

# TURNING POINT 2000

September 1999

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## TP 2000 PREPARES TO BOW OUT

The Year 2000 approaches, and this is our second-last issue. The last will be in January 2000.

The texts of this and previous issues, and of various reports and papers, are on our website - <<http://www.ecoplan.org/tp2000>>. We - **Alison Pritchard & James Robertson** - can be reached at **The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, Oxon OX10 9NU, England. Tel: +44 (0)1491 652346; Fax: +44 (0)1491 651804; e-mail: <[robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk](mailto:robertson@tp2000.demon.co.uk)>.**

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### SOME NEWS ITEMS

“The Environmental Law Foundation steadfastly believes in access to an environmental justice. It helps communities to protect their right to a healthy environment. ELF reflects its impressive contribution to environmental justice for the underdog by its persistence, diligence and professional commitment”. At 11 Downing Street on 20th April the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, presented *The Times*/Justice “Access to Justice” Award with that citation to ELF (Suite 309, 16 Baldwins Gardens, Hatton Square, London EC1N 7RJ; <[info@elf-net.org](mailto:info@elf-net.org)>; <[www.greenchannel.com/elf](http://www.greenchannel.com/elf)>; director **Maria Adebowale**).

The Schumacher Society is now at The CREATE Centre, Smeaton Road, Bristol BS1 6XN; <[schumacher@gn.apc.org](mailto:schumacher@gn.apc.org)>; <[www.oneworld.org/schumachersoc](http://www.oneworld.org/schumachersoc)>; **Richard St George**. This year’s Bristol Lectures on “Rethinking Security” will be on Saturday 30 October by Scilla Elworthy, Gita Mehta and Wolfgang Sachs (leaflet enclosed for UK readers). Sunday sessions will discuss follow-up. Schumacher Briefing No.2, “Creating Sustainable Cities” by **Herbert Girardet**, is now out - see p16. No.3 on “The Ecology of Health” and No.4 on “The Ecology of Money” are due soon. Copies of No.1, “Transforming Economic Life” by **James Robertson**, are available from us at The Old Bakehouse - £5 inc p&p (airmail outside Europe £7), sterling only. It is being distributed in USA by Chelsea Green Publishing Co; e-mail: <[blackmer@chelseagreen.com](mailto:blackmer@chelseagreen.com)>. Details of Japanese, Russian and Swedish editions will be in our next issue. Details of other publications available from us were in the January 1999 issue.

## COMMON RESOURCES, INCLUDING THE MONETARY BASE How Should Their Value Be Shared?

Currently, more than 95% of the annual growth in the money supply is put into circulation by commercial banks in the form of interest-bearing loans to their customers. Thus the indebtedness of society grows in step with the money supply and the profit goes to the banks, unlike the profit from the 5% issued directly by government as cash (notes and coins), which - as 'seignorage' - goes into public revenue. Many, including Abraham Lincoln, have argued that government should put new credit, like new cash, directly into circulation on society's behalf - which would reflect the principle that the value of common resources (created by public policy or Nature) should belong to all.

We warmly recommend "Plain Money: A Proposal for Supplying the Nations with the necessary Means in a modern Monetary System", a 45pp printed paper in English (1999) by **Joseph Huber**, based on brief introductory lectures for seminars, and available on request from Institut fur Soziologie (Abderhaldenstr. 7, D-06099 Halle an der Saale, Germany), where he is Professor of Economic and Environmental Sociology. In order to guarantee the freedom, openness and efficiency of the banking sector in a free, open and efficient market-economy, "the monetary order itself, the currency, and the amount of money in circulation" should not be part of the commercial money-making process. In the 200 years leading up to the twentieth century, "the medieval prerogative of coining" was complemented by a national state monopoly of issuing banknotes. "Today again, with sight deposits and cashless payments increasingly outweighing cash, a similar step needs to be taken by complementing the prerogatives of coins and banknotes by another one of money-on-account". So "a full and plain general monetary prerogative [will] come into existence", control of which can be exercised by a democratically legitimised public body. *Sustainable Economics*, July 1999 (**Brian Leslie**, 12 Queen's Rd., Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9LU; <brian@sus-tec.freeseve.co.uk>) contains reviews of Joseph Huber's paper.

James Robertson's paper on "Monetary Policy and Fiscal Policy: The Question of Credit Creation" for the House of Lords Select Committee on the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England was published on 27th July in the Select Committee's Report, Vol II - Evidence (HL Paper 96), pp367-373. (He also put a similar paper to the Treasury Select Committee of the House of Commons.) It summarises the arguments why government should directly create the new credit judged necessary to increase the money supply without inflationary effects, suggests how it should be done, and discusses the implications for government borrowing, monetary control and exchange rate policy - taking into account the growing importance of parallel currencies, electronic money and the European dimension. It is on our website <[www.ecoplan.org/tp2000](http://www.ecoplan.org/tp2000)>. We plan to follow up these questions with British, European and international co-workers between now and the end of the year. We hope we will have something further to report in January.

“Why should the government borrow from banks, and pay interest on, money that it is perfectly capable of producing for itself, free of interest and debt?”. Early in the 20th century two outstanding economists, Irving Fisher and Henry C. Simons, proposed that government should issue new credit directly, and that the functions of banks should be clearly divided between (1) payment services based on bank customers’ sight deposits and (2) saving and lending services based on customers’ time deposits. “The success of the Keynesian revolution some 50 years ago aborted the chances of a still more beneficial Fisher-Simons revolution. Must the world suffer a still more tragic debt-repudiation depression before reform of the debt-money system becomes a reality?”. In the *Social Creditor*, July-August 1999 (16 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH; editor **Alan Armstrong**), John Hotson’s Foreword to William Hixon’s A MATTER OF INTEREST: RE-EXAMINING MONEY, DEBT AND REAL ECONOMIC GROWTH is reprinted; and **R.F. Morrison** (<r.morrison@helensburgh.co.uk>) of the Scottish Monetary Reform Group estimates that the UK government now fails to collect £63 billion of potential annual public revenue from seignorage.

