

The

Real

Alternative

ECOLOGY PARTY

1979

ELECTION MANIFESTO



**WE DO NOT INHERIT THE WORLD
FROM OUR FATHERS -
WE BORROW IT
FROM OUR CHILDREN**

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The Real Alternative

We are a new party. This may well be the first time that you've heard of us. And we are a small party. 50 candidates is all that we can field this time round. *Yet you will find this manifesto confronts you with a real alternative.*

For do you really have much of a choice as things stand now? When it comes down to it, the message of the major parties is very similar - *business as usual*. They all recommend more of the same, even though their policies have proved themselves increasingly inadequate, even though it is clear that the deepening crisis of the industrial world requires a new approach.

The Ecology Party exists to help people face up to this crisis. You may find much of what we say disturbing and difficult to come to terms with, in that it requires a fundamental change in the way we look at things. And few of us relish change unless there are very good reasons.

It is our business to put across the force of these reasons. For we believe that we are on the brink of unprecedented economic and social upheaval. To say this does not make us prophets of doom-there is still time to do something about it. But we must start now.

This last winter brought it home to people just how uncertain and vulnerable is our whole way of life - and how downright unpleasant it might become. We witnessed a society turning against itself, everyone blaming everyone else, humanity and sympathy beaten down by a new type of "militancy", based on envy and sheer desperation.

And through it all, the politicians scoring points off the other side, exploiting the troubles of the whole country in the interests of petty party-politics.

Is this really the way we want to live? With greed, indifference and selfishness at the heart of our society? And politics just a meaningless exchange of narrow-minded dogma?

More and more people are giving the clearest answer of all, refusing to fit in with the demoralising pressures of this unfeeling and directionless existence. They are seeking a better-balanced, more caring way of life, in which people are more fully involved, and individual talents and resources made full use of.

And they recognise that if we are to protect the world our children will inherit, we must above all create a way of life that we can afford, a way of life that enriches us without impoverishing the Earth.

This new awareness demands a new political initiative. An initiative which asks people to join together *now* to make a better future.

Why Ecology ?

It's not an easy word. But it is the only word that expresses exactly what this new political initiative will mean.

Ecology is the study of all living things, where they live, and how they live together. Simple though it may sound, this amounts to the most fundamental political reality of all.

For without a full understanding of where we fit in, of the need to live in harmony with each other and with the rest of creation - within the limitations of the earth's finite supply of resources - there is little between us and eventual extinction.

Man has consistently and unthinkingly exploited the earth to fuel his dreams of growth and expansion. But in all his calculations, the notion of ecological balance is missing. The future has been sacrificed in the free-for-all of industrial development, and generations to come may have to cope with a barren and unmanageable world.

Economic growth rests upon the unlimited consumption of resources, energy and land. It has generated ever rising material expectations that are increasingly difficult to satisfy.

The warning lights are flashing. It is time to change direction now, before it is too late.

Our programme rests on six fundamental changes:-

- (1) A move towards a sustainable way of life, conserving the earth's 'capital', learning to rely mainly on those resources which can be renewed or recycled.
- (2) A move towards a stable economy, ensuring basic material security and prosperity for all.
- (3) A move towards economic self-sufficiency in terms of the basic necessities of life, particularly food and energy.
- (4) A move towards a decentralised way of life, so that people become more responsible for themselves and for others.
- (5) A move towards seeing things in the long-term, rather than settling for convenient, short-term measures.
- (6) A move towards a society which places less emphasis on material values, and more on personal development and achievement.

Such a programme adds up to a new economics for man, a new sense of values, the chance of a new future.

And that means an escape from the narrow-minded confrontations of Right and Left. The Ecology Party veers neither to the one nor to the other, and views conventional political rivalries as dangerously irrelevant, in that they obscure the nature and urgency of the problems we have to face up to.

The Crisis in our Economy

It's a pretty grim picture - permanent inflation, chronic unemployment, high levels of taxation, continuing balance of trade difficulties, an international banking system under severe pressure, and the threat of acute international recession.

The struggle to maintain a reasonable standard of living turns government against its people, union against management, worker against worker. Millions of people work at boring, repetitive jobs.

