
NewOptions

Mark Satin, Editor

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The New Age Comes to Congress

Over 70 bills expressing parts of the NEW OPTIONS/Greenish/post-liberal political philosophy were introduced into the last session of Congress.

Few of those bills passed—or even made it to a vote. But a small group of Congresspeople consistently supported them.

The mainstream and traditional left media almost never told you about those bills. And the media rarely focused on the Congresspeople who supported them. Have you ever heard *anything* about the most supportive five—Chet Atkins, Barbara Boxer, George Brown, Claudine Schneider and Ted Weiss?

But just because the media doesn't see a phenomenon doesn't mean it isn't there.

Definitive

Enclosed you'll find the New Options Inc. Congressional scorecard for the 100th Congress (1987 and 1988).

Previous editions of the scorecard have been favorably discussed by periodicals as diverse as *Common Cause Magazine* and the toney-conservative *Washington Dossier*. And we think this is our best one yet.

Most Congressional scorecards focus on 20-40 key bills. Our scorecard focuses on 74; more than any scorecard we've ever seen.

Why so many? We wanted to track Congressional support for *most* of the legislation that we felt deserved the label "decentralist/globally responsible."

And we wanted to come up with a truly accurate reading of who the Congressional supporters are . . . as definitive a list as possible.

Value committed

We spent months tracking down legislation that reflected post-liberal priorities and values. In the process, we spoke with literally dozens of the groups we've reported on over the years. Not a few of them helped write some of the bills, and lobby for them.

Although we found almost nothing that might

have been written by visionaries like Thomas Berry (#53) or Hazel Henderson (#43), we found plenty of bills that could take us part of the way toward the world they envision.

We found bills that reflect ecological wisdom.

We found bills that promote economic sustainability.

We found bills that empower people and communities.

We found bills that boost world order.

We found bills that help Third World countries become self-reliant.

We found bills that promote nonviolent and democratic solutions to international disputes.

The "New Age 21"

Very few Congresspeople did well on our scorecard. Only 81—out of 535—scored better than 50%. (By contrast, 276 scored better than 50% on the Americans for Democratic Action scorecard.)

But some did very well indeed.

Nineteen members of the House of Representatives scored *80% or more*. That's phenomenal when you consider that most of our bills didn't come to a vote, so we were mostly looking at people who'd offered to become co-sponsors of bills.

Two members of the Senate scored 70% or more. That's just as impressive, given the fact that Senators had fewer good pieces of legislation to sign on to.

Here are those 21 Congresspeople, "post-liberal" (or "Green" or "New Age") in fact if not yet in the eyes of the media:

Rep. Chet Atkins (D-Mass.), 100%;
Rep. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), 100
Rep. Claudine Schneider (R-R.I.), 100
Rep. Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.), 100
Rep. George Brown (D-Calif.), 95
Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.), 90
Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Calif.), 90
Rep. Bob Mrazek (D-N.Y.), 90
Rep. Jim Bates (D-Calif.), 85
Rep. Mel Levine (D-Calif.), 85

Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.), 80
Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), 80
Rep. Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.), 80
Rep. Matthew Martinez (D-Calif.), 80
Rep. Bruce Morrison (D-Conn.), 80
Rep. Major Owens (D-N.Y.), 80
Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), 80
Rep. Edolphus Towns (D-N.Y.), 80
Rep. Howard Wolpe (D-Mich.), 80
Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), 75
Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.), 70

Selma-Saigon generation

What can we say about the "New Age 21," besides the obvious fact of their support for decentralist/ecological/globally responsible legislation?

For the most part, they are not your flaming liberals. The composite score of our Top 10 on the 1988 ADA index would place them exactly 111th.

What they are is Congress' rainbow. Ironically, the multiracial, multiethnic coalition that Jesse Jackson wants to weld together on behalf of left-liberalism has *already* come together . . . albeit unknowingly . . . on behalf of a *post-liberal, post-socialist* politics.

Four of the 21 are black males.

Two are Hispanic males.

Five are Jewish males.

Three are white females—two Catholic, one Jewish.

One is a white male Catholic.

Only six are white male Protestants. And they are more diverse than meets the eye. Brown grew up in a Quaker household. Atkins is Unitarian Universalist. Hatfield is an evangelical. Mrazek is no WASP.

But black or white, male or female, Jewish or Christian, nearly all of them are bound together by two powerful, defining experiences.

All six racial "minorities" were born between 1929-35. Twelve of the other 15 Congresspeople were born between 1939-48.

In other words, *all six Congresspeople of color*

Corridors of Power

were in their 20s when Rosa Parks refused to get up from her seat on that bus in Montgomery.

And 12 of the 15 others were in their 20s during the war on Vietnam.

Keeping score

Here are the 74 bills (and resolutions and amendments) we focused on, arranged under 20 headings labelled #a-t. Scores were obtained by giving Congresspeople five points each time they co-sponsored or voted for at least one of the measures under each heading, 10 points each time they were the principal sponsor.

When we give the number of co-sponsors, it means the bill or resolution never got to a vote—or was watered down so much before it got to a vote, that we preferred giving points for co-sponsorship.

The vast majority of the bills died in committee. Many have been re-introduced into the current session of Congress.

Deep ecology

a. Reducing global warming. The most extraordinary piece of legislation in the 100th Congress may have been Rep. Claudine Schneider's (R-R.I.) bill to prevent the greenhouse effect. John Chafee (R-R.I.) sponsored an identical bill on the Senate side.

Talk about "holistic"! The bill would have forced the Department of Energy to rank energy options according to cost—and to pursue the most cost-effective options. (Goodbye, nuclear; goodbye, oil.) It would have required new cars to get 45 miles per gallon by 1999. It would have established a program to promote reforestation. And it would have done much, much more. (Psst—Amory Lovins, co-author of *Energy Unbound*, #31, was consulted several times by Rep. Schneider's office.)

