

# Timeline

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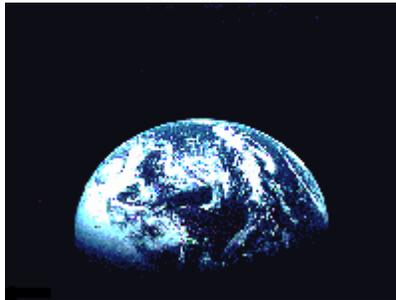
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## To Our Readers:

With this issue, *Timeline* begins its ninth year of publication.

**Our first issue in 1992 carried a front-page photo of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker receiving from Palestinian leader Faisal Husseini a copy of "Framework for a Public Peace Process," a document drawn up by Israelis and Palestinians at this Foundation's retreat center in California. Also included were reports on a conference held by the California Institute of Technology on "Visions of a Sustainable World," a conversation with author and futurist Peter Russell, and an article on Congress' approval of an astonishing \$270 billion military budget.**

**Obviously, some things don't change as quickly as we might hope. Establishing peace in the Middle East is still a work in process, a sustainable world is still a vision, and Congress is still approving bloated military budgets.**

**We stated in that first issue: "Our mission is to discover, live, and communicate what is needed to build a world that functions for the benefit of all life." As we begin a new century, we renew our commitment to keep on doing just that. We deeply appreciate all of you who—by your subscriptions, readership, and support—make that possible.**



## Reflections and a Look Ahead

**by Emilia Rathbun**

*For our first issue in 2000, Timeline asked Emilia Rathbun to share some thoughts as we enter the next millennium. Emilia and Harry Rathbun were the founders of organizations that preceded Foundation for Global Community, and their presence and teachings profoundly impacted a number of generations. Emilia, now in her 90s, continues to lecture and lead seminars throughout the U.S. and has received many honors in recognition of her wisdom and her life-long educational work.*

I was born in 1906, the year of the San Francisco earthquake. I've lived almost a century, and what a marvelous, fulfilling, fast life it has been!

I grew up in Mexico in the era before cars, airplanes, radio, telephones, television, or electricity. In my home in Mexico, one man's job was to take care of our lamps. His entire life consisted of lighting them and distributing them through the house in the evening. Later, he would extinguish them, collect them, replenish the oil, and do it all over again the next night. There was a lamp lighter who did the same for the lights of the streets in the town. I rode on horseback and in carriages, and sailed on ships whenever we came to America.

At the age of 16, I came to San José, California. My birth certificate is elaborate. My father, an American citizen born in North Carolina, was a civil engineer who built railroads and harbors in Mexico and married the daughter of a wealthy Mexican family. He made sure I

would be recognized as an American citizen who was born in Mexico. I had tutors in Mexico, so my first experience of school was San José High School. I was chauffeured to school daily from Edenvale, six miles out of town, where I lived with my father's people. I was not familiar with the concepts the students were taught, and I did not adjust well, so I was transferred to Notre Dame High School. It was an all-girls school with "Sisters" for teachers and I loved it. After I graduated, I went on to San José State to become a teacher.

During my college years, I experienced what were to become the greatest influences of my life, to this day. I joined the Y.W.C.A. It was at its peak and had significant Christmas retreats at Asilomar, a retreat center on the California coast. There, I first learned about the problem of race relations, which would later become the civil rights movement. I worked with the Mexican migrant workers in California's Central Valley, a work which was very compatible with my upbringing in Mexico. I had been taught that privilege is a responsibility and your purpose is to help and serve—a wonderful heritage which was practiced by my family who were large land owners.

Determinative for me in college was a study of Jesus of Nazareth and his teachings. I met wonderful mentors who recommended looking at the laws that govern nature, psychology, the spirit. I knew every professor personally, had them in my home for dinners, and eventually through one of them met Harry Rathbun, a professor of law at Stanford. After a glorious, romantic courtship of three months, I married him

and lived and worked with him for 60 years. We had two wonderful children, Juana and Richard, and three grandchildren whom we love and adore.

## What I Know

A human is endowed with curiosity and a desire to know. To know is important in our complex world if one is to live and to survive. Nevertheless, I have concluded for myself that the ultimate peace is attained by the willingness to accept that the most central reality of life can only be accepted and complied with, not intellectualized or conceptualized.

At my stage of life, I do not use the word God. There are as many definitions and understandings of that word as there are people and their different education, cultures, and experience. I call it the "Mysterium Tremendum."

Even though I cannot fathom the reality of the "Thou," I can meditate on various manifestations that seem to reside in, or be manifested out of, or emanate from the Mysterium Tremendum. After a lifetime of study, practice, meditation, and primary thinking, there are certain aspects of life and reality that I am certain of.

The first is that there is a source for all. They call it the "big bang." I don't know that I completely go with it, but I do because I don't have a better answer. From it came everything that is—energy, light, matter, laws, principles, life, consciousness, all that exists. We discover, combine, and work with source, but we ourselves are not the source. If you want to ask a question about anything, the answer already exists, and is there to be discovered. You

will never decide the answer by getting together with five others and having a vote. In the religious traditions, the simple instruction is do the will of a higher power.

I am convinced there is a direction of evolution, and that the direction has been toward diversity, complexity, life, and consciousness. Are we in charge of direction? No. Something other than ourselves is.

I am convinced there is an intelligence to all we discern and discover. We don't know what intelligence is but we don't need to because we're human and we know we have it. When we look out with our intelligence, we see that there is intelligence that permeates everything. Our own intelligence mirrors, or is in the image of, reality that is intelligent.