The State and Local Government Economic Empowerment Act (HR1452) was recently introduced in the US Congress. It would enable the federal government to create money to give interest-free loans to state and local governments to finance infrastructure building and repair. This would not be inflationary, and it would mean big savings for taxpayers - half to a third of the cost of raising interest-bearing municipal bonds. Details from the not-for-profit organisation Sovereignty (1154 West Logan Street, Freeport, IL 61032, USA; chairman **Ken Bohnsack** <sovgntyken@aol.com>). Growing numbers of Congressmen are co-sponsoring the bill, and it is attracting support from growing numbers of bankers, economists, accountants, academics and others.

The question now is not so much who should own the means of production as who should own Nature. In *Yes! A Journal of Positive Futures* Spring 1999 (PO Box 10818, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110, USA) **Peter Barnes** (Common Assets Project <www.cfed.org>) asks “Who Shall Inherit the Sky?”. Last December’s Kyoto Protocol on climate change agreed to establish international rules for trading carbon emission rights. But who is to own each nation’s rights to emit carbon: private corporations, the government, or all citizens together through a trust? “A future gift to private corporations of the atmosphere’s limited capacity to absorb wastes would be a terrible investment”, dwarfing the numerous previous “giveaways of public assets to private corporations, from enormous land grants to railroads in the 19th century to the recent gift of the electromagnetic spectrum to broadcasters”. The government is a poor steward of valuable natural assets (land, minerals, timber, water, etc), because it is too closely linked with powerful corporate interests. Barnes supports a Common Assets Trust, whose underlying asset would be America’s share of the atmosphere’s carbon absorption capacity. It would embody citizen ownership - on the lines of the Alaska Permanent Fund, which uses about half the income from its share of Alaska’s oil revenues for public purposes, and pays the rest in equal amounts as a citizen’s income to every Alaskan resident.

## COMMON RESOURCES (continued)

God decided, after taking a Harvard MBA, that humans should be charged for using Nature's resources (which He had previously supplied free), and that the proceeds should be shared among all. **Owen Ephraim's** (50 New Road, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 7QT; Owenephram@aol.com) 33-stanza narrative ballad, "The Musing: When God Was Awarded His Masters in Business Administration", conveys the economic and common-sense logic of resource taxation and citizens income as agreeably and effectively as anything we have seen. Splendid. Should be widely published.

"Men did not make the earth. It is the value of the improvement only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property. Every proprietor owes to the community a ground rent for the land which he holds" - Tom Paine. **ALTER** (Action for Land Taxation & Economic Reform) works for radical "change of our inequitable and inefficient tax and benefits systems". £10 pa membership includes publications and quarterly newsletter. Cheques (payable to ALTER) to John James (23 Maylons Road, London SE13 7XD).

In "Jersey: Auditors' Liabilities Versus People's Rights" (*Political Quarterly*, No.1, 1999) **Austin Mitchell MP** and **Prem Sikka** tell of corruption, intimidation and democratic failure - involving big accountancy firms, lobbyists and spin-doctors against a shadowy background of tax-evading, money-laundering, international finance. Meanwhile, the OECD and EU demand that tax havens should stop encouraging "harmful tax competition" between nations. But is this approach "fixated only on kinds of taxes that penalise and repel mobile activities"? - see *Land and Liberty*, Spring 1999 (427 London Fruit Exchange, Brushfield Street, London E1 6EL). For nations to switch to raising revenue from the rental income of land and natural resources would be preferable to developing "a worldwide inquisition by the revenue agents of every nation into the records of every other nation". Thus simple lateral thinking reveals an answer to the tax-haven problem. If existing taxes on income and capital were largely replaced by resource taxes, tax havens would lose their attraction.

**David Fleming's** (The Lean Economy Initiative, 104 South Hill Park, London NW3 2SN; <ellerdale@gn.apc.org>) proposal for "Domestic Tradable Quotas as an Instrument to reduce Carbon Dioxide Emissions" are discussed in a 23pp European Commission booklet (September 1998). Every citizen would be given, free, an equal number of carbon units to cover domestic fuel needs, including private transport; businesses and other organisations would have to buy their units from government. Those who used less than their entitlement would sell their surplus units to others who needed more. The scheme would embody an obligation to pay for using the capacity of the environment to absorb carbon emissions, and a right for every citizen to share in its value. It would complement at national level the international "contraction and convergence" model for sharing carbon emission rights proposed by the Global Commons Institute (42 Windsor Road, London NW2 5DS; **Aubrey Meyer**).

## WORK AND PARTICIPATION

Having a job is not the only form of useful work. In a truly democratic society people would not have to depend on employers for their livelihood. The answer to unemployment would not be just to create more jobs and force people into them. Policies would aim to reduce the demand for jobs, as well as keep up the supply. 'Ownwork' would be encouraged. More lateral thinking!

