

A GARDEN
CALLED
EARTH

THE REVOLUTIONARY

NEW WORLD

OF THE 21ST CENTURY



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A FARM CALLED EARTH

1	Manifest Destiny	1
2	The End of Complacency	5
3	For Our Part	7
4	Directing Children to the Future	10
5	The Professional Utopianites.....	14
6	Adieu	18

1 Manifest Destiny

WE are still blinking our eyes in joyous disbelief.

For we are living in a world that is working for a sustainable future, for a partnership with the sun and moon, and with devotion to a supportive habitat, not just for humanity but for all of biology. It is July 4, 2010.

What was to be the purpose of all of the science, education and communication that humankind had so painstakingly developed through its history? Would we use our god-like power of know-how for the good of the earth or only for the private gain of elite interests? This question faced us at the beginning of the 21st century.

The U.S. had entered into a war whose end was neither to be swift nor certain. It became obvious that our country was like a stupid, self-absorbed elephant.

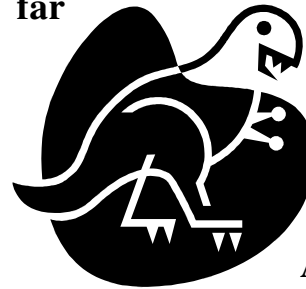


While basically a no-harm-intended beast, we had as a people put tacit weight behind many streams of action that were poisoning and brutalizing our world.

- We had an elite government in which common people had no interest

- The government did villainy in our names, often in stealth, and angered many in the world. Our press wouldn't talk about it coherently, but only in adrenaline-spiking "stories."

We were like a dinosaur about to go extinct. There wasn't enough speed, coordination or goal agreement among our parts to rescue us from predators. A bite to the leg would generate a pain response in the brain two second later, far too tardily for reaction time to be effective.



Yet, as the 21st Century progressed, we saw Yassir Arafat brought down, Kofe Anan exposed as a lout and Tony Blair elevated to even more international prominence than ever.

The energy that had erupted from religious fervor in the past was now being channeled into the Enterprise Games, an international sports competition in which athletes competed for who could teach the most third-world people to harvest nourishing food and generate solar power. It had become a status contest to help Africans plant bean fields and make water pumps using cheap solar technology. Those who used to love to compete now did so in the service of community nutrition and small business projects that

all displayed how well they could help their fellow man. Incentives to philanthropy were under way everywhere.

Kids and young families from the inner city had moved out to work in Rehabitat Emplotment Settlements, which replanted the Brazilian rain forest, and they worked as Forest Rangers and tended medicinal herbs. They ran eco-tours, and they loved their outdoor work. The United Earth had control of the Real-Time World Census of Biology and regulated the numebrs of various species, using a massive simultaneous equation.

There was world goals agreement, and nuclear proliferation was no more. Dismantled weapons were now generating power for long-range space vehicles that were exploring the sun and better ways to use it.

Dictatorship no longer paid. Those who misused power heavily now faced a powerful punishment. Instead of being “sentenced to” cable TV-watching for life and tending their fan club and copy-cat criminal web sites in “punishment“ for having committed horrific genocide, deposed mass killers were now swiftly pumped full of a heroine bliss-out cocktail and then heart-arrested with poison. Time required: 15 seconds.

But how everything happened, and how we were able to help bring all this about, surprised even us.

2 The End of Complacency

Just as when the Soviets ended their empire in a deadlock crisis, where the people refused to move, and the tanks refused to kill, the U.S. likewise reached its apex moment.

During the Bush-Kerry debates of 2004, a mass protest began in the streets of Chicago. Brought together through web and e-mail recruiting, by means of blogs and WebEx chat rooms, the people marched.

The signs they carried read, “We will use our minds. We will save our world. We will unite as one body. We will lay aside bogus elections.”

The protestors urged that no one vote. They pledged to shut down every polling place. They said that until the American people were a democracy in reality, the sham of being so in name would now cease.

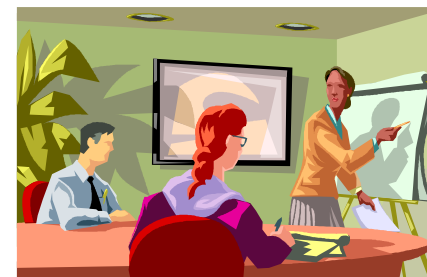
“What will we do now?” said the public, many of whom had suddenly and reactively developed a powerful thirst to vote, for the first time in 30 years.



