



# newsletter

Editor: K. Michael Benfield NEW BUILDINGS TRINITY ST COVENTRY Telephone 22

MARCH/APRIL 1975.

### DIARY

- 1) Birmingham PEOPLE meeting: 17 May 1975; Room 41 Friends Meeting House, Bull Street Birmingham. (Nr. Lewis' ). All area and local organisers and others invited to attend. Main topics for discussion will be Economic Policy and Social Welfare Policy.
- 2) National PEOPLE conference: 28/29 June. Lanchester Polytechnic, Coventry. Paid up party members only to attend. Will area contacts please note that they must advise all of their local people who will not receive direct notification. Main business will be Manifesto revisions and election of officers with ample time for social/free break and evening discussion. Fee to include all documents etc. £5.00 per delegate or £7.50 per couple sharing documents. Bookings (with fee) now please to Lesley Whittaker 60 Hertford Street, Coventry.
- 3) Nutritional Science and Health Education: One week course 12 - 20 April organised by The Nutritional Science Research Institute of England. Course fee £18 plus £2.90 for text book. Write/ring The Secretary, 6 Netherhall Gardens, London N.W.3. 01-435-7830.
- 4) The Conservation of National Resources: 12 and 13 April. Conference organised by F.O.E. and Nottingham Association of World Federalists. Cripps Hall of Residence, University Park, Nottingham. Residential inc. meals £3.50. Meals only £1.75. Bookings to F.O.E. Resources Conference, 10 Lamcote Grove, The Meadows, Nottingham.
- 5) Neglected Research and Social Priorities: 3 May 10.00 - 5.00. Open Forum, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London W.C.1. Brief proposals for contributions to: The Secretary (Spring Conference) Council for Science and Society, 3/4 St. Andrews Hill, London EC4V 5BY. Tickets by application 50p. Students etc. 25p.
- 6) Sarvodaya Peace Conference: Autumn 1975 will cover small scale decentralised, ecological society amongst other things. Enquiries to Satish Kumar, London School of Non violence, 2 Amen Court, London EC4.

### N.E.C. NOTES: (Meeting 23 March 1975 Liverpool)

Funds: Heated discussion on our requirements included observations that successful pressure groups ( F.O.E., Consoe.etal) all had paid full time officials from outset to ensure activity and results, and that in the main they all steer clear of the crucial, potentially difficult issues. This type of operation would require minimum £5,000 to start and election funds etc. C.R.L. expressed view that climate of public opinion only 5% for ecological movement of which PEOPLE received only 5% support. A.M.W. interpreted our role as to simply survive until opinion swings in our favour when currently pursued easier options abandoned. RESOLVED that funds only required to establish infrastructure and fight bye-election (£500 + £500) S.F. abstained, K.M.B. against.

Aurelio Feccei ( Club of Rome) has intimated they may agree to take part in proposed jointly sponsored conference in the Autumn.

Leeds meeting considered successful although mainly regional (see Leeds meeting). Agreed to contact "umbrella" organisation for "Get Britain Out" campaign but not to issue press release at present time.

Press etc. will be invited to future open meetings which are apparently proving more successful than similar meetings held by other political parties.

Offers of help continue to be received by Secretary for typing, corresponding, mailing etc.

Mitchell Prize: Official PEOPLE entry being submitted and several by members individually.

Conservation News: have agreed to our following up Margaret Lows-Smith's article on politics and conservation.

Correspondence/Enquiries continue to be received from abroad. Particularly note worthy is one from Birgit Lange-Olive Crona (world's who's who of women) who is disseminating photo-copies of PEOPLE manifesto in Sweden, and Dept. of Animal Ecology, University of Lund, Norway, and Values Party of New Zealand.

attending meetings of local associations, organisations, and making PEOPLE known as well as gathering impressions and information for the party and making useful contributions to proceedings (shown by the requests for further attendances, information on PEOPLE, etc.). The following reports are fairly representative.

ANTI-NUKE campaign: The petition, "We call upon the British Government to halt the building of any more nuclear power stations which there is no absolutely safe method of dispersing of the long lived radio-active wastes", was handed in to No. 10 Downing Street at 11.00 o'clock on Saturday 22nd March by six people from the demonstration., Irene Coats, chairman Conservative Society; Peter Main, young Liberals; Dr. Kit Fedler; Professor Kibble; Diana Heeks and a daughter of Jane Pink. About 90 people attended the demo' altogether. The petition was signed by some 8,900 people throughout the country.

A meeting was held at 9 Poland Street in the afternoon to discuss further action on the subject. We put in a word for PEOPLE and the need to work together on issues of this nature. This was unanimously agreed on, even though most of those present hadn't heard of the Party before.

An interesting lead from the magazine "Undercurrents" (which you probably know about) at 275 Finchley Road, London N.W.3. (phone 01-794-2750) who said they would publish anything we might like to write about in connection with PEOPLE. Chris Hutton-Squire was the chap we spoke to.: Elizabeth Davenport. (Worce and Birmingham)

F.O.E. Birmingham Conference: Within the dismal surroundings of Aston University there lies a little oasis of sweet reason and peace known as the Martin Luther King Centre. It was here that about 36 Midland Region F.O.E. (Friends of the Earth) members and representatives of allied organisations held their conference on 22nd March.

Chairman Tom piloted the delegates, from as far afield as Cardiff, Aberystwyth and Nottingham, skilfully through the 5 1/2 hour meeting. Much discussion was given to the Allotments Campaign with emphasis on making available derelict land and land awaiting development and surplus space where house owners had large un-or partly-used gardens, bearing in mind the legal aspects. Lawrence Mills (Henry Doubleday Research Association dir/sec) Fertility Garden scheme was mentioned as this is similar to the aims of F.O.E.'s Allotments Campaign. F.O.E.'s regional groups have been very active in pressing local authorities to co-operate.

Energy production by its various means was discussed, with possibly some method of electricity production directly or indirectly (by producing hydrogen) from the water motion of the sea - plenty of it and its harnessing treads on no conservationist toes, unlike Barrage schemes - as the most promising wind hydro solar and geo-thermal energy sources, received a passing motion.

