
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*

No. 118

2002

Notional price £2/\$4

William Shepherd Energy Wars



Editorial:

CUT THE CACKLE

Books:

The Breakdown of Nations

– LEOPOLD KOHR

Reviewed by Aidan Rankin

Five Holocausts – DEREK J. WILSON

Reviewed by John Robinson

The Lessons of Terror – CALEB CARR

Reviewed by Roger Franklin

FOURTH WORLD REVIEW No. 118

<i>Editorial:</i>	CUT THE CACKLE	3	
<i>Comment:</i>	Europe	6	
<i>Feature:</i>	Energy Wars: The Special Relationship	7	
	– WILLIAM SHEPHERD		
<i>Forum:</i>	Alan Turner	William Sutherland	12
	Steffen Lindig	Neil Berman	
	Graham Walker	Toma Sik	
	Barbara Panvel	M.B. Nisal	
	Donald Livingston	Thomas H. Greco	
	Nigel Cartwright	Bartlomiej Swiderek	
<i>Books:</i>	Five Holocausts – DEREK J. WILSON	17	
	<i>Reviewed by John Robinson</i>		
	The Breakdown of Nations – LEOPOLD KOHR	18	
	<i>Reviewed by Aidan Rankin</i>		
	The Lessons of Terror – CALEB CARR	20	
	<i>Reviewed by Roger Franklin</i>		
<i>Column:</i>	FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR	21	
<i>Item:</i>	Fourth World News	24	

FOURTH WORLD REVIEW is an offshoot of The Fourth World Educational Research Association Trust (Registered Charity No. 283040). It is published bi-monthly (except for a double summer issue).

Editor: JOHN PAPWORTH

Subscriptions: ANNE FEALDMAN

Secretarial: SAM HAINS & KATE ROBINSON

Dispatch: MARC RENNEN

Typesetting: GEOFF ELLIS (01858 464771)

Printing: INSTANT PRINT WEST ONE (0120 7434 2813)

Patrons: Natalie D'Arbeloff, Maurice Ash, Lord Beaumont, Sir Richard Body, John Coleman, Peter Etherden, Edward Goldsmith, Tom Greco Jnr, Ivan Illich, Dervla Murphy, Richard Neville, Helena Norberg-Hodge, Theodore Roszak, Kirkpatrick Sale, John Seymour, Zach Stewart, Will Sutherland, Shann Turnbull, Tracy Marchioness of Worcester and Jeff Ubois.

The Fourth World, PO Box 2410, Swindon SN5 4XN.

Tel: 01793 772214; Fax 01793 772521; E-mail: info@4thworld.co.uk

CUT THE CACKLE

GOVERNMENTS *the world over are confronted with problems, most of which are needless, many of which are dangerous and almost of all of which are products of the nature and structure of government itself.*

In Britain, overcrowded, overcentralised and overgoverned, it has run into the quicksands of its own post-imperial economic backlash. The industries on which its prosperity was founded – coal, steel and engineering – have been either decimated or obliterated under the battleaxe of competition. Huge swathes of its manufacturing industry are even now upping to Third World countries where taxes and production costs, especially wages, are infinitely lower.

Meanwhile its still high-consumption standards and ample social service provision continue to be a powerful magnet to impoverished Third World hopefuls who, like the British themselves, have yet to grasp that the days of an extravagant, wasteful, ecologically suicidal, socially destructive and spiritually desolating lifestyle are drawing to a close. So they continue to flood in, and government attempts to halt the tide have all the efficacy associated with a former royal person whose name is reputed to have been Canute.

So the problems which abound, proliferate and deepen. Our prisons, like our hospitals, get bigger and fuller, our schools have

ceased to be centres of learning and are now largely training centres ‘for jobs’; public transport is a mess from decades of under-investment, our agriculture is up against the wall as a result of the blind pursuit of immediate profit at the price of long-term sustainability, a pursuit which has led to the elimination of hundreds of thousands of small farmers. Small farms, like the small shops and our village stores, have been obliterated with no regard to their role in promoting social cohesiveness and the guts of moral responsibility.

Power Out of Contro;

The disintegration of the social fabric, now the most imposing factor of British life, is the major achievement of market forces, overcentralised government, the malignant evil of television and the cowardly silence of the Church. People, especially young people, are aware that they have been sold short, that they have been landed in a mess by forces they can only dimly identify but which they are aware they are powerless to control.

They are aware that the dominant forces which should be safeguarding the ship of state are busy surrendering it wholesale to the impudent effronteries of hijackers located in Brussels and in global boardrooms, whilst beyond all this are the gathering, lowering clouds of another quite inevitable world war.

Why is it that despite all the advances which have been made in some spheres at least, advances which could make the planet a scene of ecstatic social exploration, adventure and achievement, one based on peace, plenty and decency, we are confronted with ugliness, squalor, violence and breakdown?

Too Big

When confronted with a crisis of epic proportions, it might be thought that it would evoke a concern of like degree, that if it was so obvious that something was quite fundamentally wrong with our political and economic arrangements we would be posing no less fundamental questions about them. We are not. We are sedulously avoiding any serious attempt to probe the assumptions on which those arrangements are based, instead we are continuing to seek solutions which leave those assumptions untouched, and therein lies the roots of the modern crisis. What we need to think we instinctively regard as unthinkable, and the most imposing peak of this untouchable realm of our own minds relates to the size and scale of our institutions.

Over half a century ago an Austrian professor of economics asserted, 'If anything is wrong it is because it is too big.' Perhaps an oversweeping statement, but all experience since simply confirms it. Too big. Just that. So government is too big, banks, shops, farms, industries and fisheries are too big, and even more imposingly unthinkable, nations are too big. Why? Because giantism has made them unmanageable in keeping the peace or in ensuring economic justice and stability; the forces dominating them are out of control and producing effects we are powerless to pre-

vent or to alleviate. This despite the ballot box and freedom of speech. Too big is the problem of the modern world and the challenge confronting us all is to reduce the size and scale of things so as to enable us to control them.

Nobody would want a pair of shoes which was too large, so why do we tolerate far more important matters which suffer the same defect? We need to challenge that deep-rooted assumption in our minds that making things bigger makes them better when we are living in a crisis which howls with evidence indicating the contrary; evidence indicating that the small is generally better, far more stable, responsive, beneficial, controllable, peaceful and prosperous.

A New Party?

So do we need a new political party? The question raises in sharp focus the general disarray of the radical political scene in the UK. It is a situation doubtless replicated in many other countries. There are two or three mass membership parties contending for government power, then a number of single issue parties such as the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), The Green Party, and beyond them a large number of groups, movements, campaigns and organisations such as The Socialist Workers Party, The Peace Pledge Union, The World Future Studies Federation and a great many more.

