

RECLAIMING THE COMMONS:  
Taking What Is Rightfully Ours

-- A Work in Progress --

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## Introduction: Proclaiming the Need to Share

*They hang the man and flog the woman  
that steal the goose from off the Common,  
But let the greater villain loose  
that steals the common from the goose.*  
(English poem about 1764)

Our planet and its inhabitants are in trouble, and misplaced power has much to do with it. The current world order is becoming dysfunctional to all who observe the signs of our times. Often we are distracted by domestic and local issues; we fail to consider global implications of our actions. At the same time, we are a wired generation with computers and cell phones; we are acquainted with the misfortunes besetting people in distant lands. We know about the ill effects of pollution and resource waste, climate change and its human causes, threatened and endangered plant and animal species, and the overdevelopment and deforestation of our planet's "lungs." Through ease in modern communications we can experience or learn about dysfunctions in the social and economic order: local safety issues, illegal drug traffic, millions with little possibility of gainful employment, refugee camps housing millions, the one billion hungry and two billion without adequate housing in slums and refugee camps, and countless people without adequate medicines and access to health care. These ills are punctuated by radical terrorists and their bombs.

The other side of the picture contains the relative comfort and social status of those who have wealth -- the superrich and those aspiring to be. If this were mere degrees of comfort among all people, the case would rest and this reflection would be unneeded. Not so. Wealth offers the allurements of luxuries, which tax the world's resources. The wealthy have economic power, and with this comes access to political power, and with access comes influence on the legal system that legitimizes their claims to uncontrolled use of natural resources. Part of the pitch of the rich is that everyone is "free" to enter their inner circle, and thus must accept the system and work within it. A culture of consumption is nurtured, and to the degree others partly affirm this culture through spending and indebtedness, the current environmental crisis deepens.

In order to legitimize the present order, many of the wealthy profess a "prosperity gospel," wherein their material privileges and wealth result from their favor with God. It is their privilege as stewards of resources to distribute their largess as they see fit. They court legislators through contributions to continue the status quo; they fashion their influence so as to maximize profits and to employ a few more talented associates as investors within their system; they wax heavy on greed and light on need. They overlook hundreds of millions of the hungry, thirsty, homeless, and ill crying out from various parts of this beleaguered world. They seek to suppress horror stories of accumulated wealth by the small number of the ruling class. They make greed a sought-after virtue.

Current economic statistics tell incredible stories of gross irresponsibility. The wealthiest 1% of the world's people control over half of the financial resources; bankers get bonuses while the banks get taxpayer bailout funds; the head of a major American bank retires after a write-off of \$8 billion, and is awarded a \$160 million parachute; Lehman Brothers collapses after its CEO obtained "legal" perks worth hundreds of millions of dollars; Ponzi schemes of all sorts a rise; unemployment hovers at 10% and even higher in other nations; infrastructure is unattended; and resources are sequestered in tax havens.

These stories are not limited to richer and older industrialized countries. Emerging nations refuse to make concrete commitments to safeguard against climate change (as happened at the December, 2009, Copenhagen Conference on climate change). Instead of declining pollution rates, as in Europe, there is an increase of one new (slightly less polluting) coal-powered plant in China each week with only a slight pause during the recent global recession. Coal is the fuel of choice for emerging nations of Asia and emissions; despite the signs

of impending climate change, the amount of pollution continues to climb. Private free-market capitalism of the West has become an ally of China's state capitalism, but this will not last. Unemployment rises.

Change must come, but one wonders what route it will take. Will it be through tweaking of the current unfair system, or violent revolution to overthrow the system, or by the emergence of a new and just order through non-violent means? The last is possible, but the task ahead is utterly daunting. Those of us experiencing a deep disquiet in the turn of events since the 2008 economic meltdown and the failed Copenhagen Climate Conference of late 2009, grope for answers. If we give up and say "nothing can save our planet," then our despair will lead to inevitable ruin. If we think Earth will be saved by magic, then presumption prevails, and ruin will be as spiritually devastating as despair itself. An alternative possibility is a sense of hope that Earth can be saved if we seek to answer our problems by drawing from the wellspring of theological reflections and the manifesto found in the *Magnificat*.<sup>1</sup>

The moment we become one family and affirm that all can create something new together, we will feel a surge of new energy, and know that justice is at work. The feeling of powerlessness will give way to a surging power found in solidarity with those who suffer patiently. Suffering brings together those who experience similar circumstances, and in their enthusiasm, the divine is manifested. We cannot stay silent; we cannot continue to allow injustice to oppress our brothers and sisters.

Modern technology -- through Internet, television, radio, postal mail, phones, cars, rail, ships, and airplanes -- has transcended distances and brought us together. We are a global family whose home is being disturbed by a privileged plutocratic minority that grows ever more powerful through inappropriate use of the same technologies that have the power to unite us. We remember those who suffer; that includes all who lack the means to provide for the basics of life: those terrorized by lack of food, those held helpless by unemployment, those suffering from illness and disease, even the affluent haunted by the ultimate question on Judgment Day, "When did we fail to feed you Lord when you were hungry?"

How can we bring together the suffering human multitudes, while caring for the threatened and endangered flora and fauna on our troubled planet? We step back and look within; individually we have our weaknesses and limitations, but can discover spiritual strength when in solidarity with the poor. Energy swells up within when we practice self-control through patient endurance. We see and observe;

we hear and listen. We find the courage to say "enough" to the wealthy and "we are one with you" to the destitute. We affirm the existence of economic and social classes: the "haves," who are focused on acquiring, maintaining, and securing their possessions against thieves, terrorists, and tax collectors; the "have nots" who find the quest for essentials of life a daily struggle. Between the "haves" who are surrounded by overabundance and the destitute "have-nots" who lack essentials is a broad middle spectrum, which enjoys an adequate quality of life. Instead of being energized by greed, we must seek a spiritual sharing, bringing all into the great middle.<sup>2</sup>

While we are aware of divisions in the social fabric, we are puzzled regarding how to act. We may opt to live more simply and thus move from merely seeing the poor to working with them, taking a further step on the road to humility by becoming one with the poor. This path has some potential as a model for achieving solidarity with the poor. However, with the urgency of many of our problems, are such individual heroic actions sufficient? We can influence our immediate neighbors; we can help change the local community, but as citizens we must do more; we are committed to furthering a global future that will benefit all people. How can we work together for a common goal? How can we check and reverse the rampant privatization of public resources and regain essential resources for the needy? How can we tap into the discontent of the millions of hungry and unemployed? Will we encourage even the poor to peep into the gated communities of the wealthy and call for profound change?

Urgency demands practical decisions. We are unable to foretell the future, but the best we can do within a prophetic framework is to say, "Based on past experience here is where we are heading, unless...." This reflection makes no predictions, but can, at best, explore ways to direct and encourage a hope-filled future. Even our future must become a commons to reclaim through both word and deed -- even if the final results are not successful in our lifetimes. We find satisfaction by taking the long view.

Personal, individual salvation drives some to focus on overcoming their own imperfections -- and rightly so. However, all of us need to look both within and outside of ourselves. We need to be deeply disturbed by the vicissitudes of the current social and economic situation that oppresses our brothers and sisters. We must prepare ourselves all the more to help those unjustly treated. In helping them, we seek to overcome our imperfections, which hold us back. We are the parents of our future, and all the poor are part of one family moving together in this spiritual quest. We learn quite soon that material affluence leads to insensitivity that deadens the spirit, stifles rational discourse, and allows cynicism to go unchallenged.

Materialism reigns as god. We search for a spiritual energy to move forward.

As we become aware of our impoverishment and marginal condition, we cast about for resources. We are willing to listen to experts for techniques to effect change, provided they are not against us. Indeed, those gifted with intellectual acumen, technical expertise, and artistic creativity could be at the service of all, especially the lowly of this Earth. This service role is becoming apparent as the environmental crisis deepens and persists. The task is far more complex than we envisioned four decades ago in the heady days following the first Earth Day in 1970. Then, it seemed that easily-passed legislation and well-placed, clean technologies could solve environmental problems quickly. However, with time we discovered that problems are more complex. The onus has shifted from considering the sheer numbers of Earth's people as a problem to a smaller number of unscrupulous consumers with esoteric tastes and demands. Recent scientific evidence indicates that strong consumer demands are leading to the global warming/climate change phenomenon; this is truly human-caused and not so easily tackled. Consumer and ecological demands clash, tempers flare, and solutions allude us.

The challenge deepens because emerging middle-class consumers in developing nations want similar autos, appliances, and spacious housing that Western consumers possess. This fact heightens demands and increases resource use and associated pollutants, thus the environmental crisis continues. The efforts of "greens" make a difference -- but it is more than counterbalanced by the power of commercial interests propagandizing an anxious world to consume more and more. Emerging nations are reluctant to change their path; current industries, powerplants, and homes are using more coal, natural gas and petroleum as fuel in making electricity than ever before and (amid all the hype about global warming), a rise in total emissions has occurred during the twenty-first century's first decade. Mere knowledge about dangers is not sufficient; the will to act responsibly is lacking.

However, hope springs eternal. The first step is to see our misdeeds in their full social dimension. Many consumers in democratic societies have been propagandized and regard cooperative measures as "socialistic." By branding this process as socialism even the major recipients of Medicare and Social Security are drawn into defending a dysfunctional economic system that does not truly benefit them in the long run, but actually causes them to go deeper into economic servitude.

The older "middle" class is experiencing a downward spiral, even

as they try to fight back; housing foreclosures, expanding personal debt, bankruptcies, and loss of jobs are rude awakenings. Large numbers seek handouts for the first time, and are discovering what it is to be "have-nots." Perhaps a few questions are surfacing: Why should the wealthy class have unfair low rates of taxes and dodge responsibility through legal or illegal tax havens at home and abroad? Why give special treatment to those "too big to fail"? Why does the controlled media give constant market reports that have little regard for the lower-income population? Why are the privileged superrich allowed to bask in their privileges? Is this really a "free market" economy? Why not encourage the downwardly mobile to join the poor of the world, for these groups form the vast majority. The discontent of the have-not class is palpable.

Addressing unfairness while retaining rational discourse is a challenge. Change is not a theoretical exercise for a distant place but something that is beginning to be demanded by our poor neighbors throughout the world. Change is necessary here and now, for we can ill afford to retreat to fiction and fantasized worlds. We must be the change agents, the reclaimers of what ought to be held in common. So we learn from ecology that "Everything is connected with everything else."<sup>3</sup> Our social connectedness is emphasized through a global neighborhood compressed by rapid transportation and instant communication. Our backyard neighborhood includes Haiti and sub-Saharan Africa as well as parts of our country -- and is the HERE of our lives. One billion hungry people need food NOW; two billion need better health protection NOW; refugees need housing NOW. Problems from health care to climate change require solutions. *Well, now is the favorable time; this is the day of salvation.* (II Corinthians 6:2)

Knowing the problems here and now is child's play compared to the third component of needed global change: solidarity with others to bring about change -- the WE. It takes elders along with middle-aged and youth, those from all nations. Dreams of a designated "just" leader with others in rote-step are unrealistic. Establishing global justice and reclaiming of the commons demands the participation of all who are affected, from the lowly to those in high places, the haves and the have-nots. All people must work together in order to help reclaim resources needed for change. We join the "common" folks who are not beholden to particular financial interests; these people struggle to make ends meet in a world of rising essential food and fuel costs. A global participative dialog is called for, since all who share the **commons** are affected.

How can all people be incorporated into the change process? The challenge grows and tempts us to withdraw and accept a sense of

powerlessness. However, prophets emerge who point out the dangers of a failure to act and they warn of the dire consequences of human-induced climate change. Answers are not simplistic; they involve all of us in some way. A critical review of current economic and social practices must occur as well. Globalized capitalism must be confronted to prevent blatant consumer practices from spreading to the emerging middle class, resulting in resource depletion and unchecked pollution. A principle of cooperation and resource sharing is sought:

### **The Principle of Sharing Resources**

*We need to share resources so that we can regain our common inheritance for the sake of the entire human family many of whom are in grave need of essentials. Our immediate task is to regulate the distribution of resources to the degree that they are needed to assist all of us (including future generations) to live worthwhile lives and to renew the face of our wounded Earth herself. We are to refrain from overusing or misusing these resources, for misuse leads to greed, insensitivity and selfishness by the privileged few.<sup>4</sup>*

The *Common Good*<sup>5</sup> or the individual good is the issue; social justice or individual self-satisfaction; non-profit motivation versus material profit motivation; the public interest and private interest. A win-win situation is possible when we find satisfaction as individuals and when the Common Good of all is embraced, and we are aware of contributing to it. Indeed, the good of all results in our benefit. However, this situation does not come automatically. Sharing is a community-learned experience and is contrary to capitalistic culture, which is characterized by severe competition and pressure for individuals to get ahead, and a sense of the primacy of self-worth at the expense of the commons.

Sharing means All must benefit and participate. Don't "all" people include infants and the infirm, prisoners and the homeless? In order to share, creativity is needed because the outcome is in doubt, mutual support is weak, and barriers seem overwhelming. One practical problem is that a system of total inclusiveness runs contrary to the possessive tendencies of those who hold tightly to natural resources. Because the privileged control so many of the mass media outlets, our democratic process, which ought to promote sharing, is hampered.

Plainly speaking, reclaiming the commons involves meeting and overcoming the barriers which discourage sharing of resources. In fact, the vast majority, the lowly, the voiceless, and those who suffer are starting to stir -- in North Africa, in the Middle East, and in China. Awareness breeds discontent. Modern communication media

have threatened a condition of isolation, and most people are conscious of inequalities in the distribution of goods and services. The *disparity* of resources is evident, and counseling patience until the goods and services trickle down is beginning to wear thin. Discontent rises with escalating food prices, and persistent unemployment; the lowly hear that the superrich have become richer, and the poor and middle class are left behind. The lowly feel that something could be better when inequality tolerance is challenged openly and directly.

The "right to life" is at the heart of the issue. Most people of good will affirm the oneness of the human family, and that includes some sense of equality among all people. The groundswell of discontent is found in the lack of access by some to the essentials of life (food, potable water, housing, etc.). Sharing includes a principle of social equality; those who do not have essential goods and services have a prior right to resources over those who have more than enough by which to live. Change involves making this principle operative, and that means defending the right to life in all its forms, not only for those close to us but for all people in this world.

If some have and others do not have, how can we bring about an equality that is more than words? Are we willing and able to redefine the way we allocate resources: to those in power? the first to arrive? those of noble birth by blood or by wealth? to entitled owners? to non-migrants? Today, the privileged swim in luxury while others drown in destitution. A reclaimed commons finds no place for extremes, for both extreme wealth and poverty endanger the social order. Why allow one thousand billionaires to own so much, and the one billion poor to own virtually nothing? Something is wrong, and those who seek to maintain the status-quo search mightily for ways to hold tight to their privileges. Isn't such a situation tinder for a conflagration? To allow three thousand children to die from hunger and malnutrition each day is a crime against humanity. Is outmoded privilege to be tolerated? Why be silent?

**Why begin with the unprivileged?** They are motivated for obtaining change; certainly, the privileged do not have that motivation. The lowly have been purified through suffering and a lack of justice -- and this energizes their action. The need to find essentials of life leads to a more practical mindset, one that can overcome barriers more easily and looks to spiritual resources from deep within -- enthusiasm, "the God within." This enthusiasm is contagious within a community of the lowly, and inspires all to overcome a cynicism that says: "Be practical; we would ALL like to be millionaires." The counter response is, "Be realistic, all deserve the essentials of life." Enthusiasm opens new possibilities, fortifies a sense of self-worth, and overcomes inevitable barriers.

Granted, poor folks lack thinktanks, high salaries, and a covey of consultants. However, the poor are free enough not to be beholden to wealth for their continued operations. Through spiritual resources they discover a growing belief in a future that energizes one to work hard, to coalesce, and to reclaim all the elements of the commons that have been usurped by the privileged. All practical steps must be undertaken,<sup>6</sup> and those most versed in practicality are the lowly. The desire to act involves all people of good will.

However, the lowly need not wait for the wealthy to act, for the time is now. Funding sources are in short supply and yet access to modern rapid transportation (e.g., Interstates) and communication networks (e.g., Internet) allows for more ease in joining forces for common causes and emerging solidarity. People can travel with relative ease, and information can be disseminated at relatively low cost. One need not have access to a printing press in order to get word to an eager world.

Add to practicality and accessibility a willingness by the lowly to take risks. The lowly have less infrastructure; fewer systems to maintain; less concern about tenure, reputation, and peer expectations; and less need for protection of treasures. Simply put, the lowly have less to lose and, thus, greater mobility and freedom to be daring. Preservationists of the current order will not dare to take extravagant steps. Migrant hordes of Huns, Vandals, Mongols, and Somali refugees have much in common -- little to lose by their moves. Historically, the lowly of the world share the sense that "all is gain, nothing is loss."

On the other hand, the privileged, status-quo seekers lack any enthusiasm to reclaim or share what they already have. Those, who merely tinker with reform of the current economic system, support a basic routine: propose to do research or make changes that will improve what is present; convince financial powers that this is a good project; dutifully expend time and resources needed to carry out the project; report results to the funding sources, and continue business as usual. However, the system itself is never called into question, and its limitations are confronted by slight modifications that take a lifetime to implement.

Reclaimers of the Commons must strive to be in solidarity with the lowly. Watching from an ivory tower is insufficient. Granting the need to work with limited resources, reclaimers must become one with all who desire to bring about meaningful change. The method is as follows: propose to make necessary changes that will improve what is present; invite all to participate in the movement; and work within

the limits of existing resources. Those with limited material resources will find support in spiritual resources. Change agents must be part of the body of reclaimers, not people set apart. They cannot **deny** the urgency of the present situation by some form of affluent insensitivity; they cannot **excuse** themselves while they wait for a learned expert to rise to the occasion; they cannot **escape** the responsibility that bears down upon them to join forces and act here and now.

**Change agents** must arise and act. Our planet's resources have been misused -- leading to pollution and the degradation of our Earth. Squandering and misuse have resulted in a global crisis, a condition with which no previous generation has had to contend. A major problem is poor regulatory measures by governing bodies who have allowed a privileged few to capture and sequester resources for their own personal or corporate gain. It is not necessary to reinvent "good government," but an alerted citizenry is needed to see that priorities are set, good regulations are enacted, and through permissiveness or self-interest agencies fulfill their mandates for the benefit of all the people.

**Globalization**, from an economic stance, includes the movement of goods, capital, and jobs across national boundaries.<sup>7</sup> From a broader social-justice perspective, globalization indicates a growing awareness of the brotherhood and sisterhood of all human beings and of our collective responsibility to see that all will enjoy a good life. Both the economic and social justice perspectives benefit from the availability of modern global communications and transportation networks, which allow information to travel easily, commerce to flow freely, money to be exchanged instantly, jobs to move to underdeveloped areas, injustice to be detected, and justice to be actualized. Globalization is the awareness that the lowly must call for their fair share of resources and must help "liberate" the wealthy from their excesses.

Economic globalization is both a peril and a promise. The peril is that such a process leads to a concentration of wealth in the hands of a powerful and privileged few; the promise is that this process can be regulated and controlled. Through the media, the lowly are aware that others have a far higher standard of living and access to many fascinating consumer products. They want some of these good things -- a share in the materialism of the broader culture. They realize that the privileged, undertaxed individuals and corporations are able to control access to material resources and foster a contagion of selfishness that impoverishes the soul and blinds one to the needs of others. The leadership of North America, Western Europe, the oil-rich Middle East, and certain Pacific Rim countries have hastened

globalization's rise -- and the rest strive to follow suit.

Along with economic globalization we observe the emergence of a globalization of social justice, a new consciousness of the shrinking global neighborhood and a sense that we are all one family who must care for each other. Material-profit motivation is questioned when the priority becomes satisfying the basic needs of food, housing, education and health -- sharing is a motivating force which maximizes the good for all people and thus creates a spiritual "capital" in which "profit" is defined in peace and security. This globalization of social justice refutes a possessive mindset which results in a failure to feed the hungry (Matthew 25). A germinal or actual social globalization is embedded in most religious traditions. The only major exception is "prosperity gospel" churches with their capitalistic theology.

True democracy demands proper sharing of resources at all levels of governance: individual, local, regional, national, international, and global or planetary. Globalization goes beyond limited international undertakings (e.g., trade agreements among nations). As part of the human family (a globalized concept) we share this planet: Antarctica and unclaimed regions, oceans, outer space, natural resources (air, water, wildlife, forests, cultural sites), the store of information for our benefit (general knowledge, health, research findings), and the means of reaching a higher quality of life (communications and transportation means). Some private property pertains to the personal needs of individuals and is to be retained for their use.

The opposite of sharing is *sequestering*, taking for one's private use what others understand belongs also to them as part of their own claim to basic living. Forms of sequestering, enclosing and privatization, have been carried out by powerful elements throughout human history. One may note the process of colonizing the Western Hemisphere, from Columbus, the Spanish and Portuguese, the French, the English, the Swedish, the Russian, the Dutch, and the Danish. The luster of gold blinded them to the values of natives. Companies sanctioned by their respective national sponsors were involved in searching for cod, or growing tobacco, or trapping for furs. Resources held in common by native peoples were seized and utilized under threat of arms.

The roots of this exploitation are found in ancient and medieval colonies (agricultural colonization of North Africa by Rome and exploitation of Black Sea regions by Grecian states and of the Baltic region by Teutonic peoples). Through more sophisticated technology (sailing ships, compasses, etc.) and the long arm of military might

(gun powder, cannon, etc.) infringement on the commons became global in the last five hundred years. Infringement continues today in urbanization, multinational banks and other commercial interests, exploitation of resources for consumer goods, and large-scale commercial media outlets.

All creatures are interdependent and generally interact with others to obtain the basics of life in order to survive: food, water, shelter and protective cover, health, basic education and even recreational time and space. In order to ensure access to these needs, resources are given by a generous Creator to be shared in a rational manner for the good of all. Proper government must ensure that all working together address the problem of lack of adequate resources and basic needs. Our responsibility grows with our awareness of the dangers of infringement and how it harms others as well as ourselves.

As we see the need to hasten global sharing we realize that we are both protectors of the rights of others and the change agents to ensure these rights. Through the process of reclaiming the commons we reaffirm these inalienable **rights**. As democratic citizens we must be vigilant so that these rights are not violated by autocratic forces. The struggles of the past century by autocratic forces have made us aware that individual rights must be protected -- not abrogated -- by the state. Silence and inaction is never an excuse. Indeed, basic neighborliness is at the heart of mutual sharing. Just as our misdeeds damage the entire human neighborhood or social structure, so do our good deeds build up social structural relationships. Individual rights are part of our collective commons: we do not have a license to infringe on others' rights, neither are they permitted to do the same to us. The protection of individual rights is a common concern.

A reform of the global system of governance is necessary, but this cannot be achieved unless all are mindful of the Common Good. Social justice calls for the establishment of a system to ensure that basic needs always preempts special financial interests. As a superpower, America has wielded widespread influence in everything from language to fashion and lifestyle (and the devastating effects of over-consumption).<sup>8</sup> The same influence that has led to overuse of consumer goods must now be turned to the promotion of the Common Good.

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The following nine chapters explore the human rights that are violated by infringements upon the commons. These infringements include: exclusion of portions of the population from essential goods (food, fuel, water, building materials) and services (access to health facilities, education, and communications); those who fence and enclose common land or wilderness through some form of "legitimation;" those who degrade resources through unregulated actions (air, outer

space, silent space, water sources); and those who retain or keep from general circulation advances meant for the benefit of all (intellectual and cultural commons).

Reclaiming the Commons is a process that requires practices, agencies and regulations at all levels of governance -- individual, domestic, local, regional, national, and global. We will treat the following aspects of the commons: air includes outer space; water involves potable sources and the vast oceans; land includes wilderness, forests, cultivated landscape and greenspace; cultural commons includes preserving historic sites and accepting the diversity of attitudes by various cultures; access to health facilities includes the practical aspects of funding such facilities; intellectual achievements include the educational process of enhancing an involved citizenry; communication includes the rights to free speech and the need to guard silent space so that all can speak more meaningfully; trade and commerce must both be promoted and controlled at all levels for the Common Good; and the free movement of people (migrants, refugees, and tourists).

#### Commons HERE

**Chapter One** deals with natural beauty and the damage done by those who sequester common resources. Air pollution is the first level of environmental pollution awareness. Programs are required to curb fossil fuel consumption, recognize the human causes of climate change, and initiate processes such as renewable energy applications that minimize harm to our planet.

**Chapter Two** reflects on the water commons ranging from potable water sources to the vast oceans. Here we touch on the concept of who "owns" this resource. Recurring water shortages lead us to confront legitimate demands for the thirsty to take what is rightly theirs in contrast to allowing private water holders to give as they deem fit. The dangers of the laissez-faire approach by the haves, who are reluctant to surrender power and privilege, is exposed. However, global resources belong to all of us and not just the privileged few.<sup>9</sup> Take the water but do so non-violently.

**Chapter Three** considers the nagging problem of the ownership of land. Wilderness, wildlife habitat, Antarctica and fragile lands are discussed. We discuss land commons and its enclosure,<sup>10</sup> with emphasis on American attitudes and land tenure practices. A more refined global land commons is emerging.

#### Commons NOW

**Chapter Four** deals with cultures, those that are predominant and expanding today, and those that are threatened and endangered for

various reasons. Attitudinal differences as to the worth of various cultures, especially those of primitive people are discussed. Disparity of wealth threatens poorer sub-cultures and this condition must be addressed.

**Chapter Five** makes us face the unhealthy circumstances of so many of our brothers and sisters throughout the world. If we cannot address current "universal" health needs in our country, how can we do this on a global level? Funding for such a global basic health facility access is difficult, but must be examined in the light of global security, existing military spending, and the need for fair taxation.

**Chapter Six** brings us to the changes in attitude that are required for a shared world and a direct confrontation with barriers existing today. Access to educational facilities and communication tools and media must always be safeguarded.

#### WE the Commoners

**Chapter Seven** considers the silent space needed for reflection and action along with ways to confront and reduce noise pollution. Household and community compromises on areas and times of silence and of various sounds are considered.

**Chapter Eight** is where we come head-to-head with powerful commercial interests. Here we will address the question: Can we solve global environmental problems without addressing the inherent shortcomings of the global free-market system?

**Chapter Nine** describes the characteristics of people in transition with a special emphasis on becoming change agents. The free movement of people includes safeguards for travelers and residents, for those seeking work, and those needing to find their mission in life.

**The Conclusion** moves toward a solution that considers all of these nine areas. A proper redistribution of resources emerges as a just way to address essential needs; this points to a new and ideal political/economic order with several key elements. What emerges is a profound need to start with an individual change of heart, and to move rapidly to an integration of these insights at broader social levels.

## Chapter One: Air Commons

*See the rainbow and praise its maker, so superbly beautiful is its splendour. Across the sky it forms a glorious arc drawn by the*

*hands of the Most High.* (Sirach 43:11-13)<sup>1</sup>

We begin our reflections on "Reclaiming the Commons" with *life* as an act of sharing. Our Creator's goodness is shared and is wonderful to behold; we creatures are the benefactors, and in utter gratitude we are moved to share with others. Yes, we could begin by admitting to living on a harmed planet with its denuded hills and polluted rivers. Some concerned citizens take that approach, but often gratitude for gifts-given is pushed aside. Overemphasis on the spoiled does not do justice to the present moment, and on a hope-filled future world that we must both design and parent.

As we mature, we realize that our lives are short and our mortal time span shrinks with each passing day. How can we mortals be the most efficient instruments for healing our troubled Earth and bring about rebirth? How can we use our fleeting moments well? Saving our Earth challenges us to be balanced in judgments, calm during crises, and innovative in needed responses. Natural beauty, though increasingly sparse and difficult to observe, has a calming effect and allows us to see beyond immediate troubles. This beauty reflects the One we seek to imitate in godly ways.

**a) Infringement on Air Commons**

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

Our right to life includes the right to fresh air. Air, this most elementary of commons, is necessary for all breathing creatures, for the oxygen mantle that covers our Earth is one of the precious essential ingredients (along with water) that make this a liveable planet. Because air is essential, no one has a right to contaminate this life-giving commons, which must remain available to all breathing creatures. Corporations or individuals have no more "right to pollute" than the right to kill, for to deprive another of fresh air is to pronounce a death sentence. Presuming that "dilution is the solution to pollution" is deceptive and risky to others' health especially with regards to air.

Polluted air is the most elementary form of environmental assault that can be easily observed. Even infants know fairly early that their room has a strange odor caused by something they have done. Since air is needed by all breathing creatures, no one has a right to contaminate it and endanger others. With the advent of the industrial age, air-polluting sources became more frequent, first from coal-burning industry, and later from powerplants and motor vehicles. In due time, industrial air pollutants from particulates to nitrogen and sulfur

oxides have been major air contaminants. With the advent of coal-fueled, steam-driven pumps and engines, and metal smelters emitting sulfur oxides, modern industry has caused pollution. The 1800s belching smokestacks were badges of community pride -- representing full employment.

However, community opinion shifted after disasters such as occurred at Donora, Pennsylvania in October, 1948, when during a five-day period weather conditions resulted in a temperature inversion that trapped coal smoke within the river valley. Over half of the 14,000 residents became ill and about two dozen died; air pollution became more than an inconvenience -- it was a public health problem. Other victims of polluted air started to be identified, such as those suffering with asthma, emphysema, and other respiratory diseases. For many of them, breathing became a challenge, as it had been for centuries in domestic environments requiring fuel for cooking and heating. The poor have to cook with fuels at hand, because transporting fuel is beyond their means. Space heating is often non-existent and space cooling unthinkable; residents dress for the seasons.

Smokers may contaminate a domestic atmosphere where infants and elderly spend much time, and they must be held accountable. The contamination of air through domestic cooking in inefficient stoves using wood, dung, or other forms of cheap biomass is a global problem.<sup>2</sup> These devices are used by between two-and-a-half and three million people; they generate smoke that causes respiratory and eye problems for cooks and other residents, especially the very young and very old. Good ventilation and exhaust systems are often lacking. The WHO reports that 1.6 million premature deaths (half of them children) occur each year due to the use of these defective devices, resulting in increased incidence of cataracts, pneumonia and even tuberculosis. Efficient stoves and solar cookers have promising possibilities for millions of homes needing fresh air.

Outdoor air pollution can occur through natural causes from volcanoes to sandstorms; however, in recent centuries human causes have become increasingly important. Victims gasp for breath and require oxygen tanks in order to stay alive -- and no one makes the air polluters pay for the oxygen tanks or the costly treatments. Only gradually with time has the impact of the polluting sources been recognized along with all the associated health costs.

China, India, and other nations have not learned well enough from earlier industrialized nations; rather, they stoke their emerging economies by cheap coal with resulting pollution that affects their own people. Their emerging middle-class clamor for petroleum-fueled

vehicles, which add ozone, carbon monoxide and other major contaminants to the already-polluted air. Emission control devices have reduced pollution considerably, but delaying strict energy efficiency standards has exacerbated problems by allowing emission volumes to increase.

Acid rain, resulting from air laden with oxides of sulfur and nitrogen, corrodes structures, contaminates rain water, harms vegetation, and causes respiratory damage to many breathing creatures. The effect of this acid rain compounds problems such as collecting rainwater in drought-prone areas. Excessive carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas, adds to climate change along with others gases such as methane -- 23 times more destructive than the carbon dioxide when allowed to escape into the atmosphere. Keeping air "fresh" is a global challenge.

Is space beyond our immediate atmosphere a *res nullius* also? Truly, it extends millions of light-years, far beyond anything we can imagine. What we appreciate on a star-lit night is a vast cosmic expanse that envelops our planet and our solar system, and is measured by light years (the distance light will travel in a single year or 5,880,000,000,000 miles). Space, as part of the atmospheric commons, needs to be shared by all, and thus no one person or group has a right to damage it. This vast area beyond the mantle of our atmosphere can be damaged through *space junk* such as small paint chips, gloves or exploded satellites that can damage space vehicles. Furthermore, private commercial travel and commerce could begin to divide that spatial commons among the superrich (see Chapter Nine). Also, the rights to *solar energy access* is an emerging area of concern.

The Sputnik challenge of the 1950s gave the highly technological space program its greatest boost; billions of dollars went into competing space programs. Japan and the European Union (EU) entered the fray with less fanfare, but also with utter determination. Today the younger EU program has projects involving missions to two planets and a comet. China and India are launching weather and communications satellites, and the list of space-faring nations will grow in the coming decades. Space exploration and scientific research at the International Space Station have their good qualities, provided the resources used to maintain such programs are not too extensive. International communications satellites are strategically placed to help with global exchange of information. *Militarization* of outer space in "star-wars" scenarios is hopefully fiction -- but is it?

The air we breathe and the heavenly view we enjoy are aspects of a single commons experienced with delight by primitive and modern people alike. Our knowledge of photosynthesis, respiration and

fermentation shows the role of air in our lives; our astronomical knowledge renders a fascination with the immense distances and diversity of the macrocosm. Every time we exert ourselves by taking deep breaths of fresh air, we appreciate our own life; the brightness, color and changing patterns of stars turn our minds to the Creator of all. Many in industrialized areas do not have that fresh air and must stay indoors; many in congested urban areas suffer in a lesser degree from the modern phenomenon of *light pollution* (inability to see the night stars). Health experts tell us how polluted air can shorten the lives of countless numbers of people. Astronomers figure precisely when a comet will return, the composition of a star or planet, the approximate number of galaxies in the Milky Way, and the complexities of the cosmos. By the testimony of health experts, we must have unpolluted air for our physical health; by further testimony we must have access to the wonders of the heavens for our enhanced quality of life.

**b) Actions to Reclaim Air Commons**

*Pride of the heights, shining vault,  
so in a glorious spectacle, the sky appears,  
The sun, as he emerges, proclaims at his rising,  
'a thing of wonder is the work of the Most High!'*

(Sirach 43:1)

Quite often, environmental action means taking steps to reduce the use of non-renewable fossil fuels and to substitute for such fuels by use of renewable energy sources. Both conservation of energy and the substituting of solar, wind, geothermal, hydro, some biofuels and other renewable energy sources are primary ways to initiate a process of reclaiming -- but they are not the sole ways, and thus this book develops beyond this first chapter.

1. Individual and Domestic Actions -- Clean indoor and outdoor air are needed for a high quality of life and for preserving our own health. In centuries before the industrial revolution, clean air was taken for granted. Certainly smoke-filled indoor air did exist, but most humble structures were airy enough to dissipate smoke resulting from inefficient cooking and heating devices. Insulated modern homes retain heated air in winter and cooled air in summer. Infants and the elderly spend more time indoors and are more vulnerable to indoor pollution. Today, governmental regulation of domestic indoor atmosphere (in contrast to work places) is virtually non-existent -- thus toxic gas formation can go unmonitored and uncontested.

Domestic energy conservation measures include replacing incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent and LED electric light bulbs, maintaining consistent indoor temperature, downsizing living

space, drying clothes outdoors, and installing additional insulation. Second only to energy conservation is substituting renewable energy applications such as using solar or wind energy for space heating, lighting and cooking, cooling naturally with shade trees, and considering geothermal energy applications. Transportation conservation measures that save on non-renewable energy sources include doing more biking and walking, patronizing public rather than private travel modes and choosing trains instead of planes for long distance travel. For auto choice, drive energy efficient and electric vehicles.

The choice of cooking stove is more than a domestic and local issue; since about 40% of the world's population uses inefficient stoves, it is urgent that these polluting stoves be replaced by solar ovens or more efficient conventional biomass ones.<sup>3</sup> Governmental agencies must become involved; overworked domestic cooks need information, advice and assistance in implementing a change in their age-old habits and practices; the need is for better stove designs as well as better ventilation systems, since human health is at stake. More efficient cooking stoves are recommended: where a more intense heating device is needed to cook foods acceptable to the culture; where the solar potential is not sufficient to cook the foods quickly; or where cooks are away at daytime employment and must cook food at night.

Such cooking programs can be ideal assistance projects by United States (U.S.) Peace Corps volunteers and similar groups. The background expertise for training and implementation requires some technical education by trainers (preferably local people); sensitivity to the local culture that uses inefficient stoves is crucial; persuading cooks to change practices may prove problematic; working locally with individual homemakers is more successful; and results (less fuel-gathering time, less indoor smoke, etc.) can be realized. With adequate training and information, cooks are able to pass the new expertise on through a dramatic multiplier effect.

Solar cooker funding (\$2 billion for materials, installation and instruction) for furnishing 10 million cooking units per year for a decade could be available from potential *Global Development Funds* (GDF).<sup>4</sup> See Appendix One. Globally, solar cookers and efficient biomass cookers are needed by tens of millions of households. Efficient biomass cooking stove information and installment programs could receive an annual expenditure of \$2 billion from GDF money.

2. Air and Light Pollution Controls -- Air pollution affects certain regions more than others. Coal-burning powerplants, heavy industry, and congested traffic are not evenly distributed on this planet. Particulate matter, nitrogen oxides, ozone, sulfur oxides,

and other pollutants vary from negligible levels to hazardous conditions depending on proximity to sources. In 1990, the U.S. Congress established a "cap-and-trade" policy for sulfur dioxide emission, which has a declining cap over the years but free-of-charge tradeable rights to emit the pollutant; if companies emit at lower rates they can sell "rights to pollute" to other polluters.

The morality of cap-and-trade schemes for toxic emissions or for climate-changing carbon dioxide is open for discussion. Polluters should pay penalties for not reaching acceptable cap levels; even better, fossil-fuel users should be required to install air pollution controls, with stiff fines for violation. Local regulations often forbid outdoor burning. In more recent years some people seeking fewer air-pollution regulations have argued that these are "job-killers." However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) argued in 2011 that two new proposed rules would create 1.5 million jobs or about 300,000 on an annual average over a five-year period.

Other forms of air pollution exist: light, odor, and noise (see Chapter Seven). Light pollution hinders an appreciation of the night sky in urban areas. The natural celestial night is shrouded from our vision, a fact we confirm when traveling by plane at night and observing distant city lights. The urbanized half of the world's inhabitants are unable to gaze upon a beautiful night sky. The problem reaches beyond individual citizen actions to community regulation of light pollution, including street lights and vehicles. Tucson, Arizona, near where a major academic observatory is located, has taken steps to reduce light pollution. Recall (or read about) the famous blackouts during the Second World War, when drivers drove about with dimmed lights, street lighting was curbed, and windows were covered with black shades after dark. Peacetime solutions are difficult; reflection shields could direct lighting downward where the pedestrian and driver could benefit. Additional municipal lights are meant for safety in higher crime areas. In essence the night sky belongs to all to enjoy; and reclaiming it proves problematic.

Odors are recurring annoyances and can range from pleasant to highly irritating. In some cases smoke or dust can also be unhealthy; in others such as a sickening smell of pulp mills or livestock yards, the odor may not be harmful in itself but does lower the quality of life in our commons. It is often quite difficult to take remedial steps to remove odors without paying high sums of money that cut into profits of offending parties or curtail operations that furnish jobs to the local labor force.

3. Fuel Efficiency Programs -- Conservationists and others agree that every effort must be made to improve energy conservation. This

is the cheapest and most efficient way to meet increased energy demands as the world climbs out of the Great Recession. Coal, natural gas, and oil production are booming, and renewable energy alternatives are being installed in many parts of the world. However, still greater attention ought to be given to efficiency, for the monetary advantage of cutting demand far exceeds that of developing new energy sources. Curbing energy use reduces the need for expanding the entire energy supply network, namely, more powerplants and increased energy extraction, processing and transportation, plus overcoming transmission and generation losses from electricity production.

Attention must focus primarily on energy conservation -- on green building materials, smart grids and transmission systems, electronic devices, and efficient cars, trucks and planes. Higher energy **efficiency standards** for vehicles, lighting, powerplants and appliances would go a long way to reducing energy needs. A global effort to boost energy efficiency with existing technologies could cut more than 20% of world energy demand by 2020. The United Nations International Energy Agency (IEA) has made this conservation approach a top priority.

Vehicle manufacturers are currently undergoing painful adjustments to get efficiency averages to 45-, 60-, 75-, or even 100-miles-per-gallon. Other nations and even the state of California are insisting on fuel conserving devices of ever greater efficiency. Mass production of more efficient vehicles was slowed by the Great Recession and has accelerated through higher fuel prices. Electric vehicles powered by solar energy could cut motorized vehicles loose from the umbilical cord of petroleum fuel. Energy efficiency in all its forms is a win-win situation, and this is the best course to stave off the harsh effects of climate change. While slow to catch hold, the economies resulting from energy conservation are catching the eye of policymakers and the general public as well. By 2011, more and more auto buyers have been turning to energy-efficient vehicles.

4. Renewable Energy Programs -- Renewable energy includes solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal and some biofuels. These are clean and virtually environmentally benign fuels; their installment costs are going down with new technical improvements and economies of scale. Today, in California and elsewhere, solar photovoltaic (PV) developers believe they can soon deliver solar energy at competitive prices. In 2011, the cost of generating wind power in choice areas of Europe and elsewhere has fallen below \$69 per megawatt-hour; this compares favorably with \$67 for coal-fired powerplants and \$56 with combined-cycle plants using natural gas.<sup>5</sup>

Renewable energy sources certainly have great advantages over

nuclear power,<sup>6</sup> and fossil fuels that never paid their total environmental costs. "Some" biofuels means that distinctions have to be made; use of productive agricultural lands to grow corn for ethanol biofuels (verging on one-quarter of the American corn crop as of this writing) is wrongheaded, and subsidies for such practices need to be removed.<sup>7</sup> Other biofuels encourage placing wildscape into cellulosic fiber production to the detriment of wildlife habitat. When biofuels are made from waste products (wood or agricultural wastes) there are economies resulting from their conversion to fuels.

The good news is that potentially by 2030 the world could be on a totally renewable energy economy, if there is a will to bring this about. A recent study in the journal, *Energy Policy*, projects that total global energy use could be renewable by satisfying the following goals: 4 million 5-MW wind turbines; 1.3 billion 3-kW roof-mounted solar PV systems; 90,000 300-MW solar powerplants (including PV and concentrated solar); and a smattering of geothermal, wave and tidal powerplants. This study left out biomass because of pollution and land use issues, as well as nuclear energy. However, this could be amended to include hydropower facilities as well as geothermal operations and omit many centralized solar powerplants.

A more realistic report by the World Wildlife Foundation International in February, 2011 set a goal of 95% renewable energy by the year 2050.<sup>8</sup> In 2050, total energy demand could be 15% lower than in 2005; heating needs of buildings could be cut by 60% through energy efficiency, the use of solar power and geothermal heat. Suggestions included: upgrade electricity grids; install smart grids; halve meat consumption in wealthier nations; and encourage people to cycle, walk, use more public transportation, and replace airplanes by trains.

Renewable energy sources are now receiving support from governmental agencies, principally at the state and national levels. However, curtailment of subsidies due to financial troubles could slow conversion to renewable energy sources. Renewable energy sources, coupled with energy conservation, soften or delay catastrophic climate-change conditions facing our planet; these result from the use of carbonaceous fuels (petroleum, coal, natural gas, tar sands). By utilizing safe and environmentally benign energy sources, pollution from extraction, processing, conversion to electricity, combustion, or disposal of waste materials could be reduced and eventually eliminated. Unfortunately, emerging nations are now adding many marginally-efficient but polluting coal powerplants.

Renewable energy sources may be tied into the entire energy grid through net-metering programs with traditional electricity-delivery systems. Large-scale, national "Apollo-type" (from U.S. space

efforts) renewable energy programs should be created in various advanced countries such as the EU, Japan, India, Israel and others as well as in the U.S. New available solar products can be integrated into building roofs. Wind power is the fastest growing renewable source. Use of geothermal sources as well as utilization of agricultural wastes as biofuels are part of a sane renewable energy mix. Status-quo seekers have big money and propaganda machinery to cast doubt on future climate-change projections for several decades, as did the highly successful tobacco corporations' history of casting doubt for decades on smoking as the cause of cancer and other health problems. Decentralized renewable energy programs that do not favor Big Oil and Big Coal are promising.

**Funding:** Upgrading transmission lines and delivery systems along with wind generators and solar equipment in developing nations could receive \$3 billion annually from GDF plus national and private investments.

5. "Climate Change Treaty Convention" -- "Global warming" is a major Earth-threatening phenomenon that needs global attention and has been recognized as a human-made problem by leading scientists for two decades. The 2007 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report involved 4,000 scientists from 150 countries. However, widespread awareness is not sufficient to check climate change effects from actually accelerating. The Arctic Ocean is opening and summer sea ice will completely disappear between 2013 and 2040, some thirty years ahead of the prediction made in 2007. The predicted sea level rise by the end of the century will more than double the maximum estimate in 2007 of 0.59 meters. Urgency calls for a new round of climate-change negotiations to succeed the Kyoto Treaty that omitted certain emerging industrialized countries, which are now major air polluters. China has replaced the U.S. as leading polluter; it has increased carbon dioxide emissions at 10% per year during the first decade of this century.

Some of the European Union nations (Italy, Spain and Denmark) have not met early benchmarks for emission reductions, and the 20%-reduction target from the 1990 agreement level for the total 27 members were overly ambitious. In fact, European cars were 12% cleaner in 2004 than in 1995; the problem has been that the number of vehicles rose by 21% during that period; cars are heavier and more powerful; and cars travel at rapid speeds on that continent. Furthermore, aviation and maritime transportation were not covered by treaty goals, and these have proved to be major contributors to air pollution. All parties need to come on board. Regional and national air pollution control programs come at a cost.<sup>9</sup> One of the fairest (but unpopular) ways to pay for these is through an *extraction* or *carbon*

tax on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (see Chapter Five).

c) Glory of Creation

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today; I set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live in the love of Yhwh, your God,.... (Deuteronomy 30:19)*

**Natural beauty** is uplifting, is shared, is widely appreciated among diverse cultures, is given as a gift, and is in need of protection. We Americans speak of "purple mountain's majesty" and "fruited plains." People of all cultural backgrounds, and especially primitive folks who live close to nature have much in common: they admire the natural beauty of an undisturbed or well-managed landscape -- a beauty in the eyes of all beholders of good will, but somewhat hidden to those more materially inclined.

Such admiration is uplifting and raises the soul to new heights. This natural *treasure* extends to mountains, rivers, seashores, and forests. All creation has charm and grace that only the hand of the Creator can give -- and natural scenes, whether physically visited or observed virtually, bestow on us immense peace of soul. Nature's beauty is the gateway to ever deeper respect for all being. In fact, the unmarred, resplendent earthly beauty is our primary **Commons**.

**Marred beauty** stands in utter contrast to natural beauty and most observers come in contact with eroded land, unreclaimed strip mines, loss of wildlife and polluted air and water. If everything is connected to everything else (Barry Commoner's *First Law of Ecology*), then all parts of this world and all activities have some impact on other parts. Some lovers of Earth want to hold tightly to the purity of natural, untouched beauty, but that is wishful thinking at best. The free acts of individuals make a difference in society; good acts benefit all -- and bad ones harm all. Thus we have a given beauty in the world around us, but this is one that can be damaged by misdeeds either by me, by us, or by others.

**Enhanced beauty** energizes us to go beyond admiration; we perceive danger and we can choose to protect and to beautify what has been damaged. Thus mere appreciation of natural beauty untouched by human beings is not sufficient. Could beauty be reintroduced? Re-established? Returned? Could we repair what has been spoiled in some way? This added treasure of cultivated and well-managed fields, gardens, and forests is a product of human sweat mingled with creative genius.

In a 1971 lecture made before the *American Association for the*

*Advancement of Science* in Washington, DC, Rene Dubos stressed that human ingenuity can enhance the environment and is not always a negative factor when involved with natural resources. He noted the progress of northern France where he grew up, and said the draining of the marsh lands for cultivated fields was really an *enhancement of nature* -- and the result was a beautiful landscape that could be appreciated by all who were residing or visiting.<sup>10</sup> Human beings are the natural improvers of the nature around them, and thus through acting they become part of nature.

Natural beauty enlivens; marred beauty frightens, and enhanced beauty challenges us to every broader possibilities. We may be tempted to tiptoe through the tulips, focus on nature all around us and **deny** that harm is being done. We may look out and see the damage and still **excuse** ourselves because we lack expertise to respond. We may seek to **escape** into the fictitious worlds that we create or into allurements that entice us. Enchanting beauty of nature can lead to overlooking damage. Marred beauty can lead to a sense of false humility, and to excuse ourselves as not being directly to blame or expert enough to change the situation. Enhanced beauty may be too great and thus we must escape to other pursuits or allurements. As we strive to reclaim the commons we realize that our approach to nature calls for a balanced spirituality in which we admire, observe and resolve to work for protecting and improving our threatened Earth.<sup>11</sup>

First of all, a **creation-centered spirituality** affirms beauty for its own sake. We enter a world of beauty already present when we arrive, and through our respect, ought to remain after we are gone. This beauty may be in the eyes of the beholder, but a community of beholders can discover a common beauty that reflects that primary commons of Earth as **gift**. Our sense of gratitude for the gift of creation, and the added gift of being able to live within creation at this time makes us doubly grateful. Being part of creation is exciting; being called to protect and enhance creation is doubly exciting. Simply to focus on immersion into the wonderful panorama of creation elevates the spirit and inspires poetry and song. However, to bask in the remnants of an ever-vanishing natural beauty is unreal.

One answer has been to accept that exploitation of nature has occurred, and call attention to the deficient notion of subjection of creation to our own benefit. This exploitation has caused untold damage by seeking to conquer nature, to use it for our own benefit, and to fail to see the family of all beings of which we are a companion and partner. This critique says we are not masters of or exploiters over other creatures, but rather in being among the community of all beings. Thus our intellectual overview must change; we must commit

ourselves to companionship and not hurt our friends in the plant and animal worlds in any fashion. This approach attracts idealistic and numerous spiritually-inclined people. However the challenge is limited to personal attitudinal change whether by the enlightened or by those who will be persuaded. In this view social change is not in the forefront.

A **second spirituality emerges**. Being observant participants in the natural world impels us to discover marred beauty. Misdeeds have occurred. Do we act like those frightened and running away when coming upon a horrible accident? Do we approach cautiously realizing our own limited abilities to be a good Samaritan? Should we sort through our mixed emotions with anger swelling and assuming that it is enough to assign blame to culprits? No, and so change again is necessary, for we are the stewards of our Earth -- and we are partly to blame for damage done. We are willing to confront ourselves and maybe, if bold enough, our immediate neighbor. To as much as I am/(we are) to blame, I/(we) can make a change and strive for redemption. Furthermore, I look into the causes of misdeeds by others and avoid them. Insight allows us to see that others devalue nature (such as occurs in resource-exploited Appalachia) and belittle non-resource values ultimately for their individual benefit and greed.

Selfishness emerges as a social disease that is reinforced by our popular culture of individualism. We could become so angered with the damage caused by human misdeeds that we focus on the weaknesses of ourselves only, or on prosecuting the culprits whose blame we determine has caused misdeeds. Retribution is a possibility, so spiritual energy is directed to repairing individual lives or exacting restitution for damages done. Adam and Eve's failure has become a commons for us all and we thus share an original fall. Just overcoming this fall with God's help is a lifetime journey to perfection and the focus of a redemptive spirituality.

A **third type of spirituality** does not deny attitudinal change, individual spiritual growth, or direct confrontation of culprits through legal approaches. However, neither admiration of natural beauty nor placing blame for marred beauty are sufficient. We must go further; we must rally political, economic and social resources to strengthen agencies vested with remedial actions? With original beauty as a template, we seek to acquire a parent's sense of duty and tough love. Recognizing beauty (whether natural or enhanced), opens us to move beyond the stage of personal admiration and blame. We could **deny** misdeeds or **excuse** ourselves from the major ones that we perceive. We enjoy mutual admiration; we acknowledge that we are not perfect and desire to do better as individuals; but we need to take an enhancing approach that is not an **escape** to various distractions. Attention is

thus focused beyond personal attitude and culprit reform. We must have a new way of perceiving nature in which the damage is halted and meaningful reclamation will occur. *Reclaiming the commons* includes this third type of shared commons: social responsibility.

*Social responsibility* includes preserving natural beauty, realizing and halting our misdeeds, and repairing damage done. We live on a two-way street as social beings and so we appreciate beauty and together seek to protect it. This goes beyond our personal responsibilities. True, some extreme capitalists hold that "the only social responsibility is to make a profit." Moderates champion corporate social responsibilities that include decisions on how and by whom investments are placed, the conduct of corporate managers, labor relations, and duties to local communities through voting and civic participation. "Lord, when did we see you hungry?" Is the reply -- "When you allowed one thousand billionaires to go uncontrolled and one billion people to go hungry, you did it to me?"

A key rests in our role as citizens in a participative democracy. We are drawn through civic duty to recognize the collective responsibility for environmental protection and enhancement. If we share beauty together with others, we realize that our efforts are best shared in order to do something constructive for the planet. We need to address **social irresponsibility**. We share beauty; we both take and share blame.<sup>12</sup> A further temptation emerges, to **escape** through cooperative action to minor corrections, to tweak the system. Food is good but too much is not; medicine may heal, but overuse can also be harmful; life is wonderful, but mortal life has its dying moment; natural beauty can be easily marred even when we are attempting to enhance it. Good intentions are not enough. Our need is constantly to return to a sense of Mystery in order to direct our actions more perfectly. This means we need the innocent and expressive ways of a toddling and exploring infant -- and that deepens as we learn to walk, run, skip, and journey through life, and stagger and stumble in older age. We must constantly return to the Mystery that directs our actions.

The sense of Mystery must grow within us, a growing enthusiasm -- the God within. In others words, we must constantly remain in contact with the Most High as ones who follow a compass. Beauty stands before us at the heart of Mystery. Depending on our temperament, some of us are drawn to the macrocosm; we gaze out at the stars. Some of us are drawn to the microcosm; we stop to observe the phenomena beneath our feet. We stand before nature, the macro and micro worlds of glory. We are frightened by damage observed. *Quo Vadis?* Will we stand in awe and avoid marred beauty? Will we beat our breasts and excuse ourselves from the difficult tasks ahead? Will we seek a place

to which to escape, or will we accept the present condition and move on? To act or not to act! To act this way or that! To act in a socially responsible manner!

**Blessing** another is the most elementary way in which we can be socially responsible. We are moved, out of human solidarity and love of all beauty to extend what is given us to others. To bless is to extend ourselves to others and to share our blessings with them. We acknowledge the commons in which we all share. We give blessing to all and do so freely -- even to butterflies, mushrooms, lichens, evergreens, berries, birds, and amphibians. We bless a land teeming with all types of flora and fauna; we bless the entire blue-green planet that is tarnished by wanton exploitation; we even bless the Creator of all things. Natural beauty leads to respect, and respect to blessing -- the first step in a corrective healing process.

We bless the change agents, those who protect resources and heal Earth's wounds, those willing to confront misdeeds and the ones who commit them. Our blessings return to us and empower us. Even the damage we now observe amid fading natural beauty makes us aware of original blessings, deep down and yet wrapped around with the paradox of fragility. Blessings return to us in damaged land that triggers action, now, today. We care because we believe in what is here and what we can share. Awareness of our mortality impels us to extend blessings to others -- and they to others as well -- a concatenation of good will. Beauty is perceived not as mine or yours, but as "ours." We bless together, for blessing is the acknowledgment of togetherness.

If at this moment of intimate sharing someone says, "Get off my land," we are disturbed, for beauty resides even though restricted from our personal enjoyment. To whom does this beauty belong? Actually the stark reality of possessiveness strikes us at the moment when raw beauty floods our soul. Some may depart; others get angry; still others resist and confront the supposed owners. As though awakening from a dream, we face the reality that the beauty of the commons has been privatized, at least through some legal mechanism. And this is a form of marred beauty, for it cannot be appreciated by everyone. This triggers searching questions: How can we manifest our common sharing of natural and enhanced beauty with all people of good will? How can we take blame and still act responsibly? How can we reclaim our commons?

At the moment of blessing we find a curse hidden deep down in the world that we regard as commons. The curse is uttered by "No-Trespassing" signs and the legality of possessions that are luxuries to some and yet are essentials to others. Those who bless perceive an unspoken curse in others's selfishness and greed. To

reclaim the commons means that we must act -- not merely admire, not merely cast blame. Natural beauty is a blessing; our action to enhance it is a double blessing. However, we must face reality; curses are out there, and they must be addressed. Those who curse place "monetary" and commercial value on nature, seeing it as a commodity to be bought, sold, or used up and wasted at will. Beauty is stripped of its commonality and seized by a legally justified privileged individual or corporation. In enclosing the commons, the commodity-maker or air or space polluter denigrates our common democratic values. In awe, champions of natural beauty see the forest as having aesthetic value in itself; in greed, exploiters see forests as timber and logs; in concern, healers see work ahead, namely a resurrection-centered spirituality.

#### **d) Catastrophe**

*There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamor of the ocean and its waves; people dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. (Luke 21:25-26)*

Experts hold that historic changes are often triggered just after major disasters or dramatic transformations have occurred. The floods of the Noah epic have been narrated by many primitive cultures; severe droughts have led to migrations of peoples to better areas. These stories are truly fascinating and worth learning.<sup>13</sup> Certainly those of us attending the First Earth Day in 1970 were naive in thinking that addressing global environmental damage would be quite short-lived: a few simple steps accepted by all, and the problems would be solved. It soon became apparent that academic discussion and popular demonstration were not sufficient to trigger needed corrections; problems were more complete and far deeper, and solutions would have to involve the cooperative efforts of multiple parties in various ways. Yes, democratic process takes time.

In the environmental crisis social dimensions began to emerge, and social justice and eco-justice became interlinked. Toxic pollutants affect poor people who live in closer proximity to the points of emissions; contaminated water causes cholera and other water-borne diseases; people live on undesirable flood plains; others experience the destruction of their forests and their native wildlife disappearing. Suddenly, within the second half of the twentieth century, documentation of an impending catastrophe started to appear in the popular media and scientific journals. Polluted rivers in India, landscapes barren from deforestation in Indonesia, and choking air in major urban areas, announced that an environmental crisis was global. Long-term ecological changes were occurring at a quickening

pace, with effects similar to the asteroid-induced extinction of the dinosaur that occurred sixty-five million years ago. In fact, this current stage of disaster is virtually instantaneous in comparison to previous geological catastrophes.

