

# GREEN LINK

Green Spirituality.  
Acid Rain. Bahro on  
Russia.

30p

October '83  
No.16



# GREEN LINE

EDITORIAL/DISTRIBUTION:  
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The Green movement is diverse, but the sense of common identity is growing. A common understanding of the absolute need to respect all creation, and never to become so obsessed with detail as to lose sight of the whole, inspires a visionary approach to life which manifests itself in various ways: there are greens active in the peace and anti-nuclear movements, campaigning for human and animal rights, working in political parties, engaging in NVDA, and bringing a new insight to the women's movements. There are green socialists, green anarchists, green pacifists - greens everywhere!

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**DEADLINES:** We shall publish on November 1 and December 1, then after a seasonal break monthly again from February 1. Articles must reach us by the 7th of the previous month to be considered, but the earlier the better. News can be taken later (up to the 21st). Please be brief/concise: we do have to cut some letters, and are beginning to receive more than we can print. Sadly, for lack of space we also have to reject a lot of articles, but as our circulation grows so do the number of pages we can print...



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Due to building work taking place here, we fear we have lost one or two advertisements. Please send us new copy or ask for a refund if we have failed to print yours. Our apologies (amid the dust!).

# No man is an island



In the last issue of Green Line, Tom Comber answered the question, "Is Jesus Green?" Now Dave Rowsell examines an alternative basis for a green spirituality.

DURING CONVERSATIONS I have had with people trying to get them to see the Green view of the world, a comment they frequently raise is, "You can't change human nature."

Firstly, this is a question way beyond politics - in the realm of theology, philosophy and psychology. Nevertheless it has profound repercussions for the Green movement. Because the way that we human beings view ourselves and others governs how we form relationships with one another. And for "western civilisation" this is perhaps the deepest problem we face.

For thousands of years we have been, and still are, a culture that sees the human race as basically "sinful", and this view has had plenty of time to sink very deep into all our minds. Over the millennia we have carefully fostered an attitude of basic mistrust between all human beings and at all levels, from locking our doors to the arms race - things that we basically take for granted (or did!).

As if this was not terrible enough in itself, there is a second aspect that drives the whole problem even deeper. For thousands of years too, our culture has believed in God - the Great Invisible "Man in Heaven" who is all-powerful and all-pervading. "He" made everything, and "He" is in control of everything. So it follows that we are effectively in control of nothing. Also, "He" being in control is the ultimate centralised hierarchy. Thus for thousands of years the view that we can't really change anything has been a fundamental experience for the majority of people. Many claim not to believe in God any more - but whether they do or not, this basic defeatism lingers on. "God" has simply been replaced by "They". "They" can be any group - scientists, a remote government, anybody.

And if these two outlooks are not enough, the problem is reinforced by yet a further level of negativity. We are a culture that still has a legacy of when we die we go to Heaven, Hell, or if "He" is not sure if we have passed the test, to Purgatory for a while. We are "in this world, but not of it." This isn't our real place - we are just passing through, and if we mistreat it all while we are here, and everything is wrong and corrupt, so what? I'll have peace in heaven.

But this whole philosophy is really a complete failure of consciousness - none of it fits what we actually observe. For when we are born, each one of us comes OUT of the world. By the successful operation of all the forces of the universe - from food and shelter

for the mother to the sun shining from its place in the galaxy - each one of us materialises from nothing and then comes out of our mother's womb. So, instead of looking at life through male-dominated eyes, and seeing ourselves as temporary visitors, making our way as best we can through a very mechanical reality, we can consider ourselves more justified if we regard the earth as our Mother, and this place - Here and Now - being our rightful home in the great Scheme of Things.

However, as appealing as this ancient but recently renewed idea may be (for that is all it is - an idea), it does not offer the human race any real reason to give our planet any better treatment in the future than we have in the past. If we look upon the Earth as being our Mother, then it follows that we see ourselves as "Her" children. Now, as a child, I took my mother completely for granted, and it wasn't until she died that I realised just what she was and what she meant. As children we are sheltered from responsibility, and whether we see the Man in the Sky as our Father or the Earth as our Mother, we imply that we are children, and thus without the real responsibility of adulthood.

Quite simply, we just have to grow up, and not only think like adults but behave as such too - with all the responsibility that that implies. And none of us really knows what that is like yet, because we have been living in a culture that has been running away from accepting it for so long. For the real truth of it all is that we are not separate, and cannot be separated, from the world in any sense at all. Neither are we each a part of it, in the sense that the world is a wonderful gigantic machine with each of us one of its cogs. Rather, we are each a unique action of the entire universe, just like every ant, giraffe, rose or parakeet in a tropical rainforest. Each one of us is a point through which the whole world (the universe) becomes conscious of itself. The real Me, the real You, the real Blackbird are one and the same. We are not parts of it to share it - we ARE it. Each one of us is really ALL of it.


When a species becomes extinct, when a small native community is sold Coke and transistor radios, when a tropical rainforest is cut down, when a lake is killed by chemicals, it's the real ME, the real YOU that's hurt, and it's the real ME and the real YOU that dies a little bit more each time.

That, it seems to me, is the real root of ecological concern. Change human nature? Not at all: let's just grow up. Perhaps then we'll find out what human nature really is.

Dave Rowsell

# "There's something wrong with the rain"

CHRIS CHURCH takes a look at the origin of acid rain, and examines the curious similarities between this environmental threat and nuclear power.



TRADITIONALLY RAIN and snow have been images of purity. Phrases like "the gentle rain", "pure as snow", even "snow white" pervade our culture. Yet it has become increasingly clear that rain is desparately vulnerable to certain forms of pollution. Back in 1951 one of the first major fall-out scares occurred when a fall of snow in New York State was found to be radioactive as a result of weapons tests 2,000 miles away in Nevada.

And now rain is becoming more than an indicator of pollution, for it is carrying the pollution with it. "Acid Rain" may be this year's environmental buzz-word, but it is a problem of steadily growing magnitude. It is perhaps unique among environmental threats in being one that can be brought steadily under control using proven technologies until the threat has vanished altogether. But if nothing is done it is a problem that could expand from being a threat to "fishes and forests" to being a major public health problem in a surprisingly short space of time.

Acid rain is very much a problem of our own making. Firstly it results from the burning of fossil fuels - principally coal and oil. As well as containing large amounts of carbon, these fuels also contain sulphur and nitrogen compounds that burn to form sulphur and nitrogen oxides. They may be deposited near the site or pass up into the atmosphere and be blown long distances. During this time the oxides may dissolve in rainwater to form sulphurous or nitric acides. It is the presence of these that lead to the forming of "acid rain" and it is this acid rain that can destroy trees and, in lakes where the acid balance is sensitive, kill the fish and insect life, sometimes totally.

## Passing the pollution buck

The roots of the acid rain problem go back to the 1950s and one of the crucial pieces of anti-pollution legislation, the Clean Air Acts. Unfortunately, while these acts achieved their aims of ending the "pea soup" fogs that engulfed our major cities and bringing about a dramatic fall in bronchial disease deaths, their main tool was the tall chimney. Instead of polluting Manchester, Manchester's factories' exhausts were pushed up higher into the atmosphere and, it was assumed, dispersed safely. After all, the atmosphere was a big place. (Cynical readers may find interesting parallels with ocean dumping of nuclear waste at this point.) For any critic to have said then that such policies were short-sighted and would lead to massive environmental damage in Sweden and Norway would doubtless have led to such critics being labelled unscientific extremists.

Yet the facts are clear. Sulphur emissions from West European factories and power stations are killing

off fish in thousands of lakes throughout Scandinavia. For all that Poland and East Germany burn higher-sulphur coal than we do, Britain exports more air-borne sulphur than any other country, and the only countries that "import" this sulphur are Norway, Sweden and Finland. As well as killing off lakes and damaging trees there are further problems with damage to stone building and metal structures and cars. Further to this is the risk to drinking water supplies. Acidified water can dissolve aluminium, cadmium and lead from river- and lake-beds, and the problem is massively increased if the water travels down lead pipes.

