

NEW OPTIONS

April 30, 1987

Issue No. Thirty-eight

The Best Defense Is Dealing With the Roots of Conflict

Over 70,000 people marched in Washington, D.C. last weekend for "Justice and Peace in Central America and Southern Africa," and the march got as much press coverage as anyone could have wished. But on the ground—among the marchers—things were not quite right.

Nobody really listened to the speakers. (The rhetoric was so hot and heavy that even 12-year-olds were embarrassed.) People pretty much stuck to their own little groups, except to hand out leaflets. The leaflets were turgid, and even the music lacked a certain spark. It was as if we'd done this once too often.

Some marchers came away in deep despair for the anti-war movement. We came away with a different feeling. We came away convinced that *demonstrations no longer reflect what's best or most vital about the movement.* Off the streets, away from the placards and "spokespeople," the most imaginative elements of the movement had already begun to chart a new course—away from street actions and toward rethinking; away from publicly shouting "No!" and toward privately getting together and asking, "What can we say yes to?" It was those elements that we would concentrate on in the future.

In this view, the fresh thinking going on in groups like Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament (NEW OPTIONS #31), Search for Common Ground (#22), Ark Communications Institute (#33), Exploratory Project on the Conditions of Peace ("Expro" — #20), and Center for Innovative Diplomacy (#23), is not mere intellectual icing on the movement "cake." It is the batter for a new cake. And when the fresh thinking begins to fit together in a coherent way—and is adopted by new (or refurbished) peace organizations—then new kinds of demonstrations, encompassing a broader set of actors and a more positive and healing sensibility, will surely follow.

That may happen sooner than you think. Over the last two years, a number of people from the leading "rethinking/reconceptualizing" peace groups have been meeting under the auspices of the Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI) in Snowmass, Colo. Their purpose is,

precisely, to pull the various strands of "alternative security" thinking together . . . to present it as a coherent alternative to left- and right-wing approaches to peace.

Among those involved in the RMI effort: W.H. ("Ping") Ferry, co-founder of Expro; Amory Lovins, director of research at RMI and author of *Soft Energy Paths* (1977); Michael Shuman, president of the Center for Innovative Diplomacy; Daniel Arbess, until recently executive director of the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy; and Hal Harvey, director of the RMI Security Program.

In the article below, specially prepared for NEW OPTIONS readers, Harvey outlines what he takes to be the central idea of the alternative-security movement—that we've got to address the economic and political *roots* of conflict. His article is the RMI synthesis team's first published work and they look forward to your criticisms and suggestions c/o the Forum page of this newsletter.

By Hal Harvey

For more than 40 years, the debate over U.S. security policy has focused on weapons. How many should we have? What kind? Governed by what doctrines?

Poised on one side of this debate have been the *arms builders*, who believe that the best defense is a good offense. On the other side have been the *arms controllers*, who believe that the U.S. and the Soviet Union should freeze and reduce their nuclear arsenals.

Both sides are sincere. However, both sides misconceive U.S. security as principally a question of weapons. As international relations specialists have long realized, weapons are merely the *symptom* of deeper economic and political conflicts.

The Soviet-American arms race, for example, reflects each superpower's perception that the other's political system is fundamentally unjust. It also reflects both superpowers' competition to secure resources, military bases, trading partners, and strategic allies.

Alternative security strategists want the U.S. to recognize and convincingly address the full spectrum of threats to its national security. Most important, they want the U.S. to focus on reducing the economic and political roots of conflict.

Economic roots . . .

From the imperial wars of previous centuries to today's tensions in the Middle East, shortages and uneven distribution of natural resources have been a primary source of international conflict. An important step toward reducing conflict, therefore, must be to decrease competition for natural resources.

Pursuit of natural resources creates conflict in many ways, and a more thoughtful resource policy could strengthen national security considerably. Take energy, for example. Investments in energy efficiency (smarter light bulbs, smarter cars, smarter houses) and renewable energy sources would enable the U.S. to end its dependence on foreign oil supplies in short order.

In the late 1970s, the U.S. faced unstable political conditions in the Middle East and an insatiable energy appetite. The national response (under a Democratic president): Create a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) designed to guarantee access to "our vital interests in the region." The RDF's success as a deterrent is certainly open to question. What is clear, however, is that its projection of nuclear-armed battleships into the Middle East has increased the risks of nuclear war.

By contrast, an investment of a *single year's* RDF budget in reducing buildings' heat losses could eliminate our need for Middle East oil! In fact, either weatherization of buildings or accelerated replacement of gas-guzzlers by efficient cars could eliminate *all* U.S. oil imports.

Obsolete minerals

The U.S. could reduce its dependence on other strategic minerals, such as chromium and cobalt, simply by taking advantage of the ongo-

Corridors of Power

ing revolution in materials science.

Today, advances in Japanese ceramics and supermagnets, Swedish amorphous steels, and American polymers and composites are quietly doing to most "strategic minerals" what conservation and renewables already did to oil: making them optional, or in a political sense, impotent and obsolete.

These opportunities in technology, which can and must be seized by us, are complemented by a global shift—already underway—away from material-intensive economies. In the U.S., for example, steel consumption per dollar of real GNP has now fallen below its 1860 level (!)—in part because we have lighter cars, make more of their parts from other materials, and are buying a higher ratio of computers to cars than we used to.

Our military mission in dozens of countries could be substantially reduced if we encouraged such technological trends and took full advantage of them.

Share the knowledge

American dependence on foreign resources is not the only economic factor that might draw the U.S. into conflict. Other nations have similar dependencies, and could draw us into *their* conflicts. We could strengthen our national security by carefully working with other nations so that they, too, adopt resource efficiency policies.

Energy policy provides some rich examples. By promoting renewable energy systems in the Third World, we could eliminate many nations' pretexts for acquiring nuclear reactors (and thereby their means for acquiring nuclear weapons). By fostering energy efficiency in the Soviet Union, we could reduce any incentive the Soviets might have to take over Middle East oil fields.

