"There is no easy formula for this renewal." Lewis Mumford

Summer Books Issue

New Values, New Politics . Mark Satin, Editor

Volume I, No. 25

Henderson's Politics of the Solar Age Wins Transformational Book Award; Elgin, Brown, Skolimowski, Cousins Are Runners-Up

A panel of 100 university teachers and think-tank associates has given the second annual "Transformational Book Award" to Hazel Henderson for her book The Politics of the Solar Age.

"I am very honored!" said the 49-year-old British-born futurist and "anti-economist" at her home last week in Gainesville, Fla., where she is recovering from a back injury. "Such a distinguished group of judges!"

The award consists of a cash prize and a certificate of "appreciation and respect." Certificates also went to the four runners-up: Duane Elgin, Voluntary Simplicity; Lester Brown, Building a Sustainable Society: Henryk Skolimowski, Eco-Philosophy; and Norman Cousins, Human Options.

About the Award

Each year, the Award is given to the author whose book, published in North America the previous year, "had the potential to contribute most to the reconceptualization of politics along human growth, decentralist, and world order lines."

Last year's award went to Marilyn Ferguson for her book, The Aquarian Conspiracy. Thus, this is the second year in a row that a woman from the Sun Belt has won the award.

The judges come from all parts of the U.S. and Canada. Among the 78 universities represented are McGill, Columbia, Michigan, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Texas, Berkeley and Hawaii. Among the 19 think-tanks: Council on International and Public Affairs (New York City), Center for Urban Affairs and Policy Research (Evanston, Ill.), Southwest Center on the Future (The Woodlands, Tex.), and SRI International (Menlo Park, Cal.).

In March, an eight-member panel including Judith Ellison, director of the Congressional Institute on the Future, John Fobes, president of the U.S. Association of the Club of Rome, and Michael Marien, editor of the World Future Society's Future Survey, selected 15 nominees for this year's award (see RENEW-AL #21).

The Transformational Book Award is the only literary award of its kind. Sponsor of the award is Renewal Newsletter. A press release is going out later this month to 1,500 changeoriented periodicals around the world.

About the winners

Among them, the five Certificate winners cover a lot of ground. Henderson provides a critique of economics (the discipline itself not just its practitioners) and the beginnings of a coherent alternative. Elgin offers a political rationale for "a way of life that is outwardly simple, inwardly rich." Brown describes the global environmental/energy crisis and suggests the shape of a "sustainable society." Skolimowski articulates a philosophy that could serve as the metaphysical basis for "meaningful living" and political change.
And Cousins distills the wisdom he's acquired in a lifetime dedicated to humane social criticism and world order activism.

However, there are some overriding similarities among these books. Each is concerned with the planet as a whole, not just with the U.S. Each stresses the connection between politics and values. And each offers a hopeful, plausible vision of the not-too-distant future.

Controversy over Henderson

The Politics of the Solar Age was named on over two-thirds of the ballots, and judges had plenty of good things to say about it. From Hawaii: "Henderson has taught me the most about the present crisis in our economy why it is falling apart, why nobody in power seems able to understand this and what an alternative economic system might look like.' From the Midwest: "(Henderson) inspired hope without resorting to 'cheap shots' or simplistic thinking that characterized many of the other books I read." From the Bay Area: "The key issue is collecting the data to make the map of what is going on. (Henderson) does this beautifully."

There were some dissenting voices, however. One judge said, "Poorly written!" Another said, "The thunderbolts are not at all aimed at the prevailing wisdom of supply-side economics. . . . I do not know of the slightest hint of evidence to suggest that the practice of economics has even been dented by this polemic."

Controversy over other books

Duane Elgin's Voluntary Simplicity received more first-place votes than Henderson! But like The Aquarian Conspiracy last year, it was the kind of book that people either loved or left alone: it received as many votes for first place as for second and third combined.

"I think (Elgin's) views are an inevitable part of any long-range solution to the human situation," said one teacher from the Midwest. "Reading Voluntary Simplicity instructs and inspires me in making my life consistent with my best knowledge," said another, from the Pacific Northwest. However, here is an example of the other kind of reaction to Elgin's book - from New York State: "No hint whatsoever of what might be done to promote V.S. Elgin fervently thinks It's Happening (the Peter Pan approach to social change), but his estimate of 10 million Americans embracing V.S. is a rough one, and probably inflated, as are his hopes."

