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No. 1932 Free subscriptions at subscribe@fsfinalword.com Thur., Aug. 28, 2008

Cold new world



Before there was "1984," "Brave New World" or "Mad Max," there was the grandfather of all anti-utopian literature, Yevgeny Zamyatin's "We." In this influential novel from 1921, only 0.2% of the earth's population has survived a 200-year war that cut off all areas of the world from each other. The only food is a petroleum product. Centuries earlier, we, their forebears, are already "feeding" on oil, but there won't be enough of it to go around much longer. Energy Envoy Václav Bartuška told [Czech Business Weekly](#) that this planet is able to sustain fewer than 1bn people with the beautiful lifestyle we have. But 3bn want this lifestyle, he said, so things simply aren't going to stay as they are. We must understand, he added, that we are competing for limited resources with countries that understand perfectly the needs they have. What would Zamyatin draw from this? Perhaps that a new Cold War fought with pipelines instead of missiles risks being just as annihilating.



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