

**The Earth in travail**

by the Master —

**The hidden costs of  
cheap food**

by Mark Sommer

**From consumers  
to caretakers**

Interview with Vandana Shiva  
by Jason Francis

Nobel Prize for Peace 2007:  
**Gore's win a triumph  
for planet**

**White Paper for a  
peaceful Middle East**

Interview with André Azoulay  
by Andrea Bistrich

# SHARE INTERNATIONAL

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*"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond their control."*  
(Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25)

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*The picture reproduced on the cover – Flame-coloured Deva – was painted by Benjamin Creme between 1976 and 1977. The Deva or Angelic evolutions are parallel to that of the human and of infinite variety and colour, from subhuman to superhuman. Many work in a direct healing and protective relation to humanity.*

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# The Earth in travail

by the Master —, through Benjamin Creme, 14 October 2007

It may be said that at last some men are beginning to take seriously the dangers posed by global warming and the consequent climate changes that this is bringing about. It is true that there is much disagreement over the reality and extent of the dangers, and of the best means of approaching the problems which are agreed to exist. However, there is no doubt that some men, at least, are recognizing that men face a formidable task in halting the progress of destruction and in stabilizing the environment. It is also true that even the most aware and concerned of men know little of the extent and complexity of the problems.

The problem of pollution is such a case. Pollution takes many forms, some obvious and easily dealt with, if the will to do so exists. Some, however, require a science and a remedy as yet unknown to man; they are so toxic and destructive that they must be given high priority to overcome. The effect of pollution on the quality of air, food, on animals, and on fish, in rivers and the oceans, is known but largely ignored. The most destructive of all, that caused by nuclear radiation, awaits discovery by Earth scientists. The upper levels of nuclear radiation are beyond the present atomic technology. They are also the most toxic and hazardous to man and the lower kingdoms. On all those levels the problems of pollution must be overcome. This can be achieved only by a complete reconstruction of the present political, economic and social structures.

Man has ravaged and polluted the Earth, and severely damaged his own environment. Now man

must see it as a top priority to remedy what he has hurt and so restore to health his ailing planet. He must learn to simplify his demands on the planet and learn the beauty of simplicity and the joy of sharing.

Man has but little choice: the urgency of the task demands immediate action; few indeed realize the true scale of damage already done. The question may be asked: can planet Earth be saved and by what means?

The answer is a resounding YES! and by means which involve the transformation of the present modes of living by the majority of men.

The paramount ambition of all so-called ‘developed’ countries is to achieve an ever higher percentage of growth of their economies to become, thereby, richer; and, in an economic world based on competition, to attain dominance and power, and so enjoy a higher standard of life. This being so, the pillaging of the Earth, the cavalier waste of resources, is seen as only natural and necessary. This irresponsible action has at last brought planet Earth almost to its knees.

## Urgent

Maitreya, you can be sure, will not be long in addressing this urgent problem and in presenting His solutions. The first step, He will advocate, is the acceptance of the urgency which many today deny. Sharing, He will say, is the beginning of the process of change which will provide the answers to our woes and the rehabilitation of Earth.

# The hidden costs of cheap food

by Mark Sommer

*Arcata, California* — As a percentage of their personal income, Americans pay less for food than the people of any other nation on earth. But the costs of that cheap food are considerable, not only for their own health but for the health, safety, wages and working conditions of the largely migrant labour that plants, harvests, and processes that food.

The industrial agriculture system that supplies this cheap food is predicated on cheap labour, lax enforcement of already weak labour regulations, often hazardous working conditions, and physical and sexual abuse that in extreme cases has been likened to modern-day slavery.

In some respects conditions for migrant workers remain little better than those documented by journalist Edward R. Murrow a half century ago in his classic TV special 'Harvest of Shame', which revealed the existence of a hitherto hidden underclass of migrant workers who endured substandard housing and sanitation, abysmal working conditions, and exploitation of many kinds in the course of harvesting tomatoes in mid-50s Immokalee, Florida. There as elsewhere in the US, rootless immigrants, largely from Central America, plant and harvest crops they themselves can't afford to buy.

Now the very same region is the scene of an epic struggle by migrant workers for decent working and living conditions and a liveable wage. Immokalee is the state's largest farmworker community and the most important centre of agricultural production. Field labourers here pick crops on vast holdings owned and operated by giant multinational corporations. It's been the same for decades: long hours of back-bending labour, staying in substandard housing, exposed to toxic pesticides, isolated by language, and exploited by labour bosses preying on their vulnerabilities.

Migrant labour has always been a hard row to hoe. Workers live an average of just 49 years; the US average is 78. The median annual income of migrant workers is just US\$7,500, 6,500 in Florida; the median US household income is US\$48,000. Adjusted for inflation, migrant labour income has

fallen by 60 per cent in the past 20 years. Each year 20,000 farmworkers require medical treatment for acute pesticide poisoning and many more cases go unreported. Nationally, 50 per cent of migrants – 80 per cent in Florida – lack legal work papers.

While Florida farmers are paid US\$10 per 25-pound box of tomatoes, the tomato pickers are paid 45 cents per 32-pound bucket, less than 5 per cent of what the farmer gets. To earn \$50 a picker must harvest 2.5 tonnes in a typical 10-hour day, twice as much as 30 years ago, just to earn the same minimum wage.

Yet the farmer is not the big winner in this system. Fast food chains with enormous buying power exert intense downward pressure on the prices they are willing to pay farmers, who in turn squeeze workers to retain their own profit margin.

Facing these grim realities, in the early 1990s a small group of workers who called themselves the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) began organizing in a local church. Through work stoppages, general strikes, a month-long hunger strike, and a 230-mile march, in 1998 the Immokalee farmworkers won industry-wide raises of 13-25 per cent. Meanwhile, CIW began campaigning against what it calls "modern-day slavery", farm operations in Southeastern states where workers labour in conditions a federal prosecutor labelled "involuntary servitude".

In a series of highly-publicized campaigns targeting major fast-food chains that depend in part on Immokalee's tomato harvest, CIW organizers succeeded in persuading Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, McDonald's and other corporations to commit to a penny-a-pound raise for Immokalee labourers. Burger King (BK) refused to join the agreement, arguing that farmers are actually paying more than the workers say. BK would like a more comprehensive settlement that gives workers better working conditions while assuring the company and industry of consistent prices and a stable workforce. BK has offered to employ in its own operations any farmworker who would like to change occupations, an offer Immokalee workers dismiss

as "eliminating farmworker poverty by eliminating farmworkers".

Most Americans don't want to do such backbreaking work but few are aware of the working and living conditions of those who do. However, redressing the inequities of the current industrial food production system is not easy. To begin with, it's hard to make sure that extra money spent in the supermarket will filter down the food chain to the migrant labourers at the bottom.

The poorest and weakest work longest and hardest and receive the last and least. To provide a living wage to those at the bottom will take more than a piecework rate hike. It will require a systemic shift, with those of us higher on the food chain pulling it hard in the direction of those at the bottom. Not only must farmworkers be paid living wages for their labour and farmers a fair return on their crops, but governmental regulations must bring farm labour practices up to global human rights standards.

This is not just an American problem. In an increasingly integrated global food system, affluent consumers in North America, Europe and elsewhere have come to expect low prices for foods from far away and far out of season with great hidden costs in fuel and transportation, environmental devastation, worker exploitation, and social conflict. Much of the food that comes to our tables is grown and harvested by marginal farmers in distant places who receive a tiny portion of what we pay for it. Driven from the land by impossibly low commodity prices, they crowd the cities of the developing world in search of work. Failing to find it, their desperation becomes a breeding ground for extremist movements. Our abundance must not be built on their indigence.

Automaker Henry Ford, a self-interested capitalist, understood this elementary principle when he insisted on paying his workers enough for them to buy the cars they built. How much are we willing to pay for the food we eat to ensure that those whose labour brings it to our tables are paid enough to eat it too? (© IPS)

# From consumers to caretakers

Interview with Vandana Shiva  
by Jason Francis

*Vandana Shiva is a physicist, environmental activist, and author of numerous books. Her most recent book is **Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace** (published by South End Press, 2005). Vandana Shiva is a founding board member of the nongovernmental organization International Forum on Globalization based in San Francisco, USA, and director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology based in New Delhi, India.*

*Dr Shiva has led campaigns that support fair and sustainable agricultural practices, biodiversity, ecology and gender equality. She was awarded the Right Livelihood Award in 1993 and is a leader in the Global Justice Movement – an international network of organizations and movements working toward the equitable distribution of the world's resources. She is based in New Delhi, India. Jason Francis interviewed Vandana Shiva for **Share International**.*

*Share International: What are the principles of Earth Democracy?*

Vandana Shiva: The first principle is the recognition that we are, first and foremost, children of the earth and we share the earth with other species. Our first identity is as an earth community; all other identities are lesser identities, whether they are identities of gender or race, language or religion. With that identity comes a sense of duties and responsibilities, and rights which flow from the duties. Earth Democracy can only be founded on recognizing the principle of diversity – that there will be difference in the world – and in recognizing diversity, creating the conditions of peace on earth. If we are a family on the Earth and the Earth can renew itself forever – to the extent that humans do not intervene and destroy the cycles of renewability through over-exploitation and over-extraction – sharing the limited resources of the earth becomes a key factor in Earth Democracy.

*SI: Could you describe your idea of the three major economies active in the world, and how they relate to each other and Earth Democracy?*

VS: When we think of economy we think only of the market and through that the global market – this is a supermarket model of the economy, based on seeing ourselves as consumers, not as co-creators with nature. The two bigger economies on which life rests are the economy of nature, producing far more than human production can ever produce, whether it is through the pollination of insects or the recycling of water, the hydrological cycle. The second major economy is the economy where we produce for our basic needs: the water we need, the food we need to eat, the shelter we need for protection from too much heat and too much cold. In this sustenance economy, the people's economy, children get looked after, the old and ill get looked after; there are no disposable people. But in the market economy 97 per cent of humanity is actually disposable.

In a sustainable system the biggest economy is nature; the second biggest is the sustenance economy where humanity sustains and rejuvenates itself as a commu-

nity, a social network. And then the smallest part actually is the market economy. Right now in the market economy, measured in terms of finance alone, there's a trillion dollars of money moving around the globe daily, which is 70 times more than all of the goods produced by humanity. So we have more money than the resources and goods that money can command. But this growth in the fictitious financial world is at the cost of the destruction of nature's economy – one of the most dramatic examples being the destruction of the Amazonian rainforest to grow soybeans to fuel our cars. It's also at the cost of destroying the sustenance economy, which is based on self-organization, caring, family and community. And as the market economy grows, particularly the financial market economy, nature's economy and the sustenance economy shrink. The shrinkage of nature's economy is what we call the ecological crisis. The shrinkage in the people's economy is what we would call both the poverty crisis as well as the human alienation crisis.

*SI: You have written about the revered Indian civil rights leader Mahatma Mohandas Gandhi who practiced the concept of*



The Amazonian rainforest is destroyed to grow soybeans to fuel our cars

“*ahimsa*”, or nonviolence. What part does nonviolence have in the three economies? VS: Nature’s economy is based on nonviolence. That doesn’t mean there aren’t food chains, it doesn’t mean that tigers won’t be predators, but it does mean that the cycle of life rejuvenates itself. The sustenance economy’s primary principle is to do no harm; it is based on nonviolence. Unfortunately, the primary functioning of the market economy is totally based on violence; it’s based on violence to the earth. But it is also based on violence to people. The rule of the global market economy is based on, for example, uprooting farmers from the land. Ten years of so-called ‘trade liberalization’ has led to 150,000 Indian farmers committing suicide because of the dysfunctionality of an economy in which it costs more to produce something on land than you can earn from it, which is the very nature of this distorted globalized economy. This violence also affects human relationships. An example of this violence is that as we stop being producers and are reduced to being consumers, women, who are equal partners in productive economies, are viewed as parasites in consumer economies. In China and India, violence to the future generations of women takes the form of female feticide – killing the female fetus even before the girl is born. These levels of violence start building a society in which everything is a commodity. And when human relations are commoditized, disposable people are created.

SI: What are “biopiracy” and “hydropiracy” and could you give an example of their ecological and social impact? What role are trade agreements playing in them?

VS: In Earth Democracy there is a deep recognition that the resources of the earth are gifts to be shared by all for equal sustenance and not the greed of the few. Unfortunately, the trade agreements are turning these common resources into privatized property to be traded for profit by a handful of corporations. The Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights [TRIPS] agreement of the WTO [World Trade Organization] in effect forces countries to create property in life – in seeds, in plants, in animals and microbes. This in turn leads to, literally, the stealing of knowledge and biodiversity from countries that are poor financially but rich in biodiversity. Examples of this kind of biopiracy are the patenting of the neem tree

**Indian farmers protesting against the global market economy, which is uprooting them from their land**



– a sacred tree in India – patented by the US government and WR Grace [a global chemicals and materials company]. We fought for 11 years to have that patent revoked because it was based on the piracy of our knowledge. Other cases of biopiracy involve RiceTec (a Texas company) patenting a very famous aromatic rice – basmati – that comes from Doon Valley in the Himalayas, and Monsanto patenting an ancient wheat variety that has very low gluten but because of rising food allergies has very high value.

