

# **The State of the Union**

## ***Community within Global Policy***

Rudy Nesmith  
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*"No problem can be solved from the same consciousness that created it."... Albert Einstein*

### **We have a great challenge and a unique opportunity.**

The current issues confronting the American people today require a willingness to think beyond the usual confines of Republican vs. Democrat, Conservative vs. Liberal, Green vs. Independent.

Here's the situation, starting from the overall picture. We have to eliminate poverty, malnutrition, and disease for the entire population of the world within this generation. In addition we have to present the world with a working living model of what a truly human society can look like.

The first part is no big deal. The technology involved is less of a challenge than President Kennedy's issuance of the "Man on the moon in ten years" policy back in 1961. The second part however will require some serious creativity.

We have to do this, not only because we are moral human beings, but because the future of humanity depends upon it. Not only do we have to eliminate these depraved conditions, but we have to do so in a manner which enables that same population to maintain and expand its standard of health, education, culture and creative contribution to the task itself and to be prepared for the greater tasks that will follow upon meeting this minimum obligation of our human species to itself.

Our ability to meet this challenge will arise from implementing a national policy that appears to confront seemingly unrelated political issues immediately at hand. It is within the structure of this new national policy that communities established along the lines of the Four Hour Day (4HD) and the Renaissance Humanist Community (RHC) can flourish and point the way for building society that celebrates the promise of what is best in humanity.

Communities like we envision have the distinct ability to start from ideas and build themselves as prototypes for humanity. They can be at the political center of promoting national policy that is necessary for the world and for their own growth and development.

### **Our current situation in a nutshell**

Politically, there is no presidential contender who is even raising the two main issues which will confront them when taking the office they seek; The War in Iran and the International Economic Depression.

The world is on the verge of an international economic collapse potentially worse than that of the 1929-33 period. Simultaneously, the current Cheney/Bush administration is pushing headlong into turning the current invasion of Iraq into a war with Iran.

While the root cause of the oncoming economic collapse has been building since the early 60's, we have finally reached a point where not even blind faith and bubble gum could hold it together. The total mass of overvaluation of holdings in financial instruments has far exceeded any underlying backing in asset collateral. Nine Trillion in US national debt is one giant bubble, ready to break along with the collapse of the sub-prime mortgage bubble already painfully visible. This is no longer a simple matter of fine tuning interest rates, nor is it an isolated U.S. issue. The reliance on the U.S. dollar as an international currency means that all the holders and traders in this debt, from Japan to China to Europe will participate in the same collapse.

Since the early 60's we have dismantled our productive manufacturing capacity, laid off and shut down two generations of skilled engineering and machine tool workers, and totally neglected the upkeep and development of our physical infrastructure in transportation, energy production, waterways, bridges, water supply, health facilities, and education. Textiles, steel, electronics, along with every other major manufacturing sector of the economy has been decimated in favor of slave-wage labor under the guise of the neo-colonialist banner of "globalization". The 60's ushered in the "information age" and the "post industrial society" along with that strange new species, the "consumer". No longer was there a need for producers, workers or any other such tacky blue-collar items in our brave new world of banking, real estate, advertising, finance and mass entertainment. Of course these sectors have always been a part of our national economy, but never before had this level of non-productive employment become the dominant force. The old "bread and circus" of Rome has been revived.

In a capitalist society, the physical economy is not only critical to maintaining and enhancing human living conditions, it also acts as the asset base for the financial monetary system that sits on top of it like the proverbial monkey on your back.

If the U.S. has no productive capacity and its skill levels and infrastructure are deteriorating, then what backs up the dollar? Despite the ability of US news media and presidential candidates to ignore this, the rest of the world is very nervously aware of these conditions.

## **The usual solutions**

### *Tweak the Money Supply*

The first reaction to signs of a general financial collapse from the gaggle of incompetent economists, whether monetarist, neo-liberal, Keynesian, or supply-siders, will be to tweak the money supply in hope of somehow protecting the price of invested portfolios whose sole value is based on inflated monetary assets alone.

After cruising along on the Alan Greenspan period of low interest easy money and massive amounts of purely speculative earnings in the derivatives market, it began to become apparent that the great housing boom was nothing more than “Dot Com II”. When a house doubles in “value” in a two year period during which no physical improvements have been made, you’d think someone would get a little suspicious as to where this “value” is coming from. So, it’s time to tweak. Off goes the low interest faucet and pop goes the mortgage balloon. While patting themselves on the back for “correcting the Greenspan excess”, a new problem arises and it isn’t just that thousands of homeowners are losing their homes as adjustable rates soar. No, the problem from the monetarist view is the extent to which mortgages are spread throughout the fabric of the whole economy. No longer is it just the bank that holds your note. Mortgages are sold and resold and packaged into every form of speculative investment product imaginable, internationally. So, now after several major investment houses, mortgage brokers and banks have teetered on asset collapse, it’s time to “tweak” again.

