# Case

## State Good

### The Plan Is A Strike Against Oppression and Key to Create a New Vision of Citizenship That Overcomes

Brown 2003

(Wendy, political theorist at UC Berkeley, “Neoliberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy” Theory and Event 7:1)

What remains for the Left, then, is to challenge emerging neo-liberal governmentality in EuroAtlantic states with an alternative vision of the good, one that rejects homo oeconomicus as the norm of the human and rejects this norm's correlative formations of economy, society, state and (non)morality. In its barest form, this would be a vision in which justice would not center upon maximizing individual wealth or rights but on developing and enhancing the capacity of citizens to share power and hence, collaboratively govern themselves. In such an order, rights and elections would be the background rather than token of democracy, or better, rights would function to safeguard the individual against radical democratic enthusiasms but would not themselves signal the presence nor constitute the central principle of democracy. Instead a left vision of justice would focus on practices and institutions of shared popular power; a modestly egalitarian distribution of wealth and access to institutions; an incessant reckoning with all forms of power -- social, economic, political, and even psychic; a long view of the fragility and finitude of non-human nature; and the importance of both meaningful activity and hospitable dwellings to human flourishing. However differently others might place the accent marks, none of these values can be derived from neo-liberal rationality nor meet neo-liberal criteria for the good. The development and promulgation of such a counter rationality -- a different figuration of human beings, citizenship, economic life, and the political -- is critical both to the long labor of fashioning a more just future and to the immediate task of challenging the deadly policies of the imperial U.S. state.

## Coal

#### Nuclear power displaces coal and helps alleviate mining concerns.

Cerafici ‘9

Tamar Jergensen Cerafici is an attorney whose practice focuses on the intersections between environmental and nuclear law. 40 Years and Counting: Relicensing the First Generation of Nuclear Power Plants: Is New Always Better? The Case for License Renewal in the Next Generation 26 Pace Envtl. L. Rev. 391 Summer 2009

American utilities used 42.7 million pounds of U3O8 in 1998, but 83 percent of this was imported. Canada supplied 40 percent of uranium fuel used in the US, followed by Russia (13 percent), United States (12 percent), Australia (10 percent), and Uzbekistan (9 percent). The nuclear industry in the US often argues that nuclear power reduces imports of foreign oil, saving us money. In fact, very little oil is used for electricity generation and very little electricity is used for [\*410] transportation. Nuclear power displaces coal, not oil, and almost all coal used in the US comes from the US. Even more ironic, uranium fuel imports created a $ 362 million trade deficit in 1998. n68

## LG Solves

#### Loan guarantees reduce risks and make nuclear viable

New Millenium Nuclear Energy Partnership 12

(The New Millennium Nuclear Energy Summit was held on December 7, 2010, in Wash- ington, D.C. Senior leaders from government, industry and non-government organizations actively participated in defining the most important and substantive issues that confront the nuclear energy industry—an essential part of the United States’ energy production portfolio. Upon the success of the summit, four working groups comprised of summit participants were established to provide the recommendations found in this consolidated report. June 2012, “A Strategy for the Future of Nuclear Energy: The Consolidated Working Group Report” http://content.thirdway.org/publications/540/Third\_Way\_Report\_-\_A\_Strategy\_for\_the\_Future\_of\_Nuclear\_Energy.pdf)