As far as water is concerned, trade agreements as well as the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Program are forcing the privatization of water. The trade agreement that is particularly relevant is the General Agreement on Trade and Services [GATS] as well as bilateral agreements that in effect do the same. They treat environmental goods and services like water as a tradable commodity to be owned, bought and sold by corporations. The five giant players in this privatization are Bechtel, Suez, Viola (earlier Vivendi), Thames-RWE and Saur. Since water is a common resource and is used and sustained as such, corporations must steal it from a community to turn it into their commodity to trade for profit.

One dramatic example of this was the case of Coca Cola. Whenever it sets up a plant it takes up to 1.5 to 2 million liters per day of ground water from a community, with-

out asking their permission. And it took a community in the Indian state of Kerala, a village called Plachimada, where the women started to say: “Our water is disappearing. We are walking 10 miles to get clean drinking water. This is hydropiracy. This is the theft of our water.” I was involved in this movement and a few years ago that particular Coca Cola plant was shut down. Another big case of hydropiracy is the case of privatization of water in cities where common water from rivers is tapped by companies, put into pipes and sold at very high prices to citizens who before that were getting it as a public good. These are the changes that hydropiracy and biopiracy bring. They take what belongs to the public at large, what lies in the commons, turn it into private property and steal from poor communities for giant corporations to make even more money than they already make.

SI: Does this create global monocultures? And what do you mean by “monocultures of the mind”?

VS: Definitely hydropiracy and biopiracy create a global monoculture. Nature gives differing water endowments, which result in different water cultures. The desert of Rajasthan has a distinct water culture linked to the two inches of rainfall that they get – beautiful conservation systems that allow people to farm and have drinking water

throughout the year. It is very different from the water culture of Kerala where there are wetlands and people have to relate in a very different way to an area where they have to live with constant water. These water cultures are being destroyed by a monoculture, which assumes that water is something that comes from Coca Cola or Pepsi Cola in plastic bottles. That monoculture separates us from nature and nature's hydrological cycle; it totally separates us from community because instead of being caretakers for the common good of the earth's water we become individual consumers of supermarket shares.

Similarly, every society has had its own plants, its own animals that shaped the society's food and medicine. Today, as biopiracy grows, monocultures also grow. Biopiracy does not reproduce the generosity of nature; it shrinks that tremendous richness into a handful of crops. We used to eat 8,500 different crops; in India we use 7,500 various plants for medicine. Today there are four crops being grown worldwide for international trade. The growth in crops like corn, soybean, canola and cotton is reducing the diversity of the world.

What I have called "monocultures of the mind" is basically recognizing that this shrinkage of the world – a very rich, diverse world that we receive from nature – first takes place in the mind, a Cartesian mechanistic mind that constructs the world in an abstract form and then reproduces this monocultural abstraction, projects it on the world and destroys the diversity.

*SI: What impact is the globalized food system, namely agribusinesses or industrialized agriculture, having in the world?*

VS: There's a four-fold crisis emerging from the globalized food system. The first aspect of this crisis is its very heavy and clumsy ecological footprint. Industrialized agriculture uses 10 times more energy than it produces as food. It uses 10 times more water than ecological agriculture uses, which means it's 10 times less efficient in water use. It replaces people and their creativity with fossil fuels, with toxics, with giant machinery and pollution in the form of CO<sub>2</sub> from those fuels. On the one hand that is leading to a toxification of the planet and our food system. But it is also responsible for greenhouse gas pollution – the issue of climate change – and poses a huge threat to

the future of humanity.

The second aspect of this crisis is the fact that primary production through farming is being destroyed. Farmers are being turned into a threatened species. Small farmers could be extinct in the next few decades if we do not organize the food system differently.

A third food-related crisis is what I call the "health bomb" – which has two dimensions. On one hand, as food is industrialized and globalized, food goes away from those who produce it. It gets consumed where there's purchasing power, which leaves a billion people hungry on the planet – that's the malnutrition of the poor. But



Vandana Shiva

there's also malnutrition of the rich: two billion people are suffering from diseases because of bad food. Three billion, that's half the world's population, are cursed with denial of health, where health itself is the primary reason we eat – maintaining our bodies, nourishing our systems.

Finally, the fourth aspect of this crisis is the crisis of culture. We are what we eat; food is a very important part of our identity. Different cultures have been shaped by the different traditional foods available: India has very high levels of vegetarianism; in the Mediterranean there is the Mediterranean diet. As our industrialized and globalized food culture takes over, it reduces

food to another monoculture, but a monoculture of impoverished, nutritionally deficient and toxic-rich junk food which is a curse for humanity. And for young people this cultural alienation is showing up in new types of diseases like anorexia and bulimia, where humanity is now so estranged from the act of eating that food is becoming a curse.

*SI: What measures do you believe will be needed to resolve the food crisis?*

VS: The first measure we need to take to resolve the crisis is to recognize that we can produce more and better food by staying small in terms of units of production. There's a huge myth that says we need large-scale, industrial corporate farming to increase food production. But large-scale farms aren't more productive. In 20 years of research I have shown repeatedly that the smaller the farm the greater its biological output. Large-scale farms are concentrated in terms of ownership; they're not more effective in terms of producing nutrition and health for people. It has nothing to do with the quantity that is produced; it has a lot to do with the power and control of land, resources and ownership over them. So we have to defend the small farmer vigorously and spread small farming and ecological farming around the world. Ecological farming addresses all forms of these crises. It addresses the ecological crisis by reducing our pressure on resources. It solves the problem of disposability of farmers by putting farmers back on the land. It solves the problem of health because small and biodiverse farms produce better and higher quality food. And, finally, by linking back to the act of cultivating and the act of eating, we reclaim the culture of food. This is the way we need to go but this part is also a critical aspect of building Earth Democracy.

*SI: Are there movements that are attempting to reclaim diversity in the face of corporate globalization?*

VS: There are many movements around the world. But the two movements in which we are deeply involved in India are what I would call movements for "living democracy" and movements for "living economies". These movements are also founded on Gandhi's principle of *swaraj* (self-governance and self-organization) and on *swadeshi* (self-production). What we have been doing over the last 20 years through *Navdanya*, the

movement I have been building, has been to create biodiversity republics at the village level; republics that are caretakers of their biodiversity – their water, their land, their forests. In the process they protect the biodiversity that sustains them and they also enrich their own lives. They become economically more productive, their incomes increase, their production increases. At the level of political freedom these movements, which we call “living democracy” movements (in India we call them *jaiv panchayats*) are also practicing genuine democracy. The kind of representative democracy where someone is voted into office but then turns their back on voters because of commercial influences is failing the earth and failing the people. We have to invent new forms of democracy and out of these inventions we will be able to secure the future of the human species and other species on this earth.

*SI: Could you describe the unique role that women have in the worldwide movement seeking justice, sustainability, and peace?*

*VS: A movement has been building over time – partly in contrast to the monocultures of the mind of the dominant system based on greed, domination and exploitation – for peace, justice, sharing, and sustainability. And we call this “diverse women for diversity”. What women are really bringing to the world is what I call the culture of sharing and caring. After all, women were left by the division of labor to look after children, to look after the old, to look after the ill. And in the process, the culture of caring survives more in women, not because they are biologically more caring but because economically they have been left to look after the sustenance economy. Also without sharing you cannot really look after the household economy. The original concept of economics was derived from *oikos* [Greek for “the household”], but today is estranged from the economy of the household. You cannot run the household without sharing. The planet as a household has abundance but it is a limited abundance. If you take too much water from the ground we won’t have water in the future. If we take limited amounts of water from the ground we will forever have water. That concept of sharing too is being kept alive by women who are the water providers, the food providers, the seed keepers. And that division of labor, which left women in what was called secondary tasks of care-giving, has become the primary*

source of skills, values and knowledge for humanity’s future.

*SI: In your latest book you refer to “excluding the middle” because of a polarizing, either-or attitude, placing local decision-making against globalization. How does economic localization interrelate with economic globalization?*

*VS: Globalization is part of a continuum of a culture of sharing and a sense of our universal being. It connects locally in terms of our sense of the place where we live, which defines the water we drink, the community we are part of. But that same continuum gives us not just the planetary community of the earth; it even gives us the cosmic unity of seeing ourselves as part of one common universe, that we are ultimately children of the universe.*

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*“In Earth Democracy there is a deep recognition that the resources of the earth are gifts to be shared by all for equal sustenance and not the greed of the few.”*

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On the other hand corporate economic globalization based on greed leaves no local anchor. There is no “local”, except as a selling place for globally traded commodities and it is leading to new shrinkage. An embedded locality that is also universal reduces our ecological footprint while enhancing our consciousness. Globalized commodification shrinks our consciousness while enlarging the pressure that is brought to bear on the planet, and especially on the poor.

*SI: And where does terrorism come into all of this?*

*VS: Terrorism for me is a mirror image of the monoculture that is destroying diversity. I call it a mirror image for two reasons: because it uses the instruments of the dominant force – the instruments of violence – and it rejects the practice of diversity. It exemplifies the practice of the “law of the excluded middle”.*

*SI: How important are small-scale responses to large-scale problems? Could you give us an example of their effectiveness?*

*VS: There are two kinds of engagement in*

change. One way is to look at big problems created by big power and normally, since the dominant power is violence, you think the way to respond to it is to seek the same levels of violence, of dominating power. On the other hand, you can begin to make the change by beginning at a small scale. My inspiration for this has come from Gandhi who, when we were ruled by the British, took out a spinning wheel and said: “We will spin our way to freedom”. People laughed at him and said: “A piece of wooden equipment, how can it bring freedom?” He said it is powerful precisely because it is so small. It can be in the hands of the poorest woman in the smallest hut in the country, and therefore can be a source of empowerment. And empowering millions through the smallest of actions makes it a more powerful action than empowering three people with the same kinds of violent bombs, which is the logic of the suicide bomber.

I took inspiration from Gandhi’s spinning wheel and turned to the seed as a way of beginning small but letting it spread. Just today on my table a farmer has left me hundreds of seed varieties that he is distributing. He undertook this as his life commitment after we met last year during my journey through the suicide belt where I committed myself to stopping suicides among farmers; we are going to stop this violence. He did a bit of the journey with me, and now all he’s doing is distributing these seeds. The 300,000 farmers who are working with us in *Navanya* everyday are sowing seeds. The smallness of the action, the smallness of the seed, makes it powerful.

*SI: How far along the road are we toward manifesting Earth Democracy and what do you feel needs to be done now?*

*VS: If you look at the dominant expressions of where the human species is – the dominant media, newspapers, government policy preoccupations – one would think we are very far from Earth Democracy. But consider that the large majority of the world in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the peasants and tribal people in remote villages are actually practicing Earth Democracy – that’s the practice of the majority. And then think of how many people are making change quietly, below the radar, in their consciousness, in their heart – I would conclude that the majority of the people in the world are shifting to Earth Democracy.*

Further information: [www.navdanya.org](http://www.navdanya.org) ●

# Gore calls for Global Marshall Plan

Former US Vice President Al Gore has called for a new Marshall Plan that “links the battle against the climate crisis to the struggle against global poverty”. Speaking at the United Nations’ “High Level Event” on the climate change crisis held at UN Headquarters in New York, Gore stressed that nothing less than an initiative similar to the Marshall Plan that helped reconstruct Europe after World War II is needed.

The UN-sponsored meeting was the largest gathering ever of world leaders on climate change. Some 40 heads of state or government and 70 cabinet ministers from around the world attended.

A report issued three days prior to Gore’s speech concluded that the melting North Pole ice cap could be completely gone in 23 years. That report, Gore said, demonstrated the immediacy of the planetary emergency and the need for prompt action.

“The old divide between the North and South, between developed and developing is now obsolete,” Gore stated. He said that the joining together of developed and developing nations to reduce carbon emissions is the key to fighting global poverty. It is up to the developed world to show poorer nations that combating climate change will not come at their expense, but will in fact support the aims of overcoming poverty. The real cost, Gore concluded, would be in not taking action. (Source: UN News; *The Financial Times*, UK)

## Korean reconciliation moves forward

After three days of summit meetings, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun signed a reconciliation agreement that promises to build closer economic and security ties between the two nations. The first summit meeting between the Koreas in seven years was not expected to result in the wide-ranging pact that was finally negotiated. Surprisingly, though, the declaration signed contained many specific projects designed to bring the countries closer together and reflected the modest concessions made by both sides.

