

Introduction, Overview and Article Summaries

Reading through these essays and articles, written over the course of more than two decades, has led me unexpectedly to experience both mental integration and spiritual urgency. The integration came as my own work mirrored back my lifelong journey to both understand what is so wrong in our world today and to discover how we can begin to heal the enormous “person/planet pain.” I was a young woman with very big questions when I left home. I wanted to understand the root causes of poverty and war, the basis of true happiness, the big picture of the meaning and purpose of life in general, and of my life in particular. I tenaciously held these questions in my heart, soul and mind, determined to find their answers.

During the course of a 25-year vision quest I traveled far and wide, touching down on four continents and many major cities. I worked with children of migrant workers in rural Pennsylvania, with impoverished African Americans in Atlanta, and in a coal-mining village in Appalachia. After studying at the Institute of European Studies in Vienna I traveled to Beirut and taught in a school for Palestinian refugees. During trips behind the “iron curtain” I met the “enemy.” Once we saw each other as flesh-and-blood humans we quickly became friends.

I meandered the alleyways through the favelas of Santo Domingo. The slums of Nairobi looked much the same. Lagos was a living hell. I bore two children in San Francisco, and then endured a period of personal poverty and homelessness in that city of the Golden Gate. I had attained a Master’s Degree in psychology but was unable to find employment sufficient to pay the rent. I came back home to Chambersburg, Pennsylvania – a town that was burned to the ground during the Civil War. Why, oh why, my heart and soul cried out, is there poverty and war on this beautiful and amazing planet?

I gathered answers one by one, like items on a treasure hunt. The articles and essays in this book are a result of my long journey through the social and political movements of our times. Published in diverse outlets, they explore root causes of economic injustice and put forth emerging solutions to the needless material deprivation that so many suffer in a world that has plenty for all. Assembled and published together now for the first time, these writings are my treasure chest. I am happy to share it with you.

Herein you will find a way forward to a possible future of peace and abundance for all, a future that Franklin D. Roosevelt glimpsed when he put forth his Four Freedoms: freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. These writings propose a deep reorientation of our social contract, meaning the rules by which humanity agrees to live and let live. The essence of the new contract is the acknowledgement in principle and policy of the birthright of humanity to the planet, and thus, equal rights for all to the gifts of nature.

My vision quest gave me a clarity of thought and understanding, but with it has come a greater sense of responsibility – “ability to respond” – and thus the urgency I feel right now to strongly partner with others in order to implement the “earth rights” policies described in this book. Words on paper can be powerful intellectually, but they are merely words unless we put them into action. We live in a time of crisis and chaos, in a world on a precipice. Ahead lies catastrophe unless humanity can act together in global cooperation. Ahead lies increasing and relentless warfare, unless humanity can respond quickly through awareness that we are all one human family on one small planet. We are all in this together. Warfare or earthshare? That is the question.

This book is also an invitation to you the reader. If you like what you learn here, please link up with our work at Earth Rights Institute. Together we can build a world that works for each and every one of us.

Overview

These articles and essays are roughly clustered by theme. The first three articles set forth the vision and ethical foundation for a new form of democracy, which I call Earth Rights Democracy. In such a democracy, the contract between people and their government contains three primary components:

1. The equal right to land and natural resources is a fundamental human right.
2. The earth and all her life forms have a right to biological and ecological integrity and well-being.
3. Taxation and other economic, social and political principles and policies should be based on these rights.

Earth Rights Democracy establishes political democracy on the firm foundation of human rights to the planet as a birthright and is a key to securing other economic human rights. Earth Rights Democracy is an essential ethical framework for creating a world of peace and plenty for all.

The next three describe how the earth rights ethic can be linked to governance through fundamental reforms in public finance policy. Articles on “green taxes” and the “tax shift agenda” combine two trains of thought: public finance programs

of “land rent for the people” as advocated by Thomas Paine, Henry George and other classical economic thinkers and more recent movements for ecological, polluter-pay type taxes.

The seventh article is an example of this worldview as applied to current social and economic realities in West Virginia, presented in a public dialog format in a letter to the editor of the *Charleston Gazette*.

Number eight shows how earth rights ethics and policies are integrally aligned with the original Biblical teachings on land rights and social justice and how these teachings have been obscured and neglected by most mainstream religious institutions. The tragic results are persistently increasing human suffering and environmental degradation.

The next four articles, 9 through 12, place these ideas into an integrated local-to-global framework that balances the need for global cooperation with that for both decentralized and bioregionally based economics. Those involved with current movements for global governance and world democracy will discover the essential importance of a proposed new global institution that would collect and distribute economic rent from transnational and common heritage resources. – A Global Resource Agency.

Articles 13 through 16 build on this framework by highlighting current and proposed governmental institutions that collect taxes and economic rent on land and natural resources and then distribute a portion of these funds as direct citizen dividends. It is crucial to have participatory democratic input into the ways that land and resource rent is distributed. Such “earth dividends” or “earthshare” options should be included in “people’s budget” decision-making processes.

My speech at the Harvard Club of New York (Article 17) summarizes my experiences at the global UN HABITAT II conference convened in Istanbul in 1996. “Sharing Our Common Heritage via the Tax Shift Agenda” (Article 18), the keynote speech I gave at the Council of Georgist Organizations conference in 1998, is a wide-ranging overview of actual and potential arenas of action for building an earth rights democracy.

The three Pennsylvania articles, numbers 19 through 21, focus on (1) my home state, where several cities are successfully implementing earth rights democracy policies via local tax reform; (2) the details of a state campaign that passed enabling legislation to expand this tax policy option; and (3) the potential effects of land value taxation on large and small farming operations.

Articles 22 through 26 are about the work I do, which cannot be conveyed by a simple job title, career niche, or organizational affiliation. They are slice-of-life stories and interviews, sketches and vignettes of my life as an earth rights democracy activist. Each year, each month, and each day is different from all others in this

never boring and always interesting adventure through a meaningful and purposeful life.

The last four articles focus on earth rights democracy and the quest for peace on earth during these past several years of the Iraq War. Number 30, "Economics of War and Peace," is my most recent article. It is an expansive four-part paper that I presented on the Economists for Peace and Security panel at the Eastern Economics Association Annual Conference in New York on February 23, 2007.

I suggest that you begin this book by looking at the articles and essays that initially seem most interesting. While several are brief and could be read at one sitting, some longer ones contain substantial information and new ideas that might take some time to digest. After living with this book for a few weeks and gradually absorbing the information, you will have gained an important new worldview with profound possibilities for transformational action. At that point, I invite you to call or email me and we can discuss ways that we can work together to build earth rights democracy wherever you live. Our network is worldwide and we can build an effective partnership for this work. Contact information is at the very end of the book.

