

GREEN

IS THE
ECOLOGY PARTY
PLAYED OUT?
SEX AND GENDER

LINE

30 p.

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GREEN SPLIT



GREEN LINE

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GREEN LINE is part of the diverse but converging green movement. It is independent of any one organisation or group: writers and readers share together the discovery of what it means to be green, and what brings them together.

It is not an exclusive movement: greenness is a perspective rather than an ideology. Among the greens are many anarchists and socialists, pagans and Christians, together with feminists, gays and so on. But thanks to the green perspective, and to the radical self-criticism which its holistic approach requires, many conventional labels are being re-examined. Green Line has been particularly concerned recently with the re-definition of socialism, and our forthcoming interview with Peter Tatchell will continue this. But we are also about to start looking at anarchism and the influence of the greens upon it. We'd very much like to hear from readers what they think of the notion of 'green anarchy', and how the two traditions link up (as they clearly have done, for example, in 'Stop the City' where anarchists, punks and greens demonstrated together in a more than token way).

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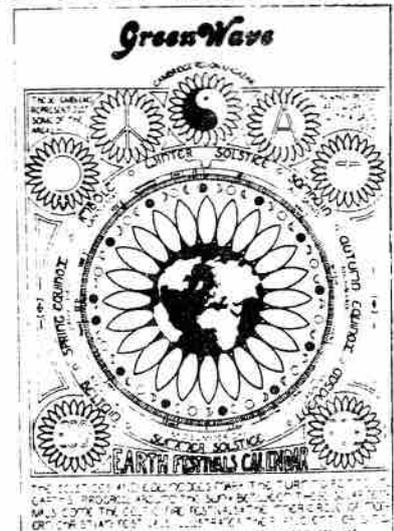
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GREEN / SPLIT

THE GREEN PARTIES of Europe are split - and the dividing lines are symbolic as much as ideological. The 'progressive socialists' have taken socialist thinking way beyond the old pattern of increased central state power milking the rich in a dual economy: there's no doubting their sincerity when they talk of power decentred to the community and the local workforce, and the need to give people real power and not merely other people's recycled cash. But on the other side of a historic divide, some greens are saying that there can be no room in green circles for people who call themselves socialists - partly because of the historic baggage the term brings with it, but largely too because the word 'socialism' itself - like

'communism' - has become a dead weight round any politician's neck. For the socialists, however, these greens must prove that they are paying more than lip-service to notions like social justice, the redistribution of wealth (and there is disagreement over how such redistribution might be achieved), and putting power in the hands of the people. The disagreements came to a head at the first congress of European Green Parties in Liege on March 31. ROLAND CLARKE was there.

NEXT MONTH Richard Hunt will question the compatibility of socialism as historically understood with the green perspective, and will propose an alternative, anarchist viewpoint.

THE CONGRESS adopted a joint programme on which the member parties would fight the European Community Elections. A declaration announcing a joint campaign had already been signed on January 27 by the Ecology Party (UK), Comhaontas Glas (Eire), Les Verts (France), Ecolo and Agalev (Belgium), and De Groenen (Netherlands).

Die Grünen (West Germany) refused, however, to sign the declaration or help the French financially in the elections - unless an alliance of greens and reds in the Netherlands, known as the Green Progressive Accord (GPA), were allowed to sign as well as the Dutch Green Party, De Groenen. This division remained unsolved after the Congress, posing crucial questions about how many green parties will stand together in the elections, and in what sort of parliamentary 'fraction' at Strasbourg (it could include Dutch 'progressive socialists') any Green MEPs will find themselves.

The Congress should have been an uncontroversial publicity stunt, but the division dominated the proceedings. Most of the rousing set speeches from leading green candidates were partly aimed at Die Grünen and the GPA. The history of co-operation between the European green parties was also re-written, with the villains no longer just the problematical Italian Radicals and the disorganised Die Grünen, but also the Dutch radicals (the PPR).

Yet in the 1979 European elections the PPR presented itself to the Dutch electorate as an ecological party. In the so-called 'Co-ordination' - the group which promoted co-operation and dialogue between the European green parties - the PPR were consistently among the few efficient and reliable parties, and

rarely in disagreement. The Co-ordination of Green and Radical Parties was disbanded by the Belgian greens after the PPR decided that they had to adopt a 'left' position on the left-right axis and sought to co-operate with two other small left parties in Holland, the Pacifist Socialists (PSP) and the Communist Party (CPN).

Later the Dutch greens and the small left parties tried to form one list for the elections, but differences over priorities and labels divided them. So on December 17 1983 some Dutch greens founded a new green party, De Groenen, while others joined with radical socialists in the Green Progressive Accord. The GPA's programme is compatible on crucial issues with the programme adopted at Liege.

While most members of the Green Co-ordination have recognised the new party, rather than the Accord, as representative of Dutch greens, Die Grünen's executive committee (partly as a result of their historic links with the PPR) support the new Accord as well. The decision not to sign was explained at Die Grünen's congress in Karlsruhe on March 3/4, but there was no discussion.

So what to many members of Die Grünen and a few dissenters in other parties is a case of 'green politics' being increasingly understood by the progressive left, looks like bandwagoning to many greens who may have broken with the old left-right dichotomy - but not perhaps with the centre. Pressed to set out clear-cut criteria about who could sign, the Co-ordination talks about people who say they are green and accept such basic principles as re-distribution of wealth both between people who are alive today and across generations.

I wonder how many greens really believe in re-distribution of wealth, and how many practice this extended socialist (and anarchist) principle. Two of the official De Groenen delegates said they could work more easily with dissident Christian Democrats who have joined the party but don't accept such principles, than with the small left parties with whom they have so much more in common.

Holland's first progressive left party, the PSP, was born 27 years ago out of the peace movement, and has always espoused nonviolence. Their environmental concerns go back as far as the formation of the first green party and of SERA in 1973. Always anti-bureaucratic, and pro-grassroots activity, they are opposed to the social democrats who have betrayed socialism.

Before the greens dropped the simplistic 'no-growth' label in favour of 'sustainable', the PSP recognised the limits of industrialism and were talking about selective growth in those areas of the economy that greens prize so highly. Some of the progressive left often find themselves tied to short-term employment demands which only perpetuate the problems, but at an employment strategy meeting of the progressive left in June 1982 there was broad recognition of the destructive nature of economic growth and extensive discussion of possible solutions.

And yet Jonathon Porritt could talk condescendingly at Liege about accepting "that there are different levels of awareness and different levels of understanding as regards green politics," implying that the progressive left, because of their socialist principles, are not as far advanced as the 'green-greens'. But many of the progressive left would be glad to be 'green' - if they didn't feel that at present it excludes such principles. As Huup Dassen, General Secretary of the PSP told me, the progressive left wonders if the 'green-greens' have really confronted how they will achieve such things as redistribution of wealth, or indeed if once in power they would retain their commitment. In becoming green I believe they have underestimated the problems of over 10m unemployed in the EEC, and the need for transitional measures.

But the 'division still remains despite a compromise proposal put by Jonathon Porritt, by which both Dutch groups could sign and would be allowed to join the Green Fraction at Strasbourg (if elected), but only the Green Party (de Groenen) could join the Co-ordination, which is broader in its aims than just the EEC elections. Such is the Dutch electoral system that the Progressive Accord will only exist for this election and not beyond it - except within the fraction.

Immediate agreement to the compromise was not possible, as the French, Dutch and Belgian representatives did not have sufficient mandates. But the compromise died a few days later when the 'green greens' claimed that the Progressive Accord had announced to the press that they had been accepted without any compromise. However, according to the Accord, the compromise was reported by the left Dutch paper they talked to, and subsequently by other papers (the only Dutch paper I saw confirms this much), while the next day some of the press carried a denial of the compromise by the Dutch and Belgian green parties.

Now it looks as if the Accord and Die Grünen will go into the elections together, and all the other

greens will be able to maintain their ideological integrity and enter the elections united. But the predicted election results are against the greens forming a fraction (for which a minimum of 10 MEPs are required). The Belgians can expect to win two seats, the French (whom the Germans will help financially without conditions) five at the most, and the Dutch might get one.

Since Die Grünen are likely to be allied to the Accord, they may consider forming a fraction with them and the other progressive left parties who have also been discussing European co-operation. Some of these are not committed to any fraction: two Italian parties (Party of Proletarian Unity for Communism, and Proletarian Democracy) have one seat already and one likely respectively. Other parties will probably leave their existing fraction, including the Socialist People's Party from Denmark (1 MEP already), and the Greek Communist Party of the Interior (1 already). Since the most recent national polls show a large increase in support for the Dutch PSP (from 3 to 6 national MPs), the Accord is likely to get 2 MEPs.

Both sides need Die Grünen's possible five MEPs to add to their own, if they are to form a fraction. So the most likely result is a combined fraction, perhaps around the themes of peace-environment-social justice-democracy. For this to work it might require two 'ideologically' different groups working together on common concerns and sharing technical facilities. If this occurs, the greens are likely to be surprised to find out how advanced in their thinking the progressive left are.

From the UK point of view, the most the Ecology Party can hope for is a respectable percentage in the 15-odd seats it is likely to contest - 5% would be significant, putting them on a par with the elected parties, who need at least 4% - 5% depending on the country. SERA meanwhile, with its environmental programme, can hope to have some influence on prospective Labour MEPs.

