

My Country Is Called Earth

A Mythology From The Twenty-First Century

By Lawrence Brown

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Dedicated to the Exellon in all of us

I want to thank Robert Butts, the husband of Jane Roberts, for his permission to quote from Jane's Seth material.

Notes for the Ebook Edition

I have decided to make *My Country Is Called Earth* available for free as an ebook so that more people will read it and also because I hope the readers will be encouraged to buy my new book, *The Education of a Messiah*.

Almost sixteen years have passed since the publication of *My Country Is Called Earth* and there are some things I would write differently today. But there are also many things I've written that I still think hit the nail on the head, so I've decided to leave the text in its original form. However, I have moved the Introduction in front of the Foreword and have added the acknowledgement above. I have also corrected the spelling and typing mistakes and have changed the formatting to fit the requirements of ebook publishing.

Now I would like to say a few things about terrorism, which was not a major problem when I published *My Country Is Called Earth* in 1994.

To have any chance of ending terrorism, we have to stop giving Muslims reasons to hate us. But when we support Israel's occupation of the West Bank and its inhumane policies in Gaza by sending Israel weapons and money and by defending Israel at the UN, when we invade Iraq and Afghanistan and abuse, injure, and kill innocent people, how can we expect Muslims not to be angry with us?

By applying the principles of the Declaration of Independence to everyone, by acting as if other people have the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness that we demand for ourselves, we'll be able to bring to an end much of the hatred directed against us.

I'm not saying that we have to love Muslims, but we must respect their human rights, their religion, and the sanctity of their homes. And we must stop thinking that we are special, chosen, or God's gift to the human race.

I hope that this book will help readers understand that the world's problems (or challenges, as Exellon calls them) do have solutions, but the solutions require that we have the courage to open our eyes to the truth and that we then change our beliefs and actions. No one can make us change and if we do not change, we will not solve our problems. Period.

One final note: All of our major problems—war, injustice, terrorism, poverty, unemployment, overpopulation, pollution, global warming, the extinction of species, and the destruction of rain forests—are involved with our failure to recognize that we are connected to the earth and each other and that we are responsible to the earth and each other.

Lawrence Brown
Gwangju, South Korea
March 1, 2010

Bill Moyers:

There's that wonderful photograph you have of the earth seen from space. It's very small, and at the same time it's very grand.

Joseph Campbell:

You don't see any divisions there of nations, or states, or anything of the kind. This might be the symbol for the new mythology to come. That is the country we are going to be celebrating, and those are the people we are one with.

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Introduction

My Country Is Called Earth contains three books. The first is the narrative of a man who falls asleep in 1992 and awakens in the year 2076. In his report he describes a future civilization in harmony with nature and without war or poverty. He explains how man had changed and how society had been reformed to make the world of 2076 possible. The second book is within the first, and is a manuscript written by one of the people the narrator meets in 2076. The third is an assortment of parables and dialogues I have been working on since 1980, which I have placed in the Appendix.

The theme of *My Country Is Called Earth* can be stated in four sentences: Capitalism, big government, powerful nations, and the mythologies of Christianity and science must share a large part of the responsibility for the problems of today. If

we are going to enter a new age, we must replace capitalism with true communism, reduce the power of government, and return proper government functions to the local level. We should eliminate standing armies, create a world government to keep the peace and protect the rights of men and nature, and remove Christianity and science from their positions of authority and influence in our culture. At the same time we need to construct a new mythology based upon love for the earth and cooperation between men.

I believe my readers can easily see that Christianity is a mythology; they may not understand why I consider science to be one. There are three reasons why I believe science is a mythology. The first is that science performs the basic function of a mythology: It tells us who we are and where we came from. In its theory of evolution, science says that man is a primate and a descendent of the first life on earth. My second reason is that science answers the important religious question, "What is the purpose of life?" Science says life has no purpose because it occurred by accident. My third reason is that a man or woman must have faith to be a scientist, just as an individual must have faith to be a Christian or a follower of any other mythology. (Faith is trust or belief without proof.) The primary faith of the scientist is that all the wonders of the universe were designed by chance—that nonphysical reality either does not exist or cannot affect the physical plane.

Former Secretary of Education and drug czar William Bennett wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* last year, "The real crisis of our time is spiritual." I agree. My analysis of the crisis is different than his, however. I think the main cause of our crisis is the failure of our two mythologies to provide us with truths we can use to build a healthy world.

Christianity says we are born sinners unworthy of God's Love and encourages contempt for people of other religions by teaching that only believers can be saved. The Christian God deserves to be feared, not loved: He will condemn a man to everlasting suffering for the mistakes of one lifetime. Christianity also tells us that God made man the master of the earth. Western man's catastrophic impact on the environment is a consequence of this teaching.

The religion of science, by preaching an accidental, godless, and mechanical universe, has taught us that life has no value. By preaching a theory of evolution that says our brains have been programmed by our heredity, science has given man an excuse for every crime: "My genes made me do it."

Our new mythology should recognize the unity and value of all life on earth. I believe these three truths belong in our new mythology: God is all there is. Man is part of nature. All men and women are responsible for their actions.

I could not have written this book if Giordano Bruno, Galileo, and Spinoza had not defied the authorities of their time. This book could not have been written without the Protestant Reformation and the American Revolution. Bruno, Galileo, Spinoza, and the Protestant Reformation asserted a man's right to express his opinions about the universe, God, and the Bible. The American Revolution proclaimed the individual's rights to freedom of press and religion, to fight for justice, and to criticize the powerful.

Lawrence Brown
Sacramento, California
July 4, 1994

Foreword By Chief Seattle

The President in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. But how can you buy or sell the sky, the land? The idea is strange to us. Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow, all are holy in the memory and experience of my people. We are part of the earth and it is part of us.

The perfumed flowers are our sisters. The bear, the deer, the great eagle, these are our brothers. Each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. If we sell you our land, remember that the air is precious to us. That the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also received his last sigh.

This we know: The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life—he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

Your destiny is a mystery to us. What will happen when the buffalo are all slaughtered? What will happen when the secret corners of the forest are heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills is blotted by talking wires? The end of living and the beginning of survival. When the last red man has vanished with his wilderness, and his memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, will these shores and forests still be here? Will there be any spirit of my people left?

We love this earth as a newborn loves its mother's heartbeat. So, if we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it. Care for it as we have cared for it. Hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you receive it. Preserve the land for all children and love it as God loves us all. One thing we know, there is only one God. No man, be he red man or white man, can be apart. We are brothers after all.

The Awakening

I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.

Thomas Jefferson

**Saturday, June 27, 1992
To Sunday, June 28, 2076**

I remember talking with a friend that day about the kind of world we would be leaving to our children. He said, "The national debt is now four trillion dollars and it is growing at the rate of three hundred billion dollars a year. How big will it be when our children become taxpayers?"

I said, "Unless we change course soon, they will inherit a sick, crowded, and violent world polarized into two camps: the haves and the have-nots."

I dreamed that night that I was fishing in a deep pool of water formed from a spring. After I caught a fish, I would throw it back into the water. There was another man fishing next to me, but he could not catch anything.

The sound of a door closing awakened me from the dream. When I opened my eyes, I saw a short, gray-haired man and two women standing by my bed. One of the women spoke to me.

“I’m sorry. Did we startle you?”

“Who are you? How did you get in?”

“My name is Mary, and with me are Elizabeth and Edward,” the woman replied. “You should be asking, ‘How did I get here?’”

I sat up and looked around. She was right—I was not in my bedroom.

“Would you mind answering a couple of questions?” she asked.

“OK,” I said.

“What is your full name? When were you born?”

“My name is Lawrence John Brown. I was born on July 4, 1950.”

My three visitors looked at each other, and then Mary said, “We’ve been expecting you.”

“Where am I?”

Edward stepped forward and said, “You are the guest of the First Gandhi village commune located near San Jose, California.” He paused. “Today is Sunday, June 28, 2076. You’ve arrived one week before we celebrate the tricentennial of the Declaration of American Independence.”

I almost fell out of bed. Collecting myself, I decided to play along with them. I asked, “How did I get here?”

“Your desire to find solutions to the challenges of your time brought you here,” Mary replied. Then she said, “We will leave you now, but Edward will come back later to take you to lunch.”

This had to be a dream too, I thought. I lay back in the bed and shut my eyes, but I could not fall asleep.

I spent the morning speculating about the kind of future I was in. Did I awaken to a nightmare—a world where bands of armed men roamed the land, plundering as they went? Where the rich lived in walled towns protected by guards ordered to shoot to kill? Where death by starvation or violence was the norm, and where the old and the weak were quickly trampled underfoot by the young and the strong? I remembered the suggestion Jonathan Swift had made in his essay “A Modest Proposal,” and wondered if it had been adopted. Swift recommended that the children of the poor, at the age of one year, be sold to the rich so they could be eaten for dinner. He said this would reduce theft, the number of abortions, and the public expense of caring for poor children.

My vivid imagination brought forth these thoughts and others too horrible to mention. Fortunately, Edward returned at twelve o’clock to escort me to the dining hall. He assured me that I had nothing to fear. He said that this was a possible healthy future to the world I had left behind, and that I had been called to be a messenger from their time to our present. He also said that I would have to return to 1992 in two weeks. I asked him about our great problems: the destruction and pollution of the environment, overpopulation, war, injustice, unemployment, poverty, the national debt, crime, and the high cost of medical care. He told me to be patient and all my questions would be answered.

Monday, June 29, 2076

“I’m going to introduce you to Alberto. He will tell you about our medicine,” Edward announced to me after breakfast.

“Can you show me a hospital? I am anxious to see what advances medicine has made,” I asked.

Edward laughed. “We don’t have any hospitals.”

“Don’t people get sick anymore?”

“Yes, but we have discovered a hospital is a great place to catch something.”

“Do people still get cancer?”

“Cancers are not common today because our culture encourages psychic and spiritual growth, and for other reasons. I realize this will be hard for you. I know you were taught to trust your doctor more than your own body. We understand health much better than your doctors did. They were so busy treating disease that they forgot good health was natural.”

Edward stood up and said, “Let’s go over to Alberto’s house. He can explain this better than I can.”

We walked to a small home about four hundred meters from the dining hall. When I was introduced to Alberto, he shook my hand enthusiastically. He said he had hoped I would visit him.

I asked Alberto how the practice of medicine had changed. He said, “First of all, I want to tell you that what I am going to say here does not apply to congenital and terminal conditions. Now regarding normal illnesses, we healers only use our skills as a last resort. I understand that in your day the patient thought it was the responsibility of the doctor to make him well. We tell our clients their health is their own responsibility. When an individual requests our help, we first remind him of his own power. If he still feels he needs us, we will use our abilities. My healing skills are involved with plants, massage, acupuncture, and meditation; there are many other ways of healing besides those I use.”

I asked him what he says to a patient before he uses his healing gifts.

“I say: Relax, let go. Don’t fight it—flow with it. I tell him he should not allow his mind to dwell on the ailment. Instead he should pay attention to his thoughts and emotions, because they will often point to the challenge that is the cause of his difficulty.”

I said to Alberto, “Most doctors in my day only wanted to know our medical history—they did not feel that what went on in our minds was very important.”

He replied, “Today, we get to know our client personally before we prescribe anything. We understand the mind must be healed before a man can return to good health. We also know the cause of many illnesses is a failure to love one’s self. Another frequent cause of illness is stress, which can appear in many forms. Resentment, fear, guilt, and self-pity are some of them. The best preventive medicine is a belief in your own worthiness, health, and safety.

“When you are sick, you may be dealing with a mental or spiritual difficulty. In such a situation, the symptoms of the illness may be symbolic of the challenge. An illness may be unconsciously chosen by an individual in order to achieve an insight into life. An individual may employ illness as a means of meeting certain people or of

participating in a mass event. These are just a few examples of the purposes of illness. I think you can see that we do not consider illness to be bad: The mind and the body use it as a tool. What I am saying, then, is that there is an inner wisdom guiding you. No one is the random victim of a disease.

“All these ideas were in circulation in your day, but today they are common knowledge. I try to keep in mind what the mystic Jane Roberts from your century said: ‘The body and the mind work so well together that one will attempt to cure the other, and will often succeed if left alone.’”

I asked, “What was done for elderly people who required constant attention?”

“Senility was an epidemic of your time, caused by a belief that man must lose his mental and physical powers in old age.”

I told Alberto I would like him to talk about congenital and terminal conditions now. I first asked him about people who needed costly medical care.

“In your time people were afraid of death, so they tried to extend their lives with surgeries and other treatments. Often those efforts just prolonged their suffering. Our people do not demand expensive medical care to add a few more months or years to their lives. We aren’t afraid of death because we believe it is a door to other realities.”

I asked, “How does your medicine explain physical and mental handicaps people are born with?”

“The circumstances are too varied to generalize. In some instances the individual accepted a mental or physical deficiency before birth in order to experience life from a particular point of view. Sometimes the condition was selected by the individual in order to force himself to focus on certain talents. We don’t use the words ‘handicap’ or ‘disability’ today because we believe each person has chosen his perspective for a reason.”

Alberto’s last words to me were: “It is true what a Mayan shaman in your time said, ‘If we make an enemy of the earth, we make an enemy of our bodies.’ Your culture thought it was at war with nature. Your doctors, therefore, used drugs and performed operations that ignored and confused the body’s healing abilities. Today we know our skills are nothing compared to the body’s own powers.

“Now that I’ve told you about our medicine, I want to leave you with something to think about: Earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters are to the earth what illnesses are to the body.”

Tuesday, June 30, 2076

“How many communes are there?” I asked Edward the next morning.

“There are literally millions of communes, or villages, as I like to call them,” he said. “Today nearly everyone is associated with one. I know communes were ridiculed in your time. They were thought to inhibit freedom, to discourage creativity, and to be economic failures. Nowadays, most people cannot imagine life without their village.”

“What happened to Social Security?” I asked.

“Social Security?” Edward repeated, as if using the words to jog his memory. After a few seconds he replied, “Social Security ran out of money long ago, but no one worries about their retirement today. People feel more secure than in your day

because they know their village will take care of them. Our villages are extended families.”

Edward began speaking of 1992 in the present tense. “In your day millions of people starve to death every year. Billions of people are unemployed or underemployed and billions live in poverty. There is no starvation, unemployment, or poverty in 2076 because we share the wealth of the earth, because we allow people to support themselves, and because villages take care of their own people and neighboring villages take care of each other. Nations cooperate internationally after natural disasters so that no one has to lack any necessity.

“Our villages come in so many varieties that it would take a book to describe them all. There are urban villages and rural villages. The members of some villages share common ethnic or cultural backgrounds. In other villages the members may be united by similar philosophical, religious, or spiritual beliefs. And there are urban villages whose members belong to the same trade or profession. In terms of size, villages have from two to a thousand or more members.

“My point is, if an individual in 2076 feels his village is stifling him, he can move to another one or start his own. I can show you a directory of the villages registered in California—there are more than one hundred thousand official villages in this state alone, and who knows how many unofficial ones.”

I asked, “How does the world of 2076 govern itself?”

“We have adopted this principle: That government is best which governs least. In 2076 the powers of the three branches of government are kept to the minimum necessary for the protection of rights and the performance of the small number of government services, and decisions are made at the lowest level possible.

“Our objective is to one day run the world according to the principles of anarchism. Anarchism is a political theory that says society should be organized through cooperative and voluntary associations. Thoreau was expressing a basic anarchist principle when he wrote: ‘That government is best which governs not at all.’”

I said, “Do you know what the word anarchy means in the twentieth century? It means a state of chaos or an absence of order. When the government in a nation ceases to function effectively, we say that nation has fallen into anarchy.”