**Peter Cadogan** (3 Hinchinbrook House, Greville Road, London NW6 5UP), a fellow pioneer of that approach at least since the 1970s, welcomes well-known German sociologist Ulrich Beck's *New Statesman* article (5 March 1999) "Goodbye to All That Wage Slavery", as a sign that mainstream thinking may now be catching up. Its message: - "There is a life beyond the alternatives of unemployment and stress at work... It must be made possible for every human being autonomously to shape his or her life and create a balance between family, paid employment, leisure and political commitment". Beck argues for citizen income to create a new alternative centre of inclusion - citizen work combined with citizen income as the basis for a political republic of individuals who create a sense of compassion and cohesion through public commitment. [For more on citizen (or citizen's) income, see page 6. Eds.]

Unfortunately, the UK Economic and Social Research Council does not appear to have caught up. Its new 5-year £4 million Research Programme on the Future of Work (director Prof Peter Nolan, School of Business and Economic Studies, Leeds University, Leeds LS2 9JT) - full report in *Social Sciences*, May 1999, copies from <exrel@esrc.ac.uk> - continues to equate work with employment. Although, "for once, researchers are being asked to pay serious attention to the future, not just the present and the past", the focus will be on such things as "the world of work", "prospects for employment, work organisations, job security and economic prosperity", "employment choices for mothers of pre-school children from a psychological perspective", "family-friendly employment policies", "contemporary trends and future developments in the labour market", "job progression opportunities experienced by low-skilled employees", "job enlargement", and "employee development". Not much lateral thinking there for us taxpayers' £4 million!

Family-friendly employment policies is a key theme in *New Ways to Work* Newsletter, June 1999 (309 Upper Street, London N1 2TY). Teleworking for at least 10,000 British Telecom office staff and new Work Options for Lloyds TSB staff are featured. "The main push for change comes from employees who are seeking a different kind of balance between their working and home lives".

The Spring 1999 *Warwickshire Participation Papers*, produced by NB21, Nuneaton and Bedworth Community and Environment Programme (3 Park Road, Bedworth CV12 8LH; **Paul Galley**), included articles on a changing role for the voluntary sector, modes of participation in decision-making, participation and partnership, and participation & democratic renewal.

## INCOMES, CURRENCIES, BANKING, DEBT

“The time is ripe for socio-political innovations which rethink the concept of work”. In their 156pp report (in English, 1999, from Institute for Social Ecology, Burbankstr.45, D-53229 Bonn, Germany; <isoe@bonn.iz-soz.de>) on “Child-Care Salary 2000: A way to up-grade Child-care work”, **Christian Leipert and Michael Opielka** describe their proposal for a child-care salary, explore how child-care work extends our understanding of work and our concept of the labour market, and suggest how the child-care salary might be financed. They conclude that parents must become better organised politically. Pressure for political reforms to improve the position of families and children could lead to broader future-oriented policies to do justice to group interests in the context of the common interests of society.

In “Universal Basic Income - What Systems, Policies and Attitude Changes are Needed?” in *Pacific World*, March 1999 (PO Box 12125, Wellington, New Zealand; <pirmoffice@clear.net.nz>; editor **Kay Weir**), Prue Hyman (Associate Professor of Economics and Womens Studies, Victoria University, Wellington) shows “it is largely arbitrary what work is paid and what unpaid; and the boundaries [between them] shift with time, space, class, technology, and convenience to employers. For example, de-institutionalisation in the mental health field, and shortening hospital stays after operations and childbirth, put more unpaid work on to family relatives. ... Yet still, overwhelmingly one’s prestige, status and claims on resources come from paid work, and governments stigmatise those without paid work or independent wealth”. In addition to all its practical advantages, the primary rationale for a UBI is recognition of citizenship, community and interdependence of all members of society.

BIEN’s (Basic Income European Network) Newsletter 32 reports that **Alexander de Roo**, BIEN’s Secretary/Treasurer (European Parliament, rue Belliard 97-113, B-1047 Brussels, Belgium; <aderoo@europarl.eu.int>) is now an MEP. Several other MEPs are Basic Income supporters, as are Andrea Fischer (Germany’s health minister), Osmo Soininvaara (Finland’s minister of health and social welfare), and parliamentarians in Belgium. Belgium’s June 1999 election saw the arrival of a new political party, Vivant, founded to promote Basic Income.

“Money needs to be put back in its place as a medium of exchange rather than the measure of economic performance or development”. Yes, but is that good reason for a single world currency, as suggested in “One World, One Currency” in the January-March 1999 *One Country*, newsletter of the Bahai International Community (Suite 120, 866 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA)?

A 10-point strategy for rebuilding the social economy, including local barter currencies, credit unions, and community loan funds, is proposed in **David Boyle’s** (<dcboyle@compuserve.com>) “Alternative Currencies, Alternative Identities”, 1999, 44pp, pbk, £7, Paper No.5 from Centre for Reform (Dean Bradley House, 52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF).

The evolution, principles and prospects of the Global Barter Network of more than 150 Barter Clubs - with 80,000-100,000 members in Argentina, and others in Uruguay, Brazil, Bolivia and Spain - are described in "Building a More Just, Sustainable and Democratic World" in *La Otra Bolsa de Valores* No.46 (Tlaloc 40-3, Col. Tlaxpana, CP 11370, Mexico, DF; <espacios@laneta.apc.org>).

*LETSLINK UK News*, May 1999, (2 Kent Street, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 3BS; **Liz Shephard**; <www.letslinkuk.demon.co.uk>) reports Tony Blair and other ministers endorsing the benefits of LETS as grassroots community-based initiatives. Linda Gilroy MP's all-party parliamentary group supports LETS.