Before the refreshments of delicious flapjack and wholemeal bread made and produced by Lyn and Kay, we had time to discuss the Bottle campaign. In an effort to bring attention to the wastage of non-returnable bottles, several groups organised an assault on selected targets, i.e. certain supermarkets, to which hundreds of bottles and jars of every description were carried in in boxes, removed and placed neatly on the shelves to avoid any injury through blocking gangways. Standardisation into very few sizes and shapes is what is required to facilitate the economic return and collection of bottles and jars. The help of the press was appreciated.

Cardiffs' Eco-Street project is a blueprint for similar activities throughout the country. Not only does it make F.O.E. known, but it helps individuals who would otherwise be unable to redecorate, insulate or otherwise maintain their property. The proceeds of weekly waste paper collections facilitate this work.

The meeting was nicely concluded by Lyn and Kay taking ten of us home to an excellent vegetarian meal.

Hope to be riding alongside you on the Sunday in July when we expect 10,000 cyclists will cycle through London to draw attention to inadequate facilities for the energy-conserving bicycle.

ALTERNATIVE SOCIETY Politics weekend: 30 + delegates of all ages and backgrounds attended. Stan Windass (A.S. Organiser) had circulated informative, questioning and provocative papers on variety of relevant subjects beforehand. Very informal arrangements led (sensibly) to formation of separate discussion groups on areas of main interest 1) Industry, Housing and Employment. 2) General 3) Politics and Government 4) Education. Unfortunately the free wheeling nature of the discussions, with the exception of group 3, tended to throw up complex arguments or irrelevancies and prevented any real conclusions, suggestions or commitments being made by any groups except Politics and Government. Nevertheless the report back stage showed that a genuine and fervent concern was held by everyone most of whom seemed to admit to a frustration with their own inadequacies. Paradoxically people express a dislike for direction etc., yet without it fail themselves. A new style of group leadership is clearly called for within the movement generally, (which fondly enough is one of the techniques being developed and taught by management consultants, colleges, F.A. etc.). However much credit is due to Stan Windass and A.S. for the valuable work which they are doing in allowing people to experiment for themselves to find new (or old?) ways of doing things and working together. Great interest was shown in The PEOPLE party by everyone attending. Stan very kindly gave me the opportunity to tell everyone about our activities which lead to all of our (3) representatives there being continually questioned in the break times in the pub and at the party which was held on the Saturday evening in the beamed attic rooms of the 15th Century mansion (Henry the VIII and Ann Boleyn slept here!) - K. Michael Benfield.

Energy Options Conference: 5 PEOPLE delegates attended this invaluablely informative conference at the Charring Cross Hotel on Saturday 1st March. This middle class gathering also attracted a number of young ecological activists, and some liberals. Even the NRDC talent scout was fiddling with something in his pocket, presumably his cheque book. Walt Patterson of Friends of the Earth, always worth a listen, talked about the dis-economies of scale and the impossibility of using several thousand megawatts of waste heat near a large power station. Five or ten smaller power stations however, could each keep a community warm. Walt's doubts about nuclear power are too well known to repeat, and in fact he didn't repeat them - or only very briefly.

Hugh Sharman of Conservation Tools and Technology Ltd talked about wind energy, and came over rather non-committally. This was probably due to contradiction between what he was doing - selling wind equipment in self-sufficiency - and what he was saying - that it's not economic unless you live somewhere jolly windy and jolly remote.

Dr. Brian Brinkworth confirmed the impression that all the research on solar energy has already been done, and that only marginal improvements in efficiency are likely in future, short of a price breakthrough in direct conversion to electricity.

Most neglected of the 'alternative sources' is probably geothermal energy, perhaps because it doesn't lend itself to backyard production. Christopher Armstead must be the British expert on geothermal, and he created a great deal of enthusiasm. The hot centre of the earth is so big that in principle its energy could support a world-wide high-energy society for centuries, thermal pollution and manmade earthquakes permitting. And Armstead believes that with the new techniques of melt-drilling, which means that no steel liners have to be put down the borehole; and rock-shattering, which might enable rocks anywhere to be made porous, geothermal energy will eventually be available everywhere, and not just where Nature has provided running h & c. But risk capital is apparently hard to find for geothermal energy, which is puzzling: surely nuclear power and offshore oil are equally-risky activities by any definition?

Peter Chapman of the Open University, proponent of the theory that nuclear programmes can eat more energy than they produce, painted two contrasting scenarios for Britain: a high-energy one and a low-energy one. His energy analysis is brilliant and he can tell you how many kilowatt-hours go to make a loaf of bread. But his economics take little account of the existence of rich people and poor people. This led him to the absurd conclusion that a high-growth society (assumed capitalist since no change mentioned) can be relatively free from social problems, and only has to cope with the

We were closely questioned by large numbers of people interested in our activities and the possibility of PEOPLE members being invited to the next Liberal Party assembly was mentioned. The Oxford University Survival Society have sent an invitation to address them in May and there is an opportunity for us to take part in a Granada T.V. series. - K. Michael Benfield.

---

THINKING ABOUT LAND (4 April Ewell Technical College) A well presented and attended (around 180 delegates) day, even if a little specialist. Lesley Blake (Barrister) covered the history of the land tenure with fair emphasis on feudalism, Roger Fincham (Stockbroker and Liberal Candidate in Herefordshire) related Natural Law to land tenure illustrating mankind's relationship with the land as being distinctly different to that with the other elements or commodities/manufacturers. Vic Blundell (Economics lecturer and United Committee for Taxation of Land Values) covered the way in which later day economic history/activity has influenced land user and holding agriculturally, industrially and residentially; making out a good case for taxation on land values (site value). Dr. Anthony Deavin (Lecturer in Soil Biology, Soil Association, Henry Doubleday, Community Land Trust, etc.) attempted a little unsuccessfully to inter-relate the foregoing topics with his own contentions that man is a land animal needing direct contact with it and the benefits of intensive agri/horti-culture, and hinted at one or two areas of investigation for possible solutions.

The chairman then made time for those groups present, of which PEOPLE Party was one to briefly present themselves. He then wound up the open forum session with the question "What does it mean to 'return to the land?'" which was still relevant even though the day had been spent on the subject. - K. Michael Benfield.

---

SECRETARY'S NOTES Expanding influence of the party has necessitated secretary Clive Lord co-opting two Regional Secretaries. Please refer all new enquiries/correspondence to them. They are:

Damon Thompson, 2 Elm Row, Edinburgh, Scotland EH7 4AA.