Share the wealth

Because impoverishment and economic subordination also provoke nations to aggression, the U.S. should promote economic development abroad.

As the Marshall Plan demonstrated, development assistance need not be offered out of charity, but because robust, self-reliant economies have fewer reasons to threaten or attack neighbors, can better resist outside domination, and are better partners in the global economy.

To promote robust, independent economies, development assistance needs to be carefully designed to foster self-reliance, not dependence [cf. NEW OPTIONS #28 & 37—ed.].

Political roots . . .

Economic and resource needs can only explain some of the military tension between nations. Another major source of tension is ideologies—political, religious or economic.

But for ideologies to lead to war, they must

be adopted and promoted by national governments. Nations in which a small number of leaders can impose their ideologies by fiat have always been the most warlike. By contrast, nations characterized by public participation—real democracy—have rarely taken up arms against one another. Therefore, one goal of alternative security policy is to seek to spread real democracy through a strategy that might be called "leader control."

Leader control abroad

Efforts to promote leader control through greater political participation abroad must be as nonprovocative as possible. U.S. foreign policy should seek to help individuals abroad reform their own systems according to their *own* values and visions.

To reach Soviet opinion leaders, Americans need to avoid the temptation of focusing solely on Soviet dissidents, refuseniks and political prisoners. While the human rights cases for these individuals are profound, Americans must recognize that they represent only one part of Soviet society—and that some of the most promising Soviet reformers are progressive yet loyal members of Soviet society.

Lost in the debate over linking Soviet-American transactions to reformed human rights behavior is the fact that these transactions, in and of themselves, exert a democratizing influence. Every one of the 50,000 Americans visiting the Soviet Union each year, whether for tourism, scientific projects or business, meets Soviets formally and informally and invariably exerts some kind of influence.

Greater Soviet-American trade is a particularly promising area for nonprovocative leader control. As Soviets encounter more American products, they begin to see the virtues of other economic systems and support internal economic reforms.

Leader control through relationships, trade and technology can be applied to other adversaries, too. In Central America, the U.S. could supply advanced communications technologies to all oppressed minorities, be they Salvadoran or Nicaraguan or whomever. In South Africa, people-to-people relationships could help sway the white majority. In Iran, relationships with moderates could be developed—not by illegal arms transfers, but through joint projects in agriculture, medicine and law.

Leader control at home

While Americans pride themselves on their democracy, the fact remains that U.S. foreign policy is largely set by the president and the National Security Council, a small organization of unelected officials. Congress plays a role in foreign policy, but it is a primarily negative one, denying budget authorizations or outlawing certain international transactions. We need a re-

vised War Powers Act, one that not only demands presidential consultation with Congress before using force, but also *prohibits* the president from using force except under certain carefully defined circumstances.

Another way to foster domestic leader control is to encourage greater public openness about our strategies, weapons deployments and intelligence activities abroad. In the same way that we now require environmental impact statements and public review for every major domestic action, we could require "national security impact statements" with public review for every major action in foreign or military policy.

A third way to foster U.S. leader control is already under way and will prosper unless the government interferes. Tens of thousands of so-called "citizen diplomats" are now working with Soviets on joint cultural, scientific and economic projects. Equally impressive are the 1,000 U.S. local governments that are involving themselves to some extent in "foreign affairs" [cf. NEW OPTIONS #23—ed.].

Whole new agenda

What we have outlined here is one part of a three-part alternative security agenda:

- We believe the U.S. should give greatest priority to *reducing the economic and political roots of conflict.*
- Conflicts that have not yet erupted into violence should be resolved through *stronger international rules and better conflict resolution mechanisms* [cf. NEW OPTIONS #34—ed.].
- To guard against conflicts that do turn violent, the U.S. should build *nonprovocative defenses* so no rational leader would mount an attack, and any attempt at an attack would fail [cf. NEW OPTIONS #26—ed.].

We believe this agenda, synthesizing many people's work over the years, presents a realistic, resilient and comprehensive new approach to national security.

NewOptions

NEW OPTIONS (ISSN 0890-1619) is published every month except August by New Options Inc., 2005 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., lower level, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 822-0929.

Please address ALL correspondence to Post Office Box 19324, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Subscriptions: \$25 a year in the U.S., \$32 first-class and Canada, \$39 elsewhere. Back issues \$2 each.

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Typesetting: Baker Johnson Design, (703) 237-0557

Printing: Newsletter Services, (202) 529-5700

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Closson: conversion to what?

For 20 years now, "economic conversion" advocates have been urging the conversion of defense plants to civilian use (e.g., General Dynamics switching from submarines to subways). Sounds great, but it is fair to say that the conversion movement has hardly gotten off the ground. What's the problem?

To the political left, "the problem" is simple: people are afraid of losing their jobs, and/or their communities' tax bases. For Michael Closson, tall, strawberry-blond executive director of the California-based Center for Economic Conversion (CEC), the problem is not in the movement's would-be supporters but in the movement itself. It is not visionary enough . . . not bold enough.

"The conversion of [individual] defense plants remains a valid concern," Closson told us last week from CEC's cluttered offices in the San Francisco Bay area. "But it is problematic, too. Plant level conversion does not capture the public imagination. It tends to lock proponents into stressing the need to preserve the aerospace behemoths which dominate defense industry. . . . It [tends to equate conversion with] job insurance. Not to put that down—but we feel it's critical to have a much broader definition of what conversion means and who can benefit.

"We [believe] economic conversion must be broadly defined to include not only the conversion of defense plants, but also the *diversification of defense-dependent communities*, and the *transformation of our overall economy*. . . . Encompassing both of these is the values issue. Some of the values which served us quite well when we were an immature country settling a continent are no longer functional—rugged individualism, resource exploitation and material acquisitiveness. Now our central role in the world community compels us to encourage social responsibility, conservation, and personal development for ourselves and others. . . ."