Power plant investments can be risky, even with established technologies. These risks can lead to significant economic losses that must be allocated among the project’s partners, investors, suppliers, vendors, and customers. If the project is directly owned by the corporate parent, or a partnership of such parents, the liabilities of such risks may be unacceptably large. This is particularly true for capital projects as large as nuclear power plants, which outweigh the market value of most modern energy companies. For example, the largest U.S. utility/power generation company has a market capitalization of $40 billion, and most are less than $10 billion. The small size of U.S. companies relative to the large infrastructure projects such as for new nuclear reactors makes such projects extremely challenging. There are many differences between regulated and merchant markets, but the basic problems of the high up-front capital costs and financial risks of nuclear energy facilities (compared to the cost and financial risks of other sources) make nuclear energy development challenging in both business models. In merchant markets, these characteristics make it difficult for investors to expect a nuclear project to earn enough revenue to cover its relatively high up-front capital costs and the financial risk premiums that will be required to build it. In regulated markets, these same characteristics make it difficult for investors to expect the energy company’s economic regulator to approve the full cost of a new nuclear project. Accordingly, federal policies to reduce the effective cost and financial risks of new nuclear projects and ease cash flow burdens during construction should be effective in both business models. Such policies should create oppor- tunities to reduce the risk of nuclear projects through effective project manage- ment and avoid shifting risk to taxpayers. An important role for government assistance to the private sector in obtain- ing financing and managing the costs for the initial wave of new reactors is through loan guarantees like those authorized in the Energy Policy Act of 2005. The future owner of the nuclear facility pays the premium for these government “insurance policies,” which helps mitigate the perceived risk by the financial community of project failures and can reduce the overall capital investment required by the private sector by reducing the cost of financing (e.g., interest rates). This government action leverages major investments by private industry to provide clean, safe, and reliable energy as demonstrated by today’s operating fleet of power-generating reactors. Recommendations • • • The Administration and Congress should assert their continued commit- ment to nuclear energy loan guarantees. Put simply, this is a key enabling path for financing of nuclear projects on reasonable terms, particularly for larger projects. Government support through this financing regimen is impor- tant since it is clearly in the national interest to create additional safe, clean, and reliable energy. The Administration should develop transparent criteria for establishing credit costs for loan guarantees. The credit subsidy costs associated with the loan guarantee program vary widely. Recent applicants have found that the criteria for determining the credit subsidy cost are neither well established nor transparent. Such criteria should be developed jointly by government and industry—or at the very least should be made clear to the applicant companies—and should reflect the actual risk to the government. The loan guarantee program should shift to industry after a pool of new plants is built. After a sufficient number of new nuclear reactors have come online, the U.S. should no longer bear the risk of default. Rather, the loan guarantee program should transition from the government to the pool of new nuclear energy plant owners. As an example, assuming 20 new plants comprise a large enough guarantee pool, the owners of the first 20 plants enabled by government loan guarantees could be required to collectively provide a loan guarantee to the 21st plant. These 21 plants could be re- quired to provide a loan guarantee to the 22nd plant, and so on. This would, in effect, transfer the risk of subsequent projects’ defaults from the taxpayer to the nuclear industry.

# K

#### The debate space is crucial to addressing the roles of institutions in dynamics of racism – the alt ignores the specific engagements of institutions like the NRC and the EPA.

Bush ‘11

Melanie, Associate Professor and Chair, Anthropology & Sociology @ Adelphi University, Everyday Forms of Whiteness: Understanding Race in a “Post-Racial” World, p. 235-236

Carol Geary Schneider, president of the Association of American Colleges and Universities, has been quoted as saying, "Very few courses in the contemporary undergraduate curriculum directly address democratic principles and/or aspirations" (Schneider 1999, 9). She further asked where in the curriculum are students engaged about concepts of justice, democracy, equality, opportunity, and liberty and suggested that these challenging topics belong in general education because they are integral dimensions of American pluralism and must be understood in the context of their historical connections(Schneider 1999, 9). This engagement is central to the development of civic responsibility and social awareness as a core tenet of higher education. While most of the work on civic engagement does not speak to the issues of involvement in political projects or the world of social movements, the history of democracy in the United States alone and certainly globally is one that situates these activities squarely within the realm of liberal education and civic engagement. This may be avoided out of concern for partisanship, because of a perception that service is good, activism is problematic or is a result of efforts to sustain the status quo. Regardless of the reason, it is important to note the significant value that comes from political involvement especially aimed not only on raising awareness or affecting individuals, but also toward structural change(Bush and Little 2009). Learning about political institutions**,** issues, contexts, and practices should be an integral part of that enterprise(liberal arts education). College graduates cannot make sense of their environment and their place in it if they are politically ignorant, unskilled, and lacking in a sense of civic agency, the sense that they can work with others to solve problems that concern them—in their communities, workplaces**,** .. ." (Colby 2008: 8 ) Overall, every opportunity to advance a broad-based and deepened understanding about the global dynamics of white supremacy, including its material impact on the lives of all people, should be pursued. This effort couldcultivate a counter narrative that deals with white racism from "cradle to grave."29 It can also provide incentive tothe large numbers of white peopleoutside the ruling class, whose acceptance of the status quo contributes to the entrenchment of the patterns of racial inequality and injustice that threaten our future, **to** perhaps **redefine their allegiances** and reconfigure their notion of "who's to blame."