I know there is love. There is something incredible about the universe and the planet we live on. There is not only beauty, there is also truth and goodness. We don't need to analyze them; we know they are here. So there is love, because we have been given a paradise.

## A Look Ahead

As we leave the second millennium, it is clear that we have been concentrating almost completely on the physical. The physical yields immediate outcomes. We can experiment in the physical domain and get a result, so that is an easy way for us to use our capacity. The resultant technology has taken us into the abstract domains, the domains of ideas, the domains of potential relationships and what they can produce. What we haven't asked is, "What will this discovery we

have made do in time and space for life?" That is the predicament we are in now, and it is making us think.

As we go into the third millennium there is a question whether the human species can make the leap in evolution that is required. To make the leap, we need to pay attention only to two things: the spirit that emanates from people, and the discovery of actual truth and its outcomes. People have to face the fact that the only way they can express spirit and the only way they can discover truth is to eliminate the vestiges of their sense of self importance. We discover and combine and can actualize things that are not in nature. We are in a man-made world. We use nature, but the combinations are not in nature. We have come into a self-importance which we now have to transcend. The self-importance says, "I am in charge of history, and I am in charge of ages, and I am in charge of reality." We cannot see our rightful place if we don't see ourselves as mirrors of reality, not the creators of reality.

Another requirement is a change in identity. Our identity can no longer be as a nation, or as a member of a particular race, or as belonging to a religion, or even being part of a culture. We need to see those as secondary identities. But our primary identity is *Homo sapiens sapiens*. We are one species made up of a variety of races, nations, and religions.

After identity, we need to know relationships and proportion. If I know my identity is an acorn, then in order to grow into an oak tree I have to relate to earth, to water, to certain nutrients in the soil, to the sun, and I have to have space. Also there has to be proportion. An oak

tree can get too much water or too little sun. This dominant relationship to authority is one humans have a difficult time with. We are not the authority. Authority comes from author. We can author a book or build a bridge by using what is available to us. But the whole of creation has emerged, and we haven't had anything to do with it. Yet we act like gods.

Religions can play a vital role. Each religion can keep its own way; there is nothing incorrect in that. But all religions must realize that there are only two things that are important now to the planet and to the spiritual people of the planet if we are going to survive. One is the manifestation of your being. Under no circumstances can you be against anything or be unwilling to understand what seems alien to you. The second thing is that truth is the same for all. Spirit and truth are all that are left, and they have nothing to do with belief systems. Truth is the same for all. No matter what religion you are, you need trees and pure water for life, and cyanide will kill you. Those are truths. So now all the religions must raise their voice and say, "Humanity must manifest the right spirit and investigate the truth." We must tend to the life-support system and to the greed and mistakes we are making. There is no God that is coming out of any heaven to do anything for anybody. We now must be aware of who we are and that we are the ones to do it.

Am I hopeful for the future? Yes, when we assume responsibility for who we are and—subject to the *Mysterium Tremendum*—fulfill our purpose on planet Earth. We can then be heirs of beauty, truth, and goodness for all.



## Natural Capitalism

### A Book Review

by Joe Kresse

**“Natural Capitalism is not about fomenting social upheaval. On the contrary, that is the consequence that will surely arise if fundamental social and environmental problems are not responsibly addressed.”**

*This is the third in a series of Timeline reviews of books about our economic system. In the first book we reviewed, The Post-Corporate World, David Korten painted a picture of a new system consisting of democratic markets based on how biological systems work. The second book, The New Pioneers, by Tom Petzinger, demonstrated new ways for business employees to function more in line with biological models. This third book, Natural Capitalism, shows how we can vastly increase our efficiency in using natural resources by mimicking biology. Timeline will continue to look for articles describing how our economic system could become more life enhancing. As theologian John Cobb has said, we are in the age of “economism,” in which the value of anything has become its value only in terms of money. More and more, it is becoming obvious this must change if we are to survive and flourish as a species.*

The three authors of *Natural Capitalism* are well-known in the field of sustainable economics. Amory and Hunter Lovins' Rocky Mountain Institute has worked for years to encourage market incentives that foster resource efficiency and lessen pollution. Paul Hawken is perhaps best known for his seminal work of 1993, *The Ecology of Commerce*, which linked the long-term success of business with the use of ecological principles. This current collaborative volume is an exposition of one part of a new "overall biological and social framework within which the transformation of commerce could be accomplished and practiced...the idea that the world economy is shifting from an emphasis on human productivity to a radical increase in resource productivity [using resources much more efficiently]. This shift would provide more meaningful family-wage jobs, a better worldwide standard of living to those in need, and a dramatic reduction of humankind's impact upon the environment."

The authors' thesis is that natural capitalism, which they define as including all the things we borrow from the Earth—the energy, the materials, water, the air—forms a basis for this shift. The fundamental assumptions of natural capitalism—"capitalism as if living systems mattered"—are listed in the book as follows:

- The environment should be thought of as an envelope which contains provisions, and sustains the entire economy.
- The limiting factor to future economic development is the availability and functionality of natural capital, in

particular those parts of the ecosystem that support life, that have no substitutes, and currently have no market value—they are worth more than all the financial and mechanical capital that *is* counted.