To continue this introduction here is a brief summary of each article, along with some of the context in which I came to write them.

Articles, Summaries and Background

1. Democracy, Earth Rights and the Next Economy. This article occupies the prime space in this collection as it puts forward a sweeping, though highly condensed, perspective on the evolution of Western politics and economics over the past 700 years. Beginning with the first phase of Enclosures which privatized common lands and ending with Vision 2020 "full spectrum dominance" policies of the US nation state, this 2001 E. F. Schumacher Lecture describes the land problem and sets forth the concept of Earth Rights Democracy. Pithy quotes from several land rights thinkers and activists are sprinkled throughout the lecture, which was nearly ninety minutes long and is also available on audiocassette. In the last part I outline several specific policy approaches based on an ethic of equal rights to earth for all. This lecture, edited by Hildegard Hannum, was published as an E. F. Schumacher lecture series booklet.

In one of the great honors of my life, the esteemed social visionary and peace activist Robert Swann urged the Schumacher board to invite me to be one of the three lecturers that year, the other two being Amory Lovins, Chairman and Chief Scientist of the Rocky Mountain Institute, and John Todd, the ecological design and "living machines" bioneer. Both are foremost thinkers and innovators in sustainable energy systems and policies. It was also a joy to meet with Bob the day after the lecture, which was our last time together. His legacy lives on through the

innovative work of his partner, Susan Witt, the current executive director of the E.F. Schumacher Society, who introduced me that October day of 2001 in Johnson Chapel at Amherst College.

2. Who Owns the Earth? Here I ask a “first principle” question, an outside-of-the-box question. It is one of my earlier essays, first published in 1987. In nearly every country, about 5% of the people own at least 90% of the privately owned land. So this question aims to understand who SHOULD own the earth and even what it means to “own” the earth. As such, “Who owns the earth?” is a profound ethical and spiritual question that functions rather like a Zen koan. The question cannot be answered in the same mindset from which it is asked. The answer lies beyond the concept of “ownership” and goes to the heart of the matter: that all life is interconnected.

In other words, how we hold the earth is how we hold each other. This essay shows how we can move beyond the politics of right versus left into a new ethical, economic, and political realm where we can hold each other and the earth in love, respect, and profound appreciation.

3. Land for People, Not for Profit. I wrote this piece after several years of participating in sessions at the United Nations. In 1993 Pat Aller and I were appointed United Nations Non-Governmental Representatives for the International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade, founded in London in 1933. This is a long name for an organization and I usually drop the Free Trade part, but not just because the name is a mouthful. In many of the networks I interact with, free trade has a bad reputation. Currently most progressives advocate “fair trade” as opposed to the monopoly capitalist Washington consensus version of free trade. But the IULVT & FT (the IU for short) is rooted in the brilliant perspective elucidated by Henry George in his book *Protection and Free Trade*, first published in 1886. He analyzed the problematic trade issue that was rooted in the land problem: trade can be neither free nor fair when so few own such a disproportionately large share of natural resources, surface land, and land value.

The IU is formally affiliated with the United Nations through both the Department of Public Information and ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council). While the IU supports fair free trade it does so primarily through its core mission of achieving socially just land tenure and a fair distribution of wealth via fundamental taxation policy reform. Our goal is to remove the burden of taxes from the backs of working people, which includes everyone producing needed goods and socially useful services, and to shift the tax base to the “rental value” of land and natural resources. For the common good, we advocate full collection of the earth’s economic rent – that is, its surplus value – from land and natural resources that have some monetized (money used in exchange) value. In brief, tax land not labor.

Pay for what you take from the earth, not what you make with your work. If all land and resources were used fairly, efficiently, and in an environmentally sensitive way, all human beings now on earth and those yet to come could meet their basic needs and live in dignity and purpose.

As a representative of a UN NGO I participated in HABITAT II, one of several major global conferences organized by various UN agencies during the 1990s. In 1996, the UN Center for Human Settlements (Habitat) organized and sponsored HABITAT II, a two-weeklong session in Istanbul. I carefully observed several of the official proceedings, paying particular attention to the section on Land Access. Along with more than 15,000 others, I also participated in sessions of the HABITAT II NGO Forum. I also organized and led six NGO Forum events that focused primarily on land tenure and tax policy.

I was very pleased with the results of the UN HABITAT II Action Agenda section on Land Access. This section describes land access as key to eliminating poverty and environmental degradation and calls for land value capture, land-based taxes, proper land cadastres (maps and records), and other elements essential to implementing the fundamental taxation policy reform that we advocate.

Some time after the Istanbul conference, however, I read a post by UNCHS intern Anna-Karin Jatfors on the Global Campaign for Secure Tenure section of the Habitat website; she encouraged using land as an investment and speculation commodity. At that point I recognized how confused many people are about how to proceed towards a truly just system of land tenure. My intention in writing “Land for People, Not for Profit” was to articulate the benefits and drawbacks of private property in land and to articulate a clear way forward towards equitable land rights and poverty eradication.

4. Green Economics: A Decentralist, Bioregionalist, Global Agenda. This one was published in *Land and Liberty* in August 1985. It is the oldest article in the book. It draws on many influences, among them PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory), Ralph Borsodi, founder of the School of Living, American bioregionalists Peter Berg and David Haenke, and the great 19th century economic philosopher Henry George. It puts forth a People’s New World Order vision, if you will, that many of us yearn to see made real. Were this future vision to become manifest, all people would have their basic needs met and be as self-reliant as possible within the opportunities and constraints of a biologically defined region. Meanwhile, workers in flourishing local-based cooperatives would enjoy the meaning and value of right livelihood. New institutions would provide the minimum basic requirements for global peacekeeping and environmental restoration and protection. This people/planet-centered approach would take us beyond the artificially (most often militarily) drawn lines of the nation state to a world where each individual and place is uniquely valued as part of the planetary whole.

Reading this article again, 22 years later, I am rather amazed that I still hold this same vision today. Like so many millions of us, I am greatly distressed by our nation's current political and economic conditions and its military and foreign policy engagements. Our federal tax system no longer effectively supports the welfare of the people on any level. Our constitutional rights have been eroded decade after decade until we can hardly distinguish the power of the president from that of a dictator. The power mongers in Washington, DC live nearby ever-increasing numbers of downtrodden and impoverished citizens. It is one thing to respect, and be committed to, the values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and freedom of worship and expression, production and exchange. Blind adherence to a fossilized and exploitative political order is quite another.

5. Restructuring Economic Relationships. This is an essay published in the Winter 1988 edition of my short-lived newsletter, *Geodata*. It simply and succinctly traces the maldistribution of wealth to the exploitation inherent – and apparent – in our systems of land tenure, capital ownership, financial and monetary policy. I call on us all to rethink the whole area of work, jobs and wages and to thoroughly analyze the economic structures of our own communities, beginning with a list of five questions.

