CENTER REVIEW

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Psychology and the Political Process

Report on a Center Conference, May 24, 1991

Boston psychologists Stuart Fischoff and Steven Zeitlin (foreground) talk with political consultants John Maguire and Jack Weeks at political psychology conference

Why did the symbol of Willie Horton dominate the 1988 Presidential race? Why is negative campaigning so despised and yet so seductive? New approaches to campaign strategy, coupled with the power of mass communications, are altering the political process in ways that are profoundly psychological.

Psychology and the Political Process, the first in a series of interdisciplinary symposia on these developments, was held May 24 at the John W. McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. Co-sponsored by the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age and the McCormack Institute, the daylong session brought together political operatives and scholars, psychologists, psychiatrists, and media professionals to begin forging a common discourse. They gathered to examine the ways each field can challenge and enlighten the others, and to develop an agenda that will lead to a revitalized democratic process.

Center affiliate Howard Berens, a psychiatrist in Newton, Massachusetts, was inspired to convene the group after last year's "Facing Apocalypse" conference (see *Center Review*, Fall 1990) made him aware of the gulf between the working models of individual and mass psychology. Berens was gratified to find almost universal interest in the topic. Conference co-chair Louis DiNatale of the McCormack Institute set the tone for the event by observing that, "We're spending more and more with every campaign, and fewer and fewer people are turning out to vote. We must be doing *something* wrong."

The day began with three introductory presentations grounded in three very different paradigms. Campaign strategist John Marttila offered the first challenge to psychologists by admitting, "I rarely think in terms of individual decision making." He described the typical approach in his field as a "sociological, demographic view" of public opinion, but he added, "This is not to say that people are running around with a perfectly crystallized set of values. I wish I understood more about the way attitudes are formed."

One sobering response to Marttila's wish was offered by the next presenter, George Gerbner, Dean Emeritus of the Annenberg School for Communication in Philadelphia. New voters today, he ob-

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The Language of the Gulf War

by Carol Cohn

Throughout the time of the Allied deployments in the Gulf following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, public language about the imminent war was what passes for multifaceted political discourse in this country. It was poly-vocal to the extent normally allowed by the commercial media, and it utilized a familiar vernacular, albeit one that has to some extent been shaped by the geopolitical discourse of politicians, security affairs specialists, and journalists.

But once the US-Iraqi war started, there was a radical change. All sources of language about the war were shut down but one: political discussion came to a screeching halt; reporters' access to the action was severely constrained and their words censored; and almost all the news we received came from one source—military briefings. Twice a day, every day, we watched men in uniform, with their easels holding charts, maps, and photos, create the news. For the rest of the day, we watched newscasters and white men in ties—civilian defense analysts—repeat and respond to that "news." The briefers' language became the public language of the war, the only language left to speak in.

For most of us, it was an unfamiliar language, and before we were even aware of what we were doing, we were caught up in learning to decode it: learning the difference between a B-52 and an F-16; learning what AWACS, Tomahawks, Patriots, and Scuds were; learning what was meant when a general spoke of the difficulty of doing "BDA in the KTO." There was little choice if we wanted to follow the news. But by the

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CENTER TO PRESENT ANNUAL RECOGNITION AWARD TO JOAN AND ERIK ERIKSON, NOVEMBER 21, 1991.

See Calendar, page two.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age, founded in 1983 as an affiliate of Harvard Medical School, addresses the psychological and social forces that fuel the major threats to global survival–regional and international conflict and environmental destruction.

The Center aims to generate and use psychological insights and tools to increase the effectiveness of efforts to bring about social change. Its interdisciplinary research projects yield information about the psychosocial roots of global threats. Its intervention, or action, projects apply research findings and psychological skills to redirect human thought and behavior into life-sustaining paths. Finally the Center uses its extensive public education program to share findings from its research and intervention projects with policy makers and members of the public. ❐

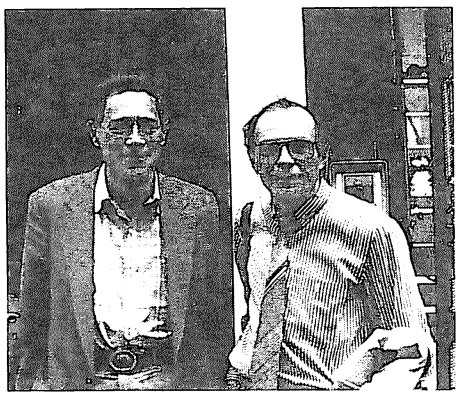
A Baltic Memoir

by John E. Mack

The political, economic, and environmental changes currently occurring in Europe fill us with hope and anxiety. The opportunities and dangers that lie before us reflect the deep divisions of the collective mind, our Nietzschean capacity for creation or destruction. On a journey to Finland, Leningrad, Lithuania, Estonia, and London in the first twelve days of July, I was flooded with emotional close-ups of the contrasting alternatives from which we will choose in the years ahead. These polarities include: ethnic conflict and genocide versus healing of wounds and new group and individual relationships; traditional leadership based on concentrated power and control versus shared power and broad citizen participation; corporate greed and elitism versus economic justice and more equitable distribution of material resources; continued ecological desecration versus the creation of livable human environments in harmony with other species and nature; and, finally, the continued attachment to failed systems and ideologies versus caring for the varied needs of human beings in all of their richness and complexity.

First stop on my trip was the International Society of Political Psychology meetings in Helsinki. ISPP was founded in 1978 by the late Jeanne Knutson, whose hope it was to discover, if not a new world order, then fresh insights into and new ways of managing political conflict. (See article, p. 7.) Conference participants heard stories of ethnic strife, especially in the Baltic republics as they strive for independence, together with discussions of new forms of third-party intervention and novel approaches to conflict resolution and negotiation. Several panels examined psychological dimensions of the Persian Gulf War. Harold Saunders, former Under Secretary of State for the Middle East, urged that we discover political ways of turning back "people like Saddam Hussein" without the use of military force.

Arriving in Leningrad after the conference, I was struck immediately by the ever-increasing economic injustice that the failing Soviet system is producing. The economic props that had been sustaining the ruble at absurd levels had been removed a few months before we came. The immediate effect of this action was surreal.



John E. Mack and Russian writer Mikhail Meylach in London

Driven by the move toward private enterprise and the hunger for "hard currency," everyone – from Intourist employees to taxi drivers – seemed to have become an entrepeneur, asking to be paid in US dollars whenever possible. A "window of opportunity" for Westerners seeking bargains in ruble shops translates into greater poverty and worsening shortages for ordinary Soviet citizens. The bizarre situation was embodied for me in the sight of a drunken and confused young Russian headwaiter at a "hard-currency-only" restaurant in the lavishly appointed but nearly empty Astoria Hotel, expensively renovated to capture Western currency.

The long train rides from Leningrad to

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CALENDAR

November 18 **8:00 PM**

Macht Auditorium, Cambridge Hospital

Enabling Social Action: Transforming and Mobilizing Bystanders

At this Center colloquium, **Linda Stout**, director of the Piedmont Peace Project, will describe her techniques for mobilizing grassroots groups in North Carolina to take action on both local and global issues. **Ervin Staub**, Professor of Psychology, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, will explain peoples' passivity in response to their own or others' victimization and social problems and will discuss ways to mobilize "bystanders" for local and global action.

November 20 **8:00 PM**

First Parish Unitarian Church, Cambridge

The Diplomat: The Role of Healing in Political Conflict Resolution

As part of the Lowell Institute's "Great Vocations" series, Center Research Associate **Joseph V. Montville** will speak at the Cambridge Forum on his work in "Track Two" diplomacy, a method of facilitated communication dealing with psychological barriers to political conflict resolution.

November 21 **7:30 PM**

Taubman Center, Harvard University

The Center's 1991 Recognition Award Reception will honor **Joan and Erik Erikson**, with a special tribute by **Robert Jay Lifton**. In their life-long collaboration, the Eriksons have produced a seminal body of work on human life cycle stages, identity, interdependence, and the tendency to define other groups as the enemy. (Call the Center for reservations: 497-1553.)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Environmental Crisis: Strategies for Social Change

Report on a Center Working Conference, March 22-24, 1991

I remember my grandmother telling me that we were rich because we had such good land to grow our crops on [and] such fresh fish to eat.... Now the fish are not fit to eat, the waters are so polluted.... In those times, when she was still alive, there were people coming to our nation with these grand ideas about how wealthy we could be if we would allow them to put a ski resort at the top of our beautiful hill, and I can remember my grandmother saying we would be poor if we allowed them to make that hill into a ski resort, because we would lose everything that was on that hill, and it would twist our minds.

—Audrey Shenandoah, elder of the Eel Clan of the Onondaga Nation, speaking on Bill Moyers' 1991 public television special, "Spirit and Nature."

The participants in the Center's working conference, *Comprehensive Strategies for Sustainability*, were a multidisciplinary and diverse group that shared Audrey Shenandoah's negative view of the twisted assumptions of modern industrial society: that the increased use of resources and production of goods constitutes wealth and that the increased consumption of an ever-wider variety of goods brings happiness. The social and environmental costs of such production and consumption are ignored by this view of society. US mainstream political culture views other societies through this distorted lens, reasoning that a country must be truly poor, miserable, and not "free" if every possible variety and brand of consumer goods is not available to its people.

These views—embedded in our culture and economy—fuel the world environmental crisis. Conference participants were united in calling for a systemic response from our society, one that addresses distortions at the psychic/spiritual and political/economic levels. The social and economic forces driving the current overconsumption of non-renewable resources, devastation of wilderness, and pollution of air, water, and soil are so powerful that anything less than a radical systemic change constitutes a band-aid approach to the problem.

