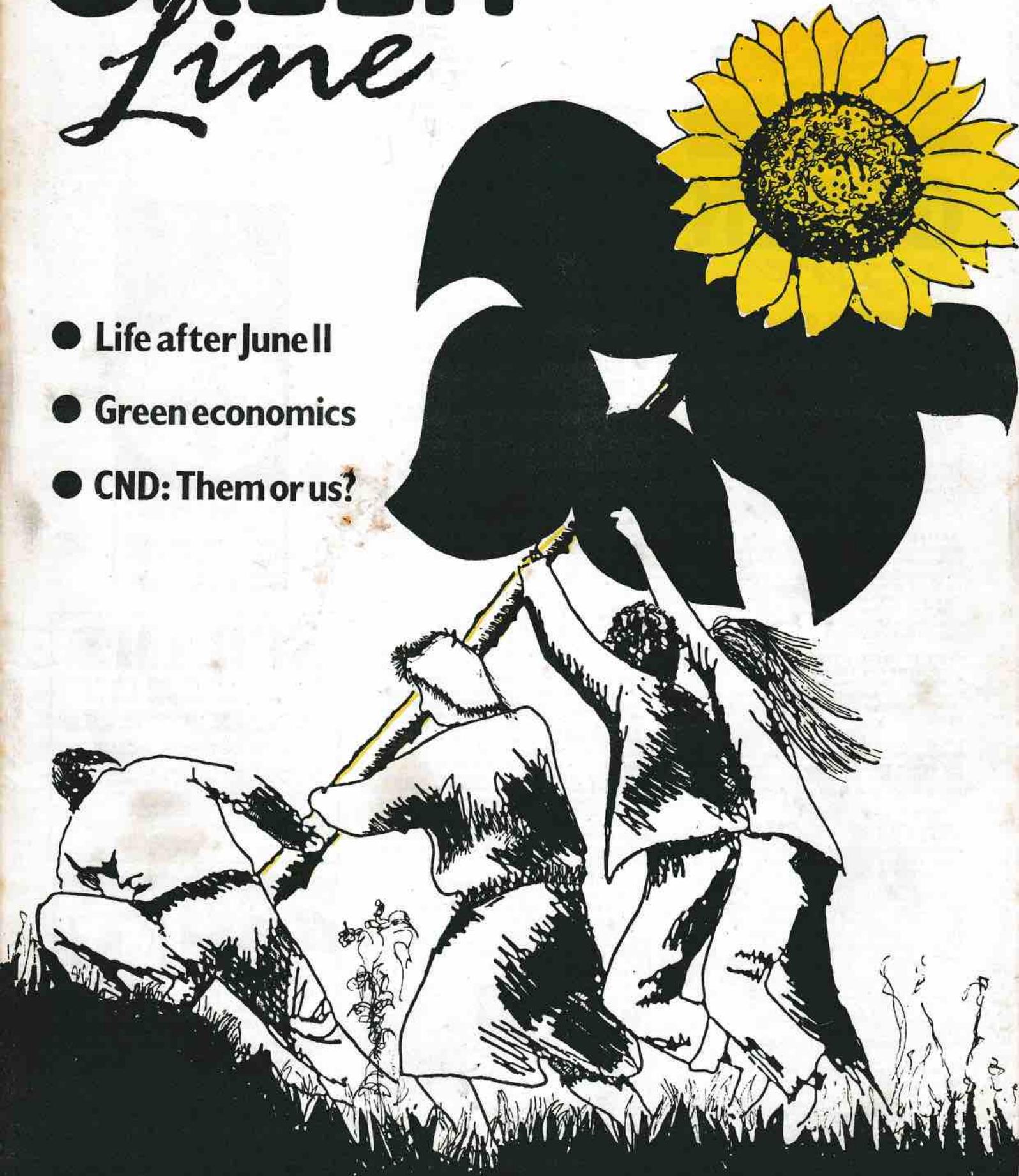


# GREEN *Line*

No 53 / JUNE 1987 / 50p

- Life after Junell
- Green economics
- CND: Them or us?





# GREEN Line

34 COWLEY ROAD, OXFORD OX4 1HZ  
TEL: 0865 245301

THE INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE OF  
GREEN POLITICS AND LIFESTYLE

GREEN LINE is published ten times a year, and is produced by a collective based in Oxford.

This issue appeared with the help of Jerry Spring, Leigh Shaw-Taylor, Barry Maycock, Graham Hooper, Carol Guberman, Andy Kaye, and Basil Harriss. It was edited by Jon Carpenter.

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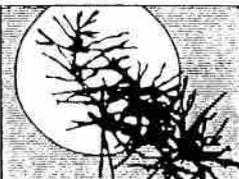
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# Now or never?

Jon Carpenter

IT'S EARLY June. Election fever grips the UK. "Voter," says the media, "your time has come." Greens - and others - dutifully agonise over "tactics".

It's late June. The election's past. "Voter," says the media, "that's your lot till the next time." The winning party/parties are now 'in power': the electorate is safely out of power. Greens are back to clearing out village ponds, and the local Green Party branch is debating whether Colonel Bassett round the corner might have voted Green if the branch hadn't been so indiscreet as to let slip in its leaflet that the party is anti-nuclear?

The media has seen to it that 'Tactics' just means whether an anti-Tory vote should be Labour or Alliance (or whether an "anti-loony" vote should be Tory or Alliance): a monstrous deception by the media and the major parties which has fooled Greens everywhere. The real object of the "tactical" campaign is in fact to keep us all voting for - and believing in - the same old parties. Greens have jumped in eagerly and suggested that the most tactical way of voting is to vote Green. But who believes them?

The real tactics will have to start on June 12, as the rumpus dies down. Now the Greens will begin to find a ready audience for their message that all the other parties and parliamentary political traditions are in essence and in every long-term policy identical. Awareness of that fact will be the political hangover with which Britain will wake up after the election, as people realise that the choices were all phoney and not one of the underlying issues was ever addressed in the whole of the campaign.

That campaign is really a funfair to keep the electorate's mind off politics. The real question now for Greens is this: will the Greens be on the streets on June 12 starting the real campaign of the 80s and 90s, the campaign set out the Green programme as the only alternative to the whole parliamentary gang-show put together?

## Challenges ahead

There is a formidable amount to take on board, matched by the strength of the Green idea and its extraordinary potency for changing the world.

First, discontent on the left and among radicals generally will be immense. There's now little possibility of the Labour Party ever forming a government on any but the most banal and compromised of platforms. Greens will have to be tough enough

to engage in dialogue with the discontented left, and discuss the kinds of cooperation which could be of mutual advantage.

Second, the direct action / anarchist movements (which are frequently now identifying themselves as Green) will - sometimes collectively, sometimes as individual participants - look to a wider Green movement for support and for a forum and focus. It will be crucial for the Green Party to broaden its base to welcome the participation of these groups: otherwise, there will shortly be two Green political groupings (one parliamentary, the other extra-parliamentary) where there should be one (a single grouping which recognises the necessity of both approaches, and which offers reciprocal support to both.)

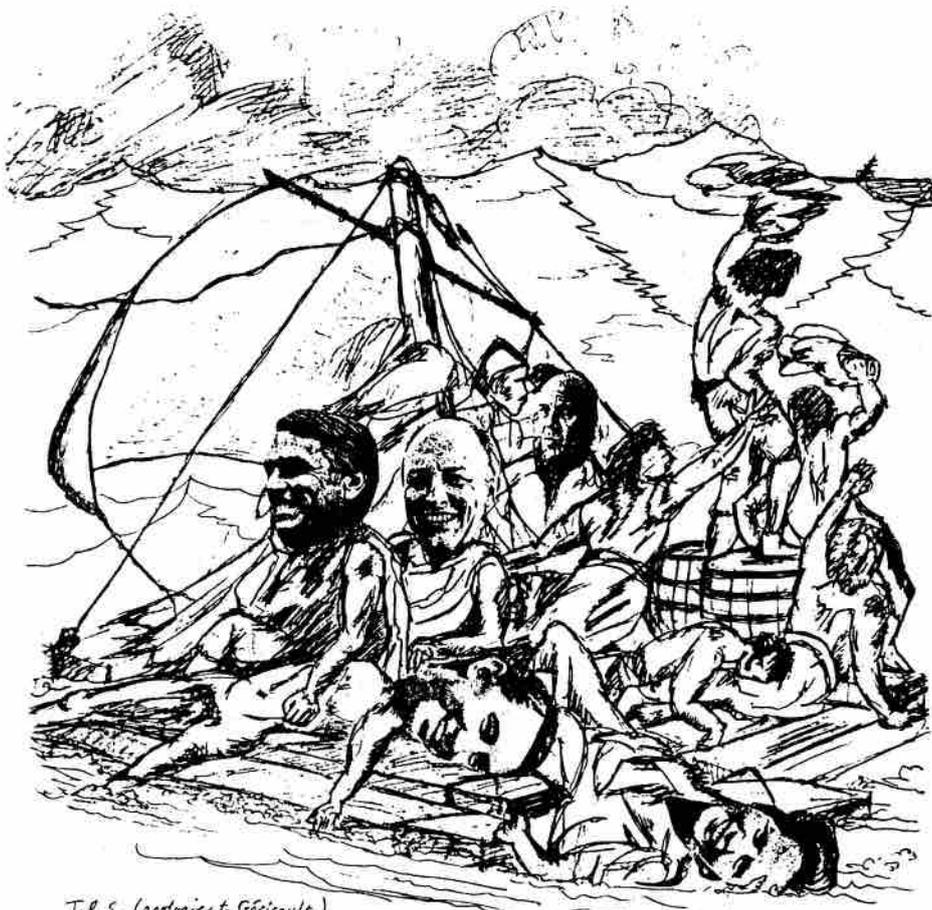
Third, the media will drop all pretence of sympathy as the radical demands emerge from the movement. We can expect systematic attacks from the popular press, whatever we actually say or do. Some environmentalists pure and simple may realise that they are not Green, and leave us: but others will be politicised, and become more deeply committed.

Fourth, Greens can expect opposition from elements of the 'new age' movements, where some proponents of a right-wing, individualist philosophy have passed for Green because of their commitment to alternative therapies, holistic agriculture, a Gaia-based spirituality, etc. But others in those movements will surely come out on the Green side, recognising that a truly holistic philosophy takes into account the social, economic and political dimensions to living as well.

Lastly, there can be no doubt whatever that the "security" services are well prepared for an upsurge in Green activity, and that they are committed both to deflecting movements away from effective action and to wrecking such action should the preventive measures fail. Their representatives will be already well placed within our movement, influential within the larger organisations, spying on the smaller ones, provoking violence (to discredit the movement) on the periphery. They've done it before; they'll do it again.

Greens are going to have to take on decades of political indoctrination, the whole edifice of multinational capitalism, the corrupt systems and channels of government and justice, the totalitarian power of the media... and win. There is, as the saying goes, no alternative. The work starts on June 12.

Maybe it's up to you and us.



T.R.S. (Apologies to Géricault)

# Cancelled: an action WE wanted, but THEY didn't

BARRY MAYCOCK writes:

I WAS all set to take part in the anti-nuclear parliament on May 15th, itching for a piece of Direct Action so close to the Palace of Westminster - when news came through that the event had been cancelled, following withdrawal of support from National CND.

I can well imagine the anger and disappointment of Essex CND who had organised the event and seen six months of time, money, and hard work utterly wasted. The action had been killed off by a letter circulated by Meg Beresford, General Secretary of CND, to local groups. It attacked the event on the grounds that it gave 'the wrong political and public relations signals before the General Election' (whatever that means - any ideas?). The organisers could have carried on in defiance of this but felt that, in their own words, this would 'divide and confuse local groups'. Nevertheless, local groups are divided and confused anyway over the cancellation; ordinary members with no particular political axe to grind all seem to feel that this was a shabby way to treat committed CND groups and their members. Apparently this is the first time National CND has felt it necessary to disown such a planned action by a CND group.

What can we do to make sure this sort of thing doesn't happen again, to prevent complete demoralisation? A re-structuring of National CND, more rotation of leadership, more accountability? Perhaps there should be nothing less than a complete rebellion of grassroots members, to reaffirm the independence and autonomy of their groups, but I doubt whether there is sufficient energy around for that! The reply that Essex CND made to Meg's letter is here reprinted in full, because it brings up serious issues about policy which will have to be faced after the General Election, whichever party wins.

## A call for independent action:

### the Essex CND statement

"LAST AUTUMN Essex CND wrote to all groups suggesting a CND pre-election action in Parliament Square and advertising a series of meetings around the country to assess the level of potential support for the idea. We found enough enthusiasm to make the proposed action viable and established a national 'May 15th' network of CND group activists. (Originally we suggested March 6th as the demo date but changed it to May 15th to allow the February National CND Council to discuss the proposal.)

The February Council decided the action could not be supported officially by National CND but agreed to publicise it in 'Campaign' and National CND group mailings. This makes it clear that Council, contrary to Meg Beresford's letter, did not establish "a consensus that this event was a totally inappropriate activity for CND". National Council operates by votes and the vote on our 'Parliamentary Assembly' showed about 60% against support. This is nobody's idea of a consensus and, in fact, it was precisely because there was none that Council compromised by agreeing to publicise our action.

Details of our action were then published in April 'Campaign'. We produced, and delivered to Underwood St, 1500 copies of our 'Action Briefing' ready for insertion in the next group mailing. This was delayed until the April Council for reasons that quickly became clear. At the beginning of Council, early on Saturday morning, Meg Beresford introduced an unscheduled agenda item proposed by National CND's Parliamentary Committee. The proposal was that our 'Action Briefing' be withdrawn and a strongly disapproving letter be substituted.

Since the action hadn't changed since February Council it was necessary to find a pretext for this decision. Meg Beresford's letter stated, "The materials produced by the organisers give the impression that it is a CND event..." The 'organisers', however, were Essex CND, a CND Area recognised as such by National CND. The May 15th action was planned for and mobilised for by CND Group activists set up in a network for this purpose and financed partly

by donations from CND groups and partly by Essex CND. It was never publicised as a National CND event.