But the European socialist fraction is a broad grouping shackled firmly to social democracy and industrialism - though not as broad as the Liberal and Democratic group which even includes the main Dutch right-wing party. Any SERA/Labour MEP will find it hard to push more than just environmental policies unless there was some co-operation with any 'green-progressive' fraction. If frustrated they could always defect!

The important thing that has come out of Liege is that some greens - like Jonathon Porritt and other Ecology Party representatives - are having to realise that there are other people whom they can and must work with. But as Roel van Duyn, number 4 on the Dutch Accord's list, told the Congress: "What unites us is more important than what divides us... We can't do what we believe in, in small splinter groups."

Those socialists who have opposed the corrupt and establishment approach of traditional so-called socialist parties shouldn't have to bear the insults of greens! Let's not forget that at the roots of socialism is a concern for people that must be united with a concern for the planet. The progressive left's ideas are an essential ingredient in tackling the crucial problems of transition from the reality of Today to the green dreams of Tomorrow.





DEAD WOOD IN A GREEN FOREST

RICHARD OLDFIELD is critical of the Ecology Party's role in the green movement. Are the failings of the party a threat to the future of the wider movement?

DESPITE THE WIDE spread of radical groupings, the green movement still has little effective influence. Some green groups are split between the political parties, and the rest are opposed (or indifferent) to them all. There are no political channels through which all greens can combine. They are divided and thus ruled.

However, times are ripe for the green movement to become just that - a movement. The budding popularity of the word 'green' reflects that - a word first used here by 'movement-centred' rather than 'party-centred' groupings. It was for example the Green Collective who in 1981 decided to reshape the 'Ecology Summer Gathering' (held near Glastonbury) into the 'Green Gathering' - reflecting the shift away from the Ecology Party (Eco) towards the independent, wider movement. Similarly, success has accompanied Green Line's increased independence from Eco: less internal party news and more broad-based coverage, becoming, as its front page proclaims, a 'Magazine of the Green Movement'. Witness also the Green Gate at USAF Greenham Common, Green CND, Green Drum (formerly the newspaper Good Earth), the Green Rallies put on by FoE, the party-independent Student Green Network (formerly the Student Ecology Movement with close links with Eco) - the list goes on. 'Green' has even entered the vocabulary of the mainstream media. This popularity is largely because its meaning is not yet linked exclusively with any one political party: it has an inclusive, loose feel.

Ecology Party: Not the Pacesetter

For its part, Eco is failing to set the pace of British politics. The network of Greenham women are setting the peace-movement pace. Greenpeace sets the pace on nuclear energy and other environmental issues. The NCCL and the '1984 Committee for Freedom of Information' (a coalition of 25 different groups) are setting the pace on civil liberties. Differing alignments of pressure groups are increasingly coming together around specific issues, combining as and when they agree to. Such

developments are straws in the wind, as are the mushrooming of independent green groups. The rash of Green Gatherings is an especial portent of the future. Last year's party-independent Glastonbury Green Gathering was the largest political event of its kind anywhere in Europe.

In mid-1982 a 'Draft Forward Strategy for the Ecology Party Nationally' was written by John Foster and David Taylor, then members of Party Council from very different wings of the party. They wrote:

"There are large numbers of potential active supporters who ... never consider joining the Party, or join it to leave quickly. ... Firstly there are those who now work through other parties... Nice ideas, even principles, are not enough: they will join us if and when we represent an effective force. Secondly, there are those who feel alienated by political parties themselves, which they tend to perceive as "power-grubbing", "centralist" or even "sexist"... Our present stance as an exclusively yet unsuccessful electoral organisation neatly fails to attract either group."

During 1982, as part of a "Personal Response" to a paper ("Re Falklands and Possible General Election") by David Taylor, Jonathon Porritt (co-chair of Eco's Party Council) wrote:

"We are already a declining force, whatever people may choose to see. The whole purpose of a comprehensive electoral strategy is to reverse this."

The party's average vote in the subsequent General Election was down from 1.6% (1979) to 1%. Of course it's always possible to claim that the electoral strategy wasn't 'comprehensive' enough. Today, the long-standing debate over the party's national, mainly electoral approach - and by implication over its political strategy - is as bogged down as ever.

Eco's Press Secretary, Tony Jones, writing post-election to the New Statesman of 19.8.83, asserted that the party "can lay claim to a thorough-going 'green' political analysis, which is both overtly political and refreshingly realistic about the problems we face in promoting the green alternative." No sign here of a fresh approach to the creation - especially without proportional representation (PR) - of a politically effective green movement. Such phrases ignore the split in opinion between the my-party-right-or-wrong true believers (largely business as usual) and those, such as the Green Collective, favouring some form of party-independent green federation(s).

Eco is the only party with claims to a green political strategy. It is therefore necessary to focus on the defects of Eco's strategy, in extolling the virtues of any alternative.

Given an unfair voting system, the 'federalists' question Eco's overriding emphasis on elections. In one effect, this emphasis asks the whole green movement - comprised of diverse historical backgrounds (including old political allegiances) - to line up behind Eco's banner. Elections also require an appeal for green solidarity to the wider public, but since solidarity within the green movement itself has not been achieved, this puts the cart before the horse. The results yield a remote chance of gaining seats and cause many to underplay the whole green movement. Even worse, party labels become increasingly mystified, as Eco presents another divisive, competitive pull on a movement already split at least four different political ways (see 'Dividing Lines', GL 3, June 1982). Is this how to create a strong movement?

Federalists also question Eco's 'national' approach

(and the centralism implied), especially when this approach means copying the conventional structures of other parties and further inhibiting the development of the movement. They question as well Eco's relatively narrow philosophical base. 'Ecology', central as it is, is only one of several principles underpinning the wider green movement. In addition Eco's continued emphasis on detailed policies provides greater scope for disagreement and seems to assume an imminent power of office. Shouldn't the focus be on getting a widespread acceptance of broad principles and how they interlink?

Election Mania

Eco has always rested on a closed-circuit, eternal logic: people join because they believe an Ecopolitical party to be necessary and see electioneering as its main distinctive feature. Thus there is a duty to fulfil that expectation. This in turn attracts people of similar ilk and the circle is joined. Alongside is a divisive either/or attitude which disparagingly directs those not behind the electoral approach to join some pressure group or other. As if this were the only alternative.

Eco has placed much importance on occasional expressions of support from the general public (i.e. votes) rather than solid support from greens throughout the movement. Because of this and also because of its relatively narrow focus on 'ecology', Eco has been left behind in the evolution of green philosophy, especially in its practical application. Concern with electoral image has further inhibited Eco's development, stunting a spirit of adventure and vision essential for any political creed to catch fire.

Eco also has an overly analytical (as distinct from synthetical) approach to political strategy. This seems to contain a distorted, masculine (though not necessarily male) competitiveness-for-its-own-sake. A recent 'Background Statement' from the internal Women and the Ecology Party working group says:

"Feminine perspectives and values tend to be marginalised and masculine ways of doing things are entrenched in the organisation and running of the Party... Another serious effect of this masculine predominance is that the Ecology Party is being increasingly ignored by the green movement as a whole... It is not joined by many greens because in its structure it has not made the radical commitment of its policies. Green groups are springing up all over the country partly because they can do what they want."

Weaving a green web

So what is the broad alternative to the party political approach (at least until PR arrives, an event at least two General Elections away). It's obviously impossible to create a blueprint for the future development of the green movement, but useful sketches can be drawn. A federation (or confederation, or whatever 'network' word is preferred) may be local, regional or national. It implies a sharing between partners of a common identity for some purposes, yet also a retention of individual identity and autonomy. It also implies the sharing of resources, communications, campaigns, and so on; but not necessarily mutual inclusiveness all round. It could link up a much wider range of activities and larger number of people - with better mutual education - than would otherwise occur. One kind of federation might encourage its groupings, where appropriate, to become smaller federations in turn. Further groups could affiliate to these without

necessarily joining the wider federalist circle thereby.

Consider some of the currents in the wider movement: ecology, feminism, peace, direct democracy, social justice, co-operation and personal growth. Green federations of varying kinds could connect not only the vast array of more 'recognised' groups in and around these currents, but also rock bands, organic farms, acupuncture clinics, communities, free schools, wholefood shops, radical bookshops, etc., etc. The scope is wide open: fluidity and adaptability is a prime strength of the federal approach. The movement's development becomes in this way more organic, more in tune with how people and groups actually form links. It involves solidarity rather than unity or a unitary system (e.g. branches coming off a central stem. It involves initiative rather than hierarchy.

With a switch by Eco itself to a federalist structure the unitary, national party would cease to exist and membership would be that of the freshly autonomous local party or (preferably) group. This might affiliate to various networks, which would no doubt include those preserving Eco's positive achievements such as policy working-groups and specialised pools of 'issue-campaigning' experience. Let a thousand sunflowers bloom with the extra people and resources which the federalist approach would eventually bring. Eco would here be practising the decentralisation that it preaches, and the way could open up for broadly-based green federations of all shapes and sizes to develop organically.

Within the federalist approach, Eco members could make many unique contributions, including the healing of splits - the 'dividing lines' - in the potential movement. They have the sense of interconnectedness and holism: the very roots of ecology. They have the integrated policy discipline necessary to create more than a network of pressure-groups and single issues.