Neighbourhoods that most need capital have least access to it. In "Small Is Bankable: Community Reinvestment in the UK", 1999, 53pp, pbk, £11.95 (New Economics Foundation, Cinnamon House, 6-8 Cole Street, London SE1 4YH; <info@neweconomics.org>), **Ed Mayo et al** propose "think big, lend small" 10-year targets: credit unions for 10% of UK households; a micro-finance scheme for 100,000 enterprises; and community loan funds for every major city.

The social investment movement is coming of age. How can it best support local development? **Danyal Sattar** (INAISE, rue d'Arlon 40, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium) reports in *New Sector*, July/August 1999 (Society Place, West Calder EH55 8EA) on the First European Forum on Social Investment in France in June, which was attended by nearly 300 people from Europe, West Africa, Costa Rica, Canada, Bangladesh and India.

The trend towards "private banking" for wealthy clients makes consumer protection for others the more necessary. In 2005 "shall we have poverty riots [and] feudal bank systems for the upper classes, or a retail banking system which serves all EU citizens and others?". **Prof Dr Udo Reifner** is director of IFF (Burchardstr.22, D-20095 Hamburg, Germany; <www.iff-hamburg.de>).

The Third World debt that the West is prepared to 'forgive', is negligible compared with the tidal wave of wealth that flows annually from poor to rich. "Some economists, like **Martin Khor** of Third World Network, have estimated this at more than US\$400 billion annually, not only in excessive debt repayment, but in adverse trade terms, depressed commodity prices, the brain drain, internal transfer pricings within transnational companies, and the payment of royalties on intellectual property" - *WDM in action*, Summer 1999 (World Development Movement, 25 Beehive Place, London SW9 7QR). The World Council of Churches has appealed to the leaders of the G7 nations, not just to cancel the debts of the poorest countries, but to "engage, in consultation with civil society, in a process of global economic reform" - *IDOC Internazionale* 98/4 (via S. Maria dell'Anima 30, 00186 Rome, Italy). "It is because we choose to work the economy of the world in the way that we do that they have the sort of debt they have". **Kenneth Wilson** discusses "Paying It Back: Third World Debt and the Future" in *Audenshaw Paper* No.178 (The Hinksey Network, 3 Thorne Park Road, Torquay TQ2 6RX).

## BOOKS RECEIVED

**Walt Patterson:** TRANSFORMING ELECTRICITY: Royal Institute of International Affairs and Earthscan, 1999, 203pp, pbk, £12.99. “As innovative small-scale and modular generating technologies prove themselves in use and become more commercially attractive, the trend will accelerate towards generating electricity not at remote sites but close to where it is used... How widespread and how rapid will be a move away from remote, large-scale central stations to smaller-scale decentralised generation? This may be the biggest single technological issue facing electricity worldwide”. Scenarios for 2020 eavesdrop on the cabinet of Traditia, and a visiting journalist to Innovatia, discussing the prospects and problems arising from the two alternative paths of electricity development which the two countries have followed. “How we shape the future of world electricity is only one issue of many, but it is crucial. It will affect the whole of human society on earth”. We warmly recommend this readable, informative and visionary book.

**Luke Anderson:** GENETIC ENGINEERING, FOOD, AND OUR ENVIRONMENT: Green Books, 1999, 160pp, pbk, £3.95. “Genetic engineering is not just a laboratory technique. It is a tool shaped by a particular worldview, supported by a particular political and economic framework”. The chapters of this readable, fully documented (38 pages of Resources, References and Index) little book deal with: What is genetic engineering?; GE and the Environment; GE and Farming; Patenting Life; Who’s in Control?; A Case Study: rBST Milk; and Turning the Tide. As well as the health and environmental risks, Anderson brings out the nature of the bid by a handful of global biotechnology corporations - with mainstream scientists and communicators in their pay, and allied to governments and international agencies like the WTO - to make the world depend on them for the necessities of life. We warmly recommend his book.

**Dorothy Myers and Sue Stolton (eds):** ORGANIC COTTON: FROM FIELD TO FINAL PRODUCT: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999, 267pp, pbk, £14.95. Genetically-modified cotton, developed to reduce the health, environmental and pest-resistance problems of chemical cotton, has brought problems of its own. This informative book covers cotton growing, processing, marketing and regulation, and argues convincingly that the organic option is safer, healthier and more profitable. Practical recommendations include research on the economics of organic versus conventional cotton production.

**Julian Pratt, Pat Gordon and Diane Plamping (eds):** WORKING WHOLE SYSTEMS: King’s Fund, London, 1999, 165pp, pbk, £9.95. “Metaphors derived from living systems like organisms, ecosystems and brains [lead] us to think of individuals, teams, departments and organisations as purposeful entities linked in a web of interdependence, [interacting] intelligently, autonomously, through a process of constantly adapting to each other, not limited to behaving in ways predetermined by a designer, planner or chief executive”. The authors discuss experience of practising these principles in three UK cities.



**David C. Korten:** THE POST-CORPORATE WORLD: LIFE AFTER CAPITALISM: Kumarian Press and Berrett-Koehler, USA, 1999, 318pp, hbk, US\$27.95. “Our task is no longer one of creating countercultures, engaging in political protest, and pursuing economic alternatives. To create a just, sustainable and compassionate post-corporate world we must face up to the need to create a new core culture, a new political centre, and a new economic mainstream. Such a bold agenda requires many kinds of expertise working at many levels of society... There are thousands of useful tasks to be undertaken”. This important book, a worthy sequel to *When Corporations Rule the World*, surveys capitalist pathology; outlines “life’s story”; notes the “shift from machine to organism as the guiding metaphor of post-modern societies”; and calls us to use “our growing knowledge of life’s wisdom to re-create our economic institutions to the service of life”, not money. Part III on “Envisioning a Post-Corporate World” includes chapters on economic democracy and the rights of living persons (as against corporations). Part IV on “Coming Home to Life” offers an agenda for the future. The Epilogue is on “Planetary Consciousness”.

