

"NO" IS NOT ENOUGH: Johan Galtung

You are organising a demonstration against the war outside the Foreign Office in Canberra. Or maybe the Prime Minister's office. You have 200,000 people coming. And right now you are busy producing the placards they will carry. What will the placards say?

This was the opening exercise at a workshop in Sydney run by futurist, scholar and peace activist Johan Galtung. Right from the start, he challenged participants to lift the anti-war discourse from the critical to the constructive.

"Saying 'No to war' is not enough: we need to offer alternatives," he said. "What is Plan B? In the case of Iraq and terrorism, what is the alternative?"

The March workshop was hosted by the Centre

**"In a democracy
it is the duty of all the parties
to have their own platforms
in foreign affairs"**

for Peace and Conflict Studies and Soka Gakkai International. Exercises were interspersed with facts, explanations and sharp criticisms of John Howard, George Bush and the global failures of human rights, from the Norwegian-born professor. His extensive knowledge helped him illuminate present attitudes with examples from the past -- for example, the history of punitive expeditions that explains why descendants of European Empires were so startled when the other side actually hit back on September 11.

"I can tell you where it comes from. It is the old Anglo-Saxon punishment expeditions. Someone in the world is 'uppity' -- for example, in the Sudan -- so Australians join the punishment expedition. These people had spears and bows and arrows: the punitive expeditions had muskets. It was an extremely uneven, unfair game. If you do that, as the British Empire did 200 times (I happen to have the list) it may be habit forming, including the habit of doing it with impunity. The US is now up to more than 200 military interventions since the first one in 1804 against Libya. In Australia, if you are located between 200 punitive expeditions of the British and more than 200 US interventions and the

A WORLD WITHOUT WAR

*A morning talk by Rosie Lazar (10),
Neutral Bay Public School.*

Death, Destruction, Devastation, that's what war brings. Today I'm going to talk to you about a world without war. A world where families are together and whole, a world without dust, dirt, rubble and ruin. Where there is enough food for everyone. Where people can move around freely and without fear. Where governments have enough money for schools, hospitals, roads, running water and electricity. A world without chaos and noise. And a world where people can look forward to the future.

As far back in history as we know, there has been war. Every living generation today has grown up with war. My grandfather was brought to Australia to escape the Nazis in Europe. My parents grew up during the cold war being fought between the eastern and western countries. We all, here in this room are growing up during a war against terrorism, which is one of the worst kinds of war because attacks come without warning in places where innocent people go about their daily lives.

In 1972, there was a war in Vietnam. America and Australia became involved in this war, and napalm bombs were used as weapons for the first time.

One of these bombs was dropped on a small village called Trang Bang. A little girl called Kim Phuc, who was the same age as us, was burnt

INSIDE

- 3 WAKING UP AFTER THE WAR:
why Iraq and terrorism are
not the main game
- 5 THE REAL BRAIN DRAIN:
how to invest in Australia's
living futures
- 7 Global Roundup
- 8 Signals in the Noise

"No" is not enough

(from page 1)

only time there was a reaction was September 11, then you might share a general feeling that September 11 was unjust and unfair because you are unable to put it in context."

To negotiate peace, Professor Galtung said:

- you have to have a reasonably good idea about what the parties want
- you need to determine whether these goals are legitimate or illegitimate
- you try to bridge the legitimate goals.

For example, the two movements in the EU are appropriately called 'Yes to EU' and 'No to EU'. In this case, the 'yes' people should stipulate under what conditions they will say no and the others should stipulate under what conditions they will say yes. In the dialogue on democracy, the point is the re-examination of your own position."

He argued that Australia should democratise its foreign policy by dropping the bi-partisan approach: "In a democracy it is the duty of all the parties to have their own platforms in foreign affairs as they have in domestic affairs. In Australia you have bi-partisan foreign policy. That doctrine is as alien to a democracy as a dictatorship is." And he argued that Australia should drop all alliances, and that it should distinguish between foreign policy that addresses Australia's interests in its own region, and global foreign policy.

"Democracy is a system where everybody affected by a decision participates in the decision. And an essential prerequisite for democracy is the protection of human rights. You cannot have democracy without human rights. There is a dialectic between electoral democracy and human rights. ... one presupposes the other. Here the west, in promoting the dialectic, has made a rather good contribution which we should not be ashamed of."