There were several other global warming bills in Congress. But none were as comprehensive as Schneider's—and most included funding for nuclear power! *Five Senators and 39 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

b. Protecting the ozone layer. In the Senate, Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and John Chafee (R-R.I.) sponsored bills protecting the stratosphere from ozone depletion. Both would have prohibited, by the mid-1990s, the production of 95% of the ozone-depleting substances that we produce today! *Eleven and 10 Senators, respectively, were co-sponsors.*

In the House, Jim Bates (D-Calif.) sponsored a bill similar to Baucus's and Chafee's. Meanwhile, Pete Stark (D-Calif.) took a different tack. His bill would have imposed a stiff excise tax on the sale of any ozone-depleting chemicals. *Seventy and 69 Representatives, respectively, were co-sponsors.*

c. Healthy food. Sen. George Mitchell (D-Me.) and Rep. Doug Bosco (D-Calif.) sponsored bills requiring that irradiated foods be

labelled—even on restaurant menus—and requiring the Secretary of Health and Human Services to study "the risks to human health and the environment presented by food irradiation." In the meantime, no irradiation of pork. *Ten Senators and 92 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the Senate, Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) circulated a letter calling for \$15 million in funding for the new Agriculture Department program in "low-input" (aka sustainable, aka organic) agriculture. (In 1987 Congress had approved only \$3.9 million in funding.) *Eleven Senators signed the letter.*

Also in the Senate, Wyche Fowler (D-Ga.) sponsored a bill promoting "low-input and sustainable agricultural production." It included provisions for an attractive "low-input transition demonstration program" with special low-interest loans for participants. *No Senators were co-sponsors.*

d. Happy animals. Sen. Wendell Ford (D-Ky.) and Rep. Robert Mrazek (D-N.Y.) sponsored bills preventing researchers from receiving National Institutes of Health money to run experiments on animals acquired from animal shelters or pounds. *Sixteen Senators and 111 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Also, Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.) and Rep. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) sponsored bills requiring federal personnel to investigate "nonanimal test alternatives" for (some) product testing. *Two Senators and 112 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the House, Bill Green (R-N.Y.) sponsored a bill prohibiting the killing of wildlife for sport, recreation or commerce on National Wildlife Refuges. *Thirty-nine Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Also in the House, Charlie Rose (D-N.C.) sponsored a bill giving people standing to sue the U.S. Department of Agriculture on behalf of animals to compel enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act. *Sixty-eight Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sustainable economy

e. Planning ahead. Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) and Rep. Buddy MacKay (D-Fla.) sponsored bills calling on the government to establish a "population steady-state" (where the number of births plus immigrants equals the number of deaths plus emigrants), and calling on the President's Council on Environmental Quality to produce an annual report on the interaction of global resources, the environment and population stabilization. (First step on the path to establishing a government "foresight capability" of some kind.) Zero Population Growth, co-founded by Paul Ehrlich (#56), helped draft these bills and round up the co-sponsors. *Three Senators and 51 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the House, James Scheuer (D-N.Y.) spon-

sored a bill establishing a national policy for the conservation of biological diversity. *Ninety Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Also in the House, Sam Gejdenson (D-Conn.) sponsored the best "economic conversion" bill. Like Rep. Ted Weiss's bill, it would permit plant-based "worker-management committees" to draw up plans for converting individual defense plants to non-defense production. Unlike Weiss's bill, it wouldn't require such committees to be set up (you can't require self-determination); and it would encourage community-based committees to draw up plans for diversifying communities and regions. *Forty-seven Representatives were co-sponsors.*

f. Trains and brains. In the Senate, Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) sponsored a resolution saying that funding for Amtrak should be continued at a level that would "enable it to continue to operate a national railway system." We desperately need alternatives to the private automobile in this country. *Twenty-three Senators were co-sponsors.*

In the House, Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) sponsored a bill imposing an excise tax on manufacturers of automobiles with low fuel economy . . . and giving a tax credit to manufacturers of automobiles of above-average fuel economy. *Thirteen Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Rep. Boxer also sponsored a resolution directing the Secretary of Transportation to develop "a system of airline safety indicators," and to "provide written information to the public semiannually on the safety of certain air carriers." Would help make us aware of the dangers of the high-tech, high-speed choices "we've" made. *Thirty-eight Representatives were co-sponsors.*

g. Soft energy paths. Sen. Wyche Fowler (D-Ga.) and Rep. Phil Sharp (D-Ind.) sponsored bills providing "federal assistance and leadership" to a program of research, development and demonstration of all the key renewable

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NewOptions

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Groups

Listening Project: relationships first!

The main way activists reach new people these days is by canvassing door to door. "From Boston to Los Angeles," SANE/FREEZE boasts, "[our] canvassers knock on 6,000 doors every night to encourage Americans to join the fight against nuclear weapons."

Many of us have canvassed to the point of exhaustion. But how much good are we doing, really? Are we really reaching people—or are we just weeding out those who (superficially) "agree" with us from those who don't? And how many people are we alienating in the process? *Ring! Ring! It's those canvassers again. They're here to tell us why they're smarter and more caring than we are, again.*

Over the last five years, in rural western North Carolina, a new kind of canvass has been developed. Called "the Listening Project," its practitioners don't proselytize so much as listen and ask questions. They're willing to spend an hour or more on each house call. Their method is designed to change themselves as much as those they're listening to.

The Listening Project is quietly having an impact on organizing efforts all over the Southeast. More and more local groups are bringing Project staffers in to consult with them and train their canvassers.