- The primary causes of the loss of natural capital are the traditional way businesses are run, population growth, and wasteful patterns of consumption. All three must be addressed to achieve a sustainable economy.
- Future economic progress can best take place in democratic, market-based systems of production and distribution in which all forms of capital are fully valued, including human, manufactured, financial, and natural capital.
- One of the keys to the most beneficial employment of people, money, and the environment is using natural resources much more efficiently—what the authors call a "radical increase in resource productivity."
- Human welfare is best served by improving the quality and flow of desired services delivered, rather than by merely increasing the total dollar flow.
- Economic and environmental sustainability depends on redressing global inequities in income and material well-being.
- The best long-term environment for commerce is provided by true democratic systems of governance that are based on the needs of people rather than the needs of business.

The authors then lay out the four strategies of natural capitalism which would “enable countries, companies, and communities to operate by behaving as if all forms of capital were valued.” They are the same strategies described in a talk by Hunter and Amory Lovins at the 1998 State of the World Forum, a talk which we included in the January-February 1999 issue of *Timeline*. In brief, the strategies are:

**1. Radical resource productivity.**

Using resources more efficiently “slows resource depletion, lowers pollution, and provides a basis to increase worldwide employment with meaningful jobs.” Technologies already exist, the authors say, to achieve ten-fold or greater increases in productivity with no increase in resource use.

**2. Biomimickry.** Eliminate the very idea of waste. Redesign industrial systems along biological lines by reusing materials in continuous closed cycles and, in the process, often eliminating the production of toxics. In nature, there are no toxics: everything is food for something else.

**3. Service and flow economy.** Instead of buying items like washing machines, carpets, VCRs, and refrigerators, we would lease them. The manufacturer would be responsible to repair, replace, and recycle the product. The product itself then becomes only a means to the end of providing a service.

**4. Investing in natural capital.**

Business can no longer ignore growing shortages of key components of production such as water and other raw materials, and will have to invest in ways to conserve and replenish them.

The bulk of the book is a series of chapters which describe “an array of opportunities and possibilities that are real, practical, measured, and documented. Engineers have already designed hydrogen-fuel-cell powered cars to be plug-in electric generators that may become the power plants of the future. Buildings already exist that make oxygen, solar power, even drinking water, and can help pay the mortgage while their tenants work inside them. Deprintable and reprintable papers and inks, together with other innovative ways to use fiber, could enable the world’s supply of lumber and pulp to be grown in an area about the size of Iowa. Weeds can yield potent pharmaceuticals; cellulose-based (versus petroleum-based) plastics have been shown to be strong, reusable, and compostable; and luxurious carpets can be made from landfilled scrap. Roofs and windows, even roads, can do double duty as solar-electric collectors, and efficient car-free cities are being designed so that men and women no longer spend their days driving to obtain the goods and services of daily life.”

These chapters include: reinventing the automobile, reducing industrial waste and inputs, redesigning housing, optimizing entire systems rather than their parts, using fibers more efficiently, improving food-growing techniques, and using water more wisely. There are hundreds of examples, documented by footnotes, as to how these results are being achieved.

One particular idea that struck me is changing the tax system from taxing people (through income and payroll taxes) to taxing resource use and

pollution. Since natural capital is what we're short of, using and polluting it should be discouraged through taxes on such things as carbon emissions, use of virgin materials, and trash produced. Governments could do so in a way that does not increase their overall revenues, but simply changes the source. If people aren't taxed, labor becomes a less costly factor of production and will be substituted for the now more expensive natural resources factor. Since there is vast *underemployment* and *unemployment* in the world, this shift will help alleviate those problems while also reducing pollution and the use of nonrenewable natural resources. In fact, several European countries are already moving in this direction.

This book is a well-documented call to action for individuals and businesses. As the authors conclude: "Away from the shrill divisiveness of media and politics, people are remarkably consistent in what kind of future they envision for their children and grandchildren. The potential outcome of natural capitalism and sustainability also aligns almost perfectly with what American voters are saying: they want better schools, a better environment, safer communities, family-wage jobs, more economic security, stronger family support, lower taxes, more effective governments, and more local control.

"Natural capitalism is not about fomenting social upheaval. On the contrary, that is the consequence that will surely arise if fundamental social and environmental problems are not responsibly addressed. Natural capitalism is about choices we can make that start to tip economic and social outcomes in

positive directions. And it is already occurring—because it is necessary, possible, and practical."

*Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*

by Paul Hawken, Amory Lovins, and L. Hunter Lovins

Little, Brown and Company, Boston, New York, London, 1999. \$26.95



## **Americans Serve as Guinea Pigs for Gene-Modified Food**

**By Donella Meadows**

News about genetically engineered crops breaks so fast that it's hard to keep up. For those who look upon biotech foods with suspicion, much of the latest news is surprisingly good. The companies who splice strange genes into our corn and potatoes and soybeans are pushing their products so recklessly that they are alarming not only environmentalists and consumers, but also farmers, supermarket chains, baby-food makers, and investors. They are going to have to slow down.

But one bit of news is disturbing. Since the Europeans and Japanese are refusing to eat gene-modified foods, these crops are now being dumped on the American market. We can't avoid them. They are unlabeled. They are in everything from

potato chips to salad dressings. If gene-modified foods cause problems, we will be the first to find out—unless we refuse to be guinea pigs.

First, a quick review of the news.

You've probably heard about the butterflies. One kind of genetically engineered corn now makes its own insecticide, using a gene pasted in it from a bacterium, in order to kill corn earworms. It turns out that this corn may also kill butterflies. Pollen from the biotech corn was scattered onto milkweed leaves (simulating the corn pollen that blows all over the Midwest every summer). When monarch caterpillars ate those leaves, they died.

