[See the note at the end.]

There is but one transition that matters at present, that from our current perilous state to an approximation of Ecotopia.

The 'awakened' in our midst know that Ecotopia is the ultimate, if not complete, answer to our problems; [1] that the fundamental unit of this forthcoming 'cityless and countryless world' [2] will be the small cooperative [3] community; and that the achievement of Ecotopia will get humankind 'back in bounds,' back on track: [4] The Fall was the fall from gathering-hunting. [5] What they need to know now is *how* to achieve Ecotopia.

The purpose of this essay is to present a strategy for achieving Ecotopia—one which takes the form of a 'wave' scenario of societal change. Given that this scenario depends heavily on the 'push/pull' concepts of migration theory, it might be labeled (rather inelegantly) as a 'pull/push/pull/push/drag' scenario. After presenting the scenario (in Section A) I address (in Section B) a vital point deliberately not considered in Section A, and also indicate the role that I see myself playing in implementing the scenario.

If there is a beginning now to implement the scenario, it will be possible to make substantial progress toward Ecotopia (in the United States) by 1990. The bombs may, of course, interrupt our work. But if we are sane, we will retain hope that salvation is possible, and will work steadily and intensely for the achievement of Ecotopia. Fortunately, conditions have never been more propitious for the achievement of Ecotopia than they are now in the United States. [6]

A. A Scenario of Societal Change [7]

Alwyn Jones asserted recently that "The emergence of an eco-future depends on the transformation of the values upon which our existing industrial system is based." [8] Indeed, the conventional wisdom of New Age people seems to be that 'mind set' change of some sort is needed as a precondition—and then cause—of societal (i.e., behavioral, institutional) change.

Perhaps there is some merit in this theory of societal change; my scenario, however, pays no homage to it—thus is semi-Skinnerian, I suppose. The scenario may entail some mind set change as a *consequence* of societal change; but so far as the scenario itself is concerned, 'values' and the like are granted little causal efficacy (except for waves one and three).

In working out the wave scenario the key decision I faced was selecting a group most qualified to serve as 'pioneers' in the movement toward Ecotopia. I decided that Arnold Mitchell's 'Societally Conscious' and 'Experiential' people [9] were logical can-

didates, but added two qualifications. First, all initial participants in The Movement must have a strong commitment to cooperative principles.

Second, the pioneers of The Movement need to have potential geographical mobility. Now given that the *retired* have incomes independent of jobs, the Societally Conscious and Experientials among them (committed to cooperative principles) are in an excellent position to be The Movement's pioneers. And given that the retired have a stake in Ecotopia—for any technologically-oriented society involves change which renders the old obsolete and hence worthless—they have a motive for wishing to become pioneers. [10]

I envision people planning/building their own cooperative retirement 'eco-communities' [11] during **wave one**, and foresee such activity as contributing immediately—and immensely—to the well-being of participants. Given that the old will be benefitting immediately while in the process of acting as 'saviors' (i.e., creating Ecotopia), the adjective 'gerendipitous' is apt for the scenario.

While the first wave is developing, it will be the responsibility of some who are a part of it to institute the **second wave**. This will also consist basically of retired persons, but specifically lower-income ones dissatisfied with their current place of residence (whether for dwelling unit or quality of environment reasons). Again, participants in the second wave will plan/build small (retirement) communities for themselves, led, however, by 'first wavers.'

Once the second wave is underway, the number of retired people associated with The Movement will be substantial enough to begin fostering the development of small eco-communities for people of all ages. That is, retired people in The Movement with entrepreneurial talents will begin fostering the development of cooperative communities, each with an 'export' base (one appropriate for Ecotopia), hence capable of attracting those of 'productive' age (with their children).

The **third wave** will involve especially people from the Societally Conscious and Experiential categories. Given that the full spectrum of ages will now be involved, the 'micro' issues of child rearing, schooling, family structure and sexuality, workplace organization, etc., will be added to the set of issues to be resolved. The Ecotopia that exists by this time will be varied, of course, by virtue of the fact that it will consist of many small communities, each trying to find its own way. But I assume that these communities will take advantage of existing message-transmission technology in a desire to share ideas/experiences (while remaining rather self-contained economically).

It is during **wave four** that The Movement will begin to involve significant numbers of people. During this stage members will strive to bring into The Movement especially people who currently

are working class. I say 'currently' to highlight the fact that Ecotopia will not have social classes in the sense that we have them now: Groups having their basis—contrary to the apologetic Davis-Moore thesis—in (subtly-operating) domination/exploitation. If there was a 'making of the working class' during the Industrial Revolution, then there will be an unmaking of same during the transition to Ecotopia: That this is possible was demonstrated by Robert Owen at New Lenark (Scotland) a century and a half ago.

Given the 'tone' that I see associated with The Movement, and the fact that many currently working class people are at least dimly aware of their exploitation, there should be little difficulty attracting vast numbers of working class people to The Movement. Those who have retained strong ethnic ties, and who thus are less addicted to the technological gadgetry of conventional American society, may be especially good prospects.

