

Ecological Development Project*

Summary of the first e-mail Workshop: March – April, 1996.

Background

The CACOR project was precipitated in response to the call from Gail Stewart for exploratory processes. The concept of Ecological Development and the CACOR Project have pervasive roots.

They have grown out of a search for a new reality by many people over a number of years, who have drawn on the knowledge about humans and nature provided by some of the great thinkers over time. Both owe a debt of gratitude to many individuals who have contributed to their development – people in government, communities, universities; citizens, philosophers, social and natural scientists. The Project will therefore strive to encourage exploration based on a variety of conceptual foundations – scientific knowledge, human experience, cultural or religious philosophy and mythology.

Assumptions which drive the Project include:

- 1) "sustainability" can only be defined in an ecological context
- 2) the preservation and development of democratic processes are of crucial importance, especially if widespread change in human practices should become necessary for the solution of global problems of human survival. People will not accept changes in practice that they do not understand and support.

Exploration of a different perspective must therefore proceed in a manner that is subsequently capable of securing widespread consent. In short, it must be "administratively feasible, intellectually respectable, morally acceptable, and intuitively engaging" (E.R. Olson), because different persons give predominant weight to different attributes, but these attributes in sum seem to encompass the major ways in which people are moved.

The Approach

The first e-mail Workshop of the Conference on Ecological Development was held from mid-March to April 22, 1996. The Workshop consisted of 10 participants of which five were CACOR members. A paper by John Walsh, entitled *What went wrong and what do we do about it*, published in the CACOR *Proceedings* (November 1995) and posted on WWW – <http://infoweb.magi.com/~dwalsh/jhw.html> – was used as the "discussion stimulant". We did not expect participants to critique the paper but rather to choose some of the topics he covered to discuss in the context of the 'ecological development' concept. The paper was chosen by the Project team because it reflected a viewpoint quite at variance with one which recognized humans as a part of nature. Thus the topics covered in the paper and the solutions to identified problems left ample room for choice of subjects as the basis for discussion.

This first Workshop was an experiment, and participants were generous in their tolerance, their contributions to the discussion and in their critique of both the substance and process. The next Workshop will hopefully benefit from these contributions, and we hope that readers of this summary will feel moved to participate.

The choice of the Walsh paper was questioned by some of the participants.

Despite the fact that the paper dealt with Canadian problems, the Project Team saw this as an opportunity to emphasize the need for developed nations to recognize that national policies which are guided by parochial self-interest have been major contributors to the global problems we face today. In this sense, the paper is very germane globally.

Another question raised about the choice of the Walsh paper was about its relationship to Ecological Development concepts, which the Workshop was supposed to be addressing. The organizers thought it significant for three reasons, viz.

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- 1) it reflects perceptions about reality and ways of dealing with problems which are fundamentally at variance with those which form the basis of the ED Project – the contrast was thought useful to position the Project in the first Workshop;
- 2) the paper was well written, thoughtful, and covered a range of issues which provided participants the opportunity to respond in areas in which they were particularly interested, and
- 3) since the paper would be published in the CACOR Proceedings, it is hoped that the Workshop discussion will underline the need for discussion of some of the fundamental differences in views within CACOR itself.

It is not the intention of this summary to deal with all the issues covered in the background paper, rather to draw on those parts of the discussion which illustrate very different ways of viewing and dealing with the complex of problems we face nationally and globally. These points of contrast will, of course, help to clarify the conceptual underpinnings of the Ecological Development Project, and generate ideas for future workshops.

Some of the Highlights

We have extracted a number of participant comments from the Workshop dialogue and added comments to tie them together. The aim is to provide readers with the flavour of the discussion and to highlight and order points to help focus our sights on the theme workshop of the Project – Ecological Development.

The choice of the background paper was questioned by some participants, for example:

.....As an overall comment, I still wonder why, if the theme is "relationship between humankind and nature", the paper by John Walsh was chosen; regardless of the comment in the March 27 message that it was because John appeared "at variance" with the "assumption that humankind must live in harmony with nature".

Personally, I found John's paper intriguing and insightful. There can be no doubt that the economic policies followed over the past decade and the decisions taken based on those policies have caused, and are causing, irreparable (in my opinion) harm to our social fabric. The gospel of "free trade" or "globalization", to use the current jargon, can only be justified by simplistic economics assuming relative equality among the players. There is, clearly, no equality among the nations of the world, in economic status, social organization, physical resources or any other measure. The only winners following this gospel are the "multi-nationals" or "global corporations" who are obviously the proponents of "globalization".

