

ECOLOGY PARTY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1977 NO. 1 NEW SERIES

EDITORIAL

Whatever we considered ourselves to be before the 1977 Annual General Meeting and Conference, there is no doubt now that we are a POLITICAL PARTY, with all that that means in the world about us

Our aim now is to seek political power - however daunting that may seem at this moment - in order to implement the measures that we believe are needed to provide a better, saner, safer and happier life for the people of this country

I hope - if I may be permitted, just this once, to depart from the editorial 'we' - that in some small measure I can help to further these aims through the medium of this Newsletter

Please - everyone - contact me with news and views - the more up to date the better - I shall publish (as far as possible) all non-libellous, non-pornographic material relevant to our Party that is written in understandable English

Peace go with you

Howard S Hoptrough

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GOOD EARTH

This meaty and excellent conservation newspaper comes to you as usual with this Newsletter; despite its quality, however, it is struggling to keep its financial head above the creditor's water (hum!) It is about the only outlet publicly for the kind of news that we, as Ecology Party members, are interested in, and it has been instrumental in bringing us many members in recent months. Please do all you can to support it - recommend it to all your friends interested in what we are doing and conservation (even, perhaps, if they are not interested!) - even buy them a subscription paid for out of the enormous Christmas present our one and only Denis Healey is providing for us! Seriously, 'Good Earth' should not be allowed to die - PLEASE HELP

THE FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE
held at University House, Birmingham on
24 and 25 September, 1977

Report

Fifty (50) members (those who were thought to have paid their subscriptions) attended the AGM and Conference, and eleven (11) apologies for absence were received (of these, seven were from Leeds, where the Branch was busy campaigning in support of an Ecology Party candidate, Peter Levenz, for a casual vacancy in a local District Council ward - see Leeds Branch report on page 4)

A lot of solid work was done at the AGM and Conference, which, although at times obviously tedious, was probably a necessary part of the process by which the Ecology Party became a fully-fledged political party. The following is some detail of the work done:

Financial report This was not ready, but it was reported that in due course it would be submitted by Crin Rushworth for publication in the Newsletter. The question of NEC expenses was raised, and there was general support for the view of the majority of the NEC that they should be paid.

'National' Party There was general agreement that the Party must act nationally and appear national; Jonathan Tyler (Chairman) suggested that four areas of policy (the Constitution, certain elections, certain policy areas (to be reviewed annually) and money for the NEC to carry out its functions) should be abrogated to the NEC, but no formal decision was taken on the suggestion.

Constitution and election of the NEC. The constitution draft submitted by Jonathan Tyler was, after amendment, adopted (see insert in the Newsletter). An interim NEC was elected, as follows:

David Fleming (Greater London)	31
Jonathan Tyler (West Midlands)	31
Peter Sizer (West Midlands)	28
Sally Willington (South West)	25
Yorks. and Hum'side repr.	22
Nicholas Hillyard (South West)	22
Steve Lambert (Greater London)	22
Ron Andrews (West Midlands)	21
Jonathan Porritt (Greater London)	20

John Davenport (West Midlands) and John Luck (South East) were elected as publicly elected councillors; David Taylor received 19 votes in the ballot, and will be co-opted in the event of a vacancy. Each voter had a maximum of nine votes; thirty-six (36) ballot papers were received, and there were thirteen (13) candidates.

Policy and literature In a discussion on this subject David Fleming suggested three areas for investigation and action:

1. A statement of definition
2. A series of papers on relevant topics (both for and against) - similar to the well-known Rabian Papers (this suggestion received considerable support)
3. Publicity literature

The need for a basic reference document (see 1 before) was agreed, and Peter Sizer was asked to continue to re-draft the Manifesto, whilst it was noted that Eric Jones was drafting a short Manifesto. By a vote of 20-13 the NEC was given authority to finalize approval of any Manifesto.

Subscriptions See 'Re-organisation of the Party' on page 5 of this Newsletter

President A motion inviting Teddy Goldsmith to become President and signed by eleven (11) members was not put to the vote

The AGM and Conference was addressed by the indefatigable protester at public enquiries on roads, John Tyme (we are happy to see that he became a member of the EP during the week-end). The activities of Friends of the Earth in France were described by Vincent Brichot in French, whilst Teddy Goldsmith did a creditable approximation in English!

RESOLUTIONS The following four resolutions were adopted unanimously

It was resolved that...