The decision to remove our mailing and substitute Meg Beresford's letter (the decision that effectively cancelled the May 15th action) was taken without warning and with no discussion at April's Council. No attempt was made to circulate to Council our allegedly misleading 'Action Briefing' despite 1500 copies being available at Underwood Street. So Council voted to remove a May 15th briefing they hadn't seen and substitute for it a condemnatory letter as yet unwritten. The many CND activists, in Essex and other groups all over the country, who have been working on the May 15th action expected more comradely treatment than an abrupt public hanging.

So why has the National CND leadership come down so hard on a significant section of the CND movement? The answer is the perennial tension that has plagued us, both in the sixties and now, between those who accept the need for serious, mass, civil disobedience and those who do not. As in the sixties this division is largely between a centralist leadership dedicated to conventional, party political campaigning and local group activists who believe this isn't, on its own, an adequate response to the world we are forced to live in. This time round our National CND leadership has avoided a split by appearing to accept mass civil disobedience whilst, in practice, blocking any serious proposal for this kind of action.

In 1983 Cruise was to be installed in Greenham whilst our movement was at its height. National CND prevented the call from many CND groups for serious mass civil disobedience by CND in response. Instead, as a matter of deliberate policy, it promoted the 1983 election as the 'nuclear election' despite the fact that the Labour Party was then clearly heading for a major defeat. We believe that this decision to stop dead the momentum of protest and resistance as Cruise was installed created the beginning of a slow decline in the CND movement which is now visibly accelerating.

In early 1984 Reagan was due to make a triumphant visit to London and National CND again decided that mass demonstrations to greet him were inappropriate. Essex CND, in a campaign called 'Action 84', persuaded National Council to listen to the grassroots of the campaign and change its mind. The result was the successful demonstrations on June 9th in London.

The blockade of Molesworth on February 6th '86 was an initiative from the Molesworth Pledge campaign which was created (partly by Essex CND) and functioned as a CND group network, not a National CND campaign. Most of

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CND Groups & Events Network

# A MASS PUBLIC ASSEMBLY SIT DOWN PARLIAMENT SQUARE LONDON



# MAY 15

FROM 2 PM PROMPT

• The one CND didn't like

the 6000 CND members from all over the country who took part know that this kind of mass civil disobedience is at the heart of our movement. They could see the need for an expanding campaign of resistance and assumed, as did the organisers, that February 6th was just the beginning.

But again there was the basic disagreement between the National CND leadership and many CND group activists. National CND decided, without consulting the CND groups, that the next civil disobedience action was to be a token trespass at Coultport. The members of the Feb. 6th Working Group opposed the choice because far less people would be able to take part than went to Molesworth and also because the nature of the action, and its distance from the London-based media, would guarantee minimal media coverage.

National CND clearly does not encourage mass civil disobedience so what alternative does it offer to keep the national movement active and in good morale? We believe the answer is, "Very little". Where is the "Basic Case" campaign, the National CND solution to flagging local group energies? It faded out. The other supposed highlight of last year, the "mass lobby" of Parliament, was a predictable failure.

As a mass movement we need large-scale, imaginative demonstrations at regular intervals. These serve the dual purpose of preventing the general public from allowing the nuclear issue to fade into the background and inspiring ourselves with our collective strength.

Yet another march and Hyde Park rally have the opposite effect. We know, as do many of us, that as a mass movement we are in serious trouble. Many of the smaller groups are struggling to keep going and some of them now exist only on paper.

Mounting a traditional march only demonstrates to ourselves, and to the public, just how much of our floating support has fallen away. The media will be happy to talk about the terminal decline of the peace movement.

The split between Underwood Street and many local group activists is now beginning to surface. Just as in 1983 National CND has decided to subordinate the movement to the Labour Party's perceived electoral interest. This explains the hostility to our proposed action on May 15th since the movement is expected to keep a low profile as the Labour Party backs away from its anti-nuclear commitments.

Meg Beresford's letter even implied that those in favour of the May 15th action are opposed to Parliamentary democracy. This accusation is part of a general, and deliberately misleading, attempt to demonstrate that the "organisers" are somehow extremists from beyond the peace movement. In fact our proposed assembly was to call for a "non-nuclear Parliament" and would have been, like all civil disobedience, primarily a moral statement. (We are, unsurprisingly, in favour of democracy and have been far more democratic in practice within the CND movement than National CND has ever tried to be.)

The strategy of conventional work within, and increasingly on behalf of, the Labour Party was a dismal failure in the sixties and led to a terminal split in the movement as frustrated activists in the end broke away and formed the Committee of 100. The current leadership has clearly learned nothing and is heading in the same direction. Essex CND don't claim to have the answer; there is no magic formula to prevent our movement fading away. But perhaps if enough of us in the CND groups recognise where we are going, it's not too late. Given the inflexible attitudes and strategy of National CND the only solution would seem to be some kind of CND group network which can act independently. We don't suggest this is easy to set up as there are immense organisational problems. But unless we are to be confined to acting as conventional lobbyists for the Labour Party we have no choice."

(Special thanks to Essex CND, Martin Robinson, and Peter Venters).

## BREAD NOT BOMBS

CAAT is organising a week of action (June 20th-28th) to focus on the links between militarism and poverty in the Third World. There have been over 140 wars since 1945, killing at least 16 million people. 75% of UK arms exports go to developing nations and that's double the amount of official overseas aid. Action Packs (£2.50) and posters (£1.30) available from Bread not Bombs c/o CAAT, 11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ.

## PEACE DIARY

- JUNE 4th: SAFE ENERGY RALLY: No more Chernobyls, no to Sizewell; with prominent Green celebrity speakers, including Jonathon Porritt. Contact Burnley CND on Burnlet 32376.
- JUNE 6: Peace Pentecost. Assemble for service at USAF Croughton (Main Gate) 10.30 am, procession to USAF Upper Heyford for 1.30.
- JUNE 7th: Twickenham CND Peace Fair. Stalls, entertainment, etc, in Marble Hill Park, Richmond Road, Twickenham, 2-5 pm. Details: 01.891.5401.
- JUNE 11th: Election. (Will Greens hold the balance of power?)
- JUNE 13th: Cruisewatch Picnic on the Plain. Whatever happens on the 11th, Cruisewatchers will still be cruisewatching! There was a lot of mischief at the most recent deployment; the convoy was stopped (and broke down) on several occasions - a potato was inserted at one point to block the exhaust pipe of one convoy vehicle (an action not to be recommended when the vehicle is in motion).
- JUNE 14th: Rainbow Festival 1987, 11am - 8pm. Lots of exciting things happening. Contact Andy Grantham (0482.794825).
- JUNE 18th: International anti-nuclear demo being held in Paris against nuclear testing; a chain of people will link the various nuclear embassies. Cheap tickets, accommodation, etc, could be available. Contact Bruce Kent at 22-24 Underwood St N1 7JG.
- JUNE 19th: Concert by Coull Quartet: music includes John Simpson's 'Quartet for Peace'. Unitarian Chapel, Birmingham, 7.30pm.
- JUNE 19th-21st: GLASTONBURY FESTIVAL.
- JUNE 20: Co-operative Activities Training Day, in London. Fee of £5/£3 includes the book "Let's Co-operate", Peace Education project, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 [01-387 5501].
- JUNE 20th-21st: Peace Festival: Contact Musicians Against the Arms Race (L/Spa 39273).
- JUNE 20th-28th: BREAD NOT BOMBS: Week of Action. Co-sponsored by many development and peace organisations; action packs (£2.50) are available from Campaign Against the Arms Trade, 11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ. Tel. 01.281.0297.
- JUNE 26/28: Annual Summer Camp of the Peace Pledge Union at Home Farm, North Green, Parham, nr Framlingham, Suffolk. Limited space, book early (£12/£6). Special programme for kids 7 - 11; adult workshops on the theme of nonviolent parenting. Info: PPU, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1.
- JUNE 27th: HELENSBURGH ANNIVERSARY PROTEST; the nearest possible date to commemorate the accident in Helensburgh, near Faslane, where a nuclear warhead carrier crashed in the main street. Nukewatch protesters will be monitoring the convoy routes, and releasing balloons to represent the spread of radioactive plutonium in the event of an accident.
- JUNE 27th: Peace Festival and Charities Fair, Rowtree Park, York. Contact Philip Ingerson (York 842493).
- JULY 4th: Ex-Services CND Vigil at Whitehall: Contact CND at Underwood St.
- JULY 4th: BLOCKADE OF RAF FYLINGDALES, demonstrating its role as part of Reagan's Star Wars programme, as a Battlefield Management System. This is American Independence Day, and we should declare our own independence from America. The base will be blockaded from noon to 4pm. Please contact Fylingdales Blockade (Bradford 578401), or write to Fylingdales Affinity Group, c/o 44 Harlow Road, Bradford BD7 2HS.

# Taking the Politics out of Green

## Who defused Brundtland?

DAVE HOWELLS writes:

THE BRUNDTLAND Report has come – and gone. In fact it went so fast that the dying echoes of the short fanfare left me quite bemused. But then I started to get the distinct feeling that the Green movement may well have been had – not by the UN or Dr Brundtland herself, but by our British media.

The way this report was treated raises a whole string of awkward questions which need the very serious attention of the Green movement. Why, for instance, didn't the media go straight to our political leaders? After all, it was a world report, commissioned by no less than the UN, and the world environmental crisis is now a major issue. Wasn't it important enough for the likes of Thatcher, Kinnoch, Steel and Owen? If not, then why weren't they publicly asked a host of difficult questions? Isn't the media supposed to thrive on controversy? And if the main parties are really as Green as they so loudly proclaim, wouldn't it seem obvious at least to ask them about it?

If the media really wanted to make an appropriate response to a world report, why didn't they even do a few in-depth current affairs articles showing the response of various rulers and leaders around the world? Surely the scale of the global ecological catastrophe warrants a whole different magnitude of publicity and analysis from that which they actually gave? Why didn't we hear what Reagan had to say? (Don't laugh, I'm serious.) What about Gorbachev? Or Nakasone, the Japanese premier? Or Helmut Kohl of West Germany? Even President Botha? And for that matter, did Gadaffi, Castro or Arafat make any response? Wasn't this report important enough for the likes of them all? Surely it was.

In fact, as far as I could find, the media carried no reports whatsoever of any approach to political parties or world leaders. It also appears that none of these interests approached the media, either. (The press release issued by the Green Party was ignored, as usual). At a superficial level it just goes to show how Green they all really aren't.

But such a deafening political silence goes deeper than that.

Looking back on the TV news report I saw, I realise that the London media have staged a subtle yet very successful coup. On the day the report was published, they all simply trotted round the corner to interview Friends of the Earth. And that was it!

Am I wrong, or have the 'establishment' used FoE to depoliticise and thus marginalise a major world environmental report? For deliberate or not, that is certainly what they achieved.

With yet another of these high-level documents so promptly and easily relegated to gather dust on bookshelves around the world, I see red. And I can see that the Green movement is wide open to this kind of thing happening again and again. It also makes me feel that some organisations described as Green are now enabling us to crawl one little step forward, but at the same time assisting conventional vested interests to push us miles and miles backwards whenever they choose.

Surely the time is long overdue for us all to get rid of the political naivety that is so persistently endemic in the Green movement. At the very least, we have to ensure that such a huge and classic failure cannot possibly happen again. Which leads me to my last question. What are we going to do about it?

## ANIMAL NEWS

• When Channel 4 showed "The Animals Film" back in November 1982, millions of people witnessed for the first time the catalogue of atrocities (vivisection, factory farming, etc) that our species inflicts on others. Many were so moved that they immediately went vegetarian and joined the animal rights movement.

Jeremy Isaacs, Chief Controller of Channel 4, has received thousands of requests to re-screen the film, but so far his only response has been to say that it will be shown again if they receive a substantial number of requests.

Now a campaign is under way to besiege Isaacs with letters and telephone calls asking him to show "The Animals Film" again. Write to, or telephone, Jeremy Isaacs in person between July 1 and 8, so that by the middle of the month he will have had at least 20,000 requests. Try to get as many people as possible to do the same. Remember that Channel 4 relies on advertising from animal abusers who have a vested interest in seeing that "The Animals Film" is never shown again, but for the animals' sake we must try.

Address letters to: Jeremy Isaacs, Channel 4, 56 Charlotte Street, London W1. To phone, ring 01-631 4444 and ask to speak to Isaacs personally.

• Since the sentencing of ALF activists in Sheffield in February, the ALF Supporters Group has undergone considerable reorganisation. Formerly it was run from a centralised office in London, but now its

functions are dispersed amongst individuals throughout the UK. Legal advice has been sought to ensure that all its activities are within the law, so it cannot be prosecuted for conspiracy or incitement – for which the former press officer Ronnie Lee got ten years (see GL 49).

To join the Supporters' Group costs £2 for one month, £12 for 6 months, £24 for one year. Members receive a quarterly newsletter. The Young SG is open to those who are 16 or under and still at school, and its annual sub is just £2. In addition the SG produces news reports (up to date information on ALF actions worldwide) and educational factsheets on various aspects of animal abuse such as the fur trade and the military industry.

For more details send a sae to: ALF Supporters' Group, BCM Box 1160, London WC1N 3XX.

• Animal Aid is organising a "Living Without Cruelty" exhibition in London from June 19 – 21. The event will draw together organisations opposing violence to humans, animals and the environment, and will aim to show how we can live with the minimum of cruelty and exploitation.

Attractions are to include a lecture, film, demonstration and theatrical programme, and vegetarian / vegan refreshments. Participants include alternative medicine groups, vegetarian food companies, humane medical charities, animal rights and environmental groups, and more.

It's all in Kensington Town Hall, Hornton Street, London W8, open 12 – 9 on Friday, 11 – 9 on Saturday, and 11 – 7 on Sunday. Admission £2/£1; special party rate (12 or more) of £1.

Info: LWC Exhibition, Animal Aid, 7 Castle Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1BH [0732 364546]. AA are also appealing for helpers, and for overnight accommodation for exhibitors.

