

GREEN *Live*

GL72 / MAY 1989 / 60p

Common threads
in Porritt, Capra
and Spretnak

April in Paris:
the European
green congress

Earth Goddesses
and New Age
patriarchy

Statistics of
a misogynist
culture

Brazil's
Amazonian
agromadness

Revisiting
the Bristol
bombing

we know
it makes
sense

**E
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'89**

VOTEZ VERT
STEM "DE GROENEN"
DEAN VÔTADH VAINÉ
PLEIDLEISIWCH I'R
BLAID WERDD
VOTA VERDE
DIE GRÜNEN WÄHLEN!
ΨΗΦΙΣΕ ΠΡΑΣΙΝΟΥΣ
WIEL GRËNG
VOTA VERD
EMAN BOTUA
VOTÁIL GLAS
vote green
VOTA VERDI
STEM FOR
DE GRÛNNE

Britain's Green Monthly

GREEN Line

34 Cowley Rd,
Oxford, OX4 1HZ
Telephone (0865) 724315

Monthly magazine of
Green politics and lifestyle

GREEN LINE is published ten times a year, and is produced by a collective based in Oxford. Green Line appears thanks to the efforts of John French, Barry Maycock, Paula Casal, Graham Hooper, Tim Andrewes and Jerry Spring. If any other readers can offer help of any kind then we are always pleased to hear from you. Phone Jerry on 0865 724315

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Normal rate £6, low/unwaged £5, voluntary hi-waged "supporter subscription" £10. The "supporter" rate helps build our publishing fund (we are all unpaid); and our thanks go out to all who have contributed as supporters. Overseas readers please add £1.50 to all rates (surface mail) or enquire about airmail rates to your area.

ENVELOPES

Whenever GL is printed with 24 pages we won't use envelopes so as to keep in the lowest letter rate. Please let us know if your copy arrives in a mess. If you want an envelope send £1 which will cover the next ten 24-page issues.

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DEADLINES

The next issue is due out on JUNE 1ST 1989. We need all news, articles, small ads etc by 20th May 1989. In general all articles are read and discussed at a meeting of the collective in the middle of each month.

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5p/word

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we eat?

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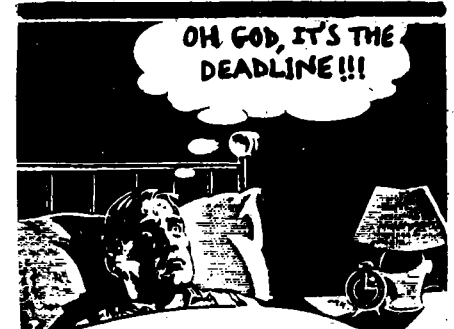
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Now you can wear the COVER ILLUSTRATION

Euro T-shirt as worn by the PM available for £5.50 inc. p&p from Oxford Green Party, 11 Bridge St, Oxford. Bulk orders: phone (0865) 249949



It's such a free country...



Two documentaries in recent months have focused on violence towards women. ITV's World in Action based a programme around a survey of women's attitudes about going out after dark, and Channel 4's Dispatches looked at the problem of obscene phone calls. Both programmes were a shaming indictment of this supposedly free society.

THE SURVEY DONE for World in Action found that 9 out of 10 women interviewed were afraid of going out after dark alone; a third of respondents had been sworn at; a fifth had been flashed at; a fifth had been touched up at some time. Thus over half of this country's population are denied their basic rights to freedom from fear of harassment or attack. You only have to spend half an hour observing your local high street on Friday night to notice the near total absence of women, and the stares and abuse dealt out to those who dare to appear alone, hurrying along with shoulders hunched and faces turned to the shop windows.

Ignoring the problem

To make matters worse, none of this is given the attention it merits, either by the media or the authorities: in many towns, women have to campaign long and hard for any hope of adequate street lighting; shortly after the murder of a woman on the M25 last year, a woman driver stopped to help another woman and child who had broken down on the hard shoulder. A passing police car pulled up and booked her for stopping on a motorway without good reason. In the end her fine was waived - which is not the same as being found innocent; British Rail have painted red lines along compartment carriages - to warn women not to use them alone, after another murder of a lone woman traveller. Did you know what those lines mean?

Of course, if 90% of men couldn't freely go about their daily lives, there'd be immediate action - just look at the government response to the miners strike. But increased policing and changed attitudes to dealing with sexual harassment and rape cases by the authorities are only part of the answer; they merely stem the tide. It is the virulently misogynist nature of our culture that has to be changed for a real solution; to grapple with the fact that in addition to the threat of violence on the streets, women have to face violence from people who know, and supposedly love them.

One of the most disheartening statistics in ITV's poll was that 78%, only 78%, of women were "angry" or "very angry" about the present situation. That means nearly one in four women have been so acculturated, so browbeaten (or worse), so inured to abuse, that they are no longer, or have never thought to be, angry.

THE STATISTICS IN Channel 4's programme were equally startling: in the 24 hours after you read this article, there will be 22,000 obscene phone calls made to women in this country, of which about 3,000 will threaten them with violence. 2.3 million women get one obscene phone call during the year, 1.4 million get up to 10, and about 250,000 get more than 10. One in five of these calls will threaten violence and in a quarter of them the victims reckon that the caller must be someone they know because of the details - the caller can talk about.

It is the most frequent crime committed in this country, yet it is categorised as a level 3 offence along with bike theft and not having a TV licence or valid train ticket. The police and government don't even bother to keep records on the conviction rates for this offence. The police say records are not required, yet they do keep records for the other level 3 offences. They also take the view that there is nothing they can do unless the woman is physically endangered.

Unfortunately, as the programme showed through several distressing interviews, many women's lives are ruined without them ever actually meeting an obscene phone caller.

British Telecom ("it's you we answer to") takes an equally disgraceful attitude to that of the police. Women who have asked for the operator to intercept their calls or have the number changed are

asked to pay around £30 for the privilege! OFTEL, supposedly the consumer's watchdog, merely says that BT is doing all it can; clearly a profit of £1.6bn in 1988 doesn't leave much spare change for women phone users whose mental and physical safety is being threatened.

When it comes to tracing the caller's number the police and BT shuffle the buck between them, claiming that there isn't a high enough chance of securing a conviction. Whilst there is a problem in Britain with non-digital exchanges, BT's attitude is pathetic compared to telephone companies in the USA. Bell in New Jersey has a free service dealing with nuisance calls which will give special phones to women so they can log the caller's number whenever they want. Nuisance calls dropped by 30% in one year.

The men

Dispatches also managed to meet some of the men who make obscene phone calls, sometimes thousands over a period of years. Their motivation varies from sexual stimulation through to feelings of fear, anger and domination. Worryingly 60% didn't consider obscene calls a serious matter, and furthermore there is evidence that some men who sexually harass or rape women have a past history of making obscene phone calls.

It is clear that the police, the government and BT have a duty to act immediately. When you remember the fuss in parliament over BT's Chatline service - when the issue was merely one of wasted money - the silence on obscene phone calls is deafening. Worse, none of the major political parties seem to have anything serious to offer on dealing with underlying cultural issues; isn't it about time it was made a central, and vocalised, part of green politics; more than just the "well of course as a green I'm sympathetic to feminism" aside from 'green' men.

Meanwhile, we wait in vain for the time when it will be inconceivable for a man to attack or pester a woman; when women won't turn their head in fear at the sound of my footstep in the street; when I won't have to cross the road or turn the other way to allay that fear.

JERRY SPRING

For more information about support and advice send s.a.e to "Phone Calls", PO Box 4000, London W3 6XJ

GREEN DIARY

MAY

10th. Rupert Sheldrake gives Schumacher lecture on a new science of life at St. James, Piccadilly, London. Tickets £3, details phone (02374) 293

12th-20th. Oak Dragon Camp. Spiritual Traditions. Adults £50, children £15. Details: Oak Dragon Project, Myrtle, Capel Seion Rd., Drefach, Llanelli, Dyfed, 0269 844272.

12th-21st. Travellers Skool Bus Camp. Somerset. A self-help co-operative gathering for families with children out of school. £5. Details 0432 352133.

16th. Soweto Day.

17th. Cecil Collins painter and visionary artist gives Schumacher lecture. See May 10th for details.

25-29th. Festival for Mind, Body and Spirit. New Hall, The Royal Horticultural Halls, Greycoat Street, London SW1.

26th-June 3rd. Oak Dragon Camp. Healing Arts. Adults £60, children £20. Details: see 12th-20th above.

27th. London Anarchists Conference. 11am-5pm, North East London Ploy., West Ham Main Hall, Romford Road, Stratford, London. (nearest station Stratford)

27th. Benefit Gig: Culture Shock, The Horns of Jericho & Rebel Sleaze. 8pm, Pel, West Ham Main Hall, Romford Rd., London E15. £3/£2. Disabled access, creche facility. Nearest tube Stratford. Benefit for Leeds Abortion Fund.

27th. Anti-Nuclear Network. National Meeting, St. Werburgh's Community Centre, Worley Rd., St. Werburgh's, Bristol; 10am-5pm. Contact: ANN, PO Box 30, 187 High Road, Wood Green, London N22 / HAG, Avon Environmental Centre, Unit G, Arnos Vale Castle Estate, Bristol BS4.

29th. Kingston Green Fair. Canbury Gardens, Kingston, Surrey. Features include "World of Water" tent, 3 stages, entertainments, stalls, refreshments etc. etc. Contact: Steph Kay 01 622 1374.

JUNE

1st. London to Stonehenge Walk. Starts 12 noon, Jubilee Gardens (by the old GLC buildings on the South Bank, nearest tube - Waterloo). Picnic at Peace Pagoda, Battersea Park between 2 & 3pm. **Stonehenge Walks** also leave from Aberystwyth, Bristol, Cambridge, Coventry, Glastonbury, Oxford & Sheffield, during June. Check out your local FIN/festival information for details.

17th. London to Stonehenge Bikers Run. Chiswick Roundabout, noon.

17-18th. Leamington Festival of International Understanding, contact Choyous Choy (0789) 292052

16-18th. Living Without Cruelty Exhibition. Kensington Town Hall, Kensington, London. Cruelty-free commodities, lectures, films, stalls & more. £2/£1.50. Details: Mark Gold 0732 364546

16-18th. Glastonbury Festival. Features include the French "Archaos" chainsaw circus and possibly the Grateful Dead.

16-25th. Stonehenge Peoples's Free Festival. Site to be announced.

19th. Glastonbury to Stonehenge Bikers Run. Main site exit, noon.

24th. Blockade Hinkley Point! This will mark the approaching end of the inquiry. There's a planning meeting on the 24th at Otterhampton village hall, Combwich, at 2pm, though the emphasis will not be on regimenting the protestors. More from BLAH, c/o Box DAM, 37 Stokes Croft, Bristol BS2.

MAKE YOUR OWN TOFU

THIS IS a handy and tasty way of eating soya as well as being a less murderous and more economic source of protein.

An acre of land would render 20lb of useable protein from beef cattle, 45lbs from other animals but 356lbs from soya cultivation. Tofu can be bought in virtually all wholefood shops but here is how you can make your own, courtesy of Vegan Times.

Equipment

2 one gallon cooking pots (not aluminium if possible)
1 collander
1 wooden spoon
2 jugs
1 perforated spoon
2 two ft. square pieces of muslin
1 pair thick rubber gloves
6 clothes pegs
1lb soya beans
1/3 cup vinegar (pref. cider) or lemon juice

Method

1. Wash beans and cook for 24 hours in enough water to allow them to double in size.
2. Strain and use a vessel to measure your swollen beans (i.e 2/3/4 cups etc.) Then rinse beans in clean water. Bring to the boil an equal amount of water, and meanwhile liquidise the beans with twice their volume of hot water. Line the pan of boiling water with muslin and secure the rim with clothes pegs. Pour liquidised mixture into pan of boiling water (into the muslin); this should then give you the ratio of three parts water to one part beans.
3. Bring to boil and simmer for 15 minutes - no longer - stirring occasionally and watching.
4. Using rubber gloves, lift muslin out of pan and tourniquet as much as possible. Stand collander in second pan, and squeeze out remaining soya milk from the muslin.

For your spring salads:-

TOFU MAYONNAISE

1/2lb tofu
1 cup olive oil
1/2 cup cider vinegar
2 cloves garlic
1 tblsp tahili
1/2 lemon (optional)
1 tsp honey
1 tsp mustard
1/2 tsp Vecon or other yeast extract
1 cup apple juice or vegetable juice
salt & pepper to taste

Liquidise all ingredients. Will keep in fridge for at least two weeks. Experiment with different proportions and additional ingredients.

A seringueiro (rubber tapper): "They thought they killed Chico Mendes. They didn't because he's alive in each seringueiro; in each worker who fights for a better society, to protect the environment and forest. Chico Mendes is alive in each of us."



(The substance left in the muslin after squeezing is called okara; this can be dried in the oven and used in cakes, rissoles, pastry, porridge or soups.)

5. Place soya milk back on heat and bring to the boil. Turn off heat and stir into a swirl. The pour vinegar slowly into the milk. Cover and leave for 2-3 minutes. By this time you should have a mixture of curds and whey. The whey should be clear/ cloudy but not milky, and the curds firm and white.

6. Line collander with second muslin and stand in empty pan. Then, using perforated spoon, gently ladle the curds into the muslin. Cover the tofu (curds) with the overlapping corners of the muslin. For firmer tofu, press with heavy lid or plate. After one or two hours, the whey will have drained out of the tofu, and it will be ready to eat.

7. Place tofu in cold water to keep, and change water every few days.

Tofu has been made from field beans - purple in colour! Could be worth experimenting with.

(Vegan Times, quarterly mag of vegan living and other green issues, can be ordered from Alpay Torgut, 25 Tabley Road, London N7 0NA. Subs: £2.40 for 4 issues)

and for a hot dish:-

BEAN CURD, CHINESE STYLE

4floc hoisin sauce
1tbs thin soy sauce
1tsp sesame oil if available
salt & pepper
1/2lb tofu, in 3/4" dice
1/4lb mushrooms
1 clove garlic, finely sliced
2 5p-sized slices of fresh ginger, finely sliced
4tbs vegetable oil
6oz bamboo shoots, chopped
3 tbs roasted unsalted peanuts
2 tbs finely sliced spring onions

Mix hoisin and soy sauces with sesame oil salt & pepper and 4floc of water.