The South will create an economic zone in Haeju, a town in southwestern North

Korea, and will join with the North in establishing shared fishing waters in areas that had previously been the sites of military clashes. The North consented to take steps to implement the nuclear disarmament agreement reached in February 2007.

Both countries agreed to work towards signing a peace agreement that would replace the ceasefire that ended the Korean War in 1953. The North and South Korean leaders pledged in the summit declaration “to closely co-operate to end their military hostilities and reduce tensions and secure peace on the Korean peninsula.” Most observers concluded that this agreement, if implemented, would open a new chapter in relations between the two countries. (Source: *The New York Times*, USA; Associated Press)

## Jatropha plant used for biofuel

Jatropha, a seemingly worthless weed often used by farmers in developing countries as a repellent to grazing animals and a guard against erosion, is being recommended as a new source of biofuel that may solve energy problems and reduce poverty in some of the world’s poorest nations.

Supporters of jatropha cite its promise by pointing out the ways in which it differs from other potential biofuels. The plant requires very little water and no pesticides, therefore avoiding environmental risks. It can be grown on virtually barren land and so would not need to consume the arable land required to grow badly needed food

In this section, we review developments and opinions which demonstrate that there is an increasingly powerful undercurrent sweeping the world in the direction of synthesis, sharing and co-operation, of new relationships and new approaches.

crops. Not only can it be planted alongside regular crops such as millet, peanuts, corn and beans, but it may actually improve their output.

In Mali, a Dutch entrepreneur, Hugo Verkuijl, has started a company to produce biodiesel from jatropha seeds and has included local farmers by giving them a stake in the company. Other projects in Mali are addressing the lack of electricity there by using jatropha to supply fuel for generators in villages that until now have had no access to power. (Source: *The New York Times*, USA)

## Mobile phone banking

Mobile phone banking is an outstanding success in South Africa. Banks in the country are few and far between except in urban areas, leaving 13 million out of 47 million inhabitants (28 per cent) without easy physical access to banks and no bank accounts. Most South Africans however, do have cell phones, a fact which inspired entrepreneur Brian Richardson to set up virtual banks. His company, called WIZZIT, now has “more than 100,000 account holders” who pay bills and receive their sal-



South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun (left) and North Korean leader Kim Jong Il (right)

ary via their mobile phone.

The WIZZIT model is also proving attractive to other developing countries. United Nations research showed that migrant workers around the world together send home \$232 billion per year but lose no less than 20 per cent due to postage costs or theft. To avoid such loss Brian Richardson would like to expand WIZZIT mobile-banking to India, other African countries and Eastern Europe. Since only 1 billion out of the world's 6.5 billion inhabitants has a bank account and 3.5 billion own a mobile phone the chances of success appear very high. (Source: *de Volkskrant*, the Netherlands; worldchanging.com)



Mobile phone banking is an outstanding success in South Africa

### Lethal injection review may suspend US executions

Anti death penalty campaigners in the US were hopeful that there would be a halt in executions while the Supreme Court reviews the lethal injection, after a rare last-minute reprieve was granted to a condemned man in Texas in September 2007. The Supreme Court offered no explanation for their reprieve to Carlton Turner Jr, who was scheduled to be put to death by lethal injection for killing his adoptive parents. Turner's lawyers had based their appeal on the nature of the lethal injection – likening it to a “chemical straightjacket.”

Turner's reprieve came just hours after a death row inmate in Alabama was granted a 45-day stay of execution by the state's governor, prompting hopes that the US seemed to be moving towards a lull on executions before the Supreme Court decides on the legality of the injection. The court is expected to meet in January 2008 to discuss whether lethal injection, a cocktail of three drugs, represents “cruel and unusual punishment” and is therefore unlawful.

The challenge is on behalf of two men on death row in Kentucky, Ralph Baze and Thomas Clyde Bowling Jr, who argued that they would suffer excruciating pain in the moments before death but would be unable to cry out because of the paralysing effects of one of the drugs. In recent months 11 states have suspended executions because of concerns about the cruelty of lethal in-

jection, and there have been a number of botched executions. The supreme court is due to come to a decision in June 2008.

There is in fact a worldwide trend towards abolishing the death penalty, and in September 2007 Gabon became the latest country to end the practise, following Rwanda, in July 2007. (Sources: *The Guardian*, UK; www.amnesty.org; wikipedia.org)

### Algerian women make headway

A silent revolution is taking place in Algeria. In a part of the world where many countries are culturally traditional, if not conservative, women in general have had little power; now, however change is on the way. Women's economic and political influence is on the increase: some 70 per cent of Algerian lawyers and 60 per cent of the judges are women. A growing number of women are contributing more to the family income than men. In the country's universities 60 per cent of students are women.

While in the past they were relegated to the background, Algerian women are beginning to play a greater role in public life. They have started to drive buses and cabs, and to work as petrol station attendants and waitresses.

Though Algeria has left behind it the dark days of the civil war, the country is still plagued by corruption, bomb attacks, the gap between politicians and the population,

and between rich and poor. Sociologists hope that women can now be the driving force for change in Algeria. With their increasing presence in the apparatus of government and on the streets, women may have a moderating and modernizing influence on society. (Source: *de Volkskrant*, the Netherlands)

### Support network for Islamic women

Muslim women are gaining ground in many parts of the world. In 1993 the American-Lebanese philosopher and law professor Dr Azizah al-Hibri set up Karamah in Virginia, USA. Karamah is a network of legally trained Muslim women, which works for the liberation of women within Islam, as a means of dealing with radicalization and orthodox Islam.

At first Karamah was active only at local level, but after 11 September 2001 the activities expanded rapidly. Questions were raised about Islam on all sides. Karamah's answer was that true Islam is a liberation for women and does not conflict with democracy and the Western constitutional state. “I have behind me at least 20 years of study of Islamic sources and I've spoken with judges, women and Imams from more than 15 Islamic countries,” said Dr Al-Hibri. Equipped with that knowledge she can answer with authority questions from youngsters, Muslim women in search of their identity and also non-Muslims. The network has grown so rapidly that an office with paid staff has been opened in Washington. Al-Hibri also hopes to open an office at the European Union in Brussels in December 2007. (Source: *de Volkskrant*, the Netherlands; www.karamah.org)

### Latin American women leaders

Madrid has held the third meeting of Ibero-American Woman Leaders, claiming real gender equality and opportunities between men and women in Latin America. Beatriz Paredes, member of the Advisory Committee for the Latin American Parliament and government official of the Mexican PRI, said

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# Israeli youth rebel against army service

Interview with Lior Volynitz  
by Aleš Kustec

Lior Volynitz, 20 years old, is one of many young Israelis who, in recent years, have refused military service because of their country's policies towards the Palestinians. In March 2005 he joined 250 other high school students signing a 'Shministim' letter. The letter, explaining why they had refused military service, was sent to the Israeli Prime Minister and other high-ranking officials. Lior was, to his knowledge, the first person in Israel to be spared imprisonment in a military jail because of his political stance as a *refusenik*. Aleš Kustec interviewed him for *Share International* in Maribor, Slovenia.

*Share International:* Why did you refuse the military service in Israel?

Lior Volynitz: I refused to serve in the Israeli army because, first of all, it was forced on me. In Israel all young men are compelled to serve in the army for three years, and women for two years. I refused to serve because I knew if I did I would be doing something wrong, and could not live with it. The Israeli occupation of Palestine and the oppression of our neighbours, like the Israeli war against the Lebanese people and other policies of the Israeli army, are acts I cannot agree with. I could not join an army whose policies are unjust, and apart from that I don't believe that violence is the solution and that peace could come out of it. I think there are other, better, ways to achieve peace.

*SI:* What were the consequences of your refusal?

LV: Anybody publicly refusing to serve in the Israeli army is supposed to serve time in military prison. Fortunately, this did not happen to me. I sent a letter to government officials and the Israeli army in which I refused military service on the grounds of being a conscientious objector. I also joined 250 young Israelis of the same age and we wrote the 'Shministim' letter [high-school seniors' letter], in which we explained our refusal because of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. I expected to spend time in military prison but, surprisingly, the day before I was supposed to enter military prison, the army called me before a special committee, a 'conscience committee', which



Lior Volynitz

has the jurisdiction to release a person from military service. And although I cited all my reasons, like the Israel occupation of Palestine, and although they are only supposed to release people who are pacifists, rather than political objectors, they still chose to release me from service a day before I was due to start my prison sentence. I was very lucky.

*SI:* Are there a lot of young people in Israel refusing military service?

LV: There were around 250 people who chose to join us and make public their refusal to do military service. But there are many other young people who refuse to serve in the army either for political or personal reasons, but this is not reported on by media. In 2006 more than 50 per cent of Israelis who were supposed to join the army did not do their military service or did not complete their full service and this number is growing every year.

*SI:* How is this issue presented in the Israeli media?

LV: I can only talk about our case, which happened in 2005. We wrote a very convincing letter, in which we explained our reasons. We presented it as a tool of democracy, showing that we refused not because we were against Israeli society, but because we were in favour of society, in favour of peace in our coun-

try. We sent the letter not only to our government but also to the media. The response was shocking because it was published everywhere. Even the President of Israel denounced our letter in the media. It really had important consequences. Of course, many people reacted against us but we saw that as a good thing, because in the past serving the army used to be something that people accepted as a matter of course. Now at least we see the first signs of independent thinking: 17-year-olds can now think for themselves. So even if the majority of articles were actually against us, we brought the issue into the public sphere, which is very important.

*SI:* How does the Israeli occupation impact on the lives of Palestinians?

LV: Since the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza in 1967 the Palestinians have lived there all this time under the control of a foreign army. This means there is no democracy in the West Bank and Gaza or few institutions that Palestinians can trust that can help them facilitate their lives. Instead, a foreign army controls most of their land. The army can do whatever it wants with the people: it can take away their land and property without being held to account. These are the basics of the occupation. Beside that, in recent years the occupation has become worse and worse.

The first and perhaps the worst tool of oppression against Palestinians is the building of settlements: the moving of Jewish



"These checkpoints, which are at the entrance of every city, make it really difficult for Palestinians to move from one area to another."



**"I also joined demonstrations and other activities against the construction of the apartheid wall and the stealing of Palestinian land."**

Israeli citizens into Palestinian territory to live on Palestinian land that was taken from them by force. That means Israel is building houses that Palestinians are not allowed to buy, live in or even visit. There is complete separation between Israelis and Palestinians in the occupied territories. The same goes for the roads. For example, the Israeli army has built many roads on Palestinian land which the Palestinians are not allowed to use. They therefore limit the movement of the Palestinians both by building such roads and by means of the checkpoints. These checkpoints, which are at the entrance of every city, make it really difficult for Palestinians to move from one area to another. Neither people nor cargo are allowed to move through them without the permission of the Israeli army. That means if you are a student and you want to go to school and pass a checkpoint, the Israeli army must first allow you to do so. If you need to go to hospital the army must allow you first to pass the checkpoint. So there is no freedom of movement inside Palestine.

Furthermore, any kind of initiative in the vast area of occupied territories – building or extending a house, opening a business or forming a local association even if it is about, say, football – requires the authorization of the Israeli occupying forces – and it is very hard to get that permission. If you do not get permission to build a house and decide to build it anyway, they can come and destroy it and even arrest you. So the Palestinians live under the occupation of the foreign army, and it controls every aspect of their lives. This situation, I believe, is the reason there is terrorism: this is the reason for the hatred between the two nations, and why we cannot live in peace.

*SI: How do other Israelis view the occupation of the Palestinians?*

LV: An understanding of what the occupation is actually doing to Palestinians is not widespread in Israeli society. Although people know there are Palestinians living not far away from them they never meet or visit them. An Israeli can live in Tel Aviv, which is 20 minutes away from Palestine by car, and may never meet a Palestinian except for the time when he is a soldier in the Israeli army. The first time they might encounter a Palestinian is when they are soldiers and are invading their villages in uniform. That means the average Israeli won't have a clue what Palestinian life is like.

*SI: You, on the other hand, have met a lot of Palestinians.*

LV: My experience was very different. In this way I made contact with Palestinians mostly through humanitarian and political groups I

worked with on occasions such as planting olive trees after the Israeli army had rooted them up. I also helped escort Palestinian children to school and joined demonstrations and other activities against the construction of the apartheid wall and the stealing of Palestinian land.

