

# HEALING EARTH:

Nine Reasons for Revolution

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# Table of Contents

Preface

Introduction: An American Beginning

Chapter One: Learning Respect through Hard Work

- a) **Sensing Our Past: Depression and FDR (1930s)**
- b) **Experiencing Change: From Horse to Tractor (1940s)**
- c) **Opening to New Vistas (1950s)**
- d) **Going Out to All the World (1960s)**
- e) **Appropriating a Unique HERE in Life**

Chapter Two: Realizing the Critical Situation (1970s)

- a) **Taking Responsibility for Environmental Damage**
- b) **Fashioning "The Constrasumers"**
- c) **Realizing That Overconsumption Leads to Clutter**
- d) **Distinguishing Forms of Consumerism**
- e) **Prioritizing Environmental Pollutants**

Chapter Three: Assessing Needs and Urgency to Act (1980s)

- a) **Demonstrating Appropriate Technology**
- b) **Attending to Cultural Differences**
- c) **Conserving Health**
- d) **Performing Environmental Resource Assessments**
- e) **Acting for the Urgent Time is Now**

Chapter Four: Calling to Join Forces with Others (1990s)

- a) **Balancing Limited Space and Time**
- b) **Welcoming the Poor as Collaborators**
- c) **Knowing Weaknesses of the Capitalistic System**
- d) **Rising from Powerlessness to Spiritual Empowerment**
- e) **Professing that WE Are Poor**

Chapter Five: Comprehending an Emerging World Order (2000s)

- a) **Feeling Effects of Social Addiction**
- b) **Proclaiming "In God We Trust"**
- c) **Promoting Public Transportation & Communication**
- d) **Affirming Right to Life and Livelihood**
- e) **Defending the Democratic Process**

Chapter Six: Healing Earth through Eco-Revolutionary Actions (2010s)

- a) **Supporting a Renewable Energy Economy**
- b) **Demanding Fair Taxes**
- c) **Enlisting the Young at Heart**
- d) **Sharing Radically by Global Patriots**

Conclusion: Nine Reasons for Revolution

Appendix One: **99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle Listing**

Two: **Elements of the System's Religion**

Three: **Citizens Actions for New Economy**

Acknowledgments and Dedication

Endnotes

## Preface

*Carpe Diem! Seize the Day!* We cannot properly heal our wounded Earth without radically changing the socio/economic System. This clarion call resounds with profound change in the air. For an 82-year-old, my Indian Summer of life is fading with this, perhaps, "last hurrah." Encouraged by long-time editorial advisor and co-author Angela Cox, I have redrafted this book to focus on the need to replace the current **System** (caps intended) through non-violent actions fashion. Last year author Naomi Klein catalyzed my emerging suspicions in *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs The Climate* I liked everything but the title, which I simply cannot remember when promoting the book. The System advances a global consumer economy that threatens the vitality of our wounded Earth. Billionaires create a Wealth Cult and millions eagerly follow.

The System and media lackeys champion excessive consumerism; so-called "conservatives" bolster a wrong-headed Tea Party culture that forgets the tea thrown into Boston Harbor belonged to the first global commercial corporation entwined with a repressive government. There's nothing conservative about allowing the wealthy to destroy the democratic process in the name of their thievery. This radical stance came early, before my public interest work and close association with Ralph Nader; it harkens back to youthful reflections in early farm life and fighting McCarthyism during College days. A nobility from inherited wealth seemed abhorrent to anyone growing up with a culture of working for one's living; redistributing wealth appealed long before reading Gar Alperovitz & Lew Daly's *Unjust Deserts: How the Rich Are Taking Our Common Inheritance* (over 90% of current economic output derives not from individual ingenuity, effort or investment, but from the collective inheritance of scientific and technological knowledge).

My radicalism is not derived from secular literature but in Scripture involving prophets, Jesus and Acts 2:44-45. Recall that a millennia and a half of Christianity did not include Capitalism. The System as practiced today, with its greed and excessive competitiveness, is not Christian and deserves to be challenged. Catalyzing citizens to distrust their own so-called "conservative roots" on political and economic matters is the motivation for completing this work. Digital presentation allows transparency and cooperation in sharing all through the flick of a computer mouse.

Free exchange delays a final word and credits a culture of positive contributions from a host of workers. Grabbing is counter to sharing in the commons and it must be halted. References direct us to like-minded people and we invite a multitude of millennials and those with youthful hearts to seek to be agents of profound change. Our goals are a New Heaven and New Earth and it is more than an iconoclastic reaction; rather, this book fills a tall order.

## Introduction: An American Beginning

**Unless we replace our unsustainable socio-economic System we cannot heal our wounded Earth.** That cold conviction has taken a long time in coming, but has serious ramifications. Others seeking to be agents of change will arrive at the same conclusion if they take time to discern their own life story, for this will prove to be a similar set of experiences. When properly understood, this calls for urgent action to ensure the continued vitality of our planet and the quality of life of inhabitants now and to come.

In times of creeping crisis we have a hard time facing reality, and that is why fiction is so popular. Too often movies and TV shows have likeable characters that seem so much part of our life; however, these are creations of sit-com writers and novelists with millions of viewers and readers, also regarding them as real. Perhaps it is because what is happening now is stranger than fiction -- and defies frank acknowledgment. Often it takes a deep spirituality to face the truth: our Earth is in trouble of our own causing, and we still have time to save it, provided we are willing to forsake the Cult of Wealth. The window of opportunity is closing but we still have time, provided we break with the make-believe world of the status quo, denounce climate change deniers, and confront policies that tolerate the actions of rich plutocrats and their legalized thievery.

Only a radical change can heal our wounded Earth, and that involves a transformation, not a tweaked System, which many would find more enticing and popular.<sup>1</sup> The current System embraces our livelihood, investments, credit, banking, lifestyle, and ambitions all wrapped into one. Is it enough to paraphrase Bill Clinton, "It's the System, stupid?" Let's be honest, why do we hesitate to launch into a proper discernment? Is it fear to be challenged as un-American? Leftist? Off the wall? Economic heretic? One toying with the common trust? Being afraid is part of our insecurity --and some of us elders remember McCarthyism in the early 1950s. Is history bound to repeat itself?

We dare to speak of healing our Earth, but what does this entail? We have engaged in programs under the aegis of "earthhealing" to address the issues of the environmental crisis. Here we shift from Earth to Healer and consider our own hesitations. However, are we able to become morally conscientious people committed to healing even if it takes immense effort? The deeper question is, "Are we willing to emerge from the catacombs of silence and act publicly?" For over a quarter of a century we used the term "Earthhealing" as a process that can be misinterpreted as awaiting Earth to heal us. "Healing Earth" is something with the emphasis on both urgent and collaboration action by emerging healers, yes, you and I.<sup>2</sup>

We elders have a freedom in our Indian Summer of life to say what we think and acknowledge past mistakes. Four decades ago I was still naive

enough to think that if we show the need, people will follow through somewhat automatically with proper action. However, involvement is utterly slow. Songwriter Peter Seeger, an advisor at the time, told me my guidebook suggestions would not be effective and to some degree he was right. I decided at the fortieth anniversary of my book *The Contrasumers: A Citizens Guide to Resource Conservation* (Praeger, 1974) to take a new approach -- and thus this discernment. Action does not automatically follow from knowledge, especially by socially-addicted consumers. The guidebook's publisher no longer exists and we must do more than token recycling (not denying it a proper place in our daily life). In a nut shell, *The Contrasumers* was based on a hope that we could change the socio-economic **System** by promoting a resource conservation ethic that would trigger a response from the public.

The current situation has its raw moments that we must ponder. A short time ago Fred, a Florida multi-millionaire, offered to fund my two poor parishes and projects with as much money as needed if I only state that the **System** was "the best developed yet by human beings," and also deny that human-caused climate change existed. He said "You can not refuse my offer." Really, you never say that to a crabby old man, but even after a brief flash of temptation I did refuse him -- and it was the first offer he had ever been refused. His was a world of the power of privilege and the status quo; to refuse his good money was inconceivable.

Let's lay out the problem of Healing Earth; radical change takes resources and these are held by privileged wealth. To institute change in a "realistic" and acceptable manner means tweaking an imperfect System. The argument is made that a middle road is the best and that revolutionaries are to be denounced as the unacceptable extreme. However, a dilemma emerges. For some of us to patch up a dysfunctional System that simply exacerbates the problem is kicking the proverbial can down the road. The challenge for those seeking radical change is whether resources can be mustered when most are controlled by the privileged few -- and resources are defined too often strictly in monetary terms.

The goal of healing our wounded Earth looms before us, for our home is in trouble and that includes all inhabitants even beyond the human sphere. Why let others dictate this harm for their own greed and selfish ends? We must rise to resist, but how? For many believers, we are expected to leave this sojourn a better place; all we can take with us is our love as a true legacy. We hold this home dear even in its fragility, and yet our companions on the road of life are highly addicted to a consumer culture that has inflicted harm on the planet.

The response must be more than some pure logic, for many consumers operate outside the bounds of pure rationality. "I dare you to change my habits that I pay for with hard earned cash -- or credit." The challenge is to

change a hardened way of thinking, and it is spreading as more and more of the world's people strive to enter the consuming Middle Class.

## **Challenges**

The first challenge is that **Our Earth is wounded by our actions.** We are aware of multiple forms of air, water, and land pollution, as well as the talk about closing the window of time before severe anthropogenic climate changes occurs. In 2014, the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has raised the probability that most global warming is human-caused to 95%, from 90% in 2007. With present consumption patterns, global temperatures could rise from 0.3 and 4.8 degrees Celsius (0.5 to 8.6 Fahrenheit).<sup>3</sup> Experts say that even reaching half that range could have a catastrophic effect on those living in low-lying parts of the globe, as well as some who will be harmed by hotter crop-growing conditions. Many do not deny the fact of an environmental crisis, while a shrinking group who refuse to speak of prudential action may be left unconvinced no matter how much evidence is presented. The goal here is not to persuade deniers, but to move beyond prudent concern to effective action.

The second challenge is that **a rapidly expanding consumer culture enhances the current unsustainable System.** Did you say six hundred million Chinese are aspiring to enter the Middle Class? We are all consumers and others want a chance for the material privileges of North Americans and Western Europeans. It is certainly challenging to try to break the social addiction to non-renewable fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, and natural gas) and adjust to reasonable limits of consumption. All the current excellent simple lifestyle suggestions (see **Appendix One**) are insufficient for catalyzing change in themselves, for they lack a political will and force.<sup>4</sup> The haunting question for years is, "What if emerging nations follow us and consume at North American and European levels?" Who can or should stop them? arises.

The third challenge is one we hesitate to articulate, namely, **we allow the privileged wealthy to control the System.** It is such an embarrassment for a democratic people and yet it occurs by, for example, repeated Congressional votes to affirm the Keystone XL Pipeline. Such payoffs and permissiveness means forfeiting our democratic duties like gamblers hoping to join the privileged few. This has nothing to do with sharing and we are again fooled into thinking we can tweak an unsustainable socio-economic System. Rather than be tolerant of the legitimate thieves, we must act as responsible citizens, both improving self and bringing about social reform. Too often those who should be moral leaders permit themselves to be court chaplains of the System's privileged few. Let's question the "Shop till you drop" mentality, the 21st century's counterpart to Roman Empire "Bread and Circuses." Tax reform calls out as a check to challenge the captains of industry

and finance who have incomes 350 times the average employee's salary. Inequality explodes even when greater equality means stronger democracy.<sup>5</sup> Why permit billionaires? Why not help save their souls by impoverishing them?

The last challenge is a general attitude that **we think we can do this alone**. Our secularized culture is blinded by allurements and is unable to allow for meaningful change to occur. We are helpless without recourse as a people to a Higher Power, because of this deep groove of paralysis based on the prevailing fiction that we can raise ourselves by our own bootstraps. Our founding parents knew what it meant to say "In God we trust." We must be humble enough to discover that we are our brothers' keepers. As Jewish philosopher Emmanuel Levinas says, "We are responsible for the others' responsibility."<sup>6</sup>

Individually, we need good food, rest, and physical exercise; socially, we need to control financial wealth, eliminate tax havens, and afford the jobless employment opportunities. The first are matters of personal responsibility; the second involves global financial and environmental decisions by individual nations, a collaborative process that cannot come any too soon. And democratic citizens must hasten the day within their respective nations and regions by living simply and conservatively and by pressing for reform of the economic, social, and political System that steals from our commons. Furthermore, we set our goals on the high motivation of a non-profit variety, with the eventual rejection of wealth acquisition for its own sake in a new non-profit economy.

### **Book Rationale**

Each of the nine decades of my life has contributed valuable increments to my final stance; this justifies a radically new System based on Christian values -- the Kingdom of God.

**Chapter One** touches on the process of learning to **respect** God's creation and mother Earth through local pride, sense of history of place, and appreciation of the home place environment (first decade); it includes an understanding that proper human development enhances the beauty of the natural world. The Depression, Second World War and especially the transition from a horse to tractor economy allows us to live with and flourish amid dramatic change (second decade). My formal education included a comfortable compatibility of science and religious belief; I always accepted evolution as taught in grade and high school by our progressive Franciscan nuns and the Xavier University educational community (second and third decade). My Jesuit calling was a ministry that was educational and research-oriented but not academic and institutionally based. Over time it was evident that I wanted to avoid competitive schools, inter- and intradepartmental

friction, publish-or-perish pressures, and those institutions with high and painful tuition for students and discover a more informal work setting.

**Chapter Two** recognizes the damage to our Earth and embraces the raw reality of environmental pollution and wasteful resource use, all through human causation. Consumerism as seen as good or bad really indicates the confusion as to how we see this key component of the current System. However, as experience proves, merely exposing ills through a quick diagnosis does not solve consumer-related problems. In the post-First Earth Day period the impression was that the environmental crisis could be exposed, acted upon and dispatched in short order. The misplaced power to control minds through misplaced advertizing raised havoc in a materialistic culture devoid of self-control.

**Chapter Three** involves the urgency to act in a non-violent manner. This changed focus from exposing pollution to a more positive selection of sustainable treatments in the form of appropriate technology and renewable energy applications, occurring in Appalachia among poor folks. Some became converts to a homesteading and simple lifestyle, but volunteerism was too painfully slow and no match for the aggressive consumer culture of shop and spend. Gradually, the competitive nature of the culture emerged and a savage dog-eat-dog competitive spirit, even for non-profit funding, became evident. Radical sharing is needed.

**Chapter Four** exposes the weaknesses in the System dealing with unchallenged fossil energy use and concentrated wealth in the hands of a few. Healing Earth must become a holistic exercise and not limited to ecological studies or revealing the damage done to Earth. Healing involves the entire social, political, economic, and especially spiritual person. One must realize that our own inner forces are not sufficient to change the habits of others. WE need each other and that exposes our inherent limitations to persuasion and publicizing results of our work.

**Chapter Five** includes coming to an understanding of the emerging world order and reaffirming our trust in the national motto, In God We Trust. During the turn of the millennia I came to see that the social addiction of our culture is simply unacknowledged and thus we must turn to ex-addicts and the poor for models of how to act and for leadership in struggles ahead; It became evident that we must pray for the continuation of a **holy anger** against cultural practices that oppress others, and yet always attempt to keep a balanced disposition.

**Chapter Six:** We do not have the complete solution so this must be considered a work in progress because no one action is sufficient to change the System, nor does a fallible individual have all the answers. Some actions are more meaningful than others given the energy and talent of collaborating



citizens, and so an order must be suggested and discussed. Awareness of urgency makes the task of being truly efficient eco-revolutionaries paramount. Conversion to a fossil fuel-free economy is key to sustainability, but that alone is not sufficient for curing all ills. Our challenge is to channel a holy impatience of youth into a non-violent process of radical change in which economic equality and a more shared social System takes shape -- and that is a tall order. We need divine help in overcoming the Evil One,<sup>7</sup> whose existence is more denied than even God's presence in our world. However, mischief is at work and that needs prayerful recognition.

### The Audience

Let's reach out to the world, even if many cannot, and most will, not ponder the message. Rather, we hunt for the few who will be moved to reflect and be moved as agents of change who will start a ripple effect to go out to all the world. The audience are people who are courageous enough to take risks and to decide on a course of action that best fits their resources. Welcome to those committed to **radical change**. Let's burn with indignation and still keep cool enough to fashion meaningful use of talents while time remains. Have faith that revolution can occur, hope that it will, and love to bring it about in a non-violent fashion.

A consensus exists that air and water are polluted, consumer waste is bothersome, renewable energy is possible, some global climate change is occurring, concentrated wealth exists, and the American Dream is fading. Answers are complex for they involve erosion of the democratic process, challenges to right-to-life and livelihood, climate change due to slowness in installing renewable energy alternatives, economic disparity through lack of fair taxes, and failure to face the prevalent unsustainable fossil fuel economy. Again we will focus on the question: what do we do in the period to the transition to new System? Climate change must go beyond tweaking or readjusting the System, for such adjustments prolong the agony of poor and impatient under- or unemployed folks. Plutocrats will deliberately sabotage our cherished democratic process and our citizens will continue to suffer from social addiction to the alluring consumer culture.

Our current materialistic System and its state Wealth Cult appears as formidable as the Roman Empire during the early fifth century A.D., and yet vast changes occurred during that pivotal hundred years. Are we heralding an iconoclastic "Last Hurrah?" Some say, "Why not tweak the System rather than reject it?" "Why bite the jeweled hand that feeds us and why not just show simple gratitude?" In contrast, we start a dialogue, "Why tolerate wealth in the hands of a few?" Or "Isn't it better to bless those who unloose purse strings rather than seizing the purse for the common good?" Forms of fair redistribution are worth addressing. Signs of change suddenly burst forth in 2011 within the "Occupy Wall Street" movement and it frightened status quo

folks.

Not everyone was accepting the trust essential to continuation of the System; a lesson was emerging: break the trust and we start to change the System. Defy the Wealth Cult, question the trust, and break the System. The privileged Wealth Cult champions a form of "indulgences" to sin (a very false interpretation of that word).<sup>8</sup> They want business as usual. Peter Heather describes a similar stance by the late Roman Senate; in the words of its fourth century A.D. champion Symmachus who flatteringly calls it 'the better part of humankind' (*pars melior humani generi*); Heather adds that "Only since the Second World War has the cult of wealth for its own sake become so prevalent that no further justification for privileged ownership seems to be required."<sup>9</sup> Is it time for revolution?

## Chapter One: Learning Respect through Hard Work

*Before anyone is a "talented" entrepreneur or a "menial" laborer, or anything in between, most of the economic gains that get distributed to individuals in a given year or period are derived from what is inherited from the past, not created by them in the present.*<sup>1</sup> Gar Alperovitz & Lew Daly

We owe a debt of gratitude to what we inherit from the past. This sense of thankfulness comes to a marked degree from how we were brought up and come to appreciate what we received from those who went before us, for they make us who we are. It is our task to be open to the past so as to carry it forward into the future. Thus, the way we do this is of immense importance and so some attention must be given to our formative years -- and in my case almost half a lifetime (from birth to mid-1970). I really have never envied quick learners, since they did not invest enough time to value the preparation needed to fashion the future.

### a) **Sensing Our Past: Depression and FDR** (1930s)

*If you would learn more, ask the cattle,  
seek information from the birds of the air.  
The creeping things of Earth will give you lessons,  
and the fishes of the sea will tell you. (Job 12:7-8)*

I grew up with nature through early farming experiences. We played with possums in the wheat field, observed nesting birds, enjoyed praying mantises catching worms, watching humming birds get nectar in tubular tobacco blooms, and caught catfish in the farm pond. Nature was all around and helped determine our unique place and how much of a debt we owe to our surroundings and environment.

In the autumn of 1930, at the first anniversary of the Wall Street Crash, my father, with the able help of his brother Pete, finished the harvest of a very drought-stricken tobacco crop and launched into building the homestead where I was born. The place was partly finished and made ready after Daddy and Mama's wedding in mid-February 1931. The house was not hooked to the electric grid, in order to save money. Two coal stoves were for heating and cooking and kerosene ("coal oil") for lighting. A plentiful water supply came from a cistern outside the back door. The farm provided ample food and a plentiful supply of quilts and feather mattresses kept our unheated upstairs bedrooms snug for winter sleeping. The road from town, four miles away, was macadamized though the one bordering our farm was called the "dirt road."

By the time of my entry into the world in 1933 a generous supply of resources were already mustered to help live a good life. Even in hard depression times there was so much to be thankful for. In that atmosphere of sheer gratitude, I was born in a healthy manner at home with Dr. Pollack present, who held up the service bill (unknown denomination) to the light and said, "This is the first folding money I have seen this month -- nothing but chickens and eggs." I was born on the last day of September, and a week later was baptized in St. Patrick's Church in Maysville.

Thankfulness amid hard times helped generate a respect for God and country, for family and friends. In 1932 our finances were such that my folks could not make the interest payment on their debt, but the town banker held off foreclosure, citing the hard-working habits of the family and others in Mason County. Yes, low prices accompanied lean crops and purchases of basic items and gasoline (at less than 25 cents a gallon, even with windshield wiping service) had to be minimized. We would bargain for coal when the miner/driver was caught with an unsold load; I wore my youngest uncle's hand-me-downs, though much out of fashion; we got a dime's worth of ice after Mass on Sunday to make ice cream. Frugal times, yes, but good ones none the less! I never heard coins jingle until in my teens, but we lived on ample lunches of Daddy's country ham and Mama's homemade bread and pickles.

**Respect** ran deep in our culture and Mass while in Latin, was a solemn weekly exercise. The huge and graceful Gothic church could be prominently seen from across the Ohio River that was now crossed with a new and beautiful suspension bridge. My paternal grandpaw used his oxen to help carry limestone rock for the church foundation around 1910; Father Jones who supervised the work, then graced the tower with the largest bell in Kentucky, but it had to be immediately dampened for fear of cracking the structure. On clear days we heard that bell ring Angelus from four miles away.

The pew rent in church gave families their special places and I never

heard it said, though those with German names sat on the St. Boniface side (with a huge stain glass window), and the ascendant Irish families seated themselves on the St. Patrick window side. Why were Fritsches on the Irish side? My then unmarried aunts in pre-World War One days insisted Fritsches from Alsace were French and NOT German. However, my mother's Schumacher family sat on the opposite side, thus giving Daddy a view of Mama across the aisle. From our family pew I recall in toddler years studying the magnificent view of St. Boniface, pictured cutting down the gigantic "Thunder Oak" tree dedicated to the Germanic god of storms "Thor;" his trembling bystanders were convinced the tree god would strike Boniface with lightning, but his fearlessness prevailed. I would wonder whether he had doubts during the chopping operation. Faith is something we opt for even while a pure gift and we still wonder about things. And Boniface was a rare elder when martyred.

**Respect** extended to civic affairs. My earliest recollections include the silence of the room as we listened to the fireside chats of President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR); this early father figure could hold an entire family spellbound for an hour, maybe because we were all Democrats and highly patriotic. Amid it all the Depression lingered, but then was abruptly broken by news of Pearl Harbor on my older sister's birthday. War came and we were truly mesmerized. I learned to read newspapers in the third grade and wondered when getting off the bus from school whether the British stopped Rommel at Tobruk in Egypt and whether the Yanks held on to Bataan. Yes, we entered the war effort by collecting milkweed pods for parachute silk (it proved no good) and accepted rationing of everything from gasoline and sugar to shoes. We kids fashioned guns and swords, but were told not to point weapons and sheathe the swords to avoid eye damage.

We regarded farm work for the war effort, for smoking materials kept the troops happy and steady at the trigger. The industry convinced the government that tobacco was as essential as ammo and so we got good prices for the crop. It came with intensive hand labor that we all supplied at a very early age. As a family we disliked the gentleman farmer (absence from hard work) in the estate across the road. Mr. Arthur Davis rode horseback supervising the black hands "Skinny" and "Noah;" we wondered at times whether these black fellows ever heard about the Emancipation Proclamation, but they did seem happy in what they were doing; they gained from us more respect than did their white supervisor. I grew to despise inherited and unearned wealth and lumped it with the likes of Charles III in Jefferson's way of thinking about him.

In Kentucky during those years we had strictly segregated schools. I burned with indignation when my black neighbor friends had to go to a small one-room school while we (public and private) white kids rode another larger bus. A mile away in America's first town named "Washington" (founded in

1786) was the birthplace of Albert Sidney Johnston, a full Confederate general killed in the battle of Shiloh. It was also the home of Union General Bill "Bull" Nelson of the battle of Richmond, who was also wounded at Shiloh. Also in Washington was and still is the first post office (1789) serving the Northwest territory and first bank west of the Appalachians, and the old souvenir-chipped stone on which visiting author Harriet Beecher Stowe saw a black man sold, leading to her highly influential novel, Uncle Tom's Cabin.<sup>2</sup> Our neighbors included the Marshalls which was the family that Chief Justice John Marshall belonged to -- though he stayed in Virginia.

In 1938, FDR elevated the U.S. Solicitor General and our Mason Countian, Stanley Reed, to the Supreme Court (my half aunt was a housekeeper for his family). While we had no other direct connections with famous people, we did consider that the noted explorer and trail blazer Daniel Boone spent a winter in the 1770s camped at the headwaters of the Limestone Creek, which was just across the border from our farm. Daddy had a shortened education due to the untimely death of his father and yet always read (especially history books) on winter evenings. In Daddy's retirement he focused on wood carving and created statues of local explorer Simon Kenton, General A.S. Johnston and was working on one of Robert E. Lee at the time of his death. A remotely related General Henry Lee was the Revolutionary War veteran who was given a land grant on which our farm was part.

We held local facts with pride except for one -- runaway slaves. Local Mason Countians at the time of the Drew Scott Decision just before the Civil War formed the "legal" hunting committees that crossed into Ohio and captured freed escapees and brought them back to the Washington jail for owners to "reclaim" them for a fee.<sup>3</sup> We did not talk about that at all.

In a border state even family loyalties were divided.<sup>4</sup> Even 80 years after the war we still had ambivalence; I respected the courage and determination of the South and yet would have perhaps sided with two of my maternal great uncles and been a Yankee; I am always thankful I did not have to make the choice. Enhancing our respect for the past was my maternal grandfather who told us tales of his youth, for at one point his father had moved the family to what would become our family farm. He remembered the gigantic chestnut that was for us a standing ghostly victim of the famous Depression period blight. We prized Grandpaw's stories as those of our neighbor ole' Joe Davis, an ancient fellow who recalled the beginning and ending of the Civil War and loved to tell stories in the Kentucky fashion.<sup>5</sup>

Memories of the past were like treasured jewels in an otherwise ordinary rural setting. We polished them at any opportunity and visited such places often. On Aunt Mary's farm, a mile away, was a cabin (Medford's Fort) made from a flatboat that brought pioneers down the Ohio from Pittsburgh and Wheeling to Limestone (now Maysville); the logs were hauled up to high

ground and fashioned into a lodging lasting for a century and a half. In our many ventures as kids in the woods we came upon a slave grave site near enough to the General Henry Lee mansion to be their slave cemetery; it contained a few rough stones with one etched with the word "Mary." The remains are known only to God.

b) **Experiencing Change: From Horse to Tractor** (1940s)

*The problem with land is that they stopped making it some time ago.*  
Mark Twain

Our close-knit farming family included bonds to land and that has continued down to this day. From the early sunrise to the advancing day and from the glory of spring and autumn color we were connected with time that never stopped and seasons with special duties and tasks. From when I started milking cows (at six) to leaving home for college in the next decade, we were expected to be engaged in the act of keeping the farm running. Livestock needed feeding and crops tending; school work was demanding and so was simply growing up and taking on new responsibilities. It was a learning experience I still wish every child could have.

Through to the end of the Second World War our farm was part of the horse culture, the animal power that characterized agriculture for several millennia; then in a wink it suddenly changed. Even before the war, grain farmers acquired tractors on the Great Plains. We were held up because the war effort turned farm equipment factories into tank producers. We knew about tractors and in fact Grandpaw and his sons had one. For several decades all the farmers were familiar with large motorized engines on wheels used for annual grain threshing and for powering crushers to pulverize local shell-filled limestone spread on fields to enrich the pastureland. As soon as the War ended and factories returned to civilian goods Daddy acquired a new Ford/Ferguson tractor that quickly became our mechanical workhorse. Incidentally, we kept the mix of horses and tractors for a time, but realized how farm life was changing.

First, the quite rapid fast pace of farming actually accelerated. When taking a load of hay or tobacco from the field by animal power, horses stopped at special places for an honored rest, for we were constantly aware of their needs for water, feed and restful moments. They also needed shoeing, combing, medicines, proper harness, and protection from bad weather.

Farming care and concerns changed when mindless tractors replaced temperamental horses. The tractor may need refueling, but little sensitivity was involved -- and hauling and cultivating continued at times far into darkness. Furthermore, it was acceptable and necessary to talk to horses: "gee," "haw," "get up," "woo," and "come on." I do not recall cursing horses

unless they made a wrong move, and the harsh words were more to our own misdoings than that of the excitable but loyal animals. Horses were our partners and when drivers respected horses, then all worked harmoniously. Thus, respect extended beyond church and nation to the animal kingdom.

Second, horses entered into the rhythms of farm life; the land furnished the feed for the animals and their manure helped the crops grow better. This symbiosis included resource conservation; corn and hay were cultivated and harvested with great attention to quality and moisture content so that the results were higher quality animal feed. In return, manure was spread at the right time so no nutrients would be lost. Of course, tractor care was quite different; certain mechanical skills demanded distant shop work on occasions. Tractor "feed" was utterly different as well. Petroleum feedstock took capital sent to distant commercial companies while feed for livestock took effort, but was home grown and much of the money stayed near home.

Much horse culture involved local sustainability. We lived off of the products of our farm: vegetables, fruits and berries along with locally grown animal products of milk, eggs and meat. The work of cultivating these high quality crops had a heavy horse component. However, to purchase, maintain and operate the tractor required heavier capital outlays and thus a greater demand that we grow more commercial cash crops (in our case, tobacco). Thus, mechanization required additional tobacco crop acreage that was highly controlled by the Federal price and allotment control program. The number of acres per farm was already allotted; our way to continue prosperous when mechanized was to increase farmland; that is precisely what Daddy did, going from one farm to two and then as our family demands increased he farmed cropland from other farms on a shared basis.

Even mechanized moderate-sized farms were not sufficient to furnish college tuition demands. Thus our family did more than farm work; we constructed a new house or refurbished old ones each summer (at least nine of them in as many years). We timed house-building for the slack time between planting and harvesting. During that period between late June and early August we installed the foundation, framing, roofing, siding, windows and doors and locked the unfinished house. During the winter the interior would be finished with hired help. Here the absence of horse care during winter made tractors appear a time savings.

Lastly, recall that animals have a special relation with us, whether as pets or livestock. All people need animal companionship, for it allows us to become more humanly sensitive. There is an innate pleasure in seeing an animal respond to our care and concern, and we learn to be happy and endure hardships together. A sensitive reciprocal relationship is never possible with a vehicle, no matter how much appreciated or idolized. A profound change in style of life and work occurred before our eyes. We did not forget the past, but

appreciated it in relation to new developments. Cultural literacy continued to be called for. A millennial shift occurred before our conservative eyes in a matter of mere decades. We regarded change as advancement, but tended to abandon the good of the past. Urban folks observed in 1910 that going from horse- to auto-filled New York did not bring about a predicted cleaner environment, but more dangerous air pollution.

In a mere decade our proximity to the scenic and beautiful Ohio River Valley, four miles away, brought changes that gave an industrial atmosphere to the peaceful rural landscape. In fact, the site where we as Boy Scouts camped downstream from Maysville suddenly became the site of a major coal-burning powerplant; and then a series of other such plants were built upstream with the horizon spewing smoke from the coal emissions. The local veterinarian noted an increase in livestock respiratory diseases and damage to plant life as well. We were not blind to a changing world, but our optimism colored the surroundings with glamour and for awhile papered over emerging difficulties. The clear star-filled skies became a little dimmer; light pollution grew, especially in large urban areas, but that was the cost of progress.

Gradually I saw that natural beauty could be marred by human misdeeds. Tobacco smoking was an unchallenged pleasure, and even as teens no objection was rendered in our family; just don't smoke in the barn and catch the hay on fire. Health effects were ignored after the War propaganda insisted that smoking was healthy for the "T" Zone and so many doctors smoked one or other brand. Denial was simply a local component of a heavy tobacco culture.

We spent some free time in summer keeping fence rows mowed and clean, but to the detriment of wildlife. We did begin through conservation measures to see advantages in planting trees and respecting even our cedars (most would call these "weed trees"); we harvested one each year for Christmas decoration. We valued local black locust for making fence posts that could withstand rot. Our love for a variety of fruit trees of every variety continues. Oaks, tulip poplars, black walnut, hickory, and hackberry have special places as well, but mostly for practical purposes. That mentioned enormous American chestnut kept standing as a ten foot high stump years after its death; Daddy did not allow us to gather the fallen rot-resistant branches, for it was the remains of a Eastern American forest blight.

Respect for some, but not all wildlife accompanies farm folks. Rural people know when nutritious dandelions become green, when the various fruit trees bud and bloom, when to cover plants in early spring or late autumn, and where to look for the best berries or nuts. We have an ambivalent relationship with crows that will damage a corn crop or foxes that steal chickens. However, we learn to tolerate black snakes for mice control and keep a distance from the pole cat (skunk). We liked to catch crawfish and welcome the semi-tropical



birds on their return for the summer, especially the mockingbird. However, not all farmers are thorough naturalists.

During the World War Two years, I created an imaginary land-locked, totally self-sustainable nation called *Caspadea*. Since this is the first printed revelation of those dreams I hesitate in how to spell the name. My ideal land was surrounded by hostile forces and so had closed borders utilizing limited resources (wood and hydropower). In this ideal but limited state all inhabitants were fully employed and living in a cooperative spirit much like our nation during war time. There was no inequality because incomes were virtually the same, with fair taxes and both maximum and minimum income levels. Education was through general funds and no tuition for studies. Most people worked on small farms, businesses, and craft shops. Medical and legal professionals were subsidized in their education and were compensated by the satisfaction of their work, including health care for shut-ins. All essentially made the same living wage, and all goods and services were under enough controls that no one was threatened by lack of livelihood. Amazingly, Caspadea needs reality today.

In early high school, the state conservation people helped us form a chapter of the Kentucky Conservation Club, an introduction to environmental care. We went to a summer camp on the Tennessee border on a newly opened Dale Hollow Lake; the program included skeet-shooting, proper hunting and fishing techniques and boating and fishing. Respect for wildlife was a theme emphasized throughout, with an investment that these youngsters would become responsible hunters.

The postwar period was certainly a time of immense change (horses to tractors, dirt roads to highways, dense towns to suburban sprawl, and electric appliances from iceboxes to refrigerators, piper cubs to commercial airlines, and radios to television. The old was set aside with dignified honor; the new was welcomed, but some negative effects overlooked or not yet uncovered. Respect was of a naive form but present all the same, but that differed among individuals. If we delve deeper we may find that the changes had some sort of psychological effect on all of us.

c) **Opening to New Vistas** (1950s)

*I look up at your heavens, made by your fingers,  
at the moon and stars you set in place. (Psalm 8:3)*

Observation was called for: looking down we saw a sacred Earth, a microcosmos; looking out and up we perceived a future with many possibilities, a macrocosmos. In 1951, life changed dramatically when I went from the comfort of farm home to urban college for all but summer months. The world opened up and a past defined "home" was giving way to a future

with immense unpredicted possibilities. Broader expanses opened to new dreams and yet immense complexity and startling simplicity were all entwined.

The American dream loomed larger than life, with its materialistic promise of perpetual betterment. Easier travel came with Interstates and faster forms of communication awaited development.

Actually, my high school had involved a number of extra curricular events and meetings, including a student United Nations conference (twice) and Boys State (once) with its dose of politics involving a later Kentucky governor, Julian Carroll, who I reminded years later how he stacked the program for a victory. "You don't still hold that against me?" he pleaded. Going North of the Mason-Dixon line for college thrust me into another culture, though only sixty miles away from home. Suddenly we are committing ourselves to new horizons. I rejected a agricultural college curriculum at the University of Kentucky (we had learned to judge cattle at a UK meeting) and now I would have chosen "geology," but Xavier University had no courses -- and I chose chemistry instead.

Debating became one extracurricular activity, which I quickly became involved, but soon found that most were pre-legal folks. The sport or art involved attending college meets in the Midwest and the Grand National in Virginia, with its host of self-judging debates that was exhausting and showing me beyond my abilities as a college freshman. Most debate details have faded, but I recall one braggart saying his father was a board member of Mellon, a New York bank. So what? Yes, welcome to the culture of prestige and heavy ivy, something I never thought about before debating.

The Korean War was intensifying. The draft possibilities hung over us like swords. I did not mind the marching and uniformed parades required with ROTC training; we learned about artillery pieces and never to jump over the gun "trails." However, we heard of the war casualties and that included upper classmen turned graduates who became the field observers at the front lines -- and reports of wounded and dead from this vulnerable group were frequent. My first major choice was not to take advanced ROTC, though I do not recall the precise reasoning since my roommate did accept the program and got compensation for doing so.

Science was challenging, though I always liked history better. Father Shields, the head of the history department, asked my history-major friend Tom Mitchell why I did not get into their field -- which I have often pondered -- though my career would have turned to academics and not public interest. I was in chemistry classes with pre-meds and came to like them and their outlook on life more than students heading for pure academics. Half my aunts were professional or practical nurses; two first cousins became doctors, seven became nurses, and eventually two siblings entered related fields. Healing was close to my own inclinations, while chemistry as academics or as business in

plastics or drugs was unappealing. Chemistry was my chosen pathway to other things.

Gradually the Jesuit life seemed enticing and past global interests and commitment to a religious life became a possibility. I was influenced by Fr. Hubbard, the "Glacier Priest," who was the only Jesuit who I ever heard; he lectured at Maysville during my high school days. A missionary carrying the Good News to others through practical applications to remove poverty all seemed promising. Could this be done in the footsteps of Fr. Hubbard, or the early astronomer Matteo Ricci in China, or the explorer Pere Marquette in the Great Lakes region?<sup>6</sup>

**The Call** to religious life was gradual and yet it came while getting an undergraduate and masters degree in chemistry in part with inspiration of Fr. Fred Miller, the Department head. My anti-capitalism from youth could not be reconciled with people making corporate fortunes off of the wealth of a history of chemists acquiring knowledge, often gained at risks to health and with little or no compensation. Why not return profits to the commons for the good of those without access to good health care? Why fortunes to some but not benefits to all? Compassion or suffering with others is a non-profit enterprise in the name Christ.<sup>7</sup> A non-profit motivation started to germinate.

During my Masters Program at Xavier, I dared to give a chemistry seminar on our need to spread the fruit of scientific knowledge to the benefit of the poor. We should have a Marshall Plan program involving chemistry for the assistance of small farmers, craftspeople and their families who lack food, medicines, access roads and proper supplies of potable water. Practical applications are needed as the handmaiden of theoretical knowledge, or maybe it was the inverse, or perhaps the harmony of theory and practice. I thought my choice of topics would be criticized for not being the regular fare, but all, both faculty and students, liked a possible public interest science -- in 1956.

All in all, service for others mixed with the desire to be a person for the Lord took me to Milford Novitiate. As we assembled on the bright September 1st, 1956, four of us novice candidates decided to have a quick poker game with the money we carried with us (it was supposed to be locked with watches and other valuables for safekeeping until later). Instead I lost my last money before entering, but the manner of loss shocked Fr. Bernard Wernert, the Novice Master, because such was not routine procedure. Perhaps my entire career in the Society of Jesus could be defined as such.

Both respectful observation and profound listening are part of the Jesuit training, and so the two years of novitiate passed and in fact were very pleasant ones. Listening attentively allowed one to hear a cry to heaven coming from those who are hurt -- and from Earth herself. Such was the Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius. That cry becomes global anguish when military, coupled with financial powers, continued through the years to ensure

the vast chasm between wealth and poverty, haves and have-nots. Must our paralysis of inaction and avoidance of responsibility continue? What about a secular world that has no fear of God? This was a time of attempts at poetry and also trying to read a host of books on classical and other subjects, along with learning to pray. It was also the start of 43 years of "jogging," before the word became a popular one in our vocabulary.

We were not allowed news from the outside world even though we did get a newspaper front sheet once telling of the Suez Canal crisis. This lack of current events news proved my greatest hardship. However, I did welcome being designated to care for an elderly and invalid Fr. Joe Kiefer. I dressed him and took him to the rest room and in the meanwhile was to make his bed, get hot water running and laid out his paper. Just as Pearl Harbor taught me to read the newspaper while in the third grade, his short restroom period taught me to speed read all major news before the Kiefer bell tinkled. To save my job I kept quiet about this honor.

One added venture occurred in my philosophy training period (1959-61): this was caving while at a perfect place at West Baden College in rugged southern Indiana. Our college was a converted hotel given to the Jesuits during the Depression; it contains one of the largest domes in the world and had several hundred rooms surrounding an enclosed and roofed atrium, under which noises even of ordinary conversation had the sound of a drum. To keep sane besides jogging, Rolly Smith, Dave Moreau and I took up spelunking in a wild well named "Lost River," with a long underground channel. Water in the channel was often to our neck, but it generally flowed slowly; the danger was if a rain storm occurred while we were inside. At the same period two students from Indiana University lost their lives in the complex. We were poorly equipped, but that gave us a thrill.

The decade could be summarized as a time of being open to what was to come and the quietness of the 50's were giving way to the turbulence of the 1960's rage. Change was in the air. The talk among some of us was the now published works of Teilhard de Chardin, a French Jesuit working in China who had just passed away. Pope John XXIII was opening Church windows through the Vatican II Council. Timeless classical and philosophical knowledge was accepted on trust but becoming frayed at the edges. Discussions of Plato (for us not in advanced Greek), a highlight of my limited classical training, and works of Bernard Lonergan in philosophy became moments of challenge. I had difficulties with classes still taught in Latin; how I got through and passed the Latin oral exam in that noble field of philosophy is a mystery to this day.

d) **Going Out to All the World** (1960s)

*Faith is seeing the brilliant countenance of Christ looking up at us from every creature.*      Text of my ordination card

This was the decade of virtually pure study and research, and it actually passed swiftly (West Baden for philosophy, Fordham for Ph.D., Loyola U. North Aurora Campus for S.T.L. theology degree, Dartmouth [summer research], Loyola U and Great Lakes for research) and University of Texas at Austin. My direction seemed to be headed to academic work, but the mode of the times made me uneasy: Kennedy's assassination, race riots, materialistic consumer culture, etc. With a host of PhDs struggling for academic positions in all (including Jesuit) schools, my attitude became "Let them have it. No one with little or no guaranteed compensation is out fighting for the little guy." "How about a prophetic role in science for those vowed to poverty?"

Research and studies seem so remote from this distance in time, and it was really my least memorable decade of life -- and yet it definitively fixed my career. Three years of intensive chemistry work (1961-64) in New York and I haven't got a single sentence to sum it up? The same for three of the theology study years at North Aurora when I never ever checked in to see a single grade (though in the end I had very good marks). In fact those six years were filled and yet it was what we can call an investment for the public interest science work ahead. Keep eyes and ears open and learn teamwork in some fashion. In the course of time we organized a team to speak about science and theology and took it to a well-attended Conference at Purdue's Newman Center. I was a party to the first Catholic student group to engage in talks on ecumenism with students from several Chicago seminaries. Times were changing.