When word of the Project spread to us, it sounded too good to be true. So one day last week we took the Trailways out to Asheville, North Carolina, to see for ourselves.

The drive out

The Listening Project's director, Herb Walters (#49), was waiting at the bus station to drive us to his office, an hour further into the countryside.

Walters is a tall, casually dressed 36-year-old with long dark-blond hair, striking angular features and kind eyes. I suppose he has charisma, but his most notable (and winning) characteristic is his lack of pretense. His seven-year-old daughter wanted us to be sure to include the fact that, whatever others might say about him, to his family he is "King of Farts."

On the drive out he tells us what it's like growing up on army bases in places like Augusta, Georgia, and trying—hard—to communicate with parents who don't understand or empathize with your life choices (anti-Vietnam activism, AFSC field work, college courses at the Institute for Social Ecology). It occurs to us that Walters's organizing strategy is that of a person who's spent his last few years trying to reconcile with his parents, rather than rebel against them.

"I think [the peace movement] has committed itself to [confrontational tactics] that won't carry us very far," he says as our car winds through the Black Mountains. "I think basically the only thing that will carry us are relationships—building relationships and trust and understanding between opposing sides."

Opening up

We are sitting with Walters and Judy Scheckel in the long, wooden building that serves as Listening Project headquarters (Scheckel, Walters's co-worker, had previously been a Nuclear Weapons Freeze organizer in New England). We're on a land trust with greenhouses, pottery studios, health food stores—and good ol' boys waving from their pickup trucks.

"We try to train [canvassers] to not just deal with issues on an intellectual level," Scheckel is saying, "but to try to make a human connection with the person."

"It's almost like a therapeutic process we're going through with people," Walters says. "There's a whole process of helping them feel safe and secure, so they can open up and really say what they think and feel."

"Usually people won't open up—not in a normal [canvass]. They're just telling you sort of easy things to say. Stuff on the surface. Or stuff from TV. What we're out for is to get a person to go much deeper, so where they're speaking from is more heart centered and really at the center of what their values and beliefs are."

Our two choices

To lead people into their deeper beliefs, each listening project designs a sequence of questions—a "survey"—for canvassers.

Each community group works out its questions in consultation with Walters and Scheckel. But in no community will canvassers begin with political statements or with questions like, "What do you think about such-and-such a policy?" They'll always begin with questions like, "How long have you lived in this community?" "What kind of work do you do?" "What are some of the things you like most about living here?"

Canvasser training also involves teaching listening and communications skills. Chief among them: empathize, empathize, empathize.

"[Suppose] you're in an interview with someone," says Walters, "and they say something like, 'The blacks always trash the neighborhoods [they move into]. . . . What can you empathize with in that statement?'"

Scheckel: "That it's important to have a neigh-

borhood where your kids can feel secure?"

Walters: "Yeah. [Well, in canvasser training we] make a list of what people can empathize with in that statement. And then we list the negatives. And—this is the key to the Listening Project—then we say, These are your two choices. Do you focus on the [positive feeling behind the statement], or do you focus on the negative?"

"If you focus on the [positive], you focus on the humanity of that other person. And you gain trust. And once you've done that you can begin to look at differences and challenge the person. . . . But if you just do the negative, you've lost them immediately. So it's a process."

Even the way Walters and Scheckel challenge people is different from most. Instead of hectoring, they ask what they call clarifying questions. "[In that example]," says Walters, "a clarifying question might be, Where have you seen this happening? Why do you think this happens?"

The great fear

Just sitting down and asking questions and caring about the answers "is an empowering experience for [poor and working-class people]," says Walters. "They can't believe that someone would really want to sit there and listen to them go on and on. . . ."

"But the most important empowerment thing is in the follow-up. We identify people who are interested in more information or who are interested in possibly getting involved in some of the issues [the canvasser] discussed. So the second part of the process is to return to them and find some way to involve them, or help them get organized, or help them do what they want to do."

The Listening Project can do just as much for the canvassers—the activists—themselves.

"It has helped give me more self-confidence," says Scheckel. "[I know, now], that I can talk to someone who is really angry or upset on the opposite side of the issue from me."

"Many activists have a real basic fear of those people 'out there' that they've always been trying to reach," says Walters.

"One of our stereotypes is that the masses out there are mad at us and don't believe what we believe. Another stereotype is that people really don't care [about the issues]."

"If you went out and did a normal survey, that's probably what you would get back. But when people get to a deeper level of what they think and feel, and they feel safe talking to you, you know, what you find out is that people really care. *Mainstream America really does care.*"

Walters and Scheckel: Listening Project, 1901 Hannah Branch Rd, Burnsville NC 28714.

Continued from page two:

energy technologies—solar, wood, wind, geothermal, etc.—as well as energy conservation technologies (dollar for dollar even more essential). *Twenty-two Senators and 76 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sen. Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.) and Rep. Wayne Owens (D-Utah) sponsored bills providing "adequate funding levels" for solar energy research and development. *Nine Senators and 16 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sen. Spark Matsunaga and Rep. George Brown (D-Calif.) sponsored bills promoting the development of technologies that would enable fuel cells to use alternative fuel sources. (Crucial to a renewable energy future. Being able to store what you use is necessary for wide application of the technology.) *Five Senators and four Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Power to the people

h. Wholistic, whole, holy. Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) and Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) sponsored resolutions establishing a commission to advise the government and public on "policies and programs designed to . . . increase human potential in body, mind and spirit." See NEW OPTIONS #52. *Two Senators and two Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) and Rep. Charlie Rose (D-N.C.) sponsored bills prohibiting the patenting of genetically engineered animals—and revoking any patents previously granted. If life isn't sacred, what is? *Two Senators and 67 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