### CHOOSE CRUELTY FREE

BUAV's campaign is now underway in the High Streets. You can help by publicising it yourself, writing to your MP or making a donation towards posters. Contact Choose Cruelty Free, Freepost, London N7 8BR.

### HUNTSMAN-BALLS

The Hunt Sabs Association mag Howl has an amusing column of quotes such as "most foxhunters are perfectly decent people..." (Leicester Mercury) or (huntsman to policeman) "If you don't get these bloody people off my land I'll burn your house down", and (hunt spokesman in Yorkshire Post) "Their motives are not conservationist, not humanist. They are politically motivated to destroy everything traditional in the British heritage. They are the tail wagging the socialist dog." So now you know. The rest of HOWL is worth reading too. Contact HSA PO Box 87, Exeter EX4 3TX.

### AND WHERE WERE YOU?

WERE YOU there on April 25th, when Friends of the Earth and CND joined hands and marched together for the first time at a major rally? Did you witness this moment of history? Were you there to add your voice? Er, no, actually I wasn't. I was at the 'other demo' in Oxford organised by Animal Aid, marching to protest against animal experiments at Oxford University. It was good to see hunt sabs, ALF supporters, anarchists, so many young people; I have rarely been on a demonstration where there has been so much feeling, so much anger. And the rally afterwards was good-humoured – the speaker from the BUAV only received a few scattered boos.

## LONDON FOOD COMMISSION

The London Food Commission has produced a book, "Food Irradiation: the facts", which presents information about this issue in an easy-to-read form. The authors are Tim Lang and Tony Webb, and the book is published by Thorsons at £1.99.

The LFC also publishes a newspaper, and a number of broadsheets on food additives, pesticides and food, etc. They're all very informative, and single copies are available for a sae from: London Food Commission, PO Box 291, London N5 1DU.

## RECYCLING NEWS

◦ FoE Birmingham have recently brought out a catalogue of a wide range of recycled paper goods, available at wholesale prices to local groups. For a copy, send a large sae to Liz Palmer, FoE Birmingham, 54 Allison Street, B'ham 5.  
◦ If you're going to the Glastonbury CND Festival this year, expect to see people gathering up the bottles and cans. Mendip FoE and Avon FoE will be operating a recycling scheme to "green" the event a bit. Volunteers are needed, and will be rewarded with a free ticket. Contact Chris Church at FoE, 377 City Road, London EC1V 1NA.

## OPEN UNIVERSITY...

A valuable new project has started in Birmingham to offer an alternative style and programme of education. The New University Project is at 24 South Rd, Hockley, Birmingham B18 and is already offering a series of weekend courses. Write to them if you can give support or are interested in participating.

## ...GREEN TEACHER

A new magazine covering questions of education policy and content has been making an encouraging start. Issue 2, for example, covered the New University project in depth. To get the latest issue contact GREEN TEACHER, 22 Heol Pentrethedyn, Machynlleth, Powys, Wales SY20 8DN.

## GREEN DESERTS

Green Deserts can offer short term work to visitors at their new project in Southern Spain where they are putting into practice their ideas on intermediate technology and organic agriculture. Send SAE to Green Deserts Spanish desk, Rougham, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP30 9LY

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH

### SAVOURY PANCAKES

A good bite when you can't be bothered to cook something substantial

8oz wholemeal flour  
4oz split pea or gram flour  
1dsp yeast extract or to taste  
herbs and spices  
dash of vinegar  
bit of baking powder if you like them fluffy

Mix ingredients with water to form a thickish pouring batter, and beat for a few minutes. Fry in frying pan or wok like ordinary pancakes. The peas contain pectin which thickens the mixture on cooking, so there's no need for eggs.

## BANNING THE BOMB

Do you ever wake up feeling powerless to change anything? Then read Ian Lee's wonderful account of his experience of cruisewatching and defending himself before the Devizes magistrates. It's in 'Threads', the newsletter of the Interhelp Network, which aims to "enable people to know the power that comes from their interconnectedness with all life and to move beyond powerlessness and numbness into action." Write to Threads, Monybuie, Corsock, Castle Douglas, Kirkcubrightshire DD7 3DY



## THERAPISTS REGISTER

David Burke is organising a list of doctors practising alternative medicine who are willing to treat the low-waged or unemployed at concessionary rates. The list only extends to the home counties so far but send SAE to David at 36 Broadway Market, London E8 4QJ. Maybe you can offer information about your part of the country.

## CANE AND ABLE

If you object to having your electricity generated by nuclear power then send 17% of your electricity bill to CANE (Consumers Against Nuclear Energy) who will hold it in trust and use the interest to fund alternative energy research. They will advise you on the legal implications of such a protest. CANE are at PO Box 697, London NW1 8YQ.

## UN OBJECTS

A non-binding resolution was finally passed at the UN recognising conscientious objection as a human right fifteen years after the issue was first raised.

## REALISM OR HYPOCRISY

The issue of working with established political groups, especially those of the left, has long been a cause of argument within Die Grunen. Several recent actions by supposedly 'greenish' governments around the world makes one wonder if greens can ever trust such politicians: there's the Bofors scandal in Sweden that appears to implicate the late Olaf Palme in arms sales to Iran, the decision of Bob Hawke's government to allow uranium sales to France despite Australia's professed opposition to nuclear testing, and Norway's continued efforts to wipe out whales whilst prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland chairs the World Commission on Environment and Development. Can we afford to vote for such people, even tactically?

## FORGETTING CHERNOBYL

The anti-nuclear journal SCRAM has uncovered some alarming oversights in the building of Hinkley Point. Apparently, it is sited above a geological fault that could increase the risk of earthquake. Of course this hasn't stopped the imminent renewal of the plant's licence by the NII despite the fact that the CEBG have yet to prove that Hinkley can withstand NII's minimum level of earthquake shock. To get the mag, write to SCRAM, 11 Forth St, Edinburgh EH1 3LE

## ELECTION LAW

CND have produced a timely booklet called "A Campaigner's Guide to Election Law". It lists some of the very restrictive legislation on public meetings, leafletting and advertising that comes into force after an election is announced. Available for 95p from CND 22-24 Underwood St, London N1 7JG.

## EYE GLANCE

It's now European Year of the Environment and there's masses of things to get involved with centred around 'weeks' for beaches, plants, waste recycling etc. For example there's Lancaster Earthcares Festival on 24th-31st August, Lancaster CFE, St Leonardgate, Lancaster LA1 1NN.

Local organisations (e.g. FoE) should be able to help you or write to EYE, 20 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TI.

## GREEN AND UNPLEASANT LAND

FoE are keen to widen their network of local pesticide incident recorders. Similarly there will be a campaign this summer to highlight water pollution in the countryside. Contact your local FoE group or write to Andrew Lees at FoE, 337 City Rd, London EC1.

## FESTIVAL LIST

Details of this summer's free festivals and other celebrations are to be found in the latest edition of 'Tribal Messenger', available price £1.50 post paid from 37 Stokescroft, Bristol, Avon. Lots of news and pix of the travellers too.

## POLICING AND PEACE

Black, women's and peace groups in Camden are organising a meeting and exhibition around the issue of how the Public Order Act and other forms of policing affect black and ethnic communities and peace activists. It's part of the Camden Black and Ethnic Peoples' Consortium Festival, and is being held on Friday June 12 at 7 pm at Theatro Technis, 26 Crowndale Road, London NW1. Info: 01 837 7509 / 833 4817.

## BECKENHAM GREENS

A branch of the Green Party is being set up in Beckenham and Penge (SE London). Contact: Debby and Pete Wakeham, 15 Croydon Road, London SE20 7TJ (day 01-582 9054, eves 01-659 4340).

## DYING LAKES

FoE have published information showing increasing acidification of 10 lakes in Snowdonia. Fish re-introduced into one acid lake all died within 2 days. Info: Adam Markham [01-837 0731].

## JOINT MAGAZINE

SDP Greens and the Liberal Ecology Group have combined to produce 'Challenge', circulated to the 350 members of each organisation: sae for details to Tricia Ashman, 12 Rowan Close, Bingham, Notts.

# Debate or Default?



## AN OPEN LETTER TO DECENTRALIST GREENS

MARK KINZLEY argues a case against "ideology", and discovers a risk that "decentralist greens" may drop off the edge of the movement in a post-election scenario

ANYONE WHO has been patiently waiting for the great debate on fundamental questions facing the Green Party must have been disappointed by the April and May issues of GL. Jon Carpenter's article [Wot! No Ideology?] met such little response, as did the two articles by John Papworth and Paul Boizot in the previous issue [Our Votes, Whose Victory?]. Jon's article raised one question above all: namely, was it a waste of ink printing it? Would two sides of blank paper have had a different result? Most people don't appear to have any thoughts whatever. The long article by Jonathon Porritt in reply to Richard Oldfield and David Taylor [Is the Ecology Party Played Out?], and more recently the main green papers, were deserving of respect as a firm point of view. Yet the greens who wrote in on both these occasions had something to say not about the content but about the style. The style wasn't nice.

In his article Jon Carpenter raised the following questions: What is the green alternative to a draconian state? By what means can we overcome ruthless exploitation beyond "getting one's message across"? If one person's power disempowers another, what is the alternative? Should the Green Party be formulating national policy for a decentralised state? It is puzzling how people can ignore questions as fundamental as these, and yet carry on regardless. Do they care where they are going, or do they just like walking?

Why the refusal to look at these questions? My brother, who is an Anarchist, has little interest in greens because, he says, they are too nice to take individual stands: a fear of standing up in a room when everybody else is sitting down. Or is it that we have assumed that the *raison d'être* of a political party is to occupy the commanding heights, so that we are frightened to question this assumption because it calls into question the party? Or can it be that we are quite literally addicted to elections and Conference? Do you realise that if Greenwich Green Party spent £300 on leaflets (this is a guess) plus £500 deposit, then they spent £3 for a vote? They only got 0.77%. These constituencies are too big to cover effectively. As for national media coverage, the results are short-lived: a few new members to cover losses over the next five years. In any case, the function of the media and the effect of getting into it are open to debate along with other fundamental questions. So what clear reason can people give for their activity in this election? Or is it that elections are an addiction - an activity which fills the void or bestows direction?

For people who are interested in the fundamental questions, it has been possible to wait. If the debate did not begin today, then perhaps it would begin tomorrow. There has been no sense of urgency; the opportunities to begin seemed open-ended. But now there are events taking place outside the control of the green movement, and which may impose the decision on us. If this is true, there is now a time limit on when we can have this debate, and beyond this limit the matter will not be settled by our discussion and free choice, but will be imposed on us. The clock has begun to tick.

A hell of a lot of people believe that the Labour Party is on the brink of irreversible decline. Peter Kellner blames "changes in class composition and housing tenure" for "a 30-year decline". Peregrine Worsthorne salutes technological change for the death and birth of whole industries, ending workers' identity and solidarity: welcome to the classless society. Then there is the decline of the unions and their slippage from labour. Every enemy has fastened on to the strange rise of the ideologue on the left. And a green would identify the emerging individual, evolving through history, who is becoming less bound by monolithic religions and ideologies and increasingly volatile, and for whom nothing is automatic any more.

These are long-term reasons for the decline of Labour, which are larger than Mrs Thatcher or media bias. It doesn't matter what is the outcome of the General Election at hand, because the reasons are long term. However, the quickest route to a disintegration of the Labour Party would be a third term for Mrs Thatcher, or an Alliance-Conservative coalition, followed by a fresh outbreak of civil war in the Labour Party spurred on by recriminations, another defection of Labour politicians, activists and trade unionists to the Alliance, further changes by the government to structures and institutions which favour the Labour Party, and over a period of time the replacement of Labour by the Alliance as the major left of centre party. Labour will be shoved out to the left and cut down to a small party with no hope of power. As I write (late March) the Conservatives' main concern is that Labour is sinking too quickly. Some worry that it will fail to do its duty and split the vote. It will have the temerity to slip into third place in the national polls and grant the Alliance the tactical vote across the nation. Other Conservatives worry that Labour will fragment so suddenly that it will leave a vacuum, part of which can be occupied by far left groups who emerge out of Labour's corpse. I hope Red-Greens don't waste our time writing in about why Labour is not going into irreversible decline: it really doesn't matter if I am wrong, since the point is to suggest the possible urgency of discussing the fundamental questions. Whatever happens, these questions still remain.

What would happen to Red-Greens in the Labour Party in such a scenario? They would find themselves seeking influence by means of a party which has no hope of power. Their spirits might be sapped by a sense of historic decline and futility pervading the Labour Party. Things would be in a state of flux, and people might be adopting new philosophies or strategies. For all these reasons we might expect an inflow of refugees to the green movement: pragmatic Red-Greens who were in the Labour Party; Environmentalist-Reds; and single issue CND types who do not think in terms of symptoms versus causes.

And what would all this do? It would strengthen one wing of the Green Party beyond all recognition. I mean people who would not object to compromise in the logical pursuit of power; people who would have voted for the recent proposals to make the party a more efficient campaigning machine, better at fighting national elections, with high priority given to media profile and a more centralised party organisation. Decentralist in goal but centralist in method: a paradox which has been

noted time and again, but replied to only with resentful silence. These people should be called Centralist Greens, and we should adopt this terminology. People of no firm persuasion would be swept along with them by pressure of circumstance. And people who believe in decentralist method will be marginalised completely with no hope of deflecting the Green Party from its pursuit of a parliamentary fraction and coalition one day in a hung parliament. In such a scenario there would be no place left in British politics for Decentralist Greens, nothing to hope for. I look for a further place of retreat and I don't see one. So I suppose I would drop off the edge; good bye to the green movement.

If the movement is swamped by Red-Greens and Green-Reds, and if they abet Centralist Greens in dominating the party, what might we lose that is so vital that some greens might lose all motivation for going on? It is a mystery. Something intoxicating, exciting, personal, sweet. That which defies knowing. It is openness to that which is larger than ourselves. It is the same as, for example, a wave of sympathy which we might feel for someone in a bad way; that is, it engulfs us, not us it, it is not available at our command, or under our control. And there is a feeling that it is afoot. Call it the Aquarian Conspiracy, Gaia, whatever. It is difficult to get it to flourish in organisations. It requires that people be vitally concerned. But there are people who pay lip service by giving equal status to other things; the religious, who 'make themselves images' of thought and feeling; and people who sneer.