All these bodies, from the largest to the smallest, have one thing in common: they accept the existing framework of power. They may well seek to replace those now occupying the seats of power, or they may be seeking to influence them on one aspect of politics or another, but none of them questions the framework itself within which that power is deployed. In this, any

of them seeking to achieve fundamental change simply cuts the ground of effective results from under their own feet, for, as we have indicated, it is the framework itself which needs to be transformed if any radical objective is to be achieved.

Conceptualising a 'new party' is in danger of simply rehashing the political fatuities of established would-be 'left-wing' parties which now abound and which have produced, for example, a Tony Blair leadership in favour of war in Iraq, private funding of public services and a general drive for 'growth' which is already rapidly ecologically bankrupting us. If there is to be unity of any radical moves, let it be a unity of mind and approach rather than of organisation.

To talk of the need for a new party is the old fashioned giantist approach; what we need is thousands of new locally-based independent political parties up and down the country! And in the world at large millions of them. The pressing need of the moment is for a political and economic programme they could adopt which affirms at every level the imperative need for the human scale as a prerequisite for the effective working of democracy. And the programmes? Each local neighbourhood party will decide its own as a matter of course, which does not mean they would not promote a common series of principles which serve their common interests.

Such principles would relate at the national level to fundamental provisions for liberty, freedom and independence, involving of course a complete rejection of any association with the European Community.

But cut the cackle all along the line; currently discussion is non-stop about what government policy should be on a host of matters which have been removed from local control. Our millions of new parties will assume as a matter of right the power to establish their own elected regional bodies to run services where such co-operation with other communities may be needed such as specialist hospitals, colleges, police, radio and TV, transport, utilities, banking and investment.

This is a programme of liberation, a programme to get government off people's backs and into their own hands. Such a political structure would at last enable people's wishes to prevail on the issues of war, ecological sanity and economic justice. Across the world people would insist on the most rigorous controls on armaments production, where it was permitted at all, and of associated scientific research. At last the questions of war and peace would not be matters of power-brokering and diplomacy in the hands of giant states but moral questions of right and wrong in the hands of people.

What are we waiting for? ■

I swear that, to the best of my knowledge (which is pretty poor and may be revised in future), my company's accounts are (more or less) accurate. I have checked this with my auditors and directors who (I pay to) agree with me...

This quote is not from any lefty, socialist or Green journal. It appeared on the cover of The Economist, the mouthpiece of corporate capitalism, on 17 August 2002.

Below is the first of what we hope will become a regular item, allowing readers as well as our regular contributors a slot where they can comment on an item about which they feel strongly. Comments should be relatively short and to the point, but the views can be as trenchant as you like...

COMMENT: EUrope

THE anti-EUro people really must start getting their act together. Almost without exception they take a stance on the weakest possible ground by focussing on the fallacies of the economic arguments.

That there is a case for this stance is not in doubt at all and its validity lies not in so much the small print of EU key documents and in its propaganda as in Leopold Kohr's matchless analysis in *The Breakdown of Nations* and in Jefferson's soundbite, 'A nation which trades its independence for economic advantage deserves to lose both.'

But the approach overlooks that even if there was an economic case for a giant EUrope it would still be wrong, wrong and wrong again to support it. Wrong in terms of liberty, wrong in terms of democracy and wrong in its impact on the vital questions relating to the way it is endangering our environmental destiny. Most

people in any case do not understand abstruse economic arguments and are just not interested. The real focus of opposition needs to stem from a recognition of the extent to which our present national governments are too large and too centralised. For that is the reason why the EUroplot was able to be promoted in the first place. Hence opposition to EUrope is pointless if it is concerned simply to return to the *status quo ante*, for it is precisely that status which was such a fertile seedbed for the EUrope adventure in the first place, so that such opposition needs to go hand-in-hand with the determination to scale down central forms of government to a level which people really can control and where participation becomes meaningful so that abuses of power such as the EUroplot become out of the question altogether.

What is the meaning of democracy, freedom, human dignity, standard of living, self realisation, fulfillment? Is it a matter of goods or of people? Of course it is a matter of people. But people can be themselves only in small comprehensible groups. Therefore we must learn to think in terms of an articulated structure that can cope with a multiplicity of small-scale units. If economic thinking cannot grasp this it is useless. If it cannot get beyond its vast abstractions, the national income, the rate of growth, capital/output ratio, input-output analysis, labour mobility, capital accumulation; if it cannot get beyond all this and make contact with the human realities of poverty, frustration, alienation, despair, breakdown, crime, escapism, stress, congestion, ugliness and spiritual death, then let us scrap economics and start afresh.

E.F. Schumacher

Small is Beautiful

ENERGY WARS

William Shepherd

The author is a regular contributor to Fourth World Review. In 1989 he published The Rise & Fall of The Swedish Green Party (1982-1997). This article is a sequel to Energy: a long wave perspective read to a meeting of Eastern Economists in Philadelphia in 1981 while the author was working with Jay Forrester's System Dynamics group at the MIT Sloan School.

DEEP in the heart of Texas, a small arrogant clique of ailing cold-war gladiators is busy fighting the last energy war, working to a master plan drawn up decades ago by America's military-industrial complex.

Their intention is to secure for America the world's dwindling oil supplies by ring-fencing the last remaining oil fields with American military bases. As the only fields that really matter are in the Middle East the USA is aided and abetted by Israel and its Jewish diaspora... or at least the Zionist wing of it. This is a marriage of convenience that will last just as long as it is politically correct for the American Mid-West to believe that good old farm boys from Kansas will be happy defending Jewish settlements in Palestine. Europhiles suffer from similar illusions in believing that the Galway militia will roll out of the pubs and volunteer as cannon fodder when Karelian tanks roll into Estonia.

Meanwhile at the rotten heart of Europe there are still bureaucrats so bedazzled by the lure of a centralised energy supply system for Fortress Europe that they continue to push a 50-year-old technology already decades past its promised sell-by date. No

sane person believes that space heating at a hundred degrees can be sensibly supplied by boiling a super-charged kettle to the sort of temperatures best left 93 million miles away at the centre of the sun. Indeed, as early as 1923 John Burden Sanderson Haldane remarked that 'on thermodynamical grounds which I can hardly summarise shortly, I do not much believe in the commercial possibility of induced radio-activity...'

But that is only half of it. Fritz Schumacher was never one to mince words when it came to nuclear power. In his 1967 Des Voeux Memorial Lecture (see chapter nine of *Small is Beautiful* for the full text) he had this to say: 'No degree of prosperity could justify the accumulation of large amounts of highly toxic substances which nobody knows how to make "safe" and which remain an incalculable danger to the whole of creation for historical or even geological ages.

'To do such a thing is a transgression against life itself, a transgression infinitely more serious than any crime ever perpetrated by man. The idea that a civilisation could sustain itself on the basis of such a transgression is an ethical, spiritual and

metaphysical monstrosity. It means conducting the economic affairs of man as if people really did not matter at all.'