The core of the concept of sustainability (as opposed to conservation or ending pollution) is a comprehensive vision of how world society needs to be reorganized so that it can, in principle, be sustained indefinitely using resources and technologies currently available. Conference participants agreed on the importance of social and economic justice as an integral component of sustainability—a belief that differentiates sustainability activists from members of some other sectors of the environmental movement. The very existence of disenfranchised countries (or oppressed minorities within countries) makes it politically feasible to make these countries or communities bear the brunt of environmentally harmful practices. Such practices take place "somewhere else, not in my backyard," from the perspective of the politically powerful; the activities are out of sight and out of mind, *yet their effect is, in fact, global.* Following the same logic, sustainability must also include a concern for what is happening to nonhuman species, also politically disenfranchised. Sustainability, then, is a holistic concept that takes the welfare of all classes of people, including future generations, all other living beings, and the Earth's biomass into consideration.

Charlene Spretnak, eco-feminist author, talking with Daniel Goleman, behavioral science writer.

Since this was a working conference with only 22 participants and a mandate to produce strategies for systemic social change, the organizers kept presentations to a minimum. Three presenters on the first day provided ample stimulus for the small-group sessions that occupied the remainder of the conference.

Donella (Dana) Meadows, systems theorist and co-author of *Limits to Growth*, led off with an impassioned account of the journey to Asia that precipitated her work on resource economics and led to the writing of her book. She went on to describe the vehemence and fury that greeted the publication of the book: the title alone was enough to induce hostility. Not only did many readers have difficulty dealing with criticism of the dominant paradigm—growth as the sine qua non of economic well-being—but they were *committed* to not listening to the new perspective.

The conference participants ruminated on the theme of hostile resistance to change for the next three days. A fundamental challenge in restructuring society is to get key information and ideas into places where they are not welcome. Resistance to any modifications of the dominant paradigm tends to be fierce. Sustainability activists and thinkers are ridiculed, attacked, and simply ignored. What dynamic is at the heart of these attacks? How can the sustainability movement best deal with the inevitable conservative backlash?

Dana Meadows told a story that provided a clue to the source of this resistance. She presented her vision of a sustainable society to a group of high-level scientists in Austria. Among the scientists was an electrical engineer who designed high-tension power line grids crisscrossing Europe. His reaction to her presentation was profound: "I don't see a place in your sustainable society for someone like me."

In fact, most people's livelihoods in our society are based in some way on an unsustainable lifestyle, which is why people react as if personally attacked when this lifestyle is called into question. Any strategy for social change must recognize this dynamic and provide people with as concrete an alternative as possible to the ways in which they currently use their skills and earn their living. Economic conversion strategies that provide sustainable alternatives also address, then, a deep psychological obstacle to social change.

As conference participants considered society's resistance to critiques of the dominant economic and social paradigm, they came up with another theme—"standing

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Commitment to Hope: Imperatives of the New Cosmology

Center Colloquium presented by Sister Miriam MacGillis, April 25, 1991

Throughout human history, mainstream cultures have ridiculed prophets, often persecuting them as subversives. With their exceptional communication skills, Sister Miriam MacGillis and her colleague Father Thomas Berry have so far managed to escape this fate. They are widely recognized for the inspiration they have provided to those who are examining our culture for the roots of the global crises currently threatening the world. On April 25th, a packed room of people at Cambridge Hospital shared the excitement of listening to Sister MacGillis' thoughts on Western cosmology. Sister MacGillis defines cosmology as the "story that ultimately gives ... answers that describe the origin and nature of the world."

What is the connection, you might ask, between the Center's environmental work and cosmology? How is the story of Adam and Eve linked to the environmental crisis? Those who search for the cultural roots of the environmental crisis end up, almost inevitably, grappling with the ideological assumptions that drive Western society. Cosmologists uncover the generative and destructive powers of unconscious cultural-belief systems.

An unassuming yet powerful presence, Sister MacGillis grounds her cosmology in her practical experience as a farmer. Having taken her vows as a Dominican nun, she made a lifelong commitment to love and honor the divine. To translate into action her conviction that spirit is an integral dimension of the natural world, she started Genesis Farm about 10 years ago.

The ideas that Sister MacGillis shared with her Center audience are deceptively simple. That is, it did not take her very long to describe them, but the mind of this listener, at least, reeled when contemplating their implications. She and Father Berry question the validity of key assumptions at the heart of the Western world view, ideas such as those embodied in the "origin story" of Adam and Eve. This origin story, or cosmology, includes three assumptions:

1. The divine ("God" or "Yahweh") is pictured as a separate being who transcends the natural world, is located outside of it, and brings it into being.
2. Adam and Eve represent a humanity destined to transcend the created world. In order to achieve oneness with the divine, humans must be redeemed out of the material world. The story has it, in MacGillis's words, that "the world is not the sacred meeting place," and "the universe itself is inherently devoid of an inner dimension."
3. As a result of human sin, the universe becomes flawed. Perfection (that is, freedom from the imperfections of suffering, sickness, death, and chaos, which characterize the natural world) existed once in the Garden of Eden and, in Christian tradition, will exist again in the future. The Christian apocalyptic story of the Last Judgment encourages millennial thinking by presenting these imperfections as "a temporary state of affairs." Perfection will come into being again through the intervention of the divine.

Sister Miriam T. MacGillis, founder of Genesis Farm in New Jersey

According to Sister MacGillis, these assumptions have provided the "visionary, millennial drive" behind the whole Western scientific and technological enterprise. Scientists' obsession with taking apart the natural world to see how it works, with controlling it, and with transcending its limitations is a misguided attempt to recreate the Garden of Eden. (Without having to rely on divine intervention, I might add.)

She speculated that, if Western scientists believed, as many cultures do, that spirit resides in matter, they would not have the option of engaging in the present extraordinary level of tinkering with the natural world—the redesigning and re-engineering of genetic structures and the cracking open of the atom, for example. Ironically, as a result of this tinkering process, scientists are now discovering the inner dimension of matter – the spirit that has been there all along.

How would our civilization change if all humans understood and accepted at the deepest level that there cannot be a universe without chaos, breakdown, suffering, and pain? The main task of science might then be trying to undo the harm wrought by centuries of attempts to control and tinker with nature. If all humans experienced the spiritual dimension of the universe, how would that affect our economy, lifestyle, and governments? Maybe mountains would not be torn apart for strip mines to meet the production needs of industry. Forests might not be felled to meet the paper needs of a throwaway culture. The concept of economic health might not include growth of consumption, because the costs of such growth might be unacceptable.

Sister Miriam encourages us to think of the universe as a subjective organism with an inner dimension. She describes the universe as expanding in size, complexity, and self-awareness, much like the progression of human life from embryo to adult. Each human being is like a cell, contributing to the self-consciousness of the whole body. Given its present cultural self-understanding, Western civilization is cut off from the genetic memory of its larger self. The accepted cosmology begins with the perception that humanity is separate from everything else in the universe. Thus, humanity's symbiotic relationship to the whole is severed by the very story that tries to give it its deepest meaning. Like cancer cells, which have lost their genetic memory and all internal growth restrictions, humans are consuming the resources of their own body, the Earth.

As she recast our image of the universe into one of an expansive subject, Sister MacGillis described the three primary dynamics driving this expansion and forming "the creative impulse of the universe.... Human consciousness must begin to under-

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Re-Inventing the Corporate Self

A Report from the Project on Corporate Leadership

by Melissa Everett

We had lunch with one of Wall Street's best-known financiers, an old college friend, to learn his views of the environmental crisis and the social responsibility of business. Holding a cigar stub in one hand and motioning us into his private dining room with its showy brocade wallpaper, he said, *"I was glad to hear about your research. It made me realize how insular I am up here. You know, my life is defined by the reality of the global market. Somewhere on the planet, all the time, something is being traded that it's my business to follow. If you think I have time to worry about acid rain, you're wrong."*

So began a year-and-a-half study of the role business leaders can play in the shift to a sustainable future. Our research team (which includes John E. Mack, MD, Robert Oresick, PhD, and myself) has been examining the leadership challenges posed by the broadest kind of business ethics – sometimes known as "global responsibility" – which includes social and environmental considerations in decision making.

The focal point of our research has been the claim that "business is different" – that responsibility for the bottom line and accountability to stockholders prohibit executives from thinking about social or environmental questions. This dogma is being questioned today by corporate insiders as well as by outsiders. Businesses such as Seventh Generation Products and The Body Shop have been created explicitly as "social ventures." Corporate structures and practices are undergoing changes, from the phasing out of toxic and ozone-depleting chemicals to employee bills of rights and the inclusion of environmentalists on company boards. How deeply rooted are these changes, and how far can they go? Are they simple, pragmatic choices, or do special psychological characteristics on the part of leaders play a role?

We have approached this question qualitatively, through in-depth interviews. Our subjects are two dozen high-level decision makers in a variety of businesses, including traditional and high-technology manufacturing, retail, architecture, engineering, aerospace, chemicals, banking, finance, and communications. We clustered our interview subjects rather arbitrarily into two groups: those who could tell us about at least one instance in which they had taken some risk or initiative in the interest of integrating their personal values and business role, and those others – equally competent and, in a conventional sense, responsible – who could not. As we complete the current phase of interviews and analysis, two distinct psychological portraits emerge.

Characteristic of the first portrait is the relationship between personal values and behavior, sometimes called self-consistency. Members of the first group saw that quality as essential. The CEO of a chemical company who had refused a lucrative contract to produce an ingredient of binary nerve gas said, "You just have to be able to look at yourself in the mirror when you shave, and if I had let that sale go through I wouldn't have been able to."