Sue Badger, 36 Asby Road, Asby, Workington Cumbria - All new English administrative counties north of a line from Southport to Scarborough (including new Lancs. and North Yorks., but not West Yorks, Merseyside or Manchester).

NEW MEMBERS: The fact that you are receiving this newsletter indicates that you are on the list of paid-up members. Anyone requesting specific acknowledgement please send S.A.E. to Clive Lord.

Supplies of duplicated explanatory literature on PEOPLE are available free of charge from Clive Lord. Send S.A.E. with your request to enable you to distribute these at other meetings etc.

Manifestos available from Lesley Whittaker, 69 Hertford Street, Coventry @ 50p each. Buy half a dozen or more for sale to interested people, contacts from other gatherings, local rates groups etc.

---

BRANCH NEWS

Liverpool recently held a very successful public showing of the film "Limits to Growth". 35+ people attended, raised many questions and some decided to join us as a result. Simple advertising by hand produced posters around Liverpool established this success which Liverpool recommend as a good mobiliser. Public collection at the meeting all but paid for costs incurred. For further information write (S&E) to Peter Murrey, 6 South Way, Liverpool 16.

North London Group have just held their first meeting at Dorothy Haywards to discuss policies and manifesto. Report awaited. They are also hoping to contribute to funds from the winding up of the survival account.

Cumbria are receiving quite a surprising degree of interest and recruits as a result of publicity drive and T.V. coverage. This thriving group now offers typing/secretarial service to all other PEOPLE groups

respectively to provide an excellent reference source. The purpose of this is to use the political opponents meeting to promote public awareness of the PEOPLE Party and of Environmental/Ecological issues in general. It can also be used to discredit the present social economic system and its representatives by confrontation. This superb 8 page booklet is available to anyone either within or without the party, price 45p from David J. Tolley, 15 Lower Cape, Warwick. (S.A.E. please)

Dorking: The schoolboy brothers Francis and Andrew Miller are feeling a bit cut off and would welcome contact/communication. Their address is Fulklands, Harrow Road, West, Dorking, Surrey. This doesn't mean they've been idle; to the contrary they have been getting good response from Clergymen and suggest that other branches could try this also. They are now intending a campaign on this approach in the Dorking area.

Coventry: Mary Reed has been making inroads with the Rate-payers action group and the Local Authority on waste (paper) collection. Michael Benfield has established rapport with the Cathedral who are increasingly concerned over matters ecological, attending and addressing various seminars/meetings held by them on related topics.

---

LAMENT for the passing of "Toward Survival" which ceased publication for financial reasons with their last (March) issue. Started in June '72 as a discussion journal hoping to see the emergence of radical ideas for the sustainable, non growth society, editor/publisher and early days printer Keith Hudson subsidised it out of his own pocket. Laterly he has been aided in this by the efforts of Tim Bouquet.

Anyone who has seen just one or two issues of this sturdy little magazine will no doubt agree that Keith more than achieved his aim. For his efforts and those of his assistants (not forgetting his wife June and family) and to all contributors (Margaret Law-Smith especially), everyone in the alternatives movement has cause to be grateful. We in PEOPLE render particular thanks for the support and publicity which T.S. afforded us.

---

WOOLNICH BYE-ELECTION now pending following death of Labour member. Is there a local or near local PEOPLE party member who would like to a) be candidate b) act as agent c) contact other independents etc who would stand on a PEOPLE ticket? If so please write Clive Lord who would also be glad to receive other offers of help for this fight.

---

CAN YOU HELP

- a) By getting adverts for The PEOPLE Party in your local newspaper, fringe journal/publication, corner shop?
- b) By acting as an official correspondent to local/national media on behalf of the party?
- c) By attending meetings of other organisations as a delegate, mixing and spreading the word?
- d) By offering yourself as an official party speaker to attend outside meetings, engagements i) in your area ii) anywhere else?
- e) By offering any skills/service/assistance to other members/groups?
- f) By sending a regular weekly/monthly contribution to party funds and/or by collecting events locally or else-where e.g. Open Forum, Film evening, Multi-group conference, Petitions, Writing/Preparing leaflets, etc. etc.?

If so please write to me setting out clearly your preferences and time/facilities/funds available (Editor) N.B. please extend this request to your friends and family.

---

N.E.C. MEMBERS:

- A.M. Whittaker: Chairman, 69 Hertford Street, Coventry. Tel: 22586  
A.L. Whittaker: Treasurer, 69 Hertford Street, Coventry. Tel: 22586  
F.M. Allen: Manifesto Revisions, 16 West Park Road, Leeds. Tel: 664669  
S. Farr: Fund Raising, 29 Laurel Road, Liverpool 7.  
C. Lord: Secretary, 44 Upper Batley Low Lane, Batley, Yorks. Batley 472767  
K.M. Benfield: News Letter, New Buildings, Trinity Street, Coventry. Tel: 22048

BANK ACCOUNT : is held for all party funds by Lesley Whittaker at Barclays Bank, High Street, Coventry; in the name of PEOPLE. Cheques etc. should just be made out to PEOPLE, or if you prefer "THE PEOPLE PARTY".

Ecological Government. Peter Allen led this discussion. He said the main requirement of an ecologically sound society was to allow relatively small self-supporting populations to be the primary unit of control. He envisaged these being coordinated into 11 provinces, or regions (9 in England). Not only would the functions of local government be limited to those, such as foreign policy, which could not be local, but national politicians would have to serve at regional and local level in rotation. There would be a single election for all levels every 4 years. This would avoid the lack of ability at council level which resulted from everyone with ability wanting to be a MP. The main point would be that power would come from below, not above.

In line with this, the Civil Service would be reorganised along local lines, and there would be much greater provision of 'watchdog' facilities - instead of a low-key Commission, he should be a major feature, with an inspectorate which included elected members as well as employees. There would be a two-part commission including an inspectorate, and an advisory and research section. The inspectorate would be quasi-judicial and quasi-auditors, with a short term of office to avoid corruption. Peter summarised the long-term aims as to achieve by progressive modification a constitution in which small self-governing communities can co-exist harmoniously.

On finance, Peter said that taxes should be localised - the national government should have to indent from local councils, not vice-versa. He also believed that the House of Lords and the Royal Assent should be abolished, arguing that the 'watchdog' function was better served, as at local level, by less cumbersome methods. The findings of any commission of enquiry for example should be published in their entirety.