The approach will be to loosen up the money supply, just a little, not too hot, not too cold, but just right. The Three Bears theory of economics. The problem at this point is that when the Fed lowers the interest rate again, there is so much uncertainty and fear in the investment community that the new flow of dollars will go nowhere but into the quickest speculative schemes to shore up the losses already taken. On the price front, this is where consumer goods pricing begins to enter the speculative market. Pricing will be based, not on today’s cost of production, but on anticipation of the effects of inflation tomorrow and planning it into today’s prices. This is the start of hyper-inflation, the self fueling runaway inflation associated with the German economy of 1923 when food and basic consumer goods doubled in price every 48 hours.

Without a policy that can effect the re-establishment of the real physical economy, all the tweaking of the monetary superstructure can do nothing but exacerbate the problem. Economists are like the patient, who unable to cure his disease, is left with a button for tweaking the morphine drip.

### *Austerity with a Friendly Face*

As the financial tweaking runs its roller coaster course, those who still believe the children’s tale that supply and demand run the economy will push the idea of reducing costs by cutting demand. This doesn’t mean the population is suddenly going to be presented with an alternative to the usual advertising media fantasyland of

“consumerism”. No, the target here is the demand for wages, public services, and basic costs of production.

The worst reaction to this financial bubble caused collapse of real human productive infrastructure would be to further sacrifice real production by implementing austerity measures against wages, social programs, and productive investment in the physical economy simply to funnel every last cent into shoring up the fictitious value of this mass of bad debt.

One would think that such a stupid response would not occur, but yet that is exactly the response that will be proposed and there will be social movements to back it up and misguided supporters to be recruited to the cause. Instead of exposing the years of robbing funds from levee restoration along Lake Pontchartrain, the Katrina disaster will be explained as just another example of Global Warming, even when there is no related evidence of this at all. The inability to fund education will be because we are living too high and consuming too much and need to cut back and live on less (even though real wages have been dropping since the 70's for everyone earning under half a million a year). Will these savings in austerity measures such as busting the sanitation union or driving down teacher salaries actually help fund education. Nope, just more funds available to pay the debt service on bonded debt.

So, how does one go about shaping the population into a happy self-destroying frenzy for austerity?

Most Republicans will mindlessly accept austerity as the standard party line, but the rest of the population will need to have it properly “packaged”.

There is already a pop-culture philosophical source available to do just that for millions of middle class liberals with severe cases of social guilt. It's the tried and true “do with less” movement and the old Malthusian Club of Rome “zero population growth” gang, back from the 70's (1870's and 1970's). Why not blame it all on the population in general. You are the reason for economic collapse. In true Hitler Youth fashion, masses of pre-teens to college students will be barraged with pop and rock celebs and music videos to “cut back”, “do with less”, “anti-technology”, and “save the planet” (where “planet” is synonymous with bloated debt instruments held by speculators). Already, the Global Warming movement is showing its true political face as it turns its focus on cutting energy use and investment. If conservation is a source of energy, then maybe starvation is a source of food. Baby boomers will remember the 60's and revive their counter-culture values of attacking everything that even sounds like a productive endeavor as we once again turn inward to the Age of Aquarius.

Now, don't get me wrong. There are lots of well meaning people attracted to and involved in the environmental activities who really want to just make sure we don't end up with a polluted barren planet. By-in-large their hearts are in the right place. In fact, I'm probably an ideal candidate for signing up. I believe that everything we do has global implications; I'm all for trees and forests and cute little animals and camping and hiking

and biking and believe that the world is being terribly polluted by corporate greed and profit driven policy decisions. But, I'm for humans acting like humans, instead of believing we're just a bunch of "bad animals" that can only consume and use up all our resources and only have solutions involving consuming less and less. If that's who we are, then Mother Nature would be very ashamed of us.

The problem is that the environmental movement has been taken over by a faction who are totally anti-technology, anti progressive development, and who have no understanding of how expanding production can be the means to bettering the lives and general welfare of all the members of our species. I have no idea whether Al Gore is just personally misguided or outright intentionally destructive, but his current policies associated with the Global Warming issue will further undermine the already ravaged productive capacity of the US and will turn the undeveloped countries, including the entire continent of Africa, into a feudal wasteland worse than that of the Black Plague of 14<sup>th</sup> century Europe. It does seem that many folks would like to conveniently forget how he turned over the election to king George without a fight, or that he is currently positioned in his venture partnerships to make millions if bio-fuels take off.

