

Fourth World News



Suicide is the main cause of death among people aged 20–35 in China, a direct result of increasing stress in Chinese society. • School meals in UK are less nutritious than meals in South African townships, according to Jamie Oliver, a well-known chef, who is furious that the government refuses to ban junk food in schools. • There has been a sharp rise in the number of men developing female breasts. Doctors think the cause is in traces of the female contraceptive pill being found in tap water and in hormones used to promote growth in farm animals. • The UK government is setting up 400 'curfew zones' in an attempt to halt yob culture. None is being established in Whitehall to curb the British government's yob culture in Iraq. • Police brutality against Sikhs in India has become rampant and promoting a general breakdown of law in the Punjab. • Australia is building military robots to do tasks which endanger soldiers' lives. • Scientists have developed a battery which can be charged from urine to make tests for pregnancy, diabetes and heart conditions. • Russia and China have staged joint military exercises against an imaginary enemy. • Fidel Castro's offer to send 1,500 Cuban doctors to help the aftermath of the hurricane Katrina was ignored by President Bush. • Fast-food chains including McDonald's, Burger King and KFC are to be sued for not warning consumers about a potential carcinogenic created when potatoes are deep fried. • The num-

ber of sexually transmitted diseases has doubled in the last five years. • Global warming is increasing much more rapidly than formerly estimated owing to a newly revealed much bigger greenhouse effect. • A UN report declares that Norway (population 9 million) is the world's richest country. • UK universities are spending £30 million a year to provide counselling for students with depression and emotional problems. • Scientists believe the recent increase in violent hurricanes, which have doubled in number in recent decades, may be linked to global warming. • 5,000 thousand children skipped class in 2004. • Railways in the UK are to be turned into concrete bus lanes. • *The Times* newspaper has declared that 'science is defeating cancer'. • Catholic bishops are now saying that parts of the Bible are not true. • Hundreds of bird species and other wildlife are declining because of global warming and are now threatened with extinction. • Sharks are now seen in numbers off the Scottish coast. • 1 in 10,000 women have breast cancer. • 1,000 milk farmers gave up last year. • Mount Everest is 12 feet shorter than when surveyed 70 years ago. • 'Farmers For Action' a militant group, plans to withhold food supplies to supermarkets as a protest against their price policies. – SAM HAINS

Fourth
World News



FOURTH WORLD REVIEW

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



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WORD AND FLESH
Wendell Berry



KIRKPATRICK SALE
Should States Secede?

ZAC GOLDSMITH
Rural Vandalism

Editorial:
War, Money and Power

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Editorial:	War, Money and Power	3
Features:	Rural Vandalism ZAC GOLDSMITH	5
	Should States Secede? Part I KIRKPATRICK SALE	7
	Word and Flesh WENDELL BERRY	10
Forum:	Harry Mister Moyra Bremner J.M. McCluskey Robin Denniston Allan J. Phillips Paul Owens Prodipto Roy S.G. Chifwambwa Thomas Naylor Bliss Alexander Joyce Mapoma Anton Pinschof	14
Special item:	Anne Fealdman	18
Books:	The Great Abdication ALEXANDER DEANE Reviewer: John Coleman	19
	Confessions of a Radical Traditionalist JOHN MICHELL Reviewer: John Papworth	19
	The Party's Over RICHARD HEINBERG Powerdown RICHARD HEINBERG Reviewer: Patricia Knox	20
	To Blazes or Jerusalem PETER CADOGAN Reviewer: John Papworth	20
	The Road to Serfdom F.A. HAYEK Reviewer: John Papworth	21
Column:	FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR	24
Item:	FOURTH WORLD NEWS SAM HAINS	28

out such genuflections to propriety.

A long chat in the enormous marble-pillared tea room, with books lining the walls and where I spotted two bishops (purple shirts with an ornamental gold cross hanging thereon) as I ate a scone, drank tea and argued with Dick about free trade. He is all for it, but I have come to distrust sweeping economic generalisations which profess to answer human needs. He said farm subsidies were against the long-term interests of farmers, had argued as much for 40 years and now 'everybody', including Tony Blair, agrees with him. I would not have thought the concurrence of Tony Blair on anything was a sign of validity. What, I wondered, about Icelandic fishermen protecting their fish stocks from giant Japanese free-trade trawlers? Or Malaysian cane furniture makers, where the government has forbidden the export of the raw material in order to protect stocks and the home manufacturer? Dick had to go to some journalistic award ceremony in a hotel in the Strand and I accompanied him there. Actually I was filling the role of escort, for Dick, who was savagely assaulted by a gang of thugs when, as an MP, he was returning home from the House of Commons, is now badly affected with failing eyesight and I was glad to be of service when crossing the heavy traffic.

Then on to a meeting in Conway Hall of, wait for it, The Committee of 100, wanting to make decisions about its archives. The Committee of what? It was an anti-bomb group of the 50's and 60's led by Bertrand Russell and an American maverick with an agenda all of his own named Ralph Schoneman. We felt the Campaign For Nuclear Disarmament was getting nowhere with its conventional protests

against the bomb and that sitting down en masse on main roads such as around Trafalgar Square would make the Government do what we wanted. Instead of ignoring us, for as a Committee we never came near to being a hundred, and in mass societies there is never the least hope that even a significant minority will take a prolonged stand on a moral issue having no immediate pocket or stomach reverberations, the government sent a couple of dozen of us to prison for a month. We hoped our martyrdom would arouse the masses but we ended up in an open prison in the Midlands whilst the masses slept on. After a couple of days I was so bored cleaning windows already pristine and spotless, I opted out by promising good behaviour and was released along with Alex Comfort and others. It was odd sitting round a table with people I had not seen for over 40 years. I could not detect any great change in attitudes or assumptions. Nobody seemed disposed to wonder why, after all the fuss and the media focus, we had so miserably failed to make the least impact on the nuclear war danger or why, despite the way it continues to mount, it fails today to arouse a glimmer of any kind of protest. As I left I exchanged a few words with Neil Collins. who assured me he sometimes obtained a copy of *Fourth World Review* and liked it. Said he was working with an anarchist group in North London; he is a likeable chap who seems caught in some sort of time warp.

Then to a pub in Primrose Hill to dine with family and friends. Two pub meals in one day, but that's London life for you. But the food was superb, uncommonly so, and as a cook myself I took care to thank the cook as we left. ■

ble getting there. The local bus service impels a call for a taxi to Swindon. After half an hour the taxi declared they could not find one of their drivers who did not have an 'air freshener' in his taxi. In my air-force service days I learned to call this sort of thing bullshit. A recent article in *The Ecologist* described how these cards are toxic but I have long known they just make me feel unwell. Fortunately my indispensable and indefatigable aide helped out and I just made the train in time for a Chelsea pub lunch with Zac, who edits *The Ecologist*, and his Managing Editor, Harry Ram.

Apart from the non-stop talk what stays in my mind is a scene I last saw in a London jail setting lots of years ago after conviction with two dozen others for what I used to think was 'peace' action, when a man asked another chap if he could borrow a roll-up: In the pub the man at the next table, burly, with tattooed arms, was deep in talk with his girl friend, but when Zac made his request to this stranger he at once smiled and passed over his roller, cigarette papers and tobacco.

It was an uncommonly warm sultry October afternoon and I went for a walk in the hot sun along Chelsea Embankment with its fine river views, numerous very large houseboats, some two storey, (people actually live on them!) and the splendid spectacle of the fairy-tale grace of some of London's newly painted bridges.