Peter agreed with Tony Whitaker that too many managerial decisions were made the subject of legislation, and Clive Lord suggested that this was the result of sheer size. Peter Allen said that consistency for instance was should not be enforced nationally, but Tony Whitaker pointed out the problem of whether or not to 'mail out' councils who got into difficulties as a result of foolish local policies, although such a decision would in practice take the form of 'judgment by peers', which he thought was fair.

Bill Badger asked Peter to relate these ideas to ecology. Peter said that smallness was important - ecological limitations demanded it. Clive Lord said he did not want to see the advantages that size did confer thrown out unnecessarily e.g. greater flexibility in the allocation of resources, or the possibility of redistribution from affluent to poorer areas. Peter said that the provincial boundaries he envisaged would prevent too great a disparity.

Clive Lord said that whilst he agreed with Peter's ideas from a local point of view, his questions there would tend to be a clash of rival ideologies, as in the past. He felt (in contrast to the manifesto) that provide it was removable, there should (as now) be a system which tended to give the field to a specific ideology, rather than a not Government of National Unity. Peter Allen doubted the relevance of *Clive's reply* in view of the risk of economic collapse. Clive foresaw rather a continued swing of the political pendulum, but in a new direction - from growth to stability instead of left to right. Mr. Jones (new member, Sheffield) supported this, pointing out that our waxy success in averting a crisis would actually generate the opportunity for our opponents' success. Ian Masson (new member, North Yorks) felt however that a NW would give personal views a better chance.

... on his Foreign Policy Manifesto draft (copies available from Peter Allen - S.M.S.) he went on to ask that did we need by self-sufficiency - could this not mean anything up to EEC level? Bacon admitted that as a result of thinking through the implications of resource shortages etc, he had changed from being an opponent to being a supporter of British membership.

Tony Whitaker pointed out that the EEC (incl. UK) was self-sufficient in food, but against the UK alone being self-sufficient. He pointed out that the true position was a good deal worse than these commonly quoted figures - it ignored the dependence of the UK on imported feedstuffs and fertilizers. Peter Allen felt that these advantages of membership were a bad reason for staying in - it could only allow us to postpone the eventual reckoning.

On the question of sovereignty, Clive Lord expressed a belief that all nations would eventually have to surrender to some sort of world authority, even if it had no more than a judicial, 'fair play' function, and he wondered if Europe might be a step in this direction. Tony Whitaker thought not - the Commonwealth would have been better.

Opinions were divided on the effectiveness of the EEC on pollution control. Bacon admitted that he was in favour of the EEC as a tool rather than as a concept. There was <sup>no</sup> discussion on whether EECs would be more effective in aiding its views on a UK or a European basis.

Bacon admitted that almost all current EEC policies were contrary to those of E.U.R.I.C. Particular concern was expressed over agriculture. Tony Whitaker pointed out that productivity per acre was going to become the most important, and Peter Allen said that per energy input the garden was the best - the EEC had the wrong policies for that. John Beveridge (prospective candidate, Walsall North) pointed out that all the conventional arguments for Europe were pro-thrust, and he did not want EECs to be associated with that. Bill had per asked how the EEC could be reconciled with the concept "small is beautiful". Peter Allen pointed out that the morning's discussion would have to be extended on an international scale - he looked forward to eventual co-ordination in a decentralized EEC.

Finally, on a motion "that this meeting uphold the statement in the current E.U.R.I.C. Manifesto on the EEC, this to be interpreted in the June referendum as a vote against membership" the voting was 17 for, 1 against, with 2 abstentions.

manifesto revision (meeting contd.)

Joyce Allen asked for guidance on the Education draft, since the working party majority were recommending a compulsory school leaving age of 15, in contrast to the 14 in the current manifesto, for 3 reasons:  
1. It is too young to start work and face the world  
2. A school leaving age of 14 would aggravate the unemployment  
3. The present failure of the present position was in the system, not the principle of the young people. The Labour party envisaged a more positive use of the 2 years, with community-based schools, and greater participation in e.g. rugby, and sailing for the school. Peter Allen cited the example of a school in Manchester where these things were done - it had 2,000 pupils. Ian Hanson said he liked the proposals, but still had per felt they were too radical enough, referring to the 15 year olds. Mr. Jones said that there was a danger that some of the proposals would not be tested. Kenley Whitaker pointed out that the manifesto already introduced a notice at 14, and Clive Lord suggested that the proposal should allow a 14 year old to leave school, if the parent wished. It was agreed that the proposal should be referred to the working party for their consideration, and that the proposal should be referred to the working party for their consideration, and that the proposal should be referred to the working party for their consideration. (2)

- Economy labels - printed with PEOPLE logo £1/100 if sufficient interest.
- Anti-consumer Christmas Campaign: Volunteers to promote this req'd
- Rates Revolution: Feedback please on your activities.
- Increased NEC membership: Names of anyone interested in serving to Clive Lord.
- Support for other organisations: Feedback please on your attendances/impressions
- Towards an agreed code: Your thoughts, suggestions on a unifying creed please.
- Newsletter assistance: SAE's or stamps please + orders for extra copies to sell.

CORRESPONDENCE

Open letter in reply to Mr. Abery (February Newsletter).

Dear Mr. Abery,

The way in which you received the Manifesto was different from most. The literature which is sent to all new enquirers deals with your points about sponsorship and a statement that we are a political party..

On your most serious point, on how PEOPLE is to progress towards power, consensus has not yet crystallized. I can only spell out my own ideas in more detail, and say that I am not entirely alone in these views. Most people seem to visualise only two ways to achieve the 'ecological' revolution - personal action and example, or at most pressure-group activity on the one hand, or dictatorship on the other. A slight variation on this is a hope that democratically elected politicians, with the collusion of the Civil Service, will either renage on a quite different Manifesto, or manage some sort of 'con trick' on a growth-orientated public.

Fortunately there is a middle group which will I believe prove both quicker and safer than either; a period of 'education' (how long I decline to guess) during which specific ecological scenarios are put to the public, alongside an exposure of how the perplexing day to day problems are related to the structural defects of a growth economy. Eventually enough will come to accept (i.e. vote for) a politically imposed solution, provided they can see that it applies to everyone else simultaneously, i.e. they do not feel they are being asked to make an individual sacrifice. Of course the positive, non material trade-offs we can offer will help.

Clive Lord, 44 Upper Batley Low Lane, Batley, West. Yorks.