*SI: How do you, as a young person, see the future for Israelis and Palestinians? Will you be able to live in peace as good neighbours one day?*

LV: I am sure that one day we will live in peace together, but for that to happen we must sit down together and reach an agreement as two sides that are equal. Unfortunately, Israel acts as if it is an isolated island in the region. But if we separate ourselves from our neighbours, we build walls not only in nature but also in our heads. We not only exclude them, but we also turn ourselves into a ghetto. I believe there could be an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians, which is the division of land for both nations: Israel and Palestine, two capitals in Jerusalem and an agreement about the return of the refugees to some extent or compensation for others. Actually there are very realistic solutions; many initiatives have already been agreed by important Israeli and Palestinian politicians, but the current leadership in Israel and the USA does not support them. It will take time but I am sure there will be peace between us. In the end peace is achieved by people, not by politicians. ●

*Lior Volynitz appeared before an Israeli Army 'conscience committee' on 17 October 2006 where he declared that he was refusing military service. Lior was officially recognized as a conscientious objector and was released from military service. Lior wrote the following statement to explain his decision to refuse military service.*

"With its checkpoints and detentions, raids and bombardments, assassinations and abductions, the separation wall and discrimination, Israeli policy in itself is enough of a reason for refusal to serve in an army that commits such war crimes. This is not all there is to it, though: the price for this policy is paid not just by Israel's neighbours but equally by us, Israelis.

"Politicians will pass the bill for the latest war against Lebanon to the bank account of those entitled to social benefits, and the cost of Defense Minister Amir Peretz's new armored vehicles will be shouldered by the laid-off workers of the next privatized company. The price for the murder of Lebanese civilians will

be paid by bereaved families in Israel. And still in a few years Israelis will all pay a price when we will wonder, "why do they hate us so much?"

"During this last war I was old enough to have been a soldier myself. I have a high military profile (97) so they might have sent me off to Lebanon. I might have obeyed orders without thinking twice – easily. But I won't be a soldier, and while the war was raging I participated in activities against the bloodshed, against policies that assume every political issue can be dealt with through military solutions.

"By refusing, I am sending a message to other soldiers and future conscripts. I would like them to know that there is another way. My message is also addressed to all the people who have suffered from Israel's policy. I would like them to know that there are Israelis who are different. I sincerely hope that in doing this I will contribute, if only in a small way, towards making Israeli society more just and peace-loving."

# Worldwide rallies for Darfur

Rallies and protests calling for peace in Darfur took place throughout the world on 17 September 2007. Hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets in over 30 countries to express support for the people of Sudan's Darfur region, and to pressure world governments, in particular the Sudanese government, to protect civilians there.

At least 200,000 people have been killed and 2 million displaced in Darfur since 2003. The Sudanese government and its Arab militia allies are blamed for the massacres of Darfur's black African population.

"From Cape Town to London, Moscow to New York, concerned citizens are asking why the UN Security Council's resolutions on Darfur have yet to be enforced," said Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who endorsed the global protests. "We are still waiting for a no-fly zone, targeted sanctions against the architects of the genocide, and referrals to the International War Crimes Tribunal. No wonder the Khartoum regime doubts the resolve of the international community, and dares to deny UN peacekeepers access to Darfur."

Protestors in Rome wore t-shirts with the image of a blood-stained hand, while others in London marched from the Sudanese embassy to Downing Street carrying signs with messages such as "Rape, torture, murder. How much longer for Darfur?" In San Francisco organizers held a film-screening and interfaith prayer. Protestors in New York gave speeches outside UN headquarters. In Ottawa, Canada, people wearing blindfolds created a human chain outside Canada's parliament.

To coincide with the global demonstrations, a co-ordinated campaign in the United States among houses of worship and faith-based organizations called for immediate protection of the Darfurian people. During the Weekend of Prayer, local faith communities and organizations were encouraged to dedicate a sermon, observe a moment of silence or pray for those in Darfur.

September 17 was chosen as the date for worldwide protests because it marked the start of the UN General Assembly, and was the first anniversary of the commitment by 150 governments at the UN World Sum-

mit to take on the "responsibility to protect" people at risk of mass slaughter.

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Save Darfur Coalition were among the groups who helped organize the global effort. (Source: BBC News; Nampa-BBC; CCTV.com; www.globefordarfur.org; www.savedarfur.org; Human Rights First)

## Americans marching for peace

On 15 September 2007 a peace rally was held in Washington DC, USA, organized by Veterans for Peace and the Answer Coalition to protest against the war in Iraq. The march took place from the White House to the Capitol and was attended by an estimated 100,000 people who packed the eight-lane-wide Pennsylvania Avenue for more than 10 blocks.

Protesters surged onto the Capitol's south lawn and up the steps where they were met by a police line. Iraq veterans then conducted a solemn ceremony in memory of the US soldiers and Iraqis killed in the war – nearly 4,000 US soldiers and over 1

In this section *Share International* focuses on the rising tide of people power which will continue to swell until, under Maitreya's wise guidance, the people will lead their leaders into the creation of a just society in which the rights and needs of all are recognized and met.

million Iraqis. Over 5,000 demonstrators lay on the ground in a symbolic 'die-in'. Peace activist Cindy Sheehan told the crowd it was time to be assertive. "It's time to lay our bodies on the line and say we've had enough," she said.

Army veteran Justin Cliburn, 25, of Lawton, Oklahoma, said: "We're occupying a people who do not want us there ... We're here to show that it isn't just a bunch of old hippies from the 60s who are against this war."

Two weeks later, on 29 September 2007, another rally was held in Washington DC organized by Troops Out Now Coalition with an estimated 5,000 people marching for an end to the war in Iraq.

Peace groups around the USA are preparing for another huge demonstration on Saturday 27 October with rallies taking place in 11 cities – Boston, Chicago, Jonesborough, Los Angeles, New Orleans,



"We are still waiting for a no-fly zone, targeted sanctions against the architects of the genocide in Darfur." — Desmond Tutu

## THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

New York City, Orlando, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, and Seattle. The organizers website ([www.oct27.org](http://www.oct27.org)) reads: "On that day, people from all walks of life will gather in 11 cities around the country in a national expression of the breadth and depth of antiwar sentiment in this nation. For many people, it will be their first step in transforming their antiwar feelings into antiwar action ... On 27 October the people will speak: we want this war to end, and we want it to end now!"

(Source: [www.oct27.org](http://www.oct27.org); CNN; [www.answer.pephost.org](http://www.answer.pephost.org))

### Burma: "the world is watching"

Following the brutal suppression of the largest pro-democracy demonstrations seen in Burma since 1988, an international day of action worldwide sent a signal to the Burmese military junta that "the world is watching your every move".

The protests in September and October 2007 in Rangoon, and reportedly across Burma (Myanmar), saw marchers chanting "May we be free of torture, may there be peace in hearts and minds as our kindness spreads around the world." People across Burma risked their lives to alert the world to their plight through mobile phone images and web logs.

In support of Burma's 'saffron revolution' a rolling programme of 200 protests took place in 30 countries, including Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, India, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, South Korea, Spain, Thailand, the UK and the US. Many of the marches were led by Buddhist monks, with protesters wearing red headbands – the colour of the Burmese national flag. Red headbands were also tied around public buildings.

In London, Burmese monks met with UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, who said that "the anger of the world has been expressed about the outrages that have taken place against the people of Burma". After scattering petals on the River Thames, the monks led some 10,000 marchers through London to Downing Street where they tied red headbands around the gates.

Demonstrators in New York rallied outside the Burmese mission to the UN, while in Houston, Texas, protesters, including many Burmese, gathered outside the Bur-



Burma's 'saffron revolution': "May we be free of torture, may there be peace in hearts and minds as our kindness spreads around the world."

mese consulate waving flags of Burma's elected ruling party, the National League for Democracy. Buddhist monks sat in meditation outside the Chinese Consulate in San Francisco, while protesters – many dressed in red – waved banners proclaiming "Democracy for Burma" and "Free Burma". Hollywood celebrities sent a letter to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon calling on him to "personally intervene". Washington protesters marched from the Burmese Embassy to those of China and India (who continue to support the military regime) and outside the Indian embassy two Indian speakers criticized the country for selling arms to Burma – a deal which they said flouted everything Ghandi, founder of the Indian nation, stood for.

Dissent is growing within the Burmese military and administration. A Burmese army officer defected to Thailand rather than carry out his orders to deal with the protests. "I knew the plan to beat and shoot the monks and if I stayed on, I would have to follow these orders. Because I'm a Buddhist, I did not want to kill the monks," he told media organizations.

And Ye Min Tun, a foreign ministry official for 10 years and second secretary at the Burmese Embassy in London resigned. Describing himself as a "good Buddhist", he criticized the Burmese government's "appalling" treatment of the protesters and "the peaceful monks".

Asked whether he thought the pro-democracy movement had been crushed, he said: "I think it's not the end. I think it's just the beginning of the revolution." (Source: BBC, UK; *Washington Post*, USA; [newsdeskspecial.co.uk](http://newsdeskspecial.co.uk), [burmacampaign.org.uk](http://burmacampaign.org.uk), [indymedia.org.uk](http://indymedia.org.uk), [cbs5.com](http://cbs5.com))

### Ecuador: more oil money for the people

The government of Ecuador has announced that 99 per cent of all 'extraordinary' profits from oil sales should be allocated to the State, since a new policy was formulated to "recover sovereignty" in the energy field in order to improve Ecuador's economy.

Ecuador's President, Rafael Correa, has recently ratified a law which states that 99 per cent of the extra benefits from oil exports should return to the government to be used for social projects. In the surprise decree just issued, Correa nearly doubled his government's share of foreign oil companies' "extraordinary earnings," or earnings on oil sold above prices fixed in company contracts, boosting state royalties from 50 to 99 per cent.

Only 1 per cent of the oil revenue will go to private companies operating in the country.

Correa said that this measure is an attempt to find a "fair" distribution of re-

*(continued on page 18)*

## A message from Maitreya

*On 27 September 2007 Benjamin Creme was interviewed for a television documentary at the Share Nederland Information Centre in Amsterdam, Holland. At the end of filming, during a Blessing from Maitreya, the following message was given by Him through Benjamin Creme.*

My dear friends. I am close to you now.

Many of you have awaited My presence for a long time. I am about to step forward openly before all men, and to begin my outer mission.

There is no distance between us. Know this. Understand this.

When you ask Me through the 'hand' or directly to Me for help, that help, you should know, is assured. It is possible that you will not recognize that the help has been given, but so it will be. Trust Me to aid you, for it is to do so that I come.

I shall exhort you to work with Me for the good of all.

This is the opportunity to grow quicker, faster than you have ever done before, and so bring you to the Feet of That One Whom we call God.

Be not afraid of the many problems which arise now almost daily in the world. These events are transient and soon men will come to understand that they have before them a future bathed in light.

So will it be.

*In His Message of November 1977, Maitreya said: "Those who search for signs will find them". Ever since, an increasing number of miraculous phenomena have flooded the world: appearances, crosses of light, healing wells, weeping icons and statues.*

*In May 1988, an associate of Maitreya stated in **Share International**: "The signs of Maitreya's presence in the world will continue to increase. He is going to flood the world with such happenings that the mind can never comprehend it."*

## UFO in British Columbia, Canada

Residents of a small town in British Columbia, Canada, saw a bright orange orb in the sky on the night of 9 September 2007. One witness in Sidney, British Columbia, said the object was shaped liked a jellyfish, and moved silently across the sky in a southerly direction. According to the witness, "It was very bright, brilliant even; it pulsed slightly. The colour was not homogenous or static. It was very much like a glowing orange jellyfish. It continued due south over Sidney at an increasing speed and appeared to move south towards Victoria and then south-west and out of sight dimming from view."

The witness reported the sighting on a website, prompting another person who had also seen the UFO to come forward. The second witness said: "We were standing outside in the front of our house and suddenly there was a bright light that came over the trees. I thought it was a plane at first, because it was so low, but there was no sound. It then curved around to the south moving very slowly and seemed to be getting higher and much further away ... then it just disappeared. We knew it wasn't a plane, it was moving way too slow. People everywhere were looking up at this thing. I don't know what I saw, but it was pretty



Family photograph taken in Jyväskylä, Finland, sent by Ulla Jyväkorpi, shows a light blessing from the Master Jesus.



Light patterns on a building in the centre of Split, Croatia, sent by Goran Bosnic. Manifested by the Space Brothers in collaboration with Maitreya.

exciting.” (Source: *Peninsula News Review*, Canada)  
(*Benjamin Creme’s Master confirms that this was an authentic sighting of spacecraft from Mars.*)

### “Ghost lights” seen in Indian grasslands

Visitors to the Banni grasslands in India’s Gujarat province say they have seen strange light phenomena on dark nights. The local people, who have reportedly seen these lights for centuries, call them Chhir Batti, meaning “ghost lights”. Indian ornithologist Jugal Kishor Tiwari has seen the unusual lights several times during visits to Banni to study the area’s varied bird species. “I first came to know about these during the study of birds in Banni in 1990,” said Tiwari. “We were there to trap some birds ... and were distracted by these lights. The light, which is as bright as a mercury lamp, changes its colour to blue and sometimes red. It is like a moving ball of fire, which sometimes stops or moves as fast as an arrow. On 5 November 2005 my team found

these lights at seven places. We have shown this phenomenon to several experts including well-known American ornithologist Bill Clark. He was amazed and had no explanation.”