In addition, Closson speaks of the need to promote positive defense policies (and not be merely anti-defense), and the need to appeal to businesspeople, professionals and local officials, "not just the traditional progressive constituency."

Leapfrogging the 80s

How did an activist in a very traditionally left- and labor-based movement come to embrace a holistic, post-materialist worldview? "Part of it has been the inability to effectuate change at the plant level," Closson told NEW OPTIONS. "But the other part is just the recognition that we have to *open our eyes* and perceive that we

have to create a positive future! And that means being really imaginative and innovative.

"[Another] part of it is that we want to have a real impact. We've reached a new era. There are limits to growth, there are limits to the old industrial model, we have to talk about quality rather than quantity. . . ."

And another part of it is, surely, more personal. Closson, 48, is an Ivy League Ph.D.; he came to the west coast to be an assistant dean at Stanford. "But all of that stuff is a little too mainstream for me. . . ."

"[What it comes down to is] we're trying to move out of the 60s into the 90s—leapfrogging the 70s and 80s a little bit." He looks around, sees clutter all over the office, and laughs: "Well, we're trying to move out of the 60s programatically, but office-wise we still have some of the flavor of the 60s intact. . . ."

Organizing

Like other economic-conversion groups, CEC produces a fistful of literature. But its activities go far beyond the literary. "We are taking a two-track approach in our program," says Closson. "We are providing organizing assistance in military-dependent communities, [primarily through] our workshops and model conversion ordinances. At the same time, we are promoting positive alternatives to the military economy."

• **Workshops.** "We're about to take our workshop on the road," Closson told NEW OPTIONS. "We'll be doing [our first] in San Diego soon and we've got some interesting people coming: one of the mayor's top aides, a Congressman's aide, the head of the local enterprise board. . . ."

"We'll be talking about the need to build healthy diversified local economies. Being heavily dependent upon the military is in contradiction to that. It's not a dependable source of income—you're too vulnerable. . . . We'll be giving concrete examples of what cities could do [instead]. A lot of these examples are already out there—community self-reliance strategies, community loan funds—the work of the Regeneration Project (NEW OPTIONS #15) and so forth—there's been some very exciting stuff going on in St. Paul with the Homegrown Economy Project (#21). . . . We're going to basically give an array of options to choose from so [cities will know] they *don't* have to stay locked in to the military economy. [More] than the examples, we'll be conveying a mindset, a recognition that WE CAN RE-CREATE our communities—that we don't have to fall back

on federal spending whether it's military or non-military. . . ."

• **Ordinances.** "We have developed a model conversion ordinance," says Closson. "It could be instituted by city councils or through the initiative process.

"There's a group meeting next month in San Jose to start an initiative campaign. I have mixed feelings about that. The advantage is that you get a lot of publicity right away. The disadvantage is that you move into adversarial modes right away."

Closson helped write the San Jose initiative—which closely resembles CEC's model conversion ordinance. "It would do three things," he says. "The first is conventional conversion stuff—job retraining, employment assistance, that sort of thing. But the others are more interesting.

"The second would be [providing] assistance to companies with defense contracts—helping them develop strategies for diversifying and moving away from defense dependency. Part of it would be paid for by the local government. However, part of it would be paid for by a tax on military contracts coming into the city. We're talking about a small tax, like about three-tenths of 1%. But in San Jose that would be \$300,000 a year! It would [sure be controversial]."

"The third part of it is developing strategies to diversify the local economy—not so much assisting individual defense firms but building up the whole sub-system of non-defense businesses, following a kind of homegrown-economy model. . . ."

Envisioning

Closson and CEC are—increasingly—promoting positive alternatives to the military economy for the U.S. as a whole, not just for individual cities. These alternatives are anything but tepid. In one recent article in CEC's newspaper, Expro co-founder Mark Sommer (NEW OPTIONS #26) suggests "reclaiming the natural environment" and "developing alternative energy sources." In another, Urban Ecology founder Richard Register (#37) argues that "creating 'ecocities' is an adventure more exciting than war." In a third, peace networker Ernie Lowe envisions U.S. venture capitalists "apply[ing] an entrepreneurial style of innovation to global problems."

Closson calls this kind of thinking "demand side conversion" because it focuses upon "the wide array of critical unmet human and environmental needs and the 'real security' which can be achieved by addressing them. . . . These needs can [and *should*] be perceived as opportunities. . . . We are operating on the assumption that Star Wars lacks not for cogent critiques but for compelling rivals. We are starting to create those rivals." *Closson: CEC, 222-C View St., Mountain View CA 94041.*

It happens every summer

Every year, the nation's "leading" academics and intellectuals decry the absence of path-breaking new social and political ideas in this country. And every summer, at least 12 conferences prove them wrong.

These conferences—focusing on bits and pieces of the emerging new decentralist/globally responsible worldview—usually receive no mainstream media coverage whatsoever. This year may be different, however. This year mainstream journalists are beginning to notice that, e.g., *New Age Journal* now has more readers than the *New York Review of Books*, and the *Utne Reader* more than the venerable *Nation*. In his popular "Zeitgeist" column in next week's *New Republic* (May 18), Charles Paul Freund is going to say this: "Last week's *deja vu* anti-CIA protest notwithstanding, 60s-clones are not likely to be the next press hype. In place of Reaganite yuppies, look for holistic New Agers."

So bring a camera and tape recorder to our 12 "can't-miss" conferences this summer. Prodded by the mainstream media, all kinds of people might be asking you, "What goes on at those places, anyway?"