The solution to these problems cannot come from Scandinavia alone. The Swedes are working to halve their sulphur emissions, and the adding of lime to lakes can act as a delaying tactic. But the long-term solution must come from the countries producing the sulphur oxides, notably Britain. And it is not just a problem of exports. A growing number of lakes in southern Scotland are dead due to acidification, and Loch Katrine and others north of Glasgow are already being limed. Nowhere is the acid water in lead pipes more of a problem than in Glasgow with its unequalled mileage of lead piping still in use.

So what can be done? The answer is quite simple: cut sulphur emissions. The less sulphur, the less acid rain. The problem can thus be tackled steadily and will produce resultingly steady decreases. The problem is not really what to do, but who should pay for it, especially when about 60% of sulphur emissions come from power stations. The Central Electricity Generating Board - everyone's least favourite nationalised industry - are acting very cagily, well aware that major modifications such as fitting "sulphur scrubbers" to major stations would cost billions. While on the one hand they are successfully managing to censor scientific papers that put the blame firmly on them, they are also trying to use acid rain as a justification for more nuclear power - surely one of the more bizarre pro-nuclear ploys yet. After a moment's consideration of the relative costs of new nuclear generating capacity (currently some 16% of capacity) against the cost of modifying coal stations (currently 80% of capacity) that still have in many cases twenty or more years of life left, shows the "nuclear solution" to have the economics of a madhouse. Add to this consideration of the awesome cost in both money and jobs of "phasing out coal" and it becomes clear that the nuclear solution is nothing more than a gross attempt at deception. Fortunately they are now being forced to take the problem more seriously but have managed to head off criticism (or so they hope) by proposing a five-year £5m research project to see how bad things really are.

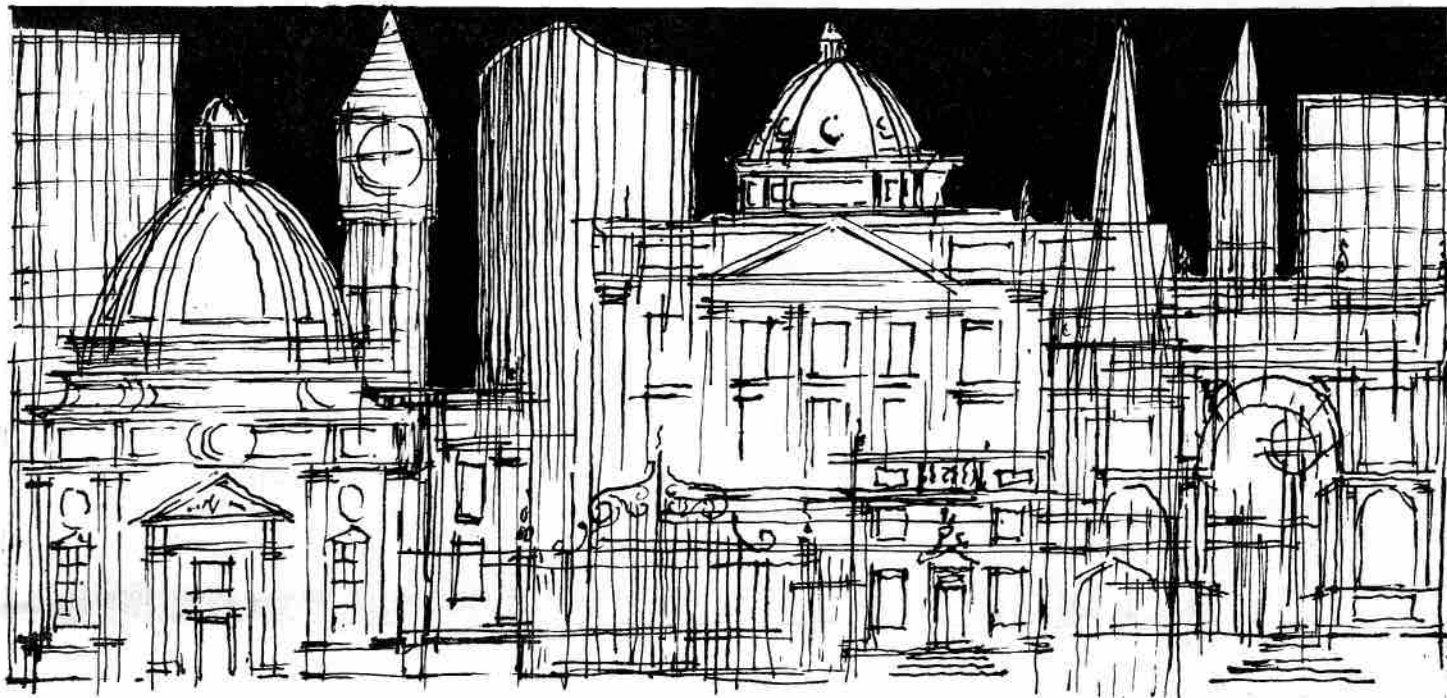
One can only assume that in their haste to ensure that nothing critical of them reaches print, they are failing to read the mass of published papers that already show the extent of the problem. It is interesting to watch the more "staid" conservation bodies in this country, who have in the past been

dubious or critical of the environmental groups' claims about the way in which the CEEB manipulates the truth, being forced to agree that this is exactly what happens.

What is needed is quite simply action - NOW! In the short term this means a government commitment to spend money on equipment to clean up our coal stations. This should be coupled with a campaign to ensure that we produce as little unnecessary sulphur as possible: in other words, a major conservation campaign. This may sound like a list of the answers to nuclear power, but the problem - a major electricity utility producing unacceptable pollution - is in fact quite similar.

It is also interesting that one major coal-burning alternative to nuclear power is also one part of the answer to acid rain. Fluidised-bed coal burning can massively reduce both sulphur and nitric emissions while burning coal more efficiently. Couple this to district heating to use all the waste heat and we are well on the way to a sane energy plan for the next century. In the long run a programme of new non-polluting renewable technologies should be introduced, as indeed they surely will be. But until then coal will be the most important fuel we have, so it is essential that we use it cleanly. The technology to do so is there - all it needs is the push from us.

Chris Church



## THE LONG MARCH THROUGH THE

GAINING INFLUENCE, let alone power, and then using it wisely are no small tasks. I hope that the alternative movement and readers of Green Line are not kidding themselves that fundamentally changing the society we live in will be a small, easy or quickly accomplished task. The Chinese have a proverb: A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. If we are serious about completing that journey we must begin to take some steps in the direction of the institutions that currently control our society, and ensure that they are changed in ways which will facilitate a change towards a self-sustaining future. Rudi Dutschke referred to this as "the long march through the institutions". It really is time that the alternative movement took his words seriously. If we really want to change things we have to come to terms with what already exists, as well as creating anew.

\*\* This is the first in an occasional series of articles by Martin Stott on approaches to change through the major institutions of society. Martin was elected to the board of the Oxford and Swindon Co-operative Society in 1982 with the support of a local alliance of socialists and ecologists. He is a member of the National Federation of Radical Co-operators.