Increasing corporate power was a concern to others as well – not a fitting context for changing the way we see ourselves in relation to nature (and not incidentally, for democracy).

.....A successful propaganda war is being waged by the corporate establishment seeking to turn the Canadian (and American) populations against the institutions of parliamentary democracy. This is done on the grounds that governments are tyrannical; that governments sustain bums who would rather enjoy the privileges of welfare that earn a living by working; that government bureaucracy is preventing the private sector from bringing about prosperity; that the private sector is more competent than the incompetent public one.

And one more:

.....Thus it was that the gains of Technology, that made it possible for all the material needs of the society to be satisfied by a fifth of the labour force, were squandered in the money games of the rich, which created high borrowing, high interest rates, and government deficits.

What has this to do with Ecological Development? Well, if we believe that a free market economy can manage "the commons" for the benefit of all peoples, we will find those who hold a very different viewpoint:

..... Without regulation, it is ridiculous to assume that anyone in a competitive business of exploiting renewable natural resources will voluntarily constrain himself/herself to using only the annual interest from the resource capital. It is an even fonder hope that everyone can be induced to submit to sufficient regulation before catastrophes like that of the Northern cod, come to pass.

And

.....As the social fabric deteriorates further, public emphasis is placed upon immediate survival, as opposed to longer term nature/humans considerations. As the Canadian social discourse becomes more "Bosnian-like", ("If Quebec divides us, we'll divide Quebec...") the sanity underlying ecological considerations retreats yet more. Panicked, environmentalists allow themselves to be pushed off the power grid by clinging to a "save the trees" position.

The background paper stimulated some interesting discussion on carrying capacity. The author raised the issue of immigration, noting that there would be increasing pressures on Canada to accept immigrants from poor countries. While he did not address possible social problems which might arise from "excessive" immigration, his argument included reference to the vastness of Canada, which prompted discussion of carrying capacity.

An example:

.....The concept of carrying capacity is crucially important, yet it is virtually ignored by economists and politicians. If there is anything obvious in all our current problems, it is that our whole system depends on a concept of economic growth of the traditional kind – and this clearly doesn't work well against the

backdrop of resource limits implied by carrying capacity.

.....*The idea of limits to growth is hard to put across in a sparsely populated country like ours. Even John Diefenbaker's 'Vision of the North' was tainted by the misconception that the vast, forested areas of the country can produce food in quantities sufficient to the needs of much increased human populations. Not only is the misconception shared by many citizens, it is also true that the heavy urban concentrations of population have no realistic sense of their dependence on the remote rural areas. People still feel comfortable in this country, moreover, and don't yet see much evidence here, of the dramatic famines and plagues which are reported from elsewhere visualize a fence around countries*

.....*The subsidy levels necessary to keep immensely populous countries like Japan and the Netherlands afloat (are) incredibly large, and, (on a scale) graded through to countries like Canada, which were not so far from being able to look after themselves in the event that imaginary fences were erected.*

The latter comments raise the problem of insularity – we are comfortable, and John Kenneth Galbraith, in his book "The Culture of Contentment", speculated on the dangers of such a narrow vision. We are, as some participants reminded us, faced with a population growth rate which, even if the birth/death ratio of one were reached tomorrow, would continue beyond our ability to cope. While John Walsh pointed to the pressures we will face from those wanting access to our country, he intimated that we should treat this pressure as inevitable and make the best of it. The "best of it" may be to view it as cheap labour to foster economic growth.

Economic growth? (Increased energy throughput!). There were two very different viewpoints here. John Walsh seems to accept economic growth as necessary to deal with the problems facing Canada. He is willing to assume for the present that free trade will help poor countries solve their problems. Free trade, of course, is about economic growth. Some participants underlined "economic growth" as the key problem in the way of attaining a sustainable global ecosystem - a sustainable "Commons". Certainly, our Reader, Tom de Fayer posed a basic question here:

.....*Have we really resolved the question of the BALANCE between the pain of 'cutting back' from our unsustainable (wild!?) spending habits and the pain of the inevitable collapse of our Economy, if we continue to live beyond our means? Can we get the arguments out into the open on both sides of this controversy and can we really expect any "useful"(?) compromises or are we doomed to "talk past each other"? The organizers hoped some fundamental issues would arise from this workshop which could pave the way to further discussion of Ecological Development.*

Certainly, the economic growth issue is basic; it is the major force in all our lives, whether in rich or poor countries. Another raised its head, also. The author of the background paper feels we can adjust present structures sufficiently to deal with Canada's problems. This seems at variance with some of the discussants who call for a fundamental change in values – a paradigm shift. A call for a radical change in how we think and view the world is seen by some as a call for radical change in how we organize and manage our affairs.