Edward answered, “Your definition is based upon the belief that if society does away with laws, police, and prisons, everyone will act with the savageness and self-interest you think you see in nature. There lies the heart of the difference between our cultures: Your culture believes men and nature are inherently evil. That idea comes from your Judeo-Christian religions, which have placed God outside the world. We see a different truth, because our God is on the earth. We believe anarchy can work in a world where men love themselves and others. We hope to see Emerson’s prophecy fulfilled in the next century: ‘The day will come when no badge or uniform or star will be worn.’”

I changed the subject. On my first day Edward told me the population of the earth had declined to six billion, after having reached as high as seven billion. He said their goal was to reduce the population of the earth to five billion.

“How was the population problem solved?” I asked.

“Nearly every individual has no more than two children and many have less.”

I asked him, “How were you able to convince people to limit the size of their families?”

“We did not succeed until the present leaders of the Catholic Church died, and younger men and women took their places. These new people were flexible enough to see that the rules against birth control did not make sense in a crowded world. In time, they came to actively support family planning.”

His words reminded me of Russia and China. I said, “In my youth, Russia was part of the Soviet Union. It was trapped in the Communist ideology until all the old leaders died and a younger man, Mikhail Gorbachev, came to power. Gorbachev recognized the need for change, and he opened the door to democracy. I am curious about China. Did China find leaders willing to bow to the inevitable? In 1992 the nation is held in a steel grip by men who refuse to see the writing on the wall.”

Edward said, “I cannot give you any names, but I can say this: When the men who had been in the Party since the Communist takeover in 1949 died, younger men and women came to power who had the courage and the foresight to begin radical reform. Fortunately, the transition was less painful than in Russia.”

I asked, “What are your opinions of communism and capitalism?”

He said, “True communism, which is simply community ownership of property, is a good idea. It was given a black eye by Communism. The Soviet and Chinese style of Communism denied the dignity of the individual and built repressive and bureaucratic state machines. And capitalism, because it is based on greed, can never result in any lasting good. Good can never come from selfishness.”

I could see by the fire in his eyes that my question had touched a topic he felt strongly about. He continued: “I said capitalism is based on greed because its basic principle is ‘every man for himself.’ A system of economics that rewards greed eventually creates great inequality. I read of a study done by the UN in your day that concluded that the richest twenty percent of mankind control more than eighty percent of the world’s wealth.

“Your economics has given society an artificial and harmful measure of value: money. If an activity ‘makes money,’ it is good, according to capitalism, even if the activity concentrates wealth into the hands of a few, violates nature, or deprives future generations of their right to inherit a healthy planet. What tremendous crimes men have committed in their pursuit of wealth!

“A tree stump is your symbol of progress: An area of tropical forest the size of a football field is bulldozed, logged, or burned each second. In the process dozens of species of plants and animals are wiped out every day.

“In your economics, people are merely numbers. When the boss decides an employee no longer fits into the long-term plan, he tells the employee to clean out his desk and leave his key. Farmers are paid not to farm while millions of people go hungry because there is no profit in feeding the poor.

“In our society the opportunity for a life with dignity is as important as freedom of speech or religion. At the First Gandhi village no one who’s willing to work goes hungry or without shelter unless everyone does. Your unemployment and poverty are due to waste, hoarding, and a maldistribution of income. You throw away enough to feed, clothe, and house millions. Your corporate farms could support millions of people on the land while still producing as much as they do now. And you have men making millions of dollars a year while other men are trying to raise families on minimum wages. There is no hope for your society as long as you cling to capitalism.”

I next asked Edward about crime. I said, “In my time, the cities are plagued by shootings, muggings, vandalism, and burglaries, especially by young men and boys. What can the future teach us about this problem?”

He answered, “Your culture is part of the reason for your high crime rate. Capitalism teaches you to worship material things, and it encourages antisocial behavior by its emphasis on personal gain without regard for the consequences to others. And just as in the 1920s when the drug alcohol was banned, by making laws against the use of certain drugs, your society literally creates crime, provides criminal syndicates with the opportunity to make big profits, and is indirectly involved in the violence associated with drugs.

“But the main cause of crime is in the home. Many parents are not giving their children the love and attention they need. Many parents are not training their children to respect the rights of others. And many parents are not teaching their children that they have a duty to the community in which they live.

“Another reason for your high crime rate is that science says that you are not responsible for what you do. Science says man is an animal who has just recently, in evolutionary terms, left the jungle, where the law is kill or be killed. And science says a man’s actions today are determined by his genes and his early childhood.

“Science also tells you, by teaching that the universe has no cause or a reason to exist, that life is accidental, meaningless, and cruel. When people believe they can be squashed like a bug at any moment, it is easier for them to tolerate violence and injustice in themselves and others.

“I cannot overlook your economics, which has produced a lot of poverty and hopelessness in the midst of great wealth. In your time, many people feel they have no future, and therefore nothing to lose if they end up in prison. In fact, prison has advantages: guaranteed medical care, food, and shelter.

“Finally, many of your social tensions are due to overpopulation and crowding—there are too many people for the available resources and space. This naturally creates friction, especially in the cities.

“I don’t want to give you the impression that men in 2076 are all angels. We still have injustices, but on a much smaller scale because we have eliminated many of their causes. Crime continues to get worse in your time because society is doing nothing about it except increasing the number of laws, police, and prisons. We understand that just locking people up is focusing on the symptom of the disease, not the cause.”

I told Edward, “I would really like to hear how the crises of my time were resolved.”

“The solutions are obvious to us,” he said.

“It seems to me that the world is falling apart. Every day brings new problems.”

Edward returned to using the past tense when he referred to 1992. “From our viewpoint, we can clearly see what had to be done. The people of your time did not see the big picture.”

“What does the big picture show you?”

“It shows us that all men are brothers. We see that the survival of nature and the survival of man are one and the same. In 1992 you faced the eventual collapse of civilization, and none of your leaders knew what to do. The solution was to abolish private property and governments in their present forms, and to stop believing that

nature existed only for your pleasure and profit. In three words, the answers were love and sharing.”

“What finally happened?” I asked.

“First people had to accept that the old ways were wrong. There was a lot of suffering before they achieved that realization.”

“And then?”

“And then men saw the truth: God loves all It has created without qualification, and God meant for all creatures to share the abundance of the earth.”

Wednesday, July 1, 2076

On the morning of my fourth day on the commune, Edward said to me: “There’s an individual here you should talk to, a man we call Exellon. He’s one of the founders of First Gandhi, and is old enough to remember your era.”

Later that day we walked over to Exellon’s house, a four room structure on the top of a hill. Surrounding the house so completely that it was almost invisible were trees—oak, elm, maple, redwood, eucalyptus, palm, cedar, cypress, southern magnolia, and others. The hill itself was covered with many varieties of fruit trees.

When we arrived, Exellon was outside eating lunch with several people who had just come from picking apricots. “So you’re the guy from the past,” he said, while looking me over. “Pretty skinny. You remind me of the joke about the fat man and the thin man. The fat man said to the thin man, ‘You look like you’ve been in a famine.’ The thin man replied, ‘You look like you caused it.’”

I ignored his joke and proceeded to ask a question: “Can you tell me how the world solved the economic crisis at the end of the twentieth century?”

“You get right to the point. I like that. After lunch we will talk.”

At this time, Edward, who was a teacher at First Gandhi, excused himself to attend a meeting with some of his students.

When lunch was finished we went inside to Exellon’s library. He began by asking me, “What do you know about monetary and fiscal policy?”

I outlined for him the role of government in the economy, as I understood it:

1. A government can expand the money supply without causing inflation as long as it expands the money at the same rate as the output of goods and services—the Gross Domestic Product—increases. But when there is a rise in the money supply without a corresponding rise in a nation’s production, there is inflation. The classic example of this was the German economy in the 1920s. This also occurred in many Latin American nations in the 1970s and 1980s, and is happening now in Russia.

2. As the money is put into circulation (assuming GDP growth keeps up with the printing presses), wages go up, new jobs are created, and poverty decreases. The key is finding markets for the increased production. It is the secret of the economic success of the U.S., Western Europe, and Japan since World War II.

3. GDP can be increased by improving productivity through investments in new plants and equipment, infrastructure, education, training, and research. Free trade also increases GDP in those nations that can compete.

I also mentioned the role of population. If the population grows faster than GDP, increased production does not result in a higher standard of living, because the money has to be spread over more people than before. In many developing nations, governments have ignored environmental concerns in order to produce rapid growth. Their short-term solution to their population problem will have painful long-term consequences.

After I finished Exellon asked, “How would you deal with the economic challenges of your day?”

I answered, “A decent job is a right. It is government’s duty to assure that right. If necessary, taxes on the wealthy should be raised to finance work-making projects.” I added, “I am not really here to talk, but to learn from you how the world solved its problems.”

After a moment’s reflection he said, “With the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1989, the former Communist nations began experimenting with capitalism. Many people thought the decline of Communism and the rise of free markets in Latin America and Asia heralded the dawn of a golden age of capitalism. Actually, the golden age was almost over in 1989. I need to go back a few years to explain why.

“In 1980 the American people elected a Hollywood actor to be their President. This man had no understanding of economics, history, or world affairs. He believed an unregulated private enterprise system would create a financial boom that would benefit everyone. So in his first term of office he cut income taxes by hundreds of billions of dollars and he loosened the reins on business.

“An example of his incompetence was the savings and loan disaster. By refusing to exercise any control over savings and loans, he gave dishonest individuals the opportunity to enrich themselves and their friends. This mistake cost the American people two hundred billion dollars, because the federal government had guaranteed the deposits of the S&Ls.

“This President allowed entitlement and defense spending to increase by hundreds of billions of dollars a year at the same time that he was slashing taxes. As a result, he and his successor, George Bush, had to borrow three trillion dollars. By 1992 America’s national debt totaled more than four trillion dollars, and the cost of servicing that debt was several hundred billion dollars a year.

“Those two Presidents made another major mistake. Because of their belief in free trade, they failed to adapt the American economy to the new global marketplace. The result was a gradual decline in the standard of living of poor and middle class Americans.”

I asked, “Are you talking about our balance of trade deficit?”

“Yes. For many years the United States exported more manufactured goods than it imported. The surplus provided jobs and rising incomes for a growing American population. But in the late 1970s this balance of trade surplus disappeared, and it turned into a substantial deficit in the 1980s. There were several reasons why this happened. Automobiles and electronic items from Asia had become popular with American consumers because of their superior quality. Many other products manufactured abroad by American and foreign corporations could be sold more cheaply than goods made in the U.S., due lower labor costs.

“The trade deficit created a permanent class of unemployed manufacturing workers. It hit black families especially hard, because many of them had relied on

factory jobs. The trade deficit put pressure on the wages of factory workers who were still employed and caused many office employees to lose their jobs when American industry restructured so that it could compete in the global economy.

“There was one other event taking place at this time that was costing jobs. Corporations were using automation and computers to eliminate many positions in factories and offices.”

Exellon looked at me and asked, “Do you know what today’s historians call the 1980s?”

I said, “I called it ‘The Greed Is Good Decade.’”

He went over to his bookshelf, pulled out an encyclopedia, opened it to a marked page, and read: “‘The Golden Age of Capitalism: The 1980s in America, when many fortunes were made in real estate, the stock market, business, and in corporate mergers and acquisitions. It was a false prosperity caused by speculation, free trade, restructuring, a *laissez faire* attitude by political leaders, and a spree of spending and borrowing by individuals, corporations, and governments unequaled in history. Politicians boasted about the number of jobs created in the 1980s, but they did not talk about the number of decent jobs that were eliminated, or the fact that most of the new jobs were low-paying.’”

Exellon closed the book. “In the 1990s, when the federal, state, and local governments finally faced their fiscal difficulties, they chose to reduce spending and raise taxes, which added to the downward pressure on incomes. And the federal government still needed to borrow hundreds of billions of dollars a year, because the weakness of the economy limited tax revenues, and because defense and entitlement costs continued to be a large part of the budget.

“I remember the debate in the United States during this time of slow growth and shortages of quality employment. Some thought the circumstances only required adjustments that would make America more competitive: the removal of foreign trade barriers, tax cuts to give the rich incentives to invest, retraining for laid off workers, better public schools, or less government regulation. A few of these ideas were tried, but the results were discouraging.

“The World War II children and the baby boomers, who had been led to expect a future at least as rosy as their parents, were seeing their dreams destroyed. Those born after the boomers were discovering there was nothing for them to look forward to. These three groups said to each other, ‘We must find a new approach. First, let us define the challenge.’ They agreed the economic system was not creating enough good jobs. They saw that the quality of their lives had deteriorated due to crime and other modern stresses. They also agreed there were many environmental concerns that had to be addressed: pollution, global warming, destruction of forests and species, soil erosion, and overpopulation.

“A few asked the next logical question, ‘Is it necessary that millions of men and women remain idle or in minimum wage or part-time jobs simply because the present system has no room for them? Perhaps it is time for a democratic capitalism, where all are guaranteed a slice of the economic pie.’

“The free marketeers argued that the old capitalism had provided the high standard of living the people of America, Japan, and Western Europe had enjoyed before, and to throw it out would be foolish. They said if people would be patient just a little longer the world would enter a glorious age of prosperity and opportunity generated by technology, free trade, and global growth.

“The proponents of a democratic capitalism answered, ‘High-tech is fine if it doesn’t eliminate your job. Free trade forces the American worker to compete with low-wage workers in foreign lands. And the world cannot afford more growth dictated by greed—we must start thinking in terms of economics that can be sustained. Therefore, we intend to form self-supporting communities that will be accountable for what they do to the earth. These communities will represent a second economy, with their own farms, businesses, and workshops.’

“The communities, now called communes or villages, began with the homeless, the unemployed, and individuals who wanted a slower, simpler life more in touch with the earth and their natural rhythms. The village life was harsh at first, but for many it was still an improvement over their prior lives of poverty and hopelessness.

“These villages served another valuable purpose. They gave people a sense of community again: a feeling of belonging, of being part of something bigger than themselves, and of responsibility to others.”

“What was happening in the rest of the world at this time?”

“How does that expression go? The rich were getting richer, and the poor were getting poorer. As more nations adopted free market systems, and as global trade expanded, the tendency of capitalism to enrich the wealthiest members of society at the expense of the poorest was enhanced. Poverty was also increasing because of declining manufacturing employment in the developed nations and population growth, environmental degradation, and flight to the cities in the developing nations.”

Exellon seemed to get distracted for a moment, then he resumed: “Isn’t it ironic that the President who had been known as the champion of capitalism actually hastened its end? The waves of borrowing he set in motion and his free trade policies accelerated the abuses of nature, consolidations of wealth, and economic hardships that result from unregulated private enterprise. The consequence was that men were pushed to the edge sooner than if he had not been elected President.”

I couldn’t wait any longer—I had to find out about the federal debt. I asked, “What was done about all the money the government had borrowed?”

“In the first decade of the twenty-first century the interest payments on the debt surpassed the income tax revenues. The United States was essentially bankrupt and the dollar was no longer considered a hard currency. The situation left us with two choices. The first was for the United States to stop honoring its debt. The second was to print trillions of dollars to make the debt worthless. It was decided the second option was unacceptable: Hyperinflation is a tough monster to slay once it is allowed to breathe.”

“So the U.S. defaulted on its debt?”

“We compromised. A courageous President announced that the federal government would begin balancing its budget immediately, and it would no longer pay interest on the national debt. Over a period of about forty years, all government obligations were paid off at face value. The decision to cut spending forced the federal government to return power to the local level, where it belonged.”

Thursday, July 2, 2076

I found Exellon sitting under an orange tree, waiting for me. I was hoping he would continue his discussion of economics, but instead he wanted to talk about the environment.

