

GREEN

Live

GL74
Jul-Aug 1989
60p

ROPESE GROENEN
NA GLASAIGH EORPACHA
DIE GRÜNEN IN EUROPA
THE EUROPEAN GREENS
DE GRÖNA I EUROPA
LES VERTS EUROPEENS

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**The
Future
of
Green
Politics
After
June 15th**

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**Tenants
uniting
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against
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Housing
Act**

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**How
Could
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Party
M.P. be
made
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GREEN *Line*

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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, Oliver Tickell, Adrian Wright 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

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Printed by WILL PRINT

TIM ANDREWES, Green Party Candidate for Oxford & Bucks Euro-constituency, sums up the party's performance on June 15th and looks forward to the future.

NEVER BEFORE IN British politics has a party risen as fast as the Greens. That was the verdict of The Economist, which calculated that under proportional representation (the regional list version), a total of 12 British Greens would now be in the European Parliament, and the Rainbow Group would have become the fourth largest faction in the European Parliament.

Green Parties were on the advance across Western Europe, their representation in Strasbourg increasing from 9 (2 Belgians, 7 West Germans) to 25 (3 Belgians, 8 West Germans, 9 French, 5 Italians). If the Rainbow Group continues in its present form, its membership will have risen from 20 to 39. The victories of the French and Italian Greens are testimony to their political durability. In Belgium, Agalev and Ecolo built successfully on their 1984 result of 8.2% by winning 13.9% and an extra MEP, while the Luxembourg Greens, with 10.4%, doubled their vote from the 1984 General Election

though failing to win a seat in Strasbourg.

It was in the U.K., however, that the rise of the Greens was most spectacular. On a shoestring budget and with poor national media coverage, the Green Party achieved the highest Green vote in the EEC. With 14.9% of the total vote, the party retained its deposits in all 78 of the mainland seats. Alistair Whitelaw, standing in Strathclyde East, cut it a bit fine with only 5.02%, but only one other candidate, again in Scotland, came in at under 6%. Every Green candidate bar one, Howard Hoptrough in the staunch liberal stronghold of Cornwall and Plymouth, succeeded in winning more votes than the SLD, who seem to have suffered most from the rise of the Greens.

The Green vote was subject to the same regional variations that it experiences in general elections: as a rule, more votes were won in the South than the North, and in rural rather than inner city areas. Greens came second in six constituencies, all of them in the South, and there were several more "near misses" where the Party came close to beating Labour. Regional averages varied from 20.3% in the South East to 7.3% in Scotland.

Green issues

It remains one of the unsolved questions of the elections how the Green Party achieved such an

astonishing rise in support. Politicians and media pundits have been quick to dismiss the phenomenon as a one-off, protest, single issue vote for a party who kept its radical policies hidden from an ignorant electorate. However, while the national press campaign was largely empty of the unilateralist, anti-NATO, anti-capitalist stance of party's policies, many local campaigns spelt out clearly the very policies considered as liabilities by the media. Penny Kemp (Kent East, 19%) made unilateral nuclear disarmament a key issue, as did Derek Wall (Bristol, 18%). In Oxford and Bucks (21%), opposition to 1992 and free market, growth economics was the focus of the campaign. It could hardly be said, therefore, that the voters were ignorant of the Greens' political message. One theme that seemed to run through many constituency campaigns was transport: in Glasgow, the Greens made the Strathclyde motorway proposals an important part of their platform; in London the focus was on Channon's expansion programmes for the capital's roads; in Kent, the High Speed Rail Link was an issue, while Sue Limb raised the spectre of Euro-juggernauts thundering through the tranquil villages of her Cotswolds constituency. Transport has probably never been significant in national elections up till now, and if the Greens can work on it over the coming months, they may well find it an extremely potent vote-catcher and political weapon against the other parties. As an issue, it links in with the Greenhouse Effect, destruction of the countryside, free trade, the adverse effects of economic growth, and central versus local production. My own experience on joint candidates' platforms was that the other parties were incapable of reconciling their green pretensions with their economic policies whenever the transport issue was raised.

There were, of course, other issues in the campaign which helped the party enormously: the general concern for the environment, and for healthy food in particular, were important contributory factors to the Greens' success. These issues seem to have opened people's minds to the Green Party in a way that has never happened before. The view of many candidates was that people were prepared to give the Greens the benefit of the doubt and vote for them even if they did not approve of all the detailed policies. The party was thus able to make inroads into the Floating Vote which, given the other parties on offer, had nowhere else to float. Hence the collapse of

the Centre Parties throughout the country. Along with these votes must have come a significant lump of support from disaffected liberals and socialists. Anecdotal evidence suggests collapsing morale in both Labour and SLD ranks prior to election, with many activists and party members expressing the desire to experiment with the Greens. But such an analysis of voting patterns does not do justice to the Green Party itself. At successive Party Conferences I have witnessed the impatient musings of Greens waiting for defections from the other



Ashdown: sick as a parrot

parties. The conversations always turned on how bad things were going to have to get in the Democrats or the Labour Party before the exodus began. The European Elections have marked the end of the Wait-and-See attitude, because the party has finally started getting out and attracting these people. Policies have been put more forcefully; the party's stance on issues other than the environment have become more clear; and local branches have actually begun to take elections seriously, fielding more candidates and running more effective campaigns.

Organisation

On top of all this, Green Parties up and down the country were far better prepared for the European Elections than the Democrats, and in some cases than Labour as well. Many prospective candidates were in place by the beginning of the year, constituency-wide groups had begun planning the campaign and researching the issues, while fund-raising for the election well in advance ensured that many constituencies could afford leaflets as well as the £1,000 deposits.

Local Green Parties have been building on their experience gleaned from previous elections and in this learning process, have been greatly helped by Chris Rose, national elections co-ordinator, and the Elections Committee, who in countless mailings over the last years have been sharing ideas and experiences from individual local branches. While the party's campaigning ability as a whole is undoubtedly not in the same league as that of the other parties (due largely to lack of resources), it certainly made an impact on 15th June. Take a trivial example of posters. Several local campaigns made an effort to get these in prominent places and give an impression of large support for the Greens, and it worked. A friend on holiday in Hereford and Worcester (23%) sent me a postcard which remarked, "by the way, more Vote Green posters here than I'd have thought possible." In Oxford, mean-



David Icke: over the moon

while, there were so many posters on the main roads that several people I met thought the Greens had a good chance of winning.

One can only speculate, but all the hard work at a local level must have been the most important element in turning the environmental concern of ordinary people into actual votes. Certainly, the national campaign made little impact until the television broadcast, by which time the party was already at 10% in the opinion polls. The broadcast itself was generally approved of by candidates, although few liked the fact that all the children involved had plummy Surrey accents. Where the national organisation came into its own was in providing backup for the local campaigns, with advice on campaigning and some very useful

briefing sheets on European issues.

Politics after June 15th

The 2,292,696 votes which the Green Party polled on 15th June came as a shock to the whole country, but not least to the Greens themselves. In the aftermath of the election, local parties all over the country will be coming to terms with their transformed position in British politics. In many areas of Southern England, they can now claim to be the main opposition to the Conservatives. If the Democrats have really become the fourth party, then Britain's best hope of proportional representation now lies with the Green Party. For many activists in the peace movement, it now makes sense to campaign for the Green Party rather than struggle for unilateralism within the Labour Party. And given the right circumstances, the Greens may soon win their first MP through a parliamentary byelection.

The significance of the Green Party in national politics is now something which my brain finds difficulty coming to terms with! It means having to shed the cautious modesty of a party used to the margins, and adopting instead a confidence and sense of expectation which even two months ago would have felt slightly ridiculous. Niki Kortvelyessy, candidate for London Central, believes that the party must get rid of this "adolescent attitude" and become far more self-assertive.

The Green Party has come out of these elections with far more money, as well as credibility, than it expected. With 78 deposits saved, there will be far fewer election debts to be paid off than is (was?) usual, and this in turn means that the party activists will have more time and energy for political campaigning rather than jumble sales and sponsored cycle rides. There has also been a huge increase in membership (approaching 12,000 at the time of writing) and initial indications are that new local branches are being set up throughout the UK as a response to the new enthusiasm for green politics. If this momentum can be sustained, the party will be on an upward spiral of activity which bodes well for the future.

For Chris Rose, the national elections co-ordinator, the next task ahead is the round of district council elections, London borough and Scottish regional elections that will provide the next nationwide test of support for Green politics in May 1990. Both the Scottish and London area parties are aiming for maximum coverage for these elections, and will

also be targeting certain wards in order to win councillors. Chris Rose hopes for "tens" of councillors next May, and these will certainly be needed if the Green bandwagon is to keep rolling into the next general election.

But the Green Party will also face some problems over the coming months and years. As the Manifesto for A Sustainable Society is put under the microscope by the media and political opponents, the party will have to be much sharper in its language and behaviour if it is to take advantage of the full glare of the media. At the same time, there is likely to be enormous pressure for the party to compromise on key policies that are completely outside the mainstream of political orthodoxy. The influx of new and perhaps light green members will also be a threat to the party's radicalism. Another thorny issue is likely to be the amount of autonomy for local parties, and how accountable the centre will be to them. The selection of the European Election speakers and the writing of the manifesto demonstrate the "democratic deficit" in the party's own structure.

Simmering ideological conflicts within the party are another problem in need of resolution. An agreement needs to be sorted out about the party's stance with regard to capitalism, and linked to that, whether it calls itself left, right, in front, or nothing at all. The whole question needs to be debated openly at the party's conference in Wolverhampton this Autumn, in the pages of Econews and elsewhere, so that the party's national speakers are not left to give their own personal view to the media.

Great opportunities have now opened up for the Green Party in this country to achieve electoral progress and changes in public consciousness that previously have been confined to the European continent. It will be interesting to see how the party faces up to the challenges ahead, and whether it will be able to consolidate and build on the 2.3 million votes it won on 15th June.

KINNOCKIST TENDENCY

EMPLOYING time-honoured tactics of entryism, Labour plan to set up a network of sympathisers (none of us at GL, honest!) inside green and environmental groups to advise the party, while publically denigrating the importance of the greens, on how to "sell" Labour policies to green voters.

NETWORK

EUROPE: GREEN TIMES

A NEW Euro-mag has been started called Green Times. The first issue is a promising mix of articles on greening deserts, green parties in Poland, European politics and green philosophy. Give it a try - they need your support! Write to De Groenen VZW, Blekersdijk 14, B-9000, Ghent, Belgium, sending cheque etc for 750 Belgium Francs for the next six issues.

GREEN
Times

In the next GL (September), we'll be having a special focus on international issues. If you've got any news of green parties/activities abroad that you think should be publicised then please send them to us by mid-August.

ARAL SEA CONSPIRACY

ACCORDING TO the Chair of a public committee investigating the disappearance of the Aral Sea in the Soviet Union (see Green International, GL64), its demise may well have been planned. Mukhtar Shakhnov found a map indicating that scientists were intending to use the dried out lake for rice cultivation. According to Shakhnov, as irrigation schemes have led to the lake retreating 80km in 25 years, 75 million tonnes of salty sand and dust have been blown onto the region's crops. Moreover, smaller particles are staying in the atmosphere and turning the rain salty as far away as Lithuania and Byelorussia. But the dust is not just salty, it also contains the chemical detritus of 25 years industrialised agriculture washed down the rivers into the Aral Sea, including pesticides like DDT. More than 70% of mothers in the areas around the rivers Syrdarya and Amudary, where the chemicals concentrate in drinking water, are anaemic; sterility and congenital deformities are widespread; and infant mortality is the highest in the Soviet Union. It makes you realise why nationalism is spreading in these areas.

ANARCHIST FAYRE

THERE'LL BE a fayre in Oxford on July 22nd with stalls, music, books and food. East Oxford Community Centre, Cowley Rd, Oxford.

>> More Network -->

RAW MILK GETS ROUGH TREATMENT

ONE OF THE government's few legislative responses to the recent upsurge in food poisonings was to propose to ban all sales of raw milk (which was a bit strange, given that the vast majority of food poisoning cases are not caused by unpasteurised milk). As the Bio-dynamic Agricultural Association (BDAA) pointed out in a recent newsletter, this inconsistency suggests that milk was being made "a scapegoat, so that MAFF can be seen to be taking some effective action" after the eggs scandal. Already, anyone who wants raw, green-top milk has to make a conscious effort to collect it from one of 2,000 farms or have them deliver it, which allows consumers rather more choice than with BST.

On the 13th June (the day of the hazelnut yoghurt scare) a written answer in the House of Commons revealed that the government had backed down in the face of a determined campaign by producers and consumers, and significant opposition from its own backbenches. MAFF received 1,200 letters from individuals and organisations against the ban, representing 18,000 consumers of raw milk. Officially, the government decided it shouldn't interfere with the freedom of choice of these people. However, those involved with the campaign reckon that the government may well try again. Apart from anything, it would be far tidier for MAFF and other authorities not to have to deal separately with all these small producers. The government introduced a ban in Scotland, which still stands today.

Instead of a ban, the government now proposes three measures, only one of which makes much sense. Firstly, untreated milk will be more fully labelled, to supplement the distinctive green-top. Incidentally, it will be interesting to see how they square this new-found zeal with their laissez-faire attitude to food labelling generally.