Tiwari said that the lights can only be seen after 8pm on dark nights, and are visible between 2 and 10 feet above the ground. He said the lights almost seem to have a mind of their own. “It’s like the lights playing hide and seek. Even if you decide not to follow them, they can creep up on you. It’s something like the light following you. This is not only mine but has been everybody else’s experience here.” (Source: <http://cities.ExpressIndia.com>)

(*Benjamin Creme’s Master confirms that these are devices used by space vehicles from Mars and Venus gathering local information about the quality of the air and soil.*)

### UFOs in Bavaria

On 25 April 2007 people in the federal state of Bavaria, Germany, noticed a remarkable object in the sky. It was a clear bright dot with several black circles rotating around it.

The phenomenon was also reported by police patrolling in Illertissen, a village between Munich and Stuttgart, who could not find an explanation for it. After a while the object and circles disappeared as quickly as they had appeared. (Source: *Tageszeitung*, Germany)  
(*Benjamin Creme’s Master confirms this sighting to be spaceships from Mars.*)

### Multiple UFO sightings in the Netherlands

**Enschede, 15 July:** “On Sunday evening around 10.40pm I looked out of my attic window. I saw two orange balls of light go from the south in an easterly direction, both at a different speed. The two balls appeared also to change colour all the time.” (*Benjamin Creme’s Master confirms they were spacecraft from Venus.*)

**Eindhoven, 15 July:** “I first saw a strong beam of light between two stars. I was lucky to see that light beam because it made me look at the sky and then a few seconds later the most beautiful thing happened: for about 10 seconds I could enjoy two ‘ships’ flying in formation. As to their size they were smaller than a one-person fighter jet, there were no lights and no sound.

“So, I really saw solid matter fly and not a beam or a ball of light or something like that. They were triangular in shape. I estimate the height they were flying at to be about 3 kilometres. The speed was difficult to estimate, but to give an idea: they flew from left to right in about 10 seconds. If it had been an airplane I could certainly have seen it for five minutes.” (*Benjamin Creme’s Master confirms they were spaceships from Mars.*)

**Helmond, 14 July:** “I live in an apartment building, of which there are three in a row, and that night I could not sleep because of the heat. So I went to my living room again and when I looked outside I saw to my surprise an illuminated cloud. The funny thing was that it looked as if it was scanning the middle apartment-building. It flew constantly back and forth. After half an hour it disappeared suddenly but after about five minutes there it was again. It flew back and forth above that one apartment building and that lasted again about half an hour. Now and then it turned over and then you saw a blue-green glow.” (*Benjamin Creme’s Master confirms it was a spaceship from Mars.*) (Source: [www.Nibur.nl](http://www.Nibur.nl)) ●

# New UN document on Indigenous Rights

The UN General Assembly has just adopted a resolution calling for the recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples around the world to self-determination. While the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was endorsed by 143 members, four members voted against the resolution – the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

The resolution states that the world's 370 million indigenous people have the right not only to self-determination but also to control over their lands and their resources. This latter clause seems to be the sticking point for those powers who exercised their veto.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called it "a triumph for indigenous peoples around the world," noting that this was a moment of reconciliation between member states and indigenous peoples.

The Declaration emphasizes the rights of indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their institutions, cultures, and traditions and pursue their development in keeping with their own needs and aspirations.

Botswana Bushman Jumanda

Gakelebone of First People of the Kalahari, who works with the independent advocacy group Survival International, expressed his delight and hope: "It recognizes that governments can no longer treat us as second-class citizens, and it gives protection to tribal peoples so that they will not be thrown off their lands like we were."

Survival International's director Stephen Corry said that the new resolution "sets a benchmark by which the treatment of tribal and indigenous peoples can be judged, and we hope it will usher in an era in which abuse of their rights is no longer tolerated." He compared the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights created nearly 60 years ago. (Source: OneWorld.net, *Star Tribune*, Minneapolis, USA)

## Child survival milestone

The number of children dying before the age of five has dropped below 10 million per annum for the first time since such records began, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Surveys conducted in 2005-2006 in more

**"To aid men in their task, the Christ has formulated certain priorities. They cover the essential needs of every man, woman and child. The first priority is an adequate supply of the right food. Secondly, adequate housing and shelter for all. Thirdly, health-care and education as a universal right."**

Benjamin Creme's Master, January 1989. In this section, *Share International* addresses problems in the areas of Maitreya's priorities, and also identifies related plans, solutions and projects.

than 50 countries show an overall drop in deaths among under-fives to 9.7 million, from 13 million in 1990. "This is an historic moment," said UNICEF Executive Director Ann M. Veneman. "More children are surviving today than ever before." However, she warned against complacency: "The loss of 9.7 million young lives each year is unacceptable. Most of these deaths are preventable and, as recent progress shows, the solutions are tried and tested."

The September 2007 report echoes findings released earlier in the year which showed a 60 per cent fall in measles deaths since 1999 – and 75 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the previous surveys, in 1999-2000, under-five mortality has dropped sharply in Latin America and the Caribbean, in Central and Eastern Europe, East Asia and the Pacific. Particularly dramatic progress has occurred in Morocco, Vietnam and the Dominican Republic (under-five mortality reduced by more than one-third); Madagascar (41 per cent drop); and Sao Tome and Principe (48 per cent drop).

Much of the progress, says UNICEF, is the result of the widespread adoption of basic health interventions, such as early and exclusive breast feeding, measles immunization, Vitamin A supplementation and the use of insecticide-treated bed nets to prevent

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The number of children dying before the age of five has dropped below 10 million per annum for the first time since such records began

## Voice of the people

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sources between “the people and the private sector.” He added that “citizens in this country think it insufficient that the state keeps only 50 per cent of these benefits”, while another government official, Alexis Mera, said that “this measure is triggering a real revolution in Ecuador, since now our main asset is going to benefit real people, not just companies. This is true justice and a coming back of real politics by and for people”, said Mera.

If oil prices remain at current levels, Correa’s move will boost government income by US\$69 million (€49 million) per month starting in November 2007, and by US\$828 million (€588 million) a year. (Source: *La Hora*, Ecuador; *El País*, Spain; *International Herald Tribune*, USA)

## Romanian villagers resist big business

In the mountains of a Transylvanian county in Romania is the small community of Rosia Montana – the unlikely setting for a battle between big foreign business and villagers. The business is literally dirty and polluting, which is why many of the 3,500 inhabitants are resisting a Canadian gold mining corporation’s efforts to start exploiting local resources.

Rosia Montana, about 600km northwest of the capital Bucharest, is the site of ancient mining activity because of its very large gold deposits, but Gold Corporation of Canada is not welcomed by all, for a number of reasons. The area is very valuable archaeologically; it has a rich historical and cultural heritage. The methods Gold Corporation plans to use could cause serious pollution; it proposes to extract the gold by open quarry exploitation and to use cyanide for metal separation.

A large core group of Rosia Montana villagers has resisted the blandishments and promises of Gold Corporation for the past 11 years, despite the fact that the region’s population is generally poor with unemployment standing at 70 per cent. “It is not about money”, say some of the locals.

The Canadian company plans to start extracting gold in Rosia in 2009 and they would exhaust the gold deposits within about 15 years. The mining company says it will create 6,000 jobs in the area.

However, ancient houses are being demolished and locals relocated to a “New Rosia Montana”. If the mining goes ahead the four peaks which surround the village would disappear, replaced by gaping holes leaving scenery irreparably changed and altering the local ecosystem.

Cyanide pollution is what the core group of protestors fear most. The activist group Romania Without Cyanide says Gold Corporation plans to use 10 to 13 million kilograms of sodium cyanide a year. With the highly toxic chemical kept in protected pools, it could easily percolate into the soil and groundwater. In addition, toxic hydrocyanic acid would be released into the air, claims a report by Romania Without Cyanide.

The mining company’s presence has split the community with some people poor enough to need to take the Corporation’s offers. Locals who have refused to move or give up their properties talk of intimidation.

Despite such poor odds, there may be reason for optimism: the Social-Democratic Party, the largest opposition force in the country, announced recently that it would support a law to prohibit use of cyanide, and Romania’s Environment Ministry has just announced that it has decided to suspend the authorization process of the Rosia Montana gold mine project for an unlimited period, reports Romanian news. (Source: NewsIn, Romania; Hotnews.ro; earthworksaction.org; Inter Press Service)

## London marchers defy ban

The peace demonstration in London planned for 8 October 2007, organized by the Stop the War Coalition, took place successfully, in spite of a police ban on protests within one mile of Westminster while Parliament is sitting. Defying the police warning, veteran campaigner Tony Benn informed the government in advance that he intended to march to Westminster anyway. The march coincided with Prime Minister Gordon Brown’s speech to the House of Commons about the Iraq war.

Protestors gathered in Trafalgar Square and, thanks to a large turnout and high profile leaders, the ban was lifted an hour before the march was scheduled to begin.

According to the organizers, at least 5,000 people attended, “a hugely impressive turnout for a weekday.” They claimed the attempt to stop it had swelled the number of supporters. Many colleges brought their

biggest delegations since the pre-war march on 15 February 2003. “Had there been only a few dozen there, the ban would probably have remained in force and the demo would have been confined to Trafalgar Square,” said one protestor. (Source: stopwar.org.uk; *Yorkshire Post*, UK)

## Maitreya’s priorities

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malaria. Other factors included appropriate treatment of pneumonia, diarrhoeal diseases and severe malnutrition, treatment of paediatric HIV/AIDS, and hygiene promotion and access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Of the 9.7 million child deaths reported in the survey, 3.1 million are from South Asia, and 4.8 million from Sub-Saharan Africa, where many countries managed to reduce rates by more than 20 per cent. The highest rates, however, were found in West and Central African countries, and the spread of HIV/AIDS had undermined successes in southern Africa.

But with the current unprecedented levels of support for global health, UNICEF believes that the Millennium Development Goal of reducing child deaths by two-thirds by 2015 could be met by Latin America and the Caribbean. “The new figures show that progress is possible if we act with renewed urgency to scale-up interventions that have proven successful,” said Veneman. (Source: UNICEF; BBC, UK)

## Empowering underprivileged children

Funds raised from a concert in honour of the late singer-songwriter John Lennon will all go to empowering underprivileged children in Asia and Africa. Lennon’s widow, Yoko Ono, said that the money raised from similar events since her husband’s death has helped build 50 schools – the original target. Now proceeds from the “John Lennon: Super Live” concerts will be dedicated to building another 50 schools. Lennon was always a great believer in the importance of education. Ono herself is convinced that education is the best means of helping children improve their lives. She is determined to raise awareness of social problems through art and music. (Source: *Nikkei Weekly*, Japan)

# White Paper for a peaceful Middle East

Interview with André Azoulay  
by Andrea Bistrich

André Azoulay is the Advisor to the King of Morocco, first to King Hassan II, and today to King Mohammed VI. In addition to his professional responsibilities, he has fought for over 30 years for peace and dialogue between the Arab Muslim world and the Jewish communities in Europe, the United States and Morocco as well as the Arab and Jewish diasporas worldwide. In this context Mr Azoulay was one of the initiators of the Casablanca Conference and recipient of the prestigious *Légion d'Honneur* of France. He founded the "Identity and Dialogue" Association, which strives to nurture and preserve the cultural identity of Jews from North Africa and promote ongoing dialogue between Jews and Arabs. He is co-chairman of the Shimon Peres Center for Peace and a member of the Board of the Euro-Mediterranean Forum, the Foundation for the Protection of Judeo-Moroccan Heritage, the C-100 (Davos Forum) for the Dialogue of Civilizations and Religions, and the Three Cultures and Religions Foundation, based in Seville, Spain.

In 2005, he, with 19 other prominent leaders in their fields, was nominated a member of the highly prestigious Alliance of Civilizations, set up by the General Secretary of the United Nations, which addresses the issue of the relations between Islam and the Western World. Andrea Bistrich interviewed him for *Share International*.

*Share International:* Mr Azoulay, you come from a Jewish community and yet your function and position as Senior Advisor to Mohammed VI of Morocco is deeply anchored in the Muslim world. What does it mean to you being Jewish in a Muslim country?

André Azoulay: As an Arab Jew I'm part of this larger regional, geographical, philosophical and culturally diverse community. Its richness of traditions plays a key role in



André Azoulay

our modern identity, although this also means responsibility: the responsibility to send a different signal to the rest of the Arab and Jewish communities to show them that Jews and Muslims can live in peace together. We belong to the same family. We share the same memories, and we are confronted by the same challenge.