These issues – economic growth and the degree of change required to deal with national and global problems – seem to be the basis for the very different ways of dealing with problems and of viewing reality. John Walsh discussed problems on the assumption that not only the "economic growth model" was inviolate and that incremental changes would suffice, but he also put considerable reliance on current problem-solving approaches and technological development. Some discussants clearly disagreed. For example:

I am less and less convinced by the rightness of abstract concepts such as carrying capacity, global modelling, etc., as ways of getting us anywhere at this point. Maybe after enough of us (25%?) form a significant force in terms of personally coming to grips with what is really the fundamental understanding behind Ecological Development, such techniques may again serve us, though I suspect very differently than the ways we now use and talk about them.

The question here is whether our techniques, knowledge, theories and technologies can be applied effectively in support of a sustainable future unless we first develop a moral context compatible with reality.

What is "reality"? What do we know about it? Do we know more than we like to admit? In his background paper, the author underlined the importance of the new understandings about our world contributed by quantum physicists and noted that we all had to "dance to the tune of the quantum jump" whether we like it or not. This prompted one comment ...

..... *But surely, most of our global problems have arisen because most of us do not "dance in step"; we have devised strategies to circumvent natural laws.*

In a discussion like this one, we might have expected more comment on reality as exposed by "the new sciences". There was some:

..... *The thermodynamic relationship between energy and entropy expressed by the Second Law (of thermodynamics) requires that entropy in Nature must always be increasing. As entropy is related to disorder, so must disorder constantly be increasing Chaos Theory is essentially an attempt to deal with complexity and its order-disorder relationships... some are attempting to generalize some of these ideas into a socio-economic context.*

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.....If such relationships are valid (in this context), is it the extent of disorder or chaos that sensitizes populations, as distinct from individuals, to see paradigm change as the only way out or their problems? Might these physical realities and theories say something about how we must think, organize and act if we are to carve out a sustainable future? about how we must relate to our ecosystem? Participant's Critique Participants were asked to offer a critique of this first experimental workshop.

Most did and some of their comments are included below – again with explanatory comment from the organizers.

..... I've treated this exercise as a dialogue, and that was probably inappropriate. I was thus left with a few things I wanted to share. The idea of replacing the term "Sustainable Development" with "Ecological Development" puzzled me. On the one hand, the word "development" was the source of the oxymoron in the minds of many. On the other, "Ecological" is more or less synonymous with "Sustainable". I say more or less of course, because unless the process of evolution grinds to a halt, nothing can be stable, or constant in any real sense.

The best we can hope for is a series of steady states, with indeterminate directions of change, through time. That relates to the long term, however, and I think that we agree that the way we presently go about managing things makes our species unsustainable within a short time horizon. I hope this means that we agree that even if we are using a new expression, the goal is to achieve greater sustainability.....

And, on the other hand:

..... Ecological development as I have understood it is fundamentally different from sustainable development, or at least where that concept has now taken us. I had thought when the "sustainable development" term was first introduced by Mme. Brundtland and Co. that it was in fact what Gail (Gail Stewart, who developed the concept) means by 'ecological development'. And yes, development was the dangerous word, but what the difference signified to me was a fundamental change in our ways of thinking (paradigm) about development - to a new way of explicitly and first and foremost recognizing the ecological limitations and consequences of what we, as humans, do, along with changing our perceptions of the human species as dominant on the species hierarchy to a recognition of interdependence with other species.

Another participant thought that:

... ..the project was to have been based upon Gail's (Stewart) work on Ecological Development. As a matter of fact, I even thought ECODEV was short for her concept. Why then was John Walsh's paper given as a basis for the discussion? That made no sense to

me whatsoever. Moreover, I had planned to participate only because I looked forward to exploring Gail's work in the company of others also interested in her idea of Ecological Development, an original idea.