> ***Somewhere on the planet, all the time, something is being traded that it's my business to follow. If you think I have time to worry about acid rain, you're wrong."***

In contrast, many of the other executives revealed contradictions between what they sincerely claimed to believe in and what they actually did on the job. An example is the chairman of the board of a chemical engineering firm. When asked whether he had faced any conflicts between his personal values and his business role, he said no. But later, talking about the global nature of the company and his international travels, he volunteered this story: *"You know the chemical plants in Eastern Europe that are making the news, creating hell with all their environmental problems? We built a lot of them back in the early 1970s. We told our clients at the time that in the United States we would have had more stringent environmental controls. But they didn't want to pay for them. And we have always taken the position that the customer is always right."*

A similar conflict is described by an advertising executive who weathered a major personal and professional crisis by leaving his job because, as he tells it, *"I wouldn't let the kids eat sugary breakfast cereals, but at the office I was dreaming up ads for Kellogg's Frosted Flakes. I'd quit smoking, but my job had me creating cigarette commercials for Philip Morris. Then, in the middle of the fuel crunch, I was asked to work on an ad campaign to sell gas-guzzling luxury cars for GM."*

Heinz Kohut used the term "social selves" to describe the different personality and behavioral patterns that most people show in varied social settings. These different selves are part of human nature and can reflect adaptability. They are a problem when they become rigid, when the different social selves lose their contact with each other, or when the individual lacks an underlying, integrating identity. Unfortunately, many aspects of corporate life press in this direction, from the frantic pace to the prevailing legal standard for fiduciary responsibility, by which an executive's decision not to pursue a legal profit opportunity – no matter how short-term, short-sighted, or harmful – can be cause for lawsuit or dismissal.

These pressures can lead to a psychological condition that has characterized some of history's most tragic moral failures, a split between the social self that faces the greatest institutional pressures – in this case, the corporate self – and the core self, which can privately retain a sense of values and even a self-image that is consistent with these values.

Our self-consistent group generally saw their attitude as natural, and so did those executives who believed in a separate set of standards for business and personal behavior. "You have to separate them; they're different" and "I can't imagine it being difficult" were typical comments from the latter group. Some members of the self-consistent group are in unique corporate situations, running companies that are industry leaders or catering to secure specialty markets. But these executives also stand out as individuals.

The first of the unique characteristics of the self-consistent executives has to do with power or *sense of agency* – not just the ability to amass resources or give orders, but an underlying dynamism rooted in the awareness that one's actions matter. One

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Connections and Divisions in the Global Community

A Report on a Workshop on Stereotyping in Stockholm

By Margaret Herzig, Paula Gutlove, and Richard Chasin

In 1987, when glasnost was new and exhilarating, Dr. Richard Chasin designed a workshop on stereotyping for a Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) in Moscow. The workshop offered participants representing members of the Warsaw Pact and NATO alliances an opportunity to address the "hot" dimensions of their relationship in a "cool" atmosphere. Each group was asked to list the stereotypes that they felt others held of them and to say which of these stereotypes were particularly distorted and damaging. The IPPNW workshop was offered again in Montreal in 1988, where the design was revised to amplify the "neutral" voices previously drowned out by the roar of Cold War rhetoric, and once more in Hiroshima in 1989, where there was even less bipolarity, and the voices of Japanese, Africans, Latin Americans, and East Europeans contributed to discussions of the damage that is caused even among friendly nations by cultural and political stereotypes.

When we were invited to offer the workshop again, this time in Stockholm, we sought to build into the design a recognition that some of the "hottest" conflicts in the world are not between nations, but between groups defined by ethnicity, race, and/or religion. We decided to offer workshop participants the opportunity to group themselves along such dimensions, not only by nationality.

When we arrived in Stockholm and heard that Israeli and Palestinian participants were planning to attend our workshop, we were pleased that we had designed the workshop to be so "safe." But by the time our workshop convened, the Israelis and Palestinians were busy trying to write a joint resolution for presentation the next day (which we later heard was not completed in time), so neither group was able to attend. As it turned out, the group that gathered for the workshop represented 15 countries, but most of the 40 participants were from either Western Europe or North America.

Workshop participants first met in regional groups to consider their hopes, fears, and strengths and to share thoughts about the sources of their identities. This was in preparation for the second part of the workshop, when groups with shared identities would consider ways in which they felt stereotyped by others.

Members of the regional groups cited concerns about damage to the environment, unjust distribution of wealth, and violent responses to conflict, including nuclear war. Some mentioned the need for world law and reforms of the UN to make it "stronger and more peaceful." All hoped for cultural diversity, increased cross-cultural contact, and the satisfaction of basic needs for all people. Many of these hopes and fears had been expressed in previous workshops. What was new in Stockholm was the amount of attention paid to issues of personal responsibility, morality, and spirituality. One group, which included a woman from Lithuania, reported disagreement in her group as to whether Communism could fit in the "hoped-for" future. While some members of her group hoped for a future without "political religions," other groups said they feared "not having religion" and "nihilism." Still another group hoped for "respiritualization beyond religion." The Lithuanian said, "It's not going to be easy to have a multinational Europe."

When participants were offered the opportunity to regroup on the basis of sources of identity, they formed seven groups: Canadian, Scandinavian, men, women, family therapists, "world citizens," and what was called a "sympathy" group, which was made up of people like the "world citizens," who resisted categorization.

The Canadians felt that they were inaccurately viewed as a peace-keeping nation, saying that the *people* are peace loving, but the *government* is "heavily involved in the military." They also felt inaccurately viewed as a nation of wilderness and small farms, when in reality, small farms are being taken over by agribusiness, and the wilderness is being destroyed. They disavowed the stereotype that they are like another state of the US, making reference to their unique history and culture. They also rejected the stereotype that they are strictly a French-English culture, saying "we are multi-cultural, with Scots and Scandinavians, and a large native population."

Workshop co-leaders Paula Gutlove and Margaret Herzig answer questions in Stockholm.

The Scandinavians felt incorrectly viewed as "slow cerebrated" and "complacent." They attributed this misperception to cultural differences: "We speak slowly and don't express things until we have thought them through carefully." They suspected that others had a superficial image of Scandinavia as a "paradise on Earth," an image that is not grounded in reality.

The men's and women's groups seemed like exercises in the cross-cultural contact that so many participants had mentioned when discussing their hopes

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Transforming the Confrontation Mentality

by Paula F. Gutlove

We can't keep bombing our problems away. Although popular in some quarters, the Persian Gulf War marked a return to a confrontation mentality that we had briefly transcended at the end of the Cold War. A number of people who feel compelled to transform that mentality attended two meetings in June and July, at which Center associates and other physicians, social scientists, and political scientists explored alternatives to violent confrontation.

In the late June "white nights" of Stockholm, 1,400 people representing more than 70 nations gathered for the Tenth International Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) to address the conference theme: Global Communication for Common Security and Health. Several key sessions focused on innovative methods of global communication and conflict resolution. As the director of the Center's projects on Promoting Effective Dialogue Across Ideologies and Advancing the Field of Interactive Conflict Resolution, I had the opportunity to report on the work of both projects.

I began by noting the importance of establishing new ways of thinking about the interrelationships among nations: making concepts of global interdependence and common security our guiding principles; supporting alliances, not *against* other human groups, but against common problems and *for* human survival; and appreciating that each party to a conflict has an interest in another's sense of security, so that no nation can achieve true security without some degree of cooperation with other nations. Furthermore, I observed the growing awareness that solutions to international problems may lie beyond the power of governments, as evidenced by the increasing number of private organizations and individuals who are trying their hand at international peacemaking.

To nurture this new thinking, we must expand our understanding of the needs, interests, and priorities of other cultures. As individuals and groups come to recognize the complexity of personal and group relations and express curiosity and compassion in their exchanges with one another, they will need to rely less on weapons and threats in order to feel secure.

The Project on Promoting Effective Dialogue Across Ideologies uses techniques from family systems therapy to help people express curiosity and compassion in their exchanges with one another, while gently challenging rigidly held belief systems. Initiated by Dr. Richard Chasin in 1987, the project applies the systems thinking of family therapists to open doors to the new thinking so clearly needed for human survival.

Family systems theory emphasizes relationships, interactive patterns, and context. Nations, like families, must be able to recognize when their belief systems are based on obsolete and constricted habits of thought that lead to undesirable actions and outcomes. Family systems therapy strives to disrupt and transform old patterns of belief and behavior, while fostering an openness to new information and the creation of fresh solutions. Family therapists have a repertoire of techniques to effect such changes. One particularly fruitful technique, often called "circular questioning," was nicknamed "organized gossip" by its inventor, Mara Selvini Palazzoli. A therapist using this technique does not ask anyone directly what he or she thinks or feels. Instead, the therapist asks each person what they imagine another person feels or thinks about a particular relationship or behavior in the group. This method is guaranteed to elicit rapt attention. The sheer quantity of new information that is generated by this technique can be striking. This flood of confusing but stimulating information, uncovered in an atmosphere of high curiosity and low defensiveness, can challenge existing belief systems while creating a space in which new beliefs can grow. Our project has used this technique in experiential workshops in a variety of settings, the latest in Stockholm at the IPPNW Congress (see article p. 6).

Over the years, we have also become increasingly interested in the work of others who facilitate dialogue across ideological and cultural divides, often between groups in armed conflict. Our work with some of these practitioners led to a new Center project: Advancing the Field of Interactive Conflict Resolution.

Over the last 20 years a growing number of practitioners and scholars have been facilitating unofficial, informal interactions between members of adversarial groups or nations. The facilitators have aimed to develop strategies, influence public opinion, and organize human and material resources in ways that resolve conflict. One type of facilitated dialogue has been called Interactive Conflict Resolution (ICR).