In the context of human rights, Professor Galtung

"...an essential prerequisite for democracy is the protection of human rights."

attacked the economic globalisation of the free market: "One hundred thousand people die every day of starvation or diseases that would be very easy to prevent or cure. Much of this is due to free trade, because you have bought up the land resources; you have traded everything – land, water, manure, seeds. The markets say that it is the freedom of the customers to choose and the freedom of the investor and producer to invest and produce. Not good enough. How about a human rights protection for everyone to livelihood?" To activists, he suggests boycotting US goods.

"You can have demonstrations but it won't touch the leadership. Boycott all US goods and you will," he said. "If we can help Americans to get rid of the US Empire, those who will benefit most are the US population. We know 70% of the population do not have enough money to make a decent living. Income is going down, expenses going up. And the top 20 per cent are living in an affluence which is unacceptable." It is quite possible to be, at the same time, both anti the US Empire, and pro-American, according to Professor Galtung.

After setting workshop groups the task of identifying what they believed to be key human rights, the professor had good news to offer, reading aloud Article 28 of the existing (1948) Universal Declaration of Human Rights: *Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realised.*

His own list of the top four human rights (and responsibilities) read as follows:

- 1 **Survival:** everyone has the right to live in a world where everything is done to solve conflicts, and a duty to participate in that activity.
- 2 **Livelihood:** food, clothes, housing: everyone has the right to livelihood - monetary by gainful employment or non monetary by growing it yourself. Or it could be a gift from your society. I do not care how it is done but everybody should live in dignity, not having to worry "do I have food for my children?," "where is the next month's rent coming from?" And the duty of everybody is to pay taxes to the global authority. These can be minimal and most will be indirect.
3. **Choices** - options: I have the right to have my

WORLD WITHOUT WAR

(from page 1)

by the bomb. She was not expected to live, had 17 operations and lost members of her family, including two baby cousins. Kim's life was changed forever. She was forced to leave the country where she was born and had to travel to the other side of the world and begin her life again in a strange country where she could not even speak the language.

This is just one story. There are thousands and thousands of these with war happening every day. As recently as last Friday about 150 innocent people died on a train and the families of these people are left broken. It doesn't need to happen!

In a world where there is tolerance and people are allowed to have different religious beliefs and cultures, where greed is put to one side and people do not fight over land, there will be no need for war! In my world without war there won't be one lucky country: each and every country and person will be safe, comfortable and happy.

Safety, comfort, happiness, that's my world without war. *ff*

view represented at the top world body and that means representation. It also means no taxation without representation. I have the corresponding duty to vote.

4 **Meaning:** we want not only something to live from but something to live for: I have the right to seek the meaning of my life wherever I find it. My corresponding duty is to have respect for other people's answers to that problem -- which of course means you don't impose your own.

"My definition of globalisation is that it is the process whereby all generations, including future generations, all races, all cultures, all nations and all states, all civilisations and all regions pull together to create a world where these rights and duties can be fulfilled." *ff*

WAKING UP AFTER THE WAR

Why Iraq and terrorism are not the main game

In the aftermath of the Iraq war, it's time to bring fresh thinking to the wider problems that face the world, writes Professor Richard A. Slaughter in the Bulletin of the World Futures Studies Federation.

"To do so means raising some awkward questions, challenging a number of strongly held beliefs and deeply offending some people. Yet the pay-offs could be enormous.

"The underlying drivers of the world economy, the current model of 'wild' globalisation, the continuing deterioration of the environment and a raft of social problems undermine hopes for a peaceful future. I

don't believe that we have collectively grasped the scale of the challenges facing us. New waves of instability will emerge both from unresolved conflicts and injustices, and the implementation of successive technological innovations in technically advanced nations. Genomics, nanotechnology and ubiquitous computing power are all advancing rapidly. Each has positive and negative implications. The former are constantly exaggerated in order to stimulate 'demand'. The latter generally emerge through social experience, which includes warfare. With so much at stake, this is not a great way to proceed.

"Some years ago Barry Jones wrote a book called *Sleepers Wake*. I once asked him what he would have these erstwhile sleepers do, were they to wake. He said: 'I'd have them see that there are different ways to do things'.

"We live in a nation and a (western) world where depth understanding of the present is not valued and high quality futures work remains all too rare. As a society we remain 'asleep' to deep processes of change and to their implications for ourselves and future generations. Many people I have met

show some level of understanding of the global predicament. But avoidance and denial are widespread."