#### Combining environmental justice concerns like siting and policy shifts is the best hope for creating a consciousness shift and avoid planetary destruction.

Byrant 95

Bunyan, Professor in the school of Natural Resources and Environment, and an adjunt professor in the center for Afro-American and African studies at the University of Michigan, “Environmental Justice: Issues, Policies, and Solutions, p.209-212

The cooperative relations forged after World War II are now obsolete. New cooperative relations need to be agreed upon – cooperative relations that show that pollution prevention and species preservation are inseparably linked to economic development and survival of planet earth. Economic development is linked to pollution prevention even though the market fails to include the true cost of pollution in its pricing of products and services; it fails to place a value on the destruction of plant and animal species. To date, most industrialized nations, the high polluters, have had an incentive to pollute because they did not incur the cost of producing goods and services in a nonpolluting manner. The world will have to pay for the true cost of production and to practice prudent stewardship of our natural resources if we are to sustain ourselves on this planet. We cannot expect Third World countries to participate in debt-for-nature swaps as a means for saving the rainforest or as a means for the reduction of greenhouse gases, while a considerable amount of such gases come from industrial nations and from fossil fuel consumption.¶ Like disease, population growth is politically, economically, and structurally determined. Due to inadequate income maintenance programs and social security, families in developing countries are more apt to have large families not only to ensure the survival of children within the first five years, but to work the fields and care for the elderly. As development increases, so do education, health, and birth control. In his chapter, Buttel states that ecological development and substantial debt forgiveness would be more significant in alleviating Third World environmental degradation (or population problems) than ratification of any UNCED biodiversity or forest conventions. ¶ Because population control programs fail to address the structural characteristics of poverty, such programs for developing countries have been for the most part dismal failures. Growth and development along ecological lines have a better chance of controlling population growth in developing countries than the best population control programs to date. Although population control is important, we often focus a considerable ¶ amount of our attention on population problems of developing countries. Yet there are more people per square mile in Western Europe than in most developing countries. “During his/her lifetime an American child causes 35 times the environmental damage of an Indian child and 280 times that of a Haitian child (Boggs, 1993: 1). The addiction to consumerism of highly industrialized countries has to be seen as a major culprit, and thus must be balanced against the benefits of population control in Third World countries. ¶ Worldwide environmental protection is only one part of the complex problems we face today. We cannot ignore world poverty; it is intricately linked to environmental protection. If this is the case, then how do we deal with world poverty? How do we bring about lasting peace in the world? Clearly we can no longer afford a South Africa as it was once organized, or ethnic cleansing by Serbian nationalists. These types of conflicts bankrupt us morally and destroy our connectedness with one another as a world community. Yet, we may be headed on a course where the politically induced famine, poverty, and chaos of Somalia today will become commonplace and world peace more difficult, particularly if the European Common Market, Japan, and the United States trade primarily among themselves, leaving Third World countries to fend for themselves. Growing poverty will lead only to more world disequilibrium to wars and famine – as countries become more aggressive and cross international borders for resources to ward off widespread hunger and rampant unemployment. To tackle these problems requires a quantum leap in global cooperation and commitment of the highest magnitude; it requires development of an international tax, levied through the United nations or some other international body, so that the world community can become more involved in helping to deal with issues of environmental protection, poverty, and peace. ¶ Since the market system has been bold and flexible enough to meet changing conditions, so too must public institutions. They must, indeed, be able to respond to the rapid changes that reverberate throughout the world. If they fail to change, then we will surely meet the fate of the dinosaur. The Soviet Union gave up a system that was unworkable in exchange for another one. Although it has not been easy, individual countries of the former Soviet Union have the potential of reemerging looking very different and stronger. Or they could emerge looking very different and weaker. They could become societies that are both socially and environmentally destructive or they can become societies where people have decent jobs, places to live, educational opportunities for all citizens, and sustainable social structures that are safe and nurturing. Although North Americans are experiencing economic and social discomforts, we too will have to change, or we may find ourselves engulfed by political and economic forces beyond our control. In 1994, the out-sweeping of Democrats from national offices may be symptomatic of deeper and more fundamental problems. If the mean-spirited behavior that characterized the 1994 election is carried over into the governance