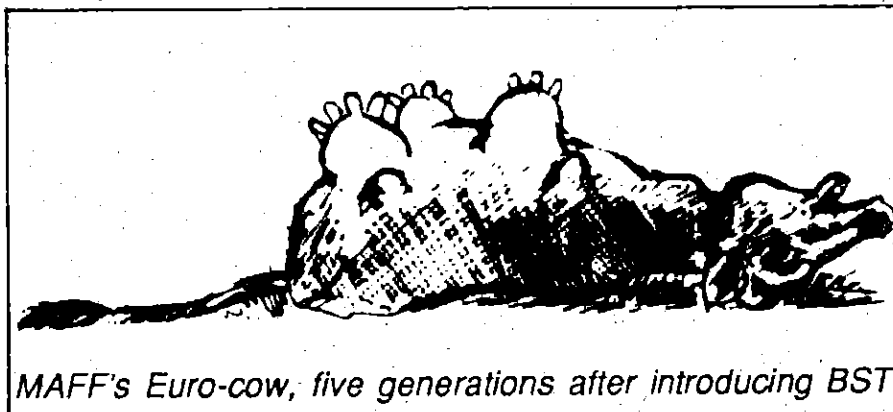
Secondly, untreated milk is to be more fully tested using the total bacteria and coliform test to assess the keeping quality (a function of bacterial contamination), and this is welcomed by raw milk producers who are concerned that their product should be seen to be as clean as possible. Already their cows are scrutinised annually for tuberculosis and brucellosis, milk samples can be tested at random, and farm dairies and their water supplies are regularly inspected (there are less visits for non-green-top producers). One hopes MAFF and other authorities will be allowed the funds to provide the inspectors and technical support that will be needed.

BDAA member and dairy farmer, John Neligan, is pushing for a Code of Conduct

to be drawn up between green-top producers and MAFF to address the salmonella question. However, as he says: "In a healthy herd there should be no salmonella contamination. It is only modern dairy practices that have created the problem, through things like the moving of young calves in auction markets, the purchase of cattle feeds that are contaminated with salmonella and grazing pastures that are affected by human sewage or by wild animals". Therefore, as well as strengthening the inspection and testing procedures already in force or suggested by the government, the code would extend far more widely: to people handling milk and milk products on farms; to cattle feed standards; to fertilizer application - especially relating to poultry waste and human sewage; and to the isolation and testing of purchased calves and cattle. "One can say that it is much cheaper to introduce pasteurisation, but even if one does, one still needs to tackle salmonella and other forms of food poisoning".

been outbreaks of food poisonings due to pasteurised milk being contaminated by poor dairy operation, which is causing them increasing concern. For instance, in 1979 3,500 people were poisoned by milk from one dairy. By comparison, according to MAFF figures, the total number of food poisoning cases due to untreated milk over the last five years is 1,600. However, statistics on this issue are distinctly problematic since they rely on whether the poisoning was reported to a doctor and the source identified. There are additional with the methodology in this area of research.

Pasteurisation certainly allows milk to be transported and sold at greater distances from the producers (your doorstep pint may be over 3 days old), but there are also disadvantages. The process destroys at least 10% of the valuable vitamins B1, B6 and B12, and at least 25% of the vitamin C in raw milk. It also affects the absorbability of the vitamin folate and may inactivate other protein carriers such as zinc, vitamin B12 and iron. Whey proteins



MAFF's Euro-cow, five generations after introducing BST

The government's third measure is to simplify procedures to enforce heat treatment orders on contaminated milk. If this makes it easier for some local environmental health officers to carry on their crusade against green-top milk then it would be a very dangerous development. In the past green-top milk has been blamed for food poisoning without sufficient evidence.

Why pasteurise?

The very fact that the milk is to be sold untreated means that the cows must be looked after especially carefully. MAFF should have been encouraging the good husbandry of these farmers, rather than threatening to wipe out their livelihoods. Pasteurisation cannot protect the consumer against poor handling and storage of milk: while most modern dairies are extremely hygienic, a recent study by the National Institute for Research in Dairying found that 146 out of 158 samples of pasteurised milk from 50 dairies were contaminated with bacteria to some degree. In addition, a report earlier this year by the Communicable Diseases Surveillance Centre found that there have

are denatured by heat treatment, reducing food value and possibly triggering allergic reactions. Raw milk contains various enzymes, cells and anti-infective agents, that help suppress infection and may be involved in the development of a strong immune system. All are affected by pasteurisation. In addition, the presence of these factors in raw milk helps to restrict the growth of bacteria in the milk itself during handling and storage. Even after pasteurisation, one group of bacteria, the thermophilic, not only survive, but also grow well at refrigeration temperatures.

As the Association of Unpasteurised Milk Producers and Consumers (AUMPC) puts it: "Pasteurisation is unable to destroy all bacteria but does inhibit the defence offered by the antibodies present in raw milk. So pasteurised milk offers easier conditions for the growth of undesirable bacteria than does raw milk. Hygienically produced milk does not need pasteurisation." However, for producers of unpasteurised milk and dairy products like John Neligan, the issue goes beyond nutritional statistics to a conviction out of experience that raw milk simply has a power for life that is lost through pasteurisation - epitomised in the

arguments over breast feeding versus bottle feeding of human babies. In Rudolf Steiner's words: "milk is crystallised love".

At the recent Festival of Food and Farming in Hyde Park, AUMPC had a small stall which was packed out all day with Londoners savouring the taste of unpasteurised milk, cream and butter for the first time in their lives. Clearly there is a market if the government will stop discriminating against green-top milk producers. Following the defeat of the government, AUMPC will continue campaigning, with the next steps being to overturn the ban on raw milk in Scotland, and to tackle the lack of availability, because of the 1985 ban on retailing, of raw milk in shops, restaurants and institutions for those who specifically request it. In addition, there is an urgent need for a list of green-top milk producers to be made available to the public. Unfortunately, this information is held by the Milk Marketing Board, who can't release it for various, somewhat unclear reasons. As we go to press, their head-office has promised GL to look into the possibility of providing this information, either as a list, or to telephone enquirers. In the meantime, why not phone the producers department or public relations department (01 398 4101) asking them to make this information available?

If you want to know more or can help continue the campaign, write to AUMPC at *Path Hill Farm Cottage, Goring Heath, nr Reading RG8 7RE* or John Neligan, 7 Stirling Close, Pennyland, Milton Keynes MK15 8AN (0908 674856). The latest issue of *Star & Furrow*, the journal of the BDAA has a useful article on milk. It's available (£5 sub) from *BDAA, Woodman Lane, Clent, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 9PX*; tel (0562) 884933.

JERRY SPRING

GROWING PAINS FOR ORGANIC MILK

TWO SMALL organic farmers in South Devon have struck up a deal with unigate to supply organic milk. Even at 37p per half litre and the small area that can be supplied, demand is far outstripping supply. The problem is in persuading other farmers to join the scheme so that it can grow and benefit from economies of scale. Recently, a local NFU/Soil Association conference on the subject had to be cancelled for lack of interest. "The big dairy farmers are making so much money at the moment that they are not interested and the small ones are giving up anyway", was the comment of a local NFU official.

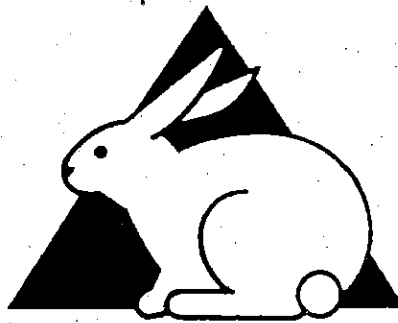
But as the journal for organic producers, *New Farmer & Grower*, put it; "we have to find a way to shake the general farming community out of its complacency and show them that our way is the right way forward for them too." A job there for the Green Party?

RECYCLED PAPER

THE DIRECTORY of recycled paper, aimed at encouraging offices to change over is available from FoE at 26-28 *Underwood St, London N1 7JQ* for £1.50. It shows the range of high quality paper available, lists suppliers and printers willing to use recycled paper. In addition there is a brief guide, *Paperchase* (also £1.50), for those wanting to set up a waste paper collection system in the office.

GREENHOUSE LEAFLET

THE ASSOCIATION for the Conservation of Energy, together with WWF have produced a new leaflet setting out the greenhouse problem and suggesting a strategy for combating it. It's available for £1 plus an A4 s.a.e with a 22p stamp from *ACE, 9 Sherlock Mews, London W1M 3RH*. Phone 01 935 1495 for details on bulk orders.



Not Tested on Animals

BUAV ARE launching a cruelty-free logo to help guide you through the maze of new 'right-on' products. Companies will have to register with BUAV and show that they or their suppliers have not used or commissioned animal tests on either finished products or ingredients within the last five years. They must also have a clear policy against such tests. So if you don't like deodorants that have been rubbed into the raw, abraded skin of guinea pigs, or lipstick that has been forced to rats till they die of intestinal damage then look out for the logo. Or of course, you could give them up altogether.

BOB-A-LONG

WALKING BY coach holidays, run by Bob Sloan are on the move again, with spaces left on tours to the Bronte country, Upper Brittany, the Isle of Wight coastpath and Cornwall. Phone (0727) 226770, or write to *Bob-a-long, Harbour Rd, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7TE* for details.

HOLISM IN SUNDERLAND

TIM MATHEWS is hoping to start a holistic study centre offering courses on meditation, alternative medicine, bio-dynamic agriculture etc. An ideal house is available in Sunderland, which has no centre of this kind, and Tim is looking for help financially as well as with setting up courses. Contact him at *18 Park Place East, Sunderland SR2 8EE*

HISTORY BOOK

DEREK WALL (who was GP Euro-candidate for Bristol) is writing a book on the history of the British Green Party. He would be very grateful for any anecdotes, archive material, analysis etc, especially from the period of 1972-1978. Please write to *34 New King St, Bath, Avon BA1 2BN*, or phone (0225) 315335 if you can help.

GREEN COLLEGE NEWS

AS WELL as the courses mentioned last month for this summer, the new Green College has finalised plans for a series of weekends this autumn.

7-8 OCT: Environmental politics and the green movement in Britain.

21-22 OCT: Learning from Europe and the U.S. Environmental protection in comparative perspective.

4-5 NOV: The crisis in agriculture and alternative farming methods.

18-19 NOV The new economics: critical perspectives.

Courses are £50 (£35 non-residential) with reductions on application. All take place at a commune in Malvern, Worcestershire. Details from *The Green College, Pickersleigh Court, Malvern, Worcs WR14 2ET*, (0865) 249020 or 01 674 0763.

WHAT HAVE...

GOLD BLEND, Decaff, Milkmaid, Milky Bar, Dairy Crunch, Mix-o-Choc, Maggi, Carnation, Coffee Mate, Go-Dog, Chambourcy, Crosse & Blackwell, Branston, Cook-in-Pot, Pasta Choice, Findus, Eskimo, Lean Cuisine, Libby's, Um Bongo, Kit Kat, Yorkie, Breakaway, Fox's Glacier, Polo, After Eights, Black Magic, Quality Street, Sun-Pat and Smarties got in common? (Clue: the answer is not, at least directly, to do with their inedibility). Answer: they're some of the many products of Nestlé, subject of a new boycott (see *Network*, GL73) over infant formula marketing in the Third World.

All this, and more is in *Ethical Consumer*, an excellent new mag that this issue looks at shampoo, instant coffee, supermarkets and paint, as well as providing boycott news and updates on information in the last issue. Six issues cost £9.00 from *ECRA publishing Ltd, 100 Gretney Walk, Moss Side, Manchester M15 5ND*, phone 061 226 6683.

GARDEN OF THE SEA

FOR CENTURIES, people in many areas of the world have harvested and eaten edible marine plants, especially in the Far East. Now interest is growing in Europe and North America, with the recent increasing realisation of the potential of the oceans for providing food for humans. Here, dried sea-vegetables have become readily available through healthfood shops, mail order wholesalers like Real Foods of Edinburgh and oriental supermarkets.

So why eat sea-vegetables? Why not? They broaden the base of the diet, being a storehouse of essential trace minerals which are often lacking in land-grown vegetables. For instance, except for Norfolk, U.K. soils are largely deficient in selenium. In addition, sea-vegetables aren't grown with artificial chemicals (except perhaps in the North Sea) and are not bred to emphasise features convenient to commercial producers at the expense of nutritional value and taste. Neither are they slimy, fishy or intrinsically salty. Infact the variety of tastes, means if you don't like one variety, don't assume you won't like the others. Taste problems may arise if you forget that dried products often need rinsing before use.

RECIPES

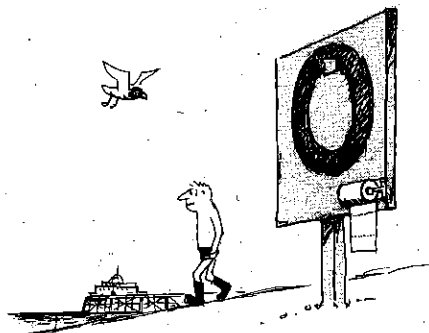
- **Wakame or Kombu Crisps** make a delightful change from potato crisps. Wakame and kombu (kelp) fronds are robust, long and green. If the wakame has a centre vein, cut it out with scissors as it is too hard to eat. Either soak the wakame or kombu briefly before frying or simply fry it dry. Cut into 1" by 2" squares then briefly fry in hot oil until crisp. Absorb excess oil on a paper towel.
- **Dulse** has a reddish-purplish hue. Rinse well until free of salty taste in a bowl of cold water. Do not soak as this breaks the delicate fronds. Examine carefully for bits of grit. There is no need to cook it, squeeze out excess water gently and serve a generous quantity between slices of bread and marge, add to salads or serve with boiled potatoes.
- **Stuffed nori** is made with prepackaged, wafer thin black sheets of nori, which can be eaten straight from the pack. Spread hot, cooked brown rice (or pot barley) evenly on sheets of nori. Roll up like a Swiss roll and flatten slightly. If necessary, moisten the edge to make it hold together. Cut each roll into 3 or 4 pieces and serve hot.
- **Hijiki (hee-zhee-kee)** looks like black spaghetti when it is reconstituted. Simmer desired quantity with enough water to cover till soft. Add marge and serve hot as an accompaniment to spuds.

ELLA MACLEOD MELIK

Thanks to the excellent mag *New Leaves*, available quarterly (£3) from *Kathleen Jannaway, 47 Highlands Rd, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 8NQ*

FLOATING ON A SEA OF SEWAGE

THE GOVERNMENT'S slyly tabled amendment (introduced, covertly, after the Euro-elections and on the last day of debate in the Lords) to the Water Privatisation Bill has caused a political storm. It gives the water authorities immunity from prosecution for pollution offences for a year after privatisation. The need for the amendment arises from the fact that discharges from around 1,000 sewage plants regularly breach pollution levels set in their operating contracts. The government claims it is unfair to hold the new companies to blame for the faults of their nationalised predecessors, which is rather as if P&O tried to shed its responsibility for Zeebrugge just because its ferry company was no longer called Townsend Thoresen.



