

NewOptions

February 27, 1987

Issue No. Thirty-six

National *Holistic* Health Care Program: Too Sensible?

Nearly everyone agrees that medical spending in the U.S. is (1) wildly out of control, and (2) increasingly ineffective in terms of actually providing us with good care.

In 1965, we spent approx. \$40 billion on medical care; in 1986 we spent approx. \$450 billion. But we still have an infant mortality rate lower than that of 14 other countries. Twenty percent of us are still grossly overweight. Twenty-five percent of us are still uninsured or underinsured.

The amount of time we spend actually talking with our physicians is way down. The amount of time we spend in surgery is way up—we are now *twice* as likely to be operated on as are the British. . . .

The conventional political responses to these appalling facts are boringly predictable. The Reagan administration recently proposed reducing Medicare and Medicaid outlays by \$90 billion over five years—brilliant, brilliant. Meanwhile, liberals and socialists are coming up with all kinds of schemes for national health insurance and a National Health Service—schemes that often have poor cost controls and always lock in the high-tech, curative-but-not-preventive approach of current medical practice.

Something missing

The point of view of holistic health care providers has generally been missing from the national health debate.

There is no great mystery about that point of view. Holistic health care providers claim that the body cannot be (properly) treated apart from considerations of mind-environment-spirit. They claim that promoting wellness is just as important as curing illness.

Thoughtful conservatives are not unattracted to holistic providers' emphasis on self-care and personal responsibility. Thoughtful liberals and socialists are not unattracted to holistic providers' emphasis on environmental factors in disease. But neither left nor right has ever acknowledged that the holistic health movement carries

within it the seeds of a whole new approach to a national health care *program* for this country, with its own coherent ideas about finance, delivery, research and education.

Partly that's human nature: the left and right would *rather* co-opt the movement than acknowledge and accept its implicit challenge. But partly that's because the challenge has remained implicit. Caught up in achieving and maintaining a certain professional status, and in various licensing disputes, holistic health providers have had little time or energy left over to systematically spell out the implications of their views for national health care policy.

To begin to discern such a policy is not difficult, however. All you have to do is talk with holistic providers and spokespeople and you'll get plenty of clues. Last week we spoke with four of the most distinguished of them:

— Tom Ferguson, M.D. (Yale Medical School, 1978), editor of *Medical Self-Care* magazine (p. 8 below);

— James S. Gordon, M.D. (Harvard Medical School, 1967), co-editor of *Health for the Whole Person* (1980);

— Craig Salins, executive director of the American Holistic Medical Association ("AHMA": 2727 Fairview Ave. E., Seattle WA 98102); and

— J. Warren Salmon, professor of health policy at the University of Illinois-Chicago and editor of *Alternative Medicines* (1984).

Among them, they give us a glimpse of a health care program that is almost too sensible to contemplate.

Financing

• **Persuade insurance companies to pay for holistic techniques.** We can move toward greater reliance on holistic care *now*, Craig Salins told us from AHMA's new offices in Seattle, if we could just "persuade insurance companies to [cover] holistic techniques.

"There are some studies that have already been done that show that, when you provide

preventive, holistically-oriented care, people stay healthy—and there are fewer medical claims. Now we need to find one or two or three insurance companies that are willing to cover holistic techniques and methods: acupuncture, nutritional therapies, biofeedback, lay midwifery. . . . Working with the [insurance companies] on a pilot basis, we think we can demonstrate to them that, [like the studies say,] it'll save them money."

• **Pay people to stay healthy.** "I'll tell you one way to have an impact within 20 years," Tom Ferguson told NEW OPTIONS from his office in Austin, Texas. "The government could simply pay people to stay healthy.

"The government could [offer] health insurance that gives you a bonus if you *don't* use health services. Or if you score well on some kind of health measure.

"Another way the government could pay people to stay healthy is to make it so everyone can have, say, their cholesterol tested for free. Then set up a policy so that the city or state or feds or whomever would pay \$100 to anyone who comes to get tested and has a cholesterol of under 175.

"The average American over 40 has a blood cholesterol in the low- to mid-200s. Many studies have shown that people who have [levels] under 150 don't get heart attacks. Virtually all the instances of heart disease could be prevented if people controlled their cholesterol."

• **Decentralized national health insurance.** The holistic health movement is less than enthusiastic about the left's favorite health insurance schemes. However, many holistic providers *are* enthusiastic about some of the more decentralized schemes that have recently been proposed—e.g., by Rashi Fein, professor of medical economics at Harvard Medical School, in his book *Medical Care, Medical Costs* (1986).

The best recent proposals, writes Fein, "have shifted from enrollment through a universal social insurance program to a mandated ap-

proach embodying the continuation of [private] insurance and the coverage of [all] other individuals through [government insurance]. . . .

"Over the last half-century most proposals have called for a federal program and federal controls. Yet arguments for state control (with federal standards and oversight) are not without merit. The individual patterns [in the organization and delivery of care] are best understood and best addressed at a locus of control that is closer to those [patterns] and to the people they serve. . . ."

● **High deductibles.** Ferguson doesn't want to make access to care so easy that people will turn all responsibility for their care over to health professionals. Thus, he'd insist that all federally-mandated insurance policies have high deductibles.

"In our own family's case," he told NEW OPTIONS, "we have a \$15,000 deductible health policy—in other words, we pay the first \$15,000 [of all medical expenses, the insurance pays the rest]. It's a very inexpensive policy. . . ." The fact that the first \$15,000 comes out of Ferguson's pocket serves to encourage him to take good care of himself and his family.

A \$15,000 deductible may be a bit steep for most. Professor Fein suggests a way out: in any decentralized national health insurance scheme, tie the size of the deductible to "income and local or state health insurance costs."