of the country, this may only fan the flames of discontent. We may be embarking upon a long struggle over ideology, culture, and the very heart and soul of the country. But despite all the political turmoil, we must take risks and try out new ideas – ideas never dreamed of before and ideas we thought were impossible to implement. To implement these ideas we must overcome institutional inertia in order to enhance intentional change. We need to give up tradition and “business as usual.” To view the future as a challenge and as an opportunity to make the world a better place, we must be willing to take political and economic risks. ¶ The question is not growth, but what kind of growth, and where it will take place. For example, we can maintain current levels of productivity or become even more productive if we farm organically. Because of ideological conflicts, it is hard for us to view the Cuban experience with an unjaundiced eye; but we ask you to place political differences aside and pay attention to the lyrics of organic farming and not to the music of Communism. In other words, we must get beyond political differences and ideological conflicts; we must find success stories of healing the planet no matter where they exist – be they in Communist or non-Communist countries, developed or underdeveloped countries. We must ascertain what lessons can be learned from them, and examine how they would benefit the world community. In most instances, we will have to chart a new course. Continued use of certain technologies and chemicals that are incompatible with the ecosystem will take us down the road of no return. We are already witnessing the catastrophic destruction of our environment and disproportionate impacts of environmental insults on communities of color and low-income groups. If such destruction continues, it will undoubtedly deal harmful blows to our social, economic, and political institutions. ¶ As a nation, we find ourselves in a house divided, where the cleavages between the races are in fact getting worse. We find ourselves in a house divided where the gap between the rich and the poor has increased. We find ourselves in a house divided where the gap between the young and the old has widened. During the 1980s, there were few visions of healing the country. In the 1990s, despite the catastrophic economic and environmental results of the 1980s, and despite the conservative takeover of both houses of Congress, we must look for glimmers of hope. We must stand by what we think is right and defend our position with passion. And at times we need to slow down and reflect and do a lot of soul searching in order to redirect ourselves, if need be. We must chart out a new course of defining who we are as a people, by redefining our relationship with government, with nature, with one another, and where we want to be as a nation. We need to find a way of expressing this definition of ourselves to one another. Undeniably we are a nation of different ethnic groups and races, and of multiple interest groups, and if we cannot live in peace and in harmony with ourselves and with nature it bodes ominously for future world relations. ¶ Because economic institutions are based upon the growth paradigm of extracting and processing natural resources, we will surely perish if we use them to foul the global nest. But it does not have to be this way. Although sound environmental policies can be compatible with good business practices and quality of life, we may have to jettison the moral argument of environmental protection in favor of the self-interest argument, thereby demonstrating that the survival of business enterprises is intricately tied to good stewardship of natural resources and environmental protection. Too often we forget that short-sightedness can propel us down a narrow path, where we are unable to see the long-term effects of our actions. ¶ The ideas and policies discussed in this book are ways of getting ourselves back on track. The ideas presented here will hopefully provide substantive material for discourse. These policies are not carved in stone, nor are they meant to be for every city, suburb, or rural area. Municipalities or rural areas should have flexibility in dealing with their site-specific problems. Yet we need to extend our concern about local sustainability beyond geopolitical boundaries, because dumping in Third World countries or in the atmosphere today will surely haunt the world tomorrow. Ideas presented here may irritate some and dismay others, but we need to make some drastic changes in our lifestyles and institutions in order to foster environmental justice. ¶ Many of the policy ideas mentioned in this book have been around for some time, but they have not been implemented. The struggle for environmental justice emerging from the people of color and low-income communities may provide the necessary political impulse to make these policies a reality. Environmental justice provides opportunities for those most affected by environmental degradation and poverty to make policies to save not only themselves from differential impact of environmental hazards, but to save those responsible for the lion’s share of the planet’s destruction. This struggle emerging from the environmental experience of oppressed people brings forth a new consciousness – a new consciousness shaped by immediate demands for certainty and solution. It is a struggle to make a true connection between humanity and nature. This struggle to resolve environmental problems may force the nation to alter its priorities; it may force the nation to address issues of environmental justice and, by doing so, it may ultimately result in a cleaner and healthier environment for all of us. Although we may never eliminate all toxic materials from the production cycle, we should at least have that as a goal.

