

## WORLD TRIBUNE MAILBOX

### Encouraging Words

I want to thank Mr. Evers for his encouraging words (Sept. 10 *World Tribune*), not only contained in his article but from the time I was married and living in North Carolina. I remember Mike as a warmhearted and caring individual who set a true example of a family man for kosen-rufu. Unfortunately my own marriage dissolved, mainly because I was a battered wife, but also because it was my own human revolution to open my eyes to the truth of the situation I was in, so I could win over my “victim” karma.

Thanks to Mike Evers, Walter Woodall, and many others in that area. I always knew deep inside that I could do better, so if I do remarry, it will be to someone who is man enough to respect women.

—LYNETTE BRAWER,  
Arlington, Va.

### About the Environment

The Oct. 1 *World Tribune* article by Frank Hotchkiss about the environment demands a response. Frank has encouraged us to keep to the facts, and we wholeheartedly agree that emotionalism and sensationalism hinder progress and understanding. Unfortunately, many of the facts presented in the article are misleading, in particular those about acid rain, global warming, biodiversity loss, forest extent and lack of consensus among climatologists. Nor do we agree with the premise that environmentalists are fundamentally pessimistic....

In discussing the phenomenon of “acid rain,” Frank correctly notes that the Earth’s oceans emits five times more sulfur dioxide than all of human industry. However, the ocean is huge, so the concentration of sulfur dioxide coming from the oceans is extremely dilute, even though the total emissions is very large. Industrial centers like America’s heartland and Europe, on the other hand, emit highly concentrated sulfur dioxide, which turns to sulfuric acid and causes acid rain. Even though we humans produce less sulfur dioxide than the oceans, we produce lots of it in highly concentrated areas, and that is the real problem (Schlesinger, *Biogeochemistry*, Chapter 13, <http://odin.dep.no/html/nofo-valt/depter/md/publ/acid/AcidRainE.html>)....

Frank suggests that scientists have not come to a consensus on the effects of...extra CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. While there may not be 100 percent agreement, there is a consensus. “In November 1995, 2,500 leading climate scientists announced that the planet is warming because all the emissions from coal and oil burning are trapping more of the sun’s heat than is normal for our climate. Even if that warming is not yet obvious, they warned, it is already generating bizarre and extreme changes in the weather” (The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Summary for Policymakers: Scientific Technical Analysis of Impacts, Adaptions and mitigation of climate change, November 1995).

That humans cause global warming is not uncertain, the uncertainty lies in estimating how much, and if it’s enough to significantly affect our lives and the lives of our great grandchildren. The question becomes not “will it happen or not for sure” but “how much risk is enough for us to take action?” The key to wise action is more accurately defining

that risk through scientific investigation. As Linus Pauling and Elie Wiesel claimed, “We are worried (about) the emergence of an irrational ideology opposed to scientific and industrial progress.” It is exactly that scientific progress that we advocate as necessary for defining what our Earth is capable of sustaining.

Environmentalism has often been cast in opposition to industry.... In a recent book *Natural Capitalism* ([www.rmi.org](http://www.rmi.org)), Paul Hawkin, Amory Lovins and L. Hunter Lovins argue that environmentalism and industry go hand in hand. Through the reduction of waste, both companies and the environment can gain.... Industry and environment can work together, and must if we are to maintain a high quality of life. Such a transformation will not occur on its own, and we must remain vigilant in the pursuit of a harmonious relationship with nature.

Most importantly, environmental concerns need not lead to resigned pessimism. They are instead challenges that encourage all human beings to think of ourselves as part of a global community. Recently, there have been numerous successes in solving environmental problems on the local and global scales that prove our abilities to solve problems collectively. Air quality, including emissions of sulfur, has improved in many U.S. cities, and the use of dangerous pesticides has been curtailed. Globally, international agreements to phase out the use of ozone destroying chemicals have shown that the world has the capacity to think of itself as an interconnected whole—a precursor to world peace.

The recent global warming summit at Kyoto again proves our capacity to think and work together as an integrated whole. Identifying and working to solve environmental problems should not be a cause for retreat but rejoice for the opportunity to unify the world under a common spirit of environmental awareness and responsibility.

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I applaud and congratulate the *World Tribune* for publishing Mr. Frank R. Hotchkiss’ article, “Some Good News About the Environment,” in the Oct. 1 issue. To my knowledge this is the first truly objective piece about the environment ever published by the *World Tribune*. Long a supporter of the Heidelberg Appeal and an uncredentialed signatory, I appeal to each member to learn more about it.

—STAN KLEMANOWICZ  
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I trust that I will be only one among many readers who write in to point out the inaccuracies and distortions in Frank Hotchkiss’ Perspective article on what he considers “good news” about the environment. Of course the greenhouse effect is “normal,” but with natural systems, even a change of a small percent can have farreaching and disastrous consequences. If our body temperature raises by less than 10 percent, for example, which means to about 107 degrees, you’d be dead pretty quickly. Earth’s temperature needs to increase by only 1 or 2 degrees for sea levels to rise and inundate coasts and islands.

And Mr. Hotchkiss points out that “forest growth exceeds forest harvesting, and has since the 1940s.” But much of the virgin forest was felled in this country well before the ’40s, and the “forest growth” that is so abundant is often made up of soft-wood, fast-

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growth trees which are sown and harvested commercially. This type of “forest” does not sustain the plants and animals that would be found in natural, native forests. And I could go on.

But let me quote from Dr. Kawada’s article on the Earth Charter in September’s *Living Buddhism*: “To practice the bodhisattva way, first we must appreciate that our very existence is sustained by the interdependent world of nature. Then, with deep gratitude, we must strive to control our desires and adjust our lifestyles.... We must mobilize all our resources to restore the Earth’s ecosystem where it has been destroyed or damaged by human acts.”

—NANCY MERRITT,  
(RMERRITT@MAIL.SMRN.COM) Burlingame, Calif.

### **Thanks to Chicago Youth**

Earlier this year my wife and I were visiting Chicago, where we met and practiced 15 years ago, from our present home in Minnesota. I hadn’t seen the Chicago Culture Center since the opening ceremony, and Susan had never seen it. So, on a Saturday afternoon we drove downtown and wandered in the front door like a couple of tourists.

There were several youth practicing swing dancing. One of them approached us and we explained that we were members from out of town. I remember at the opening ceremony that it was stressed for us members from out of town, the culture center was our home away from home. I would now find out if that was true.

Gyasi Ayo Kress introduced himself and took us to the desk to sign in. He then offered to give us a tour.... His attitude was one of pride and caring.... At the end of the tour, he explained about the (Chicago) culture festival and we got him to explain his role in it. It sounded exciting then and I was especially excited to read his experience in the *World Tribune*. At the end of our tour, we joined a group chanting and did evening gongyo with them....

Congratulations to the Chica-go youth! Thank you for your hard work and your experiences. They have reached farther than you could have imagined.

—MEL TURCANIK,  
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