

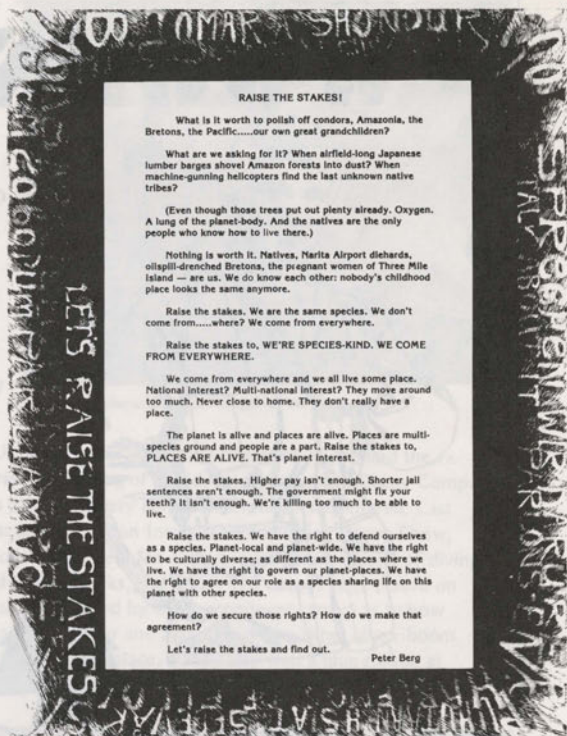
Review:
NEWS FROM UPSTREAM
NEW PUBLICATIONS
FROM
PLANET DRUM

Why do all their documents read the same? asks Michael Zwerin in the newest publication of Planet Drum Foundation, a short journalistic piece entitled *Devolutionary Notes*. *Devolutionary Notes* is anticipatory history writes Peter Berg in his introduction.

The Croatian Liberation Front is right wing, ETA in the Basque Country is Marxist. Catalanian Autonomists tend to be anarchists. American Indian autonomists look like hippies. Very confusing. Why do all their documents read the same? Zwerin puzzles out, as he travels to pockets of new nationalism within the borders of European states, seeking the answers.

In the last year a surprising number of new bio-regional publications have sprung up in the United States. They find their way here to northern New York State along the trail ROOTDRINKER has maintained. Each owes a debt to Peter Berg and his associates who have created a cluster of concerns, an image/reality, that has taken hold in America. They involve artists, writers, poets and importantly determined publishers. What are the special conditions of life here? How are they met by adaptations of and within the community? How can we learn from our native culture? These are the questions being asked. As an early Planet Drum communication, *Living Here*, presented it to the San Francisco Bay area peoples: *We begin where we are, at our personal moment of perception. We seek a sense of self-in-place first of all, and a community on a human scale, evolving to a community of creatures.*

Alexander Humboldt(1769-1859) first saw beyond the flat descriptive statement that customarily designated the habitat of each organism. The naturalist saw a community of creatures, saw the web of life, saw it's first clear development involving generalization and theory. Regional biotas, which seen scientifically involved broadly regional kinds of communities, were the special conditions that covered territories. We are separated from Humboldt's time by our knowledge of humankind's destructiveness. The awareness that fills the media with tales of chemical explosions, radiation leaks, and material hunger. So ethics, culture and human political realities define our regions and our loss of wilderness and increase our desire to return to our homeland. As the voices of new publications such as *Talking Leaves*, *Dry Country Journal*, *All Area*, *Foundationstones* and others begin the discovery of where they are at other concerns have become the news from Planet Drum. *I see ecoregions not as a revival of the past but, on the contrary, as brand new ethnic-cultural realities, even when they start from the old ones*, writes Maurise Girodias in *Raise the Stakes*, the newsletter of the Planet Drum Foundation.



By anticipating history Peter Berg and Planet Drum are adding their own creative push. They have begun living within an intellectual framework that attempts to interpolate the world and does a good job of it. New terms abound in their political writing. *Raise the Stakes*, their newsletter, is decentralist and can be equally factual and visionary. Since there seems to be such a following among other writers and editors the ideas found here often stay current. \$10. gets you a yearly membership including *Raise the Stakes*. *Devolutionary Notes* by Michael Zwerin is \$2.95 plus \$.50 postage and handling from Planet Drum Foundation, P.O. Box 31251, San Francisco, CA. 94131.

— Alan Casline, 7/29/80, Potsdam, N.Y.