### **Physical Economy**

I have been using the words "physical economy" for the purpose of driving home the crucial point of the distinction between real human value and fictitious value. I should make it clear that the word "physical" is not to imply only those items of material composition like steel, concrete, housing, and hospitals. The physical economy involves production that supports the development of human beings in all that goes into making us truly human. This obviously involves all of the production and services that makes education, art and science possible.

It is our ability to alter ourselves in a self-reflexive creative process through our understanding and discoveries of unifying scientific principles and then changing the physical world about us and our social organization that distinguishes us, qualitatively, from other animals.

It is not our straight spine, opposing thumb, and large cranial cavity. Those are all quantitative measures along a phylogenic continuum. The qualitative phase shifting leap that is humankind occurs with the ability to shape our own destiny by altering the physical and social universe in a manner that changes ourselves.

The destruction of that human process is the beastialization that fictitious value imposes upon our economy and our society like a giant slime mold growing out of control and suffocating the life out of humanity.

Anyone who has ever had the privilege of living during a time of massive social movements that even show a glimpse of engaging the concept of humanity, has had the experience of their own heightened intellectual and artistic creativity begin to soar. It is a

spirit that is usually only experienced when finding a true and kindred friend who both challenges and supports you in the pursuit of some artistic or scientific endeavor. Now magnify that a thousand-fold. It is truly something to be embraced, enjoyed, and repeated as often as is historically possible.

### **The real task ahead**

Our task is straight forward. Protect and massively build up the real productive basis of the economy in the areas of transportation infrastructure (high speed rail to eliminate inefficient cross country truck delivery, and commuter rail to replace short haul hub city air travel and drastically reduce commuter auto travel), health, housing, education, food production, water projects, air quality, and manufacturing of real goods and services that enhance the standard of living of the population as a whole. We do this as a principle of both our national and international policy.

Place the monetarist bubble in bankruptcy. I mean this quite literally.

1. Fix the rate of exchange of the dollar (eliminate currency speculation).
2. Issue credit to maintain only that section of the banking industry that preserves individual savings and pensions while devaluing and placing on hold the speculative portion of the derivatives bubble for consideration at a later date, a much later date.
3. Placing a hold on all mortgage rates for home owners and restricting any foreclosures.

This is not rocket science; we can put the monetarist section of our economy through organized bankruptcy reorganization just like that of a company that is overwhelmingly in debt. The difference is that we do this with a plan for saving the “company” (our nation’s physical economy of real production) and the “employees” (our national workforce) at the expense of the bubble of debt held by speculative credit holders.

### **Diplomacy**

We also need to build close relationships and negotiate financial treaties and agreements with our key international suppliers, credit holders, and customers. We have to do this to both stabilize the international repercussions of the current collapse and to lay the groundwork for the joint development projects which we will promote to attain our goals set out in the first paragraph of this presentation.

Currently our foreign policy is dominated by an administration whose understanding of world relations is about as diplomatic as that of Attila the Hun. Of course, poor Attila never had the benefit of Carl Rove and Fox News to “spin” it for him to a population hungry with gullibility.

Again like most of our other tasks, diplomacy requires a total change of approach, and again it is not rocket science. The central concept to guide foreign policy should simply be “what is in the interest of all parties?”. Whether in dealing with international trade and manufacturing in Mexico, assisting in resolving the Israel-Palestine issues, or questions of nuclear weapons proliferation, we must abandon the tried and failed policy of generating instability and then installing and supporting those with narrow interests that meet the short term profit needs of sections of U.S. stockholders. The concept of developing military spheres of influence must be abandoned.

There is no country anywhere in the world that would not benefit from mutually sponsored large scale infrastructure building projects in water, energy, transportation, health, communications, and education that the U.S. is in a unique position to broker.

This is true as long as we understand the difference between what the World Bank and IMF do with their debt laden, economy destroying, anti-labor development projects and what a Humanist Bank for World Progress could do. We need to export the once popular concept of “Yankee ingenuity” of the nation of revolutionaries that overthrew the King George of 1776 and launched the cry for sovereign republics heard round the world.

## **Development Projects**

What are these projects that can meld a new diplomacy into action? Obviously this has to be developed in a process with collaborators all over the world. That in itself should be a major task taken up by our RHC Global Projects work. But just to highlight the issues I will mention 5 critical areas. There are more areas of need for maintenance, construction, and research and development than the current unfortunately low level of world population can provide. Our approach can only be to identify those areas which provide maximum leverage to increase our ability to have an effect on as broad an array of potential as possible.

### **Reorganize the U.S. Military**

First we must announce that no phony “provocation” for attacking Iran will be tolerated like the Gulf of Tonkin incident was used in Vietnam. The next step will be the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. How can this be done? The obvious answer to this question is simple, “The same way we got them there, with boats and planes; lots of large ones.”