Their practical experience of campaigns would also be invaluable. And let us remember one goal which most greens share, namely the creation of a power-base with which to effect change. Common agreement also exists over the political necessity of relating support to an identifiable label. The question that divides us is how we create that power-base, and whether a party-political label and structure best serve that purpose.

In GL 18 Claire Phillips of Swansea Green Group wrote: "We felt that the appeal of the Ecology Party in Swansea was limited, that a wider grouping was necessary... We feel we have a better chance of survival if we broaden our base to include non-political greens or even other-party greens. Surely good people are too valuable to turn away - let's bring them in and get them working." Here the (semi) independent green group is seen as a halfway stage in eventual recruitment to the party branch. This approach is compatible (if less far-reaching) with the general direction of this article: the dissolution of Eco in its present form and its rebirth into channels for non-party, federalising energies. Indeed the two approaches begin to converge, since the arrival of PR (if it comes) will inevitably and rightfully bring a crop of green election candidates. The question is: how will the green movement be best placed to exploit PR if it comes? And if it doesn't come, what price Eco anyway?

With regard to the setting up of party-independent green groups, Claire Phillips goes on to write: "Unless the Ecology Party grasps this nettle... it will find itself left behind - a conventional minority party with marginal support. So: Libertarian Greens Unite - you have nothing to lose but your party political chaos."

There are various reasons for Eco's lack of a living political strategy. One example is a fear that change would mean losing the good things that the party has genuinely created. Perhaps there is also an insecure fear of giving up sectarian power bases, however small, for the greater good of the green political community. Meanwhile those advocating the federalist approach are castigated as being inward-looking and obsessed with decentralisation. They are portrayed as locked in irrelevant, constitutional change-mongering, dashing off on wild goose chases, of bumbling along in mists of idealism and maivety.

Future elections

What's Eco going to do at the next General Election anyway? At £1,000 deposit per candidate, a boycott seems the only practical choice for most Eco branches. It could be made into a new campaigning asset and assist in healing the party-political splits in the movement. But some argue that Eco is already decentralist, each branch deciding its own electoral strategy. They forget that being a branch of a national, electioneering party in itself creates pressures on branches to conform, to justify themselves.

But imagine that despite everything Eco somehow manages to put up 300 candidates. After all, as far as aspiring parties are concerned, the media ever require such proof of continued growth for their attentions. Indeed, as the January 1984 "Econews" (Eco's internal newsletter) says on the front page: "If we are to show that the Ecology Party is a growing force ... we must field more candidates than ever before." Here, the fighting of selected seats would be out, and the PR vote, the disarmament vote, etc., would be further divided. When do these and the other costs outweigh the benefits?

It's clear that if Eco clings to the party-centred approach, the future becomes bleaker both for the wider movement and for Eco itself. Why then maintain a structure and approach whose useful life is ending? Rather than delaying and inhibiting the inevitable natural growth of a non-party, federalist approach, far better for Eco to help a new lease of life come through. Far better to strengthen the movement in a deeper, more effective way, and so to really prepare it for the arrival of PR.

I recall here a part of a "Green Declaration" from the 1982 Glastonbury Green Gathering:

"The strength of nature is in her diversity and flexibility in the face of changing conditions. People who recognise and strive for nature's balance are green people. Only a green movement has the resilience which springs from respecting the diverse resources at our disposal and treating them responsibly... Greens are as a tree growing, gathering fruit, growing towards wholeness... Sometimes the tree needs pruning to help it grow, remove the dead wood maybe."



View of Eco Conference

TO A VISITOR the Ecology Party in conference exhibits many strange and unusual characteristics. In spite of the formal paraphernalia of standing orders committee, rostrum, card votes, etc., there's no doubt the Ecology Party in conference is different from other political organisations in conference.

Perhaps it has something to do with a certain air of unreality, a lack of immediacy about the questions being debated. Power of any sort is so far away that the proceedings take on a dreamlike quality. Although many of the people I met at Southport I found individually very charming, and the atmosphere informal and conducive to unhurried conversation, I must admit to being rather disappointed at the direction or lack of it that the Ecology Party seemed to be following. Coming as a sympathetic observer on the look-out for the construction of broader progressive/green/radical alliances in the future, what I found made me realise just how far there is to go, and that movement has to take place in Eco as well as amongst the aligned and non-aligned left and progressive movements in Britain.

A number of points struck me. The proceedings seemed strangely unpolitical for a political party. Lengthy discussion on how to replace the House of Lords after the ecological transition, etc. Eco still looks a long way into the future and seems to turn up its nose at the question of present issues and the strategies to tackle them. Nothing serious on constructing alliances to defend and extend imaginative and socially responsible developments like the 'Fares Fair' campaign in London, no real consideration of what power is about. "Elected power is not an end in itself, but a resource to be shared with other groups and movements, and used in alliance with them to achieve social change." A quote from the conference? Not likely: it's Mike Ward, chair of the GLC's Industry and Employment Committee.

Politics seems to be conducted in a vacuum at Eco.

Could it be that members have little experience of politics in other parties or campaigns to draw from? Dare I say it's like the SDP - apolitical until they saw the green light? Certainly the question of class or the steadfast refusal to face it seems to indicate that. I know that class won't be important in a future society - but we don't live in the future, we I hope live in the present, and class is important. The Women in the Ecology Party working group are quite right in their paper to refer to Eco as a plutocracy rather than a democracy. As presently constructed it favours the already rich and powerful. Those who can afford to be active are. Those who can't aren't. Not surprisingly Eco as a consequence lacks a strategy to widen its political base. I hope that a future wider green movement will not only include the advanced intellectual middle class but also those groups left behind by industrial society and its parties; the poor and marginalised in inner cities and rural areas, ethnic minorities, non-unionised women in low-paid occupations, the unemployed, those groups which the essentially white, male, trade-unionised and employed Labour Party has ignored to its cost for the past twenty years.

Unfortunately I don't see a recognition of this in Eco yet. The patronising attitude of many of the speakers in Sunday's debate on women was particularly depressing. Speaker after speaker got up to say that they had never felt oppressed, therefore there was no oppression, and no need for the Ecology Party to do anything about it. I certainly hope that the alliances Jonathon Porritt referred to in his 'Marxism Today' interview will come about, and I agree that the Ecology Party is likely to be part of that alliance rather than the umbrella. Unfortunately, on the basis of the Southport conference I fear it will be only a very small part, and not the major part the ideas it espouses should entitle it to be.

Martin Stott

Eco of Green Groups

AFTER THE LAST election a branch of the Ecology Party was formed in Swansea. Within a month that branch had become a 'Green Group'. This was a completely new concept, and as far as we knew it was the first of its type. Now, nine months later, there are more than 20 Green Groups in existence in England and Wales. The time seems to be ripe for such a development. Perhaps now is also the time to try to define what a Green Group is, and to speculate on what the future possibilities are for such groups.

Our group was formed in response to local conditions. In some areas, rich in green activity, there are enough people to support both an Ecology Party branch and a Friends of the Earth group. There may also be a World Wildlife Fund group. These groups may already help each other and communicate fully, so that in this fortunate type of area there is no need for any other groups to emerge. In other less fortunate areas, the same people may be struggling to keep CND, Ecology Party and FoE groups going. In Swansea we were the

only green organisation, and we felt that we wished to support all of the green organisations as they all fulfilled a vital function and needed local representation. We also wanted to maintain our independence as an autonomous local affinity group - true to decentralist ideals! Hence the birth of the Green Group idea.

The 'dark greens' maintain a small Ecology Party branch with a separate bank account. They work with CND and the Women Opposed to Nuclear Threat on peace campaigns, and with the Alliance and Plaid on electoral reform. The Green Group is open to people of all political affiliations and to non-political 'pale greens' who wish to work on FoE campaigns and fund-raising for Greenpeace or the World Wildlife Fund. Hence the word 'green' merely defines a philosophy. Under that broad umbrella members can pursue their own special interests and individual projects with the support and encouragement of the other members. Confidence will build up as small successes are achieved, and hopefully the

group will be democratic, egalitarian and effective. The three do not always go together, so even this is an ambitious project!

Each group will develop differently. First, it takes time for people to get to know each other, and this cannot be rushed. Then it takes time for people to define their aims and objectives. Organising activities of any sort helps to clarify the issues. Talking to other groups, discussing specific topics, attending environmental evening classes (we are lucky enough to have an excellent one in our area called 'Only One Earth'), discussing books or articles, showing a video, organising a fund-raising event or public meeting on a subject of interest, all help to spread the green idea. Green stalls



attract new members as well as raising funds for FoE and Greenpeace. FoE campaigns on transport, energy, countryside and recycling can be tackled gradually at a local level. Even a drop in the ocean is better than nothing, and sympathetic local media can make a tiny group sound as effective as a vast organisation! The group tends to build bridges between groups who are otherwise insular. Communications are improved and co-operation makes local functions all the more effective. The group is flexible and adaptable, unlike other more traditional, hierarchical structures. Many more women seem to take a leading part, possibly attracted to the informal structure.

