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This contains my Founder
Lecture

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probably give money to music, which easily attains sacred-cow status, why not the pursuit of history? The return to the benefactors is not, and never has been, profit but prestige: the prestige which comes of having their names associated with a culturally respected activity; and they need not share the respect to know that the prestige is there. In return for their support, you perpetuate their names on a building, a lectureship, the letterhead of a conference, or whatever, and the exchange is not discreditable to either party. It can produce bizarre results: on the campus of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem I once found myself looking at the Frank Sinatra Student Union, which stands on the Nancy Reagan Plaza; where the Kitty Kelley Research Library will be situated I haven't heard yet. But one shouldn't rush to be cynical about these things. There are names you'd rather not perpetuate and money you'd rather not touch; but if a robber baron wants to be remembered for supporting a good cause, that may be a sign of grace, and if all he wants is prestige he may not impose conditions on you. The fundamental problem, as I tried to say earlier in this lecture, is how capital is to be related to culture in a world where both are changing at uncontrollable speed; and I am convinced that part of the solution is that those like ourselves, whose commitment is to the maintenance of culture, should not be embarrassed by our values, and tell the wealthy and the potential benefactor, just as we tell our fellow-citizens and representatives in the political process, that what we are doing is valuable and has something to offer. This is what gives prestige some roots in value and culture. The American discovery has been that new money turns into old money in a couple of generations, and acquires new values in the process so that you can talk to it; I don't know how this will be in the New Zealand of the future. It seems to me, however, that we have a vocabulary — what one of the poets called 'a way of saying' — about history and its future, and that we ought to use it.

What Hope For a Sane and Humane World?

ELSIE LOCKE

If you deduce from my title that I don't consider our present world to be either sane or humane, you are right. I often feel as if I'm back in the 1930s, when I was appalled to discover not only how much human misery surrounded me, but how stupid it all was: poverty amidst plenty, people going hungry while farmers had produce they couldn't sell. I concluded then that whatever the reasons, they ran deeper than any wrongheaded policies of governments. And I think that now.

What I am about to give is a very personal view. I will begin from the home ground, which is where we have to take action if we aim to make any real contribution to desirable and necessary changes in the world to which we belong. In our settler society there has been a persistent belief that we could make something better of a new country than what had been left behind in Europe. It's a myth that the early immigrants were starry-eyed and idealistic: they came for a variety of reasons, including enticement by deceptive propaganda; but they did on the whole expect to gain a better life than they would have done in their homelands. I am speaking of the settler society, not of the Maori whose homeland it already was. That is a very different story to which I will return. The Australian historian Manning Clark made a remark which applies equally to Aotearoa/New Zealand. He said that the more successful the settlement of Australia became, the greater the disaster for the original inhabitants of the soil.

In the 1960s I was commissioned by the School Publications Branch of the Department of Education to write a series of booklets on our social history: how people lived and worked, travelled, went to school, socialised, joined together for common purposes and so on, both Pakeha and Maori. I was to base this work on source material, whatever I could find recorded at the time, and present the story in a variety of ways suitable for intermediate classes. Fifty-six of those short pieces were published together in 1984 under the title *The Kauri and the Willow*.

The study fascinated me and I reckon that for every word I wrote, I read a million. I completely overhauled my view of New Zealand history. I no longer saw the political notables as responsible for the innovations and achievements in social policies and conditions, of which we were justly proud. They came on stage at the end of the process,

The text of the 1991 Founder's Lecture delivered in the National Library's auditorium on 28 June 1991.

nearly always. The impetus for change came from the grassroots where the need was perceived, and was driven forward by mass movements or ressure groups; or else by far-sighted people in strategic places, perhaps in the public service or the professions or other relevant organisations. One of the most obvious examples is the winning of the women's franchise ahead of all the other sovereign states in the world. On a broader scale the labour legislation of the Ballance/Seddon governments, and the social security scheme of the first Labour government, owed their origins to the trade unions and other workers' organisations of the time.