Coming so soon after the Euro-elections, it is a timely illustration of how seriously the government takes 'green' issues. Its effect will be to totally negate the benefit of the pollution inspectorate - included in the Bill with great fanfare to convince critics that privatisation will mean cleaner tap-water and rivers. FoE, whose adverts on the issue have been appearing in the papers are hoping to challenge the amendment in the courts.

As if this wasn't enough, another amendment will take away protection from development from water authority land outside National Parks and AONBs. This overturns an amendment to protect these areas that was added only two weeks

EARTH WARRIORS!

AS A result of the battles being fought around the world between the forces of 'progress' and indigenous communities defending their environment, Oxford FoE has launched Earth Warriors, using as its emblem an ancient design from the plains of Nazca, Peru. Money raised goes directly to support the fight of such communities and their organisations, and to campaigning on their behalf.

T shirts festuring the design are available in L & XL and various colours: £6 each including p&p. 3" circular badges have also been made, and cost 30p each 20p p&p, bulk rates available. Contact Earth Warriors, 379 Meadow Lane, Oxford

before - but then there was an election campaign going on... The issue of land development is proving increasingly important as the water industry finds itself caught having to fund massive expenditure (£12-15 billion on latest estimates) on cleaning up the rivers and water supplies or face breaching EEC rules. Britain should have complied already, but has been given till 1993, and is hoping to be allowed an additional two years on top of that. In addition, the government can't get away again with undervaluing land following the scandalous sale of the Royal Ordnance to British Aerospace: half the profits from land development will have to be used for water/sewage improvements (why not all, you may ask?). As one merchant banker put it: "privatisation of water has to a large extent lost its vital sweetener - the potential property deals which could have induced the City to invest in water."

Water charges are set to rise substantially (perhaps by 15% per year) to pay for this, desperately needed capital spending and the £370 million costs of privatisation. The government is negotiating in secret with the water authorities to decide how much charges can increase, and an average figure will be published this month. As a free sample of life after privatisation, here are some figures from the Isle of Wight, where houses are already on water meters: a unit (about 230 gallons) costs 85p for the first 90 units and £1.15 thereafter. In addition, there's a fixed rental of £11.10. For a 1-2 person household using a unit a week, the annual bill is about £55. But for a family of four, using one unit a day (which isn't unusual), the bill is £394 a year!

Multiply these figures by the projected increases in water charges, and you'll know what to expect in a few year's time. And now to rub it in, the government is to allow these exciting new water and sewage businesses to pollute our rivers if they feel like it - so it'll be too risky to save on your water bill by washing in your local burn. How's that for a captive market?

OX4 4BL. Assistance from interested individuals or groups needed. As the campaign develops it will feature in GL, so please send us your news.



STOP PRESS: Ron Birch wants people to campaign against Tesco, who are felling important trees in Stroud for a car park. Contact: *Garfield Villa, Belle Vue Rd, Stroud, Glos.* Tel: (0453) 750371 for more.

July...

Till 10th Aug. Performances and workshops on **The tree of life: a search for a sustainable city**, moving to various sites on the South Bank, to highlight the impact of South London on the Earth. Details from Ana Sarginson on 01 274 4409.

8th-9th. In **Search of the Sacred**: in Landscape, architecture and place. Weekend conference organized by the Wrekin Trust. Venue: Zoological Society, Regents Park, London. £48 (Members £43).

8th-9th. Activists **Rainforest Workshop** at FoE, 26-28 Underwood St, London.

9th-23rd. **Traces of Matriarchal Culture in South Wales.** Holiday course for women at The Malvern, 1 Malvern Terrace, Swansea SA2 0BE. £280/£260 (group reduction). Tutors: Monica Sjøo & Christel Gebel. Details: 0792 653164.

10th. **Ecofeminism.** Talk by Bernadette Vallely of WEN, St James Church, Piccadilly, London, 7pm.

10th. **Teddy Goldsmith, pioneer of Britain's Green Movement**, talks to the Business Network. Institute for Complementary Medicine, 21 Portland Place, London WC1; 6pm. £3 members, £8 non-members; £7 for veggie dinner afterwards. Contact: Marilyn Rose 01 435 5000.

10th-12th. **Caring for the Future.** Local government conference at Newcastle Civic Centre to promote local authorities as environmental protection agencies and promote awareness of green issues in local government. Details from Association of Metropolitan Authorities, 35 Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BJ.

11th **Energy Efficiency.** WEN talk by Linda Taylor from Association for the Conservation of Energy. Details: June 10th.

14th-15th. **FoE South-West Regional Meeting**

14th-16th. **Vegetarian Convention 1989.** Liverpool University. Phone 021 357 9294 for details.

14th-16th. **Earthing the Feminine: a journey of initiation** at 56 Ashley Rd, London N19 (cost: £55). An exploration of what it means to be a woman; the source of sexuality and gender, their links to nature. Phone (0292) 777526 or 01 267 4674 for details.

14-17th. Conference on **Destruction of the Environment and the Future for the Middle East and Africa.** Contact Dr K Safwat, Dept. Geography, University College, Swansea.

15th. **Second National Organic Wine Fair**, Ruyton Gardens, Ruyton-on-Dunsmore, Nr. Coventry, hosted by the National Centre for Organic Gardening (of TV Series "All Muck and Magic"). Details: Jackie Gear, Ruyton Gardens, 0203 303517.

15-16th. **TOES 89**, rolls on to Paris for this year's summit at Maison de la

Mutualite, 24 rue St Victor. Write to TOES 89, 28 bd de Sebastopol, 75004, Paris or phone (Paris) 42 71 41 63 for details.

22-30th. **Astrology & Self discovery camp**, organised by Rainbow Circle. Bookings: Lee Brown, 8 Stifford Clays, Grays, Thurrock, Essex RM16 2DU, 0375 382 597.

22-30th. **Wildlife Conservation Festival at Alexandra Palace.** Chaired by Sir. David Attenborough.

23rd-29th. **Fifth Annual Gandhi Summer School.** At the Abbey, Sutton Courtenay, Nr Oxford OX14 4AF. Theme: "Gandhian Approaches to Western Problems". Speakers: James Robertson (economics), Satish Kumar (Lifestyle), Rex Ambler (spirituality). £60 for those camping, £70 for those using the dormitories. Contact: Robert Vint 0235 847401.

30-6 Aug. **Environmental Politics and the Green Movement in Britain.** Residential week in Malvern with the Green College. £145, details: (0865) 249020 or 01 674 0763.

31st. **Irish Struggle in Northern Ireland:** video with speaker at Veganomics Restaurant, 312-314 Lewisham Road, London SE13, 7.30pm.

GREEN DIARY

August...

1-7th. **Wilderness Forest Camp** at Saxnas, Sweden. Contact Olov Johansson, Glen 4-840-31, Asarna, Sweden. Phone + 46 687 14048

2nd. **Barnet Animal Rights.** Monthly meeting (1st Weds.), Quaker Meeting House, Alexandra Grove, North Finchley. Details: PO Box 76, Barnet, Herts. EN4 9AW.

4th. **Cantlin Stone Free Festival**, Clun, Shrop./Powys border.

6th. **Hiroshima Day.**

7th. **Life Before Profit.** Monthly meeting (1st Mon.), Veganomics Restaurant, 312-314 Lewisham Road, London SE13.

9th. **Nagasaki Day.**

11-13th. **Green Gathering** at Brookside, Mayton Lane, Broad Oak, nr Canterbury, Kent. Bands, stalls, wholefood, workshops. Free entry, camping available.

11-20th. **Annual Vegan Family Camp.** For vegan singles, couples, families etc., all welcome. Venue somewhere on Kent coast. Preceded by a Vegan Youth Camp, for young vegans, **6th-12th.** on same site. Details of both from John Strettle, 30 Dinsdale Avenue, Kings Estate, WallSEND NE28 9JD, 091 262 8844.

12-20th. **Ancient Crafts & Green Futures Camp**, organised by the Rainbow Circle. Details, see July 22nd above.

18-20th. **Cissbury Ring Free Festival.**

3m North of Worthing, Sussex.

19-20th. **Planet Aid Festival for the Future**, Essex Showground, Chelmsford. £15, including camping. Contact: Planet Aid, Development & Environment Centre, 38-40 Exchange Street, Norwich NR2 1AX, 0603 761507.

19-27th. Exhibition and workshops connected with **The tree of Life Project**, see July.

26th-Sept 3rd: **Rainbow Circle Children's Camp.** Waged: kids £40, adults £20. Unwaged: kids £20, adults £10. Fun & creativity, crafts, music & more, more, more. Info. & bookings see **Ancient Crafts & Green Futures Camp** details above.

September...

9th-23rd Goddess Art Exhibition, a collective exhibition and series of evening events by women artists involved in Earth Mysteries and the Goddess movement at the Assembly Rooms, Glastonbury. Details from Phillipa Bowers (0749) 77145.

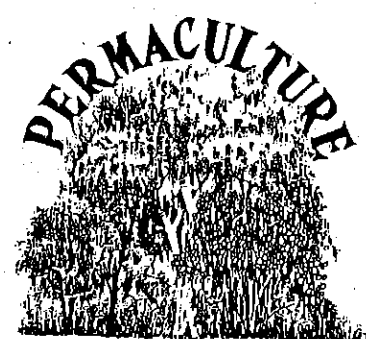
15th-17th. **Holistic Gardening.** Short course at Centre for Alternative Technology. Includes Biodynamics, Permaculture, Deep Ecology & Gaia Hypothesis. £115/£85/£55. Details: CAT, Machynlleth, Powys, Cymru SY20 9AZ, 0654 2400.

16th-24th. **Celebration of Life Camp**, organised by Rainbow Circle. £30-£100, kids free. Skill sharing camp. Details, July 22nd above.

17th. **International Co-op Day** at the Priory Hotel, Iffley, Oxford. Contact Mark Craig if you want to attend, run a stall etc. on (0865) 249241.

22nd. **Environmental Policies in the nineties - intergration of grey and green?** Conference in Nijmegen, Holland. Contact IVM, NeL, Thomas van Aquinostraat 5, PB 9044, NL-6500 KD Nijmegen, Holland.

23rd-24th. **FoE Annual Conference.** Details later.



DESIGNING FOR PEOPLE

Permaculture UK is an educational charity for designing living communities.
Let's BE green instead of discussing it.

Full Designers' Course August 25 - September 10
£1 for magazine, booklet and information to:
Permaculture UK, 8 Hunters Moon, Dartington,
Totnes, Devon TQ9 6JT. Tel: 0803 867546.



PEACE DIARY

JUL 3: SAY NO TO USS IOWA! As Cruise missiles leave Greenham Common, they are coming back into Portsmouth Harbour on the most powerful battleship in the world. The Iowa carries 32 sea-launched Cruise missiles. There will be a land and sea protest in Portsmouth: meet 10.30am Clarence Pier. There will be protests until the Iowa leaves on July 8th. Contact SCANN (0705) 811603

JUL 6-9: END CONVENTION, Vitoria-Gastez, Spain. Details from National CND, or contact c/Virgin de los Pelligros, 10-2^a Izda, 28013 MADRID.

JUL 8-9: Aldermaston Weekend Women's Peace Camp. Inf: Jean (0993) 703811.

JUL 17: CND National Conference resolutions deadline.

JUL 22: Fylingdales Peace Camp & Quaker Meeting: 11.30am. Inf: Sylvia (0723) 870030.

JUL 24-AUG 6: Fundraising walk by Bruce Kent, circling London, keeping mainly to footpaths, and staying well clear of the M25. Info from David Rumsey or Wendy Pullum, Bruce Kent Walk, CND, 22-24 Underwood St, London N1 7JG (01.250 4010).

JUL 29-30: Resistance Gathering: meeting of the Nonviolent Direct Action Network at Manchester Town Hall. Further information and registration: David Polder, NVDA Network, CND.

AUG 2-9: Summer camp at Faslane Peace Camp, organised jointly by the newly-established Youth Nonviolent Direct Action Network and Christian CND. The latter are organising their peace and justice camp from 3rd to the 7th. Details from CND.

AUG 3: PEACE WAVE Hiroshima and Nagasaki commemoration. Details: Peace Wave, 6-19-23 Shimbashi, Monatu-ku, TOKYO 105, Japan.

AUG 6: Hiroshima commemoration - for details of the International Shadow Project and Snowball actions at Upper Heyford, contact CND.

AUG 9: Nagasaki commemoration: the ringing of peace bells. For the Japanese peace movement little bells from Nagasaki have become a traditional peace symbol. A month after the atomic bomb, Nagasaki's bells were discovered undamaged in the ruins and restored to their place to ring again for peace.

SEP 1-2: International Peace Bureau Annual Conference, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton, Sussex BN1 9QU. Details: Anna Rehin, 30 Prince Edwards Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1BE (0273 476358).

TWO CHEERS FOR PEACE NEWS!

PEACE NEWS is among us again, though strangely transformed. While it is still issued fortnightly, in appearance it resembles a newspaper rather than a magazine: its politics too have changed, though to what extent, it is not yet clear. My misgivings about the magazine's relaunch were only confirmed by the nature of much of its recent content, though nevertheless I was pleased to see it and I suspect it will continue to be the one grassroots campaigning newspaper that belongs to the peace movement as a whole and not to one tendency within it. Peace News remains unrivalled for covering the peace movement is actually doing: and the vitality (and volatility) of the famous letters' page testifies to that healthy ability of the magazine to generate controversy.