My priestly ordination at the end of three years of theology (now required after four years) was without fanfare. My brother abruptly left the priesthood just before my ordination, and my folks were hurting; the rector thought I should go to Kentucky and talk with them -- and Mama wanted no celebration. We tore off and saved the stamps from the invitation envelopes, and I was happy they wanted nothing special. To me, clerical cultural status of that time was horribly uncomfortable, for I always hold our Baptism has higher ranking than Ordination. The French Second Estate and British House of Lords with forms of clerical privilege bothered me terribly. In Pope Francis' mold, I prefer service to adulation. I spent the first weeks after ordination hearing hundreds of confessions among the massive numbers of recruits at the Great Lakes Naval Base, in fact more than all the rest of my life.

Two of us got the final theology training year away from the seminary in a university setting. I studied for my final culminating *ad grad* examination at a non-seminary setting (dorm chaplain and chemistry research). I worked with Professor Carl Moore at Loyola; this research was teamwork with some chemists at the Great Lakes Naval Base where I was also an associate chaplain. Ambivalence reigned in striving to do research in anti-viral agents, military chaplaincy for a host of navy recruits and talking peace to college

students, all while simultaneously preparing for the grand final theological examination. As Bob Dylan's song went, *The Times They Are A Changin'*. I passed the exam and we got a publication in the periodical *Nature* to boot.

Instead of the third full year of Jesuit novitiate (called tertianship), after studies we had an abbreviated course of three summer months (including hospital chaplaincy at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital) and then a return in January 1970 for a final few weeks at Auriesville, NY. The day this ended I flew (not on the same plane) to Austin Texas as did ex-president Johnson returning to his home. My intention was to do post doctoral work in chemistry, which turned out to be a very satisfying experience with the distinguished Michael Dewar. Within his international team I worked with Jesus Garcia, a Mexican professor on leave from Monterrey Tech; Jesus suggested that I apply to work there and my provincial was agreeable the school had an associated Jesuit community. However, foreign languages were not my forte, with ears not so tuned and my dyslexic condition always making a chore of figuring the spellings of Latin, Greek, French, German and Spanish words. It would be a great struggle to get settled, even though Jesus said "no problem." For me, I preferred future work in English-speaking lands.

Certainly the 1960s were confusing times. The nation was still in chaos over the Vietnam war, unsettled race relations and the emerging environmental crisis. I participated in peace marches and in one where Martin Luther King was present. In early November 1969 I was walking along with UT students and wandered next to Joe Tom Easley; he casually mentioned that he was heading over the Thanksgiving break to Washington DC to talk with Ralph Nader,<sup>8</sup> who was a well known lawyer and public interest advocate. Off-hand I asked him to inquire if a position for a chemist was open. Word came back the next week to come up to DC and talk. Thus my public interest work began in such a haphazard manner.

I returned from DC and finished a review paper on *Borazaromatic Compounds* (Michael Dewar's specialty) and was off to new work; the good professor told me if he had to start over he would do what I intended to do; this was a gigantic support. In June I left with the approval of my provincial Bob Harvanek, whose only stipulation was that I not expect Jesuit funds, mainly derived from our academic people. I must find my own support. I abided by that wise request during succeeding decades.

### **e) Appropriating a Unique HERE in Life**

We all seek to know the unique nature of our calling and the environment in which called. We simply have to be ourselves and accept the conditions that surround us in order to make the best of things. In the spirit of knowing who and where we are, we must experience creation first hand, for to mimic experts is to deny a unique authenticity coming from personal experience with nature. In fact, an "environmental relativity" must be a

component of our spiritual journey of faith; this involves the **HERENESS** of our lives which I developed during the formative years.

**HERE** means we have this unique experience that includes our past sense of time and place and a desire to know our direction and bearing. We like knowing much about conditions and topography: from where the wind is blowing, how the temperature changes (to predict daily weather prospects), movement and color of clouds (saying much about the coming day), species of major native trees and plants (whether we know the scientific name or not), awareness and respect for local wildlife (for our own protection), and flow of the rivers (giving us general watershed knowledge). Awareness means a keener sense of sight, sound, smell, taste, and feel of our surroundings. We can learn to be sensitive from others who love their native place, but it is important that we appropriate (make our own) conditions around where we reside -- and be confident in making these our own.

**HERENESS** reveals a meeting place with the Spirit, making this an authentic sacred space and time for each of us. It is not something borrowed from another, but a freedom to be oneself while realizing that this occurs with loved ones, associates, and those in community. We grow in our freedom of the Spirit and that includes a sense of time and place. Within the parameters of our current circumstances we are influenced by the immediate surroundings and know it -- and sometimes these disturb us as much as comfort us. We may have to settle in all the more or move on.

**Can we tarry awhile?** We crave the sense of preserving experiences with the help of others. As satisfaction with our place grows in awareness of the Spirit in our midst, we realize that respect for place is a component of happiness. Our journey of faith becomes comforting and knowing our physical surroundings gives a deeper sense of wellbeing. We grow in our self-awareness with respect to our immediate surroundings. We bask when the environment is well preserved and we are hurt in a compassionate way when the land around us is damaged. The Spirit directs us to both admire surrounding nature in her pristine state, and to enhance nature, especially through a healing male and female hand.

**Nature can be enhanced by human activity.** Rene Dubos, a noted environmentalist (and consultant of our newly established [1971] *Center for Science in the Public Interest*), addressed a large gathering at the annual meeting of the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* in DC and argued that it was "natural" that human beings become involved in improvement of landscape and making this livable. He mentioned the draining of swampland in his native France as an example; he proposed that human improvement was a natural thing to do, for we are part of nature and worthy of acting within the bounds of environmental propriety for the benefit of all. I felt a kinship with his arguments, for mine was a mystery-filled world inviting

greater service through enhancement.

**Mystery pervades our HERENESS.** Mystery involves the partly unanswered perennial question of "why?" Here the most profound of puzzles bother one in a special way. If we are true to ourselves we never let that question leave us, for the WHY is beyond the horizon, a mortal journey that ends in death and for the believer goes beyond in an eternal quest. Mystery is both beyond us and is still grounding our HERENESS, where we find ourselves at a given time. We are tempted to stop and reflect, and take precious moments for prayer, meditation, and celebration. Environment enters into our preliminary answers to our works-in-progress, works that at times embrace looking down to see where we are, and then glancing out to see where we are going. Our vision of the horizon ahead keeps us focused on the future. Those were my reflections on the journey from Texas to Washington, DC.

**What is the First Level of Eco-Humility?** HERENESS is always tested if we have difficulties and are willing to admit them and see our responsibility in relation to them. The Earth is in trouble was the clear message of the First Earth Day. We either tried to accept this as a responsibility, or denied, excused or tried to escape from it. No matter how lowly we regard our position or place in life, we can still accept some degree of responsibility and that takes a nearness to humus or Earth and a willingness to face what must be done. If the hungry confront us we are to see and respond to them.

Troubles afflict our wounded Earth and a dispute arose as to their roots.<sup>10</sup> Some blame Judeo Christian roots and others materialism. Those troubles were surfacing through polluted air, water, and land. The first level of an eco-humility is admission that we have had a part to play in damaging our earth, a mortal misdeed that threatens planetary life. We are culprits and all must take responsibility for misdeeds, whether done individually or socially.

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The elements of my formative years converged as I launched my career in 1970 at age 36: respect for the past, familiarity in welcoming radical change, openness to what is to come, and striving to apply learning to the benefit of the commons (public interest concerns). Preserving and renewing fragile Earth and critique of the consumer culture became my special mission. That was a lot of training and I did not want any more formal education, though I had never had a single hour of the field in public interest work.



## Chapter Two: Realizing the Critical Situation (1970s)

*The kingdom of heaven is like the yeast a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour till it was leavened all through.* (Luke 13:21)

On the first Earth Day in April 1970, hundreds of us students and faculty attended an event on the mall at the University of Texas at Austin. This location is adjacent to the 307-foot administrative building tower where Charles Whitman, before taking his own life in August 1966, killed 12 and wounded 32 others with gunshots from the tower's observation deck on the 29th floor. I do not recall the specific contents of the event, but distinctly remember a spectator seated on the lawn in front of me, squashing his filtered cigarette butt in the grass while wildly cheering attacks on major polluters. Environmental confrontation yes, but how, I wondered, do we handle individual polluters? The problem emerged suddenly: **Don't we all contribute to the environmental crisis?**

**How do we go about healing Earth?** Healing runs in my family and this could combine with education in public interest work. However, the challenge to do "public interest science" in the legal center of America (if not the world) was a challenge. Here one could apply scientific principles and technique to move from problem exposure to well-founded solutions -- though the process was hidden in a cloud of lobbying, posturing and media over-reaction. The American consumer culture of planned obsolescence and waste would not allow for easy solutions, and this gradually transformed a temporary venture into a lifetime ministry that is far from over as of this moment.

### **a) Taking Responsibility for Environmental Damage**

Upon arrival in Washington in June 1970, my initial public interest work at Ralph Nader's *Center for the Study of Responsive Law*<sup>1</sup> involved a number of environmental issues with associated chemical aspects, laid out for someone on a very steep learning curve: possible asbestos in tobacco wrappers, mercury in fish, and lead in gasoline. Were the publicized reports true and how were they to be verified and rendered credible? Did some manufacturer really put asbestos in those little cigar wrappers that a rather knowledgeable Connecticut gentleman brought to our office? How did the mercury get into fish as now being analyzed and causing nationwide discussion? Why raise octane levels when lead in gasoline is doing a good job? A host of questions was being investigated by media and invited testimony before Congress; however, these activities were a far cry from my Texas chemical research of a few months before. Public media demanded quick and precise answers and yet non-profit groups were sparse and we had little time to catch our breath.

The story of my battle with the Tobacco Institute and the interaction with Fred Panzer is an early battle. My first test of fire was in reporting to the press that a series of patents had been issued to include asbestos in tobacco filters and product wrapping. This led to a firestorm from the tobacco industry and while they acknowledged asbestos patents (they could hardly do otherwise), they still vehemently denied that such had ever occurred.

I was totally unprepared for this storm and was frightened by the industry denials made in the press, yet a certain individual had given me sheets of small cigar wrapping paper that just might contain asbestos if submitted to expensive analysis. I closed the case in part because I was a pipe smoker at the time, had gone to college on income from tobacco grown at our farm, and somehow half trusted the tobacco industry that bought our family crops at reasonably high prices. Unfortunately, when later moving on I discarded those stored sheets, to my utter regret, for that issue resurfaced three decades later and the evidence showing that asbestos really was used in smoking materials had gone into the trash can. Why should we ever discard stored materials?

Environmental solutions seemed obvious in those heady early activist days. In the year 1970, our major resource was the general media attention to a new environmental crisis issue. Working in DC with Ralph Nader, known widely for his book *Unsafe at Any Speed*<sup>1</sup> and his consumer advocacy, our team had ready access to the media. Issues of pollution of air and water were safer than that of consumer tobacco products and its Big Tobacco protectors, who were well versed in attacking the medical evidence showing health damage from smoking. They had already spent vast lobby resources into creating doubt as to scientific evidence. Telling a story of pollution seemed simple enough, but bringing about corrective changes in proper order was, and still is, a major public interest problem (note climate change). Industry offered counter arguments to scientific evidence to the media gullible enough to generate a controversy claiming that fairness required BOTH sides of an issue to be addressed.

Following Earth Day, manufacturing and business became the focus of media attack. Air and water issues can be photogenic, and thus the polluted Cuyahoga River and belching smoke stacks of the rust belt made news when air- and water-borne dangers were revealed. It seemed so simple: pinpoint sources and find and fine the culprits! The initial task of the environmental activist was to uncover environmental harm and demand proper governmental policing of culprits. However, laws were not that clear and simple procedures of prosecution demanded documentation; likewise, proven pollution elimination technologies that would not stifle production or threaten jobs were not always available.

Perish the thought: **Did curbing pollution mean restricting numbers** of autos, appliances and building materials that were essential to a consumer-driven economy?<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, who is to blame totally or in part, and how do we as a nation or world divvy up that blame? Congressional testimony on a half dozen problem areas was much of my work those first years of the 1970s. We did help create a climate of chronic need for the primary environmental laws in that decade, along with the institution of the *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency* (USEPA). These were positive contributions to the elementary steps of healing Earth, but we were naive to think it was a temporary task ahead for America.

**Wasn't environment a global issue?** In June 1972, I went to the citizens gathering at the *United Nations Conference on the Environment* in Stockholm Sweden. My grander hopes included working with the Vatican delegation, and somewhat innocently I even lobbied the Apostolic Delegate in DC and attended a reception at his place. However, I was a complete novice at Church politics. Rather, I went to the Stockholm meeting as a private citizen and attended the citizens' forum adjacent to the governmental formal gathering. Each morning during the two-week meeting various priests attending the official UN forum and I concelebrated Masses in Latin, and we talked about issues afterwards; the formal folks talked about principles, and others about practical global environmental problems. It was noted that Green Peace was already active.

At the citizen's meeting an adjacent person indicated that their Swedish Prime Minister Olaf Palme (later assassinated in 1986) was sitting unguarded in the audience. I was moved and went over and thanked him for attending our session. Among the interesting talks a Brazilian biologist spoke eloquently about massive destruction of the Amazon rain forest, the "lungs of Earth." Many spoke about the need for dramatic action to cut pollutants that harmed individuals -- and some even paraded victims of the Minamata Japan mercury poisoning (*itai itai disease*), though it seemed to me human beings were exploited.

**Doesn't environmentalism have a social as well as ecological dimension?** One instance at the UN Conference stuck deeply. A rather hefty East African lady approached an all-white, all-male ecology panel swinging her hips and knocking over chairs and panelists and insisted, "This group needs integration." Half the audience was horrified and half of us cheered, but why? The concept was emerging that environmental public interest concerns must be made aware of racial and sexist issues -- and this was more than an academic problem shuttled to the background. The feminist activist added that few of her brothers and sisters of color from "Third World" lands could come and be represented; thus, she appointed herself to stand in for Earth's forsaken. And some cheered.

In the early 1970s I was energized for action, but **where must one start?** Consumer problems were often overblown and highly related to lower prices and more convenient products -- though at times they pointed to deeper issues and financial pressures. The temptation was to tweak the System whenever possible and not to rattle trade and industry groups. Thus industry's strategy was to transfer onus of proof as quickly as possible to individuals or groups challenging practices. The counter strategy by consumer groups was to create environmental regulations: air and water pollution curbs, plant and animal threat protection, and toxic chemical safeguards. Could we, in a society that champions individual freedom, offer curbs to consumers who say "yes" or "no" as exercise of their personal freedom? Here libertarian choices clashed with enhanced governmental controls.

### b) Fashioning "The Contrasumers"

The problem of the Earth Day filtered cigarette butt in the UT lawn haunted me. Who is responsible: producer, consumer, or both? Existing "consumer groups" would say the first, industry the second, and here I was (what would become a pattern) pushing the unpopular cause of the third. My more scientific mind said that a guidebook on consumption patterns would allow concerned citizens to be aware of resources consumed in ordinary life, so that they could become conscientious consumers -- or better, refrain from excess consumption when possible.

For many on both sides of the consumption battle "excess" was a postponed consideration. Why such a distraction? Industrial commercialism calls for more goods to be accessible, and oversight groups wanted cheap, non-toxic and dependable products. To some of us proper information appeared to be the answer, so that rational citizens could make good decisions. But what about those hooked on more consumer goods and cheap materialism? For me, addictive behavior was the unfinished issue, for rational choices could be colored by the desire to satisfy wants -- and these were never fully satisfied. If producers persuade people to "need" a product, surely we could persuade them not to. Easily done?

My optimism papered over the underlying problem areas of individual choice. Knowing that pollution of air, water and even pristine land is wrong, demands citizen response and participation along with active governmental intervention and restoration, for citizens acting alone and mesmerized by cultural allurements are somewhat helpless to effect change. The UN environmental principles say it well: *The capacity of the Earth to produce vital renewable resources must be maintained and wherever practical restored and improved.*<sup>3</sup> My anticipated guidebook would be of assistance to this right way of acting.

Certainly individuals and small groups can make a difference. History

tells of the influence of individuals with a mission or with driving ambitions. Jesus or Francis of Assisi, on a moral level, or Napoleon or Julius Caesar in military matters made differences. Anthropologist Margaret Mead says "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." Paucity of citizens at the start is not a determining factor. Standing up for the Common Good or challenging polluters may start small as well. Our expectations for public interest groups arousing profound change ran high in the 1970s. Certainly Ralph Nader was an individual who had a popular reputation for getting issues before the public -- and he was a champion of the little guy.

To affix domestic consumption quantities measured in individual energy use on our American lifestyle practices would help get a handle on what we consume. Yes, the world wanted autos, central heating and cooling, resource intensive animal products and electronic devices, and the publicity needed to bring these to consumers takes non-renewable energy that could be calculated in "energy units" for all goods and services. The product of this authentic puzzle in pre-computer days was "**The Lifestyle Index**;" this became an appendix to *The Contrasumers*. The concept was reasonable, though estimated expenditures have declined over the four decades through efficiency improvements. Some were interested in this novel approach, but its influence was often ignored, except by some bottom-line-conscious producers.

My question while composing *The Contrasumers* was: **How do we convey urgency to a society seeking convenience and comfort?** Can we do this here and now, or just add hints that others would accept and implement in an unspecified future? The voluntary and exemplary model approach to change predicated individuals using recognizable methods, but with a luxury of time to promote their respective programs; volunteerism in an area of change was really a luxury<sup>4</sup> of the upper and middle classes, but I did not recognize this at first. Hungry people can't wait, and so a nagging idea prevailed throughout assembling this guidebook in a commercial world: Who is even willing to be guided?

The doubts really meant *The Contrasumers* was too theoretical and needed a companion volume on implementation; thus, we launched almost immediately into *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*<sup>5</sup>. We have tried all of these ways (see **Appendix One**), but is that enough? Furthermore, neither knowledge of consumption expenditures and patterns (1970s) nor individual actions to make changes, as attempted by us in the 1980s, reached the majority of consumers. Small victories do not automatically lead to bigger ones. Generating a sense of expanding solidarity where lifestyle changes are simultaneously coupled with like-minded communities became an emerging aim during the 1990s.

*The Contrasumers* began by contrasting differences in lifestyles of a

person living in 1876 at the first centennial of our nation, with one living a century later. The locations were a small town (Milford, Ohio), the center of American population reached on July 4, 1876; the second was a suburb of St. Louis where that U.S. population center passed exactly one hundred years later. The contrasting benefits and shortcomings of people living in these different places and times set the tone of measuring consumption patterns at different periods in American history. A horse and buggy age gave way to autos and airplanes, and with dramatic changes came both benefits and problems.

**Attribution of consumer end use** emerged as a problem that many overlook. To what country do we attribute soybean carbon content (fertilizer, machinery use, etc.) if one group produces and another consumes? Which state is the polluter when one generates electricity and another consumes it? Furthermore, to say an individual consumes so much energy and forget social benefits that take resources is false. This is a major issue when it comes to infrastructure maintenance or military defense that must be attributed to individual citizens of one nation or region, or many of them. Are sailors on an aircraft carrier the per capita consumers of energy driving the ship? Hardly! Then who is it attributed to? To the energy supplier? The ship's terminal port? The general public in America? Among allies?

Consumer attribution makes knowing amounts of resources moot, except when some of this involves profits to individuals or groups in the process. And a new issue emerged: Why should some benefit without paying the environmental costs? Socially we benefit from major portions of consumption and we do so in unequal ways. Being watchful of individual consumption patterns without considering social dimensions skews the process away from social justice and even leads to questioning significant per capital numbers.

**Hypocrisy** is a second problem. How do we argue for simplicity at an individual level and still have a society that allows seven-bathroom mansions for the one conscious about personal recycling? Conservation-minded activists did have a history of shorter-term success, ranging from bird-lovers who stopped the practice of putting bird feathers in ladies and gentlemen hats at the turn of the twentieth century, to efforts by wild game hunter President Teddy Roosevelt in fighting for conservation lands and parks. Why conserve when some do and others are hell-bent on consuming? We need to have a balanced picture that includes consumption patterns suggested in *The Conrasumers*: waste recycling centers, more home insulation, energy efficiency, renewable energy implementation, reduced use of dirty coal, hybrid and electric vehicles, water pollution abatement programs, nutritional awareness, and on and on. However, consumption levels are now a major issue in previous affluent countries as well as emerging ones.

### **c) Realizing That Overconsumption Leads to Clutter**

The connection between consumption of goods and the environmental crisis emerged early on; consumer products demand mining, drilling, growing crops, and transporting raw materials, processing them, and commercializing products that are sold to the consuming public. When more and more auto, large homes, and appliances, along with resource-rich foods such as animal products are consumed, some impact occurs on the world in the form of air, water, and land pollution, and collection and disposal of wastes -- with some residual toxic materials remaining. Human consumption using modern techniques by larger numbers of people takes a toll on the natural environment, including threatened and endangers plants and animals. Spreading blame becomes a controversial item, for "waste" is what others do. Mutual blame is never popular and certainly not in the early 1970s; few speakers or writers touched the issue.

**The poor** unfairly bear the burden of environmental blame. Once pollution problems arose, early post-Earth Day blamers attacked the habits of the poor who were and are numerous and increasing by millions each year. The poor live in highly polluted areas with waste leftovers dumped near their lower-scale backyards and they have little recourse to proper disposal. Grimy and junked neighborhoods meant poor ones without proper plumbing and trash collection. In so blaming, additional finger pointing was directed to the Catholic Church for refusing to approve artificial and commercial contraceptives and at that time the swelling ranks in parts of the "Third World" appeared to prove their point -- though Muslims were increasing faster. For such finger-pointers, it was overpopulation by darker-skinned folks who were the primary cause of the environmental crisis. At this period these naysayers had a simple solution to the environmental crisis: condoms for all.

**Individual consumption varies enormously, as do polluters.** Missing from this rather naive focus on overpopulation were differences in consumption patterns, only what average consumers required, as though all regions and nations were the same. Thus if all were equal, the poor individuals collectively would be more to blame than the rich. Only when we started to compare differences did we see that even "average" American or European consumers required far more resources than Africans or Asian Indians, sometimes twenty- and thirty-fold differences. Besides, who were the generators of waste materials, not where were they ultimately stored or dumped? Focusing on "average" people instead of actual consumers involved a heavy dash of hypocrisy and misplaced blame.

**In 1974, U.S. Americans "consumed"** approximately one quarter of the world's processed resources (less today) and these, along with Canadian and European "first world" people, regarded their consuming practices as that of a cultivated, developed, and enlightened people worthy of special privilege.

Relating consumption with lifestyle habits showed affluence to be closely related. However, the question was asked: if consumption is a mark of economic activity, isn't blaming the socio-economic System unpatriotic? Connecting consumption with consumers forced a look into affluence. Thus the idea of *The Contrasumers* germinated during my only extended trip through Europe, riding *Eurail* by night and visiting sites by day -- at least using public transportation. Shouldn't petroleum-fueled autos be subject to control in numbers?

**We seek to justify living comfortably without counting costs.**

Consumption of goods demands both purchase as an event and maintenance and use as an ongoing process. For producers, the challenge is to change need for a product into a short-lived impulse and planned-obsolescence into the desire to discard an item for a more profitable purchase in the shortest possible time -- all for the sake of comfort and convenience. This commercial practice may boost the economy but come at the price of the mining of resources from Earth herself. Discards are an after thought.

A Scranton, Pennsylvania soft drink producer came to the Nader office and explained that as long as all had to recycle bottles, he could make a profit. However, when the big producers were able to stamp "dispose responsibly" and gave the burden ultimately to the consumer, then it was far cheaper for producers to dump responsibility as too costly for the bottom line. Thus, they were able to do mass scale distribution with no responsibility for the cleanup or for terminals to pick up recyclables. This was the spell of death to responsible regional bottlers.

Passing on goods in primitive communal societies was easy; in a more individualized society with heavy focus on personal possessions, this becomes more complex. Granted, some mobile primitives were free to pack up and move on when a location became too junked. However, the settled people everywhere have had problems with discarded materials -- and usually relegated the problem to lower rungs in the social ladder. All of us wonder to whom do we leave cherished items and will they simply become a growing junk burden. A wise 90-year-old, Regina Brett, includes among her 45 lessons, *Get rid of anything that isn't useful. Clutter weighs you down in many ways.*<sup>6</sup> One of the weights is that this is the price of a consumer culture that is often ignored.

Resource consumption expanded rapidly in the post-Second World War period. Industry wanted to turn from weapons to consumer products, with massive production lines and willing workers. The salvaging and scrapping of the Great Depression was a thing of the past and a new automobile, refrigerator, television, and suburban home was the "order of the day." Resource conservation sank far below convenience and keeping abreast of seemingly prosperous neighbors in the race to display status. In a land of



plenty and at dinner tables with many dishes, the rule following the depression period was to consume as you like, and plenty meant leaving a little food on the plate. High ticket durables began to clutter residences and depending on how neatly arranged were signs of being junky or prosperous. Today in America, one finds 51,000 storage facilities covering 2.3 billion square feet with leftover junk (7 square feet for every person).<sup>7</sup>

**Is increased consumption patriotic?** Following "The War," America was the great donor through the Marshall Plan and other assistance programs, which helped Western Europe nations get back on their feet. The consumption resulting from supplying a war-ravaged Europe was good for business, and that meant more money in the pocket of the working class. We were at a stage in history that was one of the most economically equal; the itch of a war-rationed populace was to spend on items formerly restricted or now popularized through an ever more sophisticated commercial media. For those of us conservationists, wants could not be challenged, provided no one wasted what was acquired. The individual urge to consume and use, displaying personal freedom's entitlement, was the *American way*, and getting things for betterment of children was the American Dream. Few challenged these concepts.

**Could excessive consumption be controlled?** Self-control is not often discussed in secular society unless someone or a close associate has a drug or drinking problem. However, we were taught from youth that everyone is to practice self-control for both our physical and spiritual health. Fasting and abstaining were accompanied by moral demands during certain seasons or events. Was this simply a private exercise by the scrupulous? Self-control was laughed at by the spending culture, whether it be personal behavior or product consumption, a barrier to the liberation in the twentieth century. For Catholics, meat on Fridays for some meant liberation from a rule; for others, it meant responsible forms of self-control in a world of the poor who could not afford meat one day a week. Freedom to consume meant so many packs a day when doctors touted the benefits of certain brands of cigarettes. Overconsumption became an old wives' tale to the detriment of both individuals and society -- and consumption increase was the goal of the System.

**"Contrasumption" was my coinage for addressing this problem.** This term has never been accepted as a new English word, but it ought to be. Reduce consumption to essential levels and thus conserve resources for present and future generations. Does the battle pit those desiring resources for their grandchildren against those who say "eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we will die?" Can quality of life be raised by reduction of clutter and junk, the handmaiden of overconsumption? Curbing consumer use reduces volume of processed materials and thus associated air and water emissions. Thus, resource conservation needed a guidebook for concerned citizens who resolved to act rationally. Exposing pollutants was yielding to beneficial

solutions, and so the key was rational processes. In composing *The Contrasumers* I surfaced my deeply troubling question: What if the far less affluent people of China, India, the rest of Asia, Latin America, and Africa join the affluent consumption demands? Was a catastrophe in the offing? The fears have justifiably grown through the decades.

**Do producers deliberately induce consumer appetite?** Younger folks may be surprised to know that early environmental legislation and agencies were non-partisan, the product of the Republican Nixon and Ford Administrations with broad-based party support. Manufacturers became targets of air, water, and toxic substance legislation and then even started speaking up for uniform regulations. Though producers knew that costs could be passed on to the consuming public, still it wanted clear and uniform regulations over any environmental piecemeal approach being applied by certain states and regions. Anti-environmental lobbying arose.

**Overly competitive sports are part of the consumer culture.** The days of an ancient wreath of laurel are long gone; in place of these are bargain times when advertisements of related and unrelated sports paraphernalia and multi-million dollar athlete contracts have ushered in a multi-billion dollar program that continues to grow as part of the consume culture. Competition hype makes for ticket sales and lucrative TV contracts to professional and academic sports games. Instead of fans enjoying good athletic play, the thrust is to win for the home town, and see cheers turn to riots. The noise of cheering Seattle fans precipitated a minor earthquake and a notation in the *Guinness Book of World Records* by a competing noisy school. The Roman Empire's "bread and circuses" mentality is still with us after two millennia.

**Are there limits to growth?** A culture of consumption has a problem related to physical limits to resources and carrying capacity. In 1972 the concept of limits came into the open through discussion of "limits to growth" by the Club of Rome.<sup>8</sup> That discussion has continued over the decades. Amid impending predictions of resource limits, still questions by profiteers arise: Doesn't material production and growth help build the economy, keep workers employed, and factories operating? Basic consumer items (food, fuel, etc.) are necessary; why not accept luxury "needs" as well? Why talk about self-controls on individuals or social controls on affluent society? Is it possible that both destitution and over-affluence is to be avoided?

**When is enough sufficiently enough?** Are there limits within the *consumption continuum* running from basic lacks (destitution) to over-indulgent excess (wanton affluence)? Certainly, a basic quality of life calls for basic essentials that may vary somewhat in different societies. But more importantly, when are there limits to consumption by individuals on the more affluent end of the spectrum? This will remain an unanswered problem for decades.

**Does consumption become a competitive game?** I am reminded each year on Easter Sunday when the liturgy is followed by the traditional American custom of an Easter Egg Hunt. These little kids are to run out immediately after hearing that Christ gave his life for us that we would help others and not be self-centered. As though mammon demands a counter-message, they are expected to get as many of the limited plastic eggs as possible. It is a contradiction of what was just taught, but a lesson kids remember most -- get what you can and forget about others who struggle beside you. I tell them that we must divide the number of eggs by the number of egg seekers and then get only your share (e.g., 12) and then help others get their equal share. If we cannot either teach or learn this lesson, we have little hope of saving our Earth. No, it is not me the killjoy but the billionaires who take from the commons. I try to give the Christian message: share.

**Is overconsumption related to lack of self-control?** As we have said earlier, self-control is not a major component of our System. People have a propensity to elevate wants to needs (think of how fast an auto or electricity in the 20th century became a need). Without any controls, even non-essential luxury items can be elevated to the mere lifetime of an electronic gadget. One must keep up with peers. Do those who buy the latest item know in their heart of hearts that this new addition is too much? Do those with wealth privileges consume ever greater amounts, and social and political voices chalk it up to freedom when it is really license? When drug overdose deaths spike on a new concoction, drug lords say "Sorry, that's the price of playing the game -- collateral damage."

Unchecked appetites end up with disorder, clutter, junk accumulation, and lack of sensitivity for those not powerful enough to resist inherent greed. Disorder becomes endemic when 23% of Americans admit to paying bills late because they "can't find them." One quarter of those with two-car garages have to park their cars outdoors. Convenience and materialistic social status drives people to buy more, consume more, and earn more to pay bills. Has self control become an old-fashioned practice?

Distinguishing essential needs involves food for basic nutrition demands; it also includes affordable and adequate housing, domestic fuel, and potable water. It is becoming a problem to have accessible quality housing and higher resource intensive food (mainly animal products and processed foods) for an expanding world population that could grow to nine billion by 2050, according to population experts. To give quality life to all these takes food, wood, concrete, etc. However, a modest quality of life is one thing -- luxury living is another, and the auto, excessive air travel, and resource-intensive food are luxurious practices. The public's attack on use of bird feathers in hats in the 1900s, furs in the 1950s, and the current assault on Black Friday stampedes are reactions to blatant resource misuse. Taxes on luxury items or "sin taxes"

have a history. Certainly decent housing and infrastructure takes materials -- but much more for resource-intensive food, extensive trips, and oversized houses.

**\* Don't we all partake in consumption?** There are no "breatharians" in this world living on free air alone. We humans need food, clothes, shelter, transportation, health drugs, and educational materials. Cultural pressures and limits to available resources dictate amounts of materials consumed. The consumption of a primitive tribe in a tropical rain forest is quite small compared to a comparable number of people in a modern urbanized society. Needs are determined by food likes, housing accommodations, travel from place to place, and amount of luggage we bring along. Social status demands higher consumption and people in rising affluence levels join the insatiable rat race to ever greater accumulations of consumer products. Welcome to the **consumer culture** and keeping up with the Joneses.

**\* Does conservation practice begin at home?** Retaining heated air in winter and excluding outside hot air in summer are good domestic practices that reduce utility bills and still allow for comfort. But more conservation measures are possible, such as shutting off electronic devices placed on standby, lowering automatic heating thermometers in winter and raising cooling temperatures in summer, refraining from excessive air conditioning through airing at cooler nighttime, reducing hot water use in bathing, using cold water for laundry, and hanging clothes outside to dry. The counter-intuitive practice of conserving lighting energy by turning on and off after each use changed with florescent fixtures being left on for at least four-hour spans, due to major energy use at start-up. Insulation is a saving practice, even for older homes, when discovering leakage of heated or cooled air through new devices. Researching conservation measures opened the way in 1974 for practical applications summarized in our *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*. See the Table of Contents in Appendix One.

**\* Should renewable energy be conserved?** This was an honest question asked at a major energy gathering on environmental ethics I attended in 1977. We know the need for resource conservation of non-renewable fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, and natural gas). These fuels when burned add carbon dioxide (a greenhouse gas or *GHG*) to the atmosphere and most scientists began to see this as a climate changing agent that would demand addressing at the global level. "Clean coal" was regarded by opponents to be an unsubstantiated myth. The goal to reduce or completely eliminate GHG centered on future non-carbon dioxide-emitting renewable-energy sources such as traditional hydropower,<sup>9</sup> dependable and clean geothermal,<sup>10</sup> and rapidly advancing with lower-priced wind,<sup>11</sup> and late-arriving solar energy sources.<sup>12</sup> Resource conservation leads to self-control, an urgently needed practice. Note: while non-renewables are needed to meet current demands, still GHG expanded from 1.8% in the 1970-2010 range to

2.2% from 2010-2011, and 3% from 2011-2012 with expanding emissions due to proposed coal plants, a number of which are now being cancelled.<sup>13</sup>

#### **d) Distinguishing Forms of Consumerism**

During my Washington sojourn (1970-77) several leading consumer advocates asked me to choose their field of consumer advocacy over emerging environmental action. They knew I worked in DC with Ralph Nader, best known for his critique of the Corvair in *Unsafe at Any Speed*. Furthermore, when beginning my DC work, the initial projects involved consumer issues (tobacco products, asbestos, lead in gasoline, as well as mercury in fish) all of which also had environmental implications. Over time, my projects began to favor environmental issues over consumer products because I was puzzled about the limited view of "consumerists," who seemed more concerned about personal satisfaction (safety, price, quality) than about consumption of goods and effects on Earth's health.

At the start I favored public interest concern about unfair consumer practices such as deceptive advertising, unfair pricing, short-lived fashions, and panic buying, but few of these middle and upper class "consumers" ventured to discuss simpler lifestyles that addressed consumption and conservation issues. Consumers considered the best bargains in higher quality products that were long lasting and safe in handling. I found this focus valid but hardly as important as to the amount of resources (and resulting pollution) that was part of the total public interest issue. Planned obsolescence hurt the pocketbook for the consumer, but it also hurt fragile Earth herself.

**Is consumerism involved in personal pro-choice issues?** One small conflict occurred at the time when the food stamp program was under scrutiny. I suggested at CSPI that we take up the issue of not allowing soft drinks (a rapidly emerging no-no among food purists) to be regarded as "food" by governmental programs. Some progressives said that would be impossible, for all people, including the poor, should have the freedom to use food stamps as they saw fit -- a pro-choice stance that did not address *who* enticed the poor to drink soft drinks. Were not major soft drink producers some of the strongest proponents of food stamps, provided their illustrious products were involved? Over years some states have removed soft drinks from the food stamp item listing, but only a few have worked bottle bills (another resource conservation measure) into state laws. At the first of each month in Kentucky, clerks testify that shopping baskets are filled with soft drinks, many subsequently sold for cash to buy drugs. Beverage producers spend much to keep the status quo in soft drink consuming states.

**Should we acknowledge an unsolved problem?** The persistent confusion over individual rights to consumer choices and the public's attempt to put limits on such choices confounded me. An essential desire for food and

other basic materials is worthy of the human person; a luxury item that consumes large amounts of limited resources or hurts portions of our planet must be curbed, discouraged or forbidden. Further, the road to escalated wants of ever more resource-intensive (and profitable) products must be acknowledged and some forms of controls put in place at the governmental level. Unchecked want leads to an insatiable appetite -- and allowing this appetite to go unchecked could lead ultimately to planetary suicide. Why allow multi-millionaires to act as they please and thus become models for a rising middle class to emulate? Pure attention to consumer satisfaction (health, safety, satisfaction and economics) does not address the forces causing the current consumption patterns. What about the lack of socio-economic controls on the overhoused, overfed, and over-traveled?

**Why not maximum wages?** Puzzlement thickened when realizing that failure to address lack of self-control only plays into the hands of those who think property holding is an absolute right. For them, who else but they are arbiters of what they own? Isn't this a private matter outside of the jurisdiction of public authorities? Some buy an energy-efficient refrigerator and then place the discarded one in a storage space to keep soft drinks and beer cool; in such instances total energy costs in refrigeration rise even when consumers pretended to practice energy efficiency. The problem with the consumer culture was that it failed to address personal and communal self-deception -- and a consumer advocate often refrained from addressing such issues. Individual patterns of self-deception seemed to be extended to broader aggregates of the total population, even to those of us considered enlightened.

**Does consumerism has several meanings?** For my quandary I discovered that consumerism had several meaning: to maximize the quality of consumer products, and to seek a broader range of consumer products with little regard for ecological consequences.

1) **Is there consumerism with emphasis on the individual?** In a first meaning a pro-choice freedom to buy did have a governmental regulatory component, provided it expanded the range of purchase and was an arbiter between producer and consumer with respect to improving quantity and quality of goods. When consumers are satisfied (hardly ever totally possible) and producers supply an adequate amount of goods (seldom the case in real time), then the former has an acceptable product and the latter a maximized profit. This is what fuels the 70% consumer-based American economic System. The insatiable appetite for more goods is overlooked in an official American bipartisan line. Maximized personal choices becomes an acquired governmental duty, but for these consumerists it would allow the choices to remain with the individual to the best degree possible provided they are safe, reasonably priced, not deceptively advertized and short-lived. Consumerism in this individual sense focuses on rights of those who want safe and labeled commercial products, the arena of *Consumer's Union* and *Consumer Reports*.

**Buyer beware!** No doubt a field of concern exists. Fraudulent consumer practices abound. Consumer protection calls for regulation of commerce accompanied by consumer/citizen vigilance. Advertisements, especially directed to young people, lead to purchase of high-priced sports clothes. Note that stores often place sugary cereals lower on shelves so kids accompanying parent customers urge this or that advertised product for purchase. In many cases, planned obsolescence is programmed into new product introduction (the disposable razor or watch or even auto). Cheating in measurements is as old as human commerce, and thus governmental regulations ensure that what is purchased is listed with correct amounts and ingredients -- and often potentially dangerous ingredients highlighted. Here ethical consumer protection deals with vigilance and proper response to deeds of unscrupulous perpetrators.

**Do consumer watchdogs have a place?** Certainly they want you to get your money's worth through proper labeling, correctly stated and revealing advertisement, high product performance, and guaranteed safety and reasonable length of useful services. The consumer advocates look out for buying colleagues and are watchful in delivering reasonably priced, safe, and long lasting commercial products. *Consumer Reports* has a highly experienced staff to grade and judge certain lines of products worth investigating. Private research is augmented by governmental regulatory agencies such as the *U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission* (CPSC) when ignorance, fraud, or greed hamper the public getting its money's worth. In turn by congressional mandate, CPSC demands clear and concise labeling of ingredients, proof of claims, proper transport and sale of items and guaranteed quality at commercial outlets.

**Must we shop till we drop?** Consumerism as a means to total satisfaction (really impossible) allows care in purchase, but never addresses the excessive purchasing. In fact, the lust for more of a good thing feeds on the lowest impulses of humanity and can harm the thrust to share with others. Materialism never satisfies, but little effort is made to limit the materialism and inequality of a society that spends more if more surplus for goods is available. Simply put, affluent consumers or those with money or credit tend to acquire in excess, and this is not just an American but a world phenomenon. Smokers puff away using tobacco products that harm them and neighbors alike; autos permit convenience and comfort travel, but exhausts invade the surrounding environment; cell phones give instant communication and keep people connected, but result in ceaseless chatter, kills time, irritates those who are not deaf, and draws attention away from needed operations such as driving.

2) **Is there consumerism with emphasis on social ramifications?** Consumerism has a second but broader public interest issue beyond attacking

shoddy, unsafe, and fraudulent practices -- though here a regulatory agenda gives benefits. The overlooked weakness of overly individualistic-oriented consumerism is that what we do privately or individually DOES affect the social structure in some way -- and realizing this is often frightening to many people. Thus the consumer with no or limited self-control has problems that affect the common good. The orientation of the consumer economy will be to call more attention to high-ticket items, to resource-intensive foods such as animal products, to medicines for diseases of the affluent, and to those items that are fashionable (luxury vs. subsistence goods). This type of consumerism caters to the ones with more expendable financial resources and less to those with basic essential needs.

**Does a consumerist culture inflate wants?** The practice by producers to create in potential consumers the "need" for a certain product may be healthful to the socio-economic System so dependent upon increased sales. However, this practice of advertisement and commercial growth through allurements is difficult for a planet with limited resources and large numbers of people in essential need for basic supplies -- and thus increased need of resources. In this form of consumerism the thrust is to want more and more with an insatiable appetite and to produce more and more to fill the created needs. The economy grows but the wounded Earth suffers all the more. Material profit motivation sparks the engine; appetite for insatiable material things energizes the driver to go faster.

**Can Earth's limited easily available resources meet inflated wants?** In this second social sense, consumerism is the perverse force at work to stoke an ever growing market and to prepare people to buy the products manufactured. Producer and consumer: one feeds on the other. In earlier periods countering this feedback loop was the call to self-abnegation through religious or cultural auspices. The thrust was to achieve free choice of simpler lifestyle that would permit individuals to reduce excessive consumption and focus on what is good for themselves and an entire society. Essential needs come first, but is this possible to effect on more than a unusual few who are willing to break loose? Here religious discipline has a message to give, but it is not a popular message in a consumer culture like ours.

**Naive hopes?** In some ways those who oppose consumerism under this definition can be victims of wishful thinking: the proper procedure will prevail by individuals turning from excess to moderation. The problem is one of pressures to conform to the needs of the spirit and the needs of the world around us; these pressures are in contrast to those that allure people to more consumer buying, the panic to get the new item. Those closely connected to the mass media imbibe the prevailing consumer culture; they who refrain from that media or limit access severely can be free to make changes on an individual level -- but that is generally a small number if expected to occur voluntarily. The problem is that most are caught up in the System.