“The Second Earth Summit took place in the year 2000. The emphasis was on creating a sustainable society. Some of the decisions made then concerned automobiles and global warming, toxic wastes, nuclear energy, population growth, and protection of forests and species.

“After years of battling pollution, it was finally decided that we must stop the activities that harm the environment. Either substitute methods would have to be developed that did not result in the use, production, or release of hazardous substances, or the activity would have to be abandoned. We have learned there are many things we don’t need and can’t afford—like automobiles with gasoline engines.”

“Surely you don’t mean the internal combustion engine was outlawed in cars, do you?” I asked.

“Why not?” was the reply. “Conditions had worsened since the Summit in 1992: The air around the cities was even more unhealthy, the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere had increased, and the level of the oceans was still rising.

“At the Earth Summit 2000 a new strategy was proposed and adopted. The plan called for the scientists of the world to work together to create solar cells that could be put into orbit above the earth. The goal was to use this energy from space, along with the energy from land-based solar cells and other clean, renewable sources such as the wind, to power our cars, homes, businesses, offices, and shops by the year 2050.

“Under the plan, manufacturers were required to be more efficient in terms of the energy and materials they used, and everyone was asked to reduce their impact on the environment.

“We also decided to shut down all nuclear power plants as soon as replacement energy sources became available. The thousands of retired nuclear power stations and radioactive waste dumps in the world today serve as silent monuments to twentieth century man’s selfishness and shortsightedness.

“Human population was our toughest challenge. All of our efforts to protect the environment would be wasted if we could not decrease the earth’s human population, because as the poor improved their standard of living, their consumption of goods and services increased, adding to the pressure on the environment.

“Before we could deal with overpopulation, we had to stop the growth of population. The nations of the world agreed to a target of zero population growth by the year 2012. It was a tremendous effort, but we succeeded. The world’s population peaked at seven billion.”

Friday, July 3, 2076

“Tell me how the world learned to live in peace,” I asked at sunset on what turned out to be the last day of our discussions. We were on the highest hill of the commune, in a forest of mighty oak trees, with a view of First Gandhi below.

Exellon began, “The world is at peace because men have discovered peace benefits everyone. Wars in the past were largely for reasons of fear, greed, or hatred.

Men have learned to eliminate those emotions from their national characters. But I suppose you want me to be more specific about how peace was achieved.”

“Yes, if you don’t mind,” I said.

“Well, Mr. Brown, it was a gradual process. It wasn’t accomplished overnight. As nations learned they had to work together to overcome economic and environmental challenges, and as communication and travel turned the world into a—what’s the term?”

“Global village.”

“Yes, as the world became smaller, men began talking with each other to resolve their differences, instead of fighting to solve them. People wanted to get along with each other, and they were electing leaders who were good at settling disagreements by compromises and mutual cooperation.”

I asked, “What do you do when one nation invades another?”

“That hasn’t occurred in many years. But when it did, the nations of the world, acting through the United Nations, quickly sent in an international military force. I should add that international peacekeeping was not successful until all the major powers renounced force as a principle of their own foreign policy and until all nations banned the export of weapons and weapons technology. Those two steps were only taken after much opposition, especially in the United States.”

I asked, “What was done with all the weapons in the world?”

“Good question,” he replied. “The world could not be secure in peace while all those horribly destructive weapons—nuclear, chemical, biological, and conventional—were still around. But none of the leading powers at first was willing to get rid of their stockpiles of weapons. The debate was bitter, especially in the United States. Eventually this compromise was reached: Most weapons would be dismantled, no new weapons would be built anywhere in the world, and all weapons factories would be converted to peaceful production within five years. The remaining weapons eventually wore out and had to be destroyed. That was how we disarmed. It wasn’t spectacular, but it worked. Time is our friend if we are patient.”

After he finished we both fell silent for several minutes.

Exellon began to talk again, but on another subject: “I want to tell you about a friend you can lean on when you need help or advice. I call this friend the inner self or inner voice. I believe it is your direct link to your soul. You can ask it questions and it will provide answers that take into account your own greatest good and the good of others at the same time. It won’t give you stock market tips or tomorrow’s winning lottery numbers. Your inner self will answer such questions as: ‘Should I move to commune X?’ or ‘What did I do to deserve such a headache?’ or ‘Why am I unhappy?’

“You will learn to consult your inner self before making any important decisions. But you must trust your self, ask your question correctly, and silence your own thoughts before you can use your inner voice effectively. Make your question as specific as possible. You will find it hard to consult your inner voice when you are not relaxed. Many have used their imagination to create an inner voice that taught violence. That is not the true voice of the inner self. The inner self never directs you to harm others.”

Exellon paused, then continued: “I am sure you have wondered,” he said, “‘Who am I?’ or ‘Where did I come from?’ The answer is that you are a portion of a spiritual

being that cannot be contained in one body. That being lives in many times and places at once. What we see of ourselves, therefore, is only a fraction of our entire identity.

“Life does not need justification—the universe exists because God consciousness desires to express itself. If you are looking for something to do, try to make your world more harmonious and healthy. Begin with your family, your work, and your community.

“You may find it interesting to attempt to awaken to your identity as a multidimensional creature beyond time and space. Awakening to your identity means understanding the power of your thoughts and dreams. Once you do that, you will realize your potential is essentially unlimited.

“One more thing.” Exellon looked directly at me. “It is OK to make mistakes. You are human. If you were perfect, you wouldn’t be here.”

When he finished speaking, I suddenly recalled a dream I had the night before. I was standing on the roof of a house with some friends. My friends walked to the edge of the roof, leaned over with their arms outstretched, and began to fly through the air. I was afraid at first to follow them, but when I lifted my arms I soared into the air too. I took advantage of my new freedom, flying over the land and changing my altitude and direction with only a slight movement of my hands. It was exhilarating to look down on buildings, fields, streets, and cars.

On the walk back Exellon stopped, put his arm on my shoulder, and said, “Relax. Stop worrying about your future. You are doing fine. Trust your inner self to always guide and protect you.”

Exellon’s last words to me that evening were: “Don’t ever forget God is all there is. Treat all things with respect—except for concentrations of power, which are by definition undemocratic. Attack all concentrations of power.”

Earlier in the day Exellon had given me a collection of essays he had written in 1994, but had never published. While lying in bed that night I began to read his manuscript.

Blueprints For Revolution

By Exellon

Who Owns The Earth?

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Jesus

There are, I believe, several possible correct answers to the question, “Who owns the earth?” One answer is that all men and nature, including future generations, own the earth. Another answer is that the earth belongs to the goddess Gaia, our mother, who wants us to share the world with all her children, both human and non-human.

With either answer this conclusion is obvious: Man does not have the right to behave as if he is the only important creature on this planet, and as if there is no

tomorrow. This means we must limit our population. We must end experimentation on animals for medical purposes or for any other reason. We must stop cutting down the old growth and rain forests, destroying the wetlands and the wilderness areas, overharvesting the rivers, lakes, and oceans, and depleting the earth's mineral reserves.

Since the earth cannot be the private possession of anyone, no man has the right to hoard wealth. The rich must share their wealth with others. The Essene Jewish sect, which had communities in Egypt and Israel around the first century A.D., gave us an example of what we can expect in the future when men share the earth. This is what the historian Philo wrote about the Essenes:

Their organization is not based on family kinship...but on zeal for virtue and love of all men. None of them is striving to get possession of any private property...or anything to get rich by, for everything is put into the common pool, which supplies the wants of all alike.

If any man falls sick, whatever medical treatment or resources are available are devoted to his cure, and his care and recovery are the concern of the whole community. Old men, though they may be childless, are thus assured of happiness and tender care in their old age, just as if they were the fathers of children both numerous and affectionate.

The time has come for a new way of thinking, a thinking that sees man as a vital member of Gaia's beautiful family, but not as lord and master of the earth. In the new age we shall attempt to practice this commandment of Buddha, who told his followers to love all things "as a mother loves her only son."

Capitalism Was Created By Men, Not By God

And a homeless hungry man, driving the road with his wife beside him and his thin children in the back seat, could look at the fallow fields which might produce food but not profit, and that man could know how a fallow field is a sin and the unused land a crime against the thin children.

John Steinbeck, The Grapes Of Wrath

Capitalism stands for a survival-of-the fittest, exploitation-of-the-weak relationship between men, the wanton destruction of nature, and economic power in the hands of a few. Capitalism is promoted as if the accumulation of wealth is a God-given right, like freedom of speech or religion. I do not believe that God gave the earth to man. And I think there is no such thing as the right of an individual to abuse men and nature. God is not a capitalist: God loves all the world.

America has the premier capitalist economy in the world, but mankind would be doomed if everyone lived like Americans. Why? Because we are only five percent of the world's population, but we are responsible for a large percentage of the global environmental damage. As China and Third World nations establish capitalist

systems, the pollution and destruction of nature will accelerate, putting more pressure on our already stressed planet.

It is no coincidence that modern capitalism was born in Europe, the center of Christianity, for Christianity provided the moral climate necessary for the development of capitalism. Christianity taught Europeans that the world was evil, that man must overcome nature, and that God gave man dominion over the earth. Capitalism could only have arisen in a society with those or similar beliefs because capitalism is based upon the manipulation of men and nature without regard for their rights. Capitalism could not have emerged in native societies or in the East because those cultures understand that God lives on the earth.

Armed with Christian beliefs, Europeans were ready to conquer the world, and when Columbus “discovered” America and trade routes were opened to Africa and the Far East, the perfect opportunities appeared. From the 16th through the 19th centuries, and in many cases well into the 20th century, Christians murdered and enslaved the people and looted the wealth of the American, Asian, and African continents. We can trace many of our troubles today to this unleashing of Christianity on the world.

We are nearing the end of the material age, which began when Western man decided to deny his connection with the earth. Today we are beginning to reawaken to that truth still known in native cultures, that “we are part of the earth and it is part of us,” in the words of Chief Seattle. Once we understand this, we will not be able to treat the earth as a thing to be used and thrown away, for we will realize that what we do to the earth we do to ourselves.

True Communism Is Christlike

And all who believed were together and held all things in common. And would sell their possessions and goods and distribute them all according as anyone had need.

Acts Of The Apostles, 2:44-5

True communism, which is community ownership of property, is based upon love and sharing. The first Christians were true communists. Saint Francis of Assisi, who gave all his property away and spent the rest of his life serving others, was a true communist. Mahatma Gandhi, who dedicated his life to the people of India and set up communal farms wherever he lived, was a true communist. Mother Theresa, who nurses and feeds the poor, is a true communist. Lenin, Stalin, and Mao Tse-tung believed in a Communism that was as far from true communism as the Inquisition was from true Christianity.

Party doctrine says Communist society is classless and democratic. In fact, Party and military leaders and the bureaucrats are an elite. They receive the best housing, education, medical care, food, and jobs. To retain control they do not allow open elections. As China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Cuba adopt capitalist systems, these same Party and military leaders will become major owners of property and the means of production—members of the class of exploiters Marx denounced in *The Communist Manifesto*.

The integration of love with Communist ideals results in a communism that recognizes the sacredness of the individual and that does not resort to violence to achieve its goals. In Israel, responsible people living by the principle of “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs,” have created over two hundred prosperous, autonomous communities called kibbutzim.

Marxist Communism is correct in one very important sense: The rights of workers to a decent income are superior to the rights of property owners to a decent return on their investments. The Communist Party is wrong when it says—and herein lies the main mistake of Communism—that the rights of the state are superior to all other rights. The state has no rights, only responsibilities: to protect and serve men and nature. At the end of his lecture “On The Duty Of Civil Disobedience,” Henry David Thoreau said:

There will never be a really free and enlightened state, until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly.

Science: The Religion Of Modern Man

I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore, and diverting myself in now and then finding another pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, while the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me.

Isaac Newton

A study of history and literature from earliest recorded time until the last century reveals that when man thought or talked or wrote, he would often make references to his God. Today the theory of evolution has become so interwoven with our culture that we think and talk and write in scientific terms. Science has become the religion of modern man, and scientists have become its priests. And like every institution that has overstayed its welcome, science is guilty of taking itself too seriously. Science needs to learn the humility of Isaac Newton, the great scientist of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The history of science is the story of many wrong turns. Today’s scientific truth is often tomorrow’s stepping stone. Many times in the past discoveries have been made that upset the conventional scientific wisdom; there is no reason to believe there are no major upheavals around the corner.

For instance, for hundreds of years educated men said the universe revolved about the earth, and they devised an elaborate scheme to explain the movements of the sun, the moon, and the planets. It took the work of Copernicus, Galileo, Brahe, and Kepler in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to knock man off this pedestal.

In the eighteenth century scientists were amused by the French farmers who told them rocks were falling from the sky. Today we call those rocks meteorites. Until the middle of the nineteenth century, some doctors diagnosed illnesses they could not explain as due to too much fluid in the body, and they prescribed bloodletting by the placing of leeches on the patient’s skin.

At the beginning of this century scientists were saying the field of physics was complete except for a little fine tuning. This was before the discovery of the atom and quantum physics. This was before Einstein's theories of relativity. At the beginning of this century scientists scoffed at the continental drift theory. Now continental drift is being taught to school children. Six years before Sputnik was launched in 1957, a prominent scientist said the idea of an artificial satellite going around the earth was "utter bunk."

Early in this century astronomers said there was only one galaxy in the universe. Fifty years later astronomers said there were one billion galaxies in the universe and 100 billion stars in our galaxy. Now they want us to believe there are 200 billion galaxies in the universe and 400 billion stars in our galaxy.

A knowledge of the past mistakes of science leads one to ask the obvious question: Why should we trust scientists when they tell us they have the universe figured out now?

A popular scientific theory today is organic evolution, which says: Living things are in savage competition with each other, and those best adapted to their environment will survive and pass their traits onto the next generation, while the characteristics of those not as suited to their environment will vanish from the earth.

All of biology is dependent upon a belief in evolution. The sciences of cosmology and geology have incorporated the concept of evolution into their theories. If evolution were found to be wrong, modern science would be thrown into chaos. That is why scientists defend it with such vigor.

Let's look at evolution in more detail. This is how science explains the existence of life on earth: Three and one-half billion years ago, atmospheric gases energized by lightning, ultraviolet radiation, or volcanic heat combined to form the first organic molecules. By pure accident some of these molecules later developed a cellular structure, including a primitive genetic code, which permitted them to reproduce themselves. Then a gene of one of these organisms mutated, again by chance, allowing its offspring to have different characteristics than it had. Everything was now in place for the evolution of species: Through chance genetic mutations and natural selection—reproduction over time—species after species arose and disappeared. Nature advanced from bacteria to algae to marine invertebrates, fish, insects, amphibians, mosses, ferns, reptiles, trees, birds, dinosaurs, mammals, and primates. And then, just a half million or so years ago, bingo: a man was born.

I think it is ridiculous to even consider the possibility that the beauty and diversity in the world, the order and cooperation in nature, and the marvelous complexity of living things all happened by accident. Scientists tell us a belief in the creation story of the Bible does not take into account the age of the earth and the fossil record, but for scientists to believe that chance is the cause of all the wonders of nature is the bigger leap of faith!

Scientists say that if there are two theories, one elaborate and the other simple, and both explain a phenomenon, the uncomplicated theory should be accepted. So several hundred years ago, science rejected the geocentric theory of astronomy, which stated that the earth is the center of the universe, because it required an intricate series of invisible spheres to explain the motions of the heavenly bodies. They adopted the heliocentric theory, which said that the planets revolve about the sun in elliptical orbits.

