tactics of the Bush II administration

show that it is so fearful of an expression of popular dissent that it is willing to defy and ignore environmental, civil-rights and progressive groups, to bribe commentators to put out its propaganda, to expand surveillance and data-base invasions of privacy, to use party superiority and backroom tactics to ride roughshod over Congressional opposition, to use lies and deceptions as a normal part of government operations, to break international laws and treaties for short-term ends, and to use religion to cloak its every policy.

It's hard to believe that the great mass of the American public would ever bestir itself to challenge the empire at home until things get much, much worse. It is a public, after all, of which, as a Gallup poll in 2004 found, 61% believe that 'religion can answer all or most of today's problems', and according to a Time/CNN poll in 2002 59% believe in the imminent apocalypse foretold in the Book of Revelation and take every threat and disaster as evidence of God's will. And yet, it's also hard to believe that a nation so thoroughly corrupt as this, in all its fundamental institutions, its bought-up parties, academies, corporations, brokerages, accountants, governments, and resting on a social and economic base of intolerably unequal incomes and property, getting increasingly unequal, will be able to sustain itself for long. The upsurge in talk about secession after the last US election, some of which was deadly serious and led on to organisations throughout most of the blue states, indicates that at least a minority is willing to think about drastic steps to 'alter or abolish' a regime it finds itself fundamentally at odds with.

Those four processes by which empires always eventually fall seem to me to be

You cannot have political democracy without economic democracy, argued R H Tawney, but new forms of power have burgeoned in the modern world suggesting you cannot have either without administrative, communications and utility service democracy.

John Papworth

inescapably operative, in varying degrees, in this latest empire. And I think a combination of several or all of them will bring about its collapse within the next 15 years or so.

Jared Diamond's recent book detailing the ways societies collapse suggests that American society, or industrial civilisation as a whole, once it is aware of the dangers of its current course, can learn from the failures of the past and avoid their fates. But it will never happen, and for a reason Diamond himself understands.

As he says, in his analysis of the doomed Norse society on Greenland that collapsed in the early 15th century: 'The values to which people cling most stub-

bornly under inappropriate conditions are those values that were previously the source of their greatest triumphs over adversity.' If this is so, and his examples would seem to prove it, then we can isolate the values of American society that have been responsible for its greatest triumphs and know that we will cling to them no matter what. They are, in one rough mixture, capitalism, individualism, nationalism, technophilia, and humanism (as the dominance of humans over nature). There is no chance whatever, no matter how grave and obvious the threat, that as a society that we will abandon those.

Hence no chance to escape the collapse of empire. ■

Quote

In my travels around the country it has become more and more apparent to me that when people feel excluded from their community and unable to make a contribution, the whole fabric of those communities is at serious risk. When that fabric starts to disintegrate then we all suffer – whatever our position. It seems to me that the best way of starting to tackle the problems is to provide practical help which will encourage people to do something for themselves to regain their self-belief and once again feel part of their community.

The Prince of Wales

Tomorrow Now is a fun ride, and if the quality of some of the writing varies, that may simply reflect the inherent difficulty in trying to predict the future.

DISTRIBUTIST PERSPECTIVES Vol 1: ESSAYS ON THE ECONOMICS OF JUSTICE AND CHARITY, compiled by John Sharpe. IHS PRESS, 2004. Pbk, ISBN 0 9718286 7 9.

Reviewed by Edward P. Echlin

A USEFUL collection of essays by leading twentieth century distributists with an updating introduction by Thomas Naylor, author of *Affluenza*. In Naylor's words 'Distributism called for broad-based, decentralised ownership of private property as well as small businesses, small factories, small schools, small farms, small crafts, and small towns. It advocated a return to farming, the primacy of the countryside, organic methods, environmental integrity and human-scale enterprise of all sorts.' Of course, this is the opposite of the way which most westerners have travelled, and which even today, despite the evident, undeniable, unsustainable damage, China and India want to walk. There are gems of wisdom and brilliant insights in these essays which still enlighten us today. I recommend their careful reading. But with a few affectionate caveats. First, the distributists were men of their time. Their thoughts must be adapted for the debris of our late industrialism which ignored their wisdom. Simply to repeat their words, even their ideas, would be a form of fundamentalism. We do not possess past wisdom, it possesses us – and should regenerate us for our own age. Secondly, and more specifically, these writers could not foresee the damage of overprocreation, migrations, industrial farming,

the rule of corporations and supermarkets, destructive over-development of land and aquifers. They knew not the food and air miles which ravage climate and land. Thirdly, the publishers and some of the writers attempt to colonise distributism for Roman Catholicism. This is triumphalist, anachronistic and inaccurate. Distributive wisdom belongs to all wise enough to follow it. I recommend this collection, anticipate future ones, and hope its thoughts, even at this penultimate hour for our planet, are absorbed, adapted and lived, as indeed they are by some, including Heritage Seed Savers and gardeners, all who live in sustainable sufficiency, and the Lifestyle Movement.