One person may buy a pound of red meat, a perfectly inspected chuck of grain-fed product that required extensive resources to produce and market. It is regulated in its production, selection, processing, labeling, measurement, safe transport, proper refrigeration, arrival at home and food preparation. The first form of consumerism is fully functioning both by the individual producer, consumer, and governmental inspection agents. Here "consumerists" direct their attention to the person who can afford the purchase in the first place -- for it is a luxury item from the world perspective of limited food reserves. The second type of consumerist critic raises questions about the resource-intensive selection in the first place and limits of such selection to the privileged few: rare occasional use or going totally veggie.

**Is consumerism a pejorative term to ecologists?** Stated plainly, those who refrain from meat products would say the first form of consumerism has limited benefits and can even be detrimental to a thrust for simpler lifestyles and Earth's long-term viability. Yes, the planet is capable of supplying essential needs but never runaway wants as Mohandas Gandhi observed. Affluence tends to convert enticed wants into cultural "needs," thus triggering consumption by the privileged and profits for the profiteers -- materialism inviting exposure. Why ought some make more than a comfortable livelihood? Isn't spiritual growth a different but more satisfying form of "profit" with infinite possibilities and no expenditure of material resource use?

**A limited perspective.** In my 1970s era, I emphasized a service economy in contrast to excessive purchasing of goods. Granted, educational, health care, food, recreation, environmental cleanup, security, insurance, and banking services need goods to work properly, but they are not the luxury of ever-increasing acquisition and disposal to salve our conscience in order to buy the latest fashion. The problem became how to move to a service-oriented economy through governmental funding of education, health, and home care programs. However, the greater challenge involves self-control and limits to consumption, the unsustainable dilemma we are in and the germs to radical change. Was I prepared at that time to talk about social limits to the consumer culture? No way!

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**How about a note on "sustainability?"** The term could have two interpretations: continuing a practice that is a profit-making success; discontinuing a practice that is harmful to the environment in the long-term. What precisely do we want to sustain: a current socio-economic System or a broader ecological natural process? Thus, my preference is to talk about unsustainability of the current System.

**Are there social Limits to growth?**<sup>14</sup> Concerning the limits to material growth, people raised important questions in the 1970s. Can forests, wildlife populations, fisheries, and water resources sustain the onslaught of growing consumer demands? These resources are limited and certain civilizations have crashed in the past due to lack of water, food, or land fertility. Specific consumption related to threatening wildlife species was emerging; forests were unable to sustain demands placed on their recovery; uncontrolled demand for ivory was depleting walrus and elephant herds; Japanese fishermen would defy the whaling ban and called their harvest over the next few decades of 10,000 whales for "research purposes," with no scientific literature for proof. *The Contrasmers* raised questions and took preliminary steps to critique consumption patterns and even suggest defensive environmental actions.

### **e) Prioritizing Environmental Pollutants**

In my seven-year stay in Washington in the 1970s I had the opportunity to be on a governmental committee that set the first criteria for classifying toxic and industrial chemicals. This was directed to the new USEPA, which incidentally has not yet (as of this writing) settled on a systematic procedure to test a vast number of industrial chemicals (including the leaking chemical that closed down the water system in and around Charleston, West Virginia in January 2014). There are many industrial chemicals out there in the public domain (some estimate 80,000), but only about 200 have been fully tested as of this writing. We considered a criteria to be volume expended (easily obtained), another to be persistence in the environment (known through experience), and a major unknown concern to be wide-ranging toxicity.

Several other environment-related issues emerged in the priority-setting stage. One dealt with worker safety. Our first Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) office existed by the good graces of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers component of the AFL-CIO headquarters in Washington.<sup>15</sup> Workers were aware in the vast chemical industry that products they worked with could shorten their lives or cause immediate harm if improperly handled. Secondly, these workers did not know much about the chemicals that could be shortening their lives and this caused concern. This triggered a substantial effort on our part to talk about the limits to trade secrecy when dealing with potentially toxic substances.

**Does responsible action demand trade secret revelation?** Some consider revealing the toxic nature of a highly-used chemical substance to be confined to those who have professional duties of safeguarding the environment. Transparency can have business implications as to who has a competitive edge with certain secret ingredients within the process or within the final commercial item or its degradation products. Revealing trade secrets became a challenge to those in public interest work, for who is to say how

much a worker, a local inhabitant, or a user of products should be exposed to a certain environmental chemical? Don't these have a right to know what threatens them? In 1977, through our *Technical Information Project* we organized a conference at Berkeley Springs, West Virginia on the subject of toxic substances and trade secrecy as a public interest concern. The problem was discussed but the issue is still before us, for efforts to reveal toxicity is like a Catch-22 involving suspicion and knowledge of tested products. The potential places for dangers in this world of toxic chemicals are numerous and embrace air, water and land areas. The opponents to "fracking" of gas and oil are facing the same problems today.

**Air purity** was of utmost concern because of obvious health effects. Air, that primary essential for life, is an area of the commons that has been contaminated to the advantage of industrial polluters. Smokestacks emit pollutants such as particulate matter; autos generate ozone<sup>16</sup> and other pollutants that highly affect congested areas; powerplants have sulfur oxides and a host of other pollutants including the more worrisome carbon dioxides from combustion of coal or to a lesser degree that of natural gas. The consuming public makes growing demands on resources and this affects the environment. Belching smokestacks were signs of prosperity when I was growing up, and by the 1970s they became signs of environmental threat. These exhausts from the carbon economy, plus those from poorly vented domestic structures<sup>17</sup> all compound the need for regulations in a world of environmental threats. Beyond this, poorly-vented and inefficient cooking stoves annually contribute to two million early deaths.

Water quality and quantity were emerging as major concerns, for water is an essential for life, can be easily contaminated, and materials when water soluble can easily dissipate far and wide given the right circulatory conditions. In the 1970s, the public was aware that the Cuyahoga River in the Cleveland area caught fire. They knew during summer vacation times of waterways and beaches closed to swimming and fishing due to sewage and other forms of water contamination. With proper regulations, these areas have been cleaned up over the years. However, water excess in floods and shortage in droughts have plagued civilization. This leads to demands for flood protection (after Storm Sandy in 2011) and water conservation measures.<sup>18</sup> Much serviceable water is needed for irrigation and now for extraction of fracked fossil fuels.

By the 1970s, water purification and desalination, while technical practices, especially in Middle East countries, were proving costly and required proper expertise and maintenance. Furthermore, trace amounts of highly potent commercial chemicals such as popular steroids that remain after standard purification processes became a global worry; studies showing decreased sperm counts in wildlife and human beings make this a matter of growing -- not receding -- concern. Contamination of oceans and over-fishing by corporate trawlers resulted in massive waste of marine life that continues

today.<sup>19</sup>

**Land quality** was also a matter of concern. Land can evidently be contaminated through industry, and when abandoned as "brown fields" or chemical waste sites requires environmental cleanup. Land contamination was a subject of our 1970s work at different times, and is still a major issue when chemicals spill in storage or use. Most were aware of radioactive contamination and that this could affect uranium mining and processing areas without proper safeguards; some safety issue cases are still pending today. Toxic chemicals cause harm to residents, both human and animal. Commercial chemical pesticides and other pollutants have been responsible for dramatic declines in many plant and animal species such as the honey bee<sup>20</sup> and numerous bird species. Mercury and heavy metals have a long history of harm to those near processing (smelters or coal-fired power plants) and utilization (mad hatters and chemical applicators). Lead, a contaminant of air, water and land<sup>21</sup> was a matter of concern in gasoline and domestic paint until curbed and halted through public interest efforts.

**Recycling versus new products give mixed messages.** A conservation ethic is at the heart of preserving air, water and land quality. Simple rules include: don't use a material if it can't be controlled; use only when necessary; reuse through the conservation measure of recycling. From an ecological standpoint, elementary resource conservation practices can be successful at all levels: individual, domestic, local, regional, and national. Recycling paper, plastics, glass, and metals is beneficial from the economic standpoint of users and a recycling system. How would GM or Toyota react if we follow Cuba's example of extending the life of half-century-old autos? Yard sales are recycling opportunities: furnishings, clothes, copper wiring, kitchenware, and electric appliances and devices. In the Depression era recycling involved all our waste materials on our farm, from food wastes fed to hogs to glass crushed into concrete. Recycled aluminum required a small fraction of the energy to make the metal from bauxite. But what about recycling consumer wastes by creative ways?<sup>22</sup>

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During my DC years I realized "You can take the farmer out of the country, but not the country out of the farmer." I needed a way to cope with Washington's stressful conditions, so I would retreat occasionally to the rural countryside (often the rustic Jesuit Bellarmine Retreat Center at Blue Ridge Summit Pennsylvania near Camp David). I craved open space, sight of wildlife, smell of the forest, and fresh breezes and solitude of the hills.

**Are we ever called home?** Returning to roots engages the rooted person. See *Appalachian Sensations*.<sup>23</sup> Washington DC was surrounded by five of the wealthiest counties in America; it was not the place to simplify life in

a very challenging manner. Our CSPI Appalachian Surface Mining Project, funded by West Virginia's Jay Rockefeller (state treasurer and later U.S. senator), took me back to troubled Appalachia. My Jesuit superior (Dan Flaherty) appointed me Province social ministries director while being allowed to continue my environmental work.

### Chapter Three: Assessing Needs and Urgency to Act (1980s)

*This is why the country is in mourning, and all who live in it pine away, even the wild animals and the birds of heaven; the fish of the sea themselves are perishing.*  
(Hosea 4:3)

Appalachia brought back memories as well as a beckoning call. I recalled looking east out of the milk room window to watch the sun rise over the Lewis County Appalachian foothills. Mountains were my homing compass, for urban stress had increased trembles in my hands. Go back home. Sick land needs compassion, especially from those kin to it by birth. Appalachia was being raped by mismanaged extraction of coal and forest products, and two mid-1970s devastating floods in Central Appalachia resulting from that mismanagement.

Radical change may come gradually or abruptly and that holds for any form of revolution. Urgency began to present itself in the 1980s, which called for abandoning the gradualistic approach to environmental protection, since it was becoming evident that pollution did irreparable damage and harmed and endangered human beings and other creatures. Returning to Appalachia tested my patience for we are limited in time to achieve what we intended. However, the environmental crisis, a micro second in geologic time, demanded immediate response even if healing takes time. In all fairness, Washington is more attuned to crisis management than is Appalachia. The drawback is that the capital, counter to its national and global protestations, was filled with personal agendas. Besides, it was not an ideal location to implement *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*.

Appalachia had an isolationist bent coming from early settlers who abandoned the crowded East Coast for peace and quiet. Religious efforts at various times were to break that isolation. However, for many regional folks "church" means the gathering community in the particular holler or mountainside for singing and preaching ... and emotional arm waving and exclamations of piety. Through the 19th and into the 20th century, mainline Protestant and later Catholic groups focused on education in mission schools and healing through small hospitals and clinics. Gradually a broader understanding of "church" began to develop. Unfortunately, some mission schools before dying prepared students with a pass to migrate from the region to higher-paying opportunities; only a remnant of these schools remain.

In 1973-4, while in DC, I was invited to be on the Bishops' "Appalachian Pastoral" team, formulated through the efforts of the *Catholic Committee of Appalachia* (CCA). This pastoral was originally meant to be a series of listening sessions, a statement of need, and then coupled with an action plan (my charge) to implement those needs. The statement was written in beautiful poetic form by a non-Appalachian, Joe Holland; it was well received by the other religious workers and bishops and by national religious groups. My regional efforts to get general assistance for the action plan were met by a diatribe against Catholics that had no place in the project. The draft plan contained a central focus on establishing an Appalachian lobby in DC. The issuance of the pastoral was well received by the general media, but the CCA charged with the action plan found actions more difficult than good sounding words and rejected it. For them, simply promoting the Pastoral would be action enough. I chalked this up as a loss.

In 1979, I was in a Canton Ohio TV environmental discussion with Barry Commoner, a well known ecologist.<sup>1</sup> What was meant to be a lively and mutually affirming discussion turned into a sort of debate. I contested Barry's exclusive thrust in blaming the environmental crisis on outside socio-economic interests alone. I injected that individual consumer actions contributed to the environmental crisis for reasons given elsewhere; certainly they were induced by corporate practices, but their lack of self control and wise choice was part of the problem. We are ALL to blame (the original Earth Day observation). After the show Barry asked whether I thought he had a chance to be a serious presidential candidate. Well, in my frank way, I mentioned that third parties have little chance of winning but can focus issues that must be raised. He did run in 1980 and was smothered, as have been other third-party candidates, a notable exception being Abe Lincoln in a four-way race.

**What were our goals for the 1980s?** From the DC experience I saw the goals as expanding environmental protection and initiating resource conservation techniques based on the book *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*. This emerged as a far more complex work plan than originally expected. The ideal clean-cut paths suddenly turned muddy. To implement change often involved tradeoffs, corners shaved and methods confronted with unforeseen difficulties. Cleaning up a polluted river may involve damaging riverbanks in the process; solar cooking may be great, but Asian Indians like certain cultural foods like the chapati that require more intense heating than delivered by solar cookers. Cultural, social, and health ramifications can be easily overlooked until facing implementation.

The short-lived Carter Administration (essentially 1977-80) gave way to my utter surprise in a victory by Ronald Reagan who came to power in January 1981. The reality hit us that a renewable energy economy was going nowhere fast. Carter's (and originally Nixon's) goal of energy independence was

postponed; the price of gasoline rose precipitously and fellow Americans were held captive in a surrounded embassy in Teheran. Furthermore, the smooth-talking Reagan resonated with bread-and-butter folks, even like my life-long Democrat mother. The rapid alert and panic in the 1970s to ever newer exposures to dangers began to wear thin and media fatigue had set in. Reagan removed solar units from the White House and deliberately belittled renewable energy.

The mission of our newly formed *Appalachia-Science in the Public Interest* (ASPI) was to make science and technology responsive to the needs of the poor in Central Appalachia: an ambitious undertaking. If the poor could change, then hopefully through hands-on demonstration an awaiting world would follow suit and live more simply. Hastening citizen action by focusing on appropriate technology (AT) was a challenge that went beyond individual and local actions to become a regional venture. We launched the new public interest center with federal funding and high hopes -- but time mellowed expectations.

#### **a) Demonstrating Appropriate Technology**

ASPI was rewarded one of the eleven grants from Senator Teddy Kennedy's *Science for Citizens Program*. We anticipated working successfully with the National Science Foundation (NSF) after a previous successful project dealing with Trade secrecy and the public's right to know toxic constituents of commercial and industrial substances. The incoming Reagan Administration called into question federal funding on our non-profit environmental groups, targeting citizen scientific applications. Immediately after Reagan took office I was called (to the carpet) in February, 1981 by the NSF to appear at the White House transition team's meeting to explain the use of federal grant money already slated for our approved "Science for Citizens Program." I got up and spoke one sentence and a person (from the Reagan transition team) sitting behind the head of the NSF shouted, "Next person please." Abolition in a moment!

Since we had good track record from other projects by NSF and USEPA, NSF's Rachele Hollander got me to quickly rewrite the grant for funding from another program, from which we had previously received a grant. Now the attention was to investigate ethical land-use practices in Appalachia with recommendations from activist groups in the region as to tackling basic regional land attitudes. Our project was saved under another rubric of ethical considerations -- but we had the new mandate to assemble a regional land conference in a year with professional academics as the main speakers -- a shift from within to outside the region. The original specifically-targeted appropriate technology program was shelved as far as federal money was concerned and the favoritism of the Carter Administration towards AT faded into history. We were able to share this new grant with non-profit environmental groups from the five central Appalachian states.

Very soon funding became a public interest issue. Our ASPI demonstration work was quickly burdened to find sources of funding for a new non-profit group in a poor region of our country. We still promoted renewable energy and AT methods (including the first complete solar house), better foods through new forms of intensive gardening, more efficient solar fueled cars, individual rainwater and groundwater systems, waste disposal techniques such as composting toilets (four designs), and a variety of AT housing techniques.

**"Technology"** during the pre-Internet and personal computer days had a more generic meaning that resembled those of E.F. Schumacher.<sup>2</sup> (My mother was a Schumacher whose grandfather had migrated from the Rhineland where E.F. called home, so I felt a close kinship). Besides, I always favored small counter forces against big corporate marketing. In essence, one does not need a large tractor on a small plot that cannot easily handle such a device; a better hoe is a superior tool of choice -- and so was AT better suited to Appalachian small communities when it was low cost, readily learned, easily maintained, and environmentally benign. Appalachia is a perfect AT proving grounds.

**Is efficiency the major issue?** Economies of scale often omit the human element that gives life its flavor and communities their character. The love and care of the small-scale producer touches on something closer to the Appalachian heart. We certainly can be proud of using new autos that improve mileage per gallon and compare older conventional vehicles with hybrids and electric cars. Efficient farming (tractor versus horses) may work better as a replacement on a corporate farm, but neither may be suited for the small-time farmer in a more primitive culture (see Chapter One on tractor versus horses and "efficiency" enhancing the System). Our family went from a small independent self-sustaining economy to an interdependent economy -- and called it "progress." Homesteading gave way to a market economy -- and became less human in doing so.

**Should we champion local sources for materials?** For any economy to be truly sustainable the bulk components of energy, housing, food, and water ought to come from the local level: energy is homegrown feed (solar) in contrast to beholding to Big Oil for fuel; food is homegrown, not shipped from distant places; water is from cisterns or wells and not from a consolidated water district, and local wood, stone or clay is the source of building a home. However, homesteaders can only go so far; they are tempted or forced into a consumer economy and need funds for petroleum-powered vehicles, health insurance, and college education. It appears to be a Catch-22: living in a human way demands entering the inhuman System in an ever deeper way. Local independence gives way to distant interdependence.

Appalachia was caught in this dilemma. Our tentative answer was an AT



demonstration center that strived to use local bulk resources and yet take ideas from all parts of the world, since an idea did not take much resource to be transmitted to a distant place. Let's look at each bulk material category in turn:

\* **Energy sources** were always plentiful in Appalachia in the form of wood and coal, and to a lesser degree gas and oil. So was abundance of hydropower that was the prime energy source of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the 1930s. And the New Deal considered this an answer to regional poverty. In my current county (Estill), abundance of forest for charcoal and iron ore in the 19th century led to one of America's earliest iron industries; with time this industry moved on to Pittsburgh in the north and Alabama in the south, with coal being the fuel of choice. A regionally available energy source replaced limited local wood.

Appalachia always had a problem due to limited arable land for raising animal feed. With mechanization, fossil fuels were enticing as apparently less expensive and more convenient -- but were they? The transition in Appalachia was from a home source throughout the mountains (wood) to one demanding more capital to develop, process, and transport. The region was quickly becoming beholden to foreign corporate investments to develop railroads, barges, pipelines, and roads to transport fossil fuels to points of distant need and especially for mining and extracting fossil fuels.

Returning to a smaller locally-controlled economy through environmentally-benign sources was the AT goal. In one way, America could become more energy independent through a renewable energy economy. In the start of our AT center during the end of the Carter Administration we experienced a friendly atmosphere for promoting solar and I joined and became president of the *Solar Unity Network*, with non-profit centers represented from all Southeastern states. This group later became a major contributor to the 1982 *Knoxville World Fair*. Our non-profit coalition led by Alabama director David Pate obtained the only original structure on the Knoxville Fair grounds and we made it a completely solarized house, a rare pleasant spot recalled by visitors years later.

ASPI regarded the use of solar energy (in a region with far less wind potential than the Great Plains) as a key to a return to the local small-scale economy. Solar was our future energy source when in 1979 we constructed an ASPI solar house, the first completely self-sustaining domicile in America. We included a cistern to catch rainwater, a greenhouse to grow foods, solar collectors (purchased used) to furnish energy for lighting, solar hot water heating on the roof, and a *Clivus Multrum* compost toilet for collecting waste materials for reuse. Our building resources, partly by volunteer labor, were certainly limited.

In due time, the costs of solar collectors would decrease, and "distributed" solar energy collected on rooftops would become popular in states with generous tax incentives. What was started in the early 1980s has now become a mainstay emerging economy in the second decade of this century with wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, and tidal sources challenging traditional fossil fuels. These techniques and others are described in our book *Healing Appalachia*.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore they were found in "ASPI Technical Reports" that were written in the 1980s and 1990s and are still available on the Internet. Developing these papers allowed us to cease verbally repeating to interested visitors one or other specific AT application, details of which could not be totally comprehended in a single tour or conversation -- thus the need for printed matter.

\* **Affordable housing** was the second component of the move back to the ideals of the homesteading culture and yet interconnected to a friendly world willing to exchange ideas for the benefit of all. Large-scale housing developments are not the only choice in this age. We chose to construct the solar house on a hillside that the previous owner, Judge Van Hook, knew contained a seam of coal but wanted it to remain undeveloped and forested. Thus we looked for ways to use local building materials, though wood seemed the material of immediate choice over clay, stone, or earth materials.

AT favors best possible construction techniques so the structures are comfortable, affordable, and relatively safe from extreme natural events -- though we wondered about possible earthquakes. With volunteers we built the solar house and subsequent dwelling on a hillside to keep it above the flood plain of the nearby Rockcastle River. It was a cantilevered pole house, though its appearance was not traditionally Appalachian. Community creativity involves designing and erecting structures that exhibit regional culture to some degree, so we left the surrounding trees as best we could -- and used Appalachian wood to the degree possible. Until the time of the early 20th century blight, the American chestnut was highly prized. But being in the heart of the mixed Mesophytic Forest with immense variety of tree species, other wood products suffice, such as oak, ash, poplar, and even locust. With forest management, the wood supply is renewable.

Following the solar house we developed on the ASPI grounds a number of additional structures including a small geodesic dome that uses smaller amounts of structural wood; we constructed a yurt built with rough-cut wood in the style of a Mongolian tent, though of permanent construction.<sup>4</sup> Likewise in 1986 we used local wood to make a cordwood-walled structure of about 1000 square feet; we later utilized cordwood for covering the exterior of a mobile home and thus made something somewhat temporary into a permanent dwelling.<sup>5</sup> We used local stone for a number of retaining walls and for walkways. Our efforts at pressed earth were not as successful, but others in the region had been successful in their subregions.

\* **Food production** is a key to local AT success. Many small gardens may seem inefficient when compared to large-scaled corporate operations with massive acres of single crops grown to schedules and specifications. However, these small plots can furnish a host of benefits ranging from personal pride, economics, and responsibility in backyard gardens to return of land to productivity. Those desiring can grow crops with less commercial chemical pesticides involved. We who lived during World War Two recall that human care and ingenuity ushered in thirty million American "victory gardens." Today, small garden plots of at least an equal number have reappeared. Individual gardening experiences had psychological, economic, environmental, and spiritual benefits.<sup>6</sup> During this time we constructed organic raised-bed garden plots on our Rockcastle River flood plain.

Small-scale gardening shows high potential as an enhancing community concern with one gardener encouraging neighborly produce exchange. Salad greens require less space to grow and allow for instant transfer from garden to dinner table without transport and travel wastes. Produce beautifies and variegates landscape. By eating locally we become locally rooted. Garden plots encourage attention to nutrition soundness and less resource intensive foods.

ASPI introduced Jerusalem artichokes to shield our greenhouse from summer heat and other varieties not known locally, such as salsify (oyster plant) and kohlrabi that we shared with those unfamiliar with them. Seasonal surpluses were sold through the beginning farmers' market. Furthermore, leftover seasonal produce was preserved through several methods: canning, freezing, a root cellar under the Solar House, and a solar food dryer,<sup>7</sup> designed and constructed by my dad in his last and eightieth year of life.

Our efforts coincided with changing national food policy directed to lower resource-intensive foods. Charts<sup>8</sup> show that on a pound or pint basis red meat (beef or pork) uses the most resources at 5.7, with butter at 3.1, chicken breast at 2.7 and fish at about 1.8, and rice, average fruit, and average vegetables slightly behind, followed by eggs and beans near 1.0 and milk, sugar, bread pasta, and flour in the 0.5 range. What is so evident is that red meat is the major culprit and moving away from it releases far more corn and soybean lands for less resource intensive grains and oils. This lower meat movement has greater future climate change control potential than curbing autos.

\* **Potable water** emerged as a rather complex issue, for here it is more efficient to gather collectively and install community water systems as was already popular in the region during the 1980s. However, our AT homesteading methods were available to help provide, preserve, and improve the quality and quantity for essential human needs. At ASPI, we did not want

to go into the regional water distribution system for that would encourage vacation and second-home development of our undeveloped Rockcastle River valley and further down the road, since we were a mile from a heavily-traveled Interstate-75 exit. Thus we championed and built five cisterns<sup>9</sup> with the emphasis on proper sealing to keep out varmints and seepage. A cistern could easily be drained if water is not frugally dispensed in domestic or irrigation use, especially outside of midday.

Our AT efforts were also extended water wise to curbing domestic consumption that some estimated for Americans at one hundred gallons per person per day; almost half is flushing of potable water. Dry composting toilets<sup>10</sup> became a focus throughout our building stage, for this is an answer to large-scale domestic water needs. We installed five composting toilets of existing commercial or ASPI design. No water is needed, for composting requires insertion of dry organic matter that, along with healthful bacteria, will turn human and kitchen wastes into composting materials to be used within certain growing areas. Private water needs are coupled with strict water conservation, for domestic water takes resources to collect, purify, and deliver.

#### **b) Attending to Cultural Differences**

*The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.* (Acts 2:44-45)

In March 1980, I was invited to the World Council of Churches' consultation on "Appropriate Technology" at Versailles near Paris, France. We assembled and discussed needs of the world's poor. A difference began to emerge as to the key understanding of "appropriate technology;" one is a **colonial** preference for giving from an "advanced culture" to a lesser developed one in an appropriating or dispensing fashion; a second is that even primitive cultures have simple and human-friendly techniques to be appropriated in a **democratic** sense to other cultures for adjusting to their particular needs. In defending the latter model it became evident that "appropriate" has multiple meanings in both French and English, one academically elitist and one democratic in manner of AT transfer.

We were committed in the early 1980s to an NSF grant to assemble an Appalachian land conference at Dungannon, Virginia. Our land attitudes have a long history back in the roots of our culture, with some traces of Roman law and Saxon/Anglo-Saxon practice (See *Reclaiming the Commons*, Chapter Three).<sup>11</sup> Add to this the particular flavor of American individualism and hidden or open hostility to Native Americans whose common lands were seized, especially during the Jackson Administration, but really throughout all of early American history. Excuses for expulsion and abrogation of solemn treaties were for Indian safety, improvement, and protection from annihilation

by aggressive white settlers. Similar land struggles continue in some fashion today.

**How do various cultures contribute to AT?** Practical AT people do not reflect much on abstract cultural concepts. In 1977, I moved from one rather wealthy DC sub-culture to a lower Appalachian one on the national outlook scale, though the classification is open for challenges; both DC and Appalachia have cultural aspects worth praising or rejecting. The System promoted Western cultural superiority during the Cold War, but in outlook people of the West were discovering value in primitive as well as sophisticated cultures, a paradigmatic shift at that time. Through our land study we found that European/American-settler land concepts were distant from Aboriginal ones which vary highly among themselves.

In central Appalachia, since the Second World War land was being surface mined, which involved less worker risks than traditional deep mining methods. However, the landscape was severely damaged in the process -- and reclamation was shoddy at best. The thoughtless blamed local residents for the conditions, forgetting that electric generation from coal is environmentally costly to areas of the fuel source. To extract coal and destroy a mountain in Appalachia takes its toll on the local population, but electricity generated benefits a broader and often distant constituency that does not have to deal with land disturbance, coal ash disposal and immediate air pollution. In coal mining areas natural beauty is marred and wildlife harmed; domestic tranquility is fractured and people lose hope in rebuilding their communities. Communities can be shattered.

**Did we seek to couple with national ecumenical movements?** It is difficult to be ecumenical in parts of the Mountains due to some insular churches wanting to avoid others. Often one has to look beyond the region. In January 1986, I accepted a four-month position as resident scholar at the National Cathedral, the major Episcopalian institution in Washington, DC, and this allowed time to work on a book, *Renew the Face of the Earth*.<sup>12</sup> The stay at the Cathedral involved many pleasant meetings and helped persuade the institution to assemble a gathering that took place in 1990, with the dedication of an environmental facade. I give a series of talks, a retreat, conferences, and one Sunday liturgical sermon. At this time several scattered citizen environmentalists discussed the possibility of a North American conference for coming to a consensus on healing our wounded Earth. In our haste to assemble the Conference with anyone willing to volunteer help we mistakenly ignored the different personal agendas of individuals.

Certainly some had an evangelical fervor with their personal commitment, others preferred a national power trip, and others of us sought a collaborative but radical agenda to confront the System. This oversight of differences took its toll, not so much at the Conference itself (a relative

success), but in trying to continue the organization afterwards. We were not dealing directly with formal church leadership, but rather in a bottom up approach. In retrospect, the *North American Conference on Christianity and Ecology* (NACCE) successfully brought together 500 people at North Webster, Indiana in August 1987, with over 100 varied talks. Here Wendell Berry gave a keynote and Bob Sears introduced the idea of a Resurrection-centered Spirituality.<sup>12a</sup> John Freda organized the largest collection of environmental art ever assembled and much of the religious press took favorable note of the event.

Had the conference concluded at that festive event, matters would have awaited a future successful event as well. However, power groups saw opportunities to reach audiences on a wider level; some wanted an evangelical platform; others, including those espousing Creation-centered Spirituality, proved very divisive and had the influence of money resources to back up taking over the reigns of the Conference structure. I had a death in the family at the very time of the August event and as president of NACCE this proved trying. Furthermore, those of us more interested in activism lost interest in the political intrigues and caused me to permanently leave ecumenical activism. However, the idea of ecumenical work was picked up by the Pew Foundation and other attempts followed through the decades.

### **What were immediate effects of globalization on Appalachia?**

The world of the 1980s was coming together in political, military, economic, and communicative ways and the term *globalization* was becoming a reality in a marked degree. Transportation moved faster and container ships were being designed to carry massive cargoes. Jobs were also starting to be destabilized in the Appalachian region and the textile and shoe factories of small mountain towns were closing; the work moved from relatively higher paying areas to those of distant lands with cheaper labor and less worker and environmental safeguards. Furthermore, financial transactions and money was moving across borders with ever greater frequency, with some landing in rather secretive tax havens. Migration to lands or parts of countries with more plentiful employment opportunities was occurring on a massive scale never before seen in human history. Urbanization was taking off in China and elsewhere. Globalization affected language choices, financial practices, clothes fashion, artistic expression, food choices, and political aspirations.<sup>13</sup>

**Does globalization affect cultural differences?** Our Appalachian young people speak more closely with standard American English than a few decades ago. Many do not imitate their parents and elders but rather the popular folks on television and the movies. That is more than a single regional phenomenon, but experienced across the country. The Appalachian dialects are under threat with a pain of loss by some and a shout of "Good riddance!" by others.

On a global scale younger people demand greater literacy and dual languages, and availability of translation services. The major UN languages (English, Chinese, Russian, Spanish, French, and Arabic) benefit in second language educational programs; medium sized languages struggled but held; minor local languages came under pressure; and local dialects were threatened with extinction to the detriment of cultural diversity. Appalachian dialects were coming under stress and younger people listened to standardized language television and radio. Furthermore, younger people turned to the major UN languages for songs to social means of communication. However, while learning languages is mind-expanding, loss of minor languages is severe (now losing two dozen a year and expected to lose half the world's languages by the end of this century). Cultural diversity is like plant and animal diversity; it adds to global cultural richness that promotes radical sharing with global benefits.

**Are cultural artifacts threatened?** Unfortunately, our Appalachian petroglyphs and other artifacts are under more frequent threat due to a loss of cultural heritage values. It is more perhaps due to local vandalism and tourism than to globalization as such. What is evident is that this is a global phenomenon. Development in emerging countries can result in overlooking environmental standards. Movement and mobility of peoples can put wear and tear on unguarded artifacts. Unprotected shrines suffer from lack of tourist regulation; the sacred Ganges becomes too polluted for Hindus to make their ritualistic bathing; the trails to Mount Everest are being trashed. The current Syrian Civil War and affected populations lead to Syria's archeological wealth being stolen, destroyed and taken abroad. Developing landscape through urban construction threatens important historic sites. Cultural monuments are unable to withstand higher levels of air pollution that erodes building stones within our sight, as when witnessing the erosion on European cathedrals and hearing marble fizzling in hot moist urban air at the Washington Monument.

**Are food choices changing as well?** Immense changes are occurring in diets both in Appalachia and throughout the world. More fat and sugar processed materials are available; more choices are going to certain meat cuts as well. Obesity rates are some of the highest in Appalachia and that is a growing concern among people with lower cost or more easily prepared menu items. The challenge is a rising world middle class that wants all good things found in affluent homes and restaurants. The environmentally concerned call for a new generation to eat less red meat and consume less resource-intensive animal products (all the while, meat consumption rises dramatically in certain emerging countries such as with 1.3 billion Chinese). The movement of rapid air freight from opposite North/South nations is bringing non-seasonal food to markets in increasing amounts and expanding the tastes of the affluent for greater variations in menus. On the other hand, the globalization of food outlets has created a monotony of fast food menus in nations where variety had previously been a hallmark.

**Is preserving culture more than tradition?** Some battle for the status quo or a return to past glory -- at least in the mind of the presenter. A Medieval Age advocate, John Horvat II<sup>14</sup>, bases an argument on "property" and "free enterprise." For Horvat, medieval methods were better, but instead of pressing for a right to the commons he espouses the right to unlimited property, and he faults those who think it ought to be redistributed. What Horvat and others of his free-enterprise defenders overlook is that rights to essential services today demands new forms of redistribution. Medieval ethical conduct with its duties and responsibilities has given way over the years, to uncontrolled materialism of private profiteers needing a counter weight of governmental controls.

**Is there a clash of cultures over property?** More primitive hunter/gatherer cultures tend to hold things in common, or at least establish rather exclusive territories for tribe or group. Those practicing agriculture acquire small plots or fields for farming purposes. Through history powerful elites could control designated areas and then require volunteer or forced service by serfs or slaves for use of the master's property. European settlers brought their notions of property and imposed them on Native Americans. Some laid claim to newly discovered lands in the name of monarchs who financed or allowed trips of exploration and settlement. Thus, distant crowns seized aboriginal commons -- and that enclosure of other commons (air waves, water resources, etc.) has never ceased. In Appalachia, many landholders lost rights to sub-surface mineral rights and saw their holdings ruined by surface mining of coal.

Colonizing powers, first Spain and then Portugal, France, England, Holland, Sweden, and Russia, arrived in the Western Hemisphere with an attitude of superiority and with settlers or adventurers willing to change the aboriginal occupancy patterns. Native good will evaporated as greed was defined by flag and firearms and extended to land, minerals, furs, timber and fish. These exploiters felt privileged and bestowed the dirty work first to seized natives who died rather than submit, and then to enslaved Africans who were able to perform hard labor in harsh climates. Resource acquisition through military might has extended to our modern times and by early 20th century included virtually all of Africa and Oceania and much of Asia.

By the time of the American Revolution, the privileged class created the myth that they have a legal right to use what has been un- or underused by native peoples who were part or full-time hunter/gathers (John Locke held that people own their private land through cultivation). That misguided colonialist sense of privilege was reinforced by religious righteousness and the combination of capitalistic greed mixed with patriotic fervor and an overlay of furthering missionary zeal combined to parse out much of the planet and its resources to those thought privileged.



American territorial expansionism of the 19th century fit into the colonialist mold, with its territorial greed called "Manifest destiny," and became a U.S. hallmark in much of our nation's history. European powers were not to interfere in this Hemisphere, for this is the American sphere of influence. Richard Kluger<sup>15</sup> narrates the tale of a U.S. venture to spread from sea to sea and often to occupy virgin lands on the East Coast, and then after intensive cultivation and non-replenishment of nutrients moving on to other inland virgin lands. From the original boundaries set by the Treaty of Paris in 1783 on territory east of the Mississippi, the expanding U.S. added the following: Louisiana Purchase (1803), Florida (1819), Republic of Texas (1845), Oregon territory (1846), Mexican cession at Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo (1848), Alaska (1867), Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Guam (1898), and even the Philippines for half a century, along with other smaller island purchases and trusteeships.

Native Americans took the brunt of this land grabbing stampede starting in the early 19th century with Cherokee and other tribes. Absolute individual (and legally based) property rights permeated Western colonial practice and clashed with aboriginal landholding practices. These native tribes were offered treaty after treaty involving the surrender of their territory ultimately to land speculators, settlers and railroad builders, their tribes and clans being relegated to often distant and unwanted land and the Indian territory of Oklahoma. Indian rights advocate Vine Deloria, Jr. noted that over those expansive years the U.S. government entered into more than four hundred treaties with Indians that required them to surrender ancestral lands -- and that it proceeded to violate every one of these agreements.<sup>16</sup> Kluger observed that Native Americans were promised sanctuaries, but these "were slackly enforced or ignored altogether."<sup>17</sup> The sorry records were clear.

Merchants and settlers followed the flag, first in colonial times through the largesse and favoritism of the distant crowned rulers, and later during American Administrations through a lax corps of enforcers. Too often, missionary ethical concerns were muted by the government's permission to convert residents unimpeded. However, some spoke about abuses such as the 1830s chorus of objections to the merciless removal of the five Civilized Tribes from the Southeast by the Jackson and succeeding Administrations. Often the religious leaders forgot that spreading Good News is ultimately a two-way street; natural revelation by hard-working sustaining cultures is good news for newcomers. Recall that Pilgrims ignorant of food-gathering in hostile New World forestlands learned survival from native inhabitants -- and then started occupying the territory of their early friends.

### **c) Conserving Health**

Settling down in Appalachia brought unexpected shocks: poor middle-

aged smokers looked older than their years; obesity was a plague brought on by overeating too much of the wrong foods and by habits involving too little exercise.<sup>18</sup> Psychologically, a sense of community eroded with those whose physical surroundings were damaged through resource extraction and then left unreclaimed. For those with a gracious sense of wellbeing, all forms of physical or mental health were fragile gifts demanding care and respect at all levels: personal, domestic, workplace and community. When experiencing individual or loved one's health problems, the flags were raised to preserve the gift of health. However, environmental neglect can weaken the determination to attend to personal health -- and this neglect of health has extended to people seeing little hope for improvement of self or community. Drugs has become an Appalachian problem and has compounded other health issues: effects of environmental tobacco smoke on non-smoking dwellers, worker safety in mines and factories, and new forms of chemical toxicity. Many small Appalachian farmers living in tobacco dependent (for livelihood) counties lost their major source of income with the fall of tobacco price supports by the end of the 20th century.

Accessible nutritious and low-priced food is another Appalachia problem. One billion or more people on this planet go to bed hungry and an equal number lack proper food diets. As Pope Francis says, "Can we continue to stand by while food is wasted and people are starving."<sup>19</sup> The facts are sobering and even more so when reflecting that, by Oxfam estimates, 40 to 50% of food is wasted. Too often the malnourished will take what is available to fill hunger pangs, and cheaper carbohydrates are accessible when more nutritious fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and whole grains prove expensive. Whether food is short or plentiful in a more sophisticated consumer culture, the popular choice is for prepared commercial foods doused with sugar and salt. A hidden famine in the midst of plenty stalks all our American as well as world poor. Those of us working in the region sought solutions in the 1980s through a variety of assistance projects: good food purchase and cooking classes, backyard gardening, restricted access to sugary soft drinks, and balanced school breakfast and lunch programs.

While slow to catch on because of seemingly high cost, the concept that health is the right of every person was becoming a justice issue. It is hard enough to achieve total health coverage in our wealthy area or region; how on Earth are we to champion total health care for a world of acute health needs? There are seven billion plus persons on Earth. On closer reflection, the problem is not always lack of health care procedures or proper medicine but rather lack of health access to these "common" resources. Redistribution. Recall the revolutionary words of Scripture, *Nothing will be impossible with God* (Luke 1:37). Health is a security issue; the equivalent of over one trillion dollars is an annual security allocation in military terms, much of which could be placed in health access for the world's unfortunate ill.

Sending navy units to victims of severe weather incidents in Oceania or army teams to Liberian Ebola victims are the start of using organized service personnel for health-related purposes. Medical advancements have come through government taxpayer funds, and so the advancements belong to all people -- even those beyond national boundaries. If that is the case, why do the wealthy receive proper health care while the uninsured cannot have access? Good health is a form of national and global security, and to extend this beyond our own American poor (not yet totally reached) to the world is the reason this must be universalized.<sup>20</sup>

Just unloosening the trillions of dollars in tax havens (some estimates range as high as thirty trillion) and making these resources available for the health of all would add immense amounts of money into circulation to educate primary health providers, build clinics, advance research in medicines, and offer home care for millions of shut-ins and elderly. Many under or unemployed are eager for a multitude of meaningful jobs waiting in caregiving. All the while the corporations have salted away billions of dollars in a wait-and-see attitude about where to expand within a greedy and outmoded System.

In Appalachia, health is a continual problem area. We do have access to good but limited clinics and hospitals, but for more extended service one must be transported to a major city (Nashville, Lexington, Cincinnati, etc.). A helicopter ride to more equipped regional facilities one hundred miles away can cost an awesome \$27,000. An ambulance ride by road could be in the high hundreds of dollars, often partly or totally at the cost of the patient. The sirens carrying the sick to a distant hospital is like Ross Perot's sucking sound of funds leaving our nation through international trade agreements. Health, like education, is an arena where scarcity ought to be compensated by taxing a broader state or region for the good of all.<sup>21</sup> The challenge to broaden services to a suffering world looms heavy on the horizon; however, expanded health access would actually stimulate a global economy through more worthwhile services. In Appalachia, caregivers await the resources needed to carry on this justice-related enterprise.

Appalachia suffers from various forms of substance abuse: drugs, tobacco, alcohol, and excessive food afflict all, especially the poor in an unequal society where many find it difficult to advance to a higher quality of life. In Appalachia, over-the-counter drugs are a major problem with legal and illegal drug overdoses<sup>22</sup> that equal or exceed deaths at middle age from all other causes. National advertizing of medicines turns our nation from a drug overdose problem by one fraction of the population to a problem of the great majority. People have developed a cavalier approach to ingestion of chemicals of a variety of kinds -- and Appalachia is no exception. By the 1980s we were well aware, especially in tobacco-growing areas, that smoking involved health risks and reminding smokers of this became a risk in itself. Kentucky had (and continues to have) the highest smoking rate in America. Furthermore,

tobacco-growing methods had changed with increased commercial fertilizers, sucker control agents, and pesticides that added to the tobacco used for smoking.<sup>23</sup>

Substance abuse extends to an entire consumer culture. It is difficult and risky to tell someone who finds benefit in a certain substance that too much of a good thing is bad. That applies to over-the-counter drugs, some health supplements, and foods with refined sugar and excess salt. Health and safety is less an issue for the young, but incidents of obese youth were changing the debate. Too much of a good thing combined with inability to say "no" added up to an emerging consumer problem. These seemingly "good things" can extend to snacks, electronic devices, guns, computer games, and a host of consumer products in an age of high pressure sales talk and ease of credit. The crisis has become one of lack of self-control, but the consumer culture regards the individual's right to any amount of consumption as the foundation of the consumer culture -- and not to be questioned.