Lester Brown's Building a Sustainable Society was the only other book to be named

Note from the Editor

This is RENEWAL's 15th consecutive issue, and according to the "credits" box on p. 2, it is time for us to take our summer vacation. Publication will resume August 30.

It's been an exhausting, exhilirating year. We now have subscribers in all 50 states, in our 100 biggest cities, and in 20 "foreign" countries; and we've been written up or excerpted in publications as diverse as the J.C. Penney Forum, Vegetarian Times, and Israel's New Outlook!

on over half the ballots. One typically balanced comment came in from the West Coast: "Brown provided a great deal of solid 'real world' information, and a reasonable if less than inspired solution." Another came in from the East: "An excellent overview of environmental trends and necessary actions. . . . Brown fails, however, to make any mention of the contribution of the arms race to sagging economies worldwide, and he has no sense of what is needed to get his ideas on the political agenda."

Skolimowski and Cousins received equally mixed reviews.

From western Canada: "(Skolimowski's) is one of the best and finest reasoned statements of a conceptual framework for a culture of life and a peaceful global world-view." And, from the East: "Skolimowski has the power to teach and inspire. He is the poet of the alternatives movement." But, from the South: "So abstract as to be meaningless, except to other academics and intellectuals."

From a professor in the Great Plains states: "(Cousins is) full of perceptive insights into human problems and potentials." From the Southwest: "Nice thoughts, lots of them, by a nice man." From a think-tank in D.C.: "(It) is not really a book - only a compilation of

Continued on page three, column one . . .

Kaleidoscope

Project Warm: the real peace movement; two more newsletters

Project Warm, of Louisville, Ky., is the kind of unpretentious, eminently practical program that can take the New Age beyond books and conferences.

"PW is a volunteer, neighborhood weatherization program," PW's Jim Walsh told RENEWAL. "We train neighborhood volunteers to apply simple weatherization materials to their own homes with the understanding that the volunteers will also apply these measures to the homes of their elderly and/or handicapped neighbors. All the materials are free. We asked for and received full funding for these materials from the local electric company — up to \$50,000 for 1982-83 (!)....

"To date we have trained 160 volunteers who have weatherized over 225 homes. Our follow-up energy analysis shows an average of 17% reduction in fuel usage. More important, we are getting neighborhood groups involved in energy matters. Today weatherstripping - tomorrow local neighborhood photovoltaics, and biodigesters . . . " (Walsh: 717 Shelby Pkwy, Louisville, Ky. 40203).

The Aguarian Research Foundation that's Art and Judy Rosenblum and their many friends - have just produced an hourlong cassette tape of speakers and music from the June 12 march for a nuclear weapons freeze (RENEWAL #24). Another tape they've produced: Isaac Asimov, Gerhard Elston, Donald Keys et, al. at the first press conference of the Planetary Initiative for the World We Choose (\$5 each from ARF, 5620 Morton St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19144).

One of the most provocative articles on the peace movement is buried in the summer issue of a community planning journal.

"Peace: An Alternative Strategy." by Berkeley professor Leonard Duhl, distinguishes among three groups involved in peace work: first, the official government agencies; second, the peace organizations (who "participate on the same 'gameboard' but on the other side of the rhetoric from the government people"); and, third, those who are "dealing with a range of (issues) that ultimately relate to peace in the world" - poverty, self-government, health, hunger, consumerism, ecology, etc. According to Duhl, it is only this third group that consistently "reflects a deep alternative consciousness of what the issues are" and can take us beyond the sterile guns-vs.-butter debate.

In this view, the resurgent peace movement is a double-edged sword. For to some extent, it draws people and public attention away from the deeper, causal issues mentioned above (reprints \$2 from: Duhl, School of Public Health, Warren Hall, University of California, Berkeley 94720).

Gordon Davidson and Corinne McLaughlin, co-founders of the Sirius Community, have produced two slideshows that are really catching on. "Alternatives in America: the Network of Light" surveys over 30 groups that serve as "demonstration centers" in

solar energy, cooperative businesses, humanistic politics, etc. "The Spiritual Destiny of America" traces the contributions of Native Americans, religious Europeans, and the perennial philosophy" to our politicospiritual heritage. Both slideshows are available for rent or sale (P.O. Box 388, Amherst. Mass. 01004).