Professor Slaughter pointed out that there is still little installed capacity to respond to these complex and demanding futures. Now, however, institutions of foresight are emerging because more people recognise that, in order to deal with the problems and potentials facing us, the first step is to really pay attention to what is happening now.

"If we consider the assumptions that underlie the global system there is little or no evidence of in-depth questioning or re-thinking by some of the most powerful actors. Growth is still good. Forget the long-

term future. You can't study something that doesn't exist. Moreover, the market will provide. The sum of individual purchasing decisions will add up to collective wisdom in the long term, right? Well, wrong. The so-called 'invisible hand' of the market is a failed theory that remains firmly in place despite being moronic in conception and outlook. Market-led economics get more unreal the longer they continue."

It is essential to 'clear the fog' and re-focus our attention on the collective tasks that really matter, said the professor. Culturally we need to wake up.

"The Iraq war had its supporters and its detractors. But the main game was not there, nor is it on any other military battlefield. Terrorism is a continuing scourge of tragic proportions. Yet it too is not the main issue. It is a symptom of a deeper dysfunction - that of uneven development. The human agony thus created every single day is beyond the experience of affluent populations and lasting solutions will not be easy. They will necessarily

"The so-called 'invisible hand' of the market is a failed theory that remains firmly in place despite being moronic in conception and outlook."

Whether you are a professional futurist or simply someone who has an abiding interest in the future, chances are you will quickly spot the linking theme of this issue.

In fact, why not take a shot at that before you read the rest of this editorial? A clue: three major features starting in different places all work towards a similar conclusion. And the process of doing this is a concept that's central to futures studies.

Johan Galtung, the distinguished founder of the academic study of peace, begins with global issues and negotiating peace, and drills through the layers of causal relationships to reach fundamental human rights and responsibilities.

Richard Slaughter argues that it's time to bring fresh thinking to the problems that face the world. While Iraq and terrorism are serious and tragic problems, they're not the main game. Instead, they are a symptom of deeper dysfunction, the dysfunction of uneven global development.

Fiona Stanley, passionate advocate of early intervention in addressing the increasing problems of children, started by looking at health, moved on to health research and found herself engaging with social and economic causes of problems among children and young people.

In each case, the drilling of successive layers -- as in Sohail Inayatullah's *Causal Layered Analysis* -- moves us from major, but superficial issues to fundamental causes of human misery. Finding ways to address these root causes is what much of futures work is all about. In our next issue, we'll take a closer look at *Causal Layered Analysis*.

Jan Lee Martin



GREEN & GRAINY:

Australia's almost-accidental journey to global food leadership

New York Times: 20 July 2071

The death in Brisbane today of environmental pioneer Hans Verdi, aged 137, reminds us of the extraordinary journey Australia made to its global dominance of the clean food industry.

Robuck, a geneticist, was the last survivor of the group of scientific activists whose work is credited with influencing legislation to ban the introduction of genetically modified organisms to Australia.

According to his autobiography, *Green and Grainy*, the timely juxtaposition of a range of global issues around 2004 and 2005 (and opinion poll reports of public reaction to them) created a political climate in which such a ban at last became possible. These events, ranging from the unsettling US-Iraq engagement to a sugar industry crisis to the tidal waves of 2005, exhausted the tolerance of the electorate for risky, untested innovation and allowed prudence to return. Australia's landmark decision of 2006, supporting all seven states in endorsing a "clean, green" branding policy for food production, followed a similar decision by New Zealand. As both nations enjoy the benefits of physical isolation, they escaped the fate of countries like Canada and France who also resisted the introduction of genetically modified organisms, but were unable to protect themselves from contamination by crops from nearby nations.

A short service at the UN Parliament today will honour the work of Hans Verdi and other clean food pioneers.

Why Iraq and terrorism are not the main game

(from page 3)

question, and then profoundly change, the current model of international business, finance, development and cultural valuation that consistently hands most of the winning cards to the USA and its client states.

The single greatest priority must be to support the fulfilment of basic human needs. The failure of current development models means that the seeds of future wars, terrorist incidents, famines and other assorted nasties continue to be sown.

"If we were really interested in 'safeguarding the future' we would insist that all governments worked toward a more balanced and equitable world.

"We would withdraw our assent from the many interests, organisations and projects that continue to create instability and danger. We would insist, one by one, that the major players -- from Hollywood to the White

House, from Wall Street to the IMF -- be held to account both for their successes and their failures.