i. Human rights. Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.) and Rep. Bill Clay (D-Mo.) sponsored bills giving employees the right to (unpaid) family and medical leave. The bills would make it possible for most of us to take up to 10 weeks off upon the birth or adoption of a child; and to take up to 15 weeks off when seriously ill. *Twenty-eight Senators and 151 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) and Rep. Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.) sponsored bills amending the Civil Rights Act to prohibit discrimination on the basis of "affectional or sexual orientation." *Nine Senators and 73 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the Senate, John Kerry (D-Mass.) introduced a bill amending the federal criminal code to add "affectional or sexual orientation" to the list of protected categories under federal civil rights laws. Would cover more situations than the Cranston/Weiss bills above. The D.C.-based National Gay & Lesbian Task Force supported both approaches. *Only two Senators were co-sponsors.*

j. Access to tools. Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Rep. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) sponsored bills giving state governments a strong

say in the licensing process for nuclear power facilities. *No Senators and 113 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sen Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) and Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.) sponsored bills putting health and safety warning labels on all alcoholic beverages. The Alcohol Policies Project of the Center for Science in the Public Interest (#17) helped catalyze a coalition of over 100 groups to work for this legislation. *Eleven Senators and 51 Representatives were co-sponsors,* and a watered-down version eventually slipped through.

In the House, Matthew Martinez (D-Calif.) sponsored a bill establishing literacy programs for people with little or no English. It wouldn't channel money to a new bureaucracy, but to what conservatives and communitarians are both now calling "mediating institutions"—community-based organizations, tribally-controlled schools, community colleges, public libraries, prisons. . . . Plus it would provide some funds for developing "innovative approaches and methods of literacy education." *Ninety-one Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Also in the House, Chet Atkins (D-Mass.) sponsored a bill requiring the Secretary of Education to help elementary and secondary schools use volunteer teachers (including students, retirees and businesspeople). A "National Center" would provide money to train them and provide technical assistance to schools so they'd make good use of them. *Thirteen Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Finally, Rep. Howard Wolpe (D-Mich.) sponsored a bill requiring that the major categories of federal spending be shown in a pie-shaped graph on the first page of the instructions for the income tax return. (Heh, heh.) *Forty-two Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Global responsibility

k. Combatting world poverty. Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) and Rep. Mel Levine (D-Calif.) sponsored bills directing the President to "develop a plan to ensure that U.S. development assistance contributes measurably toward eradicating the worst aspects of absolute poverty by the year 2000." *Twenty-seven Senators and 193 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

l. The last come first. In the Senate, Terry Sanford (D-N.C.) and others tried to block the so-called "FAIR amendment" instructing U.S. officers of international institutions to withhold funds from developing countries, if the funds would be used to produce commodities and foodstuffs that might compete with U.S. products.

For a terrific consciousness-raising experience, read the debate on FAIR in the July 7, 1987 *Congressional Record*. Sen. David Karnes (R-Nebr.) spoke for most when he said, "It is time that we start to make it clear that U.S. generosity has its limits. . . ." Very few talked

about the need to foster self-reliance in the Third World. *Only 34 Senators voted to table (kill) the amendment, 58 voted to sustain it.*

In the House, Ben Gilman (R-N.Y.) sponsored a bill directing the Secretary of State and the Administrator of A.I.D. to promote the "rights of indigenous and tribal people throughout the world." *Eleven Representatives were co-sponsors.*

m. World order. Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa) and Rep. Jim Leach (R-Iowa) sponsored resolutions establishing a U.S. Commission on Improving the Effectiveness of the U.N. The Commission would explore such things as creating a standing U.N. peacekeeping force; making better use of the World Court; and implementing the "binding triad" voting system in the General Assembly (see #34). *Five Senators and 39 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

When the tensions in the Persian Gulf were at their height, Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) and Rep. Tom Downey (D-N.Y.) sponsored bills calling for a U.N. peacekeeping force in the Gulf. *Only four Senators and 11 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the House, Bob Mrazek (D-N.Y.) sponsored a bill establishing a Commission on International Security and Satellite Monitoring. The Commission would study how satellites could be used for drug control, environmental monitoring, disaster preparedness, arms reduction verification—and even building a comprehensive global "common security" system. *Twenty-two Representatives were co-sponsors.*

"Alternative development"

n. Counting women in. Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.) and Rep. Mickey Leland (D-Tex.) sponsored bills promoting the integration of women into the development process in developing countries—most crucially, by insisting that the percentage of women receiving U.S. assistance be "in proportion to the higher of their traditional participation in the targeted activities or their proportion of the population." *Twenty-four Senators and 169 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

o. Healing the Earth. Sen. Bob Kasten (R-Wisc.) and Rep. John Porter (R-Ill.) sponsored bills aiming to protect the world's remaining tropical forests and wetlands. Both bills would have the World Bank provide debt relief in exchange for conservation efforts; both would create mechanisms so commercial banks could participate in debt-for-nature swaps. *Three Senators and 97 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the House, Claudine Schneider (R-R.I.) sponsored a resolution giving notice to U.S. development agencies that they've got to begin supporting "access to sustainable means of transportation"—particularly "nonmotorized and low-cost options" (e.g., bicycles)—in the

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The Ear . . .

Beautiful but useless?

My copies of NEW OPTIONS are piling up unread. There are just too many articles about a small number of people dealing in "what ifs."

For instance, the seven alternative political platforms (#49) are about as effective as saying, "Gee, what if you guys weren't so greedy." Maybe even less effective than that.

Even the cover story in #51, although it was ostensibly about a mainstream political group (the Democratic party), ends up saying that the most vital part of the party—its "fourth (Green or New Age) leg"—doesn't exist "yet." As if to say you're justified turning your attention back to the small groups spending their time thinking up things to do in an imaginary world where the good of humanity is the driving force and the masses are made up of energetic activists who take responsibility for their lives.