Then a visit to Chelsea Old Church where the *Book of Common Prayer*, an Anglican speciality that the Church at large is busy shooting itself in the foot by energetically discarding as though the quality of liturgical language has no bearing on the quality of our lives, still reigns supreme. It is quite fitting that that ancient but much

restored church should be full of history and of beautiful carvings, memorials and furnishings. I left feeling glad I had taken the trouble to come. A long walk through much of residential Chelsea, all those stately dignified terraces of large six floor houses a reminder of the power and wealth of trade and of empire of bygone times. Today those houses tend to have as many bell pushes on the front door as they formerly had servants.

It reminded me my sister had been a domestic servant in one of them and one free day from my kitchen-boy job in Wentworth Golf Club I visited her. The staff gathered in the basement for its mid-afternoon dinner and I was made aware that as a very special privilege I could partake. I sat between my sister and the other maids on one side of the table, and a row of footmen sat on the other. During the course of the meal the butler boomed down from the top where he presided, to the other end, 'Cook, would you kindly request the second houseparlourmaid to request her guest not to talk so much.'

A bus to Piccadilly, a walk through Green Park amid the gold of fallen leaves on the green sward, where people lay about in the sun, past Clarence House and other fine buildings, (which help to emphasise the tawdry bleakness of so many modern ones), to meet Dick Body at The Atheneum, a marvellous noble building where real live bishops can often be seen. At the last moment I astonished a security policeman by Clarence House by suddenly remembering to extract a tie from my briefcase and putting it on. Even in this day and age of inelegance one does not pass the portals of one of London's premier clubs with-

WAR, MONEY AND POWER

ON ANY REALISTIC historical perspective the most ominous and catastrophic event of the 20th Century was, indubitably, the first world war.

In the midst of a mountainous wave of what appeared to be an exhilarating trend in social and industrial progress, one having no precedent in the annals, a group of leading nations, each with record of moral and cultural sublimity of the utmost splendour, proceeded to maul one another's vitals with a savagery and wantonness no jungle beast could hope to emulate.

Millions of young men, British, German, French, Italian and Russian, to say nothing of many others, with not the remotest personal grounds for quarrel between any of them, were herded into giant armies and drilled to murder each other with the utmost ferocity by the million.

Few towns and villages across Europe are today without memorials to this witless, barbaric sacrifice of so many young lives and every year services of commemoration are still held in their memory. It was a war which tore to shreds the fabric of civilisation in ways which are still little understood even as they continue to undermine the vitals of social progress. One of these was by undermining a dawning consciousness that the value of each single human life was

itself the necessary basis of any civilised society, and its development, when confronted with such a conflict, could not fail to be sabotaged by the contempt being expressed for its own moral cornerstone.

The disease of contempt proceeded to breed a multitude of subsidiary contagions: if millions could do nothing effective to avert or arrest such horror, what was the point of the developing consciousness of the democratic ethic? If despite the power of that ethic, men could be bamboozled into adopting behaviour their savage forbears of former ages might have felt shame to contemplate, what was the point of any moral principle?

Another contagion was that of passivity on a mass scale. If men's moral judgement could not prevail against the supreme evil of war and mass slaughter; if moral responsibility could not be exercised to stop it; what was the use of being responsible about anything relating to the social order?

The question remains, why did that war happen at all? Despite the reams of literature that has poured off the presses in many languages, the question has never seriously been considered, and remains largely unanswered. The making of modern war is intimately linked to the making of money and if ancient scripture is unambiguous in

asserting the love of money is the root of all evil, nobody, not people in high office of state, the bureaucracy, the arts or journalism, and certainly not the Church, saw fit to explore that relationship and its manifest evil effects on human destiny.

It was an Austrian professor, more than 40 years after its onset, who threw a flood of light on a confused forest of otherwise pointless speculation. The power of money and its market mechanisms was riding roughshod over the entire human adventure: within its maw was the power of the state itself masterminding the crucial fields of education and information, our social structure and services, much of the entire field of artistic endeavour and not least, in what purported to be institutions of moral guidance and leadership, our churches.

The state was out of control because money power was out of control, education and information became subordinated to the market values promoted by money, art became the catspaw of the same values, so that architecture, for example, which in the first flight of industrialisation had sought to bow to the splendours of former ages with factories and railway stations which breathed of the creative possibilities of beauty, seamliness and proportion, degenerated to becoming the handmaiden of money-ordained functionalism, prompting one observer to note it seemed to have taken four thousand years to progress from a pyramid to a box, whilst church teaching scuttled into the heady ramifications of questions of divorce, family breakdown, homosexuality, parental responsibility, single parenting and so on. It seemed (as it still does) utterly oblivious to the fact that it was not the divorcees, the single mothers or the gays the founder of the Christian faith

threw out of the temple, but the banking fraternity.

But why has this extraordinarily potent power of money achieved such predominance? Again, it was our Austrian professor who supplied at least one imperative answer. It was out of control, and it was out of control because the institutions deploying it were too big. Just that.

As a result all within its grip would develop the same degrees of excess, would establish the same norms of organisation and their attendant values because they too were out of control, they were too big to be responsive to the moral and cultural promptings of the citizenry, so that despite its ardent desires for peace, social justice and decency, that power would roll on and on regardless until the insatiable imperatives of money-power ruled triumphant.

If size itself was the governing factor the lesson to be derived from the catastrophe of World War One was of an order which the 'victor' nations might have hearkened to by proceeding not to treat the vanquished as peer-units to be 'made to pay' for the war with reparations, (Germany was, in the tabloid language of the time, 'to be squeezed until the pips squeaked'), but by restoring the sovereign powers of the numerous city states of Saxe-Coburg, Hesse, Wartemburg, Bavaria, Hanover, and others, which had been suppressed into Bismark's 'Germany'. In failing to take this crucial step they neglected to question the very existence of a Prussian dominated 'Germany'; instead they inflicted such onerous economic penalties that they formed the basis for the mass discontent which any political adventurer could exploit in the pursuit of power. In short they made bad matters worse and simply created the basis

traffic in and out that it handles, to say nothing of the number of passengers moving, made me realise it is one of the modern miracles of organisational technology. They told me my plane to Hong Kong was carrying 300 (or was it 400?) passengers. But it is only one of seven direct flights to Hong Kong each day. It is a quite insane mode of travel and of course in another 50 years (or possibly less) the whole saga will be of no more contemporary relevance than Stonehenge. So why did I go? With pollution and all that? My curiosity got the better of my moral judgement. What impact was the 21st century having on Asia? Well, I went around some parts of Asia with my mouth agape. Hong Kong was once a famous city sea port; it is now a human beehive. Millions are crammed into a tiny island. How? By building upwards, so the skyline is a continuous forest of cheek-by-jowl skyscrapers. I stayed in the 30th floor of one. To look down from a window is to see people the size of beetles thronging the streets, to look up is to crane one's neck to catch a glimpse of the sky. My apartment, one of five on the same floor, had kitchen and bathroom offices the size of postage stamps, my bedroom was just big enough to accommodate a bed. Man has not conquered space, space has conquered man. The tiny narrow streets are a honeycomb of tiny shops and one-man businesses. Whatever China is achieving in terms of giant economic activity it seems still the master of small-scale entrepreneurship. In one street I noted more bathroom fittings than one might find across most of Europe. The city teems with activity and, as so often in my travels, I found myself asking 'What is it all for?' It is of course all aimed at economic success, but it is a thrust defeating

itself because it has no moral purpose. Our human significance arises from our moral purposes; without such a rudder, and a steady hand on the tiller, we are of no more account than a spider spinning a web and we become victims of our own appetites. This is why the centuries-old achievements in art, architecture, music and so on mock us with their grandeur as we boast our transient technologies. Modern progress is not presenting man with fulfilment, merely defeat. I reflected thus as I sat in a church this morning. It is a centuries-old tall-tower structure of the most overpoweringly majestic proportions and visual impact, one such as to leave one bemused with wonder. The ritual service, however, was a parody of the building's greatness and a priest with the voice of a television cockney and of one tonally deaf effused from the pulpit to a degree of quite unbelievable banality. If we do not get a grip on the moral purpose and meaning of all this entrepreneurial activity it will only end by destroying us.