Two more newsletters on "New Age politics" (broadly defined):

John Lobell, author of The Little Green Book (RENEWAL #9), will be launching Gary Null's Natural Living Newsletter October 31 — a special premiere double-issue is out now and is available free. Null does the popular radio show "Natural Living" WBAI-FM, and he and Lobell view health "in the largest context: health means not only a healthy body, but also a healthy mind and a healthy environment" (P.O. Box 849, Madison Sq. Stn, New York, N.Y. 10159).

Meanwhile, Michael Phillips, author of

Honest Business (RENEWAL #15), is about to launch Glide Formation, the first "computer based inter-active newsletter." The Formation will be kicked off via screening various mostly well-known people's comments on the subject of "the turning point."
"You can comment, reply, and (your reply) will be forwarded to the person who made the comment," Phillips explains. More important, respondents will be able to reply directly to each other's comments (Glide Formation: 330 Ellis St., San Francisco 94102).

New World Alliance update

Alliance chapter organizers discuss their problems openly

In RENEWAL #24, we reported that most local chapters of the New World Alliance have experienced declining memberships, internal turbulence, and a debilitating lack of focus despite the Alliance's commitment to such values and processes as sharing, consensus and unity. In this column, the local organizers will try to tell us what's gone wrong.

"People are burnt out on going to lectures, joining groups, that kind of thing," says Dallas's Susan Walton. "Also, there wasn't enough support coming from (the National Office) and people were fumbling around blindly (here) trying to figure out what to do."

"Some people haven't found their particular role to play in the transformation," says San Francisco's Alanna Hartzok. "Then again, some people have already found a level they want to work on. (In San Francisco,) the two came together not so well, they tended to hold each other back," and that tended to hold the chapter back.

"There's a lot of people who've drifted through our meetings and drifted away," says Los Angeles's Gerald Goldfarb. "Chapters may be an outdated, old way (for a political organization) to go. There are so many organizations! Maybe they're already doing (what they can). . . . "

The most successful chapter right now is in Milwaukee, and according to Milwaukee's Robert Thompson, "That has a lot to do with (our facilitator.) Belden Paulson. He's been doing this kind of thing for so many years, having seminars, drawing people from all (walks of life), that he's just built up a lot of credibility. Probably he'd be doing the same things if there wasn't an Alliance. . . ."

In Washington, D.C., after many meetings, the local chapter finally did come up with a common project, says D.C.'s Jim Easterly doing low-cost energy retrofitting, especially for older people. "But in practice it was difficult to mobilize people around that. People were more spiritually oriented, I guess—the membership really declined. . . . Another thing, we were always trying to think through 'who we were' and getting no clarity from the national level. We really suffered from lack of definition."

Differing notions of "what to do now" have been put forward by Wendy Mogey of the New York chapter and Mel Gurtov of the Riverside, Cal. chapter.

"People (in New York) put the Alliance at the bottom of their list of priorities because they don't know what it is," says Mogey. "Also, people who've been attracted to the Alliance (here) either haven't had the organizing experience or don't have the temperament to start a strong local chapter. (Given all this,) I'm intrigued by a more 'dictatorial' model. Like, this is in the contract: pick out one narrow concrete focus and see that as (the task, and don't) spend so much time talking in generalities -- just plunge right in there.

By contrast, Gurtov states: "A lot of people (in Riverside) were hangers-on and just not willing or able to find their own path, (but) I vowed that this chapter would not become 'Mel's chapter.' I feel no ambivalence about that: either it happens in a New Age way or it doesn't happen. We have to find a way to be both externally competent and internally doing things a new way. If we can't, then maybe someone else will come along and do it right."

Renewal

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Continued from page one, column three:

journal entries that only someone with his status could get published."

An off year?

At least half a dozen judges expressed disappointment with this year's (i.e., 1981's) crop of books. "None impressed me as warranting any especial honor," wrote one think-tank associate. However, I wonder if some of these judges weren't expecting too much of these books. Some of them were clearly expecting the books to do what only a political movement can do. Consider this comment, from a New York City think-tank: "None of these books says things in a sufficiently stirring and provocative fashion to be too highly touted." Or this, from upstate New York: "I hope that, in future years, more attention will be given to the real-life problems of getting good ideas into positions of power" (emphases added). Transformation-oriented people had better begin to understand that books cannot do everything!