However, there are a few things we should do in the week before we immediately leave.

- (1) Announce that the US will commit 25% of its entire military capacity, (personnel, expertise, equipment, budget, and infrastructure) to be resources available and under the command of the United Nations. We, at the same time agree to support an expansion of the UN Security Council

to be more inclusive.

- (2) We announce the conversion of the other 75% of our military into a new configuration. Instead of the Department of Defense/Offense, it will become the Department for World Wide Disaster and Emergency Assistance. Our new slogan, instead of the macho “Army of One (killer of many)” will become “Team America, Ready to Help”.

The mission of the new US Military will be to go anywhere in the world where there are natural disasters (hurricanes, tsunamis, earthquakes) or ones of human neglect (famine, drought, epidemics). By “anywhere”, I include the United States, where we currently seem to be unable to even perform basic disaster relief.

This will involve a good deal of the military budget in reconfiguring equipment and restructuring of the training programs. Aircraft carriers will be converted into seafaring hospitals and nuclear fueled desalinization plants. The Army Corp of Engineers will be a major center for recruitment and training of engineers in emergency flood control, housing development, water purification plants. Our young men and women who have been joining the military from impoverished areas of our country in hopes of getting an education, will not only be able to earn money for a civilian college without having to become a hired killer to do so, but will actually be trained in socially useful skills that are necessary in building up the infrastructure of our own society. After all, just how many young moms need to know how to properly wear a Kevlar bulletproof vest or calculate coordinates for a cruise missile?

- (3) These two items alone will throw the entire world into a whole new conception of what America is all about. And in fact, these are the prerequisites to combating those who oppose us on genuinely understandable grounds since all they have ever seen is a goliath war machine expanding its empire across the globe.



- (4) President Bush should then put on his latest outfit for a photo op, go on television and announce that his mission has been accomplished in Iraq and it was a great victory for all concerned and that we will have all of the troops home within the month. By then the UN will already have undertaken to provide international assistance coordinated with the Iraqi's to stabilize the situation in an atmosphere devoid of the primary thorn in the side of recovery.

Following this victorious speech, the Senate should immediately call for Impeachment Hearings for Bush and Cheney and arrest Rumsfeld on the spot. After all, just how long can you get away with sending other people's children to die for what everyone now admits was a lie?

### **Fusion Power within 10 years**

Finally, here is a challenge that is "rocket science", but a very attainable challenge. Energy is the key component to human survival and progress. We must develop a source of cheap, safe, high-energy dense power that can fuel the projects that will bring the world's population up to a level of health, education, and technological skills required for humanity to expand in a manner to be prepared to solve the issues confronting subsequent generations.

Over the next 20 years, we could easily need 50 times the world's current energy production just to accomplish the tasks at hand. There is only one way currently on the horizon of scientific endeavor. Unlike "piddle power" projects in wind and sub-atmosphere solar power proposed by the Ludite faction of the environmental moment, we require the level of high density energy capability that can be provided by the same source of power that our Sun itself uses, thermonuclear fusion power. Fusion involves the fusing of isotopes of hydrogen found abundantly in sea water to produce helium and masses of energy thousands of times that produced by today's nuclear fission plants. It is clean, safe, and the only dangerous output would be helium which could possibly be used by terrorist to disguise themselves as birthday clowns with helium balloons and a voice like Donald Duck.

Despite the fantasies of running our cars on Jack Daniels and heating our homes and swimming pools with solar panels, all of these secondary low energy versions of using the power of the sun are just ill conceived and bad science. It's no wonder that agribusiness loves the idea of growing acres of corn on government subsidy, which is the only way bio-fuels can compete financially until oil reaches \$150 a barrel. One can even understand why the commodity market speculators love it. In fact, market speculation on corn futures based on anticipation of an upcoming ethanol boondoggle, has driven the price of grain corn up to an extent that there is a tortilla price crisis in Mexico where corn is a staple of the diet for most of the population. Thousands of people were marching on the main cities in

Mexico earlier this year, calling for a halt to the phenomenon threatening the lives of millions of Mexicans. In their hands the protesters clutched cobs of corn, the staple crop that makes tortillas and for many of Mexico's poor the main source of calorific sustenance in an otherwise nutritionally sparse diet. Over the past three months the price of corn flour had risen by 400 per cent. Poor Mexicans, who normally expect to set aside a third of their wages for corn flour, had always been particularly vulnerable to price fluctuations in the corn market, but a four-fold increase was both unheard of and potentially catastrophic.

Producing masses of biological material just to further process it and ultimately burn it as fuel is just nuts. But, what is even more nuts is that agribusiness is joined in this massive push by shock troops of well meaning, left-liberal as well as “non-political” people who just like the idea of small, simple, low energy life with a car that runs on corn. It just sounds so kind and loving to the planet.