New distinctions

• A good jumping-off place is the **Choices for the Future Symposium** (June 13-15, Snowmass, Colo.), sponsored by John Denver's Windstar Foundation. Participants "will look at our underlying issues and key belief systems," write the organizers, "making new distinctions [which can] create the possibility to transcend separation." Speakers will include Ram Dass and Ted Turner; Hunter and Amory Lovins, co-founders of the Rocky Mountain Institute (p. 1 above); former Colorado Gov. Richard Lamm, author of *Megatraumas* (NEW OPTIONS #30); and former U.N. assistant secretary-general Robert Muller, author of *The Networking Institute's "Decide to Network"* poem. *Windstar Fdn, P.O. Box 286, Snowmass CO 81654, 800-542-5428.*

• If you liked our review of the Valverde and Farrell books (p. 7 below), you'll love the **National Conference on Men and Masculinity** (June 24-27, Hartford, Conn.). It's an annual conference bringing together men and women who favor radically restructuring sex roles in the direction of equality and empathy; it includes, but is not limited to, members of the National Organization for Changing Men (NOCM). Farrell has been a member of NOCM's executive council, as have such other "changing men" as Bob Brannon, co-editor of *The 49% Majority*, and Joe Pleck, co-editor of *Men and Masculinity*. "Come join us," the organizers write, "in creating a safe space where men, women and children can share and grow, work and play, and celebrate 12 years of the national men's movement." *Conference Planning Committee, P.O. Box 14035, Hartford CT 06114, 203-247-2307.*

• You might want to cut your time short at the Masculinity Conference to attend a thoughtful seminar at the High Wind intentional community in rural Wisconsin, **Quo Vadis Aquarius: Where Is the New Age Going?** (June 26-July 4). Staff people will include David Spangler, author of *Revelation: The*

Birth of a New Age (#3), and Belden Paulson, co-convenor of the first national "post-liberal think tank," currently in formation. "Through presentation, discussion, attunement, play, and the environment of the High Wind community," Paulson writes, "we will seek to separate the wheat from the chaff." *Quo Vadis Aquarius, Center for Urban Community Development, Univ. of Wisconsin, 929 N. Sixth St., Milwaukee WI 53203, 414-227-3280.*

• From High Wind community, it's just a hop, skip and jump down to Global Education Associates' 13th annual summer institute, **Choosing Our Global Future** (June 30-July 9, Evanston, Ill.). The institute will feature talks and short courses, most from an explicitly decentralist/globally responsible point of view. Some examples: Joan Shapiro from Chicago's South Shore Bank will be speaking on "Thinking Globally/Acting Locally"; George Lopez, an authority on terrorism interviewed in #24, will be giving a course on "Global Citizenship in a Changing World Community"; and Miriam MacGillis, director of the Center for Earth Stewardship, will be giving a course on "Bioregionalism and World Order." *Marijon Binder, Global Concerns Center, 2131 Berwyn Ave., Chicago IL 60625, 312-728-6336.*

Green feast

• Alternately, you can head for New England and the "first open national meeting" of the U.S. Greens, **Building the Green Movement: A National Conference for a New Politics** (July 2-7, Amherst, Mass.). "We are *not* gathering to make decisions for the Green movement," write the organizers. "Our purpose is educational. It will be a chance for Greens and activists in kindred movements from across the land to meet, share perspectives, and learn from each other." Invited speakers include Native Americans, eco-feminists, Green party functionaries from West Germany and Brazil, "people who are *active* in Green and kindred social change movements, not merely academics or authors who write about us." Workshop topics include grassroots democracy, independent political action, community economics, etc., plus you can schedule a workshop yourself once you get there. And there will be exhibits, music, games, "Green food," etc. "We hope," say the organizers, "to have something that combines the best features of an 1880s Populist encampment and a 1970s alternative energy fair." *National Green Gathering, P.O. Box 703, White River Junction VT 05001.*

One thing the Green conference doesn't have is anything on spirituality. Partly to remedy that, Corinne McLaughlin and Gordon Davidson—authors of the best recent book on intentional communities (#17)—will be sponsoring a "salon-style dialogue" on politics and spirituality the day before the conference. *McLaughlin: Sirius Community, Baker Rd, Shutesbury MA 01072.*

• After the Green conference, you'll be sorely tempted to attend the Institute for Social Ecology's summer program, **Ecology and Community** (July 10-Aug. 8, Rochester, Vt.). Among the two- and four-week courses available: "Bioregional Agriculture," "Sustainable Community Design," "Advanced Concepts in Feminism and Ecology," and "Ecology and Spiritual Renewal." Teachers will include Margot Adler, author of *Drawing Down the Moon: Pagans in America Today* (to be reviewed) and Murray Book-

chin, author of *The Modern Crisis* (#30). *Glenn McRae, ISE, P.O. Box 384, Rochester VT 05767.*

• If you can't stay for ISE's summer courses, you should at least stop off in Chicago to attend the Institute of Cultural Affairs's summer workshops, **Exploring Planetary Futures** (July 17-26). William Irwin Thompson, author of *Pacific Shift* (#28), will be leading one workshop on "Planetary Culture and Individual Consciousness"; Charlene Spretnak, co-author of *Green Politics* (#3), will be leading another on "Postmodern Politics—Spirit and Practice"; and ICA's international development workers will be leading a third. *ICA, 4750 N. Sheridan Rd, Chicago IL 60640.*

• Now head due west, for Whidbey Island (near Seattle) and the **Chinook Summer Festival and Summer Workshops** (July 18-Aug. 9). An astonishing variety of people will be on hand to tell us "stories of the earth, its extraordinary creativity, and its present crises" — then help us "unlock our personal power and wisdom." Among them: John Graham, executive director of The Giraffe Project (#37); Joe Meeker, editor of *Minding the Earth Newsletter* (#22); and Bruce Bochte, first baseman for the Oakland Athletics (he'll be taking hard-hit grounders on "The Earth Tradition"). *Chinook Learning Center, Box 57, Clinton WA 98236.*