Once we cross over into the political realm, the 'first cause', the political atom, is not ideology: contrary to Jon's suggestion, that is not what we have to keep an eye on. To be left wing, or 'structuralist', is to believe that economic factors and self-interest cause ideology. But you can't be a green and a materialist. Green literature is full of the idea that 'mind' is entering into all sciences and disciplines, new physics, holistic medicine, etc. Green materialism is an absurd idea, and green socialism consequently hard to understand. Nor are we right wing / 'individualist' / idealist. Within the orbit of green interest lie traditions and sophisticated analyses of thought and language, the very medium-substance itself. They show that such dichotomies ('reciprocal dependencies') are without ground and that the eye was misdirected. The statement that greens are neither right nor left certainly does mean something, and goes to the deepest root of the most ancient philosophies.

What causes people to stand together in particular political parties is a shared gut reaction to basic words like 'discipline'. Choice of political party is not the outcome of undecided and systematic thought. We are too lazy. Thus what I believe is less basic than what kind of person I am. Further, a kind Conservative is more useful to us than a selfish green. If we didn't identify ourselves with our beliefs, we would see this more readily. Having dispensed with the value of ideology, let us hope that a time is coming when we can dispense with green ideology and policy. What will be green will be the way we will do things, how much we see, what kind of people we are.

But what if we are inundated with people for whom correct ideology is more important than anything else? People who do identify themselves with their beliefs, and make beliefs the essential component of organisation? We would be faced not merely with an absence of mystery, but its very opposite: people who positively travel in the opposite direction to mystery and the unknowable. An attitude that the answers are knowable and that a sense of understanding may be wrested by force, a building up of ideas into a logical system and the rejection of 'wrong' ideas. 'Discriminatory mind', i.e. not this but that. But 'the very stone which the builders reject' becomes 'the corner stone' which is needed. Yin within Yang within Yin. These people don't see that there is no problem of mental content, only of process.

These builders of systems end up with a vocabulary of their own devising, increasingly divorced from everyday usage. They talk in Lego language, because what they saw yesterday is no longer present to their eye. They cannot converse in other people's terms but only in their own. As a result they marginalise themselves, they are always found on the margins or heading that way. They repeat the same tape recorded message over and over, under the delusion that everything else can be derived from one principle if only it is correct. That is not how seeing happens. Seeing is too quick. Their response becomes automatic without regard to what they are responding to. They become unable to listen to others.

I don't mean to imply that all socialists are more ideological than non-socialists. Ideology is to be found in places closer to home. But there does seem 'a lot of it' on the left. So much so that this has become a factor in the political situation, an object of discussion in its own right, the subject of an article in The Times on March 19, a letter in The Guardian on the 20th. And the plain fact is that socialism is an ideology. I don't think Jon Carpenter is right to bemoan the lack of a green ideology. It may yet come to pass.

What's to be done? The time available in which to freely discuss the fundamental questions may be limited, and beyond this limit matters will be settled decisively for us. The doers must be Decentralist Greens, and those who are undecided but feel that the fundamental questions are important and ought to be settled by debate, not by default. What can we do? The answer is this: We must discuss the fundamental questions.

Having said this, I find it hard to resist making my own attempt. In fact I have just crossed some paragraphs out. The problem has not been a lack of ideas and proposals; more Decentralist Greens have ventured into print than Centralist Greens. The problem has been getting the majority of greens to take a stand themselves, as evidenced by the empty letters columns of GL.

It's not as if we lack the resources to discuss these questions. What have Green Christians to say about the effectiveness of power versus renunciation of power? The Gospels are about the renunciation of power, control and predictability, not their pursuit. Where are the Taoists; don't you have some highly political scriptures? The division between politics and the spiritual is only an idea; everything applies in the same place. What about Ecofeminists? What can you say about experience here and now in different types of organisation? What is potency like a mountain? What do Pagans have to say about how to stay open to mystery? At what point precisely do we lose it? What about readers of Krishnamurti, with his incredibly relevant inquiries into the nature of Order and how it arises, the causes of Change, ineffective Discipline, and effective Discipline? Are these not political words? I'm sure that different greens are unwittingly using these words in different ways. Will no Green Anarchists speak? Where is your critique of the Green Party's structure and method, and the relationship between its means and ends? Why has its 'policy fetish' arisen? What is the function of the media and the effect of getting into it? The spectacle? When can the system assimilate us, and when not? What shall we ask of the Buddhists? Analyse things for us. Of what is 'the sustainable society' composed? It is nothing but a vague mental image which is dragging our attention away from the present moment. We have met a Sustainable Society on the endless road. Kill it for us with logic. What about Madhyamika Buddhism? You can take dichotomies like matter versus mind, left versus right, political change versus political transformation, and reduce them to millimetre shreds. It would save us a lot of time. Point out to us when we are in a state of personal identification with our beliefs, our thoughts.

That's almost everyone, isn't it? We are the majority. Only connect.

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# GREEN INDIA

MARTIN STOTT

IN THE SECOND OF TWO ARTICLES  
MARTIN STOTT MEETS INDIAN WOMEN  
WHO ARE PIONEERING  
A NEW KIND OF REVOLUTION

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A DAY'S journey south of Udiapur in Gujarat State is Ahmedabad, a sprawling, smoky industrial city of two million sometimes described as the Manchester of India. Here is to be found the headquarters of SEWA, the Self-Employed Women's Association, a women's trade union for the unorganised sector in India, the vegetable sellers, the paper pickers, the chindi (rags) gatherers. It's headquarters are a warren of buildings near the river which include the administrative centre for the union, the women's co-operative bank, meeting rooms, the headquarters for several of their co-operative ventures, and a SEWA shop. There is a relaxed and friendly atmosphere with visitors, staff, co-op workers and children mingling freely. There are several seated reception areas where mothers feed and change their babies, while other children play and small boys bring round tea. Phones ring, people come in and out of the offices, while in the courtyards outside the weavers and basket makers gather under the shade of the trees laughing and talking as they work.

I'm here to talk to Lalita Krishnaswami (director of SEWA's economic unit) and her staff about their experiences of co-operative organising both here and in Bhopal. They have 13 co-ops under their wing in Ahmedabad, as well as the bank. Most have between 50 and 100 workers. Over the past few years they have developed as a means of strengthening the women's economic power, and providing them with increased self-confidence derived from the direct experience of running their own business, demonstrating that they really can take control of their destinies. Many operate without a formal workplace - the women work from home - but the one I was taken to visit was a chindi and patchwork co-op based in an old school.

SEWA's location in Ahmedabad isn't coincidental. The Gandhian tradition in the city is very strong and the ashram where he lived for many years until he left on his famous 'salt march' in 1930 is in the city. Now a museum and exhibition centre, it is dotted with dozens of quotations from people who have been influenced by him. This is Professor Gilbert Murray:

Be careful in dealing with a man who cares nothing for comfort and promotion, but is simply determined to do what he believes is right. He is a dangerous and uncomfortable enemy, because his body which can always conquer gives you so little purchase on his soul.

On my way round I meet up with a Canadian traveller, Renate, and we end up in a cafe for a drink. The lime

sodas we've ordered take a time in coming. Renate says, "They probably don't have any here and have gone miles to get some. In a minute a sweating man will appear with them. Indians go to any lengths to please." She launches into a story to substantiate this. Not long ago she was travelling with a companion in the Himalayas, and they reached a hotel called "Hotel Excellent View". Over breakfast, Renate says to her companion as they sit at the window looking at the view, "Isn't it strange, they call this place Hotel Excellent View, and yet the hotel is constructed in such a way that the excellent view through the window is obstructed by this tree!" Unbeknown to her, she is overheard. Two minutes later a Nepali appears with a machete and proceeds to chop down the tree. The tree is enormous, at least 30 feet high. "I couldn't believe my eyes, I felt terrible. But the view was really excellent."

At that moment our lime sodas arrive. I note with relief that our waiter isn't sweating.

## ■ The Vedchhi Area Scheme

Gujarat is the state where Gandhian influence has traditionally been strongest in India. As Gandhi's home state it is still "dry", and it is the state with the greatest number of rural development schemes influenced by his thinking. One of the most ambitious and successful is that based around Valod in the south-east of the state, the Vedchhi Intensive Area Scheme run by the Vedchhi Region Service Committee. It covers over 200 square km, a population of 70,000 in 40 villages; 75% of the population is tribal or aboriginal. The project was started in 1950 by a group of local people, many of them still involved to this day. The scheme is based on the principles of an integrated decentralised locally generated plan, challenging the conventions of top-down planning "which makes poor people poorer and rich people richer." Its purpose is to start with the poor and "enable people themselves to manage things." The process has been operated by a series of locally generated five-year plans - a deliberate alternative to the government's national system of five-year plans, with a series of targets.

Kokila Vyas and her husband Bhikhu, who have been with VIAS since the start, are justly proud of the community's achievements. "They're not on paper, they're here to see," they say. What is on paper is impressive enough. In Gujarat 75% of tribal people are below the poverty line. In Vedchhi it is less than 10%; basic infrastructure, water, electricity and roads now reach about 90% of the area's population. This means that this tribal area enjoys a quality of life which is generally better than in India as a whole. Typical literacy in tribal areas is under 20%, in Vedchhi it's 40%; the birthrate is typically 5%, in Vedchhi it's 2.3% (in India as a whole it's 2.5%). While per capita income in India averages 1700 rupees p.a., in Vedchhi it is over 2000. In the 40 villages of the area a federation of some thirty institutions "to make things happen" have grown up. They include tribal teacher training projects, self-build housing schemes, artisan training schemes, a Khadi programme, and numerous employment schemes ranging from diamond polishing through a poultry and fish rearing unit to a women's papad making scheme in Valod itself which employs some 800 women.

The effects on the ground are dramatic. An extract from my notebook of my impressions on arrival:

This is the first Indian town or village where I don't see children in rags, beggars, open sewers, squatter encampments or rows of impoverished looking tea shops. The main streets are paved and lit, the shops have an air of prosperity, the houses facing into the street are sturdily built of stone, brick and wood. Each house has a water pipe with a tap outside.

The impression is continued by visits to people's houses and conversations in the street. The area has reached an economically self-generating stage with at best the



◦ Early morning meeting in Rasulia

benign neglect of the state and national government, but far more valuably the committed and uncorruptible vision of a group of Gandhians whose example has inspired both those around them and also foreigners, like me, who visit them.

#### ■ Reaching the poorest

Smaller in scale but as ambitious in its objectives is Rasulia, the Friends' Rural Centre in Madhya Pradesh some hundred miles or so from Bhopal. It's been around for a hundred years, and was started by British Quakers as a centre for orphans who were taught a trade or craft in their workshops. Its basic goal throughout has been "to reach out to the poorest, to help them towards a better, more human life; and to reach out to the potential leaders of change in the district and beyond, to stimulate thought, to kindle imagination, to inspire action." The centre's three main concerns are the rapid deterioration of the natural environment, the increasing poverty of the villages, and the apathy of the privileged few. Their purpose is to try to demonstrate through their own work what poor marginal farmers and others might do to improve their own lives now. Over the past six years, Rasulia has turned over its 25 acres to experimenting in rishi kheti - natural farming. Under the leadership of Partap Aggarwal, Rasulia has become a centre for "one straw revolutionaries" in India - they publish Fukuoka's book - and are developing an integrated farming method that gets away from the use of chemicals, pesticides, fertilisers, and the 'high yield' varieties of grain which depend so heavily on these inputs.

One day after work I take a walk through the fields with Partap as he explains their principles. The farm is entirely organic, but most of it is ploughed. However, over the last four years 6 acres have been turned over to the no-till system of Fukuoka, modified for Indian conditions. Although rice yields were down at first as the strain modified, becoming browner in colour, heavier, thicker and shorter, yields increased from 9 quintals per acre to 20. The high yielding wheat hasn't been so successful; yields fell to 4 quintals before they gave up, and now they are trying four native varieties to find out

which is best under this regime. Soya beans, lentils, chick peas, other pulses, and a wide variety of vegetables including tomatoes, brinjals and radishes, are also cultivated. Cotton, castor oil and some fruit seeds are allowed to grow at will where they germinate on the bunds (the paths between the fields). They strengthen the bunds, and the fallen leaves fertilise the soil.

Visitors are expected to participate in the life of the community, which numbers some 60 people including children. After breakfast, the best in India (wheat porridge followed by parathas with sour cream and gur (palm sugar) and tea), the farm workers meet each morning under the banyan tree to discuss the day's projects and allocate tasks. The task for beginners is cleaning out the dairy. This involves picking up with your hands all the cow dung produced by their 40 cattle in the previous 24 hours, putting it in a wheelbarrow and taking it to the gobar (dung) gas plant. Tip the dung into the tank, mix with water and stir with a paddle. Reach into the tank and break up the bigger pieces with your hands. Before long you are covered up to your armpits - memories of childhood mud pies. The biogas plants (five, around the community) provide all the energy for cooking; solar power heats the water; and windmills pump it up from the wells.

It's time for me to go on to Bhopal. Partap is pleased I came to Rasulia first; the Bhopal disaster is seen as a vindication of their approach. It has made more people aware of the dangers of agro-chemicals, and of the vulnerability of farmers to exploitation by multinational corporations. The scale and complexity of Rasulia, the way it mixes ordinary peasant workers and people with an intellectual understanding of the wider issues acts as a challenge to the corporations. They are saying "We don't need you," and are acting as a beacon to India in the way they say it.