**David Lorimer et al (eds):** WIDER HORIZONS: EXPLORATIONS IN SCIENCE AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE: Scientific and Medical Network (Gibliston Mill, Colinsburgh, Leven, Fife KY9 1JS), 1999, 368pp, pbk, £12. “The machine metaphor has no privileged claim on our thinking. It is not supremely objective, as its proponents often assume, but intensely anthropocentric”. SMN was set up in 1974 for scientists and doctors “inclined towards a non-materialist interpretation of the Universe”. Members contribute to five chapters - “Science in Transformation” (ed Chris Clarke), “Health, Healing & Wholeness” (ed John Cosh), “Towards an Integral Science of Consciousness” (ed David Lorimer), “Philosophy and Values for Living” (ed Max Payne), and “Implementing a New Vision for the Third Millennium” (ed Alan Mayne).

**James Morgan:** THE LAST GENERATION: Krieger, USA (for the World Humanity Action Trust (WHAT), 5 Princeton Court, 55 Felsham Road, London SW15 1AZ), 1999, 246pp, hbk. Governments “have created scarcely any systems that can influence the way the world behaves”, and “if the people who are on earth now do not do something, it will be too late”. Morgan’s less radical approach than Korten’s includes a 12-point phased programme including: an environmental security council - E8 (Environmental Eight) - consisting of USA, Japan, Germany, Brazil, China, India and Indonesia; an International Bank of Environmental Settlements, as a clearing house for trading emission permits and with responsibility for developing safeguards for global commons like rainforests and ocean fisheries; and the introduction of green national accounts and taxes that reflect environmental costs.

**April Ryedale:** WISDOM STRANDED: Fountainhead Press, Stroud, 1998, 136pp, pbk, £7.70. First volume of “Finding Wisdom: A Comedy More Divine”, an epic poetic trilogy about human evolution over seven generations from 1900 to 2040 - “modern science is in process of being superseded by a subtler understanding of the nature and power of human consciousness”.

## BOOKS RECEIVED (continued)

**John Barry:** RETHINKING GREEN POLITICS: NATURE, VIRTUE AND PROGRESS: Sage, 1999, 291pp, pbk, £15.99. Unlike ecological modernisation, green political economy “proposes a different type of progress, a view of development which emphasises qualitative as well as quantitative indicators or criteria for judging social progress... It explicitly recognises that the ‘ends’ of social progress (social progress itself), and not simply the means to it, can and ought to be subject to democratic deliberation”. Barry’s account of green moral theory and ecological virtue raises crucial questions about progress, about democracy and citizenship, about the roles of the state, the market, and civil society, and about political theory itself. We recommend it.

**Molly Scott Cato and Miriam Kennett (eds):** GREEN ECONOMICS: BEYOND SUPPLY AND DEMAND TO MEETING PEOPLE’S NEEDS: Green Audit, Aberystwyth, 1999, 243pp, pbk, £12. This A to Z - first chapter by Victor Anderson on “Can there be a Sensible Economics?”, last by Daniel Zapata and Sabine Schielman on “Indigenous Peoples, Globalisation and Transnational Corporations” - aims for a style influenced by “emotion and subjectivity” as well as the “hard-edged, objective and scientific discourse that man, and especially male academics tend to favour”. Twenty-one contributors discuss: Definitions and Perspectives; Macroeconomic Issues; Economic Infrastructure; Industrial Policy; and International Dimensions. A useful introduction to a “nascent discipline” that “has not yet reached the stage of establishing a paradigm”.

**Diane Coyle:** THE WEIGHTLESS WORLD: STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING THE DIGITAL ECONOMY: Capstone, Oxford, 1999, 253pp, pbk, £9.99. *The Independent’s* economics editor discusses: where have all the jobs gone? weightless work; nourishing the grassroots; fear of flexibility; the end of welfare; the ageing of nations; globalism and globaloney; visible and invisible cities; and weightless government. An urban mainstream perspective, progressive but flawed. The world’s financial markets may be “the ultimate embodiment of weightlessness”, but does that make them OK? Is the countryside truly “a parasite on urban wealth”? have cities “always subsidised the surrounding economy”? and are cities “poised for a huge surge in economic growth”? [What about cities’ ecological footprints? - see p16. Eds.]

**Viktor Dvorak and Petr Kasicka (eds):** EUROPEAN INTEGRATION IN A CHANGING WORLD: Jan Masaryk Center of International Studies (University of Economics, Prague), 1998, 402pp, pbk. Twenty-three papers on aspects of Europe’s future, mainly by authors from universities and government institutes in Central and Eastern European countries. Has the post-1945 development of greater Western European unity as economic integration been “a fatefully half-hearted project”? Should the “dominating materialist paradigm” be replaced with a broader regard to “common European principles and aims in terms of spiritual, moral and political life of European citizens”?

**Benjamin J. Cohen:** THE GEOGRAPHY OF MONEY: Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, USA, 1998, 229pp, hbk, £18.50. As the One Nation, One Money idea goes out-of-date, historical insights - e.g. the 5th-century-BC Athenian drachma as an international currency like the US\$ now - help us to understand the changing geopolitical patterns of monetary power today. [We would have liked more about the growing popular demand for international monetary reform, the development of complementary currencies at local and neighbourhood levels, and the implications of electronic money. Eds.]