Just how have we ended up in this mess? There are five main reasons:

- (1) **Our industries simply can't cope any more.** Confronted with the often irreconcilable demands of competing in domestic and export markets, whilst at the same time keeping people off the dole, they are declining rapidly. Much of our industrial plant is obsolescent and an absurd proportion of increasingly scarce capital is thrown away on 'lame ducks' and 'white elephants'. Smaller firms are given little encouragement to play a fuller part in the economy.
- (2) **Our whole economy depends upon the things we import** - half of our food and most of the raw materials we need for our manufacturing industries. Our efforts to reduce this burden have failed, and even North Sea Oil cannot cover up the long term imbalance in our trading position.
- (3) **We pay for these imports with the goods and services we export.** But international competition is increasingly fierce. Not only are we unable to increase our share in world markets, but we now earn less and less in real terms because of a considerable drop in the purchasing power of our exports. Very soon this will hit even harder, when the revolutionary technology of micro-electronics begins to take effect, creating a world-wide glut in the goods on which our wealth depends. Even our expertise in providing services and specialised skills is increasingly vulnerable.
- (4) **We have to spend more and more just to maintain our present way of life.** The costs of this wasteful, throw-away industrial state are enormous - expenditure on health services, welfare, unemployment benefits, on pollution, transport and crime prevention goes up and up every year. In fact, this is the only area of the economy where there is any real growth! Many new projects are prohibitively expensive, as the costs of materials and energy continue to rise, and it becomes increasingly difficult even to maintain what we already have.
- (5) **Our decline as an industrial nation has produced high levels of unemployment,** causing great personal hardship and suffering, and placing a considerable strain on the economy. This trend has reinforced the deep-seated hostility between unions and management. In deteriorating economic conditions, both sides of industry behave as if problems can only be solved by conflict rather than co-operation.

In this uncertain world we are told we have to "grow" merely to stand still. So we continue to spend more than we earn, as a dishonest way of not facing up to becoming poorer, and condemn many thousands to miserable, mass-production jobs to keep the whole giddy roundabout in motion.

Yet economists and politicians are still committed to "solving" our problems in the same old way - committed to increased GNP, increased exports, increased 'economies of scale', increased productivity, increased rates of growth.

And that's exactly what led us into the mess in the first place!

The Crisis in our Society

At the same time we have seen the gradual disintegration of those ties and values that bind society together, with families and whole communities broken apart by the pressures of "economic necessity".

The pace of change causes unprecedented stress; families are constantly on the move. Many feel isolated; neighbourliness and sociability are undermined by mass entertainment; there is too little scope for common effort on behalf of the neighbourhood, and for many it is the work-place alone that provides any sense of community.

Political and social realities are seen in economic terms; compassion itself has become an item of public expenditure. Personal, social, even religious values have been forced to yield before an overwhelmingly materialistic view of things. We seem to have lost the ability to respond sensitively, both to each other and to the world around us.

And the result?

- *a society of confrontation and crude competition* setting poor against rich, town against country, black against white. A society in which people's understandable doubts and fears are all too easily exploited by extremists.

- *a society of dependent people*, with the bureaucrats assuming more and more control over our everyday lives. The very nature of the welfare state encourages people to become dependent, making it harder for them to rely upon their own resources.

- *a society of loneliness and isolation.* 85% of old people say that this is their main worry. Yet we continue to treat them as "someone else's problem", institutionalising their needs, denying them a dignified place in the community.

- *a society of alienation*, in which many feel no sense of identity or belonging. And as a result, they tend to express their frustrations through anti-social behaviour, through vandalism and crimes of violence. Juvenile crime is perhaps the clearest indication of the breakdown of our social structure, particularly in the cities.

None of this is difficult to explain, but it is going to be very difficult to put right. There are certainly no answers to be found in choosing a way of life which deprives people of communal purpose or individual identity, which is often seen to be discriminatory and unfair, which relies on institutionalised solutions to personal problems, and which places such unashamed emphasis on material values.

It is clear that the social limits to our growth-addicted society are at least as pressing as the economic limits. We are tragically misusing our most valuable asset of all - the energy and resourcefulness of our own people.

A society which offers no motive for behaving responsibly and sociably other than the material rewards to be gained from its degrading rat race, has lost its soul, and is approaching the very edge of unmanageable instability.

Priorities for Action

Few politicians today dare question the prevailing dogma of growth, and because what they are saying cannot possibly offer any long-term solutions, they wrap everything in a layer of deliberate mystification to keep us from the real truth - *that conventional politics and economics are bankrupt.*

It has always been difficult for Government to concern itself with long-term issues, so pressing are the demands of short-term survival. It is always the squeaky wheel that gets the grease.

But we need a programme - right now - that looks ahead to the future, so that we face our problems honestly, and in such a way as to involve everybody in the changes that will inevitably occur. Such a programme would include:

- (1) the right to live and be fully involved in a democratic, well-ordered society
- (2) rewarding, enjoyable work, which guarantees basic economic security
- (3) the company of friends and neighbours in a caring community
- (4) a clean, safe and pleasant environment, both at work and at home
- (5) the chance to develop individual potentials and abilities to the full
- (6) the equal right of all children to a challenging, well-balanced education
- (7) good, wholesome food at reasonable prices
- (8) energy which is economical, reliable and safe
- (9) goods which last and in which we can take a pride
- (10) international stability, based on a fair deal for *all* the peoples of the world

This is an ambitious, but nonetheless realistic and achievable programme.