—Eli Dumitru
Cottage Grove OR, Cascade Bioregion

NEW OPTIONS continues to be necessary. How many subscribers now? [12,400—ed.]

One particularly interesting strain, to me, is the exasperation at over-idealism that keeps cropping up in letters. I think I agree with it, and yet . . . the impossibly pure vision acts as some sort of magnet drawing reality in its direction.

Isn't it amazing how everyone now listens to Lester Brown (#35), and "Endangered Earth" gets the cover of *Time*, and Presidents practice citizen diplomacy? Some of those little magnets have been pulling.

—Annie Gottlieb
*Author, Do You Believe in Magic? (1987)
New York NY, Hudson Valley Bioregion*

It was a mixed pleasure to find myself identified in Ralph Meima's letter (NEW OPTIONS #54) as a source of beautiful but useless ideas. Uncovering ugly truths comes much more readily to [me]. Thinking beautiful thoughts seems an achievement, however useless they may be.

But when I look at Mr. Meima's argument to establish the futility of such ideas, I am unpersuaded that beautiful visions are as inconsequential as he suggests.

"Thoreau and St. Francis raised similar ideas, but look at what we've mutilated since." By the same logic, one might say that oppression in America nullifies Jefferson's beautiful ideas about liberty, or that the atrocities of the 20th century demonstrate that the Judeo-Christian ideas about the sanctity of the human soul have

done nothing to ameliorate the terrors of history.

Mr. Meima says we should focus on expediency and effectiveness. And so we should. But the civilization now threatening "the ecological integrity of the Earth" is rather long on "effective" action, and rather short on visions of what kind of world all this activity should be creating.

While we need masters of expediency who can get their hands on the steering wheel, we also need people with maps that show where we want to go.

—Andrew Schmookler
*Author, Out of Weakness (1988)
Silver Spring MD, Potomac Valley Bio'n*

"Health" is the word

I was very favorably struck by your cover story, "Shifting the Framework from Growth to Health" (#50). I think you have raised a most important strategic issue.

—Frank Bracho
*The South Commission
Torre Oeste, Venezuela*

I am delighted and excited by your lead story recognition of "HEALTH" as the vision/metaphor for a truly "new politics"!

—Assemblyman John Vasconcellos
*California State Assembly
Sacramento CA, Central Valley Bioregion*

Them there bioregions

I applaud your addition of bioregional names to the names and addresses of folks who write letters to NEW OPTIONS. What a wonderful lesson!

—Amy Hannon
Greenville NC, Coastal Plains Bioregion

How dare you define and give names to the bioregions. This should be done collectively by all of us over time. Who do you think you are?

—Reginald B. McCoy
Madison WI, Heartland Bioregion

I just noticed the bioregions after the addresses. Could you publish or send me a list?

—Dave Freeman-Woolpert
Pembroke NH, Highlands Bioregion

Dear Amy, Reginald and Dave: Thanks for caring!

There is no real map of the bioregions. There isn't even a standard definition. Probably everyone thinks bioregions should be coherent in terms of topography, flora, fauna etc. Probably most think bioregions should take some account of ancient and recent human cultures, as well. We have prepared a very tentative, first-cut,

11" x 17" map of the U.S. bioregions taking all these factors into account. For \$2 plain we'll be happy to send it to you—along with a big chart showing the characteristics of each bioregion, and a brief bibliography.

Believe me, Reg, it's open to suggestions from you and from everyone. And it's not the only map-in-process out there.

If we can get Americans to think about their bioregions, we'll be getting them to think about where they really live—and (inevitably) about whether their lives are in keeping with their surroundings. Few things could be more important.

Auto sclerotic

I enjoyed your cover story on transportation/accessibility ("Bigger Roads—or Trolleys, Bikes and Urban Redesign?", #52). The heart of the plan [for our intentional community] is a pedestrian village. For many years our ads were headed: 2500 People, 1200 Acres, No Cars.

—Christopher Canfield
*Cerro Gordo Community
Dorena Lake OR, Cascade Bioregion*

Enjoyed your issue on transportation alternatives. The only contention I have is with Marcia Lowe's remark that "effective bicycle promotion calls for bike paths separate from roadways and space on regular roadways dedicated to bicycles."

This is a concept of the 70s when bicycles were still seen primarily as recreational vehicles and separate bike paths or bike lanes were considered essential to increase ridership and safety.

Since [bike paths] are relatively expensive, few were built. And many were poorly designed. Using them is sometimes more dangerous than riding on roads that are well maintained, free of obstructions and glass, and go where you want to go.

If we learn to "Share the Road," with both bicyclists and drivers learning safe and courteous practices, we will increase safety, reduce traffic congestion, and reduce car drivers' animosity toward kamikaze bicyclists. In other words: Education is more practical, less expensive and more urgently needed than facilities.

—Stephen Simac
*Fla. Governor's Bicycle Advisory Cttee
Bolinas CA, Shasta Bioregion*

Most of us drivers are so stoned on drugs (from Valium to alcohol to pot) or so preoccupied with putting on make-up or being stressed out that the four-inch line dividing traffic on our roads laughs at all the deaths due to automobile accidents we never expected.

I suggest computerizing our transport: creating individual vehicles that use telephone numbers punched into a computer that can take us

where we want to go.

Bike riders, joggers and motorists of every sort are giving each other the finger and plowing in to each other. We cannot be responsible in our insanity for transporting ourselves. Let the computer do it!