THE WISDOM OF LEOPOLD KOHR, by Ivan Illich. The 14th Annual E.F. Schumacher Lecture at Yale University in October 1994. Available as a pamphlet from the E. F. Schumacher Society at 140 Jug End Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230, (413) 528-1737.


The full text can also be downloaded from www.schumachersociety.org/publication.htm.

Reviewed by Peter Etherden

DURING his lifetime, Leopold Kohr was recognised by very few as a man ahead of his time. Even today, a decade after his death, few have caught up with him; there is still no school of thought that carries on his social morphology. There is also a tendency to place Kohr among the champions of alternative economics because of the reverential praise heaped upon him by E.F. Schumacher, one of the few who understood that Kohr was a social thinker who was picking up the biological morphology of D'Arcy Thompson and J. B. S. Haldane as the starting point of a social morphology.

BOOKS

TOMORROW NOW, by Bruce Sterling. RANDOM HOUSE, New York. Pbk, ISBN 0-8129-6976-6.

 Reviewed by Jeff Ubois

Tomorrow Now is a series of vivid images of the future, and though it is built around Shakespeare's soliloquy about the seven ages of man (oddly enough, that was also the theme for *Burningman* in 2001, the year before the book was published), it's more a series of riffs and stories than a grand unified conceptual framework for understanding Things to Come or What is to be Done.

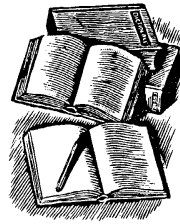
Sterling plays several roles himself in this book – satirist, futurist, journalist, prognosticator and social critic – and covers global politics, information economics, crime, war, genetic engineering, design, religion, terrorism, government breakdown in Chechnya and Serbia, the internet, and politics, with a mix of fascination ('Genetic engineering will heal the sick, fortify new deadly viruses, darken and transfigure every certainty'), sobriety ('The actual likelihood of people...getting atomically bombed is much higher today than it was

during the cold war), humour (any end-user with a permanent solution has a lost job), and an awareness of the transience of persons, things, ideas, cultures, and beliefs.

It's Sterling's eye for the present, for the persons, ideas, technologies and beliefs that will grow to shape the future, is what really makes the book worth buying.

The coverage of the information economy alone is worth its price. 'The secret sting in Stewart [Brand]'s famous aphorism "Information wants to be free" is in the part that got clipped off when the slogan became popularised. The full quote ran: "Information wants to be free; information also wants to be expensive." It's only when you can hold both of these principles in your head at once that you become a true information economy adept.' Exactly right.

Of course, it's obligatory to note a weakness even in the best of books, and in the case of *Tomorrow Now* the question of scale – of societies, cultures, countries, and organisations – is largely ignored, even though it is implicit in so many of the issues Sterling addresses. But set that aside,



DON'T GO NUCLEAR

Zac Goldsmith

The author is editor of The Ecologist magazine (www.theecologist.org.uk). Here he targets in part the policies of one of the UK conservative parties which, like the other two, seem quite unaware of the literal meaning of the word 'conservative'. More to the point, and our reason for publishing, is the current high-powered propaganda now being promoted to urge governments to adopt nuclear power as the answer to the looming crisis in oil supplies. The one option that never appears to be discussed is that energy consumption might be reduced.

NO ONE CAN ARGUE that we are not facing an energy crisis. With domestic gas supplies running close to exhaustion, Britain will soon be dependent for up to four-fifths of its energy on imports from such friendly countries as Algeria and Iran. From a security perspective, that is clearly bad news. And combined with a general consensus on the threat of climate change, as well as the mathematical certainty that gas and oil everywhere must eventually run out, it is obvious that we need to make alternative plans.