HONG KONG, I discovered, is simply a template for much of the modern outburst in Asia. In Singapore I found myself on the 36th floor of a hotel, whilst my hosts were on the 64th floor – and they were some way from the top, which ran to 84 floors. In Kuala Lumpur, now the capital of Malaysia, there was a similar forest of such structures and I gave a lecture urging we adopt human dimensions to our enterprises. There were a number of quite absorbing questions but my chairman, a stand-in man for someone on holiday, found himself enquiring, 'Instead of going to extremes of large and small, would it not be possible to settle for sizes somewhere in between?'

SPET A BUSY DAY in London after some trou-

to the empty hysterias of tabloid headlines.

Not least of the jewels of the Anglican liturgy in the sentence concerned with marriage banns: 'I publish the banns of marriage between N of – and N of – . If any of you know cause or just impediment why these two persons should not be joined together in holy Matrimony Ye are to declare it.'

A sentence beautifully balanced, diplomatic to a degree and a work of art in its own right. I recently sat in a church where the priest, for some reason, perhaps again trying to be cool, was in his shirt sleeves, rather perfunctorily announced, 'If you know any reason why this couple should not get married you should let me know.'

One reflects on what went into the colossal detail of many of our ancient village churches, never mind the sublime majesty of our great thousand-year-old cathedrals, the technological triumph of creating structures of surpassing beauty and incidentally solving numerous complex building problems and which stand steadfast for centuries to gladden the eye and to send the spirit soaring for generations.

EVERY TIME THE LATEST ISSUE of this review was mailed out I could be sure of receiving a phone call from Howard Cheney. He would proceed to berate me for my simple-minded ignorance of the fact that all our troubles were due to human nature; that a life species which could produce atomic bombs and other horrors was simply not worth worrying about; human nature was a biological pestilence and was utterly beyond redemption and there was no hope for anyone or for anything. No one could ever venture to describe him as a cheerful

presence and I sometimes wondered how Margaret managed to cope with him for so many years. I think she and their children simply learned to adapt to his forensic negativity and to take it all in their stride. Unconsciously Howard was the stuff of which totalitarians are made: he began adult life as an ardent pacifist and anti-war warrior, but with the passage of the years and a realisation that whatever he said or tried to accomplish left the world unresponsive he was convinced the fault lay not in the nature of the forces working on masses of misguided souls but in the souls themselves. If they would not agree with him and do as he wanted they were obviously fools and predestined for disaster and that was all there was to it. But despite his ferocious despair and even his own message, he never gave up trying, and perhaps he did not realise that his outpourings of pessimism had a rebound effect of making one focus on the glories, the triumphs and the potentialities of the human nature he professed so much to despise. So through all his years he continued to do what he could to promote the good cause; to attend meetings, to support organisations and to contribute generously to magazines, and not least this particular one, even as he would assure me it was all a waste of time. But he was a lovable, vital spark, crippled with arthritic pain but redoubtable to the end. It is not a scrap of use hoping his soul will rest in peace; he would be utterly miserable at the idea of any such outcome.

A FRIEND WHOSE WORK involves much global travel has accumulated lots of free airmiles, don't ask me how it works, and invited me to use some of them for a visit to the Far East. The sheer size of Heathrow and the air

for the rise of Hitler and set the stage for yet another war.

And still money-power rolls on, giant, out of control and now threatening us with global warming, industrial excess, deforestation, oceanic plundering, a population-numbers nightmare and social vandalism on a global scale, which can scarcely fail to wreck any prospect of a civilised social order.

It was a poet killed by a sniper's bullet in the final week of this epochal conflict who saw far more clearly than the assembled 'statesmen' at Versailles what would ensue:

*Now men will go content with what we spoiled
Or discontent boil bloody.
They will be swift with the swiftness of the tiger,
None will break ranks, though nations trek from progress.*

And how they trekked! And how they will go on trekking as more and more countries (global armaments trade customers) acquire ever larger stocks of ever more dangerously destructive weapons until another conflict ensues.

Or unless ordinary people across the world stop joining and supporting giant political movements they cannot possibly control, and which they can never make responsive to their moral discernments, and start instead to create genuine, decision-making power structures across the entire spectrum of political and economic matters; alternative structures locally based, in local hands and responsive to the moral leadership every small community possess in abundance when it is enabled to function and to breathe at all. ■

RURAL VANDALISM

Zac Goldsmith

The author is editor of The Ecologist.

SUPERMARKET giant Tesco's meteoric rise has almost exactly mirrored the demise of Britain's rural economy. So when Tesco announced record profits of £2 billion a few months ago, the news was met with a chorus of disapproval by most of Britain's farming organisations.

Scotland's National Farmers Union declared that the viability of Scotland's food industry was at stake and called on all political parties to make fair trade a priority, a view echoed by the NFUs of Wales

and Ulster, the National Beef Association, the Soil Association the Tenant Farmers Association and countless smaller groups.

What is obvious to these farming groups is no less obvious to Action Aid, Friends of the Earth, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Women's Institute, among many others, who joined them in their call for action.

But despite this, had you checked the National Farmers Union's website on the day following Tesco's announcement – a day that could not have provided a more

perfect opportunity for discussion about the tension between producers and retailers – you would have seen something quite different: a solitary press release describing the NFU’s display stand at the Chelsea Flower Show. ‘Set within the Flower Pavilion,’ went the cheery announcement, ‘it will feature English Meadows with a grazing topiary steer and sheep, stone walling, a running water feature...’

Given that the NFU is the single most powerful organisation purporting to represent farmers, with a whopping £20 million income, an estimated £40 million stashed away in the bank and continual access to the key decision makers, they should have been the first in line. But they weren’t. Why?

More than two-thirds of food in Britain is sold through just four supermarket chains, and individual farmers, not surprisingly, haven’t a hope of enjoying any kind of bargaining power with them. They are, as even Tony Blair has acknowledged, ‘in an armlock’. As a result, roughly 40 dairy farmers go out of business each week, and all the signs suggest the same fate for many of our remaining farms. In which case, breaking that armlock ought to be the key priority of an organisation with a mandate to represent farmers.

But if you judge the NFU by its reaction to a resolution by its own members earlier this year ‘to fully investigate and support the drafting of a new, strengthened and legally binding supermarket Code of Practice with stricter terms; and to support the appointment of an independent supermarket watchdog to proactively monitor the effectiveness of the Code...’ then it’s clear that the NFU has little intention of confronting the supermarkets.

Its official response to the resolution

begins by saying that ‘there is a belief [among many of the NFU’s members] that there is now an imbalance of power in the supply chain and that this power is being abused. Whether, and indeed how this power is being abused is open to debate.’ The report goes on to suggest a voluntary Buyers Charter in place of the requested Code of Practice.