My Rabbi once said: "There is no meaning in being Jewish if you do not look after your neighbour first, and if your neighbour does not enjoy the same values, the same respect as you. My neighbour today in my mind is Palestinian. Until the Palestinian people recover their dignity, their freedom, I feel my Judaism is weaker and hurt." For this reason it is vital to build bridges between Muslim and Jewish communities – wherever there are conflicts – and to pave the way for dialogue and peace.

*SI:* In what way could Morocco be an example to the communities in Israel/Palestine, to show that Jews and Muslims can indeed co-exist peacefully side by side?

AA: The political situation in Morocco is, as we know, different from that in Palestine or Israel, and cannot be compared. Also, we should not forget that the conflict between Israel and Palestine is not culturally or religiously based, but political. We should not take the differences in culture and religion as a pretext for the conflict, but work towards a political solution.

Nevertheless, we Jewish communities especially do have a message for the people in Israel and Palestine, and that says: in order to make a viable approach possible it is necessary to move away from the accustomed dogmatic and ideological methods that have had so little success, and to try new ways.

In this context we created the "Identité et Dialogue" group in 1974 in Paris. It was the first non-governmental organization (NGO) at that time to be formed consisting of Jewish intellectuals calling for a Palestinian State living in peace

alongside Israel.

*SI:* You are member of the High-Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations (AOC), an initiative by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. How would you describe the AOC's potential?

AA: Our world today is alarmingly out of balance. Therefore, the aim of the Alliance is to support projects that promote understanding and reconciliation among cultures globally.

In fact we were addressing the issue of relations between Islam and the rest of the world. For instance why 9/11 happened; why were there the London bombings [7 July 2005] and why Casablanca [16 May 2003]? Why are we confronted with such a regressive situation? In trying to understand the global situation we have also tried to propose a way out. Really to try to put an



**“Poverty leads to a sense of despair, injustice and alienation”**

end to this atmosphere of suspicion, of fears, to all those clichés and stereotypes that are spoiling the vision, the understanding and the knowledge of what it means to be an Arab or Muslim.

One of the main findings of the Alliance is that the chief causes of the growing rift in our world are not religion or history, but recent political developments, notably the Israel-Palestine conflict. Problems arise from intolerant minorities on both sides – rather than from cultures as a whole.

*SI: What practical suggestions does the Alliance give?*

AA: There is no simple answer and we do not have miracle solutions. Nevertheless, the AOC has analysed and presented recommendations in four thematic areas: education, youth, migration, and the media. The Alliance released an implementation plan which sets out a range of educational projects and initiatives over the next two years, including a media fund to promote productions developed across cultural, religious and/or national lines, a Youth Employment Centre aimed at increasing work opportunities for young people in the Middle East, a project aimed at expanding international student exchange programmes, etc. This has been presented to the public by the High Level Group representative, former president of Portugal, Jorge Sampaio, who was appointed recently.

*SI: The report of the AOC argues that poverty as well as globalization have an im-*

*act on contributing to the discord. Could you specify in what ways?*

AA: It is true that poverty and an unbalanced economic situation is fuelling resentment. In fact, the increasing gap between rich and poor is eroding global solidarity. Poverty leads to a sense of despair, injustice and alienation, and out of that can emerge extremism when combined with political grievances. The overcoming of poverty must thus be made a priority.

Nevertheless, poverty is not the *cause* for the growing divide. When you look at, for instance, who the fundamentalists on both sides are, you will see that they are often quite well situated. At the same time, we find very poor and weak people drawn into the kamikaze role; they are weak enough to be instrumentalized by the fundamentalists to act as human bombs.

In the Alliance’s High-level report we gave recommendations with regard to how to fight poverty and economic imbalance. But we can only be truly successful if our actions are included within an international community of nations working jointly to implement the Millennium Development Goals.

*SI: The Alliance has called for renewed effort from the international community to resolve the Middle East crisis. What are your recommendations to the political leaders of the world in this regard?*

AA: Together with Mr Hubert Védrine I was able to add a separate chapter on this issue to the AOC’s general report, wherein we rec-

ommend the development of a White Paper analysing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict objectively. This means in particular: allowing expression of the opposing views by analysing the successes and failures of past peace initiatives, and by drawing up clear criteria and guidelines that must be met if a solution to the crisis is to be attained. A document of this kind would be of tremendous impact by providing a clear foundation to all who are involved in the effort to resolve this conflict and is a basic necessity.

The Palestinian people need full acknowledgment of their struggle, their stigmatization, and the price they have paid by the occupation of their land for decades and for the many disappointments that they have had to endure. At the same time, the Israeli fears must be confronted and dispersed. This is of utmost importance: that both sides mutually recognize the differences in viewpoint. For most Jews and Israelis, for example, the building of the state of Israel was an aspiration of many to establish their own homeland, but it was soon attacked by neighbouring Arab countries. For the Palestinians on the other side, the establishment of this new state of Israel was experienced as an act of aggression and hundreds of thousands were driven from their land which was then illegally occupied.

*SI: What does the word “justice” in the Middle East really mean?*

AA: For me it starts with having a viable

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# Gore's win a triumph for planet

*Step by step, men will set in motion the requirements of the future. These must respect the destiny and free will of all. The right to the essentials of life: food, shelter, healthcare and education, must condition the direction of all governments' actions. The safeguarding of the environment — with all that that entails — must become a sacred duty which will allow men, in time, to nurse this planet back to health. (A Master Speaks )*

Worldwatch, the global environmental monitoring agency, welcomed the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Al Gore and to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as a “triumph for the planet and its inhabitants”. Worldwatch issued a press release headlined “Planet Wins Nobel Prize”.

“It is with extreme satisfaction that we receive the news that Gore and the IPCC have been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize,” said Oystein Dahle, Chairman of the Board of Worldwatch Institute and a leading Norwegian environmentalist. Speaking from his home in Oslo where the Prize was announced, Dahle said: “With their decision, the Nobel Committee has for the second time signalled that peace with the environment is an essential requirement if we are to have peace between human beings.”

Asked for his reaction former US Vice President Gore, whose documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth* won an Oscar at the 2007 Academy Awards, said he hoped the award would bring a “greater awareness and a sense of urgency” to the fight against global warming.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee said that the impact of the prize winners' work has helped to “lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract [climate] change”.

The Committee praised the contribution made by the IPCC with its more than two decades of scientific reports comprising the expertise of more than 2,000 leading climate change scientists and experts. It was such reports, said the Nobel Committee, which gradually built a broader and better informed “consensus about the connection between human activities and global warming”.

Of Al Gore, the Committee said: “He is

probably the single individual who has done most to create greater worldwide understanding of the measures that need to be adopted.”

“We face a true planetary emergency,” Mr Gore warned. “It is a moral and spiritual challenge to all of humanity.” Asked what he intended to do with his share of the prize money (in total \$1.5m) Gore said that he is donating it to the Alliance for Climate Protection.

The IPCC report stated that with global warming will come storms, droughts, floods and increased natural disasters and so tax the world's food and water systems. These in their turn can be cause for conflicts over territory and resources. The world's poor, who already suffer from a lack of clean water, sanitation and food security, will be most directly affected.

“Climate change is the greatest long-term threat to peace and security the world has ever known,” says Christopher Flavin, Worldwatch Institute President. “This prize marks another turning point for the climate issue – the question now is whether lawmakers around the world will rise to the challenge of implementing new treaties and laws that reduce the world's dangerous addiction to fossil fuels.” (Source: Worldwatch Press Release; BBC Online; Nobelprize.org)



The awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Al Gore and to the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is a triumph for the planet and its inhabitants

Over the years, *Share International* has printed articles outlining Maitreya's expectations concerning political, social, environmental and spiritual changes in the world, as presented to us by one of Maitreya's associates in the London community in which He lives. From time to time, both Benjamin Creme and his Master have shared their prognosis of future developments. In this section, “Facts and forecasts”, our staff monitors recent news, events and comments bearing on these insights.

## SOS for world's oceans

The Worldwatch Institute, the environmental monitoring agency, has just issued a press release entitled “SOS for Fading Ocean Life”.

The Institute's most recent and very comprehensive report *Oceans in Peril: Protecting Marine Biodiversity* contains an urgent appeal for the creation of “national parks of the sea”, in other words, marine reserves. According to Worldwatch such reserves “may be the only effective way to reverse trends that have left 76 per cent of world fish stocks fully- or over-exploited and marine biodiversity at severe risk.”

## FACTS AND FORECASTS

“The oceans cannot save themselves,” says Christopher Flavin, president of the Worldwatch Institute. “Collective commitments to thriving ecosystems are needed to save overfished species from being systematically depleted from compromised habitats.”

The decline in fish stocks and the increase of marine pollution is blamed on fishing policies, indiscriminate and harmful methods of fishing, the rise in sea temperatures due to human-induced global warming as well as chemical and oil spills.

“Pollution from chemical, radioactive, and nutrient sources; oil spills; and marine debris can contaminate the marine environment, kill organisms, and undermine ecosystem integrity. Of particular concern is the effect on marine wildlife of persistent organic pollutants (POPs), especially those chemicals not yet regulated under the 2001 Stockholm Convention, such as brominated flame retardants. Marine debris, including plastics and derelict fishing gear, is responsible for causing death and injury to many marine species, among them seabirds, turtles, and marine mammals. Large oxygen-depleted ‘dead zones’, made worse by excessive nitrogen runoff from fertilizers, sewage discharges, and other sources, are further signs that the oceans are under severe stress.”

### Solutions

The Worldwatch Institute put forward a number of proposals in its media release which, if implemented, might help to stabilize and eventually revive the world’s oceans. The report also cited a number of examples of marine revival, one of which was at the Soufriere Marine Management Area in St Lucia in the Caribbean, where “three years of protection tripled the biomass of commercial fish species within the closed reserves. After five years, in areas outside the reserves, biomass doubled and average catches per trip increased 46 to 90 per cent depending on the size of trap used”.

The Report’s authors also recommend that negotiations on fish and fish products should be removed from the World Trade Organization and into other multilateral forums which are not dominated by commercial and trade interests. They call for an end to agreements that allow industrial countries to fish liberally in developing-country waters: in the case of tuna fishing in the

Pacific, the economic return from access fees and licenses paid by foreign fleets is at most 5 per cent of the \$2 billion the fish is worth. Fairer deals would allow coastal states to manage resources on a more sustainable basis and ensure continued livelihoods for communities. (Source: Worldwatch Institute Press Release)

### Chemicals threatening human reproduction

On 11 September 2007, in Greenland’s capital Nuuk, a symposium of religious, scientific and environmental leaders gathered to look into the effects of environmental pollution in the Arctic. Scientists from the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme (AMAP) presented their initial alarming findings: that twice as many girls as boys are being born in some Arctic villages because of high levels of man-made chemicals in the blood of pregnant women.

The scientists measured the man-made chemicals in women’s blood that mimic human hormones and concluded that they were capable of triggering changes in the sex of unborn children in the first three weeks of gestation. The chemicals, carried in the mother’s bloodstream through the placenta to the foetus, can switch hormones to create girl children.

Further investigations are taking place in communities in Russia, Greenland and

Canada to try to discover the extent of the imbalance in Inuit communities of the north. In some communities of Greenland and eastern Russia the ratio has been found to be two girls to one boy, but in one village in Greenland only girls have been born.

Lars-Otto Reiersen, executive secretary for AMAP, said: “We knew that the levels of man-made chemicals were accumulating in the food chain, and that seals, whales and particularly polar bears were getting a dose a million times higher than that existing in plankton, and that this could be toxic to humans who ate these higher animals. What was shocking was that they were also able to change the sex of children before birth.”

Scientists believe a number of man-made chemicals used in electrical equipment from generators, televisions and computers that mimic human hormones are implicated. These are carried by rivers and wind to the Arctic where they accumulate in the food chain and in the bloodstreams of the largely meat and fish-eating Inuit communities.

Aqqaq Lyngge, from Greenland, the former chairman of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, said: “This is a disaster, especially for some 1,500 people who make up the Inuit nations in the far north east of Russia. Here in the north of Greenland, in the villages near the Thule American base, only girl babies are being born to Inuit families. The problem is acute in the north and



Twice as many girls as boys are being born in some Arctic villages because of high levels of man-made chemicals in the blood of pregnant women

► east of Greenland where people still have the traditional diet. This has become a critical question of people's survival but few governments want to talk about the problem of hormone mimickers because it means thinking about the chemicals you use. I think they need to be tested much more stringently before they are allowed on the market."

The gender balance of the human race, which up to now has been a slight excess of boys over girls, has recently changed. A paper published in 2007 in the US National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences said that in Japan and the US there were 250,000 fewer boys than would have been expected, had the sex ratio existing in 1970 remained unchanged. The paper was unable to confirm the cause for the new excess of girls over boys. (Source: *The Guardian*, UK) ●

## A peaceful Middle East

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and sovereign Palestinian State living side by side with Israel. It starts at that point and it will end at that point. Failure to solve it would be disastrous for the world. Furthermore, true justice means mutual respect, mutual confidence and trust. I hope that one day the Israelis as a people will consider the Palestinian freedom as their own freedom and as a value for their children and families. We can no longer have different treatment or consideration when we speak about dignity, justice, freedom; it must be the same for both. You cannot have a double-standard culture, it's over. We all have paid the price.