That happened in a lab, not in nature. No one knows yet whether it happens in nature or happens to other kinds of butterflies or happens to other innocent creatures that run into the pesticide-producing corn. The point is not that biotech kills butterflies, though it might. The point, made by ecologists for years now, is that gene-spliced inventions are being spread over millions of acres at a hectic pace without any idea what their effects might be. Unwelcome surprises are almost inevitable

Among the creatures that eat that pesticide-containing corn (and pesticide-containing soy products and potatoes) are people. The pesticide in question is a toxin specific to insect larvae; it probably doesn't hurt us, or so our government and several European governments have declared. Whether you believe them depends on how much you're inclined to trust your government.

Europeans, having heard from their governments that mad cow disease is no health threat whatsoever, are not in a trustful mood. They insist that gene-modified foods at least be labeled so consumers have the option of avoiding them. Suppliers—such as our own Archer Daniels Midland (ADM), “supermarket to the world”—said it would be impossible to separate out gene-modified soybeans or corn. So Europeans stopped buying any soybeans and corn, especially if imported from the United States.

That snapped European supermarkets to attention. Within weeks, they informed ADM and other processors that they would accept no products containing gene-modified corn syrup, corn starch, corn meal, soy oil, soy protein, etc. ADM then found it possible, after all, to maintain separate supply lines. The regular foods now go to Europe. The gene-modified stuff goes to us.

Meanwhile, Greenpeace activists began to question Gerber about the gene-modified content of its baby food. Gerber, though it is owned by Novartis, one of the big gene-splicing companies, didn't waste time. It announced not only that it would drop suppliers that couldn't guarantee unspliced foods, but more than that, it would use only organic ingredients. Heinz joined in. Another baby-food maker, Healthy Times Natural Food, switched away from canola oil, canola being another crop that is commonly gene-modified and not separated or labeled.

Now analysts from Wall Street to Deutsche Bank are declaring genetic engineering to be a risky investment.

Farmers who planted expensive gene-modified seed last spring are watching the prices of their crops go down. A new report of the British Economic and Social Research Council chastises its government for mindlessly promoting gene-modified foods and says, “If anything, the public are ahead of many scientists and policy advisers in their instinctive feeling for a need to act in a precautionary way.”

So, with no warning or labeling, much less fanfare, gene-modified foods are being channeled to Americans. (Except babies.) Common wisdom in the business is that Americans don’t care whether their food is genetically manipulated.

I suspect the next surprise will be the disproof of that common wisdom. The anti-gene-modified activists, fresh from victories in Europe, know how to strike nerves. They’ve already cleansed the baby food. Next, if they’re smart, they’ll organize school kids to boycott McDonald’s and Frito-Lay until the pesticide-producing genes are removed from the fries and chips.

Meanwhile, if you want to be a creative irritant, just ask every time you buy a product or order a meal containing potatoes, corn, canola, or soy, “Is there anything genetically modified in here?” If you want to play it absolutely safe, buy certified organics.

Only consumer caution or consumer outrage will slow down the gene splicers to the point where we can all have a careful, rational, democratic discussion about who puts what in our foods, for what purposes, with what tests and proofs of safety (safety for butterflies and

other bystanders as well as people), with what labels, and with what regulations about people being treated—without their knowledge, much less their consent—as test animals.

*Donella H. Meadows, a systems analyst, author, director of the Sustainability Institute, and adjunct professor of environmental studies at Dartmouth College, writes a syndicated article each week to “present a global view, a connected view, a long-term view, an environmental and compassionate view.” Meadows can be reached at Sustainability Institute, Box 174, Hartland Four Corners, VT 05049.*



## The Nuclear Threat Is Now Greater Than Ever

*The following is reprinted from a letter written by former senator Dale Bumpers, now director of the Center for Defense Information (CDI), a group of retired generals, admirals, and other high-level military officers in Washington, D.C.*

We have just witnessed what may be the biggest U.S. foreign and military policy disaster in modern times: Congress’ resounding rejection of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Today, the world is much less safe than it was.

Congress has surrendered America’s moral authority and our leadership on nuclear arms issues, effectively saying to every nation on Earth, “Nukes are important to us and they should be to

you, too.” India, Pakistan, China, and Russia have all, in the past, said they would ratify the CTBT when the U.S. did. Now, they are free to modernize; proliferation will surely follow.

The arguments against the Treaty were partisan and pitiful. Opponents said the Treaty was not verifiable, which is untrue. The Treaty itself provides for 337 worldwide monitoring stations. They said it wasn't perfect, and that's true, as with every treaty we ever ratified. The CTBT is the first major treaty to be defeated since the Versailles Treaty in 1920, and we will pay a heavy price.

One of the most dangerous assumptions in America today is that the end of the Cold War greatly diminished the threat of nuclear war. That's not only dangerous, it's dead wrong. As Russia's conventional forces have declined in quantity and quality, she has become more reliant on her nuclear forces. Yet Russia's Early Warning System is woefully inadequate and subject to fake warnings. It stretches credulity to believe we can have over 15,000 strategic warheads in the hands of seven nations and not ultimately see them used.

The nuclear danger from the CTBT debacle is heightened by the U.S. drive to deploy a National Missile Defense. Moscow has announced in clear and unmistakable terms that if the U.S. deploys such a system, Russia will have no choice but to modernize and change its nuclear targets to include our missile defense sites. They correctly say that overwhelming our missile defense system will be much simpler and cheaper than trying to build their own.

Ask yourself this question: How would the U.S. respond if the Russians announced they were building a missile defense system, had just succeeded in their first intercept, and then two weeks later rejected the CTBT?