But a voluntary charter has been attempted in the past, with zero real success. Farmers continue to be squeezed. Supermarkets continue to sell below cost. According to Derek Mead, one of the NFU’s 80 Council members, ‘the Buyers Charter is a way to reduce the heat for a strengthened Statutory Code of Conduct with an independent watchdog. The NFU should not only be signed up with the Breaking the Armlock Coalition – it should be leading the field.’

He’s right. If the NFU refuses to defend farmers against the greatest threat they face, then the NFU, with its privileged access to parliament, overflowing war chest and ability to make a real difference, will have become their enemy, not their friend. And the only explanation for that betrayal will involve cowardice and more than a little vested interest.

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FOURTH WORLD SPECTATOR



I was IN THE VESTRY preparing for a service and glanced at the page detailing the ‘readings’. There was a passage from John’s gospel and my eye alighted on a familiar sentence: ‘In my Father’s house there are many mansions...’

But that is not what I read, it said instead, ‘In my Father’s house there are many rooms...’ and I gave an involuntary gasp. The Anglican Church is afflicted with a chronic fit of the liturgical fidgets; it simply cannot leave well alone. It has been blessed with a liturgical inheritance of quite matchless grandeur and yet in a quest perhaps for ‘relevance’, perhaps for political correctness, perhaps from a desire to appear ‘cool’ and to attract more young people, it persists in fatuous attempts to bowdlerise what it ought to be safeguarding as something vital to its very existence.

The change of that single word ‘mansions’ to ‘rooms’ may be an extreme example of the fatuousness of its endeavours, but who did it? Why did they do it? And what was achieved?

The phrase has its own rhythm and the alliteration helps to lodge it effortlessly in the

mind. The alteration not only destroys both but reduces its meaning to a banality, which incidentally robs it of its real significance.

Taken *in toto* the meaning of ‘Father’s house’ quite easily enables the hearer to grasp that it is a poetic expression of God’s universe, within which the accommodation of ‘many mansions’ is seen as fully in keeping with its vast transcendent import. The early translators did a fine job in rendering the passage as they did; they trusted us to grasp as a matter of course that the world of the spirit needs particular language forms to convey understanding of transcendent verities.

Our modern translators repose in us no such trust and their substitutions have the effect of making Jesus appear to be wallowing in the prose of an estate agent’s hand-out. Perhaps the really awesome thing about these substitutions is their unconscious falsity. ‘I am the way, the truth and the life’ rings down the centuries, but attempts to slot such utterance into a modern idiom is simply to emasculate their force and to invest them with copiously vapid jargon of sociology or to reduce them

events, but its message was to triumph in ways no-one at all had foreseen.

Today, half a century or more later, we are observing the consolidation of market freedom being effected by the very socialist forces which Hayek was concerned to identify and castigate as enemies of freedom. What in fact we are witnessing is the triumph of market forces to such an extent that not only has much of Labour's 1945 programme been reversed, but in one guise or another, in the guise of 'New Labour' long established public services such as the prisons, post offices, pensions, schools, hospitals are being earmarked for 'privatisation' and even the administration of county or provincial government is now beginning to be run by private companies!

So following Hayek's argument we need to ask, with the manifest defeat of state socialism, for which we cannot be too grateful, can the ordinary person claim to be any more free? And when we look at the power of TV and the tabloids, of the power of advertising, at the power of giant super-market chains, at the increasing homogeneity of life-style these forces are accomplishing, when we perceive the extent to which the ordinary citizen is trapped in the values these forces are promoting and the pressure to conform they mount, it is safe to assert that he is less free today than at any time since the demise of serfdom.

There are several factors Hayek appears to have overlooked, such as the swollen power of the armaments industry, the swollen numbers of human lives pressing against a global menu of finite resources, the global warming and other effects of pollution caused by free markets, the crisis of oil and water supplies, the disempowerment of the citizen resulting from 'freemar-

ket' super-state schemes to unite 'Europe' and parallel measures in other continents, and not least the destruction of local community life, spirit and power which stems not simply from the enlargement of state power at the bidding of the boardroom boys, but by the elephantine enlargement of boardroom power itself across the globe to global dimensions.

Hayek's view of the world, like those of modern liberals, is essentially 19th century when market activity could still be seen as free and able to generate material benefits, if only for a tiny minority of human numbers. Today the efforts of many more of those numbers to enjoy the material benefits of such market freedom are literally destroying the world. Where are the market forces to prevent the catastrophic destruction of the rain forests? The continued decimation of living species, the collective madness of mass motoring or the monstrous poisoning of the mass mind by advertising?

It is not so much that Hayek's reasoning is out of date, despite the excellence of much of his argument, it is now irrelevant. However essential to liberty small-scale market freedom may be, on the giant scale on which it now operates it is destroying freedom and of course destroying the world.

He failed to see that a concern for freedom, like any other moral issue, could only be exercised effectively on the basis of personal relationships, and that if such relationships were sacrificed on the altar of market imperatives then what ensued was not a process emanating from people's moral judgements but one emanating from the manipulative attributes of the centralised market forces, which could only emerge at all by throwing freedom out of the window. ■

SHOULD STATES SECEDE?

PART I

Kirkpatrick Sale

Kirkpatrick Sale is the author of 13 books, including Human Scale and Dwellers in the Land: The Bioregional Vision (University of Georgia Press). He is a founder and director of The Middlebury Institute (127 East Mountain Road, Cold Spring, NY 10516) for 'the study of separatism, secession, and self-determination'.

AS THE global crisis continues to gather momentum so too does the quest for a more human scale of government that enables democratic control to operate. Such moves provoked a violent civil war little more than a hundred years ago in the USA; today, as the number of voices echoing the same cause multiplies and become more emphatically insistent, it is time to examine the options.

The first question to be asked, and it is not a frivolous one, is whether secession is legal – whether the US Constitution can be read, and history cited, as permitting (or at least not forbidding) a state to declare its independence from the Union. Scholars have come down on both sides of this issue, but that fact alone suggests that there is a legitimate argument to be made. To put it simply:

The Tenth Amendment reserves powers not delegated to the United States to the states or the people, so states may act unless specifically prohibited. The Constitution in fact says nothing about secession, and as Confederate states were seceding Congress considered an amendment forbidding secession, which means that the principle

wasn't there in the first place. Three of the original 13 states (Rhode Island, New York, and Virginia) kept an explicit right to secede when they joined the Union, and since that was never challenged or questioned it must be a right that all states enjoy. And in the 19th century, before South Carolina began the bandwagon of secession in 1860, seven states (Kentucky, Pennsylvania, Georgia, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, and Vermont) enacted acts of nullification – meaning their refusal to recognise some or all of the powers of the national government – without any retaliation by Washington.

Of course Lincoln's government acted as if secession were illegal and unconstitutional, and its victory established the practical case, operable to this day, that states will be punished if they try to secede, and the Constitution is irrelevant. But it did not establish a legal case, and the legal (not to mention moral) argument for the right to secede remains strong. So strong that even if it were denied in the US courts it would likely be defended in the court of world opinion by many of the world's nations, including those in the European Union and those that have recently exerted that right

(in the former Soviet Union and former Yugoslavia, for example). And that might make it difficult for the Federal government to act against a state that has voted for secession, particularly if there were no overriding moral issues (*à la* slavery) and the state proved agreeable to negotiation over Federal property and assets within its boundaries.

Even accepting that, a second question arises over whether a Federal government could allow a state or especially a group of states to secede, regardless of rights, if it threatened the sovereignty and power of the remaining nation. Washington might not want to let California go, as much as the neocons might like it, for fear that Cascadia (Oregon and Washington) and New England (and who knows how many disgruntled others?) would follow suit. If it still had the military means and the loyalty of the remaining troops, it might be expected to contrive a way (a Gulf of Tonkin or WMD excuse) to justify the invasion of a secessionist nation.

