

The final message of my dream is that we must realize that life is not about conquering other people or other frontiers, but about finding meaning in our own lives.

The California saga, in its negative sense, has been about escaping other places to conquer new frontiers. In treating other people, and the land itself, as alien objects to be possessed and “developed,” the frontier mentality can leave behind a trail of forgotten people and ruined landscapes.

The human price of our economic statistics should never be forgotten. Every one percent of unemployment in America, for example, is linked with 10,000 divorces.

For the majority who work, the price is similarly high. We seem to be always speeding up our lives and working harder in a futile attempt to find time for ourselves. We take unprecedented quantities of drugs in an effort to cope. The seven leading legal drugs in America include three for hypertension, two for ulcers, and two for cholesterol and angina .

The average working person has only 16 hours of leisure time each week, down from 26 hours only 20 years ago. With less time for ourselves, and less time for our children, is it any wonder that we are drowning in pathologies of desperation?

But there is a positive alternative to the frontier treadmill. It is the alternative of realizing that we are “at home,” the alternative of staying put, the alternative of the inner frontier within our own lives and our own communities. To practice what Jefferson called “ward government.” To become “happier and better,” in Lord Bryce’s words. To be about