Heat pan or wok over medium heat. Add half the oil and half the ginger and garlic. Stir for 5 seconds before adding the mushrooms. Stir-fry for 30 seconds before adding a pinch of salt.

Empty pan into a bowl and wipe clean.

Add remaining oil and then garlic and ginger. Stir for 5 seconds before adding bamboo shoots. Stir-fry for 30 seconds. Add hoisin sauce mixture and then tofu. Simmer gently for 5 minutes, stirring now and then.

Add mushrooms again with peanuts and heat through.

Serve with spring onions as garnish.

Two More Questions for The Green Party

THE GREEN PARTY has now embarked on a huge electioneering campaign electioneering, spanning the county and European elections, through which it hopes to establish itself as a permanent feature of Britain's political map.

There are 646 candidates standing in the May county elections, a number that vastly exceeded initial expectations: it had been assumed that local parties would be putting so much effort into the Euro-election (where every seat is being contested) that there would be few resources left for the local elections six weeks beforehand.

These two elections have as a backdrop a great upsurge of ecological awareness at home, along with advances for Green Parties in several West European countries. Particularly striking has been the progress of the French Greens and the persistence of Die Grunen, who continue to make gains in local elections despite ideological splits.

For the British Greens, handicapped as ever by an undemocratic electoral system, a full slate of candidates in mid-June, giving everyone in the U.K. the chance to vote Green, is a great achievement on its own. The financial effort in raising the £1,000 for every deposit - £78,000 in all - not to mention the funds needed for leaflets and other campaigning materials, is testimony to the commitment of party activists. It also raises an important question, however: *what if the total of around £300,000 invested in these elections only brings a string of lost deposits, a couple of percent in the final poll - earning a column inch or two in the Independent - and a mountain of debts for local parties?*

I remain optimistic enough to believe this won't happen, though I have strong doubts that the rise in Green awareness will translate itself into thousands of Green votes on 15th June. My own experience of canvassing for the county elections, and of holding meetings as a prospective Euro-candidate, makes me feel that the Green Party will attract increasing support from three groups of the electorate: the wider green movement, which in the past has voted for the traditional opposition parties; the highly politicised Left, who are deserting the reformist Labour Party and understand the urgency of the green message; and the almost completely apolitical section of the electorate who have no party loyalty, nor much interest in political debate.

These three groups are very small in electoral terms. A much larger group of

voters, who are in total sympathy with Green Party policies, remain unwilling to "waste their vote" as they see it by switching from Labour or the Democrats. This was by far the most depressing feature of canvassing in Oxford. It seems that ten years of Thatcherism has created a deep cynicism among progressive people, for whom elections have turned into an exercise in protesting against the Tories (through tactical voting) rather than voting for what they believe in. It remains to be seen whether they can be persuaded to go Green for the Euro-elections, which are regarded as irrelevant to national politics and consequently worth experimenting in.

Assuming that the Green Party performs tolerably well in both sets of elections, another question then arises: *will we merely be splitting further the opposition vote, in the run-up to the general election of 1991/2, and if it appears so, what response will the party make?*

In Oxfordshire, the Democrats and the Labour Party, who controlled the hung council up to 4th May, entered into an "arrangement" to keep the Tories from regaining power. A Labour activist I met told me that both parties were furious that, having made considerable sacrifices in order to reach an accommodation with each other, they now found the Green Party fielding 26 candidates in many of the marginal wards. Can we as a party honestly maintain our "plague on all your houses" approach from election to election without thinking about the huge advantages it brings to the Tories?

The county and European elections will doubtless provide a foretaste of the Russian Roulette that our electoral system has become. As greens, we have little or nothing to lose in terms of councillors or MEPs, but we cannot disclaim all sense of responsibility, especially if the balance of power hinges on our share of the vote.

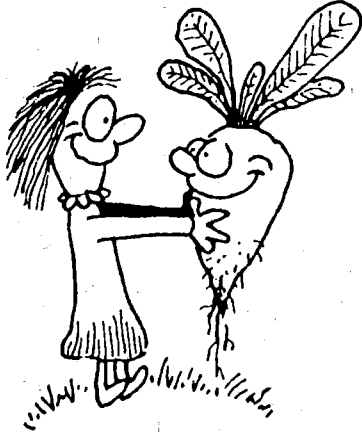
My own view is that each local party should draw up a list of minimum demands for any pact, which must include proportional representation (the Additional Member System) and the chance for Green Party candidates to have a clear run against the Conservatives in an appropriate number of seats. Some sort of decision will have to be made soon, if events are not to overtake us and create a consensus-free zone between Fundis and Realos.

TIM ANDREWES

►► more network next page ►►

MUCKY MAGIC BOOK...

THE NEW organic gardening series, "More Muck and Magic", on Channel 4 have brought out a booklet. For any actual or prospective organic gardeners who are interested, the booklet can be ordered - price £2 payable to Channel 4 - from Channel 4, PO Box 4000, London W3 6XJ.



...ARMCHAIR GARDENING

THINKING OF finally starting that vegetable patch? Here's some more books to inspire you, courtesy of Green Umbrella:

Successful Organic Gardening G.Hamilton (Dorling-Kindersley) £14.95 is well presented and helpful despite the glossy expense. Get the library to buy it for you. *Know and Grow Vegetables* P.J.Salter et al (O.U.P.) £3.50 & £3.95 in two volumes is not totally organic, but provides a comprehensible scientific account of gardening.

Month by Month Organic Gardening L.Hills (Thorsons) £3.99 is one of several booklets and pamphlets from the Henry Doubleday Research Association.

NETWORK and GREEN DIARY are compiled by GRAHAM HOOPER. Please send us news of your local groups, actions, successes etc

PASSING KINGS CROSS?

For the latest books and mags on ecology, anarchism, animal lib, gay and peace, pop into **Housmans**, 5 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DX, 01-837 4473 (we also do mail order)

RECYCLING REVOLUTION IN NEW YORK

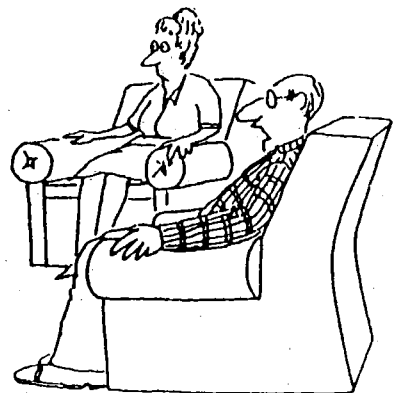
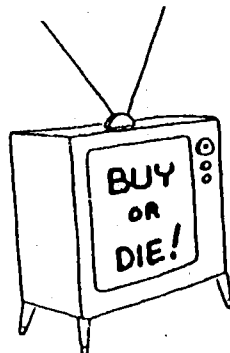
IT IS only last year that the issue of New York's annual production of 8 million tons of waste hit the British headlines. We enjoyed a compelling vision of a city drowning in its own garbage, rats stalking the streets, land fill sites full to overflowing, while barges of stinking, vermin infested rubbish sailed the seas in desperate search of somewhere to dump their unwholesome cargo. All this was most satisfactory for those British readers who enjoy nothing more than to mock and denigrate America, while retaining a smug sense of their own superiority.

How upsetting, therefore, that New York City Council has now approved a plan so bold and radical that it hard to imagine any city in Britain catching up with it, at least this century. The plan requires that 25% of the city's garbage be recycled over a five year period. All newspapers, magazines and cardboard must be separated and bundled, and bottles and cans put in a separate container. Non-cooperators will be fined, from \$25 for a first infraction by a single household, up to \$10,000 for a large apartment block guilty of persistent violations.

new facilities, designing and building new types of trucks, creating whole new capital and technical processes that never existed before". Five new recycling plants will be constructed, in addition to the city's existing can and bottle sorting centre in East Harlem. One new incinerator will be built, in addition to the existing three, despite objections from environmentalists and local residents on pollution grounds. But these, assures Mr Sexton, will be made more efficient and less polluting.

The city is also planning other programs. There will be special collections every January for Christmas trees, which will be chipped and used as a mulch for city gardens and parks. Leaves and grass cuttings will be collected for composting, and collection centres established for old car tyres and batteries.

After the bill becomes law in July, there will be a six month "education period" during which no fines will be given out; and then, less than a year since the stories broke our headlines, the most ambitious recycling project yet conceived will be in operation, spreading



"I figured they'd get around to it sooner or later"

"What we are doing is a cultural revolution, a social revolution" said Brendan Sexton, New York's Sanitation Commissioner, "we are changing the way property owners manage their property, the way householders manage their kitchens..."

Americans - not just New Yorkers, but Americans - for a long time have been affluent enough to waste what they felt like, but pressures on land use and environmental constraints mean it is getting harder and harder to find a place to throw it".

Already \$20 million has been allocated for the plan in the 1989 budget, and \$43 million for 1990. Mr Sexton explained how this will be spent. "We are building

from district to district as capacity increases.

It is hard to see Britain's moribund local government acting so swiftly and decisively, specially while rigidly constrained by a national government for whom the environment remains more a matter of public relations than of action. Certainly, we no longer have anything to feel smug about - the crisis will soon be upon us. New York has provided a model to be followed here, not only for the sake of our local environment, but also for the global environment whose resources are being needlessly pillaged to support our wasteful ways.

OLIVER TICKELL

NUCLEAR NEAR MISSES

ACCORDING TO a report in the Anti-Nuclear Network's Newsletter (Jan-Feb 89) two of the major recent disasters very nearly involved nuclear accidents. The Boeing 747 that crashed at Lockerbie in December missed the Magnox Reactor at Chapelcross by only a few miles. Also, the Armenian Earthquake was nearly responsible for another Chernobyl at the nuclear plant at Yerevan, which is said to be sited on fault lines. Apparently, the Russian government used the opportunity of the earthquake to arrest five members of the 11 strong independent Karabakh committee who are calling for the closure of the plant.

WEST PAPUA THREAT

INDONESIAN LOGGING interests, having destroyed the forests of Kalimantan and Sulawesi have now turned to West Papua (the western half of New Guinea). As much as 60% of the forests are being sought for logging concessions. One company involved in this that you can avoid is Scott (remember Scotties tissues etc?). It plans to replace the forest with Eucalyptus plantations. 15,000 tribal people will be affected and can expect no protection from the Indonesian regime in Jakarta.

You can write to P.E. Lippincott, Chief Executive Officer, Scott Paper Company, 1 Scott Plaza, Philadelphia PA 19113, USA.

CIA DIRTY TRICKS AGAIN?

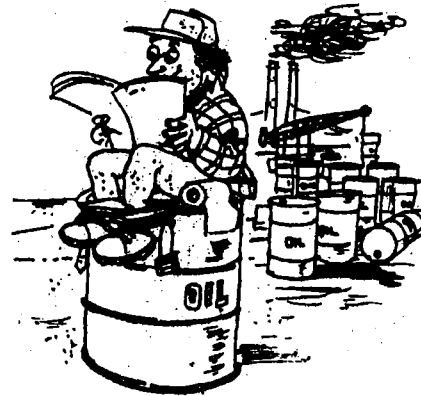
LIBYA HAS been invaded by American screwworm, the maggot of a fly that attacks cattle, sheep, goats, camels and humans. It used to decimate American cattle herds until a near total eradication program in 1959. Given the evidence that the U.S.A. has on several occasions sought to attack Cuba's animal herds with parasites, it is intriguing that Libya should be the first country in Africa to suffer the problem in recent years.

FAIR ELECTION?

THE U.S. has been telling everyone how wonderfully free El Salvador has become with the fascists of ARENA back in power. Now here are some facts: there are about 5m people in the country of which about 2.4m are eligible voters. Only 1.9m registered to vote and only 900,000 voted - i.e. less than 50% of eligible voters. ARENA got 508,845 votes which is 20% of eligible voters and 10% of the whole population. A mandate?

Meanwhile: a quote from a U.S. Republican Senator on Reagan/Bush policy towards Panama: "It's like setting your own hair alight and then trying to put it out with a hammer."

POOH-PEC?



IN THE midst of the Alaskan disaster it is nice to be able to report on projects that don't turn oil into sewage but rather sewage into oil. Nova Scotia in Canada is to end 240 years of using Halifax harbour as a toilet bowl by spending US\$8.3m on an oil-from-sewage treatment plant.

The process involves draining and drying the sewage and heating it to 450 degrees C to yield gas and ash. The gas can then be condensed to provide the oil with the ash burnt to provide energy for the drying process. It's estimated that nearly 3/4 of Canada's 500,000 tonne annual sewage production could be turned into 700,000 barrels of oil - which would be worth about US\$17m at current prices.

Here in the dis-UK, 83% of us are connected to sewage treatment plants, plenty of which are big enough to make conversion to oil viable. Presently, half of the 900,000 tonnes (dry weight) of sewage we produce a year is spread on farmland, a fifth goes in landfill and 30% is dumped at sea. Sewage to oil conversion would seem a nice little earner for water authorities. Pity then about privatisation, with all that implies for the long-term capital investment needed for such projects. On the other hand, perhaps TTWASBOEAW (the ten water and sewage businesses of England and Wales) could offer special share incentives to those who produce the most raw material for an oil conversion plant - a brown handshake perhaps...

