

RESURGENCE

Journal of the Fourth World

November—December

Volume 4 Number 5

Editor: Satish Kumar

Editorial Group: Brian Bridge,
Tony Colbert, Jimoh Omo-Fadaka,
Clive Harrison, Stephen Horne,
Steve Lambert, June Mitchell,
Terry Sharman, Anne Vogel

Associate Editors: Ernest Bader,
Danilo Dolci, Ray Gosling, Leopold
Kohr, Jayaprakash Narayan, John
Papworth, Dr. E.F. Schumacher

Publisher: Hugh Sharman

CONTENTS

Geoffrey Ashe's Column	
Creeping Revolution	2
Editorial	
The Bishop's Horse	3
Some Home News	
Hugh Sharman	5
Bread & Democracy	5
Exploding the Myth of Aid	
Jimoh Omo-Fadaka	6
The Aid Business	
Satish Kumar	8
Alternative. What is it?	
Patrick Benham	9
Murray Bookchin on	
Eco-communities	10
The Radial House	
Herbert Girardet	13
Collective Craft	
Soetsu Yanagi	17
People's Power not Politics	
Vinoba Bhave	18
And Total Vision Begins	
Prester John	21
A Rich Failure	
Prester John	22
Human Economy	
Peter D. Jones	22
Fourth World Exists	
Guy Dauncey	23
People's Right to Disobey	
Jayaprakash Narayan	24
Quotes	26
Fritz Schumacher's Column	
Numbers or Activities	27
Things	28

275 Kings Road,
Kingston, Surrey, England

EDITORIAL

The Bishop's Horse



"... no sooner do we come to the root of the matter than we are thrown back by idiots who understand nothing but horses."

The Bishop of Beauvais in the trial of Saint Joan — Bernard Shaw.

Why, in defiance of all experience, do people reserve their surprise for when things in politics go wrong or crooked? The only thing surprising about the so-called Watergate scandal is the surprise it has occasioned. These assertions do not spring from an aloof and over-dainty sense of ennui, as though politics were a nasty business as a matter of course, and which was the province solely of scoundrels and one from which only fools would expect good results. Such a reading is both glib and cheap, as well as being quite inadequate.

There are in fact sharp analytical reasons which make the aura of Watergate the norm of mass political politics everywhere as a matter of course and it is one of the striking features of the billions of words which have been churned out that nowhere have these reasons been referred to.

Watergate is, as these things go, a relatively trivial scandal. Nixon's heresy, as it is that of any other elected leader in mass politics, is in his situation and the forces operating around it. One of the realities which is slowly beginning to penetrate even academic departments given to the study of politics, is that on a mass scale, however ample the machinery of democratic voting, the people do not control the artifacts of power, rather do the minority groups who do control these artifacts, of which the voting mechanism is one, control the people.

This is not a matter of volition, of villainy or of victimisation, rather is it a simple expression of institutional realities arising from the very nature of mass government. A mass society is in no sense a community, for it negates the significance of human relationships by making them subservient to institutional arrangements, yet it is from human relationships that identity is derived and fostered by a ceaseless succession of mutually sustaining and prompting interactions.

This is the fabric of the moral quality of a society, how people see themselves and how they view their neighbours in the daily round of their relationships. This the stuff of moral judgements and moral values; without such relationship human identity cannot grow, it becomes submerged in the anonymity of the mass and morality doesn't just decline, it simply disappears, for there is nothing left on which it can be based or from which it can feed.

The power of a citizen ultimately resides not in voting mechanics and suchlike, for these are simply an expression of that power *when it is operating*, but in his own unfolding identity as he decides matters about his way of life both privately and in concert with his fellows. When he is robbed of that power, as in a mass society inevitably he is, it does not disappear, it escalates upwards into the hands of particular groups who have a special interest in laying their hands upon it.

One of the major interests of these groups is generally one form or other of power itself, for they get profit or ego-gratification from wielding it. So that we have a transition from the citizen in community using the power of his moral judgement to help determine the general course of the community's affairs, to citizen powerlessness in a mass society where special interest groups have supplanted the moral judgement of the citizen with their own quest for profit or ego-gratification as the principal determinative forces prevailing. Morality, instead of using power for citizen ends, is used by special interest groups in the pursuit of theirs.

Given this situation we would surely *expect* all moral hell to break loose in society at large. Well, what on earth else has happened?

What else is the meaning (as well as the explanation) of the two world wars and numerous other wars that have wreaked such havoc with human happiness and human destiny in this century? What else is the meaning of the doltish imbecile indifference to the world of animal suffering and sensibility implicit in the cruel pursuit of factory farming? What else is the meaning of a pattern of life, or life negation, which elevates the propensity to consume for the sake of forms of sensory gratification which are not even real as the sacred cow of existence?