Global levels of the greenhouse gas, carbon dioxide CO<sub>2</sub>, have increased since the advent of the fossil-fueled industrial/electrical/automotive revolution. While essential to the life cycle of plants, excess CO<sub>2</sub> is now considered a pollutant. What was stored for countless centuries in coal seams, forests, and petroleum deposits is "liberated" through the excessive human consumption practices of burning fossil fuels. Forest cover that acts as a CO<sub>2</sub> sink has been reduced through deforestation. Meanwhile our Earth's atmosphere, a "blanket," has become a greenhouse cover retaining light rays-converted-to-heat. The scientific community is nearly unanimous in saying that human causation is resulting in climatic changes in the last two decades, with more drastic effects likely to come quite soon. The quibble is not over the causes, so much as over the speed and degree of the effects.

These observed and predicted changes spell trouble for the world's poor. In 2007, the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>14</sup> cited four vulnerable areas:

- \* The Arctic, where temperatures are rising and ice caps are melting at an unexpectedly rapid rate;

- \* Sub-Saharan Africa, where dryer conditions are forecast;

- \* Small islands (principally in the Pacific and Indian Oceans), that may be inundated by rising ocean levels. The president of the Republic of Maldives says that, if ocean levels rise as predicted, half of his nation (with an average height of four to six feet above sea level) will be under water by the end of this twenty-first century; and

- \* Asian mega-deltas (especially in Bangladesh), where hundreds of millions of people will be at increased risk of flooding and coastal inundation, will lose the age-old natural, fresh-water cycles due to glacier formation and melting.

The Arctic polar region is already experiencing rapid climate changes, with ice cover shrinking in summer months making a long-hoped-for Northwest Passage transport route between Europe and Asia possible. Arctic regions are thinly populated -- though these thousands of people are deeply affected by climate changes. The very existence of small oceanic-island nations are threatened. Both Arctic and Oceanic groups could be moved to more favorable locations through relatively minor adjustments of world resources. However, this is not the case in Bangladesh, where, in 2050, some 220 million inhabitants could see "a good chunk of its current land mass... permanently

underwater."<sup>15</sup>

The *IPCC Report* also indicated that in Africa, food production is predicted to be curtailed as early as 2020, and that reduced water resources could affect 75-250 million people. Asia will suffer reductions in meltwater runoff from the receding mountain glaciers in the Himalayas, with negative effects on more than one billion people, by 2050. (Note that the speed of some glacier melting had been subsequently contested). Australia will experience restricted water availability, although it has suffered severe flooding in early 2011. Latin America will see declines in harvest; North America may experience extremes in weather; and Europe, perhaps the least negatively-affected continent, can still expect coastal erosion and climate-related natural catastrophes.

Kevin Anderson of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at Manchester University reports that in the first eight years of this century carbon emissions have risen much faster than expected, and that current CO<sub>2</sub> levels (380ppm) are rising 2ppm per year and could surpass 650ppm by 2050 -- causing "a catastrophic" 4°C average temperature rise. Anderson adds that even this bleak future could only be achieved if rich nations adopted "draconian emission reductions within a decade."<sup>16</sup> Many scientists say a 2°C rise is a lost cause. The ability of the Southern Ocean (a major greenhouse sink) to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> has weakened by 15% since 1980.

Natural disasters seriously affect the poor, as verified by Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in 2005. Victims with few resources are less able to relocate or to start rebuilding their lives very quickly. The more affluent can move from dangers but the poor are often not able to do so. Flood walls to hold back rising seas are expensive; every inch of increase in the height of the levees along the Sacramento River in California will cost at least \$15 million. With an impending climate change situation, the world has only limited time to supplement potable water reservoirs, food distribution networks, and health centers for people who suffer from increased malnutrition and diarrhoeal, cardio-respiratory and infectious diseases. Climate change will have immense global impacts that some estimate will affect hundreds of millions of people.<sup>17</sup> Health experts project that warmer temperate zones will accelerate the spread of tropical diseases. Others ask whether all flora and fauna will be endangered by being unable to adjust to rapid climate changes.

The catastrophe that is emerging will be compounded by the failure of policymakers to create alternatives to the current situation. If the status quo is continued, our wounded Earth is in very deep trouble. Through denial of the seriousness of our current situation,

legislators ignore the needed legislation to control the level of emissions, especially those resulting from fossil fuels. Coal is abundant and "cheap" (provided many hidden costs are ignored), with U.S. coal reserves at 245 years, and Russia with less total tonnage has a 527-year supply at current mining operations. The status quo is ensuring that coal remains a fuel of electricity-generating choice for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, the new giant coal-exporter to fuel-hungry China and India is Australia with a 186-year remaining supply at 2009 levels.<sup>18</sup> Some say that these long-term estimates are optimistic.

Coal will most likely not be replaced by easier-transported natural gas, because supposed environmental advantages of large quantities found recently in shale strata are regarded by USEPA reports as overstated. Consumption of natural gas obtained from fracturing of shale deposits in many lands makes this fossil fuel competitive with more environmentally-benign renewable sources (solar, wind, geothermal, hydro and some biofuels). The reports state that escaping methane (far more potent as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide) from leaking pipes and from fracturing operations are sufficient to equal the polluting effects of coal.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) warns that continued use of fossil fuels at current and anticipated levels makes the 2020 goal of slashing greenhouse gas emissions impossible to attain. American coal appetite is unrelenting, and Chinese and Indian consumption demands are exploding. Yes, coal is dirty, but coal is cheap and plentiful. New ideas for sequestering carbon dioxide emission from burning coal are not yet practical. New powerplants are cleaner, but their number and emissions' volumes overwhelm efficiency savings; more plants cause MORE carbon dioxide along with worrisome mercury emissions and other hazardous pollutants. The IEA estimates that China, which gets over two-thirds of its electricity from coal, will add an astounding 600 GW of coal-fired power capacity to its voracious energy consumption picture in the next quarter century. Others estimate that China will reach that goal far sooner. Sales for high-quality coal are still on the rise. We cannot ignore the threats posed by current energy practices, for such denial is suicidal. We are on the road to dramatic climate change problems. We must face reality and act in a socially responsible manner: make coal pay its fair share of environmental pollution damages, and thereby be competitive with wind and solar; replace fossil fuels with renewable energy sources.

*The cost of reducing greenhouse gas emission, increasing reforestation, cutting air pollutants and helping poor regions adapt to climate change pales in comparison to the price the world will pay*

*if we fail to act now.* Pontifical Academy of Sciences<sup>19</sup>

Impending environmental catastrophe emerges as a daunting challenge to human cooperative efforts. In August, 1914, nations took sides with bands playing the martial music of warfare. What was expected to be a quick war turned into a slaughter of millions through trench warfare, poison gas, and massive artillery shelling. That war "to end all wars" was an unexpected human-caused catastrophe. No one expected a repeat of August, 1914. However, the posturing of world leaders at the failed Copenhagen Climate Conference in late 2009 brings back squabbles of the past. The League of Nations failed to end the First-World-War disaster when tens of thousands marched to the sound of bagpipes to sure death on Flanders' fields. Glamour yields to Second-World-War slaughter with tens of millions more deaths. The United Nations and Marshall Plan were responses. Will we learn from history and reclaim the air commons?

### Reflection: Challenging Misuse of Air Commons<sup>20</sup>

The fragile air commons (a *res nullius*) cannot be bounded, subdivided, or measured out to users, but it can be damaged by specific polluters through exploitative infringement. As social beings, we realize that fresh air belongs to all of us, for air and life on this planet are connected. Likewise we know that fragile nascent human life, or "being born," requires human protective measures and responsibility. The life of this planet is fragile as well, and we are powerful enough to threaten that life by misuse of our air. Seeing our world as "one great act of giving birth" (Rom.8:22) requires us to become pro-life and champion the **entire** web of life, and accept responsibility for this living but threatened planet.

Our ancestors did not know human beings have the power to threaten that planetary life -- through air pollution and climate-change practices. Those with social concern are aware of the unsettling situation that current fossil fuel practices are leading to a catastrophe, but are we listening? Some who pollute the air, (along with legislative partisans), deny that human beings contribute to climate change. Reclaiming the air commons is where we perceive an emerging crisis. Our citizen responsibility calls us to say "no" to fossil fuels and "yes" to renewable energy; as a people, we are to take blame for damage to the air commons.

## Chapter Two: Water Commons

*They (World Bank, etc.) sought to turn this vital resource (water) into a business. But water is a social good, a natural inheritance*

*of all living beings -- plants, animals and humans. We all know this. That is why no one can own water. Thanks to the mobilizations of the people of Cochabamba they did not succeed and, as yet, no one can own water. Oscar Olivera<sup>1</sup>*

Instinctively we are drawn to water, and this indicates something about our evolutionary origins and the necessity of water for life. When potable (drinking) water becomes scarce, we must assert the right to water, and do all in our power to see that this right extends to all human beings. We must insist that all have a right to access clean water, but that is easier said than done. Water may be essential but it is also somewhat scarce in places where needed most. Four-fifths of Earth's surface is covered by water, yet much of this is saline and unsuitable for human consumption. In fact, potable water was always regarded as free although this precious substance is often inaccessible, especially where large populations are congregated. *Water is not a commercial product but a common good that belongs to everyone.*<sup>2</sup> With growing threats to the quality and quantity of water, some see dollar signs and are convinced that they can "enclose" this area of the commons and exploit it for their own benefit.

Water conservation (both quantity and quality) is a challenge and requires governmental resources because it is beyond individual control. In this world of growing scarcity, drinking water sources must be protected because supplies could carry disease organisms. Water conservation, access, protection, and fair distribution require harmonious interaction of agencies at various levels of governance. While all human beings need some water, many, especially more affluent people, make added water demands for swimming pools, car washing, and lawn care. However, far higher water demands occur in irrigation for crops and water for various industrial and mining operations.

Natural running water has always been regarded as a common property but, with scarcity and excessive commercialism, this view is changing: riparian rights (shores) have been claimed as property by individuals; water rights for the runoff from watersheds have been allocated to powerful individuals or corporations; dams inundate fields and displace native populations; and sustainability of rivers, lakes, and wetlands is threatened; these are protein sources for some of the world's poor (in Africa, fish represent 20% of protein source, in Asia 30%).<sup>3</sup>

Note: In this work *sustainable* refers to extending balanced forms of livelihood that respect the environment -- **not** continuation of current economic practices that draw extensively from the natural resource base.

## a) Infringement on Water Commons

*By the law of nature these things are common to mankind -- the air, running water, the sea, and consequently the shore of the sea.*

Institutes of Justinian -- 535 A.D.

There is sufficient potable water on this planet, but it is not evenly distributed or accessible to large numbers of people, especially those in expanding urban areas. Conflicts within countries arise over use of water for crop irrigation, industry and domestic use. Free water fountains and the common dipper at village wells are now giving way to commercial bottled water that is obtained from dispensing machines owned by private, profit-making industries. Clean running streams are a thing of the past, for in this age potable water most often requires purification due to environmental assaults. Access to water sources and seashores are denied by those who are privileged to possess water and shore "rights." The litany of water conflicts is the harbinger of an accelerating disparity of wealth.

1. **Water pollution in general.** Human activities can lead to pollution of vast water systems that are susceptible to harm. The assault on the environment is not new. For almost five centuries mercury used in placer mining ended up in our oceans; recent observations involve large masses of floating plastic bags and junk on the surfaces of the seas. We have already shown in Chapter One that climate change is causing oceans to rise and increased carbon dioxide levels are acidifying oceans and causing colorful coral reefs to bleach, be damaged, or even be destroyed.

2. **Water scarcity.** The planet's rivers are also in trouble both from pollution and from excessive use. Rivers are drying up before they reach the ocean (e.g., the Indus, the Colorado, the Yellow, and the Rio Grande). The Jordan is a brackish streamlet before it reaches the Dead Sea. Some American cities such as San Antonio have water problems. San Antonio, which draws most of its water from the Edwards Aquifer, is experiencing a shrinkage of the water table with urban expansions; for every 75 gallons of groundwater that are pumped for the city, only 60 are returned.<sup>4</sup>

3. **Petroleum resource extraction.** With growing scarcity of easily accessible petroleum supplies, reserves under the ocean floor have become the new frontier. Technology is being rapidly perfected even since the 2010 Gulf of Mexico "BP Oil Spill." While petroleum companies are developing safer drilling and better spillage containment procedures and equipment, nations bent on developing oil resources differ in the degree of regulation required. Thus, competition for developing oil fields depends to some degree on the

levels of regulation in the emerging fields off the coasts of Africa, Brazil, and southeast Asia, as well as the vast Arctic regions and areas of the Middle East. Environmental concerns are countered by economic pressures to drill, pump, and ship more crude petroleum and products from this emerging frontier. Corporate interests influenced the refusal of the U.S. to sign the "Law of the Seas" in the early 1980s, and thus retard United Nations-sponsored international rules from being effective.

**4. Fishing and whaling.** Many of the world's poor depend on fish for protein. Construction of large dams in the last century, such as the Urra Dam on the Sinu River in Columbia and the Theun Hinboun Power Company Dam on the Nam Gnouang River in Laos, has affected hundreds of thousands of local residents.<sup>3</sup> The days of immense schools of North Atlantic cod are gone. Overfishing, especially using corporate factory ships' draglines, takes in many marine species indiscriminately, and injures or kills many others. Oil spills in coastal areas such as the March 24, 1989, *Exxon Valdez* disaster damaged fishing prospects of the local fishers. Global regulation of fishing is a major issue because fish stocks are finite. Over-whaling is a challenge, especially when claimed as "scientific research" by certain whaling nations.

**5. Water pollution.** What was said about industrial air pollution applies to water as well. Horror stories about polluted water abound: in the 1960s the Cuyahoga River near Cleveland, Ohio caught fire; India's sacred Ganges is becoming a sewer, downstream from a host of untreated sewage sources; China's major rivers are now laced with heavy metal pollutants; in Appalachia "straight pipes" lead directly into creeks. Industries have championed "dilution as the solution to pollution," which is bad practice.

Irrigation projects are some of the heaviest users of water supplies. Often water "rights" were established prior to urbanization in underdeveloped areas of limited water supplies, thus precipitating conflicts over water rights. In some cases irrigation procedures could be changed to conserve water and allow for better sharing procedures.<sup>5</sup> Nitrogen and other fertilizers leach from croplands and cause algae blooms and contamination of drinking water supplies. Livestock can contaminate rural water sources when allowed free range. Soil erosion from improper poor agricultural practices add to global water contamination problems, and do sediment buildup in many places.

**6. Improper waste water systems.** Human population areas suffer if domestic wastewater treatment is lacking. While an appropriate technology calls for water-free, composting toilet facilities, still

some sophisticated practices are required for these to work normally. Appalachian "straight pipes" that empty domestic wastes directly into streams have been major sources of pollution, though stricter regulations are now being enforced.

*The rational man finds that his share of the cost of the wastes he discharges into the commons is less than the cost of purifying his wastes before releasing them. Garrett Hardin*

**7. Controlled access to water.** Privatizing water becomes a profitable business when water shortages occur. Public water fountains in town squares were traditional examples of a concept of common access to good water. The private water industry includes selling of water like soft drinks, but the private companies can easily take shortcuts, have a monopoly on distribution, can charge any price and thus favor those who can pay more, and have the infrastructure so hidden that it cannot be easily monitored. The private water company record has been far from perfect.

#### **b) Actions to Reclaim Water Commons**

*You must strike the rock and water will flow from it for people to drink. (Exodus 17:6b)*

Water quality and quality protection resemble what has been said about quality air protection in Chapter One. No single action is sufficient in itself: citizens can become "water conscious" through individual practices; coordination with a variety of public agencies is necessary to formulate adequate public policy to meet the impending global water crisis.

1. Individual and Domestic Actions -- Often people with plentiful water supplies take their water for granted, and this leads to wasteful use or restrictions on poorer neighbors and their essential needs. Wasteful use results in increasing water costs in transporting, storing, and purifying water supplies. A **water conservation ethic** can start inside the home (e.g., using water-efficient faucets); this ought to extend outdoors by replacing exotic lawn grasses with wildscape or native plants, and using **drip irrigation** in gardening practices. Sources of additional water could include catchment of rainwater in **cisterns and rain barrels** as well as creation of **aquacultural ponds**. Promotion of dry composting toilets is a way to reduce domestic water consumption.

*For I will pour out water on the thirsty soil, streams on the dry ground. I will pour my spirit on your descendants, my blessing on your children. They shall grow like grass where there is plenty of water,*

*like poplars by running streams.* (Isaiah 44:3)

2. Potable Water Systems -- In recent years, various public and private agencies have sought to address severe water problems in developing nations. For instance, The Carter Center is declaring victory over the Guinea worm disease, a terrible affliction caused by ingesting microscopic worms in impure drinking water; when the program was begun in 1986, an estimated 3.5 million people were infected, with 120 million at risk in Africa and Asia. By 2009, the number of new cases was in the hundreds.<sup>6</sup> Impurities in water can be removed by various methods such as chlorination, ultraviolet radiation and reverse osmosis as well as distillation water through solar stills. Lower-priced methods are being funded by various agencies so that good drinking water can be accessible to many of the world's people. Expect that increased population and water demands could make safe drinking water an even more precious commodity.

With emerging water scarcity, privatizing potable water supplies by profit-making corporations has become a global phenomenon from Lexington, Kentucky to the nations of Bolivia and Nigeria. However, people are fighting back in large and small communities. In fact, Paris and forty French municipalities have "remunicipalized" their water systems with resulting improved services and cheaper water prices. The International Policy Network in London, which pushed privatization, has admitted that ownership by the private sector has worked badly in many places. Numerous cities and nations such as Buenos Aires, Atlanta and Mali have found that while privatization is a boon for water corporation stockholders seeking to maximize profits, it can be a disaster for citizens, taxpayers, and consumers. Recife in Brazil and Bogota in Columbia persuaded the World Bank to lend money for public service expansion -- a counter trend to the bias in favor of private utility services.<sup>7</sup>

Over one billion people face a bleak future as water reserves dwindle, in part due to current climate change. Potable water needs must be met by different procedures: drilling wells for ground water; building cisterns for catching rainwater; teaching simple water treatment procedures (passing non-potable water through layers of cotton cloth to remove harmful organisms, boiling water or using solar distillation, chlorination, ozone or ultraviolet treatments); desalinating in extremely water-short areas near oceans and brackish water; building water transport and storage facilities; and conserving domestic water supplies. Over half the world's population lives in urban areas. Mexico City with its twenty million inhabitants, growing at the rate of one thousand people a day, is beset by land subsidence; this results from over-pumping of water from below the basin on which the city is built. Water-short areas may have to ration to protect the

water commons.

3. Regional and Multinational Water Authorities -- With growing water demands and limited water supplies, regional authorities are becoming involved in the center of controversies. Atlanta, Georgia, had a drinking water supply reduced to one hundred days and yet Federal legislation required it to share its principal reservoir with downstream Alabama nuclear plants needing cooling water, and further downstream in Florida, endangered marine life. We are told that the Colorado River and its multistate area have suffered from a decade-long drought that could be due to climate change.<sup>8</sup> The Colorado River Authority, a decades-old compromise agreement among all users, faces growing strains as Las Vegas and other cities expand in this dry region. Some rivers such as the Tigris, Euphrates, and the Jordan flow through several nations, all of which need some of that water. River dams can play havoc with downstream users, as the damming of the Nile and the Three Gorges Dam in China are proving.

Will there be water wars in the future? A key to conflict resolution is realizing the need by all parties and accepting water conservation and rationing by participants. Reclamation bureaus, which allocate large volumes of water for irrigation projects, have to ensure that limited water supplies are rationed **fairly**. Some limited water supplies are obtained by tapping the underground water commons such as the Ogallala Aquifer (stretching through the Great Plains from South Dakota to southwestern Texas). Water from this and other aquifers is being withdrawn at unsustainable rates and forcing traditional farmers to revert to dryland-type farming of crops -- and immense water savings.

**Funding:** The need for potable water is growing rapidly each year due both to population increases and to affluence on the part of the world's emerging middle class. Reclaiming the water commons involves protecting and purifying water and transporting pure water to areas of need. Protection of water supplies involves sewage collection and treatment facilities in expanding metropolitan areas. Quite often requirements for potable water cannot be met by financially- strapped poorer nations -- thus the need for about \$20 billion in GDF annual grants for developing water supplies, purifying contaminated water and constructing sewer systems and alternative waste disposal methods.

#### 4. Global Maritime Corps

*You strode the sea, you marched across the ocean, but your steps could not be seen. (Psalm 77:19)*

A global organization with certain policing capabilities is

needed to handle misconduct on the high seas. This anticipated policing force is needed because coastal states find it difficult to tackle broader maritime problems. Since shipping and ship workers are in need of protection, both permanent and United Nations member contingents (similar to employment of National Guard units for wider responsibilities) ought to engage in anti-piracy work and other needed activities. For instance, piracy arising from the failed state of Somalia, cannot be the concern solely of nearby Tanzania or Kenya; these countries lack the resources to handle such a problem. However, with global funds, smaller navies in an affected region could be trained and equipped to do the task of anti-piracy work (see Chapter Eight).<sup>9</sup>

Toxic substance disposal often occurs in our oceans -- "Out of sight, out of mind." "Not in my backyard." "Send it elsewhere." All too often, the elsewhere is a poorer place, the leaders of which may anticipate payments under the table for local dumping -- as happened in West Africa (near residential zones) and elsewhere in unregulated areas. Regulation needs to be shared globally, especially since these and more challenging medical and nuclear waste materials need proper disposal. The reasons for a Global Maritime Corps grow with the passing years -- and water-related problems point to the need of a federalized world governing body.

**Funding:** The Global Maritime Corps would be a naval counterpart of the current United Nations Peacekeepers and part of the costs will come from GDF, plus substantial amounts from shipping registration fees. Ships registered in many smaller nations are not required to meet all safeguards to carry cargo on the high seas that are imposed on ships from more safety- and worker-conscious EU countries. A world-shipping registry may be resisted by commercial shipping companies, but is part of the regulations now demanded by economic and social globalization. Workers need standardized safety protection; environmental protection includes use of proper fueling and bilging procedures. Worldwide reporting of routes and shipping conditions should be similar to that expected in land and air transportation, and inspections at port of entry and call should be standardized. Registration fees could be based on tonnage or likelihood of pollution. A larger assessment would be charged for large commercial fishing vessels, along with exclusion from areas of traditional fishing practices.

5. Global Coral, Fishing, and Whaling Regulations -- In order to protect the unique beauty of coral reefs and value of ocean ecosystems, an effort must be made to declare them as globally protected wilderness zones; portions of these fragile areas such as Australia's Great Barrier Reef<sup>10</sup> ought to be off-limits to tourists and fishing

operations. In place of actual tourist ventures, a good substitute is to promote *virtual tourism*, that is, the coral reefs could be appreciated by all people to some degree through photographs, videotapes, books, and articles.

Commercial fishing extends beyond national waters and must be regulated at a global level. Often annual limits are placed on various types of fish such as the North Atlantic cod, and then limits are exceeded through lack of strict enforcement -- and overfishing may lead to fisheries collapse and extinction. At current rates, the oceans will be overfished for many species in only a matter of years or decades. Global fishing regulations must be strict, with enforcement placed under UN supervision.

The same procedures apply for protecting whales through an *International Whaling Commission* with enforcement powers. In fact, no commercial whaling is supposedly permitted, only harvests for research purposes. Greenpeace has a ship that follows the Japanese whaling "research" fleet to the Antarctic Ocean areas because the environmental group is convinced that the whaling is "commerce" under disguise. In order to preserve various whale species, harvesting of all whales must be halted.

6. UN Convention on the Law of the Seas -- For a quarter of a century the U.S. has blocked an effective "Law of the Seas Treaty," especially one where all oceanic resources, especially those on the ocean floor (e.g., mining of manganese) would be administered through an international body under United Nations (UN) auspices. Expanded powers of UNCLOS could call for the regulation of the extraction of fish, petroleum, minerals, and natural and cultivated seaweed from the seas.

The oceans should not be divided among competing countries (enclosing the ocean commons), but remain open for the benefit of all, and should be subject to a uniform system of controls. International exploration licenses could be issued with the revenue going to the marine developing, policing and monitoring agencies. In the coming years as technologies allow for deeper levels of oceanic extraction the need will grow for global regulations and licenses.

c) Subsidiarity, Letting Go, Giving, and Taking

*It is a challenge you and I dare not ignore...the growing global chasm between the rich and poor. There are many people on this earth who have none of these things (decent home and education, a chance for a job, reasonable access to health care, and the opportunity to live a secure life), and they suffer mightily because of it. Tragically,*

*the gulf between them and us is so deep and so vast it often seems impossible to cross.*

Jimmy Carter

In the arena of water shortages, pollution, and protection, we soon discover that proper functioning demands harmony at various levels of governance. An individual water protection scheme -- just like protection of air -- can only go so far; other levels of regulation and control are needed because of the free flow and access to water. Let us consider the basic principle of governance, and then proceed to consider measures for giving and taking resources that will ultimately apply to water problems.

1. Principle of Subsidiarity -- *Subsidiarity* is a social justice principle calling for performing, at the lowest level of a system, the practical work that can best be achieved at that level. Let the individual gardener do what needs to be done and not follow a decision made at the community, state, or national level. With reference to an emerging global system of interactive governing agencies, this principle is of utmost importance. Otherwise the way is opened for a top-down authoritarian position that goes counter to a healthy grassroots democracy, which is necessary for reclaiming the commons for the benefit of all people. Let us look briefly at all levels from individual to international ones.

**Individuals** and groups of people interact among themselves and constantly join more complex aggregations without surrendering their own local autonomy. However, federalizing and localizing should be in dynamic equilibrium in order for subsidiarity to work properly. With God's help, we individuals must break loose from our selfishness and join in socially responsible cooperative endeavors at ever-broadening arenas of interest. In such issues as water protection we soon discover the need of a local "interdependence." We cannot deny our social nature, excuse ourselves from sharing with others, nor escape into our inner sanctum of self content. Rather we acknowledge our individual limitations, confess our self-indulgence, and strive to cultivate a gentleness that is truly non-violent in nature. Water protection quickly reaches beyond local areas of control, for rivers flow over vast territories and furnish benefits to many people -- all with an interest in that protection.

**Letting go.** Often, we have to let go of our closest treasures, though this is not easy. We let go of the womb for a greatly expanded life of being on our own as a crying, crawling and suckling infant; we move to solid food and walking about and learning to talk; we let go of apron strings when we go outside in play and to school for study; we give up home and locality when we go away to work or to obtain

professional training; we give up our isolated self interests through community commitment and marriage; we give up more when providing for offspring; we retire and that is a letting go; we give up mortal life for an eternity beyond. We let go of the womb of egotism, the cocoon of safety and protection, the nest of feeding, the retreat we find so comforting. We let go and share, and this is a leap of faith. We risk breaking out of self without fully visualizing what lies just ahead. The more quickly we see letting go as opening to a greater good, the better we participate at the individual level of change. Maturing is realizing a fulfillment of self in giving up for the sake of a greater good, an understanding that love is sharing and a compensating benefit through some sacrifice.

**Individual sharing** through simplified lifestyles has benefits such as water conserved domestically. A sense of tolerance results but has its limits, when some are greedy and use too much of a shared resource -- an infringement on the commons. Simple living can captivate its practitioners, and it takes much attention to live the full life of a simple "homesteader." Living simply can become time- and energy-consuming to the detriment of other activities, since a certain focusing on practices is necessary. Voluntary simplicity becomes a stone thrown into water that produces a ripple effect. The trouble is that an object tossed into a turbulent body of water has little effect -- and our culture is in violent agitation. Individual acts have an impact, but efficiency makes other approaches imperative including regulations and enforcement to control the greedy and powerful.

**Eco-asceticism** (such as being water-conscious) assists this sense of sharing with others and adds to individual control and community benefits that include a joint security in working together. On ever higher levels, this sense extends outward and involves a growth in global solidarity. It is not enough to share some resources that we have immediately at hand; as individuals, we must be prepared to engage in a foundational commitment to sharing at various levels (e.g., the regional water supply). Instead of measuring achievements in dollars and cents, socially conscious people see that satisfaction can be achieved in non-monetary ways: volunteerism, charitable giving, renunciation of wealth, and direct service for and with the poor. As we become more aware that the poor in other parts of the world lack potable water, we become aware of local water protection and use.

**A radical eco-asceticism** emerges as a commitment to stand up for the world that is being damaged by water pollution or that needs greater access to the limited water resources for the good of all. A healthy local commitment to needs near at home makes this an awareness that extends beyond making money; profit is seen in non-material terms and

involves a spiritual growth in solidarity among all peoples. Satisfaction is mutual, security measures are lessened, gratitude is extended to others, civility grows, civic duty is rewarding. However, extending ourselves becomes radical because it runs the risk of marginalization in order to expose the environmental crisis in all its raw and unpopular form. It takes eco-asceticism to be prophetic when it comes to the crisis facing our world -- and that is quite telling when it comes to water and the immense possibility of making money on water shortages.

**Local activities.** Individual asceticism in the arena of the water commons is insufficient. I can purify my drinking water, but the entire community may require more than a series of individual actions, for purification is performed at lower costs with greater or lesser degrees of finesse and skill. Individuals, families, or localities need to be part of broader connections for public protection and access to needed resources. Finding new partners and fresh genetic stock for procreation and welfare of species demand this expanding sense of interconnectiveness. These broader forms of relatedness enhance the health of the human family. Homesteading at the individual level is fine for the physically fit middle-aged person or couple, but this gets tougher with waning energy or aging; our limitations lead us to natural coalescing of larger aggregates.

About two decades ago the E.F. Schumacher Society sponsored a talk by a person who was championing the glories of the local communities -- and questions were raised about global environmental concerns. The offered answers were that local communities have much to contribute (family, cooperative values, small-scale appropriate technology, neighborly concerns, etc.), but little can be done about pollution on the high seas or the atmosphere by a single local community acting alone. It takes something bigger to handle such air or water problems. Again, in letting go, the locality obtains true identity through sharing and thus is fulfilled all the more by being generous -- provided higher aggregates respect and trust the lower.

**Regional activities.** Throughout human history, small city states and other units found that a common defense and security demanded formation of broader governing units. These were the initial seeds from which empires eventually burst forth. The localities realized their limitations and that in unity came strength. Environmentally speaking, regional endeavors are called for, such as to control limited supplies of water that flow through a territory or to protect citizens against noise or accidental spills of toxic materials when transported through an area. Regionalism leads to better protection of resources that are mobile, especially air and water and include bird flyways or fish migratory routes. Federal laws

have been developed in the last four decades as a growing environmental consciousness called for more comprehensive standards and broader restrictions on polluters. But with globalization has come the demand for still broader controls by a global body with enforcing power. More sweeping government units enhance the health of regions and localities, and grassroots pressure calls for protection as to security, trade, or water access, and these demands extend to the whole planet.

**National activities.** Over time, **these** united states have become **the** United States. Our American history is the unfolding of a united people coming to self-awareness. In 1774-75, the American colonists voiced the refrain, "Let us hang together or we will hang separately." So it is with our troubled world. By coming together and working as a single unit, we will be able to accept the challenges of a troubled planet, and take cooperative action. Since the 1940s, the global steps resemble the actions taken by the United Colonies in becoming a United States under the Articles of Confederation. However, within the 1780s the founders saw that confederated colonies were inherently weak. As he recalled difficulties in getting support for his army, George Washington told Alexander Hamilton that "No Man in the United States is, or can be, more impressed with the necessity of reform in our present Confederation than myself."<sup>11</sup>

With the creating of a constitutional federated government in 1788, the various American states surrendered sovereignty of foreign affairs and certain national responsibilities. The U.S. gained a sense of national consciousness during the War of 1812 (and later during the Mexican War) with voluntary state militias joining forces with professional military units. Furthermore, that federalization process was triggered by financial forces at work from shippers, traders, bankers, and other moneyed interests -- a federalist versus a more regionally-oriented republican tendency. While the first impulse may have sprung from the grassroots, the federating forces soon developed and called for a stronger national government. Such growth has benefits and drawbacks, thus calling for an operative principle of subsidiarity.

The American national act of letting go of slavery involved a long and tortured history, for the slave was considered a possession -- and property holders are reluctant to give up "belongings" of monetary worth. The nation became torn regionally, especially after the 1857 Dred Scott Decision allowed the forceful return of escaped slaves from a free territory. With that unpopular court decision, some states took it on themselves to resist bounty hunters from coming and taking back escapee slaves. Anger grew; conflicts developed in the territories; secession by the property-holding regions occurred;

civil war was triggered and fought to its bitter end. Slavery ceased to exist and American democracy was maturing. At first, the government granted only propertied landholders and white males the vote, and in time, voting rights extended to propertyless white males, to African-American males, to Native American males, to women, and to those between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one.

**International movements.** Does democratization stop whether in the U.S. or in the EU or among the fifty or so African nations or an Asian association? An economic globalization and a social globalization give way to a political one required by actions in the commons -- ocean regulations on drilling, polar activities, whaling regulations, Convention on the Law of the Seas, and piracy. Vast oceans seem to demand broader regulations and agencies. Yes, local or national citizens hesitate to give up sovereignty. However, to heal a troubled world with environmental and other problems requires a letting go, a surrender of privileges. Selfishness and greed along with a false sense of patriotism can delay the process. Are we willing to surrender to a greater world, to such decisions as those from an International Criminal Court? A Climate Change Treaty? A Law of the Seas?

**Globalizing processes.** The limits to the notion of national sovereignty (the Westphalian notion of state sovereignty)<sup>12</sup> is beginning to emerge in a world of globalization. The American colonies' movement to a federal republic had difficulties. The movement of unification failed to bring along the Canadian provinces and so two nations exist side-by-side. However, once the U.S. became a superpower, the sense of privilege made it more difficult to let go of that entitlement in favor of international coalition building. Henry Kissinger comments that history has an imperfect record even in the last two hundred years of diplomacy, with alliances that were filled with contention (before the First World War), or utterly filled with fear to act (before the Second World War).<sup>13</sup>

On their own, nations cannot satisfy the following needs: policing the vast commons, creating environmental protective measures for resource use, regulating trade among nations and multinational corporations, insisting on proper use of genetic materials, solving water problems, and directing climate change controls and policies. In the past two decades, the EU has been engaged in collective regulations, although serious financial problems exist. Could there be an African Union? An Asian Union? A Latin American Union? Global environmental problems call for international cooperative efforts that go far beyond eighteenth- and nineteenth-century alliances, and the early twentieth-century *League of Nations*. On the other hand, the *United Nations*, born in the aftermath of the Second World War, has had

six decades of existence with a successful record in numerous fields: it has helped settle conflicts in the Balkans, and parts of Africa and Asia; it renders global services in agricultural development, health, arms control, international justice, refugee services, and scores of other issues. However, with current water problems major global enforcement issues start to emerge.

Americans and others resist surrendering sovereignty to the UN, and thus allowing it to become more effective. Could not a global police force be maintained at a far lower cost than current national armed forces, pressured to be equipped with the latest expensive devices by military/industrial complexes? Even amid successes, the UN runs the danger of becoming an ineffective and bloated bureaucracy made up of many seeking well-paid positions in New York or Geneva. Gordon Brown, in India in January, 2008, called on the UN to be reformed along with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Financial and political crises since that time have only enhanced that call, which includes a world federated body with real powers to enact regulations.

## 2. Different Types of Giving

*As he looked up he saw rich people putting their offerings into the treasury; then he happened to notice a poverty-stricken widow putting in two small coins, and he said, 'I tell you truly, this poor widow has put in more than any of them; for these have all contributed money they had left over, but she from the little she had has put in all she had to live on.'* (Luke 21:1-4)

Before reaching solutions to global water and other resource problems we must consider the practices of **giving up** and of **taking**. Letting go is a giving up; assuming power at a given level is a process of taking. Hopefully this can be done non-violently and to the mutual benefit of all parties. From early times and within various religious traditions (Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish and Christian), charity and giving to those in need have been essential components of decent human behavior. In many cultures, there are sacred times and special celebrations for performing charity. Generous people conform. Expectations differ within traditions: give till it hurts; blessed is the cheerful giver; do not let the left hand know what the right hand is doing; give out of one's basic sustenance; give from the heart; ask individuals to take only what is needed; be willing to share what is given; neither the unloving giver nor the unappreciative receiver adds much to the betterment of society. *For I was hungry and you never gave me food.* (Matthew 25:42).

The following are nine ways to conceive of charity. In five of

them the giver has good intentions and four exceed the limits of true charity, but are classed as "charity." In all categories, resources are being reapportioned, but not to everyone's benefit.

**1. Charity as a moral imperative.** Charity is one thing; social justice is another. If there is lack of social justice, social needs must be met by those with surpluses to give. Thus social justice demands the basics of life for all, and charity acts as a hopefully temporary substitute, certainly not to become a permanent rearrangement of resources. In such circumstances, the resource holder sees that another lacks them and, moved by concern or conscience, the giver parts with possessions.

In an extreme case, possessors feel a moral obligation to get rid of all possessions (in the manner of St. Francis), and embrace holy poverty where wealth is seen as a burden. Such people discover that resources do not really belong to them except by privilege or title; the gift is from God, the ultimate provider. They consider their own wealth as a form of manipulation, traditional privilege, or thievery, and giving as a form of shedding or repentance for having what is not deserved. They may hear a John the Baptist Advent message: *Hypocrites, why do you encourage those in power to hold on to what does not belong to them? The resources belong to the poor and especially those lacking the basics of life.* The hearer is struck by what does not belong to him or her in the first place. In an ultimate case a thief may get rid of stolen goods through anonymity.

**2. Charity as a civic or cultural duty.** A levy may be imposed on an associate, assistant, tenant, serf, slave, or other underling. This is required as a result of a command, threat or cultural expectation. The one who gives in such circumstances does so out of duty and mixed goals -- not pure charity. As the giver experiences greater degrees of freedom, the act of giving skips oversight and becomes "keeping up with the Joneses," or the expected thing to do (e.g., an employee donates to a political campaign favored by the boss). Maybe the motive is embarrassment caused by Girl Scouts at the door, or firemen with buckets at the intersection. Ignoring charity is not civic minded.

**3. Charity as responsible stewardship.** A sense of stewardship means that one has possessions and wealth by some right, title, privilege, or reward. From the responsibility stemming from this right to property, one reapportions a "salvation" tax that demands sharing with the less fortunate. Proper management of resources includes the budget item called charity, tithing or donations. Such allocation of money is based on the balance in a society (a social contract) that realizes that retention while others have too little

is an unsettling social condition that cannot be justified: the ones who are without resources will starve or go without a roof over their heads; the ones with resources have a moral responsibility to give to those in need -- for stewardship can expand with time to become more than a private matter. A practice of stewardship of the commons reestablishes an equilibrium so that all live peacefully as one family. Social responsibility grows.

**4. Charity as non-violent act.** This writer once had a phone call from a volunteer group in Chicago who wanted to bring grade schoolers to Appalachia to teach people how to garden. To the question did the youngsters have experience, the organizer was somewhat taken back and said "no." Then what was to be taught? Instead the suggestion was given to come and engage in supervised tasks such as trail-making or tree-planting that require less skill. Volunteerism, as in this case, can be a sincere form of charity that is practiced mainly by those who do not have resources, but want to give through service to benefit the less privileged. Service time is offered out of genuine concern for others. Such includes numerous examples of home-building or repair, distribution of food or other necessities, caregiving to the ill and aged, cleaning up neighborhoods, rivers or roadways, and training the forgotten. While properly directed programs can be beneficial, volunteerism has limitations. George Washington said, "Making voluntary sacrifice the operative principle of republican government has proved to be a romantic delusion."<sup>11</sup>

Being a model of simple living in a world of waste is another form of giving that changes the lives of those affected. The model or exemplar is accepted and even encouraged in a society that prides itself on tolerance, even when living a more complex lifestyle. Tolerant folks accept voluntary simplicity as an example, provided that it does not extend its mandates to them. Amish people can drive buggies but not on the Interstate; homesteading is fine but not for everyone, and is time-consuming.

**5. Charity as liberating act.** On rare occasions someone will take his possessions and just distribute them at will, not just to aid the receiver but to get rid of goods that are too hard to maintain and secure. The possession retards mobility and wastes precious time in maintenance. It may be a traveler who wants to abandon fixed property or pets, or a hiker who is carrying too much useless baggage and wants to abandon some. The intention is non-charitable but, nonetheless, the outcome may be salutary for the receivers of the abandoned property.

**6. "Charity" as investment for success.** Some may consider that the super-rich giver is the greatest person since the size of the

charity is greatest. Charity is an investment that is well worth cultivating. Rather than seeing this process as an obligation stemming from having what truly does not belong to him or her, the giving becomes a virtue/investment for the future. "If I had a million what good could I do!" Looked at another way, "If I am penniless what good can I do out of love!" The success of giving becomes the goal that avoids liability and is an assurance of future success. This apparently indifferent act could easily become a veneer over pure greed, given the foibles of human nature -- or a subtle act of retaining some wealth to a degree. If a hotel manager decides to taste all the buffet dishes before sending leftovers to the hungry street people, he may even become a glutton while others go hungry.

**7. "Charity" as power.** A materialistic culture knows all too well that material temptations abound. Those who control resources may decide to give to select needy folks, with receivers expected to meet obligations desired by the giver. Strings become attached, though often in very subtle ways. Givers develop a finesse at being able to direct gifts through hidden controls; receivers know what has to be done to justify the gift and receive more. Begging and fulfilling stipulations are directed to the intentions of the giver. Puppeteers know how to keep things untangled; so do affluent givers. When the gift is in hundreds or thousands of dollars the results must be quite precise; more conformity is required, if gifts are in the millions or tens of millions. Each increment of donation size indicates growing influence, with larger sums requiring greater assurance of proper spending controls. In this century, large gifts are an indicator of accumulation of wealth, not a spirit of charity. Super-givers maintain control.

**8. "Charity" as excuse to spend.** Reasons for giving are many. In a consumer culture where spending is expected, the demands to consume more result in leftovers and clutter, as new things are purchased. To salve a conscience at the time of wardrobe change, some will donate the older items to the used clothing drive. Some will flaunt this unloading or "giving" and like the Publican in Luke's Gospel, broadcast the deed to all the world or at least through a tax deduction -- while burdening the lower-level folks with short-lived items that will soon need waste disposal. Unfortunately, so much of our consumption-driven world encourages lesser consumers to become greater ones, and this form of giving is an enticement to those on the lower rungs of the ladder of consumption to be motivated to climb higher.

**9. "Charity" as enticement or conversion tool.** Probably this is more popular than some surmise. Individuals or groups seek to entice others in a commercial or forceful manner by gifts that are

really leading them to doing what the giver already intends. Everything from spam to trafficking in people is part of the infinite schemes that seem so enticing at first glance. Some give in order to persuade others to join their ranks, e.g., cult enticements or "rice Christians." Okay, stand in line and await the evening meal, but you must hear the sermon first and answer the blessing with a hearty "amen." In order to receive, beggars must join; if they join, then they will receive future resources.

### 3) Different Types of Taking

*Zeal for your house devours me.* (Psalm 69:9)

Just as there are a number of ways of giving, taking also has different forms, some with and some without the consent of original property-holders; some are good and some are reprehensible.

**1. Taking out of necessity.** If the need is for the basics of life (a blanket, a bucket of coal, a kilo of grain), one could rightly take from the commons what is required for essential needs. This is not stealing, for the acquisition is primarily for essential need (the Cardinal Frings rule)<sup>14</sup>. Individuals can initiate short-term measures of taking when basic needs are justified; a starving person takes from the common store to satisfy hunger. To take from the common store to ensure future food supplies could exceed the limits. Certainly it is difficult for either rich or poor to judge what is enough, but in the short term an individual can satisfy immediate demands through such methods.

**2. Taking as fair taxation.** Actually, the preferred governmental resource redistribution medium is fair taxes. This is a way of taking that is regulated through governmental policy, legislation, and enforcement; the tax assessor bears a responsibility to the entire citizenry to enforce the law evenly. History's examples of crooked assessors and tax collectors notwithstanding, fair taxation may take from those with surplus and give to those in need. Granted, some will certainly say too much has been taken or not enough has been given to them, but in an imperfect world, fairness is the ideal that can be approximated. Those who champion "NO new taxes" forget that they are being propagandized by the wealthy who ought to pay far more taxes.

**3. Taking through commercial transactions.** Commercial transactions in which something is traded or money given for goods or services received are the ordinary means of business in our world. Services can include health, education, maintenance, repair, construction, and recreation. Even legal actions such as lawsuits are

part of this legal giving and taking. A subsection of this type of taking is *eminent domain*, the mandatory purchase of property by the government for the greater good of the community. As in purchasing, within this process a just compensation is required.

**4. Taking through violent revolution.** The French Revolution in 1789 is perhaps the best example of revolutionary hopes giving way to violence and misuse of power. Unfortunately, in the following two centuries other examples such as the Russian Revolution and the Chinese Cultural Revolution arose. Revolutions have not always resulted in ideal aftereffects; takers, whether the property is for public or private use, start to exercise their new power to oppress others; forced "givers" await the opportunity to take back what has been alienated in some fashion, and so many plot counter-rebellion and revolutions. Unrestrained physical power generates many types of violence: warfare, poverty, and human-made disasters. We observe violent effects quicker than we determine their causes: oppression, the devil, wealth and fame and power, culture, media or violent competition and games.

Violence may be due to the following: constant repression and the impulse to strike back; **over-competitiveness** (tending to defeat or overcome others through certain practices); **selfishness** (infringing on the dignity of others); **animosity** (tolerating differences in culture that separate one from those in need); **greed** (retaining what should be shared with those in need); **wastefulness** (squandering limited resources); **self-righteousness** (inclining some to "righteous" actions that can be violent); the **desire to exert power** and bear arms (giving owners a sense of power to frighten or intimidate others into submission); and, finally, **frustration and anger** over destitution (encouraging reactions such as terrorist attacks or armed revolt). Note that extreme violence occurred in Haiti during the turmoil over independence following the French Revolution.

**5. Liberating or emancipating people or things.** A person who is held in bondage is liberated through actions by individuals, rebel groups, or legal agencies. This taking or freeing from a thief or oppressor is a process that occurs through manumission, compensation, decrees, or through civil war or other forms of conflict. In some instances the form of repression continues when individuals are set free. In some cases, persons who are held in forced and illegal bondage by individuals or groups are liberated and oppressor(s) brought to justice. In a similar way, a stolen work of art is recaptured and "liberated" from an oppressor. Sometimes stolen art that is acquired inadvertently by museums is retaken that those who regard themselves as owners, without using recourse to legal means.

**6. Taking by Robin Hood.** A romantic tale tells of the good outlaw "Robin Hood" taking from the rich to give to the poor. Law-and-order forces may object to redistributing wealth by such means. Haves will urge continuation of the status quo; Have-nots will be reluctant to act because they are dependent upon the system for what little they have. Can such non-violent taking become a virtue, even when it frees holders from what they unjustly hold or do? Haves are no longer in the driver's seat and takers acquire added responsibilities. A version of this method of taking is some animal rights advocates "liberating" animals caged for scientific research. In a materialistic culture "violence" to property is of equal, if not greater, repugnance than violence to people, because property is so highly valued. To hurt someone is violence against a person; to sacrifice property in order to make a valid point is different. It may be a pedagogical tool for making a point, as performed by prophets of old. Radical environmental activists tend to favor this method, a dramatic way of drawing attention to an existing legal but immoral condition.<sup>15</sup>

**7. Taking through power by enclosure and exploitation.** This will be treated again in Chapter Three in reference to land. Similar actions such as allowing trading of fresh air by companies who wish to use more or less may be perpetrated "legally". Taking in such circumstances is similar to a "charitable" giving that is motivated by power to take more at will. To take in a measured amount and to dictate the use of the taking is a form of control over the resource, whether compensated in part or not at all. To force change in ownership by the takers is much the same -- an exercise of power (even if a non-violent variety), over property that may or may not belong to the infringing party. Such exercise of power can become intoxicating.<sup>16</sup>

**8. Taking through secret acquisition on an unclaimed commons.** Some are always on the lookout for a bargain that omits outright purchase. Clever people know exactly how to acquire property being foreclosed. Often resources have been taken from the commons with little reference to other commoners: the air breathed, the water from the streams, fragile unclaimed lands, and wild fruits in the wilderness. Less and less of this form of taking is possible today because of monitoring and because much is now claimed by individuals or agencies.

**9. Stealing as unlawful taking.** Thieves see an opportunity to take what does not belong to them secretly -- or openly, if the process is regarded as "legal" as occurred in American colonization in the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries (see next chapter). This differs from taking out of necessity (#1), a taking that can be justified. Outright thievery can sometimes be regarded as

"necessary" while it is greed or selfishness. A variation on this form of taking occurs when someone is kidnapped by an estranged parent who believes the child or ward is "his" or "hers." Furthermore, property lost through bankruptcy may be regarded as rightfully the former owner's.

#### 4. Elements in Reclaiming the Commons

*There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me. (Mark 10:21)*

Both giving and taking are subject to emotionally-charged detours in order to influence the process of either holding onto the status quo or disrupting it. Change or refusal to change can easily be misdirected through an exercise of intimidation or brute force by either side. Both giving and taking are one-way bridges that restrict community or global growth. History is replete with examples of one-way bridges of either givers or takers -- and fail to produce a higher quality life. A just and fair process of reclaiming the commons must include aspects in counter distinction to some of the excesses of either giving or taking.

**1. An urgent struggle for justice.** People need water to drink and thus reclaiming the water commons is not something that can be delayed. Granted, the ideal way to address this urgent problem is a simultaneous giving and taking. While potential givers may say that relinquishing a possession hurts, the argument is made that it does not belong to the original possessors in the first place; change is an act of justice, not charity. While initially becoming a loss to the "owner," the long-term benefits include the liberation resulting from handing over a basic resource. Responsible actions by potential takers are necessary to ensure that their group do not monopolize the resource to the detriment of all. Takers must promote justice through control of selfish elements within the receiving community. Such a material change is not automatic but takes community effort.

**2. Radical sharing.** In our attempt to reclaim the commons for all, we need a *radical sharing* that includes ever deepening levels of service: understanding the essential needs of all people (social awareness); giving up of excess without a basic struggle (solidarity); and trusting that resources taken will be used properly. Radical sharing must address the inordinate tendencies to self-interest and control. All must realize that giving is necessary and that imperfect giving allows for retention of control. Radical sharing means all is given and all is taken, but as a commons and not mere transfer to new controllers.

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 administers in the name of the commons. The basic environment is one of gratitude directed to the Giver of all gifts, but also extended to magnanimous givers and merciful takers who do not show revenge or individual self-seeking. Radical sharing goes to the root of motivations and to a compassionate love of the human family, 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 commons and common good.

Consider heroic forms of sharing such as organ donation, opening one's home to the abandoned, or helping to settle refugees. Sharing of surplus wealth by individuals or by nations leads to liberation of the holders of excess and the destitute; all liberate and all are liberated. The Spirit is the agent of change, and all sharers serve as witnesses and catalysts. Those who practice sharing in common (see Chapter Nine) become change agents. Ideally, sharing fairly involves a parting with one's excess, but if that is not achieved, a merciful taking for all. Radical sharing is the act of realizing that what one gives and another receives, when done freely and non-violently by all parties, binds the world more tightly together as one people.

**3. A multi-faceted transaction.** Reapportionment of resources is good business that involves responsible stewardship of resources -- and many societies have done this to some degree. Parties give up private caches of food or supplies for the good of drought or flood victims; such giving is part of a harmonious society. All parties are involved, for those who give up have the good will of those who receive, and lighten maintenance responsibilities. Those who receive are elevated to a higher quality of life. The manner of the transactions will vary with culture, but success is expected when multi-faceted. The affluent givers and the takers/receivers bear mutual responsibility. When the exchange is regulated, the entire process is not merely fair taxation but fair reapportionment involving all parties. No miracles and no violent reactions are expected; the process is to benefit all parties.

**4. Revolutionary process.** Through our religious beliefs we are moved to a *holy discontent*, that is, a deep desire to bring about authentic change through divine inspiration -- and a change where all, not just a few -- benefit. In the past, wealth was acquired by those with might or guarded privilege -- but the movement towards democratic maturation makes change necessary and inevitable, a movement that is to be both non-violent and participatory in nature. Convincing the

public that the change is necessary but revolutionary is frightening to some. The Bible is a story of part of this recognition of democratic maturation.<sup>17</sup>

In the Old Testament, Israel, an insignificant nation and a humble people, takes the lead in a exclusive profession of faith to a single God and with an understanding that other peoples were to follow. In the New Testament, the theme is continued in greater intensity. Mary hears the announcement of the Good News and proclaims that the lowly will rise and those in high places come down. The process of democratization is an authentic sharing of power with all-- the high and the low. Process springs from the grassroots, for here divine creative power, starting at the initial Big Bang, moves through an evolutionary process to our own day. The rising of lowly people shows God's power and majesty at work.

**5. A liberation of the affluent.** Affluent people are often caught in the web of their own delusions and need loosening from material things. Some extend greediness to control of vast holdings. In this century, autocratic billionaires (e.g., Muammar Kaddafi of Libya or Hosni Mubarak of Egypt), have succumbed to the rising tide of a Middle Eastern revolution. Liberation from such control is necessary. Ideally, those in control ought to surrender freely, but most often do not; change agents must bring about this needed surrender. Conservation efforts can change fashions such as the early twentieth-century one of wearing bird feathers on a hat, resulting in the killing of millions of songbirds. Hopefully, the late twentieth-century fashion of driving energy-hog vehicles is becoming unfashionable in an era of severe climate change.

**6. An Opportunity.** To catalyze is to hasten radical sharing because there are genuine needs for liberating wealth. A free and generous sharing by all parties is ideal but not to be expected. A win-win situation would be when "haves" release wealth voluntarily and "have-nots" take wealth non-violently. Urgency demands initiating and executing the process in a relatively short time because the hungry and unemployed are impatient. Prevarication is the temptation of the privileged, but acting immediately becomes an opportunity for mutual sharing.

**7. Mutual respect is mutual benefit.** Without an atmosphere of mutual respect, changes may become highly emotional and even become uncontrolled violence or rage by either giver or taker. Only a righteous anger founded in respect and love of our neighbor<sup>18</sup> ought to survive in a growing confidence of working together to further human wellbeing. Through radical sharing, both giver and taker say "yes" to full participation in the reapportionment process and can mature

and discover benefits in working together. Thus emerges a new motivation, a spiritual or qualitative "profit," not a material one. Through an atmosphere of mutual respect, profit-making is converted into a quest for a higher quality of life, a concern of all the human family.

**8. Participation.** Down through the ages, primitive tribes and religious-based intentional communities have held things in common. What was done on the local level needs to be raised to a higher level of organization. What is local could be regional, national, international and global -- a fair sharing, in contrast with legitimized hoarding or grabbing for limited and precious resources. Not only is fair sharing a tried-and-true fulfilling practice, but it involves a genuine development that can extend to the entire world -- not a materialistic development based on greed and self-interest, but one based on mutual security and benefit. Radical sharing involves freely giving and freely receiving, and the joint activity becomes part of a global participatory process.

**9. Consensus-building through mutual trust.** In this beginning of the twenty-first century we observe the EU seeking to overcome the nationalistic power struggles of a century earlier. Financial crises could tarnish this record or enhance the temptation to protectionism by some trading nations. A sense of forgiveness creates an atmosphere of consensus so that financial mistakes can be corrected within an atmosphere of mutual respect. Passing over past hurdles is not sufficient; mutual trust means confronting the present moment. Expecting unwavering consensus allows obstructionists to exert power through refusal and stopping the process -- and this demands confrontation.

### Reflection: Keeping Water from Being Privatized

*Water is not like other commodities -- it's not something people can choose to forego.* Wenonah Hauter<sup>19</sup>

Arrogance and gratitude mix like fire and water. The current efforts to take our water resource by all sorts of privateers invites actions by commoners, who regard water as a free God-given gift. Water is essential for life on this blue-green planet covered with much water, most of which is not potable. In areas where higher quality drinking water is scarce, the temptation is to privatize this resource. For instance, near Sitka in sparsely settled Alaska, Blue Lake holds billions of gallons of water so pure it needs no treatment. The temptation to privatize and ship this water to Mumbai, India is immense; in fact, one Alaskan company has acquired rights to ship 3

billion gallons of this water annually from Alaska to India.<sup>20</sup>

Transferring supplies are not as bothersome as transferring water rights to privateers. By 2040, the UN predicts that fresh water demand will outstrip supplies by 30%. Free marketers say rising prices will bring supply and demand into balance -- but water prices will go to the highest bidder, not the poor who are thirsty. Callous privateers see water to be as valuable as oil, and they plan to go with what the market will bear -- and that means selling primarily to private water and soft drink bottlers. Profits do not favor environmental protection or human rights, only big suppliers and big distributors. According to the World Bank, investment is going strong right now with water supply markets rising rapidly. Some water-rich lands like Russia and Canada will benefit, and some water-poor desert nations may perhaps fight over distribution of potentially-shared water supplies.

China and India are having potable water shortages and, as water systems are privatized, fewer who thirst at the poorer end have access to essential water. In America, a number of cities with infrastructure water treatment and supply problems are thinking about going private, and yet others have had their fill of private operators. Some point out that competition is limited to bidding and then the privateer with the contract virtually can monopolize the supply and market. These privateers can reduce a labor force, neglect water conservation, and shift environmental concerns back to the public sector.