Evolution is like the geocentric theory—it requires a complicated, clumsy explanation. My theory of life is simple and easy to understand: There has been a separate creation, an implant from the spiritual world, for every form of life. Afterwards, a god or an animal or plant consciousness looks out for each species. I am not talking about a creation similar to what is described in the Book of Genesis of the Bible, which took place over a period of seven days a few thousand years ago. I am talking about a constant creation of new species and continuous change over time within a species that is the result of spiritual forces acting on the physical world.

Evolution has recently become more difficult to believe than it already was. Scientists have been saying for years that man first evolved in Africa because the oldest homo erectus bones, from 1.8 million years ago, were found in Africa. Now pre-human bones from Indonesia have also been dated at 1.8 million years old. Malcolm W. Browne wrote about the discovery in the *New York Times* in 1994:

Although most anthropologists believe that the human race originated in Africa, the new measurements open the possibility that although its pre-human ancestors began in Africa, different variants of the primate genus Homo may have independently evolved in Africa, Europe, and Asia.

So science has man appearing in several places at approximately the same time—an incredible coincidence, given that evolution depends on chance.

The fossil records, which show that other species existed in the past, are one of the primary proofs of evolution. Yet they are so incomplete that no link has been found between apes and man. The fossil records in fact tend to demonstrate the truth of my theory and the fallacy of evolution. The records show that species appeared and disappeared suddenly. This is contrary to what evolution would predict: Darwin said that gradual changes led to the development of new species. But suddenness is consistent with my theory, which says that each species was implanted on earth from the spiritual realm. I can explain the disappearance of a species as a trial that was terminated in this reality.

Evolution will forever remain a theory, because it cannot be tested by experimentation. And since evolution depends upon lots of time, no scientist will be around long enough to witness the evolution of a new species.

Just as evolution cannot be proven by scientific methods, it cannot be disproven. This allows scientists to make outrageous statements. For example, scientists say that altruism—sacrifice for others—can be explained as a misguided parental or group survival instinct. According to science, then, when a policeman risks his life beyond the call of duty to save the life of someone he has never met, he is endangering himself because his brain has misinterpreted a genetic code that tells him to protect members of his group.

Scientists believe every action, characteristic, and impulse in living things can be classified as either aiding or hindering the survival of the individual or his group, and the actions, characteristics, and impulses that do not increase the chances of survival for the species will be discarded through natural selection. Their cold, mechanistic view of nature is due to their belief in an accidental universe.

Many of those who experience the world without scientific tunnel vision understand their survival is only possible because of the cooperation that exists in nature. All animals are aware that they are dependent upon other animals and plants

for food, and that they are in turn food to other animals and plants. Plants realize that they are dependent upon the sun, the water, the air, the soil, and the animal world. On a level below normal consciousness, every animal and plant consents to its death, knowing that it will live through the creature that has eaten it.

Scientists have studied animal populations under crowded laboratory conditions and have discovered that these societies practice infanticide, and are more prone to disease and violence. Due to their belief in evolution, scientists are required to find a survival advantage. So they say the infanticide, disease, and violence are instincts built into the genes—developed by chance and natural selection, of course—to reduce population density, because overpopulation can lead to starvation. Isn't it more sensible to believe that when life is not worth living, animals (and men) will choose to die? Survival is not what drives nature, but opportunities for value fulfillment: lives of quality, growth, and action.

I recently heard a gene scientist make this statement: "I don't think there is anything going on on our planet that is more humane, and more concerned with human values than science." If science is dealing with values, then it is working in the domain of religion. This scientist doesn't understand how scientific thinking has influenced society: By preaching a mechanical, accidental universe, science has taught men that their lives have no meaning and that they are not responsible for what they do.

I read of an experiment conducted on a group of rhesus monkeys to study natural selection. To get food, a monkey would have to pull a chain in its cage. This chain would cause a monkey in another cage to receive an electrical shock in full view of the first monkey. After discovering the effect of pulling their chains, eighty-seven percent of the monkeys decided they would rather go hungry than hurt their brothers and sisters.

I would not call the scientists who conducted that experiment humane. Or is it considered humane to abuse animals because human knowledge might be increased? Science has a perverted sense of humanity if it believes that only man is worthy of compassion!

Science, like Christianity, is built upon a foundation of faith, not fact. In the case of science, the faith is that the world was created by chance—that spiritual reality doesn't exist or at least cannot affect the universe today. There is no way science can prove that.

Now I don't want anybody to think that I believe I am teaching absolute truth when I say the world is a product of the spiritual dimension—I know there is faith involved in my assertion. But I do object when scientists say or imply that there is no faith involved in their methods and theories.

Someday the public will demand an explanation for experiences that science today says are impossible: spontaneous and spiritual healing, mental telepathy, precognitive dreams, telekinesis, etc. Science will finally be forced to open its eyes to a whole new realm of events. The next great discovery in science will be that the physical universe is only the surface layer of total reality. What is ironic is that scientists will be discovering something that has been known to non-scientists for thousands of years.

I want to end this essay with a short discussion of medicine, the field of science that deals with human health. We are taught by medical science that we are victims of

disease, and that without modern medicine we would be helpless against a multitude of illnesses. Science has turned the doctor into a mechanic, and our bodies have become machines with parts that wear out. Little is said about our natural defenses, nor about the cooperation between our cells that makes our lives possible.

I cannot criticize medicine without mentioning that the attitude of the public in the West, and especially in the United States, contributes to this difficulty. We refuse to accept responsibility for our health, and then when something goes wrong, we expect modern medicine to fix us. I believe the best medicine is a belief in your own health, worth, and safety.

I do want to point out that some doctors understand there is a relationship between the soul, the mind, and the body. A doctor who counsels cancer patients wrote: "The fundamental problem patients have is a failure to love themselves."

Medicine has done a lot to relieve pain and suffering. On the other hand, medicine has done a lot to increase pain and suffering. What am I talking about? Doctors extend the lives of many patients who would otherwise die fairly quickly. In many cases, the result is a prolonged and painful death, with physicians and hospitals raking in huge fees that place a financial burden on vulnerable families, insurance systems, and Medicare.

I see this dilemma as having two main causes. First is that our materialistic culture is basically atheistic. People who believe that this life is all there is will of course try to prolong it. Secondly, many doctors feel that if they let a patient die, they have failed, and so they keep their patients alive as long as possible.

I believe it is time Western civilization wakes up to these truths that are understood by animals and in native societies: Death is a normal stage of existence and is necessary to make room for new life. And without death, we would not appreciate life. As an African tribal leader said, "Death is what makes life precious."

We need a new definition of human consciousness, because it stretches beyond the years between physical birth and death. In the coming age, death will be known as a door to another reality, as a place to rest and to review one's past life for weaknesses and errors, and, ultimately, as an opportunity to start over with a new body.

The Arrogance Of Power

*Genuine peace comes when justice is served.
For as long as peasants remain landless,
For as long as laborers receive unjust wages,
For as long as we are politically and economically dominated by foreign nations,
For as long as we channel more money to the military than to basic social services,
For as long as the causes of social unrest remain untouched,
There will be no peace.*

*Seen on a sign in Cagayan de Oro,
Philippines, December 1991*

Throughout history, czars, emperors, generals, kings, popes, premiers, presidents, prime ministers, and princes have proclaimed they were doing God's work as they directed their armies to slaughter defenseless people. The arrogance of power has

infected many men, and has led them to believe they could do no wrong, and to believe that what is best for them is right and just.

The arrogance of power has also infected many nations, and has led them to sacrifice the citizens of other lands upon the altars of ancient territorial claims, anti-communist hysteria, capitalism, empire, national interest, secure borders, and self-defense. In the last few hundred years, Spain, Portugal, England, France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, Germany, Japan, China, Russia, South Africa, Israel, and the United States have all been guilty of the arrogance of power.

I will in this essay discuss the crimes of the people and the government of the United States because I am an American, and therefore, America's crimes are my responsibility. I also want to demonstrate a point: Not even a nation begun under the most promising of circumstances and based upon the highest of ideals can be trusted with great power.

From the 16th through the 19th centuries we killed Indians and took their land. We rationalized our treatment of Indians by telling ourselves they were heathens and savages. I believe that, in fact, their spiritual perception and wisdom were superior to ours. The Indian nations surviving today, among them the Cherokee, Dineh, Chippewa, Sioux, and Choctaw, should be proud of their heritage, because their ancestors were aware of an important truth our culture has not yet grasped: God lives in nature.

At the end of the nineteenth century, the United States took control of the Philippine Islands from Spain. Samuel Eliot Morison wrote in *The Oxford History Of The American People* that, since China was being carved up by foreigners at the time, "It began to look like a good idea to many leaders of public opinion for the United States to obtain a base in the Far East." President McKinley said he wanted to "educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them." During the first decade of twentieth century, the U.S. Army crushed a rebellion by the Filipino people, who only wanted an end to foreign rule, at a cost of tens of thousands of Filipino lives. An American soldier wrote to his family that it reminded him of hunting rabbits.

In the 1920s U.S. troops smashed a nationalist uprising in Nicaragua in order to protect the American banana interests. The family we placed in power, the Somozas, ruled over Nicaragua for nearly fifty years and made itself wealthy while brutally suppressing the rights of the people. One example: Their security forces would go out to the rural villages and execute all the teenage boys they could find to prevent them from joining the Sandinistas, a guerrilla group named after the leader of the uprising we had put down.

In 1979 the Somoza family was deposed in a popular revolt. During the 1980s the Reagan and Bush administrations fed and equipped former Somozan soldiers so they could fight a terrorist war against the new government in Nicaragua. A Somozan leader, Horacio Arce, described their goal: "We attack a lot of schools, health centers, and that sort of thing. We have tried to make it so that the Nicaraguan government cannot provide social services for the peasants." The hypocrisy of this military escapade was appalling: President Reagan informed the American people that the Somozan forces were "the moral equivalent of our Founding Fathers."

During the Cold War (1945-1989), American politicians told us our safety was threatened by governments in the Third World that were friendly with the Soviet Union or China. State Department documents and other important writings, however, clearly demonstrate that our leaders, with the exception of President Johnson, were

not frightened by little nations. The stories of Communist monsters in the Third World were meant for public consumption—the danger perceived by our leaders was to capitalism itself. In *Deterring Democracy*, Noam Chomsky discussed National Security Council document No. 5432, entitled “U.S. Policy in Latin America,” dated August 18, 1954:

The major threat to U.S. interests is posed by “nationalistic regimes” that are responsive to popular pressures for “immediate improvement in the low living standards of the masses” and diversification of the economies. This tendency conflicts not only with the need to “protect our resources,” but also with concern to encourage “a climate conducive to private investment” and “in the case of foreign capital to repatriate a reasonable return.”

Chomsky wrote that when President Kennedy tried to convince Latin American nations to work together against Cuba, a Mexican diplomat said, “If we publicly declare that Cuba is a threat to our security, forty million Mexicans will die laughing.” Unfortunately for the Cuban people, this contrived danger was taken seriously by the American public, allowing the U.S. government to maintain an economic embargo on that small island until the present day. It can be argued that Castro was pushed into the Communist camp by our support of the dictator Batista and our hostility to his confiscation of foreign-owned property.

Our involvement in Vietnam began when the French were fighting the Vietnamese patriots. The Eisenhower administration gave the French financial support and offered to drop an atom bomb on the Vietnamese forces besieging Dien Bien Phu. It was the intent of our leaders to suppress nationalist governments in Southeast Asia in order to prevent them from interfering with our designs for the region. The State Department Policy Planning Staff wrote in 1949 that the area was to function “as a source for raw materials and a market for Japan and Western Europe.”

After the Vietnamese patriots had succeeded in expelling the French from their homeland, the Eisenhower administration decided the United States would back the Diem government in the south against the Ho Chi Minh government in the north, even though the Geneva Agreement of 1954 stipulated that an election should be held to unite the nation in two years. Believing that Ho Chi Minh would win free elections, the Diem regime refused to allow them to take place.

After a bloody and long war, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese succeeded in defeating the American puppet government. More than two million Vietnamese, six hundred thousand Cambodians and Laotians, and fifty thousand Americans died in this effort by the United States to impose its will on the Vietnamese people.

The reason the United States sent an army of half a million soldiers to Vietnam in the 1960s was that President Johnson was hysterically obsessed with stopping Communism. Johnson told a member of the Senate: “If we do not stop the Reds in South Vietnam, tomorrow they will be in Hawaii, and next week they will be in San Francisco.”

An American official remarked about a South Vietnamese town the U.S. had leveled during the 1968 Tet offensive: “It became necessary to destroy the town in order to save it.” In the twisted thinking of American political and military leaders in the 1960s and 1970s, we were going to save Southeast Asia from Communism even if

we had to ravage the land and decimate the populations of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos to do it.

The American people were not only informed the war was being fought to save Southeast Asia from Communism, but that we were also fighting for freedom and democracy. For the United States to fight a war for freedom and democracy in which three million people are killed is reason gone mad. No one has ever explained to me how the dead could enjoy freedom of speech, religion, or the right to vote.

Ninety percent of the casualties of the Vietnam War were civilians. We dropped more bombs on Southeast Asia during the war than we dropped in all of World War II. In 1970 it was discovered that U.S. forces had butchered between 175 and 500 children, women, and old men two years earlier in the hamlet of My Lai. During the Congressional inquiry that followed, one soldier involved in the massacre talked about “killing everything that moved.” The commander of the man who led the attack on My Lai declared, “Every unit of brigade size had its My Lai hidden someplace.”

There are some who say the opponents of the Vietnam War were traitors. I don't understand how anyone can defend a war in which ninety percent of the casualties were civilians. I think killing civilians is immoral, no matter what your President, your commander, or your platoon leader says. Killing innocent people in the service of your country is placing your nation above God.

I consider many of those who opposed the Vietnam War to be the real American patriots, for they were standing up for the principle upon which this nation was founded: All men are created equal. The antiwar protesters of the 1960s and 70s were saying to the American people: “The Vietnamese, Cambodians, and Laotians we are slaughtering are human beings who also have the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

I consider all Presidents involved in the horrors I describe in this essay to be guilty of un-American activities and international crimes, including Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Reagan, and Bush. I also believe the paranoia, lies, and illegal activities of Johnson and Nixon associated with the Vietnam War, and the hypocrisy, lies, and illegal activities of Reagan and Bush related to their Central American interventions and Middle Eastern escapades were impeachable offenses.

I am not trying to justify the terrible violations of human rights by the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. But there are two kinds of sins: sins we commit and sins others commit. Or as my father taught me: Two wrongs do not make a right.

The Vietnamese revolution was fought for the same reason our American Revolution was fought—to put an end to foreign rule. The lesson of the Vietnam War is not that we should only fight wars when we are prepared to use overwhelming force, but that all life is sacred, and all people have the right to choose their own government and to live without fear that a foreign nation will drop napalm on their children.

As I have already mentioned, we were told the purpose of our interventions in the Third World during the Cold War was to stem the tide of Communism. This excuse was a cover for the real intent of our leaders: to prevent foreign governments from interfering with the activities of American businessmen. Our politicians saw popular movements as a threat to America's markets and sources of raw materials. They feared American corporations would have their investments nationalized if the common people were allowed to govern themselves. Military regimes which could be

bought off with money and weapons were, therefore, preferable. No concern was shown for the people who would suffer under these dictatorships.

In 1953 the CIA directed a coup that overthrew the government of Mossadegh in Iran and restored the Shah to power. The Eisenhower administration was not happy with Mossadegh because he had nationalized the foreign dominated Anglo-Iranian Oil Company.

Soon afterwards the U.S. government began to train the Iranian police in the techniques of torture. According to State Department documents, the police are able to “first detect discontent among the people” and “should serve as one of the major means by which the government assures itself of acceptance by the majority.” The U.S. trained police in torture in many other Third World nations, including Argentina, El Salvador, Guatemala, the Philippines, and Vietnam, and supplied them with cattle prods and other tools.