How did we get our dental nurses, who have given such splendid service and raised the whole standard of dental health nation-wide? In the early years of this century, when the Dental School had just been established and a Dental Association formed, certain conscientious practitioners worried over the fact that a quarter of the children never saw a dentist at all. They were scattered around the country—Dr Norman Cox in Timaru, Dr Richmond Dunn in Wanganui and others—but they plugged away, and by 1916 they had won the support of the NZEI (New Zealand Educational Institute) for dental service in schools. The politicians weren't listening much; there's no concern revealed in the *Parliamentary Debates*. They were however very much concerned with the war—and such a high proportion of the enlisted men needed dental treatment before they could be sent overseas, that special clinics had to be set up in the camps. Their director, Col T. A. Hunter, was among the reformers and when the war was over he persuaded the powers-that-be to transfer the equipment to schools. In 1921 the first training school for dental nurses was opened.

And why nurses? Because Plunket nurses had already demonstrated how much they could do 'to help the mothers and save the babies'. The Plunket founder, Dr Truby King, didn't help the emancipation of women with his political and social ideas, but there's no doubt about the improvement to infant health.

Opportunity has sometimes been found in adversity. When I was at school in the twenties, our art classes were boring in the extreme. We had to draw cups and saucers, teapots and bottles, and get the shading and the perspective right. Occasionally we had variety in the devising of flower patterns, using compass and ruler. Then the war came and there was no drawing paper, but there was now an Arts and Crafts Branch of the Department of Education and its supervisor, Gordon Tovey, had vision and ideas. Soon the children were creating their own art works using whatever materials were available: brown wrapping paper, scraps of cloth, leather and flax and bark and wood, some of them used by Maori for centuries. They modelled beads and small pots out of clay, and began the trend towards hand-crafted pottery which is still with us.

As each innovation took hold in its niche in our way of life, we came to look on it not as a gift or an extra, but as an entitlement. It was especially satisfying when the charity tag no longer clung to provision for the basic needs of the sick, the disabled and the aged. These benefits were a form of social insurance, paid for in the main by our taxes. Wasn't that what taxes were for?

As a social historian I became acutely aware of the patience, the hard work, the self-sacrifice of those who created the entitlements which each new generation took for granted. There were so many unsung heroes and heroines and some—like militant trade unionists—had suffered grievous victimisation and discrimination. As for the politicians—they looked after categories like finance and defence and trade agreements, and they joined in the building when the foundations had been well prepared, and got their names in the history books. While I now had a muted view of the capacity for creativity among our elected representatives, I never guessed at their capacity for destruction. Little did I anticipate, in the sixties and seventies, that governments could sweep away so much of our entitlement with no mandate at all from the people.

I do not need to elaborate. We meet with expressions of dismay, if not rebelliousness, day after day; we wait with nervous apprehension for the next blow to fall. Two successive governments of different political colours have insisted ad nauseum that these things had to be done, that there was no alternative, that our little country had to give up its comfortable lifestyle and get into the real world, which is based on competition and in which we must compete.

Right. Let's look at this real world, not just the part of it to which they are directing their attention. During the last three or four electioneering campaigns I have had a sense of unreality, that the candidates' concerns were well away from the major problems of our time. They addressed themselves to those issues they thought loomed largest in the minds of the citizens whose votes they sought, their first objective being to get themselves elected. That our entire world is in crisis they either hadn't noticed or didn't want to talk about.

The 'real world' we are urged to get into is only that part of it we are tied into through various agreements like the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). These are clubs for the affluent nations with which New Zealand has numerous historical links, based on Europe and those countries which Europeans have settled. It is also referred to as the 'free world' with emphasis on the freedom of private enterprise, as distinct from the 'communist' world or the Soviet bloc—within which more than the Berlin Wall has now fallen. And out there beyond both blocs is the Third World, the undeveloped or developing nations whose people are often so poor that the rest of us have to chime

in with foreign aid.

If we discard the familiar classification into 'west', 'east' and 'Third World', we see the human race as divided quite differently, down the middle between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. Indeed, the latter are somewhat more numerous, and their numbers are growing, and they are not being made richer by foreign aid. And if we look at the human habitat which we all have to share on our finite planet, we see the degradation and loss of resources proceeding at ever-accelerating speed, while the numbers of people who need to be fed, clothed, housed and taught are steadily increasing. It's a bind infinitely more serious than New Zealand's debt burden, in the name of which we are asked to sacrifice so much of our treasured entitlement.