Dear Sir,

I am sorry for the delay in answering your letter of February 19th, but I have been in hospital having a bad leg put right, and my office (trying not to bother me with correspondence) has only just forwarded on my mail.

I must say that I am in agreement with many of your aims, and admire the enterprising way you have set about your uphill task.

I am afraid that it must be uphill because to succeed requires organisation and that is a costly business. Apart from the letter columns and the phone-in programmes most of the media is closed to you too!

This is just a short acknowledgement of your letter. Please keep me informed of your progress and actions.

Lord Lyons of Brighton, 3 Clifton Terrace, Brighton (P.R. advisor to Harold Wilson/Cuba Party)

Dear Sir,

Please could you put something in the next newsletter about Lifestyle. In a leaflet about it I got today, it says "Lifestyle is about:-

- 1) Living more simply than others may simply live, recognising that our greed denies other's need; criticising our own Lifestyle before we criticise that of others.
- 2) Deciding what to buy, how much to spend and what to do without in the light of the urgent need to conserve the Earth's resources and to distribute them more fairly.
- 3) Not being led on by advertisements into buying what we do not in fact want; taking what opportunities we can of challenging wasteful packaging and built in obsolescence; and it goes on.

Copies of the leaflet can be got from The Dean of Britol, The Deanery, 20 Charlotte Street, Bristol B51 5PZ. It seems very good to me.

Francis Miller, Falklands, Harrow Road, West, Dorking, Surrey.



I would like to offer this statement by Illich in Celebration of Awareness. Although it is completely different from the one you published, I think it expresses what we are trying to do very well. It is called "A Call to Celebration" and was written by him and two friends.

This call to face facts rather than deal in illusions,

- to like change rather than rely on engineering.
- is an attempt to re-introduce the word 'celebration' into ordinary English.

I and many others, known and unknown to me, call upon you;  
To celebrate our joint power to provide all human beings with the food, clothing and shelter they need to delight in living.

To discover together with us, what we must do to use mankind's power to create the humanity, the dignity and the joyfulness of each one of us.

To be responsibly aware of your personal ability to express your true feelings and to gather us together in their expression.

I hope this is of interest to you. With best wishes,  
Francis Miller, Falklands, Harrow Road West, Dorking, Surrey.

X  
EXTRACTS DIGEST

Dust Bowl Returning?

Many Texas farmers fear that the 'Dust Bowl' of the nineteen thirties is making a comeback. The Texas High Plains, covering about 35,000 square miles, is one of the richest areas in food and fiber in the U.S. But last year wheat in the region yielded only half of a good year's produce. Adverse weather is one cause. In addition, some say that the Ogallala aquifer, a vast underground lake irrigated the plains, is drying up. H. Burleigh, director of the Texas Water Development Board, says: "The specter of global want is becoming a disturbing potential, not just a matter of cocktail hour speculation."

Drip Irrigation

"Drip irrigation" (used for some time in Israel) is now being successfully employed in the U.S. Results? Southern California avocados, lemons, grapefruit are surprisingly grown on 45-degree slopes; grapes are cultivated in an area where water is scarce. Water is brought to the fields via underground mains, pumped through filters and mixed with fertilizer. Then it flows through polyvinyl chloride pipes to be slowly released on crops. The method greatly reduces the amount of both water and fertilizer used.

Supporting Business

Efficiency and flexibility have put America's big corporations at the center of the western way of life, says editor John Cobbs in Business Week. "In the last five years, however, something has gone badly wrong," he writes. "Caught in an explosive inflation and wracked by two painful recessions, an increasing number of giant corporations can no longer claim either flexibility or efficiency. They have lost control of their costs, lost their access to capital, misjudged their markets, and diversified into lines of business they do not understand."

The magazine concludes: "The giant corporations have become so important to the U.S. economy that government does not dare let one go under."

"Doomsday Decade"

"Our time is no different from any other" - at least that is what some people say. Max Lerner, the syndicated columnist, disagrees.

"One thing we are certain of is that this decade is like no other <sup>the</sup> world has known, in its staggering revelations of corruption in high places, its conjunction of new and unexpected crises in energy, food and other resources, and its danger spots of possible ravaging wars", he writes. "None of us can ignore the onrush of brutal events which makes this the Doomsday Decade and will at best send it down in history as the Survival Seventies."

As long as we countenance violence, consider personal gain to be more important than equity..... and are willing to bend the law for ourselves in the pursuit of wealth, power and personal gratification ..... we will have a society receptive to illicit enterprise generally."

#### Freakish Weather

World food reserves have dropped to less than a month's supply, the lowest point since World War II. Yet, during the year, the world's population increased by nearly 80,000,000 people! Such a tight food situation means higher prices for your groceries... .. The key point being made by weather experts is that the weather has become more freakish, that is, more variable and extreme, with more frequent floods, droughts, cold and hot spells. All that is bad for growing crops.

Joseph Fletcher, of the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C., states that there is "clear evidence that generally unfavorable changes are in progress."

Similarly, a group of weather experts concluded:

"The direction of climate changes indicates major crop failures almost certainly within the decade. This, coinciding with a period of almost non-existent grain reserves, can be ignored only at the risk of great suffering and mass starvation"...

... In the past, crop losses due to droughts in lands such as India were, to a degree, made up by purchases or gifts from food surpluses in the United States. One reason for such surpluses was that, until a few years ago, weather conditions were very favourable there. But now government weather scientist James McQuigg says: "The probability of getting another 15 consecutive years that good is about one to 10,000."

... Many scientists feel that human systems may be at least partly responsible for the unfavourable weather! For one thing, man is upsetting the natural balance in many areas by stripping forests and fields of their vegetation, exposing the soil to sun, wind and cold. And when that happens, rainfall often decreases...

#### Vilcabamba - Where time slows down

Vilcabamba, is a mountain village of south Ecuador....

... The temperature at Vilcabamba hovers at 66 or 67 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the whole year. Naturally such a climate results in profuse vegetation...

... The oldest inhabitant of this mountain village is Arcangel Carpio, said to be 126 years old. Arcangel is a large man with European features. His face is surprisingly free of wrinkles for a man of his age. He recalls simple things, such as the days when he and his father would take long walks through the woods looking for berries and wild goats to milk.

