

ecology party

newsletter

MAY 1978

No.4 (new series)

A TIME FOR DECISION?

The vote in Parliament has now gone in favour of BNFL's THORP. Admittedly, the actual plant can't be built until about four years from now, but the agreement for it to go ahead is there.

This is now a powerful argument in favour of the programme of Fast Breeder Reactors, and will be used, no doubt, with great force at the forthcoming public enquiry.

Opponents to these projects and to the use of nuclear power generally have so far opposed them democratically.

The chances of persuading sufficient MPs to change their minds and vote against the development of nuclear power are almost non-existent.

The almost certain General Election in the Autumn will almost certainly be taken up with all the old hoary arguments of Capitalism versus Socialism - nuclear power will be a minor factor in the campaigns.

The only way in which the governments in France and Germany have been persuaded to change their minds on this issue have been by non-violent (it was the authorities who introduced violence) sit-ins and sit-downs. Even then the governments concerned have backed off only slightly.

Where do we go from here? If you are personally convinced that the introduction of large-scale nuclear power (including FBRs) is tantamount to slow suicide for mankind, what are you now going to do?

A decision for everyone must come soon - what is yours going to be?

Howard S Hoptrough
Editor
5 Morrab Terrace
Penzance
(tel: Penzance 4880)

STOP WINDSCALE - Trafalgar Square, 29 April 1978

The speech made by our chairman, Jonathan Tyler, at this demonstration was as follows:

Opposition to nuclear power has been a cornerstone of Ecology Party policy since it was founded five years ago in response to 'Limits to Growth' and 'Blue print for Survival'. 'Eco' remains the only political party committed to a non-nuclear future in Britain. Its members have therefore come from many parts of the country today to march under its banner, in solidarity with friends in many other organisations, against the decision to build the Windscale Reprocessing Plant.

Along with most critics of Windscale, the E.P. remains unconvinced by Mr. Justice Parker's Report, and is disturbed by its failure to comprehend certain fundamental issues. Some of these touch closely on the essential reasons for the existence of 'Eco' as an independent political party. Examples of our concern are:

- * the acceptance of an insidious build-up of environmental radioactivity and of irreversible contamination, despite the acknowledged possibility that recommended 'safe' levels of biological exposure may have to be reduced, as they have been on four occasions since 1931;
- * the likelihood that if a serious accident were to occur (and, in the light of recent incidents, including the ecological disaster caused by the 'Amoco Cadiz', we believe people are entitled to be sceptical of experts who play down such risks), society would be faced with an impossible choice of continuing with a by-then suspect technology or of adjusting abruptly to the high cost of precautions or to a critical shortage of energy (indeed, the case for Windscale rests in part on necessity, the wider requirements of the existing nuclear programme not having been properly assessed at the time it was embarked on;

the commitment of so large a proportion of available capital to a single project such as Windscale, together with the Fast Breeder reactors without which reprocessing makes little technical or economic sense, despite (i) serious doubts about the feasibility of both technologies and of waste management, (ii) the increasing evidence of their economic vulnerability to inflation of building costs and the admitted limits to world uranium supplies, (iii) a capital/labour ratio some 40 times the average to which Britain must work if permanent mass unemployment is to be averted, and (iv) the uncontested fact that the forms of energy requiring the least capital, providing the most jobs and offering the greatest flexibility are conservation and the renewable resources such as solar and wind power

But the issue which comes closest to the fundamental philosophy of the E.P. is the relationship between nuclear power and social and economic organisation. Justice Parker premises his argument on the need to avoid a reduction in living standards through a shortage of energy, despite the increased risks and the unavoidable interference with basic liberties. He presents no evidence that the community at large has understood this option or the alternatives, or expressed any view on them, and he dismisses the evidence of those who argued that this represents the central issue. A deeper commitment to nuclear power must not be made until the real choices have been thoroughly debated.

We believe that the widespread disillusion with a centralist, elitist, materialistic society, marked by boredom, depressive illness and political apathy, and by more dramatic signs of social decay such as urban violence and mass unemployment, cannot be countered by a policy of further centralisation, elitism and unqualified material growth. Yet nuclear power depends on and fosters all these. We are convinced that most people want more control over their own lives, more creative employment, less waste of all kinds, and a more reasonable attitude to the environment for their own sakes and for that of future generations. We also believe that most people now recognise the finite limits on resources.