6. Earth Rights Democracy – Land Ethics and Public Finance Policy as if People and Planet Mattered. The subtitle of this article draws on E. F. Schumacher's classic, *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*. I presented it at the Richard Alsina Fulton Conference on Sustainability and the Environment held March 26 – 27, 2004 at Wilson College, located in my hometown of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. It was a rare and valued opportunity to present my ideas at a local venue. Dr. Inno Onwueme, then a professor at Wilson and director of the Fulton Center, organized the conference. Inno was born and grew up in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. A brilliant professor who writes both academic papers and short stories, Inno is an agricultural economist whose special focus on the African yam has taken him to many countries.

During the few years that Inno lived in Chambersburg we met for several stimulating conversations over dinner at my Aradhana ecological homestead. As Earth Rights Institute is beginning an ecovillage development project in Bayelsa State in the Niger Delta, I was particularly interested in Inno's profound and personal experiences growing up in this region. I was especially pleased that he invited me to present this paper at this conference.

In 2005, Trent Schroyer, Professor of Sociology-Philosophy at Ramapo College and President of The Other Economic Summit (TOES), asked if I had any recent papers appropriate for the anthology that he and Thomas Golodik were putting together; this one seemed a good fit. Trent and Tom did a great job editing

this Wilson College paper for *Creating a Sustainable World: Past Experiences/Future Struggles*, published by Apex Press in 2006. I strongly recommend their book; as Professor Jeff Boyer says, it is “an important tool for international activists and educators working to democratize economic, technological, and environmental resources.”

7. Forget the Old Tax Fights: All Should Enjoy the Profits from Nature’s Gifts. One day early in February 2007 I received a call from my friend Art Rybeck, a land value tax activist and dentist in Wheeling, West Virginia. Art said that several particularly interesting opinion pieces had been recently published in the Views section of the *Charleston Gazette*, one of the state’s major newspapers. He urged me to read them and respond with an article that would touch upon those writers’ concerns and then bring them into a focus on the land problem and the land value taxation policy approach. The editorial page editor, Dawn Miller, replied to my submission by saying, “It is a joy to have such attentive readers.” I wrote a mix of philosophy and fundamental economics and appealed to readers to rise above the pessimism of past corruption. My article appeared on April 16. Dawn gave it the terrific title.

8. Public Finance Based on Judeo-Christian Teachings. Appearing one day among my many emails was an invitation to present a paper at the Christianity and Human Rights Conference at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama. This invitation was an excellent opportunity to put together materials I had collected over the years on Judeo-Christian land ethics and their relevance to the economic justice paradigm set forth by Henry George in *Progress and Poverty* and his other works. The paper also held a deep personal meaning to me. I was born into a fundamentalist Christian family in the rural Cumberland Valley in Pennsylvania. Mom and Dad made sure that my brother, sister and I went to Sunday school and church every week and Bible School for two weeks in the summer. At age ten I had the “born again” experience of giving my life to Jesus.

But by age twelve, I was seriously troubled by my mother’s statement concerning our pediatrician which went something like this: “It’s too bad that Dr. Schapiro will not go to heaven; he’s such a good doctor.” Well, it seemed too bad to me, too, and somehow just plain unfair. How could it be that those who have a non-Christian religious belief system were condemned to an eternity of hell? And what about the people in other parts of the world who live and die, never having heard the story of Jesus? After all, in Sunday School we sang “red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in his sight.” Something just did not compute! I became an agnostic.

In college and on into my twenties I explored and experienced every major religion. I sat in Zen Buddhist meditation, whirled with the Sufis, and listened to the wisdom of Islamic mysticism with Pir Vilayat Khan. I delved into the broadminded

Judaic teachings of rabbis Zalman Schachter Shalomi and Schlomo Carlbach and participated in Jewish holy days with the Aquarian Minyon in the San Francisco Bay Area.

I studied and experienced psychic phenomena and the further reaches of human potential attaining a master's degree in psychology at West Georgia College (now the University of West Georgia), followed by four years of training at the Canadian Institute of Psychosynthesis in Montreal.

This long search for spiritual truth greatly expanded my worldview. Essentially, I have come to know that we all have equal value as human beings and an equal right to exist in this amazing universe. Our existence on this plane totally depends upon the primal elements of earth, air, fire and water. As beings that are equal in value and totally dependent on nature, it follows that just political and economic rules and structures must be based upon equal rights to the earth. In this paper I make a case for a new form of democracy based on the human birthright to the earth. Showing that this ethic is foundational within the Judeo-Christian tradition of jubilee justice and both Old and New Testament teachings, I present a practical policy approach of tax fairness based on this stance. Although I focus on the Judeo-Christian tradition, I set forth a broad, ethical humanist worldview compatible with the truth of all the major religions.

While living in Atlanta I learned specific methods of yoga and meditation from instructors at the Ananda Marga Yoga Society founded by P.R. Sarkar, whose spiritual name was Anandamuti, meaning "embodiment of bliss" in Sanskrit. I remember being moved to tears upon hearing my first PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory) lecture, which set forth a high-minded purpose and vision for humanity worldwide. Securing a better, brighter planetary social order was the Ananda Marga mission and I was happy to sign up.

In 1973 I moved from Atlanta to Montreal where I lived and helped run the Ananda Marga jagriti, or small ashram, for a couple years while I trained in psychosynthesis with Martha Crampton. PROUT teachings say "time, place, and person" will determine the specific policies that will build a political economy beyond both communism and capitalism (Anandamuti predicted the collapse of both these systems).

I had my antennas out for those specific transformative policies when I moved to San Francisco in 1979. Not learning much that was new to me in the Ph.D. program in which I was enrolled, I noticed a posting for a free class in economics. My next intellectual breakthrough in understanding the root causes of poverty and social injustice came through this non-credit adult education class at the Henry George School of Social Science of Northern California. Within five weeks I received answers to questions I had been asking for years, and answers to other important questions I had never even thought to ask.

Shortly after what I now call my “economic enlightenment,” I dropped out of the Ph.D. program in psychology and headed off on a new path as educator and activist for the Henry George School and the “Georgist” movement. Over the past 25 years I became ever more appreciative of how this great Philadelphia-born seer of political economy had articulated for his times that golden thread of economic wisdom teachings of the ages. Many of us think of Henry George as a prophet. He preached the doom of systems of social injustice that resulted in the suffering of masses of people and showed how those systems could be uprooted so that humanity as a whole could move forward to a state of mental and spiritual expansion.