GREENHOUSE FACTS

SINCE MRS Thatcher has seen fit to learn something about global warming, here, in the spirit of these new governmentally approved green times, is a list of some of the positive feedback factors involved once the greenhouse gases (CO₂, methane the CFCs etc) have trapped heat in the atmosphere:

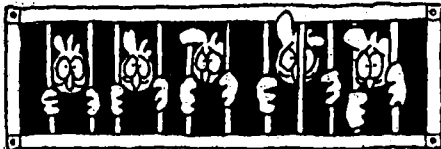
- * as the white polar icecaps retreat so the earth's surface becomes less reflective, absorbing more of the sun's heat.
- * as the seas heat up, their ability to absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere is impaired.
- * as the seas heat up, they expand (by 10cm so far this century) increasing the area of dark blue heat-absorbing surface.
- * a hotter earth may increase the loss of forest and its ability to absorb CO₂ through climate change and massive fires which would pump CO₂ into the air.
- * about 30% of the world's CO₂ is currently locked into frozen arctic tundra, which would release it as it thaws.
- * the world's population will double to 10bn by sometime in the next century creating vastly increased demand for fuel (e.g. CO₂ producing fossil fuels) and food (the production of rice, beef and wool all creates methane), and the need for the land currently occupied by CO₂ absorbing, climate regulating forests.

The University of East Anglia climatic research unit has calculated that by about 2040 world sea levels will rise by between 20-50cm and temperatures by 1-4 degrees centigrade. The problem is

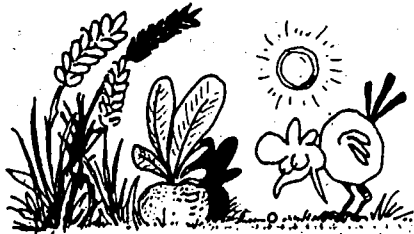
that this is merely (informed) guesswork. No one can predict the how the forces of positive and negative feedback are going to interact across latitudes; in addition it is not expected that there'll be a gradual change in climate - on the contrary, we can expect a greater frequency of serious weather problems like storms and droughts. Whilst we might survive one disastrous harvest, can we survive two in succession?

At the meeting, Thatcher surrounded herself predominantly with a comforting coterie of industrialists, like that well-known green extremist Walter Marshall, and industry sponsored environmentalists. But at least she appears finally to realise that doing nothing is no longer an option. Unfortunately, there is still a fixation on finding conclusive evidence before curtailing a potentially hazardous activity, rather than restricting it until it is seen to be safe. Pathetic Parkinson attempted to con the media into believing the meeting endorsed nuclear power as the "safe" energy of the future - later reports discredited this line, although Cecil's antics show there are still powerful pressures within the Cabinet in favour of nuclear power: apparently, Thatcher said people's attitudes to nuclear power will have to change! Room 101 here we come...

But for all the glimmers of awareness, when groups like FoE and Greenpeace are specifically excluded from such a meeting you have to wonder if this green concern is really any more than pathetic, monarchical posturing.



ANIMAL NEWS



ANIMAL EVENTS

MAY 13: Living Without Cruelty Concert at the Esplanade, Southend. Details from Southend Animal Aid, PO Box 21, Southend, Essex, or tel. 0702 353888.

MAY 13: Animal Aid Youth Day at the YMCA, East Street, Leicester. Organised by Leicester Animal Aid. Tel: 0533 600402.

MAY 20: Combined Animal Charities Spring Fair. United Reformed Church, Widmore Road, Bromley, Kent. Details: 01.467 7379.

MAY 28: Hartlepool Animals Fair: Cleveland Action for Animals. Music, theatre, puppeteers, balloons, etc. Details: 0429 277035.

JUN 16-18: The Third Living Without Cruelty Exhibition at Kensington Town Hall. Contact Animal Aid, 7 Castle St, Tonbridge TN9 1BH.

JUN 17: National Anti-Angling Day organised by the CAA Box 130, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5NR.

ANGLING FOR A BAN

THIS YEAR'S National Anti-Angling Day, organised jointly by the Campaign for the Abolition of Angling and the HSA, will take place on Saturday June 17th, the day after the coarse fishing season starts. This year's theme is the threat posed to all wildlife by discarded fishing tackle. Volunteers needed as local media contacts on 17th June. Send sae for a NAAD information sheet to CAA, Dept N, PO Box 130, Sevenoaks, Kent TN14 5NR.

LEST WE FORGET...

SOME ANIMAL rights prisoners have been moved: here is the latest information on their recent addresses. Geoffrey Sheppard (V50730) is now at HM Prison Wayland, Griston, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 6RL. Gari Allen (W62615) is at HM Prison Morton Hall, Swindon, Lincs LN6 9PS. We have received two other addresses for prisoners: Roger Yates R96097, HM Prison, Armley, Leeds, West Yorks LS12 2TJ; Paul Scarse MR0939, HM Prison, Ford, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 0BX.

The Bristol bomb revisited

NOW THAT THE furore over the Bristol University explosion has died down a little, it is possible to step back and look more dispassionately at the implications of that puzzling event. Many animal rights campaigners were surprised by it, mainly because it didn't fit in with certain known patterns of recent direct action campaigns - for example, the one which has targeted the big department stores selling furs. In addition, the group which is supposed to have claimed responsibility - the Animal Abused Society - may have been named for the one occasion, and no statement was issued to shed light on its existence. Much more predictable were the reactions, not only of the politicians and their media lackeys, but also of the usual self-appointed few who claim to represent the animal rights movement in all its ragged diversity. The inelegant haste by which they rushed to distance themselves, not just from this event, but from direct action as a whole, suggested that there was more at stake here than initially appeared.

For example, if there is one thing our experience has taught us it is the necessity for caution, so as not to prejudge an issue before the facts are fully known. But at recent events (e.g. the Dingles fire at Plymouth) animal rights "leaders" were accusing the ALF before the police themselves has stated any conclusions. Wild utterances also followed the Bristol bomb: hardly had the dust settled before Animal Aid were announcing that the explosion had "ruined years of peaceful work" - implying an achievement so fragile that one event had blown it away! This sort of nonsense is a positive inducement for a lunatic with a grudge to plant a bomb, or (a more likely scenario) for a Special Branch dirty tricks squad to arrange such an "incident" to discredit the movement, or to frame particular individuals. The police have done this sort of thing in the past, and will do so again - to the extent of committing murder if necessary.

Consistent in all these reactions has been the kind of language used: in a Guardian letter, one Animal Aid member attacked "the handful of idiots who prefer bombs to rational argument" - while disposing of "rational argument" in favour of mere abuse ("lunatic extremists", "idiots", "nutcases"). Similar phrases were used in Animal Aid's mag Outrage ("half-witted pseudo-terrorists") and in a recent CAW statement ("stupid and mindless act of terrorism"). But when certain words ("violence", "terrorism") are simply flung around like this, "rational argument" becomes impossible, and the key problem here - the vexed question of campaigning tactics - is never even discussed. The

CAW reaction is more understandable, as this Bristol group became the target of police "Investigation" i.e. the usual harassment. But all these groups, particularly the national societies, could actually approach the matter in a different way: they could dissociate themselves from direct action (if that is their policy) while using the publicity to turn the spotlight onto the horrors of animal abuse. As it is, the various statements suggest, not so much political ineptitude, as a deeply felt, very personal anger.

Can we heal the rift?

What are we to make of this? One obvious explanation is that direct action (of any kind) runs counter to the kind of policies that the national societies are pursuing, and the kind of movement they wish to create. In this respect the campaigns of autonomous groups, indeed their very "autonomy", create a problem, because they remain outside the control of the big societies, a possible source of future conflict. But the danger here is that the national societies end up performing the function within society of a "loyal opposition", cultivated by the state in order to control and contain protest, absorb genuine unrest, and isolate "extremists" - thus monopolising the framework within which dissent is articulated. Events like the Bristol bomb become opportunities, not to expose animal abuse, but to proclaim the "respectability" of certain organisations, and gain credibility with those who shape public opinion.

This policy is often justified in terms of the growing "maturation" of the animal rights movement. The reasoning is as follows: that as the movement matures politically it needs to move away from "direct action", which has become an impediment to its progress. This theory is a convenient one, for it enables groups to praise earlier actions, and make use of them in various ways, while condemning present activity. But this also forgets history: that direct action was taken up as a response to the failure of earlier campaigning, which has few results to show for over a century of "peaceful persuasion". To go "beyond" direct action could well mean a return to the unhappy situation that existed before, repeating the same old mistakes. Certainly the current policies of the nationals give little indication of growing "maturity". There is far too much emphasis on consumer campaigns, on "cruelty-free living", even though the limitations of "lifestyle politics" have been exposed so often; and campaigns that concentrate on



THE FUR TRADE

WHILST THE fur Trade is certainly under pressure at the moment, anti-fur groups such as Lynx are over-stretched and under-funded. Lynx is a young organisation, dating from 1985, and the only group here dedicated to the protection of fur-bearing animals, both in the wild and in captivity. Lynx is currently undertaking an ambitious mass information programme which will include the making of a vivid documentary film, and an education pack. Lynx needs support: please contact PO Box 509, Dunmow, Essex CM6 1UH.

Anti-fur campaigns will continue throughout the year, culminating in a National Anti-Fur Day on November 11th.

STUDENTS: YOUR RIGHT TO REFUSE

ONE OF the most important and necessary tasks facing anti-vivisection campaigners is to remove compulsory dissection and vivisection from student education. Last year 50 students from 7 countries were funded by the European Commission to meet in Holland at a 3-day conference to discuss the use of animals in education.

Students throughout Europe may face certain academic penalties if they opt out of animal experimentation. A Dutch student group have won the right for all Dutch students to opt out of animal research on ethical grounds without being penalised (though they still have to go through a gruelling interview first). Following the conference a British student group was formed, by the name of NICHE (Network of Individuals and Campaigns for Humane Education). NICHE hosted the 2nd International Conference on Animal Use in Education which took place in Edinburgh on 1st-5th April. NICHE can be contacted via Georgia Mason, Darwin College, Silver Street, Cambridge.

On the same issue, the NUS launched its campaign; Animals in Education - Your Right to Refuse, at a press conference in London on Monday March 13th. The NUS campaign will inform students about dissection and vivisection in British universities and of their right to refuse to participate if this forms part of their course. The NUS promises students full backing under the Violence-Free Science Charter which it has adopted: contact the NUS for an information pack, at Nelson Mandela House, 461 Holloway Road, London N7 6LJ.

►► (e.g. on the ozone layer, the plight of the rainforests, acid rain) it is no longer necessary to shout our message from the rooftops - Thatcher and Kinnock can do that for us! But there is no voice yet for animal rights, nothing yet has really moved; until it does it remains a sad fact of life that it often takes a bomb to seize public attention, to wake people up.

BARRY MAYCOCK

"soft" issues (e.g. cosmetics testing) are too cautious to have much impact.

The weaknesses of these campaigns stem from a very narrow perspective, made even narrower by the rejection of direct action and the groups (often the most energetic and committed) from which it springs. It is a stance which colludes with the policies of the state, with its attempt to isolate the ALF and deprive it of the "oxygen of publicity" by suppressing the Supporters Group - so that ALF actions appear to spring out of desperation and blind fanaticism, rather than carefully thought out campaigns. The gulf that separates the national societies and so many passionate activists will continue to provoke the very actions that are so disliked, as long as the latter are denied support and legitimacy, and deprived of any real voice - except the one provided by direct action.

The political "maturation" process consists of reaching out to them: of communication, not rejection. It means building up the movement in a solid and lasting way - beginning perhaps with the public meeting at which the local group is formed, with leafleting and canvassing, with an intelligent and continuing input into the political life of the community. It means raising the profile of the whole issue, especially on a local level, with campaigns against specific targets close to home, in order to touch people's lives directly. Within such campaigns direct action will have an honourable place - it doesn't have to be synonymous with bombs! It can mean pickets and occupations, blockades, disruptive tactics of every kind. The momentum of such a

movement, however, is actually impeded by the arrival of the BUAV bus, or by an obligation to take part in these ever-increasing "national days of action" throughout the year.

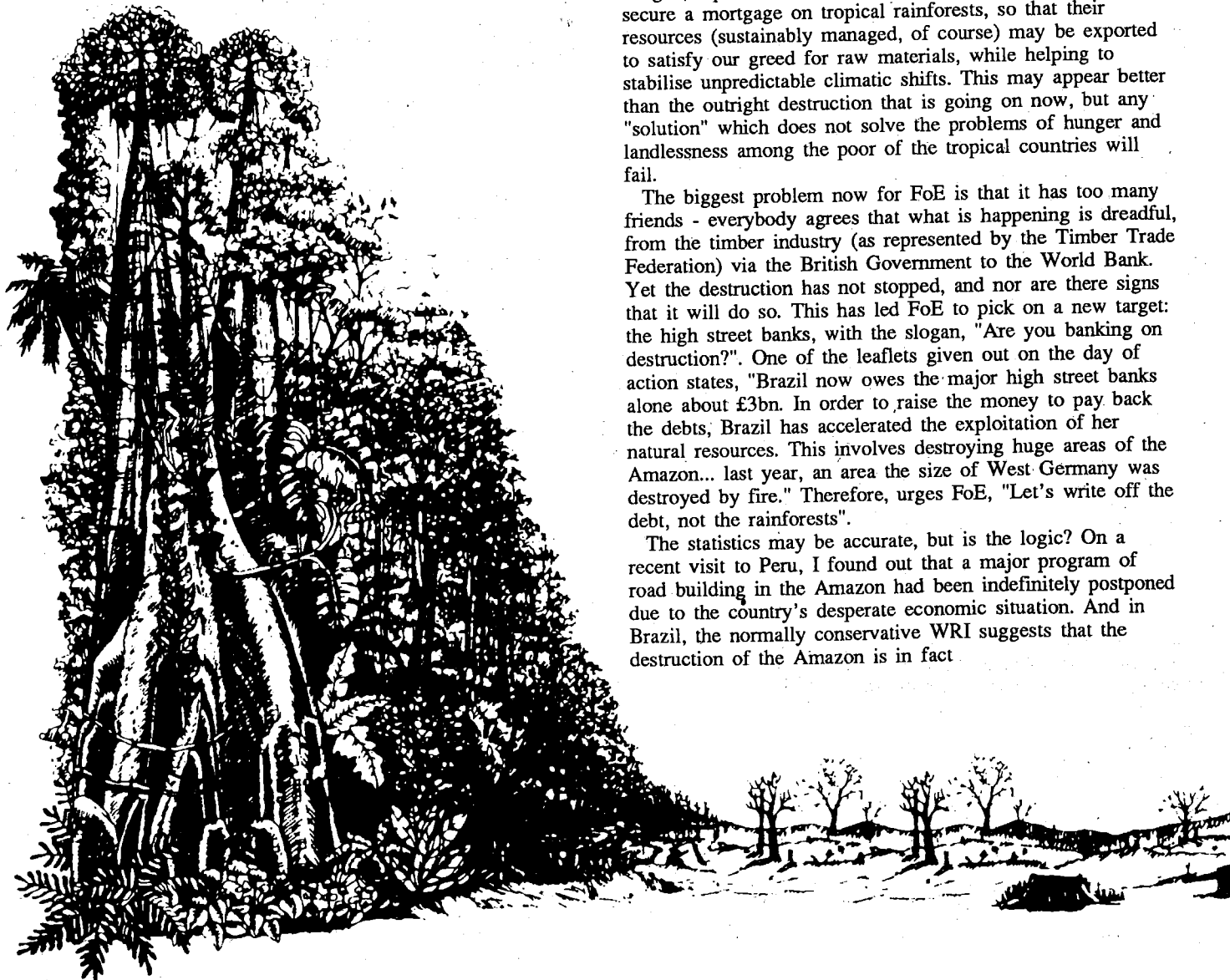
Compassion - violence

The movement needs a really big push, because so far there has been no breakthrough politically on the issue of animal rights - there are too many vested interests, too much power and money involved. But there is also a deeper reason for this: animal abuse is like a guilty secret haunting the edges of our daily lives, the knowledge of which is unbearable to us because it exposes the hypocrisy deep within a "compassionate" society, the cruelty at its very core. (A few other issues are taboo in a similar way - e.g. child abuse).