To this end, the E.P.'s prime objectives are a sustainable economic system based on the use of renewable resources and responsibility for, and participation in, decisions at the lowest practicable level. In a society based on those objectives nuclear power is unnecessary and can have no place. Opposition to its further development is therefore prominent in our election campaigns, which are winning increasing attention and support. We are dismayed that fewer than one quarter of Members of Parliament bothered to vote in the debate on Windscale on March 22, a vote that was infinitely momentous for the future of our society. We believe that there is a serious danger of civil strife if the full implications of nuclear power are only belatedly understood, and if those obsessed with short-term and obsolete concepts of economic growth - including all three leading political parties - continue to be unresponsive to the genuine doubts of those who propound credible and more manageable alternatives. We shall therefore continue to work vigorously through democratic politics to give popular expression to the fundamental choices now open to our community and to seek support for a non-nuclear alternative. On that basis we are delighted to participate in this demonstration about Windscale, of opposition to a futile and dangerous step and of joyous affirmation that more satisfying, sustainable, practicable alternatives really are within the grasp of every citizen of this country.

USE OF AGRICULTURAL LAND

A Government Committee of Inquiry into the acquisition and occupancy of agricultural land in the U.K. is now sitting. The secretary of the eleven man(?) committee is C.J.A. Barnes, Romney House, Marsham Street, London SW 1. The Committee will, in due course, report to the Minister of Agriculture, John Silkin. Anyone can send their views on

the dangers of 'big business' farming and buying in of land by city companies and foreign (e.g. Arab) speculators

ECOLOGY PARTY CONFERENCE and A.G.M., Birmingham,
9/10 September 1978

An insert is included with this Newsletter which gives all the details required, but it should be noted that resolutions ~~from the~~ for the Conference and A.G.M. should be submitted as soon as possible to the Secretary, Sally Willington, Riverside Herb Garden, Hessenford, Torpoint, Cornwall (tel: 05035 352) Either individuals or branches may submit resolutions - if there are several on the same subject a composite resolution will be substituted for them

Come on, everybody - this is the chance you have been waiting for to have your say about the way this Party is being run

SOUTH WEST POLICY CONFERENCE, Bristol, Saturday 17 June

This Conference is to be held on Saturday, 17 June, 1978 at the Grosvenor Hotel, Victoria Street, Bristol, commencing at 10.00 a.m.

It is hosted by the South West Region, but it is open to all members, friends and sympathizers, and it is hoped that as many as possible will attend. If any members wish to sell or distribute material there will be tables provided. The Grosvenor Hotel is in the centre of Bristol on the corner of Redcliffe Way and Victoria Street, close to Temple Meads station and coming in from (or going out to - whichever way you happen to be going, of course!) the A 4 to Bath, the A 37 to Shepton Mallet and the A 38 to Bridgwater. The following is the agenda:

- 10.00 a.m. Hall open and coffee available
- 10.30 a.m. Introduction by Tony Whittaker,
Conference Chairman
- 10.40 a.m. The economy and unemployment
David Fleming (NEC) will give a talk
and invite discussion
- 1.10 p.m. Lunch break
- 2.10 p.m. Education
The Devon branch will give a talk and
invite discussion
- 4.00 p.m. Tea break
- 4.30 p.m. Defence and foreign policy
The East Dorset branch will give a talk
and invite discussion

The times on the agenda are flexible, and it is hoped that the discussion will be free flowing and lively

The fee for the Conference is 75p; food and drinks will be available in the hotel, but participants are advised to bring their own if they wish to avoid hotel prices

For more information contact either: Maurice Weekes (Bristol Co-ordinator; tel: Bristol 571559)(location and arrangements), or David Taylor (S.W. Co-ordinator; tel: Bath 25597)(format and topics)

MAY LOCAL ELECTIONS

The following were the results:

London

Hoe Street Ward, Waltham Forest - Steve Lambert standing
 There were three seats here, with thirteen candidates
 Besides Steve there were three each of the Conservatives,
 Labour, Liberal and the National Front
 The top three votes were 1900, 1875 and 1824 - all Labour
 and all therefore the successful candidates Next were
 1232, 1165 and 1063 - all Conservatives; then a Liberal
 with 246, a National Front with 221 and then Steve with
 215 He was followed by two National Front candidates
 with 211 and 201, and the bottom of the poll were two
 Liberals with 170 and 169 A total poll of 10,492, which
 represents 44% of the electorate Steve's share was about
 2%

Clockhouse Ward, Beckenham, Bromley Here Helen Vernon
 stood - no leafletting, canvassing or campaigning was
 done other than some advertisements in the local press
 Helen gained 43 votes

St. John's Wood Ward, with two seats vacant Here
 Jonathan Porritt stood The following were the results:
 Conservatives: 1201 and 1156; Jonathan 342; Two
 Labour candidates with 325 and 316 and a Save London
 Alliance with 167

Leeds

Ward and E.P. candidate	Con.	Lab.	Lib.	Eco.	N.F.	Comm.	E.P. %
Wetherby Mike Sellers	5365	883	641	555			7.5
Garforth No.1 Dave Corry	4487	2451		483			6.5
Headingley Keith Rushworth	2240	1645	692	185	210		3.7
Moortown Steve Waldenberg	2926	1567		160			3.4
Horsforth Dorothy Darnborough	3201	864	3414	262			3.4
Burley Keith Baxter	1307	1811		133	36	57	4.0
Harehills & Roundhay Anne Andrew	4139	2521	396	118	105		1.6
Chapel Allert-4039 on & Scott Hall Trevor Bernstein	2984	495	54	148	108		0.7
Armley & Castleton Steve Garrett	1339	2122	3007	74	87	54	1.1
Cookridge & Weetwood Pete Lewenz	6201	2091	1132	197			2.0
Talbot Sara Parkin	3687	1061	302	201	46		3.6

A total of 2422 votes were cast for the E.P. candidates, and
 the overall percentage was approximately 3.4

Bath

Two wards were fought here. In Lyncombe Don Grimes was the candidate - the Conservative got 1139, the Labour 380 and Don 313 - an E.P. vote of 16%. In Whitcombe it was Richard Carder, and the result was Conservative 834, the Labour 402 and Richard 239 - again the percentage was 16%. A very good result.

Birmingham

The one ward, Selly Oak, was fought, with Joe Benett as our candidate. The result was Conservative 4642, Labour 2747, Joe 546, National Front 160 and Communists 60. Joe's percentage of the vote was 6.7.

At first sight these results may seem disappointing, but when one considers that many of the wards are being fought for the first time by us; that many of our candidates have not been involved in politics before, let alone stood for election; and that in many cases the campaign - through lack of time and resources - consisted only of partial leafletting, then I think we can be considered to have done reasonably well. To gain, for instance, 16% of the vote in both the Bath wards that were fought for the first time with first time candidates seems to me a good result - after all, we did not really expect to win a seat! But what it does mean is that we must work hard to build up local branches - to gain many active members and build up substantial financial resources - don't forget, the next election will almost undoubtedly be a General one!

Candidates are asked by our chairman, Jonathon Tyler, to send him five copies of all campaign literature that they used (other than the national literature, of course). This is to comply with the copyright regulations, and helps NEC with ~~publicity~~ publicity for the Party.

Howard S Hoptrough

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

The following points are noted to initiate discussion through the medium of the Newsletter, for debate at branch level, at our conferences and other conferences, or in any other way you may think useful:

- @ Was the Torness demonstration on 6/7 May a successful one?
- @ In the April issue of 'Vole' (No.8) there appeared an article entitled 'North Sea oil - a chance to rebuild Britain'. Under this heading was what appeared to be a political programme similar in many respects to our own. Any comments?
- @ In the 'Observer' of 30 April (which included a miserly reference to the Stop Windscale rally) appeared an article by Solly Zuckerman, one-time wartime scientific adviser to Winston Churchill. It argued - very cleverly - that the only way for us to survive was by the use of high technology, and ecologists and conservationists were only hampering these efforts. What do you think?