Time to get ready

• You may be exhausted by now, but chances are you'll want to keep going. Certainly you'll want to attend the 25th annual meeting of the Association for Humanistic Psychology (AHP), **Taking Humanistic Psychology Into the Mainstream** (Aug. 5-9, Oakland, Calif.), which will be highly "politically" focussed this year thanks in part to the efforts of Calif. State Assemblyman John Vasconcellos (#27), an AHP co-president. "More than ever before in history," says Vasconcellos, "our society is showing signs of readiness for accepting our humanistic vision as a basis for a healthier society. The time is ripe, our turn is coming, let's get ourselves ready now." Speakers will include Arthur Egenorf, author of *Healing From the War* (#22); Jack Canfield, co-founder of Self-Esteem Seminars (#27); and Frank Rubinfeld, author of *The Peace Manual* (#31). *AHP, P.O. Box 7226, Stanford CA 94305.*

• Next, head east to the Epworth Forest Conference Center in North Webster, Ind., and the **North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology** (Aug. 19-22). This is a coming together of bioregionalists, deep-ecologists, and Christians from many traditions for the purpose of "enter[ing] into purposeful discussion and formulating an authentic approach to the land and the environmental crisis. . . . Of central importance for the hemispheric impact of the conference will be the development of a document [articulating a] specific ecological direction for Christians of every denomination." Some of the conference conveners who'll be playing a major role: David Haenke, co-founder of the North American Bioregional Congress (#35); Donald Berry, founding father of "creation spirituality" (#29); and John Cobb, the respected Protestant theologian. *Registrar, Conf. on Christianity & Ecology, P.O. Box 14305, San Francisco CA 94114.*

• You might not feel like flying back west again. But the most experimental and participatory confer-

Continued on page eight, column three . . .

Letters . . .

Fear of greening

I agree with you: Progressive politics in this country is paralyzed by the old left-liberal mythologies. Green politics can unparalyze us by redefining the issues. How difficult this will be is best illustrated by a true story.

Last month Kirkpatrick Sale spoke at a conference at Cornell University. Kirk is, of course, one of your favorite political thinkers (NEW OPTIONS #21, 24 & 35). To illustrate Green departures from traditional politics, he spoke of the 40,000 homeless people living in New York City, and he said this: Instead of demanding that more housing be built in a city that is already "an insult" to the environment of its region, ecological wisdom would suggest that the homeless be moved out of the city, to housing in harmony with the land.

An emotional outburst from a young man in the audience interrupted the speech and continued for some time. "How dare you tell people they have to leave their homes! What you are proposing is stupid and fascist and totally unacceptable to me." Several others spoke in support of his objection. "Forcible relocation" became a phrase bandied about, although it had never passed Sale's lips and was completely contrary to his proposal, which emphasized choice and incentives. The whole issue was distorted beyond recognition.

Few people deny that the planet faces an ecological crisis. Many recognize the deadly connections Greens make among deteriorating ecosystems, the threat of nuclear war, mass starvation, and Third World exploitation. Yet new solutions elicit fear and outrage.

Somehow we are going to have to break out of this stranglehold of old mythologies and find the path to the future.

—Kitty Mattes
Ithaca, N.Y.

Does networking heal?

In your review of Lipnack and Stamps's *Networking Book* (NEW OPTIONS #34), you note—approvingly, if I read you right—that in their earlier book, "They gave the impression that the really beneficial networks were the ones that trumpeted values like sharing and personal growth. [But in their current book] they say this: 'One person's good values are another's bad values. Without judging a network's goals, values and objectives—its ends—we feel networking *per se* can be beneficial because the means are participatory.'"

There may well be *something* to this. But I would need a lot of convincing before I'd feel comfortable about the Racist Resource Group (if such existed) just because they used computers and networked.

I applaud your emphasis on synthesis, your avoidance of knee-jerk value judgments, categorizations, and non-productive polarizations, and your emphasis on process. But I don't think we can or should avoid dealing with goals, values, "ends." For if the ends don't justify the means, neither do the means justify the ends.

—Will Friedman
New York, N.Y.

Jessica Lipnack and Jeffrey Stamps respond . . .

Dear Will Friedman: We agree with you—up to a point.

While the process of networking is intrinsically a democratic one (an exchange among peers), a network's extrinsic purpose may be highly undemocratic. People with "good" values have no trademark on the term "network," and there are countless groups that come together for the purpose of hurting others.

However, anyone who's experienced the power of being in a network recognizes its process is substantially different from that of a bureaucracy or hierarchy. We believe that that process necessarily affects people in a positive way.

Religion can unite us

NEW OPTIONS is well-written, concise and to the point, and strives to provide an integrative, planetary perspective. However, the editorial vision can benefit from a continual "focus check" to assure that important issues and perspectives are not ignored or understated.

For example, in "Now that 'Progress' No Longer Unites Us" (NEW OPTIONS #33), I find it interesting that, of the six "stories" [or "worldviews" or "paradigms"] mentioned, the only one springing from a religious vision is "fundamentalism" of either the Christian or Islamic variety.

Please consider that, for more than a century, the Baha'i faith has been proclaiming a vision of the human future which has much affinity with the perspectives often voiced in NEW OPTIONS.

I realize that suggesting that religion might have a significant role to play in the effort to bring about fundamental global social change is pretty unpopular in some circles, and presents a potential "hot potato" for your newsletter. However, to ignore or understate the significance and potential of religion is often a serious lack in the "new age" dialogue.

No serious attempt to create a humane, sus-

tainable culture, let alone a new global civilization, can ignore religion. Religiously grounded values are probably the only forces capable of providing the "glue" or "foundational consciousness" needed to undergird a sustainable civilization. History suggests rather strongly that only the great world religions have spawned enduring civilizations.

Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i faith, wrote over a century ago that "the earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens." Since the inception of their faith, Baha'is have held that acceptance of the oneness of mankind is the prerequisite for the reorganization of the world as one country—the home of humankind.

That this view is a "story" capable of meeting the test of being a "major driving force in history" is evidenced by the fact that the Baha'i faith is the fastest growing religion in the world today.

—Dr. Rick Johnson
Dept of Political Science
Southwestern College
Winfield, Kans.