We as a people are much more environmentally conscious than we were even a decade ago, and we are urged to 'think globally, act locally'. We are doing better and better on the 'act locally' bit, but not in our broader thinking. We are too bound up with traditional and habitual approaches to problems to get a real 'fix' on this other, far more 'real' world. Sometimes however, our conservation campaigns direct attention to the other regions similarly affected.

Conservationists have battled away to save our forests from being converted to woodchips for export to Japan; but ours are not the only ones to be exploited, with the effects known to be devastating to the entire world. So now the 'save the rainforests' campaign is world-wide, and it involves the way people live. Forest dwellers in the Amazon basin, in the Philippines and elsewhere in Asia have been expropriated from their traditional lands and robbed of their traditional lifestyle: we become aware of that, too.

This isn't only a production problem, it's also a consumption problem. Suppose the whole world became literate tomorrow and all the children were in school. Could the paper they'd need ever be supplied from the raw materials the land can produce, if those of us who can now afford it went on wasting paper the way we do? I've known for years that one tonne of paper means seventeen trees, I recycle my envelopes and never use good typing paper when I can use scrap, but I know it's only a gesture, a drop in the bucket. My *Press* newspaper uses more paper every morning on full page advertisements than I save through my goodwill economies. On a world scale, paper is becoming steadily scarcer and more costly. Every writer and every reader sees this reflected in the price of books, which is bad for us, but much worse in countries struggling to overcome illiteracy.

Thirty years ago Tanzania had a ninety percent illiteracy rate.¹ Now almost all are literate, the adults having been taught through special campaigns, and the children sent to school, based on a unifying language, Kiswahili. But there are hardly any books. Even textbooks have to be shared. Of books for children, only six were published

between 1986 and 1990, although many more were written.

New Zealand is not a poor country. It is a wasteful and extravagant country. But that of course is a feature of the private enterprise system, otherwise known as capitalism. Any goods we can make, any services we can provide, are okay so long as they turn a profit. Enough such successful enterprises are supposed to add up to prosperity for us all; no matter if the resources of nature are being wilfully expended.

Nevertheless, as the politicians never tire of telling us, our standard of living has fallen relative to the other countries in the OECD. Among other things, they are anxious to gain or retain access to the European markets for farm produce and since GATT is supposed to provide free trade and most favoured nation treatment all round, that's where their hopes are placed. But every government in GATT does *not* stick to the free trade rules against the needs and wishes of its own people. Should we expect them to, just to please us, if they prefer to subsidise their small and inefficient farms rather than turn the farmers off their land and into the dole queue?

GATT is not in fact a mutual benefit society. It is a power system in which the great transnational companies are predominant. The extent of this power is seldom publicised and seldom realised, although we occasionally see on our TV screens the Coca Cola and McDonald's signs in the most unexpected places. And occasionally we get wind of the cruel ways by which Nestlé's market their baby foods, persuading women in Third World countries that these are superior to breast milk, although the lack of clean water and elementary hygiene means that many babies will die. And some of us have steadily opposed the penetration of multinationals into the New Zealand economy, through organisations like CAFGA (Campaign against Foreign Control in Aotearoa); there is also increasing apprehension among the general public, with the politicians so eager to attract investment capital from whatever source.

The transnational companies already control seventy to eighty percent of world trade, which includes getting primary commodities—like timber, tea, coffee and so on—out of the Third World on terms favourable to them, but not at all favourable in the long term to the producers. Frequently the Third World countries are driven to concentrate on these exports as the only way to get out of debt. Their home industries or their attempts to create them are frustrated in the process, their forests felled, their traditional and proven farming practices ruined.

Does this all sound familiar and close to home? New Zealand too is struggling to get out of debt. The enterprises keenly encouraged are those that export. The home industries which supplied our own needs have been largely destroyed. Christchurch, where I live, had highly efficient engineering works dating from the early years of settlement.