List of existing branches

East Dorset	Ian Hatwell, 20 Spring Road, Bournemouth, or Debbie Savage, 30 Martey Road, Boscombe, Bath, Dorset
West Dorset	(Not yet a branch, but enquiries to: Jane Ivimey, 63 Goldcrest Avenue, Weymouth (tel: 4659)
Bath and East Avon	(No contact as yet?)
Bristol and West Avon	(Maurice Weekes (tel: Bristol 671559))
Somerset	Garth Muton, Orchard Leigh, Compton Dundon, Somerton, Somerset (tel: 0458 42142)
(The above three are sub-branches? of Somerset and Avon; the contact for this branch is: Thelma Grimes, 51 Kipling Ave., Bath, Avon (tel: Bath 29146)	
Devon	Peter Frings, 3 Mowbray Avenue, Exeter, Devon
Leeds	Keith Rushworth, 8 The Mount, Alwoodley, Leeds 17
Birmingham South	Brenda Tyler, 121 Selly Park Road, Birmingham 29
Norwich and Norfolk	Ron Spathaky, 31 Meadow Rise Road, Norwich
Greater London	Jean Lambert, 3 Howard Road, London E 17
East Sussex	Sherry Hoevelmann, 2 Summertree Cottages, Bodle Street Green, Herstmonceaux, East Sussex
Penzance and West Cornwall	Howard Hoptrough, 5 Morrab Terrace, Penzance, Cornwall (tel: 0736 4880)

NEC MEETING 8 APRIL 1978

Points of interest not otherwise noted in this Newsletter:

- * ConSoc Conference on Lead Conclusions were that the reported dangers from lead, although great, had been exaggerated, but it was hard to get definite research results Industrial lead, rather than that in petrol, was reckoned to be the greatest hazard
- * A report was made by Jonathan Tyler on his participation in the Council of Europe Symposium at Strasbourg on 30/31 March (The report was unfortunately too long to include in this Newsletter, and too detailed to effectively compress)
- * A proposal for paid secretarial help was made, and after lengthy discussion it was laid on the table for discussion at the next meeting This was not done to shelve the issue, but because there were possibly two events taking place in the interim which could affect the proposal
- * An example of the literature now available is included with this Newsletter - further copies are available from David Fleming, 104 South Hill Park, London N W 3 (tel: 01 794 5644) The Short Manifesto was still under discussion

The next NEC meeting is on 3 June at David Fleming's place

THE ECOLOGY PARTY IN NORWICH

A branch of the Ecology Party was brought into being at a meeting in Norwich on 1 April - it will be known as the Norwich and Norfolk branch

About sixty people were present, and at the end of the meeting seventeen of them enrolled as Ecology Party members. Many others expressed an interest, and will be 'followed up' by the energetic organizer and chairman of the meeting, Ron Spathaky. In his opening remarks Ron Spathaky drew attention to the many existing international, national and locally environmentally-orientated pressure groups. There was now a need to 'draw the strings together' - to 'initiate changes'. He introduced Jonathan Tyler, who had just returned from a two-day debate in Strasbourg on European parliamentary democracy in the face of coming shortages. Jonathan Tyler said that our three main political parties are fixed in their traditional ways and cannot take on board basic questions on outcome and objects of our wasteful society. He thought that those present had all experienced an 'impending crisis awareness' and forecast an eventual break-up of our present seemingly set monolithic political parties.

Robert Waller, writer, lecturer and broadcaster, was the other speaker. He said that he was not at home on a political platform, and that he had taken considerable thought before coming to support the E.P., and believed it was now time for non-political people to come forward. Politicians are now victims of their own structures; their occupational malformations in intellectual postures made wrong positions feel right and right feel wrong, so they panicked. We must, he said, develop an 'ecological conscience'. Our emotions are based on old beliefs - therefore the difficulties are psychological, and an inner resistance to change, which produces terror. We must overcome this. He said that many of our ills were caused because people were bored in their jobs and failed to do them properly. The problem was to make a human society in which people fulfil themselves. To create and maintain, and not to destroy, was the only way to survive. The E.P. was the only Party saying this, so he hoped people would join.