New Kids On The Block

In the last couple of decades a third set of players has started muscling in on this special relationship. These are the well-intentioned reformers from green parties around the world, vociferously supported by the woolly-minded fringes of the global alternative movement who believe that a United Nations-led coalition of right-thinking non-governmental organisations can grab the reins of our emerging One World Government and impose upon ordinary people the type of regime that Aidan Rankin in *The Politics of The Forked Tongue* refers to as 'authoritarian liberalism'.

These noble souls truly believe that a planetary paradise will arise some day from the ashes of the fossil fuel age if they impose their version of Earth Summit and Kyoto Agreements on intransigent transnational corporations, reverse the clauses in the World Trade Organisation statutes and ban the burning of coal, oil and natural gas in cars, homes and businesses. They have a dream in which our hills are alive with the sound of windmills and fields are full to overflowing with fuel crops instead of opium poppies. To find out all there is to know about this Third Energy Way you could do worse than struggle through the europose in Hermann Scheer's compendium on *The Solar Economy*, translated from the German original, penned three years ago.

But recently a fourth set of players has started gearing up to launch itself upon an unsuspecting world. So unsuspecting, in fact, that despite privileged access to leading-edge research as a member of the Deutsche

Bundestag, Hermann Scheer, the President of the European Association for Renewable Energy and General Chairman of the World Council of Renewable Energy, as recently as 1999 regarded the hydrogen fuel cell technology at the heart of the proposed new energy infrastructure to be no more than a rather inefficient way to store wind farm electricity surpluses. This may now have changed as there is clearly big money behind Jeremy Rifkin's ambitious attempt in *The Hydrogen Economy* to demonstrate that the reverse is the case. Rifkin believes that hydrogen will be at the heart of the future energy economy and that solar energy will be just one of several poor relations.

In clearing the ground for his sales pitch, Rifkin does a first-rate job of pointing out the reasons that the oil and nuclear emperors have no clothes. And in doing so he also exposes the ignorance and arrogance of the Texan oil barons and provides powerful insights into the outmoded thought patterns pervading what Dwight Eisenhower once called, with strong misgiving, his military-industrial complex. Edgy in the knowledge that al-Qaeda is not the vast mysterious and formidable spectre, fiendishly capable, fabulously rich and incredible cunning, portrayed by their political paymasters, America's military planners twitch nervously in the certain knowledge that they will soon be fighting the wrong war in the wrong place against the wrong enemy. Meanwhile America's vast army of military contractors rampage through the global economy, punch-drunk from the massive budget increases nodded through the American Congress with hardly a dissenting voice after the dramatic events of September 11th 2001 and the subsequent

puffing up of al-Quaida and the invention of the Osama bin Laden legend. Here is the provenance of Rifkin's proposals.

Energy Chemistry

In 1874 Jules Verne published *Mysterious Island* in which he gave voice to Rifkin's seemingly quirky notion of a hydrogen economy. 'Water,' he wrote, 'will be the coal of the future.' Within a few decades the Stanley Steamer was a familiar sight on the bridges of New England, refuelling from the streams running down the mountainsides. For several years these cars were serious competitors to their more complicated rivals with their explosion motors and sparse network of fuel suppliers. But Jules Verne meant something quite different. 'When America runs out of coal,' he wrote, 'water is what they will burn instead. Water decomposed into its primitive elements, and decomposed doubtless by electricity, which will then have become a powerful and manageable force. Water will one day be employed as fuel, that hydrogen and oxygen which constitutes it, used singly or together, will furnish an inexhaustible source of heat and light, of an intensity of which coal is not capable.'

Fifty years later, in 1923, J. B. S. Haldane continued the same thoughts in a lecture at Cambridge University. This is Rifkin's version of what he had to say: 'In four centuries, Britain's energy requirements would be met by rows of metallic windmills working electric motors which in their turn supply current at a very high voltage to giant electric mains. At suitable distances there will be great power stations where during windy weather the surplus power will be used for the electrolytic decomposition of water into oxygen and hydrogen. These

gases will be liquefied and stored in vast vacuum jacketed reservoirs probably sunk in the ground ... In times of calm the gases will be recombined in explosion motors working dynamos which produce electrical energy once more, or probably in oxidation cells ... These huge reservoirs of liquefied gases will enable wind energy to be stored so that it can be expended for industry, transportation, heating and lighting as desired...'

For Haldane, chemistry was the key. When trees are stripped from the hillsides of the third world and the charcoal used for heating and cooking (one of the most efficient methods of soil erosion yet devised by man) Nature gives up ten carbon atoms for each hydrogen atom. When coal is burnt just two carbon atoms go up in smoke with each hydrogen atom. With oil, decarbonisation goes further and reverses the hydrogen:carbon ratio from 1:2 for coal to 2:1 for oil. Natural gas takes this still further with four hydrogen atoms for every carbon atom. So what the world has been doing over the past two hundred years, Rifkin argues, is to deliver more and more energy with less and less carbon. The sensible way forward is to carry on down this road and go hell for leather for a full hydrogen economy.

Over the past few years this view has been steadily winning adherents in the boardrooms of the banks and the automobile companies. In their version of our hydrogen future the good citizen's civic duty will be to drive around the block for a couple of hours after work every night to charge up the global energy grid. No wonder the car makers love the idea. The PR hype will be coming to your Sunday supplements shortly. Rifkin's recent appear-

ances in *The Guardian* should be seen as the opening salvo in a global war for control of these emerging global energy grids. But there is some sound evidence for his claims.

Small is Visible

Iceland, with a population of a quarter of a million souls, is a tenth the size of Wales but has the political independence that allows her to have some say in her energy future. She is already gung-ho for the Rifkin option. Within 20 years Iceland will have virtually eliminated fossil-fuel energy from the country and be running the entire economy on hydrogen. The plan is to first convert the country's fleet of cars, buses, trucks and trawlers to hydrogen and then use hydrogen to generate electricity and provide heat, light and power for factories, offices and homes.

Behind this transformation of the country's energy infrastructure is Iceland New Energy, the type of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) much beloved by New Labour and by the governmental participants in the recent Earth Summit. This particular PFI is a joint venture between Royal Dutch Shell, Daimler-Chrysler and Norsk Hydro, who have gone into partnership with six Icelandic participants: The Reykjanes Geothermal Power Plant, The Reykjavik Municipal Power Company, a fertiliser plant, the University of Iceland, the Iceland Research Institute, and the New Business Venture Fund. The Icelandic participants control 51.01% of the venture. 'Well,' as *Private Eye* is wont to say, 'that's alright then!'