Delivery

● **Mandate less intrusive procedures.**

"Some insurance companies are now saying you have to have a second opinion before surgery, and that's fine [as far as it goes]," James Gordon told us from his office in Washington, D.C. "But I think if they were to [require that]—for all except life-threatening conditions—before we went to pharmacotherapy, say, we had to have a trial of something else, something you could do for yourself—that would change things markedly!"

"The government could mandate that that be done through Medicare and Medicaid, and the insurance companies would then follow."

● **Holistic HMOs.** "Basically, Health Maintenance Organizations are disease-treatment organizations," Gordon told us. "They have large agglomerations of doctors who for the most part treat the illness [in isolation] and use the high-technology model. So they have not lived up to their name.

"[I think it's time to start getting] practitioners together to set up according to the regulations that govern HMOs, and then to create within that framework a system in which you bring to bear the techniques that are part of holistic medicine. The bulk of the time would be spent in teaching people how to take care of themselves. The emphasis would be on low-cost techniques that people could do for them-

selves, like using exercise to deal with anxiety, rather than medication. . . ."

● **Lay health networking.** "Some significant portion of doctors visits are simply to get information," Ferguson told NEW OPTIONS. "There have got to be better ways to make that information available.

"I'm amazed that there's not more government funding of lay health networking. For example, it would be [incredibly valuable] for people with the same diseases to be able to talk with each other. If people with, say, a certain kind of debilitating arthritis were able to meet and become part of some group, they'd be able to find new ways of coping . . . and at [relatively little] cost."

● **Community-based care.** Warren Salmon is convinced that the traditional public health approach to social problems—screening and health education—is woefully inadequate. In order to combat AIDS, drug abuse, alcoholism, infant mortality, and many other social problems, he sees no alternative to "mobilizing communities for action."

He points to some community-based approaches to the AIDS epidemic in San Francisco. The most effective groups did not seek to "institutionalize the problem—put it in hospitals," Salmon told NEW OPTIONS. "Instead, they used a lot of volunteers, used a lot of family members and allied health professionals, and came up with a program emphasizing social support for the victims of AIDS. . . ."

"It made a lot of use of home-care agencies. It trained volunteers to promote public awareness, using a lot of different kinds of media. It introduced many people in the community to people with AIDS, and many got involved in the care of these people."

Research

● **Fight to change research priorities.**

"The money in the research establishment does not go to studying the kinds of techniques or approaches that we're talking about," Gordon told NEW OPTIONS. "It goes for the most part to very specific biomedical research and to research on new technologies and new drugs. One thing that will have to be done to make holistic health respectable and viable is to change around the allocation of research dollars. There has to be some push to open up the vision of what important research is. . . ."

According to Salins, AHMA intends to sponsor some research itself, and along with other groups is considering setting up a "national clearinghouse for information on scientific studies related to holistic medicine."

Education

● **Educate the kids.** "Our dependency on the medical profession is largely a product of training by the culture," says Ferguson. "So if

you want to make the biggest impact in a 20-40 year period, probably the most cost-effective thing you could do would be to arrange for first graders to be in charge of a 'health program' that would allow them to study whatever they wanted, and that would put people who knew something about health—nurses, doctors, health educators—at their disposal. They would learn that *they* could initiate and control and be in charge of health care—which is just the opposite of what we learn now.

"I ran a model program myself, while I was a student at Yale. We went in and worked with a group of first-graders. We spent the first couple of sessions just giving them a chance to use the tools in the doctor's black bag. . . ."

● **Educate the physicians.** "I think there has to be some [federal] mandate to emphasize prevention and health promotion in medical school," Gordon told NEW OPTIONS. "There has to be some insistence that medical schools teach some of these things."

● **Holistic Health Service Corps.** Gordon would have all young physicians "perform community service for a couple of years, in return for whatever subsidy there was for their education from the federal government." Their community service work would consist of "teaching people self-care techniques." Not least of all, says Gordon, a holistic-health-service obligation would virtually *force* medical schools to teach holistic care to their students.

Scandalous

Next month, the American Holistic Medical Association will be holding its annual meeting, and many of the topics raised above are going to be discussed. We find it scandalous that scarcely *any* national politicians or political movements are helping the AHMA channel its perspectives into the public debate. We appear to have reached a point where the political left and right would rather ring down the curtains than share center stage.

NewOptions

NEW OPTIONS (ISSN 0890-1619) is published every month except August by New Options Inc., 2005 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., lower level, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 822-0929.

Please address ALL correspondence to Post Office Box 19324, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Subscriptions: \$25 a year in the U.S., \$32 first-class and Canada, \$39 elsewhere. Back issues \$2 each.

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Typesetting: Baker Johnson Design, (703) 237-0557

Printing: Newsletter Services, (202) 529-5700

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FREE: forging a sustainable agenda

For years, organizers have tried to foster cooperation among greenish, decentralist/globally responsible groups—the kinds of groups that have as their ultimate goal a “sustainable society.” Most of these efforts have fallen flat. But some very positive steps toward creating a cooperative context have recently been taken by FREE, the Fund for Renewable Energy and the Environment—a group created last summer out of the old Solar Lobby and Fund for Renewable Resources.

By late last year, FREE had selected a working (not a mere paper) Board of Directors that included hands-on experts from nearly every field under the sustainable sun: Lester Brown, environment; Michael Corbett, housing and urban design; Jim Hightower, food and agriculture; Hunter and Amory Lovins, energy and economic development; Robert Rodale, health promotion, agriculture and economic development; and many more. Tina Hobson, executive director of FREE, coordinated energy education programs in the Carter Administration.

Last week the Board held its first formal meeting. “A lot of it was administrative—a lot of it was getting-to-know-you,” Hobson told NEW OPTIONS from FREE’s attractive offices in downtown D.C. “[We] began to establish [our] parameters in terms of what’s renewable and what isn’t. . . .” That night, the Board hosted a reception and awards ceremony in the posh Georgetown Club (low ceilings; dark wood paneling; globes), and the turnout was so great you could hardly move around or hear yourself speak. There were at least 100 people from environmental groups (including such major players as Audubon, Sierra and NRDC), another big contingent of Capitol Hill staffer types (looking very preppy), and a liberal sprinkling of state and local officials. Could it be that FREE has created an environment in which cooperation among the many groups working for a sustainable society can, finally, flourish? And have real-world political consequences?

