

**The Straw
That Broke Our Children's Back**

by Mauro Oliveira

In search of a miracle...

I am a desperate father. I pray that my words will reach well beyond your ears and years, that you will hear me from your courage, deep within your heart.

You've just seen Al Gore's *Inconvenient Truth* or perhaps Tom Brokaw's documentary about global warming. Either way you are stunned, and rightly so. Whether liberal or conservative, you now are eye to eye with the gravest challenge faced by any humans...EVER.

Ignorance and greed has finally reached the objective: the very foundation of our children's planet, where a flag of dark victory is being raised. The coup de grace is achieved and mankind will fall. Saved only by miracle, yes, but mankind *as evolved as we are today*, has not a prayer to recognize and master the skills needed to navigate the complexities of a collapsing biosphere.

Collapsing biosphere? Both Gore and Brokaw have told us that if we work together we can solve the problems...even if the CO2 levels now on the planet are higher than at any level in perhaps millions of years (and rising)! But both men have chosen to soften the evidence, for whatever reason; ignorance, fear, denial, or perhaps most likely, power pressure.

The self-amplifying feedback loops that both men have presented: unprecedented methane releases, polar ice melts and photosynthesis reversals are a SURE sign that **WE** are now at the very beginnings of a biosphere collapse, heading to the bottom. Because the collapse has not reached a choking death hold yet does not negate the fact that it has collapsed.

And global warming is not the only Angel of Death. The Los Angeles Times recently published a five part series on our dying oceans. Our Earth's coral reefs are nearly completely destroyed and over 150 dead zones, some larger than several states combined, grow off Her coasts. The 650 gray whales that were dead or died on California's shores in the last seven years is part of the startling news that over 95% of the large sea animals are missing. Dead. The list goes on and on. This is all the result of man's pesticide use, water and air pollution, war, and of course, global warming.

How can this play out? There are only two paths left: **Life, or extinction.** Options cease to exist when your seas are dying, your air is becoming poison and the entire world is preoccupied with war and making money. Yes, the choices are simply black or white. Time for a gray area passed with the feedback loops.

Extinction *now*, is easy. We just ride along, business as usual, on perhaps some modern tech-

nological fix-it ride that the powerful tell us we should believe in. On this path we will continue to trust everything our legislators tell us as well as whatever laws they divvy out to *We the People*. We can also count on our leaders to dole out fat private contracts to the Halliburtons, Bechtels and Gileads in their world so they can fix the mess with their brilliant understanding of all that is.

Life is the other choice we have, a choice found at the core of the quantum leaps that have eluded science since man first started studying his ancient self. Choosing Life, individual humans will have to learn to think and feel for themselves, yet the mind of our *species* will birth a consciousness, focused and determined. Humans will have no time or patience for corrupt governments or corporations. Men who cannot feel a sense of awe within the majesty of nature will no longer be allowed to make our forests vanish, vacuum our seas of life, or rough neck Earth's oil into our air, land and water. Our world will be treated as sacred and protected with the very lives of our descendants. For this is what must be.

For Life, our communities will have to come together, as neighbors, as regions, and globally, in the greatest effort ever undertaken by humans. And for certain, on this road, everyone will have to sacrifice. This does not mean changing light bulbs and voting differently in the next election. Mankind will have to reboot the system. We must tear down nearly all of what is and retool and recivilize, in a kinder, absolute and compassionate way. Sustainable existence will require us to meet our highest potential.

Love *must* be our guide.

While humans are digesting the realities of global warming, many will certainly take up the challenge on an *intellectual* level. Very soon, they will feel the frustrations many of us have always felt when we've tried to halt clearcutting, or the pollution of our waters, land and air. In that frustration, those intellectually involved humans will become heartfelt *emotionally* involved.

Now here is the key. **Next they will become desperate.** At this point, better late than never, they will drop to their knees and seek a truce with their Creator. This is not about one person dying. This easily could be about everyone dying. **There must be a way...**

Desperation (not hopelessness!) ignites the brightest fire in the human spirit. We must know, as surely as our own predicament that **THIS** fire **HAS** to be bright enough to be seen from across the universe, across time, forever.

It is here, on our knees, where we must fix it first, for folks, **we DO need**

a miracle. The *second* miracle would be that humans could and would come together, in a unified spirit, to meet the challenge. But even if so, we still need the knowledge and time, of which we have neither.

Pray. By all means have a good cry. Search your soul and know for yourself that you now understand. The truth will change you if you look at it. *That is the first miracle.* Know thyself and act.

It is when against the wall, that humanity has the greatest degree of potential. That degree is relative to the want and desire of each individual person alive. Each one of us must ask ourselves the question: "If I could save the world, would I give all?"

We are the ones we have been waiting for.

Remember these words. Maybe you will find yourself desperate. Don't wait too long.

From the Archives

March 2003



**The Hundredth
Monkey**

In 1952 Japanese scientists, who had observed the *Macaca fuscata* monkey for many years, left a stash of sweet potatoes on the island of Koshima where the monkeys lived. The monkeys loved the sweet taste of the yam, but one 18 month old female

named Imo didn't appreciate the accompanying gritty sensation of the dirt and sand.

Imo went to a nearby stream and washed the new delicacy in the clear flowing waters. This solution worked so well she taught it to her mother. Young Imo also taught the new method to her playmates who taught it to their mothers, who taught the technique to the other members of the tribe. Only the adults that learned this new skill from their children benefited from this new behavioral achievement. Adults that didn't learn the clever trick from the younger generation continued to eat their potatoes covered with gritty sand.

The exact number isn't known, but at some point one final monkey took his yam to the creek and washed it. A critical mass of monkeys now washing their potatoes was then reached, and something fantastic occurred. From that point on, *all* the monkeys on the island began washing their sweet potatoes before scarfing them down. Not only did all the monkeys on Koshima island now pre wash their potatoes, but whole colonies of monkeys on neighboring islands did the same thing.

The Hundredth Monkey theory contends that when a critical number of beings achieve a new awareness and one more person adds to the number by achieving the awareness also, an entire species can then undergo a consciousness change.

For the primates the Hundredth Monkey phenomenon meant greater culinary pleasure. For humans it could mean the possibility of international peace, the end of world hunger or who knows, maybe even the demise of corporate social and economic injustice.

There is no end to the possibilities.

Archival Quotes

October 2003

"A major revolution to be won in the immediate future is the dissipation of man's illusion that his own welfare can be separated from that of all others."

Saul Alinsky

"The revolution will not be televised. The revolution will be live."

Gil Scott-Heron