But unfortunately what this all comes down to is a choice between the lesser of four evils with each one being pushed by a different cabal of wealth- and power-grub-

bing global interests. Is there a fifth option that might allow us to say none of the above? I think there is, because whichever way the global cabals dodge and weave, they cannot get away from Nature's truth which is that as much energy arrives at the Earth from the sun in 40 minutes as the planet uses in a year. Haldane was making a similar point when remarking that '...if a windmill in one's back garden could produce a hundredweight of coal daily (and it can produce its equivalent in energy), our coalmines would be shut down to-morrow'.

Energy is not a scarce resource and never will be. The energy problem, like the water problem, is to get the right amount in the right place at the right time and in the right form. And virtually everything that needs to be said about the right form of energy was said by Avory Lovins in *Soft Energy Paths* 50 years ago and is embedded in the concept of energy quality. The real political struggle is always between interests and locality, but where energy is concerned the gods have thrown their weight on the side of locality. Local energy catchment has enormous economic advantages over any piping system the monopolists might come up with.

Energy Morphology

But energy is more than just an energy problem. The American economist Ralph Borsodi was one of the first to really come to grips with the issue. He discovered in his lifelong experiments into the economic essence of the good life that the one thing that invariably made everything go to hell in a handcart was for the little individual to connect up to the market. It made very little difference whether this market was local,

regional or global. In the long run the market itself was always bad news and 'Production For Use' was the only sane response. In the depression years in the United States many families responded to Borsodi's lead by turning their backs on the high life and heading for the good life back on the land.

Borsodi's underlying message has been lost but others have come along since the 1930s with different personal discoveries but much the same message. John Seymour has spent a lifetime understanding the nature of real wealth and this is why he believes fervently in his ideas of self-sufficiency.

John Papworth has spent a lifetime knocking his head against the brick walls built by the political intrigues of the rich and powerful and this is why he is convinced that competent receivers of power and wealth must be locality-based instead of being at the mercy and whim of outside interests. Sooner or later local people must grab what is theirs. The place people live is their home and it is theirs to do with as they wish. But to be able to, they must create democratic local institutions that are robust enough to ensure that the nexus of power never disappears over the brow of the hill. The natural limit is the parish boundary and the blood cells of a sane civilisation are its villages and urban parishes. Beyond these limits moral forces can no longer call to account the ways of the wealthy and powerful.

Fritz Schumacher also saw clearly what was needed and this was why he devoted so much of his time and energy to practical ideas like the Intermediate Technology Group, the Soil Association and the Scott Bader Commonwealth, decades before their natural gestation rates would otherwise

have placed them on the reformer's agenda. And it was not just casual editing in Part II of Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* that placed education as the first of all the resources. Hierarchies mattered to Schumacher for he knew that if they were not rightly set then it would not be long before the tail was wagging the dog. Of course industry had a need for resources and for energy resources in particular because 'if energy fails, everything fails'. But after education came land. And by land, Schumacher meant proper farming on good soil and with sound animal husbandry. Such esoteric notions as harvesting wind and growing barleycorn to feed society's mobility cravings had no part in Schumacher's thoughts on the subject.

But the ideas that will ultimately transform our local worlds lie deeper than any of their practical manifestations. One such idea is hidden deep inside Leopold Kohr's writings. Ivan Illich has grasped the quintessential essence of Kohr and has given it the name of social morphology. Here is Illich in his E.F. Schumacher Lectures at Yale University in 1994: 'I see Kohr as the one social thinker who picks up the biological morphology of D'Arcy Thompson and J.B.S. Haldane ... Kohr discusses society in analogy to the way plants and animals are shaped by their size and sized by their shape ... Kohr's thought resists reduction to any scenario of the future ... nor is it oriented towards progress ... rather he enquires into the form that fits the size...' Our energy requirements should take a certain form.

We need to think these things through much more carefully before rushing off after the latest brand of snake oil on the market. ■

FORUM

SATAN'S OFFER

I VERY much appreciated your vigorous criticism of George Cox (The Case for Globalisation, *FWR* 117). When Christ refused Satan's offer global capitalism was waiting in the wings to take it up.

Alan Turner

Pen Arth, Pennant, Llanon, Ceredigion, SY23 5JP

NOTICED?

I AM really pleased to have your small but valuable and very special publication here in our public library and wonder if it is going to be noticed.

Steffen Lindig

Schweizerisches Sozialarchiv,

Stadelhoferstr. 12, 8001 Zürich, Switzerland

TOUGH TALK

THERE is no case for an English parliament, which has recently been proposed by



the founders of the new political party The English Democrats.

The regionalisation of England is necessary because, in the main, it is a population issue. Excluding Scotland and Wales the English population is approximately 50 million. To reduce this number by a division of England into six autonomous regions (Northumbria, Mercia, Wessex, East Anglia, Southeast Anglia, Cornwall), directly responsible for their own proportion of humanity, in every field of endeavour, brings that onerous figure for such a small country down to more manageable levels.

Being politically autonomous, the logical next step is to withdraw the House of Commons' members back to their constituencies and to be responsible only to their regional authority.

Scottish and Welsh members of the Commons should have been withdrawn to

their constituencies immediately those regional assemblies were created.

For the benefit of your American readers here is a five region proposal for your centralised Goliath: The Far West, Mid West, Texas, South East, North East. The House of Representatives should be the meeting place of a 'Confederation of Regions'. The Senate, to the Museum Circuit.

Graham Walker

*'Wellington', Ryelands Road, Leominster,
Herefordshire HR6 8NZ*

THE SOHAN CO-OPERATIVE

IN THE early days after the struggle for Indian independence, a group of people who had been involved in the freedom movement began to look ahead. They eventually decided to assist craftsmen and women in working in many different states to continue using their traditional regional skills in designing and making textiles by hand. Prabhaven Shah, a founder member of this group, spoke of the formation of their consumer co-operative called the Sohan Sahakari Sangh Ltd.

The organisation is sensitive to the needs of the craftsperson, paying appropriate rates which give a fair return for labour but are not so high as to unbalance the local economy. Supplies are limited to what is available in the shop, or displayed at exhibitions, because the co-operative does not order quantities of one particular design. It realises that repetition is tedious for the hand crafter and deprives him or her of the opportunity to vary the design or create a new one.

A foreign textile buyer saw a small decorative piece of cloth which had been woven by an Adivasi for his own use; the buyer asked its price, and after some consideration – because the Adivasi had not

sold his cloth before – a small sum was mentioned. Pleased by this, the buyer said he would order a large quantity and asked the cost per item but to his surprise the second time the Adivasi quoted a much higher figure per item. The buyer indicated that this was not the usual practice and asked why the man was asking for a much greater sum. The Adivasi replied that after making such a large number of identical pieces of cloth he would have to be taken to Ranchi (where there is a mental institution) and that sum of money would be needed to provide care for his family. The buyer was then further enlightened by being freely presented with the piece of cloth.

A strong faith in the will and ability of the people of rural India to resist the destruction of their traditional systems, over time underpins the work of Sohan; this process, it was said, will be facilitated by political decentralisation – gram panchayat.