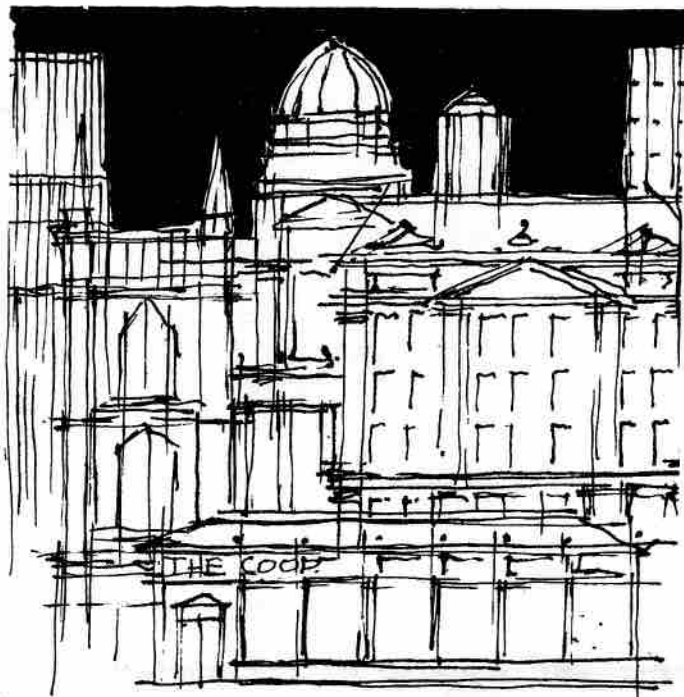
IF THE alternative movement is serious about being more than a few isolated and individual experiments in different ways of living, of interest to sociologists and, in the future, to social historians, and wishes to tackle seriously the problems of the society we live in, propose alternatives and implement them, it must be prepared to confront the reality of "actually existing capitalism" and develop a theory of transition based on what "actually exists" and where it might be taken to.

It is unrealistic to expect the transition to a sustainable, socialist and ecological society to be achieved in our life times. It is a process which will take decades, probably centuries, although I acknowledge that if some pretty fundamental changes are not made in the next few decades we may not have the opportunity to complete the rest of the transition at a more leisurely pace!

Historical precedent leads me to believe this. The nature of British society is such that major ruptures in the way of life are unheard of - the last was in 1066 - and those who argue that revolutionary transition is the only method of bringing change argue on the face of hundreds of years of history. Very few people in the Green movement take this position in any case, so that to argue that change must be gradual is nothing new. Perhaps what is new is trying to develop a strategy which takes account of this long-term perspective.

What I want to argue is that the Green movement needs to look seriously at all the major institutions in our society; those institutions which really wield power, come to terms with their existence, and then change them.

Of the major British institutions, the Co-operative Movement and the Trade Union Movement are unique in that they are composed of ordinary people and are amenable to democratic change. Contrast them with the military, the civil service, the media, the multinationals, the city - and for all their faults they begin to look like allies in the struggle for change. It's no accident that Thatcher's Britain is so hostile to trade unionism.



## INSTITUTIONS

WHEN TALK in the Green movement turns to co-operatives, the subject matter is invariably about workers' co-ops; the new flowering of self-managed productive enterprises generally employing, perhaps, a dozen or so people - wholefood shops and printers, computer software companies and removal firms. As a sector of the economy workers' co-ops have grown in an unprecedented fashion over the past decade. In 1974 there were only 18 workers' co-ops in Britain, and most of those were survivors from the last great workers' co-ops' boom in the 19th century. Now there are over 600 workers' co-ops in Britain employing over 6,500 people.

There is however another co-operative movement in Britain that was founded in 1844 by the "Rochdale Pioneers" - the retail or consumer co-operative movement, the Co-op in the high street and (for those old enough to remember) of the 'divi'. It's the slumbering giant of the retail trade, still by far Britain's biggest retailer, still with over 15% of the growing trade Britain's largest food seller (though Sainsburys look set to displace it this year.) With a turnover of £3 billion per annum, 100,000 employees, associated farms, productive units, a bank, an insurance company and a political party with representation in Parliament, it is one of Britain's institutions.

One hundred years ago, even 30 years ago, the Co-op was seen as an important vehicle for change in society, challenging capitalism at its own game and

winning, providing valuable political support for the growing labour movement, innovations in customer facilities, and trade union rights for its employees, and organising educational and cultural facilities which before the days of compulsory free education were an important catalyst in working-class self-help and consciousness.

What the Co-operative movement has to offer now in any strategy for change is democratic procedures, resources, and in the final analysis, power. At the moment the democratic procedures are being allowed to atrophy: the movement is one run largely by the managers of societies, the resources are being squandered in misguided attempts to "keep up with Sainsburys", and the power is being dissipated because there is little democratic control and even less in the way of clear direction.

This need not be the case. The Co-operative movement could and should be an ally in the movement for change. The opportunities are enormous. Its purchasing power can influence the way, and the type, of food manufacturers' produce. Its penetration of the market place could influence the consumption patterns of many people in Britain, particularly in relation to food. Its financial power could be an enormous boost to the emerging workers' co-operative movement, providing guaranteed markets for its goods at fair prices. Its power, through the various quangos it has representation on, could be crucial in influencing policy on a range of things from the statutory kinds and levels (if any) of artificial preservatives in foods, to the setting of durability and quality standards for the manufacture of household and electrical goods. What is needed is clear direction. That direction must come from the members of the individual co-operative societies up and down the country. A strategy of gaining power locally on society boards and influencing their marketing and purchasing policies can be taken further up the system in time - to influencing and eventually controlling the policies of the movement nationally in everything from banking and insurance to farming, manufacturing and retail distribution.

This strategy is not impossible. The co-operative movement in Denmark led the field in removing artificial preservatives from food in the 1960s: its competitors soon followed. The co-operative movement in the USA led the field in providing free nutritional advice to its customers in the shops. Its competitors soon followed. The co-operative movements in France and Italy have a more co-ordinated approach to purchasing goods from workers' co-operatives, and the workers' co-op movements in these countries is infinitely stronger than in Britain.



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It is of course quite unrealistic to expect to "capture" co-operative societies in Britain by coups involving sudden board-room changes; it requires dedication and commitment, things not absent from the alternative movement. It also requires a clear strategy in advance - a knowledge of where to apply pressure to gain maximum results. In the past couple of years a small groups of socialists and people associated with workers' co-ops and the alternative

movement have formed the National Federation of Progressive Co-operators - to campaign for such changes and to set up electoral organisations to bring them about. It is still small, but its annual conference in Bristol at the end of June brought together people from all over the country to discuss strategies. It now has directors on half a dozen or more of the biggest retail societies, and as it grows it could become an important focus for change in the Co-operative movement.



## Socialism and the Greens

Andy Roberts writes:

A group of people from SERA (Socialist Environment and Resources Association) and Green CND have been meeting to organise a conference on "Socialism and the Green Movement". It will be held on November 12/13 at Lanchester College, Coventry.

We hope to attract people from both the green and socialist movements, and to try and break down the mutual suspicion that often arises between the two camps. We believe that greens and reds have much in common (or should have) and that it will be very productive to get

together and talk over both mutual interests and points of divergence. Both can learn from each other, both in theoretical and practical terms.

We are planning a wide variety of workshops on topics of mutual concern including: industrialisation and growth, the future of work, decentralisation, cooperatives and popular planning, feminism and sexuality, Third World, peace and alternative defence, health, land, food and agriculture.

We are also hoping to have a special session on working in trade unions, and have invited Jim Slater, General Secretary of the National Union of Seamen,

to address the conference.

In addition, we will be having workshops to discuss the general issues raised by the attempt to combine socialist and green thinking.

Hopefully readers of Green Line will find this an interesting project. It will be the first time that socialists and greens have got together in this way in Britain, and all sorts of exciting political developments could emerge. We look forward to seeing you there.

Further details and booking forms can be obtained from SERA, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG (01-439 3749).

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# SEA SAND AND

ROLAND CLARKE recently went on holiday in Greece. Not content with just basking on sun-drenched beaches, he scratched the political surface of Greece - and struck green!

SUN, GOLDEN SAND and ancient ruins. Relaxed, smiling people mending their fishing nets, picking grapes or dancing in Tavernas. The picture-postcard, travel brochure image of Greece hides a dimmer reality that is easy to push aside while on holiday in this beautiful country. The industrial sprawl around Athens, the tumbledown houses and the demuded rural landscape easily merge into the overall golden image. It's hard to be on holiday and think that these people often feel that they belong more to the Third World than to the EEC, that this country is a key NATO member, host to numerous US bases and permanently in fear of their NATO neighbour Turkey.