ICR utilizes a third-party consultant, who facilitates interactions between conflicting parties in small-group or workshop sessions. While they are not official representatives of their governments, the participants in the interactions are usually influential members of the groups in conflict. The objectives of the interventions vary. Participants sometimes come together with the primary goal of improving their understanding of each other and moving beyond one-dimensional stereotyped images. Groups may choose, in addition, to search for deeper understanding of the underlying roots of conflict. Some ICR interventions provide a context for airing grievances, for accepting responsibility for hurts inflicted, and for mourning losses.

A wide range of disciplines are utilized in the design and facilitation of ICR interventions, psychology, psychiatry, sociology, organizational behavior, law, and diplomacy among them. ICR interventions have been used to address a variety of conflicts, including those in Northern Ireland, the Middle East, Malaysia-Indonesia, the Horn of Africa, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, the Falklands/Malvinas, Lebanon, and the US - USSR confrontation.

Traditional diplomacy is not well suited to dealing with the psychological dynamics underlying conflict, which typically reflects frustrated needs for identity, recognition, security, and equity. Interactive Conflict Resolution starts with the assumption that addressing these needs is crucial to any attempt at resolution of conflict. ICR is unique in its focus on the social and psychological aspects of protracted conflict and its careful use of tech-

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Environmental Crisis
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by." This phrase was used to refer to support and caring both for sustainability activists and for the people with whom they enter into dialogue or negotiation. Several people spoke movingly about the attacks and isolation they have endured and about the enormous difference that a support network could make in their lives and work. An active support network would help more people find the strength within themselves to speak out in the face of hostility.

In thinking about those people with whom sustainability activists must negotiate—to take an extreme example, John Sununu—, the concept of "standing by" seemed to be crucial. Participants were reminded of the innate goodness and loving spirit that resides within each human being, balanced by the deep fear that underlies resistance to change, even when such change is required for survival. Those who feel this fear do, indeed, need someone to stand by them. "Standing by" is essential when dealing with those on the opposing side of an issue, in order to create a broad spectrum of support for social change.

The second presentation, from Roger Walsh, psychologist and author of *Staying Alive*, highlighted the spiritual and psychological roots of the environmental crisis. He drew from several schools of thought to illuminate the group's thinking about the environmental crisis: psychodynamics, behaviorism, Maslow's order of needs, and Buddhist psychology. He emphasized the importance of beliefs in creating reality, quoting Henry Ford: "Those who believe they can do something and those who believe they can't are both right."

Walsh told a story whose theme recurred often throughout the conference: the power and wisdom of "not knowing" and the anxiety aroused in others when one embraces uncertainty. In pre-revolutionary Russia, a rabbi crossed the village square every morning on his way to tabernacle. One morning he was accosted by the village Cossack, who asked, "Where are you going?" The rabbi replied, "I don't know." The Cossack was so infuriated by this answer that he dragged the rabbi to the town prison, at which point the rabbi said to him, "You see? One never knows!"

This story turned out to be relevant to the conference deliberations in a variety of ways. Walsh pointed out that appreciation of the mystery of life is a key aspect of spiritual transformation. Also, it helps to recognize that all we have to rely on is our own experience and intuition; we never know where they will lead us. Once we let go of the illusion that there are certain answers and only one right way, and once we free our minds of the cloud of anxiety arising from uncertainty, we can gather information, let in reality, look at our unique situation, and find a contribution to make that will be rewarding. On this same theme, some participants pointed out that we are just now beginning to get an inkling of the scale on which we are changing the global eco-system. If people appreciated the full extent of the uncertainties and dangers involved, there would be greater willingness to change behavior and policies.

The third presenter, Duane Elgin, is a media and sustainability activist and author of *Voluntary Simplicity*. He focused on the role of the media in creating an unsustainable society and described television and other electronic media as the central nervous system of modern industrial society. He summarized several creative possibilities for using the media to change society for the better, such as ecologically responsible advertising and electronic town meetings that would enable accurate and rapid citizen input into the political decision-making process. In particular, he emphasized that existing laws, FCC regulations, and the US Constitution provide the wherewithal to democratize the various media so that they serve the larger public good.

If people appreciated the full extent of the uncertainties and dangers involved, there would be greater willingness to change behavior and policies.

Despite the optimistic tone of Elgin's remarks, the role of the media in shaping public perceptions of the Gulf War was fresh in the participants' minds, and they responded to his talk with despair. Several participants spoke of discouraging experiences in trying to air their points of view through the media. Daniel Goleman introduced a note of optimism, however, pointing out that there are important media figures committed to sustainability issues, who serve as a potential resource for the movement.

The rest of the conference was devoted to small-group working sessions, with reports back to the whole group. The groups were divided into the overlapping levels at which change must occur: individual, social/cultural, and institutional. The first task was to define the vision of a sustainable society at all three levels; the second task was to brainstorm strategies at each level that could lead to sustainability; and the third task was to go into more detail about two or three of the most promising strategies that arose during the brainstorming sessions.

The visions and strategies that came out of these discussions were breathtaking in their scope and took on added depth as participants increasingly spoke from their hearts. Proposed strategies for creating a sustainable society ranged from economic mechanisms that create incentives in favor of the environment to ways of promoting racial equality, social justice, electoral reform, and psychospiritual transformation. Specific strategies for social change were recommended by the meeting: a support network for sustainability activists, a dialogue project involving media people and sustainability activists, and a project that gets corporate leaders to discuss environmental issues.

—Bonnie Shepard and William Keepin

A full account of the conference discussions can be found in a new Center occasional paper. (See announcement below.) In addition, William Keepin and Richard Tarnas are co-editing the January 1992 ReVision Quarterly, *which will include statements from many of the conference participants.*

New Occasional Paper

Comprehensive Strategies for Sustainability

A Conference Report

by William N. Keepin

This paper summarizes the discussions and conclusions of this Center working conference held in March 1991. The conference brought together a small group of distinguished people to discuss their visions of a sustainable society and to devise practical strategies for achieving it. Conference participants included environmentalists, physical scientists, social scientists, psychologists and psychiatrists, community activists, and foundation representatives. ❐

Corporate Leadership

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might think that corporate executives would all exhibit this quality, like the defense CEO working to move his company into civilian markets who said, "Corporate America wants to make decisions, but it wants to make perfect ones. I am confident enough that I can make mistakes and bounce back. I knew I could bring some fresh air to the process." But, in a moral sense, many of our subjects showed radically different levels of agency, which had nothing to do with their individual economic or institutional power. A prime example is a successful, high-level executive in a bank that is heavily involved in nuclear power financing. Outside the office he has become deeply committed to fundraising for a hospice for children with cancer. When asked about a possible contradiction between his business and personal actions, he jokingly rose from his chair and asked, *"Are we done now?"* But he sat down and continued, *"You know, the easy cop-out answer is that there isn't strict evidence that convinces you intellectually. I mean, I still think there is enough gray that it's hard to say what the cause and effect are. But it can't be good. Nuclear power. If we could do without it, it would be great. And this is a real cop-out, but I really feel I'm being sincere in answering it – hunger is hunger, and the person's dying because they don't have enough food. The disabled you can feel, touch. With nuclear power, it gets so esoteric to me. I don't know. I don't think I've paid enough attention to it.... Maybe it's almost denial."*

Another difference between the two groups of executives is the scope of their everyday global awareness and the kinds of issues they see as meriting attention. With the globalization of business comes the need for explicit global awareness. One rather conventional manager told of enormous personal changes: *"I was called to London to run a division that primarily did overseas work ... everything from hotels in Jamaica to power stations in Saudi Arabia....A friend in Australia gave me a book called* Limits to Growth. *I had never been involved in any sort of ecological thinking or concerns about the state of the planet. In those days, I travelled first class. I was on a jumbo jet travelling through from Sydney to London, and I went upstairs to the lounge on the jet and for 24 hours I just sort of toured the planet. It was a very powerful experience for me, because I realized that what I was doing, and what was the whole essence of my life – basically running building projects in the Third World using First World technology – might not be in the best interests of the planet."*

We must acknowledge the down side of global thinking, which has been challenged by commentators such as writer/farmer Wendell Berry as being an escape from local accountability. In both groups of interview subjects, we saw difficult struggles between global and local, general and particular. But the executives who had done the most to challenge corporate norms in the interest of transcendent values were those who had the richest and most personal appreciation of the Earth as an integrated system. Such an opening up of awareness involves an overflowing of boundaries and a realignment of priorities. Seen in this light, the enormous psychic stress reported by so many contemporary executives may be labor pangs of what the developmental theorist Robert Kegan calls "hatching out" of old patterns of identity and growing into new ones.

> ***"Corporate America wants to make decisions, but it wants to make perfect ones."***

What do these observations tell us about the mission of preparing business leaders for such challenges? In general, they tell us that strategies for encouraging corporate responsibility can be beneficial by creating situations in which decision makers are able to grow. Businesses, and the communities they touch, will benefit whenever executives can:

- reformulate their sense of group identity and accountability;
- enhance their ego strength and sense of moral agency;
- expand their scope of awareness and integrate that expanded understanding into decision making.

How can these processes be encouraged?

First, business ethics must be taught with the individual in mind. Many courses in business ethics and what is rather mechanistically termed "environmental management" are about solving problems out there. The decision maker is understood to be neutral and is rarely encouraged to consider his/her assumptions, agendas, or needs as part of a problem. The challenge for the current generation of business educators is to integrate human variables into institutional and economic ones. Cultivation of true managerial vision requires permission for self-questioning, as well as the resources and time needed for personal development.

Second, corporate cultures must be reenvisioned in order to allow these lessons take root. The words of our Wall Street friend – "I don't have time to worry about acid rain" – are a testimony to the money-driven culture we all live in.