Water is free; delivery from its supply source may not be; nor is monitoring end point water use. As supplies dwindle and demand holds steady or rises, water will get more expensive. Profits ought not to be part of the picture, and privateers who care little about future infrastructure ought not be involved. Nor ought rising prices to be the prime incentive for water conservation, for here the poor suffer most. Monitoring water delivery systems is difficult because piping is underground and not easily checked; the private water people are enticed to cut corners in quality control. Water as commons ought to remain public.

### Chapter Three: Land as Commons

*I never heard that the Creator opened an estate office to issue title deeds to land.... Every proprietor of land owes to the community a ground rent for the land which he holds. (Thomas Paine)*

Land, unlike air as commons, has definable boundaries. Thus, land rights are a complex subject because much depends on the

restrictions placed on amount of land held by private parties or public land held in common. Some nomadic tribes considered vast stretches of forest or steppes to be open territory for foraging or grazing their animals. Other people settle on a particular tract, and called it "their land" with defined boundaries. The Cain-and- Abel conflict extends to sheep-versus-cattle lands, nomads- versus-settled farmers, and now with public-versus-private lands in wetlands and forests controlled by developers.

A "need" for land on which to live, provide sustenance, and build a lodging becomes a paramount land question with growing populations on a rather static land mass. Urbanization of larger numbers of people (half the global population) only adds to the unsolved needs problem. All need adequate residential dwelling space, but must all have growing space for gardens? Certainly small farmers have a right to grow their essentials of life without being forced from their land by urban development or by large corporate farms desiring to grow materials for distant markets. What about adequate territory for wildlife habitat?

The right to a particular plot of land can become a complex issue, for it includes the group holding title to land as well as those needing produce from specific land tracts. Furthermore, some land is held in common simply because it defies or is non-conducive to private ownership (e.g., glaciated land, Antarctica), or because its utility impacts larger numbers of people (mountain range watershed), or because the resource has common utility (land used for roads). A right to land may be interpreted as prior use (an estate) or for providing essential food needs (traditional farming plot). One-sixth of the world's people lack adequate food; all the while large amounts of food are wasted by the affluent. Misplaced resources could be utilized to feed the hungry when the affluent make use of the 18% of climate-change gases derived by producing meat for human consumption. Food-producing land for a few and choice of resource-intensive food product all have a bearing on land choice. Furthermore, transfer of food-producing land for commercial and luxury uses, while local populations experience food shortages, is becoming frequent.

Fragile lands need protection against exploitation of wilderness and wildlife habitats. While all wildlife enrich us and are deserving of our respect, many land-based animals are stressed by being confined on fragmented space. The forest commons, the lungs of this living planet, must remain healthy, and yet deforestation continues -- though efforts to halt the practice through controls and sustainable harvesting methods are occurring.

**a) Infringement on Land Commons**

*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)*

This land-related section is divided into four parts: land that is fragile and requires regulation to protect it from individual or corporate exploitation; wilderness areas, forests, and wildlife habitats that can be easily harmed through unsustainable practices; land that is removed from food production; and land where property rights legally take precedence over other land uses. **Wildlife** is not strictly a "common possessed by all," but rather these are fellow participants/companions with human beings benefitting from the air, water, and land commons.

1. Fragile Lands -- Uninhabited mountainous areas can be critical water sources for human populations downstream. Deserts are vast open scenic spaces that attract visitors and residents who want to escape from congested areas. These barren stretches are generally unpoliced and subject to forms of exploitation. Often mining interests seek out minerals in unpopulated fragile areas and, without proper oversight, proceed to pollute landscape through sloppy mining operations.

Forests are the planet's lungs and yet produce many other benefits, from supply of foods to moisture and soil retention. For the greater part, national governments and their local subsidiaries realize they are their nation's land guardians. However, policing as in other fragile areas is a major challenge. Furthermore, when governments are weak, these forested regions go unprotected and are harmed by exploitation and through misuse by careless funseekers leaving virtually indelible marks.

The northern Arctic polar region and the continent of Antarctica are virtually uninhabited fragile areas that are rich in untapped resources. In the Arctic region, climate changes are opening the ice sheet for longer summer periods and enticingly shorter shipping routes. Border nations (Russia, Canada, United States, Norway and Denmark) vie for sub-surface development rights for promising petroleum and other resources. International agencies seek jointly to control an Antarctica that is subject to trashing by increasing numbers of visitors.

Maritime wilderness areas were discussed in Chapter Two and the same problems of exploitation, uncontrolled pollution, and unpoliced activity exist on the land as well. Many parts of oceans are commons, and not within the particular responsibility of specific nations. On the other hand, responsibility for land-based wilderness is specified

as to countries and yet many of these do not have the resources to protect their own wilderness properly. The joint responsibility of wilderness and forests by a wider world community must be determined and turned over to global agencies. The critical factor is reluctance for nations to surrender control.

## 2. Wilderness, Forests, and Wildlife Habitats

*And every tree of the field will learn that I, Yhwh, am the one who stunts tall trees and makes the low ones grow, who withers green trees and makes the withered green. (Ezekiel 17:24)*

**Wilderness fragmentation and intrusive activity.** Road-building and construction projects can damage fragile lands, quickly leading to trashing, loss of wildlife habitat, noise, unsightly billboards, and to introduction of exotic invasive species. All-weather roads into wilderness areas and the desire to connect with nature render wilderness areas popular for hiking and camping in summer and snowmobiling and skiing in winter. With proper regulation and facilities for visitors, impacts can be limited, but certain wilderness areas must be declared off-limits, because those impacts exceed the area's **carrying capacity**. People often seek to escape congested areas and turn to wilderness for residences, reducing isolation through modern communications networks. An extreme of landscape abuse occurs when developers build hilltop mansions so owners can observe untouched beauty, while creating a scenic disturbance by their residences.

**Tourism** is popular, especially during boom economic times in scenic-but-sparsely-policed wilderness areas. Tourist activities vary immensely in their impact on wilderness areas, with sightseeing from established roads being low, and mobile recreational vehicles being potentially harmful. Wilderness recreational use can put a heavy carrying capacity on these regions, resulting in damage and waste accumulation. Green tourism involves limiting visitors and declaring fragile sites off limits. Shortages of cheap available cooking fuel have led the world's poor to increased use of fuel wood, the world's fuel of choice (see Chapter One). Recreation vehicles such as off-road vehicles (ATVs) are noisy and capable of cruising and traversing very rough terrain, fragile desert areas, and streambeds; they can cause massive damage in short periods of time. Much depends on vehicle operators attitudes and adequate policing of these areas.

**Deforestation.** Excessive harvesting of timber has resulted in the disappearance of one-third of the world's forests since the mid-twentieth century. Forests often contain valuable timber and wood for fuel and furnishings resulting in removal of commercially-

valuable trees at unsustainable levels. In Estill County, Kentucky, where this author lives, the charcoal/iron furnace industry of the nineteenth century denuded lands for miles around, and yet the forest is regenerating today. Deforestation occurs for several reasons: harvesting exceeds natural replacement (crosscut saw and oxen are replaced by chain saws and heavy loaders); marketing overlooks failure to enforce proper timber growth and replacement; large-scale corporations search out grazing lands for cattle along with soybean and grain production for export markets; and the forestlands are turned into palm oil for biofuel and some food. The effects are evident when flying over eroded and deforested Haiti, for one can see the defined boundaries with forested-neighboring Dominican Republic. Deforestation leads to local climate change (loss of foliage cooling effects), soil erosion, lack of water retention, and lack of flood control.

**Not Being Right with Wildlife.** Damaging the habitat of wildlife threatens the species itself and deteriorates our human quality of life as well. The "rights" of animals, our companions and fellow creatures, to co-exist with us should be regarded as part of our responsibility to save and enhance this planet and life itself. Without detouring into an animal rights discussion, we still assert OUR right to proper habitat extends beyond the human family and includes animal/plant habitat as well. Wildlife enhances our human quality of life; wildlife enriches us by **presence**, and helps us understand our place on the planet. Wildlife existed before us, exists with us, and allows us in humility to discover our coexistence and shared future. We defend wildlife's presence by defending and enhancing wildlife's habitat.

**Wildlife as threatened and extinguished.** The UN estimates that our planet is experiencing a major wildlife die-back period: official bird counts show decreasing numbers and varieties in our temperate zones, in part due to destruction of winter habitats, especially heavy logging of tropical forests. The Monarch butterfly has a reduced wintering area in Mexico due to recent land development. Siberian tigers have been decimated by commercial exploitation; other factors include internal conflicts, poaching (e.g., African highlands gorilla) and lack of police protection. Wildlife monitoring and protection can make a difference. For instance, the North American whooping crane has come from near total destruction to healthy sustainable population levels through conservation efforts; the bald eagle has been removed from the threatened lists. We must discover, promote, protect, and give space for wildlife to flourish; we may never meet a tiger "there" in the woods, and yet their presence in woods enriches our "here."

**Unpoliced wildlife reservations** in lower-income nations have resulted in uncontrolled poaching by inhabitants seeking wildlife to supplement protein needs. While most wildlife forays today are for good camera shots, that was not the case a century ago when wildlife sporting forays were fashionable. Sport hunting and poaching of sparse species for desired animal parts (e.g. certain tigers and rhinoceroses, bird feathers) are out of favor but further trade restrictions are necessary. Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century "conservationists" were wealthy enough to travel great distances to hunt game for sport, but they could not brag about such exploits today. Exceptions to restricting wildlife contact involve protective measures, research, and obtaining materials for virtual tourism projects to reduce disturbing fragile habitats.

**Excessive harvesting.** Bison roamed by the tens of thousands on the Great Plains, and yet systematic harvesting in the nineteenth century saw herds virtually disappear -- in part to subjugate natives who depended on these animals for livelihood. Unsustainable harvesting of certain species of wildlife (eastern elk, bison, whales) has resulted in tragic declines and extinction of certain species (passenger pigeon). Human negligence and harmful practices have caused 1,141 of the 5,487 known species of land mammals to be at risk of extinction -- and there are more threatened flora and fauna besides. Frogs, salamanders, and other amphibians are among the hardest hit by today's many strikes against wildlife; *they have weathered 300 million years to evolve into more than 6,000 singular species, as beautiful, diverse -- and imperiled -- as anything that walks, or hops, the Earth.*<sup>1</sup>

**Decline of wildlife habitat and migration routes.** Wildlife need space in which to thrive, feed, nest, and rest. Land habitat is critical for land-based animal survival. Furthermore, movement of wildlife ought not to be unduly restricted, for many species migrate in order to find ideal weather, nesting, and feeding conditions; some species need protected sea and land routes and flyways. In sub-Saharan Africa, fencing to protect grazing cattle has disturbed migration routes of certain larger mammals, denying them critical water and grazing opportunities.

**Exotic species.** At stages in history people introduce a species such as kudzu or rabbits to land that lacks native controls or predators, and the introduced species becomes invasive and overwhelms the native plant/animal balance. Many ecologists regard exotic species proliferation as THE major environmental menace to our planet's ecosystem. The exotic species condition is exacerbated by several human-induced causes: the extermination of native predators that could check proliferation of invasive species; the deliberate introduction of flora and fauna for commercial purposes (kudzu in the

American Southeast for livestock fodder, or deer for hunting); introduction for novelty (sparrow in the Western Hemisphere) or as pets (boa snakes have broken free in Florida); garden and yard landscape beautification (purple loosestrife); and the release of exotic flora or fauna through misguided pursuit of biological diversity.

**Proliferation of native species.** Encouragement and introduction of game animals such as "wild" turkeys has resulted in proliferation of wildlife beyond an area's carrying capacity; understory is damaged in the process due to the stronger appetite of semi-domesticated fowl. The loss of native carnivores (foxes, wolves, mountain lions, etc.) results in overpopulation of certain game animals (rabbits, deer, turkeys), and failure to introduce systematic harvesting procedures. The decline in popularity of sport hunting has inadvertently reduced proliferated species harvest as a mode of game population control. Such animals are low-cost, locally-grown, organic foods, and are an excellent meat alternative to livestock requiring pasture, cultivated feed, and maintenance. An American organization, *Hunters for the Hungry*, furnishes annually over one million meals of venison to the poor, and the venison is more "organic" than the average meat cuts available at food markets.

### 3. Land for Essential Needs -- Food and Housing

*The one who wrongly holds that every human right is secondary to his profit must now give way to the advocate of human welfare, who rightly maintains that every man holds his property subject to the general right of the community to regulate its use to whatever degree the public welfare may require it.* Theodore Roosevelt

Without sufficient cropland, much of the world's one billion people who live in food-insecure regions face major hunger problems. As of this writing, food prices (often one-half to 90% of many poor folks' incomes) rose 2.5% over the previous month, the ninth straight month of rise (2010-11). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Security Assessment states that between 2006 and 2007 the number of food insecure people (less than 2,100 calories per day) went from 849 to 982 million in 70 lower-income countries. Food security and productive land go hand-in-hand. Many citizens regard the terror of hunger as an abomination in an age of plenty and, with enormous food wastes (enough to feed a major portion of the world's hungry), the wrong is magnified. Food shortages resulting from increased biofuel production or natural disasters contribute to higher prices that increase world hunger.

**Scarcity of cropland.** Most staples are grown on productive land that is limited and being taken out of production through commercial

development and recreational purposes. While some dire emergencies can be met by shipments of food from surplus nations, the more harmonious approach is to produce food as close as possible to where it is consumed. Subsidies in richer nations go to large agricultural enterprises and unfairly compete with small-scale farming operations in poorer lands. Farmland is increasing in price and is now outside of the reach of most aspiring farmers. Economic incentives are often lacking, thus leading to further sub-division of small family farms or the forced migration of portions of the population to urban areas. In contrast, many large individual landholders occupy land for their own extravagant purposes -- lawns, hunting preserves, buffer zones, scenic views.

**Corporate land ownership.** Corporate farms are a modern version of the seventeenth-century enclosure of English pasturelands. Modern corporate enclosure means buying up land for profit-making purposes. Quite often corporate farming techniques involve heavy use of chemicals, monocultures, migrant labor, and outside management. These corporate enterprises are not community oriented and have little regard for the future of the rural communities in which they are situated. Their goal is maximizing profits, not building a living local community. In some places, powerful market forces require these farmers to grow specialty export crops such as coffee or sugar on former subsistence farmlands.

**Ornamental lands.** Large estates often occupy potential farmlands but remain in an ornamental condition, often to the benefit of outside wealthy interests -- and to the detriment of poorer local inhabitants. All the while, potential small-scale producers cannot find territory on which to grow their own crops. If more attention were paid to local farmers growing the produce to feed their hungry neighbors, a portion of the current global hunger problem could be alleviated. However, estate redistribution is difficult in part because new farmers need initial capital and are often inexperienced in homesteading practices. Targeting underutilized, fallow or decorative lands for food production could provide one quarter of America's food supply if a modern version of the World War Two "victory gardens" were reintroduced.

**Land as Essential Needs -- Housing.** In 2011, heavy rainfall caused a populated hillside in La Paz, Bolivia, to collapse, destroying homes of several thousand people. Residents were angry because they had to build on steep, slip-prone hillsides with no planning, few streets, and little sewage and water facilities. In many parts of the world, lower-income people build their own residences on flood plains and where unsuitable land is all that is available. The reason a million Haitians were without housing a year after the January, 2010,

earthquake was lack of clear title to housing sites, a global problem. All the while, a Los Angeles suburb challenges construction of a mega-mansion of 80,000 square feet. In 2011, some seven million Americans paid over half their income for housing. The Great Recession indicated connections between housing and credit crises with millions of residences going "under water" (mortgages higher than market value). At this time the American debt load was over \$12,000 per household and, with interest rates high (18.9% on credit cards for most average borrowers and up to 30% for those with poor credit ratings). Unregulated finances leads to usury and red-lining neighborhoods.

**Unproductive public lands** comprise almost one-quarter of the U.S. surface area and urban-abandoned lands in depopulated cities. However, hard-hit Detroit now has over 800 urban gardens (some up to an acre in size), where vacant residence plots have been turned into *urban homesteading*. Vacant military bases, portions of air fields, prisons, highways, cemeteries, educational, health and technical institutions, sidewalks, and other facilities contain potentially productive lands. In times of financial difficulties privatizing such areas becomes a temptation -- sell or lease parks, prisons and municipal water works -- even highways. Corporate propaganda deliberately denigrates public management while overlooking that profits lead to curtailment of services through supposedly better methods of management -- though results (e.g., underground utilities) are hidden from scrutiny.

**Damaging land practices.** Unfortunately, erosion and salination of croplands have a long history, from warfare and depopulation to ignorance and greed. In more recent times, exploiting mineral and fuel resources using large-scale technical devices has rendered lands into virtual moonscapes. Reclamation practices are often lacking or are of poor quality. The continent of Africa missed the Green Revolution of the last half of the twentieth century that brought sufficient grain and other food security to much of Asia and Latin America. Especially in sub-Saharan Africa, foreign agencies (from China, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, etc.), being fearful of domestic food-insecurity situations, are buying up African farmland. Besides successfully competing with local farmers for land, they obtain cropland to grow food and non-food products for the neo-colonial wealthier nations. They promise jobs, new technology, better infrastructure, and extra tax revenues but do not deliver.<sup>2</sup> They have focused attention on Sudan and Ethiopia, chronically food- and water-short nations.

More than half the world's unused arable land is in Africa; only 5% of the continent's arable land is irrigated; much depleted land is

in need of adequate fertilizers; farmers lack access roads to take produce to markets; hybrid seeds so common in other farming areas account for less than 30% of grain grown in Africa. An estimated half of harvested grain is lost to pests, moisture or other causes.<sup>2a</sup>

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Returning large-scale to small-scale agriculture is not simple. Mike Campbell, a large-scale (3,000 acre) mango/citrus fruit farmer, along with other whites became the target of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe land reform. Efforts to turn the land to poor blacks (really to cronies of the dictator president) included burning down Campbell's lodge and other acts of intimidation, which he fought through legal redress and won. His battle ended with his death in poverty in April, 2011, and much of his cropland rendered idle.<sup>2b</sup> However, successful redistribution stories exist.

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**A food crisis has arrived.** Feeding a hungry world is challenging when emerging nations such as China and India are converting their own arable land from grain crops into roadways, industrial development, and for production of resource-intensive foods (e.g. animal products) for an emerging middle class. India has 400 pounds of grain per person per year; the U.S. consumes 1,600 pounds mainly as feed for livestock. Climate change may decrease critical rice, wheat, sorghum, and corn yields at a time when little food surplus is being realized. Poor African states ruled by opportunistic leaders are ripe for cooperative schemes to turn farmland to benefit foreign food purchasers, creating stress in local areas of food production. Foresighted leaders seek development funds to move their farmers into self-sufficiency and have surpluses for foreign food demands. About 3.7 acres of the global productive farmland are available for every person, and yet about 5.7 acres are needed for satisfying consumer appetites.

**Urban Sprawl.** Land developers look to profits by converting productive land to second homes and further urbanization. China's economic expansion is combined with local governments making ends meet through land grabs such as compulsory purchase orders for the benefit of developers. In fact, in 2011 the Chinese magazine, *Caixin*, reported that revenue from land-rights sales makes up 46% of all local-government revenue.<sup>3</sup> India is rapidly experiencing problems of sprawl; in Indian Punjab, expatriates drive up land prices as they mimic Americans in acquiring large second homes -- though used only a few months a year. Groups like the *American Farmland Trust* point out how urban development in many areas of weak zoning regulations diminish amounts of prime farmland.

#### 4. Belonging: Property Rights Versus Land Commons

*To Yhwh belong Earth and all it holds, the world and all who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)*

What belongs to whom, and why do they have a right to it? Excessive private land ownership is infringement on our land commons and must be addressed. Precisely here, real differences in opinion emerge, for some ask why large landholders are entitled to own much, pay less taxes, control legislators who determine taxes, and continue to expand the global phenomenon of disparity of wealth. Others see no reason to ask. In this sub-section we must confront status-quo positions on property rights in an age of growing scarcity of suitable land. We must come to terms with property as a private "right" held by the entitled privileged and the extended right to common land. Is this not a continuation of the classic land enclosure battles of the seventeenth century?

In a world of increasing human population, essential land for food production (a commons in its own right) is in shortening supply. The hungry multitudes continue to increase, while food prices rise and food scarcity afflicts many parts of the world. The principle of subsidiarity states that the local level is the best place to manage scarce land resources, provided that higher levels (national or global agencies) have proper safeguards to protect lower levels where land for food and housing is needed.

**Principle of Having Enough:** *The right to property extends to surplus land only after essential needs are met, and then the areas of land controlled -- not owned -- should be proven by the competence and motivation of the controller, as judged by the people with the voice of primary interest groups in local communities. When distant sources control land needed by local people, the needy have a right to take over land from those with so-called "property rights."*

Excessive consumption of resources, credit without the ability to repay, confusion in investment practices, and Ponzi schemes that are overlooked, all add to a world just waiting for financial and environmental catastrophe -- and quite often such conditions involve surplus property. Is not much of this emerging condition due to a misunderstanding about what belongs to whom?

In most cultures, individual property extends to personal useful items (utensils, clothes, bedding, etc.), but hardly to the lakes, forests, rivers, and lands around them.

In many cultures, land is common property and even cultivated land

may involve personal responsible practices, but is part of the commons. For instance, the Iroquois Confederacy regarded buying and selling of land by the American government as illegal and immoral, for land belongs to the Great Spirit. Other examples besides Native American traditions where land is held in common include West African villages, Irish kinship-based society before the English conquest, and the Mexican *ejido*.<sup>4</sup> Actual fine points in practices differed throughout the world, but land commons has been almost universally held over the ages.

Western society championed the right to private property -- and that is upheld in the American Constitution (Fourth Amendment). However, this tradition has also held that "owners" are mere stewards during their lives. Transfer of land has become a critical problem area involving entitlement and legal inheritance. In civilized western societies ambivalence appears when discussing individual rights and responsibilities. We say "we" and "our" and mean our relation to people and place and Earth herself. We belong to Earth and Earth to us. Little of this massive Earth -- or any of it -- belongs to me individually; collectively we are stewards of our Earth, a body that for the Judeo-Christian traditions belongs to God. Not even "our" time belongs to us, for mortal life is a gift that must be spent well, and we as stewards help create our future destiny. For the terminally-ill person, the gift of mortal life is better appreciated when human control slips away.

Unfortunately, some regard *stewardship*, which has a temporary and responsible character to it, as ownership in an absolute sense -- an iron grip of which others have no right to interference. For these people, entitlement is regarded as deserved and bestowed by God. Others see stewardship as a temporary portion of the gift of life -- and thus can have a commons aspect. For this group, resources are gifts given to be used wisely individually AND communally, since God first shares with us. This gift is interconnected with our neighbors **here** and **now**, and with generations to come who are out **there** and **then**. Our stewardship of the commons leads to an enhanced heritage, a repository for all to share and from which to benefit. What is ours is to be shared, for it is not ours in an absolute manner. today, stewardship and sharing are thrust into greater prominence with globalization.

In modern western cultures the emphasis on individual rights is so paramount that it encompasses a wide variety of historic concepts: Bill of Rights, colonization, Native American "treaties" and tribe removals, land titles and deeds, court battles, land surveys, and various understandings of property tenure and retention. The sorry differences in what is called "property" became a source of real

conflict between Europeans and the native Americans during the entire colonization period, and well into American post-revolutionary times. "Belonging" has taken on cultural, mythical, religious, and legendary dimensions. Individual rights have been enumerated by philosophers and even by such political leaders as Franklin D. Roosevelt. We speak of the rights to speech, press, assemblage, worship and privacy -- and even the right to bear arms or the use of common resources: air, water, the oceans, wilderness, forests as Earth's lungs, space, wildlife's presence, cultural expression, intellectual life, access to communications, health facilities, and right to free movement.

The concept of land belonging to individuals to do as the holder deems best has need of reflection. We have far more power to misuse land than people in previous ages, and thus controls or limitations on personal land use must be understood. All rights are possessed within a community of rights-holders. Merely possessing a large water pump does not mean we can take water from a common pool or limited water supply without regard to our neighbors and their needs. Doesn't exercise of rights involve a "right to property" for **reasonable** use, and some land exploitation is not reasonable? I may take this food in order to stay alive; I have a right to retain this cooking utensil for personal and hygienic reasons. Do I have a "right" to waste or misuse the property held.

Questions cascade. What about the taking of a portion of the general supply for reasons of security? Wellbeing? Power and dominion? Do I have a right to enslave people as though they are my own possession? What about claiming foreign lands for my king or queen? What about conflicts over rights -- I want this limited item and so do others? Does my taking of property for a wider reason than essential use infringe on the right of another to live a higher quality of life? Do not rights clash and belongings are often at issue? If I say I own a star "x" in the heavens, it means little to others; to say I own this piece of land, on which some grow their crops, draws immediate attention.

*Property rights* are secondary to essential rights to life, liberty, and basic justice. Sometimes one landholder's property stands in the way of another's livelihood -- and conflicts soon arise. Property must give way to rights to life. Even "just" compensation is open to interpretation. Property rights involve exercise of privacy and security that may include a place in which to dwell, retire and find refreshment, retirement benefits, and basic communal security. Depending on the culture, these include some work space (a farm, pasture, or craft shop). With respect to these private property rights two extremes exist: unlimited property rights at the individual level, and the "state" ownership of all major tangible property.

Western culture includes a willingness to allow those, who legally obtain title, to hold as much property as they show cause -- even extensive land holdings.

Morally, in a time of scarcity, large land holdings ought to be limited. Individual land property can be alienated for the common good, and thus the broader community has access through *eminent domain* -- public access for roads, airports or other forms of transportation or defense. Complications soon arise over land features such as watersheds for public water supplies, or wetlands or wilderness for common use. The interpretation of the Common Good calls for legal judgment by a fair judiciary system. And is not land for food-growing and housing part of the Common Good, even when some hungry or landless people now receive title for meeting their own needs? Essential land needs call for moderate holdings.

In the hyper-possessiveness, or individualistic interpretation of property, arises a view that land could be developed at a profit to the landholder; thus the greater group (the state) is expected to pay for that potential wealth from land development (*takings*) -- even if such a land "improvement" by the individual landowner is detrimental of the public good. Can private possessions be used or not used with impunity by the absolute holder, especially since "everything is connected to everything else" (First Law of Ecology)? Land use rights are conditioned by the greater community. In an age of heightened ecological consciousness, limits are being placed on the right to private resources; such circumstances may not have historic precedence or a lengthy record of constitutional judgments by courts.

Private property is accepted by many in society. Belonging(s) may refer to the private property of individuals (clothing, books, bedding, suitcases, personal items), or to more extensive possessions (house, land, motor vehicles). Communities that share much in common have limits on what each person may possess at a given time. Tangible belongings are fought over, debated and discussed in a greedy or a fair fashion. Belongings vary immensely in amounts held, and thus classes of "haves" and "have-nots" arise. Acknowledging that classes exist does not negate a future hope for a classless society. However, it is not yet here. In recent studies, African Americans are not regarded as a single-class society, but rather as belonging to different socio-economic classes, some far closer to white middle-class values than to those of lesser-income among the darker-skinned race(s). The "classless" Chinese society of Maoist revolutionary days is being smothered today by emerging classes, Chinese superrich and expanding middle classes, along with the very poor who see their traditional lands being grabbed by more powerful classes.

Culture clashes occur over belongings. In the case of forceful importation of slaves to America, the integration of groups met resistance by those unwilling to share their property no matter how ill-gotten. It took the U.S. eight decades after independence -- and a bloody Civil War-- to realize that our country also "belongs" to ex-slaves who helped settle and develop this nation. Lincoln, the great emancipator, at one period wanted to settle ex-slaves in Africa or Central America, places far removed from where they resided. However, our nation became aware of the difficulties and trauma of such a move. Besides, Frederick Douglas and others argued that slaves had given much to make this country what it is, and they belong. However, enslavement is still global; in 2011 some 27,000,000 are estimated to be enslaved in bondage or forced employment. These unfortunate victims do not have the resources to break from their bondage.

*Belong* in its root meaning from Old English (*langian*) means being suitable, within a proper or appropriate place, or connected. *Belongings*, especially in the plural, refers to possessions, familiarity, property, and close relationship. In common use, we hold something to be mine or ours, and believe that we have a valid relationship by birth, gift, legal title, nobility, inheritance or acquisition in some manner, whether by force or not. Even the most grasping person expects this relationship of ownership to end at death, unless one extends the concept of belonging to spiritual realms: "We belong to God/God's Family," "We belong to the company of the saved," "Love is the only belonging we take with us."

**Benjamin Franklin had unfulfilled dreams.** Franklin was certainly not a radical and yet he believed in limits to wealth concentration, and wished them to be included in the new Pennsylvania constitution.

*His fingerprints were also visible in the list of qualifications that Pennsylvania's officeholders must meet: unlike in other states, they did not have to own property... Another ultra-democratic proposal Franklin made to the Pennsylvania convention (along with a unicameral legislature) was that the state's Declaration of Rights discourage large holdings of property or concentrations of wealth... That also ended up being too radical for the convention (to the state constitution).<sup>5</sup> Franklin attempted to make his point again at the convention that framed the American constitution, but property holders dismissed his views.*

American citizens who oppose divine right of kings ought to question divine right of the wealthy -- and this has strong American traditional roots. Equally strong is the unchallenged tradition to allow the wealthy to reign supreme. This went unchallenged when frontiers were considered endless, and people (except Native Americans

and Blacks) were entitled to what they obtained legal title to through hook or crook. In the nineteenth century, acquiring land was heavily directed to farm and railroad lands; in the twentieth century accumulation of wealth was more focused in urban property, stocks, bonds and other financial interests. Acquiring and retaining were regarded as laudatory, if through such acquisition owners lived more comfortably. The business and economic climate that provided jobs prospered; the political/economic power to retain wealth was unchallenged.

Since the 1970s, William Britain-Catlin says, the multinationals and banks began as a matter of course to expand and grow as tax havens. *Up to this time, nation-states had complete control over their economies and finances. That changed. Offshore tax havens put enormous pressure on domestic banking systems to deregulate and liberalize...governments across the industrialized west eventually repealed their own regulations and let offshore finance make a home office onshore.*<sup>6</sup> Trade globalization became a fact and incentives to concentrate power and property increased. In the U.S., the upper 1% had 7% of the wealth in 1980 and over 17% of the wealth in 2008. This accumulation of wealth is also occurring in China, India, Russia and other countries with rapidly growing economies. Billionaires increase even in lands with centralized economies. During 2007, the number of billionaires in mainland China rose from 15 the previous year to 105, though those numbers have decreased during the 2008-09 downturn. Globally the superrich become super-, superrich.

Yes, there are limits to physical property wealth in a world of scarcity of food and housing. Justice demands that we state these limits and set up conditions where property is redistributed according to need and not to entitlement -- a fresh look at the concept of belonging; this is long overdue in Western culture, but it must be proposed and acted upon.

#### **b) Actions to Reclaim Land Commons**

*You will declare the fiftieth year sacred and proclaim the liberation of all the inhabitants of the land. (Leviticus 25:10)*

As with air and water commons, the reclamation process on lands embraces agencies of all levels of governance.

1. Domestic and Local Community Actions -- A series of actions at the local level will assist in preserving farmland for food production, habitat for wildlife, and wilderness areas. Much depends on the amount of land under the control of individuals. Some of us who are conscious about surplus land and essential land for production would

say that, especially where a lawn exists on previously productive land, every effort ought to be made to convert this to edible landscaping or wildscape that produces some food for human and wildlife inhabitants.

**Gardening**, whether on a farm, in a backyard, or with a vegetable container inside or near a residence, champions the practice of growing food locally: garden organically; surpluses should be preserved for the non-growing portion of the season and shared with the needy; use seasonal extenders, and especially greenhouses, for increasing garden time and yields; consider ways to use and preserve heritage varieties.

**Wildscapes** help restore wildlife habitats. Since these habitats are under severe stress, effort could be undertaken to feed permanent bird populations and offer protection for migratory varieties through feeding and nesting provision. In rare cases, one can construct artificial wetlands and thus afford habitats for additional species. Where landscape allows, plant trees, which can become worthwhile family or community projects. Where possible, select native species of fruit, nut or shade varieties.

Nature experiences for youth are a valuable local community goal. School demonstration projects could augment nature and environmental education programs. Where resources are available, nature education ought to be fostered: nature hikes, camping trips, and visits to nature centers and parks (some zoological parks and preserves are better managed than others); sponsoring essays, poems, paintings, and other projects dealing with wilderness and wildlife; planting trees as a community project; cleaning up trashed areas; and building nature trails as part of community-sponsored service projects. The *Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel* provides all youth (Jewish, Moslem and Christian) an experience in nature. Would that this be expanded to all the world's youth. Fragile wilderness areas may be off-limits to recreation; in such cases, nature materials (books, videotapes, virtual or digital presentations) and observation platforms for distance viewing are worth pursuing.

**Communal beautification programs** could be regarded as hackneyed, or perhaps child's play, since youth can contribute through simple actions (painting, cleaning up garbage, etc.). While cleaning up litter is a soft approach to proper land use, still this can be of value for seeing results of their contributions in immediately tangible environment improvement. Healing our wounded Earth calls for cooperative ventures through a variety of hard and soft activities. All need to participate -- and local beautification is an excellent, initial teaching tool.

## 2. Land Reclamation Projects

*No more are you to be named 'Forsaken,' nor your land 'Abandoned', but you shall be called 'My Delight', and your land 'The Wedded', for Yhwh takes delight in you and your land will have its wedding. (Isaiah 62:4)*

Not only must urbanization of farmland be stopped, but damaged land must be returned to the commons: surface mined lands, former industrial "brownfields," slum areas no longer occupied, vacant and abandoned lots, abandoned railroad rights-of-way, luxurious estates and expansive lawns, lands infested by exotic and invasive species, over-logged areas, eroded and improperly irrigated lands, and other degraded areas. When land has been allowed to remain damaged, depression affects the entire community and results in loss of self- and community-worth. Tourists stay away and people move away, leaving residents depressed. Land reclamation programs include: return to recreational greenspace, reforestation projects and buffer zones to check and halt development. Programs can extend to repairing brownfields, urban community gardening in vacant and abandoned space, changing lawns to "edible landscape," land conservancy, and conservation easement programs to preserve neighborhood farms.

**Reclamation, a national issue.** Being right with land includes a national component, for all suffer from abandoned land. Focus on the following: protecting land being damaged by exploitative practices; halting trespassing; controlling overpopulated wildlife; confronting culprits and making them accountable. This includes such reclamation procedures as attending to abandoned land, whether by removing trash and junk, halting erosion on cropland, initiating desalination procedures, or reforestation projects. A coalition of environmental and community groups in Pennsylvania has been addressing local environmental, watershed planning, restoration, and protection efforts through a multi-agency state- and partly-federally-funded program called *Growing Greener*. This decade-old program has expended 1.3 billion dollars on reclaiming lands, though total cost estimates to address all abandoned state lands could exceed ten times that amount. This program is the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history for tackling environmental issues ranging from greener watershed protection to coastal zone and includes tree-planting programs.

**How is Growing Greener funded?** The Pennsylvania program has been funded through a \$4/ton municipal waste disposal fee as well as resource extraction fees. The federal- and state-funded flood protection portions are matched up to 35% by local government funds. Strapped by heavier state financial commitments, this highly

successful program is due to expire next year. However, program supporters hope that extraction fees from the expanding process of fracturing shale formations for natural gas will prove promising as a source of revenue for continuing Growing Greener. However, this method has environmental consequences being evaluated as of this writing; U.S. national gas reserves are the highest in forty years, and increased by 11% in 2009 alone. Furthermore, recreation fees could pay for land reclamation projects by charging fees for hiking, rock-climbing, camping, and use of waterways. Recreational areas should be environmentally sound, near at hand (avoiding distance travel), non-motorized, and relatively safe.

**Conservation easements.** Preserving green space and assisting farmers can be a win-win situation. Present landholders could come to a voluntary agreement with non-profit organizations or government agencies to limit property use. Easements are recorded with the property deed and bind all future owners to honor non-development of the property. Property owners can benefit by retaining title to their land, can sell as they wish, and can keep certain desired rights. If owners donate an easement or sell for less than fair market value to the public agency or private organization, the difference between fair market value of the property before granting the easement and fair market value afterwards represents a "charitable" contribution.

Local annual property taxes may be reduced, because the easement means that land value drops through giving up development rights. Easements may pertain to preserving land for outdoor recreation, education, or wildlife habitat protection. The recipient of the conservation easement is responsible for monitoring the easement to see that whoever manages the land adheres to the terms of the easement, and, if the easement is not being honored, for bringing the owners into compliance (if necessary by going to court). Administering easements requires lasting commitments of time and money by involved organizations.

**Tree planting** can be undertaken at various levels of participation: family, neighborhood, parish, wider community, county, or state. Leaders have several operations to attend: selecting a specific site, clearing the area, digging the hole, planting the tree by spreading the roots and adding soil and any amendments, watering, and firming the soil in place. Timing is important, for selected Arbor Days differ from place to place depending on seasonal zones. Tree saplings can be obtained free or at bargain prices, volunteers assembled, tools secured, sites selected, and crews (mixes of young and old) assigned. Once planted, trees may need to be watered and protected from wildlife.

**Reforestation** includes protection in areas left after timber-harvesting operations, abandoned farms and vacant lots, road and building construction, and resource extraction (coal, sand, gravel and minerals). Many land areas need reclaiming through such conservation practices as tree maintenance, namely, removal of exotic species, protection from development, thinning tree species to make room for tree growth, and removal of diseased trees. For forest certification techniques see actions in Chapter Eight.

Reclaiming the commons includes additional improvements dependent upon land-use conditions: removing commercial signs (Hawaii and Vermont do not allow them); siting informational centers, rest areas and maintenance facilities in less-imposing locations; building nature and hiking trails; painting flood walls and roadway retaining walls with picturesque scenes; planting trees in parking lot islands and as vegetative and sound barriers; and reclaiming strip-mined land with native trees and grasses.

### 3. Agricultural Assistance

*If one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, 'I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty', without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that? Faith is like that: if good works do not go with it, it is quite dead.*  
(James 2:15-17)

Reclaiming productive land often involves agricultural practice. Small-scale farming is the major source of income for tens of millions throughout the world and the number one work opportunity for the world's poor. Advancements in agriculture would be a major way of improving lives of the rural poor and allow people to make land more productive. Practices include:

- \* Small loans to tide farmers over to harvest;
- \* All-weather farm roads that allow local produce to reach consumers in population centers at a reasonable cost to all;
- \* Division of large non-productive estates (a major arena of agricultural reform in poorer countries), which would provide farms for landless people;
- \* Grants or coupons for the urban needy to purchase produce, which would allow farmers to purchase basic materials such as implements, seeds, fertilizers, and livestock;
- \* Removal of crop subsidies in wealthier land, which would give farmers in developing countries a chance to compete with corporate and large-scale subsidized farmers. The World Bank estimates that lowering trade barriers, most of which involve farm commodities, could

boost annual growth in poorer countries by 0.5 percent and lift an additional 300 million people from poverty.<sup>7</sup>

**Funding:** Agricultural infrastructure (rural all-weather roads, local grain storage facilities, specific irrigation and erosion control, heritage seed preservation projects, and direct outlay for supplies) could be funded (\$25 billion GDF loans) and administered by *International Fund for Agricultural Development*.

#### 4. Food Relief Programs

*Every bite of bread in one way or another is a bite of the bread that belongs to everyone.* St. John Chrysostom

Up to a billion people go to bed hungry and 23,000 deaths occur each day from malnutrition and associated diseases. The summer season of 1816 never occurred due to a volcano eruption causing millions of tons of dust to obscure the sun's rays. Just a single wintery year without a major grain harvest today would be horrifying, because the world's foodstuff supplies in storage are slim. Feeding hungry people is a key demand of social globalization. Meeting needs of the hungry locally is ideal: shipping food long distances is ecologically costly; local food markets help local economies; local farmers know the food needs of their neighbors; thus funding ought to be locally directed.

Aid workers argue that Africa can feed itself from its own resources under normal conditions, and thus cash assistance is better in that it rebuilds local farming economies and discourages corporate farming and agricultural commodity export schemes. The United Kingdom has initiated a \$1.5 million program of dispersing cash aid for food to people in Malawi using an electronic identification scheme to prevent fraud.<sup>8</sup> Relief to victims of tsunami, earthquake, and drought conditions has taken similar routes. Cash for food is easier to manage, for food choices are left to hungry people, not to donors. Often local farmers are undercut by foreign food surpluses. However, this experiment has critics: the UN World Food Programme points out that cash can be easily diverted by corrupt distributors and by consumers to non-food items. However, Oxfam found in a cash program in Zambia that the most-affected people received the help at nearly half the cost of direct food delivery.

Food scarcity may demand outside aid to prevent immediate starvation or malnutrition. Assistance through the UN World Food Programme and existing public and private relief agencies can be quite effective. Relief storage and transportation can allow for the speedy delivery of food and other needs to disaster victims. Strategically located food storage depots where grains could be kept free from

rodents and pilfering, should be increased in number along with longer-term agricultural assistance to local food producers. In 1981, through the lobbying efforts of *Bread for the World* and other groups, the U.S. set aside a grain supply to address world famine.

In January 2009, the UN convened experts to discuss the steep worldwide rise in food prices. Factors causing this rise, besides drought and other natural disasters, include: turning productive lands over to biofuels production (especially using foods like corn for conversion into cheap fuel); the choice by new middle class Chinese and others for resource-intensive foods such as meat and dairy products; and national policies that favor export commodity production over local food production. Local production of basics such as fibers, grains and vegetables should be encouraged over specialization (principally agri-businesses export commodities such as coffee and sugar) slated for affluent nations. Many European proponents of biofuels are having second thoughts about converting tropical forests in Malaysia into palm plantations to furnish palm oil for fuel guzzlers in wealthy lands.

*Feed the Future* is an American governmental program involving the Departments of Agriculture, State, Treasury, and the National Security Council. The program aims to help the world's poorest farmers grow food for their families and has sought about one billion dollars a year. The G-20 seeks to get \$22 billion over a three-year period for the world's underdeveloped agricultural areas. *The Global Agricultural and Food Security Program* (GAFSP), with a combination of public and private funding, is seeking to assist African farmers, as is the *Alliance for a Green Revolution* in Africa. Also the *One Acre Fund* provides improved seeds and fertilizers for Kenyan farmers who seek to feed families.

**Funding:** Emergency food relief stocks, storage and transportation facilities will require at least \$10 billion from GDF. This allows food stocks to be stored in strategic locations in rodent-proof facilities for delivery during food emergencies. In 2010 the UN proposed to open a fifth depot for quick-response humanitarian aid in Malaysia. More are needed. Note on direct food relief: Food pantries, soup kitchens for the homeless, meals-on-wheels, and food stamp programs should be truly limited to food (not including soft-drinks).

##### 5. Wilderness and Forest Preserves

*It put out strong branches that turned to royal sceptres;  
they reached up, reached so high they touched the clouds;  
men admired them for their height and their thick foliage.*

(Ezekiel 19:11)

Wilderness ought to remain as such; access by vehicles should be restricted. Wildlife needs protective habitat, and this is becoming more obvious in various parts of the world where human development impacts on certain endangered species are evident. Sub-Saharan Africa is hard hit at this time even on some of its wildlife reserves. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, dedicated custodians have gone unpaid for years and some have become targets of poachers and military units in conflict zones. Brazil is creating Amazon forest protective zones. Wildlife managers deserve proper wages and support for constructing protective barriers. At the Chinese Wolong Nature Preserve, threatened pandas are being bred and raised in sufficient numbers for ultimate release. By protecting natural habitats, Sichuan Province, where pandas dropped to a low of 1,200, is now seeing increasing numbers.

**Specific fragile regions** must be declared wilderness areas and excluded from human intrusion: unique rock formations, remnant tropical and temperate rain forests, certain springs and water sources, fragile desert areas with rare flora and fauna, and specific oceanic islands. Sufficient policing is necessary; developers should be kept from the land, exotic species should be excluded and removed, and tourists should not be allowed to visit these areas, but rather encouraged to be virtual visitors.

**Halting deforestation** is a worthwhile goal, since this phenomenon is the source of one-fifth of global greenhouse gas emissions. All forests deserve proper forest management and harvesting practices, controlled access roads and restrictions on motorized vehicles, removal of invasive species and native wildlife encouragement, pest control and eradication programs, and the funds necessary to carry out these measures. The UN "Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation Program" (REDD) was established at the 2010 climate-change conference to put financial value on carbon stored in forests (especially in rainforests as found in Brazil and Indonesia). Through carbon-trading schemes, money would flow to emerging nations for forest preservation, but field verification of forest conditions remain difficult. One emerging technology, *lidar* (light detection and ranging), gives three-dimensional, computer images for accurate and inexpensive stored-carbon-content information.<sup>9</sup> However, carbon trading has inherent weaknesses discussed elsewhere, and forested nations should be encouraged to impose *resource extraction taxes* on forest products with proceeds slated for reforestation projects.

**Wildlife sanctuaries** and reservations need global policing and maintenance support. This is because some wilderness areas are the targets of competing demands from increasing human populations needing

cropland, as well as those seeking "bush" meat to supplement protein demands. While Western population growth rates are small, this is not true in parts of Africa, Asia and Latin America where health and education services and employment opportunities are strained by expanding populations (above 1% growth per year). Reasonable population controls require national efforts to sustain them using means that respect cultural and religious sensitivities.<sup>10</sup> Moslem lands like Iran and Indonesia have moderate population growth rates (0.86 percent and 1.45 percent -- 2005 estimates), while Moslem lands with major economic and social imbalances are higher.<sup>11</sup> A long-term goal is to achieve social and ecological balances, which moderate population growth.

Balancing conditions for both wildlife and humans habitats is a major challenge. One solution is to furnish livelihoods to maintenance and police personnel near wildlife sanctuaries. When local populations regard their wildlife as treasures, then a harmony can be regained, but the rest of the world must assist, for wildlife benefits enrich all of us.

**Funding:** Funds for wilderness areas are in short supply, and so GDF (at least \$1 billion) should be applied for policing, wildlife inventory collection, surveillance, boundary demarcation, and acquiring sensitive wildlife habitats. Many private funders focus on specific threatened or endangered species (e.g., tigers, polar bears, whales). While zoos have their place, many confined species prefer wilderness; animal rights groups seek to eliminate global trade in primates for research and wildlife confinement.

## 6. International Polar Authority

*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)

The largest arena of undeveloped surface space on this planet is the continent of Antarctica. This continent should become a UN trust with this immense and fragile territory being held in common by all member states. Research, weather data, and other information from the continent should be jointly shared by all UN members. In October, 2007, the United Kingdom, in what was called legal bookkeeping, claimed an economic zone off the coast of Antarctica. This is counter to the treaty that bans all economic activity and proclaims Antarctica as a zone for peaceful research. To date, this cooperative recognition has worked quite well for nations within relatively close proximity (South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Chile and Argentina) and those with

broader scientific research interests (U.S., United Kingdom, Russia, China, etc.).

Economic interests may begin to make claims and even eco-tourism (at rates of 50,000 visitors per year) are expected to rise. The frozen continent appeals to travelers who see cruises to this destination as exciting and perhaps educational as well. Such volume in such sensitive though vast territory could result in potential trashing of fragile areas. Previous international accords such as the *Montreal Protocol*<sup>12</sup> have successfully addressed air pollution problems.

The five nations with interest in the northern polar regions (Russia, Canada, United States, Norway, and Denmark) lay claims to portions of that Arctic region. With global warming, a summer "Northwest Passage" is opening an easy trade route, a five-century dream. The Arctic Ocean floor has immense highly-sought oil and gas reserves.

**Funding:** An "International Polar Authority" should regulate scientific, commercial or tourist businesses in the polar regions, and be used to operate patrol planes and boats in Antarctica -- and ought to be funded by funds from Arctic oil and GDF leases.

### c. Enclosure of the Commons by Privatization

*In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.*

President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1961 Farewell Address

Some of us are torn between a sense of patriotism for the founding fathers and the American Revolutionary War, and yet a secondary theme of displacement of the Native American cultures seems to haunt us. Attitudes are now so ingrained that the challenge is to review the evolving concept of Common Good.

#### 1. American Attitudes about Land

*The true friend of property, the true conservative, is he who insists that property shall be the servant and not the master of the commonwealth. The citizens of the United States must effectively control the mighty commercial forces which they themselves called into being.* (Theodore Roosevelt, 1908)

The commons is under relentless attack today by the privatizers

who include everyone from bankers receiving handouts in American unregulated terrain, oligarchs in Russia, princelings in China and India, and Middle East wealthy classes. Victims of global privatization hope that their children may be employed or win a lottery and turn into wealthy plutocrats. Let us return to the painful history of what feeds these virtually impossible dreams, the skipping moves on a *Monopoly* board filled with hotels.

The arguments of Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*,<sup>13</sup> are a *propos* privatization. Klein points out that the fundamentalist 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 twenty-first century. This economic philosophy involves the manipulation of existing or created crises to draw attention away from people who stood for the public interest or commons. It is a global phenomenon as stated by Klein, who traces the use of crisis in nation after nation -- Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia, China, Poland, Russia and South Africa. This has also occurred in the U.S., through Reaganomics starting in the 1980s and into the twenty-first century. Granted, the American variety had differences in approach; still the same conclusions result, namely privatization of public property, deregulation, curbs in social protective networks, and free market triumphs over government.

Many people prefer to work for the Common Good along with others; however, other will drain from the common good for their own selfish gain. Too often those explorers who came to the New World fit into the second category. Some came and established viable communities; others came and oppressed the indigenous Americans, unintentionally brought diseases to which native population had low or no immunity, and brought concepts of private land ownership that were foreign to native tribes. Europeans found native American hunting grounds, village settlements, and meeting places regarded as commons. Entire territories (such as the region embracing Kentucky) were intertribal hunting grounds.

The Anglo-Saxon and German colonists and planters held strong concepts about private land holdings. The philosopher, Eugene Hargrove says that German tribes, which replaced the Celts in Northern Europe, included "freemen" (the privileged within the tribes) who promoted specific land-expansion practices.<sup>14</sup> As overcrowding would occur in settled parts of Europe, German freemen moved to border areas, drove away occupants and established their own new "freehold" farmsteads. These freehold estates were occupied initially with indefinite boundaries, but later under population pressure sub-divided so entitlement or inheritance occurred within families (with the eldest

son receiving priority). Land went from commons to areas concentrated in ever-fewer hands. Freeholder relatives became semi-free serfs and through taxes the free people became tenants.

The English were slower than the Germans to undergo the transition to feudalism. William the Conqueror found most English to be free people, but abruptly imposed feudal conditions on the conquered. Saxon freedom as to land became little more than an ideal although it shaped land use practices for centuries. The Saxon "shire" and "moot" continued to exist and have even carried down to American counties and courts. Hargrove says that freemen had absolute control over all matters pertaining to their own landholdings. Modern American resource holders demanding to know what right others have to tell them how to use their property are appealing to attitudes from Saxon and German political forebears.

Landholding among German freemen was based on clearing and developing a tract of land. Inheritance was not acquisition of land itself but rather the "transferral of the right to acquire land through work."<sup>15</sup> The key was land use, not land ownership. With decreasing mobility in the resident population came various forms of land care. Nevertheless, freemen were convinced that they could use or abuse land as deemed fitting. Hargrove sees the American rural landholder as almost a prefeudal German freeman in his attitudes. Did this attitude come across the Atlantic and traverse the North American continent, and does it even stand ready to be extended into the resource use of ocean floors?

John Locke, the philosopher, entered the picture. Land ownership did not come explicitly from German and Saxon freeholder practices, but as an English legal distinction after 1660. In his *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke attempted to justify the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the abolishment of feudal payments. Previously, property rights were tied to inheritance and to the divine right of kings, but Locke held that the people had a right to self-preservation and to what they needed for subsistence. By mixing labor with a natural object, land is owned by the laboring person. Locke held that God has given Earth to people "in common." No one has an original or exclusive right to the fruits of the earth, but human work (tilling, planting, improving, cultivating) makes land the property of an individual. Without labor Earth has little value; it gains worth through human improvement. However, people should not deprive others of the means to self-preservation by overextending their reach of property.

Locke also greatly influenced our founding fathers, as he considered the right to property as grounded in nature but not

secured there. One of the state's primary ends is to preserve the right of property (something the more wealthy American founding fathers were well aware of). These primary ends included making laws governing the use, distribution and transfer of property. However, society has little or no role in a person's resource management, and no landholder need be told by another how to use what he or she owns.<sup>16</sup> If a government interferes with an individual's uncontrolled right to his property, citizens are free to overthrow it. Locke further argued that there was enough land for everyone and was perhaps thinking of the "infinite" American frontier. His method of appropriation was enclosure of common lands by human labor -- that which gave value to land through maximum agricultural productivity. But such thinking is fraught with ecological consequences.

Locke transferred the king's absolute-and-ultimate property rights to each and every property holder (the divine right of wealth that extended in republican America with time). However, the king's rights included corresponding duties (noblesse oblige), which did not become evident for the new private landholders. The king was obliged to consider the welfare of his kingdom -- whereas resource holders do not necessarily even want to consider the public interest with respect to resource use. Locke desired to empower people and weaken government without lessening responsibility. Actually, Locke admits that the individual's power to destroy his or her property is restricted by a government that must see that this destruction does not adversely affect others' property.<sup>17</sup>

The Revolutionary War was a break with traditional Norman/English feudalism. The colonists strived to overthrow an oppressive autocratic royal rule and replace it by a more democratic or participatory structure. Thomas Jefferson saw this as a land reform movement exalting the principle of freehold tenure based on Saxon and not on Norman common law.<sup>18</sup> Thus he spoke of *allodial* rights, according to which an estate is held by absolute dominion without obligation to a superior. As early as 1774 he wrote that North America belongs to the inhabitants and not to the crown. Elsewhere he stated that individual society members may appropriate land found vacant, and that occupancy gives title.<sup>19</sup>

Jefferson did not succeed in getting much of his Saxon land philosophy into law, but some vestiges are found in the Ordinances of 1784 and 1787 permitting settlers to organize themselves into new states equal to those of the original colonies, and thus rejecting the ideal of state-colony relationship, which was what the Revolution was all about. Note that between 1781 and 1802 Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York and finally Georgia ceded their western lands to the federal government. Also citizens could move freely from state

to state without passports. Jefferson championed the rights of American small freehold farmsteads, but on terms of moral virtue and not Saxon legal precedent.<sup>20</sup> It is noteworthy that he purchased the Virginia Natural Bridge -- the first act of nature preservation in America.

George Washington, the first U.S. president, was a wealthy -- if not the wealthiest -- member of his society. His situation as a Virginia planter was grounds under the newly formed republic for the exercise of citizenship (voting, jury duty, etc.);<sup>21</sup> the great North-South gentlemen's agreement allowed the northern states' wealthy class (shipping, banking, stock-holding, and manufacturing) to retain privileges just as southern plantation owners could retain slaves. The influence of the federalist sense of privilege for the wealthy held sway during the late 1780s and 1790s and only waned somewhat through the election of Jefferson (nonetheless a slaveholder) in 1800, before being challenged during the Jacksonian 1830s era through the influence of small Midwestern landholders.

Only gradually, state by state, did white male non-property holders receive the right to vote and full citizenship. As already mentioned, that citizen voting privilege was extended to black male ex-slaves, then to women, then to Native Americans, and then to those from 18 to 21 years of age. Oppression lingered within these colonies-turned-states, namely against people of other religions, Native Americans and enslaved Africans. Expanding rights depended at first on state legislative acts and eventually on federal constitutional amendments; then in the twentieth century civil rights legislation brought still more expansion of citizen privilege. It took eight decades after the initial American government's formation and debates, compromises and physical struggles in the halls of Congress, before the African American freed slaves were included as citizens, and still another century to give this privilege full acceptance.

While parts of the population gained greater access to freedom, a counter movement of privatization of resources was occurring and actually accelerating. In 1830 settlers who were on public land unsold as of 1829, were allowed to buy it at \$1.25 an acre, and by 1841 a prospective preemptive law encouraged anyone to settle on public land and gave them the right to buy it at a minimum price. In 1854, a Graduation Act offered at \$1 per acre public lands on the market and unsold for ten years, and at 12.5 cents per acre public lands unsold for thirty years. By the time of the Civil War 70 million acres had been sold, 68 million given as military support (generally repayment for war service), and twice that amount allotted to the states themselves. The Homestead Act of 1862 set still another type of policy

-- free land under certain conditions (160 acres free after five years' residence or \$1.25 per acre after six months' residence). The parcels were generally too small for farmers who sought more land to cultivate.

Larger resource giveaways were coming. The 1873 Timber Culture Act, the Desert Land Act of 1877 and the Timber and Stone Act of 1878 allowed both individuals and corporations to acquire up to 1,120 acres of western land each. Blatant abuse reduced this to 320 acres by 1889-91. Actually, corporations had begun resource grabbing far earlier. The federal government's need for funds had allowed the sale of million-acre Ohio tracts to the Ohio Corporation and John Symmes in 1786 and 1788.<sup>22</sup> The Illinois Central Railroad was granted several million acres of Mississippi, Alabama, and Illinois in 1850. The cross-country rail linkage Pacific Railroad Act of 1862 gave even more away; for every mile of the Union Pacific-Central Pacific track laid, twenty one-square-mile sections of a forty-square-mile tract on either side of the railroad route were granted to the railroad. Between 1862 and 1871 Congress granted 200 million acres of land to railroads, but construction-time delays reduced that total to 131 million.<sup>23</sup>

The gold, silver and other rushes of the 1800s drew large corporations into the mining business. Also during the period from 1867 to 1890 grasslands in the Great Plains were opened to cattlemen and later to shepherds while the Native Americans were removed from traditional hunting lands. By 1884 foreign corporations and individuals, mostly British, had acquired 20 million acres of rangeland, but the boom collapsed due to the blizzard of 1885-87. Cattle had increased from 150,000 head in 1860 to 4.5 million by 1880.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, the most massive land grab in world history played out at the end of the century. From the first settlement in 1607 to 1870 some 407 million acres had been occupied and 189 million "improved;" from 1870 to 1900, 430 million acres were settled and 225 million were cultivated, increasing farms during that period from 2.7 million to 5.7 million. Accumulation of wealth occurred in this "Gilded Age"; by 1890, the richest 1 percent of Americans obtained the same total income as the bottom half of the population. While homesteaders secured farmlands, still railroad lands were four times that amount during this period. In the South, the percentages of holdings worked by tenants as opposed to owners increased from 30 percent in 1870 to 70 percent in 1900.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout America's national expansion basic Anglo-Saxon attitudes prevailed, even when other ethnic settlers became land holders. Through America's westward expansion, local governments were set up in the early English colonist legal tradition; landholders were often unthinking tyrants and essentially acted like petty lords-of-the-manor. Land became a commodity that could be bought,

sold, or used at will. Government was created to protect property rights and "wise use" groups challenged the right of government to control their private land use. However, the widening of our understanding of land use (wetlands, fragile coastal areas, and forests) for the common good makes this conflict extremely important today. Property rights are pitted against global environmental protection -- and must give way.