They have all gone, and so have the footwear factories and most of the clothing factories, which once had subsidiaries providing employment in small towns. The new enterprises, praised for their success abroad, come nowhere near to filling the gap. It is nonsense to say we must compete in the world markets with countries whose wage levels are far below our own. 'Freeing up the labour market', which is the nice way of referring to cutting back on established labour conditions, can only go so far after all.

New Zealanders should never forget our small size. Our national budget is smaller than that of a multinational like General Motors, its workforce probably smaller too. Do we hope to hold a place among the affluent twenty percent of the world that commanded eighty percent of the wealth? Or have we really more in common with the Third World—the exploited rather than the exploiters?

I do not know how we can get out of the debt crisis. Sometimes I have wicked thoughts, like why don't all the nations in debt—which seems to include nearly the whole lot—get together and repudiate? But alas, I don't know how to go about that either!

We are, to a degree, captives. It is impossible to know how far we pushed open the prison door ourselves and how far we were enticed, bamboozled or hoodwinked. When our political leaders say that there is no choice in the savage cutbacks of social services, that we have to do these things, in order to meet our overseas commitments and pay our debts, they are acknowledging our captivity. We must conform to the requirements of the OECD, of GATT, of the World Bank, of the International Monetary Fund, and any other mortgagees there may be. And they do impose conditions on us, as they impose conditions on the Third World recipients of their aid.

At the same time we are accomplices in the neo-colonisation of the former colonies through the exercise of economic power. The Second World War was followed by the break up of the old Empires, but political independence was not complemented by economic independence. Generally speaking the emerging nations were financed by investment or direct aid from their former colonial masters or other affluent nations, and they had to perform in a manner acceptable to their sponsors.

Now that the Cold War has subsided, and especially since its triumphs in the Gulf War, the United States stands at an unchallenged peak in the economic, political, diplomatic and military leadership of the world. The Gulf War was nominally fought under United Nations auspices in order to check aggression, but the UN has hardly been heard of since; and it is American Secretary of State, James Baker, who has gone forth to attempt a peace settlement in the Middle East that will be acceptable to America. Are we to have a Pax Americana, imposed at the will of the United States and in accordance with its

leaders' views of what the world should be like, until the whole structure weakens from its imbalances; and the barbarians are at the gate?

Consider the weight of armaments. In 1988 the global military burden was a thousand billion American dollars, of which the United States share was one third. With five percent of the world's population the United States had eight percent of the armed forces. In the span of three decades, from 1960 to 1987, military expenditures consumed more than seventeen trillion dollars worth of the world's resources. Yet it was calculated in 1989 that every minute, fifteen children die for want of essential food, while every minute the world's military machines take almost another two million dollars from the public treasuries.²

This situation is as crazy as it is cruel, but its realities do not seem to have penetrated the consciousness of New Zealand's military planners. This year's White Paper on Defence notes that the Cold War is over and there are no likely threats to our security in the foreseeable future. It recognises that 'there is only one superpower, if by that is meant a power having the economic and military means, the organisation skills and the political will to project its power globally'.³ But it does not anticipate any arms reduction—quite the contrary. After telling us that though the United States 'will be the world's largest economy and most powerful nation well into the next century, it is increasingly reliant on other states to sustain elements of its power', it goes on to say that 'nuclear weapons states will consider their arsenals to be essential for deterrence well into the next century'.

Our government clearly anticipates New Zealand's being one of those states required 'to sustain elements' of United States power. It is pathetically anxious to slide back into full membership of the ANZUS alliance. If a formula were to be found to make this possible without departing from our nuclear-free stance, our country would be signalling its willingness to fulfil every military demand placed before us. We could never risk getting offside again.

Personally I would feel utterly shamed if my little country showed itself so subservient. We have no need of ANZUS, and warning bells should ring if ANZUS has need of us.

Neither should we, who have stood proud in the world for rejecting nuclear weaponry, ever give the slightest sign of approval to nuclear weapons being held anywhere by anyone. They represent the ultimate atrocity, far more potent in the indiscriminate agonies they can inflict on the human race than the gas chambers of Nazi Germany.