#### ■ Disaster in Bhopal

After Rasulia, Bhopal was rather a shock. The disaster there compares only with Hiroshima and Nagasaki in its scale - perhaps 10,000 dead (the official government figure of 2,500 is widely disbelieved) and over 200,000 injured - and in the questions it raises about modern technology. Bhopal challenges one of the central tenets of modern India, particularly the India of Rajiv Gandhi;

that development should be built around high technology industrial modernisation. This model is based on the assumption that it produces rapid economic growth which mainly benefits the urban middle classes, and is somehow supposed to "trickle down" to everyone else.

My invitation to India came from a citizen's action group in Bhopal, a coalition of former workers and gas victims of Union Carbide, the Gas Pirrit Rahit Samithi (GPRS). The situation in Bhopal is still grim, people are still dying, many still suffer terribly, headaches and aching bones, spontaneous abortions and birth defects, partial blindness and enormous psychological scars on the survivors who have lost husbands, wives, children, brothers, sisters, parents, jobs, and their ability to work. Relief is desultory, the victims are a convenient political football between central and state government and between the government, Union Carbide and the American courts. What is the value of an Indian life irreparably damaged in the tragedy? Union Carbide's recent offers seem to indicate it is about £1,000.

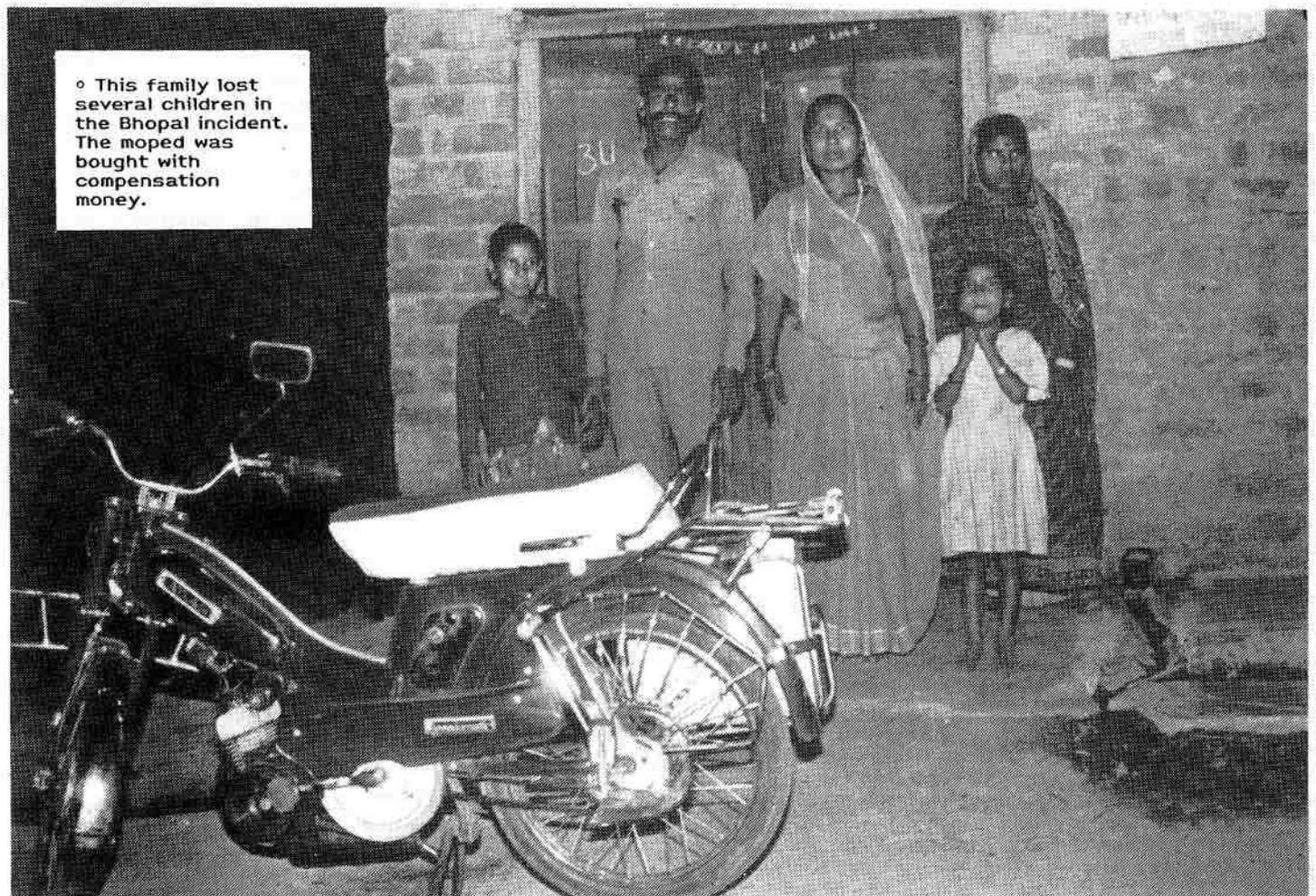
In this context, I was being asked to work with gas victims to develop alternative production and employment strategies, socially useful production alternatives to the closed Union Carbide plant. The task is gargantuan. In my two visits I was only able to scratch the surface, to work through ideas, to attempt to inspire confidence, to confirm that such cooperative, "popular planning" initiatives do exist in England and - as my travels indicated - in India too, to make suggestions from my own experience of such initiatives in England about how to go about things, where to start. In the context the progress made, and the hope it's generating, is remarkable. House to house surveys of the skills available and of local needs have been conducted. Inventories have been compiled of the resources available, the plant and equipment in the now closed Union Carbide factory, training facilities, premises, and the financial resources available from government and voluntary agencies.

Attempts have been made to drive wedges between former workers and gas victims (often the same people, of course) with some government agencies suggesting

that workers were as complicit as management in the accident. There have also been partially successful attempts to undermine any workers' organisation by offering their leaders well paid alternative employment at the other end of the state, so that the very existence of GPRS is something of a triumph. But it's not the only campaigning organisation. In Bhopal the "Morcha", for instance, concentrates on campaigns round the relief and health questions and runs a "People's Health Centre", while the Bhopal branch of SEWA (whose secretary Ramchandra Bhargav I stayed with) is pushing ahead with a programme of long-term employment generation for gas victims as well as operating a health centre and nursery.

Taking account of the gas victims' disabilities is a crucial element in any long-term employment strategy. The plant is located close to the main railway station and the hundreds of porters employed there were some of the worst affected. As they are no longer able to perform their physically arduous task of carrying luggage around on their heads because of their respiratory problems, a scheme has been hatched to change the nature of their work rather than to render them unemployed: the station stairs have been converted to ramps, and the porters have been provided with hand carts to wheel luggage around. Other schemes now operating include two women's cooperatives set up by SEWA. Each employs about 150: one makes school uniforms and other clothing, and they have instituted a series of craft training programmes. Plans developed by GPRS for the old Union Carbide plant - it extends over 66 acres, and the area where methyl isocyanate was manufactured is only a small part - include the production of agricultural machinery and tools in the old engineering shop, and of high protein soya-based foods such as biscuits in the old formulations plant.

In all this, as in the many other initiatives I have described, a key role is played by women, many of whom have a special strength and authority despite the institutionalised discrimination. Even here in the uneasy quiet of Bhopal, flowers are beginning to bloom.



◦ This family lost several children in the Bhopal incident. The moped was bought with compensation money.

I very much hope you may be able to take the following article on 'The Living Economy'. She got it so badly wrong!  
Best wishes,  
Jonatha.



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With Compliments

# 'So badly wrong...'

JONATHON PORRITT replies to the criticisms of 'The Living Economy' levelled by Penny Newsome in her article in GL 51.

IT IS a great shame that the one critique of The Living Economy to be published by Green Line is the rambling and ill-considered hectoring of Penny Newsome (GL51). Undoubtedly a well thought out socialist reaction to this book, and to the whole TOES approach, would be a useful addition to the debate about green economics for GL readers and further afield. But unfortunately, Penny Newsome's article simply obscures the real issues with a lot of disjointed rhetoric liberally sprinkled with false assertions about TOES and TOES paperwriters such as Ward Morehouse and Roefie Hueting.

To start with some false assertions, Newsome says that 'there is no economic policy in the New Economics'. The 170-odd pages of Part III of the book are positively stuffed with suggested policies: land value taxation, cooperative land banks and complete agricultural reform in the first chapter; encouragement of local currencies, ethical investment funds and community banks in the second; employment policies in the third; basic income and taxation policies in the fourth, etc, etc. The book is not a manifesto (another error of Newsome's) and was not intended to be one, so that the policies are suggestions rather than prescriptions.

Another assertion of breathtaking falsity: 'TOES intends to maintain an almost uncontrolled market economy'. Practically all the policy suggestions in the book entail intervention in or control of the market: from agriculture (eg quotas) to taxes on land, pollution and resource use; from trade (eg export conversion and import substitution) to transnational corporations (international codes of conduct). Such erroneous assertions, and there are others like them, simply mean that nothing that Newsome says in her article can be taken at face value.

The article several times springs to the defence of 'conventional' economists, who are widely attacked in the book. Yet Newsome shows herself either incapable of understanding, or very capable of misrepresenting the most elementary economic arguments of Roefie Hueting. (Ironically, as head of the Department of Environmental Statistics at the Netherlands Central Bureau of Statistics, Hueting is probably the most 'conventional' economist to have written for TOES). His study of a Conserver Scenario for the Dutch government, reported in the book, is one of the most important pieces of economic analysis yet produced as far as the green movement is concerned. It shows conclusively and in

great detail that a Conserver Economy can be viable and comfortable, and outlines the policy measures needed to get there. It breaks with normal economic practice by making output only one of seven components of human welfare (the others are environment, employment, leisure, working conditions, income distribution and safety of the future) and it gives top priority to conservation of the environment. Hueting makes quite clear that the positive correlation between production growth and human welfare will only result in greater welfare if it does not adversely affect welfare's other components. He writes: "production is only one of the factors influencing welfare... The point is that factors determining welfare have constantly to be weighed against each other; this amounts to economic choices..." (p.244).

Not content with misrepresenting Hueting on production growth, Newsome links this point with a quite separate one on the wage rate. Hueting's argument is absolutely incontrovertible: most measures to improve the environment do not produce goods for the market and therefore do not generate their own income. If those who undertake these measures are to be paid, their wages will have to come via income redistribution from those whose economic activities do generate income directly. This inevitably involves a reduction in the general rate of (growth of) wages. Newsome takes this absolutely rock-solid economic logic as evidence for some sort of conspiracy theory involving corporations in the field of the new conservation technologies. This is the worthless sort of stuff on which her accusations of 'New Right' infiltration of TOES are founded.

Newsome's treatment of Ward Morehouse is just as scurrilous. "Mrs Thatcher could be proud of him," she writes. One of the hallmarks of Mrs Thatcher's governments has been the increasing inequality between rich and poor, as Newsome ought to know. Morehouse's proposal is that all new capital assets in the US should in future be divided absolutely equally among the population at large. This would lead to a situation after twenty years in which the 94% of the US population which currently owns only 5% of such assets would then own 50% of them, with further increases thereafter. It would be an egalitarian reform of immense significance and if Newsome thinks that is the sort of thing Mrs Thatcher stands for, then she has been far more influenced by the New Right than either TOES or Ward Morehouse.

Of course Morehouse's reform is not 'socialism', but then TOES isn't socialist. This seems to be the main well-spring of Newsome's spleen. She is still deeply imbued with the capitalist/socialist binary vision, as evinced by her remarks about Fritz Schumacher. Schumacher criticised the market. Therefore "he was a socialist", says Newsome, despite the fact that Schumacher himself thought that he was not a socialist. Schumacher's work "is barely recognisable in the TOES version", according to Newsome. Schumacher's son writes in the foreword to the book: "Schumacher would be delighted to have been associated with the array of outstanding thinkers and practitioners whose ideas have been so succinctly presented in this volume... They share the same vision and spirit as Fritz did in his own day" (pp xi,xii). But perhaps Christian Schumacher has been infiltrated by the New Right as well?

Newsome's most grotesque caricature of the book is in the section about transnational corporations. The book approvingly discusses five ways in which anti-social corporations can be brought to social responsibility: publicity and education; consumer boycotts and campaigns against their products; corporate campaigns against the sources of their investment; international labour organisation; and international codes of conduct. Newsome ignores this discussion and concentrates instead on Willis Harman's analysis of changing values and of the evidence that some corporations are beginning to adopt social objectives. This of course is anathema to socialists like Newsome who only talk in terms of "goodies and baddies" and never admit that corporations are run by people who are affected by

societal changes and shifts in values like the rest of us. Such talk is "right-wing bias", evidence that "TOES is much less afraid of the boardroom than it is of bureaucracy" (the old binary language again). For my money, greens don't want their economy controlled by either boardrooms or bureaucracy (though there will probably be some of both), which is why the chapter on transnationals also discusses limits to the return on capital investments and ways in which transnationals could be converted into co-operatives. No mention of

that by Newsome either.

Articles such as Newsome's do a real disservice to the green movement. We are slowly, painfully putting together a coherent alternative to currently existing socialism, capitalism and 'mixed market economy' through such works as *The Living Economy* and it does no good at all to be misinformed and misled, and therefore confused, by those with their own ideologies to grind. May we hope that Green Line will be somewhat more discerning in its choice of such material in the future?

# ...Or right again?

PENNY NEWSOME replies to Jonathon Porritt

I THINK Jonathon has misunderstood the purpose of my article. It was not meant to be a full critique, socialist or otherwise, of *The Living Economy* (LE). The reason that I ignored some of the discussions in LE was not because I had failed to understand them, or wished to misrepresent them, but often because I agreed with them. For example, I did not rehearse the arguments in Wolfgang Sachs' useful paper on "Delinking from World Markets", but concentrated on what I thought were serious defects in the approach of LE to the all-important question of multinational companies

My article was meant to be a beacon of warning to the green movement. I was not suggesting that the book was or should be a political manifesto; but it was meant to be a manifesto for the New Economics, or TOES, wasn't it? Because most people will be too daunted by the subject matter to criticize or even perhaps read the book, I felt it was essential that someone raise very important questions before LE became accepted as 'gospel' by the green movement. Most important to ask: can the rambling hotch-potch of ideas presented (yes, policy suggestions there are indeed, but they do not add up to a coherent, consistent economic policy) get us from current economic practice which we all agree is disastrous, to the sane, humane, ecological society? I came to the conclusion that they could not - not least because the policy suggestions are mutually contradictory. In particular, many contributors to LE do advocate some kind of social ownership of the means of production, as did Fritz Schumacher (see 'Small is Beautiful' chs.17-20). But not Ward Morehouse.