Upon returning to Appalachia I observed people my age and younger, suffer, wither, and die from a variety of diseases. The gift of good health is slow to being appreciated. Through jogging over a 43 year period I kept weight at a 180 pound range -- and lost the weight battle when jogging halted. I gave up smoking forever in 1982 as the health message finally reached home. Fellow smokers denied their own deteriorating condition, "It ain't so!" One friend posted a veiled threat with his bumper sticker "Complaining about my smoking could be dangerous to your health." E-cigarettes with the nicotine vapor do reduce harmful emissions, but it continues a habit that could be a gateway to other drugs. A fictional bliss of our prevailing culture seemed to suffice. Headaches, wheezing, and other discomforts are overlooked. Big Tobacco taught a whole generation the wrong thing and only in the 21st century have ads been considered with skepticism.

Addictions in any form are a disturbing and difficult issue to handle, and yet we tended in the late 20th century to politely overlook them or focus only on the Big Tobacco producers and not on the treatment of the victims. Such complex problems demand individual attention and call for a spiritual discernment process.<sup>24</sup>

#### **d) Performing Environmental Resource Assessments**

In 1982, after realizing that our new Appalachian Institute's funding could not receive further federal grants during the hostile Reagan Administration, Paul Gallimore of the Long Branch Environmental Center in North Carolina and I developed a plan to perform "environmental resource assessments" (ERAs). These generally involved a ten-year outline to look at key areas of a physical environment (land use, water use, energy applications, transportation, indoor environment, waste treatment, forest, and community

relations); the suggested project aimed at a systematic improvement based on the actual resources of the community group and its ability to implement change.

One can green local environments without a major disruption of normal activity or input of added resources. Over the next two decades we completed about 200 ERAs in 33 states, the district of Columbia, and two Canadian provinces. Only when effort and travel became burdensome did I reluctantly ease away from this type of work -- though I found it immensely enjoyable and continued a limited number into 2014.

ERAs require keen observation, good note gathering and video recording, penetrating questions to the leadership and staff, and systematic organization of results to make a useful action plan for host groups. We had to work within the limitations presented (personnel, time, finances, and existing property). Many of these non-profit groups wanted to green their property but were unable to decide where to start or how to organize their limited resources for the transition. The problem was how to pace an organization and make meaningful progress over time. Non-profit groups tended to initiate several projects to complete simultaneously; failure could lead to discouragement and burnout.

ERAs were our vehicles of funding and promotion of our service for others; all learn in the process. Most non-profit organizations that wanted to be good exemplars of environmental responsibility saw greening their own physical presence as a part of their message to supporters and clientele. And many took off with success and were able to appreciate the many resources they already had at hand (soil, strategic location, well-built facilities, formal organization, solar potential, habit of properly using resources, and well ordered lives). We refrained from publicizing some success stories because others who were also moderately successful might become offended by being omitted.

The key to a successful ERA was to have an organizer who was enthusiastic, hard-working and practical, and who worked well with the respective non-profit administration and personnel. When such talent was present our ERA would bear fruit. Without good agents of change, the ERA reports we composed would simply sit on the shelf and gather dust. Over time we strongly suggested before performing an ERA that such persons were available to implement changes. We simply did not accept theoretical interest in saving the environment as a basic criteria, but rather the availability of such agents of change to bring practical results.

Our ERAs were aided by the communications revolution. Many of the ASPI projects were greatly assisted by personal computers in processing and record keeping. To have completed such paperwork in the typewriter age before word processing would have been far more burdensome and would

have slowed completion of one assessment a month with all our other undertakings. The trusty though improved typewriter gave way quickly to word processing by office computers and attached printers, along with office duplicating devices. Computers offered greater ease in composition, correction, additional data, as well as retrieval of recorded supplementary materials. At the very end of pre-computer days in 1982 one of our major reports had to be retyped from single space to double space for publication; it took an associate several weeks to retype in a presentable fashion and format; only a few years later, the same operation could have been achieved in an hour at most by a single computer and printing operation -- and mistakes more easily detected and corrected.

Literacy has become more necessity in an age of globalizing communications. Not only are major languages and especially English needed for more to have access, but so is knowing how to present materials to be understood by a wide range of audiences. Speed of communication as well as access to larger audiences makes literacy all the more urgent. We realize that increased driving speed makes road signage and directions more important for travelers. Few of us remember that the average posted highway speed during the Second World War was 35 miles an hour. The world is going faster and faster. Everyday business of financial and civic transactions and information called for added talents and literacy as well. Though TV and radio has become secondary to the fast advancing Internet as information sources, both still remain instrumental for general and weather information, as well as music and other entertainment. Then came electronic devices.

I did not have access to TV in the regions where I lived in Appalachia and soon dismissed the need for it. A combination of public radio for instant news and serious periodicals for more in-depth study of issues was satisfactory. What became evident to non-TV people when watching on rare occasions was shallowness of content and how a steady TV diet could lead to superficiality and neglecting serious reading time, lowering of newspaper readership and loss of facile literacy skills. TV commercials were horribly distracting and lured the exhausted or docile into a mesmerized condition -- though a relief of stress was regarded as an advantage.

During this period before heavy college burdens caused many to look for paying jobs, the college volunteer continued to help. Non-profit work loads continued to climb, but it was becoming more difficult to meet personnel needs with our limited budgets. Dedicated and simple living volunteers were always welcome, but we noted as the decade wore on and academic tuition (and indebtedness) was rising sharply that the number of summer volunteers did not equal those of the previous decade. We sought funds to bring and sustain these good folks for summer spans or other times -- and that was difficult enough. However, some progressive schools were beginning to assist with their own in-service volunteers, since our non-profit groups furnished part of a student's education.

Reporting demanded clear and informative material. Letters, phone calls and newly activated Faxes were not sufficient to affect total communication needs with peers who were wanting to green their non-profit institutions. This was prior to the age of teleconferencing and so person-to-person conferences were quite popular in this decade. With enough personal energy I attended a host of talks, conferences and retreats with a wide assortment of groups even in distant places. Certainly the itinerant nature of a Jesuit calling was elicited while health and energy was present.

I still served as president of the Washington DC based *Technical Information Project* (TIP) that Art Purcell and I founded in 1974. For my first four years after returning to Kentucky I traveled back to DC every month. TIP ran a series of USEPA-sponsored resource conservation conferences in major cities during the late 1970s and early 80s. I attended and gave talks at the majority of these from coast to coast; surprisingly, the best attended was of all places -- Anchorage, Alaska. Resource conservation was an intriguing area and one answer for environmental problems -- and many citizens wanted positive answers in a culture with emerging waste problems. Better use of commercial materials still did not tackle the issue of immersion in the consumer culture, but it was regarded by us as a start.

#### **e) Acting for the Urgent Time is Now**

Urgency in environmental matters was sidestepped as an issue in the 1980s under the Reagan/George H.W. Bush Administrations. However, bipartisanship was congenial but weakening during this period, and governmental paralysis awaited a new century. First Earth Day urgency faded with a misplaced trust that government would care for all environmental problems: air and water pollution, major toxic spills and reclamation of strip-mined land. Environmentalists became genuinely frustrated, especially when special business interests opposed tightening regulations. As mentioned, in 1981 the solar water heating on the roof of the White House was dismantled and Reagan spoke of "polluting aerosols" coming from pine and evergreen forests -- a natural phenomenon. While some blatant forms of air and water pollution were being addressed through regulations, still new forms of pollution surfaced: noise pollution, indoor environmental smoke, ozone depletion, brown fields and nuclear safety and waste disposal.

The disasters after Three Mile Island partial meltdown of the core of the Number 2 unit on March 28, 1979, followed by a more serious Chernobyl, Ukraine nuclear meltdown in 1983 changed the U.S. nuclear power strategy into essentially an informal moratorium on new powerplant construction. Higher construction costs resulting from increased regulations and unsolved problems related to disposal of wastes surfaced and puzzled policy makers -- and that continues to this day.

In the 1980s, activists sought new ways that went beyond traditional public interest methods of publicity in mainline media and legal actions to draw public attention. Ecotage surfaced as a deliberate act of halting a pollution practice by frustrating the operation and making it unprofitable to continue the status quo. For instance, housing developments were sabotaged, timber-laden forests were spiked, tree sit-ins near harvesting operations organized and engineering stakes were pulled up or changed at new contested development sites. Radical groups such as *Earth First!* were in the forefront in its public form of radicalism. John Davis, who helped as an ASPI associate in the early 1980s, moved from Kentucky to the West where radical activities were focused.

Governmental agencies immediately took the side of propertyholders and issued warnings and made arrests, while activists drew greater media attention to threatened areas of resource extraction and development. Clashes made headlines. While radical action occurred nationwide including Appalachia, still California and Western states became primary points. Environmental activists knew the public media has a short attention span, while environmental protection is a long-term issue. Possible arrests and convictions for plotting ecotage operations by Earth First! and others were hushed through a pressured change of tactics. Among the informal settlements with arrested activists were out of court settlements to direct energy to publishing peer-reviewed academic articles. All the while, moderate voices called for turning activism to trash cleanup and volunteerism.

**Was (and is) democracy under threat?** To counter the complacency and business associations of the Reagan/Bush 1980s required a double emphasis on urgency and acting **NOW**. Throughout this period the nation's merchants of doubt were active, especially Big Tobacco with reference to smoking issues through environmental smoke affecting those near but not actually smoking;<sup>25</sup> these persuaded the media to offer two sides in debate: when 98% of scientists were in agreement, then the 2% in disagreement were considered by the media as worthy of equal time. Big Oil was in the forefront with demands for favorable tax treatment allowing further petroleum and gas exploration.

**The second level of eco-humility** emerged, namely, remedial activities to eliminate environmental degradation had humbling gray areas (imperfect solutions, short-lived materials, hidden safety and others). For instance, a Cornell University economist offered a device for field testing by ASPI. He had conceived the novel idea of making a rotating solar reflection panel to boil water for a solar irrigation pump; this was all made from bicycle parts. He brought the device to our center in 1982 for field testing. My brother Charlie, a heat transfer mechanical engineer Ph.D., came with his sons to study the device. He soon gave it a thumbs down because of lack of safety in the water boiling component and the lack of rigor in the structure -- plus



original use of pure municipal water in New York was unlike our river water in rural America. The inventor was disheartened because ASPI did not accept his original idea -and that was quite humbling for him.

**What about humble Appalachian AT work?** Settling down was a difficult commitment in coming to the Mountains in pioneer times, but during the turbulent 60s and 70s it became a fad. A famous gathering place for such folks was *The Farm* in south central Tennessee, where the crowd that congregated numbered over a thousand at one point. The organization started many credible projects (ASPI bought its first solar panels from them); they had some grand projects with steel structures and educational facilities started but never completed. Finally the organization discharged hangers-on and the population dropped dramatically. AT was difficult work, took great attention, and required resources that required longer term commitments, generally as long-term, hard-working homesteaders. The affluent with rich parents lost interest or suffered burnout.

ASPI had its share of humbling mishaps in the form of building damage during windstorms and floods of the river adjacent to the property. Likewise, we had several accidents including the death of associate Russell Parmes on his bicycle hit by a student in a hurry. Furthermore, our grounds manager Tommy Lambden was murdered and in investigating the crime scene the local sheriff found his house filled with marijuana plants awaiting transplanting later in the spring, quite likely onto parts of our forestlands. Also at the time neighbors were implicated in the mysterious burning down of a house we were in the process of building. Our area was well known for illegal pot cultivation and this made cross-country traverse in the summer growing season somewhat perilous. Yes, Appalachian public interest had problems.

The decade that started on such high hopes, ended with modest achievements. In 1980 it seemed that the solar age had dawned and that eager non-profit groups were in the forefront of a global change. ASPI sponsored the *Kentucky Solar Alliance* with a newsletter along with a strong regional solar group (*SUNREP*), and a budding nationally directed *Solar Lobby* in Washington DC. The AT program was well funded and with high expectations as to publicity and conference potential. At the end of this decade the solar organizations were gone and all that remained was our Solar House, functioning through the graces of volunteers and through fees from ERAs, small donations and calendar sales.<sup>26</sup> Renewables were on the way to being delayed by opposition .

## Chapter Four: Calling to Join Forces with Others (1990s)

*The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
and God fulfills himself in many ways,  
lest one good custom should corrupt the world.*  
"The Passing of Arthur" by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

During the last decade of the twentieth century we sought to present our insights, experiences and accumulating information in a number of ways. I conducted at least two dozen retreats at Milford, Ohio and Oshkosh, Wisconsin during this period, all with a strong environmental emphasis. Some of the retreatants accepted this quite well but others seemed mildly hostile to aspects of environment, being successful businessmen with some hostility to greening the world. When my regular pastoral ministry began in the 2000s, retreat opportunities were curtailed, since the normal weekends for retreat work were occupied with scheduled liturgies.

During the 1990s our ERAs reached the height of popularity, with over half the total performed in that decade. Likewise, we sought to bring together those who had sponsored our assessment work so that notes could be compared. We held these cooperative meetings at our Kentucky ASPI center, at St. Louis, at Oldenburg, Indiana, at Milford and Loveland, Ohio, and at Durham, New Hampshire. Over this period our own AT experience advanced in areas of solar energy (retrofitted an internal combustion car to solar operation) and through acquisition of a sizeable building and grounds at Mount Vernon, the county seat, for urban homesteading. This enlarged office space allowed us to separate the library/ office from the rural forested Nature Center, whose dampness threatened books and paper files in the wooded Rockcastle Valley. Half of the extensive parking of the acquired building was turned into garden space and a cistern, solar panels, solar hot water, and greenhouse were added to make a unique urbanized AT model.

ASPI received a USEPA grant to furnish Appalachian people with a series of 50 Television interviews (presented on WOBZ at London, Kentucky) and

extended this beyond the grant period with still more. The subjects were exemplar Appalachian agents of change in a wide variety of fields, from wild edibles to forest management. I learned to listen intensely to guests interviewed and this allowed us a better understanding of Appalachian problems. We were able to pinpoint the qualities needed for regional agents of change to assist the radical movement needing to come; qualities included humor, articulation, balance, compassion and solidarity with people striving to make ends meet.

Gradually, ideals gave way to hard knocks of a gray world of imperfections, where theory met practice and simple living clashed with crass commercialism. Perhaps it was late in coming, but a rational approach without a spiritual underpinning appeared to be like building a house on sand, and hoping others somehow firm up the foundations. Just how far could a rational approach work with people caught in the throes of consumerism or cowed into passivity while the elite maneuvered their predominantly materialistic culture? Could we somehow stop the onrush of this modern unsustainable culture geared to forgetting the past and glorifying every new device in the "material heaven" ahead?

In the 1990s, addressing the materialistic consumer culture became an issue with the triumphant overturning of the USSR Empire. I frankly was bothered: Could we critique the current materialistic **System** through some form of reformation of what exists, or is a new economic and social structure demanded? If I spoke what was in my heart, private donor admirers of the System (even when we accepted no corporate money) would be turned off and we would lose a major portion of our meager means of support. Here for the first time I saw that being poor and committed to simple lifestyle was utterly necessary or otherwise we would not be free to speak. Should addressing overconsumerism be silenced by a desire not to rock the boat of monetary support from those aspiring to be affluent?

I had spoken of the sin of affluence and one priest who headed a major charitable group took me to task publicly, saying how much affluence was a blessing and not a sin. I extended my concern to those religiously-based educational institutions who needed the largesse of the wealthy to keep their institutions functioning. But did this also apply to me and our ASPI operation to a lesser degree, since many donors sought to be both green and materially successful? On the other hand, was my disdain for **Capitalism**,<sup>1</sup> something to voice to close friends but never outside of a trusted circle? My courage was not yet bolstered by the freedom coming from entering the elder years -- but it was starting to express itself. To me, silence could be golden or cowardly.

The 1990s was a time for intensifying old and introducing new practices. Recycling became popular and yet littering was a continued problem in our landscape. We championed hiking through a constructed trail system on our

property that included the *Michael Francis Zalla Trail*, maintained by volunteers; also the property is very near the 315-mile *Sheltopee Trace National Recreational Trail* maintained by the Daniel Boone National Forest. ASPI promoted biking and yet one of our associates lost his life riding on a narrow but busy Appalachian highway. Our organization promoted tourism and historic sites, and yet the local Civil War Wildcat Mountain Battle site's trenches were threatened by logging before we brought it to public attention.

For the greater part, blatant abuses of air and water were being tackled at the national level, but it took testimony and citizen attention to keep the beautiful free-flowing and white-water rafting Rockcastle River from being dammed. Nutritional imbalances were being exposed and yet the great majority of Appalachians had not yet learned to improve diets. Still, the socio-economic System in all its vagueness went uncontested. The question arose: why not look more deeply and discover the connection between this environmental crisis and that System, even while satisfied that the USSR and its sorry environmental record were being laid to rest? Corporate statism has much in common with public or private vertically integrated corporations. Perhaps materialism in all its forms was behind a lack of spiritual respect for creation, and this means confronting the existing System.

**Ginseng was a gift.** During this period ASPI strove to expand its audience by taking on new regional issues. One concern was the collapse of the tobacco economy in Kentucky and central Appalachia (where most of the tobacco dependent counties with small farmers made their living on the relatively lucrative tobacco crop). One possible solution was the wild ginseng that is highly prized in China for supposed medicinal purposes. The roots could sell for upward of a thousand dollars a pound. Syl Yunker, a ginseng grower, convinced us that his "virtually wild ginseng" (identifying and assisting wild ginseng patches to be more productive) was an economic opportunity. ASPI sponsored the *Appalachian Ginseng Foundation* along with a newsletter. We opened a small lab to extract ginsenosides from wild ginseng root for analysis and eventual commercial synthesis. We furnished isolated extract fractions to Dr. Laura Murphy at the School of Medicine at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. We also assembled and published a manual on virtually wild ginseng, and this work inspired our associate Kristin Johannsen to write a book on the subject.<sup>2</sup>

#### **a) Balancing Limited Space and Time**

*Because we can say, "The Lord is the only God, there is no other," but then live as if he was not the only God and have other deities at our disposal...There is a danger of idolatry: idolatry, which is brought to us through the spirit of the world.*

Pope Francis in June 2013 homily

Each year my religious life includes an eight-day retreat in which

progress in spiritual growth is reappraised. Jesuits are expected to reserve an annual period to move once more through the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius -- and I look forward to this opportunity every summer. For me, a key ingredient is to get away to the wilderness, and to speak to God. During this decade I still engaged in primitive camping, though of this writing I have accepted living in a vacation home in the U.S. Red River Gorge Wilderness Area owned by the Kohrs family of Bellevue, Kentucky. Why choose wilderness surroundings? We must remain in close touch with the mystery of God's creation in personal ways.

To be green today means to have courage, a gift of the Holy Spirit, and wilderness has a way of emboldening us. To reserve sacred time and space takes determination in this age of hyperactivity. One can invent a million excuses to keep grinding at daily routine and only one good one for making a retreat: we need it. Each of our senses need to be tuned to place and time (the reason for publishing *Appalachian Sensations: A Journey through the Seasons*). Furthermore, we need to attune these senses through the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Reflection space and time are essential. Working with others in a collaborative fashion demands knowing and respecting their own space and time. All of us need patience, taking time to listen and pacing ourselves through periods of rest. Prayers help set the rhythm that is needed for our entire life ventures. On the other hand, glorifying modern quick-fix technology threatens private and public space and time. Nerves become frayed, human relationships are tried, and trust needed for sharing is broken down.

Those of us affected by "sound pollution" and lack of rest are frustrated warriors unable to coordinate resources with diverse and often distant allies. Rapidly composed, emotionally-laden communications, whether by face-to-face contact, phone, or letter (and especially emails) can damage personal relationships. Ignoring an authentic pause that refreshes can be disastrous for human relations. Ironically, overly busy people often regard rest and silent reflection as an assault on their free space, when actually the obsessive filling of time with phone calls can be exhausting; human balance needs a rhythm of work and rest.

**Sound pollution** emerged as an issue. The goal is to balance sound and silent space time and place. Sound pollution and its harmful effects have been well documented.<sup>3</sup> Annoying physical sounds range from motorized toy carts to lawn mowers, from jackhammers to revved motorcycles, from house parties to traffic congestion in general. Stress levels rise and a sense of hopelessness prevails for the annoyed. The challenge is for civic controls that can quiet a neighborhood, but these are not always a matter for the local police force. Some individuals take delight in calling attention for others to notice their presence; other folks suffer silently and hesitate to set boundaries

for their silent space. This creates tension by a failure to compromise in conflicting sets of local environmental values. Amazingly, it is balancing silence/noise issues where fundamental environmental change has an opportunity for success -- encouraging respect for differing personalities and goals in a limited world. This became for me a primary insight of the decade in the emerging age of the electronic device.

Busyness/overconnectedness is an emerging phenomenon where a lacking compromise surfaces even within public places and private homes. We note that NPR runs interviews with people who are transfixed by computer games or glued to TV football games, often in disregard for others in the same household who truly despise noise and seek quiet reflection time. For the average American, time spent watching TV amounts to 72 days out of each year -- and that creates a noisy and busy milieu. On top of this, for some multi-tasking persons, simultaneously watching TV and talking on cell phones ensures the mind is semi-active with voice cords working. These watchers/talkers think those of us, the "TV-less" and "cell phone-less," bear the stamp of being handicapped; these busybodies neglect and even fear silence as something frightening in our modern world where activity has priority over rest.

To appear busy with the hand or head-held device adds to peer status as much as fashionable clothing and choice of words. Today, it is common for walkers, sitters, and even drivers of autos or larger vehicles to be conversing on cell phones. One non-cell rebel fetched a discarded cell phone from his pocket and said out loud, "This creep beside me is disturbing my silent space." A crowd at Warsaw Poland was photographed awaiting a bus and ALL were talking on their cell phones -- an apparent global phenomenon making the "cell-less" into freaks. Being quiet is a rare opportunity to be alone with our thoughts and seek God within, a forgotten connectedness free of monthly phone bill and free to engage in deeper conversation.

**Light pollution**, like sound pollution, is an intrusive phenomena; it was emerging as a problem for some time but became a widespread discussion point in the 1990s. It is the aftereffect of a lighted urban landscape and really involves (like sound and silence) a certain compromise. Preserving restful space and time includes conditions that are often intruded upon by modernity - - and dark space is one of these. When I observed excessive public lighting at one college campus during an ERA, the grounds manager said he heard only a series of complaints that were opposite, namely, parents demanding more lighting for safety of students and teachers. It was a struggle between darkness needed for sound sleep colliding with lighting needed for outdoor night travel or indoor activities. Some students want to keep interior lights burning; a partner or neighbor prefers a different time for sleeping, studying, or reading. Unfortunately the modern noise- or light-makers often hold precedence; silence and darkness are secondary and expected to yield to

sound and lights.

From a communal standpoint, light pollution concerns pristine skyscape now being denied to residents, mainly through excess of a good thing (urban street, commercial, and home flood lights). Today, over half the world is urbanized in centers with varied amounts of regular external street lighting, so that the urban sky glows up to airline travelers, and that glow obscures the starlight for those residents below -- a costly trade off. A short-term volunteer from Chicago staying at our Nature Center rose after a night of rural sounds saying, "It is really dark here." Before I finished the sentence that he could have looked up to see stars for the first time, he had packed and left. For him, darkness was a frightening unknown. Some large metropolitan areas like Lagos in Nigeria actually crave the privilege of night lighting due to undependable electric grids and lack of safety. However, in many urban areas haze and smog obscure the heavens -- a pity since for millennia less modern folks enjoyed star-lit grandeur.

Again, compromises call for respect for those demanding some urban lighting and some times of darkness. Excessive lighting, whether indoors or out, can be reduced by controls and dampening techniques on lamp devices and can be timed for maximum benefit of affected populations. Street lighting can be directed downward so that urban glow is minimized and residents have a chance to see the free celestial night show. However, this requires domestic and community environmental compromise, possible if all work together to achieve a balanced environment.

**Visual pollution** emerges as a regional issue as well; this includes commercial signage and blinking lights that appear often in congested urban areas. It is advantageous to observe clearly marked directions when traveling in these congested areas, for drivers need split second timing to flow successfully with the traffic. However, too much of a good thing can become a blur. Attempts to control excessive congestion can reduce the landscape to an artificial jungle often mesmerizing, but devoid of beauty and attractiveness. Personal comfort is dulled; attention-grabbing wearies some to become irritated or insensitive, and visual clutter can turn good souls into zombies.

Both excessive sounds and sights can intrude, but modern life demands space and time compromises. Maximizing quality of life involves sight and sound compromise. We need safe walkways and the chance to observe the heavens, to converse and to reflect, to get directions from signs and to be left alone. Our music has sweet sounds and rests. We need the "sacred silence" required in monasteries and the excitement of festivals. All in all, we crave environmental balance, only established through human compromise -- and that includes sound, light and viewscape.

**Odor pollution** is often more annoying than unhealthy, and can occur in

any part of the country. A prime example is vast corporate animal farming operations. Hog farmers, especially in the Midwest and parts of the South and even in parts of Appalachia smell profits, and thus deaden their noses to the penetrating aroma that can carry for miles and degrade the quality of life for entire neighborhoods and rural counties. However, urban odors can be just as noticeable and annoying. One California processing business made a strong popular hot sauce that brings a burning nose and throat sensation to local residents; community adjustment and compromise was called for. Both rural and urban smells may alert residents to possible annoying or toxic pollutants. Over time the nose can become deadened to a persistent odor and that can be good or bad. Deodorants do not change the atmosphere, but only paralyze the ability to detect the particular odor; some spray with deodorants to "rid" a place of an unpleasant fish odor or tobacco smoke, though the former is annoying and the latter harmful to human health -- and both remain when senses are paralyzed.

**Taste pollution** is harder to specify, but efforts are made to standardize what people like, and all of this to the profit-making fast-food shop's delight through possible increased sales of their fried and salty products. Some people develop exotic tastes for foods and drinks that others do not regard as even pleasant. The high price of certain items may be discomfoting to some, but connoisseurs go to great lengths for a moment with special wines or discriminating restaurant dishes. Food standardization through fast-food chains actually crowds out the local and regional variants in mom-and-pop diners, and cultural dishes become a forgotten delight. We have championed the tastes of Appalachia,<sup>4</sup> though realizing that some of these are becoming endangered experiences calling out for attention.

**Feelings** of being crowded or isolated affects some who consider mountains as closing in on them; they may desire to move from one location to a more spacious one. Most of us desire quality space for connection or separation; a dwelling, meeting room, or office can be too spacious or too congested. Conserving living and work space becomes a major issue when congestion grows and space rental or purchase exceeds what many can afford. Larger quarters take more construction materials, maintenance, heating and cooling energy, and more land resources. Those who experience their young ones flown from the nest suddenly are left with the decision to downsize, affording less property taxes, and less need for maintenance. Two can live at the price of one and often this opens a social morass. Occupancy numbers grew during the Great Recession when college grads stayed put or returned home because they could not afford rentals. Compromises include sound-proofing and modified heating and cooling of domestic space.

A time of experiencing the good and bad aspects of sound, light, viewscape, aromas, tastes and feelings came more acutely in the closing decade of the 20th century. More than ever before the distinguishing of



sensory quality and quantity became a matter of attention, with a growing awareness that compromises were required in our somewhat congested world so that more could enjoy the gifts we receive.

### **b) Welcoming the Poor as Collaborators**

*Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field until everything belongs to them and they are the sole inhabitants of the land.*

(Isaiah 4:8)

**During this decade I was invited and attended a program being organized by a regional forest protection group, Indiana-based *Heartwood*, and several of us challenged the deliberate attack on the U.S. Forest Service by this "Liberty" group that had funded the conference. Some attendees were naive enough to believe that their ongoing criticism of the U.S. Forest Service would allow them to join Liberty folks who preferred the non-existence of the Service. This was a deliberate attempt to enlist critics into an anti-government crusade, rather than to make the agency a better functioning body.**

During the 1990s, our environmental research team traveled to several foreign lands, mainly on solar application missions. I organized a team composed of Paul Gallimore, Don Martin, and fellow Jesuit Dick Murphy (who acted as interpreter), to visit Peru in 1990 for promoting community solar cookers. Paul and I also went to Dominican Republic and Haiti with the same mission in 1992. This became an Appalachia-Latin American joint venture.

Likewise, in subsequent periods of the decade our local Jesuit community in Kentucky sponsored Mark Schimmoeller and Andy McDonald to return to Peru and help launch a woman's solar cooker cooperative with the Medical Missionary Sisters in Arequipa. Later we sponsored Mark to do similar related solar cooker and efficient wood-cooking stove projects in Honduras in Central America and Malawi in Africa. We performed these outsourcing AT projects only where and when invited, and we regarded them as joint R&D for host and our sending agency. Our hope was to avoid being elite colonialists bringing expertise to a undeveloped area. The results of our experience were presented at the National Solar Energy Conference in St. Paul and at other venues.

**Anti-nuclear power** efforts continued through the 1990s. During this furlough of American nuclear powerplant construction after Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, focus shifted principally from nuclear safety and disposal issues to the connection of enrichment of fuel for nuclear powerplants and weapons. Mary Davis worked with us on writing projects and continued her singular work with French anti-nuclear activists by writing two books (in French) on the subject, and she gathered information pertaining to worker safety issues at the Piketon, Ohio nuclear enrichment facility, still an active issue years after her

untimely passing in 2011.

Our regional work was part of a global effort. Proliferation of nuclear weapons had spread first among the five permanent UN Security Council members to India, Pakistan, and Israel and then North Korea -- though some nations (South Africa and Latin American countries) abandoned attempts at nuclear weaponry generation. Ukraine later surrendered all its USSR-related nuclear materials for proper dismantling.

We joined peace activists who often reminded us of the American guilt complex initiated by dropping atomic bombs on two Japanese cities of no specific military importance; those horrible episodes resulted in deaths of 150,000+ innocent civilians. Nuclear testing over decades, even with test ban treaties by many nuclear bomb-containing nations, had slowed but not totally eliminated this inherent radioactive release and associated threats to safety. Mere possession of nuclear weaponry along with powerplants adds to global and regional tensions. The dissolving of the USSR added a worry that nuclear weaponry and enriched fuel could fall into terrorists' hands, and the U.S. became involved in helping collect such materials for "peacetime" uses.

Concessions are made that the "peacetime atom" has its place in medical treatments, all while nuclear power electricity generation is the major user of the fuel. The Achilles heel of nuclear fuel utilization is evident. To process uranium to a non-weapons grade limit required facilities that had a capacity to convert materials to weapon's grade level through longer and more intensive processing. National pride and corporate greed presses some nations like Iran to ever higher levels of utility, and this makes nuclear power a good example of the Genesis account of the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Today's Adam and Eve want the taste of nuclear power -- promoted by early proponents as "too cheap to charge." This taste is utterly misleading!

We were discovering that nuclear power is like a phoenix; it may just rise again and again. Many nations have continued to expand nuclear facilities, but powerplants are becoming more costly and as time has progressed renewable energy sources are less worrisome and less costly, as well as being environmentally benign. Hydropower the primary electricity-producing renewable was really our nation's first centralized electricity-producing source, though taking second place over time to fossil and nuclear fuels.

National security without a Cold War antagonist was called into question by persistent and long-term peace groups. Random acts of terrorism (marine barracks bombing in Lebanon and embassy attacks in east Africa along with damage to American destroyer Cole in Yemen) were used as justification for continuing a high military budget including manufacture and storage of nuclear weapons. Colonial minutemen had their historic moment, and so do their modern counterparts (the military/industrial complex that departing President

Eisenhower warned against). An ingrained cultural misinterpretation of guns and military for safety extends to nuclear weaponry and by association to the nuclear power facilities and need for additional enriched uranium. Values as to peacetime uses of the atom clashed, and we peace activists demanded a route to disarmament. Just the presence of thousands of nuclear weapons, especially in American and Soviet stockpiles, remained disturbing.

**Climate change** gained traction in this decade with the advent of sophisticated scientific models confirming human causation. Mobility of GHGs has extended beyond local and even regional concern; the entire planet could be affected. By the 1990s, proponents of tackling the GHG issue succeeded in organizing an international conference in 1997 at Kyoto, Japan. This meeting to coordinate national policies on the issue was well attended by a hundred national delegations and a high level American one as well. Vice President Al Gore led the U.S. governmental delegation and the conference drafted a proposed treaty committed to carbon dioxide reductions by 2012. However, major emitters U.S., China, and India did not sign. Europe took the issue far more seriously, but only a few nations reached anticipated benchmarks. Carbon dioxide levels continued to rise. Japan, the host of the conference and strongest proponent promised to reduce GHG levels 6% below 1990 levels by 2008 and had actually exceeded them by 9% by 2009;<sup>5</sup> few signers exceeded those levels.

Noted scientist and environmental writer Rene Dubos is considered the author of the catchy phrase, "Think Globally and Act Locally." However, the phrase did not convey what was starting to emerge and a more complete but less catchy phrase might be: *Think globally and act locally so that We can act globally*. Local action is insufficient in itself, and in order to heal our wounded Earth all people are called to be global -- not NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) -- citizens. During the 1990s I attended a conference sponsored by the E.F. Schumacher Society in Massachusetts, and a guest author on local activism stumbled while answering a question on how small simple-living communities could successfully handle global environmental air and water problems from a local level. Politics might, in former Speaker of the House Tip O'Neill's words, be essentially local, but NOT environmental problems. Air and water pollutants do not respect local or regional national boundaries; they are mobile.

The *Principle of Subsidiarity* has been used for decades in Catholic social justice circles as a way of delegating practices to the level closest to the people who can make effective change. Through this principle we seek meaningful action at the lowest level (personal, domestic, local, regional, national and international) provided proper governance is operative. In an age of environmental awareness and financial flow, lower levels are unable to handle situations beyond some localized infringements, such as processing trash or curbing local noise levels. Water and air move about and yet national laws are limited and lack broad-based enforcement. Infringement on the commons

means citizens in the 21st century must look to larger units for regulation to ensure all are protected -- including unborn future generations.

Global citizens must assume global responsibilities through a ripple effect going out from local points of intense activity. This ripple effect would be a process of concatenation, linking one neighborhood to another in a global fashion of creating a tidal wave of environmental concern. The problem with the ripple effect is the same as that with chain letters; the instigator benefits or becomes an expert and pivotal focus, but the ones down the line consider matters of less importance, and concern tapers off over distance and time. Working at intensive cooperative endeavors is difficult to excite. Urgency is not contagious in areas of low social consciousness and high self-interest. It has to be carefully cultivated.

Asian, African, and Latin American nations have gained from manufacturing and other services' exodus from developed lands. Profiteers with no social sense took escape industries to lower wage-paying lands and simply abandoned communities that had depended on them for livelihoods. This became a late 20th century abomination, especially when worker safety or environmental safeguards were jeopardized. The 1990s saw the quickening pace of escape industries from our Appalachian and other rural American towns. Protective efforts were essentially nil, while foreign groups enticed these irresponsible industries and services to go elsewhere and forsake workers and environmental safeguards.

Even **environmental land issues** moved from local to regional and national levels. In attempting to address the land issues that arose in our early 1980s, we became concerned about land care and proper management, especially if foisted by outside ownership groups. Unfortunately, most of the land used for major resource extraction was owned by outside individuals or groups. Thus, power rests outside the region where problems occurred. ASPI joined a project to help determine the health of our regional forests, which were threatened by mismanagement and unsustainable development practices; our group joined forces with Professors Orie Loucks of the Biology Department of Miami University and Paul Kalisz of the Forestry School of the University of Kentucky to assess and document the condition of Central Appalachian forests. These woodlands are part of the *Mixed Mesophytic Forest* -- the oldest and most varied temperate forest in the world.

On the 150 or so wooded acres at our ASPI nature center, Kalisz identified and tagged about one hundred varieties of trees and woody plants, not including the American chestnut that died out in the early part of the twentieth through a blight (in fact, ASPI planted two blight-resistant American chestnuts on the grounds and these are now bearing fruit). Our teamwork included doing forest management projects on our own property and furnishing personnel to lay out specific regional plots in Kentucky to be monitored for

accumulated damage. The difficulty was that the project would take decades to complete, but it was a start. Teamwork of academics and activists became an example for future earthhealing projects. ASPI sponsored a "Forest Commons" conference bringing together folks from the central Appalachian region to discuss these issues. Solving land and other environmental issues demanded a **WE**.

**Robin Hoods** are not WE, even with their own legitimate roles to play. Individuals may see problems clearly but it takes more than social vigilantes to effect healing of our troubled Earth. At times, certain prophetic individuals see the need more clearly, but they can only do so much. Followers do not arise automatically and this is the dilemma for the potential agent of change. He or she may be moved to act secretly or through civil disobedience when moved by the Spirit, rather than by a pure form of altruism (land a plane with petitions on the DC Mall). Lone rangers can be fooled about their own abilities to convey the urgency they sense within. These need support and advice from like-minded individuals; they crave encouragement when misunderstood, ostracized or branded as terrorists or leftists. Prophetic folks are often ahead of their time and, along with whistle blowers, risk being misinterpreted.

We were discovering that teamwork must arise; but this is easier said than done. Prophetic voices fall on deaf ears and remain a challenge. Mutual discernment has never had a strong following in independent-minded Appalachia. Problem-solving is far more challenging than problem-alerting. Teamwork with a democratic spirit confronts naysayers who see weaknesses of singular change agents. Effective working teams can both encourage individual agents of change and also offer self-corrective strategies. Fund raising, public media attention, and sharing efforts in critical times take teamwork and we were finding this out in the 1990s. But groups were teaming up: cooperative banks and savings unions, wilderness protection, housing projects, and environmental groups along with earlier labor unions.

### c) Knowing Weaknesses of the Capitalistic System

*No one can be the slave of two masters: he will either hate the first and love the second, or treat the first with respect and the second with scorn. You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.* (Matthew 6:24)

My growing distance from mainstay environmentalists who worked easily with the Reagan/Bush forces lengthened in this decade. The status quo seekers seemed to abandon pure public interest ideals of the first Earth Day and came closer to the System movers and shakers. Some "environmentalists" abandoned the anti-nuke stance of the previous decade by kowtowing to the System. These pioneered *Green Capitalism* that considered it possible to create their own green/industry win-win situation in which business would thrive and environmentalists would live "high on the hog." All

the while the scientific evidence for climate change was being documented and becoming a problem area demanding a fresh critique of the System.

Basically, *greenwashing* involves painting over an environmentally-costly product or practice with a thin layer of ecological greenery, so as to appear to be political correct and acceptable to the general public. To me, *pretending* to solve problems is a problem in a materialistic society bent on fiction (as mentioned in Chapter Two). It includes a variety of practices: gambling, unhealthy dietary practices, cosmetics, credit cards, and inflated CVs. Yes, pro-business individuals could advocate gimmicks to save resources on the short term, but if citizens are worth their salt they must be committed to the long term, which demands sustainable practices in the fullest definition. By pretending to be conservationists through popular recycling practices, many gave lip service to little things only.

In the 1990s, overconsumption continued even though some forms of energy efficiency were being accepted, especially among a new generation of electrical appliances. Urgency demanded meaningful priorities in teamwork, since no single simple-living person could change this needy world by him- or herself. Enlightened self-interest began to emerge as a questionable philosophy of the greenwashing groups. Granted, simple individuals working in the public interest had a power through example --but it became evident that this was not enough; united with others they could multiply their power manyfold. Individual power was recognized by a changing Chinese autocratic regime that did not mind when an individual spoke in his or her own self-interest even in a dramatic fashion; however, the Chinese dared not use "we," for public interest and cooperative efforts were anathema and threatening.

I refrained from speaking publicly of my growing concern that the close of the Cold War would open the flood gates to affluent overconsumption in the Western fashion among developing or "Third World" countries. The hopes of changing our consumer culture in the 1980s had not materialized, for America consumed more cars and energy demands continued to grow. Planned auto obsolescence or raw consumer consumption of ever newer models had a far greater carbon footprint than energy efficiency of the moving vehicle, and yet this was ignored because auto-making jobs were involved. Only with trusted friends did I use the term "Godless Capitalism," though later distinguishing that the System was not godless, for it adored the god *money*. The classic Christian battle between good and evil was in play, and all wrapped into a patriotism for an unsustainable materialistic economy. I needed more of a background in economics.

What about sustainability? Global sustainability? The model is a naturally functioning environment where materials were used and recycled, then being returned to the system. Human beings could be sustainable if acting properly. I always dreamed of sustainable countries from youth on, and

regard this is as a key to lasting peace. However, if climate is truly affected as the scientific community is showing, then "Earthhealing" or "healing wounded Earth" means more than just trying to stop an illness, for it demands an entirely new treatment or socio-economy. Dreams of a new sustainable System are one devoid of fossil fuel and nuclear fuel use. The question was asked in the 1990s: Can we have a solely renewable energy economy? I constructed a map of Renewable America and refined it with solar and wind potential data from government and other studies.

East Germany was now united with West Germany and was an environmental mess; it used soft coal or lignite as a primary fuel source. The USSR was heavily committed to fossil fuels while renewables were popular only in hydroelectric parts of the world (along with Iceland's geothermal resources). Globalization was expanding but with a heavy fossil fuel component, and yet a vague hope of a renewable economy emerged.

My struggles with the System went back to college days when I did not want to be beholden to the chemical industry for a livelihood and conceived for the first time of a "public interest science" (see Chapter One). For me, Capitalism was allied with "mammon" (wealth as an object of worship and pursuit), and I was no more fond of it than of atheistic Soviet-style materialism. I kept my life-long anti-establishment views mostly to myself, but on rare occasions it broke through. Back in 1954 I defaced a pro-Joe-McCarthy college petition by scrawling in big letters "Adolf Hitler." In 1970, fellow Jesuit and respected economist Ted Purcell chaired a small economics think tank based at Georgetown University. He considered that he was doing me an immense favor upon my arrival in Washington, DC. He recommended with his influence that I join the board of an interfaith group monitoring corporate responsibility. I immediately declined saying, "Ted, you know I am not a Capitalist." He replied in shock that this may be grounds to report me to Jesuit superiors. My response as an old debater was "Go ahead." That response was knee jerk, for I could have learned economics mingling in that group.

My kinfolds were pro-business, as were most potential private donors. From a religious stance, I always regarded wealth as a hindrance to personal salvation, for Jesus says it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than a rich man to be saved. Wealth and Christianity never went together, and so to remove wealth from people becomes an evangelistic Christian duty. My ministry always advocated divesting the wealthy of possessions, either voluntarily or by some forceful means, so they could save their immortal souls. Furthermore, the Catholic Church for centuries was highly suspicious of Capitalism, and I still regard my stance as an authentic conservative religious position.

I have been in total agreement with Ralph Nader's critique of large

corporations, and for that reason my several groups never ever accepted grants from corporations or trade associations (I had to turn an offer down once dealing with recreational boat resource use). The only difference I had in respect to Nader's CSRL and our Washington-based CSPI funding policies was that I took specific governmental funds (National Science foundation, USEPA, and the U.S. Department of Energy), first for the *Technical Information Project* in DC and later our Kentucky-based ASPI. Both CSRL and CSPI to my knowledge never took any industry or corporate funding of any sort, nor any governmental funds.