“Sit down with your neighbors on your block.” was the answer. “And decide what you need, and what you’re willing to do about it.”

Even though America had just imposed this same structureless task upon Iraq, the people had, largely, no idea for how to go about it, and no tolerance or patience for learning it, either. The Chinese had been doing it, but nobody had been paying any attention to them.

Many ran straight for Wal-Mart, cleaning out the serial-kiler-bootcamp learning modules that passed for video “games”. They holed up and shot their screens to hell.



But some decided to try the meetings. They called their neighbors together. There were a lot of arguments at first. People wanted to be taken care of, to feast off the fat of the political peace that others had previously made. But there was no more guarantee of cradle-to-grave nonengagement. The political flywheel had coasted to a halt.

The Free Show was over.

3 For Our Part

What the people ever did in all those meetings we don't really know. Legion are the scribblers who have reverentially chronicled the actions taken by various heroic Cells, as the groups that remained alive and active were now called.

I do know, however, that some leader far greater than I somehow called a Council of the Cells, and the Cells specialized, based on what people knew how to do. Mine was the Education Cell.

Before the Great Healing, as this revolution would later be known, I had worked in software training and my friend, Alexis, had been a journalist. We had each felt that our vocational callings were expressing some of what we wanted to contribute to life, but that much was missing.

I know that. for my part. I was looking for a leader. I wasn't doing so so well, mind you -- not systematically, and not with much hope or zest. It was a listless sometime-hobby that would pick me up now and again, in its sluggish momentum, when my mind was not otherwise directed.

Yet Alexis and I had to be patient with our process, because we knew we had to walk a path that had not yet been walked. This was partly because it had to be our own unique path -- one of growing more conscious of our Human Citizenship, and of what that could and should mean. None other could walk the path in our place.

It seemed that nearly every leader or program I had ever heard about lacked vital ingredients to trigger a major buy-in by me. It also looked clear that every leader I ever would find would always be destined to lack pieces to my perfect assembled puzzle.

I would always have to select the least of the evils and work with the power configuration as I found it.

But I believed I at least stood a better chance of more comfortable choices amongst the



evils if I asked the Leader Within what He had to say about life as I found it in my little universe, and how it could be beautified, and perhaps made more sleek and workable and synergistic with the other universes around me.

He did not speak to me very interestingly or clearly for a long time. I had to keep coming back to him and quietly engaging him in more questions, in clarification, in corrections sometimes, as I got to a more stable picture of what He meant.

Alexis was asking her Inner Knower about life as well. She had her own ways of evaluating and perceiving, and we would compare our insights and results now and then.

I am glad we did this, and got with others who were doing the same. Because the result was a better civilization than we started with. And the US has moved from a bratty adolescence of “consumption as self-reification” to become a land of wakened spirits, where social beneficence is everywhere in evidence.

Roused by my discussions with Alexis, this is some of what my Leader began to tell me about the world - -

4 Directing Children to the Future

“**R**obb,” said, the Leader, “the problems of adulthood get set up in childhood. We are no longer going to educate children for their grandparents’ world, but for their own future world. You are not going to see Latin II, III, and IV offered in public or prep schools any more because there is simply no longer time for such a frivolity. ‘Wake up and live’ is our motto today.”

“To ensure that the masses will be educated, you will have to work so that money will be put into teaching, schools and community learning programs, instead of into more prisons.

“Kids are being educated to knock out certain kinds of intellectual products and to follow passively the dictates of older and more thinking-outmoded people. But now we will educate entire social persons. We will not just process classes through the mill. And kids will be doers and initiators, not just cerebrators and product-makers.

“Kids are not being taught in the public schools to consider the moral dimensions of what they do. So the first thing that kids need to be shown

by both precept and example is the Golden Rule.

“With a moral compass in place, they need training in understanding others and in expressing themselves – all in many forms. They will study psychology, sociology and anthropology from their earliest years.



“Students need to have exercise throughout the learning day, with recess, games, singing, acting and painting their constant companions.

“We don’t want any school experience to be information-poor. Every class will therefore use web information: even gym class will show Olympic events that model an excellent way of doing sports. Chemistry class will show simulations of reaction chambers and the high-level application of chemical properties in industrial processes.