9. Financing Local to Global Public Goods: An Integrated Green Tax-Shift Perspective. Green tax-shift policy is a rapidly emerging new perspective on tax reform that emphasizes the incentive capacity inherent in public finance policy. From this vantage point, taxation not only raises the money necessary to fund governmental services; it also reflects the overall value system of a given society, rewarding some activities while punishing others. If we are to have global stability and human security we must re-think the logic of globalization, including the best ways to finance public goods such as health, education, infrastructure, environmental sustainability, and efforts towards peace and conflict resolution. A coherent, integrated and ethically based local-to-global tax system can evolve out of the current public finance hodge-podge of the world's more than 180 nation states.

I presented this paper at the Global Institute for Taxation Conference on Fundamental Tax Reform sponsored by Price Waterhouse Coopers and St. John's University, New York, on September 30, 1999. It was published in *Taxation Alternatives for the 21st Century*, the proceedings of that conference. In it I describe several successful practices and works-in-progress on green tax shift policies that harness incentives to produce and distribute wealth in an efficient, equitable, and sustainable way. I site research that shows the impressive potential of green tax reform to help solve major social, economic and environmental problems. I also present an integrated local-to-global public finance framework based on green taxation principles and policies.

In researching and writing this paper I had the chance to pull together several crucial concerns including for wealth inequality, environmental degradation, and economic inefficiency and exploitation and use them as a context for an emerging integrated worldview of property rights, human rights, and public finance policy. I describe several specific working examples of the new policy approach and present a local, regional and global perspective on implementation.

10. Financing Planet Management: Sovereignty, World Order, and the Earth Rights Imperative. In Pasadena, California, in 1979 I met two women who became important mentors to me, both on the same day at an International

Cooperation Council conference organized by Leland Stewart. I had recently been introduced to the economic justice work and writings of Henry George and was conducting my first workshop on the subject at the conference when a woman raised her hand and said, "We all know this. What are we going to do about it?" Mildred Loomis had already been working along these lines for more than forty years, and, along with Ralph Borsodi, had founded the School of Living community land trust movement. Though a staunch decentralist, Mildred agreed with Ralph on the need for new global institutions to solve problems that could not be addressed at local and regional levels.

That day I also met Dr. Lucile Green, a leader of movements for global governance that would empower individuals by giving them a voice via the World Citizens Assembly. Lucile encouraged me to participate in an amazing three-week-long journey in Japan, where people from more than forty countries discussed how to implement this idea. The bullet train took us from Tokyo to Kyoto and Osaka, ending in Hiroshima for the 35th anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb.

I well remember that rainy day as I sat between the Secretary of the Soviet Peace Committee, whose name I cannot recall, and Gennady Gerasimov, then a journalist for a Soviet magazine of the caliber of our *LIFE* magazine. Our hearts broke open, as we fully understood the enormity of the atomic bombing; we were especially concerned that all the Japanese people around us were shielded from the rain with umbrellas, hats or jackets. This of course was during the Cold War, when the Soviets were our enemies, and people of the Soviet Union rarely traveled out of their country. Some time later, while I sat in my parents' living room in Pennsylvania watching the evening news, Gennady appeared on the screen informing the world of what had happened at Chernobyl. He had become the chief foreign spokesman for the Soviet Union. I remembered us both in blue jeans with our arms linked together having our photo taken in Japan.

In ensuing years I gained greater knowledge of the various movements for global governance and United Nations reform. Dr. Harry Lerner, who had become my good friend during the Japan World Citizens traveling conference, invited me to speak in New York at several events he organized both inside and near the United Nations. While Harry strongly validated the points on economic democracy that I was making, the global governance movement as a whole sorely lacked any thorough analysis of the land problem, or of the importance of various incentives and disincentives of public finance policy.

After attending one too many UN reform and global governance conferences where people told me once again that all these economic issues would be addressed AFTER the world government was established, I had had enough of such sidestepping. The intention in this little paper with the big name was to put forth reasons why it was essential to solve the land problems and add issues of economic

democracy and equitable tax policy in order to form effective and fair global governance structures. And, unless we were clear about these concerns we risked having a top-heavy world government that might unnecessarily limit the powers of individuals and local and regional authorities. Resource rent funds organized at local, regional and global levels would address the root causes of many problems the world government people were trying to address.

I received many responses agreeing with this paper (they can be found herein). The one that pleased me most came from Dr. Benjamin Ferencz, who had been a US prosecutor at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trial and at the time was teaching international law at Pace University. I was also quite pleased with a comment from Jack Yost, then the UN NGO Representative for the World Federalist Movement. He agreed with me “very much that world federalists and world governmentals need to think through the fundamentals of economic justice.” A few years later Jack moved back to Oregon and wrote *Planet Champions: Adventures in Saving the World*, which highlighted leaders of both the Georgist economic teachings and the world federalist work. Sadly, Jack died suddenly just before his planned book tour.

11. Acting As If the Second Assembly Already Exists. The same Harry Lerner mentioned above also mentored me into movements for global democracy. His special focus and contribution was the effort to build a Peoples’ Assembly as a second house within the UN system. The UN Peoples’ Assembly would be directly elected by the people of the world and would speak for the well-being of the world as a whole rather than for individual nation states as does the UN General Assembly.

Harry invited me to speak at a UN Reform conference that he and Jeffrey Segall held in New York in 1990. This talk was included in *Building a More Democratic United Nations - Proceedings of the First International Conference on a More Democratic UN*, edited by Frank Barnaby and published by Frank Cass in 1991, now available on the internet.

My ending statements are insights I still carry close to my heart: “How we hold the earth is how we hold each other. The needs of the person and the needs of the planet are one and the same.”

12. Land Value Tax and Resource Rent Approach to Financing for Development. I wrote this policy paper with input from Pat Aller, my IU UN NGO colleague and good friend. We submitted it to the United Nations Financing for Development preparatory process at the NGO Hearings Week, November 2000. As UN NGO representatives, we hoped that the Financing for Development “track” in the UN system would prove to be fertile ground for our tax policy approach.

Each of the five major UN global conferences of the 1990's -- enormous endeavors that had attracted more than 100,000 dedicated participants from around the world -- had brought forth a number of strong and clear action agendas. Creating these documents entails a meticulous -- and impressive -- process of consensus building. Each and every word and phrase is carefully crafted with tremendous care and consideration for meaning and nuance. The process involves substantial time, effort and concentration on details, with UN member state delegates sometimes working long past midnight to meet important deadlines. Sometimes UN NGO representatives have opportunities to present their views as well. The problem was, these good ideas and proposed policies were just not being implemented. There were no significant strides forward for poverty eradication, ending starvation, housing the homeless and provisioning basic services for all.

After reviewing the situation, the UN saw the problem: no funding was coming forth to bring these action agendas into reality. Hence the next UN major global conference, held in 2002 in Monterey, Mexico after three preparatory conferences was to launch a new Financing for Development track within the UN system.