Fear of opening

In a letter in NEW OPTIONS #34, peace activist Marty Jezer states that open space—"space to operate between left and right and between the old assumptions"—does not exist in "real situations." From my point of view, this misses the point completely.

The purpose of open space is to redefine the question so that the impossible choices currently asked [of us] can be changed and become more manageable. To use Marty's example: The nature of the abortion issue would clearly change radically if the goal of our society was to ensure that no child was conceived unless it were wanted.

Even at the personal level, it is clear that we often block ourselves from seeing alternative routes into the future. Open space can change both our own perceptions and those of the society if we are willing to take the risk of breaking out of current narrow ideologies. This is what Search for Common Ground (NEW OPTIONS #22), RESULTS (#19), Action Linkage (#1), and many other organizations are demonstrating with increasing effectiveness.

—Robert Theobald
Author, *The Rapids of Change* (1986)
Wickenburg, Ariz.

Who's on first?

I was quite pleased that you ran your piece by Frances Kendall and Leon Louw ("South Africa: The Decentralist Alternative," NEW OPTIONS #35). It is my understanding that both authors consider themselves libertarians, and for some time have been associated with

the Libertarian International.

That should not be surprising. After all, libertarianism is the only *viable* political movement that seeks to bring such concepts as decentralization and non-violence into practice.

—John B. Heaton
Chair, So. Car. Libertarian Party
Columbia, So. Car.

Thanks for mentioning me as one of North America's "underappreciated" decentralist thinkers and activists (in your introduction to Kendall/Louw). In case your readers are wondering, I am editor of the quarterly networking newsletter *Decentralize!*. Readers can write for a complimentary sample issue to: Box 106, 632 S. Cloverdale Ave., Los Angeles, North America 90036.

—Carol Moore
Los Angeles, Calif.

Triad that binds

I really appreciated your article on world government ("Reforming the U.N.: Alternative to Any More Irangates," NEW OPTIONS #34). I feel that this is the only program that gives humanity a long-term future.

—Ken Keyes
Author, *The Hundredth Monkey* (1981)
Coos Bay, Ore.

In a speech last summer in Australia, Keyes called for a "global republic" with a World Congress, World Court, and popularly-elected World President. The Congress would be based on a "triple criterion" voting system much like Richard Hudson's Binding Triad: "Laws passed by the Congress [would] require a two-thirds vote that simultaneously represents two-thirds of the nations, two-thirds of the population and two-thirds of the monetary support of the World Government."

Richard Hudson's proposal for a "Binding Triad" voting system at the U.N. is a good start, but it needs work.

Hudson's third leg, which allocates voting power in proportion to nations' contributions to the U.N. budget, does not recognize the important social and ecological limits to economic growth. Hudson proposes to apportion representation by GNP, which would condone purely economic growth and development at the expense of other values.

I recognize the strategic importance of giving the big financial contributors special influence. But the fact is that the nations which have gained the most wealth through the international economic order are the nations most responsible for the problems the U.N. is going to have to solve during the next century.

I also object to Hudson's position that the

General Assembly could use peacekeeping forces and economic sanctions but not military power. I do not suppose that a centralized world government could be trusted to use violence any better than a centralized national government, but Hudson gives the U.N. too little power to enforce its laws.

There is an alternative to military power: popular nonviolent resistance. See, for example, Gene Sharp's work on "civilian-based defense" [briefly discussed in NEW OPTIONS #6 & 26—ed.].

Of course, enforcing decisions through citizen-initiated, grassroots resistance in countries whose policies contravene U.N. law would require a different kind of political structure than Hudson has in mind. An international peacekeeping force based on nonviolent resistance could only be the army of a *decentralized, community-based, participatory-democratic* world government.

—Sean Stryker
Northern California Greens
Berkeley, Calif.

United Networks?

I noticed an interesting connection between your first and last articles in NEW OPTIONS #34. The former dealt with reforming the U.N. and raised, among other things, the question of how people as opposed to governments should be represented. The latter covered the new Lipnack/Stamps book on networking and contained your comment that "quite a few 'political' people have been making fun of the concept of networking," whereas it can, on the contrary, embody "an exciting new kind of politics."

Perhaps the role of networking in dealing with the problems of the U.N. should be examined.

Several thinkers have proposed the concept of a "United Networks" as an eventual replacement for, or supplement to, the United Nations. A key consideration would be the extent to which fluid networks could function within a formal organizational structure.

While the U.N. will no doubt play an important role in the development of a network-based entity, it might be more appropriate to allow the seeds to take hold outside a nation-based organization. This would avoid the need for formal governmental approval.

—Stuart F. Chuzmir
Port Washington, N.Y.

Paying the piper

I am delighted that you have tackled the U.N. question in NEW OPTIONS #34. It is a subject that should engage many more people concerned about building a just and sustainable social order.

Recently I drew up a "Proposal for Citizen Financing of the U.N.," which seeks to embrace Saul Mendlovitz's principle of much broader participation by the peoples of the world. Here is the core of my argument:

"If it is going to be capable of acting truly in the interest of most of the world's peoples, the U.N. should not be dependent on a handful of major financial supporters, let alone one single country like the United States.

"While it would be inappropriate to tie the U.N. to any one religious tradition, the Biblical concept of tithing may be useful and relevant. Under that concept, every believer is exhorted to contribute one tenth of his or her personal income to the support of the institution in which he or she believes. Why not a different measure but embodying the same principle of a *regular, voluntary payment* to [the U.N.]—say, "hundred tithing" or one hundredth of one tenth of personal income.

"For a family in an industrial country with an income of \$25,000, this would work out to \$25 a year. For the less well off, the amount would be smaller, but in principle, proportionately as manageable.

"The goal should be to generate [so many contributions] that, at least as far as the core operations are concerned, at least half [of the U.N.'s budget] would come directly from the peoples of the world."

—Ward Morehouse
Research Associate, *Schl. of Int'l Affairs*
Columbia University
New York, N.Y.

