

tions,” at levels that would mean economic devastation worse than the Great Depression.

It is therefore not surprising that another hat that Maurice Strong has worn is that of Treasurer, now Fellow, of Lindsfarne, New York, whose founder, William Thompson, conceived it as a medieval village into which the remnants of humanity might be herded as a feudalist “concentration camp,” once genocidal eco-facist policies of the sort advocated by Maurice Strong had taken hold. And, for good measure, Strong is the president of the World Economic Forum, the Davos, Switzerland annual summit of the world’s private bankers’, which will be keynoted this year by Vice President Al Gore.

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## Interview: Maurice Strong

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*UN Undersecretary General and Earth Council Chairman Maurice Strong gave this interview to Scott Thompson on Jan. 20.*



**Q:** As you know, Vice President Al Gore is potentially President of the U.S. as of the year 2000 elections—if not earlier, through a Senate vote to convict on impeachment. I understand that you’ve had significant contact with Gore on questions of ecology. So I was wondering if you could say something about the details of your contacts, and then describe how you think a Gore administration might be better on these issues than the Clinton administration, which seems to have sort of shuffled it aside.

**Strong:** My own contact with Vice President Gore goes back to well before his Vice Presidency, particularly the time when he was so active in the Senate. And, as you know, he was in the Senate, really one of the most effective in the whole environmental field. He was very active in the Global Parliamentarians movement, and, in fact, was instrumental in helping to form the Association of Global Parliamentarians.

**Q:** Could you tell a little about that?

**Strong:** Well, I may not get the precise names straight, but there is a Global Parliamentarians organization, which includes leading members of Congresses and Parliaments around the world, which was formed specifically to spearhead the movement amongst legislators on behalf of environmental issues, both national issues and international treaties and conventions and agreements. And, Al was the original co-chairman of that, the driving force in getting it moving. . . .

**Q:** What were some of the specific issues that they took up?  
**Strong:** Well, very early on, the ozone issue, which resulted in one of the first and most effective international agreements on an environmental issue. And the international convention on restricting trade in endangered species of wildlife. You know, ivory and all this stuff . . . to try to reduce at the source the incentive for the destruction by poaching and [other] destruction of wildlife. And, those are just some examples. They also were very active in respect of preparations for the Rio Summit.

I was the Secretary General, the one that actually ran it. The chairman was the President of the host country of Brazil. . . . Our staff was in charge of actual professional preparations. . . . The Rio Summit was the meeting of heads of government: That’s why they called it the Earth Summit. It was the largest summit in history up to that point, I think probably the largest ever built. It was convened by the United Nations, and, in my role as Secretary General—I was the Undersecretary General of the United Nations—I was in charge of the Secretariat that did the substantive preparations for the conference.

**Q:** Can you tell me anything about Al Gore and the Earth Summit?

**Strong:** Yes, indeed. He was first of all very supportive of the movement within the United Nations to actually hold the conference. . . . The date of the actual conference was in June 1992. . . . But the conference was actually decided by the General Assembly, given a lengthy preparatory period, in 1969.

Gore was very active in the U.S. political movement to endorse the conference and to get it approved by the United Nations. And, subsequently, he was extremely active in helping to shape its agenda and helping to assure that it got the attention that it did.

Now, one of the things of interest at that stage was that it was then a Republican administration. George Bush was President. There was a real question as to whether the President would even attend the conference. And, of course, Al Gore, in his Senate role, was extremely active in bringing Bush in: number one, to have the President go; and, number two, to take a very forthcoming position on the issues. Bush, right up until almost the last minute, declined to commit himself to go. And, finally he did.

I can give you a little sidelight. His [Bush’s] Chief of Staff at the time phoned me every day before he went down, when the conference was actually on, because I knew President Bush, and, so—apart from the official reports they were getting from the conference as to how it was going and what kind of treatment the President could expect when he got there. . . . It was always possible that he might cancel at any moment, and so they asked me, would Senator Gore be in the room when the President spoke. And, I said, “Well, look, I can’t control that, that’s your responsibility. He’s a member

of your delegation. He's a member of your Congressional delegation, and we, as the Secretariat for the Congress, cannot control that." As if I was going to do anything to deny Al Gore's presence in the room! But, it was interesting that [Bush] was very concerned. . . . He wanted assurance that Gore wouldn't be there. And, I said I couldn't give such assurance. After all, the U.S. delegation has so many passes to be on the floor at the time of the speech. The U.S. always has big delegations, and it's always impossible for them all to be seated at once, so they have to decide themselves how they'll divide the seats. . . . And, in the course of it, they did not give Senator Gore a seat. And (I can admit this now), I quietly gave him a pass as a special guest of mine, so he was in the room anyway.

**Q:** Let me ask you. Did you have anything to do with the Kyoto summit, where Al Gore and Tony Blair were so strong on the question of greenhouse gases?