The U.S. has about 6,500 strategic warheads, and the Russians 7,000. About 3,000 of theirs and 2,500 of ours are on “hair trigger” alert, ready to fire at a moment's notice. It is sheer madness. It would take only 24 hours to de-alert every one of these weapons, and CDI has joined others in pleading with the President to engage the Russians on this urgent matter.

### *New Massive Increases for the Pentagon*

Military spending for FY2000 jumped \$20 billion over last year and will soar by \$133 billion over the next six years—without a credible threat in sight. Now everyone, including the Department of Defense, may get a 1 percent funding cut. Incredibly, the Pentagon says this 1 percent cut would jeopardize national defense. Incidentally, the military got their \$20 billion increase first, leaving everyone else to fend for themselves.

The massive spending on the military has no rationale whatever. No new threat, no foreseen threat. We believe the expenditures planned for attack submarines (\$63 billion), for 3,800 new fighter planes (\$350-450 billion), for 600 Osprey tilt rotor aircraft and other weapons are excessively costly and totally unnecessary.

Here are the results of years of making everyone else fend for themselves:

1. We rank 19th in education among the top 29 industrialized nations;
2. 28,000,000 Americans can't identify the U.S. on a world map;
3. 140,000 youngsters eligible for Head Start won't get a head start for lack of money;
4. Over 100,000 aliens are being invited to accept U.S. citizenship if they possess high-tech skills, because we're not educating enough people to fill these jobs;
5. U.S. teachers' salaries are the lowest as a percentage of national income of any nation on Earth.

You and I have a solemn duty to do everything in our power to change our priorities. There are some 30 ethnic and religious wars going on in the world, each a result of ignorance and poverty. As we become a more diverse society, we must do everything possible to dramatically improve the education, health, and economic well-being of our people. When only 36 percent of our people care enough to vote, our democracy is threatened. What kind of nation neglects everything but weaponry?



## Toward a Resilient Society:

### Thoughts of Robert Theobald

*Robert Theobald's passion was working with groups and organizations which recognize that directions, priorities, and goals have to change as society moves into the next millennium. He wrote and edited some 25 books on futurism, economics, fundamental change, and other related issues. Last September, Theobald addressed an audience at the Foundation for Global Community's center in Palo Alto, as part of our continuing speaker series. He spoke about some of the problems the world faces today, and posed some solutions.*

*Following his talk to the Foundation, he traveled to Australia for a series of lectures. But the cancer that had been in remission flared anew and he returned to his home in Spokane, Washington, where he died on November 27, 1999. He was 70 years old. We feel fortunate to have shared his energy and inspiration during the last months of his life.*

Theobald began by noting that we live in a world which is overcrowded, complex, and interconnected, and the globalization we experience today will not go away. Further, because much of what happens will not reflect a Newtonian universe but will be governed by the laws of chaos and complexity, "We can no longer deal, as we did in the 20th century, with laws of cause and effect. We have to look at how things evolve in a chaos and complexity world, which means you really don't know what will be the impact of what you do. One of the most extraordinary things in my life is to find out that the things I thought were

important were not, and things I thought weren't important were.”

Also new, he said, is that humanity is part of the evolutionary process and, he warned, “If we continue to assume that we can over-rule ecology, ecology will come back and kick us in the teeth. We need to re-learn the lesson that hunters and gatherers knew about living within the ecological web.”

Theobald noted that we are at the end of the dominator model. “We cannot live by coercive power. We cannot live by saying you will do what I tell you. That's how we've been living since we moved out of hunting and gathering into agriculture and we developed priests and kings who had the right to say, ‘You will do it my way or you are in trouble.’ We have moved into a world where we have to live in partnership models.”

Our institutions no longer work, he said, because at the fundamental level, they are dominator institutions. “It doesn't matter whether you are thinking about the university or the city council or the national government. They all say, ‘We know what you should do.’ They all come out of an expertise and professional model. Expert and professional models don't work anymore. Our institutions also come out of a divided model. They come out of a model that says you can split reality. For example, in the government you can talk about the economic department, and you can talk about the social department, and you can talk about overseas and domestic matters without recognizing that they're all tied together.”

What strategies should we use in these new times? Theobald first commented on oppositional strategies. “They're useful,” he said, “if they lead us to look at what has to change. However, if they simply keep alive the old categories, if they simply keep alive the old patterns, if they simply say I am against the multinational corporation, I am against whatever, all they do is lock us into the models in which we currently think. As Einstein observed, you can't solve problems with the same consciousness that created them. The real issue is can you come up with a new consciousness.”

“For example, the abortion debate is ridiculous. The issue is not what do you do with a fetus. The issue is why do you have a fetus there in the first place? We ought to be talking about how you limit the number of unwanted pregnancies. Another example is that we treat illegal drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol in totally different ways. Yet they are all the same basic issue. We're not prepared to have the debate: What do you do with substances that are potentially or actually damaging? We treat each one on its own merits rather than opening it up and saying, ‘How do we look at this as a large issue?’

“Another question is how do we develop new images and language. The first story was hunting and gathering, the second story was agriculture, the third story was industry, the fourth story is whatever one we're moving into. It needs new language, new images, new models. There are at least a hundred good books about transformational change. But we all use our own language and much of that language is too complex, too difficult, for the average person to get.”