Discussion followed. An interesting point about the need for re-education of children (and others) away from materialistic attitudes was raised. Jonathan Tyler said that the E.P. did not agree with the present Government's view that education is to fit people for industry. He thought that most people were worried about the present situation 'under the surface'. Robert Waller thought many problems solve themselves through an economic choice. Governments put profit above the needs of the people, but, he reminded everyone, it was their money government was using.

A Committee was formed and will meet on 6 May. Ron Spathaky's address is: 31 Meadow Rise Road, Norwich, Norfolk, and his telephone number is 0603 501791. He has a tape of the 1 April meeting which he is willing to loan free of charge (except, of course, for postal charges).

Sally Willington

GESTETNER 200 OFFSET DUPLICATOR

One of these machines is now owned by the South West Region of the Party, and is situated at Lesley and Tony Whittaker's at Rhyll Manor, Dulverton, Somerset (tel: Anstey Mills 225) Tony supplies the following details about the machine and its use:

There is no plate-making machine, so users must supply their own plates - the estimated cost of these is worth about £3 It is possible to use paper plates - which are quite cheap - but their reproduction qualities are not so good, and the run is limited to 500 copies at the most

Tony does not keep a stock of paper, so any user must supply his own

A supply of black and green ink is available, but in due course this will run out, too, and again the user will have to supply his own

It is estimated that a run of, say, 30,000 leaflets would take approximately 24 working hours to complete, so users would have to think in terms of this kind of time scale

The plate size or type is not known at this moment, but the maximum size of paper is 15" (38.1 cms.) by 10" (25.4 cms.)

The minimum size is 5" (12.5 cms.) by 3" (7.5 cms.) The maximum printing area is 13½" (33.5 cms.) by 9½" (24.5 cms.)

It behoves any potential user, therefore, to ring and arrange things with Tony before setting out on safari to Dulverton

WINDSCALE AGAIN

A well researched and cogent critique of the Parker report's recommendations is available from 'The Ecologist' at 73 Molesworth Street, Wadebridge, Cornwall at 5p a copy plus ~~postage~~ postage etc. There is a discount for bulk orders

The April issue of 'Vole' (No.8) carried an article which presents the reactions of several witnesses at the Windscale enquiry to the way Justice Parker had treated their evidence Leaflets of the Ecology Party abounded at Trafalgar Square on 29 April, both Party literature and those especially printed for the occasion Great credit must be given for the latter to John Luck for drafting it and arranging for its printing, and to his friend Stephen Eyles for printing 11,500 of them - at no cost to the Party - and for helping John to distribute them

JACQUES COUSTEAU

Many know of Jacques Cousteau, but not many know that he is a convinced environmentalist, and that he publicly campaigns against the unthinking and materialistic spailiation of the environment, and is a particular opponent of the use of nuclear power - he spoke, for instance, at the Stop Windscale Rally in Trafalgar Square

A programme featuring him was recorded by the B.B.C. at Bristol recently on this latter theme - keep a look out for it - probably August

PARTY MEMBERSHIP

Some of you will ~~have~~ be receiving renewal reminders with this Newsletter; so that we don't spend too much time in administering this side of the business, could we ask you all to renew on time and save us the trouble of sending reminders. All members had a note in the last issue of the Newsletter of the date for their renewal and the fee required to enable us to transfer to a calendar system (i.e. all subscriptions to run from 1 January to 31 December). All renewals should go to: John Davenport, 2 The Old Vicarage, 26 Main Road, Kempsey, Worcester. Many thanks. At the last count (21 May) our membership totalled 450 - this compares with 388 reported in the last Newsletter.

A LETTER IN 'TIMES' IS FINE!

The President of the Institution of Civil Engineers, in a remarkably ecologically-enlightened letter about the social consequences of high technology, published in the 'Times' of 17 February, commented that 'no political party appears yet to have accepted the importance of the selective support of technology'. Jonathan Tyler wrote at once to trumpet our existence, and to comment on the President's attempt to shift the blame for inappropriate technology away from engineers. The result was a bulky response - 34 letters in all. One was a ConSoc circular, one was from Joan Pick, whom some members will know from her 'Earth Enterprise Report', one was abusive and without an address (from a Conservative lady) and one was from a FOE/SPGB supporter proposing a debate. The other 30 were all favourable, and a majority would seem to be potential members.