The nuclear industry, then, can smell an opportunity and has presented the public with a manufactured choice. Either we sacrifice whole swaths of the countryside to the ubiquitous wind turbine, or we embrace an energy source that it used to boast was 'clean, safe and too cheap to meter'. Reality, it transpired, was never a match for those early claims. On the contrary, nuclear power has proved to be a problem on virtually every level.

Two years ago, Vice-President Dick Cheney lamented that the US government hadn't approved a single application for a new nuclear power plant for 20 years. What he didn't say was that no applications had been submitted for 20 years. And the reason, simply, is that nuclear power is a bad

investment. Without massive central government involvement and incalculable public subsidies, nuclear power wouldn't exist.

According to the *Economist*, OECD governments poured \$159 billion into nuclear research between 1974 and 1998. British Nuclear Fuels, meanwhile, has admitted that it faces a bill of £34 billion to clean the waste that has built up, and it expects that waste to increase by a staggering 500 per cent over the next ten years. Independent analysts suggest the figure is higher still. On the basis of these costs alone, some of America's most powerful conservative think-tanks have joined calls for an end to nuclear power.

Security Equation

But the direct costs reveal only part of the story. There is the issue of security. About a week before the September 11 atrocity, the director of the French nuclear installation giant COGEMA was asked about the risks of an airborne attack on a French power plant. He answered that there was no risk, because 'it is forbidden to fly over it at low altitude'. As far as I know, it is also illegal to fly planes into New York buildings.

Shortly after the attacks, the International Atomic Energy Agency warned that an attack on a nuclear power plant is 'far more likely' following

September 11. 'If the terrorist is willing to die,' director-general Mohamed ElBaradei said, 'that changes the security equation drastically.' British Energy echoed those calls, and pleaded with the British government to take protective measures. British Nuclear Fuels, meanwhile, described the prospect of a fuel-laden commercial jet colliding with a nuclear plant as 'unthinkable'.

It is worth thinking about it, for an attack on Sellafield in Cumbria would be 100 times more disastrous than the Chernobyl accident.

The security costs are hard to quantify, but that doesn't mean they don't exist. And even without the threat of terrorists, the lives of countless British people are put at risk each and every day. On every level, nuclear is an unattractive option, unless you happen to belong to al-Qa'eda and want to close down an economy overnight. 'Clean, safe and too cheap to meter?' If it weren't so serious, we'd have to laugh. Nuclear is dirtier, more dangerous and more expensive than any other form of energy – by many multiples. So for the industry to be granted a life-extension requires belief that it is the only solution to the looming energy crisis. It is not. And nor does the alternative involve smothering Britain in wind turbines.

Biomass

For one thing, such a scenario assumes demand will always be as high, if not higher, than it is now. That need not be the case. According to a recent US study, investing \$5.2 billion in energy conservation in the federal government's 500,000 buildings would lead to savings of more than \$1 billion each year, indefinitely – an enormous return by any standard. It's quite

clear that with investments in energy conservation, energy consumption would shrink dramatically without the need for sacrifice of any sort.

Nor is wind the only renewable alternative, although it does seem to be the most effective at the moment. The Cabinet Office's Performance and Innovation Unit has said that offshore wind alone has the potential to provide ten times more electricity than is now used. But equally, whole villages in Britain's West Country are on the verge of being powered by environmentally benign small hydro projects. Biomass is emerging as the answer for others. Solar power is becoming cheaper by the year, and more efficient.

All these alternatives exist, despite having received virtually nothing in the way of research funds. What is more, they carry none of the security and health risks associated with nuclear. Nor will the taxpayer be forced to cough up limitless resources to keep them going.

It's tempting to dismiss the anti-wind campaigners as lackeys of the nuclear industry. But that only partially explains the growing movement against wind. Another reason is that the government, fixated as ever on massive centralised one-size-fits-all projects, has transformed the planning system in such a way as to delete any possibility of local participation. Faced with the apparent prospect of a vast wind monoculture on their doorstep, and denied a say, people who might very well have been champions of wind energy are being turned against it, and by extension, against other renewables.

It is possible that that is what the government wants. When it re-evaluates its energy policy in 2006, it may well declare the renewables experiment unworkable and

to survive in a parched landscape followed the weeks we had spent researching a book. Thankfully, rain has begun to fall again.