"We'd ensure that what Robert Jungk called 'look-out institutions' were integrated into the very fabric of our society. Staffed by people with some of the keenest minds around, they'd show how the perception of disastrous future outcomes can provide motivation for changes in the here and now.

They'd also incubate a wide range of social innovations and support the emergence of social foresight.

"Waking up after the Iraq war means deliberately and patiently critiquing the current world order and moving forward with values and assumptions that actively break the current gridlock in world affairs."

Following this analysis of the 'global problematique', Richard Slaughter looked at some of the ways that futurists can and do respond. He emphasised that understanding the present is a pre-requisite to understanding the future and that, in turn, understanding the present absolutely requires an historical perspective of some depth.

"If we look back very carefully we can draw insight from a range of sources to gain depth knowledge of the present."

Four key sources are the work of macrohistorians like Jared Diamond, who attempted to sketch a broad macrohistory of humanity's rise from the distant evolutionary past; accounts like that of Jean Gebser which describe stages of interior cultural development; mapping of the interior spaces of individual human development, as has been done by many stage development theorists including Freud, Jung, Piaget and Aurobindo over the past century or so; and finally through gleaning insights from an understanding of our own individual evolutionary heritage as mirrored, for example, by the 'triune

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human brain' with its instinctual stem, its 'feeling' limbic system and its highly developed cognitive cerebral hemispheres.

"Simply put, we'll understand the very different evolutionary contributions provided by instinct, feeling and cognition."

Understanding human development in this way, as a complex, many-dimensional process, means that the 'waking up' metaphor takes on new meaning, says Richard Slaughter.

"In the view taken here, humanity is only part way through an immensely long historical process of slowly 'waking up', i.e. becoming more conscious, more capable, more integrated.

"One immediate implication is that, much as we might wish for it, there is simply no prospect of a decisive 'breakthrough' to a new and permanent state of grace, either individually or socially. It follows that there is no single shift to sustainability, nor is there likely to be what Raskin et al optimistically call a 'great transition'.

"Part of our maturing as a species and as a field of enquiry and action is to understand our evolutionary background so that we can re-focus our efforts accordingly." ff

HOW TO INVEST IN AUSTRALIA'S FUTURES

The learning journey of the 2003 Australian of the Year sounds like the journey that brings so many to futures studies. For Fiona Stanley AC, it began with her evolution from a doctor for child health to child health researcher to using research to improve child and youth outcomes.

"I started out learning about how the body works and how to treat it when things go wrong. I then began to realise the limitations of modern medicine were that it did not prevent disease. I decided that the best way for me to practise medicine was to try and find out the causes of diseases and prevent them. So I left the clinic behind and became an epidemiologist. Epidemiologists look at the patterns of diseases and problems in the whole population – the questions which we pose are, how often does this occur?, who gets it?, why? and can we prevent it?"

"Travelling further on my evolutionary path, I realised that to really understand causes you had to bring together not just epidemiologists, but researchers in genetics, biology, and clinical sciences. But we now realise that the real gains in reducing disease and improving health will come from the social and economic circumstances operating in families, communities and the wider society; that is, that the most effective preventive strategies lie OUTSIDE the traditional areas of the health professions. The exciting thing is that outcomes other than health such as educational and behavioural competencies may also be enhanced."

Professor Stanley addressed six key questions.

- 1 Are outcomes for children and youth improving in Australia? As so many outcomes are related to social disadvantage, surely as economic prosperity and living conditions improved, so have the health, educational, behavioural and general status of our children?
- 2 Is there any evidence more recently of a levelling of social gradients, that is, fewer differences between the 'haves' and the 'have nots'? Are all in society winners from the dramatic economic and social changes in our society?
- 3 What has been the impact of services? (mostly focussed on treatments, not preventions).
- 4 Why have so many of the problems in children and youth not improved?
- 5 What do we know about the causes and possible prevention of them?
- 6 What should Australia do?