Throughout all three preparatory conferences at the UN building in New York, we stood at the doorways of the UN assembly halls and distributed our policy paper to both NGOs and official UN nation state ambassadors and other delegates. We meticulously combed through the preparatory documents, suggesting changes in wording that would describe the importance of land value taxation and resource rent funds to finance development. We worked with the NGO Financing for Development working group to get statements into the official document. At one point we did succeed in getting a few words into an NGO statement that was presented on the main floor during one preparatory conference.

All to no avail. Our most frustrating moment came during a UN NGO session across the street at the Church Center. I had hoped to have at least five minutes to describe this policy approach to other UN NGO people. About two minutes into my talk, the chairman shut me down. I still do not know why. Perhaps because I was not an insider of the UN NGO core group that met regularly in New York.

By the time the Financing for Development conference in Mexico rolled around, I was feeling hopeless about influencing the process and did not even attend. My colleague Jeffrey Smith was in Mexico at the time and decided to go. He gave a side event workshop and made some contacts. But nothing really went anywhere and as far as I can see, the Financing for Development process is floundering. And we still see no big breakthroughs in ending hunger, homelessness and hopelessness on the planet.

Nonetheless, readers should find this paper of interest. In it, I succinctly described the land value tax policy in a global context. I then describe working models of this approach, and end with a call for a Global Resource Agency that would offer five clear benefits to the world. To my knowledge, Ralph Borsodi first proposed such an agency. He was a profound thinker and visionary who deserves to be far better known.

One more note on this article. It contains the statement that this policy approach is “under serious consideration by the Russian parliament, the Duma.” It was, at the time. My colleagues Fred Harrison, Tatiana Roshkoshnaya, and Nic Tideman, among others, worked very hard for many years urging Russia to adopt the land value tax policy approach after the Soviet Union collapsed. They had support at top levels. But in the post-Gorbachev era of chaos and kleptomania, the neoliberal economic paradigm of privatization won out, and Russia experienced one of the largest natural resource grabs in world history. President Vladimir Putin was listening in on their earlier conversations about “the land question.” To this day he still advocates capturing the resource rent of Russia’s lost natural heritage and to some extent has succeeded in wresting back control of Russia’s natural resources to benefit the Russian people as a whole.

13. Local to Global Dimensions of Ecotaxation, Land Value Taxation and Citizen Dividends. James Robertson, a British author of several important books on alternative economics, co-founded The Other Economic Summit (TOES) and the New Economics Foundation. He organized a one-day symposium at the Oxford Centre for the Environment, Ethics and Society on May 14, 1998 at Rhodes House, Oxford University. The conference was called Sharing Our Common Heritage: Resource Taxes and Green Dividends. This is the paper I presented that day.

In the citation for the gold medal awarded to James for his outstanding work, Mikhail Gorbachev called James “An outstanding example of a modern thinker at the service of society.” James Robertson was probably the very first scholar to put together the several components of what I now call “holistic, integrated green tax shift.” He designed this symposium to bring together experts on three major components of the new economic paradigm: ecotaxation, land value taxation, and citizen dividends.

I was honored to be one of the invited speakers, along with David Marquand, Tatiana Roshkoshnaya, Philippe van Parijs, and Mason Gaffney. Vandana Shiva was also scheduled to speak but could not come. India had just announced its success in building an atomic bomb and she chose to remain there to lead protests. Vandana was appalled that public funds had been directed to develop weapons of mass destruction rather than to meet the basic needs of India’s many impoverished people. Lucy Silfa, director of the Henry George School of Social Science in the Dominican Republic, presented in Vandana’s place. Lucy spoke brilliantly and

movingly about conditions in the Dominican Republic and how they could be substantially improved if a land value tax policy was implemented.

In this talk the section on citizen dividends is a bit too brief but I provide details on the ethical underpinnings and practical policy examples of ecotaxation and land value taxation. I also describe the concept of “subsidiarity” as it relates to local-to-global taxes on specific types of resources.

The paper lays out guidelines for an integrated local-to-global public finance system based on the principle of the common heritage of earth’s land and natural resources. It proclaims that the planet and all its resources, including land, water, forests, minerals, the atmosphere, electro-magnetic frequencies, and satellite orbits are the common heritage of all and must no longer be appropriated for the private profit of the few to the exclusion of the many.

All of the papers presented that day, along with books by James Robertson and other important information on alternative economics can be found at www.jamesrobertson.com

14. Alaska Permanent Fund: A Model of Resource Rents for Public Investment and Citizen Dividends. Fred Hanison, author of several important books on the land problem and land value tax policy, asked me to write this paper for the Spring 2002 issue of *Geophilus*, a beautiful journal that he launched and edited as a publication of the Land Research Trust. Six issues of *Geophilus* were published before it unfortunately folded. I was grateful for the opportunity to do some in-depth research on this very important successful model of an oil resource rent fund, probably the best one to date.

In this paper I describe the form and function of the Alaska Permanent Fund as a model governmental institution for collecting and distributing natural resource rents, particularly oil, and I suggest ways to improve the Fund. I also analyze fundamental issues regarding natural resources and territorial claims and show how a Global Resource Agency could collect and distribute transnational resource revenues.

This paper was also one of the five winning essays of the There Are Alternatives Project of the McKeever Institute of Economic Policy Analysis. It was published in an edited version in Fall 2005 in *Dialogues*, a publication of the Canada West Foundation.

15. Citizens Dividends and Oil Resource Rents: A Focus on Alaska, Norway and Nigeria. My colleague Jeffrey J. Smith, a peripatetic Johnny Appleseed-type activist and advocate for the land value tax policy, strongly promotes the idea of distributing resource rents as citizen dividends. Jeff urged several of us to engage with the United States Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) movement. Coordinated by Oxford University economist Karl Widerquist, BIG had leaped across the pond

from BIEN - the Basic Income European Network (now the Basic Income Earth Network). And BIG had embedded its annual conference within the annual conference of the Eastern Economics Association.

The stage was set and Jeff helped put me on it. The challenge was to persuade the BIG people that the very best source of revenue for a citizen's dividend was the resource rent from surface land and natural resources. Since the Alaska Permanent Fund was one heckuva good example of distributing resource rent as citizen dividends, I had to include it in the paper I presented in the U.S. Basic Income Guarantee Network (USBIG) track of the Eastern Economic Association 30th Annual Conference held February 20 - 22, 2004 in Washington, DC.

This article contains many facts and figures and concludes with these three recommendations:

1. Use information and communication technologies fully to provide transparency in extractive resource industries.
2. Invest resource rent from non-renewable resources in socially and environmentally responsible ways and primarily in the needed transition to renewable energy based economies.
3. Rent funds based on oil and other non-renewable resources should transition towards capturing substantial resource rents from surface land site values (ground rent) and other permanent and sustainable sources of rent so they could be distributed as citizen dividends.