The least you can say is that FREE’s main projects seem designed to move us in this direction. . . .

“Renew America”

The “Renew America” campaign, which the first Board meeting was dedicated to discussing, is almost guaranteed to win the hearts and support of the sustainable-society community. Board members are in the process of picking 10-15 key bills “that we should support, [that could] move us from here to a sustainable society,” Hobson told NEW OPTIONS. “And then,

instead of doing our own thing”—instead of setting up chapters, for example—“we’re going to list all the groups that support those bills. So people can join them.

“For instance, if I’m really worried about groundwater, then I’ll know which organizations I can go to to work on [key legislation regarding] that issue. . . .” All participants in the Renew America campaign will receive a scorecard every two months showing how far the 10-15 bills have progressed in Congress.

“Remember,” says Hobson, leaning forward intently, “the baby boom generation wants to do two things: expand individual opportunities and expand environmental protection. So we’re giving people an opportunity to do both! Here, if you’re interested in getting involved, are the [relevant] organizations; pick the one you like [in the issue-area you like], then go work for it.”

“State of the states”

FREE’s *State of the States* report, published last week (and slated to be published annually), describes and then *ranks* the performance of each state according to key environmental indicators. If this approach reminds you of Worldwatch Institute’s *State of the World* report (NEW OPTIONS #35), that is as it should be. “I went out to lunch with [Worldwatch’s] Lester Brown,” Hobson told us, “and I was saying, ‘What’s the most important thing I can do?’ And he said, ‘Why don’t you all do the state-of-the-states? If there isn’t a critical mass of interest in the U.S. for renewable energy and [all the rest of it], I’m going to have a hard time convincing the rest of the world that this is the way to go!’”

Scott Ridley, co-author of *Power Struggle* (1986)—a book about the electrical power industry—wrote the first *State of the States* and is already at work on the second. “We hope it will be a common data base for both citizens and officials,” he told NEW OPTIONS. “We hope it will allow [all parties] to start discussing things on the same terms.” “What we’ve done is—I hate the word because it’s overused—*empowered* activists,” Hobson added. “They can now argue with their state officials and say, look, unless this is wrong, this is what other states are doing. Why aren’t you?”

We told Ridley we felt the data was invaluable but that the vision expressed in the report was rather conventional. “In this first report, [all] we really wanted to do was begin laying out where the states stand,” he replied. “[Later] we’ll start looking at innovative models . . . defining more where things need to go. . . .

“One thing this organization *has* done so far that I think is really exciting is it’s picked up on the fact that with environmental issues you’re no longer talking about just resource conservation. You’re talking about public health.”

One thing is sure: The report is such a useful tool, and makes use of the work of so many state and national groups, that it, too, cannot help but foster cooperation among groups and activists seeking to build a sustainable society. *FREE: 1001 Connecticut Ave. N.W., #638, Washington DC 20036; State of the States report, \$10.*

School as it was meant to be

The National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools (NCACS)—the only national organization for alternative public and private schools *and* home-schoolers—is no relic of the 1960s. In fact, only in the last two years has it begun to pick up steam. We’d heard such good things about its first really big national conference, last year in Pennsylvania, that we jumped at the chance to attend its Eastern regional conference this winter at Somerset School in D.C.

We were not disappointed. As soon as we entered Somerset’s big front room, we felt we’d been transported to the world as it was meant to be. Dozens of people were milling about in comfortable clothes, and it was hard to tell the parents from the teachers from the students in any but the most obvious ways. So many of them seemed self-confident, self-possessed; so many of them seemed genuinely interested in each other. They came from places like Harmony School in Bloomington, Ind. and The Farm School in Summertown, Tenn., The Free School in Albany, N.Y. and The Arthur Morgan School in Burnsville, N.C.

The formal sessions did nothing to disappoint us. At one, an invited guest, a left-wing professor—a perfect exemplar of what Michael and Anderson call the “progress story” (NEW OPTIONS #33)—gave a speech arguing that education should be value-neutral. Several people pointed out the holes in his argument. But much more importantly, the discussants—parents, teachers and students alike—didn’t just take turns responding to the professor. They listened to *each other* and built on *each other’s* thoughts, so that toward the end the participants were asking questions like this: “Okay, but if we do have an education system that is not value-free, and the alternative school movement continues to expand, how do we have at the same time enough of a common basis for knowledge to see each other as brothers and sisters?”

Jerry Mintz, NCACS’s executive director and chief goad, was in attendance at the conference, and at one point we took him aside and asked him to tell us why NCACS was beginning to succeed. He’s a big bear of a man who founded and ran—for 17 years—an alternative school in Vermont; you get the impression he knows what he’s talking about.

“The alternative schools and communities have

always been there," he said, "but they had to get very quiet to survive the 80s. They are now being heard from again. . . . [Also,] home schooling is growing at a geometric rate. . . . People who have their fingers on the pulse of change know that something significant is beginning to happen. I think that all of us at the NCACS national conference this year felt it very strongly. . . ."

"We have made several major decisions [over the last year]. We will continue to work on becoming a clearinghouse for all alternative education nationwide. This will include the creation of a computer telecommunication network for alternative schools and home-schoolers. We will travel around the country helping people start new schools—and finding additional schools [when we talked, Mintz had just returned from a month-long tour down the California coast]. We are about to publish a new national directory of alternative schools. We will continue to expand our newsletter and our new journal, SKOLE. . . ."