It is worth noting that throughout the media reports of the Bristol explosion, animal liberationists were portrayed either as misanthropic sentimentalist, or misty-eyed fantasists dreaming of a vegan future, or looking back to a non-existent "golden age". But the exact opposite is true: animal liberationists are realists in the truest sense, they have uncovered an animal "holocaust" at the heart of our by it that they cannot forget, nor can they turn away, nor can they ever rest until they have acted, in however small a way, to lessen the weight of that terrible suffering. No wonder there is so much frustration: a whole range of green issues are being taken up by politicians, and on so many of them

The destruction of the Amazon rainforest, along with the wiping out of its indigenous peoples is at last becoming an international political issue. OLIVER TICKELL assesses the state of the campaign, while below we include the summary of a report to the World Bank that demonstrates the economic absurdity of the Brazilian government's agricultural policies in the Amazon.

Time for rainforest action



ON SATURDAY 22 of April, FoE groups around the country braved a cold day and took to the streets to protest at the continuing destruction of tropical rainforests. Since the first such "day of action" at the same time last year, there has been an overwhelming change in public consciousness about the destruction of this rich, diverse and fragile biome. The views from space of the burning Amazon have captured the world's imagination beyond the power of any statistics.

The change has also extended to political leaders, the World Bank, the regional development banks, and national aid agencies - who must share much of the blame for past and continuing destruction. Grand projects are now afoot to save tropical forests, or at least manage the resource non-destructively, such as the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP, supported by Britain's Overseas Development Administration) and the idea, floated by the World Resources Institute (WRI) in Washington DC, of an International Environmental Facility (IEF), to provide funding for "environmentally sound" development projects.

So can we at last see an end to the rainforest holocaust? Probably not. Radical environmental groups find much to criticise in the approach embodied within the TFAP and IEF initiatives, which remain solutions imposed from outside, geared to solving, not the problems of the inhabitants of rainforest countries, but the problems of the industrialised world. Environmental destruction and rising world populations will unavoidably bring about shortages of critical resources, and the global warming, caused by the greenhouse effect, is a growing cause of concern. These initiatives, it is alleged, represent an effort by the industrialised world to secure a mortgage on tropical rainforests, so that their resources (sustainably managed, of course) may be exported to satisfy our greed for raw materials, while helping to stabilise unpredictable climatic shifts. This may appear better than the outright destruction that is going on now, but any "solution" which does not solve the problems of hunger and landlessness among the poor of the tropical countries will fail.

The biggest problem now for FoE is that it has too many friends - everybody agrees that what is happening is dreadful, from the timber industry (as represented by the Timber Trade Federation) via the British Government to the World Bank. Yet the destruction has not stopped, and nor are there signs that it will do so. This has led FoE to pick on a new target: the high street banks, with the slogan, "Are you banking on destruction?". One of the leaflets given out on the day of action states, "Brazil now owes the major high street banks alone about £3bn. In order to raise the money to pay back the debts, Brazil has accelerated the exploitation of her natural resources. This involves destroying huge areas of the Amazon... last year, an area the size of West Germany was destroyed by fire." Therefore, urges FoE, "Let's write off the debt, not the rainforests".

The statistics may be accurate, but is the logic? On a recent visit to Peru, I found out that a major program of road building in the Amazon had been indefinitely postponed due to the country's desperate economic situation. And in Brazil, the normally conservative WRI suggests that the destruction of the Amazon is in fact

enormously expensive, and that the tax concessions enjoyed by ranchers and other "developers" represent an enormous outflow of central government funds, which yield virtually nothing in national production - the payoff is in the profits of land speculators (see **Brazil's Agromadness** on this page).

Much of Brazil's foreign debt has been accumulated by mega-development projects in the Amazon (road building, hydropower, the Grande Carajas project, plantations, ranching), which have failed to pay their costs - which is why Brazil is in its present economic crisis. While the destruction to date certainly has been financed from abroad, there is no evidence that writing off Brazil's debt would lead to a slowdown in forest destruction - on the contrary, it could well liberate capital, formerly committed to debt service, to finance further destruction.

Meanwhile, the official view in Brazil is that more development is needed, and more finance, to help the country out of its problems. In other words, that the problems have arisen, not from the nature of Brazil's development path, but because there is not enough of it - the solution, therefore, is yet more of the same. This view is finding less and less sympathy among Brazil's financiers. Last month the World Bank turned down a \$500m loan which would both have financed the construction of high dams in the Amazon, flooding an area of forest the size of Switzerland, and bailed out their ailing nuclear power program into the bargain. The high street banks are unlikely to sink more money where the World Bank dares not tread.

The most important thing for the future of the Amazon is political change within Brazil - a turning away from the policies that leave three quarters of the Brazilian people malnourished while their country is the world's largest exporter of soyabeans for cattle feed; policies that help the already rich make fortunes on land speculation while the majority remain landless, and whereby a challenge, such as that of rubber tapper Chico Mendes, to the authority of a local strongman is met with assassination. Nothing infuriates Brazil's President, Jose Sarney, more than talk of "debt for nature" swaps. In a meeting with US President George Bush, Sarney reportedly turned down a major debt for nature swap proposal with extraordinary vehemence. His government seeks to portray the destruction of the Amazon as the supreme expression of national development, and conservationists as outsiders, meddling in the affairs of a sovereign state to obstruct its progress.

In this atmosphere, it is hard to see what progress can be made. But what we can all do is to lessen our hunger for those resources whose production involves or results in rainforest destruction - like "jungleburger" beef, beef fattened on Brazilian soyabeans, pigs fattened on Thai cassava, Brazilian orange juice (which dominates the world market), tropical hardwoods (unless sustainably produced), exotic fruits such as pineapples and bananas, tropical oils such as coconut oil and palm oil, other plantation products like coffee and chocolate... the list is a long one, but this only highlights the depth of our own involvement. To place the blame on the high street banks is to miss the point. The reality is much harder.



Brazil's Agromadness

IN 1988 BRAZIL lost an area of tropical forest larger than the size of Switzerland. Economist Hans Binswanger of the World Bank has recently examined the economic rationale behind the clearing of forest for ranching - one of the causes of deforestation - and comes to the clear conclusion that Brazil is losing vast sums of money in agricultural subsidies to settlers and ranchers for farming that can never be profitable on the unsuitable soil of Amazonia. Cattle ranching was given over US\$1bn between 1975 and 1985.

So, what have been the economic pressures towards deforestation? Firstly, Brazil's chronic inflation means that cash savings are worthless and so people invest in land as a better security. This pushes up land prices (by nearly 1000% in 1988), making land investment even more popular, leading to even more destruction.

Because agriculture is virtually exempt from tax, land has become a tax haven for Brazilian businesses who misdeclare business income as farm income, often without even growing anything on good farmland. These people buy out, or terrorise out, local farmers who are then forced to squat land or clear new rainforest.

Up to 75% of the cash for approved agricultural schemes is supplied by government tax credits. Ranching is an approved activity (it also gets 20% of rural credit), so what would otherwise be both an ecologically and economically insupportable activity is transformed into a profit-making business to supply the meateaters of the North; the destruction of the Amazon by rich Brazilian landowners is being supported by the taxes of Brazil's poor.

If you own virgin forest or unimproved land then the government does tax you, yet tax breaks of up to 90% are offered for land that is farmed. Consequently, settlers and squatters of public land are actually being encouraged to cut down forest merely to escape tax. Moreover, squatters get usage rights and later ownership of their land provided they have used the land "effectively" for a year (i.e. cleared it of forest). A squatter can claim up to 3000 hectares and much more in the name of relatives.

Of course, there are laws regarding forest protection, but the Amazon is so thinly policed (one man is apparently supposed to be covering an area the size of France) that it is easy to avoid, bribe or intimidate government officers. And it is big businesses (did you know that Volkswagon is into ranching?) particularly who are to blame since they can afford to build private roads into the jungle off the main highways where the landless labourers and squatters live. Although the government is beginning to reduce some of the subsidies, the landowners are strongly resisting any change.

The ecological destruction of the Amazon by ranching is bizarre in that there is not even the capitalist short-term argument that it makes sense economically: it doesn't. It is only those subsidies that keep it going. Clearly therefore, the reasons for not phasing out agricultural subsidies, removing incentives for clearing forest and supporting the work of forest protection officers are political. As with the problem of land and wealth mis-distribution throughout Brazil, the present government cannot afford to offend its paymasters and supporters among landowners, big business and the military. The IMF, the World Bank and international opinion can slow the pace of destruction, but it is only when a government committed to the betterment of the mass of Brazilians is elected that we can really be hopeful again.

Hans Binswanger *Fiscal & Legal Incentives with Environmental Effects on the Brazilian Amazon* Discussion Paper 69, World Bank.

At the National Angry Women's Conference in March the New Age came in for discussion. One participant, feminist, writer and artist MONICA SJOO now offers a knowledgeable perspective on the New Age and the patriarchal and reactionary tendencies she has experienced within it. She is the author, together with American poet Barbara Mor, of *The Great Cosmic Mother (the Ancient Religion), Rediscovering the Religion of the Earth*, republished by Harpers & Row (USA) in 1987.

I GOT INVOLVED with the New Age movement because of the sudden and tragic death of my 15 year-old son in August 1985 and then the drawnout illness and death from virulent cancer of my eldest son; a suffering that I lived through with him. After my young son's death, and the experiences I went through psychically with him in his journeying to the Otherworld realms, there were many things that I desperately needed to find out and to understand about the afterlife, about near-death experiences and lucid dreams so as to keep at all sane... and my ill son was in great need of healing at all levels. So I read a great deal on parapsychology and got involved in spiritualism as well as joining meditation and healing circles with my son.

We received a great deal of support and kindness and healing from both women and men. Through the alternative Bristol Cancer Help Centre my son got involved in some therapies - but then made the fatal mistake of seeking out some Rebirthers who he imagined would be able to help him. However, they are among the most dangerous as well as reactionary, irresponsible and mercenary of the New Age therapies (at the time, we were unaware of this). I watched my son getting more and more ill again, through the weekly sessions with the rebirthers, until he relapsed, never to recover again. It might be that he would have relapsed anyway, but they sure helped speed up the process.

Denying women's spirituality

I had in the meantime gradually started to feel more and more unease over the patriarchal and politically reactionary views so prevalent in the New Age movement. It is important to remember that no way had I come into all this with a negative or critical mind: on the contrary, I had been at my weakest, barely wanting to live, experiencing a descent into the Underworld where I was stripped to the bone; grasping at anything that would help my son and I. I was even willing to read innumerable New Age books that used entirely patriarchal terminology of man-he, mankind-he etc. It gave me the eerie feeling that the women's movement, that I had been an active part of since its beginnings in 1969, just had never been; that feminists had simply not been heard; and that our struggle had just come and gone without trace. I had to pinch myself many times.

It became obvious to me that the so-called New Age movement had emerged just at a time when women are rising worldwide - rediscovering our own powers and spirituality: the Goddess reawakening within us - and that it is yet another attempt by (heterosexual and white) men to free ourselves. New Age men take it upon themselves to co-opt women's energies; to divert us from the struggle



to define for both women and men what are "feminine" and "masculine" energies, and are convincing women that all we need is a male guru; whether therapist, Bhagwan or Shaman. I found, to my increasing anger, that in New Age gatherings it is just as intimidating for a feminist to stand up and confront the patriarchal attitudes and language and imagery used by these much adored gurus as it had been in the left-wing movements of the 60s: I had a strong sense of having seen all this before.

On the whole, New Age ideologies are developed by white, privileged and heterosexual males, who are perfectly comfortable speaking of "spirituality" divorced from economic and social realities. As an active feminist, concerned with the re-emergence of women's spirituality,



The Goddess and the New Age

I was bound to react strongly sooner or later against the patrilineal emphasis of the New Age: its denigrating of the Goddess to some kind of Jungian "archetype" - just a figment of the human imagination; or to a passive Earth Mother who awaits sexual embrace and fertilisation from a masterful Sky Father - defined as the true parent and creator of life.

The patriarchal godfather is, in contrast to the Earth Mother, an impossible abstraction that is not within us or in Nature. "He" is - as Sir George Trevelyan, an upper-class New Age guru says - a "Divine architect" that somehow "designs" the world and gives "life" to Creation and the Earth, that is seen as female and, according to this logic, "passive". She is in no way recognised as being a self-creating, autonomous and self-regulating ancient all-powerful

Picture from the '88 Lunar Calendar. Contact Luna Press, Box 511, Kenmore Station, Boston, MA 02215 USA

Mother. However, the world *is* born not made; it *is* a birth process; she *is* the Matrix.