This paper is now referenced in the bibliography of the 302-page report titled *Experiences with Oil Funds: Institutional and Financial Aspects*, a June 2006 publication of ESMAP, the Energy Sector Management Assistance Program of the World Bank.

16. Women, Earth and Economic Power. This short essay, printed in my short-lived publication, *GEODATA*, draws on what we know of land tenure systems before the rise of patriarchy. I describe the difference between land tenure patterns that flow from a consciousness of the interconnectedness of all life, and land tenure systems based on male dominance and control. It has been a long time since a counsel of governance listened to a counsel of women before deciding whether or not to go to war. If we deeply honored and listened to the feminine perspective perhaps we would find a way beyond war to solve our problems.

This is the only piece in this collection that mentions the innovative work and writings of Silvio Gesell. This German economist proposed that ground rent be the source of payments to support women in their role as mothers and homemakers. Thus, ground rent payments would be an equivalent to primitive women using the land and soil to meet basic needs. Yes, we could also extend this to men in the role of primary caretaker of children. So relax Mr. Mom, we have you covered!

17. Harvard Club of New York Speech on the UN Conference. On October 28, 1996 I spoke about my experience as an NGO delegate to the UN Habitat II Conference in Istanbul as part of a panel at the Harvard Club of New York. In this brief talk I describe the challenges surrounding the primary focus of the conference: housing as a human right. I trace this concern to the problem of wealth inequality and from there to the need for equitable land access and secure land tenure. I point to promising sections of the 65-page document which was the outcome of the conference, endorsed by consensus of the official delegates from 183 nation states: the Global Action Agenda for Adequate Shelter and Sustainable Human Settlements.

18. Sharing Our Common Heritage via the Tax Shift Agenda. This was my keynote speech at the annual conference of the Council of Geogist Organizations annual conference in Portland, Oregon in August 1998. I first describe how corporate-led globalization was, and still is, pushing people off their lands, patenting seeds for private profit and control, and enclosing the commons of the genetic code itself. I then point out several global movements and organizations that seemed at the time to hold great potential for securing the human right to common heritage resources via fundamental reforms.

One such movement emerged from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro, June 3-14, 1992. A total of 172 governments participated and 108 sent their heads of state or government. Some 2,400 representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended, with 17,000 people at the parallel NGO Forum, who had so-called "consultative status." An important achievement was an agreement on the Climate Change Convention which in turn led to the Kyoto Protocol. The Convention on Biological Diversity was opened for signature at the Earth Summit. It made a start towards redefinition of *money supply* measures that did not inherently encourage destruction of natural ecoregions and so-called uneconomic growth. The Earth Summit outcome document also asked signers not to "carry out any activities on the lands of indigenous peoples that would cause environmental degradation or that would be culturally inappropriate."

Reading this speech nearly a decade later, I think I paid insufficient attention to another fact mentioned in it. The chair of this first major global conference that included so many people from all over the world was also a leader of several corporations with massive land holdings that were acquiring and privatizing major water and other natural resources and displacing indigenous people from their lands in Central America in order to promote tourist development. Is it any wonder that the world has gone backwards instead of forwards on the goals set forth at the Earth Summit? In hindsight it appears to have been one great green

wash of a conference. We will never reach our environmental and social goals if the current economic structures and powers continue to rule the world.

Reflecting in 2007 on my optimistic state of 1998, I confess that the “promised land” seems ever more elusive. Having watched the horrors of the Iraq War for several years and experienced chronic anxiety that the United States could attack Iran with its new “earth penetrator” nuclear weapons, I admit to sometimes feeling overwhelmed with despair. It is difficult to keep lighting our candles in the windy cold. We are living through yet another dark night of the collective human soul. Those of us with candles need to shine together if humanity and other forms of life on this planet are to survive and ever again thrive.

People like us can learn something from wild geese. As they fly long distances in V formation, the lead goose takes the brunt of the elements while those behind fly on the uplift of energy generated by those in front of them in the V pattern. When the lead goose tires it falls back in the flock and another goose flies forward into the most energy-consuming and challenging lead position. Sometimes I’m a lead goose, sometimes I fall back. This is natural; we must do it to avoid burn out and total despair.

Despite the lack of real progress toward the goals of the Earth Summit, something on my wish list in this 1998 speech has in fact come to pass. UN Habitat produced a document on which 183 UN member states agreed at the global conference in Istanbul in 1996. It called for land access to eradicate poverty and recommended capturing land value for the people using land-based taxes. The good news, nearly ten years after this speech, is that UN Habitat’s recently launched Global Land Tool Network is developing a major program to implement land value capture worldwide as a key policy necessary to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of significantly improving the living conditions of 100,000,000 slum dwellers by 2020.

19. Pennsylvania's Success with Local Property Tax Reform -- The Split Rate Tax. In 1990 I packed up my two kids, their hamsters, some household items and 24 boxes of books and papers and left the San Francisco Bay Area. *Fled* the Bay Area might be more accurate. I had several reasons for moving home place to small-town Pennsylvania. City life was driving me crazy. Crime, congestion and high housing costs were yielding a low quality of life in Oakland. I did not know how to raise children in a city that had no safe open places for them to play. The children would know their grandparents and cousins. Schools were better and safer back where I was born. A big scary earthquake had hit the Bay Area in 1989. And several cities in Pennsylvania were succeeding with local applications of the land value tax policy. On this last point, California was in a hopeless situation, at least for the foreseeable future, with the misguided voter lockdown of the property tax un-

der Proposition 13. So it seemed that I could contribute more to my cause if I just moved back to Franklin County. I was right.

The Jerome Levy Economics Institute of Bard College invited me speak at their conference on Land, Wealth and Poverty held November 2 – 4, 1995. This conference was an excellent opportunity to review the land tax movement in Pennsylvania. In the Pennsylvania's Success paper I give an overview of the policy and some details on its impact in the fifteen cities that had adopted it to varying degrees (more have since done so). The term "split rate" means that the property tax valuation on buildings is kept separate from that on land. Removing the tax on buildings provides an incentive to make improvements; taxing land value curbs land speculation and encourages the use of valuable urban sites. In combination, this policy provides both a carrot and stick to restoring cities and making housing affordable.

Here is a key statement from the paper: "Research based on building permits issued in the three-year period before and after the implementation of the two-rate tax policy in Pennsylvania cities consistently shows significant increases in building permits issued after the policy was put into place."

Now, an increase in building permits might not sound like a very exciting economic indicator. But please consider this point fully. If the building stock is deteriorating and houses are boarded up, then once-thriving neighborhoods are degraded and increasingly depressed -- along with the people in them. The research solidly indicates that even modest applications of this tax policy move communities towards renewal and renovation. This is the good news of the Pennsylvania story.