Jonathon now seems determined to defend Ward Morehouse's scheme. His defence indeed underlines the danger of 'new right infiltration' - for by defending capitalist ownership, and regardless of its consequences (see below), you are admitting that you are not really committed to working out feasible schemes of social ownership and organization.

But Jonathon doesn't see it like this. According to him, TOES is "putting together a coherent alternative to currently existing socialism, capitalism and (the) mixed market economy". An alternative to all three of these is impossible, so the emphasis is on "currently existing". So in LE we get, at best, a mish-mash of all three which would amount to a chaotic mixed market economy. Chaotic because TOES would replace Keynesian macro-economic regulation, the visible hand of government, (seen as rather 'socialist = bureaucratic', in new right thinking), with 'self-regulation', perhaps including codes of conduct (see LE p 272) on a micro-economic level. It's pretty new right to express a belief in voluntary self-regulation in the 'public interest'; I can hear Maggie now: "We do care, we care very much."

Capitalism and socialism represent two opposing

systems of economic organization. In between are various 'degrees of mix'. Socialism is the belief in the optimum welfare of all, the belief in the equality of outcome. Currently existing socialism, e.g. in the USSR, may fail to achieve this goal. This is partly because it has made a wrong equation, viz. maximum economic growth = optimum welfare; and partly because the socialist ideal of the sacrifice of self-interest for the sake of the welfare of all has been corrupted by the attempts of some anti-social individuals to maximise at the expense of others - like capitalists do. The intermediate goal of socialism - i.e. economic growth - can be changed. But economic growth is the ultimate goal of capitalism, which has never claimed 'optimum welfare' as a goal. Capitalism is by definition a competitive system with profit maximisation as an end in itself. People do not matter; most people are in fact just a factor of production, i.e. Labour, representing a cost to be minimised so that profit, i.e. the return to Capital, can be maximised. Even some of the people fortunate enough to be capitalists may lose the competition too - Triumph motorcycles, where are you now?

"An alternative to existing socialism, capitalism and the mixed market economy is a logical impossibility"

The most successful attempt to "reform capitalism", i.e. to make it modify the effort to maximise profit, in the interest of the welfare of people, was "the Keynesian revolution"; many will admit the causes of this revolution were not entirely humanitarian; capitalism was after all on the verge of collapse. As Marx had pointed out a hundred years before there is an inherent contradiction in the capitalist system, due to the fact that 'people' are both a cost of production, Labour, to be minimised and the market for capitalist production, which has to be maximised. The Keynesian revolution temporarily resolved the contradiction by allowing government to support the market and incidentally improve the welfare of the people. But in the 1970s a new crisis emerged for capitalism. This time the laissez-faire capitalists blamed it on the Keynesian revolution, saying that the workers had got so strong that wage rises were undermining profit, investment and economic growth; and that was thanks to government intervention and especially to the welfare state.

Memories are short and it was easy to resuscitate old myths - the invisible hand, enlightened self-interest, and all that. The ecologists who did argue that the crisis had re-emerged precisely because the capitalist system,

even sustained by governments, was inherently unsustainable were ignored. Anyway the capitalists, ever resourceful, had found other ways of temporarily resolving the contradiction: for example, using cheap Third World labour, subsidising energy and other capital costs out of taxes on the richer workers, etc.

Keynes of course knew that his or any solution could only be temporary, that "the capitalist casino" was a hopeless way to run the economy of the planet. I am afraid he would have laughed at Jonathon's faith in "the people who run corporations". Of course they are affected by "societal change and shift in values"; but it's how they react that's all important. As LE admits (p 286) visionaries such as Ernest Bader "have inevitably been few and far between". Ernest Bader was a socialist of a sort (see e.g. *Small is Beautiful* p 230). I wonder whether - and this is the kind of problem a New Economics should be tackling, one which so far as I know no economist has yet addressed - if there were lots of Scott Bader Commonwealths competing with one another, would total human welfare be any greater than it is under the competing forms of capitalist ownership that we have today? The answer lies somewhere in the Buddhist/socialist approach which is cooperative, not competitive, for society as a whole; "profitability" being at a minimum to supply needs, and not at a maximum to

satisfy ever increasing wants. But capitalism requires competition, and the welfare benefit of this competition is supposed to be not only that via growth it can satisfy ever increasing wants, even if unequally, but also that only competition can ensure the "efficient" use of

'unowned' resources (including Third World labour)? The only way is to enforce controls - either taxes on, or prohibitions on, the use of these resources. Social costs have to be made real (i.e. financial!) costs to capitalists, otherwise they will ignore them. "Our first duty is to produce profits for our shareholders," says every managing director. "Let the government look after welfare."

And when governments try to enforce controls, what do the capitalists do? Resist with all their might. "Only by producing profits for our shareholders," they say, "can we create the wealth that will allow you the luxury of welfare." And this is the argument to which at any rate Jonathon Porritt seems to have succumbed. The new-right infiltration of TOES must have gone even further than I thought originally.

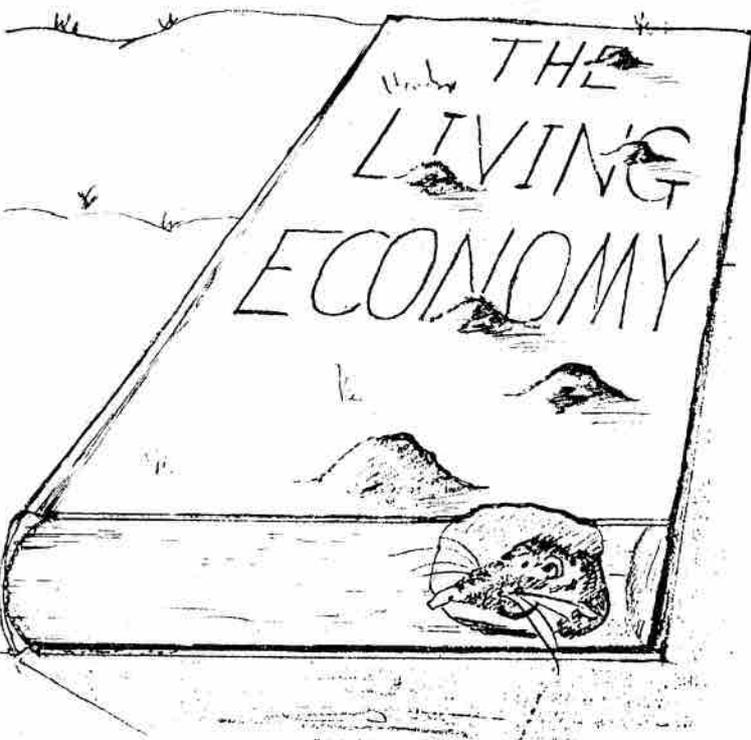
For Jonathon gives a paraphrase of Ruefie Hueting's argument in his paper on 'The Conserver Economic Scenario': "Most measures to improve the environment do not produce goods for the market, and therefore do not generate their own income. If those who undertake these measures are to be paid, their wages will have to come via redistribution from those whose economic activities do generate income directly." If you substitute "health" or "education" for "measures to improve the environment" I think this argument will have a familiar ring. It even bears the conclusion we have heard so often in the last eight years: "This inevitably involves a reduction in the general rate of growth of wages." I am sure Ruefie Hueting meant a "general reduction in the rate of growth of incomes, including profits." He should have made this clear. But in any case several problems with this argument remain.

Firstly, under a capitalist system, i.e. one in which capitalists have power because they own the means of production, they can, in the absence of trade union solidarity, enforce a reduction in wages. Only governments can enforce a reduction in the rate of growth of profits, via taxation of various kinds.

Secondly, the whole argument is based on a false assumption; the assumption that the environment is a "good" which has to be produced and bought. A green economics would point out that the environment is God-given, that without it there would be no life. What is being produced in relation to the environment is "bads" - pollution, etc. We have made the ridiculous mistake of thinking it of no value compared with the "wealth", the more and more consumption goods, that we can produce by destroying it.

Well, yes, as I said in GL51, some of us saw the massive mistake we had been making nearly twenty years ago and went so far as to propose that we stop immediately. Now TOES seems to think it has come up with a way of being able to prevent global destruction without having to do anything too drastic. The long-term project is to convert the capitalists; meanwhile we can try to buy back our birthright, we can bribe them. We can bribe them to introduce e.g. more costly non-polluting technology by offering to trade it off against a compensating reduction in the cost of labour. We can't of course really expect them to reduce profits, because then they'd go out of business and there wouldn't be any wages to reduce. The Gordian Knot of reliance on profits has to be cut if we are to get out of this trap; even 'converted' capitalists won't be able to untie it - except of course by agreeing to go out of business. None of this would really present too much of a problem if only Jonathon (I do not know if he is speaking for TOES as a whole or not) did not feel he had to defend capitalism. One could then get on with the real work of organising the global economy on socialist lines, i.e. optimising welfare - instead of worrying about how to keep the capitalists providing us with at least some welfare.

Ruefie Hueting's paper does contain some interesting economic analysis, even some useful figures, but also



resources. The ecological attack on capitalism is that it does not ensure the efficient use of resources, that on the contrary it wastes and destroys resources. But TOES, for some reason, insists on seeing this as a fault in economic theory, not as a fault in the capitalist system of economic organisation.

But, you say, socialism in the USSR is as responsible for environmental degradation as US multi-national capitalism. So it is; but once it has realised its mistake a socialist, planned economy can assign a 'shadow' price to what it previously considered a 'free', costless resource and modify its production plans accordingly. But how does a non-socialist state, i.e. one that itself has no 'ownership' rights, prevent the exploitation of

some mistakes. He seems to confuse maximisation and optimisation (see LE p 243). "We try to maximise our welfare. The opposite is nonsensical." But as Keynes showed individual attempts to maximise, even welfare, result in a reduction of our (collective) welfare, especially under a laissez-faire system which does not even attempt to compensate the losers in the competition. The Buddhist / Socialist approach is the 'nonsensical opposite': "I am prepared to minimise my welfare requirements, my demands on limited resources, so that we all can have enough. Substituting "welfare" for "production" makes no difference to the requirement of Buddhism / Socialism that the individual minimises rather than maximises in order to achieve an optimum for all.

I wonder why Jonathon feels he must defend capitalism - and in particular Ward Morehouse's Universal Capital Ownership Scheme (USOP)? Will USOP optimise welfare? Of course it won't. Capitalism inevitably leads to cumulative inequality and whatever capitalists may say about "being able to compensate the losers" they plainly don't and indeed can't for reasons that we have seen. You may redistribute land to individuals in a capitalist "land reform"; but when in financial difficulties, small peasants sell out to larger landowners and you are back where you started. Under socialism / Buddhism / Green economics, we need as a first prerequisite of a land

"The Gordian Knot of  
reliance on profits  
has to be cut.  
Even 'converted' capitalists  
won't be able to untie it"

reform that 'land cannot be bought and sold.' 'Capital' is the name given to the accumulated product of labour and land. I have no right to own the product of another person's labour. But this is the right that the capitalist has abrogated. Share owners buy the right to own the product of someone else's labour, the right to an unearned income. This in itself should make share ownership antipathetical to greens. Yet Jonathon sees USOP as "an egalitarian reform of immense significance." Very egalitarian, yes. Instead of only 6% of the US population exploiting the labour of the entire world population and the land of the entire planet, in theory everyone in the US will have the opportunity to do so. And nothing here about "the limits to growth", that first principle of the New Economics. I wonder what these \$5-trillion worth "that US businesses will spend on new productive assets in the next twenty years" will turn out to be? New armaments factories? New branches of MacDonalds?

So the success of US transnational capitalism, success which can only come from further exploitation, will give you a guaranteed income for life. And for fear of losing your livelihood in a market crash that would make your share certificate the worthless bit of paper it in fact is, you won't dare "rock the boat by suggesting social objectives" in the place of profit.

Take a case in point. Hands up those greens who (a) could not afford to and (b) on principle did not buy British Telecom shares? Hands up anyone who having bought a BT share rushed along to the AGM and demanded non-polluting technology, a fair wage for the engineers, or even a reduction in the price of phone calls. I'm sorry, Jonathon, I can't share your faith in human nature. It is indeed a question of education. But if whilst bringing up a child you continually reward his/her selfish, aggressive or just plain inconsiderate behaviour (in the short run), you will not produce a

compassionate and altruistic adult (in the long run). I wonder even about the prospects for "worker cooperatives". If after years of resisting even a minimum of worker participation, MNCs should suddenly transform themselves into cooperatives, would the new worker/owners spontaneously adopt social objectives, and forego profit for useful production?

For my money, USOP is exactly the kind of thing Mrs Thatcher stands for. It appeals for the many to become as motivated by selfish gain (and call it necessity) as the few already are. Involve those envious have-nots in the capitalist casino and we'll hear much less about controlling it or doing away with it altogether. Everyone knows "winning" in the short term can make the thought of long-term collapse just a bad dream.

As for what Jonathon calls my "grotesque caricature" of LE on the matter of transnational corporations (TNCs): for more than 300 pages LE produces various policies to avert destruction and increase welfare, but completely ignores the main actors in the actually existing economic scenario, the TNCs. Finally, in ch 14, we have a paper or two discussing what many "conventional" economists have long recognised as the stumbling block for any national economic policy, transnational corporations. See for example Osvaldo Sunkel in Gerald Meier, 'Leading Issues in Development Economics' (1977, 3rd ed): "The TNC is the basic institution of the post-war capitalist world ... creating in the final analysis a new model of civilisation represented by the super-consumption society exemplified by the US." What does LE say, then? "Economic theory has to expand and become global and holistic ... to bring it into harmony with the expansionism of economic practice, to make the practice transparent." What does this mean? That TNCs are holistic in practice? Well, the above quote is on p 99; TNCs don't get talked about for another 200 pages.