Behind all the talk in the New Age about healing the Earth is the arrogant assumption that the human (male?) mind is the self-aware consciousness of the Earth and that without it She is passive, unaware and dormant. There is no recognition that it is because She is alive and conscious that we are alive and conscious; we are of Her essence and intelligence. An example of this kind of thinking is Peter Russell's book, *The Awakening Earth - the Global Brain* (1982), which is very influential in the New Age movement. It assumes that spirit and consciousness are not a property of the earth itself but are somehow imbued into Earth/Gaia from a male transcendent Spirit Mind - and this despite advanced physicists telling us that matter (Mater/Mother) is pure dancing and vibrating energy.

Fascistic fraternities?

What I find most worrying is that some of the thinking of the New Age connects back to some very reactionary and pro-fascist religious views via the Theosophists and the medium Alice Bailey: writing in the 1930s of secret and elite "Masters" who, through hidden/occult means, could somehow control world events and human minds, and who were trying to bring about an Aryan "super-race" on this earth. Such technological developments as nuclear power, space exploration and even The Bomb were welcomed by the Master speaking through Alice Bailey (who herself was obsessed with the imagery of Light and Fire). She has, through the Findhorn community - or "light centre" - in Scotland, become a prophet of the movement.

Spiritualists speak of the "Brotherhood of Man", and there are groups such as the White Brotherhood of Light. Personally, this gives me the creeps, considering that presently this patriarchal world is run by unholy fraternities of militarists, bureaucrats, priests and scientists. Governments, the police force, and big business are ruled by secret and separatist men's organisations like the Freemasons and men-only clubs - an important book to read about this is *Men Only - an investigation into men's organisations* by Barbara Rogers (Pandora, 1988). The brotherhoods have always denied, excluded and fought women's sexual, creative and psychic powers and utterly envy women as the real creators of life. Catholicism, with its all-male priesthood and women-hating celibate monks, went as far as persecuting and murdering millions of women during the three centuries of "witch hunts" or "burning times" in Europe; they were supported by all the "great" male thinkers of that era. The Inquisition and the Nazi SS were both closely-knit brotherhoods...

In New Age thinking there is great emphasis on a supposed cosmic struggle between the forces of Darkness and the forces of Light, in which New Agers are to fight diligently for the latter, like something straight out of Tolkien. In his book, *The Lord of the Rings*, darkness is unquestionably identified as "evil" and to be defeated; yet again, the Mother Dragon is to be slain; male scientists obsessively seek to (sexually) "penetrate" into the innermost dark (womb) secrets of Nature - into Her very cells, atoms and genes. Brian Easlea, a former physicist, has spent many years attempting to expose rape-centred sexual language used by scientists in his very important books *Science and Sexual Oppression - Patriarchy's confrontation with women and nature* (Wiedenfeld & Nicholson, London 1981) and *Fathering the Unthinkable - masculinity, scientists and the nuclear arms race* (Pluto Press, 1983).

People involved in godfather and Sun/son religious thinking - as is most of the New Age movement - can distance themselves quite comfortably from actual economic and political realities, and tend to adopt a kind of spiritual

yuppiedom or even Thatcherism. They collude in the illusion, fostered in patriarchies, that "spirituality" has nothing to do with life on earth as it unfolds, because to them "Spirit" is disembodied, pure, "uncontaminated by Matter", never born of the Mother, and always male. They believe in individualism and the rightness of money and class. They adopt ancient Hindu ideas of Karma developed originally by the upperclass Brahmins in India to justify the caste system by which they enslaved the dark-skinned Goddess-worshipping Dravidian peoples.

It is very common in New Age therapies to talk of "money" as just an energy that one might or one might not like to attract to oneself. And if someone suffers abuse and oppression, it is only because that person has a "victim consciousness"; never mind that we all live in patriarchal and racist societies. With incredible smugness and cynicism, New Age white Americans, who live in the world's most powerful and exploitative nation, say that people dying in the Third World from hunger and disease, chose to do so because this is the lesson they needed to learn in this life. According to this "logic", a black child in detention in South Africa created the reality of Apartheid, and women living in patriarchal societies choose to be raped, physically abused and oppressed.

The Rebirthers even say that if one becomes ill or dies then this is a "sin against God". It was this kind of guilt-tripping that was not at all helpful for my son, ill with cancer. It implies one chooses to die from cancer ...and this in a polluted and carcinogenic world where it is a miracle that anyone is still healthy at all. It implicitly denies the Mother's natural cycles of birth, death and rebirth through Her.

A better way

It is essential, if we want to survive, that we tune into Earth's real being, and that we collectively meditate on, and visualise, the Mother Goddess and call on Her benevolent powers. We also have to face that She might just explode and erupt in utter rage, in unimaginable catastrophes, to sweep us off the surface of Her body as so many unwelcome and exploitative parasites that have outlived our time. She is being suffocated by "manmade" (the right word here) pollution and will have had enough. Women do not generally feel comfortable with abstract discussions about the death of nature; we feel her pain and grief in our bellies and wombs. Women were anciently the Shaman guardians of the sacred places of the Earth. We dream Her being.

The religion of the Ancient Mother is radical and revolutionary, as it calls for the freeing of all the oppressed - we are all Her children; the freeing of Earth and all Her creatures from their present bondage to patriarchal unrealities. Patriarchy is anti-revolutionary and is set upon turning the Earth into a wasteland. And, considering the obsession with "light" - at any cost it seems - one might be forgiven for thinking that New Agers would welcome even the eternal daylight of an irradiated earth. Yet is in the dark womb that life is born; in the dark soil that the seed germinates; it is in the dark night we dream lucid dreams when the ancestors and spirits speak with us and take us to their realms. New Agers seem to want to escape into an eternal Light-existence divorced from the Dark Earth and Womb, and desire "physical immortality" instead of being magically and ecstatically recycled by the Immortal Cosmic Moon Mother who says: "As I dying live; so you dying will live again".



What have *Seeing Green* by Jonathon Porritt, *The Coming of the Greens* by Porritt & Winner and *Green Politics* by Charlene Spretnak & Fritjof Capra got in common? Writing from an anarchist perspective, BRIAN MORRIS teases out the important common threads that run through them, and how this is reflected politically.

picking the threads in green thinking

IT IS AN occupational hazard among intellectuals, regardless of their politics, to lose touch with the realities of everyday life. Intellectuals are also prone to look upon themselves as "originals"; to assume, or kid themselves, that their own ideas are new - often expounding them prophetic fervour. Hegel, Marx and Freud were all intellectuals and, in a modest way, so too are those two doyens of the green movement, Fritjof Capra and Jonathon Porritt. In their recent accounts of green politics, both Capra and Porritt write about holistic philosophy, ecology, participatory democracy, decentralised politics, feminism and anti-militarism as if these were all something new.

The Green Party, we are led to believe, has introduced us to "a new vision of reality", and an entirely new dimension to politics. As an "anti-party" (whatever that is) it seeks to be the "political voice" for all the various citizens movements which have recently emerged - feminism, peace and anti-nuclear protest, environmentalism, animal rights and the development movement. The Green Party is to be the "conduit" between these movements and the state.

The party calls for an ecologically sustainable, decentralised and equitable economic system - a co-operative world order. The vision is commendable and all three texts are readable, engaging, comprehensive and well worth reading; together they provide us with a manifesto for green politics. There are however some serious limitations to the kind of viewpoint that porritt, Capra and Spretnak seek to propagate.

Recycling

They suffer, like other members of the green movement, from a kind of myopia; seeming to imply that until dear old Schumacher arrived on the scene nobody had ever discussed the social and ecological costs of industrial capitalism. That Murray Bookchin was reporting in detail on the environmental and health costs of pesticides, food additives, chemicalised agriculture, urbanisation and nuclear energy in

the early 1960s, and that anarchist writers from Proudhon onwards have been critical of large-scale industry seems largely to have gone unnoticed by greens.

Critiques of the mechanistic philosophy of the Enlightenment, along with its dualistic metaphysics, are of course nothing new, predating even Proudhon. Capra's suggestion that "holistic" philosophy is a "new paradigm" indicates a woeful ignorance of the Western intellectual tradition which, ever since Darwin and Hegel, has been in the process of dispensing with the mechanistic paradigm. A "new dialogue" with nature emerged in the discoveries of evolutionary biology and thermodynamics in the 19th century, and was given voice in the writings of Dewey, Smuts, Whitehead and Mead more than 50 years ago. Indeed process philosophy and "holism" is implicit, not only in the work of Reclus, Kropotkin and the early naturalists, but also in the work of Humboldt - whose pioneering study *Cosmos* appeared in the middle of the last century.

Ancient wisdom

Linked with this myopia and lack of historical sense, both Capra and Porritt seem to think, like Skolimowski and Roszak before them, that green politics is simply a rediscovery of ancient wisdom. It is nothing of the sort. It is quite erroneous to equate ecology (and the libertarian socialism that accompanies it) with the visions of Black Elk or the tenets of Buddhism, Christianity, Gnosticism or Hinduism. Although the philosophy of Lao Tze and tribal religions generally express a cosmological attitude which implies a sense of oneness, equality and reciprocity between humans and nature, these are quite different from the hierarchic and mystical cosmologies of the other, profoundly anti-ecological, religious systems.

Porritt pleads that he does not want to sound too mystical, and that there is a need "to re-assert the unity of humankind and nature without necessarily relying on quasi-religious concepts". However, he can't help offering a sustained diatribe against materialism (falsely equated with the productivist perspective of the Enlightenment) and calls for "spiritual commitment" and for the acceptance of some kind of "supernatural" or "mystical" dimension to life. Surely these terms do nothing if not to express antipathy to the organic, naturalistic perspective of ecology?

Porritt appears to see nothing between gross bourgeois materialism of the narrowest kind and ye ancient religious mysticism; the choice we are presented with is between mechanism and mysticism. The real ecology is neither: the

relationship between humans and nature is neither one of opposition and domination nor one of spiritual unity, but rather it is organic and symbiotic. Porritt would do well to read the writings of Bookchin more closely, though perhaps with a little more critical insight than he has applied to Schumacher and Capra, for they will offer him a dialectical philosophy that is more in tune with the science of ecology than are the religious musings of Schumacher, Skolimowski and Roszak - who are all looking for some religion to replace moribund Christianity.

Spretnak and Capra are even more religiously inclined than Porritt. They bewail the "spiritual impoverishment" of contemporary societies and, like many eco-feminists, hark back to the myth of pre-Christian mother-goddess cults. That such cults still flourish in India and historically are associated with agrarian theocratic states, co-existing as ideologies with slavery and patriarchy, is hardly mentioned, let alone explored. Our "oneness" with the natural world can be felt and accepted without recourse to some transcendental spirit, however conceptualised.


State ecologism?

Despite their aim of producing a new vision, none of these writers is able to extricate themselves from the party political system. They all have the liberal reformist view that the state is some kind of neutral debating society which makes decisions for the benefit of all. Thus it simply needs opening up to the views of greens at the "grassroots". It will then pass legislation to curb the awful social and environmental effects of the present system. Life of course is not actually like this.


The state consists of repressive institutions, both ideological and coercive, whose primary purpose is to support and protect the owners of capital and the capitalist system more generally. Whenever this is under threat, as in the miners strike, its true function becomes all too apparent. Most of the major decisions that affect our lives, the deployment of missiles or the investment of the wealth that working people generate, take place outside the Halls of Westminster. Parliament simply acts as a sounding board, serving to legitimate class rule.

Although all three books are supposed to be concerned with the *politics* of ecology, there is very little real political analysis in any of them. There is, believe it or not, no discussion at all of capitalism, economic imperialism (the maraudings of the Pentagon in its support of American

STILL SUSPICIOUS? JUST REMEMBER THESE THREE IMPORTANT RULES...




1 DON'T SWALLOW IDEOLOGIES WHOLE! CHEW ALL THEORIES 100 TIMES BEFORE SWALLOWING.



2 BEWARE OF SUBLIMINAL MESSAGES IN ADVERTISING! DEFACE BILLBOARDS AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY.



3 GIVE YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS A BREAK! MAKE ROOM FOR A WELL-INTEGRATED SUBJECTIVITY IN YOUR SOCIAL STRUGGLES.



CALL IT SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM, ANARCHISM OR WHAT HAVE YOU... THE FUTURE IS FLEXIBLE. ALL I KNOW IS THAT THIS PRESENT SET-UP IS ABOUT TO COLLAPSE AND HISTORY CAN'T GO BACKWARDS !!

business gets no mention); nor of state repression. What discussion there is, on green economics, is rather confused and vacillating; greens are clearly unable to decide whether or not to support the idea of private property.

There are two problems. The first is to equate industrialism and capitalism (as if the latter were simply some form of technology) or to see industrialism as the villain of the piece. Most of the ecological and social problems of the Third World have little to do with industrialism per se (as in sweatshops or bonded agricultural labour), but have everything to do with a global capitalist system which is geared to profits and inherently exploitative at the periphery. Third World poverty, political repression and racism, human exploitation are hardly discussed in any of these books. Porritt & Winner's discussion of development is to see it in terms of charity organisations like Oxfam or aid programmes. The social and ecological implications of the Third World being a "net exporter of capital" (one way to describe exploitation) is broached but never explored; real analysis of capitalism's primary responsibility for both widespread poverty and ecological destruction is avoided.

The other problem is that these green intellectuals have no clear conception of a socialist alternative to capitalism (e.g. Porritt's description of the Labour Party as the "heartland of socialism") - mainly because they go along with the ideologues and apologists for capitalism who equate socialism with Marxism and state socialism, or else with the state capitalism of the USSR. Porritt, in his earlier book did acknowledge that "the true greens" were those radical libertarian environmentalists who were the heirs to the anarchist tradition of Kropotkin, Thoreau and Godwin, and he still accepts that there is a "green line" within the socialist tradition that long ago articulated some of the basic principles now guiding the Green Party.