The top 10

Here are the books that did best in the voting. Scores were obtained by giving five points to each first-place vote, four points to each second-place vote, etc., then dividing by the number of judges.

- 1. Hazel Henderson, *The Politics of the Solar Age* (Anchor, \$9 pbk., reviewed in RE-NEWAL #10), 2.48 points;
- 2. Duane Elgin, Voluntary Simplicity (Morrow, \$6 pbk., reviewed in #9), 2.24 points;
- 3. Lester Brown, Building a Sustainable Society (Norton, \$15, reviewed in #14), 1.68 points;
- 4. Henryk Skolimowski, *Eco-Philosophy* (Marion Boyars, \$7 pbk., reviewed in #6), 1.10 points:
- 5. Norman Cousins, *Human Options* (Norton, \$10, reviewed in #18), 0.96 points;
- 6. Daniel Yankelovich, New Rules (Random House, \$16, reviewed in #24), 0.87 points;
- 7. Gary Coates, ed., Resettling America (Brick House, \$15 pbk., reviewed in #16), 0.78 points;
- 8. Bruce Stokes, Helping Ourselves (Norton, \$5 pbk., reviewed in #5), 0.70 points;
- 9. Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, *The World Challenge* (Simon and Schuster, orig. France; \$15, reviewed in #24), 0.62 points;
- 10. Niels Meyer et. al., Revolt from the Center (Marion Boyars, orig. Denmark; \$8 pbk., reviewed in #22), 0.58 points.

For the record

A number of readers have wondered how much influence I have on the selection process. For the record, then, my first choice last year would have been Robert Johansen's *The National Interest and the Human Interest* (RENEWAL #2), which failed to finish in the top 10. My first choice this year would have been James Fallows's *National Defense* (#11), which wasn't even nominated.

Kennard: we should accept human nature

"Everybody talks about the need for organizing, but hardly anybody does (it)," says Washington, D.C. community organizer Byron Kennard at the beginning of his book, Nothing Can Be Done, Everything Is Possible (Brick House, 34 Essex St., Andover, Mass. 01810, \$10 pbk.). Then there's a painful but illuminating explanation: "Maybe organizing is so mundane an activity that persons with exalted intellects feel it will dirty their hands." Then there's an attempt to ground that explanation in the author's own experience: "I don't even spend 10 percent of my time in direct service to the neediest. No, but here I am writing a book. . . ." Finally, there's a comment to the effect that, well, maybe there's another side to all this. . . .

That pattern is repeated again and again in Kennard's book, making it one of the most personal, entertaining, and bittersweet introductions to "New Age politics" that I can imagine.

All the standard bases are touched in this book: the mindlessness of big systems, the limits of modern science, the importance of entrepreneurship and "planetary community" and the human scale. What makes this book special is that these points are made wryly, playfully, anecdotally, humorously — with a healthy stress on the complexities. The result is to restore the human dimension to our too-often-abstractly-expressed politics. It is also to give strength to many activists who may have been experiencing some of the same ambivalences, double-binds, and doubts that Kennard freely confesses to.

The real theme of this book is the need for political thinkers and activists to accept human nature.

Sure we can change, Kennard seems to be saying; but the pace will be glacially slow, and there's lots to be done in the meantime. Kennard admires the Constitution because "it dealt wisely with the contradictions in human nature," and he's even begun to celebrate "entrepreneurial scale capitalism" because "its contradictions happen to mirror some contradictions in human nature that I now perceive as ineradicable."

Naturally, that perspective puts him at odds with some New Age activists who would focus more on changing people than on changing systems. As a careful student of human nature, Kennard is suspicious of those who are constantly talking about sharing, consensus, unity, etc., and his comments on, e.g., all those "selfless" activists "who are extremely competitive with others in the movement doing work most similar to their own," are bound to remind any experienced reader of many close colleagues.

That kind of outlook has had its effect on Kennard's understanding of what should be our political strategy. On the one hand, he is an eloquent champion of "networking" in its many guises. On the other hand, he feels that "traditional" organizations are needed to win popular acceptance of ideas introduced by networks.