...this Conference, believing that Britain cannot emerge from its present crisis by means of the very policies which created it, associates itself with the call of the First Symposium of ECOROPA, the movement for European Ecological Action, issued from Metz, France, on 17 September, 1977, for the abandonment by governments of the ideology of growth in Gross National Product, and in particular for the revision of Article 2 of the Treaty of Rome, which gives to the European Economic Community the primary mission of assuring the expansion of the economy

...this Conference supports the action of the French Ecology Movement in their protests against the fast breeder reactor site at La Hague, and urges Her Majesty's Government urgently to investigate the ecological damage which may be caused to the English Channel and our own shores if this project is allowed to proceed

...this Conference calls on the Government to institute a major programme of insulation works to all kinds of buildings:

- i. to create widespread employment;
- ii. to conserve valuable and presently wasted energy;
- iii. to remove the so-called need for nuclear power and any expansion of the reprocessing facilities at Windscale

...this Conference calls on the Government to enact immediately new legislation to place a duty on the C.E.G.B. to:

- i. maximise energy efficiency;
- ii. immediately commence a programme of conversion of its existing power stations to the principle of combined heat and power;
- iii. construct all future power stations on the principle of combined heat and power

THE NEXT AGM and CONFERENCE

A suggestion was made that the next Annual General Meeting and Conference might be held towards the end of August, and accommodation found at some university campus or other suitable site with the necessary facilities where members and their families could pitch tent or anchor caravan and enjoy a week's deliberations and recreation. What do members think of the idea?

LEEDS BRANCH

The BIGGEST recent event in Leeds was the Wetherby local bye-election. Wetherby is a semi-rural ward within Leeds Metropolitan District; the safest Tory seat in the area, as well as being one of the largest and most populous. After a frenetic hunt for a candidate Peter Lewenz volunteered, despite his move of house during the campaign. About 7,000 leaflets were distributed, and the result was: Conservative: 3,630; Labour: 632; Ecology Party: 314 (6% of the vote). The percentage was more than the Liberals had done in the May 1977 elections.

The leaflets were produced on the Branch's litho machine, delivered shortly before at a final cost of £210. The machine is working quite well, although learning to operate it can be a bit traumatic! Cost savings compared to normal printing costs for the campaign were about £100.

David Corry has been adopted as prospective Parliamentary candidate for Barkston Ash constituency for the next general election. A second candidate will soon be confirmed, possibly Keith Rushworth in Leeds North West. We hope to field ten candidates in the District elections next May.

The Branch has begun a process of dividing into three groups based on Horsforth, N.W. Leeds and East Leeds. The work of producing a local 'Manifesto for West Yorkshire' will be undertaken primarily by the Horsforth group.

A Branch outing to the Yorkshire Dales met with continuous rain, but an interesting time was had by all, and the trains we travelled on were liberally leafleted.

Keith Rushworth

WEST CORNWALL BRANCH

An early morning radio programme in the South West, known, funny enough, as 'Morning Sou-West', took as its theme for a week in recent times 'The impact of oil on the South West'. One of the two Branch members, Howard Hoptrough, was interviewed on the subject, and the interview was broadcast during the week.

The Branch intend to take up the cudgils of the Cornish fishing industry - which uses small, traditional boats and fishes traditionally (i.e. does not use high energy sources, and is very labour intensive) to try and ward off the threat of large modern trawlers from elsewhere in the country (which do use high-energy resources in great quantities, are hardly conscious of conservation of fish stocks, and need a high cost return in order to meet their high capital cost and high maintenance costs).

THE RE-ORGANISATION OF THE PARTY

The 1977 AGM and Conference left to the interim National Executive Committee (NEC) the task of transferring from the present administrative arrangements to the newly adopted Party Constitution (a copy of which is with this Newsletter). The NEC have decided to organize Areas (as for the twelve defined Areas of the U.K. in the Constitution) at the rate of about one a month. This will spread the load of administrative work for John Davenport (Membership Secretary). The provisional order for re-organisation is Yorkshire and Humberside, South West, West Midlands, South East and Greater London; others - if not re-organised by that time - will do so at the 1978 AGM and Conference.

The rates and provisions of the national subscriptions was also a remit to the NEC, and it has been decided that there shall be three rates: Standard £4; Couples £6; Students and pensioners £2. The former 'Associate' membership is withdrawn. All members paying one of the above rates will have equal rights (and duties) of participation in, and voting on, the business of the Party. 'Good Earth' will be provided for all members (the NEC would be interested to learn of the reaction of potential members to these rates of subscription - PLEASE NOTE that the more members we have the lower the rates can be).

The NEC felt it was not practicable to implement Clause 4 (iii) of the Constitution at present (independently determined Branch subscriptions). Instead, one quarter of each national subscription will be retained or remitted to the appropriate Branch as it is 'recognised' under the new Constitution.

THE INITIATION OF AREAS - PROCEDURE

The NEC appoints an Acting Area Co-ordinator (AAC) for Area X; the Membership Secretary then lists all current members (with details of subscription dates), lapsed members and non-recruited enquirers in that Area and passes them to the AAC.

The AAC then contacts each existing Branch in his/her Area to agree with it a definition of its territory, and arrangements for bringing its members, including those not at present on the national list, into the new locally-administered national scheme; the AAC and current members between them make every attempt to recruit lapsed members and those who have shown an interest in the Party.

The AAC contacts non-Branch members and invites them to constitute a Branch where at least five are reasonably accessible to each other; where this is not possible the AAC will collect the appropriate national subscription.

The AAC then appoints a Returning Officer (RO), who, either directly or through Branch secretaries, informs current members of an election for the Area X seat on the NEC, and invites nominations (The AAC may, of course, be nominated); if a poll is necessary the RO sends out ballot papers for return to him/her for counting and announcement of the result.