**Maximization of profits** is at the heart of my dislike of Capitalism -- both social justice and environmental concerns are secondary at best for many businesses and then window dressing. Does "non-excessive" as opposed to moderate Capitalism even exist? Many investors get nervous when CEOs use money for social justice purposes, such as caring about jobless workers when they move plants to a distant place in this globalizing era. It is "their" investor money utilized to attain more money; abandoned workers have to find new work and that is their problem. For the capitalist workers are expected to compete in the race to the bottom (lowest pay possible per unit product), while the ruthless corporation is bent on stretching moral conduct to its legal limit. This brought me to the conclusion: why not **maximum** as well as minimum wages for all? The great majority of Americans believe in redistribution of wealth by targeting the rich, and polls over the past quarter century have all indicated this by Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting (FACT) in 2015.

Capitalism exists as an established religion that must be addressed by those who favor separation of church and state. Financial and banking experts are clergy; Wall Street is the cathedral; brokers are priests; constant market reports are prescribed prayers; credit ratings are membership cards; and questioning the system is heresy. The true "faithful" are those who listen with sacred awe to stock reports, respect the advice of priestly financial advisors, and use their own money with a tremendous sense of religiosity. Patriotism and gambling in venture investment go hand-in-hand.

**Green Capitalism is a sham.** In the 1990s environmentalists wedded to the System sought respectability and financial sources by becoming pro-business, supposedly creating win-win green business fictions. "Natural Capitalism" guru Paul Hawkins was realistic in saying, *Despite all the good work, we still face the sobering fact: if every company on the planet were to adopt the best environmental practices of the "leading" companies -- say, the Body Shop, Patagonia or 3M -- the world would still be moving toward degradation and collapse... Quite simply our business practices are destroying life on earth.*<sup>6</sup>

Richard Smith, in a comprehensive review of Green Capitalism,<sup>7</sup> brings up five weaknesses of this marriage between business and supposed green



practices. In essence, the problem is that environmental advocates working hand and hand with industry ignore the principle of maximization of profits, and whether through ignorance or oversight pretend to compromise with this inherently flawed System. The trouble with greens who played the game was either to deflate long-term environmental costs or to overly inflate substituted green practices as to resource saving. They forgot that maximizing profits and saving the planet are inherently at odds, for profits come from excluding total environmental costs. During this 1990s decade, **carbon tax** was really a non-starter in a tax resistant world. Economic growth leading to catastrophic eco-collapse was hardly ever considered.

**Green forest certification doesn't work.** The green market economy sought to allow timber to be extracted from the world's shrinking tropical and temperate forests through green management practices that were certified by neutral parties. Such certification sounded good on paper, but some of us were skeptical from the start, since the certifying groups would either take the harvester's word or have to mount an immense policing operation for which they had few resources. In theory a good idea, but in practice, it simply would allow polluters to continue and absolve them of wasteful practices through publicity showing a streak of System tweaking.

During our ERA days I received a call from a major church group and was asked whether I would join a budding Appalachian forest certification group. I had already heard that one of the people who gave us grief in our 1986-88 NACCE eco-ecumenical days (and who knew absolutely nothing about forestry) was planning to get into the green forest certification racket. When I enquired whether this fellow was involved and told he was, I immediately declined. The program withered, and certified wood products today do not halt shoppers with a taste for exotic wood products who are immersed in consumption-based affluence. Furthermore, rival certifiers have a habit of bidding down requirements to satisfy clientele, and so "certified" tropical wood has limited worth except to allow green-washed consumers to clear their consciences.

**Cap and Trade is another market scheme** that was a boondoggle from the start. Opponents talked about "buying indulgences" by Catholics and failed, through their religious bias, to understand that it was precisely a theological misunderstanding of a historic period in church history. Indulgences were granted for good works (it digressed into raising money for building St. Peter's in Rome under Pope Julius II), for remission of the added social effects AFTER a sin had been forgiven, and to repair the social consequences of what the sinner had done. In fact, restitution of forest lands by planting trees as a good will gesture could be a correct practice according to that ill-fated scheme of five centuries ago. Instead, cap-and-trade called for payment from those who exceeded an allowable limit or were performing "eco-sinning," if another plants a tree simultaneously. Thus, social damage

continued from a flawed system of passing social responsibility to others. Hypocrisy reigns!

Cap and trade is really a corporate version of the game of neutralizing one's carbon expenditure from fossil fuel.<sup>8</sup> "Carbon neutral" means canceling the bad effects of someone's personal greenhouse gas emissions, so that a particular personal activity does not ultimately harm the environment. For instance, one burns a bit of wood; that is negative, for carbon dioxide is released; then the person plants a tree that takes up carbon dioxide and that becomes a "carbon offset," namely something positive. The two add together and neutralize each other. Fair enough only if the tree lives and flourishes, and many do not.

Take another scenario: a poor Indian burns wood to make a meal, but she does not have time to plant a tree that day because it took eight hours to gather wood; totally negative. Another burns wood to have a cozy fireplace effect, also negative, but the affluent enjoying the fireplace pays someone to plant a tree. Absolved? The poor person may plant the tree and it may live, or as we observed in Haiti, many got eaten up by the goats. Today China is getting a fair chunk of carbon trading funds and yet it is the world's greatest GHG emitter. Why call this neutral? Offsetting with "neutral carbon" can become pure hypocrisy!

**Green Capitalism perpetrates disparity of wealth.** How can a billionaire call a destitute person his "brother"? This is perverse inequality (the 85 richest, reported Oxfam in 2014, have more money than the lower half of the human race). The income of the top 1% is 17.2% of total global income while the bottom 50% is 15.1%. Hidden tax havens hold, by a conservative estimate upward to 30 trillion dollars, but who knows how much? Such inequality leads to immense resentment by people who lack essentials or desire a better quality of life, or sense a fading of the American Dream or its equivalent. Differences in wealth are sustained by tax laws favoring those who propose and promote their special interest legislation. Quality of life issues are well-documented by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett<sup>9</sup> using graphs of different indices, including social ills associated with advanced societies. Areas with greatest inequality have more imprisonment, drugs, obesity and different forms of physical and mental illness.

A broader attack on inequality comes from popular French economist Thomas Piketty;<sup>10</sup> he argues that wealth concentrates because returns to capital are consistently higher than economic growth -- and he calls for a progressive wealth tax. This view has brought on the ire of status-quo seekers in the financial world,<sup>11</sup> who claim to "expose" doubtful statistics, discrepancies within the bounds of reasonable professional judgment and supposed errors. Why all this fury, which has not been settled as of this writing? Simply put, governmental taxes could initiate a redistribution of

wealth and, as stated before, the majority of American citizens is and has been for decades in favor of taxing the rich.

Governments exist for the good of society and its people, not for the special interests of the privileged or propertied. Even with high-sounding words, this fact was not fully appreciated even by our founding parents; at first only the propertied privileged could vote. Over time more of the people were able to participate, but still libertarian-types desire less government, provided what exists protects their narrow materialistic interests. For more socially-oriented citizens the Common Good is a broader concept, and benefit to all together is a benefit to the individuals within the group. Proper governments defend the commons, protect the quality of life for all, and permit limited private property holdings that are not excessive.

### First Weakness: **The System Causes Climate Change**

Some 98% of the world's climate scientists (over 2,000) affirm the results from 30,000 peer-reviewed papers; this is such a solid backing that rejection without extremely solid reasons would be a gross act of imprudence. Climate change is due to human actions and this is documented in many places over time: glaciers recede and a major ice sheet breaks loose from Antarctica, the size of the state of Rhode Island; permafrost is starting to melt in the Arctic regions which can trigger a change reaction with the release of immense quantities of the potent greenhouse gas methane; oceans warm and rise about four millimeters per year and some predict this rate to increase; coral reefs erode to the growing acidity of the oceans caused by dissolved carbon dioxide; wildlife habitats change far faster than land and sea animals can adapt; the hottest years in the past two centuries have occurred since 2000; global carbon dioxide levels exceeding 400 ppm have occurred for the first time in tens of thousands of years; and increased frequency of extreme weather events occur.

Temptation to media sensationalism has grown with speculation about global warming. What about a possible shutdown of the Gulf Stream? Currently the stream warms western and northern Europe by about 20 degrees over comparable latitudes in Canada. The *Thermohaline Circulation* pulls in warm salty tropical water and when this water cools it sinks and draws down colder Arctic water and brings in still more tropical water. Excess fresh water from the Greenland icecap could weaken the stream's saltiness, and this is happening. What will result?

When issues just mentioned arise, status quo tweekers divert minds by recent depression in fossil fuel prices due to cheaper extraction techniques such as "fracking," though replacement of coal by natural gas may not prove to be the answer, since leakage rates of potent greenhouse gas methane have not been fully determined. Carbon dioxide release rates are plateauing in

developed countries and may be heading for declines with the shift to energy efficiency and renewables.

## Second Weakness: The System Weakens Democratic Process

**Democracy** is a frail plant that needs vigilant and loving care. Furthermore, this ongoing **democratic process** involves civic participation in the workings of governance through voting, monitoring of elected officials, recall, signing letters and petitions, and serving on juries with peers. Again, in democratic lands citizens are privileged to participate and in some cases they have been willing to spill their blood to preserve cherished freedoms. However, these valuable liberties can be lost -- and in some cases this has been the case. Democracy is not guaranteed once gained.

**Plutocracy** occurs when certain individuals have amassed extraordinary amounts of wealth through some contrived forms of legitimacy that omits fair taxation; the privileged are then able to exert control over others through the choices made by these powerful individuals. If checks and balances disappear, the plutocrat gains control over the System and the media that seeks to justify it. Today, billionaires have become the modern day absolute nobility; the world has over a thousand and that number climbs not only in the U.S. but throughout the world, including China and Latin America. Their publicized largesse has hidden implications, and citizens who should help furnish controls over their power, rather fawn over them and help justify the System that permits their influence. In the political realm plutocrats can hasten the demise of the democratic process and, unfortunately, this is happening right now in America. The Koch brothers and their private industries worth \$115 billion (2015) and counting can buy an entire political party and more besides. Let's beware!

**Silence can be a political position.** Impending disaster calls for action. The catastrophe of threatening climate change stares us in the face and our window of activist opportunity is closing. This time is similar to the period of slavery's defense or abolition at the start of the Civil War in the mid-nineteenth century. We must fish or cut bait. Isn't NOW the time? Isn't **HERE** the place? Will **WE** speak up or be cowed into utter silence? Jeremiah the prophet of old exposes the grave conditions of his age. Stones speak; silence betrays cowardice. Time is short and the deniers, excusers and escapists are having a field day.

**Transparency** could break this powerful privileged class by exposing their wealth and the amounts being used to bend the System to their liking. Slowly public interest groups and even tax-hungry governments are challenging the hidden vaults and have begun pinpointing tax evaders. Only the tip of the iceberg has been revealed and the corporate types are fighting hard for their privileges. A Supreme Court that regards corporations as

persons is on an erroneous track leading to further damage to the democratic process. Currently the *Citizens United* case makes contributions opaque and constitutional changes necessary.

#### **d) Rising from Powerlessness to Spiritual Empowerment**

*A Christian who is not a revolutionary today is not a Christian.* Pope Francis

During this decade we realized that many are caught in the web of powerlessness and others who discover power in numbers find this limited due to existing barriers and hurdles arising when working together. Thus, the story of beneficial power and reoccurring powerlessness is a complex one demanding clarification. This is an attempt at that.

Bob Sears, a Jesuit theologian and president of the *Association of Christian Therapists*, has been a long-time member of my environmental support group. Over the years our discussions were directed to the emergence of personal and social growth in a world heavily plagued by a socially addictive consumer culture. We shared our profound dislike for the emerging Creation-centered spirituality people (Matthew Fox, Thomas Berry, and others). This was not so much because of what creation folks say, but because of what was lacking, namely a sense of redemption and resurrection.

Bob first proposed *A Resurrection-centered Spirituality* at the NACCE Conference in 1987. Our concerns during the early 1990s were to make creation a beginning environmental concern but by no means the last word. Much focus needs to go from the human mistakes of the past to the need for a re-creation, a development of a better world through faith nourished by the hand of God. We readily admit that we must go beyond a misleading "domination theory" (we have power over the natural world), resulting from a misinterpreted Biblical Genesis account and used by exploiters for centuries to justify their treatment of people and the Earth's resources. Bob speaks of maturing faith and movement to familial and higher levels of consciousness. He verifies this insight through his experience in counseling and therapy work, with its broader social and healing implications.

**Gradually we grow.** *My Down to Earth Spirituality*<sup>12</sup> complements the resurrection-centered approach and is a component part of healing our wounded Earth through a growth in consciousness in understanding the place of power in our lives. An authentic journey of faith includes a better understanding of our physical world, where we appreciate this unique environmental experience and how we use our hands, head and heart to renew our broken world. Agents of renewal accept the urgent responsibility to heal what has been broken. Theoretical knowledge alone is not sufficient; responsible healing or environmental action is part of the deeper emotional and whole-life service necessary for individual and social wellbeing of our wounded

world. Knowing in tandem with doing expands our growth of consciousness to imitate Jesus who *increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and men* (Luke 2:52) through the Lukan journey narrative; the Church has a similar journey as recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*.<sup>13</sup>

In the early 1990s Bob Sears and I co-authored a book combining his Resurrection-centered and my *Down to Earth* approach. The latest revised edition of this book *Earth Healing* (2011) is found on-line on the *Brassica Books* website.<sup>14</sup> In this work Bob stresses the process of growing in faith through five phases, and I coupled this with growth of environmental consciousness by understanding different powers at work in healing (solidarity creates equal healing partners and the poor have an essential role to play). In 1998, I received an insight while occupying the Marquette University Wade Chair involving spiritual empowerment through acceptance of powerlessness. We discover our limitations when seeking to save our wounded Earth by working collaboratively.

### **Moments of Spiritual Empowerment**

**Stage One** -- We recognize both power and powerlessness. We perceive **undifferentiated power** of earthquakes and waterfalls, of parental power, military and economic power, and the power of some people over others. While experiencing forms of power at work in our world, we discover the powerlessness of poverty, physical disabilities, economic and political barriers, or the phases of sickness and dying. **We must help poor people and wounded Earth.**

**Stage Two** -- We experience the immediate powerlessness involved in overcoming unjust powers and how we are imperfect in bringing about change through our individual efforts, no matter how urgent the cause. It takes time to gain the experience needed to perform meaningful change, for we are confronted by **elusive power**. No matter how pure our intentions, **we are imperfect agents of change when we seek to assist others.**

**Stage Three** -- Confronting our illusion of control over conditions brings us to perceive strong-handed methods being used as **exploitative power** to retain the status quo. Opposing this draws on broader citizen **collaborative power** found in numbers and shared goals of an emerging WE. While some cultures, even primitive ones, have a power to share well for survival, still many experience the price of excessive individualism. We are weakened by our selfish consumer culture and **we look to the poor to learn how to share with others.**

**Stage Four** -- We discover and identify through God's grace the mysterious power found in solidarity and collaboration with others under divine guidance. We call on a **Higher Power** to help us overcome our social

addictions through working together with others. When it comes to healing our Earth this involves a global dimension. **Acknowledging WE the poor, through God's grace we receive the gift of spiritual empowerment.**

**Stage Five** -- Agents of change see that authentic healing comes with acknowledging God at work with and within us. A longer term authentic healing can only be achieved when this divine power enters into our collaborative activities. **We are divinely called instruments in building a New Heaven and New Earth.**<sup>15</sup>

### **Stage One: Observe undifferentiated power and powerlessness**

*Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely.* (Lord Acton)

**I got my auto license, a ticket to power in the springtime of life. A modern auto driver has ten times the power, at his foot peddle, of a first-century Roman general with an immense team of horses. With age, I find that physical power is very misleading and can even get individuals and groups into trouble. We understand the ramifications of power, when privileged to drive the highways -- but we are powerless when the engine suddenly dies.**

**Power over another** can be exercised as a parent over a child or caregiver over many of the ill. It is more forcefully observed as the power of debtor over indebted and master over slave. To some degree it is the power of a coach, CEO, teacher, consultant, and in more subtle and hidden ways the social media designer. Sometimes this power is beneficial to the sluggish, and sometimes merciless and ruthless. Modern culture glorifies the powerful, relishes them, and attempts to canonize the. A culture tending to idolatry rejects religion or even the existence of the Evil One, for power rests for them in the individual, whether self or those others who are idolized.

Collaborative group efforts are belittled by authoritarian power brokers molding and intimidating the gullible and ignorant into states of powerlessness. The counterpart of the power of the Roman Empire on the *Hoi polloi* through bread and circuses are modern food stamps and TV programs. Plutocrats mimic state autocrats while pretending to permit citizen participation in monitoring power excess. Through media propaganda and exaggeration the democratic process erodes. Voting records in off-year elections show a tendency to non-involvement; thus, we are open to this plutocratic manipulation through lobbying and direct payment for candidacy promotion in the expensive mass media. Blindness comes through ignorance, distraction by consumer comforts, and confusion over what constitutes freedom versus license. Ecologically-related impoverishment arises through acts of desecration and pollution, damaged communities, threatened plants and animals, substance abuse and digressions such as terrorists activities.

The **first level** of response is one of observation and sensitivity to Earth, the HERE spoken of earlier. Rather than merely focusing on Earth's natural wealth, observers stand at a distance, for it takes spiritual energy to become quickly immersed at the scene. Observe the poor (Matthew 25) but don't come too close; pitch the poor some charity out of moral necessity, peer acceptance, basic environmental concern or tax credit. They need "us" because they are exploited and we cannot deny their presence.

**Powerlessness** is deeply felt by millions of those lacking food or water security, by the unemployed, and by those facing discrimination of various forms. They are the ones deprived of an enclosed commons and do not know how to overcome this condition. Here the forthright must speak out. St. Ambrose says, *The Earth belongs to all, not to the rich*, quoted by Blessed Paul VI in the encyclical "*On the Development of the Peoples*," in 1967 and reiterated more forcefully by recent popes (Benedict and Francis).

### **Stage Two: Meet the poor**

*In protecting the rights of private individuals, special consideration must be given to the weak and the poor. (Leo XIII, Rerum Novarum)*

After observing and experiencing the effects of powerlessness on the part of our population we move to a deeper level of social interaction. Here sensitive people are willing to come among the poor at a **deeper level** of solidarity; these compassionate ones lose part of the distance and even find saying "we" could include these others who are brothers and sisters. At this level, the poor are those in need of essentials for life, and we the generous and altruistic ones attempt to close the gap that separates us. Often we only gradually realize that this movement is imperfect, for it is simply tweaking an imperfect system that causes the impoverishment. On this level, unsustainability is never fully addressed, but attempts are launched due to urgency of need.

**Models of progress** are introduced based on past efforts and current resources. Our ASPI efforts at a model environmental appropriate technology center really fit on this level. Without admitting this we considered our efforts as above those of neighbors still caught in the webs of poverty. The same could be said of the ERAs, which meant extending our experiences and insights to others still caught in the confusion associated with lack of planning how to use existing resources.

Another model is **community service** by groups regarding themselves as different and yet wanting to come closer through offering themselves and their services for betterment of communities. This may be done as a form of retribution to society by offenders of minor or moderate crimes. When the



service is something undertaken as teams, far more benefit can result, for there is learning through awareness of damage through crime having a profound social dimension.

This is also a form of educational experience for high schoolers and collegians in recent years. Many institutions recommend or require **immersion experiences** and **service-oriented** projects. Such programs can be partly self-serving for academic records and help promote the schools' social justice record; they can enhance student's CVs and spice chances for future advancement. However, the experiences can teach students collaborative work efforts at a preliminary level. In the 1990s, ASPI sponsored immersion experiences in shorter- (up to a week) and longer-term (a summer or a semester) work periods. Reflection before, during and after the experience became valuable moments. However, this takes effort by host groups.

**Powerlessness** is experienced on this level by those seeking to help others when those performing the service fail to effect the change desired; services produce only limited results. This occurs among service activities by caregivers, among organizers or among volunteers in immersion experiences. Rational argumentation falls on deaf ears for we battle powerful allurements that crystallize a materialistic self-seeking culture. Change in a consumer-addicted culture is not easy and mere model programs or rational persuasion is not sufficient.

In 404 A.D. the monk St. Telemachus came down into the combat area of a stadium (most likely the Roman Coliseum) and attempted to stop the gladiator fight; this irritated the pagan crowd enough to stone him to death (by one account) and led to his martyrdom by a gladiator in another account; however, it brought to a halt a traditional form of insensitive entertainment. What appeared to be a futile gesture on the part of one actually changed an entire centuries' old practice.

### **Stage Three: Become Poor through Solidarity**

*During the darkest periods of history, quite often a small number of men and women scattered throughout the world have been able to reverse the course of historical evolution. This was only possible because they hoped beyond all hope.*  
(Br. Roger of Taize)

A **third level** of experience is the demand to work in small groups in a more permanent fashion so that power comes in numbers and participants are reinforced through criticism and positive interaction. At this stage collaborators identify with the poor and cease being "them" and "us" and instead create an identity that can say in all honesty "WE the poor." It is the recognition when Damien de Veuster, "apostle of lepers" realizes that he also

has contracted leprosy. Seeing the poor and answering through offering service among them still has distance that must be narrowed so that compassion can be most deeply felt. In many cases this is done by giving away everything (St. Francis) as voluntary poverty. Distance disappears and identity is now shared with the poor.

**Community organizing** went a step further for it seeks to empower the poor and powerless. The principle is that power resides with people and by triggering response from them the conditions can be improved. Undoubtedly, community and political organizing in the Saul Alinski model have been successful to a degree. President Obama used these methods for political victory in 2008 and 2012. Empowerment comes to the disorganized when perceiving power in organized numbers in secular affairs.

**Petitioning** legislators about certain issues on [Move-on.org](http://Move-on.org) is community organizing at a national level, a nod towards participatory democracy. Internet-transmitted petitions gathered in large numbers and delivered to decision-makers seek to present citizen power to legislators. However, many go unnoticed because these legislators are beholden to wealthy interest groups. When organizing fails to get good results and petitions are ignored, a form of powerlessness can emerge within the context of group collaboration and really comes from high expectations.

Another form of powerlessness is closely akin to Theresa of Lisieux's "Little Way": *To be little means recognizing one's nothingness, expecting everything from the good God, as a little child expects everything from its Father.*<sup>16</sup> Really this is a radical spiritual openness that does not mean a form of quietism, but one of giving everything that one is able, though recognizing the limits of what can be given without God's help. It is an act of becoming poor in spirit before the Almighty -- a surrender of the individual self to God so as to be of service to others.

Granted, this understanding of powerlessness and spiritual empowerment needs further distinction in the light of activists seeking to heal our troubled Earth and going far beyond the actions of little children or prayerful hermits. It is our duty to raise our brothers and sisters from destitution and give a basic quality of life for all in some form of solidarity and a process of distribution.<sup>17</sup> A deepening compassion is drawing the sensitive to a closer association with those who lack essentials. In this way, we recognize that we are part of a greater community of need.

Those who are sensitive about threats to plants, animals, and Earth herself seek to enter this deeper **third level** of eco-awareness. We must become "Poor in Spirit" and acknowledge our basic impoverishment as being tainted by a individualistic consumer culture. America's heavy emphasis on individualistic achievement is part of what Roberto Unger calls the American

Religion of Possibility.<sup>18</sup> In the depths of anguish I discover God's grace, not my own inserting of God into my life -- for that is a power play. God is already HERE and NOW and invites us to be as well. At this fundamental moment of new-found divine power the "I" seeks to become a "WE" who must be willing to confront powerlessness as humans working together. Groups can be tempted to see empowerment by tasting the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil and thus teams, an emerging WE, arrived at nuclear power, military might and consumer comforts. We look out for teachers to assist us.

A sense of a moving WE is similar to the so-called Durkheim effervescence of a crowd's interior dynamics. Hindus at the world's largest religious event *Maha Kumbh Mela* talk about health benefits from the effect of a crowd's shared identity. Nick Hopkins of the University of Dundee says one thinks in terms of "we" rather than "I" and alters a relationship with other people. This is a fundamental shift from seeing people as other, to seeing them as intimate. Support is given and received, competition turns into cooperation, and people realize their goals in ways different than from acting alone.<sup>19</sup> Do Hindu pilgrims teach us something?

We do not have the power to lift ourselves by our boot straps and that was the basic message of authentic prophets. Likewise, these prophets of old exposed the presence of false imitators in their midst.<sup>20</sup> Those who practice **Prosperity religion**, even with traditional denominational labels, ignore the false power of wealth that can captivate them and turn them into court chaplains of the privileged.

#### **Stage Four: Need for Spiritual Empowerment**

*It is about Jesus Christ our Lord who, in the order of the spirit, the spirit of holiness that was in him, was proclaimed Son of God in all his power through his resurrection from the dead.*  
(Romans 1:4)

**Spiritual empowerment** begins with an experience of individual or socially addictive powerlessness. Often when communities are damaged and social capital erodes, then more subtle forms of social impoverishment occur. At such a stage affluence erodes a social structure and disillusionment sets in; however, through God-given openness this can become a moment of grace. Yes, we certainly cannot pull ourselves out of the mud by our bootstraps; we need the help of God in whom we trust. Calling out for divine help (a grace) is the start of spiritual empowerment. Various opportunities arise when individuals or groups sense how deeply entangled we are in material things that morph from wants to needs (various electronic devices are prime 21st century examples).

**Social addiction** was emerging as a key issue in our efforts to respond to the System's pervasive power. Our efforts as emerging in Stage Three can

work in short-term projects, but inherent weaknesses of the culture stymie broad-based efforts (see *Reclaiming the Commons*). In this issue of change those in privileged position are bent on closing out any form of violent change by use of police or military might; they espouse a trickle-down theory that all the poor must be patient, for wealth will ultimately come their way. Desperation results, but we hear that the lowly will rise -- a true manifestation of profound change through hope in a future. Every effort is made to suppress revolt at the grassroots. Here the believers in social justice become yeast for the rising of the dough. It must be non-violent and that can become a challenge.

History shows countless military exploits taken for fame or fortune: Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Napoleon or Hitler. Most were costly in lives. Recall the millions who died in internal unrest in the Soviet era after 1917 and the Chinese Communist revolutions in the mid-twentieth century. Raw physical power can be at work accompanied by mixed **spiritual motives**: the Crusades, the Moslem conquests, even ISIS. Should we go down fighting like the Byzantine Emperor on the walls of Constantinople in 1453, defending his vanishing Empire? Too many conflicts have a spiritual veneer in a downward spiral to violence.

**A Higher Power is our only recourse.** Non-violence in the midst of a people weakened by social addiction then moves to only one viable option, as those who are tackling individual substance abuse are aware: we must have recourse to a Higher Power. Human togetherness can only go so far, and the conditions of social dysfunction makes purely human recourse (no matter how much secular social justice advocates object) flawed. Through the consumer culture we are impoverished and there is no purely secular answer. This deepest level of powerlessness must surface, and as socially addicted we turn for help outside of our familiar settings. Only in God do we trust!

### **Stage Five: Recognizing Deep Power**

*We are only the earthenware jars that hold this treasure, to make it clear that such an overwhelming power comes from God and not from us.*

(II Corinthians 4:7)

**Deep power** involves collaborative empowerment of the "lowly," who seek to move beyond acquiring basic needs. In God we trust to remove class distinctions that hold back our work and to create a new System. This empowers the lowly to take what is rightly the commons as a sharing community and not as possessive individuals. This involves the act of reclaiming the commons belonging to all collectively and not to wait for others to relinquish their ill-retained goods. Deep power recognizes the importance of the human dimension as part of the divine re-creative act of healing our wounded Earth. Deep power rests with the Lord's Resurrection. This deep

power is not hopelessly anthropocentric, for spiritual empowerment through Baptism makes this a human/divine effort.

Believers do not have to await all to reach a perfect level of awareness, for our time is limited. As agents of change the believer must infiltrate and catalyze a multitude who in confusion hopes for the same end. Only when some believers are able to sacrifice for the entire people can we initiate the process of saving our Earth as agents of change. The inspired can trigger the power of spiritual transformation that can overcome the socially addictive taint of our culture. The basic power source is Divine and we are sharers through our role of sacrificing servants for all creation. We must go beyond seeing, helping, and being part-time companions; we discover that WE are the poor before the Almighty. As servants we do rank, yes, rank as servants of the creatures of our planet.

**Note:** Let's not confuse *deep power* with *deep ecology*, a term coined in 1972 by Arne Naess, who rejected the idea that beings can be ranked according to their relative value. He regarded the right of all forms of life to live as a universal right, which cannot be quantified; no single species of living being has more of this particular right to live and unfold than any other.<sup>21</sup>

A whimsical Lord manifests power through the powerless. We find this in the humble coming of the Messiah and his manner of teaching, healing and acting as a suffering servant. Scripture leads us to find a God with a preferential option for the poor -- Abraham, Israelite slaves in Egypt, captives in Babylon, Mary, Christ. If our own calling is to follow Christ, we resist the temptation to focus on perceived power elites who falsely promise trickle down resources for the impoverished -- and have no intention to deliver. The time is now and limited.

Spiritual empowerment is utterly gratuitous, for God works through humble souls. This is the pico-second of regeneration, the instant when the dynamics of empowered human activity remodel the first instant of the world's creation. God fashions healers into a New Creation, agents of change, who forsake false allurements. Those in this position are a small group of believers who are to transform and restore Earth. All natural catalysts start from a minute and critical point; they spread their effects far and wide and eventually lead to an immense change. Such effects are what are anticipated in the rising of the poor; it takes a spiritually-empowered cadre to ignite the world to the second Big Bang.

From the previous four moments we conclude: that something must be done to address poverty and save our Earth, for these are critical times for all living creatures; that, if healing is to occur, the present world order of haves and have-nots cannot continue; that the goal is to reach a general global condition of equalization so that the basic rights to all life are respected by

sharing essential needs from the vast surpluses; and that this must be done through the general participation of all in healing our wounded Earth.

We return to our sense of wonder experienced on hearing the Big Bang - at least its faint echo. We experience our humble place, our unworthiness, our limitations, and our dependence on God. The New Creation is radically different, not a public physical blast, but quite often a mysterious whisper confided to believers. We know this event is greater than the Big Bang, for it includes the suffering and death of the Almighty One, and in a chosen way we suffer and die with him. Power is now manifested! Power is in us but not because of us. Messianic power revealed through suffering servanthood is not militaristic even though tempting for Christ himself.

Forceful imposition of a new System also seems tempting, but there must be freedom involved for participants though to a limited degree. Earth healers must not do as some believers in the past and retreat from political involvement. Non-violent but still political action is a learned process, apparent from actions of Jesus and also Francis of Assisi and others; it needs to imitate the revolts against Britain's salt taxes by Mohandas K. Gandhi and his followers after the First World War. This includes the bus strikes led by Martin Luther King in Alabama; and the challenges to South African Apartheid by Nelson Mandela.

All the while we can recognize our limitations, constraints and dependence on the Spirit directing us. We discern proper sources of support by avoiding funds from contaminated sources and power elites; we refrain from any activity that might cause physical or mental harm to those identified as the oppressive class; we extend the area of non-violence to include animal and plant welfare as well.

Mary's prayer (Luke 1:46-55) is our prayer too: the lowly will be exalted; those in high places will be brought low. Expecting a simultaneous free act on the part of the low and high is wishful thinking. The lowly must take what rightfully belongs to all and not to a few privileged who seek material profits and become the new privileged oppressors. The gentleness that characterized the Violet Revolution in the Czech Republic at the time of the Soviet Union's collapse is a model of what could be done ecologically.

All things considered, authentic revolution must occur. Concentrated wealth is seldom surrendered without a struggle, and yet the clock is running. Responsibility rests with the lowly who seek equality and the removal of class distinctions. WE seek to be identified with the poor as primary agents of change. The Magnificat verses are a prayer, a hope that God's power will be manifested through properly acting human agents who realize their lowliness before the Almighty. This involves more than a manifestation of gratitude for gifts; it is the thanks that being so lowly we are still called to be part of the

divine process.

Actually, when viewing history as gradual process, we realize that changes showing that the poor can and do rise to levels of democratic participation have been occurring at a steady pace. Democratic process takes time and has had its ups and downs. Calls for conversion and deepening levels of change ring out throughout the world, and thus the focus turns more to how than to exactly when, though we are always aware of the urgency of addressing pollution effects, food insecurity, and climate change.

**The challenge** is to guide the movement from grassroots upward. We must insist that the poor take what is theirs because it is part of the commons for all. The primary challenge is for the possessors to relinquish what really does not belong to them. A surrender of ill-gotten goods is always needed for forgiveness, but it is more perfect as a free surrender. The ideal is to take non-violently and to give up freely and without regret. Mere declaration of redistribution is not accomplished deed; the Declaration of Independence began, but was not the entire American Revolution. Curbing superabundant consumption is one component; the rising of the poor from destitution is a second challenge. We cannot wait on over-consuming addicts to freely change their ways.

**Redistribution** is a precondition for authentic healing, but precisely how this occurs is somewhat hidden: voluntarily by somewhat addicted people? Through coercive measures such as taxes and regulation? Through natural disasters? Through violent struggle? Through a profound and fundamentally revolutionary spiritual change by both the wealthy and the poor? By an escalated system of environmental actions initiated by agents of change and without waiting for the privileged to say "yes?" *The Contrasumers* speaks of a rising gradation of environmental actions running from education, demonstration, research, citizen organizing, nonviolent passive resistance, guerrilla theater, and ecotage. At times higher levels of activity are demanded.

e) **Professing that WE are Poor**

*I have come to bring fire to the Earth, and how  
I wish it were blazing already! (Luke 12:49)*

**During the Clinton Administration years ASPI received a U.S. EPA grant to conduct half-hour TV interviews with fifty agents of environmental change in Appalachia; these along with dozens of unfunded ones we performed were aired on Station WOBZ in London, Kentucky. By listening to these movers and shakers our program team learned about the treasure of human resources in our poor Appalachian region. By befriending and recognizing their talent we**

**gave encouragement to often isolated agents of change. In turn, by listening to and recording their messages we gained confidence that change agents can trigger catalytic involvement by local people who can be empowered to act -- with God's grace.**

We discovered in these interviews that we really are poor as a region, as isolated individuals and through some power on our part to bring about immense change. We may have power through working together, but the change demands are so massive that our limited resources constantly stares us in the face. Perhaps reality was starting to set in as we prepared for the turn of the century. **Our solidarity rests in becoming poor with the poor.** We can now acutely experience in compassion, for now we become a WE suffering together.

**WE can act as one.** Electronic media, especially TV and through the Internet awakens the desire to reach out and communicate hopes and desires to people who would otherwise be thought of as too marginalized and unable to effect profound change. In fact, the mentality that others need our service overlooks the more important fact that they (along with us who regard ourselves as poor) are the ones to lead the radical change. WE are the ones who do not stand back but are an integral part in the healing process. WE need not be fooled into awaiting the privileged to make the first move; rather, WE the poor must take matters into our own hands. WE can do it! Through social media the scattered who desire change find fellow aspiring agents of change. "WE are people in solidarity!"

**Awaken the involuntarily poor.** One billion people live below the poverty level on less than \$2 per person per day; a second billion lack quality health, lodging, nutrition, education and/or potable water. The physically poor who are oppressed include the racially segregated, religiously persecuted, those lacking freedom of speech or mobility, or lack work opportunities for proper livelihood by those desiring to hold a meaningful job. The spiritually poor are those who suffer or make a responsible effort to enter into solidarity with all the poor. Each realizes that sharing brings a potential for doing mighty works. Gathering together creates its own magnetism and that grows when we see how close we are in our yearning for oneness.

Challenging the privileged is rare among our imperfect national leaders and yet occurs. One example is Andrew Jackson's action in vetoing the rechartering of the Bank of the United States; his biographer Robert Remini calls the message of this tornado-like veto almost a call to class warfare and says that "Certainly nothing like it has ever come from a President before -- or ever would again."

*It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their selfish purposes. Distinctions in society will always exist*



*under every just government ... every man is equally entitled to protection by law; but when the laws undertake to add to these natural and just advantages artificial distinctions to grant titles, gratuities, and exclusive privileges, to make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society - the farmers, mechanics, and laborers -- who have neither the time nor the means of securing like favors to themselves, have a right to complain of the injustice of their government...* Andrew Jackson Message at veto of Bank bill July 10, 1832.<sup>22</sup>

**The third level of eco-awareness** is where WE as poor experience our inabilities, addictions, and lack of power, whether individually or within communities. We likewise recognize at the same time that we must do something about this condition, and that in working together we can achieve success. Now with the sense of urgency growing upon us, especially from threatened climate change and erosion of democratic process, we approach our involvement by knowing that misused power is not to be tolerated. We have a growing awareness that working with others we can and must overcome the poverty that we experience in solidarity with others. Christians anticipate a hidden power in the Easter Mystery, see that our collective poverty can be overcome, and move to a new System capable of addressing current issues.

By working together, power is possible if WE act together and yet recognize our own imperfections and how they can become stumbling blocks on the road to spiritual empowerment. The cause is not hopeless, for death is followed by new life in a spiritual revolution in our midst if we recognize the hope found in Easter's mystery. The grounds are now set for change, though it is not so clear what exact path will be undertaken to achieve the hopeful results. In fact, the process of **Deep Power** involves engaging in the process of change. WE confess our inadequacies and our determination to pursue liberation together in an act ready to break loose. WE cannot do this without the divine/human cooperation, the incarnation event coming to fulfillment.

The new century opened before us; the problems we faced in 2000 were greater than the ones on Earth Day, for we had experienced a sense of powerlessness, especially in dealing with the hard knocks of imperfections and addictiveness that held us back from authentic collaborative endeavors. We were in need of a Higher Power. We reaffirmed: In God we trust!

## Chapter Five: Comprehending an Emerging World Order (2000's)

*Teach us to count how few days we have and so  
gain wisdom of heart. (Psalm 90:12)*

We approached the year 2000 with great expectations, for we thought

grand-scale reflections and that now was the century for action. I was preparing to retire from ASPI administrative work during 2002, exactly at the end of a quarter century tenure as director. Turning the work over to younger folks meant selecting a successor. This involved switching from my unsalaried position to providing a moderate income. I sought and obtained a grant to cover the first year of the new director's salary. In fact, much of my last year or so involved establishing more cushion than at any other time in my 32-year history of fund-raising, that most despised portion of my public interest work. Freedom from administration would allow me to develop a series of "Daily Reflections" on the Internet, along with some anticipated books. My waning energy was noticeable, and so conserving my shortening time span became a new goal. Besides, I was convinced that older people should not be administrators, for it takes a balancing act of meeting staff and donor expectations that was becoming harder to enjoy with a smile.

**A goal of the new century** was to confirm my deepest desire that the poor would rise within the process of healing our wounded Earth. This insight, found in basic format in Mary's Magnificat,<sup>1</sup> emerged with ever greater force when meeting more of those seeking to improve our impoverished central Appalachian region. Why expect the trickle down of wealthy largesse when it most likely would never come and is part of the American game of pretending? Take what is rightly ours and do this non-violently through spiritual empowerment -- a concept whose content was emerging.<sup>2</sup> Empower the poor to be instrumental in changing the world.

The initial insight of doing this minus a cushion of money came from my acquaintance with the work of Becky and Bobby Simpson (who was blind through a work disability) at Crank's Creek Survival Center in Harlan County, Kentucky. They sponsored general repair of hundreds of dwellings each year in Harlan County and neighboring Virginia through mustering support of volunteers from churches and colleges -- and they did this while living on a single disability check. In serving on their board, I realized that the poor can rise and take leadership roles equal to or better than affluent agents of change.

**Indian Summer shines.** God gives good health and limited time, and so one must "make hay while the sun shines" and "strike while the iron is hot." Why not recruit agents of change from among the poor? In looking around after my directorship resignation (at the suggestion of my provincial Dick Baumann), I visited West Virginia Jesuit University and could have certainly done some good academic or even administrative work there in my late sixties, but I was drawn to be still closer to the poor. Furthermore, Central Appalachia, with its many poverty problems is terribly short of pastoral personnel. By sheer need I was drawn to continue in needy parishes in eastern Kentucky.

**Pastoral work involves juggling.** Folks may not be drawn to pastoral

non-academic work for the needy (celebrating the Liturgy, anointing the sick, hearing confessions, etc.). However, this is more than personally rewarding on a spiritual plane; it is life-giving in a global sense, for it allows all who participate fully to enter into solidarity with the world's poor. Should I be an aloof researcher and teacher, or should I be called to taste impoverishment all the more?

I was fortunate after beginning my 2002 sabbatical to hear of an instant parish need arising at Somerset, Kentucky and to fill in as a temporary replacement; I volunteered for about seven months until June 2003 -- and then resumed my sabbatical. Then in autumn of this second attempt, another instance arose to fill a 1000-family parish at Frankfort, Kentucky, lasting from October, 2003 to July 2004. My only stipulation in both cases was that I spend half time in my public interest research efforts -- and not go to unnecessary meetings. This honored stipulation has endured to the time of this writing and I am eternally grateful, for I find many meetings quite draining, especially as my hearing deteriorated.

### **a) Feeling Effects of Social Addiction**

A problem arose early in my public interest career: What if the consumer culture is so mesmerizing that rational approaches have little meaning? What if all of us are pretending to do good, while really a state of paralysis has set in due to the addictive System in which we are immersed? When I was drafting this section, the highly popular American musician and environmentalist Pete Seeger passed away at 94 years. He was one of our early CSPI advisors. As mentioned in the introduction, I sent him a copy of "The Lifestyle Index" that appeared in *The Contrasumers*, and he said bluntly that he did not like the rational approach. In essence, he considered this beyond what ordinary people could do in changing their lives. He had a highly successful musical approach, way beyond my talents. Purely rational approaches were not his cup of tea, and perhaps not mine as well. After so much academic training this was hard to see.

**Do Consumers change and how?** The world seemed mesmerized by the modern consumer culture with its inherent enticement for many, if not most. The mindset involves keeping up with peers and neighbors, and that takes time, energy, and capital maintaining an bloated comfort zone that constantly fails to satisfy. Few want to face the fact known to philosophers and religious thinkers for millennia: don't count on insatiable material things to satisfy. It is a simple lesson, but few in our culture listen. Yes, Francis of Assisi and others break loose, but the multitude is chained. The quest for Christmas tree gifts is a year-round (and lifetime) pursuit: it starts early in life, and becomes an addictive quest for more and more. The economic health of nations and world is based on this quest and thus the condition is *socially* addictive.

**New century hopes bloomed amid shadows.** The United Nations set forth general goals for tackling major poverty and health problems in the first decades of the new century. The Cold War had ended and a military dividend could have been redirected to underlying causes of insecurity, at least that was the expectations of many. Consumer culture was becoming globalized as Asian, African, and Latin American economies expanded, and their millions of hungry folks wanted the showroom items that the affluent could afford. Global materialism was ready to bloom, except that forces emerged to scuttle these: Islamist radical terrorists discovered that well-placed monkey wrenches can play havoc with complex and sophisticated communications and transportation systems; China and other emerging nations were tinkering with global Capitalism in non-democratic ways; globalization enhanced the wealthy class; fossil fuels were in high demand; and migration and urbanization increased at unprecedented rates. And then there was the critical mass of discontented un- or underemployed youth.