Unfortunately, like his good friend Hazel Henderson (who writes a supportive afterword), Kennard has retained a narrow and dated vision of our potential political constituency: "minorities, feminists, environmentalists, the counterculture"—essentially, the liberal Democratic constituency. Clearly, the thrust of his book is to suggest that our real constituency is all those who love life.

Keys: it's time for humanity to grow up

Donald Keys is, among many other things, consultant to delegates at the United Nations, president of Planetary Citizens, and guiding spirit behind the Planetary Initiative for the World We Choose. For years he's worked at integrating his spiritual and political understandings into a coherent belief-system, and next month his first major book, *Earth at Omega*, will be coming off press (Branden Press, P.O. Box 843, Brookline Village, Mass. 02147, \$16).

The title refers to the fact that Earth is at a major crisis point — "point omega" in Teilhard de Chardin's terminology. That's not altogether bad, says Keys, since it gives us a powerful incentive to grow. Growth is Keys's master metaphor, appearing again and again in this book. The world is vast "nursery school," humanity has barely reached the stage of "adolescence," and the "growing up of humanity" is upon us.

According to Keys, it is literally upon us. Advances in transportation and communications have extended the "neural network" of the planet to such an extent that a new psychological and ethical response is being demanded of us, a response that could lead to what Keys, following Teilhard, calls the "planetization" (systematic interweaving) of humanity. This step is inevitable, says Keys: "human life on Earth will become organized, whether in the next few years or after an interval of ten thousand or a million years. It is inherent in the destiny of aggregate lives. . . ."

The next couple of chapters take a very different tack: they provide a down-to-earth "guided tour" of the United Nations, its problems and potentials as the first "universal organization." Keys defends

the U.N. as a "mirror of reality," pointing out that its (obvious) defects simply reflect the fact that humanity has a long, long way to go.

The second half of the book can be read on at least three levels at once! On one level, we are told much more about Keys's metaphysical system. For example, we are told that some of the new and "necessary" myths that are arising, "spaceship earth," "the global village," "organismic humanity," etc., are the partial "extrusions into human consciousness of unitary realities which are encountered in their entirety in inner life and which humanity can absorb only in small doses."

On the second level, we are told much more about Keys's ideological system. For example, we are told we can usefully think of people as falling into one of four "orientations of consciousness," pre-humanistic, anti-humanistic, humanistic and post-humanistic or transpersonal. "Democratic rule" is, bravely, questioned — does it actually lead to the wisest choices? Shouldn't we want our "wisest and best persons to lead us"?

On a third level, we are told much more about Keys's practical-political visions and plans. He finds much hope in the "parallel culture" and intentional communities; he puts out a call for "World Warriors" — changed persons who are ready to act as change agents in the larger society; he gives a very thorough rationale for Planetary Citizens and the Planetary Initiative.

Most New Age writers have only interpreted the world. Keys has written a book that can help him and his associates change it, and it's on that basis — its use-value as a tool — that Earth at Omega should eventually be assessed.

Clearinghouse reaches out to future-focused Congresspeople

Who are the future-focused Congresspeople? Do they know one another? Where do they meet? What are their goals?

Thanks to the Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future, it is possible to provide beginning answers to all those questions.

Clearinghouse: first cut

The Clearinghouse was started six years ago by Rep. Charlie Rose (D-NC), well known as one of the most spiritually aware members of Congress, and 10 colleagues. Purposes of the Clearinghouse: to provide Congresspeople with information about trends and emerging issues, to help Congresspeople look at the future consequences of their decisions, and to help Congressional committees incorporate futures research and forecasting into their proceedings (the "foresight provision," passed in 1974, requires most House committees to do this).

The 80-90 members and "advisors" of the Clearinghouse represent only about 15% of the total membership of Congress, but among them are most of those who did well in RE-NEWAL's first Congressional voting index (#23), including top-scoring Senators Chris Dodd. Charles Mathias and Claiborne Pell, and top-scoring Representatives Tom Downey and Toby Moffett. Other members and advisors include Rep. Berkley Bedell (D-IA), passionate defender of small business and local communities; Rep. George Brown, Jr. (D-CA), who would have Congress promote organic farming; Rep. Dan Glickman (D-KS), sponsor of the Peace Academy bill; Rep. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), the former community organizer; and Rep. Claudine Schneider, 35-year-old pro-feminist and pro-solar firstterm Republican from Rhode Island.