1. Are outcomes for children and youth improving in Australia?

"We are observing increases in poor outcomes for children and youth across a wide range of health, development and wellbeing domains. These are increasing in younger and younger children, and in girls as well as boys even for those areas in which girls were rarely observed 20 - 30 years ago, such as aggressive behaviour, substance abuse and violent juvenile crime. Suicides have increased fourfold in 15-19 year old males since the 1970s and the

A rare futures bouquet for the Feds

The Federal Government's announcement that it will allocate \$365m for early childhood intervention will be welcomed by futurists, whose work constantly emphasises the dramatic effectiveness of preventive approaches rather than expensive, end-of-pipe responses to social issues. To underscore its significance, we reproduce here extracts from the National Press Club address by the 2003 Australian of the Year, Professor Fiona Stanley, AC, on the subject of early childhood and its influence on individual and societal health.

rates are now higher still in 24-35 year olds; nearly 20 per cent of teenagers have a mental health problem; obesity has increased in teenagers from around 10 per cent in 1985 to nearly 25 per cent in the latest years. And in our cerebral palsy data in WA we observed the rise in irreversible brain damage due to non-accidental injury/shaken baby syndrome from 4 to 18 per cent."

2. Is there any evidence more recently of a levelling of social gradients?

"Our expectation of the increases in wealth and better living conditions in Australia was that they would deliver better situations for all Australians, that social gradients would not be so steep but would flatten out. The paradox of progress is that not only are we seeing increases in serious problems in our children, but the social gradients have *increased*, not decreased!

"All countries show a relationship between socio-economic status and health and other outcomes. This list of problems and conditions for which a social gradient has been observed shows why socio-economic status is so important and why we need to ask questions: Substance abuse in pregnancy; Teenage pregnancy; Low birth weight; Birth complications; Physical growth in children – poor growth and obesity; Exposure to environmental contamination; Poor nutrition; Behaviour problems at 3-4 years of age; Capacity to start school; Educational outcomes (school does not even out the gradient); Mental health problems; Infections; Asthma; Accidents; Suicide; Substance abuse in adolescence – and back to the beginning again and the impact becomes intergenerational. So the paradox of progress is that not only are all these problems increasing and so is the disparity across the social gradient BUT also these disparities tend to be steeper, not less steep, in richer countries (for example far greater in USA than Canada or China or Japan) and as GDP increases so do the disparities! Evidence also suggests these problems across the whole of society are higher in such countries.

"The success of knowledge economies will result from a competent workforce and high levels of social capital. Failure to invest in all stages of human development, particularly in the early years, is being recognised by organisa-



How to invest in Australia's futures: Fiona Stanley (from page 5)

tions such as the World Bank to negatively affect future economic prosperity in two ways. First, we may lack the human resources needed to sustain future economic growth and second, there is a drain on the welfare and health budgets in looking after these groups."

3. What has been the impact of services?

"Current policies and practices reflect our neglect of prevention as an overall strategy and instead we see a very unequal focus of effort and dollars into costly and ineffective interventions too late in the causal chain to make any difference to the occurrence of these problems.

"Without even asking the questions as to why are we observing increases in problems?, can we prevent them? and can we enhance child development?, we keep putting money into activities which are too late because the problem has become irreversible, and we keep cutting services which are earlier and more effective.

4. Why have so many of the problems in children and youth not improved? Are there some common explanations?

"We now have a lot of research data to start to answer some of these questions. There is evidence that if we neglect the early years of child development then there can be profound effects on a range of problems. Family environments then are crucial to the issues we are discussing. Most parents want to be good parents and want the best for their children but they need to be equipped and capable.

"We also need to look beyond the family to neighbourhoods, workplaces, the social and economic policies and environments and to ask what is it about modern Australian communities which are what we might call "family-disabling"?

And here we come to the crux of all this – there are new and powerful drivers of these poor outcomes and social disparities in our society, ones which are increasing risks for individuals, families and neighbourhoods and decreasing the nurturing and hence the protective factors which enhance resilience.

"There have been lots of other changes in our society, many quite rapid, which have also impacted negatively on early child development and youth problems. These include disparities in opportunities and services (privatisation of things like child care means that those most in need may miss out), family breakdown, increasing hours of work, rapid technological change, the information explosion, stress, violence (violence has a particular and extreme effect on young children), reduced trust and social capital in neighbourhoods (less likely to call on neighbours for child care, advice, social support etc).

5. What do we know about the causes and possible prevention of these problems?

"We have lots of evidence that early intervention to enhance child development is extraordinarily effective. Exciting new research in neuroscience, the human genome, linking social and biological research, demonstrates the huge importance of early social environments in successful brain development. You might expect that 'Head Start' and 'Early Head Start' (the Perry preschool project and Chicago child development programs) would have had an enormous impact on special education placements, better behaviour and academic performance in primary school, which they have. But they have also improved much later outcomes such as retention rates to year 12, intelligence tests, dental health, mental health, employment, teenage arrests, teenage pregnancy, welfare payments and substance abuse!!! Hey, why aren't we putting more efforts into early programs – this must be at least part of the answer to our fifth question."