**The 9-11 (2001) episode** dulled our shallow optimism. Well-planned acts of terror aimed at the U.S. by al-Qaeda disrupted the world on that single fatal September day in 2001. These attacks struck squarely at the commercial (New York Twin Towers) and political (Pentagon) symbols of the most powerful nation on Earth. In a few hours, America was thrown into a hidden war and responded to growing materialistic insecurity through use of its powerful military force. First came the Afghanistan military action lasting over a dozen years, and then the unfortunate Bush adventure into Iraq (second Gulf War) and its insoluble religious conflicts triggered by possible but never found weapons of mass destruction; this occurred within a Middle East quagmire of near perpetual cultural and religious tensions.

A long series of conflicts directed against al-Qaeda in Afghanistan and Iraq ensued with a three-quarters-of-a-trillion-dollar price tag, along with thousands of dead on every side. This war of attrition sapped American and Allied optimism and drained the idealism of those engaged in the conflict. Homeland security became the order of the day, along with forms of surveillance that infringed upon privacy rights. Was there a pattern in terrorist madness? Middle East military involvement came in the middle of sectarian strife between Sunnis and Shiites, as well as civil conflicts in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Syria and extended into central Africa and elsewhere. Peace was elusive.

**Social addiction was recognized.** Presidents Jimmy Carter and George Bush talked about the addiction to oil; others mentioned drugs, both legal and illegal; and then Big Energy became drugged on fracked natural gas. But didn't our addiction(s) within the consumer culture go beyond these to include all forms of consumer goods? It is hard to face social addictions because it is like looking into the mirror and reflecting on our entire

*Weltanschauung* (individual or group worldview). What if answers are not found in think tanks and among learned elites, or even in expensive treatment centers and added individual relaxation practices? What if answers were not with those treating addiction, but with those who have suffered and are now on the road to recovery? What if answers are from among ex-addicts and recovering souls?

**Alcoholics Anonymous** (AA) participants are keenly aware that a major step in conquering addictions is to see that the answer cannot come from the addict him or herself, for addiction bears a forceful grip, a powerlessness to change. However, a spark of hope springs in an individual's awareness that he or she is helpless; perhaps another can help (a divine gift, a spiritual insight, a grace). The soul calls out in trouble and hears a faint whisper that there is a horizon. Reach in desperation to Another, a Higher Power, a believer's God. Addicts realize that they can not heal themselves by themselves; they congregate in order to address their personal addiction through public acknowledgment, social interaction, and group encouragement. The addict sees the need for outside help, both from among fellow addicts and in the search for spiritual growth.

Social addiction afflicts our society and in this decade deserved additional attention by speaking with ex-substance abuse addicts. Drug problems are more than individual or family ones; they affect us all and involves the WE. To say WE are party to the practice and in need of collective awareness is challenging, and in this moment of truth strikes at our very souls. Those "others" who suffer substance abuse are not totally other, for all of us belong to a society that seems to have the common thread of overuse of consumer goods. Globalization penetrates into our collective souls and catches ever so many in the expanding web of consumer goods (perhaps four hundred million in China alone in this decade). Let's concede that some isolated primitives are still outside of the world web; for all intents globalization is rapidly turning the planet into a single culture desirous of autos, phones, types of food and drink, and other artifacts. Enticement itself is globalization -- and mammon smiles. The afflicted are cowed into silence, for to acknowledge our condition requires courage.

**Only a power outside the System can break the spell.** We strive to deny the condition, excuse ourselves or flee into favorite escapes. Has the model of Pope Francis, who first defines himself as a sinner in that famous 2013 interview, brought a message for all of us -- namely, our commonly shared addiction leads to our collective moment of truth and commonly shared acknowledgement of our affliction? We are tempted to believe that we are free to make consumer choices and are not addicted. In the depths of our common affliction we discover togetherness with co-sufferers in the world of consumer allurements. Experts profess their power to rise outside of the System, but do they fool themselves? Is this the allurements of the false prophet, "You can

follow me and climb beyond the web of addiction; pay me and I will show you the way?"

**Social forces can be tempting.** The bankruptcy of individuals lifting themselves by their bootstraps extends to that of addicted communities as well. A gang of drunks is not the paragon of sobriety. A community of homesteaders may become more abstemious and live conservationist lifestyles, but there are limits to what they can do for the larger society through escapist propensities. Autocrats have shown an ability to control societies for certain lengths of time through their forceful corralling of members. Tito held Yugoslavia together for a period, and so did Saddam in Iraq. Using force could break social addiction to consumer products. Ration consumer products! Imprison the overusers! Limit expenditures! If one cannot control himself or herself, why not **excuse** individual powerlessness and accept group power even at the sacrifice of individual freedom?

**Democratic culture is tempted to be permissive.** The affliction stands before us that requires acknowledgment, but the problem surfaces: How can our society preserve individual freedom to some degree and still treat the social affliction that paralyzes us as an individual phenomenon? At this point we are tempted to say: "I cannot handle this, for life is too short. Let everyone escape to do what they want, and forget about the consequences." In a globalized society, some take advantage through existing communication and transportation devices and take over a fluid financial situation. Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you will die. **Escape** to the world where some have great advantages and let it be so, for life will soon end.

**Overcoming temptation** is what this exercise is all about. Let's not **deny** the extent of this social addiction on the human race, or **excuse** ourselves from the consequences, or **escape** to other concerns. The good Spirit speaks within our heart of hearts: there is something more, for good overcomes evil -- and these temptations are from mammon. The illness called *Affluenza*<sup>3</sup> afflicts us all to some degree. Observe a post-Thanksgiving rush for bargains, those standing in line overnight for a new electronic device, and the purchase of over-the-counter medical drugs. Contagion grows; the consumer culture epidemic is global. Can we muster the courage to change? How much? Who? Everyone? Simultaneously or gradually over time? Partisan positions are part and parcel of the same malaise that afflicts us.

**Silence is not always golden.** A culture that professes freedom to do whatever one likes (if it doesn't affect others) fails to see the social nature of individual choices taken collectively. A massive number of similar bad choices mount up over time and become the ingredients of this consumer culture. Why should individual consumers challenge those who are judged to practice over-consumption? Who are to make such judgments? Is our silence due to not wanting to appear judgmental? Do citizens remain silent for fear of

disrupting the System and thus endangering its democratic underpinnings? Does not permissive silence spread the addiction? Something within the believer says to act, to call out, to find a greater community of beings who can assist with answers.

**Social reparation** acknowledges both our condition and the falsehood that we remain silent to let others do their individualistic practices provided they do not affect us. But injustice affects us all. If a billionaire takes from the commons, it is my (and more socially our) commons. I may choose to suffer injustice in silence if it is against ME; I cannot remain silent and save my soul if the injustice is against US. Excessive consumption (whether successfully defined or not) brings on the need for WE the people to act. Duty tells us that reparation must be made even after a person ceases the practice, for individual acts have consequences that go beyond change of individual hearts and forgiveness. A person who steals is expected to repay the damage, even if now resolved to be clean. A culture that steals from a future generation has need of reparation. We need not wait until all members are so inclined to be socially responsible; it is incumbent that believers take up their responsibility and act.

**Responsible citizens** stand up and confront the environmental damage done by excessive consumption. They do this by a variety of civic activities: letter-writing, petitioning, attending meetings. Prayer for change breaks the paralysis of social addiction. If every unjust act has a global detrimental effect, so does every just act have a beneficial effect. The act of prayer and cooperative sacrifice, when done through a faithful witness, has its own social effect. God hears all prayers and they never go unanswered, whether by the shut-in or prisoner, by young or old, or by the resting or person on the run.

### **b) Proclaiming "In God We Trust"**

*Not to share one's wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs.<sup>4</sup>*

St. John Chrysostom

In moving to revolution we confront the accumulated wealth of a privileged few and the docility experienced by the many. Some ask for a misplaced trust that the "trickle down theory" will work, while a growing condition of violent inequality cries to heaven for God's help in bringing about change. Emotion can cloud the mind and even bring panic for some. Our crisis offers choices of calculated and misdirected trust or cultivation of a distrust of mammon. God is trustful and so ought believers be in a prayerful manner.

*A social discernment of spirits* is needed at this critical hour. For the worldly, mammon calls to trust wealth and the wealthy, to be greedy and

selfish, to listen to merchants of doubt, and to seek prosperity religion. Spiritual forces are at work, some good and some evil. The relativism of our age allows each to do his or her own thing, and if someone is spiritual, that has a higher status than those groveling in material aspects of life. What if the prevailing System has its own spirit, which can be harmful? Now the struggle quickly devolves into a titanic battle of good and evil, of which proper choices demands prayerful discernment lest harmful ones prevail.

**Basic trust** is needed for survival. If you do not trust the other driver on the highway, you would cease driving out of fear. If you do not trust your local bank or credit union, you will be left without the opportunity to do ordinary financial transitions. If you do not trust the quality of food, you revert to patronizing only certain growers or grow your own produce. Our lives and our communications function through elaborate webs of trust, from infancy to old age. With time all of us discern our levels of trust to what and to whom. The child is taught not to trust strangers, but on the other hand is to trust parents and guardians. Believers extend trust to a Higher Power, a Divine Being, God.

**In God we trust.** This motto of the United States was not articulated at the founding, but occurred in the text of the *Star Spangled Banner* three decade later. Some may say that the motto became the glue that holds this nation together. Our founding parents had this trust in God as weak individuals and colonies struggling to break bonds with Mother England, the strongest sea power in the world. The motherland's basic democracy was really not disputed, only the heavy-handed rule of the reigning monarch. In the 1770s world of kings and queens with their various degrees of authoritarianism, our founders strived to mold a republic with few and scattered global friends -- and so trust in God was all the more imperative with a new government (though a few republics had and were existing). The motto remains popular, with recent polls showing that 87% of Americans want to keep the American motto "In God We Trust" on coins, paper money and public records, while about 13% would like to abolish it. Once I was invited to speak at a Unitarian service and was asked not to mention the "G" word. I replied, "Oh my God, what am I getting into?" Who else can give us trust but the Almighty?

**Reinforcing this motto** may be required. Amazingly, a founding episode is unfolding with a new breed of global citizens; these are beguiled today with a similar situation as with the founding of our republic. The struggle on global terms is to affirm or break with the prevailing mammon and with the disruptive wealthy nobility who have captured the System -- our state religion. We trust that a liberating force will overcome the quagmire of materialism just as a band of colonists waged a war of independence. The challenge is to break loose from the ecocidal addiction to our current consumer culture, and to discover pathways trod by individual ex-addicts with a trust in a



Higher Power. WE are part of the collective *anawim*, the oppressed, the neglected, the alienated, the powerless in society who must respond. With God's help, WE the poor can overcome materialistic oppression and experience an exodus through spiritual sharing with other like-minded people. This emerging community of activists reaches out to all for solidarity.

**Trust in unity, not uniformity.** Must all profess trust in a Higher Power through a process of uniformity? If it takes everyone, then non-believers who are contrarian can trump the consensus-building process of the believing WE; they can even seize autocratic control over the political agenda. Must remedial social action occur only when all affirm the same way of proceeding? Indeed, the prospect of uniformity appears virtually impossible. If uniformity is needed, the power of the secularist world would seemingly overwhelm that of the believer's. God works differently. Consensus in democratic action becomes a powerful bargaining chip, but unity among a core believing community and not uniformity becomes the goal; we can act even with some opposition and do so responsibly and effectively with trust that the wayward will join or at least not scuttle the entire project.

**Agents of change can be trustworthy.** With proper citizen oversight agents of change lead the way. Much depends on these knowing their individual and collective limits and showing a degree of humility befitting the task of healing a troubled Earth. Divine help is needed to overcome social addiction and that includes the added task of simultaneously working for our individual and social improvement. A precondition is a honest sense of powerlessness as to what can be done by acting alone. With God's help WE, when knowing our limits, discover the power to do godly deeds. *The Mighty one has done great things for me.* Authentic action respecting the rights of individual members grows through trust in the Almighty, a trust that overcomes selfishness and gives us the energy to reach lasting goals.

Trust in God grows among the poor. A basic hope is that the mighty multitude harbors an innate aspiration for a better life, and the critical point is whether that means for "me" or for "us" -- and just how broad is the "us?" From the 20th century independence movement in Africa (and partly through carving of boundaries of nations) tribal tensions devolve into severe degrees of infighting. The poor are not perfect and so broadening the "us" takes time to effect. America's inclusion took place gradually and first included the non-propertyed; then came Afro-American men, women, Native Americans, and younger citizens (that is about 98% more than those at the start). And of course there was Civil War.

Let's hope that our revolutionary aspirations can confront the status quo and be globalized by overcoming the allurements of mammon that hold us all back. Broadening the perspective demands encouragement from those with similar aspirations. WE become like children who trust parents and distrust

strangers; WE expand a national motto to a global one: **In God, healing comes to Earth.** We are incapable of doing this in a purely secular manner.

**Trust the poor to arise successfully.** Something deliberate must be forthcoming, a rising of those with common aspirations. Our trust must extend to bringing a new movement forward with success, provided agents of change are at the right place and time. In Roberto Unger's words: *It is the enhancement of the powers and the broadening of the opportunities enjoyed by ordinary men and women on the basis of piecemeal but cumulative reorganization of the state and the economy.* Even more important seems the shocking expression he uses, *Its watchword is not the humanization of society; it is the divinization of humanity.*<sup>5</sup> Believers in the family of God can find some challenge in talking about divinization of humanity -- a movement to godliness that is simple, loving, organized, and affirmed by Church Fathers within the authentic Christian tradition of entering the divine family at Baptism. But we cannot do this without divine assistance.

**Trust includes successfully sharing resources.** Greed or grabbing for oneself is destructive to society. On the other hand, benefits through sharing and collaborative endeavors mean improvement of quality of life. This improvement includes a growing solidarity, but is a goal inimical to the current System. Through a down-to-earth spirituality that is directed to empowering the poor, the divine presence becomes manifest in our empowered actions; the Israelites cried out in desperation, "the Lord raised up for them a deliverer" (Judges 3:15). Authentic sharers are the ears of the Lord who hears the cry of the poor, and in solidarity with them WE grow in our relationship with God.<sup>6</sup> "How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods, and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses to help?" (1 John 3:17). Sharing makes a global neighborhood. Through sensitivity to global needs WE create an internal covenant, a fulfillment of divine promises. WE are committed to co-suffer in the pattern of Christ, who gave himself up for all (Philippians 3:10-13).

**Trust involves empowerment of the poor.** In the pattern of our father in the faith, Abraham, WE surrender to God's call. God the rock is with us in our changing world -- and gives foundation and anchor to our journeying quest. Recognition is not through some superior noetic experience, not through a particular creative insight, but rather through shared suffering with our poor brothers and sisters; it is learning to know who we are by immersing ourselves with the co-sufferers' single goal. Through compassionate suffering all come to know impoverishment and discover that severe physical hunger and need cannot be tolerated. Empowerment does not come from ourselves acting alone, but, like Mary's faith and joy in the Magnificat, it surges with a realization that God is doing great things for us and through us, an original blessing unfolding before our eyes as we enter the creative act.

**Trust involves Power to act.** If WE trust and have a sense of urgency

to act, a holy ASAP, we are able to act while time is running out. WE can succeed with deliberate speed. A disturbing nightmare is when taking a timed examination one is stuck at the starting question. On first awaking, we gain immediate relief in realizing it is only a dream -- but is it? WE need "Temporal Conservation;" it takes courage to reject mammon's temptation that urgency is a mirage; it takes double courage to respond as hungry people and to act HERE and NOW. Secular caution advises delay; faith gives encouragement that WE will join other agents of change and become a model team that others will follow. Faith overcomes inherent powerless feelings within, enlightens the soul to act, stays the nerves through will power, and encourages solidarity in working together. With faith, Scripture says trees can be uprooted and mountains leveled.

**Let's become "either/or" people.** Christ teaches that we can not trust both God and mammon, for we are called to reject mammon (the evil efforts mentioned here in personal and social ways). Those who tweak the System strive to be "both/and" people, and in a misguided manner are perpetrating a current condition of destabilizing our wounded Earth. "Both/and" religionists seek that compromise that is ultimately impossible. To trust a dysfunctional System is to become part of it, even while using the name "God." Too often church leaders form an allegiance with the business world and seek the largesse from legalized thieves of the System. Change agents beware! It is better to receive needed funding from the poor in small amounts. Wealthy donors can be dictatorial in expecting us to support a System that permitted them to become and remain rich.

**Reject the allurements of wealth.** Excessive wealth is as much a stumbling block now as owning slaves as property was to America's founders. To allow this small wealthy 1%, growing more powerful by the day, to continue in their acquisition of today's wealth without objection is to deny the remaining ninety some percenters, whose cumulative wealth equals that of plutocrats. Yes, citizens are silently watching plutocracy overwhelm democracy. The wealthy privileged few, who hold their property through self-considered "divine right," captivate the imaginations of many of the have-nots. Change is inevitable, for the current unsustainable System must go, for it yields an unsustainable condition, an abomination crying to heaven. Mega-banks, which are 0.2% in total number but control the majority of the nation's wealth, have already failed; they thrive by the grace of a still silent poor majority and by a political fiat. Banking favoritism will not last.

Consumer culture has an Achilles heel. Public distrust of the System can be expressed abruptly by terrorist bombings, or calmly by those with a sense of growing spiritual power. Should we seek to conquer the System that appears so powerful, that opposition is regarded as unpatriotic and scoffed at by the media? Have people intertwined religious belief with the socio-economic System? Have we shown fear of violence to come by revolt, when

violence is already present within the status quo? The destitute have experienced this violence and can be encouraged when knowing that there's a multitude in a similar position. With critical mass, revolution will occur. This is a call to create a measured distrust of a System whose capitalistic roots are based on trust in materialism and money's power. Basically, any monetary system is based on trust and good will. To truly trust in God is to distrust an unsustainable System and our own powers to act alone. The Achilles heel is a displaced trust. Let's break the trusty System's grip! Trust in God!

**The call is for liberation.** The inability of people to liberate themselves from compulsive consumer practices leads to a social malaise of titanic proportions. This goes beyond being an American or North American/European problem: this has global dimensions. The fly in the ointment is social addictive behavior resulting from excessive consumerism that has in recent decades become globalized. In a nut shell, Earth is divided among those with a trickle down economic theory of "wait and your turn will come," and an abrupt and emerging demand for radical change. This current social-economic System, riddled with greed, brings on paralysis and pulls otherwise good potential change agents into a quagmire of materialism as tweekers of Green Capitalism (as mentioned in Chapter Four). Liberating democratic processes becomes global liberation.

**Proper trust includes the scientific community.** Misplaced trust in the System is built on the mirage of material satisfaction that demands more and more resources and is ultimately eco-suicidal. On the other hand, those who trust in God discover power in believing in spiritual prosperity amid limited physical resources. Essential needs must be met for higher quality of life, but uncontrolled wants by a consumer culture threatening Earth's vitality must be challenged. The scientific modeling of catastrophe expected by the year 2100 (98% of climate change scientists with 30,000 peer reviewed papers) demands prudence on the part of all. As part of the scientific community I accept evidence that seems solid and is accepted by most of that community. I trust that the progress of scientific knowledge is worthy of prudent respect.

**Distrust and expose profiteering in the private interest.** As mentioned in the last chapter, profiteers hire "experts: to sow doubt, ranging from Big Tobacco to Big Energy<sup>7</sup> and create distrust in traditional scientific expertise. As Jesus tells us, we can learn cleverness from the worldly -- and that is an evident case. These doubt merchants cleverly finagle their paths, as "scientific" co-equals in current public interest matters onto talk shows and public debates.

**Distrust mammon in its various forms.** Pope Francis says *we can no longer trust in the unseen forces and the invisible hand of the market*,<sup>8</sup> and that includes the socio-economic System where we find ourselves, with its commercial ads, promises, and gimmicks in a profit-motivated society.

Doesn't trust grow through community sharing; basic distrust through selfishness? Doesn't individual license spoil the socializing and sharing process, draw attention to self at the expense of the commons, and diminish social responsibility and support of protective agencies (governments and private institutions such as churches, labor unions, and civic groups)? Doesn't it erode public interest and override rights of community for livelihood in contrast to so-called "property rights?" Lack of social controls leads to disorder; overly imposed social controls leads to restrictions on individual freedom. Ultimately both extremes must be avoided.

**Distrust Prosperity Christianity.** The doctrine of glorified affluence as derived by God's good favor to profiteers is a perversity that has infiltrated American religion and shows the power of false prophets (See **Appendix TWO**). The vows of Baptism call for avoiding the Evil One. Prosperity-based congregations forget those vows and instead have triumphant strutting, bejeweled leaders who say they stand as models for followers to imitate. This becomes a religious Ponzi scheme, where head honchos pass blessings to the next in command and on down to the least in the gullible congregation. Success is displayed by mega buildings, increasing membership, and the promise that to act properly means becoming rich in the "free market economy."<sup>9</sup> The message is: "Trust profiteers and you will be materially successful." This reasoning resembles Appalachian snake-handlers who taunt congregations, "If you trust the Spirit, snakes won't bite; if you refuse to handle snakes you show lack of Spirit; if you get bitten, that shows you didn't have it."

**Arouse proper distrust.** Banking is built on trust and if we break this false trust of the mega-banks, we could change the System. Believers who trust in God must equally distrust mammon. Is it time to start belittling the stock market's daily quotations and Wall Street mechanization? Is the goal to establish a rival system much, as the Polish workers tried with the fall of the USSR -- with a quick ultimatum by international banking interests to conform to the System or be strangled to death by the world powers? Will parallel alternative economic systems work? If we painstakingly distinguish our arenas of trust, will WE ultimately succeed? Let's trust we will.

### **c) Promoting Public Transportation & Communication**

A key to instituting a new economic System through a growing solidarity of the poor is rapid means of transportation and communication. Goods must move freely and at modest prices so all can have essentials of life; ideas and social contact must flow easily, rapidly, and at low prices as well. Moderation in use of these resources is needed lest bad choices in travel fuel would add to climate change, or time be wasted in idle communication, or harming others by defaming them, or failing to forgive past indiscretions. Like all good things

these are promises or perils.

**Travel, even global travel, is beneficial.** In my middle years I enjoyed the freedom involved in travel; it seems hypocritical to discourage mobility by others. However, my attitudes are changing about excessive private travel with its immense carbon footprint. Today travel is quite possible for large numbers but at lower resource cost via subways, urban bus transit, lower-cost train, and high-speed intercity transport systems.

However, reduced use of autos for private travel and reduced use of energy-inefficient air travel could be emphasized. Private auto travel could be more resourceful by using car pooling along with combined-purpose trips. Travel allows us to appreciate distant peoples, ancestry, cultural places of origin, sacred sites for pilgrims, and recreation destinations. Well-maintained roads and airports as well as good vehicles are needed to safely reach these destinations and we take them for granted. Good accommodations help break isolation, inspire group creativity, and become a liberating force for people -- but it takes resources.

Highways remind us of those first master empire- and road-builders, the Romans, some of whose roadway masterpieces are still used. Roman bridges, types of pavement, drainage ditches, arched viaducts, and even rest areas were well ahead of their times and built to endure. While bulk commerce was cheaper by rivers and seas, still a serviceable road network allowed for reliable postal service and safe human travel. Over centuries it became evident that superb roads deteriorate through lack of protection, constant oversight, and ongoing maintenance. Today, many of us in richer countries take our travel facilities for granted; distance is measured by time rather than mileage, and drivers speed in order to shave minutes and seconds during routine trips. However, modern roads invite higher speeds, greater risks when safety is omitted, less pedestrian mobility, and other problems.<sup>10</sup>

Motorized private travel can exacerbate the environmental crisis. Sure, it is fine to walk and use one's pedal power -- but many desire to drive their own cars -- a wish that could devastate our planet's energy resource base. The demand for adequate highways and parking, plus the cost of building, maintaining and operating these vehicles will strain available materials and land. Populous China alone, the world's number one auto purchaser, is finding out the need for vast infrastructure to accommodate private vehicles. Bikes used by millions in urban China a few decades ago are parked, while roadways and streets are congested in the North American and European style. Traffic snarls along with associated problems, as well as auto safety issues are globalizing -- and that is big business.

I recall, when I was a toddler, the Wood Lane, a mud road that bordered our farm and is now a two-lane highway. We (Mama and a car full of kids)

went to visit her godmother, Aunt Mary. Once our Model A Ford got stuck in the mud, and she had to walk to a neighbor farmer and get him to bring his horse team over to pull us out. That was the late 1930s, when many of our farm roads made for horse-use were not yet even fully macadamized. Hardened surfaces called for road-building projects that gave way first to local and state and then to national two-lane highways, and finally to an Interstate System, the pride of America and liberation for the isolated. Today I use a relatively good two-lane highway between my two parishes. However, area residents, like commuting workers, are always late and travel rapidly during morning and evening rush hours when cops are scarce. In my over one decade of driving this route I have observed several major and fatal accidents. Good roads come with costs; wildlife risks lives crossing rural roads.

**Encourage walking and biking.** Auto use could be reduced by a world friendly to pedestrians and bikers. My biking days in Washington DC involved some narrow misses, for it is difficult to combine auto and bike in a mixed traffic flow. Certainly, when weather permits, biking and walking are good physical exercises, though a better resource saver is to make the home into a full or part time office and avoid commuter traffic altogether. In cities where biking is encouraged, auto-caused pollution is low, resulting in a higher quality life.<sup>11</sup> A biking network in both urban and suburban areas, as well as longer distance rails-to-coordinated-trails and other programs, permit pedestrians friendly walking and biking routes.

**Observe safety regulations.** In the course of aging my own driving demands more caution. It seems that folks drive faster, but maybe the elderly are imagining things; perhaps a little of both. Insurance rates are getting higher. However, it is safe to say that there are more distracted drivers with cell phones and other devices. So much of the resources in road travel are used in vehicle production itself (over half), and as stated, vehicles may be getting more efficient and safer. Still the world of consumers acts more in unison than expected: drivers want the latest model, and even if more energy efficient, demand more resources in basic construction and maintenance costs.<sup>12</sup>

**Reduce air travel even though public.** Certainly air travel would be more comfortable than riding the steamboat and overland stage coach of two centuries ago, or even a motor car of 1900. A little jet lag is small compared to the bone-chilling tiredness resulting from traffic congestion -- and thus the term "journey" or day's work. Getting to a place fast and somewhat conveniently is an air travel plus. However, in recent years (since *The Contrasumer* publication) we are becoming acquainted with high fuel expenditure in air travel -- more energy to cross the U.S. in one airplane ride than the energy used by an average world family in an entire year. A carbon tax on air tickets is one possibility. Furthermore, it is more ideal if people enjoyed distant places while in their living rooms via virtual travel on TV or Internet.<sup>13</sup>

**Vacation near home and reduce exotic travel.** The principle that we proposed in *Ecotourism in Appalachia*<sup>14</sup> is still operative: the farther the travel, the more infrequent the trips. Transpose routine vacation from something that must be done at a distance to something closer to home. Only rarely take the distant trip. Actually, improvement of local recreation facilities would be the best preparation for changing national travel habits. Why go to exotic places except once in a lifetime? Stay at home, improve local employment prospects, and respect our local environment. In fact, as a regional policy this could prove a major resource conservation measure and far more effective than pressuring people to become immobile.<sup>15</sup>

**Keep autos longer.** In 1993 Umwelt and Prognose Institute of Heidelberg, Germany performed a life-cycle study of autos and found that 40% of a car's average pollution was due to the driving phase and 60% to other stages (extraction of materials, manufacture, and disposal).<sup>16</sup> In *The Contrasumers* we called for "auto birth control," with full awareness that it would never happen in this consumer-product oriented world. Much attention has been given to fuel efficiency, but little is said about fashionable upgrade of vehicles every few years -- to auto makers delight. Vehicle production is at an all-time high today (even when fuel efficiency is certainly improving). As of this writing, Toyota (a major plant an hour away from me here) is making ten million vehicles in 2013, with General Motors and Volkswagen almost at this magic number as well; and a half dozen other carmakers are reaching the annual two to seven million car per year range.<sup>17</sup> China is buying about ten million vehicles each year, having surpassed U.S. auto sales, and an emerging world has millions seeking the car ownership dream.

**Return to the railroads.** High speed rail traffic will require immense resources for installment of infrastructure, and transport experts say this is a good investment. Today's railroads are publicized to move one ton of freight 450 miles on one gallon of fuel. When compared with the congestion on public highways, railroads are more resource efficient, since many rail networks are already in place and safety records are fairly good. Certainly for medium-sized trips (500 to 1,000 miles) passengers would be far more resourceful to travel by train than either by auto or airlines. Support trains when possible; they are good investments in needed infrastructure with good payback over time.<sup>18</sup>

**Communication changes are revolutionary.** Public internet accessibility is to communication what public modes of travel are to transportation. At the end of the first decade of this century the communications' field was strikingly different from that of the 1990s. Almost the entire world has since been connected with the Internet; a disconnected developing world (much without land phones) leaped over the costly land phone generation and became intertwined through cell phones for billions of people. Education and information retrieval took note and modes of classroom



assembly and paper periodicals started to be threatened. A revolution was underway, though it was hard on those fixated on gathering for lectures and reading morning newspapers. Youth adapt far more rapidly to this revolution before our eyes.

**A communications' revolution is here.** In 2003, while on sabbatical, my first set of website *Daily Reflections* was not properly installed and only a few daily issues went to viewers. I was unaware of this until others who were on-line told me they had difficulties, and this required new site management. The next year, an experienced Janet Powell, who had assisted in our forestry work through wild flower photography at ASPI, used her Internet skills to tackle the Google search engine. She became web manager and multiplied our readership manyfold, with a relatively high placement on specialty search engines. Earthhealing has reached out to readers in over 110 countries. In fact, our first full year (2004) had a total number of hits that we now receive in a single day. Interestingly, operation costs did not climb with numbers, and so while relatively poor we have a global reach.

**Connections are a blessing.** We look back at the slow communications of several centuries ago with astonishment. In early January 2015, the two-hundredth anniversary of the important battle of New Orleans reminds us that the War of 1812 was over through negotiations at Ghent in Europe a few weeks **before** the battle. However, none of the combatants were aware that peace was declared. In fact, they had difficulties knowing where the opposing warring parties were when only dozens of miles away in the Louisiana swamps. Communications were slower in those times.

Preciseness in location now through satellite networking is commonplace and that makes life **easier** for us all. Today, along with **instant** global messaging, we get information only seconds or minutes old. For years, we struggled to get our **specialty AT information** to others at relatively **low cost**, for only then could the poor have a chance to communicate over distances. Through better **access**, social intercourse is now possible in ways not previously imagined. The potential for **change** is magnified, for a communications revolution raises our levels of consciousness. Now the problem is not speed, but the clutter of competing sources.

**Communication is easy.** We can reach others with far less effort than in times past. Word-processing is now achieved with far greater ease, even though some old-timers find new techniques a great challenge. Think back three decades when draft articles were laboriously corrected and retyped over and over. Mistakes still creep in, even to the most vigilant eye. Today, word processing takes far less time. Book publishing is far easier; this is true for costs of manuscript preparation to presentation to a broader audience through **Amazon.org** and other digital outlets. Letter-writing is now an email phenomenon and surpasses snail mail days. Past processes of painstaking

data collection, assembly, communicating over long distances and time periods, typing, proofing and diligently retyping, then submitting to a publisher who may judge it unprofitable, is much less burdensome today.

**Communication is instant.** We send an email and in seconds the message is sent -- and received, if the person is at the computer or electronic device. People like the immediacy of talking through Facebook and Twitter with participation exploding globally -- not always for the better. In one day this month I sent messages to colleagues who reside on five different continents and thought little of this blessing. Daily, each of us phone others within our neighborhood, country, or world at relatively low cost, and can do this in a matter of minutes, not the days it took a century ago, or weeks a few centuries ago. In the 16th century King Philip II in Spain, ruler of the world's largest empire, stayed up at night before a ship departed, blotting out certain parts of his personally composed narrative to a subordinate general and rewriting instructions by hand that would not be read for weeks.

**Communication includes Good News.** Internet can spread the Good News, but one has to attract notice. It is like a world's fair with a host of competing booths for attention. The evangelization possibilities are astounding, but we still have to bring the message before others with ever shorter attention spans. This global instrument has the same potential for good as did the Roman road system for St. Paul. We have an opportunity for good, but so do the "weed sowers" of the world, scattering in the grainfields. Blessings, yes, but truly mixed blessings.

**Communications is accessible.** Social media allows a broader mix of conversational partners as well as frequency of people contacted. The age of social media is upon us and this is evidently a time when kindred spirits can come together on a regular basis and exchange ideas. Learning about others of like-mindedness has immense potential, but again the blessings can be mixed with the lower-based desires of false allurements. Some demand chatter as part of life, even when is it a waste of time or a distraction. This access demands safeguards for some would like to restrict access and threaten "net neutrality," which holds that network operators must uphold traffic equality in speed and access.

**Communications facilitates socio-economic revolution.** If the revolution is on, just how far will it go, or are there in-built controls? This revolution may be an opening chapter in a revolution in the socio-economic System where ease in use, instant presence, and accessibility can become the components of something more, and controls are lacking because too many are involved. The information is too easily moved or hidden to be censored; and through the current networking systems the world itself is connected. Part of the change of awareness rests in peoples of different races, tribes, and nations discovering that aspirations among different peoples are quite similar.

Through common languages and translation facilities we discover that transportation and communication makes this world a local neighborhood with similar hopes and dreams.

Through modern transportation our HERE expands; through modern communication our minds find a common NOW that conveys urgency. If the American Revolution occurred through movement of body and mind over long distances and through paper pamphlets, why with all today's more facile tools is it impossible for the WE to bring forth radical change? At critical times in world history similar or mutual developments occurred, e.g., development of calculus and stereochemistry along with revolutionary ideas at relatively great distances. Feel the vibrations! Time is ripe for change, so let's reach out by seizing modern opportunities. Have faith that benefits can be achieved. As budding agents of change, let's consider several conditions to improve our efforts:

**1. Proclaim Good News frankly and openly.** One of the blessings of being an elder is that we dare speak what others would hesitate to say. Their hesitancy may be due to need for peer acceptability by the public. When one gets older, it is harder to prevaricate, and so the expression. "What's the use, here is what I think." Frankness reveals a deep spirituality, for facing the truth is done when with impunity and the tongue is loosened at the proper time and place. Elders are better versed through experiences, but the Spirit is full of surprises. Change is possible and change is needed, so speak out even amid a gullible world filled with the burden of information overload.

**2. Keep minds active.** Mobility in body and mind will naturally slow down with aging; it takes more time to walk, rise, and process directions. "Stay active" becomes harder with years and even reaches a point when elders ask, "What's the use?" Hearing dulls, eyesight dims, and breath and time span shortens. Dialog more through modern communications and less through travel. Make Internet connections and do not apologize for staying home. Physical stamina and energy fades, minds grow less agile, names are harder to recall and memories are lost, especially what happened yesterday or last month -- and walls are filled with reminders until they are lost in the jumble. Still, continued peace of soul calls for courage. A successful revolution includes elders and youth, slow and speedy, wise and eager to learn.

**3. Know and respect the past.** Internet access gives us a library at our fingertips, so why travel far? Almost any idea can be accessed through search engines. Treasures at our fingertips include autobiographies of historic and moral leaders, and works of the prominent or obscure (James Madison and Thomas Paine). Our American founding parents were change agents with radical ideas and yet sons of their age. Thomas Jefferson said, "God forbid we would ever be 20 years without a rebellion," but the statement has been taken out of context to become a misquoted "every generation needs a new

revolution".<sup>19</sup> However, both Paine and Jefferson affirmed the right to revolution as part of a movement to a democratic society. Paine, Samuel Adams, and Patrick Henry were loud and Jefferson, Ben Franklin, and John Adams wise, but more subdued. Past variety was bent on unity and not uniformity.

**4. Accept risks.** Our American founding parents took great risks in proposing and moving forward to make a nation. They decided to hang together or hang separately, and thus were true **risk takers**. The risk was to be called downright treasonous by Loyalists who were numerous and at times powerful. John Hancock and others knew signing the Declaration of Independence involved risks. They were uncertain of victory until the very last days of the struggle at Yorktown in 1781. Even with this victory, the next two years (to 1783) were times of grave risks to find a peace that worked.<sup>20</sup> Risks today come in different forms but do involve communications: misunderstandings, competition by merchants of doubt or denial, lack of media neutrality, and ability to incite others to become willing to change when mesmerized by the status quo. Must that risk include civil disobedience?

**5. Stay focused.** Information is a blessing; it's overload, a curse. We can accept the duty to sign petitions on proper causes and then be overburdened by too many requests. We have to stay focused, though willing to be interrupted when others are in grave need, for the hungry need help now. In some strange way they can keep us focused on the critical needs of our time. Our founding parents stayed focused on taxation without representation, equality among the colonies, independence, and a national vitality. WE must stay focused on the interlocked issues of growing inequality and global climate change (*integral ecology*); these must include fair taxation as a non-violent means of revolution and global vitality. Our risks as a social group are still life threatening.

**6. Ignore status quo modifiers.** Recall in the American Revolution a major body of Loyalists was urging small reforms to stay in the British Empire. Even those closer to home, such as able commander Benedict Arnold, who changed back to the Loyalist side along with the son of Benjamin Franklin, promoted a form of tweaking the English Imperial System. They chose instead of radical change the act of repairing the status quo of English overlordship and military controls. Let's not forget much of the mass media are fed by the current System and thus are far more prone to be tweekers rather than change agents; they are determined not to bite the hands that feed them. People desiring radical change must be willing to live simply and with the least amount of additional resources, so that they stay mobile and not beholden to special interests. Enlightened whimphood must be avoided.

**7. Listen to the clear call.** Agents of change accept lessons from the past but look to the future. If the message is clear enough others will follow,

so all eyes are fixed forward and not in counting the numbers of followers behind. Goals keep us watchful, but holding confident that clarity will ultimately triumph. At the time of preparations for the Second Iraq Episode, George W. Bush was interviewed sitting on a pleasure boat off the New England Coast and assured Americans that we were in this coming conflict together. Really? Where was the need for self-sacrifice, as FDR proclaimed at the start of the Second World War? The mixed message was that the poor would fight, and the elite would profit from a consumer culture worth upholding. Then came the Great Recession! Self-interest clashed with public interest and won a battle, but not the war. Communications has a major role to play.

**8. Prepare to confront the violent.** Violence often attends revolution (French, Russian, and Chinese examples already mentioned); the Violet Revolution may have been an exception. But we recall that violence preceded many revolutions and became a precondition of radical change. However, we are not saying that our changes demand a new form of violence, for economic violence is occurring right now though global hunger, poor housing, and other forms of insecurity when the commons are not properly distributed. Violence occurs now! With the world's highest incarceration rate, an automatic gun-bearing population, and the homicide of capital punishment in the majority of states, we Americans are violent people, as expressed virtually everyday. Denial of livelihood to the unemployed is violence. Rest assured: changes in our global System will be resisted by those already violent. However, WE must be peacemakers and revolutionaries all wrapped into one.

What is better: gradualism or abrupt action? Some say "Act now!" Others, "Go slow!" Can both be revolutionary? I deeply admire the radical Catholic Worker Movement founded by New York urban-based Dorothy Day and rural associate Peter Maurin. Though I never met either, I directed ERA's on Catholic Worker centers in West Virginia and New York. Catholic Workers serve the poor as peacemakers and activists with open hands for the homeless and hungry.

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**Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker**

**In economics, private and state capitalism bring about an unjust distribution of wealth, for the profit motive guides decisions. Those in power live off of the sweat of others' brows, while those without power are robbed of a just return of their work. Usury\* (the charging of interests above administrative costs) is a major contributor to the wrongdoing intrinsic to this System. We note, especially, how the world debt crisis leads poor countries into greater deprivation and a dependency to which there is no foreseeable escape. Here at home, the number of hungry and homeless and unemployed people rises in**

\* Note: It has been pointed out that the term "usury" is not used in modern economics. John Kenneth Galbraith put "usury into a moral discussion and outside the realms of modern economics." Neither Samuelson nor the *MIT Dictionary* have an entry for it. John Rausch points out that Aristotle said interest should not be paid on money from an ethical perspective, which was the mindset through the Middle Ages. Usury does not exist in modern economics because interest charged on a loan, in theory, covers the risks of not being paid back. The wealthy pay little interest while the poor pay high interest. I suspect that is part of the limitations of modern economics. Recall that Scripture says *you must not play the usurer with the poor* (Exodus 22:25). The poor do not deserve Capitalistic economics; let's be on the side of the poor.

**Which is best?** Those who act impulsively seldom have lasting impact; those who act slowly and deliberately fail to show urgency. Is it possible that both are inspired? Past benefits deserve preservation; future benefits are worth struggling for. Healing our wounded Earth demands emergency measures and long periods of convalescing, immediate action to stop climate change and longer term solar applications, both contributing to the total revolution. Healing Earth involves a collaborative community of persons, a tighter bonded teamwork of various talents. The goal is healing.

#### **d) Affirming Right to Life and Livelihood**

*The thirst for power and possessions knows no limits. In this system, which tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits, whatever is fragile like the environment is defenseless before the interests of a deified market, which becomes the only rule.*

Pope Francis, "Evangelii Gaudium" #56

Affirm life in all its forms: the life of fetus and elderly, of prisoners and the ill, of workers wanting to earn a livelihood, and the life of Earth herself. Too often the culture of death overwhelms us and life demands our reaffirmation: all must maximize freedom in order to fulfill our destiny. For the believer this is an eternal destiny up ahead, but what about non-believers? Many neo-conservatives restrict discussion to abortion and human death issues; many neo-liberals harp on broadening a range of individual choices. Both miss the point that life must include the ability to enjoy livelihood of sufficient quality. Yes, right to life must broaden to include peace, livelihood, and environmental harmony.

**Decadence versus enlightenment?** Political correctness is a land mine, for it demands that social conservatives speak up in these critical times.

*Enlightenment* occurs when a public position on a moral issue is called into question and demands for change are made by some who regard themselves as holding a new higher ground (e.g., abolition of slavery). *Decadence* is when the religious values of a citizenry are considered old-fashioned, and rules are imposed to force submission to a correct way of thinking about issues held sacred by a given number who were a majority at a previous time. This decadence places forceful demands on believers to acknowledge a new circumstance, such as considering forms of contraception included in health care regulations.

**Right to life focuses on certain issues.** Abortion and so-called mercy killing are hot-button life issues that are foremost struggles of pro-life advocates who desire change of policies or new ones to safeguard life. The right to choose places individual liberties in contrast to the rights of others (fetus). Is this a continuation of the abolition of slavery issue? Do the rights of an individual owner (of a slave) or controller (parent of a child) take precedence over the right of the owned or controlled? Only by denying the second's right does the issue continue to fester -- and the public is finally beginning to consider this. A younger generation in American colleges are now becoming far more pro-life.<sup>21</sup> Palliative care in dying gives respect to the final moments of a human being who some regard has a "right to die," much to the profit of insurers and other for-profits. The perverse consumer culture is at work with making it easier to discard those of so-called lower quality of life. Also, capital punishment is under fire in contrast to a century ago when public hangings were family entertainment.