For the last five years, as the country consolidated its recovery from an almost total loss of trade following the collapse of the Soviet Union and US coercion of Russia to break its trading agreement with the island – a crisis greatly exacerbated by US laws passed to tighten its now 45-year blockade – Cuba has been engaged in a 'Battle of Ideas'; ideas for action to improve social welfare, an already outstanding health service, access to artistic training and cultural events throughout the island, and, above all, education. For it is the declared aim of the Cuban government to make Cuba the most knowledgeable and genuinely cultured country in the world.

Kenneth and Renée-Marie Croose Parry
Am Schoffer Park 7, D-78132 Hornberg im Schwarzwald

BRIGHT SPOT

LIFE would be very dull without regular numbers of *Fourth World Review*. Thank you for No. 131, received today.

David Henson
35 Wellington Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2ES

QUOTE

1. **EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO A NATIONALITY.**
2. **NO ONE SHALL BE ARBITRARILY DEPRIVED OF HIS NATIONALITY NOR DENIED THE RIGHT TO CHANGE HIS NATIONALITY (ARTICLE 15).**

**UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

RIGHT LINES

Congratulations on your two editorials in *FWR* 131. They were both excellent and should be read by the whole of the Western world. Prince Charles's article also was exceptional.

Dennis Nightingale-Smith
St Mary's Villa, Hanley Swan, Worcestershire
WR8 0EA

LOCAL POST OFFICE

ALONG with many in Norwich, I have been campaigning to keep our local post office branches open, which included visits to the threatened sub-post offices. On the first of these visits, I was amazed to find the postmaster tell me that she would not welcome a campaign to save her sub-post office. Why? Because the 'compensation scheme' that she was being offered for closing it amounted to far more than she would earn if she kept it open.

Cllr Rupert Read
Norwich Green Party

SANE

MANY APOLOGIES – how could I forget my subscription? I love *Fourth World Review* – it is so SANE!

Wendy Hillary
29 Van Diemens Close, Chinnor OX39 4QE

ter, with ink and paper possibly from similar sources, all part of the globalised economy long before computers were up and running. – Ed.

GREEN FLIRTATIONS

HOW refreshing to read something more of less on ones own wavelength. However, before we get too euphoric, there are some tendencies in these publications to flirt with the reactionary rather than radical views. You seem to be getting quite close to the establishment, sponsored by big names. The article by HRH was spot on but it gave the impression you are a sort of dilettante coffee table publication to amuse the bourgeoisie. It is difficult to recognise your support for the arrogant bestiality of huntsmen with the mainstream Leopold Kohr / Schumacher approach generally. Similarly your flirtation with the extreme right euro-sceptics is dangerous – they will use you for their own purposes, they want power returned from Brussels to the traditional British establishment, not devolved down to the very local level like you.

Bill Hughes

*Swindon Greens, 18 Goddard Avenue,
Old Town, SWINDON SN1 4HR*

NEW

ISO admire your energy and spirit and wisdom. And here you are embarking on a new publication! You are indefatigable! I wish you every success and the best of luck though I'm afraid few want to hear unpleasant truths.

Morag Aitkenhead

*Kilquhanity House Estate, Castle-Douglas,
Scotland DG7 3DB*

The 'new publication' is a local eight-pager called Purton Today, an attempt to convey the

global crisis in local terms to local people. Free copies are available from FWR (a SAE would assist). Hopefully others may be encouraged to adopt a similar local strategy. – Ed.

RICH POVERTY

THE poor in the villages here are so rich in natural resources they work no harder than is needed to sustain life, no harder than any intelligent people would. On the 'Apparent Happiness Index' – the visible frequency of genuine smiles – villagers here are far better off than First World townspeople, as my frequent visits to villages hereabouts attest.

The efforts of 'Development Partners' (the aid donors of yesteryear) to modernise and monetise the Ugandan economy is to drive otherwise self-destructive forces that afflict you, even in Purton. The self-centred pursuit of money, cars, telemares, de luxe shopping, etc. is being cultivated here by new commercial forces mainly from South Africa, but aided and abetted by the aid donors. I have got into some difficulty suggesting a redirection of their efforts. I wouldn't mind them recognising voluntary poverty as a valid social objective, but it is seen as a non-western heresy.

Viv & Alem Williams

*Africa 1st House,
PO Box 7558, Kampala, Uganda*

CULTURED

TRAVELLING by car round Cuba has enabled us to see the effects of the terrible drought – the worst in living memory – that has gripped the eastern part of the island for the last two years. We fear that it may be a result of the climate changes now being felt around the world because of global warming. The experience of seeing burning fields and emaciated cattle trying

unpopular, and initiate a nuclear programme in its place, which Mr Blair is instinctively drawn to.