6. What should Australia do?

"Why is this so important? Even if we don't particularly care about kids (which I do), even if we have not got children of our own, even if we only judge everything by an economic bottom line – this 'brain drain' I have described is the most concerning and worrying problem we have. Surely all of us want to be a fair Australia, an advanced Australia, a clever country that can both compete in an international knowledge economy AND look after the social problems of our modern world?

"I have suggested that the quality of the social environments in which we live impacts positively, particularly in early childhood but also across the whole life span, which in turn secures better futures for our children and better social and economic outcomes for everyone. It means better workers and better communities. We need to use the resources of the whole community to manage the challenges of competing in a global knowledge economy, to create and use innovation and to manage complex problems in today's world (such as the environment, lifestyle, aging population etc).

As Michael Pusey wrote in *The Experience of Middle Australia: the dark side of Economic Reform*, "a well ordered society needs strong markets and strong active governments and strong families all working together to put people first."

"I would like to finish with a quote from Gabriel Mistral: 'Many things we need can wait, the child cannot. Now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made, his mind is being developed. To him we cannot say tomorrow: his name is today.'

"As Australian of the Year, I say to Australia – our time is now, we cannot wait."

"...the paradox of progress is that not only are all these problems increasing and so is the disparity across the social gradient BUT also these disparities tend to be steeper, not less steep, in richer countries... and as GDP increases, so do the disparities!"

Re-engineering the Earth

It is madness. It must be, says the *New Scientist* editorial (27 03 04). What sense can it make to spray the stratosphere with tiny, shiny balloons to reflect the sun's rays, or to open a giant parasol in space between Earth and the sun? And all to curb global warming? Wouldn't we do better to stop the problem at source by the more prosaic methods of improving energy efficiency and boosting renewable energy sources? The respected journal reviews proposals by "normally level-headed climate scientists" and asks: just how lucky do we feel? Just how mad are we?

Guru of the creative class

When Richard Florida, author of *The Creative Class: how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life* was in Australia last month, he compared the shock of a man in the street from the 1900s dropped into the 1950s with that of a man from the 1950s dropped into today. The latter would experience the greater change, he said, because of "dizzying cultural and social changes" instead of merely physical innovations.

BOSS March 04 *Sydney Morning Herald* 15 03 04

The lady doth protest too much

That the now-famous August 6 presidential brief and other alarms forewarned the White House, which neglected to forearm the nation [of the *September 11 attack*], has been well reported, writes Roger Morris. He adds: [National Security Adviser Condoleezza] "Rice insisted the data were not precise enough to be 'actionable', yet the warnings were chillingly prescient: the CIA and FBI knew, and told the White House, that Osama bin Laden was planning major attacks in the U.S., and al-Qaeda ' sleeper cells' were awake. Intercepts in the summer of 2001 caught boasting of 'a very, very, very, very big uproar. . . in the near future.' History can only guess how many lives might have been saved had there been serious precautions, comparable to measures taken at the millennium on less justification.

Toronto Globe & Mail

US CRITIQUES OF THE IRAQ WAR

More and more arguments are appearing in the US against the Iraq war, with no apparent counterarguments, says Michael Marien, editor of *Future Survey*. Key faults are the unilateralism of US foreign policy, prewar planning that ignored the future of Iraq project, the Cold War mindset, the superpower syndrome, the post-9/11 trampling of freedom, and the general blowback to be expected from the new militarism. Books and features reviewed by Marien include: *America Unbound: the Bush Revolution in Foreign Policy* from the Brookings Institution; *Blueprint for a Mess: How the Bush Administration's Prewar Planners Bungled Postwar Iraq* (New York Times magazine); *Winning Modern Wars: Iraq, Terrorism, and the American Empire* by General Wesley K. Clark; *Superpower Syndrome: America's Apocalyptic Confrontation with the World*, by psychiatry professor Robert Jay Lifton; *Terrorism and Tyranny: Trampling Freedom, Justice and Peace to Rid the World of Evil*, by James Bovard; *Masters of War: Militarism and Blowback in the Era of American Empire*, edited by Carl Boggs; and more.

GLOBAL ROUNDUP

Republican attack on fundraising begs a question: how can we know?