Does a special diet account for Arcangel's long life? Apparently not; he enjoys ordinary things like potatoes, hominy, beans, lentils and yucca. Residents of Vilcabamba also regularly eat eggs, cheese and milk, but not much meat. The lifestyle in Vilcabamba, as the food, is simple. The workday begins at sunup and lasts until nightfall, when each one returns home to rest...

... Longevity is common at Vilcabamba. An amazing 16.4 percent of its inhabitants are over sixty years of age, while the figure is only 4.6 for the rest of rural Ecuador...

... What accounts for the great ages reached by inhabitants of Vilcabamba? A number of factors are involved. One is evidently their peaceful way of life. World news headlines cause no stir here. According to one survey, only seventy-five people in the whole valley had radios. These people work hard at manual labour and their principal interest is in family life at home.

As a diet, the inhabitants of this valley have a low-calorie intake, averaging about 1,200 per day, with the highest being 1,360. They also eat fresh fruit daily. But, beyond this, their food is quite common. Smoking and drinking of alcoholic beverages are moderate among older people.

The water supply may be another factor in long life at Vilcabamba. Here the waters

was nearly equal to that of distilled water."

Clean air also plays its part in longevity. Vilcabamba lies at the entrance of the Amazon jungle. One scientist estimated that 50 per cent of the earth's pure oxygen is produced by the immense forest...

... Could it be that a more tranquil life-style along with hard physical work would solve many of the health problems of today's urbanized society?...

#### A new science of life

The winners of this year's New Scientist Schools' essay competition are typical of the morose response of most children to the theme "If scientists ruled the world..." There was no need for an "if" because the children think that scientists already do rule much of it. That being the case, they are on paper fairly hopeless about their chances of leading fruitful adult lives...

...The first prize winner, David Bannister, aged 16, sums it up: "The specialised functions of a community are carried out more efficiently but there is a lack of complete vision.... There is no balanced development for mankind."

... In a small office, full of adults, they were asked to re-enact the presentation repeatedly under the glare of television arc lights.

Important media-men with microphones kept asking them whether they thought the world could survive. But they kept their cool under this pressure better than they had in print. "Taking the scientific attitude," replied David Bannister judiciously, "I have insufficient data to know whether the situation will come out to the good or not"....

#### Industrial Slavery Can Now End by John Papworth.

... The people of Switzerland have shown themselves to be generations ahead of the rest of the world. We tend to accept it as normal that local government can only perform those functions decreed to it by the national government. In Switzerland the national government can only perform those functions (and none other) as decreed by its constituent cantons. It is for this reason that the Swiss claim that theirs is not a country but a confederation. Since it is not a country it cannot even have a foreign policy, it therefore abides by a strict rule of neutrality in the affairs of its neighbours and refuses to have any truck with membership of the United Nations.

But the Swiss experience points to one area where it has failed to implement the working practice of its political democracy; that is in its economic institutions. Huge national and multinational concerns (not least in the field of banking and finance) are subverting Swiss political democracy simply because with their vast advertising budgets they are able to establish the phoney values of consumerism. It is these values which are being used to establish the terrain of debate in the political arena and thus pre-empting political decisions even before they come to be discussed.

... It is doubtful if a more blatant and insidious threat to liberty has appeared in modern times than that of the giant national or multinational corporations. And it is part of the world-wide recession of the so-called 'left' from radicalism, and even from reality, that the appearance of these monster complexes is greeted with an almost bovine indifference. Trade Unions bargain with them, so-called socialist governments sign lucrative contacts with them, socialist journals discuss earnestly what part they should play, and nowhere is their existence, or their right to exist, challenged at all. Yet it is these complexes, often with budgets outstripping those of national governments, and which are expanding and developing at a prodigious rate, which are in the vanguard of the gadarone rush to consumerism which is sweeping the world, exhausting its resources, polluting the environment and promoting an incalculable threat to the freedom of the citizen and the very existence of civilisation. Seldom in all history has so much power been encom-passed in the hands of so few private people answerable to nobody but themselves. And still we are only at the earliest reaches of this development, a development, it is not difficult to foresee, which may well end in virtual control of the world by a consortium comprised of a mere handful of such giants...

The Destruction of local Governments...Politically it is possible to note a similar

the measures taken by the governments of Britain, Italy, France and other countries to 'reform' local government. Reform is simply a bare-faced euphemism for destruction, for what has been effected here is the abolition of the smallest units of government by grouping the powers they formerly exercised into the mass of much larger units more susceptible to central government fiat and control. ...

... Freedom is not meant as an abstract principle which may or may not come down to earth in the form of a 'free' election every five years, an election in which rival party hacks contend for the privileges, the perks and the general pay off from appointment by the chief party hack to one public office or another. Rather is freedom seen as a reality to be lived in terms of making decisions in concert with others about nine tenths of the matters commonly at present usurped by central governments, matters about schools and education - in themselves one of the most vital aspects of freedom - about the structure, staffing and operation of all kinds of local government services, especially the police, about the use of language, forms of dress, patterns of sexuality, means of communication and so on and so on.

#### 'Bomb the Headquarters'

Even now many socialists of the old school seem quite unable to grasp what this revolution is all about and how it is tipping the old concepts of progress through mass-party structures, mass party headquarters, mass party leaders and mass party discipline into the dustbins of history. ..

... It is becoming increasingly evident that the political and economic arrangements of the big units, far from working at all, are quite simply breaking down. Indeed the future of the big powers is now being freely prognosticated in terms of the total collapse of their paper currencies, massive unemployment, widespread social unrest and rebellion and greater and greater measures of repression and coercion by the state, itself largely a machine of war...

... When that link is established (between deferring ideologies) we may expect the world to change and the prospects of a new and more hopeful phase in human affairs to open up. This will not happen because people want it, even though they do; it will result from the unremitting efforts of a small minority (as always!) to establish those organisational links and those working structures imbued with a clear-sighted momentum towards objectives which at present are so patently lacking. The need now, as never before, is for organising and building, to lay that groundwork of structure which will help to make the Fourth World a reality. 'Our lack is nothing but our leave'

[The fourth World is the world of small nations, the colonies within states, the Mohawks, the Basques, the Lapps, the Welsh. Those who want decentralised, small-scale forms of organisation and the fulfilment of human values. Editor.]

#### Programme pour une nouvelle culture

Rene Dumont, professor at the agronomic institute of Paris-Grignon, was nominated by more than a hundred ecological societies as their candidate for the Presidency of France in 1974. These are extracts from his election manifesto.