In 1954 the CIA backed a military coup in Guatemala that overthrew the democratically elected government, after that government had confiscated the land of the United Fruit Company. In 1964 the U.S. gave its blessing to the Brazilian military before the military staged a coup that overthrew the popular liberal government. In 1965, after democratic forces in the Dominican Republic had removed a government set up by the army, President Johnson sent American troops to that nation to reinstall the dictatorship. In 1973 the Nixon administration gave its support to the military junta in Chile that ousted the socialist government of President Allende.

During the 1980s the United States spent more than six billion dollars financing ruthless military regimes in El Salvador and Guatemala. Right wing death squads operating under the protection of the military tortured, mutilated, and killed tens of thousands of civilians in these two nations. Finally in 1992 the U.S. told the military rulers to end the war in El Salvador. Almost immediately, the military agreed to a cease-fire and to share power with the leftist forces. If we had denied support to the military from the beginning, tens of thousands of people would not have died, and the environmental degradation of much of the countryside would not have occurred. It will take a long time for El Salvador to recover from this American adventure. The suffering of the Guatemalan people is not yet over.

Aware of the American people’s confusion of independent, nationalist, and socialist governments with Communism, dictators in the Third World learned to play and win a game with the U.S. To win, to gain American support, all they had to do was to declare they were anti-Communists and imprison, torture, and murder anyone who opposed them. In Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Vietnam, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Uruguay, Angola, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa, Zaire, Iran under the Shah, Iraq, Israel, and many other nations, the United States gave diplomatic recognition and sent money and military equipment to governments that imprisoned, tortured, and killed people struggling for some of the same rights our patriots won for us over two hundred years ago.

I hope I have made it clear that the real motivation behind America’s interventions in the Third World has not been to support democracy or human rights, or because of any genuine Soviet or Chinese military threat. In most cases, the incentive has been the promotion of capitalism. As further proof, consider the following two horror stories from the post-Cold War era. (A note: Since the end of the Cold War, the most common justification for or against foreign actions has been

“national interest,” as in “It was in our national interest to go to war with Panama and Iraq,” and “It would not be in our national interest to help the people in Bosnia and Haiti.” “National interest” is political doublespeak for “whatever increases the profits of American businessmen, corporations, and investors.”)

On a December night in 1989, 20,000 American troops invaded the nation of Panama. The stated goal of this invasion was to capture General Manuel Noriega, a military dictator who had been on the CIA payroll since the 1970s. When Noriega refused to do as he was told, the Bush administration “discovered” that he was trafficking in narcotics. This fact was well-known to the CIA when he was useful to them.

The war went far beyond any effort to capture General Noriega. New laser weapons were tested on the civilian population. Massive firepower was directed on poor neighborhoods. Hundreds of homes were deliberately burned to the ground. Individuals stopped at military roadblocks were executed on the spot. Eyewitnesses said that American soldiers shot everything that moved; they reported that a U.S. tank destroyed a bus, killing twenty-six people. They also said that American soldiers fired on an ambulance, and bayoneted the wounded inside. In the weeks that followed the invasion, men between the ages of fifteen and fifty-five were rounded up and taken to detention centers by the American troops. Thousands of university professors and cultural, labor, and political leaders were also arrested.

While the Pentagon said that Panamanian casualties were no higher than 550, the estimates from the U.N. and human rights’ organizations ranged from 2500 to 4000 killed. In his speech proclaiming victory, President Bush said, “Every human life is precious.” After the war hundreds of bodies were found in mass graves, including those of women, children, the old, and the disabled.

It appears that the goal of the Bush administration was to install a government that would be friendly to U.S. business interests and that would allow American troops to remain in Panama beyond the year 2000, when by treaty, the U.S. is required to turn the Canal Zone over to the Panamanian people. How else can the murders, arrests, and detentions of civilians who might be critical of U.S. domination of Panama be explained?

In the summer of 1990 President Bush sent American troops to the Middle East to protect the West’s oil pipeline on the Arabian Peninsula. Suddenly our ally Saddam Hussein had become the new Hitler—an example of how those in power can twist facts to fit their purposes. (It has been said that many of Saddam Hussein’s weapons were purchased with money from U.S. loans.) Bush rejected all offers to negotiate; a peaceful settlement could have resulted in an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait without the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives.

During the Gulf War allied planes devastated the infrastructure of Iraq. A U.N. embargo on trade with Iraq is still in effect, as I write these words in 1994. The consequence of the destruction of the infrastructure and the embargo will be the deaths of tens of thousands of innocent people, mostly children, from malnutrition, diseases related to unsanitary living conditions, and lack of medical care. And for what reason will these children die? Because President Bush drew a line in the sand, and so that his friends in the Kuwaiti monarchy (Bush had American troops rebuild the palace) could return to rule a nation the British carved out of Iraq.

I understand that America and her allies successfully fought for the freedom of Europe from the Nazi war machine and the freedom of Asia from Japanese

militarism, and that without the U.S. presence in the world after the Second World War, the Soviet Union and China may have overrun Europe and Asia. But the defeat of Germany and Japan, and the containment of the Soviet Union and China does not justify our slaughter of the people of the Third World on the altars of anti-communist hysteria, capitalism, national interest, and secure borders.

I believe the lesson of Vietnam, Central America, the Persian Gulf, and other U.S. foreign interventions is that all life is sacred. I believe all people have the right to choose their own government. I believe the principles of the Declaration of Independence are universal: All men and women, no matter what race, religion, or nationality, are created equal.

A nation or government which kills, tortures, represses or assists in or encourages the killing, torture, and repression of citizens of foreign lands is committing international murder and other crimes, for which the political and military leaders involved should be held accountable in a world court of law.

My hands have been stained with innocent blood because I am an American, and the crimes of America are my crimes too. The abuses of the rights of people of other nations by the people and the government of the United States prove that no nation can be trusted with great power.

One Human Race, One Earth: Guidelines For A Universal Mythology

Imagine all the people sharing all the world.

You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one.

I hope someday you'll join us, and the world will live as one.

John Lennon

It is time for man to recognize that devotion to the earth is a superior virtue to national patriotism. If we are going to overcome the challenges of today, we must begin to give our love and allegiance to the planet and all the people on it. We need to make the same pledge that was made at a peace convention in Boston in 1838: "Our country is the world, our countrymen are all mankind." When we realize that we are all citizens of a country called earth, the reasons for war and defense spending will disappear.

At the same time this manuscript is being completed, horrible atrocities are occurring in Haiti and Rwanda. Wars in Angola and Bosnia are taking a terrible toll in civilian lives. A true world government would have the power and the will to stop these murders and prosecute the murderers. A competent world government would, better still, have been able to prevent the buildup of power and the breakdown of society that preceded these human rights' disasters. True justice and peace in the world is not possible before there is a world government with real authority to act.

I recognize that an international government could use its power to suppress human rights. The way to prevent this is to model the world government after the U.S. federal system with its checks and balances, to include a bill of rights, and to limit the world government's functions and abilities to gather power. The world government's role should be to keep the peace and to ensure that nature's rights and

human rights are respected; the world government should only act when national governments fail to fulfill their responsibilities. The world government should have no standing army, but should borrow its forces from local governments.

Below are some of my thoughts about world government and a mythology for the new age:

1. **Rights:** First we must recognize that God lives within all It has created; therefore, all things have rights. No one can be allowed to act publicly without regard for how the act will affect others. There are two major classes of rights:

A. **The Rights Of Nature:** Nature's rights include the survival of species and the health of forests, waterways, wetlands, wilderness areas, rivers, lakes, and oceans. The protection of nature's rights should be one of the primary functions of government.

B. **The Rights Of Man:** Human rights include equal opportunities for a decent life: a good job, a home, an education, and medical care. Human rights also consist of freedom of speech and religion, of assembly, press, the right to participate in government, and freedom from government interference in one's life. The protection of human rights should be the other primary function of government.

2. **Poverty:** There is no justification for private wealth in the midst of poverty. To end poverty, men must be allowed to form self-supporting communities. These communities should be financed by a tax on the richest members of society. There is enough money to end poverty in the world if we would prohibit hoarding and waste and prosecute corruption in society and government. Remember, the greatest resource we have is not the capital of wealthy investors, but the ability of ordinary people to work hard and creatively.

3. **The Military:** Nations should eliminate military forces and rely on local militias for defense. When one nation acts aggressively towards another, the United Nations, using militias from around the world, should stop the violence quickly with a minimum of force.

4. **Love And Reason:** We have been listening to the voices of fear and hate and greed for too long. It is time to start listening to the voices of love and reason. We can't have a peaceful, just world unless we forgive those who have wronged us, talk to those we disagree with and attempt to understand their point of view, and make an effort to cooperate with others.

5. **Law Of Compounding:** We don't have to overcome all of our challenges immediately. A little progress today, a little more next week, a little more the following week—if we keep that up, we will have made a tremendous improvement in only a few years. That is the law of compounding, used in banking and finance. It can serve us here too—the key is that we need to keep making progress.

6. **You:** You have a right to be here. You are a unique, worthy creature. Without you the universe would be different. Being an important creature, you are given great power: the power to create your own life. In the words of Jane Roberts: “You get what you concentrate on.” Or as Jesus said, “Seek and you shall find” and “As you sow, so shall you reap.” In your interactions with others, try the Golden Rule stated in negative terms: Don’t do to others what you would not want done to you.

7. **Ideals:** The ideals of our new mythology could be these beliefs: God is all there is. Man is part of nature. All men and women are responsible for their actions.

8. **The End Does Not Justify The Means:** Often in the past people have twisted good ideals into an excuse to repress people. That will not happen in the future if we remember that the methods used to achieve a just society must never violate the principles of justice. These words of Jane Roberts should be the first commandment of the new age: “Thou shall not kill even in the pursuit of your ideals.”

9. **The Abyss:** We are standing near a great void. Every step we take closer to the edge is our decision. In the words of Abraham Lincoln: “If destruction be our lot, we ourselves must be the authors and the finishers.”

10. **The Final Word:** Peace.

Saturday, July 4, 2076

When the sun rose that morning I was just getting to sleep. I had spent the night reading Exellon’s book and trying to reconcile his opinions with my world view.

Around noon Edward came by to check on me. Together we walked over to Exellon’s cabin. As we reached his home, we noticed the door was open. We walked inside and found Exellon in bed, speaking to a person who was busy writing down his words. Edward whispered to me, “He’s giving his protocol statement. That is what people do when they feel they are near death. We read the statements at their funerals. Let’s move closer so we can hear what he is saying.”

If I had the time, I would explain how disarmament was achieved. But I wonder if I should not quit here. For with the awakening of the love in the hearts of men, the Age of Light became a foregone conclusion. As the great Gandhi said, “In the long run, no force can prevail against love and truth.”

The success of this nation—its ability to offer each citizen the opportunity to develop his potential—is testament to the wisdom of our Founding Fathers in making dignity, freedom, and justice our basic principles. America has fulfilled her destined role as model to the world.

Exellon fell asleep, so we left. At the special dinner that night one of the members gave the blessing. I was told it was called The Communion Prayer: “We thank the corn, the rice, the wheat, the beans and all the other vegetables, the

watermelons, the apples in the pies, and Ferdinand, our beloved bull, for dying so that we may live. One day we will become food for the living.”

After we ate, we gathered on the grass of the softball field, where a small platform had been set up. There were several boring speeches and then Exellon was wheeled to the stage. He began:

I know you all wish I would hurry up and finish, but I have something to say, and you're going to listen. Besides, the show can't start until I give the signal, because I'm chairman of the fireworks committee.

Now that I have everyone's attention, I want to make it clear that I expect the orchards to be given as much water after I'm gone as they received while I was here. I know some of you have been trying to cut the allotment. If you do, I'll come back and haunt this place.

A voice in the crowd asked, “Where are you going, X-Man?”

“My body is returning to the earth, and my spirit is returning to the other world.”

A different voice proclaimed, “In that case, we're going to make firewood out of your orchard.”

“You just watch out, Ollie. You and Jerry and Pat are first on my haunt list.”

Ollie responded by shouting, “Ronald Reagan!”

Edward had warned me never to mention Reagan's name in Exellon's presence. Upon hearing that name, Exellon's face turned red, and he said, “That hypocrite! That murdering, lying, thieving incompetent!”

The commune members laughed.

A third voice: “Get on with it, then.”

Exellon quickly regained his composure, and he continued:

That's what's wrong with all you young people. You're always in such a hurry. The New Earth wasn't built in a day, you know.

There was a pause, as if he were rewinding a tape in his head.

We have come a long way. Three hundred years ago the ancestors of our black brothers and sisters were in chains, and women were not much better off. The Indian nations were about to be crushed under the wheels of Manifest Destiny.

In the second half of the twentieth century, America was the sole great power to survive the Second World War with her industrial base intact. America often used her wealth in those days to support brutal dictatorships in Third World nations. One President, Jimmy Carter, saw the horror of this, and he made human rights a cornerstone of his foreign policy. The Iran hostage crisis that ended his presidency was, I believe, the result of his failure to apply his human rights policy to Iran.

There is no war now. All international disputes are settled in courts, not on battlefields. Until mankind learned to stop making war, the world you live in would not have been possible.

With peace on earth, America could realize her mission: To give the world a model for a new age. A land where the rights of men and women of all cultures, lifestyles, and races are respected, where nature is loved and protected, and where a fulfilling life is available to all.

We have demonstrated that individual freedom and responsibility are the keys to creating a happy, healthy society. I can say that almost without exception, every government on earth is honest, just, and concerned with the well-being of its citizens. The principles of the Declaration of Independence are now the universal creed.

Exellon raised his left hand, and then he spread his middle and index fingers to form a peace sign. That must have been the signal, for fireworks began soaring into the night air from behind the center field fence. It was a spectacle I'll never forget, and the last time I saw Exellon.

Sunday, July 5, 2076

At breakfast a commune member announced that Exellon had died during the night. A minute of silence was observed. He also said a ceremony would be held that evening at sunset in the orchards below Exellon's house, where he would be buried. The commune member added with a smile, "Don't forget to bring your axes."

This was the day I was scheduled to see Mary, the woman I had talked with when I arrived. Mary was the leader of First Gandhi.

We met after breakfast. She explained to me how society had been transformed so that everyone could live with dignity. I have summarized her statements here:

1. Vacant buildings were opened to the homeless and the poor. The first village communes were formed.

2. A new tax structure was created to redistribute wealth. A 100% tax, called an accumulation tax, was imposed on individual net worth over \$2,000,000. Income taxes were eliminated for all but the wealthy; a simple flat tax was imposed on them.

3. Natural resources were transferred to the public domain and were allocated with a concern for the rights of nature and future generations.

4. These changes were brought about gradually, not all at once, and they were fully explained to the people. No one was deprived of their personal belongings, their home, or a livelihood.

Mary told me government was seen to have three functions, government was not allowed to spend more than it took in, and government officials and politicians were subject to instant dismissal by their constituents:

1. The first function was to protect rights. The definition of rights had grown from the political and civil liberties of our time to also include the right of all species to live in peace, the right of future generations to inherit a healthy planet, and the

right of all men and women to share in the wealth of the earth. The protection of rights was the duty of local governments. State and federal governments were next in the chain of responsibility. Ultimate responsibility rested with the United Nations.

2. The second function was to provide services when a monopoly was the most practical way of getting things done (mail delivery, energy, and telecommunications were examples), and in the few other areas government should be involved in: public safety, libraries, parks, and the maintenance of the infrastructure. To avoid the inefficiency of government-run enterprises in the twentieth century, civil service was abolished.