—Lauren David Kaye
Breckenridge CO, Rocky Mountain Bio'n

The assumption [of some of the transportation reformers you wrote about] is basically that, for metropolitan economic vitality, we need to switch from an automobile- and sprawl-dominated pattern to a pattern featuring many metropolitan centers and sub-centers, with a fair amount of automobile infrastructure maintained, if de-emphasized.

I think this is a great transition state—but not an inspiring goal.

We should instead think in terms of changing to a pattern that allocates so little energy to transportation that we could be assured of collecting it in perpetuity via sustainable sources like solar, wind and hydro.

We should be thinking in terms of transportation by food [fuel for pedestrians—ed.] and bicycle—no-energy and no-pollution alternatives, basically.

The key is what I call "access by proximity": sufficient diversity of cultural and economic activity close enough together in centers that even buses and trains are simply occasionally-used adjuncts to life that otherwise buzzes along on human muscle power. Cars would exist only for extremely specialized purposes.

This is a far better goal [than that of the reformers] and one that has an interesting side effect of providing a wonderfully rich set of images for our young people who are killing themselves faster these days than at any other time in history, so boring and bleak are our visions of the future.

—Richard Register
Urban Ecology, Inc.
Berkeley CA, Shasta Bioregion

Some potential

Well-written report on the hearing ("Human Potential Bill Reaches Congress," #52). One of the best news leads since Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backwards!*

—T. George Harris
Editor-in-Chief, Psychology Today
New York NY, Hudson Valley Bioregion

The idea of a Human Potential bill is excellent. BUT, anyone who chooses a task force of only white males these days is still part of the problem.

For each one of those excellent men [at the hearing], there is easily a competent woman equivalent in status and information. It's just

that Mr. Jones of Senator Pell's office does not yet understand that ignoring women, making them invisible, is doing as much violence to our lives as crack dealers.

[Some] women who run major organizations are developing new forms of administration; new ways of getting rid of power and developing shared power. One woman expressed it that the file folders stacked up and the pink slips about returning calls are not jobs to be done but people with real concerns, real issues.

The means toward the end cannot be different from the end itself, or should I say himself.

—Dana Raphael, Ph.D.
The Human Lactation Center, Ltd.
Westport CT, Lower New England Bio'n

Make up with Mary Jane

I greatly enjoy your publication. There is one burning issue which I have continued to await discussion on, however, and that is the legalization of marijuana.

It seems we are hurtling toward a zero tolerance attitude nationally. Politicians and citizens alike seem frozen in the face of the supposed public outcry on the "drug problem."

Where is your expose? Or as a "new age" publication are you afraid to touch the drug issue for fear of being labelled hippie?

I'd like to point out a few facts.

Politically, marijuana prohibition continues to disenfranchise an entire generation from the political process. The 60s generation—which knows from personal experience that marijuana is neither as dangerous, addictive or mood-altering as alcohol—must either become hypocrites to support anti-drug candidates, or must sacrifice community respect and possibly employment in order to speak the truth.

As far as zero tolerance is concerned, it is a ridiculous idea. Mankind has since the beginning of time used drugs, including fermented beverages (alcohol), tobacco, marijuana, coca leaves, opium gum and peyote buttons. Natural drugs offer pain relief and various cures, as historically documented in folk medicines. Other traditional uses of natural drugs include recreational intoxication, development of personal insight, and religious ceremony.

Since repeated scientific studies have shown marijuana to be less physically harmful than alcohol or tobacco, the inclusion of marijuana in hard drug statistics is clearly a propaganda ploy on the part of advanced industrial society and its old, mechanistic paradigm. It does not help society understand the difference between drug use and drug abuse.

Please make every effort to report on this topic. Millions of members of the 60s generation deserve your support.

—Denele Campbell
West Fork AR, Ozarks Bioregion

The Eye . . .

The Eye watches people and groups that have appeared in NEW OPTIONS.

ON THE HORIZON: Frances Moore Lappe (#53) and Harry Boyte (#34) are teaming up to launch a five-year experiment, Project Public Life. In NEW OPTIONS's office last month, they shared their plans to inspire "town meetings" from coast to coast and create "participatory materials and curricula" for people already talking together. Short-term goal: to get people talking about "public values and issues." Long-term goal: To "recreate a values-based politics" (concept paper from Lappe, Food First, 145 Ninth St., San Francisco CA 94103). . . . Paul Ekins (#35), supercompetent former director of The Other Economic Summit, is launching a "Living Economy Network" of social scientists from around the world who share the decentralist/globally responsible political philosophy. Immediate goal is to produce an annual book and build relationships with other groups. Ultimate goal is to forge a new "school of economic thought" like Keynesianism or Marxism (concept paper from Ekins, School of Peace Studies, Univ. of Bradford, Bradford BD7 1DP, England). . . .

PAPER TIGERS: If you enjoyed Robert Theobald's brief piece on the imaginary Dynamic Balance Party (#53), you'll definitely want to get hold of his just-published "Victory 1992! The Surprising Success of the DPB," a 74 pp. vision of what *could* and *should* be, and how we may perhaps to begin—working on concrete projects with *mainstream* people (\$10 from Theobald, P.O. Box 2240, Wickenburg AZ 85358). . . . World Federalist Association (#34) has just published a 153 pp. "Bicentennial Reader." The first part consists of excerpts from some pretty good writers on the making of the U.S. Constitution; the rest is excerpts from various world federalists and world government types. You can't miss the point: If the U.S. needed federation in 1787-89, the Earth needs federation today (\$10 from WFA, 418 Seventh St. S.E., Washington DC 20003). . . .