Things change too rapidly to offer any guaranteed blueprint for survival. In the long-term, for instance, a reduction in the population of this country may be essential before such a programme could be fully realised.

But the next few pages should give you an idea of what an ecological perspective means in terms of practical policies. They include no arrogant demands, no rash promises - just a few of our suggestions as to how to move towards a workable future.

To promise more than that, to promise increasing material wealth, to hold up North Sea Oil as our own little El Dorado, to talk about Britain getting "great" again through further industrial expansion and growth - such are the empty bribes with which worried politicians attempt to "buy" your vote.

Our programme affords the people of Britain the chance of a prosperous, stable, self-reliant, democratic future. And not just as some cleverly contrived flash-in-the-pan, but on a long-term, sustainable basis, as much for our children as for ourselves.

And that alone makes it the only REAL alternative you are likely to get at this election.

Work

THE PROBLEM

Unemployment is the most disturbing symptom of our economic crisis. Growth causes, rather than cures, unemployment. For growth today means investment in capital-intensive, highly-automated industries. The micro-electronic revolution will accelerate this trend in both the manufacturing and the service industries. International trade is bound to decline and the industrial state, geared as it is to an import-export economy, just will not be able to provide the jobs.

Many jobs today are irrelevant, repetitive and fragmented - making the wrong sort of goods in the wrong sort of way. Work is seen as a monotonous, soul-destroying means of purchasing leisure. Industrial unrest is inevitable.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ Create the jobs that need the people, adapting technology to a more human scale. Provide jobs with low capital investment, developing the skills which will make sense when energy isn't cheap and materials are scarce. Encourage craft industries.

➔ Move towards greater self-sufficiency by creating the jobs in areas where we are most dependent on imports - agriculture and forestry, many manufacturing industries, clothing and building materials.

➔ Create jobs with an eye to future energy demands, in full-scale insulation and conservation programmes, developing solar panels and other renewable energy sources.

➔ Encourage employment in all maintenance and repair businesses. Expand the "recycling" industry. Start cleaning up the mess created by our industrial society.

All of which amounts to creating the kind of labour-intensive work which won't be made redundant by automation and recession.

But that by itself is not enough: the way in which that work is done is also vital.

➔ arrange financial incentives so that industries become smaller, serving the needs of the local community.

➔ encourage co-ownership schemes and co-operatives, making workers responsible to themselves and to the community, involving them fully through consultation and participation in decision-making.

➔ provide every incentive for small businesses to flourish and become the mainstay of the economy.

➔ make it easier for people to be self-employed, rather than subjecting them to bureaucratic persecution. Provide the skilled workers our economy needs, through flexible retraining and apprenticeship schemes.

➔ promote the reduced working week and job-sharing schemes, removing the damagingly sharp distinction between work and leisure.

Such a programme, if carried out on a regional basis, yet with a sense of national urgency, would satisfy the four basic criteria of work:

- (1) that it guarantees *everyone* a reasonable standard of living
- (2) that it be *socially useful*, goods being made with care and made to last
- (3) that it be *environmentally sound*, reducing energy and resource depletion and curtailing pollution
- (4) that it be *personally satisfying*, a natural and rewarding part of our lives.

In the long term it would create a diversified, smaller-scale, self-sufficient and stable economy - which will save jobs, save energy and save on the enormous running costs of our industrial society. That, and not growth, is the only way to maintain acceptable living standards in the coming recession.

Family and Community

THE PROBLEM

Social stability depends on a *sense of community* and on *secure, caring families*. Yet an industrialised economy tends to undermine both the family unit and community organisation. Families are increasingly isolated and parental influence reduced.

However much they go on about it, today's politicians can do nothing about this without calling into question the very basis of the industrial state.

ECO-POLICIES

- ➔ *Emphasise the importance of the community in rebuilding our disintegrated society.*
- ➔ *Organise our lives so as to reduce the high level of geographical mobility.*
- ➔ *Re-confirm the vital importance of responsible parenthood. Make it possible for parents to spend more time with their children.*

(1) THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Despite considerable advances in terms of individual rights, equal pay and opportunities, women today are still expected to conform to rigid, orthodox roles. Many people at work in today's male-dominated, exploitative society are forced to measure their worth purely in terms of their wage.

- ➔ *We must break down the stereotyped distinctions that persist, in a society responsive to the individual qualities and needs of us all.*
- ➔ *While emphasising each individual's right to work, we must alter the balance of respect and reward in society, so that child-care and community work are no longer dismissed as 'non-productive'.*

(2) THE ROLE OF THE STATE

The social services are obliged to take over an increasing number of responsibilities which properly belong to the family and the community.