Yet I still miss the old Peace News, despite its eccentricities and occasional absurdities. It could certainly be exasperating, but also strangely compelling, recording the angst of the right-on and the tribulations of a kind of do-it-yourself politics that seemed to exist outside space and time. At least it did have a focus, provided by a political perspective that had become essentially anarchist - replaced now by a viewpoint which will turn out to be a kind of left liberalism. This new uncertainty of focus has led to a strange choice of material: witness an astonishing piece by Bob Overy (in PN May 26), essentially an apology for Labour's militaristic, jingoistic new 'defense' policy; and a whimsical feature by Mike Holderness in the following issue approving of the 'vigilante' Guardian Angels who help to police the London tube - and who are *not* non-violent. No light was shed on PN's policy by the first editorial comment which itself cried out, in its raggedness and incoherence, for some sharp editing.

A monthly magazine might allow deeper, more thoughtful analysis. In covering world news, a shoestring mag never has the facilities to produce much more than barstool punditry, with moral outrage substituting for real understanding (as in the reports on China). However, the second relaunched issue was already a distinct improvement on the first, and the letters' pages point to one possible role for PN - initiating real GLASNOST in the peace movement, dealing with topics that still remain unmentionable (e.g. the 'split' at Greenham and the isolation of Yellow Gate). There is a suspicious amount of concealment and self-censorship in the peace movement: even PN's popular 'Earwig' column seems curiously restrained, crawling along by means of hints and nudges, like a gossip columnist forbidden to reveal any gossip.

So - two cheers for Peace News: but cheers nonetheless.

Barry Maycock

MR TANIMOTO, fearful for his family and church, at first ran towards them by the shortest route, along Koi Highway. He was the only person making his way into the city; he met hundreds and hundreds of them were fleeing, and everyone of them seemed to be hurt in some way. The eyebrows of some were burned off and skin hung from their faces and hands. Others, because of pain, held their arms up as if carrying something in both hands. Some were vomiting as they walked. Many were naked or in shreds of clothing. On some undressed bodies, the burns had made patterns - of undershirt straps and suspenders and, on the skin of some women (since white repelled the heat from the bomb and dark clothes absorbed it and conducted it to the skin), the shapes of flowers they had had on their kimonos. Many, although injured themselves, supported relatives who were worse off. Almost all had their heads bowed, looked straight ahead, were silent, and showed no expression whatever...

...When Mr Tanimoto, with his basin reached the park it was very crowded, and to distinguish the living from the dead was not easy, for most of the people lay still, with their eyes open. To Father Kleinsorge, an Occidental, the silence in the grove by the river, where hundreds of gruesomely wounded suffered together, was one of the most painful and awesome phenomena of his whole experience. The hurt ones were quiet; no one wept, much less screamed in pain; no one complained; none of the many who died did so noisily; not even the children cried; very few people even spoke. And when Father Kleinsorge gave water to some whose faces had been almost blotted out by flash burns, they took their share and then raised themselves a little and bowed to him in thanks...

...On his way back with more water, Father Kleinsorge got lost on a detour around a fallen tree, and as he looked for his way through the woods, he heard a voice ask from the underbrush, "Have you anything to drink?" He saw a uniform. Thinking there was just one soldier, he approached with the water. When he had penetrated the bushes, he saw there were about twenty men, and they were all in exactly the same nightmarish state: their faces were wholly burned, their eyesockets were hollow, the fluid from their melted eyes had run down their cheeks. (They must have had their faces upturned when the bomb went off; perhaps they were anti-aircraft personnel.) Their mouths were mere swollen, pus-covered wounds, which they could not bear to stretch enough to admit the spout

lest we forget...



Photo: CND

of the teapot. So Father Kleinsorge got a large piece of grass and drew out the stem so as to make a straw, and gave them all water to drink that way. One of the, said, "I can't see anything." Father Kleinsorge answered, as cheerfully as he could, "There's a doctor at the entrance to the park. He's busy now, but he'll come soon and fix your eyes, I hope"...

...Just before dark, Mr Tanimoto came across a twenty-year-old girl, Mrs Kamai, the Tanimoto's nextdoor neighbour. She was crouching on the ground with the body of her infant daughter in her arms. The baby had evidently been dead all day. Mrs Kamai jumped up when she saw Mr Tanimoto and said,

"Would you please try and locate my husband?" Mr Tanimoto knew that her husband had been inducted into the army just the day before; he and Mrs Tanimoto had entertained Mrs Kamai in the afternoon, to make her forget. Judging by the many maimed soldiers Mr Tanimoto had seen during the day, he surmised that the barracks had been badly damaged by whatever it was that had hit Hiroshima. He knew he hadn't a chance of finding Mrs Kamai's husband, even if he searched, but he wanted to humour her. "I'll try," he said. "You've got to find him," she said. "He loved out baby so much." I want him to see her once more"...

...The night was hot, and it seemed

even hotter because of the fires against the sky, but the younger of the two girls Mr Tanimoto and the priest had rescued complained to Father Kleinsorge that she was cold. He covered her with his jacket. She and her older sister had been in the salt water of the river for a couple of hours before being rescued. The younger one had huge raw flash burns on her body; the salt water must have been excruciatingly painful to her. She began to shiver heavily, and again said it was cold. Father Kleinsorge borrowed a blanket from someone nearby and wrapped her up, but she shook more and more, and said again, "I am so cold," and then she suddenly stopped shivering and was dead.

Extracts from John Hersey's remarkable book, Hiroshima, first published in the New Yorker magazine in 1946, and available now (Penguin, £3.95) with a further chapter on the lives of the survivors 40 years on.

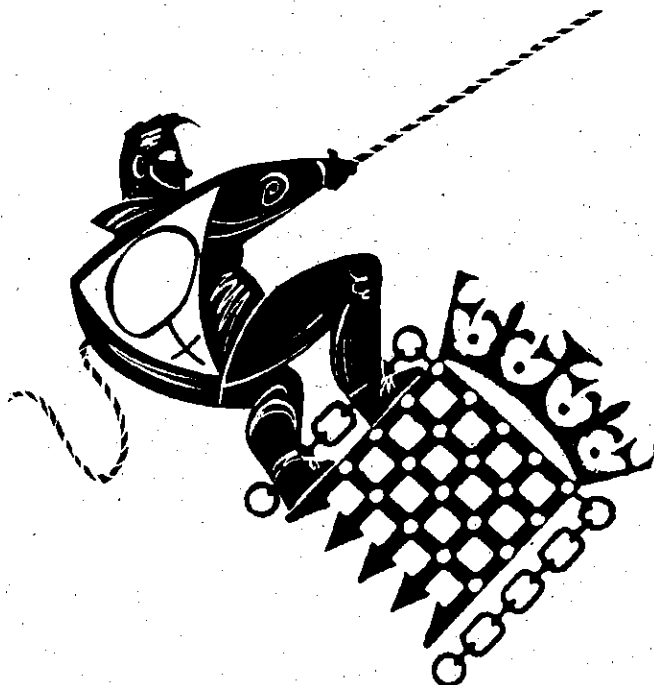
On 6th August, local peace campaigners will be out painting shadows on the streets. Join them, so that we never forget.

- PLANS FOR new nuclear deployments at US bases like Upper Heyford, Oxfordshire continue to unfold, despite government denials. It has long been believed that the Prime Minister has privately agreed to the deployment of new F1-11G fighter-bombers, intended to 'compensate' for the nuclear weapons lost under the Dec 1987 INF agreement. These aircraft would be equipped with Short Range Attack Missiles (SRAM). Local residents were alerted by a change in the flightpath back to the original one that took planes directly over a school and village. The 'environmental friendly' route required a sharp turn shortly after take-off - doing it with the heavy payloads (like SRAM) could tear the wings off. Moreover, USAF contractors began work for the new facilities at Upper Heyford on June 15, 1988. Despite the bleatings of Defence Secretary George Younger that "no decisions have been made" on NATO force 'adjustments' (note the euphemism!) it is clear that 'modernisation' is already going ahead and that the decisions have been made in secret, undisclosed to parliament and the public.

- LEEDS GREEN Umbrella reported on the April (1st) invasion of U.S-run Menwith Hill listening base in Yorkshire. The military had called in hundreds of police to protect them only to find that the 'invasion' was actually telephone calls from 200 peace campaigners to the families and living quarters of U.S. personnel! Americans on the base are required to report conversations with local people to the security officers.

Imagine for a moment that the Green Party managed to get one or more MPs elected to Westminster. Could they become a force for radicalising that archaic institution? ALEX BEGG, while sceptical of the utility and accountability of Westminster politics, takes up the discussion begun by Mark Kinzley (GL70) to suggest how we could make better use of a future Green MP, even within the present system. Alex has been a research assistant to Labour backbencher Peter Archer.

Don't spectate - participate!



From: "Abseiling makes the heart grow fonder", postcard by Kate Charlesworth for OLGA to celebrate 3 women abseiling into the House of Commons to protest about Clause 28 in the local Government Bill in 1988. Postcard available from: Cath Tate Cards, PO Box 647, London WC1X 0AP

IN THE WAKE of stories about the virtual demise of Die Grünen as a radical movement in Germany, it is worth considering what an anti-party party should do in the event of actually securing a seat in a parliament. How can we avoid becoming absorbed into the system without any real social change taking place? How should we avoid falling in with the habits of the British establishment?

Firstly, it is worth reiterating why we are reluctant to play the system like most MPs. Parliament is centralised: most decisions taken there could and should be taken at a much more local and informal level. It is elitist: Westminster politics takes place very much at the level of personal relations and there is no role for constituents or local party members to play. It is powerless: the commons acts for the most part as a rubber stamp for the decisions of the Cabinet. For a legislature, it does precious little legislating. Even the executive is tied down by vested interests and the inertia of the status quo. It is closed: the secrecy surrounding government in Britain is legendary, particularly regarding the executive (the Cabinet and the Civil Service). It is nationalist: the vesting of sovereignty here creates competition and tension between countries.

The Party bureaucracy controls the communications media in the name of the proletariat



The Party bureaucracy controls the means of production in the name of the proletariat



The Party bureaucracy is correct in the name of the proletariat



These are the most obvious problems, but there is also a more subtle fear. The Green Party demands the most fundamental changes in British society and its economic and political structures in order to end industrialism, consumerism and centralisation. If we are to achieve this, we must envisage coming to power with a manifesto to carry out (broadly speaking) a revolution. However, between that time and now, there will be a long process of consolidation and gradual gains in strength. This will lead to the formation of a subgroup in the Green Party of 'professional politicians', similar to the realos in Die Grünen. Indeed, without naming names, such a group of pragmatists among party officials and conference regulars can already be seen, even before the first Green MP. Is there not a danger that having gained some measure of power they will become reluctant to throw it away (for the most benevolent of motives)? Further, won't the desire to constantly build support, widen our appeal and make minor reforms lead to a dilution of our radicalism, even an abandonment of our principles?

What I want to show here, is how Green MPs without a majority should operate in order to be effective without becoming part of the system.

Against the spectacular

Firstly, there is the question of local party and constituent participation. This is vital in order to create (to adopt situationist language) a *situation* (that is, grassroots political activity and mass participation), and not a *spectacle* (a performance by a distant elite). We must have the idea that it is not an individual that has been elected but rather a party or a philosophy; and this philosophy must not be exclusive - one group in and one group out. We must create a continuous channel to a national forum open to all constituents. The basic

concepts of representative government must be challenged: the MP is merely a focus, a figurehead or a symbol.

A major barrier exists here in the rules of the House of Commons, which places much of the building off-limits to anyone but the individual named on the ballot paper. This should be opposed, although we can already get round it to a large extent through the use of 'research assistants' and 'secretaries' who can reach most parts. There should be a team, regularly changing its composition, comprised mainly of members of the MP's local party, but also of other constituents. The MP's salary is, I would say, sufficient for four if they don't object to fairly basic rates of pay - and I don't see why they should.

However, the main focus of activity should be in the constituency. The Westminster team should report back to the local party and to the public as a whole on a regular basis. I would go so far as to say that the MP must keep a detailed diary of everyone s/he speaks to in the House of Commons, to be the eyes and ears of the constituency. By keeping closely in touch, the local party can act as the point of involvement for the general public. Likewise, the other political bodies - all of them - must be liaised with,

So much for extra-parliamentary activity and ad-hoc meetings... but what about the institutions of the House of Commons itself?

The **Select Committees**, which scrutinise the work of each ministry, are worth attending and supporting. They provide a valuable opportunity to interrogate the Executive and uncover the mechanisms of government. It is also an excellent way of getting constituents involved through their putting questions. Hopefully, these committees will soon be televised to ensure an effective feedback to the constituency. They could provide a useful source of information for the Green Party nationally.

The **Standing Committees** on each piece of government legislation should be boycotted. The balance of their members reflects the government's majority and they have government whips to prevent anyone actually changing anything. In any case, to take part would be to legitimise the authority of the elective dictatorship. Except for rare instances, they are meaningless performances.

Written Questions through the Green MP are extremely useful for constituents and national party members, though ministers are under no obligation to answer them. One

The Party bureaucracy controls the judicial apparatus in the name of the proletariat

The Party bureaucracy controls the army and the police in the name of the proletariat

The Party bureaucracy utilizes repression in the name of the proletariat

The Party bureaucracy lives very well in the name of the proletariat

And the proletariat is happy with this?

Yes, because the Party bureaucracy never complains in the name of the proletariat



and given a voice: we cannot encourage political participation by shutting other parties out of the picture.

Casework should not all be handled by letter from Westminster, but rather delegated to the most local party member (or, for a specialised query, the most knowledgeable). Current procedure in dealing with constituents' queries involves finding the appropriate body or organisation, questioning or bullying them and then claiming credit for action taken. However, this creates a spectacle and not a situation. Instead, the party member should visit constituents, talk to them and support them in resolving their own problems. The local party would provide resources, suggestions, people and organisational support - but the action and the activity originate with the constituent. In every case, a central strategy must be to involve the constituent's neighbours; to widen the sense of responsibility and community by making the individual's problem the community's problem. For the green movement, this process of empowering citizens and strengthening communities is of equal if not greater significance than passing legislation.