WEST CORNWALL BRANCH

A small meeting of interested people took place on 17 May in Penzance, and it was decided to form a branch of the E.P. A public meeting will be called soon, and - wait for it - a jumble sale will be held to gain some funds. The contact for the branch has some slight connection with this Newsletter - Howard Hoptrough, 5 Morrab Terrace, Penzance, Cornwall (tel: 0736 4880).

MANIFESTO

A reprint of 200 copies of this remarkable tome is in hand; it contains all the revisions adopted at the 1976 Conference, is completely re-set and re-designed to fit in your pocket. Copies are available at £1 (inclusive of postage and packing - any surplus to Party funds) from me, and if the demand warrants it I can increase the print order. Bulk orders at discounts - ring me for a quotation.

John Luck

20 Military Road, Rye, Sussex

(tel: 0973 3404)

AVON AND SOMERSET BRANCH

The activities of the branch have been dominated by the election campaign in Bath where two wards are being contested by Ecology Party candidates for seats on the Bath District Council. Don Grimes, branch chairman, and Richard Carder are fighting a well-organised campaign, and with the help of branch members have leafleted every house in their respective wards, first with a national policy leaflet, and then, after an interval of a week or two, with another local policy leaflet. This has been followed by an intensive canvass of the area. Don and Richard are both opposed by Conservative and Labour candidates. The election will be on the 4 May.

On 24 April some twenty-five members and sympathizers in the area attended, by special invitation, a recording in Bristol of a B.B.C. TV programme in which Jacques Cousteau was to explain his views on the duty of environmentalists to intervene in national politics. The Ecology Party members attending the recording found the experience interesting, were grateful for the invitation, but felt that they had been misled into thinking that the audience (many of whom had travelled some distance) would be able to participate - in fact this was not the case. Only specially briefed representatives of F.O.E., ConSoc etc. were allowed to contribute. Despite this and the fact that Julian Pettifer discounted the achievements of ecological politics in this country, Jacques Cousteau was magnificent, and the programme (scheduled for transmission in August) should assist our cause.

Other branch news in brief: David Taylor, South West representative on the NEC, has moved to Bath, and his presence is greatly welcomed by local members.

The branch have decided to publish a local Newsletter (editor Garth Muton); it will be bi-monthly, so that branch members will receive it in between the issues of the last National Newsletter.

To prevent any confusion arising out of the last National Newsletter (No. 3 new series), it is worth mentioning that Avon and Somerset operate as one branch; when the membership is strong enough, however, the branch will devolve into three: Bristol and West Avon, Bath and West Avon and Somerset. All enquiries for the Avon and Somerset branch should be addressed to: Thelma Grimes, 51 Kipling Avenue, Bath, Avon.

Garth Muton

GOOD EARTH

The newspaper which comes to you with your Newsletter - and which has created a great interest in the Ecology Party - has run into unexpected financial difficulties just when it thought it had turned the corner - its printers have raised the cost of printing it to an appreciable extent. This means it will not last much longer unless there is considerable and increasing support for it, so PLEASE SUBSCRIBE TO IT ON BEHALF OF FRIENDS, AND PUBLICISE IT EVERYWHERE YOU CAN - DO YOUR DAMNDEST TO INCREASE ITS CIRCULATION. It would be a sad loss to 'Eco' if it disappeared.

AEROSOLS

With the exception of sprays for medical use (i.e. those for asthma sufferers), Sweden is banning the use of aerosols from January 1979. Sweden uses 1% (repeat - one per cent) of the total number of aerosols manufactured in the world. The U.S.A. - by far the largest users - may consider bans later this year. The U.K. may...how funny - the U.K. Government doesn't seem to be considering the matter at all!

BADGES

Steve Lambert says that the badges went like hot cakes(!) at the Stop Windscale rally in Trafalgar Square, and that his present supply has nearly all gone. He is, however, re-ordering. If you want any, therefore, please get in touch and let him know quantities. They cost 5p each, and may be sold at any price in excess of that that you think you can get!

Steve's address is: 3 Howard Road, London E 17, and his telephone number is: 01 520 0676

Please note that the deadline (not the publication date) for the next issue of the Newsletter is 1 JULY. Apologies must be made for the lateness of this issue; several circumstances conspired to cause it!