#### Their alt can’t solve without reformulating risk analysis- absent the aff forcing the rich to confront their practice of dumping environmental harm on the poor, the alt will just get coopted by elites who buy insurance to guard their privilege against even the strongest revisionist history

#### Failure to repoliticize the economy will result in elite takeover of public institutions – effectively neutralizing the potential to check neoliberal economic policy

Dulci, 2k9

[Otavio Soares, sociologist and political scientist and is a professor in international relations at PUC-Minas, *Economics and Politics in the Global Crisis*, Estud. Av. Vol.23 Sao Paulo, 2009]

The latter returned in a recycled manner, presented as an alternative to the crisis of the State. The scale tipped toward the market. **The principle of depoliticization of the economy gained space and was made concrete in the privatization initiatives**, **deregulation and reduction of government role** (as well as of its size and cost). **But the handling of political resources**, **the means of control and power**, **was essential for all of this to take place**. Only through ideological credulity could it be said that the market would recover its function as a spontaneous skeleton of social life. From the time period suggested above, we could infer that the neoliberal globalization project was affirmed dialectically, through confrontations against internal antagonists (unions, civil servants, social movements) or external ones (the communist block and later the terrorist networks and the “Axis of Evil”), nourished by constant mobilization against real or manufactured enemies. **The hegemony of financial capitalism could only be achieved by political means**, **through the opportune management of power resources**. This can be demonstrated by a study of the relations between economic and political elites in several countries. **The image of a “revolving door” has been used to portray the constant circulation of members of the elites through government positions and private companies**. **Such interchange is notorious in the financial field and affects the governability of the system**, **as the current crisis has made clear**. **Perhaps this reality is what could be expected from a “less government**, **more market” movement**, **meaning less power to the public bureaucracy and more power to business**, **bankers and private managers in general**. It does make sense as long as the responsibilities are properly shared. **Hegemony**, to recall Gramsci, **is intellectual and moral leadership**. **For this reason**, **one of the principal consequences of the crisis is that the absolute power of financial capital has been put into question**. Capitalism as a system is not at risk, but **the banks**, **investment institutions**, **risk analysis agencies and all of the paraphernalia that developed around them**, **have lost clout**. **To rebuild their reputation**, **the banks and financial market agents will have to reestablish their primordial function as support for the real economy**. This is a normative proposition but has a practical side, given that the big international banks are not able to confront the crisis without government help. **Therefore**, **they must submit to certain political conditions**. The governments, representing public opinion, demand greater transparency and management austerity, given the revelations of huge salaries, benefits and gratifications bestowed on the administrators of banks and institutions on the brink of insolvency. A true salary bubble was revealed, which was not linked to reality. Even worse, it was not tied to the interests of the companies themselves, which were paying dearly for those who led them to the abyss for short term gains. **Nothing could be farther from the puritan ethic that justified capitalism**. **With the government rescue of banks and companies**, **the principle of separation between the economy and politics was broken**. In other words, **governments** once again **came to participate directly in the game**, **and in a strong position**. Even if this is seen as an emergency measure, **it is a situation that moves the pendulum toward the State**, **as occurred in the crisis that began in 1929**. Is it possible that we are facing the end of an era, as in the 1930s? he comparison between the two crises has been frequent, and not by chance. The causes of both events were quite similar. The