By the time the fourth wave is well underway the economic support of those remaining in conventional society will have virtually vanished (as a properly-constructed input/output analysis would reveal). Those remaining in conventional society will now be drawn inexorably into The Movement, and societal transformation will be complete. Fortunately for those constituting (reluctantly) **wave five**, they will find that the indifference, coldness—downright viciousness— with which they treated those 'below' them [12] will not be reciprocated. They will be welcomed into The Movement—so long as they relinquish their conviction of superiority and habits of domination.

    B.   Conclusions

The first known attempt (albeit an unconscious one, assumedly) to regain Ecotopia occurred 3,000 years ago. That attempt resulted in the creation of an egalitarian Israeli society, and also Yahwistic religion (from which stems modern Judaism, and even modern Christianity, to a slight degree). Given this, there is a basis for regarding an attempt today to achieve Ecotopia as a religious quest; only our distorted views of 'the religious' make it difficult for us to comprehend this possibility.

Because of the parallelism between our current situation in the United States and the Israeli situation of 3,000 years ago, it is instructive to consider what Norman K. Gottwald has written. Gottwald, in discussing 'The Key to Israel's Religion,' has asserted that to be "religious in the same sense that the early Yahwists were religious, would not be to have a preestablished religion drawn out of the past to present us with a *fait accompli*. It would be rather more a matter of finding out what had to be done to master our social circumstances and to locate in the process those transcending images and those adaptive practices which could focus our energies collectively to master our circumstances." [13]

I have attempted to 'find out what had to be done' . . . to get

back in bounds, and have presented my conclusions as a five-wave scenario. But this may not be enough. We may very well need 'transcending images' to help give us enthusiasm and energy: To fuel the process of change. We may even need a charismatic personality to provide leadership for The Movement.

However, on the horizon currently there are no 'transcending images' in evidence, nor is there a charismatic personality who comprehends where we must go. Thus, we will need to proceed in spite of these (seeming) deficiencies, hoping that people will arise to supply the missing ingredients while The Movement is in progress.

As to the role that I see myself playing: I would like to initiate, in the Milwaukee [14] area, a program to foster the development of self-help cooperative retirement eco-communities. As soon as I am able to acquire sufficient funding to get started, and suitable facilities (I would like to be able to proceed with an in-residence program), I will begin.

Endnotes

1. Because Ecotopia is not the complete answer there should be no lessening of conventional peace efforts while The Movement is occurring.

   It might be noted that the most insidious threat facing us is ecocatastrophe, this precipitated directly or indirectly by energy usage. Unfortunately, nothing approaching the definitive exists on the subject, but recommended are Herman E. Daly, "Toward a Stationary-State Economy," in John Harte and Robert H. Socolow (eds.), *Patient Earth* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1971), pp. 226 -44; Harte and Socolow's "Energy" in (pp. 276 – 94) the same volume; Edward H. Thorndike, *Energy and Environment* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1976); William R. Catton, Jr., *Overshoot: The Ecological Basis of Revolutionary Change* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980); and Howard T. and Elisabeth C. Odum, *Energy Basis for Man and Nature* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book, Co., 1981).

   The ironic fact that in our mythology increased wealth is correlated with contribution to the general welfare, whereas in actuality increased wealth is correlated with contribution to societal demise (for the wealthier one is, the more energy used is one responsible for, directly and indirectly), is cause for the awakened to be profoundly pessimistic regarding the possibility of societal salvation. The above line of reasoning is implicit in Albert J. Fritsch, S. J., *Lifestyle Index* (Washington, DC: Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1974). See also John H. Antil and Peter D. Bennett, "Construction and Utilization of a Scale to Measure Socially Responsible Consumption Behavior," in Karl E. Henion II and Thomas C. Kinnear (eds.), *The Conserver Society* (Chicago: American Marketing Association, 1979), pp. 51 – 68.

2. To draw a phrase from Henry Olerich, *A Cityless and Country-*

less World: An Outline of Practical Co-Operative Individualism (Holstein, IA: Gilmore & Olerich, 1893). Reprinted by Arno Press, Inc., in 1971.

I like to think that the prophet Micah was one of the first 'moderns' to recognize that Ecotopia would be cityless: It has been said of Micah that he "felt that the rottenness of Hebrew life had come from its urban development and nothing but a return to the simplicity of the earlier days would insure [i.e., ensure] purity." Theodore G. Soares, *The Social Institutions and Ideals of the Bible* (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1915), p. 245. Certainly I would concur with Rabbi Olan's recent assertion that "The prophet possessed a profound insight into the process of human history," and that their (i.e., the prophets') "significance today is their assertion that men and nations are subject to universal moral laws which are an integral part of creation." Levi A. Olan, *Prophetic Faith and the Secular Age* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, Inc. 1982), p. xiii.

3. See Claude M. Steiner, *The Other Side of Power* (New York: Grove Press, Inc., 1981) and Frederick C. Thayer, *An End to Hierarchy and Competition: Administration in the Post-Affluent World* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1981).