But meanwhile one could quote Sunkel again: "The TRANCO needs permanently to expand its markets, underdeveloped countries are subject to a massive offensive of the consumerism characteristic of developed societies" ... "The MNC is a medium for the intrusion of the law, politics, foreign policy and culture of one country into another." What hope then for any local self reliance, local production for local need, and all those other holistic policies while the TRANCOs still dominate world markets?

Some contributors to LE realise the need for legislative control and enforcement; e.g. Guy Dauncey in another useful paper, "A new local economic order" (p 272). But you will note that legislation and enforcement are not among the five measures in Jonathon's list of measures proposed "to control anti-social corporations". It would seem that his defence of 'The Living Economy' reveals Jonathon to be to the right even of some of his colleagues in TOES.

As for me, I am not frightened by taunts of "still being deeply imbued with the capitalist / socialist binary vision." Whatever fudge TOES may like to make of it, it is either/or; and it is capitalism that has to go, capitalism based not only on an ethos, but on the logical necessity of maximisation and expansionism - neither of which are necessary to the "optimum welfare for all" goal of socialism. If the New Economics were to start at this point, it might go somewhere. If not it will be in danger of being an historical irrelevance; a group that seemed to be happy to compromise its vision in order to retain its credibility with a currently existing new right establishment.

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● Penny Newsome holds a degree in economics, and a post-graduate diploma in development economics. She has worked for the (then) Ministry of Overseas Development, for Oxfam, and as a research assistant at St Anthony's College, Oxford. She now teaches economics at undergraduate level, and is a freelance researcher.



TO CARE FOR THE ENVIRONMENT: a call to a new theology. Sean McDonagh, Geoffrey Chapman, 1986.

DIRECTED MAINLY towards those of a religious turn of mind and written for the general reader, this book is the first of its kind. It seeks to shift the narrow homo-centric perspective which, says the author, has hitherto rendered ecclesiastical pronouncements on the environment ineffectual.

Sean McDonagh is an Irish Columban priest writing from his experience of Mindanao in the Philippines and of his native Ireland. His description of environmental havoc in the Philippines makes searing reading, although his observations on the accelerating global crisis are not unfamiliar to greens.

A holistic awareness of creation has not always been absent from Christian theology. Until the 15th century human thought and activity was contained within the framework of a commonly accepted cosmology. McDonagh deplores the distortion of Christian teaching at this period by the undue influence of Greek thinking which stressed the duality of mind and matter. The result was salvation centred theology whereby souls were saved out of the world while speculation about the natural world and appraisal of the nature myths was put aside. This trend was further accelerated by the new thinking of the Enlightenment.

It is not denied that the Biblical writers are ambivalent towards the created order, affirming its splendours yet frequently experiencing nature as hostile. The reader is referred to Fred Turner (author of 'Beyond Geography') who makes the illuminating suggestion that Hebrew attitudes to the environment were conditioned as tribes jostled for survival in the restricted cultivable area of the Fertile Crescent. Life was precarious and the garden and granary became symbols of humanity's successful contest with the wild. Nevertheless, the Bible contains a rich, neglected vein of wisdom in keeping with modern holistic thinking, ranging from the Psalms and the Wisdom literature to the revolutionary attitude of Jesus towards women.

A chapter entitled 'The New Story' draws on Thomas Berry's 'Riverdale Papers' and Jim Lovelock's 'Gaia'. We follow the crisis-laden path of evolution marked by the Big Bang, the emergence of our solar system, and the formation of the first organic molecule - described as "fragile moments when the whole evolutionary process could have been derailed." That derailment didn't take place is, for the author, confirmation of the presence of a controlling power known by intuition. Today's crisis is the latest in a series, and demands the full cooperation of human consciousness.

It is in his perceptions about the demands of the present that the author is at his most original. He calls for imaginative liturgies to celebrate the whole process of creation from the Big Bang onwards. In accordance with the evolutionary principle of diversification, such liturgies would incorporate the insights of all mythologies. He praises, of course, St Francis, but also Teilhard de Chardin's vision of a purposeful creation through evolution, and the little-known poems of Hildegard of Bingen (1098 - 1178) in praise of our mother, the Earth. (Can someone research and publish these?) McDonagh has himself devised a fascinating new liturgy used by the T'boli tribe in the Philippines, incorporating the blessing of the communally owned soil and prayers for deliverance from those who would exploit their inheritance.

As a consciousness-arousing book, 'To Care for the Earth' deserves a place in popularity alongside 'Seeing Green'. Those bound by a secular view of the universe should be able to find in its pages enough common ground to join forces with folk of religious persuasion in the battle to ensure the survival of our planet.

o JUDITH PRITCHARD

## ANIMAL ABUSE - AND THE LAW

THE MILITARY ABUSE OF ANIMALS, Chris Fisher. BUAV, 24 pp, £1.20.  
UP AGAINST THE LAW: Animal Rights and the 1986 Public Order Act.  
ARC Print, 42pp, £1.50.

THESE TWO booklets come from opposite ends, as it were, of the animal rights' movement, illuminating two different approaches, two different types of campaigning. 'THE MILITARY ABUSE OF ANIMALS' is produced by the BUAV, and its subject is basically as its title suggests - the suffering (and cruel death) of animals in military research, the way we torture and kill animals in order to perfect more efficient ways of torturing and killing each other. The theme is sickening enough, though this brief (and quite expensive) pamphlet is rather short on actual text, containing very little information that I didn't already know - instead, a lavish use of horror photographs is clearly designed to shock us into action, and out of our complacency. This approach, though, quite often has the opposite effect - the more images of horror flicker in front of our eyes, the more desensitized we become. Who will read this pamphlet, I wonder? Its aim is to increase public awareness, no doubt, though I am always uneasy at campaigns that focus on the worst atrocities and leave untouched the fundamental issue behind all animal abuse - the way we cruelly play god with the planet and the creatures in it. It is the common sense consensus behind animal abuse - that in the end it is regrettable but necessary - that really needs breaking. The booklet seems mainly to have been written for the peace movement - there is an introduction by Bruce Kent and references to the necessity of making the links between issues.

This is certainly a praiseworthy aim: my disillusionment with antinuclear campaigners came with the realisation that so many were so scornful of animal rights - which was considered a grossly inferior issue to THEIR particular issue! The links, though, are made less by the top people in the various national organisations shaking hands with each other, than at the grassroots level, with campaigners sharing stalls and marching together, gently infiltrating and radicalising each other's campaigns. And if a book such as this can be sold at peace stalls and help increase an awareness of animal rights, it can't be a bad thing. After all, this is an urgent issue, and the animals can't wait: as Bruce Kent says in his introduction, "We must put an end to this disgusting work."

Without all the resources of the BUAV, Arc Print have nevertheless produced another thoughtful booklet. It's necessary and topical too: 'UP AGAINST THE LAW' deals with the Public Order Act and specifically with the way it will affect animal rights campaigning. A good deal is packed within its 40 pages: a brief history of our 'political' police, a discussion and description of the new Act, lots of advice on what to do when arrested, and how to launch a successful defence campaign. There is much practical information, and the authors stress the importance of clear thinking and careful preparation; they argue that the Act is to be taken seriously, and not scornfully dismissed.

I tend to agree with this, because there is already evidence, from Cruisewatchers and others, that the police do intend to use the Act extensively; but it is also necessary not to be intimidated by it, and feel defeated even before we start thinking about an action. This would please the authorities all too well! And too much agonizing over the fine print of the Act could well lead to a dull resignation and defeatism. The previous publication from Arc Print, 'Against All Odds', was generally well received, though it was also criticised (by Ronnie Lee, for example, in a letter to GL) for being too pessimistic; certainly there is a thin line between realism and pessimism. Nevertheless this is another excellent booklet, and perhaps a growing library of publications will help provide a cohesive framework and continuity of debate within a movement which at the moment seems very fragmented. Producing valuable books with little more than free time and a borrowed typewriter is a worthwhile piece of Direct Action in itself - more publications are in the pipeline, and the next one I believe will be about hunt sabbing. Contributions are welcome (to Arc Print, 265 Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park, London N4); my cheque, on behalf of Green Line, is in the post!

o BARRY MAYCOCK



## GREENS' ANARCHIST ROOTS

I would like to address myself to Dave Pepper's highly inconsistent and confused Labour Party view of Green "ideology" and its relationship to socialism and anarchism (Letters, GL51).

In some ways, his is a view not untypical of Labour Party activists who somehow feel indignant that Greens have managed to gain so much influence on the sort of issues which they feel that the Labour Party has been trying to address, particularly recently. It is glaringly obvious that the Labour Party has nothing in common ultimately with the Green Party, other than the fact that they adopt a parliamentary road and are basically humanists.

First, the Labour Party has recently showed just how evident the difference is: Kinnock has backed down on the unilateralist proposal, and there has been a tightening up of the party's centralist strategy (not the reverse) through the expelling and public disowning of local radical Labour councils, and the adoption of a very moderate "don't rock the boat" strategy.

Second, the Labour Party has distinct class cleavages between its leadership and the people it is claiming to represent (i.e. the rank and file of the working class). It is no more than an alternative capitalist party to the Conservatives and the Alliance, whereas the Greens have always had strong connections with grassroots activism here and in Germany.

Thirdly, the Labour Party has never showed any interest in the sort of critique of industrialism that Greens offer; to appeal to voters, they have been inevitably forced to couch their rebuilding of Britain in terms of traditional heavy manufacturing industry rather than a radical appraisal of the whole concept of work.

As a general point, it is futile to blindly throw your hopes of an eventual "decentralised socialism" into one centralised, hierarchical, political mechanism with all its party discipline, rather than to work for real change at grass roots level as the Greens advocate. Please remember also that the Labour Party has had about 70 years more political prominence, so comparisons of "success" are futile. Also the local activism and influence of Greens do point a way towards more decentralised politics should they become a major force in the future.

Whilst Pepper makes a few good points about Marxism and its value as an analytical tool for Greens, I would argue that his analysis of anarchism and his general critique of power is severely lacking. Socialist or anarchist revolutions can only come from the grassroots activism of the people. To try and go for either a revolutionary Marxist strategy utilising means which are incompatible with their ends (i.e. Lenin's revolutionary party), or to expect a "bourgeois" party (Labour) to begin dissolving itself, is to

misunderstand how power is perpetuated and how political consciousness is generated. It is for this reason that Green ideas have much more in common with anarchist ones (which share common ancestry with Marxism anyway), although no anarchist really approves of a parliamentary road.

As to whether anarchism is ill-suited because of its "utopian" nature or its lack of a homogenous philosophy, I would say this. Utopianism is perhaps necessary for our civilisation now, as Murray Bookchin argues in his ecological literature, and rather than a stagnant fixed goal "Utopia" is an ever-flexible amorphous concept - a "permanent revolution", to use a Trotskyist notion.

On the homogeneity issue, might I point out that many types of socialism and Marxism also exist, in the way that all philosophies are fragmented. Besides which, Stirner really is so peripheral to anarchism as to be hardly worth mentioning anyway. You will find that most anarchists agree on such things as concepts of human nature, advocacy of cooperation, self-management, spontaneity, and opposition to all forms of authority - including patriarchy, something which the Greens and the New Social Movements do generally address, but which the Labour Party merely perpetuates through its structure and ideas.

Finally, his appraisal of anarchist history amounts to the same old trotting out of the Woodcock parade of 19th century dead anarchists, with nowhere a word on modern thinkers: Bookchin, Colin Ward, Howard and Carol Ehrlich and John Clark, to name a few. All these have analyses well rooted in the modern idiom.

Of course it is acceptable to vote Labour on a national level if no Greens are standing, but as much effort as possible should be put into building a Green society as a viable future, through the democratisation and reclamation of our own lives, before any opportunity is totally lost.

Jon Purkiss  
Lonsdale College  
Lancaster University.

## SHIT WORK

Tim Fynn suggests (Letters, GL52) that employing a gardener while he does his writing benefits both.

In fact it is a perfect example of how 'Division of Labour' benefits the rich and exploits the poor. Gardening for other people is cold, wet, dirty, tiring, boring and humiliating. Tim can only get on with his comfortable, high-status, well-paid job because someone without land must do his shit jobs for him or starve.

So when everyone has their own land, there'll be no 'Division of Labour'. Tim will have to do his own gardening.

Richard Hunt  
19 Magdalen Road, Oxford

## RIGHT WING ECONOMICS?

Regretfully I haven't time to make detailed comments about Penny Newsome's unfortunate piece in GL51, but I hope that your readers will turn direct to 'The Living Economy' before they dismiss the book on the strength of her extraordinarily inaccurate and thoroughly slapdash critique.

For a different political view of the book to hers, GL readers might be interested in two reactions I have had from professional referees for an academic journal to which I was invited to submit a paper based on the book. "Some will see it as 'left-wing', with insufficient criticism of 'socialist' countries to match the implied criticism of capitalist economies", wrote one. His/her colleague was stronger: "This thesis is nothing less than an attack on the dominant form of the capitalist system in the West. To effect the change he envisages will involve politics of the most controversial kind."

Clearly these referees would not agree that TOES has been 'infiltrated by the New Right', as Newsome alleges, but then they are not so paranoid as to think in terms of 'infiltration' at all. Your readers must believe whom they choose. I think the book speaks for itself.

Paul Ekins  
School of Peace Studies  
University of Bradford  
Bradford, W Yorks

## FALSE DICHOTOMY

Reading Penny Newsome's review of 'New Economics' (and how grateful one is for any attempt such as this to focus serious discussion on some of the basic problems confronting the green movement) makes one realise what a long way we have to go in securing agreement on our preliminary assumptions.

She points to some glaring shortcomings of the TOES approach but in doing so reveals some rather dated attitudes of her own. There is a green slogan lying around somewhere which talks of greens being 'neither right nor left but forward'. In so far as this represents a rejection of the old left-right dichotomy it may betoken a distinct shift of awareness that the old style of confrontational politics at the top is played out and that a new approach must reject the assumptions of both.