The nonpolitical Green Group has many advantages over the Ecology Party branch. It can hire rooms that are out of bounds to political parties, and sell goods at charity

fairs that also ban political organisations. 'Political' is a dirty word, 'environmental' opens many doors. Similarly, people's minds seem to shut when the word 'party' is mentioned, but curiosity is aroused at the mention of 'Green Group'. Greens in other parties will see a rival party as a threat, but may be willing to work with a Green Group on a single local issue - after all many issues nowadays cut right across party lines. The party label seems to limit activity and put up barriers, whereas the Green Group idea seems to bring people together and broaden horizons and possibilities.

However, perhaps it is no accident that the impetus for Green Groups has come from Ecology Party people. For some time the 'libertarian' wing of the party have been making noises about 'leading the wider movement' and 'spear-heading the green revolution'. Elections are only part of the activities which we should be mounting. Campaigning and 'greening' the local community, bringing people together, all these aims are mentioned in Ecology Party literature, but unfortunately the name gets in the way and impedes progress.

So maybe it's time to put the label aside for some of the time until the credibility gap has narrowed (adapting to British conditions - that are unlike West Germany's) and to go part of the way to supply the demand for green activity at all levels. Otherwise there is a danger that we will continue to be a minority party for the convinced few who are ahead of their time in embracing the whole philosophy.

So if the 'greens are gathering', let them gather in Green Groups and take the first step towards the Green Revolution!

Claire Phillips
(Swansea Green Group)

TEST TUBE BABIES

The following article is written by South East London Women for Life on Earth. It is the first in a series of articles taking a measured look at the implications of current developments in science and medicine.

SOME WOMEN FROM Women for Life on Earth, an eco-feminist organisation, have started a small working group to look into the abuses of in-vitro fertilisation (IVF). This is the process used in the conception of the so-called test-tube babies.

A government inquiry is being held at the moment. Eventually there will probably be legislation. We would like that legislation to favour the rights of women, and where appropriate their partners, over the interests of the researchers. There are three aspects of this subject which are of particular interest to us at the moment.

The first is that there is as yet no control over what researchers can and cannot do with eggs or embryos, both human and animal. Many people have now seen the 'shoat', made by joining a goat embryo and a sheep embryo to form one animal with four parents. In the long run we have to assume that there is no genetic experiment which can be thought of which will not be tried. Do we want this?

The second problem area is human genetic manipulation. Whilst the writers of this article would not wish a disabled child on anyone, the assumptions of genetic engineering are dangerous. Those assumptions are (a) that some types of people deserve life more than others, and (b) that medical researchers are wise enough to decide what sort of people these are. The techniques being worked on at the moment involve fertilising an egg in-vitro, dividing it (artificial identical twinning),

freezing one half and growing the other half on in the laboratory to a stage where its genetic make-up can be looked at. If it shows the presence of genetic flaws, both embryos are destroyed: if it is normal, then the undeveloped half can be unfrozen and implanted in the mother's womb, where it will grow (if she's lucky - there's only a 3% success rate) and eventually become a loved child. Then the parents will know that the identical twin of that child was grown on and then allowed to die on a laboratory bench.

The third problem concerns the straightforward use of IVF to help childless women have babies. This is, in itself, a good thing. However, like all surgical procedures, a surgeon has to think it appropriate for a certain patient before adopting it as a possibility. Fifteen or twenty years ago, when many childless couples adopted, the adoption societies were in a position to select the sort of people they thought would make good parents. Now that decision will rest in the hands of gynaecologists who are mainly white, middle-aged, heterosexual, married men. It does not take much imagination to see that they will tend to select patients who fit in with their prejudices about what makes a "good" parent. Already, within the NHS, patients are being asked to pay towards their IVF treatment - this in itself selects against many would-be parents.

Black women, lesbian women, disabled women, single women - YOU SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE.

(Contact S.E. London WFLOE at 91 Kirkdale, London SE26 4BL - phone 01-699 6712).

SEX AND

KEITH MOTHERSON is writing two articles for Green Line on the subject of sex and gender.

LIKE MANY IN various parties / 'camps', greens are working towards quite new community-based coalitions. But how could these crystallise? For me the re-alignment process depends on inter-camp recognition of the centrality of women in the community, and of the Women's Liberation Movement politically. Are we prepared to pay the just price of a potential women's-led unity on women's anti-sexist terms?

That means a sustained effort to learn from feminism. Not just tokenism and co-optation or dreaming up theories of 'the feminine principle' with which to double-bind actual women struggling for change!

Focussing on sex and gender, I want to distinguish feminist understanding from two ideologies widely held among greens (and elsewhere): Humanism and (next issue) 'Feminine-ism'. I don't claim to define 'feminist understanding'(!), but I hope mostly to pass on the hard-won evolving consensus in the Women's Liberation Movement as transmitted in its public journals, the excellent Women's Press, etc.

Our sex is biologically given but gender is learnt through socialisation. As little girls and boys we are encouraged to develop 'appropriate' deportment, mannerisms, interests, activities and affections - and terrorised to drop the rest.

We now (mostly) feel unease or revulsion at boys in dresses, dynamic or brainy girls, same gender cuddling... How 'unnatural' are the most natural acts felt to be! Yet once we too were given to such naughtinesses...!

Through consciousness-raising women and radical gays have cracked the spells of our entire cultural code at the root of all our hurt fear-full lives. Feminism asserts:

(1) Though more or less 'successfully' ingrained into our very sense of identity, gender is not unchangeably decreed by God or nature: the cultural meanings ('masculine'/'feminine') mapped onto biological fact (female/male) can be reworked. (Note that this opens the possibility of instituting new genders!)

(2) Resentment en-gendered by having to become 'normal' is usually deflected against 'deviants' and 'inferiors' or inverted as shame, guilt, depression.

(3) When people see how patriarchal gender cripples their lives, massive energies for personal /political change can be released, with women making the running.

Note also that by integrating 'sexual' orientation into its analysis, feminism contains materials for solving the cluster of problems which have de-railed male-promoted communities and 'sexual revolution', e.g. exclusiveness-jealousy; family versus community; autonomous desire versus caring commitment. Gayness/bisexuality open 'structural' possibilities for unfraught 'love triangles' and other shapes and sharings in fluid webs of erotic acceptance, stable ecologies of caring.

Early civic humanism broke only partially from the feudal-theological worldview. Man took the place of God, superior to and distinct from nature; men's institutions remained intact and together defined an 'important' public realm separate from women's sphere of the (patriarchal) home. Women's birth-giving (in common with female animals) marked them as less cultured, rational, human.

Drawing on Enlightenment rationalism and Protestantism, early feminism deployed liberal individualism to press for admittance to 'the Rights of Man' - citizenship, property, and entry to professions. Liberal humanism adapted to co-opt middle-class women: women could be 'equal to men', allowed into the 'men's huts' on male terms, including acceptance of splits between women and between the private and the PUB-lic. Socialist humanism co-opted wage-working women (as workers) into the generic-human 'mainstream' - all one in the overall struggle, comrades!

Yet most women still clung or even turned to reactionary ideologies which glorified women's 'God-given' or 'natural' vocation of motherhood. Men 'happened to' dominate revolutionary and reformist parties, unions and professional associations. The vote and 'equal rights' legislation changed little.

Second wave feminists have regrouped increasingly on new ideological baselines, beyond the in-built limits of both Christianity and secular humanism. Along with atheism and scientism, individualism and labourism, these are no longer seen as sexually-political neutral. (Humanism's tendency to rationalise political rape can be seen in the Nicholas Walter-Peter Cadogan axis against women's political and spiritual autonomy at Greenham.)

GENDER



People who counterpose 'people's lib' to what they belittle as 'women's lib' aren't ungendered 'individuals' or 'equal comrades'. They are often still riddled with gender-conditioning, witness the wounds they still cling to: exclusive sexual orientation; patterns of male dominance in allegedly 'unstructured' groups and formal organisations alike.

The central problem with unisex ideology is inability to cope with the biological specificity of male and female. Women are welcomed into the 'public arena' so long as they live up to a norm which suppresses the asymmetrical realities of the way we live our bodies in 'human' society:

(1) We don't pre-exist in our 'father's' scrotum. No woman has been inside a man, every male has been 'inside' a woman. We come into existence not just 'in' but as our mothers, flesh of her flesh. Mother is our first self/world, the matrix of experience from which 'other(s)' differentiate.

(2) Secondwave feminists talk less of 'private individuals', more of a communal sense of personhood which does justice to telepathic experience of sisterhood and motherchild bonding (women as dividuals) as well as identifications beyond the human/non-human bound-ary (animals, trees, ocean, moon...).

(3) Far from women differing from huMAN in terms of lack, it would be truer to talk of man differing from wuman/wimmin in this way. No (multi-orgasmic) clitoris; and lack of capacity to menstruate, give birth, lactate. (Of course many women choose not to become mothers, a few do none of these. Rumours too of male suckling and multi-orgasm - ejaculation being different from orgasm.)

(4) So what does that leave us on the male side? The penis (culturally glorified as the Phallus). But in loving genital heterosex, penis is shared. Like sperm in relation to ovum, it can be seen as taken, magnetised, engulfed. Despite rare cases of parthenogenesis, the male contribution to biological recreation is undeniable. But compared with carrying a foetus for nine months it is extremely light-weight!