Alarming possibilities are also inherent in the possession of overwhelming economic power. The United States holds aloft the banner of private enterprise as if that were an essential part of the human rights which the peoples of Eastern Europe are so enthusiastically reclaiming. But untrammelled free enterprise, otherwise known as capitalism, while certainly allowing for freedom of speech and

communication, does nothing for freedom from want and from fear. The essence of capitalism is exploitation of resources and of people, for private profit rather than for the public good. That all those private initiatives will add up to prosperity for all in the end is a complete myth and mirage. It can only speed up the degradation of our human habitat upon which every one of us depends, along with every other form of life carried on our planet. And this at a time when world populations are rapidly growing.

There is a pathetic faith around us in the wonders of technology — but technology does not necessarily put food into human mouths. Indeed it enables the exploitation of natural resources with less labour and therefore more unemployment and a further widening of the gap between rich and poor. The peasant with his water buffalo is kinder to the soil than the bulldozer operator and the aerial topdressing pilot with his chemical sprays.

Small is definitely beautiful when it comes to food production. The affluent nations put great emphasis on energy. Professor Georg Borgstrom of Michigan University was here twelve years ago, speaking to the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Advancement of Science. In support of his claim that the whole western world was in headlong flight from reality while believing it was in control of it, he gave examples of the wastefulness of the consumer society. American air conditioners, he said, used more energy each year than the total energy consumption of China.⁴

Four years later Professor A. C. Kibblewhite of Auckland University estimated that if the undeveloped world reached the same living standards as the United States by the year 2000, a hundred times more energy would need to be provided — an obvious impossibility.⁵

The Cold War is over, but the division between the haves and the have-nots, the greedy and the needy, continues to widen and deepen. Whose side are we on?

A minority are consciously working on the side of the Third World. They can be found in the trade aid movement, in CORSO, in the Development Education Trust, in Christian World Service, in the Catholic Commission for Justice and Development, and elsewhere. In a different context — the conservation and wise use of resources — they can be found in Greenpeace, the Rainforests Coalition, the Philippines Support Network, and others with a special focus, notably the anti-mining campaigns. These are well informed about the domination of multinational companies, the damage done for example to aboriginal lands in Australia, and the military use of the minerals extracted.

That the general public remains unaware is partly due to the paucity of information. When the daily news reaches outside its regular American and European source, it tends to concentrate on disasters and sensational events — aircraft crashes, volcanic eruptions, assassinations and the like. Momentous happenings sometimes get a

mention in Radio New Zealand's Asian and Pacific News — seven minutes at ten to seven in the morning.

New Zealanders are generous and helpful when human suffering is realistically portrayed — as with famines in Ethiopia and the Sudan, storms and floods in Bangladesh, the plight of the Kurdish people. Any sort of overall picture even of a single region, any depth of understanding not just of the poverty that exists but of *why* it exists, has to be sought in publications with limited circulation. We need to be motivated in the first place, to be shaken out of comfortable assumptions and habits of thought which keep our imaginations and our understanding blinkered. We also need a sense of urgency.

Talk about the real world! Even if wars are avoided, some analysts have given us forty years before the combined factors of growing populations and the loss of sustenance from an increasingly degraded habitat will bring human society, as we know it today, to a disastrous end.

But I am not among them. I am an incorrigible optimist, not to be counted among the prophets of doom and gloom. I have faced up to the human predicament ever since I became aware that the introduction of nuclear weapons had made a fundamental change in the realities of human existence. I saw dragons we had to fight, but I have never assumed they will beat us.

My approach is both historical and biological. We humans are animals with the inbuilt instincts shared by the rest of that vast company. The primary instinct is self-preservation, and with it the procreation of the species. Many times in the past, particular societies have faced extinction but found a way out before going over the brink. The difference today is that the invention of nuclear weapons puts the risk before the whole human race, not just a segment of it. But that situation has a positive effect too: the realisation by many that there has to be one world or none.

No animal species will commit race suicide. Neither will we. We have intelligence to anticipate and take appropriate action. We are also social animals. We like to work together for the common good. In earlier times that readiness might be restricted to one's particular group, tribe or nation or whatever. In our own time, sympathy and mutual support and common action need to apply world-wide. These can't be wished into existence; we have numerous conflicts in the world right now, which must be faced up to and solutions found if possible; and they won't always be non-violent. However in the last analysis there is only one race, the human race, to stand or fall together.