This paper was published in *The American Journal of Economics and Sociology* in April 1997 and is a slightly revised version of my talk at Bard. A later version of this paper briefly elaborates the earth trusteeship concepts of John McConnell, the founder of Equinox Earth Day, and credits him as a co-author. An edited version also appears in *A World That Works: Building Blocks for a Just and Sustainable Society*, a 1997 TOES (The Other Economic Summit) book edited by Trent Schroyer and available from Apex Press.

This paper was also quoted in *An Introduction to Two-Rate Taxation of Land and Buildings* by Jeffrey P. Cohen and Cletus C. Coughlin, published in the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis *Review*, May/June 2005. Cohen and Coughlin begin their article with these two quotes:

In my opinion, the least bad tax is the property tax on the unimproved value of land, the Henry George argument of many, many years ago. – Milton Friedman, 1976 Nobel Prize laureate in economics.

The property tax is, economically speaking, a combination of one of the worst taxes – the part that is assessed on real estate improvements. . . and one

of the best taxes – the tax on land or site value. – William Vickrey, 1996 Nobel Prize laureate in economics.

20. How Pennsylvania Boroughs Got the Land Tax Option. This is the sordid saga of the ultimately successful five-year effort to pass enabling legislation so boroughs of Pennsylvania could use the land value tax option. Our campaign was not sordid. That label properly fits the backstabbing and partisan politics we encountered as we worked to pass this benign bill – an option-only or “may bill” that required no funding allocation. This brief amendment to the Borough Code simply granted this tax reform as an option for the state’s 1000 boroughs -- an option that the cities already had available to them.

Within this political adventure story readers may find some sections that could help in efforts to pass this type of legislation elsewhere. These are: (1) the initial resolution passed by the Chambersburg Town Council which signaled our local state legislative officials to take on sponsorship of the bill; (2) the piece we used to educate legislators about the land value tax policy; and (3) the entire land value tax option bill.

We nearly lost this one, and then won in the end with a vote of 198 for and 2 abstaining. A nearly unanimous agreement on tax reform. Amazing, huh?

21. Pennsylvania Farmers and the Split Rate Tax. Enabling legislation for the split rate tax option had proceeded gradually over the years. By the time I moved to Pennsylvania all three categories of cities (based roughly on population) could take advantage of this tax reform option. But where I come from, there are no cities, only smaller towns classified as “boroughs.” My hometown of Chambersburg was not allowed to implement this policy. I needed to get a bill passed by the state legislature – a daunting challenge if ever there was one. I tell the story of this five-year effort and our ultimate success in the next article. I mention it here because, in the course of the legislative work, I realized that the Pennsylvania State Farm Bureau had major concerns about any bill that included both the words “land” and “tax.”

I put this research paper together for the legislative proceedings on how the so-called Borough Bill could impact farmers. The farm lobby did succeed in amending the bill, so that essentially no borough with a farm within its limits could implement this tax reform, but the bill did eventually pass and it might not have without this paper. My research showed clearly that the tax would actually benefit working farmers. In fact, it was so convincing that some legislators were worried about adding the amendment because of their concern that it might actually hurt farmers.

Before I wrote this paper I knew that this tax shift would not hurt working farmers and would actually help them: curbing speculation in farm land, would keep land affordable, while removing taxes on farmers’ homes, barns and other buildings would be a tax relief. What I did not know until I did the research was

how much it would benefit working farmers (as opposed to both working and idle land speculators). I conclude the paper with ten clear reasons why this policy would benefit farmers and end with this statement:

Our evidence thus suggests that the split-rate tax policy approach, especially with a heavy reduction of millage (tax) rates on building values, would significantly enhance incentives for the continuation and expansion of a viable, efficient, and sustainable agriculture in Pennsylvania and anywhere else if used.

A few years later, the historian Ken Wenzler, who has practically memorized all of many writings of Henry George, had a contract with M.E. Sharpe to put together an anthology. He called to ask me if I had any unpublished articles that might be appropriate. I gave him this research paper, which he edited in his usual highly meticulous manner. It can now be found in *Land Value Taxation: The Equitable and Efficient Source of Public Finance*, which Sharpe published in 1999.

22. Lunch and Lecture with Ralph Nader. He is still a hero to me. If the majority of Americans could recognize a man of high integrity, unwavering conviction, brilliance and true inner strength, Ralph Nader would be our president today. We would not have innocent blood on our hands from wars of aggression for full-spectrum dominance in the guise of bringing democracy to the world. Ralph's presidential campaigns were wake-up calls. He put his alarm ringer on high volume but to no avail. The snoring continues.

It was my honor to organize a small group for lunch with Ralph at the White Dog Café in Philadelphia on March 25, 2000. We raised a modest amount for his campaign and had the opportunity for some one-on-one time with him.

Ralph clearly knows how to connect the dots from a “military budget twisted into a grotesque excess” to the wealth gap, through the “trivialization of the media” to “initiatory democracy where people are not simply following a movement, but they themselves become leaders who are putting forth and implementing ideas to create a better political and economic system.” All these ideas, and more, are included in this piece.

Later that afternoon, at the Wharton School of Law at the University of Pennsylvania, he gave a stirring speech to hundreds of students and members of the Green Party. Ralph said many important things that I summarize or quote in this article. Those of us who had lunch with him that day were especially pleased at this statement:

We need a big debate on different kinds of taxation, to talk about how corporations are freeloading on public services and getting tax breaks while taxes are falling on workers and smaller businesses. We need to open a debate about land taxation and Henry George, to tax bad things not good things, and not tax people who go to work everyday.

Ralph gave us another choice, beyond the least bad party. How tragic that we did not take it.

23. Diary of an Outreach Activist. One of the wonderful aspects of living a life dedicated to the service of people and planet is the many opportunities to travel all over the world on missions of meaning and purpose. This diary, published in *Land and Liberty* in 1999, includes brief vignettes of four such intellectually, culturally and spiritually rich experiences in Thailand, the Netherlands, New York City, and Oaxaca, Mexico. I include a photo of the amazing meditation structure built by the Dhammakaya Foundation taken on the day of the awe-inspiring Lights of Peace event.

24. IMF and World Bank Protest. I attended the epic Mobilization for Global Justice protests against the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) held the week of April 8 to 17, 2000, in Washington, D.C. The piece is a phantasmagoric description of the sights, sounds, textures, tones, dialogs and discussions of 50,000 plus individuals of valor who gathered from all corners of the world during that sunny but serious week.