Similarly, any invitation to an event, conference, meeting or discussion, should not be taken to apply to the MP alone, even by default, but to the local party member and/or interested constituent. Indeed the Westminster team and local party should positively search for anyone who might wish to be involved. This conjures up some glorious images: the local worthies invite the MP to a Garden Party, only to have a pair of ragged-trousered green anarchists turn up. But this is not a joke: it is an important part of generating participation and intra-community links. However, it should be stressed that anyone attending in such a capacity must, to a certain extent, be representing the local party as a whole and is limited in this respect (which applies to MP's too of course).

could even consider trying to break the system by flooding ministers with questions, although they already manage to deal with fairly huge quantities.

Similarly, **Oral Questions** in Parliament are a good way to empower constituents. However, it should be remembered that presently question time is the number one spectacle in British politics, an empty ritual of point-scoring. The local party should consider how best this is to be challenged and whether participation does not merely make the MP part of the spectacle.

The same problem exists for **debate in the House of Commons chamber**. Participation should certainly be avoided in the case of government legislation and in open debates we have to balance the danger of creating a spectacle against the benefits of introducing green thinking to a wider audience. It's another tricky question best left to the MP's local party, but my own feeling is that open debates could usefully publicise reports from Green Party working groups, public meetings in the constituency and so on - in other words, acting simply as a voice for a wider body.

Private Member's Bills are of extremely dubious value, since anything controversial has little if any chance of success. Even if passed, such bills are often amended out of all recognition. Participating would only weaken our real role in Westminster of questioning the authority of a closed parliament. Still, I would say it depends entirely on what the bill is and what the MP hopes to achieve by moving it: for instance, it could be a way of publicising green policy on particular issues (although interestingly, opposition Labour MPs have never tried this, preferring to seek all-party support).

Finally, in a future of a minority of green MPs, there is the question of **coalitions**. There is nothing green about a refusal to communicate or cooperate with other parties - that is simply arrogance. However, to me, working with

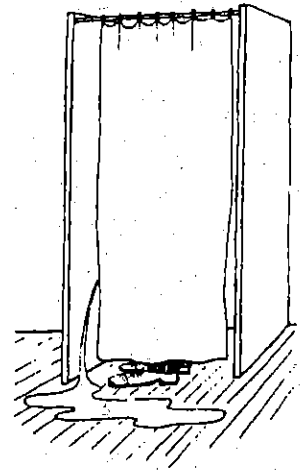
another party in government must constitute an acceptance by the Green Party that such electoral rule is legitimate. The place for compromise is between local groups, for taking action themselves that affects them alone; compromise between two elected elites to rule over us is quite another matter and weakens our claims for democracy and decentralisation by making us part of the elite. Perhaps a highly specific deal on devolution or constitutional reform might work. Or maybe an agreement, not to always vote with a party, but rather to vote against any other combination of parties... This is an extremely complex issue and deserves space to itself. The German experience shows it could be where our greatest danger lies - and the greens in the European Parliament our now going to have to face up to the same danger.

I should note, in mentioning the European Parliament, that while I have spoken throughout of the importance of the local level, I have not forgotten that we are part of a larger green movement in Europe and the world. We have yet to establish a supranational green forum with any half decent level of participation - although there have been green gatherings (e.g. see GL72 on Paris and GL62 on Antwerp) and a new Euro-mag, Green Times, has begun (see Network, this issue). This is vital if we are to challenge the nation as the 'natural' level of sovereignty, which we must do to awaken global consciousness and gain local power.

Media politics

Finally, in the light of the emergence of Green Party figureheads during the Euro-elections, there is the vaguest problem of all: the media attention that a Green MP will inevitably attract. How can we possibly avoid him or her

becoming the spectacle to end all spectacles? In the early days of the Labour Party, conference ruled and the de facto leader of the party was the chairperson of the conference. However, as time went by, the leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party gained so much attention that he completely upstaged the conference chair. One key reason for this was that when asked to comment, he frequently had to come up with a policy line on the spur of the moment.



The first lesson from this sorry tale is that the existence of a Parliamentary Green Party must be avoided. Yes, there has to be dialogue between local parties, but the appropriate forum for this is conference. Why should other local parties be shut out simply because they didn't get enough votes to elect their own MP?

The next problem is that the media cluster around sources of power like flies on waste. This does not just mean the MPs. Even if an MP carries out perfectly the task of representing the local party, that local party remains itself a source of power and threatens to turn other less fortunate groups, and those outside the party, into spectators. What is more, can we be certain that an elite of the most photogenic, the most newsworthy, within the local party will not arise?

Finally, we must stress diversity within the party. If the media cannot be shown the passage in Manifesto for a Sustainable Society then there is no 'green line' on that issue. Under media questioning, the MP or party member must resist the temptation to simply plug their own view, but rather to speak in terms of the arguments on both sides, stress consensus where it exists and the actions that others can take.

Retaking control over our lives

Much of what I've said here will apply in just the same way to Green Councillors and even to party officials. I have left unanswered the question of what we would do with a majority in the House of Commons: the obvious answer is to enact our manifesto, but my argument throughout has been that to maintain the radicalism of our manifesto and the meaningfulness of our action we must work in opposition to precisely this system. How then should a Green government achieve its aims? Indeed, what should its aims be? But that's another debate and one that is still some way away. However, the argument which runs throughout this article is that firstly, parliaments and governments do not have the power and influence that we credit them with, and secondly, that what action they do take is meaningless or destructive without mass-based support from below. Our programme must eschew petty environmentalism and social democracy in favour of giving people and communities real power over their lives.

In the meantime, anyone interested in the issues raised here can get in touch with me, Alex Begg at 2 Clarendon Crescent, Leamington Spa, Warks. CV32 5NR. Perhaps we can raise some of them at the next party conference or at local party meetings. Remember: don't spectate, participate!

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BARRY MAYCOCK reports on the opposition to the government's new Housing Act among both council and private tenants

Landlords off the leash!

"Will tenants of housing associations or private landlords be able to choose to transfer to a council landlord?"

"No"

"Will tenants who choose a private landlord be able to transfer back to the council if dissatisfied?"

"No"

"Will tenants have a choice as to whether their estate is to be taken over by a housing action trust?"

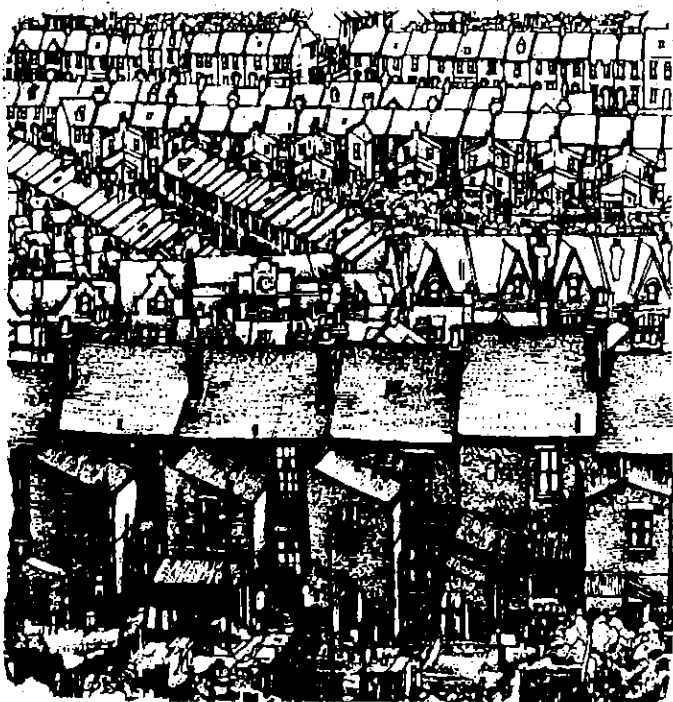
"No"

"Well minister, just how much choice are tenants really getting?"

"This is not about choice: it is about commitment"

This was an exchange between former Housing Minister William Waldegrave and a local authority representative.

(source: Shelter)



AS THE CAMPAIGN against the Poll Tax gathers speed, and receives more and more attention, it must not be forgotten that the new housing legislation has also been the target for strenuous action and resistance. The government's 1988 Housing Act came into effect in January this year to continue the policy of promoting owner occupation, commercialising the housing association movement, boosting the private rented sector, and decimating the public sector. The government's eventual aim is for council housing to be provided only for those with 'special needs' or on very low incomes. Access to housing will be solely related to the ability to pay.

As far as council houses are concerned, the aim of the Act is to transfer ownership from the council to private landlords: and though there will be obstruction and delay, the government intends this to be an irreversible process. For one thing the transfer will be in one direction only: if a new landlord is chosen and proves to be a disaster a tenant will not be able to return to the council. There is also that notorious clause in the Act which states that the transfer can be stopped if a majority of the tenants affected vote to stay as secure council tenants: in other words, abstentions count as votes for a new landlord! To counter the worst provisions of the Act, council tenants have responded with some effective campaigning: council tenants associations are active everywhere, and the depth of resistance to the Act could well have surprised the government.

Private hell

The provisions of the Act that affect private tenants have received less publicity, but are no less far-reaching in their effect. The government's aim is to restore the private rented sector by freeing many controls on new lettings: under the new Act rents will be allowed to rise and security of tenure for tenants is weakened. Most new lettings, whether from private landlords or housing associations, will be either assured tenancies or assured shorthold tenancies. The grounds on which assured tenants can be evicted have been extended, and now include various provisions relating to rent arrears. The landlord can ask the court for repossession in cases where the tenant has any arrears or where the tenant has frequently been late paying rent - whether or not this is the tenant's responsibility or (for example) due to delays in housing benefit. Assured shorthold tenancies have even less security in that the court will automatically grant possession to the landlord when the fixed term expires.

The issue of arrears will become more relevant since rents for assured tenancies will be at market levels rather than at 'fair rents'. Assured tenants do not have the right to register a fair rent, which means that rents on new tenancies will rise to current 'market levels', whatever they might be. The rent can be referred to a Rent Assessment Committee but unfortunately it can only limit rents that rise significantly above those same ever-rising market levels. However, tenants who entered their accommodation before January 15th 1989 keep their rights as they were under the old legislation. Thus there is a certain irony here for a government that believes in a free market for labour, in people "getting on their bikes" to look for work: the Act positively discourages people from ever moving lest they lose their existing rights!

Private Tenants Groups

Unlike council tenants, who may be gathered in specific communities and share a common landlord, private tenants have always found it difficult to gain a sense of common

Pensioners

In 1986, only half of pensioners owned their own homes and 7% of those accepted as homeless by councils were over 65 years old. 1.2 million old people rent their homes from private landlords. While they represent 1/5 of the population, old people live in 1/3 of Britain's pre-WWI houses, almost half of which need major repairs and a similar number of which lack inside toilet or bathroom.

Women

In London, 35% of households accepted as homeless by councils are headed by a single parent, 9 out of 10 times a woman. 54% of single mothers live in council housing whose security is currently threatened by transfer to private ownership under the Housing Act. 20-25% of those sleeping rough are women, yet only 1 in 9 DHS bedspaces are for women. There are 4 times as many lone female pensioners as male.

Houses

The country's housing stock is estimated to have an outstanding repair bill of £54 billion, and growing by £1 billion every year. In 1991 there will be 3.25 homes over 100 years old. Total government investment in housing construction, repair and improvement has more than halved, from £6.9 billion in 1979/80 to £2.6 billion in 1985/6.

Homelessness

The number of households officially homeless in England alone doubled from 53,000 in 1979 to 103,000 in 1986. More than 1.1 million new homes are needed immediately to meet current demand.

purpose and identity, and to organise effectively. There are signs that the new Housing Act is changing all that. Private Tenants Groups are now becoming established, with the aim of representing the interests of private tenants, informing them of their housing rights, and supporting them in the exercise of those rights. This is important, because people have become so blitzed by legislation, and in many ways so defeated, that there is a lot of pessimism around, a pervasive feeling of having no rights at all. One essential role of the local group is to be on the spot, and be only a few houses away when support and advice are needed. The local group could also monitor discrimination, assess the impact of the new Act in terms of rent rises and harassment etc, and publicise and take action against the more notorious landlords. This monstrous piece of legislation is producing many forms of resistance; in these and other ways a new politics of community action is slowly taking shape.

There are two (among many) useful books:
The New Housing Act by Les Burrows (Shelter, 88 Old St, London EC1V 9HU) £2.50
The 1988 Housing Act Explained (Inst. of Housing, 9 White Lion Street, London N1 NXU) £6.50



Twenty years for Survival

SURVIVAL INTERNATIONAL (SI) is the leading organisation in Britain working "for the rights of threatened tribal peoples". It was founded 20 years ago by a small group of anthropologists, appalled at the destruction of the societies they were studying as the first major roads were bulldozed through the Amazon.

In those 20 years, SI has achieved a high level of recognition for its work. It holds observer status at the United Nations, where it champions the rights of tribal peoples. Following a series of successful campaigns directed against the World Bank and other funders of large scale development projects, the question of tribal peoples' welfare now at least occupies a place on their agenda, if not as high as is deserved. SI has also been largely successful in its dealings with the media, who are giving the matters on which it is campaigning (and its representatives) increasing amounts of space.

At the same time, public awareness of the problems of tribal peoples, and of other traditional societies, has mushroomed. This has partly grown out of the recent increase in environmental consciousness - the traditional tribal societies often present a model of an ecologically sustainable way of life, and inhabit, and safeguard through their presence, areas of enormous ecological importance, like tropical rainforests, or the Kalahari desert.

This understanding that the saving of a critical ecosystem is often assisted, rather than hindered, by the presence of an indigenous population, is one product of the work of SI and other such organisations around the world. For the most part, the resettlement of tribal peoples to make way for nature reserves is a thing of the past, though this is what the Botswana government is seeking to do in the Kalahari (see article). The accepted model is now that of the "Biosphere Park" within which traditional societies as well as wildlife are given sanctuary, like Peru's 1,500,000 Ha Manu National Park.