Nine years have passed since the Greek colonels fell from power after their disastrous intervention in Cyprus. Democracy was restored and the right-wing New Democracy government of Constantine Karamanlis came to power. Over the next seven years, the government attempted with mixed success to modernise the Greek economy and social institutions, paving the way for entry into the EEC in 1981. However, the problems they sowed for the present socialist government are extensive, and the 'world recession' has added to them. In their moves to encourage industry, they built up the large companies, wiping out small and medium businesses, and by 1981 unemployment had increased to 16%.

On October 18 1981, after 40 years of right-wing political domination, Greece elected a socialist government. The Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK) was formed in September 1974, winning only 15% of the vote in the elections; but in 1977 they won 26% and continued to grow. Their spectacular 48% in 1981 indicated a major shift of voters from both New Democracy and the pro-Soviet Communist Party of the Exterior (KKE).

PASOK's success was due both to their charismatic leader and a mix of moderate and radical policies. Two years later some of PASOK's promises have been kept, but others are foundering - opening the door perhaps to other progressive forces. Generally, most people feel that the government has improved things. Unemployment may have risen slightly, but index-linked wage rises have safeguarded many industrial workers' living standards. Social services have generally been improved, with benefits introduced for the first time and a National Health Scheme bill before parliament.

But the nationalisation of shipbuilding, steelmaking, pharmaceuticals and petrochemicals industries has accompanied a continuation of the industrialisation of the economy begun by New Democracy. PASOK originally saw the need to 'socialise' production rather than develop state-owned bureaucratic industrial monoliths of the East European or social democratic type, and to that end introduced combined worker/municipal/state involvement in decision making. Their success is marred by the continual expansion of large-scale industry, often privately owned, at the expense of not only smaller and more socially useful production units, but also of the environment.

60% of Greek factories are in the area surrounding Athens. In the days of the Ancient Greeks much of this was prime agricultural land, and in an area which was Attica's most fertile - at Eleusis - stood the Temple of Demeter, Goddess of Agriculture and Fertility. Today the ruins of the temple are surrounded by factories, many of them oil refineries, some producing agro-chemicals! The bay is lined with shipyards and the waters are crowded with ocean-going ships. Some time ago one neighbouring factory used some of the temple ruins for concrete! All along the coast, from Patra on the Ionian Sea, through the Gulf of Corinth, past Eleusis to Athens and beyond, the industrial sprawl grows with socialist blessing.

Before the election they talked about development without destruction, and tighter pollution control. But the emergency pollution levels have been raised and 250 new industrial sites sprang up around Athens in one year alone. Many people left Athens in 80/81 because of the pollution from industry, cars, the airport, and the harbour of Piraeus. Limited measures have been applied - for instance, each day only half the cars, by numberplate, are allowed into the city: yet the fuel continues to have a high lead content.

And the problems are not confined to Athens, but affect the other major towns such as Thessaloniki, Patra and Kavala. At the time the economic benefit seems to flow more to the wealthier classes with their tax loopholes - though everybody delights in breaking the law in their own little way. The property racket is extensive - though entry is denied to many. The contrast between the 'tourist' seafront areas and the urban blight around industrial areas is appalling.

Poverty appears particularly bad in rural districts, where about 20% of the 8½ million Greeks live. With entry into the EEC, things have not improved. Although by 1986 Greece will have received about £1.2 billion in economic and industrial aid, the agricultural share will not have reached the majority of peasants but be confined to the very few large farmers - responsible for most of the added surplus Euro-wine and olive oil lakes - and to the agricultural supply and distribution firms. EEC regulations on such things as seed varieties, grading and packaging will add to the growing problems facing the small farmers who are in the clear majority.

Hundreds of years of grazing by livestock, and firewood gathering, have bared many hillsides, while the remaining ones are suffering under new forestry techniques or urban sprawl, and many rivers have subsequently dried up. Mechanised and chemical agricultural methods are spreading, threatening the fertile plains that for thousands of years have fed Greece. PASOK have attempted to bring some hope to the peasants by controlling prices - increasing domestic food prices - and encouraging co-operatives; a brave move considering how independent minded the peasants are. Clearly there is some new wealth in the rural areas - private investment in agricultural banks has gone up - but it may signify the death-knell for small-scale agriculture.

## A Green Dawning

Within this new political climate, green things are stirring. For some time there have been a number of 'green' groups working on or with the political parties, sometimes purely on environmental issues,



# SOCIALISM

sometimes broader. There is a scientific environmental magazine close to the government which sometimes touches on ecology, and a number of people in this are more radical and have links with further ecological initiatives outside. An alternatives/ecology movement is growing up, at present more among students and not so much in society at large.

Within this movement are a number of more progressive groups whose actions and discussions are based on the belief that the grassroots of society need to be changed. They do not therefore feel ready to talk about 'parties'. Many people who have left political parties are looking for somewhere to go - somewhere where there is a vision, a feeling for tomorrow, and not policies and actions rooted in the solutions of Today and Yesterday. A number of them have become disillusioned with the failure of PASOK to look ahead, or have found that the Eurocommunist party (Communist Party of the Interior) still gets stuck in old ideological thinking despite its break from KKE and its progressive attempts to attract the women's movement, ecologists and disenchanted urban youth.

Strangely enough the symbol of PASOK is a green rising sun, and it is partly because of their electoral call for 'change' (Allaghi) that many people are looking for something beyond traditional solutions. Peter Cadogan - another green globetrotter - who took part in this year's Marathon March observed that Greeks are naturally anarchists and only a charismatic leader like Papandreou can bring them together. There is no middle of the road democratic tradition and supporting the government would be centralist. It remains to be seen if greens can connect with this anarchist streak more effectively than the socialists.

## Ecological Initiative

In Athens one green group, Ecological Initiative, which began in 1980/1, now produces its own newspaper every 50 days and, as well as trying to initiate local urban changes, is trying to link up with people out of the towns, especially those involved in agricultural initiatives. The aim is very much one of spreading information and ecological practice. Another group in Thessaloniki, though small - about 45 - are trying to stop a ring road which will not only destroy a large part of one of the few forests in the area but will also encourage the urban sprawl. It also seems to be part of a scheme to create a new industrial area on the east side of the town.

Most of the ecological groups are already actively involved in the peace movement, which is now made up of three organisations. PASOK has its own pressure group, KEDEA, which does not organise demonstrations and tends to be more pro-Soviet than pro-US. KKE works through EEDYE, which works along World Peace Council lines, and does not participate in the Marathon Marches.

The main organisation, and the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation 'contacts' in Greece, are the independent AKE. They are the organisers of the Marathon Marches, started in 1963 by Dr Lambrakis, around whose death the film 'Z' was based. The two leading lights now are Michael Peristerakis and Yannis Drossos, and AKE are supported by among others the ecologists and the

Eurocommunists.

Greece is a non-nuclear member of NATO, but at some of the US bases there are very short-range Honest John and Nike Hercules nuclear weapons. Although the peace movement wants to believe in Papandreou's commitment to no nuclear weapons or foreign bases in Greece, he is seen by many to be prevaricating. The recent 5-year agreement with the US on their bases gives general cause for concern on military issues.

## U.S. bases

According to official accounts, there are four main US bases with 20 ancillary facilities, and five NATO early warning radar stations on the northern border. During most of the election campaign, Papandreou was calling for the closure of the US bases, and for Greece's withdrawal from both NATO and the EEC. Nearer the end of the campaign he softened his positions somewhat, and now his commitment seems dependent on pressure from below.

The new agreement signed on September 9 should ensure that the bases will close down by the end of the decade, and that until then all operations from the bases will be "defensive". The PASOK government have also tried to ensure that the function of the bases will in no way open Greece to the potential aggression of its professed NATO ally but more real arch-enemy, Turkey. Greece has been aware for a long time that the US could easily put most of its military support into Turkey, which is in a more key position in relation to the Soviet Union. All positive exchanges between progressive forces in Greece and Turkey - which could lead to an easing of tensions - are blocked by the US administration's "enthusiasm" for the present military regime in Turkey.