On top of all that, NCACS is about to launch two projects that could have profound *political* impact. It is setting up a National Student Board . . . of alternative-school students and home-schoolers. And it is laying the groundwork for a national Alternative Education Alumni Association. *Mintz: NCACS, R.D. 1—Box 378, Glenmoore PA 19343; newsletter, \$15/year.*

Continued from page eight:

ease with fish" and "first aid for five common fitness injuries," and a bevy of regular columns cover such everyday concerns as self-medication and women's health.

Maybe the greatest gift of this magazine is what it conveys to us subliminally . . . through the quality and trustworthiness and specificity of its prose. It convinces us that it is not only *possible* to take on more responsibility for our health (and, by implication, for other aspects of our lives), but that it is reasonable and "mature" for us to do so. *P.O. Box 1000, Point Reyes CA 94956, bimonthly, \$3/sample.*

(8) Socialist Review

Contrary to popular belief, there are plenty of left-wing and "progressive" periodicals in this country. In the *Whole Again Guide* you can count nearly 1,000. Unfortunately, most of them are entirely predictable. Read one issue and you could write a year's supply yourself.

The brightest exception to this rule is *Socialist Review*. It is impeccably left-wing. Collectives in San Francisco and Boston help produce it; a fistful of old SDS, NAM and DSOC activists sit on the Board of Associates; its original title was *Socialist Revolution*. But it is as fresh and challenging as any "post-socialist" upstart. Its long, thoughtful articles cover every topic under the political sun, feminism and popular culture no less than economics and the power elite. Moreover, the positions it takes are often extremely controversial on the political left (which leads to some heated exchanges in the

magazine!). Consider Murray Bookchin's critique of Burlington, Vt.'s socialist mayor for his "thirties' belief in technological progress." Or Nicole Rafter's cover story, "Why the Left Is Wrong About Crime." Or Fred Block's critique of the goal of full employment. Or Robert Collier's call for a decentralist economic program.

We don't often miss the sectarianism of the radical left, or the "joy" of partaking in a separate culture of sacrifice and struggle. But when we read *SR*, we always have to fight a certain nostalgia. *3202 Adeline St., Berkeley CA 94703, bimonthly, \$5/sample.*

(9) The Advocate

If you want to know about the harassment of gay bar patrons in Tupelo, Miss., or the U.S. Catholic church's response to the Vatican's anti-gay stance, or the organized gay response to Reagan's AIDS budget—there is no better source than *The Advocate: The National Gay Newsmagazine*. And there is no better source for in-depth reporting on trends in the gay community: how the U.S. is beginning to crack down on "fag-bashing"; changing gay images on TV.

But the real strength of this magazine—the reason it makes our Top Ten—does not have to do only with its good reporting. Some of its articles express exciting, visionary views—e.g., one recently called for a "global gay village"; another took a very sophisticated look at some of the non-traditional spiritual alternatives that many gays are drawn to. Another special strength of the *Advocate* is its dogged honesty. The organized gay movement in general, and the individual gay organizations in particular, are subjected to an enormous amount of criticism—most of it constructive, all of it revealing.

Most important of all, the magazine manages to reflect and embody the emergent gay consciousness. This is no liberal "equal-rights" magazine asking merely that gays be accepted into the American dream. Sometimes explicitly, always implicitly, it communicates that gays are in the process of developing certain abilities ALL Americans need. An ability to be in society without being of it. An ability to be self-critical without being brutal. Above all, perhaps, an ability to come to terms with self, as in this passage: "Bruce writes of pain and loss without bluster or shame—of self-doubt not as something to be placated by women, but understood by himself." *6922 Hollywood Blvd., 10th flr, Los Angeles CA 90028, biweekly, \$3/sample.*

(10) Nuclear Times

Originally, we didn't want to include *Nuclear Times* in our Top Ten. But there was no way around it. No magazine dominates its movement the way *Nuclear Times* dominates the

peace movement. It is the one peace movement magazine many funders read to find out who's doing what—and whose work *counts*—in the peace movement. (Several key peace movement funders are on the magazine's Board of Directors.) No magazine covers peace groups so thoroughly; no magazine even begins to match *Nuclear Times's* coverage of peace legislation and lobbying on Capitol Hill. The "Initiatives" section—in which 10 key peace groups get half a page each to write about *themselves* each month—is a noble and unique experiment. The whole magazine is extremely "professionally" written—you get the impression the whole staff has been to Columbia Journalism School.

So why our lack of enthusiasm? There is something too official about the magazine; you can almost feel the funders reading over the shoulders of the reporters. Too many of the stories lack bite, and for all the "professional" reporting, you rarely come away feeling you've been given the Whole Story about groups or projects or initiatives—you wish you could listen in on the reporters after hours.

Furthermore, the tone is off. Too often the magazine reads like a business or financial magazine; where is the *voice* of the peace movement? There is a voice of the peace movement—alternately dreamy and wise, forever seeking a balance between power and innocence, as Rollo May might put it; always asking questions, never satisfied; always searching, searching, searching. The old *WIN* magazine caught something of that voice; probably *Peacework* magazine, a monthly published by American Friends Service Committee-New England, comes closest to that voice today (2161 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge MA 02140, \$1/sample).

Finally, too many innovative groups and projects are given short shrift. Potentially path-breaking groups like Beyond War, Search for Common Ground, and Project Victory (NEW OPTIONS #22 & 25) are not followed closely and are poorly understood; none have columns in the "Initiatives" section. Potentially path-breaking projects like WAND's public opinion study (NEW OPTIONS #31) and Ark Communications Institute's provocative new anthologies summing up post-liberal/post-socialist approaches to peace (#33) fail to get the attention they deserve. In a country that, as we've seen, is crying out for a New Story, the peace movement's definitive magazine has simply got to play a more exuberant role. *1755 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., #500, Washington DC 20036, bimonthly, \$4/sample.*

Unabashed afterword: Sample copies of all 10 magazines above will cost you only \$32—not much more than you'd pay for one hardcover book.

Letters . . .