But for all the environmental significance of SI's work, it remains a human rights organisation, though one which has become somewhat detached from the mainstream as represented by Amnesty International. Amnesty tends to retain a rather narrow brief on "political" killings and imprisonment, and turns a blind eye to the genocide and other atrocities suffered by many tribal people. If pressed on the subject, they will probably end up by saying that that is SI's area, and thus none of their business. This point of view is not shared by the Anti-Slavery Society, whose series of books on indigenous peoples (which includes excellent works on Australia's Aborigines, the Chittagong Hills tribes of Bangladesh, and the tribal societies of the Phillipines) excels anything published by SI in recent years.

There is nevertheless a sense among both environmental and human rights activists that SI has staked out a territory, into which outsiders are admitted only on its own terms. It is regrettable that SI is seen by many as a "closed" organisation, that does not willingly accommodate the new blood (and ideas) necessary to fulfill its potential and purpose. One highly distinguished anthropologist (who shall remain nameless) described how SI refused to accept a study of a remote rainforest tribe because it was "too academic". The study was, however, published by the IWGIA (International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs) in Copenhagen. Soon afterwards, SI sent the anthropologist a photocopy of the IWGIA article (unaware of the person's involvement) with a letter saying that they

n - where next International?

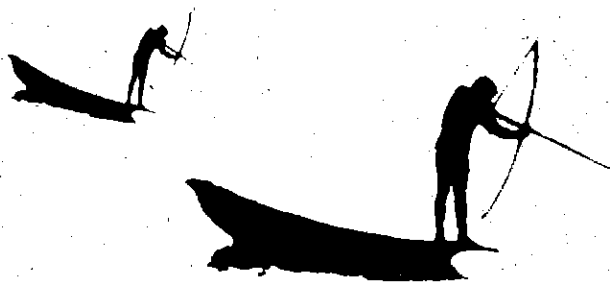
already had their own sources of information on the tribe in question!

Ironically, many other people have been refused leave to use SI's name on their research into endangered tribal peoples, due to not being "proper anthropologists". It sometimes looks as if SI is making itself difficult to help. My own experience with SI as an organisation is that it is often unresponsive to constructive criticisms and suggestions, whether from its members or its local group network. Its image remains (to the public) rather academic and middle aged. The overtly anti-Sandinista line it has taken on Nicaragua (as expressed in a hostile review by SI Director General Stephen Corry of a Minority Rights Group booklet on the Miskito Indians), combined with rumours of SI funds given to Miskito/Contra front organisations has alienated a large body of potential support. If it is to ride the new wave of radical green thought and action, it must make itself, and its message, more relevant and accessible to a new generation.

Certainly, while environmental organisations (like FoE and Greenpeace) and Amnesty International have experienced enormous expansions both in size and influence, SI has failed to do so. It almost looks as if SI is deliberately limiting its own growth. This is SI's own choice, but in its position of near monopoly (in the UK at any rate) on tribal peoples' issues, this means that the tribal peoples of the world are not getting the support that they need and deserve from us. A huge potential for constructive change is going to waste. If SI does not reform itself soon, others will move in, for in truth they hold no monopoly. The recent initiatives from FoE to support tribal peoples struggle for their forests, lands and way of life (the Penan of Sarawak and the Kayapo of the Brazilian Amazon) will provide models for more of the same.

As a supporter of SI and their work, I urge them to make their 20th birthday the occasion of a rebirth within the broader green movement. If the tribal peoples of the world are to be saved, not just talked about and their condition deplored, Survival International and its supporters must do a lot more in the 20 years to come. Another 20 years like the last, and there may be no tribal societies left to save - and then where would SI be?

OLIVER TICKELL



Useful addresses:

Anti Slavery Society, 180 Brixton Road, London SW9 6AT; **International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs**, International Secretariat, Fiolstaede 10, DK 1171, Copenhagen K, Denmark; **Survival International**, 310 Edgware Rd, London W2 1DY; **Minority Rights Group**, 36 Craven St, London WC2N 5NG

KALAHARI - MINING COMPANIES IN, BUSHMEN OUT

IN 1961 the government of Botswana created the 5.2 million hectare Kalahari Game Reserve to allow the traditional hunter/gatherer way of life of the Bushmen to continue there. 28 years later, it has decided to expel the Bushmen, who are said to "pose a threat to wildlife". This is a bizarre claim, as they have evolved a provably sustainable way of life in the Kalahari, which has been maintained for many centuries. The Basarwa and Bakgalagadi peoples of the area are among the last nomadic groups in Southern Africa, most of the remainder having been hunted to extinction by Afrikaner settlers in the 19thC. Their own numbers have dropped sharply even since the Reserve was created.

At the same time, mining companies are being invited by the Botswana government to prospect within the reserve. The companies involved include the Botswana subsidiary of South African mining giant De Beers, Selection Trust, British Petroleum and Falconbridge Botswana. Mining related infrastructural developments are opening up remote areas to cattle ranching, which represents the single largest threat to the Kalahari ecosystem.

Cattle ranching has recently become the dominant sector of Botswana's economy, backed up by massive overseas credits (many of them from the World Bank), and preferential trade agreements which give them a licence to export beef to the EEC in spite of existing European surpluses. Not that the wealth from cattle ranching has percolated very far - 50% of the national herd is owned by just 5% of the ranchers, and most of the population own no cattle at all. But the profits are huge, and the government is dominated by a new aristocracy of wealthy ranching families.

The likely fate of the Bushmen, if the expulsions go ahead, is only too plain. Bushmen do not "settle" well - once detached from their traditional lands and way of life, sickness, malnutrition, alcoholism, and unemployment or gross exploitation are the rule. One of the few sources of employment is as herders for wealthy cattle owners, paralleling the experience of Australian Aborigines. Conditions on the ranches are no better. Long days of hard work, short food rations, epidemic tuberculosis, and the complete absence of any concern for their welfare, are all leading towards the extinction of the Basarwa and Bakgalagadi peoples.

Cattle ranching is not only a human disaster - it is also disastrous for the delicate soils and ecology of the Kalahari. Seasonal migrations of wildebeeste and antelopes have been blocked by steel fences thousands of kilometres long, leading to the mass deaths of tens of thousands of animals from thirst and starvation. Overgrazing and damage from cattle hooves is causing severe degradation of the soil and plant cover.

Your letters can influence whether the Bushmen are to survive or perish. Write to *H.E. the President Dr Quett Masire, The President's Office, Private Bag 001, Gabarone, Botswana*, politely expressing your views and asking for the plans to force the Basarwa and Bakgalagadi peoples out of the reserve to be dropped. Another line of attack is via the EEC, who should rescind the special trade agreements until the human rights of the nomadic peoples are respected - write to *Jacques Delors, EEC, Bruxelles, Belgium*.

Info from Survival International



Cool facts or hot air?

**The Greenhouse Effect:
a Practical Guide to
the World's Changing Climate**
Stewart Boyle & John Ardill
(New English Library) £3.50

IF IT IS really happening - global warming - then this is certainly the kind of book we need. But, as one of the few remaining doubters amongst the greens, I am still a bit concerned that we might be 'crying wolf' on such a massive problem, thereby losing the trust of people we must persuade over the truly desperate state of the planet.

Of course, most of the recommendations for action to avoid or reduce global warming are things that need doing anyway for other urgent environmental reasons. So, regardless of what actually does happen to the climate, this book will, if read and acted upon, do a lot of good. Action on CFCs for example, is vital to preserve the ozone layer, as well as to reduce the greenhouse effect. Indeed, the CFC saga - action too late because the case wasn't fully proved - must make people more inclined to respond to the panic button on global warming. As in the example of Pascal's wager (does God exist?), given in the book, it is better to assume the worst and act now. This is particularly so since the required actions will solve other problems such as the rapid depletion of fossil fuel resources, the disaster of acid rain and the destruction of tropical rainforests.

The authors do give a small space to the view, predictably from the the Soviet Union, that global warming

may do more good than harm environmentally (e.g. opening up lands in northern climes to agriculture and increasing the rate of plant growth). But they include far more accounts of current disasters (flooding in Bangladesh), potential ones (flooding in London) and various recent vagaries of the weather. However, I cannot help feeling that in this, and in the actual data given on global warming to date, they are thrashing around with statistics to make a plausible case: Bangladesh's floods for instance may owe more to deforestation in the Himalaya; evidence of eroded and flooded coasts in Britain and elsewhere, graphically shown on TV in a programme probably built around this book, may come from local sinking of land rather than a general rise in sea levels. It is this sort of base-line problem on sea levels and average temperatures that make the case for any overall weather change to date so far from convincing. And this in spite of the large and proven rises in the levels of greenhouse gases such as CO2 and methane.

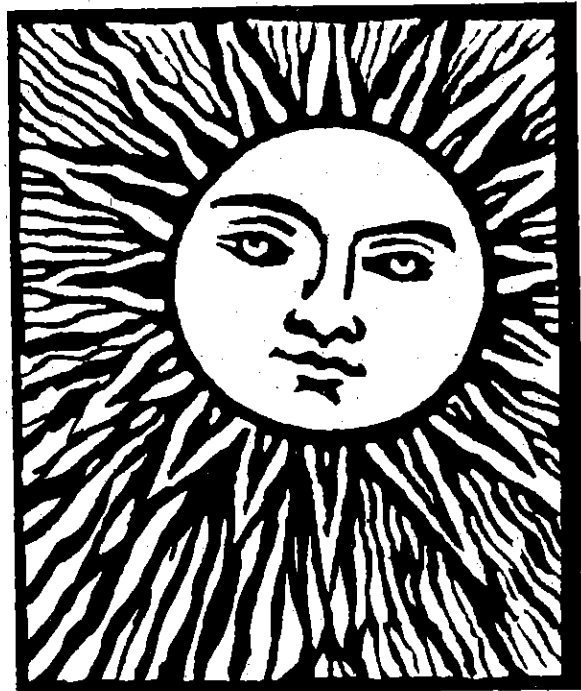
As an 'instant book' there are awkward slips, such as "the Earth has already warmed by more than half a degree since the mid-1980s" (page 9). This is a huge exaggeration of the claim generally recycled, and included in the Appendix on page 249, that there has been a rise of 0.7 degrees in the last century. I fear that under the credentials of the prestigious authors the new figure will now be recycled so as to bring further panic during every heatwave our tempre-mental climate throws up.

It seems very unlikely that sufficient measurements were made worldwide a century ago to give any reliable *average* for global temperatures. Similarly, with all coastlines rising and falling, quoting an *average* sea-level to within a few centimetres of accuracy is still probably beyond us. I realise that indirect methods can be used - advance and retreat of glaciers in many places, the isotopes of gases trapped in ice cores - so the evidence may be there. However, one cannot find it in this book; only the words of countless 'experts'. For a rather more convincing case I would recommend the magazine *Scientific American* of April 1989.

Our ignorance of even the CO2 cycle, let alone that of methane,

remains immense. The book does call for more research, so that we can find out more of what happens at the interface between the sea and the air over three-quarters of the planet's surface. The *Scientific American* article shows that any CO2 build-up is a result of small variations in the balance of a huge continuing exchange between plants, oceans and the atmosphere - still far greater than any human-made effects so far.

Thus, I am still left wondering: there is no solid theory of why the Earth's climate has changed so radically, and sometimes, it seems, so rapidly, in the distant past (as seen in sea deposits now at high altitudes and the fossil record). A dozen ideas exist, and none are proven, even



concerning relatively recent ice-ages. People forget that CO2 featured in another theory, much discussed in GL a few years ago of an imminent *ice-age* (see John Hamaker's hysterical, yet plausible 1982 book *The Survival of Civilisation*).

The experts have plugged data into their computers to 'prove' global warming (garbage in - garbage out, perhaps?) but as yet there is very little detail, at least in the popular reports, of the *meterology* involved. For instance, *why* do they think global warming will be so much greater towards the poles? Hamaker at least put some reasonable *meterology* into his ice-age prophecies: no greenhouse effect at the poles without sunlight in winter; increased evaporation and cloud from some initial greenhouse warming elsewhere; increased snowfall at the cold winter pole; albedo effect then prevents warming of that pole as

INNERWORLDWORK



Weekend workshops relating personal growth to the current world ecological/political crisis.

The present state of the world engenders natural feelings of distress, which tend to be repressed. This repression produces paralysis, isolation, cynicism, and powerlessness. Together we can lift the taboos on expression of our deep feelings about the crisis, and move through into our power to respond. Details from Mike Penney, 17 Mackeson Road, London NW3 2LU, 01 482 3588

much as in preceding summer... hence a build-up and spread of the ice caps. Well, it's not happened as fast as Hamaker feared. So will it go the other way all that fast, as the bulk of experts now tell us? If so, why?

All this leaves us sceptics wondering if the sudden fuss has not been triggered by the nuclear lobby, since there is now no other excuse for continuing with their deadly devices. Boyle & Ardill handle this non-option well, showing how nuclear power is far less effective and far more costly than energy conservation, combined heat and power etc. It is probably also more costly than most renewables. Renewables however do not get adequate treatment in this book. On direct passive solar heat there is a good section, but even in the Appendix, wind generators and tidal and wave power are given scant coverage. Yet from other sources it is clear that these renewables are the only long-term solution. Huge tidal barrages can be built 10km offshore and could provide 50% of present electricity demand at competitive cost. They could be partly built gypsum, made in vast amounts from cleaning up coal power with limestone - and found to be benign in the undersea environment. On the barrages themselves, offshore wind generators could provide the other 50% and an added bonus could be generated from waves with systems proven already in Norway.

These possibilities have been pointed out in the Guardian and New Scientist over a couple of years. A recent New Scientist claims that even onshore wind generators are not very noisy, contrary to what has sometimes been suggested. The offshore barrages would have none of the ecological problems of those in estuaries. Altogether, renewables would eventually supply enough electricity to fuel a reasonable transport network to supplement the bicycle!