Another cause for concern is that the agreement is linked to a pledge of £333.3 million for fiscal 1983 in US military credits to Greece and assistance in the development of their infant weapons industry. Most of the funds will go towards at least 50 American-built F-16 fighters - which Greece will probably go ahead and buy this month - along with 50 European-made ones, either French Mirage 2000 or the British/West German/Italian Tornado.

Perhaps the only positive sign on the Greek military front is Papandreou's continued attempts to establish a Balkan nuclear-free zone. Talks have already started with President Zhivkov of Bulgaria, President Ceausescu of Romania, and Mrs Blacic, Prime Minister of Yugoslavia. Papandreou has said that the PASOK government "are committed not to have nuclear weapons on our territory. But we shall insist that our neighbours do the same."

In the light of all this, AKE are asking for major international support for the seventh Marathon March in 1984. As it only lasts a day, one could link it up with a late spring or early summer holiday in socialist Greece. Perhaps we should take a leaf out of the socialists' magazines and advertise holidays with green extras like touring concrete factories in Eleusis. In the meantime we have to hope that the sunflowers will flourish under the 'green sun', and that together they can resurrect some of the Ancient Greek feeling for Life, Nature and Truth.

Roland Clarke

# UNHAPPY SUPERPOWER

by Rudolf Bahro

THE SOVIETS continue to feel that they are besieged, as always: as in the time of Hitler, so now by the Americans.

There is a dramatic continuity in this sense of fear, even if the USSR has itself helped to bring it about. But it has also been an objective historical process that has driven the Soviet Union to become a great power - an "unhappy great power", as I have several times written, because this role has in great measure been imposed upon it, and now it realises that it is not up to it. When the Politburo begins its work, I think this question will be top of its list for discussion.

And the first problem that is bound to emerge from such deliberations is the one posed by Eastern Europe, by the People's Democracies. It was when the two great armies met on the banks of the Elbe that the USSR found itself in the position of second great power: it had under its control - though this had not been its deliberate aim - an enormous slice of Europe, as a direct result of the war, and this forced it into negotiations on a world level.

In the years immediately after the conflict the USSR believed that it was indeed possible to build a socialist society in these countries on the model of Soviet society, though with some variations. And in fact, although the revolutionary forces in Eastern Europe have always been in a minority, the theory was not entirely without foundation: in Czechoslovakia for instance there existed a real measure of agreement if not actual approval in this direction. But later too, in spite of events in Hungary, and thanks to the victory of the Chinese Revolution, and to the idea that had gathered strength - the idea of a possible uprising of the peoples of the "south" - it was thought possible that a huge portion of the world from the Elbe to the Pacific would actually be taken out of the capitalist system; and that the USSR, thanks to its immense resources, would be able to support this process, gradually gaining more general approval.

Today very little of all this remains: China has taken a road that has put her in opposition to the USSR; the Third World remains imprisoned in the capitalist economy; of the East European countries the only one that is not in grave crisis is the German Democratic Republic. In a certain sense the GDR is also politically firm, unlike the other countries, because the Germans have two good reasons to be at least neutral towards their so-called Soviet friends: because they liberated them from Hitler, and because immediately beyond the frontier are the NATO missiles. Elsewhere, on the other hand, it is clear by now that the Red Army divisions are there only in the name of pax sovietica, that is to say, of a control exercised only in their own state interests, not in those of the block. These interests are military, in order to have a security ring, not economic, since for some time past the people's democracies have been nothing but a burden.

In this situation, if confrontation with the USA remains sharp, the USSR cannot but continue to pursue military balance, whatever the cost, getting an even tighter grip on Eastern Europe. And this is the policy that is bound to prevail if something does not change in the West. But historically the costs which this policy imposes are such that it is possible that a different tendency will emerge -

which perhaps Andropov might embody now that the disturbing debate confronting the Soviet leadership itself has begun: how much longer can this military colossus with feet of clay hold out without the risk of disintegration, causing a crisis in the internal structures of the USSR which until now have in the main held up? In fact, something like what happened in Poland might develop in the USSR; but in the light of Russian history, it is probable that what would emerge would not be another Solidarity but rather a terrible and unpredictable uprising. I do not think that such an event is to be desired in the present extremely delicate situation in the world, given the atomic potential that already exists and that someone, at this time, might be tempted to use.

I do not believe, however, that the militaristic tendency is destined to prevail. The USSR is not Argentina; in spite of the weight and prestige enjoyed by the military in the country, control remains firmly in the hands of the political leadership. It is a basic characteristic of Soviet structure: the psychological barrier against a possible take-over by the generals is somewhat higher than elsewhere, higher than anyone in the West believes.

However, even those people who think about this possibility should begin to ask themselves what should be done to prevent it. If it is true, as I believe, that the USSR is becoming aware that it is not in a position to cope with its role as a great power, we must conclude that in Moscow they are waiting for the opportunity to rid themselves of this role.

If the military and economic pressure that is being exerted from outside on the USSR is reduced, it will be possible to prevent the victory of an authoritarian-isolationist or a military-expansionist line. A more enlightened and open leadership might emerge, though indeed without any real democratisation, for which at present there are far too few social and political forces. And we must recognise this fact. In short, the possible prospect at present is an enlightened absolutism, of which Andropov could be the interpreter.

The political problem for the left, then, is how to enable the USSR to achieve such a switch. I believe that Europe has a part to play in this, an initiative that would remove the Soviet Union's historic fear.

A contribution towards modifying its attitude would come from placing on a new footing the problem of European security, for example by getting rid of the blocks and opening the way to the neutrality of the continent. Within this framework it would be possible to conceive of the withdrawal of troops by the two powers from both western and eastern Europe, and this would have the objective and immediate effect of political liberalisation.

Of course, it would be a long process. But not impossible: the people's democracies could be "Finlandised" - because it is natural that Poland should still have an appropriate interest in having good relations with its neighbour - but I think it would amount to a good step forward.

Besides, have not the Soviets already proved in

Austria that they are receptive to the idea of neutralism? And they have several times let it be understood that they would have been ready to do the same with Germany, even though that might have meant the loss of the Democratic Republic. Why then should they not accept the idea on a similar process involving the whole of Europe?

This is why the aims of the peace movement are so important, even with a view to changing the situation in Eastern Europe: the concept of the neutralisation

of both camps, the premise for profound changes on both sides. This concept - a difficult one, certainly - could today become more realistic.

Rudolf Bahro

This article first appeared in English in *ENDpapers* volume 5, recently published by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, Gamble Street, Nottingham. We are grateful to the Foundation for permission to reprint it. Translation by Peter Wright.

# REVIEW

DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: Safe and Sound - Clyde Sanger. Zed Press, £4.95 paperback.

IN THE past, issues of disarmament and development have usually been considered in separate compartments and therefore it is good to read in 'Safe and Sound' that their interdependence is being recognised by an important UN report.

I am disappointed however to see little or no reference to the impact development has on our environment, socially and psychologically, and little attempt made to explain what is meant by the idea of development beyond giving support for the New Economic Order, and to support an increase in world trade and industrialisation, trends which are not perhaps the ideal for which we should be working.

However, as the report was commissioned by the First UN Special Session on Disarmament, it is understandable that the main emphasis in *Safe and Sound* should be the issue of disarmament. ('*Safe and Sound*' is the popular version of the official report undertaken by a group of governmental experts from all parts of the world, supported by 40 research papers; it is written by Clyde Sanger through the inspired sponsorship of the Canadian government.)