Instead, they should call for the implementation of a massive programme of energy conservation – one of those rare solutions where literally everyone wins. They should acknowledge the fact that nuclear power can be regarded as cheap

only if the vast hidden costs remain hidden, if public subsidies are discounted, if the unavoidable cancer clusters surrounding each and every installation are ignored, if the security costs are externalised. And they should call for the alternative – a decentralised renewable-energy programme that embraces local participation – to be given a fair chance, with proportionate funds. ■

FARMING'S NEW FEUDALISM

Robert Schubert

LIKE THOUSANDS of others in southern Germany in the late 19th century, Karl and Anna Schmeiser worked long, hard days farming a baron's vast tracts of land to keep a roof over their heads and food on the table.

The baron owned the land, the draft animals, the equipment, and most of the crop. Karl and Anna dreamed of a better life, and in 1890 they scraped together every last pfennig and left Germany forever, taking ship to the United States. Seeking cheap land and independence, they eventually moved to the prairies of western Canada, settling in Saskatchewan in 1904.

A century later, the land is no longer so cheap. The independence Karl and Anna found is threatened too, as grandson Percy Schmeiser and his wife Louise discovered in 1998. That's when Monsanto Corporation sued them after their canola seed was found to contain the company's patented, herbicide-resistant gene.

The case generated worldwide headlines, and an uncertain future for many farmers. Although the Schmeisers ultimately didn't have to pay Monsanto, the courts did find them guilty of patent infringement. The

fact that a transnational corporation would persecute small farmers is troubling to many, and shows the depth and breadth of a decades-long transformation: the steady erosion of farmers' practice of developing and saving seeds. 'Neither I nor my parents or grandparents ever envisioned farmers losing control of their seed,' Schmeiser says.

Moreover, that's just the tip of the canola stalk. The privatisation of seed is but one part of the steady consolidation of economic power throughout agriculture. Large agro-industrial and retail corporations have now secured toeholds in every phase of the farming cycle: they own seed and seed patents, they control processing facilities, they dominate the retail sector, and they have even moved into financing farmers' operations. It's as if the barons have risen from the grave and brought the old feudal system back with them. The corporations that control poultry and hog farming have already reduced many livestock farmers to contract labour, and grain farmers like Percy Schmeiser seem headed for the same fate. ■

With acknowledgements to World-Watch, PO Box 188, Williamsport, PA 17703-9913 USA.



FORUM

This is your slot, the place where you sound off and express your views...

ENOUGH?

IS NOT Angela Bates a little naïve (as she herself suggests) to wonder why your contributors all hate Free Trade?

Consider its avowed purpose, which is to make all goods as cheap as possible. The way you do this is to pay the lowest wages you can and the least possible money on protecting the environment.

Enough said?

Lord Beaumont of Whitley

House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW

FREE SUBSIDIES!

ANGELA BATES is puzzled that 'free trade' should be held in suspicion by FWR. It is the word 'free' that causes the misunderstanding. It sounds such a harmless word. But in the modern world 'free trade' means a system of trading in which big business is heavily subsidised. It is anything but free.

I believe that many so-called 'economies of scale' in, for example, a supermarket, are in fact the effects of subsidies rather than the scale of the operation. David Kortén's

book *When Corporations Rule the World* describes how the present so-called free market system is held in place by subsidies and hidden subsidies.

Patricia Knox

Pen Llywenan, Bodedern, Holyhead

CHILEAN TRANSITION

Thank you very much for sending me the review for all these years. My reaction to the editorial of No 130 is to think that we, in the ecological and social transformational movement, are already united in the background of our feelings and actions, thinking that we are complementary, doing every one of us our part in the big picture of the benign transformation of contemporary industrial civilization.

In Chile I work independently as part of the Chilean social and ecological transformational movement, letting them get on with their ideas that I find good but not sufficient. I humbly try to contribute by going ahead with some ideas that I think are valuable and that express my wider ecological worldview.

I continue with the promotion of Green themes and I work with young and talented friends in various projects, such as participating in a national contest for funds for an imaginative ecological series of six videos. The theme will be the transformation of the present capital of Chile, Santiago, where I live, into an ecological and just city.