“Every foreign language class will be required to partake of web radio and TV that originates from stations in that language and in those cultures for :30 a week. Yahoo France, Yahoo Hong Kong and Yahoo Sweden will be consulted often. The TV playlists of Paris will be required study in high school French and the Top Ten pop song charts from Berlin will be well-known to the German students. There will

be WebEx contact with the students from the other language cultures as well.

“The norm will be that every child has “inventions and creativity class”, every school year. Lasting only one period per week, its effects will fan out to enlighten the rest of the week. Students will be helped into alpha state during the creativity hour, and their results will be praised and rewarded. There are also going to be weekly field trips.

“Writing students will not be taught to reproducing the social pathology of the more troubled writers of the past, through neglect of mentioning these ills. There will be an awareness to avoid the life patterns of a reclusive Emily Dickinson, a suicidal Sylvia Plath or Virginia Woolf, or a murderously-intentioned Ernest Hemingway or Norman Mailer. The social aspects of crafting written products will be made more clear. There will be many more projects like creating web literature, editing video productions, and writing interactive essays.

“Rendering students passive beneath elite institutions is not the goal of school. We have deschooled society, de-lock-stepped the learners. *The Book on the Taboo Against Knowing Who You Are* will no longer be thought of as the Alan Watts book on Zen, but will be used to re-

fer to the Gradebook, the too-full Schedule Book and the overly-focused-upon Bankbook.”

5 The Professional Utopianites

Alexis and I didn't have to start from scratch in our pilgrimage. True, we did feel an important impetus -- that we needed to share more of who we were and what we had -- in all ways -- far more broadly and passionately than ever before if we were to bring about a palpable improvement. Yet from the very beginning, we nonetheless knew that no one could lead the world to better places alone or in isolation. Nor did we attempt to do so. There was plenty of energy to leverage.

Since we were thinkers and writers, we began sharing our thoughts and half-formed wishes with each other and our friends. This was the only place where we knew to start. We made more friends within our building. We attended CAPS meetings and met wider-flung neighbors. We made it a point to remember people's names and the pursuits that interested them, so that we could speak to them with rapport whenever we met.

We also started goals clubs, both general and project-related. Earl Nightingale's saying came back to awareness many times, "Everything you want in life you must get with and through other people. Go *out* to people!" We had to

have good ideas and be willing to lead, but other people were going to be the key.

Probably more than anything specific for a while, we kept asking honest questions of ourselves and to those in all the haunts of life. We were also vigilant in our employment to select right livelihood, and we used our money strategically, towards betterment. Right livelihood had to serve our higher values in some way and also to pay well, whether in money, experience and learning opportunities, or in both.

Like most people, we had more time than money at our disposal. So the use to which we put our minds during our days was very important. The way we prioritized our information consumption was going to make a big difference and we knew it. We cut down on vacant "time passing" consumption and prioritized better what we would give ear to.

There was, when we started, already an army of pre-existing people who were all being paid by some source or other to work towards a better world, and with this goal a clear ideal. This differentiated them from people who worked purely for the sake of dominance, status, pleasure, selfish control, sadism, compulsion, escapism or addiction.

So the utopianizing process had to be shared. But we needed a re-awareness process, to be able to spot utilize the incredible potential around us that had become invisible to us through the cynicizing effect of our milieu.

There previously had been disjointed attempts to bring about community involvement and enlightenment – for example, Café Society, Greenpeace, the Illinois Coalition Against Handgun Violence—and all had value. But there was no linkage, no coordination, and no boosted synergistic power amongst them.

By some miracle I am not even sure I can myself explain at this hour, I invented a special Healing Earth powder. I began traveling from one socially constructive movement to another, sprinkling people with this dust, and turning their faces towards a Clearinghouse Web Site that had been sponsored by the Illinois E-Learning Roundup Agency, which I had helped to found. Also consulted in this creation had been Faith Popcorn, Alvin Toffler, Marvin Cetron and other futurists and think tank innovators. Quite magically, people began to get on the phone with each other, rallies and fund-raisings were held with more coordination, and charities began to thrive as never before.

The web site also had graphical indicators that showed where various campaigns stood in re-

sults-against-goal. This motivated all the groups that would be viewed by the site visitors to more focused and effective outcomes.



6 Adieu

The tale of what happened next will have to be told at another time, for our Story Hour, I'm afraid, has come to an end.

May we all bless and keep or beautiful world and may others feel inspired to do the same!