## 2. The Evolving Commons

*Corporations have neither bodies to be punished nor souls to be condemned.* Eighteenth century British jurist, Edward Thurlow

In old English law, the common(s) was a parcel of land that was shared by village residents for grazing and other purposes. This term **commons** can be extended today to include the wealth and essential resources of this Earth that are to be of use for the betterment of all people; they are not the possession of individuals or a privileged few. Thus we can speak of things as *res communis* or common to all. In counter distinction, in Roman law there is a *res nullius*, or those physical things that "have not or have never had" an owner such as light or oceans; they may be regarded as not able to be reduced to "property." However, with technical development or innovation damage can occur that is equivalent to enclosure (air or an ocean can be polluted, or a tall building can block another's access to view or solar light, a matter of legal contention or negotiation).

In Roman law the *res communis* was held by the state and *res nullius* was the property of no one. In modern law there is a confusion in these *res* terms because some public things such as air waves can be appropriated by individuals or groups for profit.

In clarifying the concept of commons partly through the advent of modern technology we realize that "commons" is not a static concept but changes with time and changing uses. What is held by no one can still be changed by malpractice and equivalently "enclosed." Our evolving concept of commons respects the sacredness of the individual person and still acknowledges that greedy individuals can become privileged, economic nobles who consider that all power belongs to them -- and not to others. Currently the laws of mining and transportation privileges often favor them.

The *Commons* is the concrete embodiment of the Common Good (the goal of all people of good will who believe in the act of sharing). Enduring civilizations embody the Common Good, though tyranny has suppressed its recognition for periods of time. Our founding fathers were aware of this and argued for a government that respected the Common

Good, that is, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." However, theirs was a limited perspective as a study of history confirms. "Life, liberty and pursuit of happiness" have been threatened by autocratic rule, slave traders and owners, merciless factory managers, oppressive taxes and loans, takers of Indian lands, snake oil salesmen, terrorists and outlaws, unsafe nuclear facilities and weaponry, and on and on. The radical sharers of resources seek to confront those who seek to "enclose" rain forests and the air itself.

Virtually all people regard some property as private (clothes, etc.) and some as public (at least the air all about), but few agree on some final delineation of commons and non-commons. Since some of the traditional *res nullius* can be appropriated through sophisticated technologies (airspace or specific bands of the electromagnetic spectrum), the arena of commons can expand through liberal interpretation and be restricted through profit-making endeavors and manipulation of legislative bodies. If the sea's far limits were uncharted (for instance, before America's discovery by Columbus), we would all most likely acknowledge that the Atlantic is a commons; if a navy base is just beyond the horizon and ships are patrolling the sea, we speak of national off-shore claims and fishing limits -- a restriction on what is commons.

People need adequate nutritious **food** and potable **water** to survive; the desire to keep warm (or cool) with **fuel** for cooking food is part of that set of essentials along with adequate **shelter** and **clothing**. For the most part the bulky essential items have always (until recent decades) been principally available at the local level. Not allowing locally-produced goods to be used for local needs (e.g., during the 1840s Irish Famine) is perhaps more exceptional than the rule. Taking essential resources has been subject to biased interpretations; Native American game areas would be called "unowned" by early white colonists and yet the practice at the time was not regarded as immoral. However, sensitivity grows with ever-more-scarce land resources.

Global *compassion* (suffering with others), in the wake of instant communications and available rapid shipping, make distant people part of a shrinking local "neighborhood." We learn of distant earthquakes in minutes, and are moved by common decency to initiate relief efforts. This awareness of concern for others extends beyond the human family to flora and fauna and Earth herself: wilderness as skin, forest as lungs, fragile water sources as life blood. Taking excessive private land for personal reasons is counter to this communal sense often strongly held by primitive peoples who have much to teach all of us.

Selfishness expressed as excessive privatization is confronted by a goal of universal peace, prosperity and quality of life. Compassion is triggered through sensitive awareness and actualized by a growing sense of communal stewardship -- for when one human suffers, the entire human family suffers. Compassion can become epidemic in the good sense; it becomes the hallmark of radical sharing, and a sense of common good deepening our collective consciousness. The poor and the homeless become ever more present among the compassionate; their very suffering is a type of "commons," which belongs to all people. Compassion is a learned experience of formal and informal education alike.

*Insensitivity* blinds ones to an understanding of the Common Good; it distances people from needs of others and focuses on individual material wants that are never fully satisfied. The sin of affluence is precisely that it desensitizes individuals to what affects others. This insensitivity manifests itself in large holding of property, and especially land; it removes the holder from realizing that some small-scale local landholdings are critical for satisfying food and housing needs. Insensitivity leads to spiritual impoverishment and results in attempts to establish security through such material means as military defense and larger amounts of material wealth. The insensitive and selfish regard sharing as impractical: "My steak would spoil before it reached hungry Africans." However, grain to fatten beef cattle could be shipped to feed the hungry. Sharing includes conserving resources and curbing wasteful extravagance. The affluent engage in unsustainable practices; they see no need to share with others or with future generations. They lack a "commons sense."

*The Principle of Having Enough* focuses primarily on essential needs of a community as community -- and not as individuals. The concept of "commons" understood by healthy sustaining local communities refutes outside interference and also challenges private privilege. When missionaries followed the colonial flag, they often preached what indigenous people lacked -- and as colonialists failed to see that local people had Good News worth sharing with the rest of the world. One gift of Good News is that indigenous people often know how to take care of land in a communal manner -- not as outsiders and not solely as individuals. A more communal concept of land leads to a better understanding of a "commonwealth" of global proportions.

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A *commonwealth* is a political unit (state, nation, etc.) founded on law and united by compact or tacit agreement of the people for the Common Good. Using this title are the British Commonwealth, Commonwealth of Poland, Independent States (former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) -- and American states of Kentucky,

Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, along with Puerto Rico. American citizens perceive little difference between commonwealths and states. Combining the words "common" and "wealth" indicates responsibility by citizens who must work with a properly functioning government that defends the common good. For the citizen, the term "commonwealth" triggers a spirited response, a sense of joint defence of the public interest, and a value in shared benefits for all people.

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## Reflection: Limiting Private Property is Good Stewardship

Land is tangible, definable and able to be delineated. Sedentary people were quick to define what nomads often regarded as open common space. Private holdings are possible and often needed for food production and residential lodging. Land misuse includes an atmosphere of absolute control over acquiring, retaining, and using land -- an attitude fraught with absolutist cultural traditions, which must be totally corrected. Proper land use in this world of limited productive land must be reclaimed as acts of good communal stewardship. Thus proper land use is a shared responsibility of all people, not just individualized stewardship of title-holders. Misuse of land is evident: erosion through overgrazing and improper agricultural and mining practices; enclosure of large amounts of land for private interests; unplanned development and urbanization; and failure to reclaim damaged land.

Right to common land clashes with right to private property. An enhanced sense of global land needs limits amounts of privately-controlled land. Forests, wilderness, watersheds, and scarce food-producing areas are essential as commons, not as self-proclaimed private landholding privilege. Historically, land titles were liberally dispensed to colonists, homesteaders, and railroad companies. However, an evolving concept of commons makes our local community a global neighborhood -- and redistribution becomes a communal stewardship issue and project. Many individuals lack resources needed to reclaim land and thus the state must become the protector of these people and the promoter of proper land use.

## Chapter Four: Cultural Commons

*There is one who keeps quiet, not knowing when to answer, another keeps quiet, because he knows when to speak.*

*The wise will keep quiet till the right moment, but a garrulous fool will always misjudge it. (Sirach 20:6-7)*

A thriving culture is one where all parties share a common

experience and destiny. While air, water and land make certain spatial demands on those concerned about the commons, here and in the next two chapters we will discuss temporal considerations. A modern materialistic culture focused on satisfying today's wants fails to see that past traditions have much value worth preserving and celebrating. Granted, some traditional cultures still thrive, especially at local or regional levels and among remaining primitive people not yet touched by "development;" their message is to honor and respect the past as of greater value than the weight of a culture-crushing, consumption-based economy.

On the other hand, material consumption, especially by the wealthy who are shielded by legal safeguards to current disparity of wealth, causes those who lack to seek more material goods. This condition is exacerbated by rising rates of disparity of wealth: the richest 1% never earned more than one-tenth of the national income share in any year from 1952 to 1986 and then rocketed to 18.3% in 2007. The figure was 18.4% in 1929.<sup>1</sup> Rather than redistributing wealth to those in need, it is being retained in an uncritical manner in the perverse materialistic culture of our day. The future is individual and short-sighted at most, and past cultural value is often overlooked.

Cultures are under attack and the need is to emphasize cultural rights for all social beings. These include the right of free expression in religion and cultural interchange. As social beings we seek to act in harmony and bond ourselves together while making bridges between diverse groups. We seek to enhance basic social capital as a common experience of joint cohesiveness among people.<sup>2</sup> Just as our right to physical life includes rights to air, water, and land for essential food and residential space, so we need to have our social needs satisfied and thus have a right to a cultural commons stemming from the past -- the grounds on which people are able to engage in community as sharers with others of that which they find worth celebrating.

Cultural cohesiveness erodes through insensitivity: this is accelerated by a disparity of wealth. This disparity is utterly corrosive to primitive and other cultures based on spiritual values that are outside the global economic system. Youth in primitive cultures are captivated by material progress and can easily be led to abandon their heritage. Today, individual cultural expressions and languages are as threatened as are plant and animal species. Defense of a general cultural commons includes flourishing sub-cultures that have time-honored traditions needing to be recognized, honored, protected, and encouraged.

#### **a) Infringement on Cultural Commons**

*He goes to bed a rich man, but never again: he wakes to find not a penny left.*  
(Job 27:19)

History shows how a breakdown has occurred rapidly when Western colonizing (Portuguese spice trading, Spanish gold quests, French fur gathering, English plantations of tobacco, tea and cotton, Dutch shipping) led to extracting raw materials and then to imposition of colonist structures on distant peoples. Native American cultures were subjected to destructive influences, first of exotic diseases to which they had no immunity, and then of abundant guns and alcohol. Capitalistic colonizing practices became threats to native cultures and these have been recognized in recent time. Recalling and preserving the values of past cultures is of utmost importance as heralds to an emerging global culture that honors past cultures. Strategies at all levels of society -- local, regional, national, international and overall global levels are called for at this time.

World cultural treasures are under attack from a variety of sources: 1. air pollution, which harms fragile cultural treasures; 2. development, which commercializes public sites and privatize folklore that ought to be in the public domain; 3. loss of local languages as a step to globalizing communications and trade; and 4. discriminatory assaults on minority cultural and religious groups.

1. Indifference to Preserving Treasures -- Global heritage sites need to be recognized and protected from the current ravages of air pollution and acid rain. Certain materials are more prone to attack than others, and so special monitoring of our cultural heritage is needed. Some sites such as the pyramids in Egypt, the Sistine Chapel, Mutua Picchu in Peru, and the Taj Mahal at Agra, India, ought to be internationalized due to rising protection costs that need to be shared by the entire world community.

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We can experience the destruction of culture first hand. Ed Miller, a Jesuit language teacher and friend, was doing research in Rome during the summer of 1972 when this author was passing through; he had access to investigate the Colosseum grounds -- and I was his working associate. We lifted an ancient stone and found the side facing the earth had crisp and clear inscriptions; on the side facing the atmosphere, the writings were melting like ice sculpture -- culture vanishing before our eyes.

Again, when living in Washington during the 1970s this author would jog around the various national shrines and monuments on Saturdays. What was startling was that in passing the Lincoln Memorial I could hear marble sizzling by acid-laden air on warm humid

summer days. A cultural heritage was dissolving.

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Besides air pollution, indifference to protection of major cultural and historic sites from poachers, relic hunters, and natural calamities must be addressed. Merely designating an unprotected site as culturally significant invites damage. After being described in the media, a 6,000-year old cave painting in western Africa was ruined by spray paint. European conquerors and thieves took ancient artifacts, parts of the Parthenon in Greece, many Middle Eastern columns and memorials, and even parts of the Egyptian pyramids. The "civilized" thieves considered themselves entitled, since being citizens of developed countries supposedly entitled them to treat loot with finesse. Cultural protection must include limiting tourist numbers, for carrying capacity is often exceeded. King Tut's burial site has shown signs of deterioration through tourist activity, as has the paleolithic cave paintings of Lascaux, France (closed to the public due to fungus brought by visitors).

Religious shrines deserve protection, even if not of one's specific religious beliefs. Many shrines are magnets that draw large numbers of pilgrims to specific locations and events. Often these sites and events involve beautiful-but-fragile settings. We may not visit the actual sites, but we still ought to help ensure safety and protection of religious participants and the respective shrines themselves.

2. Commercial Development of Cultural Sites and Artifacts -- Historic sites are worth preserving when considered of great significance by certain cultural, national or regional groups. Modern development and economic pressures infringe on battlefield sites near urban areas, along with historic buildings or cultural grounds. Developers and commercial interests tend to play down or ignore historic significance of such sites, or of birthplaces and residences of recognized personages (e.g., civic leaders, reformers, artists, or inventors). The same patterns are seen in minimizing ecological value of wilderness areas for the sake of exploited resources that are phrased as "benefits." Commercial stories are often more enticing than money-short historic or cultural presentations. When presented well, highlighting local historic and cultural sites enhances tourist value and pride of communities. Such sites include places of early settlements that include tales of colonists' sacrifice and ingenuity.

When the story is good enough to arouse curiosity, the very historic sites can be commercialized -- and privatized. Often access comes at exorbitant fees: Williamsburg, Virginia, costs over \$50 for

an adult ticket and is priced beyond the ability of the average tourist to pay; both public and private camping facilities have escalating entrance fees. Morris Island, a major Civil War battle site, is being turned over to private developers. In many cases authenticity of sites is lost through commercialization. Furthermore, profit motivation drives companies to sequester folklore and cultural artifacts: children's stories, ditties, poems, and games. Privatizing is an inherent erosion of the cultural commons. A recent trend is that the children's world of games, fairy tales, nursery rhymes and songs has been privatized by entertainment companies -- even "Happy Birthday" is copyrighted. Among the stories that Disney has come to control beyond Mickey Mouse and Winnie the Pooh are the ancient tales *Robin Hood*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Davy Crockett*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Cinderella*, and *Snow White*. Incidentally, while taking many from the public domain, the number of Disney stories added to the public domain is "none."<sup>3</sup>

3. Loss of Ancestral Language -- Cultural heritage and expression are threatened and endangered species. When communities break down over the profit-motivated quest for money a traditional culture will soon break down. First, in the act of assimilation people will neglect to record songs, dances and other cultural expressions even within their communities and family. This is especially true when a primitive language ceases to be spoken. On January 21, 2008, Marie Smith, the last speaker of the Eyak language in Alaska died; a last-of-a-language death occurs about three times a month. Youth in sensitive pockets of threatened culture prefer to speak the predominant language of the region and are often embarrassed about their parents' tongue. The UN reports that, at current rates of disappearance, within this twenty-first century half of the seven thousand languages of the world will vanish -- three per month.

Language loss is a major concern among cultural preservationists. A map shows thirteen major hot spots of this disappearance of human knowledge and history: Northwestern U.S./Canada, Southwestern Oklahoma, Northern Central and Southern South America, Southern and Eastern Africa, Northern Australia, Western Melanesia, Taiwan-Philippines, Southeastern Asia, Eastern Siberia and Central Siberia. Five of these are areas of severe loss including our Pacific Northwest. Some languages are down to a handful of users (e.g., Wichita, three speakers). In order to address this tragic loss of culture, the *Living Tongues Institute for Endangered Languages* is working with a *National Geographic* project.<sup>4</sup>

4. Globalization Assault on Cultures -- A lack of seeing the worth of a culture leads to an indifference that can affect people in noticeable ways. Intolerance creeps in, hospitality slackens, and

discrimination occurs in subtle ways. Military struggles bring on resentment and hatred, and bullying and friction increase, especially against minority groups in a country. Religion involves more than private spiritual practice; it is the public manifestation of one's beliefs; it involves acknowledging a Supreme Being, acts of reverence, petition, contrition, and gratitude. These religious expressions become cultural treasures.

Globally, public practice by one or other group is restricted and accusations of false acts encouraged (e.g., blasphemy laws in Pakistan and Iran) by the dominant religion's adherents; curtailment can even include threats to life or imprisonment. Our country was founded on separation of church and state; early colonies restricted religious groups as set by established churches or first settlers. American constitutional guarantees of freedom of worship did not erase the barriers to Catholics and Jews for decades. Pity the convert to Christianity in Afghanistan. Annually, human rights organizations list restrictions on various religious groups in different countries. Most often at the bottom of the list is North Korea; also close by is Saudi Arabia, which limits public worship to Moslem practices alone, and only permits private worship by individuals or small groups. China places limits on religious groups and restricts public Christian worship to approved places of worship and by approved religious leaders using approved sacred texts.

Concerns mentioned here are receiving national and UN attention (see Chapter Nine for human rights violations among migrants and refugees). What is evident is that often cultural restrictions have economic ramifications, for discrimination often accompanies minorities with lower income. Often governments are reluctant to take steps to defend the oppressed because majority groups dictate legal and regulatory priorities. Cultural and religious discrimination is embarrassing and often left hidden.

#### **b) Actions to Reclaim Cultural Commons**

*I will make you the light of the nations so that my salvation will reach to the ends of the Earth. (Isaiah 49:6b)*

Culture defines a civilization -- and peoples of all times and places as well. The culture of one people is of value to all, and thus is part of a common heritage that beckons us to share and to respect as part of what makes us who we are. Honoring past cultures allows us to see deficiencies of our current materialistic one. Let us see cultural history as a partial judge of the present moment, and insist that we do not forget the greatness of the past along with its shortcomings. Neglecting culture harms the Common Good and

associated human treasures that we hold dear.

1. Establish Local Celebrations -- Actions to preserve our cultural "capital" range from individual to cooperative efforts. Individual members can preserve family culture: by constructing family trees through genealogical research using current Internet resources; by passing on keepsakes, photographs with proper identification, and written reflections and family histories; by organizing family reunions; and by recording elders and preserving their recorded conversations through audio or videotape. We will not be around forever and so: the sooner recorded the better.

At the local community level the following ought to be considered: support county fairs and annual community events; afford opportunities for scattered former residents to return and reestablish ties. Those members gifted in music, story-telling, and entertaining youngsters have special chances to excel.

2. Regional Cultural Sites -- Certain places ought to be recognized as having significance both to outsiders and to residents, who strive to sharpen their sense of regional pride and history. Identify historic and cultural sites and have them marked and publicized -- to a limited degree because publicizing unprotected sites can incite vandalism. In preparation for Kentucky's 200th anniversary, this writer sought to undertake a project of identifying all old cabins and homes constructed when Kentucky was part of Virginia (before 1792). The project, entitled "Virginian Houses," was abandoned after being discouraged by the state historical society; the agency argued that identification would be the kiss of death to various isolated and unprotected structures.

With higher maintenance costs today, the challenge is to find resources to preserve and protect sites, and still make them accessible to the public. The problem goes beyond the local community and region; this can involve national cultural treasures and be thrown into competition for limited financial resources. Many funders regard cultural preservation as of lower importance than other immediate needs -- and are forgetful of longer- range benefits that may accrue. Protection of archeological sites from vandals and thieves takes protective barriers and active policing. Funding from adequate recreational fees and promotion could allow many sites to pay for themselves.

3. Green Tourist Guidelines -- By the twenty-first century, tourism, the world's fastest growing service industry during prosperous periods, has approached an annual one trillion dollar business on the global scale. Although tourism thrives where sites,

transportation, and lodging are maintained, still the welcoming attitude of people is of immense importance. In order to respect native cultures, green tourist guidelines include:

- \* Be aware that the carrying capacity of certain regions is exceeded by excessive tourism that puts stress on land, roads, waste facilities, and the flora and fauna;

- \* Curtail distance travel as petroleum supplies diminish; while luxury travel is at the heart of the airlines economy, still conserving limited petroleum supplies for more essential purposes comes first;

- \* Pack out and dispose properly of what you pack in;

- \* Encourage infrequent long-distance trips (one such trip per decade or per lifetime) and substitute virtual travel using Internet videotapes or printed travelogues, especially for wilderness tours;

- \* Emphasize travel closer to home using bikes or walking tours where possible ("stay-cations");

- \* Curb all-terrain vehicle use in fragile areas, and declare such areas off limits to all for recuperative periods of time;

- \* Initiate a three-part cultural preservation program that focuses on tourist satisfaction, preservation of the culture and environment, and just compensation for local workers;

- \* Promote the region's natural flora and fauna as well as cultural and geological highlights; and

- \* Train tour guides in cultural highlights and local ecology.

4. Language Revitalization Programs -- Programs could be undertaken on national or international levels to oversee the preservation of endangered languages. These include recording surviving native speakers and preparing dictionaries and other materials made available through national or regional libraries and cultural centers. A community of indigenous people speaking a native language is the best way to preserve threatened languages but who wants to preserve a dying culture? Our cultural respect ought to extend to keeping languages flourishing; this has been achieved with "Language Revitalization programs."

**Funding:** Language preservation is urgently needed from the GDF (about \$1 billion) for endangered language preservation: recording materials for the three hundred most endangered languages is top priority; developing dictionaries and archival materials is another for a broader range of endangered languages.

5. UNESCO Cultural Sites -- The quality of our lives is enhanced by flourishing, diverse cultures -- for in diversity comes richness of human expression. The basic mission of **UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization** (UNESCO) is *to contribute to sustainable human development in a culture of peace underpinned by tolerance,*

*democracy and human rights, through programmes and projects in UNESCO's fields of competence: education, the natural and social sciences, culture and communication and information.*

Many cultural sites ought to be declared global heritage areas with protection for safe travel and accommodations. These are actually far more numerous than one first conceives.<sup>5</sup> Just as recognition of local sites when left unprotected invites vandalism, so it is all the more possible at the global level. However, global recognition, along with adequate promotion and protection, may tap into an expanding tourist trade; with time these sites ought to pay for themselves by bringing in the multitudes and their fees. In poorer areas, tourist fees may be insufficient to maintain such sites; broader maintenance funds may be necessary.

Such heritage sites include the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, St. Peter's in Rome, Saint Sophia in Istanbul, the Taj Mahal in India, and Angkor Wat in Cambodia. The Smithsonian Institution lists ten endangered global cultural treasures including *Visoki Decani Monastery* in Kosovo and *Jaisalmeer Fort* in India.<sup>6</sup> The religious and cultural requirements, activities and fund-raising could continue, and worship times and space would be respected. Praying at or near the site would expand the sense of global social capital -- our common brother- and sisterhood.

**Funding:** UNESCO cultural site preservation is in great need of funding today. The number of these defined global sites could be increased to the degree that money would allow for guards, guides, preservationists, and promotion people. An annual GDF (\$2 billion) would give high priority to threatened sites; added tourist fees and donations could help maintain the sites as well.

**c) A Clash of Attitudes on Matters of Wealth**

*Must I hold a man honest who measures with false scales  
and a bag of faked weights. (Micah 6:11)*

The attitude that clashes with traditional culture(s) is a wanton materialistic *consumption culture*. The goal of upwardly mobile Chinese and Indians is to imitate Western culture with private vehicles, spacious homes, and electronic appliances and gadgets of all sorts. Consumption culture is a dream, but the devil is in the details. This culture is enticing and addictive for the consumer who is never satisfied; one vehicle calls for a truck, a camper, a boat, and on and on. It is the "on and on" that drains the world's resources, causes resulting pollution, and turns individuals from common concerns to enhancement of possessions.

Institutes vie for the attention of these want-to-be wealthy folks. Movies, novels, talk shows, and songs are directed to their support. A culture of comfort soon results. Educational institutions and even retreat houses vie for students through more luxurious settings and parking lots; prosperity churches thrive and their leaders become court chaplains of the rich; American legislators clamor to appease their major donors even when talking their fiscally-conservative lingo. All the while the slippery road to bankruptcy continues, with projected Congressional Budget Office U.S. indebtedness of 215% of GDP by 2039.<sup>7</sup>

The struggle within our civilization is over attitudes, and so often this focus is on material wealth, its acquisition and retention whether by honest work, force, deception, bribery, or other means. Challenging the materialistic attitudes, whether from a frontal attack on accumulated wealth or a subtle promotion of spiritual alternatives, is always a tough decision. The cultural clash over attitudes reaches far into the tangle of credit ratings, ATMs and loss of confidential information on the Internet, ubiquitous advertisements and TV channel choice, free trade and tariffs, carbon taxes and cap-and-trade. Add to this the fact that rational discourse is limited because materialistic attitudes carry with them addictive behavior. Furthermore, democratic process is at risk when vast sums of money buy elections through the influence of hidden wealthy sources. Tackling wealth and materialism is at the heart of the problem at all levels.

### 1. Personal Attitudes about Wealth

*Then Jesus insisted, "My children," he said to them "how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."*  
(Mark 10:24)

Difference 1: **Greed versus sharing.** Only a rare individual is not affected by wealth, whether that be wealth that he or she has, or wealth that is coveted. Material wealth leads to greed and insensitivity, but those coveting wealth may be more prone to anger, for they discover opportunities denied by their situation and circumstance. The wealthy and poor alike are candidates for addiction; in a materialistic culture those people who have much simply want more, since no amount of material goods is truly satisfying. The upwardly mobile desire to be millionaires, to be billionaires and to be multi-billionaires and still more. Insecurities reign, for material goods never satisfy. Wealth triggers the desire for more wealth. There is never enough.

\* **Concentration of wealth omits sharing and breeds insensitive individuals.** Protecting and properly distributing the common wealth to those who lack essentials of life demands a deep sensitivity to needs of neighbors and a willingness to share with them -- a *commons sense*. The affluent grow in insensitivity for they only foresee what more is needed perhaps to make them happy. The horizon is something material and not yet reached. They like their own privacy, privilege, security and comfort; vacationing and jetting, replenishing wardrobes, and expensive autos -- but there is still more because the heart is not satisfied. Addiction rests precisely in the fallacy that more material things will satisfy -- and in some sense once on that road it does not take great wealth to fortify the addiction. People who have experienced scarcity feel a greater need to forget the experience. Granted, insensitivity can affect the poor and those wanting as well.

The **insensitive** and privileged seek to preserve the privileged position, which always requires a little more security. This "little more" consumes time, attention, effort, and selection of friends and associates. The privileged may graduate to ever higher degrees of selfishness; they quote a queen of their calling from 1789, "Let them (commoners) eat cake." Privileges of the wealthy soon seek their own justification. Insensitivity hardens into an attitude that spills over into a political and economic position that overlooks the potential of the poor to rise up and become active citizens -- and eventually to take what is rightly theirs. Insensitivity ignores a fundamental human equality and the creative talents of the lowly; it perpetuates castes or classes or strata in society, excluding others from the bonds of association and sharing as one people.

*Have you ever met a wealthy person thin enough to slip through the eye of a needle?*" The privileged are often more **addictive** than they realize -- and this addiction cannot be reasoned away. Today, status means money, something portable, exchangeable, and easily moved through Internet transactions. Billions of dollars flow back and forth and ever more easily among those at the top. The wealthy and imitators seek further profits through so-called high-yielding investments and hedge funds -- the Wall Street equivalent to Roman bread and circuses except it is the investors who compose the audience.

The upwardly mobile want to become "godly" in affluence, for sanctity equals wealth for them. Success is to acquire more, retain more and consume more, a heavenly quest. Money is easily changeable, transferred and sequestered in tax havens. Through television imagery and shop windows, have-nots caught in the wealth web drool over possible material plenty.

**A devil's advocate** may argue that the wealthy ARE the major

patrons of the arts -- and thus promoters of culture. How are you to denounce them as destroyers of culture? An answer is that specific types of art are acquired or donated in the pretended charity model mentioned in Chapter Two. The wealthy patron wants a good reputation, a tax write-off, something that will salve consciences, makes good publicity, and demands expressions of gratitude and demands of "no new taxes." Highlighting certain works of art is not the crux of the concern. Social capital enters the picture because affluent insensitivity erodes true social relations that allow all to judge what is good art. A patron of arts becomes the judge through the openness of the purse strings; a dutiful public never brings up the subject of culture since it is owned by the wealthy. Indifference to cultural expressions of the poor results from a disparity of wealth that overlooks a cooperative spirit, and makes the wealthy patron the one who determines what is worthy of being judged good art.

## **2. Regional Level: Consumer and Corporate Attitudes**

*We are stripped of everything; my people's portion is measured out and shared, no one will give it back to them, our fields are awarded to our despoiler. (Micah 2:4b)*

**Difference 2: Material versus spiritual motivation.** All people aspire to a good life, but the pie of material resources is limited -- and differences in how this pie is to be sliced are becoming more evident in times of instantly accessible communication; the have-nots of this world observe that they lack what others have. They cannot afford material goods and so they react in a number of ways: a wishful hope of living according to the rules and gaining what the rich have; a sense of powerlessness that material success can never be gained in this life, and thus focus attention on preparation for a more blessed life to come; a sense of anger that some have so much and the poor have so little; or a willingness to join a cooperative effort so that all can gain a proper livelihood.

**\* Concentration of wealth permits corporate power to grow unchecked.**

*Summary of brief to deny corporate rights: "The people of these United States created local, state and federal governments to protect, secure, and preserve the people's inalienable rights, including their rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is axiomatic that the U.S. people -- the source of all governing authority in this nation -- created governments also to secure the people's inalienable right that the many should govern, not the few. That guarantee -- of a republican form of government -- provides the foundation for securing people's other inalienable rights and vindicates the actions of people and communities seeking to secure those rights."<sup>8</sup>*

A corporation needs to be a participant in a balanced economic system, for it has a special role to play depending on the purpose for which it was incorporated. When that institution is non-profit, or when the group is owned by the employees, there is a possible opportunity for democratic principles to work. When the corporation is large, owned by distant and non-local stockholders, controlled by those bent on profits, an authentic democracy is diminished. Yes, there can be voting and ballot initiatives, but policy makers are not foremost. Corporations are not evil in themselves; they have a special role to play in history, but they are the creature of the state that is the creation of the people. The apparent intention of our founding fathers was that corporations owe their existence to the permission of the people; they are thus beholden to us. Corporations that are established as for-profits have obligations to their stockholders and customers. Their degrees of democratic process vary according to their own choosing. Far too often the CEOs have the power to feather their own nest and let the workers be damned.

America's founders of the Constitution left unspecified powers to the states -- and that includes control of corporations. Corporations report on their general operations and renew their charters periodically according to different state statutes. One of the great travesties of Western law has been the fiction of the "corporate person" with certain rights but few duties, because it really is not a human person capable of responsibility. In the beginning of the republic and well into the nineteenth century the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the rights of human persons did not belong to corporations. However the case of *Santa Clara County versus Southern Pacific Railroad* (1886) was interpreted in the opposite way. Research unearthed the fact that the judge never intended the case to refer to corporate personhood.<sup>9</sup> The current Supreme Court upholds the corporate personhood but that will undoubtedly be subject to future struggles.

A corporate "person" can go far beyond the incorporator's intent; they influence legislation, buy law-makers, determine international policy, dictate the economic policies of entire nations, e.g., fruit (Central American nations), sugar (Dominican Republic), rubber (Liberia), diamonds (several African countries), and aluminum (Iceland). Petroleum battles with OPEC, Russia, Nigeria, Venezuela and others are played out today. Currently corporations are taxed just as citizens are taxed, but being powerful the businesses have a covey of lawyers who can invent loopholes and exemptions -- and many profitable corporations do NOT pay income taxes.<sup>10</sup> With increased size and economic power of corporations and their ability in this age of globalization to expand beyond borders, one asks whether the creature

created by the people has become an uncontrollable monster.

Corporations of whatever size reflect the personalities of their controlling executives. If the chief executive officer takes a reasonable salary, limits profits to a fair level, and shares returns with employees who should have some company voice, the Common Good is served. If executives are making far, far more money than the workers (in the U.S. sometimes fifty times as much or more), and exude insensitivity to employees, corporations reflect an image of their greedy executives. In such circumstances what was said about super-wealthy individuals extends to the corporations as well. Just as there are some individuals with a sense of stewardship for the wealth they have at their disposal, so there are companies with the same attitude. However, these may be exceptions and not the rule. Greed extends to institutions peopled by the greedy, and social capital erodes through accumulated and unregulated wealth.

For the most part, earlier corporations were not of such size and complexity as the modern ones, though the textile mills of New England included managers who also could be kind or heartless, and working conditions reflected greedy personalities. Misdeeds by powerful executives of unregulated businesses can lead to corporate decisions that can shake the world financial markets (Lehman Brothers in September, 2008). Multinational corporations can have immense influence on global concerns; when activities become too expensive in one country, corporations close (with trauma to the abandoned community) and start up elsewhere. Some firms require employees of many years service to train their own replacements before being laid off. The corporation may transfer funds from country to country; it may choose sites with the most lenient work rules or environmental regulations in the most lenient nations, where it can pay the least taxes and make the most profits; and it may simply blackmail existing work sites to get more concessions from workers.

Managers of corporations with this false interpretation of personhood with rights (but few duties or obligations) consider the corporation as apart from the responsibility to answer to the people. Corporations hold financial power, influence governments, and run propaganda mills as though they are entitled to "free speech." Corporations under such circumstances are inherently unable to be instruments of the Common Good because they are particular and not common; they are institutions held by executives and stockholders for uncommon and particularized benefit.

When corporations do what they are incorporated to do, they assist in economic development; when not, they are a peril to democracy. Through economic globalization, multinational corporations and client

nations can oppress weaker nations and can overthrow political leaders. Chinese mining corporations in Zambia disregard worker safety, forbid unionization and send agents to shoot protestors. Actually, corporate financial transactions must be transparent; standard environmental practices must be required; and penalties must be imposed on multinational corporations for violations. Corporate attitudes permeate an entire culture and lead to perceived attitudes of hopelessness.

**\* Achieving wealth is a false goal for many.** The lucky workers are considered to be the few who make it rich, the subjects of novels. Most youth who have such aspirations find high hopes crushed in the journey of hard knocks; they feel lucky today to find a job, work hard, and assume responsibilities with aging parents or with increasing demands. Their early aspirations sprang like wildflowers in springtime trampled in the hot summer of disappointments. Working hard rarely brings a "Horatio Alger" success. Yes, early homesteaders followed this route to success, when fertile land was accessible, health care treated with homegrown herbs, and people worked long hours. Many immigrants still take the hard-work approach and some reach modest degrees of success. On the other hand current (2011) dreams of many fade with unexpected medical bills, risky retirement funds, and (underwater) mortgages higher than their respective homes are worth.

**Passive workers** try to come to terms with the perception that material success is not possible in this life, and fall back on an escape route: a drug or other allurements that deadens the failure to achieve material success, religious experience, or escape to a distant place. The feelings of the heart, a growth in inner spirituality that awaits a future eternal life, help the otherwise hopeless to endure. For them, success is not here but beyond -- and of a radically different nature.

**Angry workers** look at the situation with greater scrutiny: revolt and take what is rightfully "ours" in a violent fashion; smash the current system so that none can have possessions if some cannot (perhaps some terrorists hold this position); expose the fallacies of false/unfulfilled promises of the wealthy; upset the apple cart of good behavior and refuse to play the capitalistic game; or quit the system completely and go to drugs or other forms of escape. Tens of millions of un- or underemployed throughout the world are fertile grounds for revolt. The slaves' revolt in Haiti at the turn of the nineteenth century becomes a lesson for the world of haves and have-nots. Uncontrolled anger leads to revolt and slaughter. Tens of millions are out there seething -- they are not workers for they never had an opportunity to work.

**Hopeful workers** look ahead to attaining something more for their children by playing by the rules. Goals of wealth permeate a culture prepped by media, the entertainment industry, and the gambling industry, all seeking to proclaim the *trickle down theory* (success will come down the ranks if allowed at the top) as means to the good life. If you are good and obedient, you may someday become wealthy; if you hit the jackpot, you are instantly superrich; if you guard the system, namely by voting for lower tax breaks for the affluent, good things will at least come to your posterity. For these, greed becomes an individual and corporate virtue, political corruption is a risk, complacency and non-participation are ways of life, and material success is heaven.

*A cry goes up from the poor, and Yhwh hears...* (Psalm 34:6)

**Sensitive workers** hear the cry of Fourth World Poor, the five thousand children who die daily for lack of food and proper health care. Hearing the cry generates a hope founded in solidarity with the very poor who need hope as well to do something meaningful in the coming years. Sensitivity offers the viable possibility of change coming soon -- a way to freedom in which all can participate. Sensitivity enlivens what excessive wealth deadens.

\* **A consumer culture restricts those who want to break free because action is assumed to take material resources.** The consumer culture is based on dependence; one is not expected to act without certain materials.

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While this author was explaining the concepts of composting in one's backyard, a person asked earnestly, "What must I buy to get this started?" Using traditional tools and practices and constant commercials directing people to specific material goods creates what appears to be an unbreakable pattern: "I cannot act because I do not have proper support materials."  
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Dependence on material things is an attitude promoted by the wealthy, for how else can one keep the treasure and the multitudes in their place? Utter dependence on material support becomes the way we think about our foods, travel, living space, recreational materials, personal items, communications gadgets, and pretty soon our whole life. The media help create this dependence. Oliver James, a British psychologist, explains that an epidemic of mindless consumption-practices are sweeping the world.<sup>11</sup> He has chronicled how depression has enveloped affluent people, and he documents the fact that mental illness is especially prevalent in English-speaking countries, far more so than even in continental Europe and many times

more than in so-called less-developed lands.

In the 2006 State of the Union message President Bush said "America is addicted to oil." We went from little petroleum use in 1900, when horses were still the most common mode of transport, to virtually total dependence in one century. Even sixty years ago it was different, when a uniformed attendant cleaned windshields while the hand-pump with glass bulb on top poured the measured amount into fuel tanks. During the Second World War, filling gas tanks was an elaborate ritual; now it is an addictive "necessity" by the driver/pumper. Now the attitude is to give us fuel at whatever price -- though there do seem to be limits to what is tolerated. This oil dependence allows for denial of hidden costs: air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions; and military expenses needed to secure oil sources. Goodbye glacier, polar bear, snow-covered Mount Kilimanjaro, Pacific Ocean nations; we need our oil.

\* **A prevailing privileged arrogance discourages authentic primitive art.** Regional (Appalachian) experience shows that corporate intentions can dictate how a quilt is made, what design sells best, and exactly how a final craft product is to look. Thus regional primitive art is dictated by a distant director of sales and perceived marketability. Craft authenticity is compromised by the privileged distant policy maker who sets standards and overwhelms local and regional creativity. The needy say little.

### 3. Democracy and Excessive Wealth

*That an enormous Proportion of Property vested in a few individuals is dangerous to the rights, and destructive to the common Happiness of Mankind; and therefore every free State hath a right by its laws to discourage the Possession of such Property.*

(First draft of Pennsylvania Constitution<sup>12</sup>)

**Difference 3: Democracy allows versus rejects excessive wealth.**

Is it wrong to be a billionaire? Assuming wealth is acquired in a "legally acceptable manner," should money-making and retaining skills be disparaged? Certainly the Great Recession of 2008-09 has raised some questions as has Bernie Madoff's Ponzi scheme. Amid home foreclosures, job insecurity, and unemployment of this period the wealthiest, the titans of world finance, whose very misadventures brought about the world meltdown, got richer.<sup>13</sup> Further questions abound: Do citizens do the wealthy a favor by making them surrender excessive wealth, whether land (Chapter Three) or excess money? Is acquisition of wealth extended colonialism? Is the classic colonialist adage a myth, "Be cheerful in your station of life and you

will prosper?" Are the wealthy far-sighted enough to allow a few of the lower castes to climb the ladder of wealth, just enough that all aspirants feel satisfied? Do wealthy retain power through access to leaders and media?

Concentration of wealth has accelerated with globalization; this allows the privileged to expand contacts, influence governments and evade restrictions and taxes. Wealth subtly used even in so-called democracies determines who has the resources to run for office and who gets elected. The president of China on his first trip to America first stopped to visit Bill Gates, the wealthiest American; the American president came later. Access is a two-way street with wealthy entering political leaders' inner sanctums and leaders scrambling to meet the wealthy. Wealth breeds power. The wealthy have access to or outright own media publicity and informational resources; they can form public opinion; they have a special entree into minds and hearts. They control the democratic process by propagandizing voters. *Any billionaire can change the state constitution* (by the initiative "direct democracy" process). *All he has to do is spend money and lie to people.* Karen Bass, former Democratic speaker of the California State Assembly.<sup>14</sup>

Access to political leaders and policy is also the avenue to legislation and regulations. A wealthy person can run for public office, create a climate through mass coverage of their positions, and influence elections. Even if not in office, the wealthy can lobby for favorable tax privileges. All the while, certain conservative politicians keep hammering average citizens about the evils of taxes. The propagandized voter dutifully turns down taxes -- even on the wealthy who should be taxed fairly. Participatory democracy requires one person/one vote, not authoritarian rule by wealth. In the past, nobility arose based on courage in battle or proven military leadership. Dynasties resulted when nobles wanted their families to enjoy privileges that they themselves had received. Continuation led to inherited nobility that was recognized by common folks who gave obeisance to the leading noble. While the former colonies rejected inherited nobility (in the person of George III) in the War of Independence, the temptation existed to reinsert nobility -- to make George Washington or John Adams a king, and to give voting privileges to "noble" landholders. However, nobility sprang from wealth not birth; Alexander Hamilton, America's premier capitalist, was illegitimate but spoke up for the possibility of acquired wealth -- and his face is on the American ten-dollar bill due to his foundational financial work.

Today, in various parts of the world wealthy "nobles" are regarded by the general public as privileged; their wealth is theirs to acquire,

retain, and dispose of as they desire. Freedom House, a Washington-based think tank surveyed nations and found Namibia to be in the second highest rank for political rights and civil liberties. Mo Ibrahim ranks this sixth in good governance out of 51 African nations. However, the UN Development Programme ranks Namibia the world's most unequal nation -- a land of wealth and affluent towns and the worst sort of nearby dirt-poor slums.<sup>15</sup> Why the lack of conflict amid such disparity?

Retention of wealth erodes democratic procedures by removing control and use of resources from the hands of citizens and gives power to the wealthy elite. The autocrat may or may not use that wealth wisely; if not, then this privileged person can turn democratic process into a sham. In 2007, the billionaire community rose to 946 people though it leveled off to some degree in 2008 and included a member of a Mexican drug cartel. The *New York Times* reported that one of these superrich (Larry Ellison) has to spend \$83,000 an hour constantly to keep from growing all the richer. Some defend the super-accumulators as super-givers to charity -- a potential powerplay to curry favor with hard-pressed taxpayers? To question this largesse may mean less trickle-down favors. Are citizens to blame? Do we surrender power, fail to tax fairly, allow democratic principles to erode, and permit the wealthy to retain and dispose of wealth as they see fit? Are we willing to do something about all this?

Americans inherit a long struggle over the evolution of the democratic process itself. The Virginian and other southern planters retarded this process due to their wealth that included slaves (counted as three-fifth people). The predominant voice was that of haves (planters), not of have-not slaves or small landholders. Early on, northern states saw grave injustice in slave-trading and banned this practice, but this "peculiar institution" became a thorn in our nation's side. The struggle between North and South grew in intensity in the first half of the nineteenth century with northern states freeing slaves (not achieved in New Jersey until the 1840s). Scenes of acrimonious struggles, including physical and verbal abuse, occurred in the U.S. Congress. The white propertied got their voting rights in the early 1800s, and then African-American males during and after the Civil War. The 600,000 Union and Confederate dead were victims of a ravaged imperfect democracy battling over property and wealth.

\* **Concentration of wealth deifies money.** *Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.* Lord Acton

Until the financial meltdown of 2008, the great majority of people trusted that the wealthy were doing the right thing and rarely

questioned their emphasis on material acquisition, retention, and use. The efforts by Milton Friedman and others to equate capitalism with freedom leave average citizens confused. They often put their trust or "faith" in this new situation where --

- \* materialistic capitalism is the religion of the state;
- \* all citizens must speak of this religion with reverence and to do otherwise is unpatriotic;
- \* money is almighty -- "in this god we trust" (though the gods Euro, Pound and Yen may substitute for Dollar in the Pantheon);
- \* the leader is the chairman of the U. S. Federal Reserve;
- \* the cathedral is Wall Street, and priests are brokers;
- \* daily services begin promptly at 9:00 and end at 4:00;
- \* the chant is the Dow Jones industrial averages;
- \* business schools are seminaries;
- \* unbelievers are never to speak of "Godless" capitalism, for it has a god -- money;
- \* habitual wear and lifestyle are dictated by current fashion and being godly means being wealthy; and
- \* advertising is the gospel and the media must promote it.

#### 4. Economic Regulation and Trade

*What was enjoyed by one side (Allies), particularly after 1917 (the last portion of World War I) was a marked superiority in productive forces. As in earlier, lengthy coalition wars, that factor eventually turned out to be decisive.*<sup>16</sup>

#### Difference 4: **Free trade versus fair trade.**

Wealthier nations and their nobles attend Davos each year to compare notes and press for continued privileges. These people become a super-community that transcends national boundaries and sets the tone of international commerce for the near future. Privilege is a step beyond individuals, corporations as such, and propertied classes of people. A grand and global culture of money and influence prevails.<sup>17</sup>

One way of conceiving of this emerging culture of money is in the removal of restrictive limits on commerce, and the emergence of "free trade." The supposed motivating fear is the return of tariffs and protectionism with financial difficulties within nations. Moralists point out that it is quite difficult for two economically unequal nations to deal fairly on a one-to-one basis, because invariably trade works to the advantage of the wealthier party. On the other hand, a consortium of raw-materials producers may be able to work to the advantage of weaker nations. Today, efforts are made by the *World Trade Organization* to increase free trade even when poorer nations watch copper, cotton, and other commodities rise or sink in

value. Rapid movement of industries from one country to another (searching for cheaper labor) shifts trade dramatically, and this adds to the woes of certain nations -- and is quick to weaken the role of traditional cultures.

**Fair trade**, not charity, is what many economically emerging nations favor. Imports and exports have long provided a tax base for nations through duties and tariffs. Import, export and exchange of goods are regulated to exclude undesirable and unsafe products (e.g., illegal drugs, uninspected food, laundered money, or unsafe toys), to keep out inferior products, or to prevent the loss (or gain) of cultural treasures. Developing countries claim that the \$300 billion a year in recent subsidies paid to agricultural producers in the wealthy nations have the effect of driving down prices of their own competing commodities, and thus threaten fairness in trading. What they have called for repeatedly is a level playing field in the market place.

The 2009 *World Social Forum* that was held in Belem in Brazil sought to address free trade problems in a number of ways. This conference occurred right after the pro-capitalistic *World Economic Forum* held annually at the Swiss resort of Davos. The social forum took the basic stance that severe restrictions must be placed on economic globalization. Among other resolutions were that a special tax was to be imposed on international financial transactions and that the UN was to be charged with regulating the movement of capital across national boundaries. Also the Forum suggested the regulation of trade surpluses, registering credit-rating agencies that pertain to international trade, and limiting multinational corporation bonuses, hedge funds and over-the counter derivatives (OTCD). Subprime mortgages should be banned.

Repeating all of the sorry mess of the financial situation by some in commerce is beyond this work. The idea that "privilege knows best" rings hollow after the 2008 meltdown. Some of the wealthy nations are certainly better stewards than others, but not in every case. Material gain has a way of blind-siding those executives of large corporations and the permissive governments that allow them to operate. History has its precedents. The fifth century A.D. poets eulogized the late Roman emperors (Avitus and Anthemius) just before the collapse of the Roman West.<sup>18</sup> They spoke hollow words that were untrue -- and retarded efforts to save the empire. Does history repeat itself?

**\* Disparity of wealth can complicate international relations and determine historic events.** Paul Kennedy shows that productivity (and thus the potential for wealth) goes hand in hand with exertion of power at the international level, with mixed results.<sup>19</sup> Exertion of power

is another way of saying that military threats can often take precedence over diplomatic means. In regard to particular time periods in question (the early twentieth century) one wonders in retrospect whether Germany would have come to the aid of its ally Austro-Hungary in 1914 had it been the far less powerful Prussian state of a century before. Was perceived or real power dictating the course of events leading up to the bloody First World War? Would the U.S. have invaded Granada, Panama, or Nicaragua in the twentieth century, or Iraq in 2003, or Libya (with others) in 2011, if it were not the "privileged" superpower? Does power derived from wealth lead to conflict? Often in this age of sophisticated weaponry, diplomacy has taken a back seat to arms.

Wealthy nations use perceived privileges like wealthy individuals and corporations. If a poor nation has severe need of essential goods (food, water, etc.), it will be quite beholden to neighbors and other nations for foreign aid, trade and possible diplomatic procedures. If a wealthy country has the power to colonize others in order to satisfy its own needs, then the wealthy land is tempted to take unilateral actions to achieve its ends. For almost two centuries America cultivated an isolationist spirit, since it was separated by the Atlantic Ocean from Europe's fights. As long as that ocean kept us from the reach of another continent's weapons, our country avoided European alliances and balance-of-power interplays. Today, oceans make mere backyard neighbors.

In December, 1941, the bombing of Pearl Harbor thrust an isolationist U.S. into the international community. However, some reluctance prevailed. Through the rest of the twentieth century numerous treaties signed by the majority of UN countries were not part of the American agenda (e.g. The Law of the Seas and International Courts of Justice). The North Atlantic Treaty Organization developed, but with American generals in high positions. After 9-11 this country considered cooperating in its so-called "war on terror" with other nations. However, the George W. Bush administration tended towards unilateral actions. This did change dramatically with the Obama administration.

Twenty-first century globalization delivers a new message: nations can no longer remain isolationist or act in a unilateral fashion. Scarce resources, climate change, and unemployment affect us all, not just certain countries. The destitute are enslaved in their condition. Paraphrasing Abraham Lincoln's 1858 "House Divided" speech, *I Believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free,*<sup>20</sup> we cannot be a healthy international community consisting of haves and have-nots, of the free and those enslaved in destitution. Today this divide is not purely racial; it disturbs our

entire ecological order.

*While the poor of the world continue knocking on the doors of the rich, the world of affluence runs the risk of no longer hearing those knocks on account of a conscience that can no longer distinguish what is human. Benedict XVI<sup>21</sup>*

Affluent nations cannot face up to the responsibilities that they owe to a poor set of nations with three trillion dollars' worth of indebtedness. As we will explore in the next chapter, allowing people to go hungry or be denied proper health care is a crime against humanity to which we are all party. Some may ask: we cannot satisfy our own nationals; how can we satisfy another six billion in the world or at least the one billion most needy? The destitute experience terrorism from poverty daily and are victims of a "war on terror." Only when we see all people as brothers and sisters does the terror of destitution enter our moral awareness.

The military culture is being challenged by some thoughtful fiscal conservatives. A paradox emerges in our world even after Osama bin Laden's demise: the greater the concentration of wealth, the greater the degree of insecurity and threat of terrorism. The philosophy is that since wealth is materially-based, security must be also. Amid calls for reduced spending, military budgets sustain the insecurity that they seek to combat. An alternative is that conversion of major portions of military expenditures to furnish the essential needs of the poor is a true security and sustainable program. This can only be achieved through fair taxes.

The world's restless are so because they are unemployed, lack essentials, and resentful of those who have power that can be exercised unilaterally by sophisticated weaponry acquired through material wealth. With media in sight, terrorists target wealthy nations in a war of cultures. Hackers do havoc to sophisticated computer systems and Sony Play Stations. Suicide-bent terrorists become rather cheap and often effective weapons of mass destruction. Terrorism exposes an atmosphere of existing insensitivity, one that is best exemplified by using food sources (corn) for fuel for wasteful vehicles while the price of food escalates (Chapter Three).

**\* Concentration of wealth impoverishes developing nations.**

Rich nations have dictated fashion, music, and behavior among poorer nations for over a century. However, the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India and China) nations are changing the boundaries and equations through their own emerging economic power. Poorer nations serve as the sweatshops for globalized industry; they cut environmental and safety regulatory areas in order to produce cheaper and more

competitive products. Wealthier nations tap their talented graduates, leaving many poorer nations further impoverished. The current ascendent materialistic, consumer culture finds poorer people desperately attempting to catch up while weighed down by indebtedness and lack of economic planning. The wealth of North America, Europe and now parts of Asia (in 2011 China holds one and a half trillion dollars in cash reserves) entices migration from poorer lands; immigrants risk life and limb to cross the Mediterranean Sea in flimsy boats or the Arizona Desert to reach work possibilities. In China, millions are displaced and move internally from rural to industrialized areas.

Modern communications make employment possibilities known to desperately unemployed in poorer nations. In the first decade of this century, construction and service opportunities opened Europe and North America to millions, many undocumented. Furthermore, professional jobs from nursing to scientific research draw people from Latin America to the U.S. even while there are massive shortages in their lands of origin. (Brazil now sees a counter movement of talent returning). The departure of migrants disrupts community and family life in the source country; shortages of highly skilled medical, educational and technical service personnel occur in lower-income nations. More Haitian doctors reside in Canada and the U.S. than in that impoverished land with its own immense needs. The irony is that poor nations donate bright sons and daughters to wealthy countries after paying for their basic education. However, large amounts of expatriate money go home.

##### 5. Global Role and Limits

*Doom for the man who founds his palace on anything but integrity, his upstairs rooms on anything but honesty, who makes his fellow man work for nothing, without paying him his wages, who says, "I will build myself an imposing palace with spacious rooms upstairs." (Jeremiah 22:13-14a)*

**Difference 5: Governments are despised versus governments are necessary.** Citizens rarely reflect on the disparaging of our governments mainly by libertarians, and the disservice this renders to saving our Earth. Time and again, free marketers want less government so as to minimize costly social networks and worrisome financial regulations. Social benefits are often ignored in the rush to industrialization -- and this is conveniently overlooked by fiscal conservatives. During the mid-1990s Russia's population below the poverty line increased from two to seventy-four million, and one-quarter of people lived in conditions described as "desperate."<sup>22</sup> All the while, American attention focuses on getting government off

our backs through fewer regulations and less taxes.

Governments are necessary but sometimes unpopular. Police security expects a functioning local government, good roads must be maintained by responsible regional governments, and social security for all the people demands a strong federal government. To speak of the glory of less government goes contrary to the environmental needs of our world that cannot be handled on lower levels. All levels of government are necessary; concerned citizens know it, and others unthinkingly assume it. However, all share one common, though often unexpressed, desire for efficient government.

**\* Concentration of wealth encourages practices that harm the planet.** Good environment is the primary basic right of all people -- and creatures. Concentration of wealth in the hands of a few leads to extravagance and triggers similar practices by aspirants to wealth -- resources diverted from essential needs. The new champions are an emerging Asian and Latin American middle class demanding private cars, resource-intensive foods, spacious homes, and appliances. Consumer practices and spending are encouraged by governments that regard consumer spending as a patriotic means for keeping the economy going. "Consume, yes; conserve, later." The challenge is to create a non-consumer-based economy.

Cheap oil has resulted in a resource-consuming lifestyle: private vehicles, foods from distant lands, spacious over-heated and over-cooled homes, electronic gadgets. Our world has become a consumer-based economy with many adherents becoming addicted to luxury "needs" that drive this economy. In 2003, at the start of the second Gulf War President Bush told Americans to continue consuming -- a rare "war" starting with belts loosening. All the while, non-renewable fuel consumption continues to lead to air and water pollution; resources are wasted on luxury items; land is disturbed; wildlife is displaced; resource conservation is ignored; and tax benefits continue to favor non-renewable energy exploitation and use. The wealthy promote a culture of well-publicized unsustainable consumption; consuming peons follow in lock-step. While wealth accelerates, material consumption is diverted to luxury and away from essential needs. All the while insidious culture-destroying practices transfer blame away from primary users and to the "overpopulating" poor who are forced to reside near polluting sources. In one way, this becomes a backhanded compliment, since it admits that human beings cause the crisis, though it badly twists the blame game.

**\* Unsustainable alternative practices.** An innovative business practice emerging in Europe and North America is called "off-setting" of emissions by doing some good to the environment (planting trees)

elsewhere. This practice preys on guilt felt by jet-setters through offering to salve consciences by paying extra for an airplane ticket. The extra money is shunted elsewhere to pay for a less-energy-intensive practice (e.g., efficient stoves for the poor). Off-setting "compensates" for extra carbon dioxide generated by travel. The BBC had a special broadcast (September 20, 2007) that was critical of such practices. A trip from London to Berlin by plane emits 0.22 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per passenger, and a return trip by train emits 0.10 tons. The difference is what must be "off-set," and passengers pay for the off-set to be done by another person, who plants trees or takes other green conservation measures. The idea is simple enough but opens the door to gross misuse. Opponents liken it to permissiveness encouraged by medieval "indulgences," but that is a misinterpretation of the concept; in fact, a true understanding has meaningful application here.<sup>23</sup> Off-setting is a guilt-salving permit to stay affluent.