However, the anarchists realised that a society that was "ecological, decentralised, equitable and comprised of flexible institutions, one in which people have significant control over their lives" (to quote from one of the books) must

necessarily be a socialist one, but one without state institutions. But having adopted anarchist principles in their theoretical vision, in practice the greens advocate party politics. Porritt accuses Michael Allaby of writing "humbbug" when the latter suggests that ecologists should not be concerned with power, and reckons that all anarchists are living in an unreal world.

Porritt the realist (on TV, a keen supporter of the monarchy) suggests paradoxically that the greens only seek power in order to relinquish it; to get involved in national politics only because they don't believe in it; that elections have merely an educative or propaganda value... it's all very strange. But then it's equally paradoxical that someone who argues that everyone should be empowered to determine the course of his or her own life should also suggest that the coming revolution of the post-industrial age will be ushered in for us by a middle-class elite - none other than the Green Party itself. No doubt it will wither away, like the state of the authoritarian Marxists, in due time. Porritt & Winner's book is dedicated "to all those who have the influence, and who know how to use it wisely for the future". Enough said.

It would appear that great efforts are being made by people like Porritt and Capra to hinge the ecology movement to reformist politics, which is in keeping with the aims of Schumacher's essentially radical liberal politics. For what he advocated was a balance and harmony between management and workers, and the need for political policies that would sustain and preserve those "non-economic values" (his phrase) debased by capitalism. Nowhere does he ever suggest that we should put an end to the system that fosters the nuclear weaponry, that creates the pollution, that "ravishes nature" and "mutilates man" (his phrases). Rather he pleads only for the re-affirmation of religious values to counterbalance the effects of the capitalist system. The Green Party is the political expression of Schumacher's vision; it hardly presents a challenge, let alone a threat, to capitalism or the state structure which supports it.

WHATEVER THE OUTCOME, AN EXCITING FUTURE IS IN STORE FOR ALL! RELAX! ENJOY THE RIDE! JUST BE SURE THAT WHEN HISTORY MAKES THAT "DIALECTICAL JUMP" - YOU'RE IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT!



Note on contributions to Green Line

Articles continue to arrive in numbers that make us feel GL is something worth doing, and we appreciate the effort put into them. Where possible, we will try to get back to you with comments - especially if we feel an article could be used if some changes are made - but unfortunately we can't guarantee to do this, we simply haven't enough time. We suggest that if you're not sure whether an article will be suitable for GL then you give us a ring (0865) 724315 anytime or write. Apart from anything it is always nice for us to meet the people who read GL, even if only over the phone!

Learn from Scotland!

TIM BRENAN'S LETTER (GL70) advocating non-registration as the "crucial point at which the struggle against this tax will be won or lost" shows a lack of understanding of the campaigns in Scotland and the means the Community Charge Officer has at his or her disposal. I offer these observations in the hope that the campaign in England and Wales will be more successful.

The main Scottish opposition did not concentrate on non-payment, but on non-registration. The tactic was changed once non-registration (advocated by the Labour movement Stop It campaign) was seen to be failing and other groups - some local, some centrally organised - took over.

The Stop It campaign was likely to fail for a number of reasons. Firstly, Tim doesn't seem to understand the effects of the threat of continued, escalating fines for non-registration. Secondly, registration officers do not even need you to register to complete their lists: they have access to local council records (most of us appear somewhere). In Scotland, people who believed they had dodged registration found themselves on the list with no effort at all. They have us all ways.

The option of non-payment is the only one left (apart from waiting for a Labour government). Due to the failure of the non-registration campaign in Scotland, people are left with conflicting messages from opposition "leaders", making the possibilities of a mass, local campaign against the tax difficult. We can only hope that non-payment, along with the difficulties being experienced by the councils in implementation will make the tax unworkable.

Don't, as we did in Scotland, put all your eggs in one basket: an initial defeat over non-registration may not then be fully recovered from. Learn from Scotland's mistakes!

LEE BROWN, Glasgow

* Remote and scattered communities will be among the hardest hit by the tax. In the Highland Region of Scotland, for example, those families that live in tied houses exempt from current rates will be forced in April to pay at least £1,500 - an estimated £250 each - to councils who offer them practically no services. The big landlords and southern speculators who own much of northern Scotland will pay much less, along with the owners of large houses in big towns like Fort William and Inverness, which offer a wide range of council amenities. Attempts to lobby the government on this have met with no success.



* One idea for sabotaging the system is to send masses of photocopied registration forms back with names and addresses chosen at random from the phone book. It should take ages for the council to sort out. Unfortunately, registration forms may contain bar-codes and pre-printed information. But then accidents with the inkpot and the leek and potato soup happen all the time, don't they?

* The council, bless their little cotton socks; will be supplying us all with prepaid envelopes so as we can return our forms all the speedier. This means that if a roof tile, brick etc happens to get attached to the form the council will have to pay the postage on it. After all, it'd be nice to support the post office while it's still a public industry.

* It's just an idea, but has anyone thought what it would be like if your council's computer was so "programmed" that it muddled up all the addresses when it sent out the Poll Tax bills and then wiped its own files...? Perhaps computer programming could be fun after all.

► Get your Anti-Poll Tax cards, "Must Pay: Will Pay" (see opposite) and other designs!! From No Bullshit Cards, Box P, Cowley Rd, Oxford OX4 1HZ; 10p, or 5p each for bulk orders. Phone (0865) 245301 for more info.

Leaflet ideas

OXFORD'S CAMPAIGN against the Poll Tax has produced a leaflet drafted for circulation to all houses with the aim of encouraging everyone to resist in whatever way they choose. If you're forming a local group, drafting a leaflet etc. then why not contact OAPT, 10 Chapel St, Oxford OX4 1XL (0865) 728647 to share views, advice etc.?

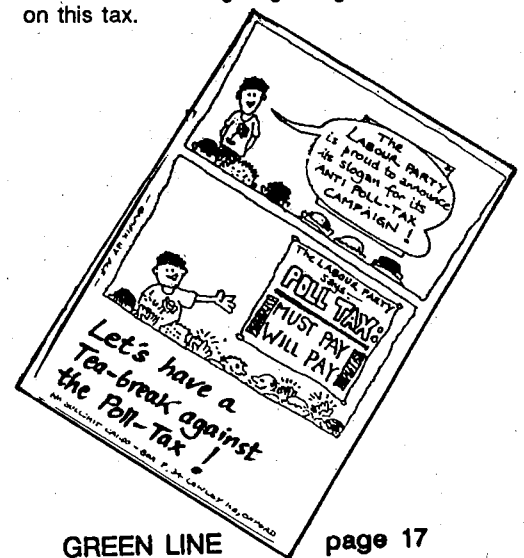
The leaflet itself contains ideas on how to respond to registration letters without breaking the law. For instance, you should always wait the allotted number of days before responding to the registration form and then reply with complicated questions. You can return the form uncompleted with some query - especially about the "responsible person". You can deny ever having received the form through the post, or tell them that the dog chewed it (an understandable reaction). And of course you can repeat each of these stages every time the letter plops onto your doormat.

If everybody in your town were to do this, it would delay registration by months and vastly increase the council's hassle and expense. The point is that everybody, in however small a way, can help to make the tax unworkable for local councils; the ultimate aim being to force central government commissioners to be brought in, with all the accompanying political implications of such a step.

When the council gets fed up with your stupid questions they'll be using canvassers to call door-to-door. You should refuse to answer their questions on the doostep: make them leave their questions with you to do later (i.e. in another three weeks time). Don't cooperate at all with these people: ask them why they're doing this job; argue with them; make them go back to the council and demand another job instead of canvassing.

Remember to ring the council's Poll Tax office and give the people on the end of the phone a hard time with questions and argument about the tax. You'll probably be getting an evasive and dishonest letter about the tax from the council - there'll be plenty to ask about that.

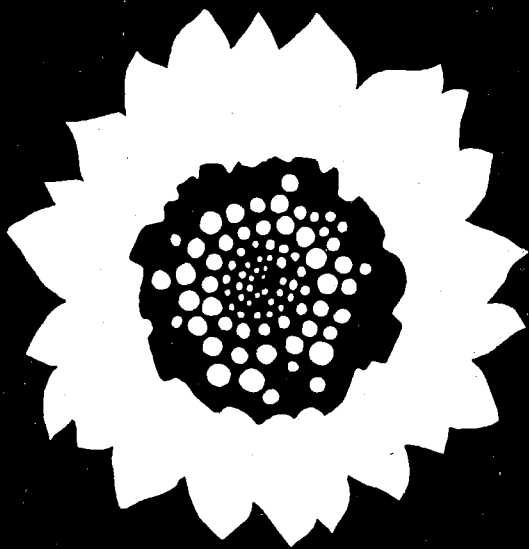
Finally, please let us know what's going on in your area, so we can publicise it in GL and let people know that they're not alone; that groups all over England, Wales and Scotland are fighting the government on this tax.





MARIE-ANNE HESLOP went to the fifth congress of European greens without the weary baggage of the regular conference-goer. Here she reports on her positive experience of a very successful international event.

April in Paris...



avec
LES VERTS
POUR L'ÉCOLOGIE

THE FIRST THING that struck me was the exhilarating setting at the new La Villette Centre: the modern architecture gave the conference a forward-looking, scientific image rather than a stuffy, romantic and intellectual one, as would have been the case had it been held at La Sorbonne. The organisers were overwhelmed by its success, ran out of badges and rooms ...but not of patience: people remained friendly throughout.

Saturday morning's plenary session was devoted to the Environment. Sandra Postel from the USA clearly demonstrated that "life on earth is threatened". She convincingly outlined all the present factors we have read about, and those we have not read about yet. Jaconda de Santis spoke in Italian about the greens' successes in Italy in halting any nuclear power development. Finally, Paul Lannoye exposed "the traffic of European waste". His talk was extremely interesting, especially regarding the exploitation of Third World nations in this traffic.

Following all this were related seminars led by the plenary speakers, but with anyone allowed to intervene; making a choice was painful. Protection of the environment? What kind of energy policy for Europe? What can we do about our waste? I chose the latter, as I believe that individuals like myself can actually influence the way things go at a very basic level, i.e. local councils.

In the waste seminar, African delegates expressed their outrage at the way Europe and the USA were using poor countries to dump dangerous industrial waste. In one reported instance, farmers were told toxic waste was fertiliser and destroyed their crops and the fertility of their soil by spreading it on their fields. West German representatives talked about the Rhine. During this discussion, some people from Strasbourg greens and a neighbouring West German group discovered they were fighting for the same thing and undertook to work together. It was a very positive moment.

Ways of getting rid of waste were considered - there were clearly some very knowledgeable engineers in the audience, who added a welcome intelligence to the discussions, even if I couldn't understand their arguments. Domestic waste was passed over too quickly, despite its greater reality for many people than industrial waste, (time was pressing) and women including myself protested that it was also important, particularly for voters in local elections. A motion was passed demanding that each country should be responsible for their own waste disposal (for instance, France currently accepts West German waste). One man was desperate to talk about the sea; he was threatening to start a Blue Party. Eventually some of us stayed behind to listen to him.

Saturday afternoon was devoted to Europe of the Citizen: What type of institutions for Europe; Women and politics; and The need for a regionalism beyond the concept of the nation-state were the three main speaker topics. The leader of the anti-racism movement in France (SOS Racism), Harlem Desir made a somewhat controversial contribution, not in content but in the context of French politics.

I was delighted to see that the conference was pro-Europe. I have been alarmed at the anti-European stance taken by the English greens. Indeed I can see no country taking costly environmental policies in isolation as their industries would suffer too much from foreign competition. If such policies are taken, they will have to come from Europe. Britain, more than anyone, needs Europe since there will be no British Euro-green in parliament due to the electoral system.

The seminars following the speakers - Towards the united regions of Europe; Nationality and citizenship; and Art and culture - were all attractive, but I chose to attend Feminism nowadays. It was led by the representative of the Icelandic women's movement, Alena Anderlova. Why do women find it so difficult to express themselves in a mixed audience? Is political jargon a male preserve? Is what women say so simple and true that it sounds unsophisticated and is

"EASTERN EUROPE is going green. The rise of the ecological and pacifist movements constitutes one of the most spectacular phenomena of the 1980s. The majority of countries have been affected by this ground swell." So says journalist Veronique Soule after five years there. It's certainly a situation that would have been unforeseen ten years ago when great minds held forth on the "apathy" of those "poor" Eastern Europeans.

There has been a plethora of articles on the countries of central Europe, giving frightening assessments of ecological catastrophe and chaos in society, health and morality. According to Stalin, industrial fanaticism and agricultural productivism was justified in order to "correct Nature's error", and it is the legacy of his policies that we see today.

But western Europe is also to blame. Poland's enormous national debt, built up during the reign of Gierek was due to a frantic import of industrial capacity and technology from the EEC with no locally controllable system of maintenance and safety. More recently, during a visit of the Polish PM to Bonn, a contract was made between Ruhr industrialists and Polish authorities for the storage, "guaranteed risk-free" of 900,000 tonnes of toxic heavy metals in a mine in Upper Silesia. So western Europe has, as we approach 1992, a set of countries that are easily accessible and hungry for hard currency willing to act as a huge dustbin.

"Two events", recalls Soule, "have played a fundamental role in the

The East



is green!

greening of Eastern Europe: the birth at the beginning of the '80s of a powerful pacifist movement in Western Europe, then the Chernobyl catastrophe on 26th April 1986."

A short tour

Poland: with an official press increasingly committed to Glasnost, 2,000 ecological societies alongside the pro-Communist League for the Protection of Nature, the semi-official Polish Ecology Society and a Franciscan ecology society masterminded by journalists and academics that gives life to the regions of Gdansk and Krakow.

It was WIP (Peace and Liberty) which was the force behind the demos against the building of the nuclear power stations at Zamowiec and Klempicz as well as the nuclear waste store at Miedzyrzecz (Gorzow). With the Ecological Seminary of Poland, these eco-pacifists set up information banks and alternative energy and agriculture projects. The Huta Siednice factory, which pollutes Warsaw's water with Chromium, will have to be shut down in 1991 - a success for WIP, in the face of the Warsaw industrial lobby.