... There are Solutions:- ...

- The primacy of well-being over the accumulation of goods, and the quality of life over the standard of living.
- Equilibrium between production, consumption, population and resources.
- Transference to the whole population, men and women, within the framework of their communities, of the power to organise themselves, make their own decisions, as well as the power to acquire the necessary information.
- Respect for technical and cultural diversity, of human beings and of social groups.
- the use of decentralised production techniques, non-polluting and based on renewable resources as, for example, solar energy (soft technology).
- Decentralisation of power at all geographical levels (regions, departments, communes, quarters).
- Obligatory information to associations about the decisions which concern them, and access to the decision-making procedures.
- The possibility of legal intervention by the association before the harmful projects are begun.
- The setting up of local means of communication which will allow everyone to express

- By social investments (creches, hospitals) the most productive of all.
- By changing industrial production to more durable, useful and less polluting products. This is especially possible for the motor car.
- By altering agricultural policy so as not to favour the moneylenders. Confining of subsidies to activities which do not destroy the natural equilibria.
- By reorientation and development of services such as preventive medicines, state education, permanent citizenship to the foreign workers, the protection of nature and the struggle against pollution...

#### The Redistribution of Wealth

Democratising education, increasing low wages, helping the aged... is not enough.

The redistribution of wealth involves above all a move towards;

- Greater equality in the conditions and environment of work, housing and health.
- Greater equality for all in quality and standard of life - a fairer relationship between the prices of agricultural and industrial products.
- Financially it requires a complete re-thinking of the distribution of the national wealth.
- Giving the major part of public money to the local communities.
- Economising by avoiding waste.
- Giving priority to social spending for the betterment of the environment of the underprivileged.
- A generalised tax on pollutions.

But don't wait for things to change by themselves. Only you have the power to change them.

They have not told you this. But it is true.

- There is no life left in the Baltic Sea; soon there will be none in the Mediterranean.
- Each time you take your car away for the weekend, France has to sell a gun to one of the petrol-producing countries of the Third World.
- Intoxication by exhaust gases and tobacco cause as many road accidents as drunkenness.
- In order to travel 10,000 kilometers, one has to devote 1,500 hours to one's car (earning the money to buy and maintain it, driving time, waiting in traffic jams, hospitalisation). This comes to 6 kilometers an hour, the rate of a pedestrian.
- Winter 1974, Morlaix flooded: the hedges which held the rain in the soil having been destroyed. Lisbon and Florence had already suffered the same fate.
- Each year 100,000 hectares of agricultural land vanish under concrete.
- The Maine-Montparnasse building consumes as much electricity as a town of 25,000 inhabitants.
- According to the technocrats, 80% of the French people will live in the towns in 1985. According to a recent poll, 70% of the French people want to live in the country.

But Have They Told You That....

- Domestic heating and production of hot water by solar energy is practicable now.
- The recycling of aluminium requires eight times less energy than its production from ores.
- The richest beds of tin are the rubbish dumps of the big towns.
- The train uses four times less energy per passenger/kilometre than the car.
- An agriculture which respects the soil and relies on natural processes obtains excellent yields, with a minimum of chemical fertilizers and dangerous pesticides.

TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE CULTURE - by ~~Deleuze~~ <sup>Deleuze</sup>

"The world is as it is because we are all living against each other; it cannot be different until we live for each other."

...Politics and morality - Reform or Revolution?

Many people have said: "The world is the way it is because we are all wicked, so we must start changing our ways to get a better world." This is a personal or moral approach. Others have said "We behave as we do because the rules of society are wrong; we need to change the rules." This is a political approach.

Political workers choose one of two ways to try to bring change; reform and revolution. The reformer assumes that society is basically good, and that the bad things can be put right little by little. The revolutionary assumes that society is rotten, and must be broken down before a better one can be built...

"There's a word for what's wrong with the world. It's called Alienation."

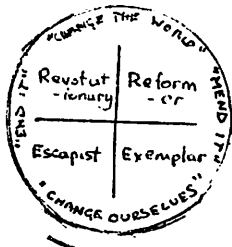
... How far can reform go? In theory all the way to full, hostile equality. The end of the reformist road is the Conservative dream; a property owning democracy; equality in competition; all the forces of greed and ambition in perfect balance. Luckily for us, this nightmare-paradise is unlikely to be reached, though it is the goal

each other for what's left. So the very fact that living against each other sets a limit to how far reform can go. When a society gets to this point, we can say that it is 'mature'. The great ages of reform have ended. We should be grateful for all reforms that have been won - usually in the teeth of bitter opposition. They make life for most of us better than it would have been; but they still leave things very wrong. The worst thing about mature society is this; some institutions, once used by a powerful group to keep other people in their place, or to live on their backs, become living monsters in their own right. Examples of these are the Church establishment, the money system and the Party, or political bureaucracy - often after a political revolution. These living monsters grow so powerful that they dominate our whole lives. Weak and strong alike, we become robots to their inhumane laws. This is the stage of alienation proper.

Some people refuse to believe this process is happening; you can't see this sort of monster as you can see a person. So they blame the managers of the money system or the groups which gain most from it. The argument is that since some groups are still able to take advantage of the money system, they must be running it. But the total powers needed to do this have been taken away by reform. A human tyranny has been curbed to release an inhuman one...

How long does a mature society last?...  
 ... What happens then? History shows us that several things can happen. Occasionally society disintegrates all together, giving way to a return of the 'dark ages'. More often, total revolution or foreign conquest (usually the latter) cancels all the rules, gives a new group total power, and the whole process starts again. More often still the change is not so dramatic. Perhaps peacefully, perhaps via a coup or partial revolution, a strong man comes to power. He is able to take at least some control of the runaway engine - at the price of many of the 'democratic practices' won from the old order. But the new restrictions on freedom renew the drive to reform.

Where does this leave reform and revolution? The reformist hope that the 'improvement' in the rules would itself change our ways, has not been met. The revolutionary insists that in real revolution the people as a whole will take power. But this, as we have just seen, requires the people to be for each other as a whole - the very condition which the revolution is, or should be out to achieve. Likewise, the reformer, seeking changes in the rules for competition to co-operation needed a real reforming drive in this direction from the people the rules were to change. So both reform and revolution requires a condition of success the very thing they intend to create - a real human society.