The BBC-reported an off-set example of giving credit to influence an Asian villager to install a wind-generator; the new user now watches television and, in turn, is influenced to take his personal savings and buy an advertised motor vehicle. Soon the village has increased its use of non-renewable fuel while engaged in benefits of the renewable source (wind). This secondary effect of increased consumption is never part of original calculations. Off-setting may work in given circumstances; New Jersey is reported to be going solar through this practice.<sup>24</sup> In certain circumstances off-setting may be a transition to renewable energy use. However, the practice does not address consumption patterns, overestimates potential savings, and diverts attention from genuine conservation measures. Energy taxes are far better practice, for otherwise the affluent continue in an unsustainable culture of consumption.

### Reflection: Comparing Two Cultural Views

Disparity of wealth at all levels erodes the cultural capital of a community whether local or global -- and by allowing this situation we become party to this offense. In some cases those who are acquainted with this emerging global wealthy elite conclude that America needs its plutocrats.<sup>25</sup> Secular society speaks and concedes that material matters much. The moral and religious community must face an eroding in trust in the democratic process. Is public critique needed to challenge the popular assumption that wealth occupies the moral high ground and the ultimate goal of current commercial activity?

#### \* Individual:

**Greed** is a virtue and **Charity** is the concern and decision of the privileged, versus

*Sharing is a virtue but charity can be an exercise of power,*

and so doing justice is better than merely giving to the needy in charity.

\* Regional:

\* **Consumers** will be motivated materially to strive for greater shares of the resource pie; and

\* **Economic and corporate privilege** knows best, no matter what the world mess, because the poor know so little, versus

*The material pie is limited; motivation should be directed to higher spiritual and qualitative horizons.*

*Beware of the materially privileged and realize that "the poor" hold the key to rising and saving the Earth.*

\* National:

**Democracy** means complete free choice, and millionaires have a right to become billionaires, versus

*Democracy is harmed by excessive wealth and*

*Superrich inequalities hurt the human society.*

\* International:

**Free market** and **free trade** are articles of faith;

**Credit** energizes a culture of consumption, which influences people and nations far and wide, versus

*The market must be regulated and trade must be fair along with consumer rights protected;*

*Capital and credit are dangerous when unregulated.*

\* Global:

**Governments** are to be despised, complacent, disparaged, and manipulated as a source of bail outs, and

**Problems** are solved solely by secular procedures, versus

*Good government is absolutely necessary for the sake of our wounded Earth and our global economy, and troubles stem from a lack of reverence and faith in the future.*

## Chapter Five: Access to Health Care Facilities

*Health and strength are better than any gold, a robust body than untold wealth. (Sirach 30:15)*

Our individual health is a fragile and somewhat temporary gift (not a commons shared by all). On personal health matters, we can respond to this gift through profound gratitude and a resolution to preserve it well. However, various human health conditions may require facilities for primary and other treatments, and thus health

can quickly go beyond personal responsibility and require governmental support for maintenance, research, monitoring, and general promotion and care. The **commons** enters into a discussion of these governmental or other health facilities and their availability or access to all people.

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. He went on to say that there are great inequalities in health throughout the world. One may look into the actual situation within developed nations, and find great variation in health costs and accessibility to treatment. As we delve further, we find a form of "medical tourism" or traveling abroad for lower-priced treatment. We can find various degrees of pharmacological, medical, and surgical consumer options that are far outside the reach of average income or poor people. In health care, disparity of wealth is most keenly the dividing line.

a) Infringement on Health Facility Access

*There is the danger that the ignorant man may easily underdose himself and by exposing his microbes to non-lethal quantities of the drug make them resistant.*

Alexander Fleming, developer of Penicillin

Health can be threatened in various ways ranging from lack of personal individual care, to health of those under one's charge, to improper personal treatment by traditional caregivers, to lack of physically available basic treatment centers, and to lack of financial means for secondary treatment of conditions due to costs. With respect to medical costs, various practices that infringe on limited health resources are discovered. Some people are overtreated and some do not even receive what is minimal for life.

Beyond this is the emerging situation of modern higher-priced procedures, elective surgeries, and medicines that are theoretically available, but outside the range of one's ability to pay for them. Differences are unfair and yet they exist. However, we can afford to dream that all could be served with a comprehensive global health care system that might cost as much as one trillion dollars annually. However, that is less than the cost of the global military budget, and health care is global security.

1. Lack of Facilities -- At least two million people die each year in various parts of the world from lack of proper medical facilities

for diagnosis, treatment and care -- and from lack of proper medicines. That estimate may be conservative. In one way of looking at things, health advances so prominent in the last half century are the result of the contributions of ALL the people, either through their work, contributions to the common good, or their redemptive suffering for and with others. The collective sufferings of all people make them deserve an "entitlement" to the global advances of medicine and treatment.

Mali is fortunate by poor nation standards; it is a country with about eight hundred, twenty-first century health centers, some quite elementary; their operations are very low-priced, but health services are beyond the financial means of the very poor who earn less than one dollar a day. On the other end of the health care spectrum, the world's affluent have a host of highly sophisticated services available, with daily hospitalization costs in the thousands of dollars. Differences in health care between the destitute and privileged are immense, and disparity in this portion of the commons is growing.

2. Unfair Advantages -- Medical care based on economics leads to those with the most money receiving the most care and those with the least getting the least. If limited health care is to be rationed, what must be the selection basis? Selection ought to be made according to need -- but whose need? The wealthy? The privileged? Younger folks? Productive workers? Breadwinners? Caregivers? On what basis should medical research funds be apportioned? On the most dangerous threats to the broadest range of people? On the drug that is potentially most profitable? On tropical diseases afflicting the poor?

Health care varies significantly, with richer nations generally having far superior health facilities. Advances in health care are part of the common store of information that is to benefit all -- and so the entire human family ought to benefit from any new procedure or medicine, even though not all have immediate access through nearby experienced caregivers. Granted, public funds have been used for scientific research and training of personnel, as well as for the safety, prevention, and maintenance agencies that have promoted health advances. Unfortunately, to show even greater lack of fairness, a portion of these public funds subsidize the private pharmaceutical industry that benefits most in its generous profits. Globalization, as a process of extending benefits for all, is severely tested with respect to health systems, mainly due to the escalating costs of comprehensive care in certain countries. The rich hope for continued good health at whatever costs; the poor hope for the barest medical essentials. Some people possess a "medical card," and yet over 47 million Americans were uninsured and 25 million underinsured at the

first anniversary of the Comprehensive Health Care Act in March, 2011. This would gradually be cut by 33 million in 2020, provided new legislative additions would lower it further.

3. Illegal Traffic in Body Parts -- The practice of selling body parts seems incomprehensible; however, with booming markets and successful medical operators along with people in dire need of funds, such a black market "business" is expected to prosper. Kidneys are worth thousands of dollars. What if a poor person agrees to gamble with one good kidney and risks selling blood or body parts? Similar traffic is more intense with those heirs for the dead, and is only limited at the moment of death by the rapid transition time required for moving certain body parts to needy patients. The broader trade includes stealing human bones and other body parts before cremation or burial, without the consent of the deceased or knowledge of survivors. Living donors often are paid minimum amounts and they may lack health supervision after the donation has been completed.

4. Over-prescription and Drug Abuse -- A drug war is being waged today affecting the health of millions. Illegal drugs flow from Andes coca forests and Afghanistan poppy fields to affluent lands; questionable pain clinics flourish; prescribed drugs flow through the Florida pain pill pipeline to other states. An ongoing battle is waged against traffickers who often can avoid checkpoints set up to intercept drug-laden sea, air, and land vehicles. Drug production is lucrative. Only 7% of Americans think pharmaceutical companies are trustworthy. In the U.S., over two million adverse drug reactions (ADR) occur annually, of which about 100,000 result in death; this makes ADR one of the highest causes of death. Annually, drug overdosing costs Americans about \$55 billion. Victims suffer, caregiver fatigue emerges, profits spiral.

Advertising medicines within a permissive consumer culture leads to over-prescription of medications. Except for New Zealand, the U.S. is the only nation that advertises medicines -- and why? Drug companies promote their high-priced medicines to the general public in order to boost sales -- a fifty billion dollar overcharge (beyond what other people pay for the same generic brand medicine) in this country alone.<sup>1</sup> When consumers see a pill on TV and hear the message, they ask their doctors to prescribe it. Inadvertently, both doctor and patient expand the drug culture.

Antibiotic over-prescription because of ignorance, convenience, laziness, perverse financial incentives, and sheer bad luck is causing resistance to bacteria.<sup>2</sup> James Hughes of Emory University says that about 50% of antibiotic use is unnecessary or inappropriate. Antibiotics are used against bacteria, not viruses, and yet patients

press doctors to prescribe them for viral common colds, self-indulgence that makes one a breeding grounds for resistant bacteria. However, the greatest use (80%) and misuse of antibiotics is in livestock operations, where perfectly healthy animals are dosed with antibiotics as an incentive for faster growth and cheaper meat production -- along with evolution of resistant superbugs.

Tuberculosis went from the cause of death of millions to tens of thousands in the last century, but victory was not total. Now resistant strains of bacteria are arising that require treatment with stronger and more costly antibiotics. There is little incentive among major pharmaceutical companies to invest in the development of stronger antibiotics. Resistance problems are more concentrated in poorer nations that cannot afford costly alternative drug treatments. Furthermore, an individual course of application gives a cure, and antibiotics are not like drugs requiring long-term use by given patients. Amazingly, this problem is an example of tragic misuse of the commons: gains from overdose of antibiotics are private, whereas losses are public.

5. Health Rationing, Infringement or Not? -- Nothing can raise voices faster than to talk of Grandma's possible lack of a hospital bed when she will need it. The question comes down to who deserves to receive medical treatment. When an estimated half of all treatments in this country are given to those who most likely suffer from preventable illnesses (poor eating, smoking, excess fatty or salty foods, etc.), one could ask where these people fit into service-denial schemes. To say that smokers with increasing risk of lung cancer should pay extra through increased insurance premiums causes some distress; to say that these same people should take a back seat when it comes to health care is another matter. What about costly care for black-lung miners or white-lung asbestos workers who are also smokers? Health lotteries exist today in terms of new cancer treatments or certain trial medicines. Costly medical treatments are denied to patients with no means of payment -- wealth disparity within and among nations. What are the payment limits for medicines and procedures? Is global health rationing based on limited funds happening today?

**b) Actions to Maintain and Improve Human Health**

*The whole town came crowding round the door; and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another.* (Mark 1:33)

Often people doubt individual reclaiming actions because agency programs are more controlled and better monitored and measured (e.g., to stop air pollution or preserve a potable water supply). The health

arena is different because personal prevention measures could cut health costs immensely and be its salvation. In health access and success, the person and home are the principal battleground. Health care of the ill is far more costly than preventive care at the individual level. While governmental agencies play an important role in the world health situation, limited health resources could be at least doubled in effectiveness, if all were to practice good health preserving measures, or if treatment of preventable illnesses were not funded by governmental agencies. Abuse of one's body is the primary cause of illnesses that require health-care providers' attention. However, in many cases the cause of illness is hard to determine.

1. Personal and Community Health Maintenance -- Health is a concern of all people, those with preconditions and those in perfect health at a given time. It is a moral duty to keep ourselves healthy. We can attend to daily proper physical exercise and food and drinking habits, seek medical advice, and sift through voluminous literature to learn about how to preserve good health. We are attentive to commonly known healthy practices: eat balanced meals, wholesome food, whole grains, fruits, nuts, and vegetables; refrain from excess alcoholic beverages; avoid drugs and unneeded medicines; reduce meat and animal products consumption; exercise daily; stay spiritually alive; do not smoke; get needed sleep; and avoid stress. However, merely knowing good guidelines does not mean they will be practiced or done perfectly.

Personal health extends beyond individuals to dependents and even to neighbors -- but just how far. How do we stop another's use of drugs when pregnant? Individual personal responsibility is required. Should the state intervene if personal irresponsibility is manifest? It certainly should, if someone else's health is threatened by actions of a negligent person. We prefer to handle health matters on our own, but age, illness, and mental capacity may require help or intervention. People hesitate to institutionalize their loved ones, but it may become necessary under certain conditions even when all concede that home care is better. When supplementary professional nursing and physical therapy can be provided by visitation, home care surpasses institutions for many reasons. Home hospice care occurs in familiar surroundings, for the terminally ill who crave surroundings where loved ones can cluster and support them.

Caregivers who receive financial assistance can share their income with friends and neighbors who help with bed care, laundry, house cleaning, obtaining supplies, maintenance, and cooking. Thus health funding stays at or near home. Furthermore, compensated home care becomes a major area of employment, especially for women, and can be a major economic benefit. Economically speaking home care costs

far less than institutionalized care and is the major type of employment in the world; modest stipends for home-care workers could be a major redistribution of world's resources. Today, many people work outside the home and are less available to assist in caregiving; with assistance in the form of money, food, and auxiliary services, more would devote themselves to shut-ins.

2. Drug Abuse Prevention and Control -- All areas of health-related drug education are difficult to implement and involve hidden complexities. With the vast influx of American drug advertisements in all forms of media, no wonder the American public has passed from fearing excess drug intake to expecting it, for either oneself or dependents. From fear of chemicals has come expectation of cures through the chemical "savior" of prescription or over-the-counter medicines. This transition in attitudes has occurred over a two- or three-decade period filled with the bombardment of medical commercials on every TV viewer or magazine reader. What baffles anyone with common sense is that the general public does not need to know which drug is best -- only the medical professional should know and be able to adapt it to the patient.

Amazingly, drug ads are not meant to inform but to entice a public to become drugged -- addicted. Distinctions between prescribed and illegal drug use and misuse blur. One proposed solution to drug costs is to globalize drug research funding through public money. Already public funding advances medical research and development; more control over pharmaceutical industry profits is an alternative.

All effective medicines should be in the public domain and produced at the cheapest price that good quality will allow. AIDS, with over thirty million deaths since 1981, is a case in point; AIDS-affected nations such as India and Brazil are making generic drugs available at lower costs to a wide range of the population. However, less than half the AIDS cases in South Africa, one of the most severely affected nations, receive the generic drugs. Often when American laboratories have been the sources of the drugs, the more expensive outlets have ironically been in the nation of origin, where generic drugs are unavailable.

A prominent global substance abuse area is tobacco use. Though the *UN World Health Organization's* "Framework Convention on Tobacco Control" was signed as a treaty by the U.S. in 2004 (and ratified by 150 countries), it has never been ratified by the U.S. Senate and would actually toughen current American anti-smoking measures. In the past, youth was drawn into tobacco addiction through advertising; this promotion failed to suggest that smoking results in severe health effects and shortened lives, and that second-hand smoking is harmful

to non-smokers, especially infants and the elderly.<sup>3</sup> While U.S. smoking levels are plateauing, smoking continues to increase in certain poorer nations. At present smoking rates, WHO estimates that lives shortened by tobacco smoking will climb from one hundred million in the 20th century to one billion in this century.

On a positive note, some smaller companies are doing new antibiotic research though complications constantly arise among patients being treated. The *Infectious Disease Society of America* proposes offering tax credits, guaranteed markets, and prizes for new antibiotic development.

3. Health Insurance for All -- Health insurance is a complex and contentious policy issue in America. Expert Henry Simmons of the National Coalition on Health Care scoffs about affordable health care when the greatest expense is due to "pushing paper," or a complex bureaucracy that costs between \$300 and \$500 billion each year. The health care system has spiraled out of control without giving a better quality of care. In fact, health care costs are foremost concerns among many retirees, the self-employed and those not covered by health insurance. Merely making costly medicines and health technologies available does not ensure better health, only higher costs and inaccessibility to the poor. Unpaid health bills are still the leading cause of bankruptcy. The challenge is health care access for all seven billion of the world's people.

Virtually all countries experience shortages of health care workers. In 2009, the U.S. had an estimated shortage of 200,000 nurses, and especially male nurses. Worldwide, the shortage may be three million nurses alone. Now add on the millions needed for service personnel, cooks, nurses aides, administrators and, of course, doctors, and consider the ten million who could be employed in meaningful work, if employment funds could be found and made available to these potential caregivers. Why should the most promising medical personnel come to richer lands when needed in their homelands? And why should potential medical personnel fail to obtain a proper education due to lack of funding?

4. International Health Alert System -- Pandemics can and have occurred with devastating effect, such as the Black Death in the fourteenth and other centuries and the flu epidemic of 1918-19. The persistent fear of such a recurrence surfaces often, and did so in recent years with the "Asian bird flu" scare that killed some people and resulted in exterminating vast populations of poultry in Hong Kong and elsewhere. The swine flu scare of 2009 is a second example. Knowing what causes such events and controlling such situations challenge public health officials everywhere, but success is possible.

International cooperation occurs but better administration is needed in an age of frequent and rapid travel that could spread contagion at lightning speed.

5. Global Health System -- Primary health benefits available to all in the world need a global supervisory agency, as do all areas of the commons. The *UN World Health Organization* (WHO), headquartered in Geneva, seeks to enhance world health quality through its variety of programs. Low-cost immunization programs are conducted today for several serious diseases such as smallpox, measles, and polio. While health services are available in affluent nations, the WHO hopes for a global reach. Immunization of one billion youth could cost about \$50 billion.

Hydration methods for all 200 million dehydrated infants would come to \$2 billion per year. A simple plan to halt malaria for two million African children a year would cost \$10 per family. This money would provide bed mosquito nets to needy families along with tips to prevent malaria (at a total cost of three billion dollars).<sup>4</sup> Some estimate that a total malaria eradication program would cost about \$5 billion per year. U.S. aid agencies are providing five million nets for Tanzania as well as AIDS medicine for thirty million. Using generic cocktails at \$365 each, the cost will amount to \$11 billion annually. Hansen's Disease (leprosy), a curse of former times, is easily curable. The Guinea worm eradication program is a special concern of the Carter center.<sup>5</sup>

The WHO set very ambitious Millennium Development Goals in 1990. In the first seven years progress was made in the areas of AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis. Half the world's population were at risk of malaria; treatments have been scaled up in recent years. Tuberculosis death rates declined from 1990 to 2006 from 28 per hundred thousand people to 25. The serious HIV epidemic found 2.7 million new cases reported in 2007 with two million deaths in that year, plus 33 million living with HIV infection. Leprosy saw a dramatic decline from 5.2 million cases in 1985 to 212,000 in 2008.

Global health is showing some progress. Underweight children declined since 1990 by 27%, but progress among nations has been uneven; there were still some 112 million underweight children in 2005. Some progress was made in the first half of the 2000 to 2015 time span. Under-five child mortality rates declined from 12.5 million in 1990 to 9 million in 2007. Progress depends on increased immunization coverage, use of insecticide-treated mosquito netting, use of oral rehydration therapies during episodes of diarrhoea, and improved water and sanitation systems. The first areas are relatively low cost and produce dramatic results. Access to health services is improving.

Births attended by skilled health personnel increased in the years 2000 to 2008; globally, one-third of birthing mothers do not have access to skilled personnel. Maternal death rates especially in Africa (a half million per year) have not changed in the past fifteen years.

**Funding:** The largest commitment of a Global Development Fund (\$75 billion) should be directed to various health-related areas with focus on poorer nations. Here are some possible allocations:

- \* Public health programs and alert systems \$12 billion
- \* Construction of hospitals and clinics \$12.5
- \* Immunization of all youth for all diseases \$12.5
- \* Generic drugs for AIDS and tuberculosis victims \$10
- \* Malaria prevention and eradication \$5
- \* Drug research for tropical diseases \$3
- \* Rehabilitation of child soldiers and victims \$4
- \* Dental programs \$2
- \* Equipment for 50,000 clinics and hospitals \$12
- \* Tobacco and drug information and cessation programs \$2.

### c) Funding Obstacles to Health Care

*So God help me, I can perceive nothing but a certain conspiracy of rich men procuring their own commodities under the name and title of the commonwealth. They invent and devise all means and crafts, first how to keep safely, without fear of losing, what they have unjustly gathered together, and next how to hire and abuse the work and labour of the poor for as little money as may be.*  
Sir/Saint Thomas More (1478-1535)

Practical undertakings require resources; practical people know that financial support is necessary. With health care issues so universal and procedures so expensive, it is not surprising that the public considers a global health care system to be relegated to the distant future. However, once wealth disparity is confronted and military expenses are curbed, we can reasonably address this global security problem -- and free resources for essential needs. Those who argue "no new taxes" are often over-taxed individuals or small businesses who really want fair taxes. It may seem counter-intuitive, but the most available resource is at the individual level and the hardest at the global level. The following are existing and possible health funding sources for health programs:

#### 1. Resources Closer at Hand

*Modern society has made the bank account the standard of values. When the bank account becomes the standard of values*

*the banker has power. When the banker has power --  
the technician has to supervise the making of profits;  
the politician has to assure law and order in the profit-  
making system;  
the educator trains students in the technique of profit-making;  
the clergyman is expected to bless the profit-making system  
or join the unemployed;  
the Sermon on the Mount is declared impractical; and  
we have an acquisitive, not a functional society.*  
Peter Maurin (1877-1949)

The one source of health assistance that is closest at hand is the individual volunteer. It is difficult for individuals to launch caregiving programs without some means of livelihood, whether alms or donations, retirement fees or individual support from others in family or community. Quite often youth volunteer in summers or for longer periods after schooling (preferably with promise of in-service points or college loan forgiveness); working people give vacation time to service projects with at least the implicit blessings of their current employers; physically able retirees donate their own free time and expertise for the good of non-profit organizations. *Volunteering* (by all age groups) and *sweat equity* (by individuals seeking to improve their own property) are major ways for individuals to tap resources close at hand and ultimately assist with local health needs.

*Community assistance projects* combine volunteering with specific community needs (e.g., home repair for the ill and shut-ins, Habitat for Humanity work, and community literacy programs). Often those skilled in art, music or story-telling will offer auxiliary services for the mentally challenged and senior citizen centers, or serve as assistants in Meals-on-Wheels or a plethora of extension programs. Seniors can help with intergenerational garden and tree-planting projects. Local "living history" projects for recording elders can be successful such as the *NPR StoryCorps Project*. Many local individual and community health needs are funded through *charitable donations* as was evidenced after the 2010 Haitian and the 2011 Japanese earthquakes. However, donating sources are insufficient to meet world demands.

*Home care* is a particular resource that is vast, because tens of millions of relatives and close associates are primary health-care providers for shut-ins and those non-institutionalized persons in need of partial or total assistance. Often these generous caregivers need outside funding, especially from regional sources. A "coupon system" would allow food subsidies to be met though funds meant for upgrading agriculture in the region. A farmer receives coupons for furnishing food to caregivers, and uses these coupons to purchase agricultural

improvements (implements, etc.). Services for caregivers could be included making this an alternative financial resource at a regional or national level.

Moving up the resource ladder we come to mandatory tax "contributions." *Property taxes* meet many local and even regional needs such as basic public education, roads, administration, courts and jails, garbage pickup and police. Some health resource needs at the local level (clinics, public health facilities, and student community eye and dental care) could be included. Garbage pickup volume could be greatly reduced by backyard composting and use of taxes to subsidize maintenance of recycling centers to handle discarded glass, plastics, paper, metals and cardboard. *Obligatory service fees* are needed for local utility and recreational improvements geared for preventative health. *Admission fees* for visiting sites, museums, and for camping and other recreation facilities add more indirectly to the general health of the community. *Excise taxes*, collected by state or national governments on the manufacture, sale, or consumption of "sin" commodities (tobacco, alcohol, etc.) can be used for health care, social services and public health programs. Any reduction in use reduces "sin taxes," but health benefits accrue from less tobacco and alcohol consumption.

By mid-2011, the constitutionality of the federal 2010-legislated and mandated health-insurance coverage is being determined. Large insurance companies have had a major voice and advocates for a single-payer health plan were left by the wayside. Interests on all sides of this federal health care debate, especially insurance companies strive to influence public opinion.

Health care, research, general monitoring, and oversight programs currently handled by the federal government are supported through *income taxes* based on incomes after certain deductions have been made -- many of these deductions are under review. In the United States, city, state, and federal income taxes hark back to the U.S. Congress passing the first income tax in 1862 (3 percent on incomes over \$600 and 5 percent for incomes over \$10,000). Such simplified taxes evolved into more sophisticated ones requiring professional assistance. Today, the federal tax code extends to 67,000 pages and baffles all, not just taxpayers. A total tax on every income over a certain amount would simplify the tax-paying process, and this would address the large number of corporate freeloaders and their massive deductions and benefits.<sup>6</sup>

## 2. Global Resources

*We need a global strategy that can help hundreds of millions of*

*families living in poverty here and around the world to move up new ladders of opportunity. The ILO's Decent Work Agenda can be a foundation for a global new deal.* Juan Somavia, Director General, International Labor Organization.<sup>7</sup>

Even amid shortcomings, the president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev, suggested an annual reduction of military budgets by one percent in favor of a UN fund for the maintenance and strengthening of peace on the planet.<sup>8</sup> A component of that peace would be a global health proposal. Reducing the one-and-a-half trillion dollars spent each year for military weaponry, defense contracts, and actual defense by standing armies is a good suggestion from whatever source. Saving one-sixth of the annual global military budget would realize \$250 billion for a "global development fund" that is the suggested funding of many previous actions of this book (given for practical purposes). Currently, UN funding depends on national contributions, engendering relatively small receipts considering the responsibilities resulting from globalization. Global efforts require potential tax sources:

*Resource extraction taxes* (including the so-called "carbon" tax) should be levied on those who exploit global resources from the ocean, polar regions or wilderness commons. To date, these forms of taxes have proved highly unpopular among extractive oil and coal industries. However, such a tax is more explicit and fair and far superior to a cap-and-trade policy that can easily be deceptive and subject to false expectations. Deep sea petroleum technologies are being perfected and utilized; those technologies for obtaining minerals from the deep-sea floor await perfection.

*User fees* could be imposed on the exploitation of essential communications and transportation resources. The spectrum of the airwaves used for radio, television, mobile phone, satellite communications and others were valued by the New America Foundation at \$771 billion in 2002. Maritime policing expenses could come from fees collected for shipping on the high seas, from the use of canals, and from policing at strategic straits. Added airline travel and freight fees could be collected at all international airports to fund security efforts, training of air security and pilots, control-tower management, and noise suppression. A portion could support public health. International financial *transaction taxes* could tax enormously profitable capital flows going across national boundaries obtained by bankers, speculators, and hedge fund operators. A global tax collection would increase revenue of all participating states and not penalize some through capital movement to a lenient nation state. Extra health funding could be forthcoming. A transition tax requires power to expose tax havens and prosecute "corporate crimes against humanity."

*Global Development Fund (GDF)*<sup>9</sup> is a potential infusion of development money to enhance health as well as housing, agriculture and water infrastructure, education and peace-keeping policing (90 percent of funds) together with smaller programs for other agencies. See Appendix One. Health share would be a significant 30%. The major GDF source is the tithing (10%) of military budgets and armaments industries, along with a proportional allotment from wealthy nations with small military budgets, but who use the U.S. military security umbrella at little or no costs. Those areas with rapidly expanding military budgets such as Latin America (\$60 billion annually or twice what it was five years before) would be forced to think again about militarization -- and follow Costa Rica's example and declare peace with all.<sup>10</sup> The GDF could be used to expand current UN agencies and to enhance them and new agencies with enforcement powers. See Appendix Two.

### Reflection: Making Basic Health for All a Security Issue

A healthy world is our dream, and this can be a possibility -- though we know the great toll of human illness. Neglecting sick African children with easily preventable and curable illness ultimately harms a global society. The best medicine and treatments in the West and North should be available in the South and East; otherwise, a grave disparity exists. Untreated and easily preventable sicknesses not only result in human suffering, but the condition actually destabilizes communities local and beyond. We affirm that access to health facilities is a human right for all and not just the privileged few. Rationing can be a godsend for the poor and a cloud of restrictions for the wealthy.

**Minimum rationing** involves being inclusive as best we can with available health resources, especially services found in clinics that come at low cost. Our attention turns to primary health care: pre-natal care, universal vaccination for common diseases, hydration for those suffering from dysentery, protection from malaria with mosquito netting, basic medicines for preventable diseases, and supplements for the malnourished. The World Health Organization is already running many programs costing as low as a few dollars per person, per year. Expanding these programs globally would only take a fraction of the global military budget -- and diversion to universal health is a low-cost security issue.

**Maximum rationing** involves choices of all forms of elective treatments and new medicines for patients with a range of degrees of sicknesses, age, and condition. Are these services available for the very poor in Haiti and parts of Africa? The irony is that some of these

developing lands have more native-born health personnel working in North American and European health facilities than in their own impoverished countries. Rationing could mean paying expatriates to return to their homelands and allowing the people broader health opportunities. Health care is like fictional story-telling; it is fraught with flights of fantasy about getting better and staying healthy. Isn't this a universal wish?

Insecurity of all forms threaten the social order, especially when victims know others have better health care access, whether fortunate people in the local community or beyond. Health-care rationing occurs on battlefields as "Triage," or dividing victims into degrees of effective care, namely, those critically in need of treatment and possibly surviving with immediately attention, those in between and requiring longer-term attention at moderate cost, and those too far gone to receive immediate attention. Battlefield situations exist. Global health triage could be based on success possibilities, patient's age, current health situation, along with responsibilities of the patient -- and costs. The world's military is often sent to help with costly natural or human-caused disasters, of which it does a credible job. Military-to-health-care funds would become a peace dividend and part of global security; these should be part of a deliberate diversion of money from military budgets.

## Chapter Six: Communications and Intellectual Commons

*Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation.*  
(Mark 16:16)

We have a right to know and to express ourselves, but what does all this mean? We ought to learn to know how to conduct ourselves in ordinary living circumstances and that requires literacy; we ought to learn enough and reflect deeply, so we can become wise; we ought to have the proper information needed for exercising our citizenship; we ought to communicate our thoughts and aspirations to others freely. The ability to read, learn and communicate is dependent upon resources, our native intelligence, our acquired skills, and the circumstances in which we find ourselves. Personal actions must be coordinated with that of a broader community for enhancing the intellectual commons, that repository of all the intellectual achievements of our human wisdom and research. In turn, enhancement depends on our ability to have access to and use communication facilities.

The basic right to a higher quality of life occurs through improved communications, for only then can we cultivate the teamwork necessary to reclaim the commons. As social beings, we grow together,

express ourselves, and break out of the isolation that surrounds us. Legitimate forms of communal expression include the right to gather together in public, to speak freely with others, to vote, and to worship God. Such public expressions require governmental protection and encouragement though not a directed specificity as to what to learn and communicate. In order for us to have the right to protected public assembly and free speech we must also have access to sources of information and means of communication: the press, Internet, assembly, and airwaves.

Governments must protect and yet not restrict the intellectual commons treasure. Participation by all citizens comes through offering citizens access to proper learning facilities (qualified teachers, materials, facilities, transportation, etc.), by fostering literacy as needed for responsible citizenship, by building libraries and repositories of information, by sponsoring research and development through issuing of patents, by regulating copyright tenure and access, by providing an atmosphere where gathered information can be shared, and by protecting media where we can express ourselves. Such legislation as the *Freedom of Information Act* and agencies as the Federal Communications Commission are established to ensure openness in learning and communicating. The government must protect citizens against the privatizing tendencies to control information and the media for lucrative gain.

In an ideal world the individual and the state (private and public sectors) must work together to enhance and perfect the intellectual commons through encouragement of private education and research, through a free press and other media outlets, through free access to the Internet, and through protecting and promoting access to technical information. Make private information public when in the Common Good; keep it private when needing protection.

*If the Internet teaches us anything, it is that great value comes from leaving core resources in the commons, where they're free for people to build upon as they see fit.* Lawrence Lessig

Reclaiming all parts of the communications commons demands a guaranteed right to free speech, free press and free expression. Ancient Roman roads helped in the spread of Christianity. Today, we not only have dependable global travel and postal systems, but radio and television span the planet. Rapid proliferation of cell phones creates an atmosphere of being "wired," constant connectedness. Our communications marvel is the Internet, an instant exchange that is now globally accessible to a multitude of people. However, our intellectual commons is fluid, fragile, evolving, open to individual discernment and respect, and subject to the sponsorship and fostering

by governments at all levels.

a) Infringement on Intellectual Commons

*How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation and tells Zion 'Your God is king!' (Isaiah 52:7)*

Enclosure of the global intellectual commons means that some have access and others do not. Some have the ability to communicate information and others do not. Limited learning opportunities, obstacles in language exchange, lack of guidance in the proper management of public information, repression in communication processes, and lack of sharing known information are all part of the infringement of our rights to know and communicate freely.

1. Inadequate and Inaccessible Educational Facilities

*Freedom is to be attained by educating the people to their capacity to regulate and control authority. Mohandas Gandhi*

The intellectual commons is unaccessible to a goat-herder in India. Inadequate basic educational facilities, such as classrooms and computers as well as electricity and rest rooms with plumbing, are part of the global barrier to information and its communication. Furthermore, the poor lack security to travel to or stay in school, and money to buy school books and supplies, or attire to wear to school are all infringements on proper education. Facilities may be physically present, but lack of tuition and clothes and shoes keep the poor from entering the academic threshold. Like health, education suffers from a lack of accessibility. In economically-strapped developing nations it is common to divert possible educational funds to repay past debts or the current military bills. High education costs curtail ambitions of lower-income people even in America. Some school districts discourage children of illegal immigrants from enrolling; youth in sub-Saharan Africa must raise orphaned siblings (an estimated twelve million) due to deaths of their parents from AIDS. In some nations girls are dissuaded from attending school through threats or actual acts of violence.

2. Difficulties in Language Exchange -- Sharing comes through **communicating** with others in mutually intelligible language. Often migrants are literate but do not have facility with the host nation's principal language. Ideally, migrants ought to retain native tongues, adapt the host country's, and thus be skilled as bi-lingual. Some people hide their limited reading and writing abilities thereby retarding their literacy progress. Literacy campaigns in which

migrants choose to participate, often lack one-on-one tutoring; these could be furnished by schools, churches, and civic organizations as well as retirees willing to work at one-on-one tutorial levels. Literacy frees people to venture into vast information arenas, and thus become a resource to the entire community. Literacy programs using educational films and tools could promote global awareness -- the continents, nations, seas, cultural habits, and ordinary modern business operations of citizens.

3. Potential Information Misuse -- Today, many citizens suffer from a glut of information, not a paucity of it. Who has the right to general information -- experts? a select few? an uncritical public? Many want their information to stay private; others in an unthinking fashion in this age of Facebook are willing to reveal all -- potentially to everybody. We may have to remind people that our social security numbers now demanded for numerous transactions was never intended as such; when they were first issued in the early twentieth century, these numbers were meant for government eyes only. Along with other vital statistics and purchasing preferences, this personal numbers are highly used today -- but very few people object. Certainly, people have a right to privacy but that is subject to varying degrees of interpretation; information easily can be misused. Commercial for-profit groups and the media see tapping into the self-revelatory social networking and websites of others as potentially lucrative. Job-seekers regret indiscretions of past private revelations that remain as a more-or-less permanent Internet records. Starting afresh is nearly impossible. Even uncontested rumors become "factual" information in an unforgiving age of instant publicity.

**Commercials** infringe on ordinary forms of communication (the minutes per hour of prime TV time devoted to advertising increased from 9.5 in 1960 to 15 in 2002). From 1992 to 2002 the pieces of junk (mail or phone calls) in America jumped from 62 to 87 billion, telemarketing calls from 7 to 51 calls, and spam from zero to 84 billion per year. Unwanted commercials are cluttering our communication system and frustrating many who would prefer a broader and unrestricted means of communication. Chatter is not strictly communications, but often the abuse of it. Radio waves fill the air with programming of all sorts and this volume is getting heavier with time. The airwaves and communications media must be available with messages sent and received without interference -- and airwaves are truly part of the commons.

4. Limits on the Right to Free Expression -- External barriers including bureaucratic stone-walling are facts of life. At times we all need assistance and encouragement. The right to free expression can be threatened by those who sabotage websites and by repressive

governments that want to halt an aroused people who call for free elections. It is also threatened by powerful media interests who control through multiple outlets. One can denounce public repressive regimes and yet overlook private media moguls; they have the economic power to create subtle propaganda machines that can limit or control information needed to form public opinion. A vigilant society must become aware that deliberately pacifying an audience is like giving drugs; it is a subtle way of suppressing freedom through thought control.

Repression of free speech is a major global problem. China and other nations censor current news releases from America and the free interchange on the Internet -- and have persuaded foreign news outlets to participate in exchange for access privileges. When the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded on December 10, 2010 to Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo, his government would not allow him to leave prison, nor his wife to leave the country to collect the prize, nor his country to hear the Oslo ceremony or even news of his award. At that time, any key word that brought an Internet user to that event was suppressed, emphasizing the power of control of a communications network by autocratic authorities.

**Copyright extension** is an infringement on the common intellectual stock and a sequestering of this information from the public domain over a longer period of time. Copyrights have expanded from fourteen years with fourteen year renewals in the 1790s to copyrights through the author's life plus fifty years in 1976. Furthermore, the Sonny Bono Act in 1998 extended the life of the copyright another twenty years -- and in 2003 the Supreme Court ruled that this expanded duration does not violate our American Constitution. Due to this act, in 2030, the number of works in the public domain will be reduced from 25 million at the turn of the century to only 10 million.<sup>1</sup>

##### 5. Lack of Sharing the Intellectual Commons

*Keep watching the wind and you will never sow, stare at the clouds and you will never reap.* (Sirach 11:4)

Intellectual treasures are present but not always shared by individuals or groups. Often these treasures are retained as "trade secrets" or hidden for various reasons (privacy rights, privileged information, fear of legal action, neglect, and lack of publishable material or presentable plan). Often the lack of sharing is a matter of inadequate language, technical translation, or making materials available to libraries or data bases. Certainly the Internet has allowed far more sharing than in times past. Information and current news are delivered easily; health alerts are given; and appropriate technology practices are championed.

**Broadcast band holders** can easily monopolize the means of communication. Although the 1934 Communications Act allowed the distribution of free licenses, the recipients were to broadcast programs in the public interest. Using these airwaves generally takes expensive facilities that are more often owned by large media holders who can dictate what is communicated. Although air waves belong to all, privatization means those with more money and influence often predominate. Corporate broadcasters have grown large and profitable under such arrangements and obligations have declined. Today, 90% of American talk radio and many of the networks are controlled by wealthy individuals and groups who are free to promote their own agenda.

**b) Actions to Enhance Information and Communication**

*The knowledge that I have now is imperfect; but then I shall know as fully as I am known. (I Corinthians 13:12)*

The practice of good citizenship in the modern world requires access to basic education, a commons that expands with the advancement of knowledge. We hear over and over that "No child ought to be left behind." Along with this rush to educational improvement is the need for each intellectual capable citizen to have access to good education and basic information, to be able to read signs, directions, regulations, candidates' platforms, and documents of various types. Citizens need both writing and reading skills in order to have access to general knowledge in libraries and on the Internet. Likewise, quality education must be available to all for the Common Good.

Communications are part of the commons, for we improve our bonds of community through communicating. Still we have an elementary spoken and written global language (English is our *lingua franca* today but perhaps Chinese in a decade or so); a simplified English would help expand global communications that includes a dependable global postal system, radio and television network, as well as Internet. The rapid proliferation of cell phones allows constant communication with friends and relatives. The Internet is a free form of idea exchange that is becoming accessible to large portions of the world's inhabitants. Through phones, emails, and blogs, individuals can communicate instantly; they can visit and converse with the neglected, isolated, and bereaved as well as friends near and far. This connectedness has made the world affordably reachable in a moment.

**1. Local Educational Activities and Opportunities**

*Yhwh has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in*

*prison; to proclaim a year of favour. (Isaiah 61:1b-2a)*

Parents and guardians have a key role in promoting, assisting and encouraging youth education, especially the slow learners. Special community education programs can be costly but assist in providing universal educational opportunities. Special gifts and talents can be unveiled and fostered, provided efforts are not repressive and overbearing. Continued educational programs have a place including reading and discussion groups and special interest groups (amateur archeology, herb-growing, trail-making, etc.).

**Community student exchange** is a fruitful venture. Quite often disadvantaged youth do not have opportunities to get away for summer months or to travel to volunteer work in other places. A youth exchange program among related institutions would be highly educational, quite low-cost and rewarding. However, logistics in setting this up successfully could be daunting for both parents and teachers. Medium and higher-income families travel freely, but lower-income folks lack such opportunities. Through Internet and careful planning favorable placements could be achieved. Civic groups could play a role in establishing such exchanges.

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A few years back, a group of chaperoned Minnesota youth were doing volunteer work in Appalachia. One of the youth asked a local young person if he was going to help with the project. The response was, "I'd love to go and help y'all in Minnesota."  
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**Technical training** is needed. People are born with different intellectual abilities. Subjecting all to exactly the same educational methods and schedules is wrong-headed, but some educators and parents/guardians resist divergence of educational routes in the teen years. While all youth ought to have an opportunity to partake in basic educational subjects, there are limits for the non-academically inclined. Talented and earnest students should have training in arts such as music, dramatic arts, visual arts, and teaching skills and trades such as culinary pursuits, mechanics, and gardening where they are able to apprentice to experts and find steady employment. Added training in horticultural skills, landscaping, reforestation and renewable energy areas could be most helpful in environmental fields. Corraling all students into a single type of classroom out of a spirit of equality pushes some beyond their endurance and holds others back, thus frustrating under- and over-achievers alike. Specialization should start early with some flexibility for readjustment when students rise above or fall below pre-judged achievement levels.

**Funding:** GDF (about \$35 billion) could be made available in poorer nations with strapped elementary educational programs: building and upgrading primary schools; primary school teacher training and outside teaching corps for foreign language programs; equipment, computers and school supplies; high-speed Internet access and library materials; and school bus and lunch programs.

2. Globish: A Common Language -- Today a large number of people in the world speak more than one language, but native English speakers are a glaring exception. Rather than pressing for multi-lingual skills, U.S. state and local officials tend to emphasize using scarce educational funds to teach English to immigrant groups. Knowing and speaking second languages adds to cultural richness. European schools are strong in teaching students second or third European language courses. However the same is not true in all parts of the world, where some mono-linguistic efforts are driven by shortages of funds or by nationalism. Kurdish in Turkey is actually frowned upon and resources to teach this language have until recently been quite limited. A major extension of tolerance is to see that a second language (especially if spoken by a large number of immigrants) is a valuable asset to the native majority.

Robert McCrum<sup>2</sup> calls Globish the universal language of the business world. This is not "pidgin" or a broken English used by the unlearned in some parts of the world, but rather the language that non-Anglophone businesspersons speak among themselves. This language conceived by Jean-Paul Nerriere is regarded as a "world dialect of the third millennium;" it is simplified and unidiomatic. This English-lite 1,500-word vocabulary resembles what I.A. Richards did with 850-word "Basic English" for use in China in the 1920s. Another attempt was "Anglic," but this lacked the use of English words in their common spelling, looks terribly unfamiliar to many, and is a chore for English speakers to spell. In an ideal world of communication we English speakers should go halfway and limit our language to basic words when speaking with foreigners. Besides slowing down, speaking distinctly, and using written handouts, we native English speakers ought to familiarize ourselves with English word lists to be used in all international communication. However, linguists tell us that language change happens on its own and is not forced or legislated.

3. National Research Centers -- Public and private scientific research should be encouraged at the national level to the degree that resources allow. The world needs good scientific and technical skills on many levels, and this requires training and opportunities. Renewable energy R&D (see Chapter One) is a prime candidate for a

mission focus that is paramount today. So often, the American national laboratories deal with military aspects of the total economy, and so nuclear materials procurement and use -- even in health areas -- are of prime focus today. However, Americans deserve more for their governmental research dollar in a host of areas ranging from renewable energy to medical research in tropical diseases (becoming increasingly pertinent due to climate change), aquaculture, archeological exploration and preservation, and a wide range of safety issues that private business does not emphasize.

4. Global Disaster Early Warning Systems -- Disasters often occur when and where least expected. Confining warning systems to national levels is far too limiting in the age of globalization, and rapid notification of international disasters.<sup>3</sup> Modern global communications can alert potential victims before some events happen. Today, hurricane warnings can be given well in advance, though exact paths may not be determined precisely. Current weather forecasts are far more accurate than those of a century ago due to modern satellite information. Forecasts give those in the path of storms precious time to move to safer ground, provided transport is available. Earthquakes are virtually impossible to forecast in advance, though the likelihood of a destructive tsunami can be communicated to possible target areas quickly; an international tsunami alert system is being established and could have saved many of the 200,000 Indonesians and others who died in the December, 2004 tragic event. However, the 30,000 Japanese who died in March 2011 had too little lead time to escape. Likewise, earthquake-prone regions can require structural improvements to buildings. Improved technologies can warn of possible volcanic eruptions as well. We may not curb natural disasters, but we can learn to get out of their way.

**Funding:** Much of the globalized banking process is handled over the Internet and calls for a *transaction tax* (see Chapter Five). Funding for the "Global Disaster Early Warning System" could be derived from the GDF (\$2 billion) and deserves global funding sources.

5. Worldwide Web -- The Internet is a valuable resource for rapid and low-cost communication throughout the world. Apart from the spam and virus problems and possible terrorist threats, a hidden threat could come from companies that would like to privatize current free access to the Internet and charge fees or restrict use to what they deem more profitable or valuable. Some restriction as to use of pornographic and other harmful materials could be promoted for the sake of greater Internet access by a wider number of people -- concerned adults keep youth from having unrestricted access.

The possibility of millions of readers places demands for

wholesome content and procedures on the publishers (whether individuals or commercial agencies). Attention must always be given to proper preparation of materials, critical design work, editing and placement on the website, and ability to attract viewers through search engines. Expanding audiences can be drawn in several ways: annual or periodic funding drives; paid subscriptions; advertisements related to the content; blogging sites for interactive or conversational-style presentations; sales of materials presented; and links with related sites. The Internet is a easy portal to carry information to the entire world; this means of communication must remain public and certainly should not be privatized -- something requiring citizen vigilance.

6. UNESCO Education Fund -- At least one hundred million youth lack formal schools due to poverty (lack of transportation, tuition fees, clothing and supplies) and lack of governmental facilities. Schools do not exist in parts of Africa and segments of Latin America and Asia. Closer inspection of Africa and parts of Asia and Latin America -- and even the U.S. -- reveals poorly equipped schools, few teachers, and lack of supplies, electricity and restroom and water facilities in existing schools. Affordable public primary education ought to be available to all the world's youth. Poorer countries may hesitate to devote scarce resources to education when the brightest and ablest students migrate out of the area after receiving a basic education. A country that educates its brightest students, who then migrate to wealthier lands, deserves assistance in order to keep the talent at home after advanced education abroad.

7. Global Copyright Regulatory Agency -- Copyright infringement as noted is so widespread that global regulations are needed through international auspices. Democratic societies have given exclusive rights to creators of written works and still allow the public to benefit from the works. However, under commercial pressures, public benefits have eroded and private companies can own popular fictional characters, website links, common words, and what should be part of the general intellectual commons. Our worldwide intellectual treasure is something that must be both protected and shared, and this requires international agreements that allow public use after reasonable limits of time -- some say fourteen years but some say longer. Shorter copyright spans of time may actually place more, not less, interest on creative endeavors that permit faster paybacks. Uniformity in such copyrights would benefit globalizing tendencies within the intellectual commons.

Present trade regulations favor corporations when it comes to patent rights. Through *Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)*, individual countries are prohibited from making patent

regulations to suit domestic conditions. On the other hand, copyrights are being ignored by certain groups, and thus conflicts are arising in areas such as music that is being downloaded both within and beyond the country of origin. The same holds true for newspaper and periodical investigative reporting. Intellectual advances need protection against piracy.

**c) Barriers to Change by Individuals**

*You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out.* (Matt. 5:13)<sup>4</sup>

As individuals we discover an explosion in material and information, and conflicting demands for our attention. We watch, reason, and listen to news reports or favorite talk shows; we enter an Internet chat room; we read printed matter; and we talk with friends and neighbors. We ask ourselves: how do we properly share intellectual commons? How can we communicate meaningfully?

1. Negation by External Sources -- Certainly the common-sense rationalizations by others are worth listening to on many occasions. The question is whether those who deny, excuse or escape to favorite pastimes are right.

\* Flat-earth deniers -- *So the planet is in trouble. Who says so? I know for everyone who announces a crisis there is another who says it is nonsense. See if you can make me believe that crisis stuff. So we have a few hot summers and Arctic ice melts earlier. Glaciers have always been melting and I remember many hot summers in the past. You worry too much.*

**Response:** It is difficult to convince "flat-earth" people otherwise, but do not try too hard; they will gradually come around as they sweat through more hot summers. Still it is a challenge to shake such naysayers out of their shells. Rather, discover in their underlying desire for good news a possible ground for agreement. Yes, but if need be err on the side of prudence.

\* Modern pharisee excusers -- *They are not going to make me change, for I have been doing good things since learning them from my grandparents who endured the Great Depression. I do not waste materials and I clean up my plate; I pay taxes, refrain from having big debts, and mind my own business. Why trouble me with such worries? I am no street person; I prepare for tomorrow.*

**Response:** A good approach is to appeal to such people's pride for

their country and community. If they are already on the right course, then they are ahead, and can help teach others genuine conservation -- a very unpopular subject. The pharisees admit openly that they know how; invite them to help change others.

\* Eat-drink and be merry escapists -- *Why are you bothering yourself about all those rumors and facts? It will simply give you heartburn. So it is true and so there's nothing more certain than death and taxes. Besides, they tell us the world is coming to an end. Do like I do -- have a beer, sink into an easy chair, and watch the football game. It takes your mind off such stuff, for crises are hard on your psyche. Sit down and have a beer.*

**Response:** Sports fans and other escapees are impossible to change because they are so caught up in their own worlds. Perhaps they really like competitive activities. A change of lifestyle takes effort and some ingenuity, and maybe they could excel by being among the first to change. Start with the wellbeing of the individual and work by instilling trust. Tackling this issue is like engaging to win a sport. Try escaping to meaningful things.

2. Negation Internally -- What other people say may be persuasive, but we reckon that the present is not like previous situations; there is a possibility that our "experts" just quoted might not be exactly right. We need to go through some of the same thinking approaches that the three classes above went through and confront barriers that relate specifically to ourselves as deniers, excusers and escapists.

\* Personal denial -- *I am too old to be gullible. There have been too many snake oil salesmen; great ads lead to purchased junk; blemishes turn out not to be cancerous, new light bulbs do not last that long; too many experts would starve without a cook or electricity; and most impending storms never come. Why believe this crisis alarm? Some thrive on announcing catastrophes, but give me proof, if I am supposed to change my ways.*

**Response:** We sometimes find ourselves being the victims of alarm, for some cry "fire" on totally false occasions. Even the local sirens go off at wrong times, and so we mistrust alarms. Some healthy distrust is necessary to distance ourselves from every con artist and Chicken Little running around. Our history of stormy events makes us aware that those who do not evacuate by land have a harder time with water evacuation when floods do come.

\* Personal excuse -- *Look, let's be sensible about this crisis at hand. I believe it, but what can I do about it as an individual? Life's journey takes me past many wounded victims and I simply must*

move on. That is what 911 and medics, climate experts, and science advisors to President and Congress are all about. I support their efforts, and as a citizen I can only handle my own backyard. Others are paid to be crisis experts.

**Response:** Mature people know what they can do and what is beyond them. We want neither a false humility nor the absence of a real one. The "that is too big for me" excuse is not the whole story, but honesty is involved. Can we carry out any meaningful action beyond the local community? Apologies and excuses are not sufficient. I alone have not created this global mess; we have done it collectively for we are all connected. No single level is sufficient to bring about a new economic system; we must work together on all levels, and involved citizens can make a difference -- even a big one if we believe we can.

\* Personal escape -- We each find our own story: My maternal great grandfather and my paternal grandfather both fought on the losing side of the 1870 Franco-Prussian war. When in the First World War, the old veteran Great Grandpa heard that the Germans were again approaching Paris, he stopped reading the newspaper and called a personal blackout of such events -- until my grandmother (his daughter) alerted him that the German advance had been stopped. His media blackout was his psychological support to cope with overwhelming bad news. On occasions I must escape through daily routines to free my mind. Escapes ensure my optimism.

**Response:** Catastrophic reports may awaken a few but not all. Sometimes alarms tempt people to run from the bad situation, and thus they do the opposite of what is expected of a Good Samaritan. Our wellbeing is paramount and must be considered at times -- but it is not always the stuff of heroes. Escape comes in many forms: substance abuse, over-attention to sports, hobbies and recreational activities, excessive drink or food, and on and on. If one lacks a deep spirituality, improper escape routes become all the more enticing. However, a more perfect spirituality means we are willing to become more involved and not tempted to run away.

3. Affirmation by Others (pretension, monkey wrench, limited lifestyle) -- Overcoming the barrier of denial, excuse and escape opens the citizen to affirm that things ought to be done, but that does not mean the person is fully willing and able to do just the right thing. Some further discernment is necessary. Again going to our traditional media outlets and companions may not prove totally satisfactory. Note that each temptation to withdraw from what we ought to do (**omissions**) has a parallel impulse to do something active (**commissions**) -- but these actions can be misdirected, rash or incomplete. The parallel to denial is an affirmation to false pretensions and fame. The parallel

to excuse is a form of violence in striking through emotion and is an exercise of power over others -- a misplaced sense of responsibility. The parallel to escape is establishing security in material things -- a misplaced sense of involvement. These are similar to the three great temptations of Christ as he prepared for public ministry.

\* "I have it right" -- *Some say I shoot from the hip; well that good intuitive sense keeps us cowboys alive. Shoot first, and ask questions later. I would solve an oil crisis by denying oil to all competitors and other up-and-coming extravagant users, and make sure all traditional users have top priority. Simply halt oil tankers going to the wrong places and there will be enough for us.*

Affirmation is the opposite of denial. In contrast to the denier, the affirming one does not agree with the happening, but rather faces the issue in all of its raw reality -- and this means being extremely practical beyond the point of diplomacy. But is every new idea worth introducing, or should it be thought out and discerned first? Having easy answers does not mean that they are to be acted upon; critical analysis is always needed.

\* "I am angry" -- *Yes I am angry! I don't have a job and you tell me the world is in a mess. Give me a chance, and we can get something done. Little folks like me know that, if you place a monkey wrench in just the right place in this complicated world, everything comes to a stop. I am convinced I can stop the system, and then I might bargain for a good job. No excuse for me. We need to strike now while the iron is hot.*

**Response:** The opposite of excuse is acceptance of responsibility. Those people who express anger are not unwilling to do something, but is everything doable right now? The exact type of action needs reflection, for the master wrecker can make as much impact as the master builder -- and with far less effort even if at greater personal risk. Anger may be justified, but the manner of controlling that anger and conserving it for meaningful action is important. Part of our future tasks include giving attention to details, finding the technically qualified, and deciding what to do with limited resources. It take expertise that is beyond individual action; we must work together.

\* "I want to get involved in my own way" -- *I regard myself as a true citizen. I give my out-of-fashion clothes each year to poor inner city and Appalachian folks. I don't travel for the pleasure of it, but take few and meaningful trips when necessary. I provide well for my family so they will prosper. Yes, I even drive a heavier than usual SUV because they are safer. I keep the house warm in winter and*

*cool in summer for our comfort. I even get high quality bottled water from Fiji and certified organic food at somewhat higher prices. I try to do what is right.*

**Response:** Involvement is the opposite of escape, but the involvement can require time and energy and become somewhat self-centered if overdone. While escapists may think at least implicitly that they are unable to cope with what needs to be done, those who are involved without reflecting thoroughly consider "spinning their own wheels" as a noble attempt at improving a bad situation. Wrong involvement is a problem, for it clutters the mind and leads to minor adjustments, which may or may not be better. Willingness to examine and change personal activities must always be part of our questioning of individual lifestyle.

4. Personal Pretensions, Power, and Compromises. -- We cannot remain silent in this troubled world, for inaction is ultimately devastating. However, our actions must fit within the limits of our own energy, time, health, and financial resources. Here the personal choices involve acting responsibly, choosing deliberately, and acting accordingly.

\* Personal pretensions -- *Yes I talk about "we" for we can do much. Our locality is known because of who we are. We are a great nation because of our constitution and our striving to have democratic principles adopted by people everywhere. We are privileged to be model stewards of a world of many resources.*

**Response:** False glory is the fruit of these pretensions. "We are better than they." "Our nation is number one." "We are the most democratic of people." Others hear these claims to superiority and wince. When we sense their discomfort, we may retreat into deeper levels of pretension, boasting, and a history of privilege and glory. Knowing the truth about ourselves is painful, but it is liberating and can result in our becoming a better person. We sometimes think we are great, the divine gift to others because of our self-appointed position; we sit on the pinnacle of the Jerusalem Temple; we are tempted to make a spectacular leap into the unknown; we fantasize floating on the ceiling or fly by waving our arms; we overestimate our importance and self fulfillment. Let's awake from our daydreams. We can do a respectable job in life but only if we remain humble, see that much is gift, and know we can only do a small part of a global undertaking. We are simply part of a team, and the team work is what really counts.

\* Personal power -- *I was a sixteen-year old and just received my driver's license. Suddenly I experienced the power of the 100-horsepower engine with my hands at the steering wheel and my feet*

*at the gas pedal; it is more power than was available to an emperor with a three-team chariot. Little wonder that great thoughts as to speed and power flood the mind, and intoxicate the young driver. Why can't we do what needs to be done now by force?*

**Response:** An experience of power can come early or late, and still stands as a dramatic opportunity to move forward in unexpected ways. However, raw power is a barrier to authentic action, for it can be used badly and lead to abuse. Controlling our new-found power is a challenge, for it has damaged our surroundings as much as helped heal them. For where evil (abuse of power) abounds, grace (fulfillment for the better) is all the more present. Youth often come to a sense of power whether in the first automobile, or with new stamina, or with the surging of first love. All, young and old, can become empowered, and the challenge is to direct power to proper action when power seems to fail us.