direction of the process has also followed the same course, from the center to the periphery of the world capitalist system. Both began in the financial arena and extended to the real economy. Or, according to the suggestive expression used in U.S. debate, the crisis began on Wall Street and spread to Main Street, where the common citizens live. Nevertheless, the world was very different 80 years ago. It was more rural and provincial than today. Many of the current countries were still colonies. Trade was more limited, and the scale of transactions relatively modest. The international division of labor distinguished the few industrial countries from the others, which sold agricultural products or minerals and purchased manufactured goods. In any case, the political and social consequences of the crash of 1929 are worth considering. They were of broad scope. **There was a collapse in the belief in liberal values and in a world guided by the self-regulated market**. **In its place**, as we indicated before, active, **interventionist governments asserted themselves**, varying from moderate to deep intervention and even total intervention (totalitarianism). The central values of the 1930s were the strong state, nationalism, racism, corporativism, the command economy and widespread politicization of social life. Due to the economic crisis, countries became more insulated. Each attempted to survive on its own. Trade and exchange declined. The international order was compromised, the arms race expanded and a solution for global disorder was only achieved at the end of a long world war which cost millions of lives. The only positive balance was the emphasis on the social question. Although in many cases (as in Brazil), that advance replaced a constructive approach to the question of democracy. T he most ominous political consequences of that time – dictatorships and war – do not seem probable, at least in the short term. Nevertheless, xenophobia and racial pressures cannot be discarded. They are already manifest in ethnic conflicts in Europe and other continents, and could be aggravated by the unemployment generated by the economic crisis. Barriers to immigration could certainly be tightened, and, in any case, the exodus of the poor towards the rich countries is not likely in times of want. If the flow is inverted, and immigrants return home, how will they be re-integrated, and what are the consequences of the lost flow of foreign currency which immigrants had sent from abroad? In the Central American countries, for example, those resources represent an important portion of national income. In the economic arena, there are certain analogies that are not surprising. One impulse similar to that found in the Depression is protectionism. The initial U.S. measures to confront the economic crisis, for example, displayed a tendency to treat it as an internal problem that did not involve the rest of the world. Their autism was revealed in the congressional attempts to introduce protective “buy American” clauses in the Obama government’s large public spending package. Of course broad reactions from abroad led legislators to review the package – particularly because the U.S. has often made open market demands on other countries. In situations such as that which the world is undergoing, there is a broad call for governments to act quickly and decisively, looking only inwards. Even so, **it is important to indicate that the best alternative to overcome the crisis is represented by coordinated measures**, **instead of each country for himself efforts**. **Unlike 1929**, **there is now an embryo of global governance composed of multilateral entities and government forums** (particularly G-20), **which are capable of promoting the search for joint solutions**. **Insofar as the various interests and needs are placed on the agenda**, **we have a chance to advance in a constructive direction**. **This would mean**, among other things, **focusing on production and labor more than on financial capitalism and on unchecked rent seeking**, **and also to approach the planet’s environmental challenges**. **A crisis involves risks**, **but also creates opportunities**. **The current crisis curbed the “irrational exuberance” of globalized capitalism and the unsustainable pace of consumption and use of resources which**, **as we well know**, **are not unlimited**. **The opportunity to rethink this route is essential and cannot be lost**.