If you have never experienced this type of event yourself, the piece should give you a bittersweet flavor of the global struggle for justice. The bitter is the knowledge of the massive and unnecessary suffering on the planet. The sweet is being in solidarity with high-minded justice-loving sisters and brothers from all around the world. As I again read the story several years after this one-of-many such protests, sometimes I think I see a small shift in the WB's policies. I know that some people inside both the WB and the IMF sincerely want a better world for all. I know that those of us with "good will and special skill" are finding each other and strengthening and expanding our networks.

Recently I was rather surprised to discover that my article on Citizens Dividends (#15 in this volume) was mentioned in a WB publication entitled *Experiences with Oil Funds: Institutional and Financial Aspects*. When I was there among the throngs protesting the WB in 2000, I never imagined that my ideas would be incorporated into a WB paper in 2006. Perhaps some people inside those Washington circles are indeed awakening.

25. D.C. Protest Provides New Insights. This guest essay for the Chambersburg Public Opinion gives a brief overview of my experiences at the Mobilization for Global Justice, detailed in the previous article, and also describes the breakthrough in using peaceful civil disobedience and the non-violent strategy developed by Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King.

26. Professional Super Hero. In 1997, *INSider*, a magazine distributed on college campuses nationwide, published this interview Adam Monroe conducted with me.

I cannot find either this article or an Internet URL for INsider, so the magazine must have either folded or been transformed into something else. I cannot find Adam either, but I do have a hard copy of the INsider interview somewhere in my archives. Adam's compelling questions led me to reflect on the UN and the roles of UN NGOs, specifically the one I have represented for the past twelve years, the International Union for Land Value Taxation. He also elicited some of my thinking on the global struggle for economic democracy.

It is interesting to read our concerns about the MAI – the Multilateral Agreement on Investment – as its outcome was uncertain at the time of the interview. We now know that due to people power and the Battle of Seattle during the 1999 World Trade Organization Ministerial, the MAI came tumbling down. But it reared its power-hungry head again with the 2003 push for another trade agreement. It was the same quest for corporate rule with a slightly different name. This failed as well, thanks to the united efforts of more than twenty poor countries. I think you'll like the Princess Leia quote from Star Wars near the end of the interview.

27. O! Say Can You See: A Perspective on the Current Crisis. The title is taken from the first line of the “Star Spangled Banner” the official national anthem of the United States. I gave this talk at the Books Not Bombs/Stop Iraq War Forum organized by students at Shippensburg University, Pennsylvania on March 5, 2003.

So many millions of people came out in the streets or organized forums like this in an effort to prevent the war. To me, nothing more clearly indicates a dysfunctional democracy than the fact that a government can launch a war using its citizens' tax dollars of the citizenry and risking or taking our lives and our children's lives with so little respect for the views of all of us.

This speech is a call to stop the momentum towards the Iraq war, a call to use global governance structures to abolish war and solve international conflicts, and a call to pledge allegiance to the earth and its people as an interconnected whole. I briefly analyze resource wars and describe the transition of the United States from republic to empire, using a quote from Dr. Stephen Pelletier, a former professor at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

The media was blasting the phrase “shock-and-awe” at us at that time. The world would soon see those words made manifest. In March 2003 I would never have dreamed that in June 2004 I would be spending time with a U.S. Air Force squadron leader who was involved in the shock-and-awe Iraq attack. More on that in article 29.

28. Letter to a Church. This was published as a guest editorial in the *Public Opinion*, a Gannett newspaper in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Members of a nearby United Brethren Church frequently left notes on my doorstep inviting me to their

services; this letter was my response. My parents had raised me in the fundamentalist, conservative United Brethren faith, a Protestant sect. I went to Sunday School and church every week and Bible School and special evangelical services every summer. I was “born-again” at age 10. By age 13 I was asking many questions and not finding sufficient answers.

My needs for emotional healing, interpersonal conflict resolution, intellectual understanding, and spiritual insight were in no way fulfilled by my affiliation with my parents’ church. This letter is an appeal to organized mainstream Christianity to end the hypocrisy and begin to live the teachings of Christ’s message of love and peace.

29. A Friend of Mine Bombed a Friend of Mine. This was another guest editorial in the November 1, 2004 *Public Opinion*. The title the editor gave it was “War in Iraq touches many lives near and far.” This essay is only six paragraphs long. In that brief space I tell a little story about my friendship with two men and their relationship to the “Shock and Awe” bombing of Baghdad. I end the story with a simple but profound thought from Martin Luther King.

This short personal story points to the great mission before us: abolishing war on Planet Earth. War is a completely unacceptable way to resolve conflicts. We can learn nothing more from it. “Thou shalt not kill.” Period. No exceptions.

Each of us needs to decide if our children and our children’s children are to live full lives. If political leaders will not abolish war, then we the people must stop paying for it and stop offering up our children and ourselves for slaughter.

30. Economics of War and Peace. The current Iraq war and the potential for a US attack on Iran are affecting everyone in the world on some basic level, whether physical, emotional, mental and/or spiritual. In the 1940s, during another time of war, Ralph Borsodi, Mildred Loomis, and other decentralist, pacifist, “alternative” economists were influenced by the ideas of Henry George; they composed a series of four simple graphs to portray how a simple economy builds into a war economy and how to mold it back into a peace economy. Lindy Davies, director of the Henry George Institute, later graphically redesigned these four rough graphs and they became my framework for this four-part article.

I presented this final article of this anthology in summary form on February 23, 2007 on the Economists for Peace and Security panel at the Eastern Economic Association 33rd Annual Conference in New York. In it, I first describe a simple economy in which people secure their basic needs via fair access to land and natural resources. Then I articulate the root injustice built into our current economic system that lets an elite few privately appropriate the economic surplus. From this dynamic the military-industrial-financial complex emerges, along with an imperialistic U.S. foreign policy.

The fourth graph depicts a new role for democratic governance: Earth Rights Democracy. This system captures the “rent” of nature’s gifts to benefit the people as a whole via a type of public finance reform that simultaneously lifts taxes from those actively producing wealth. I provide several practical examples of this policy, to point the way towards a world of peace and plenty.



The Distalfink Bird is part of Pennsylvania Dutch (Deutch = German) culture. It is supposed to bring “Good Luck” to all. The photo was taken at Aradhana, the author’s home and headquarters of Earth Rights Institute’s East Coast office.

I am putting the finishing touches on this book while on a weeklong silent retreat with about 200 people led by Gangaji, a wonderful spiritual teacher. We are gathered at Tenaya Lodge in the awesome expanses of Yosemite National Park in California. Here, I experience abundance, joy and deep inner peace. All needs are fully met. My prayer is that we soon put in place an economic system that will enable each and every member of our human family to secure basic material needs with dignity and time to spare. Everyone can then enjoy the adventure of mental, creative and spiritual expansion during this brief sojourn on Planet Earth.

Shalom...Amen...Saalom...Om.....