*\* Personal material security compromise -- Everyone likes the good life, from warm covers to air conditioned rooms, to fancy vehicles, to good dining. Yes, I strive for the good life; I find security in close relatives and friends, an ample insurance policy and a pocketful of cash. I like to rest at night knowing the residential area is well-policed. I like an assured income, a stable dollar, a well-stocked neighborhood market, a dependable supply of electricity, and Internet services. No dramatic changes for me, for I will not bite the hand that feeds me.*

**Response:** The final barrier to change is that of a basic security that we fear to part with. We find those rewarded who like to compromise with the system. Let's keep everything the same; let's not rock the boat; let's make our current system work for the good of everyone. What about compromising needed modifications to a dysfunctional system? Will it allow needed changes in urgent times? Is the system to be tweaked or changed? What is enough security? Primitive cultures may regard "enough" as a full belly after a good meal; others regard enough as a good provision for a rainy day. Some scientists exploring Papua New Guinea were taking an expedition with tribal people as assistants. After the hired natives saw food was being carried as provisions (their custom was to gather each day's needs that day), they sat down and feasted on the entire supply. Why carry tomorrow's meal when it could be gathered then?

**Summary:** Confronting the external barriers (neighbor or media), whether by doing nothing or taking misguided actions, can be decided quickly; our internal temptations to do nothing or to do too much are difficult to confront and resolve -- but these are part of an involved citizenry determined to reclaim the commons. The inertia that leads

to denial, excuse and escape needs to be overcome by taking responsibility for our own actions and by becoming involved. However, fame (pretensions), power (expressed as violence), and material goods raise their ugly heads and can contaminate good intentions found in getting involved. We can advance as change agents (Chapter Nine), tapping past intellectual treasures and preparing citizens for what needs to be done. Reclaiming the intellectual commons takes will power, and that involves working together to overcome inertia and false leads. Personal discernment must be accompanied by a team approach where the will to move properly becomes a cooperative effort, a willingness to communicate. That is why we have coupled the intellectual and the communications commons into one aspect. Let us look at how we can express our growth in teamwork through presenting the message.

**d) Two Approaches to Presenting the Message**

*Up, Jerusalem! stand upon the heights  
look to the east and see your children  
Gathered from the east and the west  
at the word of the Holy One. (Baruch 5: 4-5)*

**We can save our Earth, if we change our ways or  
We cannot save our Earth unless we change our ways.**

These two statements deal with the same theme (reclaiming the commons) and yet they may yield very different outcomes depending on the time, place and circumstance. Choice of approaches is not a mere academic exercise but a real puzzle with possibly grave consequences. The first approach may be dismissed as too bland by a public that is pulled in many directions; the second approach may be noticed but dismissed as another scare tactic to draw our attention away from today's pressing issues. The presenter emphasizes certain strengths according to how the message is given. Audiences differ in age, cultural background, educational achievement, and professional standing.

1. Soft Approach: We can save the world, if we change our ways.  
*My son, be gentle in carrying out your business, and you will be better loved than a lavish giver. (Sirach 3:17-19)*

Maximizing free choice is always the ideal way to proceed. Everyone who is concerned about current events knows that the world is in trouble. The challenge is to save our Earth with the resources at hand -- and there are many. Literature is plentiful; demonstration projects and centers exist; individuals and groups are involved in renewable energy projects; and jobs are opening where the thrust is

to reduce resource use and assist in implementing new applications. Change is possible through teamwork. Talking about threats will only retard this work, for people do not like to be threatened in their individual or group working conditions. A liberal may emphasize the right way of acting, whereas a conservative may emphasize avoiding wrong ways. Persuasiveness holds precedence over fire and brimstone, and yet each has its place. Three arguments support the soft approach:

**\* An amiable, affable, comforting and entertaining approach works best with modern audiences.** This approach holds attention, gets its point across with less disturbance, and is simply more popular and non-threatening to all who expect the crises to be inevitable. It can emphasize hope over despair, God's grace over evil, and invitation rather than threat.

**\* A personal-decision, "soft" approach maximizes our freedom to choose right from wrong.** During the American Revolution, people underwent enormous changes due to one-on-one conversation and through the spread of pamphlets, talks, sermons, banners, church bells, and other media events of that day. Outlets of change are needed today. We can create slogans, print succinct and clever bumper stickers, sponsor concerts, and press for talk shows with a theme that the commons belongs to all of us, not to a select few. We cannot put off changing for times are serious.

**\* Simple lifestyles and appropriate technology emphasize change, rather than focus solely on what is wrong.** E.F Schumacher, the father of appropriate technology, defines it as *a technology of production by the masses, making use of the best modern knowledge and experience conducive to decentralization, compatible with the laws of ecology, gentle in its use of scarce resources, and designed to serve human persons instead of making them the servant of machines.*<sup>5</sup> This type of technology champions the following: smaller-scale means of production; respect for primitive cultures; favor for what is simple to install, operate and maintain; attention to what has lower costs and greater durability; use of renewable resources and recycled materials; enhancement of self-reliance at the local level; encouragement of ownership of the means of production or worker coops; and challenge to nuclear power and agribusiness. Appropriate technology promotes equity, self-reliance, and a stable social structure.

2. Hard Approach: We cannot save our Earth unless we change our ways.

*I brought you to a fertile country to enjoy its produce and good things; but no sooner had you entered than you defiled my land, and made my heritage detestable. (Jeremiah 2:7)*

True prophets are willing to provoke others when they say, "Woe to you..." They may even point out that some soft approaches are the works of "false" prophets. "Truth at any costs" should be the battle cry. We can see the present so clearly that a specific future will most likely result -- plain as the nose on our face. That means confronting wrongdoing directly. Three emerging facts support a more "tough love" approach to the environmental crisis:

**\* The poor suffer most through such a crisis.** If we fail to see what is coming, we are allowing our affluence to promote a growing insensitivity to the poor or "have-nots" of the world, and thus our own personal salvation is at stake, not just the salvation of Earth as we know her to be. What if Chinese (consuming one-third of what Westerners consume) and Indians (who consume one-third of what Chinese consume) follow our example? If these countries numbering three times the West's total population exercise a certain "right" to have still more, then available resources will be exhausted, more endangered plant and animal species will disappear, and climate change will accelerate. The West feels too privileged to call for profound changes; the East regards the right to equal material consumption as forthcoming. A mentality of materialism is the blueprint for disaster because uncontrolled resource use leads to impending disaster.

**\* Consumers must be shaken from their addictive behavior.** Those of us immersed in material comforts find that it is difficult to even question our current lifestyle practices. Our present unsustainable economic system is moving towards ruin and few are willing to discuss concrete issues. Even to bring up the subject of consumer spending is somewhat unpatriotic for consumption and economic prosperity go together. The emphasis is always on tax cuts to all, not a fair tax system for redistribution of wealth.

**\* Voluntary approaches are of only limited success.** Is voluntary change too little and too late? In itself, the one who wishes to live simply gives a powerful example that simple living can not only be achieved but that the outcome is a higher quality of life. The problem with affirming the soft sell voluntary approach is that it lets the wasteful populace continue in their ways; all smile and show tolerance to voluntary approach. In turn, this tolerance conveys the impression that we have all the time in the world to make profound changes -- and this is simply not true.

**Whither Hard or Soft Approach?** The choice of approach may color the results we achieve. A soft approach (**if we change our ways...**) may be more amiable and agreeable to some and yet not persuade others to change their ways; a hard approach (**unless we change our ways...**)

may turn people off and destroy the chance to get good results. Taking a more regulatory hard approach to change means we have to address legislators and policy-makers. If we make a soft sell, we must stress individual responsibility to bring about change, not an easy job. In truth, a simultaneous assault using both approaches may bring about the best results. Some people are better at giving or at receiving one or the other. The end result is radical change, and this goal can best be reached through the teamwork of those with a soft approach and the harder line approach working in tandem.

## Reflection: Rendering Material Profit-Motivation Unpopular

The topic of reclaiming the commons is not on everyone's lips, and, in fact, appears to be on few agendas because of the remoteness, lack of understanding, attention to material profit-making, and an atmosphere of trivia that crowds out any type of serious reflection. The absence of needed discussion about the deeply-flawed aspects of our current culture does not mean it ought to be postponed to a later date. We know the place (air, water, and land) is HERE; we know the time (past treasures, future health, and present means of communication) is NOW. But how do our mere words and deeds turn into meaningful action?

The challenge for us is one of persuasiveness, of inserting ourselves into an expressed concern about our dysfunctional system. We cannot deny the situation, excuse ourselves from the fray, or escape to more trivia. Rather, we must expose the shallowness of material-profit motivation that can bring ruin to all. The chatter of messaging activity seems to drown out our interchanges but they could be used for good. Show the addictiveness of our consumption culture in all its absurdity through opt-eds and serious and humorous books, poetry, song, and dramatics. Brainstorm ways to work with others to render material profit-motivation unpopular.

## Chapter Seven: Silent Space/Time

*Stillness is what creates love. Movement is what creates life.  
To be still, yet still moving -- that is everything!*

Do Hyun Choe, Japanese sage

The most difficult and often overlooked area of the commons is that of silence space/time; this is especially true in a world of increasing and ever-more-intrusive noise. We have the right to speak, to publish, to worship, and to remain silent in legal proceedings; we

also have the right to BE silent in special times and places. The value of silent space/time rests with the interplay of harmonious sounds and silent pauses, both necessary. The legal expression "You have the right to remain silent" is part of a broader right to silent space. Furthermore, we do not have the abusive privilege to make noise that disturbs another's silent space and time, though that "noise" is regarded as music to some. Here competing rights and areas of conflict emerge: to speak, to enjoy the company of others, to celebrate, to remain silent, to have silence for an extended period.

**Silent space/time** is related to air, water, land, culture, health, education, communication, commerce and movement of people; this condition is necessary for a higher quality of commons. Silence is the pause in the symphony of life, without which sound overwhelms us and distracts us. Silence is intermediate between death and eternal life. Silence is meant for all and is part of all -- and, while integral to any discussion of the commons, it is the most evasive and often least appreciated -- especially by those who confront injustice vocally, or by those who choose to suffer in silence.

**Silent space** is sacred space with a special quality. This is the silence that soothes with cool breezes and gently flowing brooks or the quiet landscape devoid of human beings; it is the silence broken by tornado winds and raging floods and rest stops where one cannot hear another speaking due to nearby rushing highway traffic. It is the hospital silence interrupted by loudspeakers. Silent space is recognized, craved, defended, and sought diligently because it is fragile and easily broken.

**Silent time** is overlooked by busy people who champion the right to speak as the "right to make noise." The silent time of deafness is one extreme; the shout of "fire" in a crowded room is another. This commons is infringed upon by "busy" cultures. In fact, quietude is an inherent ingredient of the human person and not a spice added to the culture as though it is optional. Some say that misused time is related to a sick culture, and includes continuous chatter unconnected properly to self or others.

**a) Infringement on Silent Space/Time**

*There is a time for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven:... a time for keeping silent, a time for speaking...*  
(Ecclesiastes 3:1,7)

Silent space/time is a valuable blessing, a form of commons that can be so easily infringed upon. Rural and pastoral places and days of songbirds and tinkling cowbells have given way to a host of invasive

technologies and practices that can be extensive in territory, of high volume, and of long duration. Thus today, guaranteeing silent space/time preserves our quality of life, for it is the necessary defense since we are not absolute masters of silent space/time. Infringement corrodes our privacy, assaults our sensitivities, and defies our desire to control our environment. We are surrounded by noise aggressors who champion a "freedom" that they wish to be unchallenged; however, confrontation is forthcoming. Many regard "their space" as both the private domain of web-casting and also sounds of music and drone of chatter, often ignoring that these infringe on others' silent space/time. Noise overpowers silence and silence becomes an increasing rarity. Hidden in this struggle are boundaries to one's silent space, depending both on recipient's hearing and producer's ability to generate sufficient disturbance locally or afar. The champions of noise consider modern technological sound-making as a triumph.

With rising levels of noise people seek to get a qualitative and quantitative handle on this modern phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Objective quantitative measurements of loudness are measured in "decibels" (dB). When measurement or weighing is made for high and low-pitched sounds according to ordinary hearing, adjustments are called "A" weighted levels (dBA). This sound is measured in logarithmic units called *decibels*, which go from zero where humans start to hear to over 140 where noise causes pain (e.g. certain rock and roll concerts). See Appendix Three for listing.

**Transportation sources.** Large numbers of people live near highways or in the paths of approaching and departing aircraft. Highway noises from trucks, motorcycles and automobiles as well as airplanes have resulted in reduced silent space/time. Traffic involves several components: **volume** -- 2000 vehicles per hour sound twice as loud as 200 vehicles per hour; **speed** -- traffic at 65 miles per hour sounds twice as loud as traffic at 30 miles per hour); and **number of trucks** -- one truck at 55 miles per hour sounds as loud as 10 cars at 55 miles per hour)<sup>2</sup>

A *noise meter* can determine the noise level at a given time. A continuous graph could be taken from a constantly running noise volume recording device, but representing the noise as a single number is regarded as more manageable. The two most common statistical descriptors used for traffic noise in decibels are the Leq (constant average sound level) and the L10 (sound level that is exceeded 10 percent of the time). The Leq is usually about three decibels less than the L10.

Various sound-related factors include highway surface material

(blacktop sounds different from concrete), the steepness of the road itself (on steep inclines heavier vehicles must labor to ascend or brake to descend), and frequency of motorcycles (virtually always loud). Truck noises are caused by a number of factors (tires, engines, exhausts, squeaking brakes and backfiring). Though traffic noises are often regarded as continuous, noise is never really constant due to number, speed and types of vehicles, and weather conditions.

Traffic is not just land and air based. The vast oceans can also be noisy. Deep sea oil and gas drilling disrupt communication systems of the bowhead whales. There is the confusion of sonar signals and blasting by survey vessels. About 127 supertankers ply the seaways (up to a reported 232 decibels),<sup>3</sup> along with 23,000+ freighters, tankers and other commercial bulk carriers. Statistics related to sea traffic do not generally include all the smaller powered ships, yachts, and boats (even jetskis).

**Impairment of Physical Health.** Irreversible hearing loss may occur through loud noises, certainly at 120 decibels and damage begins at about 85 decibel. Teenagers attend rock concerts that register 110 decibels or more, while 115 is the limit beyond which the *Occupational Safety and Health Administration* (OSHA) forbids any unprotected exposure. Virtually everyone experiences temporary deafness at some times due to loud noises -- Temporary Threshold Shift.<sup>4</sup> Loud noises can be cumulative, as each episode destroys some cells in the ear itself. *Noise Induced Hearing Loss* is far more widespread than some might anticipate; some 90% of miners experience this by age 52. *The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health* estimates that some thirty million Americans are exposed to noise hazards. Another estimate is that one-third of people have permanent hearing loss resulting from noise exposure.

Hearing problems increased 26% from 1971 to 1990 for those aged eighteen to forty-four.<sup>5</sup> This is shrugged off as the price of the modern age, whether due to outdoors noises (bulldozers, jackhammers, construction, farming, lumber, and mining equipment) or inside noisy work places. Among the health damage is total or partial hearing loss as well as *tinnitus* (ringing in the ears). The latter can be rated from lower levels of annoyance to severe; objective tinnitus is an actual sound that can be detected.<sup>6</sup>

Noise-related disturbances are present for all and especially young students who pretend to ignore it. Maser and co-workers found that children attending a school beneath the Seattle-Tacoma airport flight paths showed a deficit on standardized tests when they were compared with a similar cohort of youths in a quieter school.<sup>7</sup> Cohen and associates found higher math and reading scores among children in

noise-abated schoolrooms than among those lacking such amenities.<sup>8</sup>

**Psychological Disturbances.** The *U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs* and other governmental agencies find a causal link between noise pollution and sleeping disturbances, increased blood pressure, irritability, and fatigue. Rises in blood pressure and threats to the cardiovascular health of a person have been diagnosed to occur at higher noise volumes (above 70 dBA), which can prove to be a measurable degree of increased stress. Anecdotal evidence supports the theory that sleep deprivation is often caused by noise. Those living near heavily-traveled roads and airports under real-life conditions found increasing levels of stress. The average person who is subjected to 45 decibels of noise cannot sleep. Chemical stimulants only exacerbate sleep- deprivation problems.

**Harm to animals.** Pets find it difficult to cope with noises. Thunder hurts the sensitive ears of dogs. Cows are disturbed by sudden noises and respond favorably to soothing music; even excitable animals calm down quickly to Felix Mendelssohn's *Scottish Symphony*. Noises also affect wildlife cycles from breeding to migrating, and adding special stress to threatened and endangered species. Unusual or continuous noises such as all-terrain vehicles, helicopters, and snowmobiles, and even hikers' conversations and traffic can disturb wildlife. Whales are acoustic animals whose lives are informed by what they hear; they sing love songs, change melody, sing in harmony, have voice ranges covering seven octaves, must travel over great distances and communicate with faint sounds. However, various forms of sound pollution such as Acoustic Thermography of Ocean Climate and Low Frequency Active Sonar could have severe effects on marine life communication patterns. Noise pollution of various types (up to 200 decibels) can cause whales' confusion and beaching.

**Cell phone** infringement of silent space often goes unopposed because users consider their practice as privileged. Most often, those who lose silent space remain silent about this enclosure of a commons. Ordinary or excessive communication can be harmful in many ways: wasting time; distractions, especially while driving, are equivalent to drunk driving; and infringement on the silent rights of others. In fairness, cell phones are an excellent alert system in times of emergency and are a technical boost to people of all incomes where land phones are rare.

**Other polluting practices.** **Spam** intrudes on our normal conversation and thus is a problem related to a commercialized communication gone riot. Without devices and regulations to cut off spam, email becomes a major chore. In recent years unsolicited phone calls were problematic before governmental regulation reduced these

drastically. **Visual noise** is related, and includes clutter in one's room, backyard, and closets, commercial blinking lights on neon light strips, and highway billboards.

### **b) Actions to Preserve Silence**

*There is no quiet space in the white man's cities. What is there to life if a man cannot hear the lonely cry of the whippoorwill or the arguments of the frog around the pond at night?*  
Chief Seattle

With increasing levels of noise, concerted efforts must be made to confront the noise-makers and propose alternatives in order to preserve the mental and physical health of residents desiring silence and rest. Some people remain silent because they cannot speak; others remain silent at times to allow others to speak; still others remain silent because they are intimidated. Citizens must confront noise-makers and this may require vocal expression.

1. Domestic Silent Space/Time -- We need silent space; we need quiet time to meditate and reflect; both constitute a "sacred silence" that allows us to turn our hearts to God. Just as music needs stops and rests, so does life. Leisure advocates say: take rest breaks during the work day to gain strength and energy to keep on top of the assignments at hand; make the day of rest truly restful; create both sacred space and sacred time in your life, where and when different senses can harmonize sights, sounds, smells, tastes and feelings of nature; find retreat time; plan and take an annual vacation.

Homemakers can establish quiet places and times for internal peace, reduced stress, and improved wellbeing by ensuring the following steps for all residents and visitors:

- \* turn down volume or use head phones;
- \* dampen or replace noisy appliances and other devices;
- \* establish TV-cut-offs (mute button) for commercials;
- \* abandon cell phones (or turn off the ringer) during meals;
- \* erect privacy and sound barriers using various types of material (stone, wood, metal, or vegetative), thickness and height, and manner of construction;
- \* mow lawns with a muscle-powered mower or turn space into edible landscape or wildscape;
- \* enhance sound-proofing in parts of the home or create a quiet nook for reading and listening to music. Egg cartons tastefully dyed and arranged can be low-cost materials for quieting the special room or nook. One commercial acoustical product for ceiling and walls is a fused vinyl material called *Audioseal*, a very dense material costing several dollars per square foot as non-reinforced rolls, and double

cast for reinforced rolls that can be available for retrofitting structures with noise problems; and

\* add insulated enclosures to dampen noisy devices that can even cause structural vibration -- air conditioners, water pumps and purifying equipment, outdoor by-pass pumps, natural gas compressors, and heating and ventilation equipment.

2. Promote Local Silent Space/Time -- Creating silent space is always a challenge. Sound-proofing is the easiest way to reduce noise in community buildings such as schools, hospitals and other institutions. Multi-purpose rooms, gyms, cafeterias, and auditoriums are known to reverberate with bouncing balls, animated conversations, and banging doors (caution signs are often insufficient). Installing acoustic foam wall and ceiling panels of various sorts is preferable; likewise, there are fabric wrapping and ceiling banners for sound absorption, and pipe covers.

Local actions may include: instituting night curfews; forbidding amplified music, especially in hospital and senior citizen areas; restricting revving of motorcycles; limiting use of noisy motorized vehicles, power mowers, leaf blowers, snow blowers, water skis, and water craft; and banning noise-making devices from schools, libraries, churches, and public places. When development plans call for zoning changes, ensure that noise pollution is challenged. Letters-to-the-editor allow people to become aware that others suffer in much the same way with noise problems -- though they often remain silent. Co-sponsor community events and discuss program timing and noise reduction procedures.

Some pretend to multi-task when supposedly studying; others insist that youth find silence oppressive; however, the opposite tough love needs to be emphasized, namely, silence is a required learned experience. Initiate school projects to audit neighborhoods to make youth aware of noise sources and dangers. Projects could include noise meters with results made available online and in the community. Radio public service announcements are good noise awareness education practices. Youth and adults alike need silent and worship space and time. Employers of modern "24-7 businesses" infringe on the right of a people to rest or have silent time. All citizens ought to promote "**blue laws**," i.e., days when business activities are prohibited or curtailed. Workers, especially caregivers and service employees need time off and especially vacation time.

The following are additional areas for local or state noise regulations: vehicle muffler inspections; supervised public fireworks displays; consideration of England's 1993 law against nuisances (e.g., noises caused by car repairs, radios and alarms, loudspeakers from 9:00

pm to 9:00 am, with the exclusion of police ambulance and fire vehicles; and outside night hours for non-licensed entertainment). In England, the *Clean Neighborhoods and Environment Act of 2005* empowers local authorities to designate all or part of their area as an alarm notification area. Here local authorities are notified as to burglar alarms and a local "key holder" designated who can silence an accidental alarm.<sup>9</sup>

3. Regional Noise Abatement -- The best estimates state that overall noise levels have increased by about 20 decibels over the past half century. A 1970 City of New York study warned that noise levels there were "intense, continuous and persistent enough to threaten basic community life." The challenge is always to establish silence in and around homes or an immediate neighborhood. The double challenge is to regulate longer-range noise problems such as air, sea and land vehicles for passengers and/or freight.

Airplanes can be extremely disturbing to residents who are virtually powerless to make changes. However, regional authorities can adjust flight times and frequencies as well as designate use of certain runways and flight patterns. Flights are also becoming more frequent at international, national, regional and local airports (20,000 in the U.S. alone). Jets and jumbo jet noises affect operating personnel, passengers and especially residents living in the direct flyways or near airports. Attention could be given to airplanes passing through sound barriers, low flying aircraft, or performance of stunt flying. Often those living near military bases must endure low-flying helicopters and jet booms.

Road traffic noise concerns regional planners. Interstate highway congestion and speeds can influence local noise levels and move communities to install noise barriers in densely populated areas near traffic corridors. Regional planning of new roads as well as these noise barriers can help control noise. New York and other cities are developing metropolitan noise regulations. Some cities restrict revving of motorcycle engines and seek to reduce traffic congestion by promoting more public transportation through increased parking fees and enforcement.

4. National Noise Abatement -- The federal government has given attention to industrial and transportation noise rather than to neighborhood noise, where it is deferred to local governments. The federal government has generated documents to provide a basis for state and local governments' noise level standards. Federal actions through the *National Environmental Policy Act of 1969* require environmental impact statements on major actions that deviate from normal practice (and that includes noise). The *Environmental Protection Agency* (USEPA) coordinated noise control activities until

those activities were phased out in 1982. A USEPA "Levels Document" in 1974 identified the 24-hour exposure level of 70 decibels as the level of environmental noise, which will prevent any measurable hearing loss over a lifetime. Likewise, outdoor levels of 55 decibels and indoor levels of 45 were identified as preventing activity interference and annoyance during daily activities.<sup>10</sup>

The *Noise Control Act of 1972* and the *Quiet Communities Act of 1978* were not rescinded by Congress, and remain in effect today (although essentially unfunded). These regulations cover standard transportation equipment, motor carriers, low-noise emission products and construction equipment. The USEPA still works on issues related to airport noise, aviation noise as part of the *Federal Interagency Committee on Aviation Noise*, railroad/ locomotive horn noise, and with the *Federal Highway Administration* (FHWA) on motor carrier noise emission compliance.

The federal *Occupational Safety and Health Administration* is concerned about the safety and health of America's workers. OSHA has determined that a maximum continuous exposure level for eight continuous hours cannot exceed a sound-pressure level of 90 dBAs. For every five-decibel increase in this sound pressure level the allowable exposure time is cut in half. OSHA guidelines say that no sound-pressure level above 115 dBA is allowed without hearing protection, which ground crews at airports are observed wearing.

In 1997, the *Federal Highway Administration* finalized procedures for abatement of highway traffic noise and construction noise. The procedures place increased emphasis on the importance of noise-comparable land use planning at state and local levels. Quieter highway surface materials are also a federal concern. The *Federal Aviation Administration* (FAA) is concerned about airport noise as well as about aircraft operations. It uses the day-night equivalent level for noise as established by the USEPA as the noise "descriptor" in its assessment of land-use comparability with various levels of aircraft noise. This method accepted the work of Theodore J. Schultz as a basis for noise standards.<sup>11</sup>

The *Consumer Product Safety Commission* is charged with protecting the public from unreasonable risks of serious injury or death -- and noise-making devices are included. The *Federal Communications Commission* strives to restrict privacy infringement by telemarketers with unwanted phone and fax messages. Telephone subscribers must notify the government in order to go on a list refusing such infringement. A *Federal Trade Commission* "do not call" registry currently has very stiff fines for violators. The *Noise Pollution Clearinghouse* raises awareness of noise pollution and is helping

communities take back commons from those "acting like noise bullies;" the group has a library of resources and tools concerning noise pollution. See <<http://www.nonoise.org>>.

### **c) Creating Retreat Space and Time**

*You must come away to some lonely place all by yourselves and rest for awhile;" for there were so many coming and going that the apostles had no time even to eat. (Mark 6:31)*

Toning down and becoming sensitive to noise is one very important step towards a return to respected silent space in our world. Another and far more difficult exercise for those addicted to loud sound is to break away and accept or endure periods of silence. In many cultures people speak, and then remain silent for periods of time -- just being silently present to one another. The measured words are important, but so are pauses between words. In contrast, chatterers betray a dysfunctional condition in our society, a compulsive need for converse to break dread silence.

Creating silent space/time is necessary because we must first believe that all space/time is sacred enough to require our attention. Secondly, creating space/time gives us courage, for if this condition can be achieved on a local level, it can be on a global level as well. Thirdly, sacred space/time is not total silence, but celebrates the presence of silence as a major component of total respect. This process consists of toning down or eliminating the noise-maker through regulation of the device (e.g., sirens), the area where operating (quiet zones), or muffling the consistent noise (highway traffic). Classical music lovers may flee from hard rock; residents may run from abusive language.

#### **1. Sacred Space**

*Everybody needs places where they can pray and play in.* John Muir

One could consider sacred space to be within our hearts and in formal places such as churches and shrines (see Chapter Four). Those immobilized by illness, imprisonment and infirmity discover sacred space within the heart. When reserving sacred space we may ask: Is the place safe? Handicap accessible? Well maintained? Does it have an atmosphere of peace? Are the artistic decor and architecture uplifting? Is the place too silent or noisy, claustrophobic or spacious, dark or illuminated, colorless or colorful, comfortable, or sparse?

Certain sites have special religious, patriotic, cultural, or personal significance, reminding us of significant persons and events.

Sacred sites are the assortment of locations (parks memorials, sites and shrines) where heart, mind and whole being are moved to the wonder of Creation. Communities may identify their own "Sacred Sites," i.e., accessible places set apart by communities in a collective recognition. Ideal "sacred space" stimulates all senses: beauty of a unique scene or vista, scent of evergreens or seawater, sounds of wind, birds, or rushing water, texture of rock or tree bark, and taste of sassafras or berries. Such a confluence of stimuli augments a natural meditation area, a place to be alone with God. Many sites are plainly visible; others are known to only a few in order to avoid trespassers. Mitch Finley says, "We like to touch, taste, and smell God -- or, at least, we like to touch, taste, and smell God's presence."<sup>12</sup>

A sacred site is a powerful instrument for community formation in being a natural gathering, reflecting, or resting place. Particular site selection criteria include: secluded, but not totally so, for people fear vandalism; accessible for a great number of people; scenic and devoid of major distractions such as noise; natural and with minimal development, conducive to prayer and reflection; and held as unique by landholders, residents, or other interested parties. In some cases, one finds out about these sites through research and rediscovery. For instance, archaeologists may uncover artifacts indicating that indigenous peoples worshipped in this location. Certain sites -- birthplace, imprisonment, awakening, gathering, battle, or immense suffering -- become hallowed by reason of historic fact and we honor this.

We may search and discover forgotten arenas of natural sacred space or undertake a more heroic venture of re-creating what was wounded. Natural areas to discover sacred space include:

**Sight** -- Look to the beauty of creation and see places to observe brilliant sunsets, colorful flowers, verdant forests, movement of the ocean waves, floating clouds.

**Touch** -- Reach out and touch living things: tree bark, leaf texture, petal softness. Realize that paved surfaces and urban lighting distance us from nature.

**Sound** -- Listen to the natural sounds of thunder and rushing water, or the more gentle sounds of songbirds and crickets, gurgling creeks and peepers.

**Taste** -- Search about and find something that can be tasted in the landscape during the proper season: berries, fruits, nuts, herbs, sassafras bark, or mushrooms.

**Smell** -- Take in the aroma of fresh air that smells different with each season. Smell the fragrant flowers, evergreens, and even the decaying leaves in autumn and winter.

We discover in damaged landscape the ugly sights, the foul odors, the moaning sounds, the taste of despair and the feel of disharmony. However, with our efforts and guided by our senses we can create new life by recasting the landscape:

**Sight** -- Clean up the roadside litter even when one did not throw the materials thoughtlessly away.

**Touch** -- Feel the weight of a shovel full of upturned soil when digging a hole to plant the sapling that will cheer a denuded landscape -- and be assured that it is a wonderful experience.

**Sound** -- Hear the excitement of those helping to build a nature trail for others to enjoy on a portion of reclaimed land.

**Taste** -- Taste the home-cooking of those who appreciate one's volunteering to help with home insulation and repair.

**Smell** -- Take in the whiff of wood smoke when burning briars and untangle choked landscape so that native species can grow once again. Caution! Don't burn poison ivy.

2. Sacred Time -- Silent periods do not need to be signs of lack of social awareness. Rather, in order to enhance social skills and communication, silent periods are absolutely necessary. The generous and kind Abraham Lincoln was so often bothered by job seekers and others that he had little time to himself during the work days of his presidency. Finally, in early 1865, at the end of his first term and in preparation for his Second Inaugural Address, he accepted the suggestion of his secretaries and sequestered himself for four-hour periods of complete silence so he could concentrate. He discovered that silence can be as golden as the times when one must speak up.

Silent time differs due to shock, fright, or other emotions. When a memorable performance is completed, an audience is dumbfounded, and remains motionless rather than applaud. When a good soul has been verbally attacked, bystanders may be speechless. Too often silence is regarded as a sign of diffidence, ignorance, lack of attention, disinterest, fear, or quiet disapproval. It takes a special insight to know when to break unwanted silence. Individuals tolerate incessant sound, not because they like it but because they regard their lack of contesting as a form of peacemaking. Misplaced power rests in sound-making for some who think sacred silence is intolerable; proper power rests in confronting this attitude and rediscovering sacred time.

3. Retreat Space -- Retreat settings may be permanent (designated housing) or temporary (camping tent). Since some find camping chores, gnats, bugs, wood smoke, and rugged terrain distracting, they prefer dedicated retreat settings (established paths, prepared food, room

service) that provide amenities conducive to cultivating inner peace. Some retreatants seek solitude in woodlands, desert, coastline, houses of prayer, or their own upper rooms. They seek a broad diversity in location, accessibility, simplicity, degree of privacy, length of stay, and availability of services.<sup>13</sup> Site selection is similar to that for sacred space.

Tranquility is a retreat-setting characteristic that comes with possible isolation and the need to pack supplies to remote sites. Accessibility is important for those limited in time and energy; some seek road access, parking, and a trail to the site, and yet somewhat isolated. Conduciveness to prayer may be enhanced by non-proximity to major wildlife or by "relative isolation," (non-intrusive proximity to others). Retreat establishments realize that clientele may seek connectedness (proximity to others) as well as comfort and are afraid of silence as a realm of death or evil spirits. Rather, silence is a time to find God and chance to know oneself. Connectedness includes common meals, lodging near others, pets around, or land-based phones.

4. Retreat Time -- Since sacred time is an encounter with God, individual retreat periods require planning and a basic formality:

- \* **Set a definite time;**
- \* **Keep unrelated devices and materials at home;**
- \* **Seek general goals by being open to conclusions;**
- \* **Limited conveniences are helpful;**
- \* **Silence is golden, no matter the type of retreat chosen;**
- \* **Keep a record for your own possible future reference;**
- \* **Travel lightly rather than with excess baggage; and**
- \* **Prepare to arrive at a resolution and decide on it.**

#### Reflection: Balancing the Silence/Sound Environment

The right to silent space/time often conflicts with those seeking to enjoy themselves with laughter, song and animated conversation. A higher quality of life needs to have a harmony of sounds and silence<sup>14</sup>, not one to the detriment of the other. Creating that balance is a challenge and requires compromises. Merely confronting excessive sound does not create a more permanent condition where people can talk, shout, and sing, and others can rest as they see fit.

Success consists of compromise with making, avoiding, and suppressing sound so that all are willing to accept the results. The community balancing process includes starting local educational programs, fact-finding using noise meters, listening to the demands of those with delicate auditory senses, encouraging proper rest time, and allowing a certain amount of celebratory activity. If we seek to

compromise and balance sounds and silence at the local level, we grow in the confidence that we can reclaim the commons. The best defense is a good offense: confronting conflicts of self-interest (insensitive noise-making or extraordinary demands for silence) requires open and listening change agents who work with all parties for the Common Good. We strive for compromise with those needing to sound off and those needing periods of rest.

## Chapter Eight: Movement of Goods

*At this sight you will grow radiant, your heart throbbing and full; since the riches of the sea will flow to you, the wealth of the nations come to you. (Isaiah 60:5)*

Reclaiming our commons includes a freedom to engage in commerce to the benefit of all. However, we must go beyond what is commonly called "free trade," especially among unequal partners. For the most part, this portion of the commons is afflicted by the hidden dangers of disparity of wealth, and our permitting this condition to continue. **Can we continue to address global inequities without confronting the inherent shortcomings of a "free market" where nothing in the world of material goods is free?**

We must face realistically the myths that abound: that consumer products are always safe and effective; that workers are a cheerful, secure, valued, and happy lot; that goods move easily without environmental costs from cradle to grave with wastes handled properly; and that the captains of industry are responsible and in full control.

Trading goods is a necessary part of quality of life, and where this commerce occurs, fair methods of exchange must be available to all, lest we have great advantages (e.g., those with food surplus have greater power over those with food scarcity). A fair economic field is all the more imperative because we are currently emerging from "The Great Recession." We experience high food prices, high and growing un- and underemployment rates, and the disparity of wealth that cries to heaven for a fair reapportionment of all resources (including financial ones). Such is necessary to move from undeveloped to developed on a global level, for a permanent cleavage implies a failure to reclaim what is to be held by all.

One route to this development is to lower global trade barriers. The Doha, Qatar "Doha Development Agenda" (DDA), sponsored by the World Trade Organization (WTO) was initiated in 2001, and continued on an annual basis with high hopes. However, these meetings have completely broken down and are regarded as doomed<sup>1</sup>; only bi-lateral or regional

agreements have been forthcoming in this century, some significant and some imperfect, in part because many developing nations have been left out.

Global trade barriers are the arena in which the current political/economic system manifests one of its greatest weaknesses. The world is at the stage where the early American colonies were at the time of the Articles of Confederation. Had this nation evolved into state-by-state tariffs, barriers, and trade agreements, the U.S. would not have developed into one nation, but rather a multiplicity of quarreling mini-nations. The current division of the world into "developed" and "developing" nations has proved insufficient, and "emerging" nations such as BRIC and South Korea are rapidly becoming economic powerhouses. As Susan Schwab says, "In private, most emerging and developing countries acknowledge that it is in their interest to bridge the increasingly artificial divide between developed and developing nations when it comes to global issues such as trade, international finance, and climate change." <sup>2</sup>

**Right to fair trade.** From the dawn of human civilization, people bartered and exchanged goods. Some were satisfied that the goods were of equal worth, or that exchanges bought security, peace and other non-tangible benefits among neighbors. With time, commerce and movement of goods in the form of shipping and manufacture yielded vast monetary rewards and wealth to middle and major traders. Our focus on air, water, land, cultural expression, health access, informational communication, and silence all have an economic aspect that we need to consider in any commercial reflection. Fair distribution of goods is at the heart of authentic trading, and this takes more than one-on-one negotiations among nations; truly this is a global matter, and the mechanisms for multi-lateral trade agreements are difficult. It is not that various regulations must change; the system must change, and be succeeded by one with enforcement powers in trade matters as well as finances and climate-change legislation. **Fair trade** must replace "free trade."

**Consumer rights.** Some regard "consumers" in a good sense and some in a pejorative one.<sup>3</sup> Movement of goods is a part of a complex business picture that includes personal ethical issues, such as quality of materials and specific quantity of items exchanged or bought or sold. Countless regulations exist dealing with units of measure, instruments and their calibration, and price levels and advertising for products. In developing nations with less product control, cheating of consumers through faulty measuring devices is still frequent -- but this infringement involves a lack of overall control by governmental protection agencies. Goods move more freely and fairly in a protected atmosphere, and so personal practices must

include restrictions resulting from governmental regulation of commerce, along with the vigilance of the consumer who must always beware.

**Producer rights.** Those who grow, extract, and manufacture goods that move through the system deserve special protection, especially since this system constantly seeks the lowest prices for products along with the highest profits. Of special concern are the uncertainty of farm commodity prices and the abundance of products, the up-front costs for fertilizers and tools, and the difficulties in marketing products. The *UN International Fund for Agricultural Development* says that rising food prices should give small farmers a boost and enable them to invest money in irrigation and other agricultural improvements. However, farmers in less-developed lands have only increased cereal production by 1% in the recent decade, whereas those in rich countries by 12%. Support for small farmers in developing lands is of utmost importance as the world population approaches nine billion by 2050.

**Right to work:** One of the persistent problems facing our modern world with vast numbers of unemployed is the right to livelihood or the "right to work." Work allows us to express our creativity and our privilege to serve others. Since our mortal life is short, work is our rare opportunity to live productively and perfect ourselves. While much work on infrastructure ought to be done, and willing people are available to fulfill those tasks, the problem is finding available resources to fund operations. To sequester wealth for the privileged is to deny work to those who must live -- and brings on the impulses to use their energies by revolting against the current unfair system.

**Corporate limits:** Many have become rich, and that wealth is subject to redistribution through fair taxation. In 1978 the top 0.1 percent took home 2.7 percent of the total income.<sup>4</sup> In the U.S. in 2006 the top 0.1 percent taxpayers (148,361) took home an average of \$1.9 million each, or 11.6 percent of the total income. Why do we as democratic people allow this growing disparity?

**a) Infringement in Commercial Areas**

*Trouble is coming to the man who amasses goods that are not his, (for how long?) and loads himself with pledges. Will not your creditors suddenly rise, will not your duns awake? Then you will be their victim....Trouble is coming to the man who grossly exploits others for the sake of his House, to fix his nest on high and so evade the hand of misfortune. (Habakkuk 2:6,9)*

The right to fair and accessible movement of goods is basic to

a higher quality of life. Impeding the movement of essential goods such as food, water and fuel due to excessive controls or through unsafe practices is a gross injustice that must be addressed. Misuse and waste of commercial resources are more keenly felt by consumers, workers in production and shipping, and by those who are frozen out of the production process through unemployment. An economic system that perpetuates unemployment is unsustainable.

1. Consumer Beware! -- Entire books have been written on specific categories of products; these range from Ralph Nader's *Unsafe at Any Speed* to countless accounts of shoddy, unsafe, falsely advertised, misrepresented, and overpriced products that crowd the market. These include toys with lead paint to vehicles that constantly demand recall. Each of these products is a case where the commons of fair trade has been violated, and yet when the alert regulatory agencies are absent, such practices continue to plague the marketplace. As more and more goods are sold on the Internet without the personal examination that occurs at a flea market, one will hear a groundswell of complaints.

2. Worker Injustice -- In Chapter Four we mentioned major differences between free trade and fair trade. Two unequal parties may be coerced by the wealthy power of one to trade "freely," but the result will not be fair trade; one has an advantage over the other and freedom is compromised. Commercial activities are now globalized; injustices to workers in rapidly emerging nations are similar to those noted in earlier Western European and North American development periods. Corporate outsourcing, unsafe coal mines, failure to pay workers, escape industries, and repression of the right to organize are all part of the infringement on the rights of people to find and retain decent working conditions. A world of surplus potential workers is opening itself to bargaining for the lowest wage to the great disadvantage of all workers.

*The bottom 80% of Americans now lose a collective \$743 million a year thanks to slow wage growth. The top 1% gains \$673 billion.<sup>5</sup>*

A second major injustice is the stigma of being unemployed -- All people deserve work opportunities. Why does one with the privilege of wealth have a right to deny another who is less privileged the right to a livelihood? Slavery is not only bad working conditions; slavery is inability to work until invited to do so by the captains of wealth. Over a waiting period without work in this dysfunctional economy, the unemployed become virtually unemployable. They speak today about unemployed middle management as the BWM or "beached white male." During this Great Recession and following period unfortunate persons with longer unemployment terms are being discriminated against when competing with less experienced workers who work for much reduced

wages. Thus begins a downward spiral of competing workers who bargain down with others for scarce positions. A taint is placed on the unemployed that challenges the right-to-work structure of a democratic society.

3. Movement of Goods Involves Safety Issues -- Extracting, processing, and shipping of goods can be done at lower prices by shortcutting safety issues. One would have expected that sorting through labor safety issues in the last two centuries would close the issue. Not so with globalizing tendencies. Farming is fraught with safety issues not easily handled without strict regulations. Mines in many parts of the world have sorry safety records, and coal mine disasters still occur with frequency and large loss of life. Manufacturing conditions in factories in developing nations are often in great need of improvement as companies cut corners that eat into profits. Sea piracy needs to be controlled by a future Global Maritime Corps. As of this writing some 800 people of various nationalities and fifty ships including massive oil tankers are being held by pirates from the failed state of Somalia.

4. Indebtedness -- The heavy indebtedness of the consumer is a driving factor in the consumption-based economy that encourages people to obtain now and pay later. American personal debt is in the neighborhood of 12 trillion dollars. That is an individual consumer condition, and also is present in all forms of government including our national government with an over 13-trillion-dollar national debt. Granted, considerable amounts of indebtedness are due to health and other bills that mount unexpectedly. Smother people in mortgages and credit card debt and they become passive -- enslaved to banking interests, who define our respectability through credit ratings.

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I went to a motel in Corinth, Mississippi on a stormy night when camping was impossible. The clerk asked for my credit card and I waved cash and said I do not believe in credit cards. If I took those cards I would be beholden to banks for my financial life and death. That wasn't very convincing, for the clerk pointed to a sign on the wall -- "No card, no lodging," as rain poured down outside in sheets. Fortunately, a neighboring motel did accept cash. This episode triggered formal complaint to the Federal Trade Commission. Why is American currency not honored in our country? Without a credit card I am a non-person. Most who hear my story do not side with me, lest the banks declare them unworthy of credit; they prefer to kow-tow to the system.

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Is a debt and a constant payment to it the mark of citizenship

in our country? Currency has given way to the "credit card," held by one of a few major banks controlling our financial lives. In turn, banks to whom one is enslaved make profits, reward officers with large salaries, and conduct any business they desire since they are too big to fail. If they fail, taxpayers will go into deeper collective debt to ensure their continued life. Youth are instructed to become indebted quickly and responsibly so they can build a good credit rating. In addition, millions are paying oppressive high interest rates to "pay day" outlets, to overdrawn credit cards, bank accounts, and "underwater" mortgages (where total owed is higher than the residence value). Thank God, debtors' prisons are gone!

5. Unfair Corporate Practices -- The financial power of multinational corporations equals or surpasses that of entire smaller nations. Money-making policies that impede the lives of workers with insecure jobs are oppressive. Greed and loose or lacking regulations can result in concentration of financial resources in the hands of a few, a process that is antithetical to a more equal distribution of resources to everyone. The ability of companies to leave communities in which they have engaged faithful workers for decades -- and even force experienced people to train successors in distant lands -- epitomizes what must be reclaimed. Private wealthy decision-makers are weakening and re-establishing public policy while forgetting justice.

**b) Actions to Reclaim the Commercial World**

*You cannot be the slave both of God and of money.* (Luke 16:13)

Wasted resources in all forms need to be conserved so that they can be available to people in need. Placing these resources in the hands of the needy demands fair processing of materials and dependable transportation systems. Inspectors are needed to act as watchdogs in areas of mining, manufacturing, shipping, and commerce. Enforcement personnel are key because so often companies seek shortcuts; some are more irresponsible than others. Satellites in space can monitor the land and oceans; radar can monitor the airways, radio waves can link the shipping world; trains, trucks and cargo ships move safely at great distances in a short time. Regulations on shipping routes and safety of those traveling on these routes are global issues. Volumes of cargo hardly envisioned at the start of the twentieth century move on land, sea and air. Regulations extend to the trade services themselves, where fair and just safety conditions and wages are necessary.

1. Individual Consumer Issues -- Can a consumer help reclaim the commons when so many consumer issues are non-communal and based on individual practices? The answer is "yes," provided consumers

realize they are world citizens with responsibility to others. Consumers are cautioned to avoid wasting food, water, energy for fuel, and all domestic supplies, and spacious housing is a waste when overly cooled or heated. Consumer finances ought to be such as to avoid heavy indebtedness -- but that is not always a free choice in a time of high medical bills. Consumers are urged to recycle plastics, metals, paper, and glass containers. Furthermore, composting of garden and kitchen wastes could be part of each domestic scene.

Trade and commerce thrust individual consumers into the wider world where actions affect others more directly. Patronizing farmers' markets offering locally-grown produce is second best to growing our food ourselves -- an activity that is not always possible because of lack of land, time, or energy of the consumer. Conscientious consumers ought to read labels and attempt to determine where products originate; attention is given where possible to purchasing goods from individuals and companies that treat workers with justice in wages and working conditions. A further question in a materialistic culture is whether the lure of a consumer purchase is motivated by need or by possibly addictive behavior. In short, consumers ought to be conscientious and strive to become contrasumers.<sup>6</sup>

2. Production and Shipping Safety Issues -- Governmental agencies must monitor and regulate working conditions of those who process and ship goods. Often the movement of factories from one nation to another occurs through the profit-based incentive to produce materials at lower costs by omission of safety and environmental requirements. Nations to which regulated industries escape often have elementary labor safety standards at best. Workers receive no amenities and are not allowed to voice objections to conditions for fear of losing their jobs to the eager unemployed outside the gates. Service workers at airports, seaports, and traffic terminals are subject to similar conditions as factory workers. The right of workers in both production and the service industries as well as governmental workers to organize and form trade unions is highly restricted and discouraged in many nations. Unionization is a way to expose (whistleblow) and agitate against unsafe working conditions.

3. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) -- Safety concerns stemming from global commerce go beyond consumers and workers and involve larger numbers of people and the planet herself. Monitoring atomic and nuclear testing was a major concern in the mid-twentieth century. Nuclear materials are used in weapons of mass destruction and their testing caused illnesses to workers and neighbors who were not taking proper safeguards (along with release of radioactive materials into the atmosphere). The "peacetime" use of the atom in medicine and radiological treatments is justified; its use for nuclear

power facilities has been questioned, for it involves risk-taking that many consider reckless. No nuclear facility is clean; none is totally safe; and none can be cleaned completely when spillage occurs. The IAEA was established to promote and monitor nuclear facilities; the agency should drop promotion, and extend monitoring activity to all nuclear facilities -- and hasten the age of renewable energy. We have picked fruit from the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." Nations with aggressive ambitions are tempted to be "godly atom guardians," but unsafe containment pools and nuclear weapons' stockpiles say otherwise. The pyromaniac propensities of youth have us play with nuclear fire, or is this an attempt to justify the 1945 killing of innocent civilians in Nagasaki and Hiroshima atomic bomb attacks.

**Funding:** A *nuclear maintenance tax* ought to be assessed on all nuclear installations: nuclear powerplants and uranium processing and enrichment facilities. Also worldwide monitoring and decommissioning costs along with an expanded IAEA (with enforcement powers) should be funded from the GDF (\$1 billion).

4. Employment and Fair Trade Products -- If one is a coffee drinker or fan of chocolate then purchase from fair trade sources which lack profit-making middle people and more funds go back directly to producers. A fair trade advocate seeks to ensure that purchased products meet proper worker safety and environmental standards.

The *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora* (CITES) was drawn up in 1973 to protect wildlife from exploitation, and to prevent international trade in threatened species. The U. S. is a party to this treaty, which has proved to be an effective vehicle for protecting these species through severe trade restrictions and commercial penalties. Consumers, seeking rare animal parts for food, medicine, luxury items, or live animals for pets, increase commercial pressure when expendable wealth becomes available. A strict global regulatory approach to one of the world's most serious environmental problems should be backed up with strengthened enforcement powers to ensure that treaty obligations are met by all nations.

**Forest Products Certification** ensures that forest products are properly harvested, processed and utilized. However, protection often depends on the testimony of harvesters who have devastated forests through improper practices that are far too prevalent today. Policing at points of harvest and transport would curb excesses, but this is a major challenge. Forest-product trade ought to be regulated by policies similar to those for endangered species, for in a real sense our forests are endangered.

**Funding:** CITES obligations and exotic and invasive species control ought to be funded through the GDF (\$1 billion) with sizeable funding going for local police security and to monitor trade in wildlife, as well as the eradication of exotic invasive species. Likewise a global forest certification program should be funded by timber and extraction fees alone. On a larger scale, a recent report states that \$20 billion annually could cut deforestation-related emissions in half by 2020.<sup>7</sup>

5. "Global Financial Control Agency" -- Corporations should be controlled through regional, national or global regulations depending on their extent of operations. So often it is a state-incorporated body that grow to become multi-state, then national, and then international due to financial policy decisions, globalized ease in shifting operations and transferring finances, and great differences in business climates among countries. Taming global corporations would be a win-win situation and favored by progressive groups at all levels. No matter how misguided the rulings, corporations are not real persons (see Chapter Four), but are creations of the state through the consent of the people.<sup>8</sup>

By the end of this century's first decade, the U.S. public had lost patience with irresponsible corporations. However, patience is not the same as control; after a 178-billion-dollar bailout in 2008-09 of the indebted insurance group AIG, that corporation's management went ahead and paid bonuses to its financial section sub-managers who had engineered the risk-taking that brought AIG to its knees. Mismanagement was accepted with awards that extended to banks and other financial institutions on an international scale. Reform was in the air.

In 2010, the U.S. Congress passed the *Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act*, regarded as the most sweeping change of financial regulation since the Great Depression. As of this writing, this multi-faceted legislation has not yet been implemented fully. Some of its components include: creating a number of agencies or combining existing ones (e.g., Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation); ending taxpayer bailouts of financial institutions, compelling oversight reporting on agency operations, eliminating loopholes in financial practices, providing an early warning system on economic stability, and even creating rules on executive compensation. Needless to say, some business opposition was and remains heavy.

As in pre-American Constitution days, nations today lack enforcement powers to demand accountability from corporations with

little transparency in financial dealings, as well as policies pertaining to minimal wages, worker safety and environmental safeguards, proper ways of waste material disposal, and hidden environmental costs. This negative competition among nations is an inherent weakness of the current system. In fairness, some enlightened corporations see a need to discover roots in the labor movement -- attested to by siting plants in more experienced, well-policed areas with health and educational benefits for employees, and remaining in nations with more demanding environmental safeguards. "Leveling the field" includes instituting a "Global Financial Control Agency" answerable to a federated world government.

Ironically, it was early multinational corporations that caused many colonial woes from the time of Columbus and Cabot. New Englanders were incensed by the heavy-handed activities of companies like the East India Company (the first multinational corporation), and thus occurred the *Boston Tea Party*. Precious cargo of the beverage was dumped into the harbor because taxes associated with tea were onerous and contrary to the wishes of colonists. Virtually all of eighteenth-century British parliamentarians were stockholders, and that one-tenth made fortunes from that company, which drew wealth from impoverished India.<sup>9</sup> Lack of international control has been a stumbling block from the early days of global commerce. This problem calls for collective action.

**Funding:** A "Global Financial Control Agency" should operate on funds raised through fees and from a *Transaction Tax* (see Chapter One) on all international financial transactions. With time, the agency could enforce regulations, provided nations allow global transaction taxes and fees to be imposed and collected.

### c) Financial Resource Issues

*You are the ones who destroy the vineyard and conceal what you have stolen from the poor. By what right do you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor? (Isaiah 3:14b-15a)*

Reclaiming the commons may occur along different routes, some of which value human economic circumstances in quite different ways. When one person is regarded as being more productive or of greater economic worth than a prisoner, a chronically-ill hospital patient, an elderly person needing total care, or a child with a crippling illness, the scheme could take on a heartless pragmatic tone; people considered of less worth receive the least care and a smaller apportionments of resources. Colonial period enslavement was justified in part due to a failure of native people to understand differences in monetary values of gold and trinkets.

*Material profit motivation* has been a powerful driving force down through the centuries. While many great leaders have not been motivated by a lure of wealth, still others were, especially European explorers such as Christopher Columbus, John Cabot, and Amerigo Vespucci, driven as they were for Oriental trade routes. *Columbus's fixation on gold, and the fixation of those who followed him about financial profit, blinded them to the value of what they found in the New World.*<sup>10</sup> The heavy focus on retrieving gold or furs or cod has kept excessive profit-making very much alive for centuries -- and Spanish and later successive colonists for the most part failed to halt the utter destruction of the first contacted (the Tainos), and then many native tribes.

Please note that the term "filthy" rich is not used here, for wealth (money or property) is not evil, but rather its accumulation in the hands of the powerful is dangerous. Wealth is a promise and a peril and, like tobacco and certain drugs, is addictive and requires individual and collective controls. For many, unshared wealth threatens personal salvation (Mark 10:24), creates a climate of greed, which many envy, and encourages unregulated transfer of funds at a global level to havens where it becomes unproductive. In an age of hunger and unemployment, lack of proper productive use of wealth is an inherent weakness.

#### 1. Resource Conservation Ethic

*When they have eaten enough he said to the disciples, "Pick up the pieces left over, so that nothing gets wasted."* (John 6:12)

The Earth's resources are vast but finite. Extracting and making them useful requires financial resources and can lead to harmful emissions and land disturbance. Common sense says it is wrong to consume the last drop of oil, because future generations will need some oil products for lubricants and specific petrochemicals. Overuse exceeds the carrying capacity of natural systems and waste accrues. The waste creates environmental disposal problems, cheapens one's sense of resource worth, breeds further waste, and creates disharmony in community by the waste's presence. Allowing the wealthy to waste and the poor to pick up or store their waste is certainly not egalitarian. To "tolerate" waste by anyone is not true tolerance; no one, the privileged or others, has a right to waste; this is because this planet's resources belong to all of us, whether those needing essentials now or the legitimate demands of future generations.

Resource conservation is in the front line of sustainability. In order that conservation is more than the deeds of the green conscientious citizen, restrictions are imposed. Strict laws oppose

driving under the influence of alcohol or restrict water use in times of drought. Regulations are now extended to vehicle fuel and light bulb efficiency standards. Changes in behavior are occurring in many areas, in part, due to these new regulations. The hype of higher horsepower gives way to making smaller vehicles more fashionable. Down-sizing residential space is bantered about in the West, but the emerging economies are finding the opposite trends more popular -- though sheer population size means that conservation in one part of the world does not totally balance additional consumption or residential spatial demands in another.

Instituting regulations may improve conservation, and removing some may also help, e.g., consider the 300,000 American local areas that do not permit clothes to be dried outdoors (this could cut domestic energy use by 6%). Lawn-size limits, types of lawn cover, and manner of cutting lawns are often mandated; in place of such regulations edible landscape, wildscape, and use of native-plant lawns requiring less water should be encouraged. Lower energy rates could be given to those who conserve in heating and cooling practices (not higher heated temperatures in winter than cooled temperatures in summer).

All people consume, and many people waste carelessly; the affluent consume more and thus create more waste and emissions: more auto travel, spacious living, resource intensive foods, and luxury items. All must meet essential needs, but all ought not tolerate the raiding of the commons, where some exert power to take what they want without regard to the Common Good. Forcing people to reside in areas devoid of proper domestic waste disposal does not make the poor more wasteful -- for much of the world's wastes go somewhat unnoticed -- a tragedy of the commons.<sup>11</sup>

**Living simply** is an individual attempt to be conservative in use of resources. Some regard this as a free choice engendered by social justice and radical sharing of resources. Those living simply are aware that wasteful practices impact the social order and that their lifestyle stands in contrast to crass materialism with hunger for big homes, cars, boats, etc. Simple living is that template for improved quality of life and a guarantee to work for a sustainable way of living. Living simply may be voluntary, but also it is necessary to have regulated resource conservation: energy efficient housing and vehicles, etc. The ethic may be promoted through media outlets, county fairs, school programs, farmers' markets, businesses, and local celebrations.