The conference turned out to be another iteration of dozens of similar conferences I had attended too many times.

Hopefully, it is too early to tell whether the whole Conference will turn out to be 'yet another iteration of dozens of others'; this was the first Workshop of a continuing Conference.

One participant, commenting in the same vein, asked whether we could start again and discuss the concept; she also noted:

..... It is unfortunate that the title of the discussion group, and the discussion that several participants had hoped to have, matched neither the paper, the weak formulation of the hypothesis by the organizers, nor the ensuing discussion. This was unfair to the author, who presumably offered his paper for a robust critique against the papers that CACOR had already published and to the participants who seemed understandably confused or reduced in some cases to calling upon older understandings of sustainable, rather than ecological development.

.....CACOR has already published some papers outlining what ecological development is or might be all about (Gail Stewart, Jerzy Wojciechowski). These suggest a formulation for the discussion much more precise than that offered by the organizers -- a new relationship between ourselves and nature. They also suggest a starting point well beyond the economic treatise outlined in Walsh's paper. At least as I understand it, ecological development is predicated upon the deeply felt personal and societal understanding that we humans are part of nature, that we live inside the environment ("invironment"). To appreciate this different view of the human/nature relationship requires deeper thought, experience and analysis than can be elicited by embracing too readily concepts and policies based on other understandings.

This, of course, is the challenge and if we have done nothing else in this first Workshop than to create a demand for a fuller articulation of the conceptual underpinnings of Ecological Development, this is a good start. However, John Walsh's paper did provide a well-articulated point of departure from the concepts we wish to explore. Would we have got the range of responses and the variety of viewpoints had we focused strictly on the concept of Ecological Development? Do we not need to encourage participation of those who hold very different viewpoints? Are we attempting to "convince" the latter, or are we more interested in exploration of the concept as a worthy hypothesis? The author of the background paper, John Walsh, circulated "The Author's Reply" to Workshop

participants, providing further amplification on the main points in his original paper.

Organizers' Comments:

Our thanks to all those who participated in this first Workshop * of the Ecological Development Conference. Your contributions provide a rich foundation for subsequent workshops. Thanks also to our Reader, Tom de Fayer, whose following summary contribution offers a perspective which is particularly fitting in these times of change and uncertainty.

Comments on the first e-mail Workshop

by Tom de Fayer*

Introduction

The Project has now been launched. The aim of the first Workshop was to begin to gain a new appreciation of our relation with nature and to address different topics from a common perspective. I am sure nobody expected any 'miracles' and I would not wish to attempt to summarize the contributions or to evaluate them. I will merely try to assemble some sort of a picture of what I have learned or perceived from the contributions and from other seemingly relevant sources. I hope they might help in the further development of the discussions.

The nature of and limitation to our perceptions

I presumed that we set out in our discussions to learn and understand more about nature and its ways. However, as I read the contributions of the participants, I noticed that we have somehow failed to define what we meant by "nature". Is the term used in our discussions intended to include the entire Universe around us? Should this assumption be correct, it must clearly include components which are not readily perceived by means of our senses. In our search for new insights and understandings, it might just be useful to explore issues, in a way that consciously recognizes that we generally presume that what we sense is reality. This may not be so, of course.

In the normal course of events, we perceive the world through our five senses – hearing, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling. It is easy to discern, however, that there are numerous things that we cannot "sense" directly; we require special equipment such as a Geiger Counter, radio, TV, etc. to realize the presence of these "things".

In the light of our modern scientific knowledge, it is clearly reasonable to recognize that there exist "things" in our Universe which are well beyond what we can "sense", i.e. NON-sense.

Modern science has dissected our Universe into minuscule particles and are now at the stage where they cannot determine whether these are indeed waves or particles or some "smeared out reality" in the last resort (light may consist of either a particle or a photon or both at the same time). Another example of an elusive scientific problem is provided by the ambiguity that emerges when we try to determine simultaneously the location and momentum of a particle (Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle). Such scientific findings may appear strange and paradoxical when looked at from the point of view of our conventional senses.

