

4-DESTITUTE. With strength of affinity-chosen families, the homeless can squat in unused houses or live in vehicles. Would we prefer such civil disobedience to taxing the "haves" so as to provide shelters for the "have-nots"—often keeping them dependent? Such forced "charity" weakens both. For community cooperation between haves and have-nots, we would support those who practice self-help and mutual reliance as they house themselves.

OUR POSSIBLE CONCLUSIONS. Do we feel related as life-loving Earth-Natives? Is tolerating hostile institutions riskier than organizing to tame them? Do we see our local society and world society as injured living systems which need healing agents to rebalance for communities of mutual benefits? Who would you join for dear life?

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**FRIENDLY SHARED POWERS: Practicing for Dear Life!*
with Clear Marks

©1979 & updated thru 1986 130 pages \$7

from School of Living, R1, Box 1508AA
Spring Grove PA 17362 (10 miles SW of York PA)

Periodicals to Help Actions for Mutual Benefits to Heal Society

In Context: Quarterly of Humane Sustainable Culture.

Box 2107 Sequim WA 98382 \$16 a year

Rain: Resources for Building Community. a quarterly

1135 S.E. Salmon Portland OR 97214

New Options. monthly 11 issues a year \$25

1701 K St NW Washington DC 20006

Utne Reader. (like a Readers Digest of the alternative press)

6 issues a year \$18 Box 1974 Marion OH 43305

Resurgence. (published in England) 6 issues a year \$14 or \$12

Rodale Press 33 East Minor St Emmaus PA 18049

What other publications belong on this list?

Resource Organizations to Enliven Community Economies

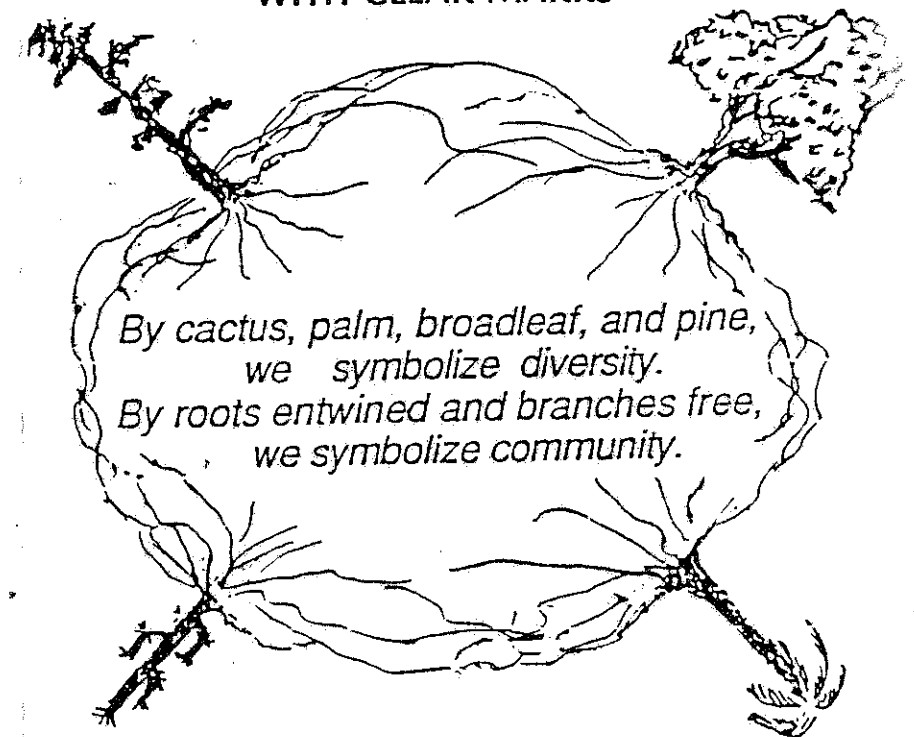
Economic Renewal Project, Drawer 248 Old Snowmass CO 81654

Regeneration Project, Rodale Press 33 E. Minor St. Emmaus PA 18049

Institute for Local Self-Reliance~2425 18th St.NW 2nd floor
Washington DC 20009

COMMUNITIES TO DOMESTICATE EMPIRES!