**Francis Kinsman:** (1) THE BUG AND YOU: MILLENNIUM, HOUSEHOLD, SOCIETY: 50pp, £7.95; (2) THE BUG AND ME: CHECKLIST AND ACTION PLAN: 40pp, £4.95; both (inc p&p) from Francis Kinsman (4 Sion Hill Place, Bath BA1 5SJ), pbk, 1999. Useful practical advice. And will the Y2K Computer Bug bring home the need for a new path of progress and an 'agenda for reconstruction'? "We simply don't know what's going to happen"; most likely scenario is worldwide "groaning economic, political and social disruption" for months, then 3-5 years of "sporadic upheaval and ultimately revitalising change".

**John Quinn (ed):** THE OPEN MIND GUEST LECTURES: 1989-1998: Institute of Public Administration, Dublin, 1999, 194pp, pbk, IR£12. Mike Cooley (1989), James Robertson (1990), Gordon Wilson (1993), John Hume (1994), Erskine Childers (1995) and Senator George Mitchell (1998) are among the guest speakers invited by John Quinn to give these lectures on RTE Radio 1. The common thread running through them is "about the work of building up our human community in peace and civility". (An accompanying CD contains short recorded extracts. Details from John Quinn, RTE, Dublin 4, Ireland.)

**Robert Vint (ed):** FAITHS FOR A FUTURE: Religious Education and Environment Programme (REEP, 8th Floor, Rodwell House, 100 Middlesex Street, London E1 7HJ), 1998, 114pp, pbk, £14.95 + £2 p&p (payable to REEP) - A4, spiral bound, photocopyable worksheets. For primary schools. Linked to the National Curriculum. Chapters on Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam Judaism, nature experience activities and practical conservation projects - and good reference section. Tested with hundreds of teachers across the country.

**Margaret Chisman:** A WORM'S EYE VIEW OF WHITEHALL: 1999, 230pp, pbk, from the author (The Bungalow, Near Station, Tring, Herts HP23 5QX). Having joined the Civil Service at seventeen and served in "lowly grades" in twelve departments, she describes how she and her colleagues made routine office work tolerable. A very readable personal account of the tensions between commitments to routine public service, family, and creative aspirations.

**Nicholas Albery and Stephanie Wienrich (eds):** SOCIAL DREAMS AND TECHNOLOGICAL NIGHTMARES: Institute for Social Inventions, 1999, 304pp, £14.85. "200 Best Ideas from Around the World" for better quality of life. The 1999 £1000 Social Innovations Award is about ways of matching people with jobs, friends, spouses or sexual partners via the Internet.

## BUSINESS WORLD

“Virtually everywhere the mass media provide people primarily with commercial messages... It is hard to discover in most of today’s newsmedia the kind of information that would help citizens of democratic societies to reach well-informed political decisions... The media have been called ‘Weapons of Mass Distraction’”. Distraction and entertainment may help us to “amuse ourselves to death”, but does it properly inform us about matters of public interest? **Cees J. Hamelink**, in “The Right To Communicate: the PCC beyond 2000” in *IDOC Internazionale*, January-June 1999 (see page 7), suggests future campaigns under the People’s Communication Charter - which states that “all people are entitled to participate in communication and in making decisions about communication within and between societies”.

“Snouts in the Trough: Export Credit Agencies, Corporate Welfare and Policy Incoherence”, June 1999, and “The Dyson Effect: Carbon ‘Offset’ Forestry and the Privatisation of the Atmosphere”, July 1999 - Corner House Briefings 14 and 15 (PO Box 3137, Station Road, Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1YJ; <cornerhouse@gn.apc.org>) - reveal massive public subsidy for business corporations. In Briefing 14 **Nicholas Hildyard** describes how financial guarantees from government agencies help private sector companies to offload on to the public the financial risks in Eastern Europe and the South of projects - from dams to arms and polluting power stations - that are often environmentally destructive, socially oppressive or financially unviable. An agenda for reform includes an ethical guarantees policy and a commitment to socially just and environmentally sound development. In Briefing 15 **Larry Lohmann** compares the 17th and 18th century enclosures of common lands with today’s proposed extension of neo-colonialist corporate power by the privatisation of carbon sinks and rights to emit carbon, allowing Northern corporations to create large-scale forestry plantations in the South as a *quid pro quo* for maintaining disproportionately high carbon emissions.

“What is the proper role of giant corporations in a democracy? ... For centuries, people whose labour and lives have been shaped by corporations have asked how mere creations of statute got to be so dominant; why corporate claims to authority over people and property are so vigorously enforced by courts, police and armies”. *By What Authority* - newsletter from POCLAD (Program On Corporations, Law & Democracy, PO Box 246, South Yarmouth, MA 02664, USA; <people@poclad.org>) - proposes *quo warranto* orders to state officials to revoke the charters of overmighty corporations.

“Three global corporations control 80% of world trade in bananas; three corporations control 83% of world trade in cocoa; five control 77% of world trade in cereals; and fewer than ten companies control 94% of the agrochemicals market”. Alan Simpson MP was one of the speakers in the parliamentary debate on EU-US trade on 22 March, well reported in *Farm and Food News*, June 1999 (4 Willifield Way, London NW11 7XT; **Joanne Bower**).