**The right to livelihood** is a sub-set of right to life; this includes the right and duty to work in order to uphold life with dignity. Profiteers are not the ultimate deciders of who is to work, for they tend to place money over people and see idle workers as a pool for cheap labor as each unfortunate underbids a neighbor. For some of us who are social conservatives and still believe strongly in the role of government, the demand for **universal employment** is part of the demand for life -- and to define right to life narrowly does injustice to the total range of social justice concerns. Unfortunately, the term "right to work" has been co-opted by those wanting to exclude unions from their rightful place in labor relations. Let's introduce "right to a livelihood."

**Rights have responsibilities.** The right to a job entails the corresponding duties to perform and not to avoid work in any way. *We gave you a rule when we were with you: not to let anyone have any food if he refused to do any work* (II Thessalonians 3:10). This simple rule by the Apostle Paul is not the hardest to enforce in any society, but expecting meaningful work from the lazy is forced labor of sorts -- but why impress that working for a living is a great opportunity? Do-gooders ought not tolerate shirking, nor ought those concerned with administrating support funds.

Religious communities have obedience rules that can apply to working relationships; so ought local communities and governments. Laziness is nipped in the bud by withholding food. Let's give all a chance to work and regard this as a citizen's legitimate duty.

Creative managers should structure work to be more engaging and less monotonous. Promoting teamwork, work station changes and creating a healthy, productive, and even fun atmosphere can change the nature of work from drudgery to fulfillment.

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Franklin D. Roosevelt's Economic Bill of Rights  
State of the Union Address, January 14, 1944

- \* The right to a useful and remunerative job in the industries or shops or farms or mines in the nation.
  - \* The right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation.
  - \* The right of every farmer to raise and sell his products at a return which will give him and his family a decent living.
  - \* The right of every businessman, large and small, to trade in an atmosphere of freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopolies at home or abroad.
  - \* The right of every family to a decent home.
  - \* The right to adequate medical care and the opportunity to achieve and enjoy good health.
  - \* The right to adequate protection from the economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment.
  - \* The right to good education.
- 

**Meaningful work opportunities exist.** My farming father repeated many times at the beginning of the day, "There's work to be done." Unaccomplished work abounds, and willing workers are needed, though it may be a challenge for some to carry their load. Even with labor-saving techniques, renewing Earth takes all the support we can muster, provided creative work managers have the resources to find work, though not necessarily "highly economically rewarding work." Jobs need to be done that are beneficial to society and spiritually rewarding. However, the unsustainable System has no material profit motivation for full employment, for how else could one freely choose from a pool of competing job seekers? What about home care, literacy and language training, environmental cleanup, physical therapy exercises and infrastructure improvement: renewable energy utilities, accessible ports, safe all-weather roads, and an expanded dependable grid and energy storage system? Three basic facts stand out: plentiful work opportunities; multitudes willing to work (300 million worldwide); and hidden resources by private



groups that should be taxed for the common good (work, workers, and available taxable resources).

**Champion democratic work places.** Unfortunately, not everyone is master of his or her own living and working site. In fact, the great majority of people work for others. While this is the condition of labor today, it is not necessarily the best. People are not now bound to the land as serfs or slaves of old, nor beholden to industries and businesses under trying working conditions. Over time workers have gained the right to organize, to gain a living wage, and to operate in safe working environments. The control of such conditions must be nearer to home where feedback is possible and decision-makers respond to local needs. Distant decision-making can become insensitive. Captains of modern industry often make sole decisions such as production, location of plants, and termination of jobs, with no regard to human effects on local communities -- only profits. Public and private corporations ought to be accountable to democratic monitoring and controls.

**Worker-owned establishments are increasing.** Working alternatives are possible and actually flourish.<sup>22</sup> In some specific cases workers have taken charge of a work place and continued through elected management to operate and do a good job. Some succeed and some battle larger market forces. Among worker-owned companies are large ones such as the American Polaroid Corporation and the British retailers *John Lewis Partnership*, with 68,000 workers. Globally perhaps, the best known worker cooperative is that of the Spanish Basque region's *Mondragon Cooperative Corporation*, with about 40,000 worker owners; this has an extensive network of various subdivisions in production, services, and educational facilities.

**Non-profits are self-motivated.** As previously mentioned, some of us can be highly motivated by a cause worth fighting for, rather than a materialistic money-making goal. In fact, today a non-profit economy co-exists along side of the profit one.<sup>23</sup> Gar Alperovitz mentions a wide variety of existing non-profits; in the twenty largest American cities these include 40% of the two hundred largest corporations: health care facilities, academic institutions, and a host of other non-profit organizations. Added to this are 2,000 municipal electric utilities that supply electricity to one eighth of the American population, along with many public waterworks as well as other facilities. Since non-profits do not have to make money for shareholders, many public utilities can be ten percent cheaper than privately-held counterparts. These can be highly motivated and even be proof of a healthy non-profit world. Raising quality of life along with reducing insecurities can be spiritually rewarding outside of a capitalistic banking system.

**Sacrificing for others is fitting work.** Not all people are qualified for certain fields -- or to engage in labor right now. We exclude the young, old, physically ill, and mentally sick. Some who are unable to work in our Jesuit

order are commissioned to be "praying for the Church and the Society," which may most likely be my last occupation. To the degree possible, those praying are not retired but hold a very important place of labor through the eyes of faith. They help create a healing environment in our wounded world. A spiritual aspect to good work performance makes it easier for the disabled to do menial jobs or for the ill to offer up their suffering for the good of all.

**Governments are employers of last resort;** all forms of joblessness are a contamination that festers, breeds discontent, and is destructive of the dignity of the human person. Why should such issues related to the social life of a community be handled at a national or global level when best done locally or regionally? Governmental agencies should help furnish jobs for the unemployed with monetary resources taxed from the wealthy. It is the people at the grassroots through good government who have a better sense in how resources ought to be invested or saved. Fair taxes ought to be at least 90% upon the wealthy and thus be the condition of public works so needed today (work needed, ready workers and available money).

Many migrants muster resources to reach places of possible employment (consider European boat people paying a thousand dollars or more to risk their lives to cross over to Italy from Libya). Migrants justifiably seek freedom or better quality life and work. Current movements of immigrants represent the largest movement of people in human history. By 2013, the total number of global immigrants was 232 million, or 3.2% of the world's population, while only 170 million in 2000 and 154 million in 1990. Currently Mexico is the largest source of immigrants, but Africa as a continent far exceeds this one nation. Migration is a complex problem area because it is generally better to keep potential employees closer to their traditional residences and families than for them to move to distant places.

**The right to life includes planet viability.** Our human quality of life is enhanced by the welfare of all creation. If some species are threatened or extinguished by human misdeeds, then all suffer. Impending climate change threatens a major die-back in the hosts of plants and animals -- and that becomes a human tragedy and an infringement on the vitality of the planet. Broadening the range of the right to life issues strengthens the total cause. Unfortunately, neo-conservative climate change deniers strive mightily to limit the issue, for fear it infringes on property rights. All need to work together in maintaining health, keeping upbeat, and on and on. Believers must broadly affirm life.

#### e) Defending the Democratic Process

**The democratic process** is threatened. **A fortiori**, this applies to our general participation in healing Earth. To restate for emphasis, the power of the super-rich to use the mass media to exert autocratic influence on the

status quo endangers our democracy. If in an election for presidency \$300,000,000 is offered to the candidate coming closest in policy to the superrich donor, then our democracy is truly threatened. Besides this lawlessness of wealthy autocrats, our individual rights to privacy, free speech, and free exercise of our conscience are also under attack from "Big Brother" agencies, both public and private. The opportunity stemming from the Supreme Court's declaration that corporations are persons (Did any firm ever go to jail?) allows such institutions (CEOs holding the puppet strings) to have free reign on influencing our democratic process.

**The common good is at stake.** The poor must have decent amounts of food, potable water, affordable lodging, recreational space, adequate health, and basic education; these are threatened when the wealthy make decisions as to allocation of resources. Social justice and civility declines when the cult of death and the cult of excessive wealth combine to strangle the democratic process. In order to counter such conditions a number of public policy issues must be championed:

\* **Insist on democratic elections.** High costs of campaigning allow the wealthy to have an advantage over the average citizen. A current problem is the existing *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court ruling, which allows political spending as a form of protected speech under the First Amendment; currently, the government may not keep corporations or unions from spending money in the form of ads to support or denounce individual candidates in elections. A second court ruling in the Spring of 2014, *McCutcheon vs. Election Commission*, added fuel to the fire by removing cash limits to partisan groups and essentially gutting restrictions on donations, all in the name of free speech.

In opposing these decisions, Associate Judge Stevens said corporations could threaten elected officials with negative ads, the public's faith in the electoral process is adversely affected, qualities unique to corporations give a unique advantage, and these can raise vast sums of money that few individuals can match. Efforts, including a possible constitutional amendment to repeal this ruling are ongoing. Furthermore, the costly nature of campaigns makes fewer candidates want to endure the rigid scrutiny of private life and running the gauntlet of public opinion. Rather than public campaign financing of elections, a better option is to regulate equal campaign exposure by all candidates.

\* **Assure that all vote.** Voting is a privilege and a moral obligation in a democratic society. In areas of great inequality in the U.S., the numbers of those who vote declines. This is especially true when some say it is useless to compete against those with large war chests. Frequently, road blocks to voter participation are similar today to effects of Southern poll taxes a century or more ago. Today, the subterfuge is that in order to avoid fraud, new

requirements must be imposed to prove citizenship on the part of poor voters. Actually, cases of such fraud are extremely rare, and burdens of proof through photos or other documentation is a heavy yoke on non-drivers. Some states now restrict voting times and places, creating very long voter lines.

\* **Voting is a duty.** One way to overcome voting barriers is to require the vote of citizens, as some are discussing. Seeing voting as a duty (just like jury duty or the requirement to pay taxes) means extending the duty to those burdened by immobility via use of posted or electronic balloting. Facility becomes the goal, not restrictions, for duty requires all to exercise their citizen rights and thus strengthens the democratic process. Voters can still return a blank ballot or add a write-in name if objecting to the slate -- but vote all must. Furthermore, this "all" ought to include ex-felons. Voting in a healthy democracy ought to be a duty, not a mere option.

\* **Charity is not a proper alternative to justice.** Charity is regarded as a good in society, especially when people have special needs; giving in such circumstances benefits recipient and donor alike. However, getting at the root of the need can be a greater good, especially if the cause is a lack of social justice. In fact, when justice is unattended, certain charity can be toxic and harmful to recipients.<sup>24</sup> This is especially true when it becomes a disincentive to work or to furnish one's own livelihood, or when it replaces a means of livelihood that would be so much more dignified for the recipient than direct handouts. People prefer to earn their livelihood through farming, services, or exercising some control through worker ownership -- and governments can help far better than optional charity practices.

\* **"Occupy Wall Street" is a democratic form of rebellion.** In 2011, when revolution began to ripple throughout the Middle East, a spirit of change rose in America and ushered in the short-lived *Occupy Wall Street* movement, first in Manhattan and then in other parts of the U.S. and elsewhere. People craved a change from the System of profiteering and expressed this at the seat of profit's power. Revolution is possible when all ask, "Why are there billionaires?" Why 800 military bases to secure Pax Americana? Why not be the first nation to abandon the consumer culture? Why not a global Manifest Destiny? Why not global civic action taken together? Why not a new socio-economic order? Throughout history, people from Augustine to Thomas More and from Ben Franklin to Franklin Roosevelt dreamed, spoke and wrote of greater goals. Norman Thomas said that *Men still laugh at Jesus the dreamer, or wistfully sigh for ideals beyond their grasp.*<sup>25</sup> His kingdom emerges while some disparage dreams pointing to justice for all.

Legacy emerges as democratically based. What brings on youthful visions and late life dreams? Perhaps the will to make a mark, or to leave one upon departure. Maybe it is dissatisfaction that *The American Dream*<sup>26</sup> was too materialistic and self-centered. Parents want the best for offspring. St.

Theresa, the Little Flower, prayed that her good works might flourish after her mortal life, and her heaven has consisted of doing good on Earth; miracles and a most popular autobiography followed. Can radical change be our legacy? Was Theresa's request selfish or an utter selfless desire that God's will be done? Let an eternal wish be to help heal our wounded Earth. An unrecognized founder of our country, Thomas Paine, believed in violent revolution if necessary. We seek a non-violent revolution, but change none the less.

**Stop privileges for the Wealthy.** According to the New York Times in 2010, General Electric made over \$14.2 billion in profits, but paid no federal tax. None! Furthermore, in the same year due to what GE spent on lobbying, American taxpayers actually owed GE \$3.2 billion in tax credits. That was the year GE cut retirement benefits among its non-union workers and paid their CEO a 100% pay raise. It was the year that GE CEO Jeff Immelt was chair of the President's Council on Jobs and Competitiveness.<sup>27</sup>

Fuel taxes consume a quarter of my expenses, but I admit they are fair to help maintain safe roads. Yes, and electric and non-carbon fueled vehicles need to pay fuel tax equivalents. The wealthy get a free lunch and it must end; they use the media to inspire money-short lap dogs to mouth a dislike for taxes when, in fact, the latter ought to be proponents of more taxes for the wealthy. The rich take from the commons as legal thieves while they use the past resources of the people (Internet, roads, security, past information) to gain what Gar Alperovitz and Lew Daly call their Unjust Deserts.<sup>28</sup>

President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) proposed to finance the Second World War through stiff taxes on the wealthy and did succeed to a major degree. FDR proposed a 100% top tax rate in time of "grave national danger". At the start of the War FDR told Congress that "No American citizen ought to have a net income, after he has paid his taxes, of more than \$25,000 dollars a year (about \$350,000 in today's money).<sup>29</sup> At the end of that war the supertax did reach 94%. Today, we face a far graver global danger, and such taxes are right and just. Some will call it "confiscation," but it is really merciful redistribution, provided honest and well-watched government does the extracting. And precisely here an aroused citizenry is called for to get the job done well. We must stop retention of wealth, an elitism that smacks of empty nobility and rank, which is a threat and violence to a democratic society. Justifying wealth Scripturally is like trying to justify slavery; removing it is like abolition -- and its time has come.

**Citizens favor fair taxes.** Major reasons against the rich persons being the arbiters of wealth include: it is undemocratic to recognize "wealthy autocrats" in a democratic society (not "nobles" in the Feudal sense, for they have no sense of *noblesse oblige*); the materially privileged are poor judges when it comes to their supposed property limits, for greed can easily enter the

picture; and they generally defend the status quo, which demands this unsustainable System in the face of current climate change; and they use more resources due to higher lifestyles. The affluent indulge in large homes, cars, boats, and air travel; how about high taxes?

**Redistribution schemes need to be perfected.** This is a way to return wealth to the commons, not to a new privileged set of possessors, as when the USSR and its full top-heavy command economy collapsed. Orderly redistribution has its own troubles, quite messy at first before practical problems are overcome. Rather than redistributing to individuals, a better approach may be turning property over to monitored local and regional governmental agencies, to non-profit land and resource trusts, or to local cooperative units controlled and monitored by civic-minded elected members at that local community.

After the recent Great Recession, the public began to abandon the myth that highly-paid CEOs do better jobs and that Hedge fund operators were the best managers of their so-called generated wealth. Most of the financial track records by those blinded by greed were rated failures or extremely threatening to the entire economic System. There's as many thieves in corporate offices as in the back alleys of a poor neighborhood. Most financial managers (if not all) admit it is unclear who really understands the System. The democratic people managing the commons through legislative oversight has a far better handle than a privileged few financial managers on Wall Street. The age of globalized Capitalism is outmoded, though all the monetary powers of the world will seek to prolong its existence. It ought to be declared an authentic crime along with slavery and human trafficking -- and a firm policy of returning the resources to the people become national and international public policy.

**Promote limited private property.** The dream is emerging that we are to build an economy based on the redistribution of ownership rather than wealth. John Rausch points out that M.M. Coady, founder of the Antigonish Movement in the 1930s-40s envisioned the Cooperative Commonwealth, "which consisted of these elements: individual farmers, shop owners and tradesmen, regulated co-operatives, government-owned industries (too big to fail) and a large cooperative sector that delivered most necessary goods. Workers in these co-ops have ownership."<sup>30</sup>

Part of the damage inflicted on lower income people during the recent Great Recession and its aftermath consisted of allowing unscrupulously conceived mortgages in the anonymous hands of irresponsible and unregulated money managers. People blinded by greed brought on a near disaster; big banks were regarded as 'too big to fail' -- a fatal misjudgment, for they had already failed. Housing went into default. A panicked administration said, "Attend to the billionaires; forget the small fries." Skepticism towards the System emerged, though ever so slowly because trust is so misplaced and a

state religion of the cult of wealth was deeply embedded in ordinary people.

Are we wiser enough now to impose controls and limit property holdings along with salaries at a maximum level? Greed is always insatiable, and uncontrolled global greed is ecocidal. Wise founding father Ben Franklin<sup>31</sup> called for limited property holdings. James Madison wanted, besides political equality, to withhold *unnecessary opportunities from a few, to increase the inequality of property, by an immoderate, and especially an unmerited, accumulation of riches.*<sup>32</sup>

**Support small farms, businesses, and worker-owned co-operatives.** It is not right that large-scale operations can or should do what smaller ones can do well or better. This is the principle of subsidiarity at work. 'Small is Beautiful' means small farms can handle local needs better than large corporate ones; small fisheries means that factory fishing giants that deplete ocean fishing stock must cease; small businesses can sell materials with the same finesse as can big-box stores and with greater accountability to local communities; and small banks can look out for the needs of local people. Private banks should not handle massive transfers of funds (from locals and their communities) from one nation to another without tight controls. Globalized business where needed (communication and transportation) should be at a governmental level and operate on a non-profit basis. Small operations with governmental oversight are far better than megacompanies, bigger than some national governments, and operate by wealthy CEO robber barons. Democratic process demands more.

**New grounds: address private investments.** The flow of wealth from one nation to another and from one source to a tax haven is runaway Capitalism, an abomination to a just society. Many ordinary folks want investments to pay well in their so-called retirement years; preparing for the future is a responsible outlook for self and family. But is Capitalism and its investments the answer? If the total investment of the region and nation is through the hard work of the people, then they have a right to adequate social security in their own old age -- a good reason why large-scale earnings and investments are unneeded.

Local investments mean local prosperity. Using local investments is an extension of our Small is Beautiful philosophy of obtaining basic bulk local food, water, building materials, and fuel from local sources. Private investing in distant places causes extravagances that have hounded colonialism, whether past or modern, at the expense of locally-based native peoples. Keep global transportation and communications systems out of private hands, and let all investments be local. Encourage democracy at all levels but decentralize the sources of wealth for the good of the whole.

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The first decade of this century reaffirmed my insights about power that surfaced in the 1990s. Here the initial insights were beginning to take concrete form using the wisdom of a series of good emerging social justice advocates and economists. Thus an opportunity began to unfold that spiritual power could be exercised to save our wounded Earth through a new System quite different from the existing one.

## Chapter Six: Healing Earth through Eco-Revolutionary Actions (2010s)

*The world's wealth and resources do not belong to the select few; they also belong to the poor.*" Pope Benedict XVI (September 5, 2007)<sup>1</sup>

This final chapter deals with my current thoughts about healing our wounded Earth. I neglected economics for years since I had no formal education in this subject. However, after the turn of the century the notion of reclaiming of the commons, a moral imperative, had to include a specific outline within my political and economic discussions. With our *Daily Reflections*, starting in 2003 and continuing with widespread readership from 130 nations, it was becoming necessary to spell out practical actions needed for radical change and eco-revolution. For the past decade I have read two dozen books and spoken to various individuals on the subject of economic change -- and thought much on the subject. That does not mean the subject has been exhausted.

I always feared that my love of the commons and commoners would have adversaries call me "Marxist" and so I deliberately refused to read about that subject or the political communist literature. My original inspiration for communality was the *Acts of the Apostles* (though some say that was Marx's as well). So proximity of thought may have actually turned me off rather than inviting further consideration. On the other hand, I did not find a need to seriously read materials to oppose so-called "political conservatives" -- who really were not conservative at all. For whatever reason, political economics took a back seat.

Finally in this decade, radical change demands more. I have sacrificed time for economic issues reading *The Economist* every week as well as books by Gar Alperovitz, Richard Kluger, Jeremy Rifkin, Thomas Piketty, Richard Wilkinson, Jeffrey Sachs, Peter Barnes, Anthony Atkinson and others. Puzzlement with current economics continues, but it is good to know that the mystery penetrates an elite economic community as well. As a person who never was in debt, how could my country accrue in the past decade alone more indebtedness than for the past two hundred plus years combined? How does a national policy of QE (quantitative easements) justify such actions of manufacturing all this money over several years? What if the American dollar



loses its prime status to another currency? How can a sustainable economy depend on consumer spending for two-thirds of its activity? Is what we are doing truly sustainable?

My growing conviction is that large-scale voluntary radical change is impossible given the social addiction of our culture. A few souls making radical changes to counter an unsustainable economy is not sufficient. Furthermore, a paralyzed national Congress existing since 2010 and endowed with money from legalized thieves will do little if anything. Something more dramatic must occur in the offing, and so each day I pray "Lord, bring it down!" I only hope it will not be too much hardship on the poor of our land and world when prayers are answered.

A second conviction is that we should not focus on a single environmentally-based activity to address the impending "catastrophe." The Christian is called to bridge the divide of past with future in critical times. We must be willing to work on many fronts, from practical lifestyle changes and scientific research to religious and artistic expressions. Working on multiple fronts simultaneously was my original insight in *Renew the Face of the Earth* in 1987, even when friends told me to take a specialty and run with it. I still hold this pluralistic view of activism -- namely, healing our wounded Earth is through various ventures by people working in solidarity. Still the following actions warrant special focus at this time:

- a) Supporting a Renewable Energy Economy**
- b) Demanding Fair Taxes to Avoid Massive Inequality**
- c) Enlisting the Young at Heart and Patriotic Support**

The goals of these actions are of deepest consideration; tweaking the current dysfunctional economic System is a gross disservice and yet many favor economists seem to tend in that direction. A fine distinction must be made as to whether an action of transition is meant to be temporary (e.g. using a less polluting fossil fuel) or permanent (urging cooperatives to replace large private corporations). The emphasis must always be for the latter. Too often the status quo calls for continuing inherently unsustainable activities under the name of practicality, which is actually translated "prolonging profits." They delay the inevitable towards which we need to give our full attention.

We need to bring a transition in perilous times with grace and balance, control of emotion, and still ongoing consistency. We act somewhat like chemical and biological catalysts to hasten a fundamental change, not to support a patchwork for continuing a dysfunctional System. The caution that radical change must be a new violence is nonsense, for the status quo is already violent for the non-privileged: every child who dies from hunger, every adult with cancer and lacking treatment, and every person who suffers from extreme weather conditions caused by climate change is a victim of violence.

The vast extinction now occurring as butterflies and bird species struggle to stay alive, coral reefs fade, and mammals sacrificed for a lucrative animal-parts market is violence that is unacknowledged by those blinded by affluence or its quest.

A catastrophic crash is currently occurring as severe as the end of the dinosaurs of 65 billion years ago. Writer Elizabeth Kolbert refuses to end her book on impending extinction on an optimistic note. "Life is extremely resilient but not infinitely so."<sup>2</sup> Human wrongdoing threatens the very vitality of Earth and this is a clear reason for being serious about the prospect of eco-revolution. Granted, in times of hunger and unemployment the temptation to violence is greater because of justified grievances on the part of the poor and oppressed. A sudden awakening may cause this counter violent behavior.

Thomas Paine, the American founder and Revolutionist said that not thinking a thing wrong gives it a superficial appearance of being right. He speaks of *a long and violent abuse of power* by the ones who perpetrate that violence.<sup>3</sup> Paine's words as directed against the nobility of his day could be applied with equal force today against the inequality of the under-taxed privileged. While that 18th century American cause was focused on national independence and representative taxation, today's global focus is on equality, interdependence, and planetary vitality -- much broader issues.

Radical change is urgent; it is justified in order to halt anthropogenic climate change and bring fairness to the democratic process. As stated, documented studies indicate that a massive surging inequality (partly due to uncontrolled globalization factors) exacerbates social ills such as community breakdown, drug abuse, and high levels of incarceration.<sup>4</sup> With private wealthy citizens acquiring vast sums of money, their funds are used to subsidize political allies who refuse to sufficiently address the climate change issue. Pope Francis speaks about this widening gap in very forceful language.<sup>5</sup>

The conflict of God versus mammon becomes the titanic battle of this century. One side is a materialistic culture, which threatens both our physical and spiritual life. The battle is between good and evil, between the desire for a higher quality of life by all and that of greed, selfishness, and individual enrichment for the privileged few and those enticed to imitate them. In this decade, a **social spiritual discernment** must be initiated, not a single once-and-for-all exercise by an international committee of "experts," but an ongoing process involving numerous agents of change from various lands, backgrounds and cultural conditions. It involves a convergence of prayerful reflection by a variety of people of good will.

A technical replacement of non-renewable energy sources by renewable

ones will not fully address problems of overconsumption or practical problems of living more simply. A hundred percent non-fossil fuel economy could be instituted in our current System and still allow the wealthy elite to continue degrading democracy through their autocratic power. However, renewables can be inherently decentralized over a span and permit conditions for energy self-sufficiency at the domestic and local levels. Protecting this movement to local control must include fair taxes and redistribution of resources to those in need. This has been well noted by scientific experts.<sup>6</sup>

The basic argument seems irrefutable: wealth in the hands of the privileged few creates situations that many of the rising middle classes seek to imitate -- like lemmings racing to the sea of global catastrophe. In an age of uncontrolled financial accounting these wealthy few press legislators to abide by their bidding, encouraged by financial gifts to help pay for expensive election campaigns. Democratic values are threatened for it continues a status quo that is unsustainable due to an insatiable thirst for more and more resources. The window of opportunity for a sustainable future closes if we do not act resolutely.

**The challenge** is before us. The double current of basic disquiet by the economically disadvantaged and allurements of a *nouveau riche* in many countries will cause a flood. Seeing this as a risk must not distract us from organizing to address the problems that confront us. Christian believers find a perfect healing model in Jesus Christ, a faithful follower in Mary his mother, and a need for faithful eco-revolutionary agents of change.

**Eco-revolution comes in degrees:** some aspects demand immediate change (e.g., stopping a specific toxic pollutant) and some occur over long periods of time (e.g., the Industrial Revolution). Some positive changes are needed **NOW** in bold letters, because a delicate living planet can become a lifeless one if unsustainable practices continue. Activity for its own sake is not enough. This is not pushing rocks uphill, to allow them to roll down and then starting again. All people of good will must be involved in urgent matters, not make-work in the fictional world of pretending. Brakes are needed now on out of control greedy corporations, governmental agencies, and hedge funds that smash the bars of justice and erode the social capital needed for healing. When Jesus at Calvary says, "Forgive them for they know not what they do," the "they" include all profiteers in our social addicted consumer culture.

Emergency caregivers are first responders. Within the range of individual healing, the ill or wounded need immediate diagnosis; this is followed by emergency treatments to curb bleeding and life-threatening conditions; beyond this is the longer-term nursing, which demands compassion as a remedy to help healing. Patients are challenged to participate in the healing process through confidence in advice and treatment by physicians and attending therapists. All these regularly accepted procedures are superseded

by miraculous cure that is not to be expected; ordinary healing takes time. Through **gratitude**, the ill appreciate the collaborative role in healing; in **compassion**, the immediate step of determining benefits and putting these into effect begins the process; in **justice**, the best possible procedure for longer term treatment is proposed and initiated; and in **courage** we launch out on a renewal journey directed towards eventual healing.

*Anyone who is not against us is for us* (Mark 9:40). The grand enterprise of healing Earth takes a community of caregivers graced by the willingness to undertake a collaborative service. This means all believers in the future, especially the Christian's special servant role of agents of change. Jesus serves us, suffers and dies for us, and invites us into being people of service. In his agony and death he becomes the suffering servant as foretold by Isaiah the Prophet; by Resurrection/Ascension he opens the door for our service for and with others.

#### a) **Supporting a Renewable Energy Economy**

The first decade of this century, unequal massive wealth and excessive use of non-renewable resources became twin global issues leading to climate change and global social problems. Wealth ostentation fueled insatiable imitation by a surging mass of people rising from global poverty into a middle class. Meeting these demands with available non-renewable energy has led to pollution of our atmosphere and water and the excessive carbon dioxide that was previously mentioned as bringing about drastic climate change.

One necessary revolutionary change to be emphasized is the introduction of a renewable energy economy. In 2013, over 37% of new electricity generation was through renewable energy sources. Recent studies suggest a 100% U.S. renewable energy economy by 2050<sup>7</sup>, that could be extended globally. As mentioned in Chapter Four, Merchants of doubt hired by Big Energy strive to prolong the status quo; a delay in the climate change battle when the very planet's vitality is at stake creates billions of dollars of profits each year for Big Energy. They regard their bogus arguments of equal merit and deserving equal time, thus making a gullible public consider this issue to have two equal sets of scientific evidence. The consumer culture continues to champion conspicuous consumption by the wealthy and the "wannabes" for autos, spacious housing, resource intensive foods, and electronic devices -- all creating an indelible carbon footprint.

**Know and halt the ravages of climate change.** Deniers capture a major political party, a consumer economy, a national credit-carded nation, and a fiction-haunted land that cannot face raw reality through its secular spectacles. Never before has the human family been faced with such existential threats and this calls for spiritual renewal. A society addicted to material success and selfish privileges seeks to avoid the existential question:

Will the window of opportunity close before effective remedies are actualized? If renewable energy sources can successfully substitute for non-renewable coal, oil and gas, this will give time to heal our Earth, though is not a perfect solution in itself. The climate change battle is clearly articulated and cannot be ignored.<sup>8</sup> The only possible positive effect is the opening of an ice-free Northwest Passage for transporting goods from Asia to Europe, but that is minor compared to losses from rising shorelines and extreme weather conditions.

The move to the renewable energy economy is accelerating both by the economic readiness of these alternative technologies at comparable costs to fossil fuels and because stiffer environmental restrictions are crippling the coal industry. Wind is rapidly becoming cheaper than fossil fuels and solar is a few years away. In 2014 the world added more windpower than new coal generation and now at as low as 4 cents a kilowatt, or a third of nuclear power's range. With renewables coming so rapidly, financial analysts say the U.S. coal industry is in "structural decline."<sup>9</sup> Some 264 coal mines have closed between 2011 and 2013; also from 2005 to 2013 the amount of coal-generated American electricity dropped by 10.5% and is still in decline; this high paying but dangerous mining occupation is confronted by pollution problems.

Here where I reside we have a drop of 110-car coal trains from seven a day a decade ago to four a week, with over 6,000 coal miners in the region laid off and little promise of return to mining. In late 2013, the Canadian Province of Ontario decided to close all its coal-burning powerplants, the first province or state in North America to do this. Even China, this century's primary carbon-emitter (until recently opening one new coal-fired plant per week) is having second thoughts with Beijing being so highly air polluted. Switching to renewables is now going global, even when some regions are suffering due to the transition.

**Renewables are coming but not fast enough.** Urgency is growing, as shown by statistics assembled by Ken Bossong at his *Sun Day Campaign*.<sup>10</sup> In 1973, fossil fuels such as oil (30% imported), coal, and natural gas accounted for over 83% of energy use. Nuclear power with 42 powerplants in 1973 provided 4.5% of U.S. electrical generation and 1% of total energy demand; due to rapid expansion in the following decade to about hundred plants by 2013, nuclear power provided over 19% of U.S. electrical generation and 8.2% of total energy use; however, after the Three Mile Island accident in 1979 nuclear leveled and is now starting to decline as five older plants were closed in 2013 alone.

In 1973, renewables were mainly conventional hydropower generating 15% of the nation's electricity and providing 3.8% of total energy; biomass and geothermal adding about 2% of total energy use, with wind, solar and

biofuels virtually non-existent. By 2013, renewables emerged as a major energy supplier, and these sources account for 12% of domestic energy production and 14.2% of U.S. net electrical generation. This renewable mix includes hydropower (29.7%), biomass (25.4%), biofuels (20.0%), wind (19.3%), solar (3.2%), and geothermal (2.4%). Early predictions by the U.S. Energy Information Administration have proved far too pessimistic for solar and wind area are truly taking off, besting 2030 predictions by 2015.

**Champion a "Manhattan Project"-style focus for renewable energy.** How about instituting a crash program comparable to the world War II development of the atomic bomb? Resources and knowledge are available but it takes the will power of a nation still mesmerized by fossil fuels to effect changes. In 2004, 2% of American new electricity capacity installments were renewable, and this has risen to 56% in 2012. For a few months in 2014 it was 100%. If the drive to bring on fracked natural gas were truly challenged with effective state and federal regulations, then renewables would have a good chance to forge ahead. Methane escapes in varied amounts from the fracking process and this is twenty times more effective as a climate change gas as is the larger amounts of carbon dioxide from coal-fired powerplants. All things considered, natural gas is not a good transition fuel.

Solar energy is the source to watch (see our book *Healing Appalachia: Sustainable Living through Appropriate Technology*) with a host of proven solar applications, along with details and references for a number of other appropriate technologies. A whole range of changes usher in the coming solar age:

- \* Solar shingles as alternatives to free-standing PV panels are undergoing noticeable improvements in technology and prices;
- \* More states are incorporating friendly policies to feed solar produced energy at homes back into the grid system;
- \* States like California give generous incentives for new housing construction with solar applications, as well as promoting utility installment of domestic solar units on private homes;
- \* Solar hot water systems are becoming more popular, especially in the South as a low-priced solar application;
- \* Solar cars have far lighter and longer-range batteries than just a decade ago, and bypass high auto fuel costs; and
- \* Solar recharging stations are being installed in certain businesses so that solar electric cars with limited ranges can be recharged while employees or customers are occupied.

Solar energy applications have come a long way since 1978, when we at ASPI built the first "solar house" in America (contested by a house in Massachusetts). Today, one thousand homes a week are now being solar-fitted in a wide range of states in our country. While some areas are more solar friendly, still solar will soon pay for itself in virtually all parts of our

country and even northern New Jersey is taking a leading role. Amid a growing support for renewables there is a serious effort by the last champions of coal to weaken or scuttle the efforts by governmental regulatory agencies to clamp down on carbon dioxide emissions for those outdated coal-fired powerplants.

**Redirecting investments** is one temporary route to change that we must concede for the sake of an orderly movement to a new System. My friends in *350.org* (with whom we participated in the New York Climate Change March in September 2014) have launched a highly aggressive campaign with many college students demonstrating for their respective institution's divestment in Big Oil stocks, to cripple the fossil fuel economy -- and their possible success is not to be denied. Much depends on whether this is a short-term transitory phase to something greater or if this is meant to patch up an ailing unsustainable System and thus postpone urgent changes that must start immediately. If the divestment movement gains momentum then fossil fuel corporation stock will have their bottom line affected. Redirecting those investments to local concerns would be of great assistance in installing wind and solar applications without extra public money.

**Petition for removal of financial subsidies** to fossil fuel energy companies, currently at an annual rate of \$10 billion in the U.S. alone, is another necessity step. Sizeable subsidies are made to consumers and companies in oil-producing countries. While small property holders are responsible stewards, the big fossil fuel ones could be a major stumbling block. Big Energy has fuel reserves, if not stranded by price declines currently worth at least ten trillion dollars (a proportion of wealth equal to that of slavery at the time of the Civil War). The horror for these Big Energy investors is to leave fossil fuels unmined and undrilled (as all of us renewable energy proponents prefer); the value of "property" would sharply decline like that of liberated slaves.

**A shock treatment** to move rapidly to a renewable energy economy is part of a multilayered approach to radical change. Recently, a study sponsored by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center concluded that our global industrial civilization is heading towards collapse. Pretty pessimistic! Overuse of resources by an unequal privileged class and discontent by the majority of commoners is cited. This study is authoritative and legitimate, with tags of cross-disciplinary ("Human and Nature DYNAmical") model, and peer review;<sup>11</sup> it suggests a number of cases of rising and falling civilizations, and cites the Roman Empire and the Han, Gupta, and many Mesopotamian Empires. Are we at this point?

**Civil disobedience** may be a matter of last resort when actions to hasten the change-over from a fossil fuel economy are met with extreme resistance by Big Energy. A case in point is the transport of petroleum from

the tar sands reserves of Canada's Alberta Province across the United States Great Plains to Gulf Coast refineries for eventual export to other countries. Should a major project, the *Keystone XL Pipeline*, be permitted by Congress and the U.S. State Department, then tens of thousands of North Americans are pledged to perform acts of civil disobedience. The project had Congressional approval (Senate Bill 1) in early 2015 and was only three votes shy of overriding an Obama presidential veto. The vast opposition is because this pipeline would tie the Continent and world into furthering fossil fuel development and make controlling climate change far more difficult. Uncertainty persists.

### **b) Demanding Fair Taxes**

*That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to abolish or destroy it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.*

#### Declaration of Independence

The manner of reasoning within our most cherished American document seems quite foreign to current ways of thinking. How could we think seriously about something new? But wasn't that precisely what our founding parents did? If a System is not sustainable, then it should be replaced, but here we do not mean the democratic process enunciated in 1776; rather we mean the manner in which our System has been taken over by powerful moneyed interests. The very life, security and happiness of our people are involved, and so changes of such a nature that ultimately become revolutionary are what we must do in order to be faithful to the calling of the Declaration of Independence.

A strong media blitz can con citizens into arguing for "no new taxes" for all. In fact, Republican legislators have been forced by peer pressure to sign such pledges and thus go contrary to their oath of office to uphold the public welfare of our nation. Failing to demand new taxes on the privileged wealthy causes the widening inequality, all while national needs for infrastructure upgrading, health access, and employment are so great. The chant of "no new taxes" when those are absolved from paying sizeable amounts of taxes is an abomination. Even we low- or no-income folks pay costly gasoline taxes. On the other hand, all paying fair taxes and removing tax havens (in untold trillions of dollars) should improve national security and improve democratic process.

**Limit wealth**, for it is a limited resource. It has the blessing of a majority of Americans. In fact, Benjamin Franklin in 1787 made a proposal to limit wealth, but was dismissed by property landowners who were the majority



at the Constitutional Convention as "the mouthing of a overly elder statesman." Economist Jeffrey Sachs says, "I have no quarrel with wealth per se."<sup>12</sup> One response is, "Some do quarrel with it when uncontrolled, for wealth of itself is dangerous and leads to a false sense of power. One way to begin the process of distributing wealth is to forgive student debts and institute free education and health accessibility to all.

**Maximum wage scales** are as needed as minimum ones. It is terribly disheartening for workers in a company to know that the CEO of the institution makes 400 times the wage of the worker in the plant; such escalated incomes are not uncommon in the United States at this time. Are CEOs worth it? That ought not be the proper question. A better one is "How do we as a people allow it?" High incomes for favorite coaches or players of sports or of forms of entertainment should hardly be tolerated -- or at least allow them to make the salaries (for bragging rites), but take it all as taxes. Inequality leads to civic discontent and rising insecurity. Just to guard private wealth takes public funding of police and military organizations. There's better use for these funds and in times of national distress we need to follow FDR's example and take over 90% of large salaries for the common good.

**Disparity of wealth and climate change are complementary problems.** The democratic processes needed to move to an environmentally benign renewable energy (wind, solar, hydropower, geothermal, and tidal) economy have been frustrated by Big Energy and its demands to stay with the status quo of mainly non-renewable fossil fuels and nuclear power. Inequality subsidizes a complacent media to broadcast the myth that renewables are incapable of meeting rising energy needs. What is in short supply is not the renewables, but the willingness to make major changes. As mentioned the need is for an *integral economy* that is sustainable over a long time period.

Lester Brown speaks of five ecological principles that govern eco-economics:

- \* Sustainable yields to eco-systems (curbing overfishing or over-harvesting forests or mistreating croplands);
- \* Reliance by nature on balances to restore sustainability (reforestation or soil enrichment);
- \* Sustainable natural recycling processes (recycling of nutrients);
- \* Protection of the natural photosynthetic processes (halting desertification and paving of cropland, and curbing acidification of lakes that diminish Earth's productivity); and
- \* Recognition that ecosystem services are of greater value than resources extracted as goods (trees in a forest render immense ecological value beyond mere wood products, from scenic beauty to retention of soil and habitat for wildlife).<sup>13</sup> Let's not forget carbon sequestration.

The task to establish a sustainable System to replace the current one

could come more easily if a major financial crisis occurs. Dire financial conditions could more easily justify radical change. For some in the past, sustainability meant retaining the status quo by tweaking the System to keep it operating a little longer. Time is of the essence and a little longer for Big Energy means more profit even while Earth herself is increasingly threatened. From an environmental standpoint the term sustainability looks to the planet's health and is seen from long-term considerations.

Change scares those espousing capitalism who look back in history. Empires rise and fall, sometimes slowly (the Roman Empire) and sometimes quite rapidly (e.g., the Soviet Union). WE as agents of change trust that proper conditions can trigger the fall of that which is unsustainable. WE earnestly ask, "Will the present economic order fall and Capitalism be replaced by a just and fair System?" Most likely not completely in my lifetime, unless something dramatic occurs very soon. Systems, especially unsustainable ones, do not last forever.

Capitalism, as Peter Barnes says, devours nature, widens inequality, and fails to make us happier.<sup>14</sup> The philosophy of so-called "Free Market Capitalism" was advanced by the originator of the shock or crisis concept, Milton Friedman, from the 1970s to well into the 21st century. This economic philosophy involves manipulating existing or created crises (Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, China, Poland, Russia, South Africa and U.S.) to draw attention away from people who propose alternative strategies.<sup>15</sup>

Shaking the present System involves us all. Small establishments cannot thrive without collaboration at broader levels on numerous areas of global balance: global financial transactions, prosecuting genocide and crimes against humanity, international trade and communication regulations, international environmental controls, and natural resource and especially migratory wildlife preservation. Ideally, North Americans know the battle of small versus larger governmental units. Thirteen disparate and often self-centered colonies came together with common grievances and goals to form a United States, and ultimately ten provinces made neighboring Canada. The dream of the founding parents became a reality after struggle. Together we could focus on mutual defense of our planet and conservation of resources.

Democratic preservation through times of radical change will be a challenge that no one can deny. However, the stakes are high and we in North America have been successful in creating the conditions for higher change and yet keeping a certain degree of local autonomy. This can be achieved through fair taxes if we but have the will to bring this about. Tax specifics must be worked out, but the thinking of FDR that no excessive profits are allowed in troubled times must be reactivated, for these are troubled times.

Some 90% tax on excessive wealth and income is reasonable and should

be advocated by progressives here and now. Amazingly the majority of Americans in recent polls show a strong dislike for the inequality of this country and its expansion; this US condition exceeds that of all developed nations through the standard inequality measure (*Gini coefficient*). Anthony Atkinson notes that the value shown for the US and UK have much higher overall income inequality than Continental Europe and still higher than the Nordic countries.<sup>16</sup> This listing of nations shows inequality immensely different and still growing among many underdeveloped lands.