At least the greenhouse effect has, for whatever reasons, caused a lot of alarmed utterances from such as Mrs Thatcher so that, as Jonathon Porritt says, "green" has now become a lot more "respectable". Boyle & Ardill's book will certainly help to carry forward the ideas and actions needed to save the environment from several disasters. And if the predicted warming does not actually take place, or goes the other way, then we must hope that the rest of our ecological arguments will not be too badly discredited.

ROGER FRANKLIN



A third path for the Third World

Developed to Death
Ted Trainer
Green Print (£6.99)

UNFORTUNATELY, I DOUBT that many academics would be able to cite this cheap-looking book without embarrassment; economic and political arguments are frequently interrupted by cartoons and boxes of quotations. Dramatic descriptions of starvation, diseases and Third World sufferings are accompanied by drawings of fat, rich men; striking information and impressive statistics appear unsystematically - partly due to the way the author uses them to strengthen his often repetitive arguments. All this gives the book the appearance of being half-way between a serious essay on Third World development and the much illustrated, condensed ideology of Spectacular Times.

But so much for the form. The content is well above this unusual presentation for lazy readers, and of great importance and interest for anybody interested in sustainability, Third World issues and green and

international economics and politics.

While too many greens vacuously repeat the slogan of "neither left nor right", Trainer actually practices it. He clearly explains the arguments and mistakes of the conservative and the Marxist approaches to development, and how much they have in common and their disastrous consequences. By developing an alternative, green approach to Third World problems, he offers concrete arguments and ideas in favour of a third path. Nevertheless, both his analysis and values are certainly left-wing.

The traditional approach believes that the capitalist market will develop these countries, especially if there are enough loans, capital and business turnover - that is for orthodox Marxists,

"capitalism's historical task". Conservatives say that there will be a trickle down; that is, although the slices would not be equal, at least the small pieces will become bigger. For Marxists, once the cake has grown bigger, a structural transformation would be needed to ensure its equal distribution. Trainer argues that even if they both were right - which he denies - considering the actual pace of development, many of these countries would need up to 500 years to reach our level of development: years of misery, starvation, depletion of irreplaceable ecological capital, starvation and war... and by then, considering other factors such as population growth and ecological damage, it will be too late anyway.

Trainer explains why market forces have a strong tendency to produce highly inadequate development in the Third World and stresses the preferability of appropriateness and sustainability over merely cumulative models of development. He shows the links between our over-consumption and their starvation, poverty and injustice, arguing that because we are living at their expense their situation can only improve if we consume less and waste less.

Many of his ideas are not new: Gorz, for example, said that "the remedies to hunger are not technical because the causes aren't either. The causes are essentially political". He also considered the role of

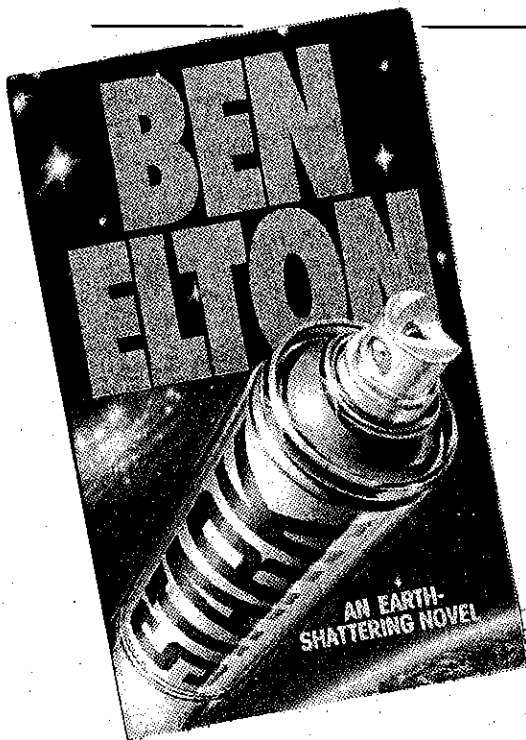
multinationals introducing unnecessary and, in Third World conditions, dangerous products (such as Nestle's milk powder) and taking the best lands to grow cash crops which degrade the soil and leave the local population nowhere to grow the food they really need. Like Trainer, he considered the effects of the world capitalist market in countries where around 5% of the population controls 80% of the land, concluding that since many of these countries have barely enough to feed their people, "the causes of starvation are to be sought in our plates" (Le Nouvel Observateur 6/7/81).

But even if many of these issues and proposals have already been taken on board by greens, Trainer offers a considerable amount of updated and very interesting information; defines and confronts the many assumptions of the conventional approaches; considers a very wide range of problems (e.g. external debt, GNP, multinationals, land and income distribution, trade terms, state intervention, food, agriculture, demography, rural and urban areas, aid, US dependency and intervention, and even repression and terrorism). Out of all this he produces a long list of basic principles for

appropriate development within the limits of global sustainability.

As is usual in this kind of book, Trainer has devoted more space and energy to describing the situation than to the problem of transition to the green world, and to the political feasibility of such a transformation, given the interests at stake of big business and political power, which remain the biggest obstacle. But, despite its form and some other deficiencies, I would eagerly recommend this book. It is a perfect example of why one should not judge a book by its cover.

PAULA CASAL



Eco-humour

Stark
Ben Elton
(Sphere) £3.50

ROOTING AND TOOTING are the only two things which appear more often than doobies in this, Ben Elton's first novel. No doubt his bank's laughing its head off - the only book to go straight to number one in the Best Sellers lists. And it's about the *environment* too; as if banks had nothing to do with the problem.

He of Friday Night Live and Black Adder (and don't let that worry you as Stark bears little resemblance to either, though it retains a definite Elton humour) has produced a story which will cause mirth and merriment

within the green movement at the caricatures it paints (his solution for tie-dye shirts wouldn't go amiss) as well as providing much needed information on the state of the planet for those whom GL wouldn't normally reach. What's Stark? Well, it's up to you to find out, but he gets you there in an interesting and humorous way.

For people involved in green issues, the strength of this book will be recognising, and laughing at ourselves! The characters are one of Elton's strengths, and there is somebody for everyone here. Perhaps I've got a problem, but I could really relate, like, man to the crazed 'Nam Veteran Zim who left his bollocks in a field north of Saigon and assures us they are unlikely to still be there. But then anybody who has seen pink dragons wearing bikinis has taken some pretty rough rides. And even if you can't help feeling sorry for Sly (the bastard) he may help greens realise just what they are up against, both amongst us and out there, as well as putting a few things on record about how serious the problems are that we face.

The recent oil spill threatening the coast of Alaska and the unseasonal floods in central Australia for some strange reason both appear as disasters in the book. For those of you who have been wondering about the inclement weather for the time of year, be thankful we

don't have cockroaches. But it's not all doom and gloom (and some of you might like the idea of not having to fly south for that Spring tan - just think of the petrol saved bringing the seaside to our doorstep); Stark merely offers some pretty hard truths and a wonderful description of a birth.

Although the story has something to do with boy-meets-girl, it is refreshing to miss a lot of the sexist crap that publishers otherwise put out. For people who think something needs to be done, hope springs eternal. EcoAction (the good guys and girls) offer a little radicalism which we wouldn't go far wrong in adopting: when faced with Stark, painting CND symbols on children's faces and the twice yearly demo are plainly ridiculous. The sooner we realise that confrontation may be necessary the quicker this mess will be sorted out and we can get back to some sort of peace.

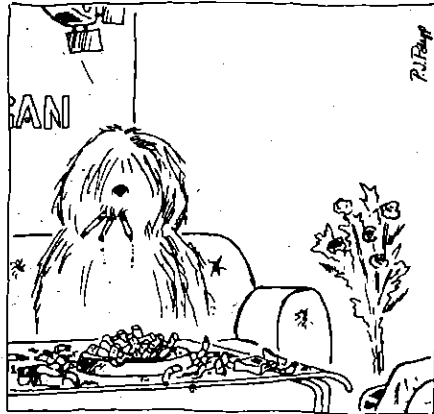
Oh yeah, the ending's not too cheery, but then life is hard. Read somebody else's copy, but don't stop thinking when you put it down.



Rainbow Circle present a 10 day camp offering a wide range of workshops exploring creativity and practical green lifestyles. August 12 - 19th.

Adults £30-£100, Children free. For information about this and other camps contact Lee Brown 0375 382597 & Lyn 01 7947093.

ANIMAL NEWS



WELL, TERRY... YOU SEE... BEFORE I MADE IT BIG IN THE DULUX ADVERTS, I USED TO BE A SMOKING BEAGLE FOR I.C.I.

Ethical Consumer

DIARY

JUL 15: Living Without Cruelty - A Green Celebration. The Ballroom, Queens Hotel, Hastings. Live Music and bar extension. Details from Bexhill Animal Rights, tel. Bexhill-on-sea 214459.

JUL 15: "Who's dying for a piece of meat?" Exhibition, Middleton Hall, Central Milton Keynes. Organised by Animal Action, tel. Leighton Buzzard 378747.

JUL 15: National Day of Action Against the Poultry Trade. Details CAW (0272 776261).

JUL 22: BUAV AGM, Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London.

JUL 29: Service for Animal welfare at St Edmondbury Cathedral, Bury St Edmunds, 3 pm. Organised by Animal Christian Concern, tel. Horsforth 583517.

AUG 5: Animal Charities Summer Fair at St Mary's Centre, Chain Street, Reading 10am-4.30pm. Tel. Reading 427608/473589.

AUG 12: HSA Action Against Grouse Shoot. Details elsewhere in Green Line.

Life before profit

THIS GROUP meets every first Monday in the month (2nd Monday if 1st is Bank Holiday) at the *Veganomics Restaurant 312-314 Lewisham Road, London SE13*. On JULY 31st there will be a video on the Irish struggle in Northern Ireland, with a speaker. The group is opposed to all forms of exploitation; human, animal and plantlife. For more details phone Simon or Andy on 01 733 2614 (during office hours).

Opposing the right to kill...

THIS YEAR on the inglorious 12th (of August) the Hunt Saboteurs Association will again be in action on the grouse moors in an attempt to stop the slaughter of thousands of grouse on the 'inglorious twelfth' - the most prestigious day in the shooting calendar. HSA methods, as always, will be non-violent and involve peaceful occupation of shooting butts and moors which past experience has shown can save hundreds of lives.

Last year HSA members successfully prevented shooting on three moors on the opening day of the grouse shooting season and on another the following day (the most ambitious effort to date). This year it is preparing to attend up to six shoots. Also last year, and for the first time, Animal Rights groups were asked to help out by distributing leaflets and informing the local press. This helped by giving these actions widespread additional local publicity.

For more information, contact the HSA, P.O. Box 87, Exeter, EX4 3TX. Tel: (0392) 430521.

...conserving the right to kill

ENTHUSIASTS OF bloodsports, though under pressure, are prepared to fight a long and expensive rearguard action in order to defend their right (or perhaps their need) to kill. Public relations are now a priority, along with pragmatic alliances with certain environmental and 'conservation' organisations.

In recent years angling groups, for example, have made links with FoE, RSPB, Swan Rescue, etc, despite all the damage that angling does to wildlife and the environment; and the British Association of Shooting and Conservation (sic) has signed a 'Statement of Common Interest and Co-operation' with the Nature Conservancy Council. The policy of certain organisations (e.g. LACS, RSPB) to purchase sanctuaries for the protection of wildlife has worried the hunting and shooting fraternity, which has responded by buying up 'sanctuaries' of their own.

Recently the NCC awarded a grant for the extension of a sanctuary run by the RSPB in Nene Marshes, Cambridgeshire, but only on condition that hunters can continue to shoot there: wildlife is 'conserved' in order to be shot! In the past NCC money has gone to organisations which have put a stop to hunting and shooting on their newly acquired land; but the government's own view is that "traditional country rights and uses should not be interfered with", i.e. should not go against the interests of the Tory hunting and shooting lobby. This policy has been confirmed by Ridley himself, who will continue to lay waste to everything around him until he is 'kicked upstairs' to the peerage, perhaps as Viscount Ridley of the Environment.

LEATHER - THE FACTS

MOST PEOPLE now reject the wearing of fur as barbaric yet don't extend this to include leather and sheepskin. WHY? Leather is not just a by-product of the meat industry.

OSTRICHES are now factory farmed in South Africa. 700 Ostrich skins a day are processed into shoes, wallets and handbags.

ALLIGATORS AND CROCODILES are caught with giant fishing hooks or netted and clubbed to death. One trader states "The demand just overwhelms the capacity for supply".

The skins from UNBORN CALVES from slaughtered pregnant cows are turned into luxury suede.

SHEEPSKIN mostly comes from sheep reared for their wool which have reached the end of their profitable lives.

Worn out DAIRY CATTLE which can no longer meet milk yield targets end up as cow hide.

Slaughterhouses make more profit from animal by-products e.g. bones, horns and hooves (gelatine), hair (brushes etc) and blood (petfood, fertiliser, pharmaceuticals) than from the actual meat. Up to 10% of an animal's value to the slaughter comes from skin. Many slaughterhouses also own tanneries.

Trade in animal by-products is international. In the USA beef consumption far exceeds the demand for cow hide so it is exported to Japan where there is a strong demand but fewer cattle. The USA is one of the biggest markets for imported KANGAROO hide. Many of the leather garments sold in the UK are imported.

Plastic, the most common alternative to leather is a recognised environmental hazard. However, the livestock industry also damages the environment. It destroys rainforests to acquire grazing land, pollutes the soil with chemical fertilisers, wastes water on irrigation and contaminates rivers and lakes with animal excrement.

Animals have the right to a natural life, free from the degradation and suffering of being turned into mere products. Systematic exploitation of those who are different from and more vulnerable than us is not only unnecessary but also immoral. For further information please write to: Campaign Against Leather & Fur c/o Box 17, 198 Blackstock Road, London N5. Any donations to further this campaign are welcome!





INTELLECTUAL POLITICS?