Barbara Panvel

*5 Pear Tree Grove, Solihull,
West Midlands B90 1LL*

DIFFERENT?

I AM AFRAID that I am too committed to arrange a colloquium on the topic of the human scale of the political order. As you know I did one with Liberty Fund a couple of years ago. But I will keep it in mind for another occasion. The main problem is funding. I have founded the Abbeville Institute which will explore the question of human scale, centralisation and secession in the context of the Southern tradition. The failure to allow peaceful secession in 1861 was a disaster for those whose souls are attuned to a decentralist view of things. A million and a half were killed, went missing or were wounded merely to create a unitary

state to carry our Lincoln's policy of a central bank, subsidies for big business, and a protective tariff. The central government had a perfect alibi for this murder: emancipating slaves. Most of the great centralisations in modern times – including the EU – have been under the banner of human rights, freedom or emancipation. The history of the US, however, reveals a quite different picture. Subverting the legitimating history of the Union will go far in legitimating decentralist ideas in the US. Had there been no vast-scale unitary American state, the twentieth century might have been quite different. Would there have been an EU?

Prof. Donald Livingston

478 Burlington Rd, Atlanta, GA 30307, USA

PURLOINING!

IN my previous letter I said that I did not wish to subscribe to *Fourth World Review* as I had access to it via the internet. I realise, with great regret, that my comment might have stung, as hard-working publishers must feel cheated by this form of purloining. I recently downloaded a set of past issues and enclose a further £5 to help with the costs of the printed versions.

Nigel Cartwright

*12 North Close, Wade Court, Havant,
Hants PO9 2TE*

ACT

VIEWS of the world – part I: Humans playing at being gods? Or... Humans in the grip of 'games' of their own creation which they are unable to escape from – the money game particularly, closely followed by the corporations and 'Whitehall-style' democracy. All a licence to plunder, a licence for a cushioned 'winner takes all' arrangement covering the entire planet. Our cultures of

the 21st century are the ultimate predatory life forms, highly damaging to life on earth.

Views of the world – part II: None of this is news to those with eyes and ears and half a brain. We look out in our millions at the mayhem and misery arising from our foolish game here – knowing it will get much worse before it gets better (if indeed it ever does). With knowledge aplenty to enrich life on earth, we make no pretext to understand just how. We make no effort big enough to kick the traces of the game we find ourselves playing.

Views of the world – part III: Just 'how' is the question. Just 'how' is the elusive and all embracing 'how' which dogged humankind through the centuries. We can all see the follies of today yet we seem powerless to change them. Is it bigness that is the problem? Is it leadership? Is it 'government'? Is it a religious problem? Is education simply replicating the problems? Are we caught up in a crazy system of money which has become a cancerous monster?

Views of the world – part IV: Lost inside the big picture are a million little ones. Husbands and wives arguing and fighting. Families at war with themselves. Communities and neighbours without joy. Slums and shanty towns where hunger and poverty are the daily norm. Crime and war that never stop stalking the illusions of civilisation. Oceans poisoned, species driven to extinction, children starving. Pious hopes and wordy exhortations will change none of these.

And our future discomfort and damage to the planet? Is it a crime of the practical – a failure of the 'how to' or is it a crime of the spirit – a failure of the love of life and wonder of the unknown?

Well all the analysis in the world won't necessarily change the march of events –

and maybe the story has to just unravel in its own colourful way. Maybe it is in the doing that changes can be made. Maybe we should be thinking less about where we want to go and thinking rather more about how we are going about getting there? Maybe even talking about what is going on is simply idle mental masturbation – a pile of verbal froth that changes nothing except the supply of newsprint. BUT... and here's the strange thing... ideas are more capable of changing things than bulldozers or even nuclear bombs. And, as we all know, there is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come. One thing is for sure – words alone will change nothing, if we do not like what we are witnessing or living then we must act to change it. Asking others to change, however eloquently, is just passing the buck. The challenge is there and we can make a beginning by changing the way we live our own lives.

William Sutherland

Killowen, New Ross, Co. Wexford, Eire

IMPORTANT

I AM NOT sure how best to send a subscription, and how much to send to cover my subscription to the US. I find *Fourth World Review* to be great and important, and do not want to stop receiving it.

Neil Berman

53 Vernon St, Somerville, MA 02145, USA

TRANSLATION

I DID NOT write before because I could not afford the postage. I have translated the article on Havana Harvest (FWR No.) into Hungarian and am also leafletting it.

Toma Sik

*Pf. 653, H-1243 Budapest,
Carpathian-Basin, Hungary*

LOCAL PAPERS

PLEASE find herewith international postal coupons toward a subscription to the review, which is a pathfinder for us 4 people. We all enjoy the articles, and at times republish them in local papers in the local language.

M. B. Nisal

44/A, Gokul Peth, Nagpur – 440010, India

STRATEGY

I BELIEVE that one of the most important current tasks in the pursuit of global peace and harmony and a dignified life for all is the liberation of money and finance from monopoly control. As that liberation process proceeds, the practice of usury will wither away.

My own efforts on the monetary and financial front are generally oriented toward designing and promoting transcendent private initiatives, rather than seeking reform through political channels. The general strategy is to make use of whatever leeway exists to circumvent the 'toll gates' through which we are led by established institutions. I believe that actions must be taken simultaneously at all levels, from the local, to the regional, national, and global, and they must involve varied constituencies. As circumstances change and opportunities present themselves, efforts can be directed toward extending the implementation of private voluntary exchange alternatives by individuals and businesses at the grassroots community level, by business associations at all levels, and even by governments at the municipal and provincial levels.

My latest book, *Money: Understanding and Creating Alternatives to Legal Tender*, describes much of what has been done in all

of these realms over the past 20 years, but more importantly, it lays out the principles and processes by which these efforts can be effectively extended, and offers several specific designs.

In my research into money, banking, and finance, extending over half a lifetime, I have discovered a great body of insightful work that provides the kind of direction we so badly need at this time. Most of this work comes out of what has been called the 'free money and free banking' school of thought. This is the 'mother lode' from which the richest ideas can be drawn. I am eager to find colleagues who will work with me on collecting, refining and promulgating the best approaches to free exchange and equitable finance. Fortunately, much of the work of discovery and mapping has already been done by master archivist John Zube and others.

Thomas H. Greco

PO Box 42663, Tucson, AR 85733, USA

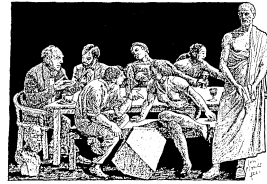
BASQUE SUPPORT

SPAIN'S BASQUE National Party is supporting the Silesian Autonomy Movement (RAS) in its bid to promote the idea of political and economic autonomy for Silesia (southern Poland) in the ongoing local election campaign in Poland. The RAS fielded some 200 candidates in Silesian and Opole provinces for the 27 October local election. According to the RAS website (www.raslaska.org/ras/index2e.htm), the movement's long-term political objective is the 'creation of Lower and Upper Silesian autonomous regions, within their historical borders'.