The grass is greener

It is very strange reading about "human economy" and "world order" and "whole being" in NEW OPTIONS after being out of touch with my former political subculture's writing for so long.

A lot of these ideas strike me now as being very ungrounded and unrealistic, and read like secret passwords exchanged between philosophers who take themselves to be superior to the mainstream.

The fact is that those who best embody liberal, conservative, social democratic, even Communist ideas, are much happier and practical people than *any* of my former contacts, including yourself, Michael Marien (NEW OPTIONS #23), John Marks (#25), the Greens—and myself! And so I gravitate towards such "traditional," "old paradigm" people . . . and towards J.S. Mill, Frances Bacon, Karl Marx, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Clausewitz, Hobbes, Edmund Burke. These philosophers were much more in touch with reality.

We all seem to have followed the pattern of Emerson and Thoreau, who lived cheaply and not unhappily at the margins of New England society, writing some beautiful thoughts *alone* in their notebooks for other "independent" people. They preached friendship and BEING and nature but had difficulty living it, while many others in the mainstream lived it without talking about it.

—Marco Ermacora
Montreal, Quebec

Tired proposal

It is disappointing to see the masthead "New Options" followed immediately by yet another tired proposal to convert the United Nations into a "global legislature whose laws could be carried out by the Secretariat and interpreted by the World Court" (NEW OPTIONS #34). The Binding Triad concept—with each member state's vote to be counted three ways (one nation-one vote, population, contribution to U.N. budget)—demonstrates only that Richard Hudson has wasted his time at the Center for War/Peace Studies.

First of all: So long as the citizens of Western "democracies" insist that they have invented some grand new scheme of governance in the world, there can be little hope. We are no better than any other parts of the world . . . which is not to say we are worse.

Second of all, it is nonsense to expect *any*

nation-state to happily accept defeat in an adversarial voting process, let alone open itself to whatever "police forces" the victorious members of the U.N. chose to deploy.

—Professor Frederick C. Thayer
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Penna.

That was a superb overview of the U.N. reform movement! Don't know how deeply you want to explore the world-government scene—some of it may seem TOO far-out. But certain efforts come to mind that might be worth using to highlight key issues that must, sooner or later, be addressed. Here are two:

● *Personal vs. national sovereignty.* Garry Davis (World Service Authority, 1012 14th St. N.W., DC 20006) has been providing "passports" to thousands of stateless persons who have no NATIONAL standing anywhere.

● *Direct representation of people on a world basis.* Philip Isely's Third Provisional World Parliament (World Constitution and Parliament Assn, 1480 Hoyt St., #31, Lakeland CO 80215) will be held in Miami June 19-28. Might be worth looking in on, not so much to assess it as to get a feel for the tremendous commitment that is involved.

—Elizabeth R. Dana
Federalist Caucus
Portland, Ore.

Don't dismiss Irangate

Yes, the structure of the U.N. is an issue worth discussing. But to make Irangate the tail that wags that dog misses some far more important points to be made about Irangate.

For example, Irangate demonstrates the strength of a dangerous and hitherto not widely recognized interest group or "lobby," the ex-military and ex-intelligence officers who (a) favor covert actions, (b) attach little or no importance to constitutional, Congressional, legal or moral requirements, and (c) probably most dangerous, have access to their successors in government. *The Nation's* lead article for January 31 lays out this side of the issue.

Surely your readers deserve a more useful discussion of Irangate, not a disappointing use of it to lead into a discussion of possible structures for a more effective U.N.

—Jack Toby
New York, N.Y.

Dear Jack Toby: We did not ignore the Nation/Progressive/In These Times point of view. We actively sought to rebut it! Our view is that Irangate was primarily a result of the absence of world order ("competent global institutions"), and only secondarily of the machinations of the left's favorite demons, ex-military officers and the like. You can disagree with that view, but please, at least

notice it!

Spiral of silence

I have been reading your publication with great interest for some time with only one reservation: its lack of discussion regarding alternative approaches to the most important long-run question of our time—the type of world institutions needed to preserve peace. NEW OPTIONS #34 just scratches the surface of this area but constitutes a great start.

I would suggest a running commentary on world institutional approaches. It is so important to keep this top priority subject in the realm of public discourse.

No one can predict how long it will take to produce acceptance of some form of world government. But the most certain way to assure that the time will be long is to ignore the problem because it appears so difficult of solution.

This is exactly what has been taking place in recent years. Too many of us avoid discussing the development of meaningful world institutions for fear of being regarded as soft-headed and politically naive. It is vital, therefore, to break out of this vicious "spiral of silence" by repeated airing of the question.

—Frank Bourne
Washington, D.C.

Where "reform" begins

You are to be commended for addressing the issue of U.N. reform. However, your characterization of the United Nations Association of the USA (UNA-USA) is not accurate.

We believe that the United Nations, even with its current problems, has an admirable record of achievement. Yet, like all institutions, it must be improved. Our U.N. Management and Decision-Making Project is proposing several U.N. reforms. Its first report has just been published [UNA-USA, 300 E. 42nd St., New York NY 10017, \$4].

UNA-USA is in the forefront of groups calling for the United States and other governments to meet their treaty obligations by paying their full assessed contributions to the U.N. These contributions must be paid in order to facilitate the process of reform which began in the 41st U.N. General Assembly.

I urge you to advise your readers that unless governments, especially the United States, meet their financial obligations to the U.N., there will be no United Nations and no possibility of implementing the Binding Triad or other reform proposals.

—James M. Olson
National Field Director, UNA-USA
New York, N.Y.

Dear James Olson: We respect and appreciate

the work you do. However, the reforms your new project has proposed (so far), and the improvements your chairman, Elliot Richardson, has suggested in public debate, would simply make the current U.N. more capable and efficient. They would not make the U.N. more representative of the people of the Earth, nor would they expand its authority. That is why we classified your organization among the "system-maintainers," rather than the "system-transformers."