I put the communications revolution among the great positive advances of the post-war world. Even allowing for all the omissions, distortions and deceptions in the news we receive, we know far more than previous generations did about other peoples, their lifestyles and

cultures, their needs and aspirations. Although it is certainly not universal, tolerance of differences in race and religion has grown rapidly. The various United Nations declarations about human rights represent a consensus about what should be aimed at. Nobody pretends they are all achieved, but we could not have got so far without improved knowledge following improved communications.

In some ways surprisingly, although racism finds few overt supporters, nationalist feelings are as strong as ever. Indeed, every small nation within a federation, every ethnic minority, every indigenous people seems to be asserting its right to self-determination or complete independence. To some observers this looks like very undesirable fragmentation; and there are many contemporary examples of the devastation wrought by warring factions. On the other hand, the self-assertion of peoples who have been oppressed or marginalised can be a beneficial injection for the health of society. I would like to bring this apparent contradiction back onto home ground.

For the first century after New Zealand entered the British Empire, Maori played very little part in the social innovations and achievements in which Pakeha rejoiced. They were pushed out of the way or simply used as a pool of labour, as happened everywhere with colonisation. Lands were taken from them by means ranging from reasonably fair to utterly foul. In their ignorance and often with the best of intentions, the colonisers sought to assimilate Maori into their own way of life. Maori culture was denigrated, spiritual beliefs were rubbished, *te reo* Maori was discouraged to the point where almost an entire generation was persuaded that their children should abandon it. Maori population declined to the point where, around the turn of the century, many Pakeha believed they were dying out. This prospect was not necessarily deplored. Some Pakeha saw it as a law of nature that the superior race should prevail, and it would be convenient not to have to bother about them.

In the course of my long explorations into our social history, I was shocked and staggered at the extent of the injustice and the depth of the oppression our immigrant ancestors inflicted on Maori. And I was impressed with how the essentials of their own culture had survived all the combined efforts to eradicate it. It has not only survived, it has renewed itself with great force.

Surely we have all gained from the liberation of the spirit and the abilities of those people who were here for centuries before Captain Cook; who had gained an intimate knowledge of its land and its sea and all that lived upon and within them! There are some parallels here with women's liberation which has brought fresh talents into the mainstream where formerly they were cramped and frustrated. But it goes deeper than that.

Modern industrial civilisation is very artificial. It has largely separated

the human animal from interaction with other species in the web of life, with plants and animals, and also from close experience with natural forces, the rhythm of the seasons, the realities of calms and storms.

The spiritual beliefs of the Maori have close parallels with those of other indigenous peoples like the Australian aborigines and the native Americans. There is a pool of wisdom here which the rest of us would be wise to tap as far as we are able. Maybe our 'Pakehatanga' can likewise develop the endurance with which to resist the cultural invasions to which we in our turn are being subjected.

Our economy has been capitalist all along, and from the outset it indulged in a reckless waste of resources, and promoted the interest of the individual entrepreneur above the interests of the people as a whole. At the same time it also promoted the idea of service both on the everyday level of co-operation with one another, and in the public arena. Many good things have been done by the state, by local government and co-operatively, partly from necessity when private capital was lacking, but with beneficial results which encouraged more of the same.

Quite suddenly and swiftly, these values have been swept aside as no longer appropriate in this so-called real world. The measure now is commercial success. The Public Service has been rubbished and many important functions have been transferred to state-owned enterprises or privatised, and the process continues apace. We all know that a spring-clean was due, but the Public Service has never been just a mess of inefficiency and bureaucracy. The country is full of monuments to the success of Public Works, and several departments like the DSIR were and are staffed by very able and dedicated people.