The facts relating to disarmament are assembled in an impressive manner compared with those devoted to development. There are several graphs and some very good cartoons, one showing the military man giving the beggar a gun, with the words 'Not alms, my man, it's arms'. The resources the arms race consumes are discussed in some detail, and '*Safe and Sound*' asks how can development be sound when half a million top scientists on top pay devote their working lives to military research and production, and when military expenditure in the world exceeds \$500 billion a year? The main emphasis is to look at the benefits that might arise from disarmament, not only for the developing countries but also for the whole world and for increasing world security.

The idea that world security can be increased through redirecting resources from the arms race to development is to me the most interesting one in the book - that there is a safe way to disarmament through sound development. For such an idea to come from such a prestigious source may mark the turning point in mankind's thinking. The old idea of collective military security is tacitly discarded and a new one emerges, claiming that security can best be found by removing the causes of conflict, and perhaps of more importance, generating a new climate of opinion founded on social and economic justice.

Personally I do not think the book develops this concept adequately because although it is a good one

it should also include other aspects of human relationships within a total context. Development however is the key which could unlock the impasse blocking our minds and our actions. If only we could initiate imaginative development programmes, easily attainable if we redirected resources away from so-called 'defence' programmes, the other issues such as human rights and social and economic justice would all be much easier to resolve. A snowball effect could then be created, trust and confidence between nations increased, and the arms race put into reverse.

The value and importance of '*Safe and Sound*' is therefore to recognise the interdependence of disarmament and development. In the past these issues (as with most other issues) have been considered in isolation from each other, each seeking a solution as an end in itself. Slowly it is becoming recognised that life is a whole or nothing, and that the success of one aspect depends essentially on the success of other aspects, and therefore that what is needed is a new philosophy which enables them all to be brought together in much the same way as ecologists have shown in the world of nature.

Another valuable contribution '*Safe and Sound*' makes, and one which may have the greatest influence on those who hold power, is to indicate the cost-effectiveness of security through development.

Present policies mean we undermine the social and economic fabric of nations worldwide by vast armament programmes which generate the insecurity they are designed to prevent. These policies could and should be reversed, and for the same money not only could a greater sense of security be created, but the well-being of half the world - at present suffering dire poverty, economic slavery, and in some instances torture and genocide - could be transformed. The present world economic crisis could also be resolved to the relief and well-being of the rich half of the world. The full implications of this reversal of policies is not developed in '*Safe and Sound*', which is a pity. To have attempted such a task would have meant a very different kind of book. We can at least be thankful that a prestigious group of world leaders have agreed on a new approach to world peace. I am reminded of Einstein's dictum, that "peace cannot be kept by force, it can only be achieved by understanding."

Sadly the understanding sought by the First UN Session on World Disarmament, as outlined in '*Safe and Sound*', was ignored by the Second Session. However, the nations can no longer say there is no alternative. '*Safe and Sound*' affirms that there is. It does not give the whole answer, but it does give hope; and where there is hope then political will to take action cannot be far away.

Ted Dunn

# LETTERS

## Our Mother who art in Heaven...

Dear GL,

I would like to say how much I enjoyed Tom Comber's article in the last issue, "Is Jesus Green?", which was fascinating and thought-provoking stuff marred only by the supercilious and destructive editorial comment which followed.

The "traditionally sexist" language was not in fact "Christian" so much as simply English. Far from being an "impediment" to "increased understanding", it is the ordinary language of ordinary people, except for those who happen to be hung up on neutering their vocabulary. The only impediment to understanding that is likely to arise is if members of the Green movement start speaking in their own private code-language setting themselves apart from other people (whom we are supposed to be trying to reach and communicate with.)

If I may paraphrase, I would like to apologise to any ordinary people who happened to read the last issue of GL for the elitist tone which it adopted on that occasion, and I hope that this will not be a total impediment to dialogue between Greens and the rest of the population - though dialogue is admittedly difficult if we are not even speaking the same language any more.

Peter F Bolwell  
Flat 6, 39/40 Cornwallis Gdns  
Hastings, East Sussex.

Dear GL,

It was very good of you to include something on the religious/spiritual side last issue, but the article you chose to start off with (Is Christ Green?) will probably have further alienated people who are already suspicious of religion. All those "Him's" and "He's", and the underlying theology was very suspect.

Never mind!

John Careswell  
Seniors Farmhouse,  
Semley, Shaftesbury, Dorset

Dear GL,

Much can be said by way of criticism of "Is Jesus Green?" (my article in GL 15). I would like to withdraw the obscure 'ontology' and the juxtaposition of the metaphors 'the Father' and 'the nature of things'; they are not on the level as ways of indicating the reality of God.

The article would have been better without the misprint 'round' in place of 'wrong' as submitted.

But your postscripted apology is surely ridiculous. Are your readers really so sensitive - and sexist - that they would find the traditional language of Christian theology an impediment to understanding? Would they be happier to speak of God as Mother? I find no difficulty or enhanced significance in addressing God in my prayers in that way.

But perhaps the impersonal It, Life Force, etc., would alone be without impediment. But that could not be for Christian believers. If God is less than personal, then we His creatures who are persons must be superior to Him in the order of being, more godlike than God. That would be a theological and logical nonsense, and a total impediment to faith.

All movements, inter alia the Christian movement, are liable to trivialisation. Your postscript suggests to me that the ecological movement is threatened in this way by feminism. Could we not now accept that the feminists have made their point and get on with the real ecological debate - and not get bogged down in tedious grammatical revision.

Tom Comber  
32 Alexandra Road, Oxford.

## Poverty by taxes?

Dear GL,

I think Joe Minney's objections to Richard Hunt's emphasis on taxation as the basis of poverty can be reduced if one regards an unsustainable economy as one that taxes the future. Hence the children have shoes now, but in 50 years there may not be children to need shoes.

One can regard the stocks of the world - herring, forests, soil fertility, etc. - as entailed in trust for all generations. So that only the sustainable yield may be taken. Our present

affluence comes from using these stocks and inserting pollutants. Hence it is equivalent to a wealth tax on future generations.

Most people manage to believe that something will turn up, and so ignore the ethical objection to an economy that is not sustainable. Though they depend on an assumption that new laws of physics will be discovered (and favourable ones at that), or simply believe that the supernatural will provide for their grandchildren.

The objection that small self-sufficient villages would be too close together is more doom than green. It raises the well-known problem that the population is very high for any pleasant sustainable society. To refute Richard's proposed land usage, the need is to put forward one that will deal better with the high population.

Stating the final land usage and usage to be achieved does not cover the even more difficult problem of how to get to it. Regrettably, even if taxes caused poverty, abolishing them will not remove it in the short term. Pensions are probably a bad example, as a pension can be regarded as deferred income. That is, a state pensioner is getting back, usually, some of the taxes paid earlier: not money from the rich. The landless unemployed are at risk, as they appear to be paid from oil revenues, not from taxing the rich.

Henry Cox  
3 Church Road  
Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent ST7 2HB.

Dear GL,

I write as a Bear of Very Little Brain who finds economics difficult. Nevertheless, even before reading Schumacher, it appeared crystal clear that Economics is not the exact science it claims to be and that the propositions of most of its practitioners stem from a set of unexamined assumptions. Chief among such assumptions is that it is the function of the economist to answer questions affecting the survival of the nation state.

With us it is not so. The question we ask is: Given the interdependence of the global ecological system, what are the economic data we need to know to ensure the continuation of the planet?

So let's look at the whole planet - and this is what, it

seems to me, that Joe Minney for all the correctness or otherwise of his detailed arguments, largely fails to do. How otherwise could he possibly fail to be aware that the thirty-fold increase in labour productivity and the concomitant real wealth of today's workers has been at the expense of an unprecedented deterioration, reaching catastrophic proportions in living standards in the Third World? Conversely, Richard Hunt, despite his somewhat convoluted arguments does do just this (although rather more markedly in 'Who's Starving Them Now' than in 'Authority or Liberty'.)