## 2. Worker Ownership

*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 5:8)

Workers often need start-up funding and can build their own cottage businesses through low- and no-interest micro-loans. Such loans can stabilize poor communities, offer opportunities for workers to avoid loan sharks (especially women in developing countries whose families depend on their income), enliven the entrepreneurial spirit, and ultimately discourage workers from emigration. Dr. Muhammad Yunus, the founder of the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, won the 2006 Nobel Prize for Peace for establishing a micro-loan system starting with a \$27 loan for weaving businesses. Today some 50 million people have benefited from micro-loans (as low as \$50 or less) to purchase basic materials and equipment. The *Foundation for International Community Assistance* has operated since 1984 helping to set up village banks whose members choose their own investments, disburse and collect all loans, manage their savings, elect their officials, write their by-laws, and keep their own books. Sometimes this works and sometimes mixed results occur because of difficulties in planning, loan sharks, and lack of marketing for those who must compete with large corporations.

**The Mondragon Cooperative Corporation** (MCC) is a regional and later a national level model with large-scale manufacturing, retail and financial operations that are worker-owned. This organization, located in the Spanish Basque region, includes the world's largest set of co-operatives. Mondragon was founded under the inspiration of Father Jose Maria Arizmendiarieta shortly after the Second World War; workers started with a small manufacturing operation of petrol-based cookers and heaters, moved to other industries including white goods (appliances) and has expanded today to be the largest corporation in the Basque region and the seventh largest industrial group in Spain. The umbrella group now consists of more than 160 companies, which manage their own health insurance and pension funds, and have graduated to supermarkets (*Eroski* stores), the second largest Spanish retailer. In the 1990s a *University of Mondragon* was started with 4,000 students at three campuses.

Democracy is at the heart of Mondragon. A 650-member congress is composed of elected delegates and meets annually. Each subdivision or company has its own elected management and workplace council. The expansion of Mondragon includes establishments in China and America. Today, the group consists of two-thirds employees as well as one-third members<sup>12</sup>. During the recent recession the Mondragon businesses were hurt like those in the rest of the world. Salaries were cut by 8%; as losses occurred in one area these were covered by the others; co-ops were closed but workers had to be reemployed in a 50-kilometer radius.

However, some branch companies predict that diversification of MCC could be its downfall; cooperatives can break apart when worker-owners become too diverse. With all its imperfections, MCC is still a model of what is needed in reclaiming the commons (worker control); MCC allows immediate livelihoods to be furnished at the local level; it acts as an intermediate between local and larger-scale national organizations. How big should cooperatives be allowed to become? With proper regulatory controls these can work at various levels, but lack of controls perpetuates the status quo.

In late 2007, the second largest French bank, *Societe Generale*, reported that one of its traders, Jerome Kerviel, had lost the bank the equivalent of 7.2 billion dollars. Apparently it was not personal gain that motivated him, but rather the implicit mandate that he was operating upon -- to make a profit for the bank. Apparently he was dutifully striving to do just that through his own rather risky trading procedures, but oversight was loose and he became the scapegoat when the scheme failed. What was overlooked in the controversy was lack of regulation of the actions of an individual. The next year as the Great Recession began in earnest, more unregulated individual financial actions surfaced.

In December, 2008, the Bernie Madoff scandal (engineered by this highly respected investment broker) involved as much as \$64 billion expected gains and \$10 to \$17 billion (government estimates) investments actually lost; a month or so later it was reported that an American banker, Allen Stanford, had fleeced as much as \$10 billion from American and overseas bank clients. Bank and insurance losses mounted and by February, 2009, the Royal Bank of Scotland reported the previous year's loss of \$34 billion -- a record financial loss. In Michigan at the beginning of the next month General Motors reported a \$60 billion loss. Red ink had turned into a flood from the for-profit sector of the Western world. Befuddled national leaders threw money into the black holes of multinational corporations in hopes that chaos would be delayed. In fairness, many of these loans are being repaid. Institutions were considered "too big to be allowed to fail." In fact, they failed because they were too big and too unregulated.

Giving wealth away through a personal conversion (the Francis of Assisi approach) is rare, very rare. Various misgivings soon arise from those who say: "I am the best guardian of what I have, and I worry that the new owners will not use my materials properly"; "I think others must travel the same route to receive my equivalent experience"; "Why should I give what belongs to me alone?" Workers seek to take what is rightfully theirs, for resources belong to all. The Israelite people took the Promised Land -- and the operation was violent at times. An early Christian group took from a common fund for needs; it was

non-violent while it lasted. Why do Bible conservatives expound the conquest of the Promised Land but gloss over the early Christian experience as narrated in the *Acts of the Apostles*?

### 3. Military Conversion

*These will hammer their swords into plowshares, their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, there will be no more training for war. (Isaiah 2:4b)*

An enhanced security that comes with reclaiming the commons is a "peace dividend," which could amount to hundreds of billions of dollars if fully implemented. Recall that the U.S. went in a matter of a few years (1930s and 40s) from a staunchly isolationist mentality to "policeman of the world." Neither extreme isolation nor super-power status is viable for long in the age of an emerging globalization. Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan lasted far too long, if even justified in the first place. Europe and Japan really should have no American troops stationed there, for their own police systems are adequate. Many military bases at home or abroad need strict review in an age of rapid deployment of forces.

National military establishments are becoming outmoded, especially when about one-and-a-half trillion dollars is required to maintain these armed forces. The only possible saving grace for such global deployment is when a natural disaster occurs, some of these can respond quickly in a disciplined manner to offer peacetime assistance. Coordinating national forces (NATO, African Union, etc.) has been regarded as a step in the right direction for peacekeeping duties. By the autumn of 2006, the recruitment of UN personnel for work in Lebanon and Sudan had swelled the UN peacekeepers' ranks to nearly 100,000.

Security forces can be used in the case of major disasters. The earthquake disasters in 2010 in Haiti and 2011 in Japan did lead to some military forces responding in peacetime duties. When the Berlin Wall crumbled and the Cold War ended in 1990, many had hopes that military budgets in post-Cold-War days would be dramatically reduced -- a peace dividend. However, the military-industrial complex thought otherwise. The so-called "war on terrorism" has contributed to increasing military budgets, making the task of the twenty-first century Pax Americana quite costly.

Peacekeepers ought to come from affected regions of conflict, where possible. The hesitancy to arm peacekeepers is debatable; self-defense and defending innocent civilians are legitimate reasons for arming such units. However, only a minor part of the current global military budget goes to training, equipping, and transporting

UN peacekeepers to conflict zones such as Kosovo, Sudan, Somalia, or Libya. Peacekeeping is an arena where a federated-global organization with enforcement powers is emerging as a necessity. However, additional billions of dollars from an expanded GDF (\$10 billion) could help establish permanent bases in volatile areas and provide training for global police contingents, which could be dispatched rapidly when emergencies arise. Aircraft and other vehicles could minimize dependence on nations with standing armies. Often, poorer nations furnish personnel to staff and fill the ranks of peacekeeping contingents; the need is for training and equipment to handle global conflicts.

The American military/industrial complex presses for its pet "Star Wars Program" and expensive equipment, which have consumed billions of dollars and will not add one iota to security. Aircraft carriers and stealth bombers costing billions have the same inevitable result of heavy military costs and little or no security gain. The U.S. superpower with a majority of the world's military expenditures is a major consumer of world resources. Tanks and heavy equipment that consume two to three gallons of precious fuel per mile (yes, per mile) need to be far fewer in number. Weaponry becomes costly due to outrageously-paid defense contractors. In a perverse manner, the power of the military/industrial complex makes conversion to peacetime uses seem unobtainable. Conversion will come from an aroused citizenry, not from military leaders. Less militarization means greater security and the opportunity to give peace a chance.

#### 4. Full Employment

*"Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us," they answered." (Matthew 20:6-7)*

Each year on Labor Day, speakers call for full employment; they champion the cause of just wages, pension plans, and insurance benefits. They may speak of the right of every citizen to contribute positively through work to benefit their immediate families and a global community, along with the duty of the government to be an employer of last resort. Work needs to be done to repair and rebuild the infrastructure of our country, to educate the illiterate and poorly educated, to care for the elderly and sick in an adequate manner, to build affordable housing, to reclaim damaged lands, and to initiate a renewable energy economy. Authentic development requires more, not fewer, employees. A limited number of potential workers and job possibilities is not the bottleneck; rather, finding financial means to pay workers for filling genuine needs is. Curtailment of military spending along with tax reforms could provide finances needed for full employment -- even with resulting lower-paying jobs.

At least elemental fairness means we must harken back to the *Works Progress (later Projects) Administration (WPA)* during the Great Depression, during which eight million got jobs to help support themselves and their families. No one doubts that today such meaningful jobs could be created in addressing our badly neglected infrastructure, or the multitude of services needed by the young, elderly, ill, illiterate and disabled. The work is there; the people are willing; only the funding resources are lacking. The answer seems so obvious: tax the rich and use governmental funds and create the jobs. The drawback is that legislators who could bring this about are beholden to the rich for their positions.

It took the human race millennia to determine that slavery and forced labor conditions ought to be banned. Unfortunately, such conditions still exist today including the inability to work in a meaningful manner -- a form of enslavement. Private enterprise does not deliver quality work to all, especially since much "make work" of the past is now performed by mechanical means in a more technical society. However, service work opportunities abound and eager hands coupled with trainable minds and willing hearts could do a host of tasks for others, e.g., care-giving, teaching, assisting the disabled, repairing the environment, growing adequate food, and constructing proper lodging and sanitation systems for the people.

If citizens have a duty to be good citizens, the state has a duty to provide them a livelihood. Citizens are expected to vote, to defend one's country, and to serve on a jury; the state owes citizens the opportunity to be creative through work. The state must be the ultimate employer when traditional economic systems limit numbers of workers. Unemployment is unacceptable both for the willing and the lazy, though creative work for the latter is a challenge. *Anyone who would not work should not eat* (II Thessalonians 3:10). The current system creates a pool of the unemployed to serve as reserve -- a demeaning reserve, especially for the long-term unemployed. Hopefully, they will organize and take what is rightfully theirs in a non-violent manner. Some may say, "Work opportunities do not exist"-- a blatant lie. Rather, work opportunities are enormous, but financial resources to pay for them are not forthcoming due to a weak and unsustainable political/economic system that fails to reapportion resources.

Unemployment conditions vary considerably from country to country. In some nations un- or underemployment reaches unusually high rates, even to two-thirds or nine-tenths of all workers in parts of Africa. Many nations with emerging economies find it increasingly difficult to create jobs fast enough to meet their rapidly swelling

labor forces. Due to automation, the labor force numbers in many sectors (e.g. coal mining, agriculture, and railroading) is in decline, and this makes the employment picture all the more challenging. The hopelessness found among long-term unemployed workers, leads to family and community discord, substance abuse, and acts of violence and even the temptation to suicide. Workers, when regarded as unneeded, suffers from this horrible misunderstanding -- for in reality this person is needed. Certainly, matching work opportunities with workers becomes a challenge but fair taxes would lead the way. Large amounts spent on anti-terrorism measures could be directed to the world's unemployed, a fertile seedbed of legitimate discontent.

##### 5. Tax and Financial Reform

*Let me have no more of the din of your chanting, no more your strumming on harps. But let justice flow like water, and integrity like an unfailing stream. (Amos 5:23-24)*

Warren Buffett, the major shareholder in the Berkshire Hathaway holding company, is worth over \$50 billion (though he lost about \$11 billion in 2008), but he found he was taxed at a lower rate than the fifteen people in his office who volunteered to compare tax rates. The office average tax rate was 32.9%; his tax rate was 17.7%. Buffett honestly states, "There wasn't anybody in the office, from the receptionist on, that paid as low a tax rate, and I have no tax planning. I don't have an accountant. I don't have tax shelters. I just follow what the U.S. Congress tells me to do." Reporter Merlene Davis asks a searching question, "How much longer do we have to watch the rich getting disgustingly richer?"<sup>13</sup> The answer is disgustingly simple -- until we reclaim the commons.

Multi-millionaires have many tax loopholes and congressional friends to help keep those loopholes coming. Tax-and-spend is not as palatable to the rich as no-tax-and-spend. The poor are burdened by taxes on clothing, liquor, entertainment, auto and gasoline as well as local, state and federal income taxes. The poor pay more taxes in proportion to their total income than do the wealthy. Why not fair taxes? Earn what you desire if that makes you happy, but let us have taxes to take all surplus beyond a modest income. Propaganda campaigns paint raising taxes as universally bad -- but not if fairness means taxing the wealthy who can afford to support revenue-starved governmental agencies. Some corporations pay no taxes because of complex write-offs, deductions, losses and perks. A no-new-tax campaign is fiscally irresponsible when fairness is not present. The specter of wasted governmental funds is called a reason for less government -- but excessive military budgets supported by fiscal

conservatives make this argument somewhat hollow. Tax fairly.

**Higher motivation, lower salaries?** High taxes on rich individuals and corporations with very low taxes on the poor would be the most just and non-violent way to reclaim the commons. Is there any evidence that extravagant and retained incomes mean better service for the Common Good? A living wage is a necessity for life; an excessive salary with perks running into the millions of dollars is a trigger for destructive anger and misuse of a limited pie.<sup>14</sup> Tax havens must be eliminated and excessive salaries taxed (everything beyond a six figure total). Allow high salaries, just tax all beyond a moderate income level set each year. Allow ego-enhancing salaries but immediately tax excess. Let them earn as much as allowed to where they are satisfied with earning a high salary; however, relieve them immediately for the Common Good through taxes on all but a moderate income and in moderate-sized businesses and farms.<sup>15</sup>

### Reflection: Benefits from Redistribution through Fair Taxes

Fair taxes help everyone in many ways:

- \* Tensions would be allayed through a reduction in the disparity in wealth;

- \* Worldwide hunger and lack of potable water could be reduced through subsidizing small farmers to assist in agricultural expenses associated with local food production and improvement of local water systems;

- \* The Global Development Fund and other United Nations programs would have the revenues from fair taxes for their expanding agenda;

- \* A global public housing program would employ thousands of workers, require use of local building materials, and add money to the local economies;

- \* Reduced military expenditures would shift more problem resolution to diplomatic and financial activities, and the military personnel to peacemaking duties;

- \* Terrorism would be reduced along with the security measures now existing to counter terrorist assaults;

- \* Enhanced democracy would occur through direct election of candidates as well as limits on campaign spending;

- \* Renewable energy alternatives would be promoted;

\* Employment would increase with attention given to improvement of infrastructures (roadways, irrigation, high speed railways, park areas, and food and water treatment systems);

\* Health and educational facilities and programs would be expanded to cover basic needs of all people; and

\* Motivation would be purified to where profit motive becomes a spiritual and not a material goal.

## Chapter Nine: Movement of People

*You must not molest or oppress the stranger, for you were once foreigners yourselves in the land of Egypt. (Exodus 22:20)*

Being human means we learn to crawl, walk, run, visit, and migrate. Mobility is part of our restless human nature -- venturing to see the marvelous world, fleeing from dangers, learning about our cultural roots, going to school, searching for work, and enhancing our quality of life through hiking (pure peregrinations). We are who we are through moving about, and we change those we meet on the way: residents, immigrants, tourists, pilgrims, refugees. Free flow of commerce (goods and people) was a major consideration in the American Constitution, which does not allow state-by-state obstacles to interfere. We move about freely, and we note that the EU supports this by eliminating border barriers.

**Free movement** is part of our commons -- and this ought to be championed and encouraged as an integral part of the total reclaiming process. We seek to transcend the social, economic and political barriers that separate us here and now. Reclaiming must be freely undertaken and freely tolerated; defending the free movement of people is of utter necessity.

Freedom of the spirit is expressed symbolically through physical movement from one place to another. Travel includes concern about destinations, exploring new frontiers, challenging circumstances, and possibilities of hardship and risk. All people including tourists and pilgrims have valid reasons on occasion to travel -- and residents in host lands act responsibly by showing hospitality. The welcome mat ought to be out to refugees, those seeking work opportunities, and those who desire political freedom. However, any movement not only affects movers but residents of host places as well. Often mass movements are to be avoided because of the disruptive effects. The possibility of hundreds of millions moving to escape rising oceans later in this century is a haunting concern of many who have foresight.

Some estimate that a quarter of a billion people could be forced to move in this century due to climate-change conditions -- movement unprecedented and with massive consequences.<sup>1</sup>

### a) Infringement on Movement of People

*None of their members were ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from them to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any members who might be in need. (Acts 4: 34-35)*

In theory, all people ought to be free to move about. In practice, however, human mobility quickly runs into problems: restrictions on leaving, traveling, or arriving by those seeking work opportunities or forced to move due to oppression; false reasons for inducing one to change residence; and extravagant means of travel in going from place to place.

1. Work Opportunities -- All things considered, it seems far better that work opportunities be met at the place of origin; thus less disruption to families and community are involved and all can enjoy being together. Work opportunities could be brought to workers rather than have them move elsewhere, but labor history goes on. Barbarians crossed the Rhine into the Roman Empire; eager Mexicans cross the Rio Grande; Chinese farmers migrate to eastern industrial cities -- all part of a grand sweep of people to something more promising. A host of challenges includes decent lodging, work permits, fair pay, and health benefits for newcomers. Some welcome migrants because they are willing to work; others build barriers to stop their movement.

A better quality of life is a valid reason for people to move from one place of work or residence to another. Many of our ancestors felt justified to come to America for better work and long-term opportunities (my grandfather came because he wanted to grow grapes). For the most part, immigrants have willing hands and open hearts; so ought residents to have hospitable faces and open hands to receive those coming; our immigrating ancestors expected as much. The struggle to get the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) legislation approved has been part of this ongoing concern by residents who welcome the work performed, but not the worker coming to do the job.

Still, movement of working people involves problems related to the source of migration and/or the magnetic forces attracting people to a particular destination. Primitive hunters and gatherers were drawn to more abundant food supplies; nomadic herders from the time of Cain and Abel looked for grazing opportunities; wholesale

migrations at the late stages of the Roman Empire sought economic opportunities within the Empire. Today, North Africans leave areas of unrest for new job opportunities.

2. Forced Movement -- Millions of threatened people move to what they regard as safer areas, such as occurred in the partition of Pakistan and India in 1947. Refugees often seek freedom from persecution or distance from homeland conflicts. In late 2007, two boat loads of West Africans, some with college degrees and special skills, were intercepted near the Canary Islands; it was found that dozens had died for lack of food and water. The dead had been thrown overboard and never reached the Islands, the desired stepping stone to Europe. This mishap occurred one week after charred bodies of a half dozen Latin American migrants were found in wildfire-ravaged canyons in San Diego County, California. Over and over, the toll of immigrants to Yemen or elsewhere breaks into the news.

In 2011, the entire southern tier of Europe braced for a mass immigration due to North African and Middle Eastern revolutions. Native inhabitants await an onslaught. In turn, these residents seek assistance in handling immigrants; they build protective fences and walls, erect "No Trespassing" signs, and they employ security forces. The Roman Empire's border fortifications were meant to keep the tribes out; the Berlin Wall was intended to keep people confined; fencing between Mexico and the United States has been erected to exclude illegal migrants. Confinement, passports, visas, and green cards pertain to people seeking to move about and others to continue exclusive residence without interference. Exclusion can be related to health safety issues (carriers of certain diseases), military action (national secrecy), or ecological concerns (trading in wildlife), as well as to job opportunities.

Human travelers are vulnerable and depend on the permissive and protective nature of residents. Movement of people should not be influenced by total exclusion or total inclusion of the foreigner -- for we all are foreigners. Repressive entrance conditions can hinder the free movement of people through immigration policies (lack of guest-worker programs, discrimination, and ejection of illegal workers without due process). Reception or rejection of political exiles fall within this category. Refugees continue to flee from perceived danger. A valid basic question is, "How can conditions in the place of origin be changed so that refugees can return quickly after a temporary stay abroad?" Air and land travel must also be protected from human trafficking, terrorist attacks, and from harassment and any form of discriminatory practice. While most travelers feel restricted by searches, delays, luggage limits, passports and papers, still most would agree that these can be tolerated in order to minimize

terrorist threats.

3. Travel Modes -- People who move about can infringe upon the environment itself. Those traveling to fragile places (see Chapter Three) can damage the environment by the mode of travel, or the waste left behind after their visit. In the spring of 2011 a clean up of Mount Everest yielded twenty tons of garbage left behind by climbers of that fragile mountain. Travel modes differ in carbon imprint. More energy-intensive air travel is regarded as a necessity by the traveler, e.g., to get to destinations quickly. Jet travel for frequent vacations results in a severe carbon footprint and accompanying pollution. Eco-tourist critics say that such travel should be made by public transit and infrequently. The impulse to visit exotic places can be compensated partly by virtual (video, audio, and Internet) communication; thus people may refrain from the actual physical travel. Desire to see other places exists but a general rule applies: local tourism - frequently, regional/national - infrequently, global - rarely, space tourism - never except for scientific purposes.

Privatized means of transportation are commonplace and have actually been allowed from the earliest days of our republic on toll roads, canals, and rivers -- and now by the airlines. However, today tax-built highways and other public means are being privatized. The Pennsylvania Turnpike, the Chicago Skyway and the Indiana Turnpike have been sold to investors, even foreign ones. In fairness, passageways of travel ought to remain in the public domain for the benefit of all the people. They allow the commons to encourage the free movement of people.

#### **b) Shorter-Term Citizen Actions**

*Rise Yhwh in your power! We will sing and play in honor of your strength.* (Psalm 21:13)

Our living space, speaking broadly, is meant to be shared with strangers. Often localities welcome laborers when help is needed in meatpacking, construction or agricultural harvests -- and yet they speak differently about sharing educational and health opportunities that require resources. A worker-permit-managed approach along with readily available housing would protect people from the "sharks" who prey on innocent immigrants. Illegal migrants face unresolved problems: deportation that can break up entire families; lack of welfare and support groups; lack of sanctuary (however, San Francisco is a "sanctuary city"); and lack of compassion for refugees and migrants. These persons are not criminals, but hardworking people willing to pay taxes and to improve their status in life. Let's

welcome them.

1. Hospitality and Compassion for Strangers -- Immigration is a global issue, but quickly becomes a concern of local communities on migration routes or near migrant destinations (e.g., Malta or Arizona). Hospitality and compassion are called for at all times, but overburdened regions can find this stretched to the limit. Because of the global nature of immigration most of these movements of people can affect local destinations severely, and yet must be seen in global terms. Agencies are needed to administer to the needs of refugees and victims of human trafficking, to expected large numbers of ecomigrants in the twenty-first century, as well as to poor residents who need financial assistance.

2. International Refugee Services -- Worldwide refugees (in recent years numbering about twenty-five million) are often regarded as temporary (four and a half million Iraqis alone in 2010) due to rebellions, civil strife and major forms of repression. Others regard the political conditions of their homelands as such that they do not wish to return and prefer to settle elsewhere, preferably in more affluent countries. The UN and other refugee programs strive to meet the essential needs of political and economic refugees, who may include a new wave attempting to escape looming environmental disaster caused by climate change. Up to 17 million in Bangladesh have fled their homes in recent years because of flooding, and that number is expected to increase with rising sea levels. In late 2008, Anote Tong, president of the low-lying Pacific island nation of Kiribati, said the entire nation of 100,000 people is exploring a mass migration to higher grounds.<sup>2</sup>

**Funding:** *World Refugee Services* could use funds provided by GDF (\$2 billion) in shelter, health, education, and return of refugees in developing lands. However, much more funding should come from current private and faith-based sources.

3. Human Trafficking Cessation -- Too many unfortunate people move through false allurements or servitude; they may be unsuspecting women or youths destined most unknowingly for the sex industry in wealthy nations. These unfortunate victims are promised employment, which turns out to be prostitution or involuntary servitude. The penniless victims soon discover that they are far from home, do not know the local language, and are caught in a trap. Loose immigration practices have encouraged some of this within the EU by incorporation of Eastern European nations. Better migration controls could curb, if not halt, human trafficking. If a person being brought across the border has a legitimate sponsoring agency, a certain transparency is present. Passports, green cards and visas must be verified.

Other human trafficking involve boys and girls (child soldiers), who are swept up by rebel armies, given bare sustenance, and forced to endure all sorts of privations. After they have experienced years of trauma, it is difficult to reorient them to normal lives of youth and to basic education. Here governmental support and encouragement of *faith-based initiatives* are needed, for the difficult task of reintegration of child soldiers into society, and returning them to their homelands, is often a burden on many assistance groups.

4. Human Rights Commission -- Human rights regarding freedom of movement (physically or emotionally) underpin the issues of the Common Good for all. The right to express oneself freely in religion, press, and normal assembly are often infringed upon. To address such grievances, commissions dealing with citizen rights exist in many states, as well as at national and international levels. These commissions focus on exposing problems and determining safeguards for those suffering from the following: unjust imprisonment for crimes; torture or inhumane treatment as war prisoners; lack of freedom of expression in worship and speech; child labor and human trafficking; oppression due to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or social and economic status; or other human rights violations. State, national and international commissions ought to include anti-torture and political asylum legislation.

**Funding:** Transition taxes could be used to create and fund an agency to work closely with the Human Rights Commission. Added funding is needed with estimated annual GDF (\$0.5 billion) for anticipated expanded operations.

5. World Criminal Court -- Crimes against humanity, including those listed as promoting human trafficking, should be punished through international legal procedures. Many Americans and others with a nationalist bias fear upcoming surrender of legal process to international bodies. Globalization exacerbates the problem. Modern communication makes distant places appear more enticing; modern transportation allows a degree of movement denied to former generations. In many cases, the forced inclusion or exclusion of people leads to criminal acts such as repression of people's free movement, mistreatment of refugees, forced return of people, and trafficking in human beings. Such effects demand international justice.

Ultimately, a *World Criminal Court*, currently the International Criminal Court (ICC) situated at the Hague, needs the power to subpoena, call for the arrest, trial, conviction, and punishment for the culprits of crimes against humanity. Some regard the "surrender"

of reserved authority to this global court as abhorrent and a closed issue. However, the U.S. evolved from colonies through the Articles of Confederation to the national constitution in 1787. History has come to urge the next evolution from nationhood to a federated global system. The ICC accepts the difficult issues of "crimes against humanity" (Darfur, Bosnia, Rwanda, Libya) but is currently hampered by restricted powers and lack of an associated enforcement arm. When extending the definition of "crimes against humanity" to include the looting or stealing of national wealth or exploitation by corporate special interests, the ICC agenda expands enormously. It needs authority and encouragement to pursue international criminal cases.

**Funding:** An expanded ICC can not function solely on fines; the expanded budget could come from the GDF (\$0.50 billion).

6. Space Travel and Global Space Agency -- Long distance research and cultural travel are justified; however, since such travel is resource intensive, it ought to be undertaken rarely. While some battle light pollution, star-gazing ought to be justified; astronomical scout merit badges encouraged, school tours sponsored to observatories and to national space centers, and videos and lectures made available on space programs. We are always encouraged to star gaze as form of travel. We are free to observe with the naked eye cosmic showers, changes of the planets, or identify the North Star, Big Dipper, or Orion -- at no extra travel or instrumental expense. We marvel that early heavenly observers could determine so much with crude instruments, that they could chart their sea travels by the stars and know when the solstices would occur. Simple space travel can be encouraged through observing, enjoying and spreading word about the heavens.

Plane travel affects many parts of the commons: air and noise pollution, passenger safety, and health effects through rapid travel from many destinations and through areas containing existing health problems. When air travel was severely restricted after September 11, 2001, the American atmosphere became noticeably clearer, indicating that air travel does have some effect on our surroundings; it also became quieter (Chapter Seven). Air traffic noise can be reduced through restrictions on flight paths and on when and where to travel. International air traffic efforts include standardized commands, signals, and flight procedures in the movement of passenger and cargo planes in the airways. Without some standardization increased air traffic would be chaotic and increasingly hazardous.

The fictional stories about escaping our polluted planet for another involve expensive space ships of a *Star Wars* variety, along with the elite selected to populate outer space. What about the

emerging elite space travel for the very privileged? A few years ago, a rich American named Dennis Tito paid the Russian space agency twenty million dollars for a ride to the new space laboratory being built in outer space. He called himself the "first space tourist," but that has been contested. On December 2, 1990, Toyohiro Akiyama, a reporter for the Japanese television station TBS traveled on the same type of Soyuz rocket as Tito, and docked with Mir -- at a cost of millions of dollars. In 1991, Helen Sharman also traveled to Mir. But it was not just the Russians who commercialized the space program. In 1985, NASA launched Senator Jake Garn aboard the space shuttle Discovery. Senator John Glenn's second ride was as a senior citizen.

Space proponents seek "commercial" flights, which only the rich can take -- at much taxpayers' expense. Just such high-roller tourists rode an American submarine when it accidentally struck and sank a small Japanese fishing expedition near Hawaii and killed nine (including some young students). In 2006 Russia developed plans to institute a program for more space tourists to help pay its space program bills. Space tourism is costly, for space travelers live with artificial life support systems, need multi-million-dollar lift-offs, and require technical backup from programs and agencies, which costs money. Space travelers do not pay their way; they merely get in the way. For millennia, travel was regarded as a "journey" (with associated difficulties) rather than a trip. The "journey" in Columbus's voyages and the Lewis and Clark Expedition involved risks to human safety. Recall Amelia Earhart's flight around the world in the 1930s and the first trans-Australian trek in 1861.

Today's space program has many international cooperative features (e.g., International Space Station); however, this program is expensive and requires a high level of sophistication along with launch and control capabilities. However, after serious accidents such as the destruction of the returning Columbia space shuttle in February, 2003, space exploration needs to incorporate more unmanned (and inherently safer) projects. The 2007 shooting down of a space satellite by the Chinese (United States and Russia have carried out comparable exploits) has resulted in dangerous space junk (see Chapter One). Orbiting communications satellites are key to the rapid exchange of global information and require global cooperation. Launching, regulating, fee-collecting, monitoring and terminating such satellites demand a "Global Space Agency." Atmospheric scientific research using satellites and other information sources is quite necessary for fuller understanding of climatic changes. Scientific space probes, telescopes, space laboratories and international space programs are expensive; sponsorship can only be afforded by wealthier nations.

### c) Interior Ecology for Reclaimers

*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)

Reclaimers must launch their own spiritual journeys involving their interior ecology -- intellectual, emotional and physical balance. We all have work to do for this balance, but having examples in human history of models to follow makes the task easier. Christians have such a model.

Jesus shows a soft side, namely his mercy and compassion for overlooked people -- when he weeps over Jerusalem. At the same time, Jesus, the prophet, shows holy anger when denouncing the Pharisees or driving moneychangers from the temple. Jesus has the rare ability to balance seemingly conflicting emotions and to express each in its proper turn; he is a perfect model of ecological balance. At the time of Jesus, major commerce in Jerusalem involved exploitation of the poor by temple business leaders. Jesus responds in four ways: he drives out those buying and those selling; he overturns the moneychangers' tables; he prevents anyone from carrying any vessels from the temple precincts; and he teaches.<sup>3</sup> Jesus' concern is the poor's access to the temple, "A house for all the people."

Reclaimers of the commons are challenged to show mercy and yet become confrontational. One can be angry enough to punch holes in wallboard, which may relieve pent-up anger, but society demands that we repair punched holes. Control of excesses is necessary even with righteous anger -- for how else can the world be a better place? Historically, heroic people, from prisoners of conscience to people living ordinary lives, have been challenged to maintain a sustained anger against wrongdoing of all sorts. Silence is not an acceptable option. Advocates for justice must take risky and unpopular positions. It is hard to be always merciful; it is doubly hard to sustain righteous anger and mercy in equilibrium over that long period. Balancing acts of compassion and those of confrontation takes energy, for burnout must be avoided, and goals require time even beyond our lifetime. This proposed balance means we take care of physical and mental health, pace ourselves as energy levels decline, and live within our economic means.

Reclaimers who learn balance feel uneasy in being called "commoners." Such a designation includes the underprivileged, the marginalized, the lowly, the ones regarded in a worldly way as powerless. In fact, *commoner* has been used in English history to mean those who are not nobles or clergy (Lords), and the ones who are

represented in the "House of Commons." Maybe far more of us are commoners than we care to admit, and perhaps we ought to be in solidarity with common folks. As we have previously indicated, we join forces with colonists in human history who in their revolt against the crown (privileged by power) regarded themselves as commoners. Thus all who are not privileged by wealth or power are commoners of whose company we aspire.

Radical sharing of the commons involves identifying those in most need, the poor, and to encourage all to work together in rising up and initiating a process of healing our wounded Earth. By broadening the concept of commons and commoner, we discover attributes of the person who shares and can be a servant model for us. Most individuals are not gifted with each and every aspect of what it takes to be an ideal public citizen or commoner, but these different characteristics are worthy of our aspirations and efforts to practice them. We could take a series of ideal persons and make a composite; better still we could seek to find one person who contains all attributes -- if such is possible; an ideal model could help us confront our individual obstacles.<sup>4</sup>

Each of the previous areas of commons find certain characteristics emerging, and these will be mentioned in turn:

1. Air/space -- Serenity in the face of creative mystery;
2. Water -- Assertiveness of those in need of clean water;
3. Land -- Loyalty by those wed to land in some fashion;
4. Culture -- Joviality in order to stay connected;
5. Health -- Solicitude for the ones who need additional care;
6. Intellectual -- Discipline required to master the resources at the frontiers of knowledge;
7. Quietude -- Sensitivity to the needs and weaknesses of different people;
8. Commerce -- Ambition that must be checked on tendencies to possessiveness;
9. People -- Wisdom to be change agents.

1. Serenity -- *Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road...* (Luke 24:32). The ideal commoner cannot be in turmoil through substance abuse or other interior disorders. Such a commoner must know interior tranquility and peacefulness. The Spirit brings this peace of soul, and the individual knows he or she is on the right course even though work ahead may seem overwhelming. A good motto is "do the best you can." If we do, then our limitations can be accepted more easily, and we are not disturbed by our own stumbles and falls. Serenity creates a calming environment that undoubtedly will affect the disturbed; calm comes with being ourselves -- a breath

of fresh air.

2. **Assertiveness** -- *Zeal for your house will devour me* (John 2:17). The citizen must step forward and be public about what he or she holds dear. We cannot hide a lamp under a bushel basket, but must allow it to light the entire room. Opportunities avail themselves and we must be first to see them and respond in creative ways. The times are too pressing to remain silent or to withdraw from the battle. Boldness requires a prophetic stance and a risk of being unpopular in the act. Today, the move to privatize free water is an egregious enclosure that requires public confrontation.

3. **Loyalty** -- *This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.* (John 15:12). People with duties know that they must take responsibility for their actions. Even amid difficulties, loyal people attempt to do what is expected. This loyalty extends to neighbors whether close at hand or far away. A certain creativity exudes from the loyal heart giving a freedom to act and to be focused and steady in pursuit of needed goals, especially for those we love -- the hungry, the homeless, the threatened plants and animals. Loyalty means breaking away from self-centeredness and being willing and able to sacrifice for others, no matter how long-term or difficult the service.

4. **Joviality** -- *Fill the jugs with water, and they filled them to the brim...* (John 2:7). Balance is an important aspect of the ideal commoner and that includes our cultural celebrations. A sense of social life gives harmony to the stresses of everyday living, so a light-heartedness is present that can be tapped into, when humor and good will are called for at serious times. People need to enjoy themselves and share that enjoyment with others. Freeing people includes releasing the bundles of latent laughter and good will. In contrast, the overly serious individual makes life tough for everyone and actually deflects needed cooperation.

5. **Solicitude** -- *No, anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant* (Matthew 20:26). The change agent serves others and is willing to sacrifice in order to reach those in need. This requires a concern for the physical and spiritual health of others. Caregivers and medical professionals often show this characteristic caring attitude. Carelessness about our fellow human beings in this world greatly retards the reclaiming process. Change agents must show solicitude in demanding financial resources to extend health access to all people -- truly a demand.

6. **Discipline** -- *I have come not to abolish but to complete them* (the Law or the Prophets) (Matthew 5:17). This requires an exacting

person who does each thing just right. A person must be attuned to the need for details and have a handle on them (some do not), or have assistants who can execute detailed work. Lack of discipline in mustering intellectual resources and properly communicating them weakens the ultimate reclaiming process.

7. **Sensitivity** -- *As he drew near and came in sight of the city he shed tears over it* (Luke 19:41). All who seek to help others must be sensitive to their neighbor's immediate needs. In order to cultivate this sensitivity reflection and prayer time are in order -- and this requires coming to terms with one's own feelings as well as the immediate needs of those around us. Change agents must intuit the needs of others for change and come to their defense through breaking the prevailing silence. Affluence becomes a shield and barrier insensitive to human needs, and this must be countered by agents who realize that salvation demands sensitivity to those in need.

8. **Ambition** -- *Repent, and believe the Good News* (Mark 1:15). The task before us must succeed or else we will remain a world of haves and have-nots. While success in the eyes of modern commerce is highly materialistic, it needs to be challenged -- and this takes strong ambition. It takes ambition to speak and to challenge the disparity of wealth, to loosen the bonds of tax havens, and to distribute wealth to those who need it most.

9. **Wisdom** -- *His teaching made a great impression on the people because he taught them with authority...* (Matthew 7:28-29). The wise know that one must make hay while the sun shines for our time is short and our resources limited. The wise are more willing to set priorities and thus avoid foolish wasting of precious resources. Wisdom deserves respect, but it takes some insight to recognize the wise -- and that means a respect for elders that is so prevalent in more primitive civilizations. Discover, support, and promote change agents in our midst.

#### d) **Change Agents**

Catalytic "agents of change" arise from the ranks of commoners, for they are the ones who accelerate the transition process. A "select few" from the commoner ranks are needed, but not in the sense of elite privilege above or beyond the rest. Rather, these leaders are the few from within the common ranks who are willing to sacrifice for others in a very special way -- to go ahead of others in time, not above them. Catalytic change agents vary in the sense of mission:

\* Some stand outside, aloof, and offer clarity or advice as though removed and at a distance from the change process system; these want

to be connected in some way, but not to be identified as commoners as such -- **a first degree of humility.**

\* A deeper degree of commonality is experienced among those who stand in solidarity with the commoners. Here people not only give a donation of some kind but become one in assisting others in obtaining resources -- **a second degree of humility.**

\* The deepest and most immersed level involves those who become totally involved in the activity as such, participating in the fullness of not saying "they" but rather "we" the poor. At this deepest level, making things happen occurs because we, not they, need to take what is rightly ours and to do so from within the ranks of the commons -- **a third and deepest degree of humility.**

The most effective agent of change is a prophetic witness who is not exterior to the group; rather, this person is immersed in the "dough" of the poor masses, the leaven needed to raise the dough. Without leaven, rising will not occur; through another Biblical metaphor, without a spark, the conflagration will not be ignited. Catalysts (and sparks as well) need to be at the right place at the right time. Jesus speaks of yeast (a biological catalyst) and says that his chosen followers are to be immersed in the world but not to belong to its course of actions (John 17:14). He carefully selects and trains them, and so selectivity is not overlooked; it is simply not based on prior privilege. One may expect learned outsiders, but not so here. Only those from the ranks of the poor can be sensitive to the urgency requiring change; they know better what resources are needed; and they can better assure that missions will get accomplished with sparse resources.

The principle of subsidiarity serves as a model template for service: the candidate for leadership is not to be a person who is an upwardly mobile bureaucrat, who strives for top post, but rather one who has experience coordinating various levels of governance. Movement upward (preferably visualized as outward) should go to the one who served best in coordinating at lower levels. The health of the whole depends on coordinating efforts of all levels working simultaneously. The catastrophe we face today cannot be solved on a single level, only through cooperation from grassroots to the global sphere. It takes a special talent to fill all ranks. The characteristics of the ideal reclamer from the previous sub-section are extended here to include change agents:

1. **Peace of Soul** -- Change agents speak in full confidence that they are doing what they can. While we are deeply disturbed about conditions in the world around us, we cannot let such disturbances

torture our soul. To be stressed consumes energy and disturbs the quality of our work. However, an interior ecology of soul brings peace that radiates to others. Past experience in combatting interior turmoil is helpful here, along with spiritual companionship and direction. The interior tranquility in knowing we are doing the best we can is counterbalanced by an exterior urgency to do still more and more. Being at peace within and agitated without is the heart of the catalytic agent's stance.

2. **Public Witness** -- Agents must be assertive and seen as standing out and showing courage. Some can become popular and be heard in all the media outlets, at least until the public tires of their message. Others rise rapidly through popularity or fame, and still others will have to wait until after their own deaths to get their more authentic message across. Change agents are willing to follow paths that lie ahead and still do what can be done at the opportune time regardless of possible observed success. For example, if fully aware of critical water shortage problems, inspired agents speak publicly even before the issue is critical.

3. **Risk-Taking** -- The prophetic catalyst must be willing to suffer and endure hardship for the sake of the mission. Being loyal to the mission involves risks that may have dire consequences, but this is expected. Due to these possible risks, the agent may be tempted to deny the message (the situation is not as bad as some say), excuse it (experts can take up the issue better than I can), or escape to minor or more pleasant issues. Risks are many: failure to be heard or understood; loss of employment or funding; threats or even physical harm; loss of friendship and association, even separation from relatives and long-time friends; and marginalization through deliberate but unpopular actions. One risk is to redistribute land, an unpopular message.

4. **Lighten Up** -- Agents may have an important role to play, but in the end they are only servants who look to the Almighty as the master builder. Self-importance swells heads without improving results. No one can do everything, for resources are limited, and obstacles continue to get in the way. Change agents accept the seriousness of the task, but stumbling is natural and might even create humorous situations. Can we afford to laugh at ourselves especially given the limitations of our cultural past? In a more serious moment, agents know that as Archbishop Romero's prayer concludes: "We are workers, not master builders, ministers, not messiahs." Even these words can make us chuckle.

5. **Public Concern** -- There is a diagnosis of but not acceptance of current conditions. A public-spiritedness must prevail at all

times, but this can be difficult to sustain. A solicitude about public-interest issues includes recognition of the potentiality of existing and emerging resources, of the current injustice in the exercise of resource access, retention and use, and of failure at proper distribution of these where need is greatest -- in other words, the health of the system. Public concern involves ultimately being successful, but success is not the sole criterion; the main initiating point is the recognized message of need for action. Change agents inspire by focusing attention in a clearly stated manner, even if they lack charisma. A future vision drives them to reclaim the commons for a sick world.

6. **Organization** -- Catalytic agents must rise from within the community: that is, closely connected with it and yet disciplined enough to see that they are ahead of it in time. Many citizens do not yet recognize that change must occur, but agents do. A chemical or biological catalyst must be properly placed in order to be effective; so should change agents. These people have little power working alone, but can be very effective when working beside the right folks who are motivated for action. Together with them, agents have power (Romans 1:4) to give new life. Agents forsake the false humility of permanent individual powerlessness, and join forces with neighbors -- a proper positioning. Within the context of a working group with common goals, agents can serve as key energy points empowered to trigger change among the citizenry.

7. **Emotional Balance** -- Agents must be psychologically balanced because they must be able to handle several seemingly contradictory emotions (mercy and anger, strictness and leniency, patience and need for quick action). The agent must be able to bear being disturbed enough to act and yet balanced enough to continue acting through a period of time. Violence is always a temptation, but a balanced person knows that better options exist for change. Retaining control over anger (and all emotions) is a skill for which some are well suited. If agents are not perfectly balanced, they should be encouraged to defer to associates who can exhibit better emotional control. Reclaiming the commons demands a certain coolness of character and yet hot enough to be confrontational when necessary.

8. **Creativity** -- In the prophetic mission, ambition takes on a special virtue and that involves different ways of approaching individuals, groups or situations. Creative people are able to strike beyond traditional boundaries and to do so in ways recognized by others. Creativity is a gift and needs recognition and affirmation. Support of fellow agents is critically important because both message and creative presentation could come under attack. Creativity also involves mustering resources that are needed to complete the task at

hand, even when cutting short the traditional commercial sources of support.

9. **Urgency in Mission** -- Catalytic agents must recognize urgency when present. The time to act is NOW; the place is HERE; the actors are WE. Focus is now time, place and change agents. Windows of opportunity are narrow. As we age, we become all the more mindful of lost opportunities and leaving everything to another generation. Shortness of life (Psalm 90:12) is understood in a more pressing way by the wise. Our resources are entrusted to our use while we are here (stewardship), and we simply cannot waste them, for they are finite, as are our mortal spans. Each passing day with unattended matters makes the situation worse. Urgency stimulates the agent to strike while the iron is hot.

**e) Longer-Term Citizen Actions**

*Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. (Philippians 2:4)*

Citizen involvement is often put in individualistic terms; furthermore, over the past four decades some of us have suggested a wide variety of environmental actions<sup>5</sup>. However, joint citizen actions go far beyond what most highly charismatic individuals can achieve; such actions need connections to local communities and beyond. Citizens reclaim the common together: economic (demanding fair taxation and proper distribution of tax revenues); religious (advancing social justice issues on moral grounds); social (directly involving the poor); and political aspects (bridging partisan politics for the Common Good).

This phase of social and political discernment includes longer-term individual and community actions that bring about the reclaiming process. Nations must surrender their sovereignty so that the entire world community can gain ownership. We must move from our distinction between **International** actions (among consenting nations), and **global** actions on a transnational scale. This movement can only occur if the commons is regarded as a global concern and subject to federated global action. Such a transformation will require surrender of power, and a mutual process of giving and taking that becomes an ultimate radical sharing process.

Reclaiming the commons involves us as participants, individuals, families, local groups and citizens understanding and contributing to oversight of our broader governmental agencies. Individual and local cooperative activities are treated extensively elsewhere by this

author.<sup>6</sup> Ideally, food, water and housing needs ought to be met at the local level, but that is not always possible. Globalization requires enforcement procedures demanding the surrender of national powers. The myth that "markets will regulate themselves" is the daydream of those who try to convince the public into believing that the rich and powerful are virtuous and smart enough to run things. Globalization is a promise of a world coming together, and a peril if the greedy take control. To preserve the promise and to protect against the peril we must have regulations to counter inevitable irresponsibility.

**How about regulation?** Reclaiming the commons demands effective global agencies. Too often in the past century the U.S. regarded its law as supreme; it failed to surrender sovereignty to UN-related agencies. America, born through the successful surrender of certain states' rights to a federal government, must be first to embrace global agencies capable of enforcing regulations. The reclaiming process will be successful, if it provides all people with the basics of life. Without powerful global agencies, people will continue to be made prey to the wishes of uncontrolled economic marketers, colonizing and exploiting individuals and groups. Protection is needed to counter predatory corporations, petty dictators, and criminals -- and that takes enforced rules.

**How about funding?** Developed and wealthy emerging nations ought to have a fair excess tax on all their wealthier population. No one needs more than a reasonable salary with all excess amounts taxed for support of development projects throughout the world. This tax could be a ready source of funding to match tithing of military budgets as already discussed. In the U.S., a simplified excess income tax on the wealthy (not on the lower-income portion of the population) would help reduce the complexity of current tax regulations. Lower-income people are already taxed sufficiently for items and services by states and local governments. A fair system would remove all money in excess of a fair figure set on the wealthy in each nation. Companies can set salaries as they wish, but taxes should take all but a reasonable remainder.

Many developing nations have accumulated crushing debts, often through robbery by tyrants, wars and natural catastrophes, or through extravagant misguided development projects. *A Year of Jubilee*<sup>7</sup> could help forgive poorer nations' debts. Such events may never have occurred in history, but interest was voiced in the year 2000. At that time the national debts of poorer countries amounted to 2.5 trillion dollars while ignoring past hidden debts due to colonization, exploitation, pollution and unfair returns on trade. "Indebted forgiveness efforts" targeted the seventeen poorest countries. In

early 2007, China forgave \$15 million of Liberia's external debt, which was a symbolic gesture given China's cash reserves were at that time over one trillion dollars, and Liberia had a three-billion-dollar debt. Nicaragua, a candidate for debt forgiveness, has an external debt of \$4.054 billion (2005). Haiti, with 80% of the population below the poverty level, and a severe earthquake victim, had an external debt of \$1.3 billion.

### 1. Reclaiming Social Structures

*Maximized choice and minimized risk encourage voters to forget economic reality.* Canterbury Archbishop Rowan Williams

The five-star Cancun Hotel Coral Beach sought to eject Rigoberta Menchu' (Nobel Prize winner, candidate for the Guatemalan presidency and champion of indigenous rights) because she entered unannounced wearing traditional Mayan attire -- and they thought she was a beggar or street vendor. She was actually the guest of the Mexican president. "The hotel discriminated against real Maya while trying to attract tourists with fake Mayan spectacles."<sup>8</sup>

Reclaiming the commons will meet fierce hostility from those at the upper end of the social spectrum, those who hold the purse strings of our world. While changes may be good news to those seeking adequate and safe food, water, housing, health, education, recreation, and environmental protection, changes may not be so welcome by the wealthy. Their social spectrum is built on a series of artificial structures: cultural bias, educational background, differences in employment and residence, civic and church affiliations, and conformity to community norms. We must confront the false facade of social differences while still affirming a need for profound change for those of greater need.

The status of material possessions must be addressed; the poor are not so because of culpability or laziness. Population growth rates tend to stabilize when economic conditions are stabilized and numbers of children need not be insurance against the vicissitudes of old age. Besides, it is consumer growth, not population growth, that is the principal consideration. Until recently the United States' per capita energy consumption is 500 percent of the world's, wood consumption 400 percent, plastics 700 percent, aluminum 750 percent, steel 300 percent, and cement 200 percent. China's growing appetite for resources is changing this immediate picture. If we are worried about consumption problems, let us confront affluent consumers first, not the poor who are desperate for fuel wood for cooking and heating. While focusing on alternatives for fuel wood gatherers we must confront rampant consumer practices in emerging and wealthy nations.

Misplaced biases and prejudices cannot go unchecked. We may hear this, "Patience, in time the poor will be able to imitate the affluent." However, patience is in short supply for the hungry and unemployed who may take to the street in protest. Forceful repressive measures by those in power are a possibility. But also in the realm of possibility are non-violent means of change such as those led by Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr. The ideal procedure is for change agents to focus on tapping the human resources emerging from the lower portion of the social spectrum. Focusing on the lowly as change agents has many benefits:

**a) Experiencing poverty.** The special poverty issues that must be addressed are better known to the lowly themselves for they are the ones who suffer from lack of access to resources. Who knows the urgency of getting fed better than the ones who are hungry? An upper portion of the social spectrum may attempt to address an issue that they deem opportune and that could grab the attention of others but is of secondary importance. The lowly are hardened by the experiences of hard times.

**b) Risk-Taking.** People at all levels of the social strata are gamblers and risk-takers. The poor are more often risk-takers with greater stakes -- their own and their family's livelihoods. They do not know where tomorrow's bread or health care or other essential will come from. Getting or protecting the bare essentials (food, shelter, utilities) are more authentic areas of risk-taking than the petty concerns of the retainers of luxuries. The risks of the lowly are not always construed as gambling (though the poor include those willing to take big chances). Who takes the greater risk, the broker who wants to invest one more million in an unknown venture, or the one who makes just enough to live, hoping that the bare essentials will come again tomorrow?

**c) Learning to Share.** The poor have to share often within family living circumstances that a wealthier person has never experienced and never even dreamed of experiencing. Granted, not all the lowly will sacrifice, but some do this well and their deeds are known (including by those who become poor with the poor) and are worth imitating by those of good will among the lowly. Often a wealthier person has never had to share a bathroom or bedroom or clothes or a common dish at table. Thus sharing is difficult for the affluent, and radical sharing is a totally new challenge that seems frightening at first.

**d) Belonging to a needy community.** The poor realize that there is a nobility in becoming part of a greater whole that includes others who share their conditions. Thus the goal of a greater good as well as the practices of a life of hard knocks combine to make this an impulse

of the poor, who see that they are part of broader communities of those who lack resources. The selfish are consumed with individual advantage and are blinded to the benefits of attaining community goals.

**e) Believing in a destiny.** Believers include many who are convinced that God is on the side of the lowly and that the ones who are near the lower social status are destined to lead a profound change, for that is the divine way of showing God's almighty power. The poor are destined to be essential within the change process. The primary option is favoring the poor, for the lowly will rise.

**f) Focusing on motivational change.** Radical sharing is the atmosphere in which a just reclaiming of the commons can occur. To share is to come to a better quality of life, and so any social or economic system that shares radically gives qualitative benefit to all. Realizing that the engine that has moved the system for so long, namely profit-motivation, has been interwoven into the fabric of the social system is one thing; being willing to change to a new system is another. Thus a noble goal that the lowly can see more clearly is not the mirage of limited material goods, but the infinite destiny of spiritual gain for all. The lowly are able more easily to see that being "for-profit" can mean for-spiritual-benefit.

2. Challenging Political Structures -- Our ability to reclaim the commons is where ideals enter into the realm of raw practicality, namely politics. Will this idea succeed? Will people get involved? Change agents cannot act without some popular support, and is this available. The political message must be credible so a democratic people will say "yes" in a non-violent fashion, especially expressed through voting. Are we asking for a benevolent dictator? Hopefully democratic process is developed enough that it can rise to the occasion. Here are some basic questions worth pondering:

**Are we interested in credibility, or veracity, or both?** Credibility must be expected by all parties, but it is not the same as veracity, or the quality of truth about claims. Credibility deals with whether something is believable even though the facts or claims may be hard to establish or, in some cases, fictitious. In the ideal order an atmosphere of credibility and veracity nourish and enhance each other.

**Are we overly propagandized?** The current popular media are commercialized and thus beholden to the status quo; it is not interested in real change. However, the media now include a freer agent, the Internet, as a source of information and communication. Major media outlets are subject to materialistic profit-motivation, and are beholden to the established order. Shrinking printed media

will most likely soften efforts to limit wealth, and prefer merely to tweak the system. Citizens will continue to be propagandized, for commercials reach into virtually every home and ear. However, people themselves who see possibilities in African and Middle Eastern revolts may be open to change: to expose the excessive wealth, to reduce finances to the military/industrial complex, and to show human causation in environmental matters. Good News just may be more than daily stock market numbers; we just might change.

**How do we radically share?** The prospect is frightening to the tight-fisted who regard the needy as undeserving. Does radical sharing leave room for legitimate needs of individuals -- personal property, respect for human rights, adequate housing and privacy, reasonable educational and recreational opportunities, health and retirement insurance, basic safety protection, adequate transportation and communication, and ordinary means to grow spiritually and in quality of life? Does such sharing respect the personal areas of life (privacy, retreat space, communications) that are not meant to be shared with others? Does sharing involve taking risks that defy ordinary popular acceptance? If military and safety personnel take risks in their daily duties, should citizens take risks in accepting governmental regulations? Is foregoing democratic process through a failure to participate in civic activities taking unnecessary risks?

**Can reclaiming the commons become a popular public interest issue?** Urgency drives us forward to make needed changes today in so many areas. Financial needs fill the media and we constantly meet needy friends and relatives. Personal contact, Internet exchange and posting of information, letters to the editor, organizing and attending conferences, clever bumper stickers for vehicles, and public service announcements are all part of public interest concerns. The need is to focus on critical issues that affect us all: health insurance, adequate child care, reconstruction of the public infrastructure (roads, bridges, sidewalks, etc.), which are limited by the strapped finances of governmental agencies. If a public fully understands and begins to realize that their own commons is at stake, its popularity will undoubtedly grow. The Internet holds a key to this.

**Should we target political leaders?** To convince the public of the need for change requires genuine leadership -- yet at this writing the elected national legislators poll badly. Still, we know the effects of influence, and thus we must personally contact them or those closely associated with them. We must be willing to write emails or personal letters and phone the leader's office, sign petitions, and confront leaders when they visit our neighborhood and talk to them

about specific issues. We must give them specific scientific reports, essays and detailed information on pertinent issues.

**What about more direct confrontations?** Marches and direct non-violent confrontations may prove necessary in moving the issues forward. This proves more difficult for the physically impaired or older citizens with waning energy levels. The American civil rights marches of the 1960s led to impressive gains for minorities, especially in areas of racial segregation. Today, concentration of wealth must be directly confronted at corporate board meetings, the International Monetary Fund gatherings, and anywhere the financial powers pretend that they are meeting for the benefit of all. At meetings where the financial powers desire to promote their "divine rights," confrontation should occur.

**Must we join particular public interest organizations?** There's one-and-a-half million non-profit groups out there, some ill-focused, some social clubs, some wanting to hold on to a niche of the status quo structure. However, many meaningful groups exist but struggle with limited funding, surviving through voluntary contributions and services. Some people, especially retirees, have experience that can be tapped for the proper functioning of such groups. Globalize the public interest needs via the Internet, for these groups deserve encouragement, volunteer support and creative input. Become friends, because friendship is often lacking when the rank-and-file are hard-pressed and criticized. Learn about particular organizations, make contacts, solicit support, and help steer target groups to reclaiming the commons.

**What about influencing political party platforms and policy?** The phenomenon of political parties has an interesting history, but it does not necessarily mean that vast differences exist between them. In fact, often in two-party nations such as the U.S., differences may be minor and are limited to tweekers of the system. Parties can be vehicles of the status quo, or through honest interchange on the Internet people can become engaged and help influence party platforms and policy. Today, Internet participation allows average citizens to give financial support and to insert their views into the heart of a policy making process. Reclaiming the commons calls for citizen participation. Judgment of citizens is demanded as to whether the system can be changed fundamentally from within political parties or by "independents" who simply choose from the most advantageous of the current tweekers.

A follow-up question involves the limitations of existing political parties and their status-quo-type agendas. We are reminded that during the Civil War, the Republican (war) party shared the

"saving of the Union" political motive with some Northern Democrats, who together formed a "union" movement during the 1864 national campaigning. Such a critical situation could emerge today within the landscape of current political parties. However, that may not be enough. A new "social justice" political party does not have much hope in an embedded two-party tweaker system. "Reclaiming the commons" could be popularized, if it stresses global fair taxation as the vehicle of change. Should a world federalist (or other) political party approach the real questions facing reclaiming the commons? This is an urgent American and a global political question.