Third, the swelling cadres of specialists who help business executives get through their days – consultants, therapists, stress managers, even "executive coaches" – must be encouraged to take a fresh look at their services. Too often, these professionals adopt a "hands-off" attitude about values, putting band-aids on stress symptoms and sending executives back into the same dysfunctional settings.

Finally, the laws and structures that govern business must be changed. The legal responsibility to maximize profit, regardless of human and environmental impact, is a fatal barrier to self-critical leadership, and its impact has been multiplied by the takeover frenzy of recent years. As Peter Drucker writes in *The Frontiers of Management*, "Even if we control the hostile takeover, there will remain the underlying structural problems.... Are the stockholders the only constituents to whom all other interests, including that of the enterprise itself as a going concern, must be totally subordinated?"

The psychology of corporate decision makers has often been ignored in discussions of corporate social and environmental responsibility. The business world is beginning to recognize the importance of this factor. Our initial findings are tentative and call for broader, more systematic investigations. But they also suggest paths for psychologically sophisticated action.

In the coming months, we will be expanding upon this discussion in a final research report, a magazine article, and participation in an interdisciplinary conference, "The Greening of Industry," sponsored by the Tufts Center for Environmental Management. We are also open to receiving proposals from potential collaborators who might wish to apply these findings in business settings. Our goal is to point to a path of corporate social responsibility that is also a path of growth and satisfaction for corporate executives. ❐

Ongoing Projects of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age

RESOLVING GROUP ANTAGONISMS

International Program

The Center is becoming well known for its groundbreaking initiatives in the burgeoning field of Interactive Conflict Resolution (ICR). ICR is distinguished from traditional efforts in diplomacy by: its emphasis on transforming adversarial relationships into more cooperative ones; its sensitivity to social and psychological dimensions of conflict; its attention to basic human needs; and its promotion of collaborative problem solving.

Advancing the Field of Interactive Conflict Resolution
Project Director: Paula F. Gutlove, D.M.D.
Associate Director: Eileen F. Babbitt

This project aims to establish and promote ICR as a significant complement to traditional diplomacy and help to meet professional needs in the field for a code of ethics, training standards and programs, and evaluation frameworks. Toward these ends, the project will organize a series of multi-disciplinary seminars; develop a data base of ICR interventions and their results; and disseminate project findings through a professional newsletter and other publications. The project is currently coordinating the development of ICR intervention strategies and mobilizing appropriate practitioners for the ethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia. (See article, p. 7.)

Promoting Effective Dialogue Across Ideologies
Project Director: Paula F. Gutlove, D.M.D.
Associate Director: Margaret Herzig
Project Advisor: Richard Chasin, M.D.

Using techniques and theories from family systems therapy, this project facilitates dialogue among groups whose perceptions of each other may be distorted by hostility and/or ideological differences. Since 1986 the project has led workshops on cultural and ideological stereotyping in a variety of settings. In the "safe" setting of these workshops, participants can engage in dialogue with people of other cultures and ideologies without risking hostility or engaging in false camaraderie. (See article, p. 6.)

Nationalism, Ideology and the Self
Project Director: John E. Mack, M.D.

This project is examining the multi-faceted relationships existing among the self, ideologies, and nationalism. In the resulting book, Dr. Mack will offer an in-depth analysis of the psychological roots of nationalism by addressing the historical origins and contemporary functions of nationalism in the context of international political relations and the psychology of individuals.

Meeting Human Needs in Political Conflict Resolution
Project Director: Joseph V. Montville

Mr. Montville is a seasoned foreign service officer and a pioneer in the use of non-governmental initiatives to resolve ethnic and ideological conflicts that prove resistant to traditional methods of diplomacy. In this project, hostile parties participate in a confidential and unofficial process of mourning historic losses and healing old wounds. The process helps to build enough trust among participants that they can develop joint strategies meeting the needs of *all* parties for security, acceptance, and respect. Mr. Montville and his colleagues are working in explosive conflict areas such as Northern Ireland, the Middle East, the USSR and Central Europe, and South Africa.

Building Institutions for Peace
Project Director: John Woodall, M.D.

Dr. Woodall is collaborating with several organizations in Europe that are jointly developing an institutional mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accord with the goals of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Currently, Dr. Woodall is developing a pilot project in Cyprus. A series of facilitated workshops focused on water management issues will demonstrate both to Cypriot officials and to his European colleagues how psychologically focused conflict resolution techniques can be applied directly to wider inter-ethnic conflict.

Children's Program

Images of the Enemy
Project Directors: Petra Hesse, Ph.D., and Debra Poklemba

This cross-cultural research project has examined children's thoughts and feelings about a designated enemy and how these thoughts can change in the course of a child's development. Interviews, drawings, and stories have been collected from 1,200 children in the US, West Germany, and Argentina, with additional data from developing countries. The US-based research resulted in the creation of a videotape, *The World Is A Dangerous Place: Images of the Enemy on Children's Television*, for use by parents and teachers. (See video ad, p. 13.)

As a follow-up to the video, the project directors are writing a curriculum combining media literacy with multicultural and peace education. (See "News and Notes," p. 12.) The curriculum will enable parents and teachers to provide children with the tools they need to look critically at the stereotyped images and violence that permeate children's television shows, as well as to exercise a variety of options for resolving conflict.

Conflict Resolution in Young Children
Project Directors: Diane Levin, Ph.D., and Nancy Carlsson-Paige

Dr. Levin and Ms. Carlsson-Paige are well-known for their documentation of recent changes in children's war toys and play. (For information on their two co-authored books, see *Materials Available from the Center*, p. 18.) In this project they employ a developmental approach to analyze children's understanding of conflict and its resolution. The findings should make a significant contribution to the field of conflict resolution by determining how approaches that work with adults can best be adapted for children at different developmental stages.

See pages 18 & 19 for information about ordering books, audiotapes, videotapes, and research papers from the Center.

Ongoing Projects of the Center for Psychological Studies in the Nuclear Age

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Through articles, colloquia, and Academic Council meetings, Research Associates and members of the Center's network are exchanging views and ideas about the psychology of environmental responsibility. Not only do these ideas have the potential to increase the effectiveness of environmental groups' efforts to promote behavioral change, but they may also ultimately change the face of the field of psychology. This process of discussion andexchange of ideas led to a small interdisciplinary conference in March 1991: "Working Group on Comprehensive Strategies for Sustainability." (See article, p. 3, and Occasional Papers, p. 19) The insights and recommendations coming out of the conference are being used to design an environmental program that focuses on: (1) promoting dialogue and understanding between key social sectors such as the media, environmentalists, and business executives; and (2) supporting educational efforts to counteract ideologies and attitudes that disempower people with regard to environmental concerns.

Corporate Leadership: Addressing Global Concerns
Project Director: John E. Mack, M.D.
Project Associate: Melissa Everett

What enables some corporate leaders to take socially responsible action on global issues, while others who share concern for these issues seem unable to act? What is the nature of the personal and corporate soil in which global responsibility can flourish? This intensive survey and interview project began with a psychosocial analysis of the decision-making process of corporate leaders. The findings led to the identification of some psychological characteristics of globally responsible leaders, including scope of awareness, self-consistency, and moral agency. These findings, which suggest creative approaches to executive education, will be presented in a magazine article and a trade book. The project will also disseminate its findings among corporate executives, ethics programs in business schools, and executive training programs, in an effort to define a path of social responsibility that is also a path of growth and satisfaction for corporate executives. (See article, p. 5.)

The Psychology of Global Awareness and Social Responsibility: Implications for Psychotherapy
Project Director: Sarah A. Conn, Ph.D.

This annual course offering is co-sponsored by the Center and the Department of Psychiatry at Cambridge Hospital. It explores the implications for mental health and psychotherapy when self-definition expands to include connectedness with all life on earth and with one's socio-political context. What is the relationship between personal pain and global problems? Dr. Conn and course participants address these issues through readings, experiential exercises, group discussions, storytelling, and case presentations by participants.

Related Activities

Earth: A User's Guide
Project Director: Daniel Goleman, Ph.D.

A behavioral science writer for *The New York Times*, Dr. Goleman is doing the background research and writing for this project, which will culminate in a book, a PBS series, and possibly an interactive classroom video. These products will build on his previous work on the psychology of self-deception, presenting information on environmental destruction in a way that empowers and motivates people to make lifestyle changes. The project has received commitments from George Lucas, who will co-produce the series, and from well-known actors, including Robin Williams and Chevy Chase, who wish to appear in it.

All Consuming: Materialistic Values and Human Needs
Project Director:
Andrew B. Schmookler, Ph.D.

Dr. Schmookler is analyzing the psychosocial forces that contribute to environmental destruction. Currently he is writing a book for a general audience that explores what it is – in ourselves and our political and social systems – that makes our civilization so hungry for material wealth without limit, even at the cost of sacrificing other important values.

DECISION MAKING AND POLICY

American Ideology and Discourse in the Nuclear Age
Project Director: Hugh P. Gusterson

This project uses an ethnographic study of the conflict between nuclear weapons scientists at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory and local anti-nuclear activists to interpret American ideology in the nuclear age. Recently, the project has analyzed how the belief systems of nuclear scientists and protestors have adapted or dissolved with the end of the Cold War, creating the potential for both new struggles and new points of convergence. By examining the processes of ideology formation and the circumstances in which old beliefs are reconsidered, the project investigates the possibilities for delegitimating nuclear weapons and for building dialogue between pro- and anti-nuclear activities.

Language and Thinking of Defense Intellectuals
Project Director: Carol Cohn, Ph.D.