Unless we are able to generate the level of power that can fuel desalinization plants to make the deserts bloom again, to run the number of hospitals that are needed to provide for the world's undeveloped and developing nations, then we don't have a plan at all.

We have to help China leap-frog the coal powered stage of their industrial development that is choking their air with pollution. There is no reason for them to create the same human misery and environmental destruction that the U.S. experienced during our early industrialization.

Conventional nuclear reactors can provide the energy to desalinate seawater, and high-temperature nuclear reactors can efficiently create hydrogen to replace petroleum fuel. But fusion has a trillion times the energy potential of fission and the even higher temperatures available from thermonuclear fusion can provide working plasmas that can reduce garbage and waste down to its constituent elements, eliminating disposal problems. A high-temperature plasma torch will also be able to “mine” strategic minerals directly from ordinary rock. The ultimate in recycling will be available as landfills are ionized into raw materials for input back into the production cycle.

There is currently a project for developing a large tokamak fusion reactor in Cadarache, France. ITER is a joint project of 8 nations. The initial budget was \$3Billion. After the U.S. refused to participate at such an “exorbitant” sum (compare this to \$100 billion a year to invade Iraq), the funding was lowered to \$2Billion. Currently the budget is a paltry \$14Billion spread over 30 years. Of course Greenpeace opposes nuclear fusion because it just involves too much science and technology and, after all, the word “nuclear” rhymes with the word “bomb”. They much prefer windmills, even though some of them are bothered by the thousands of migratory birds that are ground up each year by 70 foot whirling blades.

We need to do 3 things immediately:

- (1) Make a blockbuster movie called “Fusion Power, the Necessary Truth” and revoke Al Gore’s ill gotten Nobel Prize and instead offer it to the first young scientist that actually does do something for World Peace in the area of energy.
- (2) Fund fusion energy research and development like it was George Bush’s next war.
- (3) Build nuclear fission plants to immediately increase the levels of power needed to get the development projects going. There are new designs for nuclear energy plants that eliminate many of the issues of the older light water reactors. The pebble-bed reactor can have all of its supporting machinery fail, and the reactor will not crack, melt, explode or spew hazardous wastes. It simply goes up to a designed "idle" temperature, and stays there. In that state, the reactor vessel radiates heat, but the vessel and fuel spheres remain intact and undamaged. The machinery can be repaired or the fuel can be removed. Currently France generates 76% of its electricity from nuclear energy. The U.S. stopped building nuclear plants in 1979 despite the fact that more people have died in the U.S. from turbo windmills than from any nuclear accident. Windmills 1, Nuclear 0.

The question becomes, what do you want to do, eliminate poverty and disease or just feel good about pretending that doing less is more?

Maybe an aspiring Commune should consider going into business building small nuclear reactors like the one that the 700 residents of the small village of Galena, Alaska have been trying to get permission from the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission to obtain from Toshiba. The 4S, “Super Safe Smart and Simple”, installs completely buried underground and runs for 30 years without having to be maintained.

### **Water Projects, the Basis of Human Life**

If energy underlies the existence of our planet, then water underlies the existence of life. More important than food, oil, and all the raw material production, the availability of an abundant supply of clean potable water is key to issues of survivability, prevention of disease, general health, and the ability of our world population to spread over vast currently uninhabitable locations on the globe.

According to the World Health Organization, 3.4 Million people die each year as a result of water related diseases, making it the leading cause of disease and death

around the world. 4000 children die each day from ingesting filthy water, particularly in Africa and Asia. Cholera, typhoid fever, and hepatitis-A are the most common water borne bacterial diseases.

That such world-wide human death and misery could be eliminated through increasing water supplies and building water treatment plants is both infuriating that it isn't being done and heartening that it is entirely possible to accomplish.

### *Change the climate*

In addition to providing increased water supplies and distribution, we need to actively intervene in our planet's water cycle itself. We must increase the organization and maintenance of forests and agricultural crops which will decrease the temperature of the earth and the atmosphere by the conversion of solar radiation into plant life. The most efficient means of lowering the temperature in certain regions is through the increase in bio-mass. Areas which are today uninhabitable deserts were once the Fertile Crescent of ancient Mesopotamia; the Bread Basket of southwest Asia; the same area which the U.S. military is currently invading and turning into even more of a human and social wasteland.

Change the percentage of solar radiation that falls on barren land into that being photosynthesized by trees, plants, and agricultural products. The water given off becomes rain. This feeds the cycle that will lower the climatic temperature and, over time, can convert desert regions into habitable landscape.

Anyone who has ever flown across the U.S. has seen the phenomenon of miles of southwestern desert and suddenly large circles of deep green. These are where giant circular irrigation systems spread water in a radius out from a central pivot point and turn a section of desert into crops. This purely mechanical system can be aided by reforestation.