SustainAbility's *Company Profile* No.9 (49-53 Kensington High Street, London W8 5ED; <[www.sustainability.co.uk](http://www.sustainability.co.uk)>; **John Elkington**) is very impressive. "This tiny global company... speaks for no single country or world region. We try to represent the values and interests of future generations. ... Who should we compare ourselves with? Leading consultancies like McKinsey? Think-tanks like the World Resources Institute? Activist groups like Greenpeace? All of the above, probably, but an emerging focus of our work is culture change. We must help transform corporate, economic and political cultures". SustainAbility has worked with the bio-industry since the early 1980s. But late in 1998 "we decided to unilaterally end our retainer relationship with the world's biggest biotechnology company, Monsanto... We felt we were not making sufficient progress to justify continuing the relationship".

"There is something morally amiss in a culture that shows so much callousness towards the millions who cannot demonstrate their personal worth through material possessions. The incessant chase for more has staggering affects on the environment and on our quality of life. Our consumerist ethos takes an especially heavy toll on poor people, both physically and psychologically". In *Enough!*, quarterly report from the Center for a New American Dream (6930 Carroll Ave, Suite 900, Takoma Park, MD 20912, USA), **Betsy Taylor** asks "Can we have Social Justice in a Commercial Culture?".

In *New European*, Vol.99, No.1 (editor **John Coleman**, 14-16 Carroun Road, London SW8 1JT) **Martin Polden**, President of the Environmental Law Foundation (see page 1), discusses "the place of the law in the convergence between the interests of the business community and those of local communities". Compliance and best practice as a basic tenet of sound business will become more important. The proposed offence of corporate manslaughter will mean more exposure for directors, and the EU is pressing for the burden of proof to be on the defendant to demonstrate that its activity did not result in damage, and not on the plaintiff to demonstrate that it did.

There are three connected reasons why the government, and Tony Blair in particular, have failed to deal with [the issue of GM food]: first, Labour's faith in the white heat of technology; second, New Labour's determination to be the friend of big business; and third, Labour's commitment to the global market, which lays them open to bullying by the United States. **Sue Mayer**, director of GeneWatch, <[www.genewatch.org](http://www.genewatch.org)>, believes that "blind faith in the big business version of progress has lost the government the public's trust" - *Red Pepper*, April 1999, <[www.redpepper.org.uk](http://www.redpepper.org.uk)>.

In *Inside Track*, Summer 1999 (Green Alliance, 40 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0RE; <[ga@green-alliance.demon.co.uk](mailto:ga@green-alliance.demon.co.uk)>), **Peter Madden** points out that the Blair government has not lived up to its promise to govern in the common interest on issues like GM foods, climate change and transport. It seems too sympathetic to the interests of firms like Monsanto, the Energy Intensive Users Group, the road transport industry and "Mondeo man".

## VISIONS, IDEAS, POLICIES AND PROJECTS

Articles in the first two issues of *Foresight*, journal of futures studies, strategic thinking and policy, include “Transforming the Future: Rethinking Time for the new Millennium” by **Bill Martin and Sandra Mason**; “Why the Future is Fortean” (involving areas of human experience that are ‘damned’ by mainstream science) by **Ian Miles**; and “The US Military’s Future in Operations other than War” by **Robert Olsen**. Editor **Colin Blackman** (Camford Publishing, Sidney House, Sussex Street, Cambridge CB1 1PA; <crblackman@camford.demon.co.uk> <www.camfordpublishing.com>).

In *Gandhi Marg*, Jan-March 1999 (Gandhi Peace Foundation, 221-223 Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg, New Delhi 110 002, India) **Romesh Diwan**’s 23-page article “Mahatma Gandhi, Amartya Sen, and Poverty” explores in depth their different conceptual frameworks. Gandhi’s is the more revolutionary. “To Gandhi, poverty is part of an exploitative equation between the non-poor elite and the poor masses, where the elite exploit the poor and the poor co-operate in this exploitation. His solution follows logically: development of character among the exploited poor and appeal to ‘trusteeship’ to the non-poor exploiter. In his analysis, both are necessary... Sen, on the other hand, considers poverty only as an attribute of the poor who need certain ‘capabilities’... His policy recommendation, then, is to offer opportunities for more education, growth, and health so that the poor can acquire these”.

**John Bunzl**’s ambitious paper TOWARDS A SIMULTANEOUS POLICY: AN INSIDER’S GUIDE TO SAVING MAN AND THE PLANET: 1999, 67pp (available from him at 17 Westcombe Park Road, London SE3 7RE) discusses a detailed strategy for achieving the two world goals of environmental sustainability (Right Livelihood) and an end to world poverty and dependency (Right Human Relations). The reality of competition and the need for co-operation demand a Simultaneous Policy to transform the international economy, to be implemented by all nations simultaneously under the guidance of an International Simultaneous Policy Organisation (ISPO) capable of involving “all members of mankind in a spirit of world community and common purpose”.

**Bruce Lloyd**’s (South Bank University, Southwark Campus, 103 Borough Road, London SE1 0AA; <101645.1441@compuserve.com>) “The Wisdom of the World: One Thousand Messages for the New Millennium” is a compendium of quotations to which readers may add their suggestions - see <www.wfs.org>.

*Adbusters*, July/August 1999 (1243 W 7th Ave, Vancouver, BC V6H 1B7, Canada), asks the World Trade Organisation conference at Seattle, November 30 - December 3, the Big Question: “Is economic progress killing the planet?”.

The EUROPEAN ELECTION MANIFESTO 1999, 18pp, £2.50, from the Green Party (1a Waterlow Road, London N19 5NJ; <office@greenparty.org.uk>), provides a clear statement of policies for which support is growing in Britain and Europe.