Impression of the participants' contributions

The Workshop offerings spanned a wide range of issues, which is of course what was intended. Indeed, they ranged from "ethics and morality" on the one hand through "messages from outer space" to a litany of subjective perceptions of the frailty of human nature (selfishness, ignorance, crass stupidity, socio-economists, governments, etc.). We seem to readily identify the shortcomings of all human beings, even if only by implication! nevertheless, we regard the human race as the "pinnacle of progress and development" in nature. This happens even though we judge our place and progress by our own arbitrary standards! Why should "brain size" or "intellectual development" prove to be the valid criterion of progress? Surely the prime test should assess our qualities vis-à-vis what we want to accomplish or attain. As Thomas Berry clearly suggests, fish are far more advanced than humans when it comes to swimming and birds are more appropriate when we come to flying. What has humanity really achieved with its heavy and convoluted brainpower? The most destructive powers that anyone could possess!

The convergence of science and belief systems

It seems somewhat disconcerting perhaps that modern science has apparently knocked out all the solid foundation from under our senses. We believed that what we perceive is reality; however, a better understanding of the underlying characteristics of our perceptions and of our observations do not seem to provide the much-sought-after improved base for the discussion of our problems. In the light of our new understandings, we seem to be better equipped to deal with uncertainties, relativity and other quirks in science, but not in our socio-economic environments.

We are trying desperately to discuss meaningfully some of the apparently irrational, i.e. apparently NON-sensical characteristics of our World also, and we hope that we can do this without feeling entirely lost or insecure in our continued search. There seems to be a some converging (or parallel?) perspectives emerging in both science and belief systems (i.e. Much of the apparent NON-sense in our

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various religions and the evident NON-sense in our modern sciences and technology) that would suggest a remarkable completeness in our Universe. The modern scientific understanding of the development of the Universe with its dimensions of Time and Space, from an unimaginable and indeed unbelievable singularity, provides a solid scientific base for the notion that there exists a fundamental interdependence, relevance and interaction between the rational system that we believe we "sense" and the reality of the "ultra-sensory" World. All this is now commonly accepted in both our Science and in our "religions" and "beliefs". (The term "religion" is used here in a more general way than is usually the case: this might just avoid the problems caused by any 'denominational' or sectarian interpretations. The definition of "religion" in this discussion includes the search for possible inputs from the world outside or beyond our senses; e.g. the outer world recognized today in science also – e.g. Stephen Hawking's "Absolute Elsewhere").

Our total universe encompasses therefore, among other things, not only the seemingly irrational (NON-sensical?) concepts discovered by science today – relativity, Heisenberg uncertainty, particle/wave dualities, etc. – but also the apparently NON-sensical dimensions of beliefs – our religions.

As an example in our modern world, our religions as well as our science can readily accommodate the concepts embodied in such ideas as "the Omega Point Theory" (e.g. Teilhard de Chardin, Roger Penrose, etc.). Theologians address "eschatological questions today, while scientists talk about the "C-boundary". Terminology apart, they both would seem to search for explanations for the same things. There is thus a truly remarkable convergence between science and religion today.

The following reflections should provide some of my personal and very subjective impressions of the Universe, which surrounds us and of which we happen to be a part. I perceive a little Globe – Spaceship Earth – hurtling along in our Universe; we do not really know where from or where to. We do not perceive our movement, of course, since there is nothing to which we can relate it. From ages immemorial, we have searched for some fixed point, against which to compare, set or gauge things (e.g. Archimedes – "Give me where to stand and I will move the earth"), but we have none. How can we establish some fixed point for our beliefs, observations, Paradigms, etc.? We are evidently inhibited in our search by the limits imposed by our "humanness".

In considering our place in the Universe, I often find it highly regrettable that we tend to perceive ourselves as being "boxed in" in our world by the limits of our knowledge, whereas I prefer to see ourselves simply "caged in" by our earthly existence! In a "box", one is restricted and inevitably hits the wall whenever one moves in any direction; in a "cage", one always has the opportunity to reach through the bars, again in any direction, and seek out

things beyond one's immediate confinement. As intelligent beings, we can also design appropriate tools to catch something we could not otherwise capture; for example, we can fix a hook at the end of a stick to catch something that is out of reach.

In seeking some guidance to our collective future – whither we are heading – we can perhaps take an optimistic view. Darwin, for example, suggested that "...all living forms of life are the lineal descendants of those which lived long before... (and)... the ordinary succession by generations has never once been broken.... no cataclysm has desolated the whole world". Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of equally inappreciable length. And, as natural selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection.