There is though one specific area of human experience where we men are entitled to demand the last word! Non-oppressive male mysteries can only be founded around mutual cock-penetration - either successively

or simultaneously (either mutual sucking or in a circle of men).

In all other areas of life exclusive 'male mysteries' are oppressive mystifications, since women can do everything else as well or exclusively (see (3) above).

By failing to look biological asymmetry in the eye, humanism necessarily participates in the oppression of women. It is anti-green in the sense that it denies women's natures as bodily creatures/creators and as cultural creators of the meaning of their own lives, including their own exclusively-woman experiences. Yet to silence women when they talk of these realities or image through them is to practice the taboos of male-supremacism which depends utterly on confidence-wrecking shaming of women for their 'dirty', 'deficient', 'messy' bodies (- and of 'softy' men for our 'animal' proclivities).

Patriarchal culture enshrines menstrual/womb (etc.) envy in a thousand practices, cults, ideologies of the various 'men's huts'... the GodFather protection racket and Salvation by the Male (Take, Eat, this is My Body); Heroic Sons slaying maternal whales/dragons; paternity fetishes and anti-ecological cults of the phallic identified seed over the soil; anti-cyclical sense of time as an Arrow; war as rival bloodletting; creativity reduced to Production of special objects in all-male fraternities; initiation into Real Man-hood as a second birth, dying to one's mummy's boy/sissy self; and bogus compensatory claims to virility/vir-tue (e.g. strength, courage, rationality, mechanical aptitude) which necessitate making/keeping women weak, fearful, tearful and dependent.

Herein lies the dynamism of patriarchal imperialism. To prove its lie it has to drive against women, Nature and the 'softy community'. Now Real Men seem Hellbent on eliminating either women (test-tube babies) or the entire planet. (In 'Fathering the Unthinkable' Brian Easlea talks of 'the pregnant phallus' and documents how the Manhattan Project scientists thought of the bomb as their 'baby'.)

Remaining the creature of the patriarchal theology it thinks itself to have overcome, Humanism contains few resources for identifying, checking and healing the global social neurosis headed by Reaganism (multi-national technocracy at the service of ancient Biblical obsessions).

But women are now reaching deeper down into the mythic roots of cult-ure to invoke new energies for personal/political/spiritual transformation and to reconnect with the power of the Planet Herself. Gaia lives! - and Pan, too, in Her!

have also been reduced in area. The statistics include: one fifth of Hampshire's chalk downland lost to more intensive agricultural use* between 1966 and 1980; 17.5% of chalk downs in the Isle of Wight similarly damaged or destroyed during the same period; 32% of the North Kent Marshes converted to arable land between 1969-82 - an area which had been of immense importance for its birdlife.

The loss in habitats has been paralleled by declining numbers of certain plants and animals which require specialised conditions to survive.

(2) Destruction is publicly funded. Three major 'agents of destruction' have been labelled as the farming, forestry and water industries. They are accused as 'being massive bureaucracies whose main purpose is to promote a continual increase in the supply of their products without regard to whether the demands are there or not, and despite environmental and social problems which ensue.' The authors emphasise that this process is being funded by the taxpayer, who is at the mercy of these bureaucracies (which are in turn manipulated for the better interests of minority groups of the population who have traditionally maintained a powerful and domineering role in society largely centred around rural land ownership and land management.)

(3) The wider issues: crisis at home and abroad. The problems operating in the British countryside have wider implications over and above loss of landscapes and wildlife habitats. Of increasing concern is the prolific use of pesticides and fertilisers on agricultural land and the consequent long-term threat to human health.

These problems are also linked to the wider issues of crises in environment and population in the Third World... We and the other developed countries have a record of exporting our problems to places and peoples who need them least.

(4) Radical reforms are necessary. The authors conclude that land reforms are essential if the three 'major agents of destruction' are to be controlled. Their suggestions for reform are radical, but not unrealistic if there is a shift in political climate and attitudes. Meanwhile they stress that all environmentalists must strive to influence the political system as it stands by convincing the major parties to take on board sound environmental policies.

'The last word' concerns Direct Action, and it is concluded that this type of pressure is likely to increase in the 1980s as it becomes increasingly obvious that the problems of countryside conservation and environmental protection as a whole cannot be solved by compromise and co-operation... This has been tried, and has largely failed.

The countryside debate has wide repercussions for the future of our environment. Politically, conservation is becoming a word which is going to win or lose votes in elections to come. Greens should take note. This book is highly recommended as a valuable source of information on environmental politics and problems.

*i.e. ploughing and conversion to arable land; destruction of herb-rich swards due to fertiliser/herbicide application and for re-seeding, etc.

Sue Everett

THE BLOGGY LOOK FOR SPRING



Our Fashion Editor reports:

This spring's colours run the full riotous gamut from mud to dun. The look is multi-layered; the look is ethnic-punk.

This year's big events in the social calendar are outdoors (though no one is quite sure where), so wrap up warm. The fashion fabric is wool (animal solidarity I think). And the look is bulky, to cover all that padding to cope with the boots of our boisterous young bobbies.

The objet trouve is de rigueur. So just everybody who is anybody is into jumble sales. Look out for that Afghan shaggy coat (Third World solidarity) worn under Mexican ponchos (workers of the world unite) topped out by mile-long knitted rainbow scarves (Support Greenham Common Women).

Jeans (socialist solidarity) are last year - but definitely. This year it's skirts (feminist solidarity) worn long over those oh-so-chic khaki overalls worn even longer.

As ever, accessories are crucial. Your whole get-up can be totally ruined by a badge which is not ideologically sound.

But above all, this year's accessory - carried with total sang froid - is a bloody great pair of bolt cutters.

And fashion this year is uni-sex. So it's exactly the same for all you lovely ladies!

VIEWSREVIEWS

What are Eco's Aims?

I found Mark Kinzley's letter (GL19) especially interesting because whereas he seems somewhat a veteran of Eco, I am but a beginner. I think I may have learnt a lot from what he has said and maybe he can learn something from me?

Eco - the Ecology Party - exists as an alternative to the other political parties in two ways. Firstly as a potential legislative body it offers alternative policies. Secondly as a grouping of people it should offer both an alternative way of relating and an alternative set of aims.

I say "should" here because I question whether these latter alternatives have been achieved. At this spring's Eco conference I was appalled at how much we had failed to develop an alternative way of decision making. I also found cause to question Eco's real aims.

Looking through the green literature and through Eco's manifesto, you cannot but help being hit time and again with the message that our ways of thinking must change. Not just 'their' way of thinking but ours as well. Sometimes we think that because we are working for what is right we're OK - and we forget that we have our own little problems too.

Eco is about helping people to discover that there is an alternative, and helping them to work for it. Eco exists because we know that sometime we will need structural change to help practically, and probably Eco will be the only way of doing it.

In the meantime there are millions, ourselves included, who don't really know what Eco's all about. "Mouthing cliches and one-liners" doesn't happen if you know and believe in what you know. Entering parliament doesn't matter: it should not and never should be the goal of Eco. Eco is to do with people; parliament will come, if it comes, from the people, not from us.

Eco is the servant of the green movement. It rises and falls because we have brought people to our ideas or lost them. We mustn't get caught in seeking popular support if people don't believe in all we say. It's going to be a long haul and we must pace ourselves accordingly. It's going to be a long haul and fortunes will rise or fall with changing times. That's why we've got to concentrate so hard on getting our own thoughts right.

Kevin Stannard
102 Coulston Road, Lancaster LA1 3AB

NVDA: Explain Methods

I was happy to see your notice of Action 84 and the proposed Lancaster House blockade (GL 20) - written by whom I do not know.

However, as a strong supporter of NVDA, may I raise two points:

(1) "effective direct action (by which is meant something illegal, or leading individuals to arrest)" ignores the fact that strikes, though somewhat curtailed in Britain today, vigils, boycotts are some of the many forms of direct action which are not illegal, nor do they necessarily entail arrest.

(2) In the call for "mass civil disobedience in London in June" there is no mention of the necessity for non-violence, nor discussion of the merits of the particular brand of it (duragraha?) which would "physically prevent the Heads of State from leaving "ancaster House".

Full explanations, surely, are needed within the movement, and to the public, about the methods and the long-term purposes of the demonstrators. Let us formulate them.

Tony Weaver
1 St Barnabas Villas, London SW8 2EH.

Public Spending

Time for Research?

Richard Hunt's suggestion (Letters, GL 19) that the Ecology Party's economic policies would cost £100bn has surprisingly not been taken up by others in your correspondence columns. As provocative as ever, Richard has put his finger on one element of green politics - the size of government - which has rarely been critically considered.

The response of greens to this question is usually simplistically presented as 'decision-making at the lowest level possible', and there are the usual platitudes about efficiency and cutting waste. However at the present time it is particularly pertinent to look at what happens when there is a transfer of power from one level of authority to another. Does anyone seriously believe that if a government at Westminster attempted to pass power downwards (in contrast to the present proposals) those people who had held power for decades would not fight tooth and nail to keep hold of it? Of course they would - just as Ken & Co. are (rightly) seeking to maintain their power.

Richard Hunt's fears are thus confirmed. Not only are the Ecology Party's policies potentially very costly, but also they have severe implications for

the size of government. A simple example may suffice.