**Strong:** I was actually there as the representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations. So, I actually was there to greet Al Gore when he arrived, and I was on the stage when he spoke. . . . I knew Gore, of course, a lot better than I knew Blair. So, I had pretty much a close relationship. . . . You know I'm a businessman as well an environmentalist. And, many of my businesses are in the United States. And, so, I had a role as a trustee of the Democratic National Committee

at one stage, in the U.S. So, I had, some, you know, political contact with him as well.

**Q:** Very interesting. What did you think of *Earth in the Balance*? . . . Now, I understand that Gore had a team, when he wrote this book in 1992. It was a team effort. Did you have a hand in that?

**Strong:** I was not a member of the team, but I was quite active in interaction with them. I would give Gore more credit for that. He started with input from his team, but he really put his own stamp on this. And, being a very experienced politician, he allowed his values—that is, environmental commitment—to override his sense of political self-interest, because he knew that staking out these positions would attract an awful lot of flak. So, it took a lot of political courage, but this is the real Al Gore shining through, in the sense that his commitment to the environment and to related issues, the fundamental issues that affect life on earth. . . . This is a deep-seated value commitment, and it transcends the political. He is a consummate politician, and since being the Vice President in the Clinton administration, he has had to be careful not to be seen as a one-issue Vice President. . . . And, in order to be effective, he has had to, of course, yield some of his strong convictions to the practical political process, because you had a House, a Senate, that had been unsympathetic and even hostile to environmental issues. But the real Al Gore, I am

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sure, will re-emerge, because he hasn't gone away. He's only just had some of his commitments to some degree submerged in the political realities of this administration.

**Q:** Do you know Martin Palmer . . . ?

**Strong:** Not personally.

**Q:** He's the spiritual adviser on ecology to Prince Philip. He told me that there had been correspondence between Prince Philip and Al Gore since the 1986 Assisi Conference. I think you would know about that. . . .

**Strong:** That's right. They've been close. . . . On these issues, they are very much soulmates.

**Q:** Right, and apparently they met in 1990, when Prince Philip brought the Assisi process of religion and ecology to the United States. Could you tell me anything more about that relationship?

**Strong:** Well, it's one of mutual regard and respect. I would say it's as close as it could be with personalities of that kind. Charles is close. . . .

**Q:** You mean Philip?

**Strong:** They both live busy lives, but they really do share a major interest. Their ideas on the environment are so similar. . . . I actually meet both of them. [Gore] has got a good relationship with Charles as well as Philip. . . . As a matter of fact, in my view, he's much closer to Charles's views, than to Philip's views. I was actually Philip's vice president of the World Wildlife Fund, and, while he has given his substantial reputation, lending it to the World Wildlife Fund, his own view of environmental issues is very much narrower than that of Al Gore. Al sees it quite properly in the broader context of how you manage the economy, how you manage society generally. Whereas Prince Philip has seen it much more narrowly in traditional conservationist terms. . . .

**Q:** You were also . . . the treasurer of William Thompson's Lindesfarne model, which was a sustainable development village idea. Are you still in any way involved with this project?

**Strong:** Well, I think I am. I've never been able to get to their meetings in the last couple years, although I think they still list me as a Fellow, because I have a continuing interest. But, I haven't been able to participate—

**Q:** I understand Al Gore took an interest in that. Do you know anything about that?

**Strong:** I don't. I know he read some of William Thompson's stuff, and I think he knows some of the Lindesfarne Fellows, but I don't know him to have been actually active with Lindesfarne activities. Sympathetic with them, in contact with them. But, not active with them to my knowledge.

**Q:** And, what do you think of this project? Does it have any kind of viability in the world, in terms of a model for

sustainable development?

**Strong:** Well, I think so. I mean we actually gave them land in Crestone, Colorado—

**Q:** Oh, someone at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine told me that that part had been dropped.

**Strong:** Well, no, what's happened is that it was, in fact, a very real impression of Lindesfarne. But, then they merged it with, gave it over to a Buddhist retreat center, which followed the same values. And, the community is thriving up there. . . . It's not called Lindesfarne, but, I believe they still have an association with Lindesfarne. In fact, Bakir Roshi [phonetic spelling], who runs it, is a Lindesfarne Fellow himself. The altitude there is over 7,500 feet, it got to the point where William Thompson couldn't even live there any longer, so he made that transition. But, the original Lindesfarne idea is very much alive there in that community.

**Q:** Who is Bakir Roshi?

**Strong:** Richard Baker, he's a Zen Buddhist monk.

**Q:** And, could you tell me a little more about this? When I raised with Martin Palmer the question of whether or not Al Gore was also close with Prince Charles, he simply said: "Well, there's a great gap between the offices of Prince Charles and of Prince Philip." And, he didn't say anything further. Could you tell me a little bit more about that relationship?