Bartłomiej Swiderek

Ul. Paderewskiego 9219, 44-105 Gliwice, Poland

The London Academic Inn



**Dinner Discussion
Wednesday December 4TH**

DR COLIN TUDGE

Author, broadcaster and science writer

Ruskin and the Ecology Movement

6.30pm for 7.00pm.

Admission £25 (including dinner and advance copy of the discussion paper)

**New Cavendish Club,
44 Great Cumberland Place,
London W1 (Marble Arch Tube)**

I require tickets for the December meeting and enclose £.....

Name:

Address

.....

.....

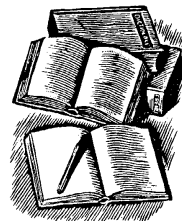
Tel. no.

Please send to: P.O.Box 36, Rye, Sussex TN31 7ZE. Cheques: The Academic Inn.


24-hour credit card line: 01797 229631; tel/fax orders to 01797 226397

Further details: www.cesc.net/academicinn

BOOKS



FIVE HOLOCAUSTS, by Derek J. Wilson. STEELE ROBERTS LTD, 2001. ISBN 1-877228-41-9.

 Reviewed by John Robinson

The author's 'five holocausts' are war and militarism; human oppression; economic destitution; overpopulation; and ecological/environmental destruction. Each is dealt with in depth in this thorough survey.

President Bush beats loudly on the drums of war. Obscene profits are still generated from military spending in the USA, and arms continue to flow to repressive regimes in poverty-stricken countries.

The global economic order which has resulted in widespread economic destitution – and the widening gap between rich and poor – is effectively ruled by a *de facto* government. Wilson writes: 'In the world-wide form in which economics has developed – for there are now no rational or irrational boundaries – this is a new phenomenon peculiar to the late 20th century. Nations have lost their sovereignty and governments their control to an exceptionally powerful and covert, self-elected and


self-serving behemoth at the top of which sit the world's leading banking empires and the transnational corporations (TNCs).'

The call is to recognise 'our common future' (the title of a report by the United Nations 'World Commission on Environment and Development' chaired by Gro Bruntland) and to move to 'sustainable development'. Perhaps the most difficult task will be to come to terms with the 'global imperialism' of the United States of America and the control of the 'global corporation'. Wilson comments: 'We have ignored Chief Seattle's eloquent warning' (quoted in full in the book) which expresses a love for the land which is shared by most of us. 'When the last red man has vanished from the Earth, and his memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, those shores and forests will still hold the spirits of my people. For they love this Earth as the newborn loves its mother's heartbeat. So if we sell you our land, love it as we've cared for it. Hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you take it. And with all your

strength, with all your mind, with all your heart, preserve it for your children and love it... as God loves us all.'

Those in government and business must come to recognise that each and every organisation will act above all to protect its own interests. And those interests often conflict with those of others – including the poor and powerless – and may conflict with a need to protect and nurture the environment which we now have the collective capacity to destroy. Power should be accompanied by a sense of responsibility. The efforts of Derek Wilson and others like him will be wasted if they are not followed through by a well-funded independent effort to explore these matters in detail and to describe the implications for each country free from the straightjackets of the demands of growth-orientated business or short-term political parties.

THE BREAKDOWN OF NATIONS, by *Leopold Kohr*. GREEN BOOKS, in association with New European Publications, 2001. £9.95. ISBN 1-870098-98-6.

 *Reviewed by Aidan Rankin*

A small-state world would not only solve the problems of social brutality and war; it would solve the equally terrible problems of oppression and tyranny. It would solve all problems arising from power. Indeed there is no misery on earth that cannot be successfully handled on a small scale as, conversely, there is no misery on earth that can be handled except on a small scale. In vastness, everything crumbles, even the good, because, as will increasingly become evident, the world's one and only problem is not wickedness but bigness; and not the thing that is big, whatever it may be, but the bigness itself. This is why nothing can be

solved through union or unification, which enlarges bulk and size and power. On the contrary, the possibility of finding solutions recedes in the ratio at which the process of union advances. Yet all our collectivised and collectivising efforts seem to be directed towards this one fantastic goal – unification. Which, of course, is a solution, too. The solution of spontaneous collapse.

The solution Leopold Kohr proposes for the problems of over-government sounds refreshingly simple. It has about it the refreshing clarity of Rousseau, but without the neurotic sentimentalism to which the Genevan thinker often fell prey. Like Rousseau, Kohr is concerned with reconciling with the demands of civil society the natural impulses of human beings: loyalty and territoriality as well as tolerance and exploration, a sense of community and order as well as a need for individual liberty. Kohr's conclusion is that the larger the state, the more complex and less soluble its problems become.

This view of the state also resembles Rousseau, who distrusted large-scale states and centralised authority, preferring small or medium-sized communities where consensus could prevail. However, for Kohr the small state should not aim for homogeneity. It should, like ancient Athens at its best, be an arena for free discussion and the interplay of ideas. Indeed, far from being inward looking or narrow as in the caricatures propounded by big government 'liberals', Kohr's small state provides the best guarantee of diversity and variety, be it in politics, economics or education. Large states, by contrast, tend to develop tyrannical characteristics. They impose absolutist legislation that ignores individual and local needs and they value conformity above

idiosyncrasy. Large states pass too many laws and hand down too many court rulings. The intention of these might be benevolent, but in practice they cannot work because they are by their very nature inflexible.

In the 1960s and early seventies, the theme of 'living within limits' was one of the ecological movement's defining features. The pioneers of the modern green sensibility were adamant that there were limits to growth, both in economics and in the role of government. E.F. Schumacher's *Small is Beautiful* was in large part the application of Kohr's ideas to the economic sphere. In 1969, Edward Goldsmith spoke in *Blueprint for Survival* of the nascent movement's goal as 'a society made up of decentralised, self-sufficient communities, in which people work near their homes [and] have the opportunity of governing themselves'. This was entirely compatible with Kohr's idea of the small state, as was Mahatma Gandhi's vision of *swadeshi*, or 'home economy', based on self-governing village communities, small businesses and traditional craftsmanship, in opposition to developmentalism imposed from above and the worship of technology for its own sake.

Ecologists have placed less emphasis on limits as their political wing has turned further towards the big government left, with pro-bureaucratic, pro-growth policies presented in green wrapping paper. However, the idea of limits was applied to modern politics by Kohr ten years before the green pioneers. He drew upon a decentralist tradition in Western political thought that has challenged, and sometimes successfully fought off, the rival tendencies to expansion and grand design. Aristotle belonged to this tradition because of his belief in equitable,

enforceable laws and the role of custom and tradition in ensuring good government. Warning his fellow Greeks against expansionism, he argued that there are natural limits to the size of states, just as there are to plants and animals.