Presumably if a green majority had authority in parliament, it would seek to increase the power of local authorities to develop and fund local economic strategies, and this would involve offering financial assistance to local industries. In theory, to compensate for this rise in local public spending, the level of public spending at central government should fall. For example, in this instance, the Dept. of Industry should cut back its expenditure. But would it? And how would the green majority fight off the pleas from big business, trade unionists and other interest groups who would want their state assistance to be maintained? If Mrs Thatcher can't cut public spending, can we seriously expect the Greens to?

All this raises a further host of questions related to green economics (e.g. what should public spending be as a proportion of the Gross National Product) and green politics (e.g. what are the mechanics of transferring power from one level of government to another?).

It is time that we who have been involved in the Green Movement for a decade or more admitted our excessive use of generalised and

simplistic policy proposals and started getting engaged in some rather more serious research.

Tim Cooper
66 Princes Square, London W2

Just Extravagant?

I notice that nobody has seen fit to take up the point made by Richard Hunt in your February edition about the extravagance of the Ecology Party's public expenditure plans. Yet the electorate is entitled to ask how we intend to foot what will probably be a massive bill, even granting a generous margin of error in Richard's calculations. Is there not a likelihood that, despite the contributions of Community Ground Rent and Community Credit, taxes will have to be levied at confiscatory rates or the currency debased? Is this going to win us votes, or will it repel those who broadly sympathise with our philosophy?

More important still, on the premise that power tends to corrupt, could even an Ecology government be trusted, unlike ordinary mortals, not to abuse such huge quantities of public money? Wouldn't the party do better to advocate the curbing of state power, which is at the root of most of our troubles, rather than contemplating its increase?

George Morton
167 Broomhead Drive
Dunfermline, Fife.

Third World: A Question of Land

In response to the Zen Buddhist's letter (GL 21) about consumer responsibility and the Third World, I agree with what he/she said. I am a voluntary representative for Traidcraft, the alternative trading company mentioned, and have been thinking about Third World affairs for some time.

The solutions proposed in the letter and by Traidcraft both help to some extent. Yes, we must make our trading with the Third World fair. Blacking exploitative multinational products and buying alternatives instead is fine (surely it is important to write to the multinationals informing them that you are doing this and why - otherwise you may feel less guilty, but have you achieved anything for the producers?).

What is the likely response of multinationals to consumer pressure of this kind? At the least a transfer to other activities in the Third World, at the most lip-service to improving conditions for producers. And by continuing to buy and depend on cash

crops/products from the Third World (however humanely produced) surely we are diverting the land and energies of Third World people to our needs instead of theirs. Don't they need more of the land to produce food and goods for themselves (and land reform to ensure that they can)?

The problems of Third World people are largely political. Until they are more self-sufficient and less reliant on and dominated by developed countries, I am sure their problems will continue. Individuals in developed countries can continue to campaign against the injustices in the present situation, but should also press for more radical changes in our relationship with the Third World.

Finally, I cannot recommend too highly Susan George's book "How The Other Half Dies" (Pelican) to anyone interested in Third World affairs.

Sue Moss
6 Tottleworth, Rishton,
near Blackburn, Lancs.

Just Get Them Thinking

Isn't it time that an organisation was set up which has as its main objective the practical implications of the Green Movement?

As Derek Wall wrote in GL 20, "there is no single road to a Green Future". So far we've seen the Ecology Party banging its head against a brick wall, the stumbling block being the electorate. I wonder if they know why.

CND and the women's movements turn to the streets and demonstrate. What does the 'ordinary' person think of that? And I don't mean the green sympathiser.

The 'ordinary' person is a part of a society which condones war - which supports the taking of lives for a cause: 'defence'!? During our social conditioning at school were we ever led to question authority? What about the schoolchildren of today? Are they impervious to the implications of the media?

Those who do reject the present 'system' and want to lead a life closely connected with ecology, what are they supposed to do? March and discuss it - and get where? Suppose they want their own land to organically grow their own food: where does the money come from? Their non-existent job? Whether they want a 9 to 5 job complete with nervous breakdown or not, what chance do they have?

We can preach to our hearts' content about the 'golden future of a green world' while not being able to put our words into actions, for our own lives, to people who are primarily concerned with material wealth. We have thought about our future and have found our own answers. Do you think the 'ordinary' person has thought along the same lines? This society hardly encourages it. Is it wise to impose our views on people who don't think like us? Is it wise to march against what they think is right and cause bad feeling, because they are at a disadvantage with not being able to understand us?

Perhaps we should just encourage them to think seriously about the future. After all, why wouldn't they want to be happy and healthy and surviving? Those who have thought should have the choice to follow our way of life. I know it's all very idealistic, but wouldn't it be worth a try? I could be right or I could be wrong, but it wouldn't hurt to think about my questions (or would it?).

Jo D Burgess
41 High Street, Coningsby, Lincoln.

Disempowering Lectures

It's good to see Susan Griffin's Schumacher Lecture being published more widely. But readers should be warned that the Schumacher set-up last November contradicted in practice much of what Susan says and draws on.

Firstly, the Lectures were opened by Satish Kumar with a christian prayer using traditional patriarchal language, the usual 'He - Son of God - Man' stuff - all this without a word of explanation or warning, as if it was as natural and unremarkable as saying hello. When asked not to close the Lectures with another male-god invocation, Satish Kumar blamed a woman for sending him that prayer (typical!), ignoring his role in deciding to use it to set the tone of the Lectures and to use it without explanation or seeking agreement.

Also, the way in which he answered this request sounded, to me and four friends, quite dismissive and supercilious.

This paternalistic 'feel' of the lectures, contradicting much of what was actually being said, was heightened by Satish Kumar's repeated interruptions of the German woman speaker who was taking Petra Kelly's place. He was correcting her pronunciation, ostensibly, but he was also doing more than that.

Each speaker was introduced by Satish

Kumar with words of how long he'd known them, what he thought of them, what like-minded chums they were. Then, after each lecture, we applauded first the lecture, then again Satish's summary of how much he'd enjoyed the lecture.

For me and my friends, Satish Kumar will now always be Lord Shiva.

Later, Des Wilson took to the pulpit and told us how busy he was, so many lectures to give, just got his speech typed out by his secretary without whom etc., so efficient, haven't even had time to read it through! The he referred constantly to 'mankind'. Questioned later he insisted that he'd been saying 'humankind'. But we, and the woman who asked the question, clearly heard the former.

In effect the audience was meant to shut up and be educated, and grateful for it. Lord Shiva's table, and the lectern, were set up on a stage. They had microphones. But members of the audience, to ask a question, had to try to shout simultaneously at the stage and back at the rest of the audience. Of course, we had no voice amplification. So many questions were just not asked, and those who did persist against the odds had their questions misheard and misanswered much of the time.

Overall, the Schumacher Lectures were disempowering and disappointing for me, and I would not want Susan Griffin's article to encourage anyone to go to the next Schumacher Lectures.

Ian Lee
Oak Cottage, Islington, Alton, Hants.

The Greening of Labour

The Labour Co-ordinating Committee is a radical grouping of Labour Party members with a reputation for being slightly ahead of its time in terms of party thinking and strategy. Their June 'Strategy Conference', entitled 'The Socialist Vision', features some six workshops, the second of which is entitled 'Greening the Party'. The April issue of London Labour Briefing carries an essay by Peter Tatchell on the subject. Tatchell describes a convergence between reds and greens as "one of the most important tasks facing the radical Left in the years ahead." To quote part of the article:

"The Left needs to reformulate its socialism in the light of insights from the ecological movement. One example of this is the issue of Third World development. Grossly neglected by most socialists, this issue exemplifies how a green perspective can resolve a dilemma which has plagued the Left in the West for decades. With our dominant Croslandite vision of socialism through a redistribution of the fruits of increased prosperity, both Labour's

right and left cling desperately to the oppressive illusion of indefinite economic growth. Not only is such unlimited growth impossible in the long term given the finite resources of our planet, but it can only take place at the expense of the Third World."

More of Tatchell in a future issue...

New (Socialist) Ground

Readers who find GL at its best when offering a platform to socialists will be much impressed by the second issue of New Ground, SERA's quarterly journal. Articles include 'Towards an Alternative Ecological Strategy' (Robin Cook), 'The Case for a Citizens' Army' (Peter Tatchell); and 'The Ethics of the Market Place' (Jeremy Seabrook). Price 50p from SERA, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG. Annual sub. 4 issues for £2. (Or join SERA - £5 / £2 unwaged - and get New Ground free!)



PPU is 50 and 'On The Road'

The Peace Pledge Union is marking its 50th anniversary by taking to the road during June and July with a resource vehicle stimulating street actions, workshops on nonviolence, and supporting existing events. Their vehicle will be carrying video and exhibitions. If you can help with the trip, or could host the van, write to Theresa McManus c/o PPU, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1. (01-387 5501).

Natural Gardening

The National Centre for Alternative Technology at Machynlleth is running a course on organic gardening from May 18 - 22. It will suit beginners as well as more experienced gardeners. Cost £80 (claimants etc. £55). Info: Machynlleth 2400.

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Fun Year for the Green Collective

'Lots of love and fun' is how the Green Collective describes its plan of action for 1984, which is beginning to take shape now. Several things are happening...

(1) The Green Field at the CND Festival (Worthy Farm, Pilton, near Glastonbury - June 22/23/24). Come and enjoy a quiet space with all the usual Gathering attractions.