In the Amazon Rainforest, commercial lumber cuts selected hardwoods and in the process destroys several times as much vegetation through felling of interconnected vines and canopy and the compaction of the soil under heavy machinery. Then the peasants, forced off their land, enter the forest to continue the destruction. We would do the world a great service if the impoverished landless peasantry of South America were provided employment in housing construction, water management, and transportation infrastructure as an alternative to the massive slash and burn primitive agriculture that is eliminating over 1 ½ acres of rainforest each second. The rainforest needs management, not rape.

The lack of cheap abundant water is also increasingly an issue of political conflict. In addition to drinking water, there is a national and world wide need for water in irrigation and manufacturing processes as well as repair and expansion of materials transport waterways and related dams, locks, and levees.

### ***Water, water everywhere, but ...***

The current lack of available water is not due to a lack of water itself. The planet is covered with water, above and below the surface. The great atmospheric water cycle moves vast amounts of water all over the globe. Fresh water is locked in icebergs and glacial sheets left from our current ice age as it plays out the last 20,000 years of its 100,000 year glaciation cycle. 50,000 years ago this same glaciation period left the Sahara and beneath it the Nubian Aquifer, a body of water beneath the sands of northeast Africa 30 times the size of all of our Great Lakes together. One should keep in mind that bringing fossil water to the surface to become available to human use and part of the water cycle is quite different from bringing fossil oil to the surface for the purpose of burning it.

Major projects need to be defined in areas where water availability will have the most immediate and broad impact on health and food production. These regions coincide with areas where the immediate potential for joint cooperation over projects of mutual benefit would work in the stabilizing of political volatility, such as Africa and the states of southwest Asia. The issue of water is a seldom mentioned proverbial 600 pound gorilla in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

### **Transportation**

The ability to move people and materials in an efficient and safe manner underlies the ability of our society to grow and function. Every aspect of economic and social life depends upon this, and yet the dismantling and destruction of the transportation infrastructure is one of the earliest signs of an economy that is on the road to collapse. Over the past 30 years the U.S. rail system has been gutted by neglect and direct abandonment in favor of long haul trucking at less fuel efficiency and tonnage capability. The U.S. government poured huge sums into highway construction from the 1950s. The heyday of congressional pork barrel politics fed itself on cross country real estate speculation. This subsidized the auto and trucking industry, while the railroads shrank.

With passenger automobile accidents killing as many people in the U.S. every year as died in the entire 15 years of the Vietnam War, this has got to be worthy of serious consideration as not the best way to get from home to work.

We must launch a major renovation of our national rail system to support both high speed long haul freight and move toward a high speed passenger service on the order of the French TGV and Japanese bullet trains for under 500 mile service where air travel does not compete in total travel time or passenger convenience.

For the developing nations we must provide the same policies as Abraham Lincoln, who deliberately launched a rail-building enterprise, subsidized and directed by the government to increase rail track five-fold over the following

years. This railroad-building drove the expansion of the steel, iron, and national industries generally. During the New Deal, FDR used the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to rescue and rejuvenate the rail industry and it was the foundation of the infrastructure that served the industrial expansion during the war.

Colonialism has historically launched its exploitation with the building of rail lines from the slave labor raw material mining camps straight to the docks for export. Instead, we must promote the construction of modern electric rail systems as a key component of every nation's internal transportation network for the growth and development of their economy and benefit for the general welfare of the citizenry.

There are major continental rail links that would lead to integration of whole new areas. Projects such as the Strait of Gibraltar tunnel to link Europe to Africa by train. There are beginning discussions involving a Baring Strait land bridge linking China to Alaska by undersea rail. These projects can then act as the major arteries for branching rail systems to remote areas over undeveloped rural locations where transportation of people and freight is key to providing the development of health care, housing, and productive infrastructure.

## **Culture**

While I believe we should place a violin, an acoustic guitar, or flute in the hands of every young child upon entering kindergarten, there is also another musical form available immediately, their voice.

There is a saying from Zimbabwe: "If you can walk, you can dance, If you can talk, you can sing!" And this is certainly the case with children who are introduced to music as an integral part of their lives, just as if it were language.

If we are to enable generations that follow us to have the kind of creative healthy mental and social abilities that can carry us all forward in a direction of human fulfillment, then music must be in their soul. Most parents have gone beyond the need to coo and babble to a child who is eager to grasp language, but yet we are immersed within the concept that from childhood to adulthood, the best we can provide in musical training is television advertising jingles, followed with even duller pop music and down right brain damaging rap and whatever version rock has morphed into at the moment.

The time has come to bring back the children's choir.