Kohr applies this theory of Aristotle to modern times in what might best be called political ecology. As well as the Greek city states, he takes as his models the Medieval and Renaissance principalities of Central Europe and Italy. At that time, there was not only a greater cultural diversity, but also (ironically) a greater sense of what it meant to be 'European'. Influenced by Kohr, Sir Richard Body takes up this idea in *Europe of Many Circles* and its sequel, *The Breakdown of Europe*, a profoundly optimistic book, despite its title. Body contrasts the architectural variety of the European Renaissance with the dehumanising car-buncles of the European Union's bureaucracy. The first represent vitality and organic cultural evolution, the second abstract blueprints and a deracinated 'official culture' imposed from above. Kohr also draws inspiration from the cantonal systems of present day Switzerland, participatory and democratic yet traditional in origin and respectful of local need.


There can be many problems with small states: small is not necessarily beautiful, as John Papworth constantly reminds students of Schumacher. Kohr was aware of such problems, but he argued that in communities of limited size, there is a greater possibility of reconciliation, good government and freedom. Evidence for this can be found in many areas: the peace and stability of much of small-town America, in comparison to the oversized cities; the freedom and variety of Danish education, in comparison

the Britain's monolithic 'National Curriculum' and educational factories; the success of Switzerland in reconciling four language groups. To the surprise of many, Communism can also 'work' in a small-scale setting. One of India's best-governed, most successful states is Marxist-ruled Kerala.

Kohr's book was first published in 1957. His ideas would have had value then, as the European Community was taking shape and the process of decolonisation was underway. Today, they provide a still more timely warning against the development of superstates, the push for uniformity that does not create true unity but – as we saw with the USSR and Yugoslavia – will almost inevitably fall apart. The forewords by a man of the left, Neal Ascherson, and a Tory politician, Richard Body, point us towards another aspect of Kohr. He is radical because he is conservative and conservative because he is radical. As such, he transcends the left/right division that has sterilised modern politics.

With acknowledgements to The Salisbury Review.

THE LESSONS OF TERROR, by Caleb Carr. LITTLE, BROWN, 2002. £10.99. ISBN 0-316-860794.

 *Reviewed by Roger Franklin*

I started to read this book, written by a military historian and novelist from New York, in the hope that it might shed some new light on the events of September 11 and show what we might learn from what happened. Could he suggest plausible ways in which a recurrence might be prevented, for the sake of the environment and all who suffer, presumably unnecessarily?

Writing as he does, from an American viewpoint, it is perhaps understandable that

he thinks that victory will come to his own country in the end. 'The US is the only true military superpower, propagating "Western values".' Even if it is accepted that this is so, how long will this situation last? How dependent is it on the continuing strength of the Wall Street stock market? What if by some chance the American leadership is the first to receive a serious unexpected setback, rather than the Iraqi leadership, or that of the multifarious terrorist organisations around the world? Caleb Carr argues that international terrorism will prove to be self-defeating. Maybe. But what if it causes the world's cultural and economic agenda to change; would that be a defeat?

The author writes knowledgeably about American *realpolitik*, but less so about British and European perspectives. He also writes well, as one would expect of a historian, about the general history of war in recent centuries. He advocates reform of Islam, whereby there might be a reinterpretation of 'those anachronistic passages of the Koran that were so necessary to the survival of the Faith in seventh and eighth century Arabia, but that now propel men to self-defeating acts of terror against civilians'. Well, yes, but how exactly? This book does not seem able to clearly identify the answer to this most important question. He believes that 'might is right' and that a better application of advanced military technology will provide the solution from an American perspective. Buy this book if you believe this to be true, and to provide a good overview of military campaigns going back to Roman times. But if you think that the diplomatic or theological approach is the way to find a solution, then this book is probably not the one to provide an answer. ■



FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR

I WONDER HOW MANY *political* activists who still cherish the illusion that it is possible for government on a giant mass scale to be effectively democratic absorbed the significance of two incidents at the recent national conference of the Labour Party?

The first was a debate on funding the provision of schools and hospitals. The Blah government has opted to give private companies the go-ahead to build them and then rent them out to school or health boards. To this the Trade Unions and many party stalwarts are bitterly opposed, and when a vote was taken the government policy was decisively defeated. Afterwards Gordon Brown, the finance minister, declared there would be no change of policy at all. One may well wonder, why then bother to have a conference at all?

The second relates to the debate on the government's war policy towards Iraq. Speaker after speaker was called and, strange to relate, all of them spoke in favour of war. Finally one delegate made a 'point of order' in which he called attention to this disbalance and requested those opposed to the policy be heard. As a result one anti-war speaker was allowed to the rostrum. Let it be noted that this deployment and abuse of

power was not because it was a Labour Party conference, all other mass parties do it as a matter of course and as a result of Papworth's Law, 'The bigger the unit the smaller the significance of the individual member and the greater the controlling power of the centre.'

PIERRE, AS BECOMES THE ELDEST SON PERHAPS, was the first and decided to marry a very lovely Chinese lady from Hong Kong who has trained to be a lawyer. There is something superbly impressive about the language of the *Book of Common Prayer* (its Tudor author was beheaded for his trouble). It may be politically incorrect in all sorts of ways but it really does resonate, whereas attempts to update the language with contemporary verbals simply ignore that language is not a box of bricks but a living stream of collective consciousness. I wonder the same misguided folk don't attempt to modernise *A Midsummer Nights Dream* or *Hamlet*. Anyway I was glad Pierre and Grace chose it for their ceremony in our village church. A goodly company came from far and wide, the bride's parents flew in from the far side of the globe and graced the event in traditional Chinese robes and helped to sign the registers. Pierre's friends,

whom I usually see in jeans and T-shirts, were suddenly spruce and correct in grey morning coats and afterwards everyone repaired to a reception in a huge marquee on my lawn. Band, bouquets, bar, buffet, the lot, you may say, making me realise that weddings are not only religious ceremonies but elaborate social ones too. Pierre now lives with Grace in Hong Kong, but with the economy on a major down job prospects are not easy.

THEN MARIE HAD A WEDDING, her very own. She married Andrew, a really decent chap who runs a wine shop in the city. Very convenient, you might say. The church was my old stamping ground of St Mark's in Hamilton Terrace where the vicar (*in absentia*) kindly allowed me to assist the ceremony. I was assisting a bearded priest from All Saints Margaret Street, the High Church of All High Churches in the Anglican Communion. He is obviously destined for the episcopate. Before and after the ceremony our conversation was punctuated by long, discreet silences, but not mine. Perhaps it is part of episcopal training. I sometimes think the Anglican Church is submerging itself in these discreet silences. But still, if you have nothing to say perhaps it is just as well to say nothing. Never mind, he conducted the ceremony superbly, made us all feel that it had been exclusively formulated for the bridal pair. Believe it or not, but contrary to all tradition and legend, the bride arrived at the church door with absolutely royal punctuality, as well she might, for she looked absolutely, stunningly, radiantly regal. It seemed utterly incredible that she was my very own daughter, although my happiness was tinged all through that

deeply moving ceremony with the sadness that her mother, a cancer fatality four years ago, was not present to share our joy.