**Strong:** Well, I can't get into the personality aspects. I can, however, in terms of how I would assess their respective environmental issues or interests: Prince Philip's, as I mentioned, are far more traditionally conservationist and wildlife oriented. . . . Whereas Prince Charles has a much broader interest in environmental issues: everything from how cities are built, how buildings are built . . . how societies are run, and the social implications of the environment. The broader implications of the environment, which are very much more in line with Al Gore's interests, as you find in his book. . . .

**Q:** I understand you not only gave Sir James Wolfensohn his first job, but that you are an adviser to the World Bank—

**Strong:** To the president. To him as the president.

**Q:** And, Martin Palmer told me that Sir James is trying to change the culture of the World Bank. This is one reason why he got involved with Prince Philip's Alliance of Religion and Conservation at Lambeth Palace last February. Could you discuss that aspect?

**Strong:** He's one of my oldest friends, and I'm a very close friend and colleague. And, I know Jim has deep spiritual, ethical, and moral values. And, it's his role in the World Bank to try and bring the moral and ethical world into much more close interaction with the practical economic world—

**Q:** Would you have advised Sir James in changing the World

Bank from these sort of mega-projects, huge dams and so forth, toward something that's more sustainable, environmental, appropriate technology-oriented?

**Strong:** Well, you know, the good thing about Jim is that he had most of these convictions for many years. I worked with him way back at the Stockholm Conference in 1972. He was there. He was one of the bright young men. So, he's had a long interest in these issues. He didn't need me to advise him on the more fundamental things such as incorporating the people aspects, as he's done, the social aspects, the environmental aspects. He knew not just to rely just on the big mega-projects, but to bring in the NGOs, the little people, citizens, religious leaders, foundation leaders. Those things he already had in mind and on his agenda, when he came. If I was any help, it was more a matter of helping him to actually implement some of those things.

**Q:** One of the companies my researcher came across that had been involved with both financially and ethically was Molten Metal. . . . Now, Vice President Gore praised this as a breakthrough technology, and I believe Peter Knight, who was a lobbyist for Molten Metal, became the 1996 Clinton/Gore campaign manager, so I assume you know him?

**Strong:** Well, I don't really know him. I know about him, and I know of his role in the 1996 Clinton/Gore campaign. But, I can't recall that I ever met him, and, if I did, it would have been very superficial —

**Q:** I understand that some people may be in litigation with Molten Metal, and there were some claims that there was some sharp trading going on. What can you tell me about Molten Metal, as it involves you and the Vice President? How viable was this technology?

**Strong:** Well, from what I know and understood, and I believe the operations are proving it out now, the technology is an effective one. However, the problem with the company was that it takes sometimes more time and more money to develop certain technologies. And, sometimes they're not quite as economical as it would appear. And, so the company's problems were related more to the fact that they got ahead of themselves financially —

**Q:** You mean with the Vice President's support? Was he being iced out by the Department of Energy, because it seems like the Department of Energy cut off the research and development technology, that related to this —

**Strong:** Well, first of all, the first funding that Molten Metal got from the U.S. government was from a Republican administration, so, although much was made of the fact that they also got money from — I think more money eventually — from a Democratic administration, it came through the professional, rather than the political process.

**Q:** I see. So, the Vice President had nothing to say about

how, "Look, I've just said that this is one of the technologies that must be developed to reprocess hazardous waste, and, to have that effect, you must give more money."

**Strong:** I don't have a deeper knowledge of the particulars, but I do understand that the Vice President based his statement on a briefing from officials of the Department of Energy, who had a genuine knowledge of it and a genuine interest in it. It had been those officials who had promoted it for funding. My understanding is that there was some form of investigation that made it clear that Vice President Gore had never had anything to do with the allocation of the funding. . . . Now, of course, who knows? People may have heard his speech, and then been influenced by that —

**Q:** I understand there was some influence of the speech, at least in terms of the stock market, but apparently he did not have the werewithal to effect the DOE, in terms of continuing the project.

Also, my researcher came across a reference in Peter Munk's book — I guess you know Peter Munk?

**Strong:** Yes, I know him.

## Meet eco-fascist Al Gore

Al Gore, Jr.'s book *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit* (published in 1992 by Houghton Mifflin Co. while Gore was a U.S. Senator), like Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, has within it the seeds of the next world war, insofar as it is anti-human, Malthusian mumbo-jumbo and pseudo-science which would condemn mankind to a nightmare of "scarce resources" and "biological holocaust." The Earth is like a living being, or a goddess, according to Gore, whose livable surface is its skin, its most important organ. He equates mankind's relationship to nature to rape, or the rampages of the Nazis across Europe. Modern industrial civilization is the equivalent of a dysfunctional family of drunks and drug addicts which abuses its own children, and the radical ecology movement is the modern-day resistance movement against the "real" fascism, that is, "production and consumption."