WITH CLEAR MARKS



**"LOVERS OF LIFE CAN
RECOVER SELF-RULE
BY ACTING CREATIVELY."**

COMMUNITIES TO DOMESTICATE EMPIRES!

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Surviving Differently. A fable reports Lazy Grasshopper basking in sunshine when Busy Ant asked, "Why don't you gather food for winter?" Lazy did not answer but her species survives by eggs designed to survive severe cold.

Until humans learned to speak, packs of hunters and gatherers barely survived fierce animals, famines, and climate changes. I project that fighting males bossed each pack. Language enabled the invention of planning circles which included women, aged ones, and youth. Nursing women heightened loving feelings. Huddled around a fire, circles sometimes created better policies than any member proposed. Future generations often conserved these genius-level decisions. Thus CIRCLE CULTURE mothered both wisdom and creativity.

With agriculture, humans formed larger villages surrounded by open land where they found food, firewood, and shelter materials. Open land enabled self-employment, as by pasturing animals and gardening. In times of scarcity, they shared. Their COMMUNITY CULTURE prevented poverty amidst plenty.

Risking Nonsurvival. Since prehistory, warmakers conquered such harmless communities. Freeborn members became subjects of kings, then subjects of majority rule, and now subjects of media-manipulated majorities. Governments fenced land, then taxed property so that speculators and rich persons owned more and more. Without open space for subsistence, rent-payers felt pressed into jobs as factory wage-slaves. Thus modern poverty began with loss of self-rule and fencing of land. Submissive masses weakened into a HERD CULTURE which smothers circle genius and community strength.

Now the U.S. government serves greedy supernational corporations. Like a tiger controls its tail, this empire controls many countries. The many-tailed tiger empire treats the American people as one of its colonial tails. It drains American resources for warmaking and profiteering. Disorganized lovers of life sit on our American tail like pimples without muscles.

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Empowering Our Local Political Economy. At least four economic projects could help free our communities from combinations of economic and political oppression:

1-Financing worker-owned cooperative enterprises with the successful Mondragon model. 2-Correcting property taxes which subsidize speculators and owners of highly valued land. 3-Promoting a local currency--a community-controlled money supply. 4-Encouraging mutual reliance among our destitute; not keeping them dependent on government agencies.

1-CO-OPS. Unemployed and unhappy wage-slaves can become self-employed by community organizing for a cooperative bank, as in the Mondragon movement of northern Spain. That bank finances worker-owned industries. It puts "relationships first" by loaning only to persons who've already become friends. As their partner, it sees that they learn business skills so well that they rarely fail. This 30-year old movement has built 85 co-ops with 20,000 worker-owners. See "Mondragon" 3pp from *In Context* of Spring '83 and "Mondragon Cooperatives" 2pp in Tarrytown Letter Aug.'84 (Copies from me). More info: Trusteeship Institute, Baker Rd., Shutesbury MA 01072

2-PROPERTY. One gentle land reform can open lifestyle choices to tenants and homeless persons. Perhaps they could even build their own homes without threatening land-owners. Henry George showed that society's neighbors, utilities, roads, and markets contribute to land values. Hence he proposed that society deserves continued repayment (as rent) for such contributions. Thus Pittsburgh and Scranton prosper by collecting more of land's "rent-value" while reducing taxes on buildings. Owners hired workers to build on highly-valued land while speculators sold off idle land usable by the needy or the public. With policies of taxing land and improvements equally, the comparable cities of Philadelphia and Wilkes-Barre remain depressed. See my Chapter 11 pp 3,4* & *Fortune* article Aug 8, '83 4pp. More info: Schalkenbach Foundation 5 East 44 St. NYC 10017

3-COMMUNITY MONEY. A local exchange system raised employment and living standards in one town for three years. Having debugged his system, inventor Michael Linton has introduced it in Tucson AZ and San Diego. Write him at 479 4th St. Courtenay B.C. V9N 169 Canada.