(2) Early in August, the Collective are organising with Molesworth Peace Camp a harvest celebration on the base. Details to follow. There will not be a central Green Gathering this year: some local gatherings are being planned, but fewer than had been hoped.

(3) In the winter of '84/'85, the Collective are planning a major 'Green Congress - a 4 or 5 day event offering a more intellectual sharing

of the green perspective. If you're interested in helping organise this, contact David Taylor, 4 Bridge House, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs.

(4) 'Do you need help and hints on group practices and dynamics? Then rush out and book our own green dynamic, Kim McGavin, a skilled facilitator, tin whistle player, etc. Contact him at Hillview, Yeolands Lane, Swimbridge, Barnstaple, North Devon (0271 830332).

(5) Under the banner of Green Promotions we now have Planet Waves (Apocalypso Sunshine Music), the Continuum Theatre Company (clowns, music and dance), and Panic Picnics (arts workshop - paint, silk-screen, dye, etc. - experienced with kids). All available for your summer event: book them now. Green Promotions, 37 Parkers Way, Totnes, Devon (Totnes 864568).

And if you remember the haunting and unique melodies of Planet Waves from the Green Gathering... well, their first cassette is now available from Green Promotions, price £3.

(6) These and other shows will be travelling the country this summer in the 1984 Green Roadshow. Their first date is the Boscombe Down Peace Festival, June 15/16/17. Details from John Fuller, 64 Florence Court, Andover, Hants. If you'd like the Roadshow to visit your area, contact Richie, 30 West Street, Ashburton, South Devon (0364 52932).

(7) To link in with all these projects subscribe to the Green Collective mailing: send £5 (which includes a contribution of £1 to the land trust) to 4 Chase Crescent, Woodcuts, Salisbury, Wilts.

May Tree Fair

On May 19/20 the Forestry Commission's Thorpe Woodland Campsite plays host to the Green Deserts 'May Tree Fair'. The Green Roadshow will be in attendance, as will other theatre groups, musicians, pupeteers, tumblers and jugglers. Admission is £2 a day for adults; half price for OAPs, UB40s, and over 12s (under 12s free). Camping pitches are £1 a night. It's a big fund raiser for Green Deserts, as well as tremendous fun. Thorpe Woodland Campsite is 5 miles east of Thetford where the Peddars Way crosses the A1066. Info: 0359 70265.

Square Wheel

Peace Theatre

are a group of people who took part in the Walk for Life, and who want to take the deeper message of peace in a more leisurely way to the towns and villages, recapturing the old awareness of the cycles of the seasons in the belief that through such deeper awareness comes healing. Their spiral route, starting from Arbor Low in Derbyshire, covers much of England and Wales: ideas for venues, and contributions towards acquiring horse-drawn vehicles, to Ros Hudis, Square Wheel Peace Theatre, 12 Station Road, Ditchingham, Bungay, Norfolk NR35 2QW (0986 3706).



New Age Movement on TV

Harlech TV are producing a series of six TV programmes for networking in September, to be devoted to the alternative society and new age movements. Areas covered will include medicine, energy, and education. A book may accompany the series. Filming will take place during May and June, and the producer would like to hear from anyone who might have ideas or material to contribute. Write to John Osmond, Current Affairs Dept., Harlech TV, TV Centre, Cardiff

Bradford Gathering

Scoring a probable 'first' as the only gathering to get a local council grant (towards publicity - they're seen as a cultural activity!), Bradford Green Gathering will be taking place again this year - on June 23/24. They're looking for more craft stalls and craft demonstrations than last year, and will be putting more emphasis on children's events. 'We are trying to get a few big speakers to replace some of the smaller workshops we tried last year.' Info: David (393938) or Lynne (597685).

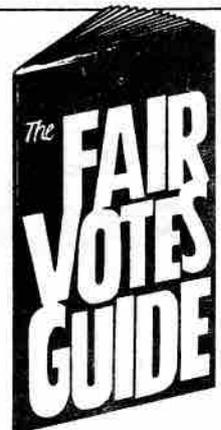
Bradford Green Jobs Group

This new group as acquired premises to run as a Green Jobs Centre, and is organising an insulation scheme. Many other ideas are in the pipeline. Info: David Presto, 9 Southbrook Terrace, Bradford BD7 1AD (0274 393938/722772).

Peace With Nature

is the title of a very practical and down-to-earth weekend at Seniors Farmhouse (June 1 - 3), led by Pam and Nick Rodway. It aims to increase understanding of - and involvement with - the total living and creative process of nature, and the implications of this for a fully peaceful life. Very relevant for all greens. Details: 0747 3961.

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Whale Campaign

Despite impressions to the contrary, the whales are not yet saved. The Norwegians, Russians and Japanese are constantly demanding higher quotas. The Norwegians are also trying to convince the International Whaling Commission (IWC) that their whaling is aboriginal (i.e. done by local people to survive, and not commercial) and should be permitted to continue. While niceties are examined by endless committees of the IWC, the slaughter will continue.

The IWC meeting this year is in Argentina from June 18 - 22. There will be appropriate action at the relevant embassies in London, and a 'Whale Festival' is being planned.

Sea Shepherd is organising a demonstration outside the Norwegian embassy on May 17 at 11.30 (this is Norway's Independence Day). John Marik, MP for Wrexham, is introducing an Early Day Motion in the Commons for Sea Shepherd that asks the British Government to break trade links with Norway if they do not give an assurance that they will stop whaling. You should write to your MP asking her/him to sign the Early Day Motion.

For information from the Anti-Whaling Committee c/o Don Jenkins, Gorphwysfa, High Street, Penmachno, Gwynedd, N Wales (Penmachno 315): and from Sea Shepherd, 12 Royal Tce., Glasgow G3 7NY (041-332 1503).

Twinning the Greens

Pamela Clayfield, of N W Leics. Ecology Party, is running a 'twinning' scheme to create links between Eco branches and Green Groups here with their counterparts in Europe. At the moment, Pamela is offering to set up links with groups in Austria, Belgium, Eire, France, Germany, Holland, Luxemburg and Sweden; but she already has requests for contacts in Russia and Japan and would like to hear from anyone who can suggest links with these and other countries, especially in Eastern Europe. If your group would like to make contact with a green group overseas, or if you can help with contacts, write to Pamela Clayfield at 16 St Matthew's Avenue, Worthington, nr. Ashby de-la-Zouch, Leics. LE6 5SF, enclosing a short account of your group and a s.a.e. Or phone her at 0530 222115.

Green Bibliography

Janet Crawford (32 Kylemore Road, London NW6 2PT - 01 624 0206) is compiling a list in index-card form of publications relevant to green/Eco politics. 700 items are listed already under fairly general headings (pollution, Third World, resources, nuclear energy, etc). The list is not available as a whole, but if readers want to know what is listed under any particular topic(s), Janet will pass on the necessary information. She is also interested in merging her list with anyone else's similar listing of publications.



Frieze for Peace

Abbey Wood School (Eynsham Drive, Abbey Wood, London SE2 9AJ) have decided to mark the United Nations International Day of Peace - September 20, 1984 - with the creation of an enormous patchwork, providing an example of what can be created by co-operation. With your friends you can contribute a section (60cm high and as long as you can make it, backed with cotton for strength). S.A.E for leaflet to 'Patchwork for Life and Peace' at the above address.

Countryside Conservation

is the title of a one-day conference to be held in the Curtis Auditorium, University of Newcastle upon Tyne, on May 18. Representatives from various bodies with an interest in the countryside will attend. Leaflet and booking form from Rick Minter, 4 Clayton Park Square, Jesmond, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE2 4DP. Fee £5.50 including buffet lunch.

Deep Greens Overseas

Warwick Fox tells us of two publications in the green perspective.

The Deep Ecologist is available from John Martin, 10 Alamein Avenue, Warracknabeal, Victoria 3393. (A\$8.00 p.a.).

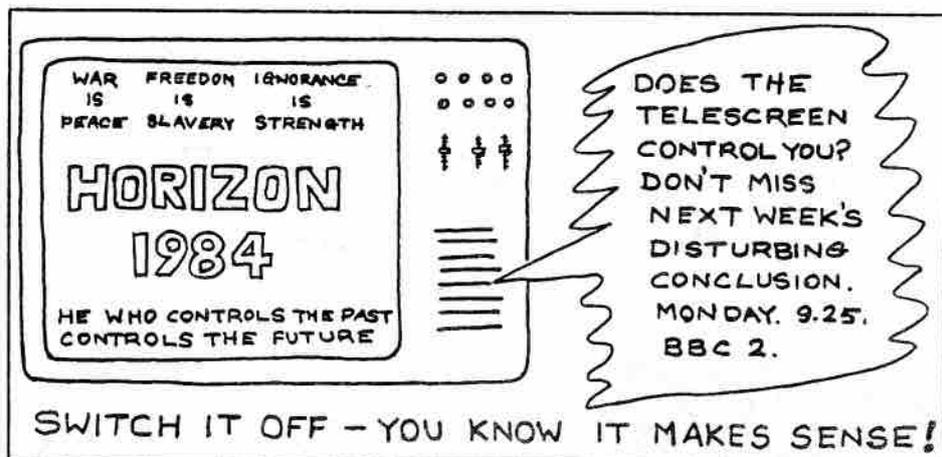
Eco-Philosophy - newsletter from Prof George Sessions, Dept of Philosophy, Sierra College, 5000 Rocklin Road, Rocklin, California 95677, USA.