“There is an enigma at the centre of the Schumacher legend. Why did Schumacher show so little interest in money?”. As a young man, working with Keynes and J.K. Galbraith, he was recognised as an up-and-coming expert on international finance and currency reform. In “The Schumacher Enigma” in *Fourth World Review*, No.93, 1999 (24 Abercorn Place, London NW8 9XP), **Peter Etherden** (c/o William Franklin & Sons, PO Box 36, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7ZE) says of “Small Is Beautiful”: “Work is there; education, labour, employment. Everything is there except money, income, wages and capital. Why?”.

In “Towards an Ecological Theory of Unequal Exchange: Articulating World System Theory and Ecological Economics”, in *Ecological Economics* 25 (1998), **Alf Hornborg** (Human Ecology Division, Lund University, Finngatan 16, 223 62 Lund, Sweden; <alf.hornborg@humecol.lu.se>) points out that ecologists and economists are “trapped on opposite sides of a dualistic cosmology. Ecologists have looked for objective foundations for subjective, cultural, phenomena,.. [eg] an energy theory of value. Economists, on the other hand, continue to assume that objective phenomena should be reckoned with in terms of subjectively founded criteria such as ‘willingness to pay’”. Ecologists maintain that prices should reflect energy flows, economists that ecology can be evaluated in terms of prices. “The conundrum for ecological economics boils down to two, seemingly contradictory and irreconcilable, observations. The first is that prices are cultural constructions that do not measure or reflect real material flows... The second is that prices are real determinants of local material conditions for production... The ideology of prices and money fetishism continues to confuse us in many ways”.

Emeritus Professor **William Alexander** (1647 Guerneville Road, Santa Rosa, CA 95403, USA; <wakerala@aol.com>) has studied the failure of 20th century economic theory to explain why the standards of wellbeing in Kerala are higher than in other Indian states (and Asian nations). His March 1999 paper “Fatal Daughter Syndrome” provides statistical evidence, including Kerala’s female life expectancy and female literacy rates, suggesting that the explanation is to do with gender equality, and that ecofeminism may prove to be “a bio-ethical necessity for satisfactory human survival on a global scale”.

An international campaign for a World Atomic Safety Holiday (WASH), calls for (1) shut-down of nuclear reactor and reprocessing facilities from 1st December until after the New Year; (2) reliable backup power and three months fuel supply on nuclear sites and, (3) de-alerting of all nuclear weapons no later than 1st December - info from **Paul Swann** (<pswann@easynet.co.uk>).

An interesting development is an environmentally benign pack for CDs, “Survival Pack”, by Serendipity (Beech Farm, Retford Road, Blyth, Worksop, Notts S81 8EU; **Helen Stevens**) - latest model, Sampler ‘99 “Classicprint”.

The National Small Press Centre provides support services to small publishers. Details from **Rose Heaward** (Runetree Press, PO Box 1035, London W2 6ZX).

## SUSTAINABILITY, ENVIRONMENT, ETHICS

“Creating sustainable cities is one of the great challenges for an urbanising humanity at the threshold of the new millennium. Since most human activity now revolves around cities and their economies, it is critical to get things right”. Some people argue that large cities “are cancerous organisms that cannot have a permanent place on the face of the earth”. “Everything should be done to ensure that megacities of tens of millions of people do not become the norm, but they have become an irrefutable fact of life”. In Schumacher Briefing No.2, **CREATING SUSTAINABLE CITIES** (1999, 77pp, pbk, £6 from Schumacher Society - see p.1) **Herbert Girardet** proposes practical ways for cities to enable their citizens to meet their own needs and enhance their wellbeing without damaging the natural world or endangering the living conditions of other people - within a new culture of sustainability.

In **ENERGY & LIFESTYLES**, 54pp, December 1998 from Indranet (79 Carter Road, Bandra, Mumbai 400 050, India; <admin@chs.ilbom.ernet.in>) **Winin Pereira & Subhash Sule** explain why the present fossil-fuel-based westernised lifestyle is unsustainable and unjust, discuss the structure of a just and sustainable energy system, and ask if “we in India are prepared to start changing now or will we wait until the westernised system collapses? ... India may have only a few years’ grace in which to turn to a more sustainable system”.

Among the recommendations in **REPORT 2000** from Churches Together in Cumbria Environment Group (£2 inc p&p, 3 White House, Walton, Brampton, Cumbria CA8 2DJ), about sharing our planet with the rest of creation and sharing God’s generosity with all people, is that “through our own practical example, we should live more simply than others may simply live, using energy and resources wisely, and working towards a sustainable lifestyle”.

“It is essential that we express our care for creation in both practical and spiritual ways”. **Tim Cooper**, chairman of Christian Ecology Link, welcomes the appointment of a Churches Environmental Projects Officer to promote a new Eco-Congregation project among 42,500 churches - see *Green Christians*, Summer 1999 (**George Dent**, 20 Carlton Road, Harrogate HG2 8DD).

**DRUG USE IN FARM ANIMALS**, 1999, 28pp, £10, is one of the authoritative, well-researched reports from the Food Ethics Council (Minster Chambers, Church Street, Southwell, Notts NG25 0HD; <foodeth@globalnet>; **Ben Mepham**), highlighting ethical concerns about developments in food and agriculture, and making recommendations for practical action. Thirteen recommendations include changes in the criteria and scientific evidence required for making regulatory decisions, and the composition of the committees making them.

If the state of Parana, Brazil, recovered a quarter of the manure from its 4 million pigs, it would generate enough methane to power its metropolitan buses all year round - ZERI Foundation (<karlsson@zeri.org>, <www.zeri.org>).