We agree with you that the U.N. cannot be transformed unless it is also maintained. However, sometimes the only way to maintain a system is to transform it. In that sense, Fobes, Hoffmann, Hudson and Mendlovitz may be doing some of your work . . . much as you are doing some of theirs, and ours.

The U.N. has interested me greatly beginning with my re-entry into the University of Alabama in the spring of 1946, when I became a student of Dr. W.W. Kulski, Polish delegate to the old League of Nations.

I definitely find myself in the camp of the system-transformers. A Jeffersonian at heart, I find it rather incredible that so few provisions were made for a malleable constitution which would permit some system change as the U.N. matures.

—Robert A. Smith III
Abbeville, Ala.

Science must prevail

I disagree with Donald Michael and Walter Anderson that progress no longer unites us (NEW OPTIONS #33). In fact, it is the only significant thing that *does* unite us.

The problem is, all of us have different ideas of what progress should *lead to*. And we all have different ideas about that because we all have different *value systems*.

To resolve this clash of value systems, is there any way to prove one value system is best? Unfortunately, no. The philosophers have been trying for over 2500 years and the only result is total failure.

To me, this means we must develop a kind of progress that allows most if not all of the value systems. Doesn't that make more sense than trying to develop a value system that *doesn't* favor progress?

In further criticism of the progress "story," the authors point out that all "stories" are threatened by information. This is of course true. But the authors fail to note that there are two human endeavors where the "selective ordering of information" is allowed to be corrected: science and technology.

The scientific and technological *establishment* is threatened by information. But scientific and technological mavericks have the power to always destroy such hidebound establishments.

In fact, in no other human endeavor can the status quo always be destroyed when it has outlived its usefulness.

That is why progress has *only* been made in science and technology. There has been no significant progress in any other field since the ancient Greeks.

Perhaps progress in all other fields can begin if we start all over again: Throw out all the other fields, play the ends of all the value systems against the facts and inductively proven laws of science and technology, and see what results.

—Harry Kerastas
Bridgeport, Conn.

Beyond science

Donald Michael and Walter Anderson, in their enumeration of candidates for a "post-modern story" to supersede the "progress story" of the modern world (NEW OPTIONS #33), overlook what may turn out to be a most important underlying factor.

The modern world was largely shaped by three developments: a "scientific revolution," an "economic revolution," and the rise of the nation-state. All of these developments were closely interconnected; all were part of one fundamental mind-change that [lies deeper than the competition between "stories" described by Michael and Anderson]. That fundamental mind-change we might, without undue distortion, call the "scientific heresy."

The scientific heresy really started with a widening group of persons voicing what many had come to suspect—"Reality is not the way the religious authorities told us!" This heresy amounted to a radical challenge to the prevailing authority structure (Scholasticism) and the substitution of a new one (empirical science).

The ultimate effect of this change in the picture of reality was by no means apparent at the time. In fact then, as now, there were a host of competing "stories," social movements and assorted odd groups—some looking forward, and some yearning to return to a familiar past. But in the end, the scientific heresy prevailed. It brought us the modern world with *its* competing stories.

Now there is a "new heresy" abroad, and again it lies deeper than the competition between stories.

This new heresy, which one scarcely heard hinted at prior to the last couple of years, is essentially that "Reality is not the way the secular authorities told us either." The objectivist, reductionist, positivist bias of the modern scientific picture of reality does not conform to the reality of human experience, and we now realize it never will.

Some more holistic form of science, giving more validity to subjective experience and more

humble in its attitude toward the nonmeasurable, is probably in the making—but that is not our point here. Our point is that the predominant authority structure is again being challenged. And the contending authority structure places far more emphasis on inner, intuitive knowing.

In the modern scientific world-view it is assumed, implicitly if not explicitly, that the physical world is real and consciousness/mind/spirit is somehow "less real." Incredible as it would have seemed to most of us only a few years back, this picture of reality is being turned on its head. In the new heresy, consciousness/mind/spirit is the fundamental reality, and the physical world is somehow "less real."

Of course, the "new heresy" no more means that science is outmoded than the "scientific heresy" meant that religion was outmoded. But some are disturbed by the new thought.

This "new heresy" lies behind *some* versions of what Michael and Anderson call the "green" and "new paradigm" stories. But it is both more and less widespread than that. It is less, because it lies behind some but not all of the "green" and "new paradigm" talk. On the other hand it is more, because it can be found among those who do not seem to be openly challenging the prevailing "progress" story.

—Willis W. Harman
Sausalito, Calif.

Willis Harman is president of the Institute of Noetic Sciences (475 Gate Five Rd, #300, Sausalito CA 94965) and author of An Incomplete Guide to the Future (1976).

Time to connect

I like NEW OPTIONS—I like the global philosophy and the integrative ideas—but frankly all these high-powered erudite heavy thinkers/writers get me feeling definitely inferior much of the time.

I am a housewife/mother of very young children and my personal impact on the world right now hinges on my contact with others like myself and my training of my children. Would it be possible to direct your attention in some small part to issues of concern to the likes of us? We are your grass-eaters on the political food chain.

—Jane McDay
Williston, Vt.

Your Board of Advisors is an exciting group of people whom I deeply admire and who give me strength in many ways. My one observation about the group is that they may rely too heavily upon writing books as a strategy for getting their point across.

—James L. Stovall, Jr.
Baton Rouge, La.

Ten best movement magazines?

For 35 straight issues this space has been used to review books. But it may be that the social change movement is better served by its magazines than by its thick tomes. Or at least, better revealed.

Certainly you'll get that impression if you page through the latest edition of Tim Ryan and Patricia Case's *Whole Again Resource Guide* (SourceNet, Box 6767, Santa Barbara CA 93160, \$27 pbk). It lists and describes over 3,200 social change-oriented newspapers, magazines, journals, newsletters, and manuals, in the process giving us a beautiful panoramic sense of what the "sustainable alternatives" movement is all about.