One approach Theobald emphasized is listening. “When I talk to somebody I haven’t met before, I try and listen to them until I can say, ‘I agree with you.’ If I do that, I find that I can agree with an extraordinarily broad range of people: business, churches, environmentalists, educators. But I have to listen first.” Instead of listening, Theobald said, we define people as good guys or bad guys, and “go oppositional. We say we won’t work with business, we won’t work with multinationals. One way to look at a multinational corporation is that it’s a lot of individuals trying to make good decisions. You can either believe that people are evil or you can believe that they are stupid. I am a great believer in the stupidity model. I believe that very few people get up in the morning wanting to make the world worse. Think about it: most people believe they’re doing the best they can. Many people have extra-ordinarily little space to be creative. We can help them find space.”

Theobald said our first priority is to put quality of life over material goods. People work much longer than they used to or they should, he believes; they’re stressed out and would eagerly accept shorter work hours even if it meant fewer things to own. To work so hard, he said, “doesn’t make sense at an individual level; it doesn’t even make sense at an institutional level because the best way to turn a knowledge worker into an information worker is to overload them. What we need is creative work.”

Another item we have to deal with, he said, is the growing gap between the rich and the poor. “It’s totally extraordinary and perhaps the most frightening trend in

the world. You’ve probably all seen the statistics: three billionaires in the United States have more money than 48 nation states. Ten billionaires could deal with the major primary problems in the developing countries and not notice. The latest United Nations report talking about the wealth uses the word ‘grotesque,’ and I think it’s the only possible word. You can’t live like this. It’s not only a moral question, it’s a practical thing. It won’t work, period. People who think they can live in gated communities away from the poor for an unlimited period of time are kidding themselves.”

As for ecological integrity, a term Theobald preferred to “sustainability,” he said simply that “without ecological integrity, we won’t be here.”

Theobald also had as a priority what he called “effective decision making. It’s the one we miss all the time because our culture is not designed to deal with complex, long-run decisions. I’d like to say you can do it with adversarial government, but I don’t think so. I think you’re going to have to come up with a totally different form of government. We have to move beyond democracy in that sense, because democracy is simply coercive power at a different level. What we did is replace the power of kings with the power of the state. Sort of mediated a little bit, occasionally and not very effectively, by elections. But the bigger the system gets the less effective the mediation is. If we are going to make decisions about global warming, about new diseases, about what you do with East Timor and Kosovo and Africa, about water shortages, we need a

different pattern of decision-making than we have now.

“Finally I don’t think anything can be done about any of this without an effective value base. You can call it religion, or spirituality, or you can call it system theory—they all come out in the same place. And they all make it perfectly clear that without honesty, responsibility, humility, love, and respect for mystery, societies don’t work.”

Theobald then addressed the need for new behaviors. “First of all, each one of us needs to keep ourselves together in the turbulence of our times. It may be spiritual. It may be going out into nature. It may be working with a healing group. You’ve got to take time for yourselves, because you can’t do good work unless you are together.” Next, he said, to change the culture, we need to move beyond ourselves, figure out how to work with groups, how to educate, how to move from a job model to a right livelihood model, how to move from a medical model to a health model, how to move from coercive action to mediation, how to move from a world which encourages consumption to a world which reduces consumption by reducing hours of work.

“Unless we operate at that level, and unless we can as groups begin to show people in this culture that the work we are doing is not marginal or crazy, but we are indeed the wave of the future, people will continue to say, ‘Well, I’m not happy with what’s going on, but eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we shall die.’ Many people say that people in this culture are apathetic. I don’t believe it. People are baffled, frustrated, and angry. Now it looks like the same thing.

If you’re baffled, frustrated, and angry, what do you do with it? You don’t know. So one of my lines these days is ‘Dream no small dreams.’ You’ve got to have something big enough to inspire people: ‘Hey, that might make a difference!’”

In addressing how to spread the word, Theobald saw the need for the people most involved to talk to each other instead of just doing their own thing, creating places where people can come and learn about what he called “21st century living,” and letting media know that we want fewer stories about rapes and murders and more about what’s working in our societies. He emphasized the importance of writing our politicians, a practice he felt we have largely abandoned because we think politicians have become irrelevant. And he suggested that instead of writing negative letters, which we’re good at, we should all vow to write a positive letter to somebody once a week: “All of us doing this work find it very nerve-racking, very tough. And it’s nice to hear somebody write you or call you and say, ‘Hey, I really like the stand you took,’ or ‘I thought it was important.’ It’s not easy work. We all need strokes.”

Theobald then talked about leadership and authority. There are three models of authority, he said. “One model is top down. Everybody says we’ve given up on that. Did we? Nooo. We’re good at disguising top-down authority. But it goes on. It’s just done in different ways, ways which are more annoying, more difficult to deal with, more frustrating. We will consult you but, strangely, we will end up where we were meant to at first, right?”

“The other model we moved into is equally bad and that is the flat culture. Everybody is equally competent. So we have community meetings. We get a good turnout at the first one. We argue. And the next time 50 percent of the people come back, and we argue. And eventually we get down to a small enough group and, either fatigued or frustrated, we agree on something. Guess what happens the next week? Either somebody comes back and says, ‘I have rethought this and I’d like to start over.’ Or somebody comes in from outside and says, ‘I wasn’t consulted. Can we start over?’ Flat doesn’t work any better than top down.