Also, I like to tell you that my more beloved project is the future foundation of an eco-centre to teach the arts of economic sustainable self-sufficiency, specially to the young and poor people, as well as the establishment of self-reliant autonomy in urban and country communities.

I think that we live in a transitional period where we must to work on all sides and fronts, searching for salvation and the real liberation of our fellow human beings and all living beings.

Pedro di Girólamo

Ave de Valdivia 1801, Providencia, Santiago, Chile

NATURAL

I'VE just realised why your sentence about population growth ('despite the natural checks of war, disease, famine ...', etc., editorial, FWR 131) is misleading.

It's the word 'natural' which implies these checks are part of what nature intended. You should change it to 'despite the present-day effects of war, famine and disease' (or something similar).

Kate Robinson

17 Church Path, Purton, Swindon SN5 4DR

The word 'natural' is used to indicate the natural consequences of human actions on population numbers. I have no idea at all what nature intended. – Ed.

Editor's Note

First, thank you to the many readers who responded to our recent subscription reminder: so we are almost secure for the current year; if only the rest would follow suit.

Next, do remember these pages are yours; so when you have written the cheque do use your pen to sound off your own views on whatever grabs your attention. We can't all meet up in a pub to engage in dialogue, more's the pity, but do take advantage of the postal service and these pages to engage in the next best thing.

Then, thanks to Jiri Foukner of the Czech Republic, we now have a fully operative website: www.4thworld.info.

CONSISTENCY

YOU constantly batter us with demands for a return to local power, local politics, local accountability, local democracy, local community (nothing wrong with that). But then you give your web address: www.4thworld.co.uk. Local? Sheer hypocrisy!

Are you aware that any involvement with computer technology is inimical to the very notion of the 'local'? That this technology has been central to globalisation, and that only a wholesale rejection of its doubtful charms can be considered ethically consistent with localism?

Peter Quince

12 Stephens Close, Faversham, Kent ME13 7SS

Peter doubtless used a factory-made pen, possibly made by an underpaid, overworked and non-unionised child worker in Asia, to write his let-

VACANCIES

Fourth World Review is proposing to establish number of special posts:

1. Indigenous Affairs Editor:

To monitor and report on the efforts of indigenous peoples everywhere to achieve the full recognition and power of self-rule as acknowledged in the United Nation Charter.

2. Community Affairs Editor:

To monitor and report on the rapidly expanding drive to establish democratic local control of local affairs by village and local community people across the world.

3. Promotion Manager:

To devise and encourage means to increase understanding of Fourth World principles by expanding the readership of Fourth World Review and promoting seminars, assemblies, lectures and by other appropriate means.



In keeping with our standard editorial practice, all posts are honorary. They may appeal especially to retirees who may be seeking more purpose and fulfilment in their lives, or to ambitious students seeking initial experience in journalism or management, by allying themselves to a prestigious radical cause and its unique journal, currently circulating in more than 40 countries and with no rivals in the field. E-mail facilities enable applications for the editorial posts to be received from anywhere in the world.

Replication and circulation of this notice will assist the cause. Offers of assistance with routine work related to the preparation, printing, packaging and posting of Fourth World literature and the maintenance of subscription records etc., from readers in the neighbourhood of the editorial base particularly welcome.

FOURTH WORLD REVIEW, PO Box 2410, Swindon, Wiltshire SN5 4XN

INVOICE



It is not easy to act responsibly if one lacks responsibility. It is fundamental to our approach that power to decide must stem from the individual. That is why our cover price is notional and why our readers are free to set their own subscription rates. It is also why we discourage advertising as being an intrusion into our individual powers of judgement. So the responsibility here is on each reader, on whom we rely heavily just to keep going.

Remember our mantra:

*The one to act is me,
The place to act is here,
And the time to act is now.*

And then perhaps add a mite more.

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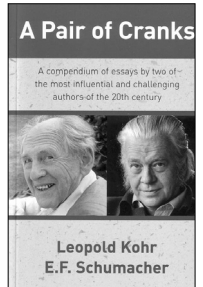
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FOURTH WORLD



THE BREAKDOWN OF NATIONS

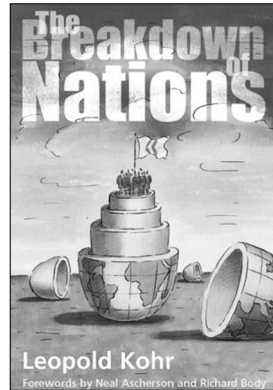
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