In Upper Silesia as in Nowa Huta, various societies work together with Catholic experts, Solidarnosc militants and intellectuals from the democratic opposition. Not surprisingly, ecology was one of the priorities on the agenda of the Polish "round table".

consequently overlooked when expressed? Is it simply a lack of practice?

In Iceland, all women have to take the microphone in turn, even if only to repeat what has already been said. Although the practicalities of it can be difficult, it seemed to me a good starter - for any group, mixed or not. In West Germany, there is an automatic round of one female speaker, one male speaker and so on. Women from Spain and Portugal thought it would be more difficult in the Mediterranean countries for a woman to have power of speech in view of their culture - I believe myself it is just as difficult here in Britain.

Sunday morning was an intellectual feast. The speakers were enthralling and were applauded at length. Rene Dumont and Fernando Gabeira from Brazil spoke at length about the responsibility of Europe towards the South. Petra Kelly talked (in English, to some of her compatriots' disapproval) about the issue of Eastern Europe. Finally, there was a brilliant exposition on European defence policy as a threat to peace from the Norwegian Johan Galtung. I only wish I had taken notes to be able to rehearse his arguments on some of the sceptics I know; it was pure joy. Hopefully he will have recorded his latest arguments in print somewhere.

That day I was torn between Galtung's seminar and one on the green movement in the Eastern bloc countries; eventually choosing the latter, reckoning that I could more easily find written material by Galtung. Representatives from Hungary, Moscow, Lithuania and Bulgaria all said there was a strong environmentalist movement in Eastern Europe (see above). Environmentalism seems to lead inexorably towards issues of

independence and sovereignty: as Thomas Frey of the Estonian Green Movement said; "We can't sort out the problems of environmental damage while we remain dependent on Moscow which imperialistically controls 90% of our countries' economies." One speaker noted how Glasnost meant a right to a voice - but the voice couldn't yet say what it wanted. However, they asked for Gorbachev to be supported as he faced very strong opposition within the USSR. Then time ran out and we had to rush to the final plenary session.

Sara Parkin had been present all through the conference and chaired several debates, including this closing session. Antoine Weichter, leader of Les Vertes in France, spoke optimistically about the forthcoming Euro-elections. Les Vertes were thanked for organising such an inspiring conference. It had indeed been most impressive: for instance, a conference newsletter had appeared each day, containing many useful articles. I can send a photocopy (they're in French) in return for £1 + sae c/o Green Line.

One pleasantly surprising aspect of the conference was the media coverage. The French left-wing daily Liberation gave over two full pages in its weekend edition to the proceedings and television cameras were everywhere - French, West German and Italian among them (although I learnt on my return to Britain that nothing had been reported in the media here). Although English was used as the vehicle language, I felt that the English presence was not very obvious. Unashamedly I have to say this was one of the few instances where I was proud to be French ...no offence: Vive La Difference!

Unfortunately an agreement signed on 5th April will accelerate the Azur nuclear power programme "if funds allow".

USSR: 16% of citizens, according to a March poll, would vote green if given the choice (which compares to 41% for the Communists). Those elected recently on an ecological ticket "belong to a united and very strong current in central USSR" according to the paper L'Evenement (6.4.89).

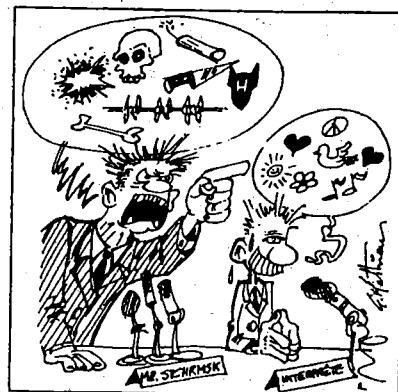
Independent societies for social initiatives (such as democratic Perestroika) are strongly influenced by western alternative ideas. The ecological wave expresses itself in the popular fronts of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The programme of the Armenian Karabakh Committee regards it as "urgent" for the survival of their people that they "lead a merciless fight for the protection of nature and against pollution" and "struggle against

nuclear power stations", and force the closing of the chemical complex of Nairit. At last the brave forbearers, such as the Moscow Trust Group established in 1982, see their wishes coming to fruition in thousands of places.

Bulgaria: The poisoning of the children of Ruse [see Green International, GL64] led to the spontaneous creation in 1987 of a Committee for the Protection of Inhabitants to halt the production of Chlorine by the Romanian factory across the Danube, and recently, Romania mysteriously shut down production. Painters and writers became part of the movement in Sofia at the start of 1988. The reawakening of independent activism has led to the setting up of the Independent Association for the Rights of People and the Society for the Support of Glasnost-Perestroika, which gathered together the core of the intelligentsia in November '88.

Hungary: The Fidesz (Federation of Young Democrats) are active protectors of the environment.

More prominent is the Danube Circle (created in 1983) which sees itself "as a mediator between science and citizen from an ecological position; against



monopolists and monetarism; for a decentralisation of energy". It is willing to participate in creating a party of green slate without wanting to be one itself.

Its role was decisive in the battle of Nagymaros over the Danube hydro-electric project on the Slovakian border [see GL55, Green International, GL65], that led to the formation of the Hungarian greens (confusingly, the "Blues") and the Friends of the Danube. In February this year, a petition demanding a referendum on the dam collected 125,000 signatures. The parliamentary president finally allowed for the government's decision to be re-debated.

Yugoslavia: Greens, especially in the rich republic of Slovenia, are part of an alternative rainbow of feminists, pacifists etc. coming together in the official but turbulent League of Slovenian Youth [see GL50]. They've organised demos against the nuclear programme, and campaigned for the promotion of cycling. Other groups are active: in Belgrade amongst university members; in Serbia with the Writers' Union; in Zagreb as in Slovenia.

Romania: An ecological report was published in 1988 by the clandestine Christian socialist Democratic Action.

Common ground

Veronique Soule, believes these new protestors, who "brandish the banner of eco-pacifism", have much in common with western youth. Non-violent on principle, "they demand the right to speak on the questions which trouble them: a framework of rights for their life today; the assurance of peace on the continent; pure air for their children in the future."

JEAN-LOUIS PEYROUX
translation: RO VICKERS

Extracted from *Les Nouvelles Vertes*, the conference newsletter.

Czechoslovakia: The forum to bring together experts and ecologists that Charter 77 organised in 1987 resulted in a historic document on energy, health and the economy [see Green International, GL58]. A series of frequent discussions with French, Dutch, British, Polish and Hungarian pacifists had a lot to do with the sudden appearance in April 1988 of the Independent Association for Peace. With the anti-conformist group, Children of Bohemia, it publically invited young people to discuss ecology, education and military service. Faced with this, the state has astutely promoted the boy-scout Brontasaurus movement that builds small-scale water purification plants.

East Germany: 300 ecological groups are tolerated under the wing of the Evangelical Church. Since 1982-3 and the independent movement against European missile deployment (active groups still in East Berlin and Leipzig), ecology has become a significant and unifying force in the alternative scene focusing on the Initiative for Peace and the Rights of Man.

Emerson College

a centre of adult education training and research, based on the work of Rudolf Steiner

SUMMER CONFERENCES 1989

July 1-14
**BIODYNAMIC GARDENERS
and GROWERS COURSE**

A working conference on Biodynamics

July 16-22
**"THE WONDER OF LIFE -
A Glimpse of Hope"**

A journey towards learning to re-discover beauty and experience those "seen and unseen" wonders of life

July 23-29
SOUND SENSE for MUSIC EDUCATION

A workshop for those concerned with meeting the musical needs of children

July 23-29
EDUCATION and HUMAN VALUES

An exploration into the tasks of education in today's changing environment

Details from: the Conference secretary,
Emerson College, Forest Row, Sussex RH18 5JX
Tel: (034282) 2238



CAAT SCAN

THE DEFENCE Components and Equipment Exhibition is due to take place in Birmingham on 9-11 May, at the National Exhibition Centre which is owned by Labour-controlled Birmingham City Council. Pressure is being put on the council not to agree to such an exhibition in 1991, and support for this campaign is needed. An information pack is available from the Campaign Against the Arms Trade (11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ, tel: 01 281 0297).

CAAT has also produced *Europe and the Arms Trade: a Campaigner's Guide*, in preparation for the European Elections on 15th June. It is available from CAAT at 25p, plus a large SAE.

CND CAMPAIGNS

CND WILL continue to concentrate both on NATO and the British bomb. The spring campaign on NATO will develop throughout the year, and will be linked to an autumn campaign on Trident. In the autumn there is likely to be a public information campaign, including a mass canvass during UN disarmament week in October, a leafletting campaign, and local candle-lit vigils at Trident-related sites.

The CND annual conference will be held at City University in London on November 17-19. The deadline for resolutions is July 17.

DISARM THE SEAS!

THE ARMS race at sea provides opportunities for campaigning, but also presents difficulties - for example, the countless inland groups tend not to get involved. This is likely to change with the emergence of effective campaigning groups - Sea Action, SCANN, North Atlantic Network, etc. All these various groups will play a key role in the Disarm The Seas Week of Action from 27th May to 4th June. A crucial campaigning tool is Greenpeace's famous map of Britain's naval nuclear installations (available from Greenpeace Nuclear Free Seas Campaign, 30-31 Islington Green, London N1 8XE, 01 354 5100). CND has suggested constructed a Jaws model - perhaps from bits left over from various cardboard dinosaurs. details of the many actions national and international can best

be obtained from SCANN, 119 Orchard Rd, Southsea, Portsmouth, Hants PO4 0AD.

END PIECE

THIS YEAR'S END Convention will take place at Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain, on 6th-9th July. The overall theme will be *The global dimensions of peace and disarmament for development*. The registration fee, around £50-£55, must be sent with the final registration form in May. Details from CND.

END are also involved in a new campaign around a European Citizens' Assembly, an idea first put forward by Charter 77, and widely discussed by groups in both East and West. All groups committed to ending the Cold War would be invited to meet, with political parties permitted only as observers. It would give greater presence for all those trying to work round the blocs like church, green, trade union, women and other groups. Issues such as trade, social policy, ecological cooperation would be discussed with working groups putting forward proposals to national governments on particular problems such as disarmament and acid rain. The assembly would help independent groups in East Europe try to free themselves from state harassment and intimidation.

The idea is still at a formative stage but END will be promoting discussion and debate over the coming months, including a public meeting in London on 30th May (for details see Peace Diary).

PEACE DIARY

MAY 9-11: Defence Components and Equipment Exhibition, N.E.C, Birmingham. Contact CAAT (see CAAT SCAN)

MAY 13: Peace Pentecost; theme - *flames of hope, not flames of destruction*. Service in Lincoln Cathedral (beginning 11.30 am); procession through city to RAF Waddington; then festival, and fence to be decorated with pennants. Contact Christian CND, 22/24 Underwood St, London N1 7JG 01 250 4010

MAY 13: First of two media dayschools organised by Yorkshire Humberside CND (and June 3rd in Leeds): 10-4pm, Arts Centre, Darlington. Contact John Brierley, Lower Lumb Farm, Cragg Vale, Hebden Bridge, W.Yorks, HX7 5SH (0422) 883927.

MAY 18: Public Meeting with Alistair Mackie, Ryde Town Hall, 7.30. Ring Ray, (0983) 62048.

MAY 23: Debate on NATO, co-sponsored by Oxford CND and Peace Through NATO, at 7.30pm, Oxford Town Hall. Contact Oxford CND (0865) 726441.

MAY 26-JUN 4: Disarm the Seas Week of Action.

MAY 30: END public meeting; 7pm, at ICA, London. E.P.Thompson, Mary Kaldor, Sara Parkin, Charter 77 & independent Hungarian trade unionists. Contact END 01-272-9092, 11 Goodwin St, London N4 3HQ

Will NATO go quietly, or will it explode?

THE CURRENT RIFT within NATO, primarily between the US and West German governments, has developed into a major international issue, and provides an opportunity for peace organisations to focus on dissension within the alliance, and to build an effective anti-NATO campaign throughout this year. It is important, however, as this campaign unfolds, to think clearly about the deeper reasons for NATO's malaise, and not to over-emphasize the part played by Gorbachev and his "peace" initiatives. The most recent NATO problems - over "modernisation" and the appropriate response to Soviet policy - are symptoms of a long decline and an increasing irrelevance.

The present structure of NATO is an anachronism, reflecting the power relations of a world which has long disappeared: it was US pre-eminence at the end of the second World War that established the basis for NATO, which became one of the chief instruments of US economic and political dominance. At that time the USA was in a class of its own as a military superpower, but has since lost a lot of its economic vitality. Its political leadership too is being increasingly challenged, particularly by a powerful Western Europe flexing its economic and political muscle, with the stronger EEC states asserting independent foreign policies not necessarily fitting in with US plans.

The key role is being played by West Germany, seeking a role that reflects its economic strength and strategic importance at the heart of Europe. Thus it has responded most positively to Gorbachev's proposals on arms reduction, and been the most reluctant to be stampeded into support for NATO "modernisation". Bush's dilemma lies in whether to make significant concessions to Kohl, and whether to postpone the most crucial decisions until after the West German elections next year. The USA needs Kohl in power, rather than any unpredictable "Red-Green alliance". But any short-term solutions will merely put off the fateful day when real decisions will have to be taken, as to whether the alliance can continue to exist in its current form, develop into something else, or break up completely.

The usual conservative forces, mostly emanating from the US and Britain, are gathering strength to resist any real change. The main justification for NATO hitherto has been the supposed reality of the

"Russian Threat" which has become less tenable since Gorbachev. Nevertheless recent statements from US politicians and strategists indicate the idea of the Russian Threat is being revived in a new form, stressing the ephemeral nature of the new Soviet system, the possible fall of Gorbachev, and instability in Eastern Europe as the Soviet "empire" collapses - all this is supposed to require more weapons, not less. Accordingly, a strong NATO will always be necessary to counter any threat the USSR may represent in an indefinite future! An idea being

floated is for a new weapons system to "couple" the USA and Western Europe together, reviving a flagging alliance - a device tried so provocatively with Cruise in the late 70s. However, this is unlikely to be repeated because the aggressive policies of the Reagan era merely masked underlying weaknesses, which Bush now has to tackle. The illusions of a previous era cannot simply be taken up again.