“There is a middle ground. It’s not easy: teams, sapiential authority, servant leadership, all sorts of processes that allow us to work in different ways and to acknowledge where the competence is. And we have to be adult to do it. It won’t work unless people have the confidence and the willingness to say, ‘I can’t do that, I don’t know, that’s not my piece of the puzzle.’ And perhaps, even more in this culture, ‘I do know how to do this and I am willing to do it and I will lead in this area.’ Because true leadership is something we dodge. Top down leadership is easy. You know, ‘I’ll be in charge and I get all the bonuses.’ But saying I will do it without taking credit for it is not something we have enough of in this country. A Jesuit told me a definition of humility. He said, ‘Humility is not only knowing your weaknesses, it’s knowing your strengths as well and being willing to live with them.’ It’s an enormously powerful statement when you think about it. It is so easy to simply say, ‘I am humble. I’m

not going to do any of this. I don’t have any skills.’ It’s much harder to say, ‘I have the responsibility and I will do the piece of the puzzle that I can manage.’”

Theobald also warned against trying to do everything even though we see so many areas that cry out for help. Stay with what you are passionate about, he advised. “Do what matters to you. Decide what your personal mission is within this transformational framework and you will be amazed how much you can accomplish because the system is ready for change. Margaret Mead said, in one of the most quoted lines around: ‘Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.’ It’s true. If only we’d believe it.”



## Ways to Handle Conflict

### Two Book Reviews

by Mac Lawrence

*When spider webs unite, they can halt even a lion.*

Or even stop a war before it starts, adds author William Ury to that Ethiopian proverb. Ury’s book *Getting to Peace* and Harold Saunders’ new book *A Public Peace Process* shine a welcome light on how ordinary citizens can be effective in resolving conflict in every area where humans interact.

***Getting to Peace: Transforming Conflict at Home, at Work, and in the World* by William L. Ury**

Ury, one of the world's best-known negotiators, director of Harvard's Project on Preventing War, and author of the popular books *Getting to Yes* and *Getting Beyond No*, is also an anthropologist. He sees the whole human race as a tribe endangered by "our human habit of falling into destructive, often deadly conflict whenever a serious difference arises between two people, two groups, or two nations." In our increasingly violent world, it is imperative, he says, that we "create a culture where even the most serious disputes are handled on the basis not of force and coercion but of mutual interest and coexistence."

*Getting to Peace* won glowing comments from reviewers like Jane Goodall, John Kenneth Galbraith, and Jimmy Carter. It is an easy read, filled with dramatic situations Ury has mediated, from a wildcat strike in a Kentucky coal mine, to family feuds, corporate mergers, and international conflicts. He sees himself as bringing in a third side to a conflict, an outsider who helps resolve or even head off the conflict before it starts.

Ury is convinced that violence is a choice humans have made, not something unalterably carried in our genes. Humans have been around for some two and a half million years, he says, but only in the last 10,000 years is there clear evidence of organized violence and warfare. Before that, he believes, humans cooperated with each other. Every person was important in those days to

assure the survival of the tribe or clan. Hunters needed to work together to hunt successfully. No one owned land that needed to be defended or had crops to hoard. Of course there was plenty of conflict, Ury says: "As every family member knows, the more people are dependent on each other, the more potential conflict they face." But they solved their conflicts cooperatively and fairly in ways probably similar to the ways the Bushmen still do today, including having an "exit strategy," where one or both of the parties physically withdrew from a heated exchange to cool down.

"What gave birth to organized violence as a core feature of human life," Ury says, "was the dramatic change in the relationship between human beings and their environment, but what turned war into the vast and bloody conquests of recorded history was the change in the relationship between one human being and another. States now formed with the king and noble classes at the top, and the peasants and slaves at the bottom. When the rulers' power was threatened, war erupted. As Ury notes: "War shifted from a fight typically carried out for a personal purpose, such as revenge, to an impersonal battle for someone else's power and glory....The logic of coexistence may have remained the same for...the common citizen, but for the king and the noble classes, the logic of war prevailed."

Today, however, war has lost its legitimacy, Ury says. It has gone from a win-lose scenario to lose-lose, he notes, quoting Mahatma Gandhi: "An eye for an eye and we all go blind." What we are moving into, Ury says, is a "both-gain"

logic in which it is an advantage to share information and pool resources. “The Knowledge Revolution has brought about the signal evolutionary event of our era, the ingathering of humanity into one interactive and interdependent global community.” Hierarchies are crumbling, replaced by self-organizing, cooperative networks.

The Knowledge Revolution has its ominous side—you can learn how to make an atomic bomb on the Internet. But it also provides a channel for people around the globe to communicate with each other on common problems. It’s a way, Ury says, “to decide to give a resounding ‘No’ to violence and coercion and an emphatic ‘Yes’ to coexistence and conflict resolution.” He believes we are, in fact, well into a “Negotiation Revolution” in which we all can become “thirdsiders.” It is *people*—from the community—using a certain kind of *power*—the power of peers—from a certain *perspective*—of common ground—supporting a certain *process*—of dialogue and nonviolence—and aiming for a certain *product*—‘a triple win.’ ”

Ury has a motto for thirdsiders: “*Contain* if necessary, *resolve* if possible, best of all *prevent*.” People can play any of ten roles in conflict management: *Provider*, who helps people meet the needs that lie behind the conflict; *Teacher*, who shows that violence solves nothing and teaches tolerance and problem-solving; *Bridge-Builder*, who fosters genuine dialogue to forge relationships across lines of conflict; *Mediator*, who helps people search for a solution; *Arbiter*, who decides the outcome of the conflict when mediation doesn’t work; *Equalizer*, who

brings the powerful to the table and evens the playing field; *Healer*, who repairs injured relationships and encourages apologies and reconciliation; *Witness*, who recognizes the early signs of impending conflict and signals for help; *Referee*, who sets limits to the fighting; and *Peacekeeper*, who provides protection and enforces the peace.