### c) Enlisting the Young at Heart

*[The dragon's] tail dragged a third of the stars from the heavens  
and dropped them to the Earth. (Revelation 12:4)*

The titanic battle of good and evil plays out in the ongoing drama before our eyes whether of angels or humans. Yes, Christ saves this world and Mary models our role in salvation history, but as players on the scene WE are engaged in a healing struggle, a **work-in-progress**. Time is of the essence, and WE are not saviors, but humble healers. Our energetic work and constant prayer can bring down a dysfunctional System, if we are sensitive to the poor. A single dancer will do little to move an unstable house or bridge, but if others join and act in rhythm then soon the structure sways and even collapses. Thus marching armies break step when crossing bridges. The rhythm of prayer will break the ranks of materialism until an outmoded System crumbles -- and that is our hope.

**The temptation** is to say that we are powerless to make change. *Oh you of little faith!* In a falsely humble way we shy away from changing a mighty System and settle in to live a good life that keeps everything in a state of tranquility (not peace). The temptation is great: "Do not change the System, for none is perfect and this is the best we can do. If I do not deny that change may come I at least excuse myself for not being expert enough to publicly oppose it. For the sake of my mental and psychological health I escape to my hobbies and let the world go on as it is." Such a condition by so many must be resisted.

It takes courage to confront the System and some are fearful. This work is part of our life of faith -- and those are the ones to which this work is principally directed. The message is not meant to be apocalyptic (as popularly thought to mean frightening), but in the positive Scriptural sense of enabling believers to find hope during hard times. WE the poor can hopefully rise from a prevailing social addiction within our consumer culture and with God's help renew our damaged world. WE can overcome the temptation to deny, excuse, or escape the current situation; we can refrain from violence and engage in effective eco-revolution, even when detailed specifics are being worked through. Unfortunately we know too many deniers, excusers and escapist.

Though violent responders are regarded as sparse, tweakers often belong to this class; they accept the "moderation trap," thinking that a little good on the part of many, or the espousal of Green Capitalism<sup>17</sup> will cure our environmental ills.

We are God's arms, hands, legs and feet, the immediate change agents of a New Heaven and New Earth. Those impaired by age or illness are God's vocal cords, through prayers begging the energetic do their civic duty. All, including the public witnesses and the shut-ins, become one voice calling for radical change. Some are moved to petition and write letters, others encourage legislators and enforcers of laws, and still others take their message to the streets through peaceful demonstrations and even, if necessary, civil disobedience. Some are limited by mobility and can offer prayers for the success of the others. WE need all, especially those in non-profit fields and in caregiving of both soul and body. The healthy make effective change agents.

**A spiritual profit-motivation** challenges material profit-motivation. Support a non-profit economy through dedicated groups showing thriving organizations, including worker-owned factories and businesses as well as charitable and educational institutions, along with promoting and investing in small farms and services. Join the recent movement to divest from fossil fuel companies and reinvest in renewable energy companies, especially at the local and regional level.

**Earthhealing includes health integrity to Earth and People.** Global resources develop medicines and health treatments and ought to be available to all, not just to the privileged. Caregiving has a universal scope. When supplies and treatments are limited, especially in early research and development, some rationing may be necessary -- but not based on an individual ability to pay. The World Health Organization must be central to global decision-making; WHO should promote inoculation of all infants and youth from the scourges of Polio and Smallpox, but also Hepatitis A and B, MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella), DTaP/Tdap (Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Whooping cough), Influenza, Pneumococcal, Rotavirus, Chicken pox, and Hemophilus influenzae b. These are recommended pediatric immunizations in the U.S. and others are soon to be added. Caregiving is a universal concern.

Spiritual demands for wholeness of soul and body help us as conservative people bring past benefits and blessing into an emerging future. Over-consumption demands **temperance** in use of resources; institutional resource conservation must occur through **prudent** action; in opposition to worldly materialism we must muster **courage** to call upon a Higher power to give us the power to establish **justice**.

**Temperance** calls for people with a strong conservative streak who marvel at the enveloping creation and praise God for such gifts. In gratitude

we respond with profound respect. With Mary we state that we are truly "blessed" HERE, the first moment of healing on our part. Our splendid and fragile Earth, product of billions of years of evolution, is endangered in this ultimate moment of geological time by greed and arrogance. Resource depletion, waste, and pollution cries to heaven to be exposed and halted by all legitimate means. Through a down-to-Earth approach, we stewards of all creation must see clearly, then do something to bring about radical change and this is mentioned earlier in Chapter One as an eco-humbling task.

As a global community we continue to do great harm even with knowledge of what occurs. One vivid example is in Tanzania, where 30 elephants a day (10,000 a year) are being poached for valuable ivory for flourishing Asian markets of luxury items for the increasing multitude of the *nouveau riche*. That nation's elephant population has declined from six times the existing number a half century ago to about 60,000 today, and if left unpoliced the entire elephant population will be wiped out by 2020. We must act.

**Prudence** is needed by the enormity of catastrophe that seems to be coming. Urgency makes us turn to Mary at the Incarnational event, for she is the **NOW** of life. As activist, she is uncomfortable on the pedestal of passive obedience.<sup>18</sup> Prudence is a determinant in what we must do to know the situation and act upon it. Edward Everett, an early American statesman, said of founding father Samuel Adams that amid explosive times he was "of the few who never lost their balance." He attributed this to a "religious tranquility." Ira Stoll, an authority on the life of Samuel Adams, comments *how paradoxical-- a tranquil revolutionary*.<sup>19</sup> In honesty, Adams was highly focused on the revolutionary cause and kept up the drum beat through writings and public vocal commentary, along with recruiting others to the cause. However, at times he needed more foresight, especially in the failure to bring Canada into the independence struggle, partly through bias against Catholic Quebec.

**Change is urgently necessary NOW.** Time is of the essence, for the window of opportunity for meaningful actions to heal our wounded Earth shortens by the day. Looming catastrophic events caused by continued increased GHG emissions are at hand. We need prudence not to delay change but to affirm that appropriate technologies are ready to be fully implemented. As mentioned in Chapter Three a second level of eco-humility realizes our imperfections in curbing the severe damage being done to Earth.

**Justice** is needed for healing and this operates from the grassroots more than from top down. An ultimate eco-economy may possibly be a series of interlocking co-operatives or other sub-entities founded on new or tested appropriate technology models: community controlled at the local level, people friendly, and environmentally benign.<sup>20</sup> As mentioned earlier, the **Mondragon Cooperative Corporation** in the Basque region of Spain is one success

story.<sup>21</sup> Wealth ought to be distributed among a multitude of stake holders who control the local economy through democratic voting procedures, including the process of electing managers who are from among the local people.

**WE are called to act in solidarity.** At this level of eco-awareness we cannot tarry while expecting the affluent to surrender privileges; as revolutionaries we hear the stirring of the lowly to reclaim the commons. The deepest type of eco-humility (see Chapter Five) is to identify as poor with the poor, to be honestly able to say "WE the poor." The "WE" means we all are poor in a variety of ways and we must admit it, an act of humility.

**Courage** is needed today to overcome the power of the consumer culture. It takes a certain boldness to champion a simple lifestyle that conserves resources amid an economy of consumption; non-profit and cooperative enterprises ought to be promoted courageously. Resources needed for a decent living are respected through the service of love stemming from the great commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. Confronting the arrogance of entrenched wealth takes the boldness of agents of change. Likewise it takes vigilance to down the financial princes and demand radical change that continues compassion for the needy.

**The final moment is one of trust in God.** Change agents are not to be the new privileged in material things, but spiritually privileged to be the first to serve. We need to be humble enough to take mutual correction and willing to look to a higher power for guidance and support. The ultimate end of our collective endeavors is for all to be all in Christ (Ephesians 1:12). Democratic process is fragile and needs the awareness of limits on what we can do. WE (not I) are the focal agents. There can be no overlordship within the ranks of eco-revolutionaries, for God is overlord.

Some are shaken in faith and say democracy was the most successful idea of the 20th century, but then ask "Why has it run into trouble and what can be done to revive it?"<sup>22</sup> Believers are catalysts who are expected to hasten the day of the Lord. We are not mere spectators but rather participants. Radical change means transformation and not destruction like ore smelted into precious metal through fire. It takes courageous agents of change who live virtuous lives of temperance, prudence, justice and courage. We must be sensitive to individuals with growing revolutionary discontent and be aware of this in our troubled world. Recall Rome in the fifth century A.D, China's Ming Dynasty in the 17th century, the Bourbon monarchy in the 1790s, the Soviet Union in the 1990s.<sup>23</sup>

Perhaps it may be best to look from this time of discontent to more sharing aboriginal civilizations who flourished as revealed through anthropological and archeological research. For instance, the Northwest American native tribes are known to have the *potlatch*, or the redistributing of

abundance and therein became successful people.<sup>24</sup> A Kwakiutl chief was known to be of service by redistributing 18,000 Hudson Bay blankets, a dozen canoes, bracelets, sewing machines, outboard motors, pots, pans, clothing and much food. For that tribe **service** was and is a mark of distinction and gratification. We learn much from primitives.

#### **d) Sharing Radically by Global Patriots**

*Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men see visions.* (Joel 2:28)

I am a social and fiscal conservative and passionately pro-life; this means human life (from conception to death) AND Earth vitality. However, I am appalled by those who call themselves conservative and reinterpret history involving the Boston Tea Party, forgetting that the product thrown overboard (tea) was that of the first and largest commercial trading corporation (*Honorable East India Company*) in direct association with the largest naval power in the world (England), though government as such owned no shares of that company (legislators certainly did).

Modern day Tea Party folks fail to see that the Big Energy/Big Banking association with a tolerant Big Government is ushering in a climate change scenario that in simplest terms is "ecocidal." Being propagandized by Big Energy/Big Banking, many of these confused "conservatives" are far from the American Revolutionary spirit and its risks. Rather than being willing to endure risks involved in radical change, these imprudent deniers of the current happenings through inaction create a grave risk of destruction of Earth's fragile vitality -- and thus stand squarely on the side of the Corporate misdeeds that sparked the First American Revolution.

There is a close connection between the Capitalistic underpinnings of Big Energy/Banking and the prime immediate cause of our current environmental difficulties. This is explained by Naomi Klein in the very lucid *This Changes Everything, Capitalism vs. the Climate* -- a "must read" during these urgent times.<sup>25</sup> Find out how we have become captive to the System from the age of the Watt steam engine to today. Fossil fuels blight the situation and the Capitalistic System built on maximizing profits for Big Energy/Banking; it is furnishing the lubricant for the suicidal movement to greater warming levels than tolerated by our Earth.

Klein shows that the London-based Carbon Tracker Initiative totaled all private and public oil, gas, and coal claimed deposits and this 2,795 gigatons (1 gigaton is one billion metric tons) of carbon is five times the amount experts calculate can be allowed to be burned by 2050 and still keep global warming within a 2 Celsius degree rise.<sup>26</sup> These publicly stated statistics show what Big Energy and investors are hell-bent to extract, sell, and burn; unfortunately,

they have behind them the political power influence to set the planet on this suicidal course unless sensible and concerned people take action NOW. That is why we despise indebtedness and misguided power of Big Corporations.

*We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness.*

U.S. Declaration of Independence

**Life** as expressed in the Declaration of Independence includes our quality of being human and now expands to include our Mother Earth that is being threatened. A truly patriotic Tea Party-goer would want to dispose of the fossil fuel reserve deposits and keep them permanently in the ground for the health of the planet and our own life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness. However this would not satisfy greedy Big Oil investors who would then see the value of their companies dwindle and precious stock prices erode. Profitability would be at stake if these companies were unable to suck up the deep water fossil fuel deposits, whether in the Arctic or off the coast of Brazil or Australia.

Capitalism devours nature, for the unpaid bills to our natural world are the profits of this extractive set of industries. However, we pro-lifers are called to pursue a quality "life," one tied in closely to Earth herself. Any destroyer of the vitality of this planet is an unjust aggressor. How could one talk about being pro-life when all indications are that if influential Big Energy has its way we are in for possible five or better Celsius degree temperature rises by the year 2100? Again, we must keep in mind that a few degrees of climate change are small in number, but like our body temperature conditions around 98 degrees Fahrenheit, a few degrees could spell life or bodily damage or death.

**Liberty**, as mentioned in the Declaration of Independence, is something that much patriot blood was spilled over in that American Revolutionary War -- and the War of 1812. The threats to our nation and now to our world are just as real, but do we have the patriots to come to the rescue this time -- or are we complacent to the mega-rich? Thomas Piketty shows that the concentration of that wealth is extending in an explosive degree in the manner in which this System currently operates, with low taxes on income or wealth and lack of transparency.<sup>27</sup> We know too well that the top 5% of Americans own more than the rest of the bottom 95%, and virtually all new growth is in that privileged 5%.

What is liberty for those at the lower economic levels who do not have the means to rise to a moderate quality of life?<sup>28</sup> The very commons, which belongs to all, faces continued enclosure by those in economic power -- and this works against our ordinary folks.<sup>29</sup> In turn, the concentrated economic power in the hands of the super-rich expressed, by immense and often hidden donations to elections seems at times to hold a death grip on our liberties.



**Happiness** is the more complex issue because so much depends on the subjective feelings of the citizens involved. The Framers of the Constitution talked about the pursuit of "happiness," not Locke's term "property." Peter Barnes says that he assumes that "Jefferson altered Locke's wording to make the point that property isn't an end in itself, but merely a means to the higher end of happiness."<sup>30</sup> The propertied founders of the Republic placed heavy emphasis on property (including slaves comprising one-seventh of property at that time), though the happiness of the slaves and native Americans was not considered by well-off founding fathers.

Quality of life has come to include a universal birthright to education, access to health, livelihood, and security -- and even the right for a good start in life.<sup>31</sup> We might add that had FDR lived further into his last term these rights would have been further detailed as mentioned earlier. It has been pointed out by John Rausch that economists as well as sociologists and philosophers have been doing studies on non-material "goods and services" that lead to greater satisfaction. "Psychic income is well established in economic literature: a person works for less pay for the satisfaction of doing good. Let's replace 'wealth' with 'wellbeing'."<sup>32</sup>

*If anyone has two tunics he must share with the one who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.* (Luke 3:11)

The lessons from Pope Francis to live simply in lodging and transportation are meant for a world, not a chosen few. Simple living has its own inner dynamism that allows us to serve others to go from a material culture of individual grabbing to revolutionary sharing. To speak and act in a sharing manner means we are to be poor in spirit, something that simpler lifestyle techniques (Appendix One) teach us as an antithesis of a competitive culture. Simple living avoids unhealthy excess and encumbrance of things; it invites fidelity to Scriptures and tradition; it makes for true conservatism -- socially, fiscally, and even politico-economically. We want a quality of life and trust in God, not play god. *If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.* (Exodus 22:25)

Much is emerging on what the future System will look like by such popular futurists as Jeremy Rifkin,<sup>33</sup> and these are well worth further consideration. Healing Earth includes many activities in keeping with one's temperament; some are transitory means to pass to another System and must be seen not as compromises but as outlets to soften the revolution for the most vulnerable. We must be willing to give and share our excess with others.

**Radical sharing** demands ever deepening levels of service:

understanding the essential needs of all people (social awareness); giving freely and without a basic struggle (solidarity); and ensuring that resources will be used properly. Radical sharing touches on inordinate tendencies to self-interest (control by giver and misuse by receiver). True giving is a joy and a necessity without strings attached; true receiving is joy as well and done in gratitude for givers and through surrender of pride. Radical sharing becomes a participative control of the commons -- not mere transfer to new controllers. Radical sharing has a hidden power to overcome and regulate interest, to build sociability, and to lead ultimately to a harmonious global community. A deeper sharing results when takers **collectively** (not individually) demand all, and not just a fraction of the surplus.

Simultaneous giving and taking allows for growth in a spirit of togetherness that gains strength with time. If all parties seek perfect harmony, one gives up and another takes and both join in administering in the name of the commons. Our environment elicits gratitude directed to the Giver of all gifts, but also extends to magnanimous givers and grateful takers who do not show possessiveness or greed. Radical sharing goes to the root of motivations and to a *compassionate* love of the human family, for all benefit through the act of sharing. All give up something: those with resources give up what does not really belong to them; those who take, take in the name of the *Common Good*. Organ donors and those who share homes with refugees lead the way; they show that liberation is possible through radical sharing. Ideally, sharing occurs in giving and receiving freely and generously.

Radical sharing enhances our growth in humanness. If someone has excess and another has need, the ordinary human being will share with the other, even if some give to refit a wardrobe or earn a tax credit. The grip of those with over-possession is surpassed by those who radically share in many ways: all who care selflessly for loved ones; organ donors even for strangers; those who recognize God's radical sharing of his Son; married couples who see bad times as well as good; military exploits of heroic proportions; and giving a teammate all the credit.

**Commons** are the arenas of our lives (air, water, fragile lands, etc.) where God owns and we share with others as wealth benefiting all. It includes past heritage, gathered research and knowledge, security and communications systems. Sharing of surplus wealth by individuals and by nations helps establish a just social order. Such radical sharing leads to liberation of people, both the holders from their burdensome excess and those who are destitute from their constant worry. All liberate and all are liberated. See **Appendix Three** for specific acts of radical sharing.

Radical sharers make good agents of change at all levels. We learn about people who vary immensely in needs and those wanting to make needed change. One such example is Zimbabwe in Africa that finds its exchange rate

in 2015 go to a billion to one for the dollar; so the financial agents of that unfortunate land decided to change over to the dollar -- but didn't have the proper change in coins for the poor of that nation -- and had to pay people in chewing gum and candy. Our world is in need of sharing.

## Conclusion: Nine Reasons for Revolution

*I will give them a sign and send some of their survivors to the nations.  
For as the new heavens and the new earth I shall make will endure  
before me ...* (Isaiah 66: 19, 22)

Healing our troubled Earth becomes a revolutionary act; this is the testimony of my own discernment through eight plus decades. Chapter One involving my formative years described my early critique of unearned wealth, of a history that respects patriot sacrifices, of the value of work, and of hearing God's call to help the poor. This was followed by my first efforts in attending to the environmental crisis (Chapter Two), a concrete **HERE**. An appropriate technology experience (Chapter Three) was worth sharing with those seeking to engage in a greening process, an urgent **NOW**. In Chapter Four, limitations emerged demanding our joining forces of kindred spirits, an affirming **WE**. The turn of the century saw the connection of environmental crisis and social inequality, a need to trust in God for help (Chapter Five). We are now drawn ever closer to help usher in a new System of radical sharing (Chapter Six).

Local communities, grassroots activist groups, conservation trusts, farmers' markets, cooperative businesses, and non-profit health and educational programs, and other ventures must all collaborate to bring revolution; here are some reasons to do so:

**Reason One: History demands that an unsustainable System must be replaced.** This motivation for the First American Revolution does not fade with time, but now encompasses an entire world. Fidelity to American history demands that revolution is always in our blood and that we accept that changes are inevitable; true patriots move with the tide. It is not possible for all the world to consume at rates that America has done since the end of the Second World War. It is a disaster if those eager for a consumer economy were to attempt to succeed. The System must change.

**Reason Two: Excessive wealth as exists today breaks down the dignity of human beings.** This wealth has been allowed by an overly tolerant System, where the privileged influenced the creation of laws that enhanced their own thievery. Since their influence allows them to "possess" the commons that belong to all, their laws are totally undignified and reduce the majority to a level of subservience and false promises of extended trickle down privilege. Excessive wealth must be contested.

**Reason Three: Silence is sinful when individual citizens fail to speak and act.** Democracy is not a speculative sport, though many think occasional rallying cries are sufficient; we must participate to every degree possible, for the process is fragile and requires constant vigilance and effort. We commit sins of omission by denying the problem, excusing ourselves as too inexperienced or escaping to allurements. We must bear witness to the current situation by direct participation to the degree our talents and circumstances allow; this demands commitment to radical change.

**Reason Four: The Spirit constantly moves us to act.** We must become "comfortable" in accepting our limited talents and discomfited by what still needs to be done. Revolution helps each of us become balanced in both energetic action in the world and maintaining spiritual interior peace within, a personal ecology best suited for a willingness to be truly revolutionary in a consecrated life immersed in worldly challenges.

**Reason Five: A public interest motivation is a citizen's responsibility.** A primacy of private "enlightened" interest falls short of the development needed in our world calling for essential needs being met before the "wants" of the affluent. Change agents must insist on deeper levels of motivation and this growth in awareness can only be met by those revolutionary in temperament.

**Reason Six: Continued tolerance of excessive wealth is a form of violence.** Our world is too filled with violence of many types: terrorist attacks, nuclear weaponry, the unstable armed with automatic weapons, and people living with food insecurity. When we allow some to live in destitution and others to wallow in wasteful affluence then a hidden form of violence takes place all around us -- and we become party through inaction. Revolution is necessary.

**Reason Seven: Merely tweaking an unsustainable System is not sufficient.** Mild examples of greening capitalism and cap-and-trade only prolong Earth's agony and fail to bring about needed change. Tweakers do a disservice by delaying urgent change; by contrast, those calling for revolution reject the many who attempt to have a dysfunctional System subject to their mild reforming approaches. A world where fiction is prominent appeals to the patchers, but does not allow them to confront reality. Revolution is the answer.

**Reason Eight: Reclaiming the commons through revolution is needed for the vitality of the planet.** This awareness has come quite slowly and yet must be acted upon with all deliberate speed. We must save our troubled Earth; we cannot allow the privileges of the nobility of wealth to delay the process. Revolution is of prime necessity and not just a theoretical

pastime or option.

**Reason Nine. Pope Francis is right:** *A Christian who is not a revolutionary today is not a Christian.*

This list is incomplete because this is a work-in-progress. Completion is facilitated more easily by use of digital publication and rendered more fruitful through collaboration with others. I invite you to undertake your own discernment and become agents of change willing to work together for a more socially discerned outcome. May a **New Heaven** and **New Earth** come quickly; let's put our hopes into action.

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## Appendix One

### **99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle**    **Table of Contents**

#### **I. Heating and Cooling**

1. Save Heat and Insulate
2. Keep Furnace Operating Properly
3. Regulate Humidity in Heated Homes
4. Conserve Cooking Energy
5. Refrigerate Wisely
6. Design Buildings with Ecology in Mind
7. Cut Hot Water Costs
8. Economize with Modular Heating
9. Cool Conservatively and Ventilate
10. Dehumidify in Summer

11. Air Condition Minimally
12. Convert to Renewable Fuel Sources
13. Solar
14. Wind

## **II. Other Home Conserving**

15. Light House Efficiently
16. Save Water *DR 6/11/08*
17. Aerosol Sprays
18. Use Few Cleaning Products
19. Budget Resources
20. Build a Yurt *DR 1/31/14*
21. Make Home Repairs
22. Paint the House
23. Make, Repair and Reuse Furniture
24. Eliminate Unnecessary Appliances

## **III. Food**

25. Consume Less Meat
26. Select Unprocessed Food
27. Avoid Non-nutritious Food
28. Reduce Intake of Refined Sugar
29. Eat Wild Foods
30. Learn to Preserve Food *DR 10/23/08*
31. Conserve Nutritional Value of Food
32. Be Aware of Agribusiness
33. Organize a Food Co-op
34. Bake Bread
35. Prepare Various Food Products
36. Drink Homemade Beverages
37. Advocate Breast Feeding
38. Question Pets and Pet Food

## **IV. Gardening**

39. Garden on Available Land
40. Grow Vegetables
41. Plant Fruit Trees
42. Fertilize Wisely
43. Use Natural Pesticides
44. Compost and Mulch
45. Keep Bees

## **V. Solid Waste**

46. Avoid Disposal Paper Products
47. Refrain from Purchasing Plastic-wrapped Items
48. Ban the Non-returnable

- 49. Sort Trash
- 50. Flush-less Toilets

*DR 6/19/08*

## **VI. Clothing**

- 51. Choose Fabrics Wisely
- 52. Pick Quality Clothing
- 53. Make Clothing
- 54. Mend and Reuse Garments
- 55. Do Not Wear Fur from Endangered Species
- 56. Protect the Feet

## **VII. Fulfillment**

- 57. Have a Hobby
- 58. Become Artistic
- 59. Decorate the Home Simply
- 60. Create Toys and Games
- 61. Preserve a Place for Quiet
- 62. Camp and Backpack
- 63. Enjoy Recreational Sports
- 64. Exercise without Equipment

## **VIII. Health**

- 65. Use Simple Personal Products
- 66. Select Safe Cosmetics
- 67. Beware of Hair Dyes
- 68. Do Not Abuse Drugs
- 69. Stop Smoking Cigarettes
- 70. Curb Alcoholic Abuse
- 71. Prepare for Environmental Extremes
- 72. Guard Against Home Hazards
- 73. Recognize Signs of Chronic Disease
- 74. Care for Teeth
- 75. Watch Weight
- 76. Learn to Rest and Relax

## **IX. Transportation**

- 77. Know Bicycle Benefits and Servicing
- 78. Bike Safely
- 79. Encourage Mass Transit
- 80. Share the Car
- 81. Avoid Unnecessary Auto Travel
- 82. Car-buying Hints
- 83. Choose Proper Gas
- 84. Drive Conservatively
- 85. Seek Proper Maintenance and Service

## X. Community

86. Live Communally
87. Refurbish Old Homes
88. Provide Pure Drinking Water
89. Join a Craft Cooperative
90. Care for the Elderly and Ill
91. Have Simple Funerals
92. Influence Legislation
93. Consumers Beware
94. Battle Utilities
95. Demand Corporate Responsibility
96. Start Recycling Projects
97. Fight Environmental Pollution
98. Improve Land Use
99. Create Work and Study Opportunities

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## Appendix Two:

### Elements of the System's Religion

- \* **The gods** -- Dollar, Euro, etc.
- \* **Religion** -- The Capitalistic Wealth Culture (WC)
- \* **Cultic Practice** -- the System honoring wealth in the hands of the privileged and affirming their right to raid and invade the commons.
- \* **Religious elders** -- the super wealthy who call shots, influence politics and pay for legislators to keep favorable tax privileges.
- \* **Religious centers** -- Wall Street, London Financial District, etc.
- \* **The Creed** -- Money is almighty; all can ascend and trust that this condition will continue forever.
- \* **The System** -- Backing up the mischievous practices of the elders if they fail to direct the taxes and indebtedness of ordinary folks to continue the status quo.
- \* **Tithes** -- The taxes no one likes to pay and from which all seek in some ways to obtain exemptions.
- \* **Call to prayer** -- Daily stock market reports.
- \* **Heresy** -- Doubting or removing trust from the System.
- \* **Cult councils** -- The federal reserve bank. It is hard to see where government ends and private welfare begins and this blurred line is intentional.
- \* **Business schools** -- Promoters who condition acolytes and give legitimacy to the System.
- \* **Prosperity Churches** -- Court chaplains and false prophets for the wealthy.
- \* **Liturgy** -- Superbowl Sunday.
- \* **The Fearful** -- The societies set up to protect the separation of Church



and State and are completely silent about our economic System, lest their granters object.

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## Appendix Three

### **Citizens Actions for New Economy**

- \* Promote backyard and community gardens and farmers' markets throughout the land.
- \* Encourage worker-owned cooperatives (over ten thousand exist in the U.S. right now).
- \* Develop a more comprehensive public rail transit network, accessible to all.
- \* Make voting mandatory for all adult able-bodied citizens as part of citizenship.
- \* Place strict limits on campaigning for office.
- \* Tithed military spending so as to transform to a global health and emergency security network.
- \* Recognize a common inheritance with 90% plus of all higher salaries returned to governmental infrastructural maintenance.
- \* Abolish global tax havens and restrict flow of capital across boundaries through international controls.
- \* Adjustment of liveable minimum wage and fair maximum wage.
- \* Erect a universal social security and health care system.
- \* Make all public education free.
- \* Ensure neutral Internet access.
- \* Phaseout all nuclear weapons and private automatic weapons.
- \* Prohibit trade in animal parts.
- \* Initiate reparation for damages to primitive peoples.
- \* Expand global wilderness zones.

### **Acknowledgments and Dedication**

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a debt of gratitude to the parish members of St. Elizabeth of Hungary at Ravenna, Kentucky for use of facilities, as well as those of Our Lady of the Mountains at Stanton, Kentucky for continued interest and assistance.

This book is dedicated to Pope Francis in appreciation for his call to profound change and revolution. With him I am vowed to that cause.

# # # # #

## Endnotes Introduction

1. A working definition of System as used in this book is an economy based on consumption by individuals using capital earned or credited and following patterns dictated by those of privileged wealth; these influence legislators to pass laws that allow them to retain and accumulate more of that wealth and influence ordinary consumers to want more and more of what they lack, each hoping to become wealthy like those in the privileged position.

2. "Healing" and "Earth" has been used by this author in a number of variations for three decades in over 200 ERAs performed throughout North America, with Bob Sears, SJ in *Earth Healing: A Resurrection Centered Approach* (Brassica Books 1995, 2011), in our current Earthhealing "Daily Reflections" series since 2004, and in *Healing Earth: Our Common Blessing* (Seescapes Publishing 2010).

3. *United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report*, March 31, 2014. <<http://planetark.org/wen/71334>>.

4. Tom Rath, *Eat, Move, Sleep: How Small Changes Lead to Big Changes*, (Missionday, 2013).

5. Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*, (Bloomsbury Press, New York, 2009); Thomas Piketty: *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Trans. Arthur Goldhammer, (The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2014).

6. Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence*, Trans. A. Lingis (M. Nishoff, The Hague, 1981), p. 117.

7. Discerning spirits (good and evil) deals with the emerging field of social discernment, for the "Evil One" is among the undiscerned. The term "mammon" is used to cover this and worldliness in general.

8. **Indulgences** are reparation for wrong done to the social order due to sin and remains after sin is forgiven. Amazingly, it is a good example of material reclamation that must be done after pollution has been halted, but is used in a

perverse manner by some environmentalists to be the permission to sin. Strangely, that is precisely what Cap-and-Trade or similar activities are about. Far better is a carbon tax and heavier imposition on luxury use of resources.

9. Peter Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A History of Rome and the Barbarians*, (Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 17. The argument is made that the Senate was a privileged group of land holders and others of old wealth, and truly regarded themselves as the good and respectable, who spoke proper Latin and were the movers and shakers of Roman society.

## Endnotes Chapter One

1. Gar Alperovitz & Lew Daly, *Unjust Deserts: How the Rich Are Taking our Common Inheritance and Why We should Take It Back*, (The New Press, 2009), p. 96.

2. Upon meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe during the war President Lincoln said he was meeting the person who was most responsible for bringing on that conflict.

3. Ann Hagedorn, *Beyond the River: The Untold Story of the Heroes of the Underground Railroad*, Simon & Schuster, 2002.

4. The day this was written I went to the Church as requested and rang the bell for four minutes at 3:45 p.m., when General Grant and Lee signed the surrender agreement 150 years to the hour. Grant meant much to me, for over a 12 year span I always passed the house that he had attended as his first formal schooling; then I returned home to the divided estate of Gen. Henry Lee (Robert's distant relative).

5. This are recorded and embellished in my *The Brothers' War* on the website <earthhealing.info>.

6. My book *Water Sounds* (Marquette University Press, 2010) is on the missionary ventures of Pere Marquette.

7. Christians are aware with St. Paul of the need "to make up all that has still to be undergone by Christ for the sake of his body, the Church" (Colossians 1:24). This sharing does not enhance the value of the redemption (which cannot be increased), but it makes us co-sharers and thus more compassionate people who experience the awesome price that Christ has endured for us.

8. The **Nader Raiders** were associates with public interest lawyer and popular author Ralph Nader who had then and as of this writing the Center for the Study of Responsive Law. We have been partners in various ways ever since

those days in 1970.

9. Warren Brunner and Albert Fritsch, *Appalachian Sensations: A Journey through the Seasons*, (Amazon.com, 2013).

## Endnotes Chapter Two

1. Ralph Nader, *Unsafe at Any Speed: The Designed-In Dangers of the American Automobile*, (Grossman Publishers, 1965).

2. "Consumer," throughout my treatment in the 1970s, did not differentiate between the many types found in the Values and Lifestyles System (VALS): a) Needs-driven -- Poor, Survivors, and Sustainers; b) Outer-directed -- Belongers, Emulators, and Achievers; c) Inner-directed -- I-Am-Me Types, Experimental Types, and Socially Conscious Types. These distinctions did not fit my concerns as I moved to more environmental issues.

3. "Declaration of Principles," United Nations Conference on the Environment, 1972, #3.

4. "Luxury" as used in this text is regarded as inexact in Economics, because what is initially non-essential (TV) becomes essential in a short while. "Luxury good" refers to "a good with an income elasticity of demand greater than unity such that, as income rises, the good accounts for an increasing proportion of the consumer's income" (*The MIT Dictionary of Modern Economics*, p. 258). Thorstein Veblen says some people do conspicuous consumption for the "envy effect." Denis Goulet speaks of three types of goods: necessities (subsistence goods), enhancement goods (making one more human), and luxury goods. John Rausch calls luxury goods "the disproportionate use of limited resources to satisfy the wants of a few." This could be applied to a range of fossil fuel uses.

5. CSPI, *99 Ways to a Simple Lifestyle*, (Anchor/Doubleday, 1976), and (University of Indiana Press, 1976).

6. Regina Brett, "45 Lessons Life Taught Me," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, <[www.snps.com/glurge/lifelessons.asp](http://www.snps.com/glurge/lifelessons.asp)>.

7. Howard Mansfield, "Reclaim Home to Regain Your Soul, Clutter Symptom of Deeper Malady," *The Lexington Herald-Leader* (September 29, 2013) from *Los Angeles Times*.

8. Club of Rome, *Limits to Growth*, and subsequent materials by Donella Meadows et al.

9. *Daily Reflections* (Hence DR)

- "Hydropower's Potential," (*DR*, December 19, 2007);  
"Hydropower: Large and Small," (*DR*, April 24, 2008);  
"Ten Reasons for Small-Scale Hydropower Now," (*DR*, June 7, 2011).
10. "Geothermal Application," (*DR*, July 8, 2006);  
"High Potential Geothermal Areas," (*DR*, December 22, 2007);  
"Geothermal Energy: A Stimulus Package Success," (*DR*, February 11, 2011);  
"Anniversary of Utility-Scale Geothermal Power," (*DR*, December 17, 2010).
11. "Wind Power Coming to Life," (*DR*, March 15, 2008);  
"Bring Wind Power to the Fore," (*DR*, March 6, 2009);  
"Offshore Energy: Wind and/or Oil," (*DR*, August 4, 2010);  
"Windpower and Changing Landscapes," (*DR*, May 26, 2011);  
"Eight Reasons to Go with Wind," (*DR*, March 1, 2012).
12. "Solar-Powered Car," (*DR*, March 28, 2008);  
"Solar Shingles," (*DR*, November 27, 2006);  
"Solar Cookers and Ovens," (*DR*, February 11, 2008);  
"Consider Solar Photovoltaics," (*DR*, July 7, 2010);  
"Promote Solar Hot Water Systems," (*DR*, July 23, 2010).
13. Timothy Cama, <[www.thehill.com](http://www.thehill.com)>, (April 11, 2014) on United Nations Draft Report. A rapid turn about has been witnessed in the last year of this writing and rates are now plateaued and will hopefully start falling.
14. Fred Hirsch, *Social Limits to Growth*, (Harvard University Press, 1976).
15. "Tony Mazzocchi, Labor Warrior and Friend," (*DR*, September 1, 2012).
16. "Ozone: Friend or Foe," (*DR*, September 5, 2008).
17. "Soot: A Climate-Changing Pollutant," (*DR*, May 21, 2013).
18. "Twelve Ways to Save Water," (*DR*, May 21, 2008);  
"Domestic Potable Water Supplies," (*DR*, July 19, 2008).
19. "A Sea of Expectations," *The World in 2014: The Economist*, (2013), p. 77.
20. "Where Have All the Honey Bees Gone?," (*DR*, July 12, 2007);  
"Is Honey Bee Colony Collapse Disorder Solved?," (*DR*, September 6, 2012).
21. "Lead and Children's Day," (*DR*, November 20, 2007);

"Lead Contamination," (DR, May 6, 2009).

22. "Old Car Art," (DR, June 14, 2007);  
"Recycling Old Tires in Different Ways," (DR, November 19, 2007);  
"Recycle Barns," (DR, August 9, 2007);  
"Disposal of Electronics Junk," -- (DR, September 12, 2009);  
"Reuse Materials -- Nine Suggestions," (DR, January 23, 2009);  
"The Yard Sale and Swapping Ideas," (DR, September 10, 2009).
23. Lynn White, Jr. "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science*, 155, No. 3767, (March 10, 1967), pp. 1203-07.

### Endnotes Chapter Three

1. Barry Commoner was the originator of "The four Laws of Ecology:"  
*Everything is connected with everything else; Everything must go somewhere; Nature knows best; and There is no such thing as a free lunch.*
2. E.F. Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful: A Study in Economics as if People Mattered*, (Brand & Briggs, London, 1973)
3. Albert Fritsch and Paul Gallimore, *Healing Appalachia: Sustainable Living through Appropriate Technology*, (University Press of Kentucky, 2007).
4. "The Yurt: A Worthwhile Structure," (DR, January 31, 2014).
5. Rob Roy, *Cordwood Buildings: The State of the Art*, "A Mobile Home Converted to Cordwood," Al Fritsch and Jack Kieffer (New Society Publishers, 2003), pp. 99-101. Also "Learning about a Cordwood Building," (DR, April 10, 2008).
6. Al Fritsch, "Spirituality of Gardening," < [www.earthhealing.info/garden](http://www.earthhealing.info/garden)>.
7. "Drying Food with Solar Energy," (DR, October 23, 2008).
8. Seth Shulman, "Smarter Ways to Keep the Planet Cool," *Catalyst*, (Spring 2012) p. 9.
9. "Cisterns: Conserve Rainwater," (DR, June 11, 2008).
10. "Making Compost Acceptable," (DR, June 19, 2008);  
"Ten Reasons for Composting Toilets," (DR, November 14, 2008).
11. Albert Fritsch, *Reclaiming the Commons: Challenging an Enlightened Church to Act*, (Brassica Books, Third Ed., 2013).

12. Albert Fritsch, *Renew the Face of the Earth*, (Loyola University Press, 1987).
13. John Horvat, *Return to Order: From a Frenzied Economy to an Organic Christian Society*, (Five Star Publications, 2012).
14. John Rausch uses a pneumatic D-E-P-E-N-D-S to summarize globalization effects: Deregulate, Eliminate barriers, Privatize, Export-led Growth, Nullify labor and environmental standards, Downsize government, and Social homogenization (private communication).
15. Richard Kluger, *Seizing Destiny: How America Grew from Sea to Shining Sea*, (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2007).
16. Vine Deloria, Jr., *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto*, (University of Oklahoma, 1988), (cited in Kluger p. 222).
17. *Seizing Destiny*, p. 400.
18. "Physical Exercise for All," (*DR*, April 24, 2007);  
"Indoor Physical Exercise," (*DR*, October 26, 2007);  
"Do and Encourage Physical Exercise," (*DR*, January 16, 2009);
19. Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation: Evangelii Laudium*, (2013) #53.
20. On November 18-19, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI spoke at the *25th International Conference on Health Care*. He stated that it is the moral responsibility of nations to guarantee access to health care for all citizens, regardless of social or economic status or their ability to pay; great inequalities exist in global health care.
21. Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *The Left Alternative*, (Verso, 2005) argues this notion of broad-based funding of education to compensate for poorer areas that cannot afford quality education. The same applies for health services.
22. John Abramson, *Overdosed America: The Broken Promise of American Medicine*, (HarperCollins, New York, 2004).
23. Albert Fritsch, *Tobacco Days: A Personal Journey*, (Brassica Books, 2010).
24. "Discernment Process: Reasons For and Against Smoking," (*DR*, September 26-27, 2007).
25. Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway, *Merchants of Doubt: How a Handful of Scientists Obscured the Truth on Issues from Tobacco Smoke to Global Warming*, (Bloomsbury Press, 2010).

26. Public interest work and art can go hand in hand. Photography would prove a balm for harnessing the exposure of environmental crisis issues. This inspired the first "Simple Lifestyle Calendar" in 1976 and continued in calendars, books, and daily reflections.

## Endnotes Chapter Four

1. **Capitalism** is defined as "A political, social and economic system in which property including capital assets are owned and controlled for the most part by private persons. Under capitalism the price mechanism is used as a signaling system which allocates resources between uses," (*The MIT Dictionary of Modern Economics*, p. 52). The term has no scientific agreement, for we hear of the Chinese Communist "Capitalistic practices." John Kenneth Galbraith says we use "Capitalism" because Milton Freeman's "free market" masks the ownership and relationship patterns involved.

2. Albert Fritsch and Sherman Bamford, *A Manual for Ginseng Growers and Trainers: How to Grow Virtually Wild Ginseng*, (ASPI, 1996).

2. Kristin Johannsen, *Ginseng Dreams: The Secret World of America's Most Valuable Plant*, (University Press of Kentucky, 2006).

3. Albert Fritsch, *Sounds and Silence*, (ASPI, 2000).

4. *Appalachian Sensations*.

5. James Hansen, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity*, (Bloomsbury, New York, 2009), pp. 182-83 and p. 206.

6. Paul Hawken, *The Ecology of Commerce*, (Harper, New York, 1993), Preface and p. 3.

7. Richard Smith, *Green Capitalism: The God That Failed*, , <<http://truth-out.org/news/item/21060>> January 10, 2014, p. 6.

8. "Neutral Carbon: A Shell Game?," (*DR*, September 28, 2007).

9. *The Spirit Level*.

10. *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*.

11. "Free Exchange: Picking Holes in Piketty," *The Economist* (May 31, 2014), p. 69.

12. Fritsch, *Down To Earth Spirituality*, (Sheed and Ward, 1992).



13. *Acts of the Apostles*: churches building themselves (Acts 9:31); The word of God continued to spread and gain followers (Acts 12:24); taught and proclaimed the Good News (Acts 15:35); and spread more and more widely and successfully (Acts 19:20).

14. Robert Sears and Albert Fritsch, "*Earthhealing: A Resurrection-Centered Approach*, (Brassica Books, Second Ed., 2013).

15. Christians are accused by Marxists of being **docile** and awaiting God's action. In an unbiased sense of being docile or **learnable** we concede the point -- but not to be purely passive spectators.

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17. Some speak of rising above a poor condition as needing enough food, clothing, shelter, education and health care to be more human (Denis Goulet); E.F. Schumacher speaks of "Maximum wellbeing with minimum consumption."

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## Endnotes Chapter Five

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4. *Evangelii Laudium*, No. 57; St. John Chrysostom, De Lazaro Concio, II, 6: PG 48, 992D.
5. Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *The Left Alternative*, (Verso, London, New York, 2005), p. 23.
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9. **Free Market** for the purist means that left to itself, through competition an allocation of goods will occur through substitution of rare or over-priced goods with a resulting equilibrium. "Institutionalists" hold that the market will always be distorted because of the maldistribution of power in the economy (e.g., the power of advertising and oligopolistic power).
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