So, in order to overcome the current situation, we need a clear vision of future possibilities for this region, along with true courage on the part of both Israelis and Palestinians, and also on the part of influential countries involved – especially America and the permanent members of the Security Council.

*SI: According to opinion polls, even most Israelis want to see an end to the occupation, but they do not think the current generation of politicians can deliver a solution. When discussing the war in 1967 together with the fact that Israel missed the chance for a peaceful solution in those days, a former Israeli Cabinet Minister recently said: "Today we can make peace and we aren't trying."*

AA: The majority of Israelis support the

Two-State Solution. There is no alternative to that. The people seem to understand history better than their leaders. They know that Israel's security is tied to the Palestinians' wellbeing. The leadership is becoming weaker and more and more confused now. On both sides, Israel and Palestine, the problem is the lack of leadership which does not seem to be able to face the challenge to make peace.

*SI: The Arabs have a saying that goes: "War starts with words". Both Arab and Western media have responsibility in that regard. Is the media leading the world to more understanding or new strife?*

AA: Indeed, the media plays a basic, vital role in this respect. You cannot deal with such dossiers, if you don't have the correct intermediation with public opinion. Everything is dependent on communication: information, education and knowledge is conveyed through the media. Unfortunately some media have inflamed the minds of millions of people – just by manipulating reality. This is especially the case when Western media largely give voice to extreme religious Islamic groups and also the most anti-Muslim ideologues in the West. This one-sided media coverage leads to polarization and mutual hostility. A clear example of this is the distortion of the true meaning of the word 'jihad'. It has gained a negative connotation whereas in its true connotation it has a positive meaning, being either an inner struggle against weaknesses and evil that dwells within each individual (greater 'jihad') or the defence of one's community (lesser 'jihad'). In the way the word is used by Western media it has lost its positive connotations and instead is related with violence and extremism.

*SI: How could the media be brought around to contributing to the defusing of the tensions, and not to see it merely as an infringement of their press freedom?*

AA: I don't see it as such. Like anyone else journalists are not free of obligations and sanctions. They have ethics and rules to respect.

Many of the problems today arise at the meeting between politics and religion. One of the main influences, in view of the present climate of fear and suspicion, is the derogatory and violent use of language which can have a very destructive effect, especially when disseminated by the press. It is here that politicians and the media, who mould

and influence public opinion, have a special responsibility in uniting peoples and differing beliefs, by creating a climate of mutual respect and understanding. Having such a strong influence, both of these groups must be most careful in their use of language so as to avoid insulting and degrading other people's belief systems and sacred symbols.

(Further information: [unaoc.org](http://unaoc.org)) ●

## Trends

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that "we want to integrate, now as a priority, policies of equality for the empowerment and the actual freedom for women, promoting parity in the three powers of the state: executive, legislative, and legal."

She added that Latin American governments should take advantage of the "new times to work together for eradicating any form of exclusion of women in society", especially in the field of education, health, and access to paid work. In this regard, Paredes reminded the audience that the "Quito Consensus" had been passed – a document drawn up in August 2007 in Ecuador in which representatives of 33 countries called together by the Latin America Economic Commission asked for a full acknowledgment of women's participation in the work sector, as well as their participation in politics. (Source: *El País*, Spain)

## Sustainable banking – a new trend

Just one week after the Netherlands branches of Friends of the Earth and Oxfam announced that the four biggest Dutch banks are failing seriously in socially responsible policies such as sustainability, thousands of clients changed to two other banks [ASN Bank and Triodos] known for their active policy with regard to sustainability and socially responsible investment. A number of organizations also withdrew from dubious investments revealed by the enquiry. The Queen Wilhelmina Fund against Cancer ended its investment in the tobacco industry, while the Dutch Society for the Protection of Animals disposed of investments in pesticides as well as investments in companies which are active in Burma which is being boycotted by the United Nations. (Source: *de Volkskrant*, the Netherlands) ●

# Repeat appearance

Dear Editor,

On Sunday 2 September 2007 my son and I were viewing a production of Jane Austen's *Emma* on television. Quite unexpectedly, reception of the transmission was suspended and was replaced by a large head and shoulder image of an Afro-American man seemingly in the same guise that Maitreya used as a homeless New York flute player. (He was wearing the same green jersey and black cap.)

The image stayed on screen for about 10 seconds and then disappeared. My son James, disappointed at the brevity of the event, remarked: "Come on Maitreya, you'll have to do better than that!"

Well, remarkably he did, because the Afro-American reappeared during an episode of *Coronation Street* a few nights later, again just for a few seconds but this time looking more directly at us.

I have heard of no other person who witnessed these events, which were personally very reassuring. Can you confirm their authenticity?

Davina Darby, Christchurch, New Zealand.

*(Benjamin Creme's Master confirms that Maitreya did indeed manifest this sign, appearing on television in the guise of an Afro-American man.)*

Two letters from the same person:

## Cool rescue

Dear Editor,

We live in a small village in Sicily and around six years ago, together with other parents from the same village, used to take it in turns to collect our children from the school in the nearest town, some five kilometres distant. One day it was my turn to pick up the

children. I'd left myself a very short while to get to the school and find a parking place. I had about a final mile to drive, when the unthinkable happened.

Firstly, I am not that confident a driver, and am also extremely impractical, and secondly, the car I drove at that time was a Renault Five, rather on its last legs, and given to letting me down. And let me down it did, just as I was negotiating the trickiest part of the journey, hemmed in as part of three-lane traffic which did not keep, ever, to rightful lanes but wove in and out of whoever afforded a careless inch of space between bumper and boot. The point was to keep moving, and as I anxiously did so, I noticed masses of smoke billowing from the car engine. Other cars roared past, drivers helpfully yelling "Switch off the engine!" as they overtook me. Fortunately I was in the inside lane and so pulled up and switched off, but by doing so I obstructed a whole line of traffic behind me. I could have died from fear. I wouldn't be able to pick up the children; I'd left my mobile at home; I thought the car might well blow up, and had no idea of what to do or where to find help or how to get a message to the children or to my husband.

Just as I was about to burst into tears, I noticed a very strange thing. A bright-yellow car had pulled up behind me. I wondered how it had done that, as the traffic had condensed all around me and there literally, was no place behind me to park. A tall, dark, Sicilian-looking man got out of the car and moved in a very fluid, casual way towards me. As I was about to burst into flames myself from panic, I unconsciously noted his calm, and also the fact that he was smoking a cigarette and that his first words were calmly and quietly spoken; all of these

things came back to me so clearly afterwards, but at the time I could only feel conscious of time running out, and worry. One thing struck me, though, forcibly: he didn't share my panic at all, and loped his way among the traffic, and spoke as though it were an everyday occurrence, and time no problem at all. He seemed in a bubble of total unconcern for what was happening around us. The car radiator was the problem. No water at all. And the man in the yellow car said: "Don't worry – I've just bought some water." Disbelievably, I followed in his wake of calm to his car, and there, on the back seat, were four or five one-litre bottles of mineral water, unopened. Waiting for me. I think I must have looked at him. How? Why? Unperturbed, he took a couple of bottles, and very gradually poured water into the radiator.

I'd told him about picking up the kids – was doubtless hopping from foot to foot as he worked – and once or twice he said: "Don't worry. You'll get there in time." Eventually, he asked me to start the engine. It was fine. I got out of the car and suddenly didn't know how to thank him. He seemed to have not only come with the immediacy of light to my aid but also seemed to have stopped the world for a while whilst he helped me. I was speechless with gratitude. But I looked into his face and said, impulsively: "You're an Angel." He just smiled. He said: "Oh, I always pass by here at this time." But I never saw him or his yellow car again.

One more thing: looking into his car interior when he extracted the water bottles, it seemed absolutely devoid of any object, any personal possession – it contained: water. Somehow I'm convinced he was divine, and was intrigued and also somehow reassured,

Over a number of years, some of the Masters, in particular Maitreya and the Master Jesus, have appeared at Benjamin Creme's lectures and Transmission Meditations. They also appear, in different guises, to large numbers of people around the world. Some of these recount their experiences to *Share International* magazine. If the experiences are authenticated by Benjamin Creme's Master, the letters are published.

These experiences are given to inspire, to guide

or teach, often to heal and uplift. Very often, too, they draw attention to, or comment on, in an amusing way, some fixed intolerance to, for example, smoking or drinking. Many times the Masters act as saving 'angels' in accidents, during wartime, earthquakes and other disasters.

They use a 'familiar', a thoughtform, who seems totally real, and through whom the Master's thoughts can be expressed: They can appear as a man, a woman, a child, at will. Occasionally They use the 'blueprint' of a real person, but in most

cases the 'familiar' is an entirely new creation. The following letters are examples of this means of communication by the Masters.

Please note: In the absence of any indication to the contrary, the editors will assume that your name may be printed.

Unless requested otherwise, some of these letters may be reproduced on the *Share-International.org* website. Only initials, town and country will be used.

that the Divine, in relation to us, is so human and kind and ordinary. Who was this ordinary, extraordinary man?

*(Benjamin Creme's Master confirms that her rescuer was the Master Jesus.)*

### Instant comfort

(2) In August 2007 I was in England, at my parents' house. Two years ago my mother suffered a stroke and I feel it part of my loving duty on earth to help both her and my father, who is 81 and a marvellous carer and man, as much as I can. But of course the pain of their changed existence transmits itself to me, and if I want or need to cry from tiredness or the helplessness of it all, I go outside to my chair in the garage, and with the door open, observe the garden and the row of fir trees. It is a very peaceful garden.

One day, sitting there, my attention was caught by a shape on one of the fir trees that moved in the breeze – I thought it might be a dragonfly, which are my favourite insects – hoped it was, but on closer inspection it was a leaf, masquerading as a dragonfly. I was momentarily disappointed. Then, to my amazement, still sitting thinking about dragonflies, a real one came into vision and hovered about for a while at exactly the same spot where I'd seen the leaf. I found it such a beautiful coincidence, as though I'd somehow manifested it myself – conjured it up. But did I? I don't think so. It was a small miracle, but somehow it reminded me of the gifts of life, of hope and possibilities. Still there, in the smallest of things.

Should either of these events have been gifted by a Master could you tell me please, anyway, just how they tune into everyone and everywhere at once?

Gill Raciti-Brown, Catania, Sicily, Italy.

*(Benjamin Creme's Master confirms that the dragonfly was manifested by the Master Jesus. The Masters are omniscient.)*

### Heart of the matter

Dear Editor,

On 14 September 2007 during a paranormal fair a man came up to our information stand and looked at the flyers for Benjamin Creme's upcoming lecture in Amsterdam. He was about 45 years old, grey-brown hair with a light-brown complexion, laughing brown eyes, a gap between the teeth in the lower jaw, colourfully clothed with a big crystal heart pinned on the middle of his shirt. When we encouraged him to take more in-

formation material, he laughed and said with a naughty look in his eyes: "Oh, it is about Maitreya isn't it, that man who always appears as a different person and suddenly disappears?" I agreed and told him that Maitreya will be working very soon openly for the benefit of the world, but works in the background at the moment. He scarcely listened to me but said very decidedly while he pointed to a photo of Maitreya in Nairobi: "He was once in Kenya and he lives in London." Then he pointed to our information and books and said: "The people are expecting the Christ or the Buddha or whoever, but they only offer us an entrance, an opening, in order to reach our innermost self, our source, and there at the source we are able to meet each other."

He said something else about the Buddha but I don't remember exactly what because I was fascinated by his eyes (they were very intense) and he spoke so fast. But I felt it was really true and to the point. He wanted us to understand that the most important thing for everyone to do is to go inside to the source, the source we all share, because there we can really meet one another. And it is not important who leads you to the source. (I think he meant the various religions, prophets, etc.) Then he walked on and said, laughing, but in a very resolute way: "That is how I do it".

A little further away he stood still, a young woman with long blond hair joined him, and they both walked away. We were impressed and I still think of him. Could you tell me please who he was?

Betty Grossman, Den Haag, the Netherlands.

*(Benjamin Creme's Master confirms that the man was Maitreya. The fair-haired 'woman' was the Master Jesus.)*

### Something to think about

Dear Editor,

On Saturday 22 September 2007, a co-worker and I had a table with free literature at a Body-Mind-Spirit fair in an old church in the centre of Zwolle. We were surprised to see so many people come to our table and when I returned from a moment of absence, a co-worker was in conversation with an American-Indian lady. She had a very warm personality – 100 per cent alive, being completely 'present'. Something was very moving about her. Her black hair was quite long and she wore a short, black skirt, black wool-

len stockings and long boots. She wore a golden bracelet across her hand, tied to a ring.