3. The third purpose of government was to direct the execution of the remaining public services. This was primarily the duty of local governments. For example, fire fighting, education, and sanitation were handled by associations that were required to submit bids to the local government in order to win their contracts. These associations were either villages or partnerships. Parents were permitted to choose which school their child would attend. A popular school opened branches; unpopular schools went out of business.

4. A local government's funding came from those receiving or benefitting from its services. State, federal, and UN governments depended upon local governments for most of their revenues; they also received income from the sale or lease of natural resources. Constitutions at every level prohibited governments from passing debts onto succeeding generations.

5. Government officials and politicians were subject to instant dismissal by a majority vote of their constituents. Elected public servants needed a two-thirds vote to be returned to office for a second term. In 2076 it was easy for good public servants to get a two-thirds vote, because there was little partisanship in politics.

Mary said, "Public office is considered an honor, not an opportunity to feed at the public trough. No one is permitted to enrich himself, his family, or his friends directly or indirectly. Anyone who profits from the misuse of public office is deprived of any wealth gained and also has to face criminal penalties. These laws are strictly enforced."

I said, "In the twentieth century we mostly elected lawyers to state and national offices."

She said, "No wonder you have so many laws. Allowing lawyers to write laws is like letting the fox watch the hen house. We have decentralized government, so our most important decisions are made at the local level, by ordinary citizens who don't speak legalese. As a result, our state and national legislators have very little to do."

I asked, "Where does government in 2076 draw the line between protecting rights and interfering in individual lives?"

Mary replied, "What people do to themselves is not the concern of government. When their actions affect others then government gets involved. But I see what you mean—everything we do affects somebody or something. By walking across this grass I may crush an ant. Every time we eat, we are killing something. We realize that for life to go on, there must be death. What we do is we try to eliminate any

unnecessary interference in the lives of others. We understand that each species has the right to survive and prosper.”

“What about crime: Do people still lock their doors? Is it safe to walk the streets at night?”

“I think I can best answer your questions by saying that men have changed in fundamental ways. Due to this change, many of your difficulties have either disappeared or declined to a level where we can manage them. The New Age did not arrive through the passage of more laws, by the hiring of more police, or by the building of more prisons. We achieved the harmony and the peace the world now enjoys by reducing the number of laws and the power of government institutions and by changing inside: We looked within our hearts and found the good in ourselves and others.

“People today respect the rights of others, including the right to be different. We are taught this from an early age. I know that the people in your time do not believe a non-coercive society is possible. They cannot imagine men acting graciously toward each other without fear of punishment motivating them. But in our day people want to be responsible citizens.”

A commune member, apologizing for the interruption, entered the room and asked Mary if she would mediate a dispute. I told her I would return the next day.

Monday, July 6, 2076

On the ninth day Mary took me on a tour. The commune was laid out so that the dining hall/meeting room, the school, the library, the recreation area, and the small health clinic formed the nucleus. Most of the residences were located around this hub. Individuals who preferred more privacy lived in the homes scattered throughout the nearby hills. The commune grew most of the food it consumed, generated its own electricity, and had its own carpenters, mechanics, teachers, and cooks.

I asked Mary if the commune members were happy in their work. Didn't some of them have better jobs than others? Weren't some members envious of others because of the jobs they had?

She said the popular jobs were rotated; no one got stuck doing unpleasant work. During harvests everyone pitched in. Mary said that people whose jobs required them to be indoors welcomed the opportunity to do physical labor, for it was widely recognized that working in nature brought man in touch with himself and reminded him of his connection with the earth.

I mentioned to Mary that it appeared from what I had seen that there were no lazy, uncooperative people in 2076. Mary said that was not true—there were people who did not want to work or who did not get along with others. Those people were usually ostracized. They ended up moving to other villages, or trying to make it on their own. When they left the village they surrendered the security of the home, the medical care, and the other support the village provided. Government maintained no safety net in 2076: no unemployment insurance, welfare, Medicaid, Medicare, or Social Security systems.

I asked Mary why government had abandoned the role of helping the unemployed, the poor, the sick, and the old. She answered, “In your time governments are doing, or attempting to do, what families and communities should be

doing. The world has returned to the old standard that saw the family and the community as the focus of life. Society is structured so that there are no extreme contrasts in wealth and so that it is not easy for men to harm nature or each other.”

In the afternoon we visited the areas where the animals lived. I was happy to see that no animals were kept in cages or pens. While on the subject of animals, I remarked that I was horrified by the cruel experiments performed on animals in my day. Mary said experimentation on animals had been outlawed. She reminded me of what Jesus had said, “Whatsoever you do unto the least of my brethren, you do unto me.”

I was impressed with the affection the members displayed toward the livestock. Noticing a member calling one of the pigs by name, I asked him if he ever became attached to an animal and was unable to kill it.

He replied, “No, because we wait until the animal has reached old age. We don’t kill our animals in their prime like you do, so our meat isn’t as tasty as your meat. On the other hand, our meat comes from animals that have been loved, not brutalized and terrorized, so our meat is healthy for us to eat.”

Mary talked about farming: “We emphasize sustainable agriculture. That is farming that does not injure the earth. First Gandhi practices sustainable agriculture by growing many different crops and by raising several kinds of animals.

“Sustainable agriculture is also organic. It was said in your time that if all farms were organic, people would starve. The cause of this misconception was the fact that organic farming often resulted in lower yields in the first years after switching from scientific methods. The farmer had to experiment to determine the best crop rotation, and he had to find substitutes for the pesticides and fertilizers he had been using. Organic agriculture requires a greater sensitivity to nature.

“There are several significant advantages to organic agriculture: Foods are being grown that are healthy for the individual. Chemicals are not being put into the soil and water that can harm living things. Man is working with nature, not against her.

“One hundred years ago only a few million people in the United States were farmers. Today, if you count all the people associated with rural villages, there are over two hundred and fifty million farmers in America. In the nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, the ratio of rural citizens to urban citizens is even higher. In fact, eighty percent of the people in the world live on farms and in rural communities.”

Tuesday, July 7, 2076

On this day Mary took me to see First Gandhi’s urban center. Our trip to the city gave me my first chance to ride in the electric car Exellon had told me about. It was comfortable and quiet, and it’s acceleration was faster than the Volkswagen bug I owned in the twentieth century. When I asked her about the car, she said, “This automobile was built to last. We understand that the earth cannot support consumption for its own sake. We have an expression: ‘Only take what you need.’”

During the trip Mary told me, “There is one luxury from your time we consider a necessity: travel. We encourage every village member to see the world. Some members, falling in love in or with other lands, never return.”

We were on our way to the city of San Jose, about twenty-five kilometers to the north of the commune. San Jose was in the Santa Clara Valley, where I grew up.

When I was a child it had nearly one million fruit trees, and called itself the apricot and prune capitals of the world. In the 1980s it became known as Silicon Valley—the capital of high-tech, and the home to more than one million people.

We rode on Highway 101. Instead of finding it filled with noisy, polluting autos and trucks, I saw only silent electric vehicles. In the middle of the freeway were two lines on which monorail trains flew by at great speed. I noticed as we neared the city that the sky was as clear as the sky above the commune, not hazy as I remembered the summer skies of San Jose to be.

Mary told me life in a city was more competitive than on a rural commune, but the stress was nothing like that of urban life in 1992. It was not possible to make a lot of money, so people did not overwork themselves, and they did not feel a need to do one hundred things in a day, so they were not in a hurry to go from one place to another.

Nearly everyone in a city was associated with a rural commune. You could live at your urban center for a period of time and visit the rural commune when you wanted a break. If your rural commune was close to the city, you could commute to your job every day.

City communes usually were involved with manufacturing or with running small businesses. Rural communes with urban centers were mainly devoted to farming. Communes far from cities often did not have an urban counterpart; besides farming they engaged in many of the kinds of activities performed by the city communes.

Mary said First Gandhi made no effort to store up wealth or to grow physically in terms of the amount of land it occupied. The commune attempted to make only enough goods and to cultivate only enough land to serve the needs of its members. She told me these words of Gandhi were written above the entrance to the commune: “The earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs, but not for every man’s greed.”

Mary mentioned to me that in 2076 most transactions were executed with money for the sake of simplicity, but there was also much bartering. Some communes traded exclusively by bartering. I asked her if there were any price controls in 2076. I wanted to know what prevented an individual or a commune from monopolizing the local supply of an item and charging a high price. Mary said people or communes could not do that because it would not be tolerated. Pressure would be placed upon the gouger by others.

When we arrived in San Jose we stopped at First Gandhi’s urban center. It was a block of homes in a residential neighborhood. Where the street had once been there was now a playground, a recreation area for adults, a large vegetable garden, and fruit trees. There was a small parking lot at the end of the block and next to it was a workshop, a two story building about thirty meters long and ten meters wide. We did not go inside, but Mary told me computer chips were made there.

I asked Mary how the commune governed itself. She said she had been elected to lead First Gandhi by a two-thirds vote of the members. The members could remove her from her position at any time by a majority vote. She did not make important decisions; they were made in the weekly meeting held in the dining commons. The urban center was linked to the rural commune by video during the meetings. Issues were decided by a two-thirds vote.

She told me how the commune allocated its income: All commune earnings were first applied to satisfying the needs of the members—food, shelter, clothing,

education, medical care, etc. In years when there was a surplus, the commune paid a salary to its members based upon the amount of work the individual did and the value of that work to the commune.

What interested me was how taxes had changed. No basic necessities were ever taxed, nor were there any property taxes. She said all the federal, state, and local taxes of the twentieth century had been reduced to only four: the accumulation, gift, inheritance, and income taxes, all of which were assessed at the local level. The revenues from these taxes were used to redistribute wealth. If there was any money left over, it was used to pay the costs of the local government. Mary said that when the new taxes were first applied, some of the revenues from the wealthy regions of the world were transferred to the poorer regions, because it was understood that the rich had made their money from the labor and resources of others. By the middle of the century, when the wealth of the people around the world had evened out, this practice was discontinued.

In the afternoon we boarded a monorail that circled the San Francisco Bay in two hours, despite stops in the cities of Fremont, Hayward, Oakland, Berkeley, Richmond, San Rafael, San Francisco, Daly City, San Mateo, Redwood City, and Palo Alto.

During our monorail excursion Mary told me about the distinction they made between public and private acts. Public acts were actions of an individual that could affect other people or nature in significant ways without their consent. Private acts were all other actions of an individual alone or with other consenting adults. Private acts were not the concern of the commune or the government, but public acts were regulated.

She said this about guns: “It is difficult for us to believe today that intelligent people in your time argued that a man had the right to own a weapon that could kill dozens of people in a few seconds. Or that your society would even consider that a matter worthy of debate. How could the freedom of one individual be more important than the right of the public to live in safety?”

I told Mary, “I saw a guy from the National Rifle Association say on TV that people had the right to own assault weapons because they were used in competition, and also because they were collected by gun lovers.”

Mary laughed and said, “Following that line of reasoning, if I announce I’m going to have an armored vehicle race, then you have the right to own a tank.”

I said, “And if I decide I want to have a weapons-of-mass-destruction exhibit on my property, the government would be stepping on my rights if it said I couldn’t bury a Minuteman missile in my backyard.”

Mary next talked about corporations. She said the corporation, which was an invention of capitalism, had been outlawed early in the twenty-first century. She mentioned several reasons used to justify the elimination of corporations: Corporations permitted men to become rich from the labor of others. Corporations enabled men to concentrate power: The concentration of power allowed the owners to exploit workers and endanger their health and safety, especially in nations where there were few laws to protect labor. The concentration of power also made it easier for the owners to buy politicians and abuse the environment. And in a court of law a corporation had the same privileges as a person, without the responsibilities: A corporation could sue to have its “rights” upheld, but if a corporation committed criminal acts, the shareholders were not put in jail.

I asked, “Don’t you lose a lot of efficiency when you eliminate corporations?”

“When we weigh the value of greater production against the value of a human life, there is no contest. Today, we believe a job should not only allow the individual to support himself and his family, but it should also add to the quality of his life by giving him the opportunity to express his creativity. We want our jobs to use our hands and our brains; we are not interested in work that can be performed by robots. So today we favor community gardens and small farms over mechanized farming, shops over factories, and small businesses over large ones.

“In 2076 no one is permitted to hide under the corporate veil. Corporations have been replaced by what you in the twentieth century call general partnerships. But unlike your partnerships, which can have owners and employees, all businesses in 2076 are owned by their workers, who are held accountable for the actions of their company. There are no men anymore with the power to hire, abuse, and fire people—there are no bosses.”

I said, “If there are no bosses, then there is anarchy.”

She replied, “That’s the idea.”

Then I saw my mistake. I was thinking of the twentieth century definition of anarchy when I spoke. I rephrased my question: “If no one tells people what to do, how is it possible for them to work together? What if one of the partners is lazy—I guess you can’t get rid of him?”

This is what she said in response: “When people work together, they elect a leader to coordinate their activities. This leader can be removed by a majority vote at any time. The leader, therefore, exerts power only with the consent of the group. The leader cannot fire anyone, but the group can decide they don’t want to work with someone. That person is paid or given his share of the assets and is asked to leave. Also, an individual can choose to end his association with the group. Usually this is accomplished without bitterness. People today want harmony in their relationships.

“I know all this may sound like nonsense to people in 1992. They think men will not cooperate with each other unless they are coerced, but you must remember what I told you earlier: Our society could only succeed if men changed fundamentally from your time. We know the people of your time have the ability to change, because our society grew out of yours.”

I asked Mary if communes were required to own everything. She said no one was forced to join a commune, although almost everyone did. There were businesses and farms owned by individuals. It was against the law for those individuals to hire employees. Once a business or farm got so big that the owner could not do all the work himself, he either contracted out some of the work or he took on partners. Throughout the world men associated freely with each other.

I asked her if partnerships were limited in size by law.

She answered, “No. There is still a need for large associations. An example is manufacturing that involves a substantial capital investment, such as autos, airliners, and large ships. Those factories and shipyards are owned by the workers, so those partnerships have several thousand members.

I asked, “Is government still bloated with employees?”

“We have whittled down the number of government employees to a fraction of their number in your day by eliminating many of the regulating and licensing activities of government, by reducing the layers of bureaucracy, and by returning most government functions to the local level. Still, the size of government is larger

than we would like. We tell our government employees that their ambition should be to make their occupations unnecessary.”

I asked her what was done to protect business owners from lawsuits. I told her one of the reasons businesses incorporated in the twentieth century was that the owners could only be sued to the extent of the capital of their corporation.

She replied, “You must be referring to the litigation explosion in your time. Ninety-five percent of your lawsuits would be thrown out of court today. We expect people to accept responsibility for their lives. If one person injures another through negligence or intent, the criminal courts will deal with the situation. Sometimes the courts will impose monetary penalties, which are limited—we don’t allow lawyers to go around looking for deep pockets.”

My last question for Mary was: “What happened to the Democrats and the Republicans?”

“We have no established political parties. We understand that time and power corrupt all institutions.”

Mary paused, then added: “We know that the longer an institution exists, the more likely the institution will forget its original mission, and the more likely its leaders and bureaucrats will decide their purpose is the protection, consolidation, and expansion of their power. Thomas Jefferson recognized the danger posed by institutions when he wrote that there should be a revolution in America every twenty-five years.”

Wednesday, July 8, 2076

On the eleventh day I went to talk with Mother Elizabeth, the other woman I had met when I awoke in the commune. She told me she was a priestess of the Gaian Catholic Church, a wife, and a parent. These are excerpts from our conversations:

“Your civilization has yet to discover how a man’s intents, beliefs, and desires shape his experiences.”

“Your people have got to stop killing each other, but they also must understand it is okay to die.”