**Do we champion freedom of information?** Information is always valuable, but more so in times of grave crisis. Yes, we are witnessing a global catastrophe and we need pertinent and current information. While this is being written, a dramatic drop in people in America and Europe consider climate change of major importance -- due to distractions about financial troubles. Fortunately, the Internet allows large numbers of people easy low-cost access to such information. While Internet information may be unverified, critics pinpoint disputed information quickly. Consider the issue of the use of corn for making biofuels as substitutes for petroleum products. As the discussion evolves it opens gray areas with hidden environmental impacts, higher food costs due to diverting corn to biofuels, calculations for the effects of residual materials as animal feed, and the influence of special interests (ethanol manufacturers) bent on monetary profits.

**Must the UN change in structure?** The previous questions addressed regional and national governmental changes. However, attention to change must move to surrender of national powers to a global body (perhaps a UN successor). In reflecting on reclaiming the commons, we see with increasing clarity that a global body is necessary to regulate and redistribute global resources fairly. Fundamental UN changes are remote, even though a vision of a federated global body minus veto power by the United States, Russia, United Kingdom, China and France is beginning to emerge. Non-veto nations are the primary proponents. What about a bicameral global body where certain nations will have a greater voice through numbers, and another would be each sovereign nation's equal voice? The question is whether nations will surrender authority to a federated global government with enforcement powers.

**Are we gambling on political change?** A myth of the current economic system is that wealth is open for the taking by all -- the "Grand Lotto" winners. The media are quick to note that someone pays two dollars for a winning ticket and gets a quarter of a billion dollars before taxes. The so-called fortunate soul is so very ordinary. The

gambler says, "Maybe I am next," though chances are less than being struck by lightning. Paychecks are cashed, and a portion allotted for weekly gambling, a get-rich-quickly dream that enhance the gambling coffers, with a meager portion to public education and much to the gambling industry. Deception reigns.

Unfortunately many live in this world of material dreams, of sugar coating life's harshness, and in tolerating the unjust current politico/economic system. Gambling crowds out aspirations to resourcefulness and participation for civic change. Diverting daily wages to gambling becomes an overbearing regressive tax on the poor, who crave easy money to pay real debts. How could wage earners be convinced to gamble with direct political action for profound change? Diverting weekly gambling excitement into electing change agents could be a win/win situation. Chance and risk take on new meaning: with effort a new reality could emerge.

**Lobbying**, or the free association with legislators by non-elected interest groups, is heavily skewed in the direction of wealth/power. The word "lobby" is somewhat pejorative and presumes access at the doorsteps of government. However, lobbying can be directed to public interest issues. By imitating the success of special interests in obtaining legislation, public interest groups (civil rights, human rights, welfare, environment, consumers, and others) have lobbied successfully. These highly-motivated individuals and groups know that good legislation requires lobbying. Few shout, "We are the commons;" however, some public interest citizens succeed in educating legislators and introducing policy changes, and these ought to include change agents.

**The Internet** is a tool for the free movement of change agents; the Worldwide Web spreads the word rapidly; its emergence was virtually unpredicted; its growth has been phenomenal; its influence is yet to be measured; its cost per global contact is minimal (far less cost than printed media via postal services). Today search engines find topics of special interest with ease and allow searchers to discover what is available worldwide with far less effort. Specialty publications can flourish over the Internet where they were isolated and virtually unknown in the past. Today, the lowly can spread Good News, provided the Internet remains in the commons and is not taken over by private interests seeking material profits. Vigilance is part of catalytic change.

In summary, changing the system requires political action. Starting a groundswell demands mobile change agents who network, interconnect, lobby, and seek and find public outlets for the message that can be delivered without barriers.

## Reflection: Becoming a Prophet

Paralysis, not free movement, dominates the public scene. Silence ensues where the public denounces materialism as contrary to the Spirit. Where are the believers called to be prophetic? Yes, remaining silent in the face of current materialism is a partisan act, verging on idolatry. To act or not to act is the question, and religious institutions must examine their vital role here. Failure is to ignore the needy. Again, why should the wealthy control global wealth while the destitute go hungry? Is it until a democratic people will no longer tolerate gross inequality?

Silence permeates business, educational, health, and even church circles. Are civic and church leaders expected to be court chaplains to the rich? Established systems, whether secular or religious are often dependent on traditional economic and political systems to survive. Public critique of the existing political system brings disapproval, and a certain covert "red lining" of criticizing institutions or individuals. Who dares to lock horns with loyal supporters and donors who are dutiful promoters of the state religion of Money? Excessive wealth remains overlooked in some religious communities, for that is the hand that feeds religious institutions, which ought to be free.

Today, within consumer society is it unpatriotic to talk about reducing consumption? Do we forget that self-denial is a virtue that is practiced according to religious tradition (Advent, Lent, Ember Days, Ramadan, Yom Kipper, etc.)? We ought to promote self-denial, e.g., saying "no" to drugs and other allurements. Religious-sponsored educational and charitable institutions have generally started quite small and with freedom to act. As they age they prosper, take on larger commitments, must maintain more involved physical facilities -- and lose their freedom. How dare they be so illustrious and speak against the hands that feed them? Thus a gradual almost unnoticed toning down of justice-related issues results. We strive to be dutiful stewards of the gifts that keep the institutions visible, e.g., the Roman Emperor Constantine's legalization of church structures.

Silence mutes prophetic voices and limits private institutions to healing, relief, and teaching. Prophetic witnessing suffers. Even though numerically weak (one-tenth of the population) in the 1770s, churches played an important role in the first American Revolution. Today the majority identify with a religion, and prophetic voices are muted in business, political, and even religious events. Where are prophetic voices? Critical evaluation of

materialistic ads could become game play -- namely creation of anti-commercials to counter deliberately misleading ads, to counter consumer impulse-buying, and to halt compromising of private information on the Internet. Confronting the prevailing culture demands freedom of movement by prophetic change agents.

*Religious leaders should remind us often that the sacred gifts of creation belong to everyone and must be cherished and preserved.*<sup>9</sup>

## Conclusion: Elements of the Emerging Global Commons

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

In the late 1980s the Polish Solidarity movement challenged the collective state system imposed by the Soviet Union after the Second World War. The workers at the Lenin Shipyards, located at Gdansk, Poland, struck and declared that they wanted to be part of collective bargaining on their own terms. They insisted that they were not depersonalized automatons of an almighty state. Furthermore, the workers knew that the system was dysfunctional, and they wanted a voice in worker goals, safety, and general working conditions. Even though their aims were somewhat vague, these workers wanted a democratic but non-capitalistic system that was controlled by worker councils.<sup>1</sup> In fact, these Polish workers were inclined to favor a socially-just system influenced by fellow Pole, Pope John Paul II. Needless to say the Polish workers' aspirations were crushed in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse by the global capitalist system.

The human family of brothers and sisters is one and this unity is shared to some degree with all living beings on this planet; there are no foreigners or those beyond economic privilege. All people, including the poor, have the same rights as the economically privileged. The current world with its heavy emphasis on consumption of goods leads to an insensitivity that distracts us from the social responsibility required to create an ideal order.

Our reflection leads us to know our place (the **HERE**) in preserving air (Chapter One), protecting water (Chapter Two), and reappropriating land (Chapter Three). Threats to our wounded Earth make us focus critically on the current dysfunctional economic/ political system. We consider actions directed to renewable energy, access to potable water, and sufficient land for food production and housing. The urgency (the **NOW**) to act draws our attention to respect the past by celebrating culture (Chapter Four), the granting of a quality of life by affordable health care (Chapter Five), and a current sharing that comes from binding past history and future hopes

communications\intellectual commons (Chapter Six). Such ambitions require immense tolerance for cultural difference and new allocation of financial resources for health access.

Focus and urgency merge in change agents (the **WE**). We must act at the local level and onwards in establishing a balance of sounds and silence (Chapter Seven). On the other hand, we must regard the global starting point to extend fair trade to all people by a control of commerce (Chapter Eight). We must become change agents (Chapter Nine), so that all may share a *Global Commons*. This commons -- both natural systems (atmosphere, hydrosphere, lithosphere and biosphere)<sup>2</sup> and human services and applied technologies -- is the way to a higher quality of life for all.

### 1. Preserving Air

Air belongs to all of us, a commons, and preserving its quality is at the heart of an emerging *Global Commons*. We must begin by acknowledging the glory of undamaged creation, something primitive in its beauty and capacity to elicit immense appreciation by all. Moreover, willful human greed blinds one to beauty and leads to resource damage and destruction. This greed must be countered by an acknowledgment of blame on our parts, either what was actually done or our failing to take social responsibility to check ongoing damage.

**Denial of Harm.** Air (along with water and land) pollution has occurred, especially in this industrialized era. Denial of what is occurring to people, communities, and Earth seems unimaginable -- but actually exists today. This denial comes in various forms: refusal to concede the seriousness of environmental impact; duration of harm; or degree or target of blame. Air pollution includes degrees of impact caused by excess carbon dioxide, nitrogen and sulfur oxides, particulate matter, and ozone resulting from combustion of fossil fuels. Also, radioactive emissions can result from preparing nuclear fuel and power generation mishaps.

**Accepting Blame.** Each area of the commons demands confrontation with those who would take over, privatize and enclose what belongs to all. One of the most dangerous movements in this twenty-first century has been the polarization of partisan politics to where some deny climate change even in the face of overwhelming scientific evidence. This basic **denial** has been legitimized according to certain political parties and thus retards a global effort absolutely needed to save our wounded planet.

**Restoration.** In delving into the mystery of created beauty, we see needs that reach to practical goals such as filled stomachs, access

to health benefits, and safe and affordable shelters. Solidarity with the world's needy means sharing their dreams as part of an emerging "spiritual commons." "Good bye and good luck" does not satisfy a hungry person; words are not enough. Turning away from harmful activities opens possibilities to a variety of remedies: enforcing existing anti-pollution regulations; resource conservation; recycling of materials and refraining from use of certain items and spacious living conditions; and promoting alternative renewable and clean fuels that do not emit the pollution that causes the harm, e.g., renewable energy such as solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal, tidal and some biofuels.

**Element One** -- *The Global Commons must be preserved from human-caused harmful actions.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- This right to air cannot be commercialized by some for their own personal benefit.

**Practical Corollary** -- A renewable energy program must be instituted to replace polluting non-renewable fossil fuels.

## 2. Protecting Water

Water is essential for life and is a commons. Protecting water is a public function, for the common good of all depends on adequate supplies of drinking and other high quality water. This protection involves both water quality and quantity, especially when higher quality water becomes more scarce. One arena of protection is from privatizing efforts by some who desire to control water source or distribution for their own individual benefit. In many cases, essential water supply extends beyond the immediate locality, and so higher levels of government are required to ensure protection of watersheds, aquifers, glaciers and lakes. Water protection emerges as a major twenty-first century issue due to increasing human urbanization, overuse, possible climate changes affecting water levels and rainfall, and water pollution through sanitation, industrial and agricultural operations. A supply of clean water is emerging as a twenty-first century core issue.

**Greed** appears as individuals and groups seek to privatize scarce water that has always been regarded as "free." To take for individual private benefit what is regarded as a people's right is a dangerous precedent. The water commons calls out for governmental protection from private efforts by certain individuals and profit-seeking organizations. Today, an ever-more-thirsty world awakens to find those with legal and economic neocolonial power or entitlement declare their private "right to water." This action makes others in want

beholden to them for that which belongs to the public in the first place.

**Confronting water scarcity** includes protecting it from privateers, polluters, hoarders, and sufferers of affluenza. Tackling this emerging problem makes us more aware of how to treat the *Global Commons*, which is emerging as a goal in issues of current ownership and "belonging." What "giving and taking" means with a scarce resource expands the arena of elemental social justice. Access to essentials extends from water and food to include access to health and other services. Improved water regulations can be utilized beyond localities to regional, national, and to global resource issues.

**Element Two** -- *The Global Commons must be protected in times of scarcity. This issue becomes cogent and urgent when some attempt to take for private gain that which belongs to the commons.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- Water is not to be privatized as though it is a resource for the taking by the powerful and turned into a private source of material profit.

**Practical Corollary** -- Every effort must be undertaken to fight commercialization of water. Fair fees for transporting or purifying water may be exacted but with recognition that the water itself belongs to those who need it.

### 3. Apportioning Land

*The land is sacred. These words are at the core of your being. The land is our mother, the rivers our blood. Take our land away and we die.* Mary Brave Bird, Lakota

Land is definable, and portions of this limited planetary land surface are to be apportioned for particular use (essential food production, residences, wilderness, fragile protection, etc.). Luxury control or "property rights" are always secondary and those who control land do not have a right to damage it and further restrict its future use. Proper land use is part of the Commons.

Many of the world's people regard land itself as sacred and a commons held by all. Some cultures respect property rights to land and settlement rights, but this is not an absolute right but conditional to the needs of the Common Good. People of the Book<sup>3</sup> regard God as owner, and human beings as temporary stewards or caretakers of the land. The *Global Commons* with reference to land and land use has immense spiritual dimensions, for some land is holy, consecrated or

dedicated to worship.<sup>4</sup> Land is "ours" to use, not something to which we are entitled; land is a divine gift, which we are invited to acknowledge through public worship.<sup>5</sup>

**Absolute land use rights** is an erroneous concept that has permeated Western, and especially American, land use patterns in recent centuries. Large land properties (e.g., estates), held over time by wealthy individuals or groups, go beyond essential land use. A "right" to allow land to erode or to be stripped of protective cover is a grievance that require corrective action. Damaged land must be reclaimed. Vacant or underused land may be taken by government for common use as roads, ports, or for urgent residential or agricultural needs. The **right to property** is conditioned according to essential need (food, lodging, etc.).

Areas of wilderness needed by flora and fauna to flourish are also commons; such land must be declared off-limits to human disturbances. Eco-consciousness grows and expands neighborliness to all plants and animals, especially endangered or threatened species. In recent times, foreign or exotic plants and animals have become invasive mainly because distance between us has narrowed and care can now touch all planetary creatures.

**Element Three** -- *Land holdings are of various sorts and ought to be defined and controlled for the sake of wilderness, fragile lands protection, and proper use for essential needs.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- Private land property for farming and housing is affirmed, provided this is not excessive.

**Practical Corollary** -- Land use includes: erosion control, regional zoning rules, national wildlife habitat, protection of fragile lands, and defending endangered flora and fauna.

#### 4. Celebrating Culture

Our Commons includes our past history that is worthy of celebration. The commons belongs to... us, him, her, them, etc. People on this Earth in their respective local communities own the commons like we "own" the individual spans of our lives. Ambiguity colors our journey of faith. In one way it is our journey, and in another way it exceeds locality and includes an entire world. Many trod rough paths; they labored, gave birth, reared offspring, fought wars, saw families disperse, and often died early -- and at times they skipped and played and sang and celebrated common events. Our concern includes celebrating past achievements with others even beyond the

human sphere, and in religious formality we acknowledge the Source of life.

**Disrespect for the past.** A materialistic culture that believes in a systematic dismissal of cultural history. The drive to privatize the commons includes devaluing all past treasures -- and convincing adherents that past cultural expressions are inferior and dying. The tyrants of the majority champion the wealthy, promote major languages with an inference that minor ones clutter the scene, and regard the past as events worth forgetting and transcending. In place of past achievements, an attempt is made to call for wealth through hard work and luck; such wealth will substitute modern conveniences (private vehicles, spacious homes, and the latest technologies) for past cultural treasures.

**Cultural celebrations** are needed like smiles and laughter in an overly serious world. Life can become overly stressful if happy occasions are not recognized as such (births, weddings, anniversaries, feasts, and even deaths). Recognition of the worth of other cultures opens the door for our own appreciation of our roots, not as separate from others, but as part of a varied floral garden of cultures worth enjoying by all. Our co-existence within this garden encourages us to explore our own cultures, reaffirm our histories, and share with an ever deepening respect for others. Through our respect for others we can encourage an upcoming generation to value its past and discover the weaknesses of present cultural expressions.

**Element Four** -- *The Global Commons includes our shared cultural past that is worth discovering, describing, honoring, celebrating, and preserving.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- The diversity of culture must be remembered, acknowledged, respected, and celebrated; all forms of cultural or racial intolerance ought to be exposed and condemned and the richness of diversity ought to be seen as "genetically" wholesome from a cultural standpoint.

**Practical Corollary** -- We ought to encourage organization and participation in activities that celebrate diversity of culture at local and higher levels: festivals, selected historic sites, museums, songs, stories, dances, costuming, dramatic plays, and threatened-language education and proliferation.

## 5. Opening to Health Facilities

Our **future** includes potential for a higher quality of life than what we now experience -- and access to this is part of our Global

Commons. To suffer is part of our human condition, and to suffer alone is painful enough; thus to suffer with others in "compassion" helps enhance our solidarity. The harmony of compassionate citizens through modern communications reaches out to ever-more-distant people who suffer, often needlessly from hunger and lack of basic health care. As neighborhoods grow more global, an emerging issue is the commons of health access -- something that seems so remote that it is denied as impossible, excused as too costly, and escaped as being beyond personal concerns.

**Insensitivity.** Failure to notice those in need results from self-centered wealth and affluence. Personal exotic health problems and expensive healing techniques can be individualized. Health care is costly and often the arena of the rich, but should it be? Counselors offer advice; cheerful caregivers can make a difference, but anticipating a healthy future proves a challenge -- a possible gift from the Almighty. The faithless are consumed by their individual health problems, and neglect to extend compassion to sufferers in other parts of the world.

**Gratitude** underpins faith in the future in part because good health is a gift worthy of thanksgiving. Individuals or local communities may become overly involved in their concerns and forget that a wider world has growing health access issues. We cannot afford to remain totally focused within our little worlds; social bonds of mutual concerns strengthen our security and quality of life, for it is healthy to broaden our vision. We need highways, environmental protection, AND health care and access. God gives life and good health; we are called to the commons of enlivening by extending shared health benefits to wider arenas of people. This growing commitment challenges us to confront materialism's current appeal to the wealthy, wasters, "prosperity churches," and those with privileged health benefits. Individual achievements are what Thomas Aquinas called "straw."<sup>6</sup> Those who believe in the future see this in both short-term physical health and longer-term eternal blessings or spiritual health. For many believers a healthy future views death as a hiatus, not an end.

**Element Five** -- *The global commons includes a shared healthy and higher quality future. All people require access to modern advances in medicine and health care even if delivering this is a major problem.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- It is healthy to bring on a greater future for all, for this energizes our present undertakings.

**Practical Corollary** -- Through political pressure we must strive to convert military personnel and systems into those dealing with

peaceful security and wellbeing. Through citizen pressure during hard financial times military expenditures can be reduced.

## 6. Sharing Intellectual/Communications

Respect for the cultural past and hope for a healthy future merge into a growing awareness that we must act now and be willing to share the task of reclaiming the commons. The present moment is one that combines memory with trust in a will to decide and do. Past generations deserve appreciation; future generations deserve consideration; both groups orient us and make us be ourselves. Our focus is to answer current essential needs (food, water, fuel, adequate housing) of our planetary family. Focusing here demands that we use modern communications (Internet, phones, mail, TV, radio, conversation) and bring our common intellectual treasure to bear on problems. As communication becomes more instant, varied, and far-reaching, the length of time between the occurrence of a disorder and global awareness of that occurrence, is shortened.

**Isolation** is a curse that cannot be tolerated. Our hand goes out in an act of liberation to all who feel forgotten and overlooked. During the darkest days of America's Civil War in 1862, we find President Abraham Lincoln late at night at his favorite hideaway in the telegraph office (his modern mode of communications); this was located at the old War Department building, next door to the White House. There he comes several times a day to await military reports from the war zone -- and to reflect. He writes but, uncharacteristically, he rewrites and thinks, and rewrites. He is composing his first draft of the *Emancipation Proclamation*.<sup>7</sup> His mind returns to his "House Divided" talks of 1858, while candidate for the U.S. Senate: he is convinced we cannot have a nation that is half-slave and half-free. He must free slaves in the only way at his disposal -- as president with limited war powers, namely, freeing those in areas in rebellion.

Our common hopes go out to those striving for freedom from isolation; the Lincolnian insight of our nation goes out from us to all the world. We cannot have a stable world divided into haves and have-nots, the isolated and the ever-communicating, the privileged and the illiterate, the overly affluent and the destitute. Artificial class divisions are outmoded in this age of shared and easily accessible information, for overcoming class differences becomes a binding glue for securing a *Global Commons*. This commons requires participation by all people, not some of the privileged simply giving up, nor the violent taking violently. Successful interaction demands mutual giving and taking.

**Element Six** -- *The Global Commons extends presently in space and time through communication among peoples in a pattern of organic growth; all give and all take in an act of sharing.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- By respecting our past and having faith in our future we change the question from will it happen to a statement of inevitability and imperative: **WILL IT TO HAPPEN.**

**Practical Corollary** -- We must extend our social contacts and networks to the degree that current time and energy allow.

## 7. Balancing Silence and Sounds

If citizens at the grassroots learn to tackle local problems, a confidence will develop to tackle global ones. Controlling sounds within the home is a first step on the road to discovering the power to make change and to reclaim the *Global Commons*. We soon discover competing interests that demand balancing; we question an overly-centralized system that violates privacy, or a decentralized anarchy that fails to respect the commons. Totalitarian individuals or states violate individual or collective rights in much the same way. Powerful individuals privatize what rightly belongs to the commons; powerful states trample on individual rights. Mutual respect and social harmony are expected.

**Noise** is annoying to some and music to others. The *Global Commons* requires harmonized working relationships. The dream is that the lowly will understand their role as citizens, and thus take a leadership role in calling for a change (e.g., workers at Gdansk). Global citizens must expect responsive government at all levels starting at the lowest. That response is through monitoring, alerting and attacking excesses of all forms from waste of resources to exposing excessive wealth that hampers higher quality of life. The grassroots starts the process. Citizen action becomes a ripple effect reaching more and more communities. Sustainable local communities is the immediate goal. Ideally, each locality should be self-sufficient in basics yet interlinked with other communities; the harmony of local caring and of broader regional sharing becomes the dynamics of a *Global Commons* dynamic.

Seeking an ideal system means that more encouragement should be given to service-orientation (especially health, educational, and ecological services) over manufacture of luxury consumer products. Privatization by corporations and powerful individuals leads to global concentration bent on profiting from consumer products and enhanced consumption. Changing the system is a major undertaking, is not achieved in a day, and will have to confront powerful interests. Just

to meet the essential demands of the entire world for public infrastructure and private housing requires a consumer culture and some manufacturing. Compromising is essential to political change and involves respecting the rights of all parties. However, compromises should not allow a dysfunctional system to dictate future paths.

**Element Seven** -- *The Global Commons is a gathering of people with competing interests all working together for a higher quality of life. The interest of each is to be honored without diminishing the standing of others in the process.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- Both silence and sound are blessings, but extremes of either are to be avoided.

**Practical Corollary** -- Balancing domestic sounds and silence is the template for a harmonized world. Start with domestic sounds /silence issues, expand to local community times and zones, establish blue laws (no commerce), retreats, and vacations.

## 8. Controlling Commerce

The free movement of commerce is part of the commons. The fruit of commerce is a shared resource that can potentially benefit all within the Global Commons. Commons allows for those in need and those in excess to create an agreement to come to some mutual benefit through formal exchange of materials.

Commerce takes place at all levels, but the modern focus is now global economics and commerce and international business relations. On an international level our leaders must convince emerging powers such as China and India to stop imitating our material profit-motivated practices, and show them that they must revert to simpler living practices as well. Sharing at the global level is more than merely spatial activity; we must extend our vision to others throughout the world. We share with others in all parts of the world, for we are all one family and what God has shared with us, we bear responsibility to share with others.

**Disparity of wealth** is a plague that infects the world order, and stands as the greatest obstacle to reclaiming the commons. It is the work of diabolic powers wherein some become the privileged, and others the tolerant destitute. This condition is enhanced by global commerce involving transfer of vast sums of money. The proposal is made here that this phenomenon can be properly addressed through fair taxation.

The challenge among the richer nations is to be transformed from

a material for-profit system to a spiritual or qualitatively beneficial one, and the world from gaining material fortunes to reapportionment of fortunes through a fair and regulated global system. If this reclaiming of economics takes place, we shall start healing our wounded Earth. We the people can take back our world from the materially privileged. Reclamation of the commons by a Third Way involves actions and services starting at the grassroots and going to the regional, national, and international levels and finally to the global sphere. Reclaiming and protecting the *Global Commons* does not demand a world government or a super-federal system -- and that is often the temptation of top-down people. Nor does it demand a world of local communities who dream of isolated self-sufficiency. An emerging *Global Commons* involves power distributed among various levels of governance and sustained by a democratic spirit.

**Element Eight** -- *Wealth is to be limited and redistributed for the sake of the common good according to essential need.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- Vast disparities in salaries cannot be tolerated. Large holdings of wealth must be taxed for the benefit of all.

**Practical Corollary** -- Challenge and denounce the "divine right of wealthy nobles" through nonviolent means such as talks, writings, blogs, demonstrations, policy making, political action, boycotts and direct exposure.

## 9. Becoming Authentic Change Agents

Free movement is a commons that must be proclaimed, so that the Global Commons itself will be reclaimed. For such a free movement, prophetic change agents must be encouraged. However, freedom of movement involves the risk of being marginalized, shouted down, overlooked, or unable to live to see their own success. The ultimate goal is a global "federation of nation states," one in which free movement is guaranteed through uninhibited interactivity among various levels of governance. The need for a global political/economic system is evident, as control measures for globalized financial transactions or certain environmental controls are beyond a single nation's capacity. The ease at which change agents move freely across levels is a forerunner of what must occur when a future world federation functions. Numerous barriers must be surmounted including reluctance to surrender national authority.

**Affluence** is a major hindrance to profound change since it renders the affluent person insensitive to what is needed by others. Furthermore, a mentality of possession of excess prevails in this

culture of consumer goods. Addicted consumers confuse "wants" and "needs," and are soon locked in an endless race to obtain more of material items that never satisfy.

In order to overcome this barrier we must simplify our lives and join forces with those committed to energy efficiency, resource conservation and proper food choices. Through lifestyle simplification we benefit: better psychological and physical health, solidarity, good home economics, sensitivity to needs of others, community relations, and environmental resource conservation and protection.

Reclaimers who identify with the common individual must expose the inherent limitations of materialism, and move towards a shared goal of this federated *Global Commons*. This refined goal includes a social justice component that incorporates eco-justice, for what hurts our people hurts our Earth and vice versa. Besides human beings, "commoners" include plants and animals in a planetary community of shared resources. To hasten our goals we must challenge material allurements that deny urgency, excuse the system, and allow us to escape through wasteful lifestyles.

**Element Nine** -- *Change agents must move to a federated Global Commons where all can participate through democratic means.*

**Theoretical Corollary** -- Agents are those who can operate across levels of governance and be uniting forces between levels through an atmosphere of tolerance and kindness.

**Practical Corollary** -- Change agents must address faithlessness as the plague of status quo retention. We must encourage creative ways to challenge the success of materialists, and hasten the day for a universally recognized *Global Commons*.

### **Summary Commitment**

Reclaiming the commons demands an interior spiritual transformation involving a radical change of heart, a confession of inadequacy at doing the task alone, a perfection of motivation, a commitment to change, and concrete action that is a work in process. We are limited change agents, and what we initiate will continue after our mortal exit. Still, change agents have much to do before saying adieu:

**1. Confront addictions.** Under God, we are empowered to make change and to discern where and when to act. Alcoholics Anonymous members and ex-drug users testify that their road to recovery must rely

on a Higher Power. People of good will recognize the pervasiveness and addictive nature of the global consumer culture. A conversion on an individual level is the first step towards change. Allurements of various sorts tempt us and weaken our openness to conversion. Success requires assistance from this Higher Power, whom many of us call Yhwh or God. Modern consumers must break with addictions and publicly distance themselves from the culture in which they are allured and immersed.<sup>8</sup>

**2. Confess the inadequacy of the individual.** Such profound change is beyond individual powers, and thus we must acknowledge our limitations. "We need God's help and that of kindly neighbors as well." While mesmerized by modern allurements, we still recognize help that is offered. We cannot deny the situation; we cannot excuse ourselves from acting; we cannot escape our social duties. It is not right to distance ourselves from the struggle. We must muster our God-given courage and change our ways or else we will never attain a *Global Commons*.

**3. Address the motivation challenge.** We are permeated with material profit motivation. My prosperity stands in contrast to our common future. We are almost overwhelmed by the pressure of material "profit motivation" -- as though it is the only practical way to act in our culture. Resisting that power takes prayerful discernment and willingness to act. We are surrounded but we can separate ourselves with God's help. Materialistic profit motivation captivates people but does not satisfy them. An alternative that does not deny profit motivation **does** exist and involves growth in spiritual consciousness, with benefits that surpass private self-interest and elite privilege.

We grow spiritually when we share and help provide nutritious food, adequate housing, proper health care, and meaningful employment with and for all. We are able to see that material profit motivation is a form of idolatry, to which so many in our society give obeisance. Rejection of all forms of materialism is a step on our journey to join the reclaimers of the commons. This rejection is followed by public action: in our own way we confront the drive for material wealth that hypnotizes the gullible, dangles crumbs before the hungry, cautions patience for sufferers, and tries to silence the promoters of a *Global Commons*.

**4. Choose life.** The wave of globalization tends to engulf us. It opened markets, encouraged travel, sparked movement of people, and discovered hidden cultures. However mixed results occurred as well from extravagances of seekers of wealth: conquistadors crossed the oceans for gold; navigators sought shorter shipping routes and spices; trappers tramped through forests and vast territories collecting furs.

These were certainly motivated -- but quite often for dreams of material gain. Retaining that inadequate motivation today is fatal to the hope for reclaiming commons. A spiritual clash is occurring. Choosing life means we have to abandon unsustainable ways of proceeding and accept a new motivation, one with a clear and lasting goal.

5. **Word becoming deed.** Saving our wounded Earth calls forth our deepest spiritual aspirations to do something meaningful. The future is a divine/human, people-to-people, public/private and present/past/future generational sharing. All time belongs to God, but our time is limited and we must make the best of this precious temporal stewardship. Believers must challenge those who see no or little future: deniers walk away; excuse-makers refuse to engage themselves; escapists cannot bear to face reality. In every moment of omission, the ultimate result is that needed action is avoided, delegated, or postponed. The temptation is to remain in a state of inaction, for action is risky and may prove imperfect. But inaction means the destruction of Earth herself. Believers must act to the degree that each is able to create, assist, encourage, pray, and support the reclaiming process.

Our actions are magnified through sharing, for energy comes through **compassion** in being Good Samaritans to our neighbors, humans and other creatures. We are moved by internal demands or **obligation** to a sense of oneness; we seek an **inclusiveness** in restoring a natural world damaged, a perceived beauty marred; and finally we share because we would otherwise deny the **hope** that keeps us going forward. In sharing we reclaim; in failing to share we allow the path to destruction to go unchallenged.

We are parents of our time. Our fruitful work is our offspring; we endeavor to give birth to and nurture the efforts that will surely outlive us. If we regard them as solely "ours" of this age, we have distorted ownership and excluded future generations from their rightful share. The public interest brings on a common destiny. We seek to identify all people of good will and believers in the future to reclaim a commons -- that which is rightly ours as community. We move together through persuasive word and effective deed; we distance ourselves and remain debt-free from the economic system; we strive to use appropriate technologies to live simply with a conservation ethic at the local level; we accept responsible environmental concerns at a regional level; we participate in innovative civic actions at a national level; and we accept and support international and global programs. We do what we can with the vision of an emerging *Global Commons*.

Stand at the city gates with Jeremiah! Cry "Woe!" A new day is

dawning. *Carpe Diem!* (seize the day).

Appendix One: Global Development Fund  
(Suggested Annual Budget)

chapter	percentage	billions
1. Renewable energy electricity	1.2%	\$3
Solar cookers and efficient biomass applications	0.8%	\$2
2. Potable water systems	8.0%	\$20
Maritime Corps upkeep	3.2%	\$8
3. Agriculture, FAO, UNRRA	10.0%	\$25
Relief storage and transport	4.0%	\$10
Nature Preserves policing	0.4%	\$1
International Polar Authority	(oil leases)	-
4. UNESCO site maintenance	0.8%	\$2
Global language preservation	0.4%	\$1
5. Health services	30.0%	\$75
6. Basic education and literacy	14.0%	\$35
Global Early Warning System	0.4%	\$1
8. International Atomic Energy	0.4%	\$1
CITES/ exotic species control	0.4%	\$1
Forest Certification Fund	(timber fees)	
UN Peacekeepers	4.0%	\$10
9. UN Refugee Services	0.8%	\$2
Human Rights Commission & World Criminal Court	0.4%	\$1
Global Space Agency	(national funds & fees)	
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* Housing in poor countries	20.0%	\$50
		-----
		Total: \$250

**Note:** GDF targets development mainly to developing countries. GDF involves a 10 percent tithing of the \$1.5 trillion annual military budgets plus a comparable assessment from low- or non-military developed nations.

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\* General Housing Development

Safe, decent and affordable housing could be furnished to one billion people as a major GDF goal; this goal could be realized in the form of low-cost design, green building techniques, native building materials, and local labor and sweat equity. In the developing countries, building sites would be secured or contributed and locally-obtained, basic building materials along with sweat equity.

No space heating is provided in warmer climates. GDF would go for procuring building supplies (stone, wood, or clay -- pressed earth, cob, adobe, brick) and for cement, window glass and roofing. Composting toilets could be constructed on site; filtered rainwater stored in cisterns and individual solar energy equipment provided for domestic lighting.

Composed 6/11

## Appendix Two: Global Enhanced or Initiated Agencies

A listing of organizations that would oversee and monitor dispensing GDF funds to recipient groups in areas discussed in this work. New agencies are enclosed in quotation marks.

**World Food Organization, Non-Governmental Organizations Relief Services, UN Peacekeepers, Climate Change and Renewable Energy Programs, "Global Space Agency," International Atomic Energy Agency, World Health Organization, Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Education Fund, UNESCO Cultural Site Fund, "Global Language Preservation," Global Copyright Regulatory Agency," Human Rights Commission, Global Disaster Early Warning Systems," "Global Wildlife Police," Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), "International Forest Products Certification," International Criminal Court, Refugee services, and Law of the Seas "Maritime Corps".**

## Appendix Three: Comparing Decibel Levels

Source	Sound level for operator in dBA
<b>Inside Noise</b>	
Refrigerator	40
Floor Fan	38 - 70
Clothes Dryer	55
Washing Machine	47 - 78
Dishwasher	54 - 85
Hair Dryer	59 - 80
Vacuum Cleaner	62 - 85
Sewing Machine	64 - 74
Electric Shaver	75
Food Disposer	67 - 93
Electric Lawn Edger	81
Home Shop Tools	85
<b>Local Outside Noise</b>	

Gasoline Power Mower	87 - 92
Gasoline Riding Mower	90 - 95
Chain Saw	100
Stereo	up to 120
<b>Transportation Noise</b>	
Inside airplanes	60 - 90
Motorcycles	100
New York Subway	up to 101

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## End Notes Introduction

1. Princes will be pulled down and the lowly exalted (Luke 1:52). This is the basis of the theological motivation contained in this reflection, and is found on the DVD "The Call of the Magnificat," (Seascapes Publishing: 2011) and explained in our *The Little Blue Book* (Brassica Books, 2011) or on the website <http://www.earthhealing.info>

2. **Economic classes.** The weakness of inserting the middle zone, the *tertium quid*, into a reflection like ours is that all haves will feel comfortable here and all have-nots will feel left out. Thus over-affluent haves and destitute have-nots tell us that extreme differences must be addressed in reclaiming the commons.

3. This is Barry Commoner's "First Law of Ecology."

4. This is patterned after the "First Principle and Foundation" at the start of *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*.

5. *Common Good* is the goal of all people of good will who believe in the act of sharing, and the belief that benefits will come to all through this sharing. It is good to share; all share when working together for good. This concept has a long history in the course of social justice development in Catholic Christian circles. However, the concept predates Christianity and is found in Greek and Roman writings and in different expressions in other cultures as well. Primitive cultures regarded resources held in common for their mutual benefit as a Common Good, whether articulated or not.

6. Benedict XVI, *Fighting Poverty to Build Peace*, #15, January 1, 2009. *I extend ... a warm invitation to meet the needs of the poor and to take whatever practical steps are possible in order to help them. The truth of the axiom cannot be refuted: "to fight poverty is to build peace."*

7. *The Economist* (February 21, 2009), p. 59.

8. Among books that show the connection between consumption and environmental degradation is my own book, *The Contrasumers: A Citizen's Guide to Resource Conservation* (New York: Praeger Publ., 1974).

9. Benedict XVI, Catholic News Service, September 5, 2007. *The world's wealth and resources do not belong to a select few; they also belong to the poor.*

10. **Enclosure of the English commons.** In *Utopia*, author Thomas More has Raphael Hythlodæus argue against the practice of land enclosure for rearing sheep, which had led to removal of fields from cultivation, destruction of houses and eviction of tenants (Peter Ackroyd, *The Life of Thomas More*, [New York: Vintage, 1999], p. 173). The practice intensified between 1760 and 1820 when common rights to arable and pasture land were lost.

### End Notes Chapter One

1. Scripture quotes set a tone and are not meant as "proof texts."

2. Elizabeth Rosenthal, "Third-World Stove Soot is Target in Climate," *New York Times* (April 16, 2009).

3. Al Fritsch and Paul Gallimore, *Healing Appalachia: Sustainable Living through Appropriate Technology* (Lexington, Ky., Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2007) pp. 75-77; "Fresher Cookers," *The Economist Technology Quarterly*, (December 6, 2008) p. 3.

4. A Global Development Fund (GDF), involves using global assistance money for poorer nations. Expanding this funding is challenging, since a much smaller \$4.17 billion 2008-2009 UN operating budget was hard fought.

5. <<http://www.sustainablebusiness.com/index.cfm/go/news.display/id/21839>>.

6. "The Morality of Nuclear Power Generation," *Special Issues* (2007), <<http://www.earthhealing.info/issues.html>>.

7. In 2011, U.S. ethanol production will consume 15% of global corn supply and is destined to rise. From this comes a saving of one million barrels of crude oil/day <<http://www.planetalk.org/wen/61203>>.

8. <<http://www.canada.com/technology/Planet+could+save+trillions+shifting+renewable+energy/4214399/story>>.

9. A Kinsey and Co. study says that global warming can be kept below a critical 2<sup>0</sup>C rise at a cost of well below 1 percent of the gross domestic product. *Acid News* (March, 2009), p. 11.

10 Rene Dubos, who served as advisor of the fledgling Center for Science in the Public Interest in 1971, confirmed to us that this was an essential insight in any environmental movement.

11. See Albert Fritsch, S.J. and Robert Sears, S.J., *Resurrection-Centered Spirituality* (ASPI Publications, 1994), <<http://www.earthhealing.info>>.

12. Personal responsibility is found in Scriptures -- notably in the prophet Ezekiel.

13. D.S. Allan and J.B. Delair, *Cataclysm! Compelling Evidence of a Cosmic Catastrophe in 9500 B.C.* (Rochester, Vt.: Bear & Company, 1997).

14. *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report, "Climate Change 2007"* (November, 2007). Subsequent annual reports have confirmed this report.

15. Don Belt, "The Coming Storm," *National Geographic* (May, 2011), p. 64.

16. David Adam, "Too Late? Scientists Start to Say 'Yes'," *The Weekly Guardian* (Dec. 19, 2008), p. 6.

17. James Hansen, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth about the Coming Climate Catastrophe and Our Last Chance to Save Humanity*, (New York: Bloombury USA, 2009).

18. *The Economist* (Jan. 29, 2011), pp. 64-66.

19. Pontifical Academy of Science, "Fate of Mountain Glaciers in the Anthropocene," Catholic News Service (May 9, 2011). <<http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1101834>>.

20. Each chapter's Reflections invite further development and may serve as discussion topics for study groups.

## End Notes Chapter Two

1. Oscar Olivera, *!Cochabamba! Water War in Bolivia* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2004), p. 7.

2. Bishop Mario Toso, Pontifical Council of Justice and Peace, (February, 25, 2011).
3. Pedro Arrojo Agudo, "Global Water Crisis: values and Rights at Stake" (Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justicia Booklets, 2010), # 139, p.8.
4. Tomales Bay Institute, *The State of the Commons*, <<http://www.onthecommons.org>>, p. 16.
5. In 1992, while traveling through the Holy Land along the Jordan Valley, I saw irrigation sprinklers operating fully in a late spring morning (full sun) on cropland in Israeli-occupied areas. This occurred while West Bank residents had severe water shortages.
6. The Carter Center, "Guinea Worm Countdown: The Road to Eradication" (April 15, 2009). The first quarterly report gives 210 indigenous cases, a 48% reduction over the March, 2008 report.
7. Greg Coleridge, "Keeping Public Assets Public," *By What Authority*, <<http://www.people@poclad.org>> (March 12, 2009), p. 3.
8. "The Drying of the West," *The Economist* (Jan. 29, 2011), p. 32.
9. Peter Lehr, "A Better Way to Sink Somalia's Pirates," *The Guardian Weekly* (November 28, 2008).
10. "The Reef's Greatest Test," *National Geographic* (May, 2011), pp. 34-57.
11. Joseph J. Ellis, *His Excellency: George Washington* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), p. 168.
12. G. John Ikenberry, "The Future of the Liberal World Order," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June, 2011), p. 59. Ikenberry says, *The original principles of the Westphalian system--sovereignty, territorial integrity, and nonintervention--reflected an emerging consensus that states were the rightful political units for the establishment of legitimate rule.*
13. Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, (New York: A Touchstone Book, 1994).
14. Cardinal Frings of Cologne, Germany, told his people that they could take coal and food as needed in those tragic years of shortages immediately following World War Two.
15. Some just-war theorists say violence to people is justified when

halting greater violence.

16. A spiritually astute person recognizes a physical sense of powerlessness, and a spiritual power that embraces the reality of individual powerlessness, and causes the individual to submit to a greater Power. Through surrender comes spiritual empowerment.

17. *The Little Blue Book* (Brassica Books, 2011) or <http://www.earthhealing.info> explains the theology behind the lowly rising and those in high places coming down, a concept that has disturbed Latin American autocrats and the current Chinese religious affairs office.

18. While uncontrolled anger is dangerous, controlled righteous anger is a mighty weapon as Jesus uses in driving moneychangers from the Temple (see Chapter Nine).

19. Wenonah Hauter, Executive Director, Food and Water Watch, 1616 P St. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

20. Jeneen Interlandi, "The New Oil: Should Private Companies Control Our Most Precious Natural Resource?" *Newsweek* (October 18, 2010), pp.38-46.

### End Notes Chapter Three

1. Jennifer S. Holland, "Vanishing Amphibians," *National Geographic* (April, 2009), p. 142.

2. "When Others Are Grabbing Your Land," *The Economist* (May 7, 2011), pp. 65-66.

2a. Roger Thurow, "The Fertile Continent," *Foreign Affairs* (Nov.-Dec., 2010), pp. 102-10.

2b. "Obituary, Mike Campbell," *The Economist* (April 23, 2011), p. 91.

3 "A Work in Progress: Special Report on the Future of the State," *The Economist* (March 19, 2011), p. SR13.

4. Karen Coulter, *The Rule of Property*, Real Democracy Pamphlet Series (New York: The Apex Press, 2007), p. 3.

5. Walter Isaacson, *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), p. 315.

6. William Britain-Catlin, "Offshore Fallout Can't Be Contained," *The Guardian Weekly* (February 13, 2009), p. 18. Tax havens may be one of the most egregious modern financial crimes against humanity. There dictators, corporations and banks hide their loot. The "privileged economic nobility" escape responsibility to the land of origin. Tax havens are estimated to contain about fourteen trillion dollars, enough to erase the national indebtedness of the world's poorer lands with much left over.
7. Harry Dumphy, "World Bank: Boost Aid and Lower Trade Barriers," *Lexington Herald-Leader* (April 14, 2003), p. A-9.
8. Chris McGreal, *The Guardian Weekly* (March 2-8, 2007), p. 30.
9. "Lidartector," *The Economist*, May 28, 2011), p. 86.
10. Reasonable birth control policies are in dispute in various parts of the world ranging from required abortion (not now official policy in any country) to population promotion programs (in France, some European regions, and Japan). Family planning can be promoted through natural rhythm approaches, which are effective and in keeping with "organic" approaches to life (no medicines or contraceptive devices), and preferred by simple lifestyle advocates.
11. C.I.A. *The World Factbook: Statistics and Analysis for Every Country on the Planet* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 2006).
12. The *Montreal Protocol* that limited the production of ozone-depleting chemicals (certain Freons) was initiated in 1987 and proved quite successful in obtaining proper environmental controls. The destruction of protective ozone layers over the polar regions was halted and normal ozone levels are returning.
13. Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism* (New York: Metropolitan Books and Henry Holt & Company, 2007).
14. Eugene C. Hargrove, "Anglo-American Land Use Attitudes," *Environmental Ethics* 2 (1980), pp. 121-48.
15. Ibid., p. 130.
16. Ibid., p. 141.
17. Ibid., p. 146.
18. Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation: A Bibliography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 11.

19. Thomas Jefferson, "A Summary View of the Rights of British America," in *The Portable Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Viking, 1975), pp. 17-19.

20. op.cit., Hargrove, p. 136.

21. In reading *His Excellency* (the life of George Washington, by Joseph J. Ellis, [New York: Vintage Books, 2004]) one reads how hostile Washington was when visiting his western lands (before his presidency) and finding homesteaders settled on his property.

22. Sidney Ratner, James H. Soltow and Richard Sylla, *The Evolution of the American Economy: Growth, Welfare and Decision Making* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 132.

23. Ibid., pp. 328-29.

24. Ibid., p. 261. Also see Al Fritsch, *Green Space A Citizen's Guide to Proper Land Use* (ASPI Publications, 1982), p.74.

25. Harvey J. Kaye, *Thomas Paine and the Promise of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005), p.162.

#### End Notes Chapter Four

1. "Economics Focus: The Beautiful and the Damned," *The Economist* (January 22, 2011), p.90.

2. Social Capital does not have a clear, undisputed meaning.  
<<http://www.socialcapitalresearch.com/definition>>.

3. *State of the Commons*, p. 19.

4. "A World Loses Its Tongues," *National Geographic* (October, 2007)  
<<http://www.languagehotspots.org>> accessed March 18, 2008.

5. National Geographic, *Sacred Places of a Lifetime: 500 of the World's Most Peaceful and Powerful Destinations*, Washington, DC. (2008).

6. "10 Must-See Endangered Cultural Treasures," *Smithsonian* (March 2009), pp. 30-49. Other endangered cultural sites include: Fenestrelle Fortress, Italy; Church of the Nativity, Bethlehem; Chanchan, Peru; The Hill of Tara, Ireland; the city of Hasankeye, Turkey; Xumishan Grottoes, China; Historic Route 66, U.S.; and Dampier Rock Art Complex, Australia. The *World Monuments Fund* has a watch list of endangered

sites.

7. Niall Ferguson, "The Empire at Risk," *Newsweek* (December 7, 2009), p. 42.

8. Programs on Corporations, Law & Democracy <<http://www.poclad.org>>.

9. Thom Hartmann (*Unequal Protection*, 2002) unearthed the original records as stated in *The Little Earth Book* by James Bruges (New York: MJF Books, 2004) p. 118.

10. "Senator Bernie Sanders' Guide to Corporate Freeloaders," <<http://front.moveon.org/d-which-corporations-are-the-biggest-free-loaders>>, accessed April 18, 2011.

11. Oliver James, *Affluenza* (New York: Random House, 2007).

12. Karen Coulter, *The Rule of Property* (New York: The Apex Press, 2007), p. 47.

13. Robert C. Lieberman, "Why the Rich are Getting Richer," *Foreign Affairs* 90 (2011), No 1. pp. 154-158; Review Essay of *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer -- And Turned its Back on the Middle Class*, Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010).

14. "The People's Will; Democracy in California," *The Economist* (April 23-39, 2011), p. 14.

15. "On We Go," *The Economist* (March 12, 2011), p. 56.

16. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), p. 274.

17. "The Few," *The Economist* (January 22, 2011), Special Report.

18. Peter Heather, *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A History of Rome and the Barbarians* (Oxford Univ. Press: 2006).

19. Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*.

20. Lincoln was inspired from the passage in Matthew 12:25 "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

21. Benedict XVI "Caritas in Veritate" #75.

22. Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism*, p. 238 and 497.

23. An indulgence (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, p. 370) is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven. In reality, this pertains to the extensive social disorder resulting from personal sin. A correct application here in this context is recognition that non-renewable energy use has done environmental damage, and this demands changing to renewable energy, but still off-setting for past environmental damage. It does not mean continuing "indulging" in a past bad practice when using this current English word with its hidden bias.

24. "New Jersey Is an Unlikely Leader in Solar Energy," [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/43022312/ns/us\\_news/new-jersey-unlikely-leader-solar-energy](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/43022312/ns/us_news/new-jersey-unlikely-leader-solar-energy).

25. Chrystia Freeland, "The Rise of the New Global Elite," *The Atlantic* (January/February, 2011), p. 55.

#### End Notes Chapter Five

1. John Abramson, *Overdosed America: The Broken Promise of American Medicine* (New York: HarperCollins, 2004).

2. "The Spread of Superbugs," *The Economist* (April 2, 2011), pp. 73-75.

3. Numerous references on environmental tobacco smoke are found in this author's book, *Tobacco Days: A Personal Journey*, (London, Ky.: Brassica Books, 2010.)

4. "The \$10 Solution," *Time* (January 15, 2007).

5. See Carter Center, Chapter Two, Ref. 6.

6. "Senator Bernie Sanders' Guide to Corporate Freeloaders," See Chapter Four. The listing is not regarded as exhaustive.

7. *Center Focus*, Center of Concern (Winter 2009), p. 3.

8. *The Economist* (December 16, 2006), p. 81.

9. *Global Development Fund* is similar to a "Global Marshall Plan" promoted by the Spiritual Progressive Network. The goal is to develop partnerships among nations so that stronger ones can support developing nations.

10. Oscar Arias, "Culture Matters," *Foreign Affairs* 90 (2011), No. 1, p. 6.

## End Notes Chapter Six

1. *The State of the Commons*, p. 19.

2. Robert McCrum, "Globish-English-lite," *The Guardian Weekly*, (December 22, 2006). A version of Globish by this author is found on our Earth Healing website "Basic Globish," *Special Issues* (2007) <<http://www.earthhealing.info>>.

3. See "Nationalization: Good or Bad?" *Daily Reflections* (August 4, 2011) <<http://www.earthhealing.info>>. Nationalization" is a mixed blessing and depends on cultural and economic circumstances. Costa Rica, with no army and a high standard of living, has nationalized utilities, railroads, insurance, and banks. However, many countries have moved away from nationalization for a variety of reasons. The principle of subsidiarity encourages nationalizing areas where local or regional governance is deficient (e.g., a national electricity transmission grid).

4. Matthew 5:13 "You are the Salt of the Earth" has a disputed interpretation as a metaphor because salt has many meanings. Here we refer to intelligence, but it could mean a purifying substance, a preservative of valuable materials, or a necessary ingredient (and thus wisdom). Most likely the passage in Matthew's Gospel refers to salt as a brine that fulfilled salt needs during this period when crystalline salt was rather expensive. When this solution became too dilute it was tossed out: "We have a moment of usefulness and then it is passed; let us use that moment well."

5. E. F. Schumacher, *Small Is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as if People Mattered* (London: Brand & Briggs, 1973).

## End Notes Chapter Seven

1. Bart Kosko, *Noise*, (New York: Penguin Group, 2006).

2. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, "Highway Traffic Noise," available online at <<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/htnoise>>, accessed March 20, 2007.

3. Sy Montgomery, "From Sea to Noisy Sea -- Undersea Noise Pollution

- Special Report," *Animals* (Mar.-Apr. 1977), online at [http://www.findarticles.com/articles/mi\\_moPRO/is\\_n2\\_v130/ai\\_19225853](http://www.findarticles.com/articles/mi_moPRO/is_n2_v130/ai_19225853)>.
4. George Bugliarello et. al., *The Impact of Noise Pollution: A Socio-Technological Introduction* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1976).
  5. Kosko, *Noise*, p. 48.
  6. This writer has constant ringing in the ears; his brother reminded him that, as youth, they crushed corn for livestock -- with a loud crusher that left them unable to hear for an hour.
  7. A Maser, et al., *Effects of Intrusive Sound on Classroom Behavior: Data from a Successful Lawsuit* (San Francisco: Western Psychological Association, 1978).
  8. S. Cohen and N. Weinstein, "Non-Auditory Effects of Noise on Behavior and Health," *Journal of Social Issues* 37 (1981) no, 1, p. 36-62.
  9. National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection, "Intruder Alarms," available online at [http://www.nasca.org/uk/pages/environment\\_facts/noise\\_nuisance](http://www.nasca.org/uk/pages/environment_facts/noise_nuisance)> accessed March 22, 2007.
  10. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Information on levels of Environmental Noise Requisite to Protect Public Health and Welfare with Adequate Margin of Safety," Report No. 550/9-74-004 (Washington, D.C., 1974).
  11. Theodore J. Schultz, "Synthesis of Social Surveys on Noise Annoyance," *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, 64 (August, 1978), pp. 377-405.
  12. Mitch Finley, *The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (Ligouri, Mo.: Ligouri Publications, 2003), p. 19.
  13. A. Fritsch and P. Gallimore, *Healing Appalachia: Sustainable Living through Appropriate Technology*, (Lexington, Ky.: Univ. Press of Kentucky, 2007), pp. 217-227.
  14. "Sounds and Silence." *Special Issues* (2007) <http://www.earthhealing.info>>.

End Notes Chapter Eight

1. Susan C.Schwah, "After Doha: Why the Negotiations Are Doomed and What We Should Do About It," *Foreign Affairs* (May-June, 2011), pp. 104-117.
2. Ibid. p. 117.
3. We need to be reminded that the terms **consumerism** or **consumerist** may be used in a favorable sense to mean responsible and safety-conscious purchasing, without reference to whether the item is actually needed; a second more critical meaning is wanton irresponsibly and addictive purchasing of consumer products. Because of the two diverse meanings, these two words are not used in the text of this book.
4. Justin Fox, "Pay them Less? Hell Yes," *Time* (March 2, 2009), p.30.
5. "Plutocracy Now," *Mother Jones* (March/April, 2011), p. 26.
6. The "Contrasumers" was the term coined by this author in the book by that name published by Praeger Press, 1973.
7. Doug Boucher, "Out of the Woods: A Realistic Role for Tropical Forests in Curbing Global Warming," Union of Concerned Scientists, 2009, <<http://www.ucsusa.org/REDD>>.
8. A conference by Ralph Nader entitled "Taming the Giant Corporations" in early June, 2007, concluded that corporations must be tamed and returned to the status of creatures of the state and the people.
9. James Bruges, *The Little Earth Book*, (New York: MJF Books, 2004), pp. 114-16.
10. David Boyle, *Toward the Setting Sun: Columbus, Cabot, Vespucci and the Race for America* (New York: Walker Publ. Co., 2008), p. 363.
11. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, 162 (1969),pp. 1243-48.
12. *The Economist* (March 28, 2009), p. 77.
13. Merlene Davis, *Lexington Herald-Leader* (November 20, 2007).
14. Speaking of limited pies triggers optimistic proponents of undiscovered resources. Granted more natural gas will be discovered and energy-saving devices invented, but resource expenditure has ill effects. Our emphasis is that limitlessness is spiritual, never

material, and that pies are material.

15. Taxing estates is a special consideration. In some cases, farmers or small business operators are property-rich but money-poor. To place heavy estate taxes on those families who farm or operate small business enterprises is highly unfair, if heirs are burdened by property inheritance taxes. Such assessments drive people to sell or severely restrict their operations.

### End Notes Chapter Nine

- 1 "Bangladesh," *National Geographic* (May, 2011).
2. "'Ecomigrants' Flee Climate Chaos," *The Guardian Weekly* (March 13, 2009), p. 32.
3. Chad Myers, *Building the Strong Man! A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (New York: Orbis, 1988), pp. 299-303.
4. Robert J. Nogosek, *Nine Portraits of Jesus: Discovering Jesus through the Enneagram* (Denville, NJ: Dimension Books, 1987).
5. *The Contrasumers* cited above; CSPI, *99 ways to a Simple Lifestyle*, (New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1977).
6. References are found in *Daily Reflections* <<http://www.earthhealing.info>> and in *Healing Appalachia* (Chapter Seven).
7. Scripture calls every fifty years a "sabbath of sabbaths." Debts are to be liquidated in this jubilee year.
8. Rory Carroll, *The Guardian Weekly*, Aug.24-30, 2007, p.8.
9. *State of the Commons*, p. 30.

### Conclusion End Notes

1. Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, p.171-83.
2. A.R. Palmer, "What Do We Mean by the Global Commons" (Boulder, CO: Institute for Cambrian Studies, 2008), available at <<http://www.en.boulder.co.us/local/sustain1>>.
3. These include Jews, Christians, Moslems, and Bahais and comprise over half of the human race.

4. For Jewish people, Yhwh bestows a specific place as Holy Land; for Moslems, all eyes turn to Mecca in prayer; for Christians, the act of Christ's death and resurrection is a new liberation; historically, salvation is a global deed in time, but from *soteriology* (study of the divine accomplishment of human salvation) Calvary is an ongoing event.

5. *The Little Blue Book*.

6. F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas* (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 10. After a mystical experience (a few months before his death in 1274), Thomas told his secretary that "all I have written seems to me like so much straw compared with what I have seen and with what has been revealed to me."

7. David Homer Bates, *Lincoln in the Telegraph Office* (Lincoln, Neb.: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 1995), pp. 138-53.

8. *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius*.

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