Ury uses real situations, such as stopping a classroom fight, to show that the roles often blend and several can be played by the same person. We can all learn some of these skills, he says. Start close to home with any dispute you see, play the roles you feel comfortable with, educate the organization you work for or volunteer with, champion the teaching of tolerance and conflict resolution in schools, promote the idea of international mediation services.

If we do all this, Ury says, “Schoolchildren may wonder one day why serious conflicts ever escalated into wars. They may be astonished why we did not take the simple precautions necessary to prevent conflagration. They may puzzle over why people did not see that whatever an effective system might cost in time and effort, its price is but a pittance compared to the exorbitant cost of destructive conflict.”

*Getting to Peace: Transforming Conflict at Home, at Work, and in the World* by William Ury. Viking, New York, 1999. \$23.95

***A Public Peace Process:  
Sustained Dialogue to Transform  
Racial and Ethnic Conflicts* by  
Harold H. Saunders**

Hal Saunders, director of International Affairs at the Kettering Foundation, spent 25 years in the government working to diffuse international conflicts. He served first at the National Security Council, then at the State Department where he was Director of Intelligence and Research, Deputy Assistant Secretary, and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. He was engaged in Henry Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy, the Camp David Accords, and the Egyptian- Israeli peace treaty, and helped negotiate the release of the American hostages from Iran in 1981.

Saunders' book is filled with the wisdom he gained as he worked with warring parties. More and more he came to realize that human relationships must be healed before true peace can be attained. "Only governments," he observes, "can write peace treaties, but only human beings—citizens outside government—can transform conflictual relationships between people into peaceful relationships." That premise is the main thrust of his book, *A Public Peace Process*.

In his Introduction, Saunders defines who his book is written for: "First, for citizens outside government who want to build those peaceful relationships—whether in far-off countries or in nearby crises...for citizens who say, 'Enough is enough. This situation can't go on any longer!'"

Second, the book is for "practitioners and scholars who develop, test, and refine the instruments of peacemaking and peace-building that citizens use." His third audience is "citizens in government who need to recognize that there are some things that governments do not do well; they need partners." Fourth, are the "scholars of conflict resolution, political science, and international relations who are responsible for helping the next generations grind the lenses they will use to bring a very different world into focus."

The term "a public peace process" came to Saunders while he was facilitating a dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian leaders initiated by the Foundation for Global Community and held at its seminar grounds in Ben Lomond, California. Nothing useful could come out of such a meeting, he found, until the participants were willing to listen to each other and to begin to understand the other's viewpoint. He also realized that this would not happen quickly in a situation where the parties had developed such deep mistrust and enmity; it would require a sustained dialogue. And that is the heart of Saunders' public peace process: "a systematic, prolonged dialogue among small groups of representative citizens committed to changing conflictual relationships, ending conflict, and building peace." It is a move, he says, that is required in today's world, "a move beyond traditional academic disciplines and bureaucratic departments."

In writing about the process of sustained dialogue, Saunders shows how it differs from normal political dialogue and what

it can achieve. “If citizens genuinely grapple with their choices together, they will begin to change the quality of their relationships. They will not necessarily agree about everything, but they will emerge with a sense of where their aims are common and what is tolerable and intolerable for each significant actor. And they will understand why. They will begin considering their commitments to engage in the common task of dealing with the problem at hand. It is the mutual promises they may decide to make that will bind them in whatever associations they eventually form to accomplish the particular plan they decide to pursue.”

Saunders would also like to see the technique taught in schools as “one more vehicle for transforming our fragmented, confrontational, and self-centered society.... ‘A different kind of talk. Another way to act.’ Why not teach this to our children?”

Of his work, Saunders notes: “I write at the end of a century of world war, unprecedented genocide, weapons of mass destruction; a century of Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Pol Pot, Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosovic; a century in which innocent people by the millions have been slaughtered. I am also aware of the inhumanity of one citizen to another. I have no illusions. But I write in the conviction born of personal experience that there is a better way to conduct the affairs of humankind and that this better way must be fashioned, in significant part, by citizens outside of government in the hope that those inside government will follow their lead. To do that, citizens must come to know the power that they can create.”

*A Public Peace Process: Sustained Dialogue to Transform Racial and Ethnic Conflicts* by Harold H. Saunders. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1999.



## Prayer for the Great Family

by Gary Snyder

Gratitude to Mother Earth, sailing  
through night and day—  
and to her soil: rich, rare, and sweet  
*in our minds so be it.*

Gratitude to Plants, the sun-facing light-  
changing leaf and fine root-hairs;  
standing still through wind  
and rain; their dance is in the flowing  
spiral grain  
*in our minds so be it.*

Gratitude to Air, bearing the soaring  
Swift and the silent Owl at dawn. Breath  
of our song clear spirit breeze  
*in our minds so be it.*

Gratitude to Wild Beings, our brother,  
teaching secrets, freedoms, and ways;  
who share with us their milk;  
self-complete, brave and aware  
*in our minds so be it.*

Gratitude to Water: clouds, lakes, rivers,  
glaciers; holding or releasing; streaming  
through all our bodies salty seas  
*in our minds so be it.*

Gratitude to the Sun: blinding pulsing  
light through trunks of trees, through  
mists, warming caves where bears and  
snakes sleep—he who wakes us—  
*in our minds so be it.*

Gratitude to the Great Sky  
who holds billions of stars—and goes yet  
beyond that—beyond all powers, and  
thoughts and yet is within us—  
Grandfather Space.  
The Mind is his Wife.  
*so be it.*

—after a Mohawk prayer

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