The elected member for Area X then takes his/her seat on the NEC and assumes the co-ordinating functions of the AAC. Any other member from Area X on the NEC as elected at the 1977 AGM and Conference is then deemed to be one of the nationally elected members until the 1978 AGM and Conference.

Note 1: The Membership Secretary will continue membership administration until an Area has an elected NEC member or an AAC; he will then co-operate with the Area whilst retaining a residual role for non-Branch membership; where Areas are not organised he will collect subscriptions early in 1978.

Note 2: A common subscription date of 1 January will be adopted; new members joining on or after 1 January and on or before 31 August will pay the full subscription for the year and receive all publications to which members are entitled (if available); those joining on or after 1 September will continue their first subscription until 31 December of the following year.

Comments or enquiries about these arrangements should be addressed to John Davenport or Jonathan Tyler.

THE INTERIM NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR 1977/78

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LOGO

Preparation of new pamphlets and leaflets for the Party is now in hand, and it is perhaps also the most appropriate time to consider the whole question of the design of Party literature and the image this creates. A number of members, including myself, are unhappy with the present red and blue colours (split between Tory and Labour?) with its distended 'g' (what does it mean?) of 'Ecology'

Design work is very nearly impossible in committee, and it is certainly going to be very difficult to arrive at a design with which all members of the Party will be happy. In an attempt, therefore, to allow everybody the opportunity to influence the 'house style' of the Party and the symbolism by which we hope to be recognised, the NEC invites all members to send their ideas, sketches, comments etc. on the colours and the logo (symbol) to me by Saturday 2 December 1977. If you have an idea for a logo or symbol please append an explanation as to why you feel your idea is appropriate, and what thoughts you have had in arriving at your design. I would also like to hear from any member who feels we should keep things as they are.

John Luck

(Editor's note: Perhaps 'Logo' is a new 'Party' game!!!)

OFFSET LITHO

Steve Wadensburg, of the Leeds Branch, has a Gestetner 210 offset-litho printing machine for sale at \$225. It is a good machine and could quickly repay its cost by the production of election material for the Party. But it needs a spare room or garage, someone to take charge of operating it, and the capital. Can anyone offer any or all of these? Please contact the Party Secretary if you can help in any way.
(Mrs. Sally Willington)

THE GIFTIE GIE US

The Guardian of 24 September last carried a piece about our then forthcoming AGM and Conference, and this is how we were described: ...the earnest, middle-class, sandal-wearing, vegetarian characteristics of the ecologists...
How about that, then?

LOBBYING

Energy 2000 (Yorkshire) is planning a mass lobby of Parliament to convince the Government that there is a strong body of opinion in this country which is totally opposed to the expansion of nuclear power and in favour of the urgent development of alternative sources of energy

The lobby will take place on Wednesday, 16 November from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. in the Grand Committee Room, House of Commons. It is hoped to arrange a march and demonstration prior to the lobby. The support of Lord Avebury, and Robin Cook, Nigel Forman and Stephen Ross, all MPs, is promised. Details from Energy 2000 (Yorkshire), 64 Salisbury Road, Skefffield S10 1WB; to make sure of lobbying your own MP an appointment should be made with him/her at the House of Commons on that day and within the times given, otherwise permission to enter the House of Commons may be refused.

Ecology Party members are urged to support this lobby if they possibly can, and meet in Old Palace Yard at 1.30. Banners will be present. Details from David Taylor, Marley House, Winfrith, Dorchester. Tel: Warmwell 852858

Following the Queen's speech, it was announced that a Bill will be brought before the House of Commons to legislate direct elections to the European Parliament. At the moment simple majority (as in our own elections) is generally regarded as the method to be adopted. Some form of proportional representation is, however, supported in some quarters, and as this method is fairer and tends to help minority parties such as ours, all Ecology Party members are asked to lobby their MPs by letter in order to campaign for proportional representation. Two of our founder members, Mike Benfield and Tony Whittaker, have indicated their willingness to put themselves forward as candidates for election to the European Parliament, so let's give them a hand on the way.

NEXT NEC MEETING

Will take place at 104 South Hill Park, London NW 3 on 10 December at 12 noon. There is really nothing to report to the last meeting - despite its marathon length of six hours - because the results make up the bulk of this Newsletter.

S T O P P R E S S

SOMERSET AND AVON AREA BRANCH

This Branch had its opening meeting recently, when twenty (20) people attended. The following officers were elected:

Chairman: Don Grimes, 51 Kipling Avenue, Bath. Tel: 29146

Secretary: Colin Hunt, 10 Oakfield Grove, Clifton, Bristol

Branch co-ordinators:

Bristol and West Avon: Colin Hunt

Bath and East Avon: Hugh Dawson, ~~XXXXXX~~ 1 Oakley, Claverton Down, Bath

Somerset: Garth Maton, Orchard Leigh, Compton Dundon, Somerton, Somerset

A local fee of £1 for six months was agreed prior to becoming a full member.

Press coverage included the Bath and West and the Western Daily Press. A

meeting will be held on Tuesday 1st December