IF LAWRENCE Thompson (Letters, GL72) is worried about the intellectualisation of politics then I've got good news for him: according to a 1983 survey, only 50% of the U.S. population reads, and when they do, it's usually not books. In fact, decorators often don't even have to bother to put bookshelves in homes any more. True, some benighted people do still buy books, but take heart - they're mainly on diet and exercise, or cookbooks and Smiley Face books. True, doom-and-gloom-sayers from Alain Bloom on the right to Barbara Ehrenreich on the left have made noises about the ongoing "dummification" of Americans. But the rest of us know that with our TV-drenched, two-minute attention spans we're marching bravely along the road to freedom.

Least I seem an American chauvinist, I hasten to add that intellectuality is on the run in Lawrence's own country too, where a recent study showed that well over half the population can't use a railway timetable. Still, I have to admit we're doing well here - Ronald Reagan, when asked, couldn't remember the last book he'd read and President Bush prefers fishing to reading. Now that our leaders have been freed from the shackles of thinking, liberation is nigh - we're on the very brink of an ecological society!

Yes, I defend reason, but that doesn't mean I'm attacking other sensibilities *per se* - a passionless, colourless, nonsensual life would hardly be worth living. I simply don't see all the arduous brain-crunching going on around me that goddess-worshippers claim to see (except on the part of people in industry, the Pentagon and multinational corporations who're using their rationality to help tear up the planet. To abjure thinking hard about how to fight them amounts to rolling over and playing dead.

Unfortunately, what I do see in the ecology movement - a movement that is very dear to me - is that far too many people are becoming intellectually numb, chanting as congregants of supernatural beings and living on a diet of myths. Meanwhile, eco-entrepreneurs who make a business of banging on drums and conducting weekend workshops on goddess-worship are getting a lot richer, profiteering on the gullibility and desperation of our times. As thinking people, I know we can do better than that.

Janet Biehl
21 Alfred St, Burlington
Vermont U.S.A.

FURTHER DOWN THE WALL...

DEREK WALL rightly urges us to go beyond "Red-Green" dogma into constructive dialogue, but wants to oppose 'capitalism'. 'Capitalism' is nothing if not a dogmatic tag taking its meaning directly from Marxism. To pretend that 'capitalism' has a precise meaning in any other context is untenable. What is a 'capitalist'? A Manchester mill owner? The board of ICI? The shareholders of ICI? The 'working class' shareholders of BT? A Sicilian peasant farmer? A Papuan "big man"? Some of them? All of them? Or none?

As used by Derek, it is a generalising, ideologically defined smear; pejorative as much as descriptive; a class-based rallying point. Used idly and without thought for context, its usage, and the political mind-set its usage implies, are all the less acceptable. It is not 'Capitalism' he should be opposing, but large-scale (national and transnational) companies producing unnecessary goods in an uneconomical way.

'Capitalism' is a myth; reducing the ills of the world to the narrow Marxist interpretation is a romantic reductionist fallacy. The root cause of the malaise lies far deeper. Big, private business is the symptom, not a cause. Private ownership *per se* is not objectionable, provided the enterprise produces to need on a small-scale, ecologically sound basis.

Inappropriate usage of anachronistic dogmatic terminology such as 'capitalism', when it is irrelevant or even detracts from the argument being advanced, leads me to conclude that 'greens' such as Derek are more concerned with a revivification of the left than establishing a genuinely new ecologically based hope. This is the way to permanent opposition. The planet can ill afford the luxury of socialism.

The main practical objection to the use of socialism as a means of informing green politics regarding the Green Party must surely be the way in which it puts unnecessary obstacles between us and the electorate by invoking the massive and damaging inertia of the "right-left" dichotomy. Once the Green Party is identified as a left-wing party, we are finished. And if the Green Party ever becomes a party of the left, I would welcome its "finishing". Our job is to redefine and transform politics - not to jump on the bandwagon.

Steve Ely
2 Kenyon St
South Elmsall

SCHOLES LESSONS

MARTIN SCHOLES' dismissal (Letters, GL73) of my recent review of Porritt and others (GL72) as "sneers" and "semantic gobbledeook", and as not providing him with any "practical" suggestions clearly indicates his own inability to understand the substance of my critique. For his information, there are many people in the green movement who are not enamoured with the reformist strategies of the Green Party and choose to be "practical" through extra-parliamentary politics - through movements and activities like trade unions, Survival International, CND, Amnesty International, the AA movement, allotment clubs etc.

The distortion of equating the Green Party with the green movement as the only "real" and "100%" greens - the rest of us being impractical and a lot of intellectual people jumping on the bandwagon - is about as wilful and obfuscating as equating socialism with Marxism. It is historically invalid and politically naive. Surely there is a way between Marxism and the reformist politics of the Green Party? If Martin wants to know what it is I suggest he studies such intellectual pseuds as Murray Bookchin and John Clark. They will give him insights, a political awareness and some practical suggestions that go beyond the narrow electoral politics of the likes of Porritt.

Martin's waffle about being a "lesser mortal" and part of the "real world" sounds pretentious and spurious. Some of us pseuds who left school at fifteen and worked for several years as a foundry worker and seaman know what the "real world" is like and don't need Martin to pontificate to us about it. But there are real issues about the politics of the Green Party - not its 'greenness' (much of which is commendable) - that ought to be seriously scrutinised by Martin. He would not then feel so disillusioned by the inevitable antics of Kinnock. My critique of Porritt's reformist politics is a contribution to this debate, not a sneering exercise or an intellectual ego trip. Martin's cavalier 'put-down' is intellectually sterile and gets us nowhere.

Brian Morris
18 Hillyfield
Lewes

NOT SO GREEN

REGARDING YOUR cover last month (GL73): it is not green to burn Poll Tax registration forms on a bonfire. By all means, burn them indoors to cook or keep warm, or recycle them (as did Liverpool anti-Poll Tax groups recently after shredding more than 200), or compost them. Mine went back unopened to the sender with "Vote Green, June 15th!" in large letters on the envelope.

You also comment in GL73 on 'green' claims by battery makers (see also the full-page ads in the papers recently). But the only batteries that might, perhaps, qualify are rechargeable ones - if, as claimed, they can be re-used 500 times. The charging devices and batteries should be made as competitively cheap as possible to drive the wasteful and polluting throwaways out - if necessary with a pollution tax on them as a subsidy to the rechargeables. Lobby your MP - they'll all be 'green' after the Euro-results!

Roger Franklin
Horsley, Stroud

"ALF" - SHOUT IT OUT!

AS COMMENTED on in GL72, there has been much bickering about the recent escapades of the ALF. I write after watching BBC's recent documentary, *Animals of War*, and feel no reason to oppose such direct action. As the many supporters of the ALF point out, no human life has been harmed or lost, so what are the arguments?

To watch any film of animal suffering usually only furnishes us with the pictures to go with what we already know. As we watch these animals eke out their final moments of hell we may feel inadequate, angry and tearful, but what are we going to do about it? O.K., so we turn vegetarian or vegan and declare: "I'm not causing any animal pain. My life is cruelty free" and then bury our heads in the sand. Cruelty free is only a start: it doesn't prevent cruelty in areas that don't involve our own vanity or food. What about those poor beings in the BBC's documentary, the unnecessary laboratory experiments, the animals who suffer and die for results whose answers we already know? I don't know whether I'd have the bottle to go on an ALF style raid. I don't know if I have the skills to bomb a fur store. But I'm not going to condemn animal liberators who do feel strong enough to go to such lengths, just because my own strengths differ from theirs.

The ALF has to be part of the AR



WHO DO THEY THINK THEY'RE KIDDING?

Publicity for Panasonic's new 'green' batteries, or perhaps to show that apples are as poisonous as batteries, or as thick skinned, or take as much energy to produce...?

movement or else that movement becomes merely a talking shop and controller of what we should think and do. The ALF is not terrorist - as always, when the sea gets rough and the boat begins to rock, we blame the balance between the extremes and the centre, rather than what actually caused the calm seas to change.

I watched the images in *Animals of War* and felt the tears well up inside: from parachuting dogs to monkeys being electrocuted because they couldn't keep a simulated cockpit horizontal and dolphins being trained as some bio-torpedo.

It is only direct action that will tell on the participants of the non-human holocaust, so lets stop slagging off the ALF and accept that they are a very meaningful part of the AR movement. Let us shout out ALF as loud as we shout HSA and then maybe we'll really start scaring the establishment machine!

Dougie
England



TO DEPLORE IS NOT ENOUGH

JERRY SPRING (Comment GL72) rightly deplores the growing hostility and violence towards women on the part of many men. However, Jerry merely deplores - he does not propose remedies. For instance, does he believe in severe punishment for rapists? (I do.) Does he believe that truly savage punishment should be meted out to those who rape children or old women? (I do.) Does he believe the police should have the power to move on and harass the moronic aggressive louts who infest our streets and who delight in humiliating people? (I do.) Does he realise a lot of the foul behaviour that goes on is motivated not by sexual desire but by a subtle form of personal power worship and is he in favour of scrapping the idea that every individual, however barbarous he may be, is automatically entitled to our worth and respect? (I do.) Finally, has Jerry considered that as there are more men seeking sex than there are women, a system of licensed brothels, as on the continent, would be a good thing? (I'm not sure about this.) I expect a Comment from GL to do more than deplore situations that readers already deplore. I expect him or her to discuss solutions.

H.I.Jones
London N6

Just because I can't afford to go to the opticians anymore doesn't mean I'm not going to fight the tax!



What're you smiling for?



Says on the news that Tory backbenchers want to put £1bn extra into local government!

I feel like dancing after the Euro results!



Councils caught in data protection trap!

POLL TAX REGISTRATION could be thrown into disarray because councils are demanding information to which they have no legal right. This follows the ruling by the Data Protection Registrar that Trafford Council in Greater Manchester may not transfer the information it has collected from its registration forms onto computer. The NCCL is now sending complaints against several other councils to the registrar, Eric Howe, who is himself writing to all councils to warn them about possible breaches of the Data Protection Act.

Trafford fell foul of the law because it asked for details about personal relationships between people living in the same house. Whilst this is vital for the council to determine liability for payment, it is unnecessary for registration, and such questions cannot be asked unless the registration form tells you that it is not obligatory to answer them. This has been confirmed by the DoE. What's more, it is not only questions about relationships: requests for title, date of birth, whether you're a student and day-time phone numbers may all make it illegal to store the information on computer. As we go to press, the NCCL have sent another thirteen registration forms to the registrar, and will expect a reply early this month.

Trafford Council themselves have since come to an agreement with the registrar that the illegally collected information will not be stored on computer and will not be passed on to any council official for the purposes of enforcing either registration or payment of the Poll Tax. The question is: do you really believe they won't? The NCCL will be applying for a judicial review of what should be done with the information, hopefully forcing councils to physically destroy it. As the NCCL feared right from the start, councils have been abusing the registration process to gather as much information helpful to enforcing payment as they can get away with. This is despite prior warnings from the DoE on what questions to include (although DoE Minister Nicholas Ridley has kept remarkably quiet throughout - does he support law-breaking by councils?).

While these developments will not

stop registration, it could obviously cause real difficulties in completing the registration process by December 1st. *It is therefore vital that in every town the registration forms are scrutinised and sent along to Madeleine Colvin at the National Council for Civil Liberties, 21 Tabard St, London SE1 6BP (they'd appreciate financial support as well). Their phone number is 01 403 3888.* IT IS NOT TOO LATE! If your council has broken the law then they may well have to wipe their computer files and start again - all of which will give more time to organise local opposition groups to the Poll Tax.

Jerry Spring

NEWS FROM LEEDS

Leeds has reacted as strongly as Scotland to the "not very nice" Poll Tax. Seventeen local groups have been formed so far to provide collective support for people delaying registration. The campaign sees mass non-cooperation as the only way of defeating the Poll Tax in the end, and that means neighbourly support in non-payment.

Registration forms have arrived at long last. Local groups are now organising ways in which people can "lose" their forms. Some have bonfires planned whilst another is going to hire a skip so that registration forms can be recycled - so green!

The central group, Leeds Campaign Against the Poll Tax, believes the best way of involving people is through local groups, which organise meetings for union and community groups, provide information for women's and black groups. Leeds Campaign sees itself as providing a resource base, encouraging activity and organising city-wide events. Such a federated structure has many advantages and works well. The city-wide group has organised large marches and demonstrations, benefit gigs and cultural events. The local groups organise meetings where people want them and decide the form and content of campaigns.

At a number of launch meetings, SWP and Militant groups have been told to drop the 'party line', stop trying to take the campaign over, and either get involved or drop out. This has proved very successful:

local people wanting to become involved no longer have to run a gauntlet of paper sellers with their 'Socialism Yesterday' or 'The Next Step Backwards'; gone are the boring and pointless stand-offs between different far-left groups, Labour and green activists. Instead, an energetic and hopeful campaign is reaching many thousands of people.

The Leeds campaign is informing people of the many fates that could befall their registration forms - children colouring in those little boxes, or forms as lining for the budgie's cage. The worst thing you could do is complete it and return it on time. So remember - don't!

Adrian Wright

NEWS FROM BIRMINGHAM

IN BIRMINGHAM the Green Party printed some cards quite some time ago for people to send to the council saying that they will not pay. Now, a list of questions has been published in our newsletter. We are sending the registration forms back unsigned, several times, with loads of these questions, and also asking someone to visit us to explain it all, in order to slow down their registration, and then we are boycotting canvassers. Some people are going to appeal against a decision of the Registration Officer to the Community Charge and Valuation Panel. This should throw a spanner in the works. Other groups are doing the same as above, and also providing special bins for people to throw their registration forms away. On Tuesday 16th May people gathered in a local park then made their way to Council House outside of which they held a mass burn-in of registration forms. This was covered quite well by local TV.

Ankaret Harmer

POLL TAX COVER UP!!

GREEN LINE has some excellent anti-Poll Tax T-shirts available, carrying a spoof of the government's 'Crime - together we'll crack it' slogan (only this time it says 'Poll Tax - together we'll crack it'). There's black on green or red, and also white on black, all Extra Large. They cost £6 and all proceeds go to fund the local campaign in Oxford. Please make cheques to 'Green Action' and send them to 11 Bridge St, Osney, Oxford OX2 0DG.