And yet, and yet. It is hard to think that a Federal government would actually command its troops to mow down Los Angelenos and San Franciscans the way they do the innocents of Falluja and Najaf, or withstand the barrage of criticism, domestic and international, if it did; such an act would more likely propel additional secessions than gain support. It is harder still to think that the troops would actually carry out such an order, killing (ex)Americans on (ex)American territory. And if the troops did actually succeed in conquering and occupying an independent state, the population would be virtually uncontrollable – if it is not possible to win the hearts and minds of Vietnamese and

Iraqis by invasion, think how much less possible it would be to win over people who had voted for secession with the full knowledge that it might lead to war.

It is not fantastic, then, to imagine that instead of a futile war Washington would be willing to negotiate a settlement, in the hopes that, by giving concessions on autonomy and self-regulation, say, and by demonstrating the extent of the Federal dollars lost, it could win a secessionist state back into the Union. In some cases that might well happen, and if it failed it would at least show a government intelligent and confident enough to act as a future ally rather than a marauding warmonger. And as an ally, it might be able to establish diplomatic and trade ties that would allow it to still use such resources and talents of the new state as it wanted, perhaps even the bases it had previously used. With the additional benefit of no longer having to maintain Federal offices, regulators, highways, parks, dams, and such, and even presumably with a negotiated fee in compensation for these lost assets.

There is another strategy that a Federal government determined to squash secession might take, involving no troops, no war, nothing but a few phonecalls. Washington might put pressure on large chain operations – Wal-Mart, Target, McDonald's, General Motors, Gannett, and many others – to cease doing business in the secessionist state, lest the Feds make things difficult for them in all the others. And unless the secession is so widespread that more states are out than in (a highly unlikely outcome), the corporations will comply and shut down and withdraw their businesses in the independent state.

Would that – or even the threat of that –

possible solution based on the restoration of the power to govern latent in unnumbered urban communities. These communities will forge a new classless alliance to beat the war makers. It will comprise 'authentic professionals, managerial and high tech classes, volunteers and the deprived, the underclass'.

What is interesting here is that an intelligent, long-term activist with an extensive knowledge of history can promote such a dreamland scenario without once referring to the all important factor of food.


He seems totally unaware of the ecological non-viability of the huge urban agglomerations, if only in terms of food, which have erupted on the basis of a cheap plentiful supply of oil over the last century or so. Not one of these vast urban centres is remotely concerned with the all-important question of their own sustainability. Does the author suppose food grows on supermarket shelves? He can see that Middle East politics will cut off the oil before long, but where then will be his classless alliance? With empty supermarket shelves the new aristocracy will be the John Seymour-style smallholders; in their efforts to feed just their own families they will be at war with the rabble that manages to survive the mass starvation and the mortal epidemics that will engulf millions of helpless urbanites. This rabble will be thronging the highways and byways of rural Britain as, enrolled in the ranks of some transient warlord, they proceed to rob, burn, pillage, rape and murder in a desperate quest for food.

I can only urge the author to bury the vestigial Marxism, which appears to dominate his thinking so many decades after he left the Communist Party and to read John Seymour's *Retrieved From The Future*. It is all

there, plus a most unlikely happy-ever-after ending. The new civil war will be between rival bands of starving urban desperadoes, the rural food producers seeking to rescue run-down farms and supernitrate-poisoned factory farms, and of course the military. We are helping to create this nightmare every time we drive a car, book an air ticket or walk into a supermarket.

Available free (+ postage) from Peter Cadogan, 3 Hinchinbrook House, Greville Road, London NW6 5UP

THE ROAD TO SERFDOM, by F.A. Hayek. INSTITUTE OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, 2005. ISBN 025536576-4 £10-00

 *Reviewed by John Papworth*

THIS book, which first appeared in 1944, is one of the major guns in the armoury of the liberals who base their liberal views on a belief in the need for free markets and who are opposed to socialism and state planning.

The date of publication is important. The end of World War II saw the electoral triumph of a Labour government in Britain committed to a programme of socialist planning involving among other things the state control of schools, medical services, 'welfare', railways and the coal industry.

Hayek was at pains to point out that socialist planning could only lead to the sort of totalitarianism which prevailed in Russia or which was being decisively destroyed in Germany. He argued that only competition in free markets could ensure freedom in general for the ordinary citizen, if only because such competitive freedom was the only way a multiplicity of choices would be available to the individual which state planning inevitably destroyed.

Despite the enormous success of this book it had very little effect on immediate

the usual moral cop-out that any spokesman of any Christian religious organisation is prone to utter, but it is nonetheless true. The point is that all he has to say is of interest and makes for rewarding reading.

THE PARTY'S OVER: OIL, WAR AND THE FATE OF THE INDUSTRIAL SOCIETIES, by Richard Heinberg. CLAIRVIEW BOOKS, 2003. £11-95

POWERDOWN: OPTIONS AND ACTIONS FOR A POST-CARBON WORLD, by Richard Heinberg. CLAIRVIEW BOOKS, 2004. £10-95

Reviewed by Patricia Knox

WE ARE now at the peak of global oil production; within the next few years the rate of production will start to diminish. Meanwhile, governments and economic systems of industrialised nations continue to encourage ever-increasing use of oil and other resources. We seem to be on a collision course with resource availability from resource depletion and environmental collapse.

In these two books, the author faces squarely the implications of the end of the oil era, and the different strategies that might be used in the face of this. What is needed is the systematic and intelligent de-industrialisation of both rich and poor countries. Instead, the policy of governments of rich nations seems to be the way of competition, war and increasing use of oil, which will only lead to collapse when oil finally runs out.

Then there is the way of the dreamers, who wait for the magic elixir, the idea that scientists will invent a replacement for oil so that our consuming lifestyles can continue without end. Renewable energy sys-

tems will provide a partial replacement for oil, but not sufficient to sustain our present high energy-consuming lifestyles.

But what is needed is the way of power-down, a deliberate, systematic and intelligent self-limitation path towards local food and energy self-sufficiency. This path should be supported by cultural preservation centres, analogous to the monasteries at the fall of the Roman empire, which would preserve culture and the techniques of self-sufficiency, with the aim of sharing this knowledge with the wider community. They would preserve knowledge of growing and preserving food, metal working, making of clothing, building of houses, building and operation of renewable energy systems, as well as preserving knowledge about how ecosystems work, and about chemistry, physics, astronomy, geology and geography.

The world as we know it is built upon the availability of cheap oil. There will be many changes in the decades ahead, as this resource diminishes and finally disappears.

Will we choose the way of war, or the way of sustainability? These books will help us to make a wise and informed choice. It is important that some of us have accurate knowledge about this, since so many people are in denial.

TO BLAZES OR JERUSALEM? by Peter Cadogan. 2004. ISSN 0014-1690

Reviewed by John Papworth

THIS booklet, based on a lecture given to The South Place Ethical Society, skims through vast aeons of history, from the ice ages to the present and despite some arresting insights, ('We love what is familiar, even our chains') he seeks to outline the causes of war in empire-building and a

cut the legs out from under a secessionist state and force it to come crawling back to the Union? I think not, for several reasons.