This study critically analyzes the language and thinking of national security elites. It begins with a focus on nuclear discourse, then continues with a consideration of national security discourse in general. Dr. Cohn moves from an analysis of language to an exploration of the nature of security thinking itself and to a political analysis of the power, functions, and effects of this body of knowledge. Drawing on feminist theory, her work reconceptualizes both security and security policy with attention to individual conditions and societal dynamics of resource distribution, gender, ethnicity, and global ecology. A book presenting this work is in preparation. (See article, p. 1.)

Peace Researchers' Perceptions of the Present and Future State of the World
Project Director: Milton Schwebel, Ph.D

This research aims to define a process for identifying and addressing the present seeds

Ongoing Projects of the Center
continued from previous page

of future conflicts before they become full blown. Dr. Schwebel is interviewing peace researchers around the world about their perceptions of past, present, and potential conflicts and their beliefs about effectiveways to influence these. His book will serve as a tool for officials and citizens working both to prevent and resolve regional and international conflicts.

Risks and Alternatives to Militarism after Operation Desert Storm
Project Director: Daniel Ellsberg, Ph.D.

Dr. Ellsberg is engaged in an analysis of the failure to prevent war in the Persian Gulf. His perspective is enlarged by his ongoing research into the psychosocial sources of risk in another notable pre-war situation—the Cuban missile crisis. His study, and the resulting book, will focus on the following key questions: What were the risks of each governments's strategies? Were the risks worth taking? How did each government perceive these risks? And, what is the role of machismo in militarism and crisis behavior?

The Role of the Science and Technology Communities in The Formulation of Nuclear Policy
Project Director:
Margaret Brenman-Gibson, Ph.D.

This interdisciplinary study analyzes the process of creation of the nuclear-pumped X-ray laser, a key element in the multi-billion-dollar Star Wars program. Using mainly life histories of individuals working on this new technology, Dr. Brenman-Gibson explores systemically the intersections of individual lives in their organizational and historical contexts. This study analyzes the implications for military policy and spending. ❐

HELP!

Charitable Donation Opportunity

The Center desperately needs IBM compatible hardware and software, especially 386/286 PC or IBM compatible, HP Laserjet III or equivalent, and DBASE IV. If you can help us, please call Joe Kelliher at (617) 497-1553.

NEWS & NOTES

● The Hitachi Foundation and the Peace Development Fund have awarded grants to Petra Hesse and Debra Poklemba for the completion of an early childhood curriculum that combines media literacy with multicultural and peace education.

● Our congratulations to Melinda Fine, who is finishing her dissertation this fall and has been hired as Assistant Research Director for the Literacy Project of the Children's Television Workshop in New York.

● An article co-authored by Petra Hesse and John Mack, "The world is a dangerous place: images of the enemy on children's television," is featured as a chapter in the new book, *The Psychology of War and Peace* (New York: Plenum Publishing, 1991).

● Center Board member and University of Massachusetts Professor Ervin Staub is building on his research on bystanders in situations involving group violence by promoting "caring classrooms" that encourage children to develop a helpful orientation toward others. Staub is seeking more school districts to become involved in this program.

● At the invitation of the New York-based Freedom House, Joseph Montville joined a small delegation that travelled to El Salvador in April to consult with a politically wide range of Salvadorian groups on the use of conflict resolution techniques in building democracy.

● Currently Montville is working with Search for Common Ground in Washington, D.C., which has organized the Initiative for Peace and Cooperation in the Middle East (IPCME). IPCME is modelled after the process started in Europe by the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Progress reports from Montville's People of the Book project will be fed directly into the IPCME discussions.

● Paula Gutlove and John Woodall have been invited to speak in November 1991 in Austria at a conference on "European Integration and National Identity: The Yugoslav Case – Domestic and International Concepts and Strategies," organized by the Consortium for the Study of European Transition. Besides leading an introductory session on psychology and peace research, Gutlove, Woodall, and other ICR colleagues are developing concrete proposals for intervention, which will be presented at the meeting to politicians and representatives from Yugoslavia and other European countries.

● In July, Joseph Montville gave a talk at the Moral Re-Armament Conference in Caux, Switzerland on the healing function in political conflict resolution. In August, he spoke on the roles of religion, psychiatry, and diplomacy in resolving violent conflict at a regional meeting of the World Psychiatric Association in Budapest.

● Petra Hesse and Debra Poklemba have begun to develop an early childhood curriculum centered on the global environmental crisis. Their initiative is a response to a research finding from their project on children's images of the enemy that a number of children perceive environmental devastation as a enemy.

● The Center is pleased to announce the receipt of a $5,000 grant from The Conanima Foundation to support the Center's work on the psychology of environmental responsibility.

● We congratulate Carol Cohn on her appointment as the Eugene Lang Visiting Professor of Social Change at Swarthmore College for the 1991-1992 academic year.

● Congratulations also go to Hugh Gusterson, who has received a post-doctoral fellowship in Anthropology at the School of American Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico. ❐

Book Announcement

The Invisible Threads: Independent Soviets Working for Global Awareness and Social Transformation, *by Gale Warner. Washington, D.C.: Seven Locks Press, 1991. pb. 249 pages.*

As the leadership battles in the Soviet Union dominate the news, there is an intoxicating "people's history" under the surface. Gale Warner brings this history alive in her readable and richly informative new book, which demystifies the news by exploring the Soviet social fabric, the backdrop against which people are claiming new freedoms and building new relationships. ❐

Baltic Memoir

(continued from page 2)

Vilnius and Vilnius to Tallinn provided vivid illustrations of the environmental destruction that is becoming ever more widespread on the planet. Hardwood and pine forests, lush meadows studded with wildflowers and scenes of Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian families working in the fields or swimming in rivers and creeks gave way to landscapes desecrated by industrial debris, rusted vehicles, scrap metal, silent cranes, and broken down factories blackened with soot, some belching dark smoke into the sky. Environmental consciousness seems only to be starting in these regions. When we asked about the polluted waters of the Gulf of Finland, we were told that there are priorities "higher" or "more urgent" than the environment.

In Vilnius, my wife Sally began a pilgrimage to visit the places in southern Lithuania and White Russia from which her father and grandparents had emigrated at the turn of the century. Jews had comprised 30% of the population of Vilnius until the Nazis, zealously abetted by some Lithuanians, succeeded in murdering all but five percent of the country's Jewish population and obliterated the Jewish culture and community that had thrived in many cities, towns, and villages. There was little evidence that the Jews had ever lived in the towns we visited. But in one small town, Viesayjai, a barbed-wire fence had been put up around a section of woods that contained the few remaining gravestones, some broken or fallen, of the Jewish cemetery. A large new stone had been placed at the entrance with the following words in Hebrew: "The Old Jewish Cemetery. May Their Memory be Sacred."

Finally, in London we met up with Russian poet and writer Mikhail Meylach. Mikhail had helped to introduce Sally and me to the Soviet Union in Tbilisi in 1979. He had been happy to tell visiting Westerners in 1979 the truth about what was happening in the USSR. I was shocked and outraged to learn from his sister in Boston in 1986 that Mikhail had been arrested in 1983 for "spreading anti-Soviet propaganda" (under a clause in the Soviet penal code that has since been deleted), which meant passing Western books to Soviet citizens. After three years at hard labor he became desperately ill with peritonitis and almost died. I joined the effort to obtain Mikhail's release and spoke publicly in Moscow on his behalf. He was freed in February 1987, remained in Russia, and has since married and become a father. It was a deeply moving reunion.

Perhaps every generation feels itself to be at a crossroads, in a race between living and dying. Yet with the breakup of the Soviet system, perhaps the last empire in Europe, both the dangers and the opportunities before us seem different, greater somehow than those confronted by previous generations.

What are we learning about ourselves that might be helpful? This journey brought home to me the destructive nature of totalitarian systems, whether Soviet-socialist or Western-techno-economic and their utter inability to address the physical and psychological needs of human beings. Self-understanding must catch up with technological material knowledge, which means, above all, remembering the past and facing up to the crimes committed in the service of corrupt political ideologies and soulless governments. Further, supporting nature's life systems and re-forming an emotional connection with the Earth must become top priorities for all of humankind. We also desperately need to discover new forms of political power that incorporate increased citizen participation and freedom. A trade unionist in Lithuania told Elaine Bernard, of Harvard University's Trade Union Program, that factory workers want to "create a society where people could always resist the government and be free to express their own ideas" (*Resist*, May/June 1991).

The failure of the Soviet system has led Russian intellectuals to question profoundly the psychological roots of Russian imperial arrogance. I worry that the material success of Western business and the dominance of American military technology will prevent the same kind of self-scrutiny on our part that is necessary to prevent future wars and to create a sustainable world. I wonder if political self-questioning can occur without the stimulus of military defeat or economic disaster. I fear that we will choose not to respond to Harold Saunders' plea that we find ways of turning back "people like Saddam Hussein" without using military force and that we will never as a society debate whether we needed to bring about so much suffering and death in the Persian Gulf to restrain Hussein. Organizations like ISPP and this Center can serve a useful function by working relentlessly to keep such questions before the public. ❐

Language of the Gulf War
continued from page 1

time we were done, we looked up and discovered that there was no other language left and no other public way to speak about the war. This particular language simply did not have the words that would allow certain kinds of questions to be raised, ideas to be thought, or images to be evoked.

So the first language-related phenomenon to note was the supplanting of political and moral discourse by a military-techno-bureaucratic one. The stark absence of continuing political debate and moral discussion once the war started was attributable not only to the cowardice of our politicians and journalists, but also to the fact that military-techno-bureaucratic discourse is not designed to address political and moral issues. It is constructed to enable the *fighting* of war, and nothing else. As with nuclear techno-strategic discourse, its subject is weapons, rather than states, political ideals, or human bodies. The combination of the language itself and the automated high-tech weaponry it referred to made it easy to discuss the war as though it were simply a contest between weapons systems.