Looking over our table she asked: "Do I have everything about Maitreya?" after putting some information in her bag. She pointed at her heart, saying: "But in the end, it all comes down to ourselves, doesn't it?" Because she seemed to talk quickly, we found it difficult to remember afterwards exactly what she said, but it was something like: "The body is nothing, nothing at all. The eyes do not see by themselves: there is someone or something who looks through them. The brain cannot think by itself: there is someone or something who thinks through it." Pointing to her ajna chakra, and then upwards, she said: "The 'other' is a thought, a mere thought." She added: "Others do not really exist for us, do they? Except as a thought. There is only energy – everything, everyone is energy. It does not help to go and sit on a mountain, does it? It is better to go through it all than to sit on a mountain." A little later I saw her standing nearby, as she was surveying the hall.

While driving to the fair that morning we had been exchanging thoughts on unity of consciousness – that in our minds we understood it, but in day-to-day living it is not so easy to experience – so these words therefore made sense to us.

Could you please tell me if she was a Master?

Rita-M. Linnenkamp, Lelystad, the Netherlands.

*(Benjamin Creme's Master confirms that the 'woman' was the Master Jesus.)*

### Hand-sign

Dear Editor,

On Friday 28 September 2007 I attended our morning Transmission Meditation in Madison. Then driving back to my office at midday, while changing lanes to make a turn, I got behind a workman's van. On the right side back door of the van was an imprint of a hand. It was grey. I didn't think too much of it except to wonder why they imprinted one hand on the back of their van. Later on I wondered if it was a manifestation of Maitreya?

Ellen Turgasen, Madison, Wisconsin, USA.  
*(Benjamin Creme's Master confirms that the handprint was manifested by Maitreya. It is one of many which Maitreya is manifesting in different parts of the world.)* ●

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Q. We have questions to the Hierarchy about adoption of children. 'Adoption' in the following questions means: a) the adoption of children by a married childless couple; b) adoption of children by a married couple with their own children; c) adopting the partner's child from a former relationship. What does the hierarchy think about adoption of children in general?*

A. Hierarchy is very much in favour of the adoption of parentless children. They are not in favour of the adoption by relatively rich people in the West of poor children who are not parentless, from other, mainly Eastern countries.

*Q. Is there a difference between the three different above mentioned forms of adoption (a to c)?*

A. Basically not, although each situation could be different.

*Q. On which conditions is adoption all right?*

A. If the child is without parents and the adopting couple are ready to give their love and protection to the child as if it were their own.

*Q. Is it better for a child to grow up in an institution-home for children in its country of origin or in a family as an adopted child?*

A. In a family.

*Q. Is adoption a helpful process to give a child a better chance to grow up in an intact family?*

A. Yes.

*Q. Is adoption an inadmissible intervention in the life of a child with disadvantageous consequences for the child?*

A. Not usually.

*Q. If a couple adopt a child, should the parents have the same country of origin as the child that they want to adopt?*

A. Not important.

*Q. Is it alright that the parents and the child that they want to adopt, have different nationalities of origin?*

A. Yes.

*Q. What does the Hierarchy think about adoption of children with other races than the parents?*

A. It is acceptable if the other requirements of adoption are met.

*Q. What is the best age of the child for adoption?*

A. As young as possible.

*Q. From which age upwards should the child not be adopted?*

A. Above 14 it is usually too late for the child to bond fully, but this need not rule out adoption.

*Q. Which requirements should parents meet for an adoption of a child?*

A. If they can give love and protection to the child as if s/he were their own.

*Q. What is the attitude of Hierarchy to adoption by gay couples and single people?*

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Benjamin Creme does not seek to set himself up as an arbiter of the authenticity of other groups' activities and communications. Please refrain from posing such questions.

A. Hierarchy knows that adoption by gay couples and single people often results in a perfectly happy outcome for both child and parents. However from the point of view of Hierarchy only a stable heterosexual couple can provide ideal role models for the growing child.

*Q. On 17 April 1981 a Japanese freighter, the Taki Kyoto Maru, was sailing off the coast of Japan in an area of the ocean known as 'The Dragon's Triangle' when the crew felt something equivalent to shockwaves course through the ship. A bright, saucer-shaped USO (Underwater Submerged Object, or a UFO under the water) about 50 feet in diameter arose from the ocean. The ship's dials, compass and engine 'blurred'. The USO circled the ship for about 15 minutes and plunged into the sea causing massive waves that nearly capsized the Japanese freighter. The time on the radio in comparison to the time on the crew's watches showed that the crew lost 15 minutes.*

*(1) Why did the equipment 'blur' when the UFO came near? (2) Why did the crew experience a loss of 15 minutes of time? (3) Is there anything in that area such as an underwater UFO base that could cause electromagnetic disturbance and distortions in time, or was it perhaps old Lemurian technology still operating under the sea etc?*

A. (1) This is usual in such encounters. The effect of electromagnetic 'swamping'. (2) Same reason. (3) Yes, UFO base (not Lemurian technology).

*Q. I may be going out on a limb here, but I read about the connection between the Space Brothers and the Hierarchy. I've always thought there was a connection there somewhere. My question is (1) will there be a day when the existence of our Space Brothers is finally declared to all of us? (2) Will it be in my lifetime, I'm 51 years old?*

A. (1) Yes. (2) Yes.

*Q. (1) Maitreya talks of salvation: could you please explain salvation? (2) From what is it that we need to be saved? (3) I thought that Maitreya was not coming as a Saviour but as a Teacher and Guide.*

A. (1) Maitreya does not present Himself as a saviour. Salvation is the process of coming into the likeness of the soul and only we ourselves can do it. (2) From our ignorance and illusion. We do not see reality as it is. (3) That is truly the case. We can save ourselves by correct response to the teachings of Maitreya. These teachings awaken us to the reality of our own soul and so enable us, eventually, to demonstrate the divine nature of the soul.

*Q. (1) Is it true that some people are not related by karma to their immediate families? (2) If so, why does this happen? (3) If we are not related by karma to our direct relatives (parents and siblings) does that make family life more difficult? Would there be less mutual understanding in such circumstances? (4) Are we not generally born in groups? (5) The notion seems strange since you would share genetic material but have no 'past' in common.*

A. (1) Yes, it is rare but it occurs. (2) It is the action of the life which has many mysteries. It brings into an incarnating group a new and different energy or stimulus and prepares the way for some soul-envisaged purpose. (3) Not necessarily. (4) Yes, but a group is a dynamic process. (5) Life is very inventive and creative.

*Q. Is the Holy Shroud in Turin Cathedral a garment worn by Jesus or by the Madonna? How has that shroud and other sacred textile relics been so well preserved since fabric is pretty fragile and susceptible to decay?*

A. The Holy Shroud in Turin is the authentic burial shroud of Jesus. The figure of Jesus (crucified), is a photograph (a negative photograph) imparted to the shroud by Maitreya Who overshadowed Jesus for the last three years of His life. The shroud has survived a fire which destroyed parts of the fabric but the figure of Jesus is well preserved as is the majority of the 1st Century fabric.

*Q. Please can you tell me what Maitreya says regarding patients who are being denied medication for Cancer and Alzheimer's disease, when drugs are already available for them. The government says it is not cost effective, but how can they say that when people's lives are at stake and their quality of life can be improved. What can we do to try to persuade the government that this is totally wrong, and unacceptable? They don't seem to listen to ordinary people.*

A. Maitreya does not address such questions directly but He talks about the need for world change, and it is precisely these daily problems of people that should be addressed in any sane society. When we accept the principle of sharing and reconstruct our world, then the allocation of funds for such purposes can be achieved without difficulty.

*Q. In message number 13 Maitreya says: "Begin by dedicating yourself and all that you are and have been to the service of the world. Make sure not one day passes without some act of true service and be assured that My help will be yours."*

*If Maitreya expects me to commit to serving the world, He asks too much. I have to survive too and make a living. I cannot serve each day and work too. I can serve every once in a while, like once a week but "every day" is asking too much. Also, in Maitreya's Teachings – The Laws of Life, Maitreya says when a person is depressed he gets drugs to avoid experiencing it and He tells us*

*to "sit quietly and experience what you are going through", to "observe and be detached." Implied in these statements is a rather flip attitude about depression. I have struggled with depression for years and take medication for it. It seems like he is putting me down for taking medication. You cannot just "detach" your way out of it. It is a debilitating disease. I could not function when depressed, I need medicine so I can work and support myself. When the whirlwind of negative thoughts swirl in your brain you can't detach. It is impossible. He doesn't say whether detaching will cure you of it. Even so, regardless, trying to stay detached all the time is simply too difficult to do when you are depressed. Again, Maitreya asks too much of us and me.*

A. I am sure that many people would agree with you but nevertheless I suggest you try to do what Maitreya advises and I think you will be surprised how relatively quickly things will begin to change within you. Maitreya does not suggest you have to serve all day every day but a word or an act of kindness is also service and can take only a few moments. Begin to serve and it will have a blossoming effect within you. You will want to serve and be able to more and more. You have to begin the process step by step and through using the photograph of His hand ask for Maitreya's help. ●

## People and their rays

A ray is, according to the Master DK, "but a name for a particular force or type of energy, with the emphasis upon the quality which that force exhibits." Rays thus qualify all creation, including the human constitution. Soul, personality, mental body, emotional body, physical body, all are coloured by one or other of the seven rays.

In order to facilitate study and comprehension of the rays, Benjamin Creme's Master, over the years, has kindly provided requested information on the ray structure (and point of evolution) of well-known individuals, but for reasons of privacy, never of living people. The figures in the given order represent: (S) Soul ray; (P) personality, major and (sub) ray; (M) mental body, major and (sub) ray; (A) astral/emotional body, major and (sub) ray; (Ph) physical body, major and (sub) ray; (PoE) point of evolution.

For more detailed information we refer you to the Alice Bailey teachings (Lucis Trust), books by Benjamin Creme and back issues of *Share International*.

### Recently given structures:

*Jane Tomlinson (1964-2007) English athlete and campaigner for cancer charities*

S: 2; P: 4 (3); M: 6 (6); A: 6 (2); Ph: 3 (7). PoE: 1.2

*Ulrich Mühe (1953-2007) German actor*

S: 2; P: 4 (4); M: 3 (4); A: 2 (6); Ph: 7 (3). PoE: 1.35

*Leonard George Cramp (1919-2006) British aerospace engineer, scientist and author*

S: 2; P: 4 (6); M: 3 (7); A: 4 (6); Ph: 7 (3). PoE: 1.45

*Marcel Marceau (1923-2007), French mime artist*

S: 3; P: 4 (4); M: 3 (7); A: 6 (2); Ph: 3 (7). PoE: 1.0

*Anita Roddick (1942-2007), British founder of The Body Shop*

S: 2; P: 6 (6); M: 2 (4); A: 6 (2); Ph: 7 (3). PoE: 0.9

# Help is needed – and offered

It will soon become clear that without help men have but little time to rectify the problems, ecological, political and economic which cause chaos, danger and heartache to the majority of Earth's people. It is a situation unique in Earth's history. Much depends on men realizing that they have, as custodians, the responsibility to tend carefully the well-being of the planet and all its kingdoms, and to pass on a vibrant, healthy planetary home to future generations. So unhealthy has the planet become from man's predatory action and cavalier neglect, that, were it human, grave doubts of its recovery would be in order. The home of man and the lower kingdoms must be nursed back to health to fulfil its role in the evolving Plan.

Chaos reigns, likewise, in the political sphere. The nations are led by groups dedicated to the past, unable to see that their methods apply no longer to the needs of today and tomorrow. Blindfolded and arrogant, they strut the stage of life like out-of-date actors, unsure of their direction or their lines. The door marked EXIT looms large for these destructive usurpers of power.

## Saddest

The economic and social spheres are the saddest of all. While the world's wealth flows into fewer and fewer hands, countless millions beg for the minimum to survive. Millions are too weak to beg, and die, forlorn, before they have tasted life. What can men do to rectify these sad and dangerous conditions? To whom can they turn for help in their agony?

There is but one source of help for men in their extreme need. That help is theirs for the asking. We, your Elder Brothers, seek only your welfare and happiness, and are ready to aid you and to point the way to a better future for all.

We see all men as One, brothers and sisters of one great family. Men need, likewise, to banish from their hearts the sense of separation, and to rediscover the reality of brotherhood which lies at the heart of the human condition. Men, all men, are potential Gods and needs must create the conditions in which they all can flourish. We will help you to do this, gladly, when you take the first small step in that direction. That first step is not difficult nor fraught with risk. You have nothing to lose and your divinity to gain: that first step is called Sharing.

The Master —, through Benjamin Creme, *Share International*, September 2006