Gore's genocidal outlook is typified in the following quotes. For example, did you know:

- That the tragic "Irish Potato Famine" was caused — by the Irish!

"Archaic rules of land ownership helped to create a culture of poverty, which in turn resulted in early marriage and further population growth. Between 1779 and 1841 the population increased 172%, making Ireland, by Disraeli's estimate, the most densely populated area of Europe. The fateful decision to rely almost exclusively on a single food

**Q:** And, it said that Peter Munk had been frozen out of the United States, in terms of his Barrick Gold, by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. Now, there's a reference in Peter Munk's book, that when he was being stonewalled by Babbitt, in terms of having the connection in the United States to open a gold field here, you helped put him in touch with Al Gore. Can you tell me anything about that?

**Strong:** No, I didn't actually put him in touch with Al Gore, because he already was in touch with Al Gore. I think through Vernon Jordan. . . . But, he knew that I knew Al Gore, and I might well have been happy to introduce the two, but I didn't actually need to do that, because he already had made contact.

**Q:** I wonder why he cited you in his book?

**Strong:** Well, I don't know. But I did send someone out to look at his mine. . . . You know, whether I thought I was doing a job, because I actually know something about the mining industry—I used to be in it. And, I felt they were doing, from what I could see, from what my expert could see, a very good job with that mine. . . . It was the one [mine] in the U.S. that I was looking at. . . . And, I never went to any of their other

mines. The issue there was not so much an environmental issue, as an issue of title under the U.S. regulation or law, people who get mining claims have to pay only a very small royalty. And, the issue at that time with Babbitt, who's also a good friend, was that he used that as an example of a mine that was going to make a vast amount of money, and yet the U.S. government only got a small piece of it.

**Q:** I think the reserves were estimated at \$10 billion—

**Strong:** Yes, well, Munk's assertion was that, well, yes, but that's been your law for years. We followed the same law. If you want to change the law, that's fine—

**Q:** But, otherwise, it was an environmentally qualitative operation?

**Strong:** Yes, I think so. That doesn't mean it was without flaws and had some challenges, but they spent a lot of money, and, I thought they were doing a good job. It was in that context that I made a positive remark at one stage about it. He may have relayed that to Al Gore, because I think he made a case to Al Gore, or somebody did on his behalf.

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crop, potatoes, for subsistence, set the stage for the horrible tragedy known as the Great Potato Famine.”

- That the fourteenth-century “Black Death” spread of bubonic plague was due to “climate change,” in Europe and China, not the economic collapse due to the failure of the oligarchical banking system of Europe.

“Just before the Black Death, poor weather and crop failures caused widespread malnutrition and increased susceptibility to disease. . . . One year earlier, as a result of the same global climate changes that produced constant rains in Europe, unusually heavy rainfall in China caused the repeated Yellow River floods.”

- That the answer to the question, “What is your life worth?” is two trees, not three, if you know the right people!

“The Pacific Yew [tree] can be cut down and processed to produce a potent chemical, taxol, which offers some promise of curing certain forms of lung, breast, and ovarian cancer in patients who would quickly die. It seems an easy choice—sacrifice the tree for a human life—until one learns that three trees must be destroyed for each patient treated. . . . Suddenly, we must confront some tough questions. How important are the medical needs of future generations? Are those of us alive today entitled to cut down all those trees to extend the lives of a few of us, even if it means that this unique form of life will disappear forever, thus making it impossible to save human lives in the future?”

- That the pre-Christian, Mother Earth cults were more “environmentally friendly” than the Western mono-

theistic religions. Did you know how much we can learn by studying the history of Druid sex rituals with trees?

“The prevailing ideology of belief in prehistoric Europe and much of the world was based on the worship of a single earth goddess, who radiated harmony among all living things. . . .

“Its best documented tenet seems to have been a reverence for the sacredness of the earth—and a belief in the need for harmony among all living things; other aspects of the faith are less clear, and it is probable that many barbaric practices accompanied the more benign beliefs.

“. . . It seems obvious that a better understanding of a religious heritage preceding our own by so many thousands of years could offer us new insights into the nature of human experience.”

- That if you are a manufacturer, producer, or industrial worker, you are the moral equivalent of a drug addict.

“Industrial civilization's great engines of distraction still seduce us with a promise of fulfillment. Our new power to work our will upon the world can bring with it a sudden rush of exhilaration, not unlike the momentary ‘rush’ experienced by drug addicts when a drug injected into their bloodstream triggers changes in the chemistry of the brain. But that exhilaration is fleeting; it is not true fulfillment. And the metaphor of drug addiction applies in another way too. Over time, a drug user needs a progressively larger dose to produce an equivalent level of exhilaration; similarly, our civilization seems to require an ever increasing level of consumption.”—*Lance Rosen*