"You might say the members of the Clearinghouse are generally younger in age and younger in years of service, and a disproportionately high number of them are women coming in (to-Congress)," says Rita Goldman, the young, black executive director of the Clearinghouse. "I think women are generally more sensitive to the fact that the future is something we need to pay attention to."

Clearinghouse: second cut

Recently, RENEWAL spent an afternoon at the Clearinghouse, and we learned that the "official" purposes, cited above, are only part of the story. "We want the legislators not only to know but also to feel the need for (futureoriented) legislation," Goldman told us. "For example, we discourage them from sending surrogates to our discussions, we encourage them to bring their husbands or wives, and most of our (sessions) are closed to the public so we can have meaningful discussions, without people spouting the rhetoric they spout in public. (All this) creates a commonality of experience. . . . " The deeper or "latent" purpose, then, is to induce Congresspeople to let down their guards and talk to each other not as roles but as confused and

caring human beings — "which they also are. It's one of the only places in Congress where legislators are actually encouraged to do this."

The Clearinghouse has experimented with many different kinds of programs and gatherings during its six-year history, but its centerpiece has always been the "Dialogues on America's Future" series - informal, off-therecord discussions (sometimes quite intense!) between members of Congress and innovative thinkers; not just whom you'd expect (Daniel Boorstin, Walter Wriston) but also people like Elise Boulding, Buckminster Fuller, Elizabeth Dodson-Gray, Willis Harman, Hazel Henderson, Jonas Salk, E.F. Schumacher, Paolo Soleri. . . . Until this year, there'd also been a Trend Evaluation and Monitoring Program (TEAM). According to Goldman, "TEAM was a network of volunteers who picked out articles from 70 publications indicative of a trend. Then the analyst would try to put together what it meant - for Congress, for society, for the globe. . . . We found the problem is not identifying the emerging issues the problem is what do you do with them after you've identified them? How do you raise (Congresspeople's) consciousness? How do you mobilize people?"

The Clearinghouse publishes numerous periodicals, including What's Next?, a survey of future trends, and Foresight, which tracks future-oriented legislation through Congress. "There needs to be hard-core futures legislation in different areas," Goldman told us. "Take computers, for example. There's already a need for a public political response! To wait until there's a crisis to address this issue doesn't make a whole lot of sense. But so far we don't see as many hard-core tangible results as I'd like. What we see (among some legislators) is a conscious awareness, like, maybe we should spend some time thinking about (computers). I don't mean to minimize the importance of this. But in the same way that we go for the jugular in oversight hearings, well, we need to do foresight hearings in

a different and more (powerful) way. . : ."

Clearinghouse: third cut

After RENEWAL left the Clearinghouse offices, which are tucked away in an Annex building, we made our way to some of the Congressional office buildings where we talked to some aides who are familiar with the Clearinghouse. From them we were given an even less congratulatory version of the Clearinghouse's current role.

"There's a real need to network the different (future-oriented Congresspeople and their staffs), but the current staff (of the Clearinghouse) doesn't have the skills to do this," said one aide. "Except for the (executive) director, they just want to stay in their office and set up events. . . . Also, there's a need for a real futurist on staff. There isn't one now, you know. Many of the questions that come up at our end are questions about, well, the Voting Rights Act, sodium content, DNA and so forth — questions way over the heads of the organization."

"So many of the speakers are just visionaries — just good talkers," another aide told us. "After a while, that loses its appeal. Two (recent) speakers who were effective were (Jean-Jacques) Servan-Schreiber and (Daniel) Yan-kelovich. Servan-Schreiber has vision but he's also got resources — \$20 million from Mitterrand. Yankelovich has vision but he's also got polls backing him up."

"The Clearinghouse now is a beginner's organizaton," said a third aide, "it's not a whatdo-you-do-with-it-now-that-you-know-it organization. And that's why it's losing its membership! It's not more information we need now, it's what does it all mean? How can we present it to our constituents? How does it translate into specific legislation, and how does it translate into what I should do Monday at the 3-M Company?" (Congressional Clearinghouse: 555 House Annex #2, Washington, D.C. 20515; subs to What's Next? on request, subs to Foresights \$15/year).

Renewal

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