

HUEY JOHNSON

I'm Huey Johnson, President of the Resource Renewal Institute in San Francisco.

You don't need to reinvent the wheel. The social contract that the Dutch called their approach where they got industry cooperating with government, being open, having environmentalists playing their independent role would be a wonderful thing to do here. We have enough industries that are often damaging themselves by just sheer simple economic foci; they would be better off understanding, and they do understand, increasingly, that you know, if they only are driving for economic gains they're going to be tripping over their neighbors.

The Green Plan idea has fared very well in New Zealand—I've tracked it since then—and certainly in Holland. And the EU has taken the Dutch example, brought in the Dutch consultants, and they've put together their own plan for the EU, naming it something else. But basically they still have a comprehensive, integrated systemic approach to managing resources. And I see no reason that it's apt to die any time soon. It is becoming part of the EU operation. It gives them a tremendous economic advantage over us. And for people who don't think so, the EU is really taking care of the economy in a competitive way in their mind's eye. And they've really been successful. I recall when I first looked at the Euro, it was worth about 35 cents. Now it's a dollar thirty.

I think it's a very sellable idea and that's what the social contract is all about. So we would have a social contract underway, I would not, I would ask states, to come up with a plan based on, very similar to what the Dutch and New Zealand have done. It needn't conform precisely cause water levels in Florida, for instance, are two or three feet under the ground, and in California they may be 200 feet. So, we're a desert; they're a swamp. So the rules and our concerns, our priorities, are going to be different. You need to relate but you still have to have federal oversight. And in the case of the Dutch, New Zealand, and others, the federal government defines policy and then the regional government exists to start enacting it and the locals control decisions relating to individual problems—pollution, factory sighting, whatever it is. And that's working very well—and it would work here.”