#### Economistic coding of the environment ensures extinction- their obsession with economic logic ensures that overconsumption patterns remained unchallenged and that innovation pushes unsustainable growth- that’s also a disad to their truth claims

Weiskel ‘97 (Harvard Seminar on Environmental Values) (Timothy C., 6 July 1997, Selling Pigeons in the Temple: The Danger of Market Metaphors in an Ecosystem, <http://ecojustice.net/coffin/ops-008.htm>)

The natural order of the world and our role within it is affirmed by market enthusiasts and politicians alike to be an inevitable manifestation of the ongoing logic of an economy of unending, capitalist accumulation. In recent electoral history, politicians took pride in mouthing the simple syllogism, "it's the economy, stupid!" -- as if the only significant role of political leadership was to "grow the economy." Whether we like it or not -- whether we fully know it or not -- **this** entire worldview is subconsciously enlisted whenever we surrender to the use of market metaphors in devising public policy. It is no wonder that in this framework it is impossible to formulate effective environmental policy to protect biodiversity. Such a worldview arbitrarily restricts the notion of what is possible to what is profitable. Market metaphors truncate the range of policy options open to environmental leaders, and the vocabulary and images these metaphors generate completely fail to capture what we humans value most about our rich and complex world of everyday human experience. The insidious thought control exercised by market metaphors in the public discourse needs to be squarely confronted and firmly rejected. Only by stepping outside the make-believe world of these market metaphors is it possible to see why they mystify rather than clarify our environmental circumstance. Essentially, market metaphors are based on a logical fallacy that projects a fundamental falsification of reality. Despite frequent appeals to the "real world," market advocates live in a self-contained world of abstract modeling, statistical fantasies and paper currency that serves as a proxy measure of wealth. In fact, the real world is quite a different place, consisting of the physical parameters of all life forms that can be measured in terms of meters from sea-level, metric tons of gas emissions and degrees of temperature variation. The human economy needs to be understood as a subset of this physical ecosystem and not the other way around. Environmental policy based on an inverted representation of reality cannot help but fail in the long run. It is for this reason that economism -- the belief that principles of market economics can and should always be used to resolve environmental public policy dilemmas -- represents such a palpable failure of political leadership. Further, the attempt to substitute economism for meaningful public policy constitutes a blatant abdication of the public trust. This tragic abdication of the public trust through the relentless pursuit of economism has fueled the current righteous indignation of global citizens sensitive to the environment and concerned about the prospect of human survival. Politicians under the spell of economism fail to grasp what growing numbers of decent citizens sense and seek to affirm from a very deep level of conviction, and that is simply this: biodiversity must be saved for its intrinsic, expressive, and relational value -- not simply for the momentary advantage it may yield in some economist's cost-benefit calculations. If global policy makers do not free themselves from the trap of market mantras, their claim to leadership will be seen to be vacuous and illegitimate in the long run. This will be so because misplaced market metaphors cannot help but prove fatal in mediating human relationships with the environment. Taken together they have the power to drive industrial civilization into the sad syndrome of "overshoot-and-collapse" so often characteristic of failed economies of accumulation throughout human history. Unless radically different forms of valuation can be rediscovered, unless public leaders can learn to embrace and articulate them, and unless these leaders can then proceed to formulate effective public policy based on these new values to change collective human behavior, we will witness the demise of industrial society as the unavoidable outcome of "business as usual." In short, public leadership needs now to define, declare and defend the public good in terms that transcend private self-interest. There are no doubt connections between the public good and private gain, but to justify the former exclusively in terms of the latter is a fundamental mistake of moral reasoning. Without political leadership that can understand this fundamental difference and learn to defend the public good in its own right, industrial civilization will become irretrievably consumed in a scramble for private profit and personal advantage in a dismal world of diminishing resources. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, expressed this fear with a rivetting sense of urgency in his opening remarks at the Earth Summit Plus Five conference in New York.