First, a seceding state would have to be, and would want to be, in great measure self-sufficient, providing for itself those goods and services it could not trade for with the outside world. Like Japan historically, and a number of other new states, it would create a phenomenon that Jane Jacobs has called 'import replacement', the building of bicycles at home, recycling the metals and materials from the dumps and by the wayside, instead of buying them from abroad. It would certainly not be able to offer bikes for sale as cheaply as Wal-Mart does, at least at first, but it would put many more people to work per bike than Wal-Mart, and strengthen its economy in ways that would eventually enable its people to buy the more expensive product. Imagine this going on for a host of other goods across the state, replacing those that can be made by intelligent recycling and manufacturing, refitting and reusing others, developing hand crafts as a substitute for machinery to create others, refusing to make those that are pointless, wasteful, environmentally harmful or costly, and foregoing many that turn out after a while to be neither necessary nor desirable. Wal-Mart would not only not be missed, it would be seen as having been a foolish enterprise that foisted too much needless

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'stuff', in too many useless varieties, of too shoddy a manufacture, with too much added-in transportation costs, on a gullible and malleable public.

And if the citizens of the new state really missed some big chain store and couldn't work out a replacement, they would stoically bear that burden as good and loyal patriots.

With acknowledgments to Chronicles, the publication of the Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.

Part II will appear in the next issue of Fourth World Review.

If we want to resolve a problem it is a good idea to try to ascertain what has caused it. Knee-jerk reactions to its effects may be healthy but not always helpful.

The roots of modern African poverty stem partly from Western misconceptions about what poverty really is, but they mainly stem from the colonialist devastation of the African tribal system.

John Papworth

WORD AND FLESH

Wendell Berry

Wendell Berry is a well-known American author.

TOWARDS the end of *As You Like It*, Orlando says: 'I can live no longer by thinking.' He is ready to marry Rosalind. It is time for incarnation. Having thought too much, he is at one of the limits of human experience, or of human sanity.

All public movements of thought quickly produce a language that works as a code, useless to the extent that it is abstract. It is readily evident, for example, that you couldn't conduct a relationship with another person in terms of the rhetoric of the civil rights movement or the women's movement – as useful as those rhetorics may initially have been to personal relationships.

The same is true of the environmental movement. The favourite adjective of this movement now seems to be 'planetary'. The word is used properly enough, to refer to the interdependence of places, and to the recognition, which is desirable and growing, that no place on earth can be completely healthy until all places are.

But the word 'planetary' also refers to an abstract anxiety or an abstract passion that is desperate and useless exactly to the extent that it is abstract. How, after all, can anybody – any particular body – do anything to heal a planet? The suggestion that anybody could do so is preposterous. The

heroes of abstraction keep galloping in on their white horses to save the planet – and they are falling off in the grandstand.

What we need, obviously, is a more intelligent – which is to say, more accurate – description of the problem. The description of a problem as planetary arouses motivation for which, of necessity, there is no employment. The adjective 'planetary' describes a problem in such a way that it cannot be solved. In fact, though we now have serious problems nearly everywhere on the planet, we have no problem that can accurately be described as planetary. And, short of the total annihilation of the human race, there is no planetary solution.

Wrong Economics

There are also no national, state or country problems, and no national, state or country solutions. That will-o'-the-wisp, the larger scale solutions to a large scale problem, which is so dear to governments, universities, and corporations, serves mostly to distract people from the small, private problems that they may, in fact, have the power to solve.

The problems, if we describe them accurately, are all private and small. Or they are so initially.

The problems are our lives. In the 'developed' countries, at least, the large problems

BOOKS

THE GREAT ABDICATION. Why Britain's Decline is the Fault of the Middle Classes, by Alexander Deane. IMPRINT ACADEMIC 2005.

Reviewed by John Coleman

THIS is essentially a conservative book. It believes that the middle classes have given up their role in guiding the morals of the nation. The book is right, I believe, in regard to the present day, but perhaps does not take into account the factors that led to the present decline.

There have been times in history when a hard moral rigidity needed to be softened, but not so in a sentimental or politically correct sense. Jesus Christ needed to oppose the rigidity and hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees. People have a habit of swinging to an opposite extreme when they see something they consider wrong – they throw the baby out with the bath water and in a broad sense I think that is what we have done. Disraeli once said that the most important thing in politics is to distinguish between a principle and the abuse of a principle. I think that Deane is right that we have thrown out our principles because we have seen them being abused. The answer surely is to regain them without regaining the abuses.

The quotation at the beginning of the first chapter is particularly apt as in a way it sums up the whole purpose of the book: 'I say there is a simple answer to many of our problems – simple but hard. It's the complicated answer that's easy because it avoids facing the hard moral issues.' Another good quote is from Frank Field: 'Today's political agenda is no longer about finding a compromise between socialism and capitalism. Increasingly the new politics is about moderating behaviour and re-establishing the social virtues of self-discipline coupled with an awareness of the needs of others. It is these virtues above all others that are essential to civilised living. The new politics centre on reinforcing what is good and acceptable behaviour.'

CONFESSIONS OF A RADICAL TRADITIONALIST, by John Michell. DOMINION PRESS, 2005. £25 ISBN0-9712044-4-6

Reviewed by John Papworth

TO DO justice to this work would involve a comment, at least, on each of the hundred or more of its articles, which range, well they range all over the place on almost every subject related to modern life and statecraft. If I say, 'You may not agree with all the author has to say', it may sound like



ending up with unspendable credits, or unredeemed deficits, is to finally involve the whole gamut of the local economy, allowing all to spend and accept credible parallel currencies for a proportion of turnover, such that currencies circulating in free competition with monopoly money can eventually be seen quite simply as a cheaper (private or public) monetary service.

The decisive moment may be when accountants add an extra column for non-monopoly currencies, under the heading of

transactions in kind. If the EU Commission can lie through its teeth and invent the concept of coexistence between organic and GM agriculture (a technical and legal acrobatic of monstrous and finally impossible proportions), then it should be possible to allow coexistence also for free currency and monopoly money, if only in the name of fair competition for services.

Anton Pinschof

Kergroas Vras, Mael-Pestivien, Callac de Bretagne 22160, France

The Fourth World seeks to operate on a voluntary, non-centralised basis. Our typesetter is in the Midlands, our activist-promotional agents operate increasingly in different countries around the world, our book reviewers and correspondents are similarly dispersed (and so too are the Patrons who help us now and again to stave off bankruptcy). For more years than we can reckon our mail list has been in the charge of a London-based volunteer who has attended with unremitting thoroughness to every detail of change; new subscribers, lapses, changes, of address, subscription details and other matters have been in the hands of



ANNE FEALDMAN.

Now in recent years widowed and in her nineties, Anne has decided to pass the torch to other hands. This note can be no more than a tiny token of gratitude for so many years of freely given meticulous and unstinted work. Without her splendid service our work would have been crippled to a marked degree. Thank you Anne for your noble dedication to a great cause and may you continue to enjoy many years of happy retirement.

John Papworth

Editor, Fourth World Review

exist because all of us are living either partly wrong or almost entirely wrong. It was not just the greed of corporate shareholders and the hubris of corporate executives that put the fate of Prince William Sound into one ship; it was also our demand that energy be cheap and plentiful.

The economics or our communities and households are wrong. The answers to the human problems of ecology are to be found in economy. And the answers to the problems of economy are to be found in culture and character. To fail to see this is to go on dividing the world falsely between guilty producers and innocent consumers.

The planetary versions – the heroic versions – of our problems have attracted great intelligence. But these problems, as they are caused and suffered in our lives, our households, and our communities, have attracted very little intelligence.