Reorganizing Wisely: A sense of relatedness helps us cooperate. Like natives elsewhere, American Indians who still practice friendly ways identify with "all our relatives" including Mother Earth's nonhuman forms of life. Relatedness resembles modern WHOLE SYSTEMS consciousness.

Whole systems models help us see oppressions, wars, and environment destruction as one syndrome, one combination of symptoms which indicates society's DISORGANIZATION. Like garbage attracts flies, such weakness attracts victimizers who see easy pickings by exploiting, attacking, or polluting. This view replaces fractional models of specialists who treat the symptoms as separate disorders.

Underdots point to important terms where they're defined or explained.

Goethe observed: "We are shaped ... by what we love." Suppose we love both life and self-government like natives. In this tiger country, we Earth-Natives do need mutual reliance which grows in circles of intimate friends. Then we need communities which I define as memberships cooperating voluntarily in projects for mutual benefits.

To start a circle, let's invite a few community members who attract us. Chosen friends with different interests usually communicate better than nonfriends who happen to share a common interest. REGROUPING again and again helps us locate who is attracted to work with whom. At best, such affinity choices result in the strength of extended families plus the satisfaction that members chose each other. (See my Chapter 7* on practicing such regrouping.

To enhance creativity in planning what we'll do, Mary P. Follett recommends INTERWEAVING brief messages--not indulging in long speeches which prevent interweaving. (Her book is called *Creative Experience*.) Diversity of viewpoints helps round out wisdom-gaps. By shared leadership procedures, we can create AGREEMENTS without dividing into winning majorities and losing minorities. My Chapter 8* is titled "Facilitating Group Genius."

Rebalancing Locally & Regionally. Like any healthy organism which rebalances subsystems for mutual benefits, a world society composed of victims and victimizers needs rebalancing to heal it. Organisms make MINIMUM ADEQUATE CORRECTIVES. By this rebalancing Principle, we who'd heal society won't overcorrect to provoke backlash and won't undercorrect to let victimizing continue.

86 dec 27

Dear Mark Sullivan.

One paragraph in the enclosed pamphlet on empowering communities treats of land value taxation as an important--~~means~~ but it's not well understood. The whole pamphlet is due for revisions soon and I'm asking for your comments and perhaps a suggestion on how to clarify that paragraph.

Best wishes to you,
Clear Marks

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not letter to M.R. O'mara Jr.
Pamett Leroy

Fortunately affinity choice circles can practice rebalancing skills in our local microcosm of world society. If rich landlords or businesses get government privileges that harm the non-rich, we can convene a network of circles to constitute a local community council. Not everyone will join us so our community will include fewer persons than the society we care for. As a community council, we can achieve more shared benefits than a fragile coalition.

Neighbors inside natural boundaries of life-regions share economic, ecological, and social interests. Rather than let political boundaries divide us, we can link local community councils into a bioregional community council. The six national communities of Iroquois do this. The Grand Council of their regional community is international.

Correcting Society's Abusers. The more community mutual reliance, the less we need coercion by big business or big government—and the less we will tolerate. We are to strategize actions which improve a harmful agency's policies rather than replace it, but we are to replace it if the harm continues.

Henry Thoreau exposed voting as often undercorrecting. He contrasted lightweight paper ballots to a heavier option—casting one's whole influence by civil disobedience. Then Mahatma Gandhi invented "gentle forces" which multiplied friendly powers and minimized backlash. Thus unarmed India reclaimed self-rule from a trigger-happy British Empire. (Gene Sharp's *Social Power and Political Freedom* reports many gentle force successes elsewhere.)

Before 1960 in northern U.S., gentle forces stopped many businesses from discriminating against black consumers. In that movement, I learned to rehearse scenarios of actions beforehand, both to foresee likely consequences and to stimulate strategic imagination. Such spontaneous sociodramas also strengthened us volunteers to face abusive victimizers.

We do well to practice society-healing actions locally before confronting an empire. Otherwise even civil disobedience can resemble the harrassing of irritated unresponsive bureaucrats. In his last days, Gandhi regretted putting civil disobedience before his "Constructive Program" to empower self-reliant communities. Prerequisites for gentle force may include such economic projects for mutual trust as what follows.