“A day is like a life: You are reborn in the morning fresh like a child, you do your work during the day, and at night you are tired so you lay down to rest.”

“All time is simultaneous: The years 1992 and 2076 both occur in the spacious present. When you take into consideration simultaneous time and reincarnation, you can say that you’re as dead now as you’ll ever be. Or if you think of yourself as a visitor from another reality to which you will return after you die, death isn’t scary at all—it’s going home.”

“Everything is alive—a rock, an insect, an atom, this table—because all things possess consciousness. Consciousness can never be destroyed.”

“Since God is within all Its Creations, then Earth is God, and the Children of Earth are God; therefore, all things have rights, and their rights are sacred.”

“Some people have used the theory of evolution to excuse the ruthlessness of capitalism, but they were seeing nature as they wanted to see her. Anyone who opens his heart to nature knows nature is based upon cooperation. If there were brutal competition in nature as your scientists said, the world would not survive for an instant.”

“There was much discussion in your time about the conflict between science and Christianity over evolution, but few talked about what science and Christianity had in common: They both viewed man as the highest or most advanced creature on the earth and they both saw the world as a savage, selfish place.”

“Several centuries after Christ, Christian leaders put together a book they claimed was the Word of God, although it was written by many men, and they developed a dogma based upon the teachings of St. Paul: Man’s nature is sinful because he is born with the stain of the sin of Adam on his soul, and because the flesh is weak and under constant temptation from the evil world. God sent Jesus, His Only Begotten Son, to die for man’s sins so that man might have eternal life with Him in heaven. Only those who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord can be saved from hell.”

Elizabeth told me of a conversation she had with one of the few remaining believers in the old Christianity:

The Christian said to Elizabeth, “Everything in the Bible is true because the men who wrote it were inspired by God.”

Elizabeth asked, “How do you know this?”

The Christian answered, “We know the Bible is God’s Word because we have been blessed with faith.”

Elizabeth said, “There are people who believe in other Gods than your God, and they have their own holy books. How can you say your book is true and theirs is a lie?”

The Christian said, “All other religions except for Judaism worship false gods, and the Jews have failed to recognize the divinity of Jesus. Christianity is the one true religion.”

Elizabeth asked, “How do you know that?”

The Christian answered, “We know Christianity is the one true religion because we have been blessed with faith. If you want to be saved, you must ask Jesus to come into your heart.”

Elizabeth said to the Christian, “You tell me your book and your religion are true, and when I ask you for proof, you say your faith is proof. Faith is not proof: Faith is what you choose to believe. Your religion is arrogant, illogical, and intolerant. It is for people who are afraid to trust themselves. My God loves all kinds of people, and wants us to be strong and to take responsibility for our lives.”

Here are more excerpts from our conversations that day:

“Your generation must stop living as if you own the earth. The book of Genesis is wrong. God did not give man dominion over the earth. Those words were written by greedy men. We are supposed to share the earth with all forms of life. That is what God really wants.”

“The old Christianity taught that man should love God, and if he did not, God would send him to hell forever. Now what sort of a God is that? A cold-hearted, cruel God, not a God of Love.”

“The Old Testament cannot be the Word of God. God does not want man to take an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. As Gandhi said, ‘An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind.’”

“How can the Old Testament be the Word of God when the God of the Old Testament commands the Israelites to conquer the Promised Land by the sword, and to kill every man, woman, and child in Jericho and in the cities of northern and southern Canaan?”

“I’ll tell you what kind of a God you find in the Old Testament: a God created by violent men to justify their aggression against weaker nations. That is not the true God, but only a crude god made in the image of a warlike people.”

“People in your time believed the Four Gospels were divinely inspired, when in fact they were edited versions of the original texts, rewritten in the fourth century to fit the beliefs of the leaders of the Catholic Church. Words were put into the mouth of Jesus. References to reincarnation were removed or altered. Mary was made out to be a virgin, because normal motherhood was thought to be unclean, due to the Church’s rejection of the world.”

“There were other gospels left out of the Bible, because they had Jesus saying things the Church found threatening. For example, *The Gospel According To Thomas* contains a passage in which Christ responds to a question from one of the apostles about the coming of the Kingdom of God: ‘The Kingdom shall not come by expectation. The Kingdom is spread across the face of the earth, and men do not see it.’ A profession of priests would find such ideas dangerous, because if God were already in their midst, there would be no need for a church.”

“In the early Christian centuries a decision was made to treat the stories about Jesus as historical facts. The Catholic Church later wrote the Nicene Creed, which spells out the beliefs of the Church. That Creed was the result of the victory of one faction of the Church over a group that wanted to view Jesus as a Buddha-like man: a human incarnation of God sent to remind us of the divinity of all creation. Today the Buddhist view has won over the Catholic Church. The Church teaches that we are all incarnations of God. To become aware of that truth and to live out of that knowledge is our task.”

Thursday, July 9, 2076

This is what Mother Elizabeth said when I asked her to talk more about science:

“Your scientists are men of great faith. It takes a strong faith to believe that chance and the laws of physics and chemistry designed and built the universe with all its complexities and wonders. If you put limits on what you will admit is real as your scientist do, if you decide to only accept what you can see, detect with your instruments, or fit into your theories, you force yourself into incredible conclusions.

“In order for science to be reborn, scientists had to realize that nature cannot be comprehended by dissecting it or by standing apart from it. Science now recognizes that the spiritual plane is the source of the physical universe. For example, our doctors understand that the beliefs and attitudes of an individual are more relevant to the cure of his sickness than the identification of any virus or anything else they can do for him. In your time, doctors were treated like gods. Now we know the patient is the god: The patient is the creator of his experiences.

“Your medicine uses self-hypnosis in the wrong way: It teaches people to look for symptoms of specific diseases. It also teaches people to fear they will become ill by constantly telling them there are many diseases waiting for the opportunity to attack them.

“In your day, many people believe medicine saved them from cancer or from some other disease. We think those people who survived their illnesses would have survived without doctors. We do not believe there are victims of any disease. We believe, as Jane Roberts said, that no one dies before he is ready to die.

“Now that men no longer fear death, they do not ask to be kept alive when they are spiritually and physically ready to let go. I understand that in your time some terminally ill people had themselves frozen in the hope a cure could be found in the future. All those bodies that were frozen have been thawed out and placed into your cemeteries. Our cemeteries become farmland after fifty years, but yours, because in your time people were pumped full of chemicals, are considered toxic waste dumps now.

“By burying people in metal or concrete boxes, your society violates a basic law of nature: The dead shall become food for the living.”

Friday, July 10, 2076

Mother Elizabeth told me that native cultures believe the entire earth is Holy Land. You don't have to go anywhere to be in the Holy Land, therefore, because it is all around you. She said native cultures have a reverence for all life, and try to live in harmony with the world.

She said that our Western civilization, which wiped out most of the native cultures in the world, sees nature as an adversary; this attitude is the cause of the great environmental challenges we face in 1992. “Today,” she said, “mankind is at peace with the earth. The way the Indian relates to nature is a model for us.”

Indians see themselves as participants in the Great Mystery of Life, she said. The old Christianity, on the other hand, said that life was a trail of tears. The old Christianity condemned the world and declared that the senses and the body could not be trusted. Man was supposed to rise above his sinful nature; only then could he be saved.

“It was not man who was flawed, it was his beliefs,” she said. “Your religion told you the heart of man was wicked; therefore, many men failed to love themselves and in fact felt guilty to be alive. Guilt has its value—when you violate others or nature, for example—but if you believe you are an unworthy creature you will attract unnecessary and unpleasant experiences into your life and you will limit your growth.

“Your science, which was more influential than religion in your day, taught that life was without rhyme or reason: an accident in an uncaring universe. Your science also said that you were a naked ape, implying that your actions were determined by instincts and other inherited tendencies. And your psychology taught that man was a victim of past events, especially those in early childhood. The result of these ideas of science and psychology was that many men felt they were not responsible for what they did. Is it any wonder then that vandalism, violence, and disrespect for others were rampant in your society?”

Elizabeth told me the negative beliefs of our time had been replaced by such positive ideas as:

You are a worthy creature; you have a right to be here.

Each individual is responsible for his life.

The universe is designed to support your growth.

She said, “Today the Gaian Catholic Church preaches the true meaning of Christ’s teachings: God is on the earth, within Its creations. Since God is present on the earth, then life is blessed, and heaven is here and now.

“I know this may sound strange to you, but there could be no peace in the world before man learned to be at peace with himself. How could man trust his neighbor before he trusted and loved himself? I think man’s failure to trust his body and his own intentions is the reason for the military buildup after World War II.”

**Saturday, July 11, 2076
To Sunday, June 28, 1992**

There was a little ceremony for me in the central hall. It involved an Indian medicine man in native costume performing a dance and chanting: “Beauty before me, beauty behind me. Beauty to the left of me, beauty to the right of me. Beauty above me, beauty below me.”

After the ceremony I thanked my hosts for allowing me to stay with them and I said, “When I arrived here two weeks ago, I did not know what to expect. I believe now that I have awakened to a future I had imagined in moments of hope and inspiration. I will return to tell my brothers and sisters about this time, and do my best to make it a reality in my world.”

This has been a story from the world of dreams. It is a story of a future we can have, not one that must be. There are many possible futures; we have the power to choose which one we will experience.

If I were to sum up the message from this future in a few words, they would be: The challenges of today cannot be overcome until we realize we are not the owners of the earth and we are not superior to the other species on earth. The truth is that God made every creature in Its Image, and meant for men to share the earth with each

other and with nature. When we understand this we will not destroy nature for profit or be insensitive to the rights of others. And we will not permit men to hoard mountains of wealth while others live in hunger and poverty.

The last thing Elizabeth said to me was that man does not have to go through all the suffering that Edward and Exellon told me about: We can change the world today, and not wait until we are pushed to the edge. She said to do this we must recognize that our mythologies—science and Christianity—are the main cause of our difficulties: A new mythology is needed to allow man to bridge the distances he has created between himself, God, and the world.

Appendix

Letter From The Earth

I am Gaia, your mother, and I have feelings and rights as you do. I give of myself freely, but you may not own me. I belong to all my children.

In your race to conquer the world, you trampled on the rights of native people. You looked down upon them, yet they understood these important truths your culture denied: That the gods dwell within nature. That man is part of the earth. And that man must share this planet with other forms of life.

When men understood these truths, they lived in harmony with the world. They identified with a storm, a tree, or an animal they had killed. They believed the earth was sacred and abuse of nature was a violation. And they accepted death when their time came, because they knew death was necessary to make room for new life.

At the beginning of your Judeo-Christian civilization you attempted to separate man from nature. You said the world was evil, and man must overcome it. You chose to believe that God made you the lord of the earth. And you decided the earth could be the possession of whomever could capture it and hold it by force. You named this idea “might makes right.” It was incorporated into your property laws, and grew into a heartless economics you call capitalism.

You think you have found justification in nature for capitalism, for your scientists tell you that the species alive today are alive because they are the best competitors. Your scientists call this idea survival of the fittest, and use it to explain their theory of evolution.

The theory of evolution is wrong. The law of the jungle is not survival of the fittest, nor competition between species or individuals. The law of the jungle is cooperation within the web of life. The mouse in the cat’s paw does not begrudge the cat its meal, for the mouse understands it will live through the cat. The cat knows it must die someday too, and that it will become food for others.

It is only man who does not understand the purpose of death. It is only man who kills for sport. It is only man who has hunted animals to extinction. Survival of the fittest is your rule, not mine.

The final outcome of your experiment—to see the result of pretending you are not my children—should now be quite clear to you. You are on the road that leads to

the end of life as you know it. It is not too late to get off this path, but time is running out.

You are not the first men I have known. Civilizations more advanced than yours I have cared for and watched die. Others have prospered here and moved onto new planetary systems where I am now the legendary home. If you should destroy your world, I will survive, and mutant species will arise whom I shall love as much as I loved you.

Visions Of A Renewed America

I had a dream in which two heroes from our past spoke about their fears and hopes for the future of America. First I heard the man who led America through its darkest hour.

Abraham Lincoln scratched his beard, cleared his throat, and began: “In my Gettysburg Address I asked whether a nation ‘conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal’ could endure. With God’s help, we survived the challenge of slavery. Today America faces many challenges undreamt of when this nation was formed. Their solutions will require original, courageous thinking.”

George Washington, looking splendid with his new white teeth, smiled and cut in: “The politicians are the problem, Abe—they have no principles. They’ve sold their souls for votes and campaign contributions. And, like Humpty Dumpty in Lewis Carroll’s *Through The Looking-Glass*, they use words to deceive.”

He picked up a book and began to read:

“When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said, “It means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean so many different things.”

“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “which is to be master—that’s all.”

President Lincoln interrupted President Washington: “Excuse me, General. Didn’t we agree that I could talk first? Now where was I? Many people feel politics is corrupt and there is nothing they can do about it. In a democracy that is not true. The American people must understand that they only get the government they demand.”

Washington said, “It is a crime for politicians to borrow hundreds of billions of dollars every year. They are stealing from today’s children and from future generations. Balanced budget amendments and term limits are like putting locks on the cookie jar: Congressmen and Presidents should be responsible enough to just say no to deficits.”

Lincoln said, “The people must first be responsible themselves and stop asking their government to give them what it cannot pay for out of annual revenues.”

A grinning Washington said, “I know how to force Congress and the President to balance the budget. Citizens should demand that their state legislators ask Congress to call a national convention, per Article V of the Constitution. Once the convention is gathered, it should write a constitutional amendment that says if Congress and the

President fail to pass a balanced budget by the beginning of the fiscal year, they will have to run for reelection the following November.”

Lincoln, laughing: “That’ll work for sure, George.”

Washington said, “I’m going to change the topic. I have watched America prop up one dictatorship after another in the twentieth century. An America true to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence would recognize there are many people in the world still denied the rights we won over two hundred years ago. An America true to the ideals of the Declaration of Independence would use its vast powers to aid those seeking social justice, instead of, horror of horrors, encouraging their repression.”

Lincoln added, as if aware that his words had a wider audience: “Friends, America has been blessed by God as no other nation has. Will you accept your destiny as the nation chosen to lead the earth to a new age of peace, justice, and prosperity? The whole world awaits your decision.”

Washington got in the final word: “In their relations with other people, they have to realize that imperialism is not the American way. Imperialism is what our patriots fought against. Was the American revolution only for us, or was it meant to be a beacon of light for all the world to see?”

The Proper Functions Of Government

Me: I will fix your bicycle tomorrow, grandma.

Sophia: Words are cheap. It’s actions that count.

Me: I’m not a politician. I’ll do it.

Sophia: I didn’t say you were a politician. I think politics could be a noble profession, because it provides a great opportunity to do good. The problem is the men who enter politics. Most of them are liars and crooks.

Me: Ronald Reagan and George Bush are the biggest crooks of all time. Their legacy for future generations will be three trillion dollars of debt. And that doesn’t count the money they borrowed from Social Security. Next to the word “irresponsible” in the dictionary should be a picture of those two clowns.

Sophia: I saw a bumper sticker on a motor home that describes the way we’ve been living. It said, “We’re spending our children’s inheritance.” Our culture is literally borrowing from the future—not only money, but natural resources and clean air, water, and soil. Someone must warn the people about the coming crisis. I think we need another Paul Revere. Why don’t you get on your horse?

Me: I don’t have a horse and I would not make a good politician. Tell me if you like Jefferson’s ideal government:

...which shall restrain men from injuring one another, and leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement.

Sophia: OK, man-without-a horse. I like Jefferson’s ideal government. People should be left alone.

Me: How else could we follow the advice of Emerson when he said, “Whoso would be a man, must be a nonconformist.”