Talking about Land by Joanne Bower

... The Oxford Farming Conference of 5-7th January 1975... it was perhaps a little paradoxical to hear so much of their (farmers) desperate situation when 850 of them could converge on Oxford for this occasion to debate the theme 'Farming for Survival'. Those in danger of not surviving were no doubt hard at it on their farms.

... the single reference to 'small is beautiful' came from a speaker who farms 3,800 acres, is chairman of a farmers' co-operative, a director of an oil seed company and of two frozen food processing companies. Sir Michael Culme-Seymour certainly talked of stewardship and the duty of the farmer, to hand over an estate in a better condition than he found it. His statement "You do not own the land, the land owns you" might well be written on the brow of every farmer, Sir Michael also recognised that a farm divided into small tenant holdings does better than a large enterprise, but regarded 800 acres as the sort of farm-unit which an individual could adequately handle. Cold

livestock received no support, while others felt confident that intensive animal production would continue, using all available land for production of red meat, and producing white meat from intensive units. This seems to suggest a painful ignorance of the world food situation...

... The accent, was too much on exploitation of land and capital and on profitability to be of heartening for an ecologist. True, John Cyster, farming 700 acres in partnership, preached self-sufficiency. He was going to be more careful about the kind of fertilizers he used, and suggested a drawing in of horns regarding the 'excessively intensive agricultural methods of the last decade'. He was using no bought-in feed-stuffs except minerals, and was growing his own seeds in defiance of a warning from the British Seeds Council. He dropped a somewhat alarming hint about first-class firms who do the farmer's accounting work provided he used the right kind of fertilizer, which seems to indicate that domination of agriculture by big business will die hard.

The effects of capital Transfer Tax proposed in the present Finance Bill were generally agreed to be of sinister portent to farmers, and something which the NFU and CIA could fight on a joint front, to prevent a 'slow grinding down until nationalisation of land becomes inevitable'. A suggestion that next year's conference might include consideration of Community Land Trusts, now being experimented with in America, and which could provide an alternative to nationalisation, was received with no enthusiasm.

Much was made of the figure of only 1.8% of the population being involved in farming, with consequent lack of adequate representation in Parliament. Perhaps farmers should remember that 10% of the population is involved in consumption...

#### NEWSLETTER:

DEADLINE for news and views to be included in next newsletter 3rd May 1975.

APOLOGIES for the late appearance of this issue of newsletter due to:

- a) Copying bureau ceasing business and awaiting alternative to open.
- b) Postal delays in receipt of other material for inclusion in the mailing

- we hope that this combined March/April edition makes up for this.

YOUR OPINIONS are requested on the size, style and content of the newsletter. Hopefully it has improved since we started publication but your suggestions and criticisms would be welcome.

PLEASE ENSURE THAT THIS NEWSLETTER IS CIRCULATED TO ALL MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP AND OTHERS INTERESTED.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Towards Survival - 79 Sutton Avenue, Coventry.
- Resurgence - 275 Kings Road, Kingston, Surrey.
- Awake -
- Undercurrent - 275 Finchley Road, London N.W.3.
- The Sunday Times - Fleet Street, London.

#### SITUATIONS VACANT:

VEGETARIAN COOK/ other staff for proposed non profit making shop/restaurant/information centre in Coventry. Help to spread the word by practical example. Low wages and accomodation by arrangement improving as the venture prospers. Surplus funds ploughed back into establishing similar ventures, stock and donations to PEOPLE funds. Write c/o Editor.

ADVERTISING AGENCY EXECUTIVE to help shift the emphasis of an established agency to promoting enterprises favourable to a stable society and develop new techniques which will promote this cause by practical demonstration. Birmingham & Midlands. Write c/o Editor.

cont/...

Our last issue set out how costs were militating against the continued production of the type of newsletter which we feel you should have. This month we report the passing, for financial reasons, of "Towards Survival" with which many of you will be familiar. Until September 1974, in addition to the time spent in preparing and producing each issue (25/30 hrs. per month) the cost of all newsletters, including postage, was met entirely from my own pocket. As with the February edition, this current issue is also being heavily subsidised directly by me.

I make no secret of the fact that I am at odds with the remainder of the NEC over subscriptions, believing that to be truly effective in the hard bitten commercial world in which we live, our annual fees should be considerably higher.

We do not receive cash backing from vested interests, as do the Conservative and Labour parties, and even the Communist party charges £3 p.a. (levied at 15p/month for which one receives a membership card only.) Trade Union dues usually tot up to between £10 and £25 p.a. whilst subs to most professional organisations/institutes range from £12 p.a. to £50 p.a. we all know how little is obtained from any of them.

The message is simple and seems clear enough to me. If you haven't got substantial outside backing (which we haven't) and you don't levy sizeable fees (which we don't) then you can't function properly.

At this stage in the national development of the PEOPLE party I believe it is essential that we should have a solid, regular medium of communication - the newsletter. This has several functions:-

To:

- a) Keep everyone informed as to activities of NEC, branches and members.
- b) Convey ideas and report progress.
- c) Provide relevant information from external sources.
- d) Provoke discussion and action.
- e) Be circulated to the outside world to show that we exist and are active, purposeful and useful.
- f) Provide a link with and for other organisations.
- g) Enable PEOPLE to be relevant and of service to the rest of the eco-movement.
- h) Broadly promote PEOPLE as the political umbrella for all environmentalists.
- i) Act as a medium for recruitment.

For these reasons I now need your help, I would like to raise £300 immediately to enable production to continue in its present form.

Whether or not you are a paid up member of the party, if you feel as I do and believe that the newsletter should continue in its present form please send me a donation towards this fund by return. To save receipts and postage, acknowledgement will be in the next newsletter. For your convenience I enclose a reply paid envelope (G.P.O. will re-direct it). Please use it now.

Thank you,

Yours Sincerely,



Michael Benfield.

---

**SITUATIONS VACANT CONTINUED...**

**ALTERNATIVE ESTATE AGENCY.** Opportunity exists within established practice to serve the growing alternatives movement as a national clearing house for information on new villages, communes, small holdings, farms and other suitable property. Chance to really do something worthwhile by helping others establish the alternative society and demonstrate its practicability. Based Coventry. Write with details of age, experience, and how little you can afford as basic wage c/o Editor.

**YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS** may be included in Newsletter.  
**COST:** As much as you can afford:- Minimum 50p

---