Flip through the pages just looking at the titles of the publications, and you'll have an experience akin to that of reading poetry: *Common Ground* . . . *Earth Star* . . . *Free Spirit* . . . *Heartland* . . . *Many Hands* . . . *New Visions* . . . *Rising Sun* . . . The publications are arranged according to 40 subject-chapters that, among them, summarize the breadth of our movement's concerns: Alternative News, Animals, Antinuclear, Astrology. . . . Ryan and Case's brief descriptions—of all 3,200 publications, not just the biggest or best-known—are usually on the mark.

If we have a problem with this book, it is that it is too full, too overwhelming. Since the authors diplomatically refrain from rating the publications, you can't get any sense of which periodicals are most stimulating and useful. Tempted to write away for hundreds, you'll probably end up writing away for none. So, unable to keep from rising to the bait—and prodded, also, by a couple of dozen of you over the years—we prepared the following list of what are, in our opinion, the Ten Best Movement Magazines. Keep in mind our list does *not* include: newsletters (a separate genre!), periodicals less than two years old, periodicals that don't really focus on any one movement (such as the *Utne Reader*), and periodicals published outside the U.S.

We went so far as to rank our Top Ten—no doubt a carry-over from our childish fascination with the AP's weekly ranking of college sports teams. And no doubt just as arbitrary. But we'll go to the wall with this: The person who is not interested in what at least one or two of these periodicals have to offer, is a person not interested in life.

(1) *Earth First!* newspaper

The environmental movement has the best magazines. *Amicus Journal* (of the Natural Re-

sources Defense Council), *Not Man Apart* (of Friends of the Earth), *Sierra* . . . all are informative and inspiring. But *Earth First!: The Radical Environmental Journal* is something more: it is a phenomenon, a Force. It is as full of life and diversity, of exuberance and brilliance, as the movement we need to create.

There's a patina of vulgarity, with headlines that read like they came from the *New York Daily News* (Texas EF! Fights Freddy Godzilla . . . Conservationists Suffer Stunning Road Defeat . . . RAID ON REYKJAVIK . . . Editorial: Do It!), an enormous letters-to-the-editor section entitled "Dear Shit fer Brains," and a writing style that is occasionally so informal and off-the-cuff you'll think you're listening in on a couple of good old boys driving home from the game. But look again. The "uncivilized" style functions—brilliantly—to jerk us out of our pasty, "civilized" ways (surprise, surprise: editor Dave Foreman used to be an environmental lobbyist on Capitol Hill). Moreover, the "uncivilized" style may be the perfect foil for the hyper-civilized, deep-ecological, almost worshipful approach to the land and all its inhabitants that *Earth First!* newspaper embodies and champions. Can you imagine how sappy the paper *could* sound?

The diversity of articles is astonishing. In one recent issue alone there are four fine pages on rainforests; reports on EF! chapter activities (they do a lot more than spike trees); a 5,000-word critique of Alston Chase's liberal best-seller, *Playing God in Yellowstone*; a besotted and clearly unreliable account of "the Earth First! Christmas bash"; Andrew "Parable of the Tribes" Schmookler's beautifully-wrought reply to some of his anarchist critics; a hilarious regular column, "Ask Ned Ludd" — kind of an Ann Landers column on how to sabotage road-building and timber company operations; and much more. Most movement periodicals tell you what to think. Some (#2-10 below) help you to think. *Earth First!* newspaper shakes you so hard that your heart and mind and gut all run together. Will a holistic movement follow? P.O. Box 5871, Tucson AZ 85703, eight issues/year, \$2/sample.

(2) *The Sun*

According to the *Whole Again Guide*, over 1,000 spiritual and "human potential" periodicals are published in the U.S. A couple of them are well worth reading. And *The Sun: A Magazine of Ideas* is more than that.

Better than any publication we know, *The Sun* expresses the sensibility we'll need if we're

ever going to bring a sustainable society into being. It doesn't preach that sensibility; it never "preaches" (that's part of the new sensibility!); it's not even terribly "spiritual" any more, in any conventional sense. It features editor Sy Safransky's ongoing account of his social-emotional-intellectual-political life, tender and brutally honest. It features carefully crafted interviews with explorers like Ram Dass and Tuli Kupferberg (the last as obscene as anything in *Earth First!*); articles with titles like "A New Astonishment: Notes on Watching Television" and "The Perils of Being a Wonderful Father" and "Peace Nigger's Long March"; poems and short stories. We love the "US" section, which every month asks readers to "write about subjects on which we're the only authorities" (recent subjects: Changing Beliefs, Compromise, Broken Promises).

Through it all, the tone is the message; the gentle, humorous, searching tone. The tone of the editor confessing, "I want to embrace the world's pain, but I can't even embrace this small pain of mine." The tone at once ironic and forgiving. 412 W. Rosemary St., Chapel Hill NC 27514, monthly, \$3/sample.

(3) *Sojourner*

Many women created ongoing public roles for themselves through feminism. But Shulamith Firestone, author of the very best feminist book of our time (*The Dialectic of Sex*, 1970), simply gave us her gift and left. Similarly, Allison Platt, founding editor of the very best feminist periodical, *Sojourner: The Women's Forum*, who spent years improving the quality and expanding the scope of her newspaper in a dank warehouse off the M.I.T. campus, often working till the wee hours of the morning accompanied only by her little white dog, "Lincoln," basically disappeared just when the larger feminist community began to recognize the extraordinary nature of her accomplishment. Is there a lesson here?