On the other hand, there are, of course, more pessimistic perceptions also, for example, the more modern philosophies of Bertrand Russell. Stephen Weinberg, an up-to-date American physicist and a kindred thinker of Russell, contends that.... "it is almost irresistible for humans to believe that we have some special relation to the Universe, that human life is not just a more or less farcical outcome of a chain of accidents reaching back to the first three minutes (of the Universe's existence), but that we were somehow built in from the beginning. It is very hard to realize that the entire Earth is just a tiny part of an overwhelmingly hostile Universe. It is even harder to realize that this present Universe has evolved from an unspeakably unfamiliar early condition and faces a future extinction of endless cold or intolerable heat. The more the Universe seems incomprehensible, the more it also seems pointless.

These diametrically opposed perceptions are clearly not amenable to any compromise. The Universe either survives or it does not. In the circumstances, our only hope seems to lie in the possible existence of an even larger framework of additional dimensions. Our efforts may have to focus upon "hoping for the best, but preparing for the worst". There is, of course, always the possibility that "there is something out there" beyond the physical Universe – i.e. a quite different, possibly NON-sensical, frame of reference.

The CACOR Ecological Development Project – Change through understanding

Both the objective of the exercise and the process adopted seem to be admirable and impressive. However, the true challenges of the Project may hardly be appreciated until we approached the practical part of the exercise. The width of the problems identified included our politicians, our governments, our business executives, our more profound thinkers and philosophers, etc. We seemed to be the only ones, who, by implication at least, were somewhat

better (and brighter?) perhaps than the others and, to quote from a highly respectable musical – Annie Get your Gun – we contended that "anything you can do, I can do better".

It is perhaps inevitable that in our initial steps such a wide diversity of views should emerge. After all, we did set out to look at things from the vantage points of our varied subjective interests and perhaps our own specific paradigms as well as our personal preoccupations and prejudices. Hence my reluctance to summarize, interpret or indeed classify. I do believe, however, that we can use these diverse visions, not as Divisions, but as a new base from which to progress together.

There seems to be a genuine difficulty in sorting through diffuse ideas, unless there is some general background or overview that ties things together. In my reflections, I have found a very helpful picture represented by a column of warrior ants. Following the movement of each individual ant can drive anyone crazy, whereas simply observing the direction in which the column moves, seems to be somewhat irrelevant to the individual ant. In closely related environment of socio-economics, the question evidently also arises: "what is the relevance of philosophers to the resolution of practical, day-to-day, down-to-earth problems, affecting individual persons (i.e. ants)?"

The next stage of the CACOR inquiry

When imagining the picture that we might present to the outside world, the image of an abstract smile jumped to mind. What better example than the Cheshire Cat? It just sits there and watches us; sometimes we can see it, sometimes we cannot. However, it is still there, whether we observe it or not. Then there is the memorable conversation between Alice (in Wonderland) and the Cat where Alice just wanted to get somewhere and the Cat assured her she would if she only walked long enough.

Evidently we cannot provide a guide as to how to get somewhere unless we have some idea of where we want to get to. We are evidently all anxious to get somewhere – Utopia, heaven, a world of compassion.... It would be relatively easy to arrange things in Paradise – the uneducable, the wasters, evil ones, etc. would already have been weeded out. Nor would there be a need to contend with the shortcomings of Democracy. Those, who cannot comply, have already been sent to the other place and government would ensure that those who decide not to comply, will either "shape up or ship out".

Unfortunately, we retain numerous serious shortcomings when seeking a State of Ultimate Happiness. This does not mean we should not continue to seek, to struggle and "keep the integrity of our hope intact".

The foregoing ruminations are intended to provide perhaps a few seeds for further reflection; they are not- and cannot be – answers to any of the issues raised. Although I offered some criticism of the background paper by John Walsh, I nevertheless welcomed the paper exactly because it provided a number of new angles in our endeavors, particularly in relating some of the modern scientific ideas to our socio-economic environment.

To somewhat more concrete terms, I offer the following illustrative questions as possible directions in our future inquiry.

- How do we proceed to learn more about Nature and its operations when we evidently lack definitions, absolute facts, unbiased points of view, etc.
- In the circumstances, "how do we define Nature and how does it (and we, as humans) relate to both the "sensible" and the NON-sensible Total Universe?"