Let me quote the field of service with which I have had the closest association, the School Publications Branch of the Department of Education. I have been a contributor for more than thirty years. The editorship has always been first class. In 1976 I took a display of their productions with me to the Pacific Rim Conference on Children's Literature in Vancouver. The North Americans were astounded that such quality and originality could come from a *government* source. And afterwards, when I visited several Canadian schools in British Columbia, I was able to demonstrate New Zealand life — not scenery — with a set of thirty-six slides given me, *yes given*, by the Tourist and Publicity Department.

The School Journals and other publications are still coming out and have lost nothing in quality, thanks to the continuing dedicated staff. But there are fewer of them due to financial restraints, followed by the so-called 'reform' of the education system. How that word 'reform' has been abused! It used to imply improvement, now it more often implies destruction.

Rogernomics ushered in a positive mania for changing things even

when they had a proven record and were still working well, and this mania persists even where the financial crisis of the nation is in no way involved. School Publications now stands apart and is called Learning Media. One of my former editors said to me sadly, 'Why did they have to change the *name*? School Pubs had such a splendid reputation.' Why indeed? Are we being conditioned to discard the whole idea of service to others, and replace it with the scale of values that goes with 'every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost'? We, the people, have never asked for this, and we do not need to accept it.

Fascism, and in particular the Nazi regime, won masses of people over to reactionary beliefs and practices and tried to impose them on half of Europe. Despite its vast and sophisticated powers of suppression it never succeeded in removing its dissidents. The resistance movements which inevitably developed were often tiny and isolated—sometimes no more than individual refusals to co-operate—but they had their cumulative effect.

In New Zealand today a similar resistance has arisen to being taken over by the mentality and practice of 'getting rich at all costs' and by the cultural invasions which threaten our values and our standards. This resistance shows up in specific campaigns, as for a quota on radio for New Zealand music, or in defence of the Concert Programme, or in opposition to taking away the teacher aides who enable handicapped children to be achievers. Even if these prove to be rearguard actions, they serve warning to the powers-that-be not to go too far. It shows up when we use good lucid English in place of the new-speak of the ad men and the political and commercial persuaders. It shows up when workers activate their trade unions to find new ways of protecting their wages and conditions after the destruction of the accustomed labour laws. It shows up when the poorly paid, the unemployed, and the other welfare beneficiaries operate an underground economy of mutual support and sharing, or bartering of skills and small-scale production. It shows up when Maori hapu and iwi exercise their drive towards self-determination locally on the limited land and resources they still possess, and continue to campaign for the restoration of those of which they have been unjustly deprived. It shows up in the movements for peace, and those which oppose any further encroachment of transnational companies . . . the list could go on almost indefinitely. The inter-connected effects of such homegrown movements show up very clearly in the 'green' movement which has great potential for influencing the decision makers.

In 1972 the first United Conference on the Human Environment was held in Stockholm. That was a year when agitation against the French nuclear tests in the atmosphere had reached a peak, when the yacht *Greenpeace III* (formerly the *Vega*) was savaged in French Polynesian waters, and three other protest ships set sail with varying fortunes. New

Zealand's representative, Duncan McIntyre, with great diligence secured eight co-sponsors for a successful resolution calling upon any state to which it might apply to desist from polluting the atmosphere with nuclear tests. Although the conference would not go so far as to mention France by name, the point was made. If it had not been for the activities of peace people in New Zealand, would Duncan McIntyre have raised the issue in this way? And with Government initiatives since then, concerning whaling and drift-netting and Antarctica, there was a non-government seed-bed in Greenpeace and Project Jonah and the Antarctic and Southern oceans Coalition.

Although there has never been nearly enough action concerning these and other issues that affect us all, like the greenhouse effect and the ozone layer, New Zealand's role in efforts to solve environmental problems has been positive and worthy. And yet defence and foreign policy statements for many years have asserted that without a military posture, without tagging along in military alliances such as ANZUS, we can have no significant influence in the world! We need more lateral thinking in that area, surely.

The Stockholm conference was passed over lightly but it did draw the attention of governments to the deterioration of the world's ecosystems, and Ministries of the Environment have been created in many countries, including our own, to attend to outstanding issues. Eleven years later the World Commission on Environment and Development set up by the United Nations, otherwise known as the Brundtland Commission, began three years of intensive research to produce a report called *Our Common Future*. Next year there will be another international environment conference in Brazil, known for short as 'ECO '92': definitely an ECO, not an EXPO. The economic interests will be there of course, and endeavour to insert their own agenda as they have done this very week in relation to mining in Antarctica. There will be a job here for New Zealand.