Euphemism and abstraction reached new creative heights in the variety of words used to avoid saying that United States forces were bombing *people*. Listening to the news, you would hardly have known that American bombs were killing people and destroying Iraq's infrastructure, leading to even more deaths in the long run. Instead, US forces were "flying sorties," "engaging" the Iraqi army, "taking out" Iraqi "assets," "servicing" targets (sexual, domestic, and bureaucratic connotations rolled into one), and "softening up" the Republican Guard. Rather than engaging in the mass murder of hungry sleep- and water-deprived young conscripts in a police-state army, US bombers were "attritting their forces." When bombs fell on the Republican Guard, we did not hear of people brutally blown to bits; instead, it sounded relatively benign, as "Republican Guard 'emplacements absorbed' the 'munitions.'"

Gulf War language also demonstrated the reversal of metaphor between sentient beings and insentient matter that is typical of war discourse. The only things that got "killed" on Allied sorties were Iraqi missiles and other military targets. Iraqi people did not get "killed"; civilian casualties were referred to by the now-infamous term, "collateral damage," a stunningly abstract and sanitized way to refer to mangled human bodies. The word *collateral* serves to remove moral responsibility from the attacker; if the deaths were "collateral," they must not have been intended. The word *damage* serves to turn human beings into objects: *things* are damaged; living beings are hurt.

Another way people were transformed from living beings into things was by the use of acronyms. Compare your response to the briefers' references to EPWs (enemy prisoners of war)—which sounds like a technical commodity not to be given a second thought—to your reaction to that one moment when there was a fissure in the hard, shiny surface of military-techno-bureaucratic-speak, and we actually heard a description of captured Iraqi soldiers who had not eaten in three days and whose bodies were covered with lice and open sores.

"...implicit in describing oneself as a professional doing a job is an injunction against thinking about and feeling for the people who suffer and die in war."

The other stunning use of acronyms to turn people into things and make their bodies disappear was the briefers' way of referring to American casualties. At a briefing on the second or third day of the battle of Khadji, General Schwartzkopf was asked how many American soldiers had died. In the middle of a long answer about the battle itself, he said, "I'm sorry to say that we lost 12 KIAs and 2 WIAs." He could not even use the common but fairly brusque terms, "killed in action" and "wounded in action," much less actually come out and say that men had died. He never referred to them as people or said that they were dead.

The flip side of the metaphoric reversal between weapons and humans is that, as humans are rendered inanimate, weapons become animated. Weapons become the living beings, the "vulnerable" actors in warfare, and take on human attributes. Human bodies are missing from the war, but weapons have bodies and brains. Bombs are either "dumb" or "smart." "Smart" weapons have "eyes" and computer "brains." One pilot said, "The computer makes the decision when to drop seven-and-a-half tons of bombs. On our missions, we stay unemotional, objective." The agency and the moral responsibility of the human combatant again disappear, as with the term, "collateral damage," because it is the animated weapon itself that becomes the combatant, makes the decision, and takes the action.

Another striking language phenomenon of the war was the use of the singular masculine pronoun in referring to Iraq and Iraq's army. Sometimes it represented a conflation of Iraqi forces with Saddam Hussein himself, as in, "Saddam really took a pounding today." This usage substituted the image of one implacably and impeccably evil enemy for the actual human beings—the men, women and children—being pounded. Paradoxical as it may seem, in personalizing the Iraqi army as "Saddam," the individual human beings in Iraq were abstracted out of existence.

Sometimes the "he" did not seem to refer specifically to Saddam Hussein himself. Instead, it seemed to be simply an example of the characteristic military habit of turning a complex state and set of forces into a singular male opponent. This is what I call the "unitary masculine actor problem" in security discourse. There are substantial ways in which this problem reflects and creates distorted thinking. For example, it distorts the defense analyst's understanding of the opposing state and the conflict in which the states are engaged.

When the analyst refers to the opposing state as "he" or "the other guy," the image evoked is that of an individual man, a unitary male actor. But states are not unitary and unified. They comprise complex, multi-faceted governmental and military apparatuses, each with opposing forces within it, its own internal institutional dynamics, and its own varied needs in relation to domestic politics. In other words, if the state is referred to and pictured as a person, what becomes unavailable to the analysts and policy makers is a series of much more complex truths that might enable them to imagine more policy options and different ways to interact with that state.

If one kind of distorted picture of the state results from the image of the state as a unitary actor, another results from the image of the state as a specifically *male* actor. When "he" and "the other guy" are used to refer to states, these words carry assumptions about how men act, which just might be different from how states act. The two

Continued from previous page
are too easily assumed to be the same.

Casting the state as a male also elicits emotional responses on the part of the speaker, as demonstrated by George Bush, who acted as if Iraq's aggressive actions were a *personal* challenge from Hussein. When referring to the opposing state as "he," male competitive identity issues are evoked, as in, "I'm not going to let him push me around," or "I'm not going to let him get the best of me."

A different kind of language usage, equally striking, appeared in interviews with soldiers. When asked how they felt about what they were doing, many soldiers responded, "We're here to do a job; we're trained for it; and we're ready to do what we've been trained to do." At first it struck me as a bizarrely banal way to talk about fighting and killing people—harmless, affectless, dead, flat. But it is also enormously disturbing. It holds echoes of the Nazi refrain, "We were just doing our job": obeying authority is the highest priority and excuses you from thinking about your job in moral terms.

In fact, the phrase "I'm here to do a job" suggests even more than just a willingness to obey authority. It represents a willingness to narrow and constrain the criteria against which we measure ourselves. It suggests that the standard we hold ourselves to is that of doing a job well, rather than doing good. The question, then, is not one of morality, but of efficacy, competence, and efficiency in doing what one has been trained to do. It makes the taking of life merely a question of professional competence.

There is one more highly disturbing and significant dimension to the phrase, "Here to do a job." People who think about, plan, or commit acts of war almost always say that you cannot let yourself feel anything about civilian or "enemy" casualties, about suffering human bodies. They believe those feelings get in the way of rational analysis and action. To let such feelings influence you is seen as unprofessional. Thus, implicit in describing oneself as a professional doing a job is an injunction against thinking about and feeling for the people who suffer and die in war. This is, I think, the most dangerous aspect of this "doing a job" usage. While security studies specialists insist that if you let yourself feel for the victims of war, you cannot do your job well, I suggest quite the opposite: that you cannot make rational decisions if you shut out the effects of those decisions on human beings.

The Gulf War taught us an important lesson in the power of language. The language of the military briefers acted first as a barrier between the public and the realities of war; second, as a diversion that filled our minds with slick high-tech imagery; third, as a conjurer's trick that made dead bodies vanish and hid human suffering; and finally, as a selective medium, which allowed certain kinds of discussion but not others. ❐

Adapted from a presentation to the Harvard University Center for Literary and Cultural Studies on April 10, 1991. The author gratefully acknowledges support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

Connections and Divisions
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for the future. The men's group acknowledged some truth to the stereotypes that describe men as competitive, forceful, eager for money and power, and childish. They expressed ambivalence about the stereotypes that suggest men are aggressive, selfish, egoistic, destructive, and out of touch with their feelings. They disavowed the stereotypes that depict men as inflexible, insensitive to the needs of others, and unable to talk to one another. They explained, "Men just don't talk to each other in the same way that women talk to each other."

The women's group said that many stereotypes of women are true, including ones that describe women as: intuitive, sensitive, caring about others, emotional, and irrational (all of which they considered positive attributes). They "owned up" to being vain, but no more so than men. They considered some stereotypes to be largely untrue, but understandable given cultural norms: for example, being submissive, unintellectual, and non-technical. They had difficulty evaluating the stereotype of women as gossiping too much, as gossiping had varying social meanings and values in their home cultures.

The "world citizen" and "sympathy" groups felt that they were stereotyped as idealistic, naive, rootless, and unpatriotic. The "world citizen" group denied being unpatriotic, but they said that the stereotype was understandable. Their concept of patriotism, they said, "may be a little more developed." The "sympathy" group affirmed their lack of patriotism and claimed it was a positive quality. Both groups assented to being idealists, dreamers and visionaries of sorts, but not "impossible" dreamers.

The family therapists group found that stereotypes about their group varied from one country to the next. In Portugal, for example, family therapists are apparently seen as fighting against divorce and against individuality, while in the other countries represented (the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Germany) the opposite stereotype was felt to be held, that family therapists initiate separations. The group disavowed the stereotype that they only want to make money, saying, "we treat two, three, or four people for the price of one!"

The workshop closed with brief statements by each participant to the full group. Many comments affirmed the value of having small working groups at large international meetings. A German peace activist said that he came to the Congress to "get his battery recharged," and that being a passive recipient of a theoretical speech couldn't do that for him. "It was good for me to speak and laugh here," he said. Another European said that working together and looking at differences is an appropriate prelude to non-violent conflict resolution. Others expressed the desire to learn more about the people in international groups whom they would otherwise just sit next to in a lecture hall. Some participants became self-reflective. One said she was so accustomed to transcending a group identity that it was interesting for her to place herself in a group and resist its pull toward "black-and-white" thinking. Another said that the workshop enhanced her appreciation for the differences that can exist within apparently united groups. Yet another participant said, "It's good to put these questions to yourself, to see how differentiated and complicated things are." ❐

For reports on previous IPPNW workshops, see Center Review, *2(1), 2(3/4), and 4(1), or the* Compendium of Project Reports *now available at the Center. A longer report on the workshop in Stockholm is also available.*

Psychology and the Political
continued from page 1

served, are "the first generation for whom the essential myths and stories that shape their belief systems are told not by their parents, teachers, or elders of the tribe, but through television by a few corporations with something to sell." So serious is the problem, in Gerbner's view, that he now devotes his time to launching a Cultural Environmental Movement, an ambitious coalition of people from the media, professional and advocacy organizations, and citizen groups dedicated to democratizing the airwaves.