Universal imperative

My husband and I are members of the Baha'i faith. Earlier this year we moved to Guatemala to build a life for ourselves and help in the development of the Baha'i world community—the administrative institutions of which are a blueprint for for an inevitable World Commonwealth Federation.

Talk about "grassroots"! This movement places priority on the ability of largely illiterate, impoverished Third World peoples to peacefully (without revolutionary violence) achieve self-determination on the local level. The application of spiritual principles is inherent [in our work].

So here we are, peacefully struggling to establish an economic footing on which to support our family of five (we are not subsidized by the Baha'i faith). Money to renew our magazine subscriptions is just not available. However, we're making an exception for NEW OPTIONS. We get so excited reading of the manifold ways that the universal imperative of this Age is expressing itself in the minds and actions of concerned fellow humans.

—Diana Carson
Canton Chitay, Guatemala

Winner: limits to technology?

When Langdon Winner wrote the book *Autonomous Technology* as a young MIT graduate in 1977, he was still struggling to define the problem of "runaway technology." Now he's written a second book that is to the first as a butterfly is to a caterpillar: *The Whale and the Reactor, A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology* (Univ. of Chicago Press, \$18). It is the most subtle and sophisticated treatment of the autonomous-technology theme since Lewis Mumford's books of the 1930s and 40s. And it is more. It is the most *constructive* critique of concepts like "appropriate technology," "decentralization" and—even—"the New Age," that we now have.

Hidden constitution

We have no philosophy of technology, says Winner, because the "idea of progress"—the idea that change is "growth" and growth is good—has been so dominant. Even the left sees technology as neutral, its effects dependent largely on how it is used and to whose benefit. Winner has a name for this perspective: "technological sonnambulism." Sleepwalking. He calls on us to "admit our responsibility" for the world we are making by means of our technological choices.

In careful but graceful prose, he shows how our technologies "reconstruct social roles and relationships." He demonstrates "two ways in which artifacts can contain political properties." He argues that our technological ensemble constitutes "a constitution of sorts, the constitution of a socio-technical order." Some of its characteristics:

- centralized organizations;
- "gigantism";
- hierarchical authority;
- crowding out of other varieties of socio-technical arrangements and activities.

Just as our political constitution has a guiding principle (democracy), so, too, does our socio-technical constitution: the principle of efficiency. To create a different and more humanly satisfying socio-technical constitution, we first need to come up with a different socio-technical principle—a "deliberately articulated, widely shared notion of a society worthy of our care and loyalty." And not just by writing about it. "To [foster] this process would require building institutions in which the claims of technical expertise and those of a democratic citizenry would meet face to face. . . . The heretofore concealed importance of technological choices would become a matter for explicit study and debate."

To some extent, of course, we've already

begun this debate. Over the last 20 years we've been inventing (or resurrecting) concepts like "appropriate technology," "nature" and "risk assessment"—concepts that seek to put the "principle of efficiency" into some kind of humane perspective. Unfortunately, says Winner, none of these concepts is adequate to the task.

Inadequate concepts

Winner mistrusts the concept *appropriate technology* in part because of its origins. Vietnam, the 1968 Democratic party convention, Kent State, etc., convinced many of us that traditional political routes to change were closed to us . . . so we decided to focus on technological change instead. And *that's* why we got an "appropriate technology" movement. Moreover, "The set of criteria upon which this vision of good technology rests is filled with conditions that may not be compatible. It is not obvious that decentralized technologies are necessarily environmentally sound. . . . It is not clear that labor-intensive systems provide 'work primarily undertaken for satisfaction' . . ."

The *New Age* is faulted in part because its proponents "did not recognize a need for political organization." The *computer revolution* is a deeply misguided notion because the sheer quantity of information available has very little to do with people's ability to think wisely or act effectively. The deep-ecologists' concept of *nature* is useless because, in the end, nature can be used to justify anything. The concept of *risk assessment* gets us nowhere because its focus is too narrow ("it is one thing to think about the prospect that a lethal bug might escape from the laboratory and quite another to ponder what it means to assume direct control of the evolution of the human species").

What would Winner have us do, then, if none of these concepts is quite right? How would he have us begin to think about alternatives to the efficiency principle? In the last chapter he travels back to his home town on the California coast, where he sees—at the very same moment—a great whale and the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant. The juxtaposition affects him deeply. Diablo is "out of proportion, out of reason," he writes. It is as if he is calling on us to get in touch with our *inner sense* that something is deeply wrong. And to trust that inner sense, come what may.

In the 18th century, the most radical change agents typically made "appeals to reason." In the late 20th century, the most radical change agents—like Winner, like Andrew Schmookler (NEW OPTIONS #5)—are making appeals to

the sacred energies we bring with us from our Source . . . even as they critique the present with all the intellectual resources they can muster.

Valverde, Farrell: the new empathy

Two kinds of feminist books have captured the attention of the media. On the one hand, books that blame men's socialization, or masculinity itself, for women's problems. On the other hand, books that refuse to pass judgment on male-female relationships so long as both parties give their informed consent to whatever goes on (Carole Vance, ed., *Pleasure and Danger*, 1984, is the main text here).

Now a third kind of book has begun to appear. It does not contradict the two "recognized" approaches, above, so much as incorporate their truths and go beyond them. It emphasizes the ambiguity and complexity of the needs—and desires—of both sexes. It sees sex roles as (negatively) symbiotic, not just exploitative. In addition to "women's rights," it stresses mutual responsibilities. In place of blame, it stresses empathy.

In their very different ways, two books, recently published, beautifully express this "third force" in the men's and women's movements: Mariana Valverde's *Sex, Power and Pleasure* (New Society Publr, \$10 pbk) and Warren Farrell's *Why Men Are the Way They Are* (McGraw-Hill, \$18).

Celebration of complexity

Valverde is a lesbian feminist activist currently teaching women's studies at the University of Toronto. Her book is a delight to read, in part because she refuses to choose between her "theoretical" and "experiential" voices (so you get to hear both), and in part because of her dogged honesty. As she says, "I have tried to avoid dogmatism and to leave the door open not just to 'the experience of others' but also to feelings and ideas of my own that do not fit my present self-definition."