ART ECO: Center for Science in the Public Interest (#31) has just put out a glossy flyer advertising its colorful, beautifully designed 18" x 24" poster guides to eating right. Two hang in our office kitchen: "New American Eating Guide," which doesn't mess around, and "Nutrition Scoreboard," which rates over 200 foods, from "watermelon" at +68 to "Spam" at -35 (flyer free, posters \$4 each from CSPI-PA, 1501 16th St. N.W., DC 20036). . . .

That's an Eye-ful!

Falk, Morgan: the culture of terrorism

Dear Robin Morgan,

Three weeks ago, in a placid university town, Capt. Will Rogers III's van was blown up by what most Americans suspect were Iranian terrorists. Two weeks ago it was projected that more than one out of every 1,000 Washington, D.C. residents will be shot to death *this year*.

It's becoming more and more obvious that there's something in the very marrow of the culture—in modern, industrial(izing), global culture—that's giving rise to terrorism.

Most of us are afraid to even think about that! It's the gift of your new book and Richard Falk's new book that you're *not* afraid to think about that. Deeply. And say why it's so.

A certain mind-set

I wonder if you've seen Falk's book, *Revolutionaries and Functionaries: The Dual Face of Terrorism* (Dutton, \$18).

Falk is, as you may know, a long-time world order advocate: co-founder of the World Order Models Project (#34), member of the Committee for a Just World Peace (#52), and professor of international law at Princeton University. As befits his background, his book is lucid, intellectual, "rational."

He casts about for a definition of terrorism that can encompass both revolutionary and state terror. Here's what he comes up with: "any type of political violence that lacks an adequate moral and legal justification, regardless of whether the actor is a revolutionary group or a government."

I've got to admit, the definition doesn't do much for me.

Falk feels the left has apologized for violence so often it's created "an unavoidable impression of tacit acquiescence." He argues that "minimizing political violence has to [replace] a leftist tendency to promise deliverance from evil if only the old order is replaced."

But is Falk's position so different from that of the left? He's not against *all* violence, just violence that lacks "adequate moral and legal justification." C'mon: How many revolutionaries think their violence lacks adequate justification? "It is unrealistic and arrogant," Falk writes, "to insist that victims acquiesce in injustice." The clear implication is that violence and acquiescence are the only options. As Gene Sharp convincingly demonstrates (#6), there are *always* nonviolent options.

Persevere, Robin—the book gets better. By the middle chapters, Falk is arguing that terrorism is not just an affliction of the bad guys. It's an affliction of us all—an "affliction of mo-

dermy," in his own deft phrase.

In his key chapter, "The Terrorist Mind-Set," Falk describes what is in fact the mind-set of the emerging global culture. It encourages compartmentalization, up to and including "a splitting of personality that allows the bloody work to be done." It thrives on abstractions, hyper-"rationality," demonization of the "enemy"—above all, perhaps, on the cold, calculating cynicism that passes itself off as "realism."

Then come suggestions for challenging the culture of terrorism. Some focus on the immediate terrorist menace. Others are more general—e.g., "develop a positive foreign policy toward social and political change in other countries"; "build up the role of international institutions."

What's missing is any sense of how to develop the political will to achieve these suggestions. The references to our need for "human solidarity" are nice, but where's the motor? What's the vehicle?

A certain sexuality

As you can tell from the above, Robin, your book, *The Demon Lover: On the Sexuality of Terrorism* (Norton, \$19), overlaps with Falk's in some ways. But it's much, much bolder . . . as befits a long-time feminist poet and theorist whose books include *Anatomy of Freedom*, #4, one of the few attempts to articulate a wholistic, post-liberal politics; and *Sisterhood Is Global*, #18, an anthology on the international women's movement.

Your approach to terrorism is less exclusively intellectual than Falk's, more imaginative and experiential. He goes from point A to point P. Your book travels in four ever-widening spirals. Each is richer and runs more risks.

In the first spiral, you look at the writings of U.S. terrorist "experts" as well as terrorism in myth, art, philosophy, etc. Like Falk, you conclude there's been a "democratization of violence" in the world—and you define terrorism even more broadly than Falk, so broadly that it includes street violence, domestic violence, etc. Your goal is to pinpoint something about terrorism everybody seems to have missed. *Nearly all of it is committed by men.*

In your second spiral you examine "official" and "revolutionary" terrorism. You note that "the politics behind the politics" of the revolutionaries *and* the counter-revolutionaries is always "manhood," as in Eldridge Cleaver's well-worn saying, "We shall have our manhood or the Earth will be levelled by our attempts

to gain it."

The third spiral is an examination of women as terrorists. You argue that women become terrorists for male approval and love. To keep women from feeling you're trivializing their motive(s), you include a painfully honest chapter describing your own flirtation with terrorism in the New Left of the 1960s.

Your fourth spiral is beautifully done. It begins with what is, in effect, a refutation of Falk and all other radicals who can't quite bring themselves to tell their revolutionary "friends" to put down the gun. It describes your visits to the women in the Palestinian refugee camps. These women have no love for the Israelis, and when their men are around they ape the proper revolutionary line. But when you get them alone, their rage comes pouring out—at their men's refusal to settle for less than "total victory"; at their men's obsessive need to prove their "masculinity" by plotting and fighting unto death (meanwhile almost never pulling their weight at home). These women's refrain will haunt any male reader of this book for months: "What do men know about life?"

Your fourth spiral closes with the "motor" and "vehicle" Falk lacked. The motor is a coherent vision of a new politics, "The Politics of Eros." This politics would respect differences, be more specific than abstract, feature "creative collaboration" instead of winners and losers, and always seek to build "respect," "caring" and "trust" among people. The vehicle is women themselves, who according to you already embody this politics in their personal lives, and need only learn to express and institutionalize it in the larger, public world.

Toward human solidarity

You're right, Robin: Men are obsessed with pursuing ill-conceived notions of "masculinity" and "manhood." It's embarrassing walking around after reading your book and seeing it everywhere. But I don't recognize the *women* in your book.