(6) Failure to act now could damage our planet irreversibly, unleashing a spiral of increased hunger, deprivation, disease and squalor. Ultimately, we could face the destabilising effects of conflict over vital natural resources....We must not fail. In past epochs individual religious and spiritual figures emerged to warn society of this kind of impending doom. Prophets of old inveighed against gluttonous consumption based on inequity and iniquity, and they warned societies of the physical consequences of failing to mend their ways. Perhaps more importantly, they served to remind societies of the natural order of the created world and the proper place for humankind within it. Amos, Jesus of Nazareth and Mohammed of Medina all arose in the ancient near east with strikingly parallel messages in this regard. Jews, Christians and Muslims to this day retain scriptural traditions which remind them that the earth does not ultimately belong to humans, nor will their mistreatment of the earth or their fellow creatures go unpunished. In these religious traditions arrogant, self-centered behavior with regard to the created order is thought to be morally wrong, however expedient or profitable it may prove to be for individuals in the short run. We are not fully informed by the preserved text, but one suspects that selling pigeons in the temple prompted a sense of moral indignation on the part of Jesus of Nazareth, not because the prices were a bit too high. Rather such activity inspired moral outrage because selling pigeons in the temple involved a fundamental confusion of the market place with sacred space. It is -- perhaps not surprisingly -- the scientists who speak with the prophetic voice of conviction in our day. Physicists like Nobel Laureate Henry Kendall, the late astronomer Carl Sagan, the evolutionary biologist Edward Wilson and renowned "public" scientists like the late oceanographer Jacques Cousteau now provide us with the clarion call to awareness and action that parallels the prophetic message of old. In a document entitled World Scientists' Warning to Humanity the Union of Concerned Scientists representing more than one hundred Nobel laureates put the message quite plainly:(7) Human beings and the natural world are on a collision course. Human activities inflict harsh and often irreversible damage on the environment and on critical resources. If not checked, many of our current practices put at serious risk the future that we wish for human society and the plant and animal kingdoms, and may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner that we know. Fundamental changes are urgent if we are to avoid the collision our present course will bring about. It is hard to image a more thorough embodiment of the ancient prophetic tradition. Nevertheless, economists and politicians -- the scribes and Pharisees of our day -- do not yet seem to have understood the point. It is not that their prices are inaccurate -- goodness knows we have some of the world's most clever economists and accountants devoted to the task of assigning nature its cash value. We cannot expect much better on this score. But the issue before us is more fundamental than this. The essential problem is that to approach the issue of biodiversity as if it were an exercise in global bean-counting is fundamentally wrongheaded. It is wrong because it mistakes price for value, proffering market valuations as a proxy surrogate for a meaningful discussion of values. In such a constricted framework there can never be a purposeful debate -- only a mindless, mechanical and endless set of calculations. Given the two-year time frame of the electoral cycle and the pressures to craft policy to please rich and influential interest groups, there are powerful and evident reasons why politicians may well wish to avoid meaningful discussions about values and the environment. In this sense, the alliance between economists and politicians is a marriage of considerable convenience for both partners, but it must be made clear to each of them that this is not acceptable as a mode of public leadership. On this point, scientists and spiritual leaders agree, and it is for this reason that they have joined forces in such impressive numbers to express themselves in terms of the moral obligations facing the human community. The Union of Concerned Scientists has joined with the National Religious Partnership for the Environment to reiterate the prophetic message in churches, temples and mosques across the country and around the world. In a similar vein, research scientists at Harvard have provided strong support for the activities of the Harvard Seminar on Environmental Values convened by the University's Committee on Environment and the Center for the Study of Values in Public Life in order specifically to explore the full range of valuation -- not just economic costs -- which can be drawn upon in developing public policy to protect the environment and biodiversity. The message from spiritual leaders and research scientists alike is as clear as it is forceful: we did not create the world; we cannot control it; we must not destroy it. More precisely: we must not commodify and merchandise biodiversity merely because in the short run it may appear profitable for us to do so. Convinced that we know the price of everything we will soon have lost the ability to value anything that is priceless. The capacity to value some things and human experiences beyond all measure of worldly worth and to esteem them without any thought of their exchange value or sale is surely one of the most cherished attributes that makes us human. To forget this or deny it is to disavow our humanity, and down that road lies our swift and certain extinction. The capacity to appreciate intrinsic value is not a quality of humanity that it would be wise to denigrate, dismiss or eliminate in formulating environmental public policy. On the contrary, it may well constitute our last, best hope for survival as a species.