Chilwell Trespass

Chilwell Ordnance Depot in Nottingham has been sold to the Americans, to become the 103rd USAF base in Britain. A Mass Trespass is being organised for Sunday July 1. For more details phone Nottingham (0602) 581948; or write to Nottingham CND, 15 Goosegate, Nottingham.

Nottingham at Peace

Nottingham CND are giving 'early notice' of their fourth annual Peace Festival being held at the Victoria Embankment on July 8 - in the hope of avoiding clashes of dates. There will be a separate womens area/marquee, and a festival-within-a-festival for children. Groups from outside Nottingham who wish to take part should write to Nottingham CND c/o Environmental Information Centre, 15 Goosegate, Nottingham (Tel. 582561).





Student Green Network

The Student Ecology Movement has been cremated - but out of the ashes has risen the "Student Green Network", a completely informal linking of groups with no membership as such and no national co-ordination beyond a newsletter.

More information from Robin Wiles, 38 Emery Avenue, Westlands, Newcastle-Under-Lyme, Staffs ST5 2JF. Tel: 0782 622426. Robin is editing the first newsletter.

This is the Network's contact list of autonomous green groups in colleges in the UK:

- ABERDEEN University: Doug Evans, Dept of Botany, Aberdeen Univ., Aberdeen.
- BATH University Ecology Society, Bath University, Bath, Avon.
- BIRMINGHAM University Ecology Society: Julie Coaton, 3 Norfolk Road, Edgbaston, B'ham.
- BRADFORD University Green Group: Jennie Bean, 3 Swinton Place, Bradford 7, W Yorks.
- CAMBRIDGE University Survival Group: Chris Thornton, Clare College, C'dge.
- ESSEX University Green Group: David Ford, Flat 2, Keynes Tower, Univ. of Essex, Colchester, Essex CO4 3UD.
- EXETER University Ecology Society: Kevin Cotter, 115 Old Tiverton Road, Exeter, Devon.
- GUILDFORD Technical College: Richard Stephens, 7 East Meads, G'd, Surrey.
- Huddersfield Polytechnic Green Soc.: c/o PO Box 89, Huddersfield Poly, Huddersfield, W Yorks (Tel 687729).
- KENT University: Chris Wilkinson, Little Gorsley, Pett Bottom, Canterbury, Kent.
- LAMPETER (St David's College, Univ of Wales) Ecology Society: Simon Hunt, Clydfan, Bryn Road, Lampeter, Dyfed SA48 7EE.
- LEEDS University Green Group: Martin Sutherland, 35 Hartley Avenue, Leeds 6.
- LEICESTER University: Leicester Environmental Action Force (LEAF): Gill Haigh, Block F, Elms Road

- Houses, 36 Elms Road, Leicester.
- LOUGHBOROUGH University of Technology: The Green Society, Univ. of Technol., Loughborough, Leics.
- MANCHESTER Polytechnic: Lyn Wells, 523 Charles Berry Crescent, Hulme, Manchester 15.
- NEWCASTLE Poly Green World: Edward Jones, 5 Sunbury Avenue, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
- STAFFORD: North Staffs Poly: The Greens, Richard Thorpe, 65 North Walls, Stafford, Staffs ST16 3AD.
- NORWICH University Ecology Society: Paul Rynsard, Student Union, UEA, Norwich.
- OXFORD Poly: Kevin Armstrong, 199 Cowley Road, Oxford.
- PLYMOUTH Polytechnic Ecology Movement: Mick Ruhland, 73 Alexandra Road, Mutley Plain, Plymouth, Devon.
- READING University: Penny Howard, 28a Alexandra Road, Reading (65937).
- SHEFFIELD Univ Green Movement: Stephen Renals, Runmoor House, Shore Lane, Sheffield S10 3AY.
- STIRLING University Green Alliance: A M Chambers, 3:43 Murray Halls, Univ of Stirling (0786 3171).
- SUNDERLAND Polytechnic Green Group: Karl Peterman, Flat 3/5 Gray Road, S'land, Tyne & Wear SR2 9HA.
- WOLVERHAMPTON Poly: Richard Gale, c/o SU, W'hampton Poly, Wulfrana Street, W'hampton, W Midlands.
- YORK University Green Movement: David Hurley, Derwent College, Univ of York, Heslington, York YO1 5DD.

New Green Groups and Up-dates

(This list revises the list published in GL 20).

- SALISBURY Green Group: Caroline Lanyon, 14 Churchfield Road, Salisbury SP2 7NH.
 - BOURNEMOUTH Green Alliance: Roger Eade, Crystal Studios, 43 Poole Road, Westbourne, Bournemouth (0202 761710).
 - CHESTERFIELD Green Alliance includes 13 groups from Sheffield and Ch'field.
 - SOUTH DEVON Green Collective: Dean Holden, 37 Parkers Way, Totnes, S Devon (Totnes 864568).
 - LOWESTOFT Green Group: Bob Walker, 4 Bruce Street, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 0HA (0502 87042).
 - STROUD Green Forum: John Sommerville, 95 Bisley Road, Stroud (Tel 71523).
 - AYR Green Group: Jane Dickie, Castlehill Manse, 3 Hillfoot Road, Ayr, Scotland. Tel 0292 267332.
- ** Please send corrections and additions to the lists of Green Groups and Student Green Groups to Green Line, 34 Cowley Road, Oxford: and to Green Collective, 4 Bridge House, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs (Green Groups and Student Groups); and/or to Robin Wiles, 38 Emery Avenue, Westlands, Newcastle, Staffs ST5 2JF (student groups only).



See London's Arms Dealers!

London Peace Action are organising a sponsored cycle ride round the capital's arms traders on Saturday May 26 as part of the CAAT (Campaign Against the Arms Trade) 'Bread Not Bombs' week of action. The route is about 35 miles, and there will be breaks en route for bring-and-share lunch and tea 'in a nice park'. Sponsor forms and further details from Sue on 01-607 4015; or London Peace Action, c/o 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1.

Exploring Peace

is the theme of a weekend workshop at Seniors Farmhouse (May 11/13. Topics will include lifestyle, despair work, and the links between personal and social change. There is no way to peace; peace is the way. Write to John and Ingrid, Seniors Farmhouse, Semley, Shaftesbury, Dorset (0747-3961) with s.a.e. for more details.

The Future for Forestry

is the title of a report written by Richard Grove and published by the British Association of Nature Conservationists. It is the only up-to-date and comprehensive survey of the impact of forestry and forestry policy on the British countryside available today. £2.95 + 30p p&p from BANC c/o Mrs Carla Stanley, Rectory Farm, Stanton St John, Oxford.

Green Lines



PAMPHLETS AVAILABLE FROM GREEN LINE

(Prices include p&p, except that orders under £2 should be accompanied by a 12½p stamp).

ECO-SOCIALISM IN A NUTSHELL (SERA, 24pp, 50p). Extract from 'Nuclear Power for Beginners'. 5 for £2 post free.

SOCIALISM AND ECOLOGY (Raymond Williams. SERA, 20pp, 75p). An historic convergence. 5 for £3 post free.

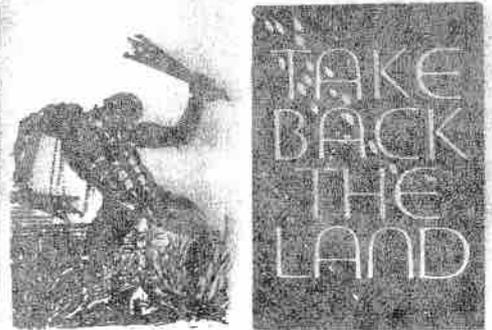
GOD'S GREEN WORLD (Christian Ecology Group, 48pp, £1). Prayer, creation, conflict, the feminine, economics, animals ...

FAIR VOTES GUIDE (Campaign for Fair Votes, 32pp, 95p). All the basic facts about electoral reform. 5 for £4 post free.

EMBRACE THE EARTH (Green GND / GND, 44pp, 90p). A green view of peace. 5 for £3.50 post free.



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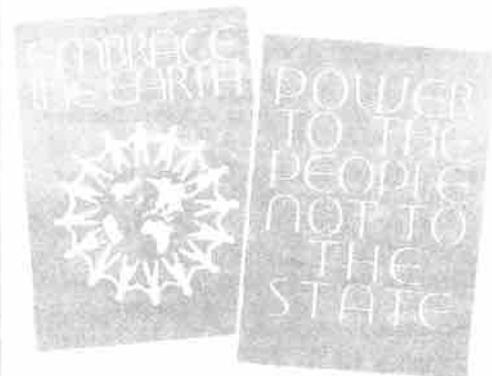
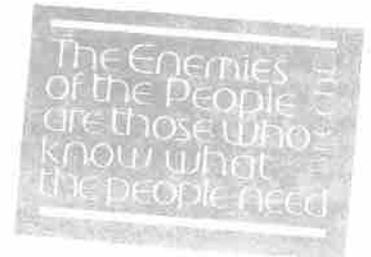
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