## **More than just projects**

Diplomacy is not simply a matter of the right projects for cooperation. These are necessary underlying components, but the more important aspect of attaining cooperative

diplomacy is in establishing, for those involved, the conceptualization of what it means in a way that intersects the humanist content of their culture. There is always a core within the tangle of beliefs and assumptions that historically came to make up the philosophies and religions of seemingly divergent cultures. Our underlying common humanity has always managed to survive within those belief structures despite the entanglement of politically motivated deviations and counter attacks.

Consider the Israel-Palestine conflict for example.

We have had enough trouble battling the apostles of hate and divisiveness like Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations" and other popularized propaganda pieces for the creation of spheres of conflict to justify the 21<sup>st</sup> century neo-crusaders of the American Century think tank grouping around Cheney, Bush, Wolfowitz, et al.

How often have you recently heard the fallout from this? Comments like "There's no solution in the Middle East, they've been battling for thousands of years. It's in their nature." Publish and broadcast this crap enough and even people that know better will begin to believe it.

What needs to be developed is consciousness of the tradition among Jews and Muslims of their common religious origin in monotheism. The first organized recognition of humans as distinct from beasts. The philosophical expression of Truth as a single unified understanding of the forces in the universe. It was this that gave us the foundation for modern science as it developed up through the Greeks associated with the Pythagoreans, Socrates and Plato and revived again in the 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian Renaissance thinkers like Nicolas of Cusa, and Da Vinci all the way up through Einstein's insistence on unified knowledge as a rejection of Heisenberg. It is the Jewish tradition of Solon of Alexandria and the Islamic philosophers Al-Farabi and Avicenna.

Too often is forgotten the early Kibbutzim, the agricultural communes founded by European Jews, mostly communist and socialist, who moved to Palestine, purchased and drained malarial swampland and worked in cooperation with their Palestinian neighbors. All before Zionism became the means for the U.S. and British to have a post war anti-Soviet outpost in the region.

It is only when one recognizes that which is universally human in themselves and their beliefs, and when they are given the opportunity to act on those beliefs in a specific activity, that they can begin to embrace a life that actually expresses those beliefs.

### **How can we fund all this?**

When someone says that there is no money available for such large scale domestic and international projects and that it would be inflationary, just ask them if they see any difference between generating credit to fund activity that raises the living conditions and

productive capacity of a population versus generating credit to build gambling casinos and fund speculation in currencies? If they don't, then they haven't a clue as to the nature of inflation or economics in general. Unfortunately this seems to be the case among our professional economists as well as our population.

Issuing money to someone to support a drug and gambling habit does create a fictitious "monetary value". The debt can be sold to others and others can even speculate on whether it's value will rise or fall in the margin and derivative markets. It even adds to the Gross Domestic Product which economists view as an indication of a strong and growing economy. But what is the nature of this "value"?

Contrast this to issuing money to someone to build a home, raise and educate the next generation, increase their own level of skills and engage in producing goods and services that enable others to do the same.

This creates physical value sufficient to more than compensate for the currency generated by the credit issued. This simple concept can guide a new national policy implemented through the Federal Reserve System and foreign policy implemented through a newly formed Humanist Bank for World Progress.

### **The Effect on Production**

The five major project areas outlined here are the key drivers for what might well become hundreds, if not thousands, of related sub-projects that will be both possible and necessary.

The overall effect of the required production chain and the bill of materials needed to support all these national and international development projects will make large labor demands on the U.S. and our developed-nation allies in Europe, Russia, India, Japan, and increasingly China.

It will turn the immigration issue on its head in the U.S. We will have to beg Mexicans to sneak across the border to join our industrial labor force. Our new policy must include simultaneously, education, technical training classes and a union wage scale. Of course it might be difficult to get any applicants since there will already be a shortage of labor in their own country as they need construction workers for the Mexican end of the huge water project for capturing and redistributing fresh water in Alaska and Canada and delivering large quantities to water-poor areas of Canada, the lower forty-eight states, and Mexico.

Twin Oaks Community might have to rethink its hammock and tofu production in favor of a national development contract supplying the impact resistant airdrop containers for food and medical supplies needed by our newly formed "Emergency Disaster and Relief Team", what was formerly the Marine Corps. Semper Fi !



The 4HD Guitar craft and laser shop, however, will be busier than ever, turning out quality acoustic instruments in 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, 3/4, and full size for eagerly awaiting young hands in the national youth strings program for public school pre-K thru 12.

## **Communities**

The concept of realigning the political and economic course of our national republic is very important at the level of large scale economic projects and the kind of world diplomacy that is required.

Within the global reconstructing process, we need a new view of what the living community structure of society could be. This is where we locate the idea of the Renaissance Humanist Community as a prototype for the kind of social organization that is a natural outgrowth of this world view.