The Bush campaign team and the Republican Party have alleged that Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry is benefiting from illegal infusions of "soft money" from wealthy individuals, unions, corporations and other special interests. According to the *Washington Post*, they claim advertising by well-funded liberal groups is part of an "unprecedented illegal conspiracy" -- a claim the Kerry campaign denies. Does this signal a closer examination of the credentials of apparently independent groups? One that could benefit all sides in an election campaign and especially the voters in a democracy? It is clear that the goals and values of many organisations, including special interest groups, are increasingly being challenged to establish the legitimacy of their intent and the consistency of espoused intent with actual behaviour. Meanwhile, Paul Krugman of the *New York Times* writes that current manipulation and abuse of power by the American government puts Watergate in the shade: even in Israel, George Bush's America has become a byword for deception and abuse of power.

13 04 04

Signals in the noise

It's a meat market

Global meat consumption is increasing dramatically. Beware, warns Colin Tudge. It is bad for the environment, and bad for us. Although he concedes that "Meat is wonderful. Human beings are good omnivores and we have always been hunters as well as gatherers," Tudge argues that you can have too much of a good thing. And as a new report he has written points out, we produce and eat so much meat, it is literally killing us and our environment.

New Scientist 13 03 2004 1191

The end of globalism

John Ralston Saul charts the demise of another grand theory and a rebirth of nationalism. "Of course, grand ideologies rarely disappear overnight. Fashions, whether in clothes or food or economics, tend to peter out. Thousands of people have done well out of their belief in Globalisation, and their professional survival is dependent on our continued shared devotion to the cause. So is their personal sense of self-worth. They will be in positions of power for a few more years, and so they will make their case for a little longer. But the signs of decline are clear, and since 1995 those signs have multiplied, building on one another, turning a confused situation into a collapse."

AFR Review 20 02 2004 1192

Eclipse of a superpower

Marc Faber, the most famous fund manager in Asia, is convinced that the world is poised on the edge of a radical realignment, writes Asia-Pacific specialist Rowan Callick. This will result in the United States -- vulnerable to a financial crisis like that which hit Asia in 1997 -- sliding into decline and Asia emerging as the great 21st-century economic power, with China controlling industrial production and India tradeable services. Australia, too, will be a winner, Faber told fund managers at presentations in Sydney and Melbourne, as commodities -- especially energy sources -- have only just begun a prolonged period of high prices and strong demand, sustainable perhaps for 30 years as the new economies of China and India grow.

Australian Financial Review 30 03 2004 1193

A different meat market

International studies have found that women who have cosmetic breast implants commit suicide at up to three times the rate of women in the general population, says Richard Eckersley. Researchers are not sure why. Is it because of chronic pain, implant breakages and deformities? Or does it reflect the type of women who get implants? The findings fit those of other studies that have shown that people for whom "extrinsic goals" - such as fame, fortune and glamour - are a priority tend to experience more anxiety and depression and lower overall wellbeing than people oriented towards "intrinsic goals" of close relationships, self-understanding and acceptance, and contributing to the community.

Sydney Morning Herald 26 03 04 1194

Back to basics for renewable electricity

Pennsylvania State University researchers claim the waste you flush down the toilet could one day power the lights in your home. Even better, their new device breaks down the harmful organic matter as it generates the electricity, so it does the job of a sewage-treatment plant at the same time. This could mean that future sewage treatment will pay for itself. Meanwhile, trials at an electricity generating station in southern Spain, powered by heat from the sun, have shown it to be cheaper, more efficient and able to operate on a bigger scale than rival photovoltaic technology. Enthusiasts argue that only thermal power can concentrate solar energy sufficiently to generate electricity on the scale of commercial power stations.

New Scientist 13 03 2004, 10 04 2004 1195

Bombshell at the ballot box

Staff at the Australian Electoral Commission are warning of a collapse of electoral integrity, writes *Australian Financial Review* political correspondent Mark Davis. They suggest a failed national election could be on the cards in 2004 because of serious problems inside the Commission. Factors contributing to the fear include a funding crisis, a stalled plan to rationalise its network of offices, poor relationships with both federal government and the opposition, and depressed staff morale. A Sydney reader, writing in response to the article, pointed out that Australia's untraceable secret ballot creates an easy opportunity for electoral fraud, so that when the Electoral Commission says that fraud is negligible, it simply can't know.

Australian Financial Review 8 and 17 03 2004 1196