Greens, one might have thought, don't want a right-wing free market free for all if only because of the ecological damage it does. At the same time they do not want a jackbooted, nanny state taking over our lives in the guise of a welfare state which proves in practice to be anti-welfare and puts our destinies in the hands of armies of impersonal bureaucrats. On this count greens must surely reject state planning if only because it is simply another name for totalitarianism and because we have no evidence that it can lead to any other result. If such evidence exists will the planners please bring it forward?

In any case the left-right dichotomy collapses for two other reasons. First, there is the fact that what is called the right appears to accept more and more the presumed need for state planning and in doing so becomes increasingly centralised and authoritarian. In this it is moving steadily towards Fabianism and a general leftist, 'Auntie knows best' position; the historic ground of the Labour movement. Whether labour even now

has cottoned on to the essentially authoritarian nature of its own assumptions about state planning is something perhaps socialists can best sort out for themselves. We should note in passing that the education minister who now proposes that Whitehall should decide the basic curriculum of every school in the country is a conservative. In doing this he is of course treading a path laid down by Labour which has already resulted in the comprehensive collapse of the state education system. I would like to suggest that greens who believe the state should have any say or control over education at all have yet to take in the first principles of green politics.

Second, the whole right-left argument has been overtaken by events centering on the five main elements of the global crisis. These are: war, demographic instability and excess, resource depletion, pollution and the enveloping thundercloud of alienation which dominates people's lives almost everywhere in the modern world. On this last point I would suggest that to continue to use 'right' and 'left' as terms for political discussion is as good an indication of alienated thinking as may be found anywhere. Our present political and economic structures, whatever their political colouration, have produced this multiple crisis. It stems from the thinking and the policies and institutions which follow. As Rudolf Bahro and others have pointed out, to attempt to use the instruments of alienation in order to cure alienation is a nonsense.

John Papworth  
24 Abercorn Place  
London NW8

## GOOD WEED

There are still not enough women contributors to GL. Women make up 52% of the population, so why can't we write half the words in GL. Or are some of the contributors who I think have male names really female, so it's not as bad as it seems? What about an all women issue now and then? Am I alone in thinking that ordinary women's magazines have far more greenish input than they used to?

Martin Stott is unusually quick among 'old India hands' at idealising that society. I can't help but laugh at his reference to the 6am 'hawkers', because the 'hawking' that goes on at 6 am in India is the healthy or unhealthy expectoration of surplus mucus by the entire population on waking. I hope that, unlike me, he didn't catch hepatitis and undiagnosable dysentery from buying the much walked-on by flies milk sweets. Don't get me wrong; I love India. I'll go back any time I have enough money to be able to fall back on the occasional air conditioned room when I feel poorly.

I was disappointed that Jon Carpenter's write-up of the Green Party conference didn't expose the party's shameful decision to back down on legalising cannabis. Not that it has been removed from party policy, but it just ISN'T going to be in the election manifesto. So much for our commitment to blacks and the oppressed in society. My feeling was that conference goers were so busy congratulating themselves about being broadminded in supporting gay issues that they couldn't be "liberal" twice in the same day. Can I remind you that adult consenting gay activities are LEGAL in private, while cannabis eating, drinking and smoking are still ILLEGAL in private even between consenting adults. Both groups can of course have their choice of drug or sexual partner used against them in child custody cases, and may legally (or not so legally) lose their job or home if "found out". What about some solidarity then? No one even offered to roll me a joint after Conference voted

against my proposal to include the cannabis "vote loser" in the election manifesto. Sob, sob!

Linda Hendry  
2a West Preston Street  
Edinburgh EH8 9PX

## GREEN NOBODIES

As a former Marxist, CND/NVDA activist and observer of the alternative movements of the 1980s, I view the current state of things with despair. I do not believe that having the most perfect form of PR (although I support it) will mean success for the Green Party because its policies are neither radical nor popular. It views the average voter with condescending elitist zeal because of a lack of concern with issues to do with social justice, poverty and inequality.

Where the example of Die Grunen seems to be different to the U.K. is that the German Greens are the party at the head of a mass movement. If you look at our history you will see that society changes because a significant minority or mass want reform or revolution. Small groups of ideologues like greens do not lead except where their views coincide with those of a sufficient number of disillusioned or oppressed and radicalised people. Only then might greens have an opportunity to speak on their behalf. Unless there is this kind of mass support (millions rather than thousands) the greens will be a party with a head but no body.

I have no doubt that the imminence of PR will allow people to see that voting green is not a waste of energy. I would like to see a more radical, populist green party. Radical equals a coalition of mutually sympathetic forces of the left and non-liberal greens to replace capitalism and build a green society. Please write to me.

Tony Walker  
Ground floor flat  
28 St. Stephen's Road  
Leicester LE2 1DQ

## STICK TO PRINCIPLES

I'm fed up with the debate of who to vote for: Labour or green, etc. When the Labour Party was formed, people who believed in it voted for their candidate even though when the party was small there must have been times when they knew their candidate could not get in. But they voted for what they believed in. They stuck to their principles and thus the Labour Party grew. Unfortunately, the leadership copped out of true socialism and we are left with the present mess of mediocrity and compromise.

It is this historic determination to stick to principles which we should be learning from those first Labour voters, instead of looking to the present leadership for answers to today's problems. After all, we will never get a Green party into power by voting Labour, will we? Growth is going to be gradual; there's not going to be some miraculous time when suddenly all Green candidates are bound to win so we can vote for them. We've got to start voting now. And if you haven't got a Green Party candidate in your constituency then you've got three options: don't vote, scrawl "green" right across your ballot paper, or start a local Green Party and put up your own candidate.

Rob Walkham  
15 Minffordd  
Bangor  
Gwynedd, N.Wales

## MORAL VOTES

All Greens, and anyone involved in radical campaigning, must surely realise that the absolute priority is "Thatcher Out". It is just getting too difficult to recruit activists when everyone knows that at the end of the day Maggie will whip her rubber stamps into line and get her way.

But it is also important to keep Green politics in the public eye and not let it fade away. Those 35 marginal seats (including Cambridge) can't be ignored. There are issues Greens can emphasise which will attract Tory votes. The traditional "conservation lobby" is the most obvious of these. Others include much greater freedom for small businesses while rigorously controlling the power of big business, "rolling back the state", and money-saving energy conservation measures (now banned by Treasury restrictions on capital spending!).

Probably the most important area is that of moral issues and human relationships. Big business has a vested interest in promiscuity and divorce, isolating people so they fill their lives with more material goods. I stood as a "Celebrate Liberation" candidate in recent student union elections, opposing media and peer group pressure to compete for sexual partners, and attracted support from Tory and Green voters.

It is not enough for Greens to stand on the sidelines for fear of "preaching". We must get the message across that only by opposition to the materialistic Tory philosophy can we guarantee stability and security in human relationships - and make politics worth doing again.

Julian Edmonds  
19 Great Court, Trinity College  
Cambridge CB2 1TQ



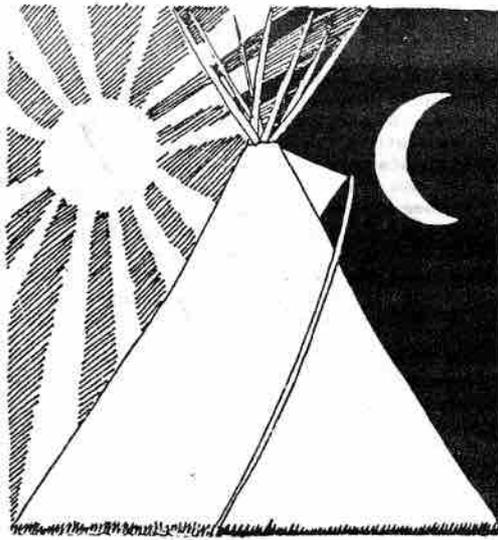
## INDEPENDENT AND ANGRY

Congratulations on 50 issues. It is to your credit that you have refused to accept a narrow definition of what Green is about, though I disagree that anger is ungreen. It is right to be angry about the destruction of the planet, and it's right to be angry with the political powers who are responsible for the state of affairs we find ourselves in today.

The debate will continue between the factions until an ideology and a place in the political spectrum is defined. Greens are not the first group to claim they are neither right nor left: many anarchists state the same. However, there is a tendency internationally to form alliances with the left. In this move there is the danger of becoming subservient to the major parties (Labour, German SPD, Italian PCI, etc.).

Greens must pursue an independent path, whether parliamentary or extra-parliamentary. Remember, the Labour Party is Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Loyal to the system which has caused the problem. Greens for a Labour Victory are deluding themselves.

Frank  
Santa Lucia.



## BRIG OUBRIDGE WRITES:

### IN SEARCH OF THE NEW COALITION

THERE IS a very simple explanation for the fact that, whilst her government is consistently opposed by 60% or more of the electorate, Mrs. Thatcher is still leading the opinion polls and looks increasingly likely to be returned to 10 Downing Street for a third term. None of the opposition parties has yet put together a consistent and convincing package to make them seem like a viable alternative government.

Despite our 'majority' system of one party government every government since 1945 has in fact been a coalition. Tory governments have been coalitions between the "caring conservatism" that is now reviled as "wet" and the more extreme right wing elements which now predominate. Likewise, the Labour Party has always been and still remains an uneasy coalition of its own left and right wings. Past Labour governments have always been dominated by the right, and have consistently failed to deliver radical solutions to our political problems. It certainly seems that Neil Kinnock is set to continue this pattern.

The Liberal/SDP Alliance also reflects an uneasy coalition between the radical 'soul' of the Liberal Party and the compromises which their leadership have made with the essentially conservative SDP. Their damaging split over defence policy was just one surfacing of deep underlying tensions, and beneath the veneer of election-time unity a great many Liberals are just as heartily sick of Owen and Steel as an equal proportion of the Labour Party are of Kinnock.

The problem which faces the radical elements in both the Labour and Liberal parties is that they are in the wrong coalitions. The contradictions between the radical and conservative factions in both the Labour Party and the Alliance are too deep to be resolved or papered over, and in their present forms neither can present a

coherent radical alternative to Thatcherism.

That radical alternative does exist, however, and its direction is undoubtedly green. In terms of policy, many of the key elements of such a package have already gained a real majority of public support. In particular, well over 50% of people are now opposed to nuclear power, and since before the 1983 election a similar majority of the population have been opposed to Cruise, Trident and the accelerating arms race in general. Yet it is on these very issues which must lie at the heart of an alternative agenda that the existing major opposition parties are most split.

Out-going Young Liberals chairman Felix Dodd was certainly right when he called recently for an end to the Liberal-SDP Alliance and for a new coalition incorporating radical Liberals, the Labour left, and the Greens. (He should also have included most of the Welsh and Scottish nationalists, but I suppose he must be English!). It is not a new idea. It is not even a new coalition, for it is one which has been working in practice for years in the anti-nuclear movement. That experience has helped greatly to 'green' many 'reds' and Liberals, and the common ground is now far wider than just the nuclear issues. It includes a broad consensus on issues of civil liberties and the environment, and a determination to reverse the centralisation which has taken place under Mrs Thatcher. To bring it about would also require an agreement on proportional representation - another issue with clear majority public support, and with a degree of support in all parties, whatever their official line.

Of course, there would also be differences, as is inevitable in any coalition. For most Greens (of whatever party) it would not be radical enough: the Labour elements would be too centralist and industrialist, while the Liberals would be too wishy-washy. The struggles of feminists are far from won, even in the currently women-led Green Party. But it is clear that Thatcherism cannot be defeated without this kind of realignment, and with the Greens providing the essential direction the differences would be more easily bridged than are the divides within the present opposition parties.

A new radical alignment is necessary. The great tragedy of British politics is that it may well take another Conservative victory to bring it about. That would be a high price to pay for the self-seeking arrogance and short-sightedness of the current crop of party leaders.

### Zapping

My recent reading has included an excellent paper by Kim Besly on the subject of zapping - which, for anyone who doesn't know, is the

bombardment by low frequency electromagnetic waves to which Greenham women in particular have been subjected over the last three years or so.

The report is available from Kim Besly, Inlands House, Southbourne, Emsworth, Hants PO10 8JH in return for a suitable donation to cover photocopying and postage. I suggest you get a copy and pass it round your local group: it's essential reading for anyone concerned about civil liberties.

### Tipi living

At last someone has got down to writing the booklet that various tipi dwellers have been meaning to write for the past 10 years. I am very glad that it's Patrick Whitefield who has done it, for he has made a very good job of it indeed.

He doesn't tell his reader how to actually make a tipi - that is the subject of a promised 'further volume by the same author' - but in 36 very easily readable pages he manages to convey the genuine feel of tipi living, its underlying philosophy of living lightly upon the earth, and various handy hints on the practical aspects of the lifestyle. Anne Moger's illustrations are an attractive and fitting accompaniment to the text.

Step by step, Patrick takes us through the business of choosing a tipi, learning to pitch it, and coping with the weather come storm or shine. Short but useful sections on maintenance and oving complete the first half of the booklet, while the second deals with the essentials of living within the tipi - fire-making, wood-collecting, furnishings, food, cooking, and the other aspects of daily life. What emerges is a colourful portrait of tipi living which manages to convey its real flavour without ever becoming pretentious or dogmatic.

Of course, every tipi-dweller's life is slightly different. Patrick's booklet is very much a personal statement of his own experience and perspectives, and I don't doubt that every individual tipi-dweller could, like me, find a couple of minor points to disagree with. However, such differences would only be small matters of personal preference, foibles and prejudices: in every basic respect Patrick has managed to get it just right. I shall certainly buy it in bulk, so that I can become a retail distributor to the annual crop of summer visitors to my fireside.

• TIPI LIVING is available from Patrick & Co., c/o Lockyer's Farm, Compton Dundon, nr Somerton, Somerset. £2 incl p&p.

◦ BRIG OUBRIDGE

[Brig was recently elected unopposed as Community Councillor for Llanfynydd.]