The reason for regarding a cooperative orientation as ecological is that "what we call Man's power over Nature turns out to be a power exercised by some men over other mean with Nature as its instrument." C. S. Lewis, "The Abolition of Man," in Herman E. Daly (ed.), *Economics, Ecology, Ethics: Essays Toward a Steady-State Economy* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1980), p. 178.

4. Philip Slater, *Earthwalk* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974), p;. 165.

5. Warren Johnson, *Muddling Toward Frugality* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1978), p. 43.

It should be made explicit that the achievement of Ecotopia would involve a 'return' in certain senses, and that we are prejudiced if we see this solely in a negative light. As René Dubos has stated, "To long for a human condition not subservient to the technological order is not a regressive or escapist attitude but rather one that requires a progressive outlook and heroic efforts." *So Human An Animal* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1968), p. 196. A literal return to a gathering-hunting may have appeal to some in our society—perhaps especially after reading Paul Shepard's *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), but a large-scale return is not possible (or even desirable, of course). Not so much because we 'can't go back' (propagandistic dogma which also reveals a fixation on technology), but because the world could support just about 12 million people with traditional gathering-hunting. Fekri A. Hassan, "Earth Resources and Population: An Archeological Perspective," in Donald

J. Ortner (ed.), *How Humans Adapt: A Biocultural Odyssey* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1983), p. 195. Rather than thinking of a literal return to gathering-hunting we should adopt the fairly sensible approach used by Gordan Rattray Taylor in *Rethink: A Paraprimitive Solution* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1972)—and consider carefully the profound comments of Paul Shepard (on 'the tender carnivore,' etc.).

6. Many in our society today wish to change their way of life. As Dubos (*op. cit.,* p. 196) has stated: "The impulse to withdraw from a way of life we know to be inhuman is probably so widespread that it will become a dominant social force in the future." Second, Nature seems to have been preparing us for a change in way of life. As Shepard (*op. cit.,* p. 277) has noted, "There are many striking parallels between post-industrial man and hunter-gatherer man. They are both highly mobile, non-territorial, non-soil-working, nature-interested, much leisured, function-oriented, small-familied, and altruistic. The most modern urban mean are ready to abandon, if they only knew how, civilization based on war and competition and on an industry so heavy that the human personality as well as the surface of the earth is stamped with its obscenity." Third, our legal institutions and traditions will protect those who wish to create Ecotopia within this nation—although archaic and biased building codes will present some obstacles. Fourth, many in our society are potentially footloose, the most significant of these subgroups identified in Section A. Finally, America has a rich 'intentional community' heritage; this can be drawn upon by the movement advocated here. The best work relevant to this topic is Dennis Hardy, *Alternative Communities in Nineteenth Century England* (London: Longman, 1979). Nothing of comparable quality exists for the American experience, but recommended are Dolores Hayden, *Seven American Utopias: The Architecture of Communitarian Socialism, 1790 – 1975* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1976) and Rosabeth Moss Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972).

7. Compare with Edward Goldsmith *et al*., *Blueprint for Survival* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1972). The Blueprint looks to government for salvation whereas my scenario (designed for America rather than Britain) makes no reference whatsoever to government. My position here is that even if a more democratic electoral system (e.g., the 'tiered single-member district proportional representation system' that I devised several years ago) were in place in this country, it still would be foolish to look to government for leadership in bringing about societal change. First, government is 'superstructural' (as Charles Fourier observed 150 years ago); more to the point, government in the United States presides "over a competition of interests" (Edward C. Banfield, "The City and the Revolutionary Tradition," in *America's Continuing Revolution* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press/Double-

day, 1976), p. 227), with none of those vested interests desiring societal change. Second, relevant experience with the federal government gives one little basis for optimism regarding government's fitness for leadership. See Paul K. Conkin, *Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1959).

8. Alwyn Jones, "Beyond Industrial Society: Towards Balance and Harmony," *The Ecologist: Journal of the Post Industrial Age*, Vol. 13 (1983), p. 145.

9. Arnold Mitchell, *The Nine American Lifestyles* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1983).

10. Philip Slater has stated: "Older adults have a vested interest in finding a place for themselves in the new society, and whatever place they find will provide a model for new-culture adherents as they age." *The Pursuit of Loneliness: American Culture at the Breaking Point* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970), p. 143.

11. See Gary J. Coates (ed.), Resettling America: Energy, Ecology & Community (Andover, MA: Brick House Publishing Co., 1981).

12. See Daniel C. Maguire, *The Moral Choice* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1978), pp. 314 – 18.

13. Norman K. Gottwald, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250 – 1050 B.C.E* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 703.

14. 'If it'll fly in Milwaukee, it'll fly anywhere.'

[Note: I originally typed this on a typewriter—and I still have that type-written copy (which shows a couple of corrections). In retyping the paper as an electronic file, I have retained the pagination that appears in *Transition*, and made a few small additional changes. The primary change, however, was to add links to various web sites.]