Psychiatrist Richard Goldwater then related these themes to individual psychology. He noted that modern media technology has created at least the illusion of intimacy between individuals and public figures, making it more obvious that individual psychological principles may apply to such relationships. Goldwater stated that one such principle has to do with the public's relationship to authority and the use of empathic statements by public figures to promote the feeling of alliance.

Is it the politician's task to reflect public sentiment or to shape it with visionary leadership?

The afternoon's presentations were given by two political scientists and a social psychologist, all of whom had made creative journeys into psychology to enhance their understanding of electoral behavior. Using the 1990 Massachusetts gubernatorial race as a case study, George Marcus of Williams College and John Sullivan of the University of Minnesota presented a quantifiable model of voters' emotional responses to candidates. This model groups emotions into two clusters, one having to do with degree of arousal or enthusiasm, and the other related to degree of anxiety. Marcus and Sullivan noted that campaigns that target affect (including, but not limited to, "dirty politics") are able to alter voting patterns by activating emotional systems in ways that interrupt the linear process of taking in information.

Psychologist Michael Milburn of the University of Massachusetts at Boston, author of the recent book, *Persuasion and Politics: The Social Psychology of Public Opinion*, wrapped up the day. Milburn began with a report on the (negative) effect of dramatic news presentation on viewers' understanding and recall. He proposed mechanisms by which people draw meaning from television images and constructs based on their own experience and psychodynamics, a process he calls "schema activation." For insight into the ways political drama engages the public, Milburn looked to the work of German psychologist Alice Miller for subliminal patterns of identification between candidates and voters. He suggested such themes as authoritarian family systems, denial of personal suffering, humiliation and revenge.

Billed as "not a typical conference," the event fulfilled its potential for creative chaos, interdisciplinary stimulation, and questions left unanswered. Areas of conflict were also areas of fascination:

- Is it the politician's task to reflect public sentiment or to shape it with visionary leadership?
- Are clinical models of psychodynamics useful in accounting for political behavior?
- How do candidates' psychological blind spots and hidden agendas lead to fatal campaign errors?
- Is it possible to craft emotional appeals that can both empower voters and win elections?

According to Berens, nearly everyone at the gathering has expressed enthusiasm for follow-up meetings. Many have also suggested practical projects through which the group, or subgroups, can test their ideas. These include psychological analysis of recent campaigns; creation of a working group to describe, in detailed psychological terms, the characteristics of an excellent campaign; testing of these ideas in specific 1992 contests; education of media and political professionals; and development of a variety of written materials. Berens concluded, "The experience of 'moving the tables together' among these disciplines made us think more creatively and showed that the gaps in thinking and style can be bridged. Many participants are continuing to meet and are finding a wide range of ways to work together."

—Melissa Everett

Transforming the Confrontation Mentality
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nologies from the social sciences. It complements other diplomatic approaches by dealing with subjective obstacles to sustainable resolution of the conflict.

Growth of the practice of Interactive Conflict Resolution has outstripped the development of collaborative professional networks, stable funding sources, evaluation methods, comprehensive training programs, and guidelines for ethical practices. The Project to Advance the Field of Interactive Conflict Resolution aims to promote the professionalization of the field, to demonstrate its relevance to various constituencies (parties in conflict, governments, international organizations such as the United Nations and the CSCE, and funding agencies), and to increase the availability of practitioners to those who will benefit from their services. The project was able to move these aims forward at the Fifteenth International Scientific Meeting of the International Society for Political Psychology (ISPP).

The ISPP meeting took place immediately after the IPPNW Congress, across the Gulf of Bothnia, in Helsinki, Finland. At this meeting of approximately 250 political psychologists, representing over 40 countries, conflict resolution was an important part of the agenda. A proportionately large number of the participants were actively engaged in interventions in a variety of international "hot spots," and still more participants had an active interest in advancing the field.

For many participants, the first morning of the meeting was devoted to a discussion of conflict resolution topics, including: the costs and benefits of institutionalizing and professionalizing the field; the importance of developing quality training programs; the interplay among practice, research, and theory; the need for documentation of work being done; the lack of quality control within the field; and difficulties in obtaining funding. There was general agreement that institutionalization of the field is necessary, given increases in the number of active practitioners, the demand for their services, and the recognition by the general public and policy makers that interactive conflict resolution can make a significant contribution to the resolution of violent ethnic conflict. Many expressed the sen-

timent that a new profession has sprung up, one that needs to refine its identity and carve out its own institutional base.

The application of conflict resolution techniques to specific conflicts and the results of such interventions were the topic of a number of other panels in the course of the five-day meeting. Lessons about the importance of leverage and power in the resolution of conflict were drawn from experiences in South Africa, Namibia, Angola, and Cuba. Leverage, in these various situations, was defined as the ability to manipulate economic conditions (for example, through sanctions), the structure of a negotiation, or the psychological needs for recognition and inclusion of those in conflict.

An interesting twist in the discussion of power and leverage was the unique role that small states can play as international mediators. Algeria and Sweden were cited as examples. Smaller states were described as acquiring leverage through their neutrality, impartiality, and access to "hard to reach" parties. A small state has the ability to be a non-threatening, sympathetic ally, which can be particularly useful when a power asymmetry exists between the parties in conflict.

Current events highlighted the importance of developing steps for conflict resolution in war-torn Yugoslavia. A number of impromptu gatherings were organized to discuss concrete proposals for action, bringing the preceding theoretical discussions to bear on a crisis in the making.

At both international gatherings participants felt strongly that current international events, particularly in the Persian Gulf and in Eastern Europe, present politicians, diplomats, and citizens with an important challenge to rethink the ways in which nations relate. Innovative alternatives to traditional diplomacy are among the most promising lights on the diplomatic horizon and must be seriously considered by the global community. Support of alternative ways to resolve conflict will help to transform combative international stand-offs into cooperative relationships. It will also create the opportunity for both influential leaders and ordinary citizens to rethink basic assumptions about social conflict and its roots, transform their confrontation mentality, and empower them to take effective action to achieve a peaceful, sustainable future. ❐

Commitment to Hope

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stand that the heart of our survival is our functioning out of those same principles in an aware and freely chosen way."

The first dynamic is that of *differentiation*. "The whole universe is coded to be differentiated." The constant interactions of natural elements push them toward chaos and dissolution, thus releasing their potential to evolve into a more complex and diverse state of affairs. This movement towards ever greater complexity and diversity is essential for the maintenance and survival of life in our bio-system. So, too, in human interactions, the diversity of languages, cultures, origin stories, laws, and ethics are essential to the survival of the human species. The greater the diversity within the human family, the more likely the occurrence and adoption of adaptive responses to global crises.

Ironically, human history is riddled with examples of the drive to *eliminate* differences, an obsession with conformity and uniformity. Ruling elites have armed themselves and unleashed terrible repression in order to eradicate differences among their subjects. Sister Miriam comments forgivingly: "We are a very young species." She describes the proper role of human beings as delighting in and celebrating the incredible diversity of life on Earth and within the human family.

Driving this universal movement towards diversity and complexity is the second dynamic, "*interiority*." An inner dimension exists within every being, at all levels of existence. Every atom "at the depth of its mystery...is coming into creation in a unique, unrepeatable, irreplaceable way, and, therefore, is a manifestation of the deep creative process out of which everything comes."

The third dynamic is that of *communion*. "...[E]very atom in the universe, every tree, every galaxy, every star" is not only unique, with an inner dimension, but it is also bonded to the whole. "The curvature of space holds the universe together as one reality, and on the inner plane it is one." Love is the capacity to grasp and actively choose this diversified unity, and "that is the proper role of the human." Sister Miriam submits that a love that recognizes the interiority of the whole natural world—and not just of the humans within it—is essential to the survival of life on Earth.

How does one move from this grand scale to specific local actions that can help preserve and improve conditions for all life forms? One answer, according to Sister MacGillis, is "coming home," or adherence to the principle of bio-regionalism. Each bio-region is unique in its geology and "community of life." For humans to experience oneness with the living world, grounding all action in their own bio-region is essential. The human residents of a region must immerse themselves in the total community of life and beings that comprises the bio-region. If a bio-region is healthy, then the humans who live in it will be healthy. If a bio-region is diseased, then the humans in it will be diseased.

In the name of bio-regionalism, Sister MacGillis calls on us to: 1) end the poisoning of the bio-region by industrial and agricultural toxins; 2) enhance the natural diversity of the bio-region, and end the nutrient-depleting and pest-attracting practice of mono-culture over a vast tract of land; and 3) consume fruits and vegetables in season, in order to reduce the use of fossil fuels to transport them to markets out of season. No more "fresh," chemically-fixed California eggplant in the heart of a New England winter!

Her other suggestion for positive environmental action is to redefine economic sustainability. What is produced and what is consumed in a particular region must be consistent with the region's natural regenerative powers. We need to create environmentally oriented alternatives, not only in terms of ecologically sound lifestyles rooted in bio-regions, but also in terms of professions. "There's no blueprint... Plan A, Plan B.... We're writing the new nutrition, the new agriculture, the new economics."

Sister MacGillis emphasized the need for creating *visible* alternatives in the process of social change. "You rarely leap off one trapeze unless you know the other one's coming at you." Creative alternatives to the existing order are the source of hope. "Hope is not optimism. It is a choice to do in the present moment that which has no evident feedback or results."

— Bonnie Shepard

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