Richard's gale force arguments appear to boil down to what most of us, in varying degrees, would wish for - i.e. freedom from centralised control. It was nice of Green Line to design Richard a special anarchist badge all to himself, for surely only he is fully entitled to wear it. But I'm not sure that I'd like to see him let loose with a gun.

Joe Minney has a strong point in implying that urban life will always be with us. Isn't it high time we looked a bit more into this aspect of the future - or am I ignorant of what the Ecology Party's 'Building and the Built Environment' group are up to?

Judith Pritchard  
58 Quest Hills Road, Malvern

## Sizewell

Dear GL,

In spite of council and police opposition, closed car parks and lack of organisation, a gathering was held on Sizewell beach to oppose the construction of the new PWR power station.

We camped on the beach in spite of local by-laws, held a vigil outside the gates, and demonstrated to the public that the CEGB's case is only one side of the argument.

It was good to be able to really get to know people and to feel the thread of unity that ran through the group. We need more small gatherings and more action. If you are committed then don't be deterred by police or authority. Ignore what they tell you. Gather together and take action. Now.

Sizewell "17"  
c/o 55 Stuart Close  
Emmer Green, Reading.

Dear GL,

I criticise two things about the July/August issue. One of them is a cartoon at the end of the magazine which seemed to imply that it was all right for some extent for a black man to be racist. My view is that racism is bad regardless of the colour of the person who practices it.

I also criticise one of the Green Jokes which read as follows: "What do you call an eco cat that seduces dogs? - A purr-vert". Now 'purr-vert' obviously means 'pervert' which is a very blanket term used to describe many different types of people, some of them harmless, some of them dangerous; but it's basically a derogatory term which society uses to label anyone whether harmless or not who does not conform to the sexual patterns of the majority. In other words it can be an oppressive term used to persecute people. Therefore I don't think it's very "Green" to uphold the use of such blanket terms.

J C Burridge  
Swansea.

Dear GL,

I have found that in my local area nearly all the organisations that were a focus for people with Green sympathies have disbanded. Some of the people I have occasionally contacted since these focal points have disappeared have found themselves isolated in their ideas and to be coming under pressure from consumer unit society. This has made them unhappy in their work and contributed to their becoming disillusioned. In addition, although they might not organise useful activities, they would assist if there were someone else to establish events. It is through mutual support that people learn and grow to self-fulfilment.

I am sure that if this has happened in my local area it will have happened in others.

What I would like to do, with Green Line's help, is to receive names, addresses, and where relevant phone numbers from people who would like to contact and be contacted by people with Green sympathies who live in their area. No formal organisation need be established unless the people concerned feel that it would be useful, but I am sure new Green groups and Green centres will

be formed. Through their contact they would be able to organise paper collections, transport sharing, food cooperatives, help for elderly people, and endless other types of work. Through the support they gain from knowing and being encouraged by people they come into contact with, they will grow and develop their ideas and help us all to a greener society.

If people who are interested would send me their names and addresses plus stamped addressed envelopes, I will sort these into localities. By next January or February I would send each contributor a list of all people who have similar green ideas in their area. I would send them up-dated lists with a second s.a.e. as more names rolled in.

I would not want to make any charge for this.

Bob Walker  
4 Bruce Street  
LOWESTOFT, Suffolk NR33 OHA  
Tel: 0502 87042.

Dear GL,

Steve Lawe (Can Liberalism be Green, GL 14) has a very muddled as well as pessimistic view of freedom. At one point he uses the extreme example of unfree survival in preference to free starvation to justify a generally authoritarian approach to change, thus disapproving for example of Liberal opposition to the authoritarian seat-belt law; he then appears to approve authoritarian measures in general, without consideration of libertarian alternatives other than 'laissez-faire', then warns us of the obvious: "of the likelihood" that orthodox policies will lead (he doesn't seem to realise how far they have already lead) to greater centralisation and "even" authoritarianism.

Change is urgently needed, and some fundamental changes will need British parliamentary action; but Steve needs to make the distinction fundamental to anarchist and libertarian thought between 'freedom' and 'licence'. Responsible freedom is the essential basis for an ecological, humane society, and "that government is best which governs least" - that is, its aim should be to facilitate a self-regulating society by removing the anomalies which prevent this from being realised.

Brian Leslie  
12 Queens Road  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9LU

# NETWORK



WE APOLOGISE for the very restricted 'Network' feature this month, due to lack of space. More next month...



23 Lower Street, Stroud, Glos.  
(04536 70962)

AFTER 40 days (a significant time) the 'Fast for Life' has ceased. Although no new peace initiatives have taken place this would seem a good Gandhian stopping point, for the fast has heightened people's awareness and not put a terrible moral pressure on the rest of us. The ending of the fast does not exclude similar actions taking place before December.

On rare occasions the peace and war lobbies concur; in this instance it was Michael Heseltine and the peace activist Daniel Ellsberg who came together for a moment. Heseltine, speaking in Washington, said that after the shooting down of the South Korean airliner we should take the Russians more seriously. The West was dealing with a ruthless aggressor and because of this arms control was imperative.

Ellsberg, a nuclear weapons advisor to the Pentagon from 1959 until 1971 when he was dismissed for publishing secret documents on the Vietnam war, feels that Reagan has completely misjudged the resolve of the Soviets. About the same incident he says, "Do these look like the people who can be relied on to back down or never shoot by mistake?"

The US administration works on the assumption that it will eventually bring the USSR to its knees.

Ellsberg, who was in Europe to give support to the Fast for Life, was asked if the American military believed in the concept of deterrence. He replied that deterrence is not the function of American nuclear forces, and that the current war plan cannot be dismissed as a contingency plan only. The military, he said, had no time for contingency plans on this scale: their plans are for carrying out.

## Nuclear Dumping

To get over international agreements the British government is considering torpedoing high-level nuclear waste canisters into the ocean floor. This would not contravene dumping rules since the waste wouldn't actually be floating on the ocean bed!

## Green CND AGM

Against a rain-sodden field at Otmoor, Green CND had a buoyant and in the main convivial AGM. A full report will appear in the Green CND newsletter. To allow for greater flexibility on such issues as human rights, third world issues and acting as a link organisation for the green movement, it was suggested that a parallel organisation to Green CND be set up, with the same membership. A name like 'Green Unlimited' was suggested!?

John Marjoram remains secretary of Green CND, and Linda Churnside becomes the representative on CND National Council. And a new post (for greater efficiency!) - Martin Stott is press officer (0865 243013).

National CND has written to all its groups asking for feedback on its proposals for nonviolent direct action in December. It has stressed that there should be a substantial amount of regional action which should be tied up with peace camps and affinity groups. The whole subject will be fully debated at the next National Council meeting on October 15/16. Perhaps anyone with inspiring green plans for December would pass them on to me so they can be added to the debate.

John Marjoram

## COMING EVENTS

October 16: Women for Life on Earth London Conference: info Liz Butterworth, Bermuda Lodge, Eye, Suffolk.

October 22: CND London Demonstration 11 am Victoria Embankment. Also big West German demos in Bonn, Neu Ulm and Stuttgart. (Later demos in Brussels (23rd) and Paris (29th).) Info on these and others from END (01-272 1236).


October 22: Schumacher Lectures, Bristol University Union, Queens Road, Bristol 11 am - 6 pm. Tickets £6 from Schumacher Society Ford House, Hartland, Bideford, Devon (02374 293). Speakers Susan Griffin, Rupert Sheldrake, Sigmund Kvaloy. (See next entry).

November 5: Schumacher Lectures, Tuke Hall, Bedford College, Regent's Park, London, 11 am - 5 pm. Speakers Petra Kelly and Susan Griffin. Tickets as above: note you need 2 tickets if you want to attend both venues: one ticket does not cover both. London tickets also available from Dunamis, St James', Piccadilly. Tickets at the door at both venues.

'THE TRUTH GAME', John Pilger's report for Central TV, is now available on video from Concord Films, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. One day's hire £15 (film version £30) plus carriage and VAT.