We are not trying to build small communities in order to add them up, reductionist style, into some loosely coordinated world federation. We need to produce a national policy within which communities such as those outlined in Gabe Sinclair's "Four-Hour Day" novel (<http://www.fourhourday.com>) and Rudy Nesmith's Renaissance Humanist Community "Manifesto" ([http://www.renaissancehumanist.com/concept\\_manifesto.asp](http://www.renaissancehumanist.com/concept_manifesto.asp)) and "Constitution" ([http://www.renaissancehumanist.com/concept\\_constitution.asp](http://www.renaissancehumanist.com/concept_constitution.asp)) can become more than prototypes, but actual participating units of the republic as a whole.

To add to the old "revolution vs. build communities" discussion, I would say that this time we have to do both and they are inseparably synergistic. Economic collapse and having the world drop into a repeat of the Hitlerian nightmare of austerity, slave labor, and war will not benefit the building of communities.

The nation must rededicate itself to human oriented production through the elimination of usury-fueled speculative fictitious value of financial monetarism. The fight to make this happen mixed with the real positive living alternative of 4HD/RHC communities can change not only the fate of the world, but revive the necessary human spirit required to get the job done.

Within this context we can continue the good work in broadening the scope of our communal discoveries by converting the national currency into a time-based economy, freeing up the artificial connection between labor and distribution, and of course fostering lots of intriguing social relationship activity that flows (with some struggle) with the disentanglement of property and possession from friendship and love.

All of this will require masses of protesters with righteous indignation taking to the streets in sufficient numbers to stop ongoing crimes against humanity by the current administration. However, another rendition of the 60's leftist protest without an alternative would be simply that; protest.

On the other hand, there is nothing intrinsically revolutionary about autonomous self-centered communities of 100 or 1000 well meaning people. These are just as easily manipulated into working as a counter revolutionary self-indulgent tendency. Just flip through the list of communities in the Federation of Intentional Communities Directory to see what I mean. Contained therein is every conceivable small issue, self indulged collection of misguided social formations imaginable. The smaller one's focus, the more susceptible one is to manipulation. This is the same way that the issues of "local control" and "constituency organizing" so often turn inward and are used as a battering ram against what could be the combined interests of the population. It took the Wobblies in the 1920's to redefine the scope of union organizing to even begin to move things in the right direction.

## **The Road Ahead**

What we have to create does not have a model for us to point to, neither historically nor in the realm of well formed ideas. That's the real task before us.

There are pieces located in the mix of ideas including communes like an idealized Twin Oaks or the early kibbutzim. Add to that the political focus and educating/organizing that was the Highlander Folk School of the early civil rights movement, plus an active center for developing global solutions with international collaboration (a think tank for human progress). Integrate into this a center for artistic creativity on the level of painting and sculpture of the 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian Renaissance and the classical music of the century starting in the later 1700's in Germany, Austria, and Vienna. Not an imitation, but a reaffirmation of that quality and direction of creativity. Assemble this into actual functioning communities which can act as social prototypes. Beacons in a storm of insanity.

## **The Significance of it all**

What is the significance of this political thrust we have just proposed?

In addition to saving the U.S. and related international economies from an economic and political repeat of the 1930-45 period of poverty, fascism, and war through effectively removing the monetarist component from the economy, there is one more aspect that is implied. We don't intend to restore it.

Unlike the dismantling of FDR's emergency development programs after his death, we have every intention of continuing to expand the human productive economy without the curse of speculative investment being introduced into the policy at all. "Usury" will once again become the foul epitaph that it once was.

Our intentions are to promote the expansion of those successful community experiments that cohere with the policy of egalitarian design for the benefit of the General Welfare of the citizenry. Communities of this sort will have already been created and operating on an

internal time-based economy of the Labor Credit type. The ₤ being equivalent to 1 hour of work adjusted only by the desirability of the task itself. With a fixed rate dollar immune from currency speculation, the time will be ripe for a national system of time-based labor value. Suddenly one hour of the janitor's life is worth one hour of the plant manager's life. Imagine the implications world wide.

While you might have noticed that I have not called for the "overthrow of capitalism", it should become clear that anyone who would propose that we turn over our national and international reconstruction and development projects to be owned by a select group of privateers, would be met with a resounding belly laugh and a sufficient amount of disdain. Why would any sovereign people, who actually see the benefits of economic democracy, then willingly decide to abandon it in favor of the very same narrow interests that produced the impending calamity in the first place?

It is time that American working people have the opportunity to see what it is like to abandon childish regard for incompetent and destructive icons and exercise their potential creativity for the benefit of the General Welfare of these generations and those to follow after us. After all, isn't that where your own true immortality can be found?