Abstract Concerns

We have failed to produce new examples of good home and community economies, and we have nearly completed the destruction of the examples we once had. Without examples, we are left with theory and the bureaucracy and meddling that come with theory. We change our principles, our thoughts, and our words, but these are changes made in the air. Our lives go on unchanged.

For the most part, the subcultures, the countercultures, the dissenters, and the opponents continue mindlessly – or perhaps just helplessly – to follow the pattern of the dominant society in its extravagance, its wastefulness, its dependencies, and its addictions. The old problem remains: How do you get intelligence out of an institution or an organisation?

My small community in Kentucky has lived and dwindled for at least a century under the influence of four kinds of organisations: governments, corporations, schools, and churches – all of which are distant (either actually or in interest), centralised, and consequently abstract in their concerns.

Governments and corporations (except for employees) have no presence in our community at all, which is perhaps fortunate for us, but we nevertheless feel the indifference or the contempt of governments or corporations for communities such as ours.

We have had no school of our own for nearly 30 years. The school system takes our young people, prepares them for ‘the world of tomorrow’ – which it does not expect to take place in any rural area – and gives back ‘expert’ (that is, extremely generalised) ideas.

The church is present in the town. We have two churches. But both have been used by their denominations, for almost a century, to provide training and income for student ministers, who do not stay long enough to become disillusioned.

My Community

For a long time, then, the minds that have most influenced our town have not been of the town so have not tried even to perceive, much less to honour, the good possibilities that there are. They have not wondered on what terms a good and conserving life might be lived there. In this my community is not unique but is like almost every other neighbourhood in our country and in the ‘developed’ world.

The question that must be addressed, therefore, is not how to care for the planet,

but how to care for each of the planet's millions of human and natural neighbourhoods, each of its millions of small pieces and parcels of land, each one which is in some precious way different from all others. Our understandable wish to preserve the planet must somehow be reduced to the scale of our competence – that is, to the wish to preserve all of its humble households and neighbourhoods.

What can accomplish this reduction? I will say again, without overweening hope but with certainty nonetheless, that only love can do it. Only love can bring intelligence out of the institutions and organisations, where it aggrandizes itself, into the presence of the work that must be done.

Love is never abstract. It does not adhere to the universe or the planet or the nation or the institution or the profession, but to the singular sparrows of the street, the lilies of the field, 'least of these my brethren'. Love is not, by its own desire, heroic. It is heroic only when compelled to be. It exists by its willingness to be anonymous, humble and unrewarded.

The older love becomes, the more clearly it understands its involvement in partiality, imperfection, suffering and mortality. Even so, it longs for incarnation. It can live no longer by thinking.

And yet to put on flesh and do the flesh's work, it must think.

Exploitation

In his essay on Kipling, George Orwell wrote: 'All left-wing parties in the highly industrialised countries are at bottom a sham, because they make it their business to fight against something which they do not really wish to destroy. They have international aims, and at the same time they

struggle to keep up a standard of life with which those aims are incompatible. We all live by robbing Asiatic coolies, and those of us who are 'enlightened' all maintain that those coolies ought to be set free; but our standard of living, and hence our "enlightenment", demands that the robbery shall continue.'

Dependency

This statement of Orwell's is clearly applicable to our situation now; all we need to do is change a few nouns. The religion and the environmentalism of the highly industrialised countries are at bottom a sham, because they make it their business to fight against something they do not really wish to destroy. We all live by robbing nature, but our standard of living demands that the robbery shall continue.

We must achieve the character and acquire the skills to live much poorer than we do. We must waste less. We must do more for8 ourselves and each other. It is either that or continue merely to think and talk about changes that we are inviting catastrophe to make.

The great obstacle is simply this: the conviction that we cannot change because we are dependent on what is wrong. But that is the addict's excuse, and we know that it will not do.

How dependent, in fact, are we? How dependent are our neighbourhoods and communities? How might our dependence be reduced? To answer these questions will require better thoughts and better deeds than we have been capable of so far.

We must have the sense and the courage, for example, to see that the ability to transport food for hundreds or thousands of miles does not necessarily mean

To these ends we intend to issue regular papers treating with a broad range of secessionist issues, including the question of the constitutionality of secession in the US.

Thomas Naylor

127 East Mountain Road, Cold Spring,
NY 10516

NEEDED

I WISH you and *Fourth World Review*' all success. We need you more than ever.

Bliss Alexander

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AR 72947-8233, USA

HELP

WE have received more equipment from the World Bank for skills training in carpentry, metalwork, bricklaying, tailoring and catering, but the young people we have recruited need sponsorship, since they come from poor families and cannot afford to pay the £30 for three-week short courses, or the £60 six-week course. We train them in groups of 20 per skill, then they get trained in entrepreneurship and business management apart from the practical skill.

Do you think you could find some people or companies that can sponsor a student and pay for them?

Joyce Mapoma

Village Industry Service, PO Box 35500,
Lusaka, Zambia

PARALLEL CURRENCIES

I WANT to comment on the vanishing LETS (Local Exchange Trading System) phenomena, having been involved in Brittany in one I started, and about a dozen I helped to start from 1996 to 2001, when ours fizzled out. One of the others, in a neighbouring district to ours, had a

strongly politically motivated core group and is yet operating as a self-help group.

I have long had the distinct impression that applying the Vancouver formula, of private associations of like-minded spirits organising their own internal market, does not work far beyond the initial enthusiasm.

Having visited Vancouver Island, and having also experienced English and European suburban archipelagos, I can quite understand how the LETS can enthuse enough varied types of people to be able to include a broad enough spectrum of goods and services, such that supply and demand are sufficient for the demand and the supply.

But in scattered rural populations, for example, where the circulation of goods and services is already difficult enough, and where the LETS membership formula attracts too many ideologically stereotyped and socially isolated people, there is always a lack of certain categories of producers and/or buyers, not to mention the inevitable psychological problem of an inward-looking group (attracting a high proportion of recent immigrants, eccentrics, outcasts and scroungers), for whom the LETS at first seems like a Shangri-La that excuses initiates from the effort of social intercourse with normal local people on the same planet, never mind political dialogue with institutions and other organisations!

My own (unheeded) initial advice when starting our LETS, and my conclusion now, is that LETS should organise always with a view to getting local public authorities and professional and cultural bodies to discuss and eventually apply the principles of local currency (basis of issue, agent of issue, entropy, etc.), rather than LETS only existing for personal benefit.

The only way to avoid some members

of the kinds of State functionaries whose job is to impose social control. Any advantage would be infinitely outweighed by the stupendous power which such a system would bestow on those who operated it. Any individual who offended the bankers or the government hirelings who serve them could be cut off, electronically, from income, pension, employment, health care, housing and even the ability to effect a single purchase from a shop. At the tap of a few computer keys any individual found to be out of step with the international banker-imposed world order would be cut off from society's increasingly computerised life-support systems and rendered an 'unperson'.

Allan J. Phillips

116 Coney Green Drive, Northfield,
Birmingham B31 4EJ

EXPANSION

I FEEL that it's necessary to act immediately and so I have decided to translate (maybe I do parts by myself) *Fourth World Review* into German, if that suits you (if I remember rightly you mentioned that a translation would be a good thing). It's one of the best journals I know and I think that more people in Austria, Germany and Switzerland should know about it. But it is impossible to translate each journal – a period of two weeks is too short. So we would have to think over other solutions.

Klaus Faißner

Neuwaldegger Straße 44a,
Wien A-1170, Austria

SHAMING

MANY thanks. *Fourth World Review* often inspires, but occasionally shames me.