At any rate . . . *Sojourner* was, and still is, everything *Ms.* magazine fancied itself to be ten years ago: a vehicle in which all kinds of feminists can have their say, and BE. They are all here: lesbian feminists and liberal feminists, cultural feminists and Marxist feminists, eco-feminists and feminists of color, Christian feminists and pagan feminists. . . . Better yet, they are HERE; present in all their flesh and blood, and contradictions. Their letters (must be the longest letters-to-the-editor section of any U.S. periodical) are nothing if not heartfelt. The articles—largely by women from the Boston/Cambridge area—cover the gamut of *human* concerns: from the situation in South Africa to the possibility of "re-making love." And yet, despite the diversity of viewpoints and subject matter, the newspaper maintains an essential unity. How?

For one thing, nearly all the articles feature women thinking—hard—about who we are and where we're going, and where we should be going. When you're reading, you may be overwhelmed by the differences of opinion; but half an hour later, chances are you'll be left above all with a tremendous respect for the depth and originality of feminist searching. Another point of unity: Most articles are (explicitly or implicitly) concerned with setting forth a *uniquely feminist* perspective. Thus, one recent contributor seeks to distinguish the feminist perspective on foreign policy from what she calls the "peace movement perspective." Finally, the design itself—a beautiful round typeface, an extraordinarily soft and sensuous layout—helps to hold the disparate material together. *143 Albany St., Cambridge MA 02138, monthly, \$2/sample.*

(4) Sojourners

The right-wing evangelical movement dominates the headlines to such an extent that a parallel evangelical movement—not left-wing so much as light Green (simplicity-, community- and nonviolence-oriented)—has never been given its due. Fortunately, *Sojourners: An Independent Christian Monthly* beautifully conveys that movement's philosophy and concerns.

Edited by Jim Wallis, author of *Call to Conversion* (1981), *Sojourners* articulates what it calls a "Bible-based politics" that's "consistently pro-life." Well-researched, sprightly-written articles argue for such things as the family farm, redistribution of wealth, nonviolent solutions for Central America, shelter for the homeless, and "racial reconciliation" in South Africa. But the arguments come from Christian ethics and philosophy—not from liberal political philosophy. Similarly, abortion is opposed . . . but not on the grounds of conservative political philosophy. "An individual's self-interest is [not] the highest value," one important article recently declared. "The job of Christian feminism is not to numb those life-preserving instincts in women but to awaken them in men."

The most provocative articles of all may be the music and media reviews. You get to see our culture not from the left or right, but as a kind of worldly Jesus might have seen it. *P.O. Box 29272, Washington DC 20017, monthly, \$3/sample.*

(5) In Context

Harper's and *The Atlantic* take an in-depth look at contemporary American culture; just so, *In Context: A Quarterly of Humane Sustainable Culture* looks at what Fritjof Capra calls "the rising culture" . . . every nook and cranny of it.

Each 64-page issue has a major focus. These cover the gamut of "sustainable" concerns: "Friends and Lovers," "The Way of Learning,"

"Being a Planetary Villager," "Sustainable Habitat," "Living Business," "The New Story." Most of the articles are about—or by—those who are DOING THE WORK in these areas: writing the texts, running the groups. For example, the "Sustainable Habitat" issue features articles by or interviews with Tom Bender (*Environmental Design Primer*), Amory Lovins (*Soft Energy Paths*), Wes Jackson (Land Institute), Hunter Lovins (Economic Renewal Project) and William Irwin Thompson (*Pacific Shift*)—as well as many up-and-coming younger lights.

What makes the magazine special, though, is not just the appealing content. It's that the tone reflects and embodies the content. In fact, the tone conveys more than the explicit content. At its best, it conveys a hopefulness, a playfulness, a vulnerability, a sense of promise and potential, even—you will forgive us—a kind of spiritual groundedness, that evokes the inner core of the new culture. For this we can thank Robert and Diane Gilman and their many friends, who painstakingly edit the copy in a rural cabin in Washington state. *P.O. Box 215, Sequim WA 98382, quarterly, \$5/sample.*

(6) Reason

We have qualms about *Reason: Free Minds and Free Markets*, and not just because it's libertarian. We don't like the right-wing foreign policy (many libertarians are not right-wing on foreign policy); we don't like the self-satisfied writing style; we don't like the socially-unconscious financial advice. So why do we read it regularly, even eagerly, as soon as it comes in to our office?

Well, partly for the same reason we read *Sojourners*: it gives us a different slant on things, so different that it makes the world anew. And partly because the writers are thinking, thinking, thinking: they're more fun to shadow-box with than those from any other movement

magazine.

Finally, though, it's because you can't deny that the magazine is on to a Big Truth: Decentralization and self-reliance (aka: personal and community empowerment) have got to be a part—a very big part—of the "humane, sustainable" future. All *Reason's* articles conspire to hammer home this Truth: whether it's American Indian Movement leader Russell Means taking on the political left, or the hilarious critique of rock music censorship, or the piece making a plausible case for a free-market approach to land reform in Guatemala, or the exciting review of an Ayn Rand autobiography. . . . We wonder how many first-time readers of *Reason* will say something like this: "There are ideas and passions here I haven't pursued since adolescence. Why?" *2716 Oak Park Blvd, #1062, Santa Monica CA 90405, monthly, \$2/sample.*

(7) Medical Self-Care

More and more of us are taking charge of our lives—assuming much more responsibility for our health, diets, energy consumption, etc. Quite a few self-help magazines have sprung up to serve our needs in these areas. But too many of them are laden with rhetoric, and some of them give questionable advice.

Medical Self-Care is dramatically different—it is the very model of what a self-help magazine should be. The editors and writers are expert in their fields. The articles are written in a clear, no-nonsense manner, and tend to feature the best of mainstream medicine as well as the best of the alternative therapies. Some of the articles touch on the larger dimensions of health—crime and health, health in a hazardous world, etc.—and the editor's column occasionally tackles the socio-political dimension of health issues. But most of the articles tend to be about such down-to-earth matters as "preventing heart dis-

Continued on page four, column one . . .

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New Options, Inc.
Post Office Box 19324
Washington, D.C. 20036

Issue No. Thirty-six

Non-Profit Org.
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Permit No. 4999