How will we be represented? Will non-governmental organisations once again be ahead of the governments in their knowledge, their thinking and their energy? Will the pressures for what is nicely called 'development', but often means further exploitation of finite resources, predominate over measures for human survival? If we really want a sane and humane world, all opportunities like this one must be taken.

The 'green' movement is rapidly growing in strength worldwide, and this is another of the great positives in favour of sanity and survival. There is another 'positive' in our own possession which we must never cease to maintain and utilise.

Three and a half centuries have passed since John Milton wrote his famous words, 'Give me the liberty to know, to utter, to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties'. Armed with this right we can seek out and expose the anti-human forces at work in our world, and so, fortunately, can those many American citizens who do not

approve the policies of their own administration. They can, and they do, and much of the authentic information about what goes on behind the scenes comes from American sources.

The capitalist system, complete with the new form of economic imperialism which dominates the Third World and gets to us too, appears unassailable today. But our plundered planet with its deprived populations cannot possibly sustain the present pace and extent of exploitation of both people and resources. As Professor Borgstrom put it:

The western world likes to think it is the first civilisation. But it is the only civilisation to hit on the idea of wasting as much as possible as quickly as possible. Never in history has so much been destroyed for the sake of so few.⁶

So what is the alternative? It can only be some form of socialism, a political, economic and social system where production serves not private interests but public good.

Socialism is an unfashionable term today, considered a lost cause because of the collapse of East European countries which professed it. But the authoritarian kind of socialism which took hold in those countries defeated itself by generating extreme bureaucracy and corruption. The people were denied the essential liberties of access to information and the right and opportunity to utter and to argue freely according to conscience. There was no way they could dislodge those in control, until the whole edifice became unworkable. And then the floodgates burst open.

Freedom in the capitalist world includes, and is often thought to rest upon, freedom of private enterprise, which includes freedom to exploit people and resources. Conversely socialism, which would keep private enterprise in check, is thought to be hostile to and incompatible with human freedoms. This is simply not true. Those like Dubcek of Czechoslovakia who strove for 'communism with a human face' saw clearly how urgently their societies needed the circulation of thoughts and ideas.

People of goodwill towards others have a double-headed dragon to deal with. The first head is New Zealand's own: the craze to destroy our social gains, to divert us from standards of social responsibility and co-operation into 'looking after Number One' first and foremost. The second is overseas, the uncontrolled and predatory raging of dominant forces in economic, political and military power. We will wield our trusty swords more successfully if we can at least partially sever the domestic head from the overseas head.

We citizens have precious little control over our government at this moment. Some way of making democracy more real has to be found. We have to persuade those who speak for us in the forums of the world to disentangle us from the consortium of rich nations which pretends to be the 'real world', and from the military colossus which backs it

up. That is a tall order I know, but we will not be the only people in the world heading in that direction. Champions of fundamental change occur in every developed country and also in every undeveloped country, every emerging society, however poor and deprived the mass of its people may be.

In 1962, the year when the two superpowers came to the brink of nuclear war over the Cuba missile crisis, the United Nations Secretary-General, U Thant, who was Burmese, made an eloquent speech which was published in our *External Affairs Review*. Emphasising that the whole world was closely linked as never before in the history of mankind, he denounced the myths of 'a peaceful world consisting of a number of armed sovereign states clinging to their sovereign status without accepting any restriction for the sake of the world community'. He assigned two major roles to the small nations. The first was to create a bridge between the big powers, especially on issues of global importance; and the second was to give expression to the still, small voice. He said:

More often self-interest, rather than conscience, 'makes cowards of us all' and prevents us from speaking the truth as we see it. It is a proper role for the small nations to speak the truth where they see it, and let the chips fall where they may . . . I hope that for the future . . . the small nations will not either be overawed by their most powerful friends, or cowed by threats into silence.⁷

Wise words for us, are they not, thirty years later?

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