A NEW Green Group has been set up in Cornwall. Callington and District Green Group can be contacted via Nigel Miles, 1 Rose Terrace, St Ann's Chapel, Gunnislake, Cornwall PL18 9HT. Weekend phone number is Tavistock 833626.

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## Northern Gatherings

Chris Savory reports:

The Bradford Gathering was held indoors on June 25/26 - it wasn't a camping event, though accommodation was available. It was an attempt to spread green ideas among people in Bradford and the surrounding area: 6 million people live within an hour's drive of Bradford, so there are a lot of possibilities!

We had about 40 - 50 stalls, mainly from local groups pushing information, but enough crafts etc. to make it interesting. Films and videos were running all the time, and there was a good selection of speakers and workshops. Around 1,000 people came in altogether, most of them content to browse around the stalls.

It was disappointing that only a few people felt like participating in the workshops, which were held in rooms away from the main area. About 80 people came to listen to Simone Wilkinson and Susan Lamb from Women for Life on Earth, though, which was a success. The atmosphere was particularly good on Sunday with a giant inflatable, jugglers, stilt walkers and fire eaters for the kids and a folk band busking.

As a result of the Gathering we are setting up a Green network with a newsletter, and another event is planned for next year. I think it was a success and it was a good way of getting people together. The main things I learnt were that even most activists don't want to unite behind a 'green' banner - and we probably haven't got time to change their minds. Also, that unless those people who identify as Greens stop just peddling ideas and get some action going, they are going to be left behind when/if things do start to change.

### Green Moon Gathering

It would be fair to say that the most exciting thing that happened at the Green Moon Gathering in Cumbria (July 14-17) was the amazing thunderstorm on Sunday afternoon that lasted around 8 hours and included half an hour of enormous hail stones. One tent was struck by lightning and the couple inside were thrown out and temporarily paralysed. The buses

parked at the bottom of the hill will probably be stuck till next year!

The site is in a beautiful valley and a free and easy four days in such surroundings were on the whole enjoyable. I was disappointed that none of the advertised "discussions, workshops and guest speakers" materialised, and there was little entertainment as well - so £5 seemed a bit expensive. Another bad feature was that a number of rowdy pissheads were attracted to the gathering, and their presence didn't improve the atmosphere at all. In general, more politics would have been a good idea: so would an information point, an extra marquee or two, and more rubbish bins.

But as it's the only festival of its kind in the north of England I hope very much that it survives: it was very noticeable that at both Bradford and Green Moon none of the southern clique of Green/Eco hacks were to be seen - I wonder why?

## Gathering '84

David Taylor writes:

The Green Gathering Collective has agreed to organise a 1984 Green Gathering and has come up with a host of ideas for improvements and modifications in the facilities and arrangements. We've considered the theme and are presently working towards an 'international' gathering. By 'international' we do not mean 'between nations', we mean a global consciousness; an understanding of global issues through planetary, rather than national, eyes. Has anyone got connections with greens working abroad? Perhaps you have a specific interest in global affairs - Third World, hunger, native peoples, wildlife, oceans, re-forestation, etc. We need to pull together a group of internationalists who can begin working on this.

We also need a new site: unfortunately we can't use the Glastonbury one again. Can anyone help find a new site? We need about 40 acres in central England with good access and camping areas.

This year's gathering generated a small surplus, but not enough for

all our ideas. Can anyone help with loans or donations? We've also got good news for anyone who might be thinking a green gathering/day/picnic/festival/walk! We are setting a resources bank to provide back-up loans, publicity, exhibitions, theatre, contacts and advice. If you're thinking of putting something on, please let us know as soon as possible.

And finally, for those of you who attended this year's Glastonbury Gathering: we've now got an excellent legal case against the police and their harassment of almost everyone who entered the site. We have agreed to enter an official complaint and are looking into the possibility of taking it to court.

If anyone would like to help in any way with these projects, we'd love to meet you. Please drop us a line and let us know if you've got any relevant skills, knowledge, or contacts - to 4 Bridge House, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs. (0480-63054).

## Swedish International

SWEDEN'S GREEN Party, Miljöpartiet, hosted an International Green Gathering in August - hiring a private boarding school surrounded by deep dark woods and a lake as yet unaffected by acid rain.

The other green parties gave reports. Many receive state subsidies and were giving away literature freely. The Swedish party appeared strongly feminist: at least 40% of candidates for election must be women, as must every other speaker on a platform (though this was not apparent at the Gathering.)

But the British contingent came away with the feeling that our electoral impotence is less important than the way people throughout Europe have separately arrived at the same conclusions. As Jacob von Yxkull of the Alternative Peace Prize Panel said, we must concentrate on preparing realistic alternatives that we can offer to the confused majority when the inevitable breakdown in society begins. We must be sure that people will realise, "There is no alternative to the alternative!"

(From a report by Sue Bill).



## ECO'S CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Tony Jones writes:

The Ecology Party enters the season of "mists and mellow fruitfulness" with a programme for action which is as diverse as it is large. In addition to the important preparatory work for both European and local elections next year, the party has endorsed a series of campaigns which will form an important feature of our work over the coming year.

The aim will be to present a range of well thought-out, well presented campaigns to Eco groups so that they can decide which particular campaign fits in best with their local strategy for greening their own patch.

A brief look at what's on offer gives some indication of the diversity: the campaign season opens with a Campaign for Real Democracy which takes a searching look at some of the failures in our democracy - e.g. the unrepresentative voting system, the threat of the £1,000 deposit for parliamentary elections, and the growing imbalance between central and local government - and puts

forward a ten-point programme to bring democracy up-to-date.

Two more campaigns will be launched in the new year. One will focus on the links between food, health and agriculture and provide a new look at the 'politics of health'; the other is a campaign for a non-nuclear Britain, examining both the civil and military ends of the nuclear fuel cycle.

Whilst Eco will be the prime mover in all these campaigns, it is to be hoped that they will provide an opportunity for co-operation with other sympathetic groups at both local and national level. For example, the party is fully involved in the all-party Fair Votes Campaign, which picks up on the PR element in the Campaign for Real Democracy. In all these campaigns there should be an opportunity for Eco groups to make good contacts with other local groups, some green, some not so green, but all needing to hear what we have to say.

Apart from these campaigns, the Ecology Party will also be hosting

two events which should create considerable interest. In the first case, Eco is taking a leaf out of Die Grünen's book and staging our version of their very successful Nuremberg Trial. (See separate report.) And next spring we shall host an Alternative Economic Summit - to parallel the conventional gathering which will be held in the UK. Our conference will be open to all those excluded from the gallery of Western Heads of State - for example, those from the Third World and all those who are prepared seriously to consider the future of work, jobs and the economy in a sustainable future.

It should be an interesting year.

## YOUR INTERVIEW

WE'VE HAD some interesting ideas from readers recently.

A particularly good suggestion is that we arrange for readers to 'interview' well-known people. First we ask you who we should approach; then we (try to) get that person to agree; then we ask you for your questions. (You can submit a question when you nominate the famous name, if you like!). Let's try it: send in your nominations and questions NOW!

## Sunflower Badges

Our sunflower badges have had a tremendous reception. They have been welcomed as symbols of the green movement's unity-in-diversity.

The designs, as shown here, are printed in three colours on 1" badges. They're very eye-catching. The set comprises 7 different designs: CND, feminist, yin-yang, anarchist, Christian, Eco and FoE.

They retail at 20p, but for bulk orders (20 or more) we charge only 12p each post free: order 100 or more and they're only 10p each! A sample set of the seven designs costs £1. All strictly cash-with-order. From Green Line, 14 Alexandra Road, Oxford OX2 0DB.

This is our new sticker, printed in light yellow, gold and green and very striking. It retails at 30p, but we supply orders for 10 or more for 20p each post free (or 100 for £18). 3 1/4" x 5 1/8".