For some reason we sang *I Vow to Thee My Country*, despite its somewhat blasphemous first verse, albeit redeemed by the second. Owing to the peculiar acoustics of this Victorian church we, the bridal pair and the two clerics at the high altar, with the organ right at the other end, were singing half a line ahead of the congregation, inducing a fit of the giggles in the bride.

Then a reception at the Foreign Press Association in Pall Mall. I am not much of a drinking man and after a couple of flutes of champagne I took temporary refuge in a coffee bar near Piccadilly Circus. When I rejoined the company, John-David, my now only unmarried one, told me to stand at the top of an ornate flight of stairs and make a speech. Well, I ask you, no dinner, only just rehabilitated with coffee into sedate society, just stand there and in cold blood make a speech. What a way to carry on. Well, I made no reference to Andrew's wine business, but I did remind him he was now my son-in-law, so I hope he took the hint.

OUR VILLAGE, with four thousand, is really a small town. It straggles lengthwise somewhat and has a lot of well marked footpaths all over the adjoining fields. Part of the pleasure of perambulating is to note the care expended on people's gardens – which are generally, even on a council housing estate, of considerable size. Some are maintained with meticulous care, with not a blade of grass out of place, as though the occupant was a retired regimental sergeant-major, whilst others seem to have been abandoned, with broken cookers, fridges or washing machines half

buried in overgrown weeds. Curiously not many grow vegetables, but those that do arouse my envy with well weeded rows of onions, cabbage, broccoli and the like, giving the appearance of the cover of a seed catalogue. At the Harvest Festival the altar was loaded with tinned foods. In one garden there is a large cage full of exotic small birds which chirp non-stop and in another are several dogs; one, in a small enclosure, barks ferociously at every passer-by – probably from sheer frustration, as well it might.

THEN THERE WAS THAT ARGUMENT (on the telephone) with Dick Body. It is not enough to argue for local democracy and local control, we have to say how we are going to get there. Well, if I am concerned about our destination I don't see why I should be expected to work out the route; it seems to me an abrogation of principle is involved here even to attempt such an exercise. If we believe people should make their own decisions, then to map out schemes of advance

for them is to repeat the current practice. We need in many respects to reject representative democracy and replace it with participatory democracy.

I HAVE RECEIVED an invitation to a private screening of an American film, *Bowling for Columbine*. The notice indicates it is seeking to discover why the American pursuit of happiness is so riddled with massive amounts of violence and asks, 'Are we a nation of gun nuts – or are we just nuts?'

FOR THE FIRST TIME in my life I have been harvesting herbs, cutting them and then drying them in my airing cupboard. So I have quantities of bay leaf, sage, oregano and rosemary. I never realised it was so easy and in the shops a jar the size of an eggcup costs a pound sterling or more. I will make presents of some at Christmas. Perhaps next year I will add other herbs to the list, grow a lot more and then market it to make some money to keep this journal going... ■

A city, as every community, must have structures which give physical expression to its identity, and at the same time provide the citizens beholding them with an emotional 'lift' that is shared by all. By their very nature, 'identity' structures must be visible to everybody from near and far. Hence, the most symbolic of them must rise high above the rooftops and the hustle of the day. Moreover, they must not be utilitarian in character such as factory chimneys or water towers whose earthbound function pulls the mind downwards, not up. Like castles on hilltops, church spires, or towers of cathedrals, they must point towards the sky, refreshing man's tired spirit by leading his eye beyond the physical limits of their confines and out of the long shadow of Earth's narrow cave, to the celestial seat of the Platonic idea of his city, where the mystic bonds are woven that tie the people together in their communities on the ground.

Leopold Kohr

Fourth World News



China has detained many of its political critics in psychiatric hospitals claiming they suffer from 'political monomania'. • A new generation of video recorders which erase the adverts could destroy commercial television, according to industry watchdogs. • Azerbaijan's breakaway region of **Nagorno-Karabakh** held 'presidential' elections, defying the international community. • 4,000 **Russian** soldiers die each year from suicides, accidents and shootings by fellow soldiers. • Coca-Cola and other such 'liquid candy' soft drinks are to be banned in all Los Angeles schools amid growing alarm over **America's** obese children. • Negotiations at the **Earth Summit** in Johannesburg broke down after the US failed to agree to a projected target date to halve the number of people living without proper sanitation and clean water. The summit is set to cost around £33 million. • The number of serious assaults on teachers by pupils in the **UK** has quadrupled in the past four years. • The vapour trails from aeroplanes across **Britain's** skies are altering the weather, making the days cooler and the nights warmer. • UK Trade and Industry Secretary Patricia Hewitt has called for a more 'democratic' economic policy where people feel they have power over the forces that affect their lives. • A new scheme to combat child obesity is being tried in five schools across the **United Kingdom**, with children forced to play sport every day. • England's 20 top performing local authorities will be given freedom to run their services with minimum interference from Whitehall, so they say. • Department stores in **Cairo** have stopped buying US branded clothing and footwear. • American firms like McDonalds and Coca-Cola have reported a 50% drop in business in **Middle Eastern** countries since a Muslim boycott began in

September 2000. • The Environment Agency is planning a strategic withdrawal from large parts of the **English** coastline as it believes it can no longer defend them against rising sea levels caused by global warming. • In some areas of **Britain** more than 40% of children are playing truant from school. The problem is not just confined to secondary school, with some primary schools reporting even higher rates. • A typical worker in their 20s who enjoys a long and successful career will still have to rely on state hand-outs in retirement. • The **EU** is set to expand further by allowing another 10 countries to join in 2004. • The United States tested chemical and biological weapons on British soil during the Cold War, according to recent declassified Pentagon documents. • **Kuwait** has pledged to fight back if it comes under attack from Iraqi forces. • According to the CIA, Saddam Hussein is unlikely to launch a chemical or biological attack unless provoked. This suggests than an attack on **Iraq** is likely to trigger the one thing President Bush is trying to prevent. • The Shibata area of **Tokyo** has devised a job creation scheme by hiring unemployed people to chase away gangs of violent monkeys. • Former Tory MP Alan Clark has disclosed in his diaries that Tony Blair's spin doctor Alistair Campbell offered him a peerage to quit the Tory Party. • Parents are increasingly using their retirement savings and taking second jobs to help pay for their children's university education. • Pictures of President Bush, Tony Blair and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi were publicly burnt in Milan as tens of thousands of people took to the streets in protest against planned American military action against Iraq. – **Sam Hains**

Fourth World News