The result is a principled—and deeply moving—celebration of complexity and ambiguity in our love relationships. For example: In her chapter on "Body," she points out how our need to be strong *coexists with* our need "to give up our human power." In "Heterosexuality," she puts part of the blame on women for the alleged "[male] scarcity problem," pointing out how women's "last-man-in-the-world syndrome" can put "undue pressure on a relationship," and freely acknowledging that women "have contradictory needs and wishes. We want lifelong security, but we also want complete autonomy. . . ." Warren Farrell doesn't put it

any stronger.

In "Lesbianism," Valverde claims that the chief advantage to lesbian sex is *not* that women are "better" than men, but that there are no traditional roles or expectations to get in the way of women's discovering what it is they really want and feel. In "Bisexuality," she challenges the widely-held notion that there is a "core" sexual orientation in each of us. Instead she has kind words for "vindicating and affirming sexual ambiguity, in a world which is presently extremely uncomfortable with any ambiguity." In "Pornography" she goes so far as to note that women's own sexual fantasies and desires tend to recapitulate the same power relations we see in male porn.

It is a tribute to Valverde's skill as a writer that her book does not leave the reader frustrated and confused (all that complexity!), but with a heightened sense of empathy and compassion.

Call it powerlessness

Warren Farrell used to be the archetype of the "sensitive," politically correct (PC) male. He wrote *The Liberated Man* (1974), organized over 600 men's and women's groups from coast to coast, served on the board of New York NOW. Then something happened. He began suspecting that "understanding women" was his way of being "women's hero" . . . and his desire to stay women's hero was interfering with his ability to listen carefully to men, and *hear* what men were saying.

The result of his reassessment of self (and men), *Why Men Are the Way They Are*, is unique. We have plenty of books describing men as women see them. How many books describe women as men see them—*truly* see them, without macho or PC rhetoric? And of those, how many scrupulously avoid "blaming" women, but instead, use their observations to construct a new agenda for sex role reform and a new concept of power?

That's what Farrell's book does. Here is the key passage: "The more deeply I understood women's experience of powerlessness, the more I assumed men had the power women did not have. In fact, what I was understanding was the female experience of male power. [It is equally important to understand] the male experience of powerlessness, [and conversely, the] male experience of female power."

How can Farrell—still a committed feminist—claim that men and women are equally crippled by their own powerlessness . . . and equally intimidated by their sense of *each other's* power? Easy. He redefines power to include five components: not just access to external rewards, but also access to internal rewards (inner peace, capacity for emotional release, etc.), interpersonal contact, physical health and sexual fulfillment.

Armed with these new understandings, Farrell re-examines the sexual and emotional landscape. It does not look to him like it did before. He is appalled not only by men's "primary fantasy" but also by women's. He dwells on women's mixed messages to men, as well as the reverse. He explains why men have turned women into sex objects, but with an eye to *explaining* rather than blaming. By the same token, he explains why women have turned men into relationship objects and success objects.

He discusses male competition as partly an adaptation to get within the range of desirable women's "relationship binoculars." (It works, he says.) He has a field day with the new—female—sexism, as embodied in books like *No Good Men* ("sexism is discounting the female experience of powerlessness; the new sexism is discounting the male experience of powerlessness").

Balance

What is to be done? Valverde and Farrell come to many of the same conclusions. Both would empower women—Valverde, so women can better decide who they are and what they want; Farrell, so women can become their *own* heroes, and won't need to turn men into success objects. But Farrell doesn't stop with women's empowerment. He calls on us—all of us—to help our partners develop a balanced sense of power in each of the five components of power he describes.

Beyond this, Valverde calls for the development of a "feminist morality" — a new code of ethics to "balance and guide individual desire." And she holds out hope for "real," "functioning," "caring" communities that could implement such a morality.

On a less abstract, theoretical level, Farrell calls for much the same thing. He urges those who share his views to become politically in-

olved. He urges the men's and women's movements to create trans-ideological alliances of all those who want to move from "give me my rights" to "let's share all our responsibilities (and powers)." It is this stress on an ethic emphasizing mutual responsibility and empathy that distinguishes Farrell's and Valverde's approach to feminism from the approaches that are celebrated in the media today.

Continued from page four:

ence this summer might well be the third annual Telluride Ideas Festival, **Glasnost: New Thinking in the USA/USSR** (Aug. 21-23, Telluride, Colo.). John Naisbitt (#20) is currently in the Soviet Union, picking and choosing the Soviet speakers; then he'll choose their American counterparts. According to organizer Rita Robinson, the plan is to have the Soviet and American speakers discuss "topics of urgent mutual interest. [The] audience participates and helps shape the conversation, asking the hard questions, finding answers, comparing jokes, stories and sustainable futures." *Ideas Festival, P.O. Box 1770, Telluride CO 81435.*

Sense of it all

● By now you will surely be exhausted and overwhelmed. What better workshop to help you make sense of it all than Omega Institute's **Agenda for the 21st Century** (Sept. 5-7, Rhinebeck, N.Y.)? All the speakers will be trying to help us "replace [our] fragmented vision with a holistic world view," and they'll be coming at it from a dozen different angles. Fritjof Capra (#3) and Willis Harman (#36) will be talking about crises and transformation in science and society. Eleanor LeCain, executive director of Expro (p. 1 above), will be asking, "What are likely to be the most successful transitional strategies to a peaceful world?" Patricia Mische, author of *Star Wars and the State of Our Souls* (#22), will be asking, "[Must] 'New Age' values and consciousness remain at the periphery of public policy development?" *Omega Inst., Lake Drive, R.D. 2-Box 377, Rhinebeck NY 12572.*

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New Options, Inc.
Post Office Box 19324
Washington, D.C. 20036

Issue No. Thirty-eight

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