Sophia: Government has no business regulating the lives of men except when men violate the rights of others. Government has stepped far beyond its proper function when it decides which private acts are to be allowed and which are not.

Me: What should we do about government infringing on our sovereign right to live the way we want so long as we don't hurt anybody?

Sophia: We need a constitutional amendment to ensure the right of individuals to act in private. It could be worded like this: "All acts performed between consenting adults which only affect the actors shall have the full protection of the United States."

Me: Can you define the proper functions of government?

Sophia: Protecting the rights of man and nature, but not protecting man from himself. Everyone has the right to go to hell or ruin his health any way he wants. Government should also provide services when monopolies are the most practical way of getting things done, and it should promote cooperation within communities, and between regions, states, and nations.

Why don't you read your favorite passage from the Declaration of Independence? I think the Declaration is the most revolutionary political document ever conceived. Jefferson was writing more about a future world than the world of 1776, for he himself kept slaves.

Me: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it.*

Sophia: It is time for government to fulfill the ideals of the Declaration of Independence: to guarantee all men and women equal treatment under the law and the opportunity to pursue a decent life for themselves and their children.

Me: Today there are millions of people in America who feel useless. Meaningful work is what they need to restore their dignity. Flipping hamburgers at McDonald's won't do it.

Sophia: Speech! Speech!

Me: Sit down. There won't be any speeches here.

Sophia: Okay, then what is the major question facing the world today, Mr. Brown?

Me: Can we survive technology? And our most urgent challenge is feeding hungry children, especially in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.

Sophia: Read me that little piece you've written.

Me: "Friends, Romans, countrymen..." Just kidding. "Michael was not enjoying the view..."

Turning Point

Michael was not enjoying the view as he stood on the veranda of his mountain home overlooking the city. His thoughts were on his brother Daniel, who would soon be flying to the East.

In their last conversation Daniel said, "Man is standing on the brink of disaster: before us lies the abyss. The only sane act is to turn around and find a new path. This

can only be done by free men working together. It is my intention to make the people of enslaved lands aware of their power.”

As the lights of the city were coming on, Michael remembered the words of a poem from Lao Tzu’s *Way of Life* that Daniel was fond of:

*Nothing is weaker than water,
But when it attacks something hard
Or resistant, then nothing withstands it,
And nothing will alter its way.*

*Everyone knows this, that weakness prevails
Over strength and that gentleness conquers
The adamant hindrance of men, but
Nobody demonstrates it is so.*

Through his telescope Michael could see the airport in the valley below and the plane that would take Daniel away. “There he goes,” Michael said to himself, as Daniel’s plane took off. “Darkness has settled on my world.”

And in the air, Daniel closed his eyes and saw himself in the future, speaking before a large group of people:

I am here today because I believe we can overcome the challenges that face us—of war and injustice, poverty and pollution. I am optimistic that we will succeed, and not suffer the fate of the dinosaurs.

It is time for the development of a world consciousness, a community of men and nature. For the next stage in the growth of mankind lies in the unity that only can be achieved when men rise above the barriers that separate them from each other.

We are like the single drops of a river, with our individual ways flowing over pebbles and rocks, under bushes and trees, but with the common destination to reach the ocean. And as the drops depend on each other, and as they together form the river, all men create the consciousness which leads every individual to his fulfillment.

He lifted his head and looked out to the people, who had become very quiet.

Your challenge is to take charge of your lives. Talk among yourselves. Build up each other’s faith that you can influence your world. If your government does not act with humanity, then get rid of it. Remember, I’m not talking about violence. Violence is a reaction against feelings of powerlessness. The power you seek is within you.

The world is at a turning point. Old, tired institutions will be replaced by ones that have meaning for our time. Men and women with love and understanding for all life will lead nations. We are at the gate to a higher level of being; in our hands is the power to make this step a smooth crossing or an abrupt one.

Opening his eyes, Daniel noticed the plane and the people in it. For now the dream was a reality only in the dream world; his point of power lay in the present. The task before him was to organize a system of beliefs for the coming age.

The Aquarian Manifesto

We have been told stories of a cruel, angry God, of original sin, disease, and the need to be saved. Science has taught us that life is meaningless: an accident in a universe that doesn't care whether we live or die.

We reject both mythologies. These are our truths:

Men and nature have never been separated from God. Jesus was not, therefore, God's Only Son. It was through purity of soul that Jesus was fit to be a temple of the Christ, Universal Love. Jesus lived, according to the Aquarian Gospel, "to show the possibilities of man. What I have done all men can do, and what I am all men shall be."

Because you have a personal relationship with God, you don't need to belong to a church to know or serve God. Churches should help men to know and love themselves and others.

Each individual is responsible to the God within. The Golden Rule is still the best guide for living: Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Now is the time to remember the old wisdom. It is time for man to again accept the validity of inner knowledge. Science must learn to examine nature from her point of view: It will never understand nature by taking her apart. In the words of the fox in *The Little Prince*, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye."

Cities Of Light

Protocol statement. First Gandhi village commune. July 4, 2076. A man, Exellon by name, as he lay dying:

Today we are celebrating the 300th anniversary of the Declaration of American Independence, and I am celebrating my 126th birthday. Mahatma Gandhi had wanted to live to 125, but the Hindu-Moslem violence at the time of India's independence broke his heart. Eyewitnesses said it was a bullet that killed him, but I know the hatred between brothers and sisters saddened him so much that he lost his will to live. The bullet was the means of death, not the cause. Please excuse me; I have been rambling. My mind is not as organized as it once was.

You are living in the best of times. President Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms—from fear, from want, of expression, and of worship—are the birthrights of all the citizens of earth. Today everyone has a good job and a decent home of his own. Medical care and education are available to all. There is hardly any crime because there are no poor, we are more interested in spiritual than material wealth, and men are no longer packed into the cities. We are now able, due to this decrease in crime, to treat those who violate other's rights as sick men, not as evil men. We have learned to

live without poisoning the atmosphere, water, or soil. The great solar panels now supply most of our energy needs. Earth and man are one again.

There are some who complain that life today is too easy, that there are no challenges anymore. If you feel that way, join the colonists on Mars. Those pioneers face a struggle just to survive. But there is plenty to do here for those who wish to explore the inner universe, source of the physical.

I have lived through the second half of the 20th century. It was an exciting time to be alive. Society was seething with unrest, with hopes of a just, peaceful world—the world you now take for granted. Martin Luther King, Jr. summed up the feeling when he said, “I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’” Some thirty years after King’s death, Americans began to realize that God is the Real Owner of the earth, and that God meant for all of us to enjoy the fruits of the earth.

Because the free market could not offer each American a job with an adequate income, government was empowered to make up the difference. Through public works’ projects the cities were renewed, bridges and roads rebuilt, and land reclaimed. In the poverty-trapped inner cities self-supporting manufacturing communes were formed. These communes acquired farms and began to offer their members the chance to escape the city.

By the early twenty-first century, many Americans wanted to get away from modern civilization. Many desired a simpler life more in touch with themselves and nature, as in the Findhorn model, where gardens were tended with sensitivity and love. And as government’s financial difficulties worsened, more and more citizens were forced to take care of themselves. For these reasons and others, the village commune concept quickly spread throughout society.

Around this time, compassionate, clear-headed men and women were being elected to positions of leadership. They were guided by the principles Daniel spoke of when he said, “There is a way men can live together in peace and happiness. It is the way of reason and love.” This change in the leadership of the American people, this blossoming of the love in American hearts, was an inspiration for the rest of the world. Those who had tolerated injustice before now found it to be unbearable.

I have been asked what I have learned in my 126 years. One of the most important lessons I have learned is to live like the hunter described by the Indian Don Juan:

A hunter uses his world sparingly and with tenderness regardless of whether the world might be things, or plants, or animals, or people, or power. He taps it lightly, stays for as long as he needs to, and then swiftly moves away, leaving hardly a mark.

If I had the time, I would tell how disarmament was achieved. But I wonder if I should not quit here. For, with the awakening of the love in the hearts of men, the Age of Light became a foregone conclusion. As the great Gandhi said, “In the long run, no force can prevail against love and truth.”

The success of this nation—its ability to offer each citizen the opportunity to develop his potential—is testament to the wisdom of our Founding Fathers in making dignity, freedom, and justice our basic principles. America has fulfilled her destined role as model to the world.

My God And I Are One

Me: Please read these questions that I have made up.

Sophia: “What is the key to inner peace?”

Me: I have been searching all my life for simple codes to live by. One is the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” It covers man’s relationships. In the Bhagavad Gita I found four lines that seem to me to summarize the rule for the inner life:

*When you move amidst the world of sense
From both attachment and aversion freed,
There comes the peace in which all sorrows end,
And you live in the wisdom of the Self.*

It means that you are not overwhelmed by good or bad fortune. It means you do not long for possessions or pleasures. It is a state of mind called detachment. With detachment you will find no cause for anger or fear. I should add that I am a long way from detachment myself.

Sophia: That’s for sure. Anyway, back to your key to inner peace. It sounds like a cold-hearted peace to me. Like the peace of the ascetic living in the cave.

Me: It does not mean that you should not love, but that you should not become attached to the object of your love. Detachment means being able to do without. Detachment frees you from the wheel of fortune. Then it opens you to the fountain of creativity that lies within.

Sophia: Buddha said desire is the cause of suffering.

Me: And the Bhagavad Gita also emphasizes that man must give up desire. I have trouble with that. It takes desire to walk across the room, to be born, to do anything. I think it would have been better if Buddha had said, “Attachment and aversion are the causes of suffering.”

Sophia: Do you want to hear my three rules for living? First, don’t dwell on the past. Second, enjoy the moment. And third, only think positively about the future.

Me: Those are three great rules to live by.

Sophia: And easy to remember. Next question: “What is your goal?”

Me: “We are fighting for nothing less than world peace,” in Gandhi’s words.

Sophia: “How can you be fighting for world peace and be detached at the same time?”

Me: Gandhi said, “By detachment I mean that you must not worry whether the desired result follows from your actions or not, so long as your motive is pure, your means correct. Really, it means that things will come right in the end if you take care of the means and leave the rest to Him.”

Sophia: “What is love?”

Me: Love is willingness to sacrifice for others. Love is unconditional. Love is trusting. Love sees the grace in others. Love does not seek to dominate, possess, or bind, but gently encourages growth.

Sophia: “Have you said we choose the events we participate in?”

Me: Our beliefs, intents, and desires act like magnets, drawing people, experiences, and material objects to us.

Sophia: “What is the path to God?”

Me: A 16th century mystic said to two disciples who asked the same question:

*Path presupposes distance;
If He be near, no path needeth thou at all.
Verily it maketh me smile
To hear of a fish in water athirst!*

Sophia: “What is the purpose of life?”

Me: Some people think the purpose of life is to live as long as possible while collecting and consuming as much wealth as possible. I think the purpose of life is value fulfillment—leading a life of quality, growth, and action. When that is no longer possible, it is time to get out of the way.

Sophia: “Do you believe in reincarnation?”

Me: Yes. A belief in the immortality of the soul enables one to understand why God creates some men sick and poor and others healthy and prosperous. It also relieves the anxiety of death.

Sophia: “Do you believe in karma?”

Me: I believe we are all responsible for our actions. Until we appreciate the power of our thoughts, we will not be able to move on to more advanced planes. I also believe our reincarnations are simultaneous: Our lives do not occur one after the other, but all at once. Our past, present, and future lives affect each other, then. This concept will take much more time to explain. Maybe I can get into it in another book.

Sophia: “Do you believe in good? Do you believe in evil?”

Me: Answer to the first question: Yes. The universe has a benign design. It is easier to be good than to be bad. Answer to the second question: Evil as in the devil, no. The devil exists only in men’s minds. Men are generally of good intent. I do not deny that some men have treated nature and other men horribly, but many crimes are misguided attempts at achieving justice. Often men have made the mistake of assuming the end justifies the means.

Sophia: “How would you reply to this statement: ‘I am just a bag of bones that will soon die and rot in the grave. You can’t convince me of life after death.’”

Me: In a certain sense, we are like icebergs: What we see of ourselves is only a fraction of our entire identity. We are multidimensional souls, living in many bodies, some not physical, in many times, and in many worlds. I like what the poet Jane Roberts wrote about death: “A death is but one night to the soul.”

Sophia: “What did Gandhi say about Jesus?”

Me: He said, “It was more than I could believe that Jesus was the only incarnate son of God, and that only he who believed in him would have everlasting life. If God could have sons, all of us were His sons. If Jesus was like God, or God Himself, then all men were like God and could be God Himself. My reason was not ready to believe literally that Jesus by his death and by his blood redeemed the sins of the world.”

Sophia: I’m tired of these questions. I have one for you: “Do you support the Equal Rights Amendment?”

Me: If in one life I am born a man, and in another a woman, how can I say one sex is superior to the other?

Sophia: You didn't answer the question.

Me: I'm all for it, except I think there should be a clause in there about cooking. I can't cook. Look, I'll wash the dishes, okay?

Now I want to introduce the Aquarian Gospel as an alternative gospel. It was written in the last century by an American who called himself Levi. It covers the travels of Jesus in Egypt, Greece, Persia, India, and Tibet during those lost years the Four Gospels make no mention of. I'm going to read a passage from a speech Jesus made at a feast in his honor in Benares, India:

With much delight I speak to you concerning life—the brotherhood of life.

The universal God is one, yet he is more than one: all Things are God; all things are one.

Now, men and birds and beasts and creeping things are deities made flesh; and how dare men kill anything?

'Tis cruelty that makes the world awry.

When men have learned that when they harm a living thing they harm themselves, they surely will not kill, nor cause a thing that God has made to suffer pain.

The God I speak about is everywhere; he cannot be compassed with walls, nor hedged about with bounds of any kind.

When men become afraid of God, and take him for a foe, they dress up other men in fancy garbs and call them priests.

When man sees God as one with him, as Father-God, he needs no middle man, no priest to intercede;

He goes straight up to him and says, My Father-God! and then he lays his hand in God's own hand, and all is well.

And this is God, You are, each one, a priest, just for yourself.

Sophia: This is the last question I'm going to read for you: "We have been taught by Christian religions and Freudian psychology to distrust ourselves. Christianity says impulses are the work of the devil. Freud said the unconscious was a dark pit full of ugly desires. What do you say?"

Me: Strong, natural impulses are the soul's guides. I am not talking about the impulse to have another scoop of ice cream or to punch your boss in the nose. In the words of Jane Roberts: "Natural impulses always direct you to actions that will lead to your own greatest fulfillment, and to the fulfillment of all other species at the same time." I think you should use this rule to determine if your impulse is natural: If it directs you to hurt another living thing, then it is not a natural impulse.

Me: Sophia, do you have a final word?

Sophia: Whenever you find you are taking yourself too seriously, you should think about your death. In relation to your death, nothing can be very important. I am not saying this to make you sad, but to help you be humble and to allow you to laugh at yourself.

Me: You can write my epitaph now: "He saved the best for last." Ha, ha! I want to end with a poem:

Happy are those who can sing:

A brave new moral order is blowing in the wind.

Bright is the dream from which it will spring.

Love and sharing for everyone.

This is the dawn of the Aquarian Age,
When man will know, "My God and I are One!"
Leaves of grass tumble down, kissing Earth,
Children play the circle game. Walls fall down.

The turning of the age shall not be delayed,
Peace will have its millennium at last,
Man will walk in Nature as a friend,
And Christ shall come again.

It is for you this joy Consciousness brings.
It is for you this song Life sings.
Sing along: I Am! I Am! I Am!
Welcome to Gaia's Family.

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I cannot end without mentioning Joseph Campbell's great influence on me. I discovered Joseph Campbell through his interviews with Bill Moyers on PBS.