I stopped putting women on a pedestal years ago . . . in part because I read a book by Robin Morgan called *Sisterhood Is Powerful* (1970). Why are you futzing around with a new pedestal?

Both men and women have been wounded, terribly, by "modern" life—not to mention the evolutionary process of the last few thousand years. You tell us a lot about men's wounds and women's strengths. Wouldn't it have been more in keeping with the spirit of your "Politics of Eros" to also examine some of women's wounds, and men's strengths?

If you'd done that, perhaps the new politics would not require women to be the new heroes, models, Great Ones.

Perhaps a bit of compassion, on all our parts, would suffice.

Continued from page four:

Third World. *Fourteen Representatives were co-sponsors.*

p. Empowering the world's poor. In the Senate, Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) sponsored a bill requiring the U.S. "to make assistance available to financial intermediaries [n.b.: not "governments"] in developing countries to enable them to provide loans and other assistance for micro and small enterprises of the poorest people." Credit would be extended to tiny enterprises in such basic, unspectacular fields as food processing and production of cloth and clothing. *Fifty-five Senators were co-sponsors, and parts of the bill became law.*

In the House, Howard Wolpe (D-Mich.) sponsored a bill authorizing assistance for famine recovery and long-term development in sub-Saharan Africa. The bill would channel money to things like food production, health promotion and improving the "relevance" of formal education. *Sixty-seven Representatives were co-sponsors, and parts of it got through the House.*

Also in the House, Rep. George Crockett (D-Mich.) sponsored a bill promoting "equitable and participatory development, national and regional economic integration, and food security and self-reliance in the Caribbean." Among its provisions: "Priority . . . shall be given to supporting indigenous Caribbean institutions (including farmers' unions, cooperatives, labor organizations, women's groups, and community organizations) that represent, work with, and benefit the poor." Do you detect the hand of The Development GAP (#28, 54) in any of this? *Twenty Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Real security

In NEW OPTIONS #32, Mark Sommer, co-founder of the Exploratory Project on the Conditions of Peace (#20), proposed "independent initiatives" as an alternative to traditional arms control and peace-through-unilateral-disarmament. He defined independent initiatives as "policy initiatives to be taken by a government independently of its adversary—in order to generate reciprocal action on the part of its adversary."

By Sommer's definition, several proposals from the 100th Congress would qualify as independent initiatives.

q. Independent initiative I. Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Rep. George Brown (D-Calif.) sponsored measures requiring that we continue our moratorium on testing antisatellite weapons against objects in space—so long as the Soviets continued their moratorium. *Twenty-two Senators and 142 Representatives were co-sponsors.* In 1988 the ASAT program was cancelled.

(Ed. note: Here we gave points for sponsor-

ing rather than voting, the better to measure gut support. For the independent initiative below we did the opposite, the better to measure general sentiment.)

r. Independent initiative II. Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) and Rep. Dick Gephardt (D-Mo.) offered amendments prohibiting underground nuclear tests with an explosive power greater than one kiloton—so long as the Soviets didn't test. Hatfield's moratorium was for two years, Gephardt's for one. *Hatfield's amendment was tabled (killed) in the Senate, 39-57; Gephardt's passed the House, 214-186.*

s. Creative peacekeeping. Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) and Rep. Sonny Montgomery (D-Miss.) sponsored resolutions declaring that the President should "appoint a representative to negotiate with the government of Vietnam [to resolve the] outstanding humanitarian issues" between them. According to Hatfield's office, the intent was to initiate a healing process between the U.S. and Vietnam. *Twenty Senators and three Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) and Rep. Charlie Rose (D-N.C.) sponsored resolutions expressing support for the Dalai Lama's proposal to "promote peace, protect the environment and gain democracy for the people of Tibet." The resolutions call on China to enter into "discussions" with the Dalai Lama regarding Tibet (not an outrageous request, since the Dalai Lama supports autonomy—but not independence—for Tibet). *Three Senators and six Representatives were co-sponsors.*

In the House, Peter Kostmayer (D-Penna.) sponsored a bill providing assistance through the National Endowment for Democracy to promote democracy in Nicaragua. The bill specifies that funds be provided "only to internal groups that have renounced violence and support a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Nicaragua." Exemplifies the kind of "positive interventionism" we argued for in NEW OP-

TIONS #20. *Fourteen Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Also in the House, Claudine Schneider (R-R.I.) sponsored a resolution urging that more members of Congress travel in the Soviet Union—and more Soviet leaders travel in the U.S. *Forty-three Representatives were co-sponsors.*

t. Peace fund. Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) and Rep. Don Bonker (D-Wash.) sponsored bills making it possible for objectors to war ("conscientious objectors") to have their tax payments spent for constructive, non-military purposes. A U.S. Peace Fund Board of Trustees would be set up to spend the monies on things like peace research, improvement of global health, education and welfare, and retraining of workers displaced from military production facilities. According to Marian Franz, chief lobbyist for the National Peace Tax Fund Campaign (#17), if 1.6% of us are war objectors the peace fund would rake in about \$2 billion a year! *Two Senators and 48 Representatives were co-sponsors.*

Use your scorecard

A copy of New Options Inc.'s scorecard showing the positions taken by each Congressperson in each of the areas mentioned above should have accompanied this newsletter.

Copies of our scorecards from the 97th through 99th Congresses complete are available for \$6 from NEW OPTIONS.

Read those scorecards. Then, use them to hold your local, state and national legislators accountable.

Use them to demand that your local newspapers and TV stations pay more attention to the kinds of positive, life-affirming measures we list there.

Use them to come up with ideas for a political campaign of your own.

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