Paul Owens

48 Rookery Road, Knowle, Bristol BS4 2DT

DESTINY BECKONS!

I FIND inspiration, stimulating thinking and astuteness through the pages of the *Fourth World Review* and pray the Almighty God to give you strength and good health so the you may continue to do the good work for many more years.

At any rate, what you have already achieved through your moral integrity, courage in your writings and consistent calls for universal brotherhood through respect for the environment and local community concerns is sufficient enough to open for you the portals of immortality in this and the world beyond.

S.G. Chifwambwa

24 BP 142, Abidjan 24, Ivory Coast Republic.

SEPARATISM

IN answer to a growing swell of interest in realistic responses to the excesses of the present American empire, the Middlebury Institute has been launched by a group of activists and professionals to promote the serious study of separatism, secession, self-determination and similar devolutionary trends and developments, on both national and international scales. The institute hopes to foster a national movement in the United States that will:

- ◆ place secession on the national political agenda;
- ◆♥encourage secessionist and separatist movements here and abroad;
- ◆ develop communication among such existing and future groups;
- ◆ create a body of scholarship to examine and promote the ideas of separatism; and
- ◆ work carefully and thoughtfully for the ultimate task, the peaceful dissolution of the American empire.

that we are well off. It means that the food supply is more vulnerable and more costly than a local food supply would be. It means that consumers do not control or influence the healthfulness of their food supply and that they are at the mercy of people who have control and influence. It means that, in eating, people are using large quantities of petroleum that other people in another time are almost certain to need.

Our most serious problem, perhaps, is that we have become a nation of fantasists. We believe, apparently in the infinite availability of finite sources. We persist in land-use methods that reduce the potentially infinite power of soil fertility to a finite quantity, which we then proceed to waste as if it were an infinite quantity. We have an economy that depends not on the quality and quantity of necessary goods and services, but on the moods of a few stockbrokers. We believe that democratic freedom can be preserved by people ignorant of the history of democracy and indifferent to the responsibilities of freedom.

Our leaders have been for many years as oblivious to the realities and dangers of their time as were George III and Lord North. They believe that the difference between war and peace is still the overriding political difference – when, in fact, the difference has diminished to the point of insignificance. How would you describe the difference between modern war and modern industry – between, say, bombing and strip mining, or between chemical warfare and chemical manufacturing? The difference seems to be only that in war the victimisation of humans is directly intentional and in industry it is 'accepted' as a 'trade-off'.

Were the catastrophes of Love Canal, Bhopal, Chernobyl and the Exxon Valdez episodes of war or of peace? The were, in fact, peacetime acts of aggression, intentional to the extent that the risks were known and ignored.

We are involved unremittingly in a war not against 'foreign enemies', but against the world, against our freedom, and indeed against our existence. Our so-called industrial accidents should be looked upon as revenges of Nature. We forget that Nature is necessarily party to all of our enterprises and that she imposes conditions of her own.

Now she is plainly saying to us: 'If you put the fates of whole communities or cities or regions or ecosystems at risk in single ships or factories or power plants, then I will furnish the drunk or the fool or the imbecile who will make the necessary small mistake.'

Taken from What Are People For?, with acknowledgements to Vermont Commons.

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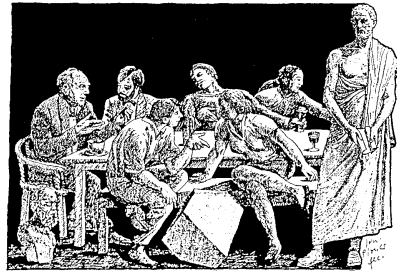
Tel: 01922 631 970

or

07819 153897.

FORUM

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



COMMON GROUND?

I WAS glad to see you taking a more sympathetic reference to all us peace-nik short-termists! There must be many of us who accept your overall analysis – but hope to work towards it bit by bit. We won't get anywhere without seeking common ground with some of the 'men in the street'. Total revolution (which is what we need) just scares them away. We have to effect change democratically – and that is going to be, as the world now is, a very long-term job. But you are right to stipulate the objectives.

Harry Mister

*Hornbeam Cottage, 67 Postern Green, Entfield
EN2 7DE*

E-MAIL?

I WANT to tell you what a joy I find *Fourth World Review*. In fact it is my favourite publication, for it says so much that others do not, or dare not, say directly. Or fail to say with such directness and courage. And I love the small, human scale of it. If ever

there was an example, in publishing, that 'small is beautiful' – and that talk can be walked – *Fourth World Review* is it.

Thank you for creating it and for continuing to produce it. However, in future, could I possibly have it by e-mail? For, I cannot justify trees being cut down to bring me what could come in seconds electronically. Nor can I feel comfortable about the world's dwindling oil being consumed to deliver it to me.

Moyra Bremner

1 Lambourne Avenue, London SW19 7DW

PEACE!

WE need to find ways of focusing public energy and resources on achieving peace. Peace in the world will not just happen; it needs to be worked at. The money and time spent on preparing for war must be diverted to work for peace. Our existing Trident submarine fleet is capable of killing more than a hundred million people. Blair

has just decided it is to be 'upgraded' at a cost of billions of pounds. Is this what people want? I don't think so.

In order to help realign our efforts I now work for the Ministry for Peace Campaign. We are not alone in the drive to have a Ministry for Peace established. There are parallel movements in other countries including the US, Canada and Australia. In October this year we are having an international summit in London of all the countries involved in this movement. To find out more please go to our www.ministryforpeace.org.uk.

J.M.McCluskey

*3 St Margarets Road,
Twickenham TW1 2LN*

Our correspondent echoes the kind of out-of-date thinking which has bedevilled efforts to stop war for generations, and which continues to lead many people up the garden path of total ineffectuality. Wars today are a product of powers out of control. On a mass scale (the qualification is vital) the desire of people everywhere for peace is simply frustrated by mass centralised forces in the grip of boardroom brigandage. Any prime minister who proposed to make the armaments industry a branch of public service, or to abandon it, for example, would be out on his ear in a fortnight. The proposal to establish a 'Ministry of Peace' is about as realistic as suggesting the Federation of British Butchers should form a branch of the Indo-Pakistan Vegetarian Society.
– Editor

MORE JOKES

I LIKE *Fourth World Review* mostly for your contributions – but I should like more jokes and less fashionable anti-Blairism.

Robin Denniston

25 Pyndar Court, Newland, WR13 5AX

BARCODES

GAS, water, electricity and British Rail have been sold off and now council housing must go. But good-quality services and local participation are not the real goals. It is all to do with the preparations for the destruction of the national states and the establishment of the World Government.

To consolidate their stranglehold over peoples and nations, the Top Bankers will soon introduce their 'cashless society' in which all cash will be abolished. All financial transactions will be fully computerised. Individuals' incomes will be automatically credited to their bank accounts and all payments automatically deducted. All traded products will have a barcode in which product name, price, weight and other information will be computer-scanned at checkouts. This system is already in operation in most supermarkets. It is a system that will accelerate the destruction of small independent shops and tradesmen as only the big chain stores and conglomerates will be able to afford such systems.

In due course every human being will have his or her own barcode, which will encode the individual's name, address, family antecedents and social security number. This information can be added to and amended at various stages of life with details of education records, employment history, current financial status, business interests and associates, court convictions, health records, social contacts, friends, enemies, visits abroad, political views and associations, hobbies, etc. A lot of people would have scanners to access relevant parts (and in some cases all) of this data. In effect, people will become mobile credit cards. This system would be the very ultimate in surveillance, making all of us slaves of the inner elite and