Whatever the resolution of this particular crisis within NATO, future developments on the international horizon hardly indicate a trend towards "peace". The collapse of the old world order, and the birth of one moving beyond the blocs, is seen as a good thing by many peace campaigners, yet it could well lead to the kind of resurgent nationalism that has preceded most modern wars. The result of the

Reagan - Gorbachev "peace process" is likely to be more militarism, not less. This presents a particular problem for those peace organisations which have hailed a "new era of peace" in the aftermath of the INF agreement. The danger has always been in taking Gorbachev (as well as the later Reagan) too much at face value, as a "man of peace" rather than a shrewd realist devising policies which take into account the economic and political weaknesses of the Soviet Union.

This concern with the "good leader" reflects an abiding tendency in peace movement, stressing personal witness, private initiatives, and the dramatic consequences of unilateral and individual action. Consequently, the movement is often reduced to reacting opportunistically to the latest "initiative", its role limited to applauding or hissing the actions of world leaders. The end result will inevitably be a cautious campaign,

as the movement tries to assess in advance how world events will move.

This caution is reflected in CND's campaigning plans for the year; Trident will once more provide the principle focus, with the old Jaws leaflet dusted down and pressed into service again. The reaction is likely to be boredom rather than breathless ecstasy: but CND hasn't an abundance of options, and must continue to wriggle within the confines of its "single issue". Even an anti-NATO campaign threatens to burst through these confines: after



FINDING THE RIGHT LANGUAGE

I FIND the spiritual, cultural and prehistorical aspects of green most interesting, but also very difficult. One problem is that language what is currently talked about and so covers established views but not new ones, or very old ones. Thus I think there is a wide category, "spiritual but not supernatural", which lacks a separate word and yet is between "material" and "supernatural". I suspect there is often confusion with concepts like holistic, Goddess, region, as some people think of them as natural while others do not.

"Male Gods located off the planet" are clearly supernatural, but Mother Earth can be the concept of all of nature, or of a supernatural entity. The latter is more likely when the word "Goddess" is used, as most people nowadays think of a male God, and of God as supernatural. Worship, and even more, attempts to influence or propitiate, tend to a concept of supernatural, controlling entity. Whereas respect, wonder and stewardship tend to "nature", as does "biosphere".

It seems that hunter-gatherers, and some people even now, think of themselves as part of nature. This seems to go with concepts that it is not right for people (or firms) to own land, but only to be stewards of it and use the renewable yield, and to worship nature as they are part of it. But it also means to have concepts of supernatural entities that are spiritual but natural, for land and people are real. It also tends to a sense of place, and to the spiritual being tied to the place. Conversely a tribe with a mobile God can move and colonise the lands of other people.

The concept of supernatural entities that can be influenced seems to have come from agriculture, which brought dependence on monoculture of a few varieties, increasing the risk of failure. So people seem to have assumed, and then believed, that failures came from entities that they could or must propitiate and worship. This led to much superstition and many cruel practices, some of which were done in the name of the Goddess; and men as sacrifices had reason to want changes. The changes have developed into the religions we know, the culture into a sectarian strife which now affects so much - including churches and greens.

I feel that the green movement can be thought of as an attempt to get away from this culture of strife, but it needs to describe new (or old) culture and societies; going further than just destroying what is wrong: for revolution

NUCLEAR WAR BALLOT

YES Let's have a nuclear war.
I'm sick of waiting.

NO I'd rather wait a little longer.

You only have one vote.

all, CND could logically call for a non-nuclear NATO.

The broader peace movement can be much bolder than this, and look at NATO and other military alliances within a truly global perspective - in other words, be less preoccupied with the safety of its own European backyard. One important focus in this respect is the international trade in weapons, both nuclear and non-nuclear, and the role of defence industries.

There are plenty of arms fairs, for example, to provide opportunities for action (see CAAT SCAN opposite). We must take the initiative if the peace movement is to regain its earlier vision of building collective resistance at grassroots level significant enough to pull the "leaders" along, not act as their cheerleader; to hold an abiding vision of the peace movement as a truly international movement of peoples.

BARRY MAYCOCK

Questions of spirituality for the green movement

is an aspect of the culture of strife. In contrast I think that our education system suits the propagation of doctrine: that is, suppressing change and discussion of novel ideas. My deduction is that the green movement should spend some effort on establishing new language to suit discussion of its new proposals, rather than leave it to people to write articles that succeed in putting over their ideas, despite others using the same words for other ideas. I suspect that many disputes, even splits, are made worse by confusion. Just as I fear that much I write will confuse.

Henry Cox,
3 Church Rd,
Alsager, Stoke

INTELLECTUALISM AND POLITICS

JANET BIEHL, in *Separating Fact and Fiction in the Green Goddess Myth* (GL70), starts by allowing a role for spirituality at the personal level but goes on to say that myth is sheer fiction and illusion. Is it really spirituality in politics she is against, or spirituality itself? She argues for a very intellectual politics, stripped of emotion, sensuousness and love, holding to that intellectualism which has bedeviled western thinking for centuries.

Intellectualism has neatly boxed away from each other, mind and matter, the spiritual and temporal, and us and nature. It has set us against nature, against each other and against ourselves. It has sworn us to a dry quest for the cup of absolute objectivity.

Janet says "Goddess worship has historically been used by rulers to try and legitimise political tyranny". So has just about every religious creed and political philosophy, and degrees of tyranny have been so common for so long that our pictures of Goddess worship in the past have almost certainly reached us through forces which would have quashed earlier and liberating forms of such worship, much as the Christian church has quashed liberating forms of early christianity.

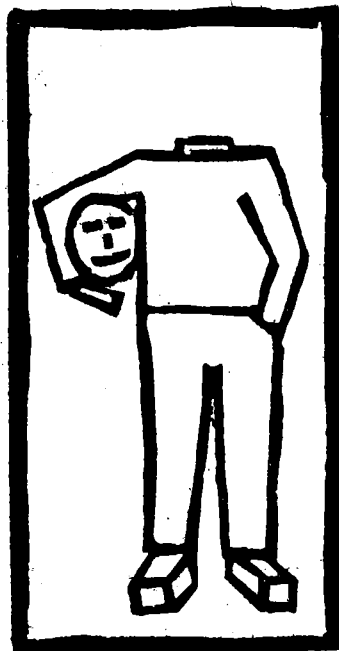
She says of a political movement "Its members voluntarily agree to work on behalf of a larger political idea", but where does this idea come from? Is it from loveless experts working on high, or from each of us as we bring the whole of ourselves, not just our intellects, to our political work?

Why should we try to cut our politics off from the rest of our lives, form our homes, our families, our communities and our spirituality? If we try to treat our politics as so special, we just ask for

career-minded specialists to steal our own tools and to press us down with them; and if we treat our spirituality as so special we ask for that too to be hijacked, commercialised and politicised (or depoliticised) by so-called experts.

Janet stresses ecology, which is of course important to the green movement, but her intellectualism would render this, as yet new, science as another powerful tool for industrialists.

Lawrence Thompson,
44 Tiverton Way,
Chessington, Surrey



TOWARDS A GREEN MYTH

I HAPPENED to buy a copy of GL70 at the Green Party Spring Conference, where I participated in workshops on green spirituality. GL70 raises some very important points on the whole question of the deeper side to green philosophy.

While Janet Biehl is right to warn us of the dangers inherent in the Green Goddess or any other mythology, she is wrong to deny the immense latent social-psychological power of myths. The fact that myths have been misused and manipulated throughout history (Hitler and the Wotan myth being an extreme example) does not in itself invalidate the whole idea of mythology. This is equivalent to claiming that because there have been some evil philosophers, all philosophy is therefore

to be avoided or kept at arm's length in its own little compartment.

If we are really serious about the peace process, we have to be more aware of our own unconscious forces. Wars take place as a result of denial, displacement, repression and projection of that which we cannot accept in ourselves onto the scapegoat figure of the day. Wars take place as a result of not being honest about our inner psychological processes. Our contemporary mythology falls into this latter category.

Val Remy's excellent review of Blackwell & Seabrook's *The Politics of Hope* (GL70) contained much insight in accepting the need for a green myth. As Val reminds us, myths do not die, they merely find new vehicles through which to express themselves. At the moment we are living in a society with the wrong myth: the pseudo religion of consumerism. This is a morally bankrupt and spiritually arid myth. It therefore follows that we need to formulate and, where necessary, re-express a more globally appropriate green myth; a morally sound and spiritually enriching myth.

If we can get green spirituality together in a clear, wise and compassionate manner, and with the psychological insight to avoid the dualistic pitfalls of Die Grunen, then we shall participate in the most inspiring social participation imaginable.

Think of the multitudes seeking a deeper meaning to life than the meaningless trivialities of consumerism! Why shouldn't the Green Party become their spiritual home? For this to become possible we have to grasp spirituality, face the flak that will certainly come our way, but work on together in tolerance and trust.

John-Francis Phipps
Rock Cottage,
Craswall, Hereford

VOTE GLI

I'D LIKE to send GL a vote of appreciation for responding to reader's letters a few issues back by providing coverage again of the spiritual and personal side (see John Puxty's article GL69, and Graham Hooper's book review in GL71). This area is very important to many of us in the green movement. Please keep it up!

Mark Kinzley,
7 Gaysham Ave,
Ilford

→ more letters overleaf →

PRIVATISING PROTEST OVER THE GOVERNMENT'S WATER RIP-OFF

DO I detect a schism within the Tory ranks? The Electricity Privatisation Bill has come in for vigorous criticism from many backbenchers, not least being the MP for Bedfordshire North who has said that the nuclear element could upset the flotation. The nuclear industry is to be cushioned from economic scrutiny and won't have to hold its own in the hyper-competitive market like every other privatisation venture that has so far been thrust upon us all.

This, along with the pure dogma which characterises the proposed flotation of water, has blown apart Thatcher's cherished philosophy of the free market, and it certainly blows apart the myth that "the consumer will benefit". All the privatisations are of course aimed at her chums in the City and the big financial institutions who have consistently creamed off the gains from assets that were not the government's to sell in the first place. However, it is one thing to float industries on the open market (which, I might add, I passionately disagree with), but it is another thing

entirely to sell off natural and fundamental elements like water.

I cannot understand why all hell is not breaking out over the water sell-off, since public opinion is overwhelmingly against it. Only 4% of the people in the UK want it to go ahead! Now I know that democracy isn't exactly rife in this country, so I would expect Margaret Hilda to refuse to bow to the majority view, but what can we do about such dogged intransigence?

The Green Party has stopped short of advocating a boycott of taxes and charges for water and electricity, and its one of the few moves the party has made which I don't necessarily go along with. My first impression when reading this was that the Green Party has lost its radicalism in a fit of nervous law-abiding; but then I remember the Labour Party's stance regarding the iniquitous Poll Tax - Must Pay: Will Pay - and so I am prepared to overlook the Green Party's decision not to endorse withholding payments, albeit reluctantly.

I would just like to say that laws are only to be considered if they are

ethical. It's a debatable point as to who chooses what is ethical in the first place, but there are certain fundamental truths that are either moral or immoral. The Poll Tax is immoral, and I doubt whether anyone who reads GL would disagree. Equally, the Water Bill (or should I say Land Bill?) is immoral because it is designed to leave private, profiteering tycoons in charge of nuclear power plants for obvious reasons of putting private gain before safety.

So if all this is unethical, surely it is ethical to endorse mass non-payment? Upholding the rule of law is only relative to where society is at any one point in time. The argument that laws must be upheld can (and has been) used to justify all manner of wrongs. Let us remain confident in our aims and objectives and not subject ourselves to the restraints that the establishment would like to impose on us.

Ian James White
North Hull Green Party
Orchard Park Estate
Hull

BEYOND RED-GREEN DOGMA

MANY WORDS have been wasted on the subject of Red and Green and I'm not sure that Stephen Ely (Letters, GL71) extends the argument either. Socialist, green, right and left are all slogans. We find it variously attractive to wave banners signifying, in the case of "neither left nor right" how totally original our beliefs are and, with "Red", signalling a support perhaps for some kind of working class mythology.

We cannot go on like this: such banner waving always alienates. We have to take what is useful from existing ideologies and then go beyond them. To me, socialism means redistributing wealth and power and opposing capitalism. Whilst socialism takes many forms, these two elements are key to overcoming the ecological crisis and we ignore them at our collective peril. If we don't take on board these fundamental tasks then our politics, however we label them, are irrelevant. If we call it something other than socialism then that doesn't bother me; ignoring real political analysis is a very different matter.

Ted Trainer, author of Developed to Death (Green Print, 1988) put it like this: "Neither of these two strands of thought, the ecological and the Marxist, is sufficient on its own; but both are essential for a satisfactory diagnosis of our ills". Greens are naive about power; Vulgar Marxists are horribly reductionist. Greens believe that argument is enough; Marxists realise that economic forces influence politics. Marxism has been anthropocentric; greens have been naive about how we reach a sustainable society. We need to cut the dogma and increase the dialogue.

Derek Wall,
Bath

←
letters on
greens and
spirituality,
pages 22-3



END
EUROPEAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT
11 Goodwin Street London N4 3HQ Tel: 01 272 9092

AN ALTERNATIVE
VISION OF EUROPE

a public meeting on the future of
Europe to promote Charta 77's call
for a European Citizens' Assembly

TUESDAY 30 MAY 1989 7pm

ICA THE MALL LONDON SW1

admission free

SPEAKERS INCLUDE:

<p>E. P. THOMPSON</p> <p>CHARTA 77 spokesperson</p> <p>MARY KALDOR</p>	<p>JULIA SZALAI <small>Independent Hungarian trade unionist</small></p> <p>SARA PARKIN <small>European Green activist</small></p> <p>British Trade Union speaker</p>
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This meeting has been organised by European Nuclear Disarmament. The following organisations have agreed to sponsor the meeting and to support discussion of a European Citizens' Assembly:
Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament • Charter 88 • Friends of the Earth • The Socialist Society