- ➔ *We must reverse this trend by encouraging self-help organisations, emphasising the ability of individuals to take responsibility for themselves and for others. Old people must be brought back into the community, and we must learn again to value their knowledge and experience.*

➔ *We must learn to work with people rather than for people, developing a system of care and welfare based in the community, rather than passed down from on high.*

(3) ETHNIC MINORITIES

There is still widespread racial discrimination. Legislation in this field has proved largely ineffective. In many parts of the country the divisions between different ethnic communities are deep-rooted and potentially explosive.

- ➔ *It is vital to recognise the enormous value of cultural diversity, to create a society where people are not only equal before the law, but treated as equals. We need a far stronger lead from government, a far greater educational commitment.*

➔ *In the long run, only a decentralised, community-based society, with low levels of unemployment, in which people share a common sense of purpose and direction, offers any sort of solution.*

(4) LAW AND ORDER

Rising crime rates are a symptom of the stresses on the individual and society. Should we then reform offenders by "hard-line" punishment or by gentler persuasion - or should we perhaps reform the system?

- ➔ *Again, we believe the emphasis must fall on the community. The alienation of the young, the selfishness of the persistent offender, and the indifference of those who stand by and let it happen, can only be resolved within a self-reliant, "self-policing" community, in which people are fully involved, and feel a sense of pride and identity.*

Government

THE PROBLEM

There is widespread cynicism and apathy about politics today. The live broadcasting of Parliament has focussed attention on its inefficient procedures and the undignified behaviour of some MPs. Party interest appears to override national interest, and as much time is spent making deals as taking decisions. There is endless juggling around with local government organisation, but invariably it is to suit whichever party is in power, rather than the people they claim to represent.

Power remains firmly fixed at the centre. The party machines serve as an impenetrable barrier to many people's interest and involvement. Central Government is ever more ready to intervene, and there is considerable unease at the extent to which our lives are controlled by bureaucrats. The "experts" and "decision-makers" seem more and more remote.

ECO-POLICIES

(1) THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

➔ *Change the present system. The "first past the post" method of electing MPs encourages a negative attitude, "to keep the other lot out", replacing positive confidence as a basis for voting.*

➔ *Introduce Proportional Representation as a vital part of the reforms needed to regenerate our political structures. It will ensure fairer, more effective elections.*

➔ *Rethink the whole business of participatory democracy, including the desirability of five year intervals between General Elections.*

(2) DEVOLUTION

➔ *In view of the referendum results, start again on the whole issue of devolved assemblies in Scotland and Wales. Reassert a firm commitment to devolution, including extensive economic powers, whilst insisting that as the most important constitutional issue this country faces, it must not be treated as some convenient device to placate nationalist feeling or simply transfer bureaucracy from one place to another.*

➔ *Prepare now for regional assemblies throughout the United Kingdom, in such a way as to ensure that they do not become power-hungry mini-Westminsters, but are properly geared to play their part in the transition to a more stable society.*

(3) DECENTRALISATION

➔ *Work towards a fully decentralised society. Make it a priority for central government to set up legislative and administrative structures to facilitate all local initiatives in this direction. Central government will of course retain many vital functions, such as foreign policy, resource management and pollution control.*

➔ *Emphasise the dual priority of economic self-reliance and political self-determination, based on a network of small, independent communities.*

➔ *Consistently apply the golden rule of decentralisation - "that nothing should be done at a higher level which can be done at a lower level". Participation is the key to success in any democracy.*

We believe that the greatest unfinished task of our democracy is to transfer responsibility away from central government back to the people of this country. It is only by doing this that we shall restore the balance between the individual, the community and the nation.

Education

THE PROBLEM

The number of bored, aggressive and anti-social children in our secondary schools points to the failure of the present system. So-called "economies of scale" invalidated many of the opportunities of comprehensive reorganization. Many schools are divorced from the communities they are meant to serve. Children often see themselves as just so much "job-fodder", and are not taught how to play a fully developed role in society.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Allow education to play its proper, all-important part in the transition to a more balanced way of life, not just in schools and universities, but in every facet of society.*

➔ *Schools will be smaller, better able to ensure that all children receive an equal educational opportunity.* At a time when the number of children in schools is falling rapidly, any spare capacity should be used for community facilities. Much closer links between schools, universities and their surrounding communities will be encouraged.

➔ *Make the study of world politics, of the environment and man's proper place in it, a vital component of any core curriculum, teaching people the values and skills appropriate to a self-reliant society.*

➔ *Move from a highly competitive, materialistic approach to education, to one which stresses more positive values, encouraging individuals to realise their full potential for the good of the community.*

➔ *Local authorities will take over full responsibility for the administration and financing of education in their area.*

Health

THE PROBLEM

Standards of health fall far short of those to be expected in an affluent society. One person in five will become a victim of cancer. There has been a dramatic increase in deaths caused by heart disease, and a significant decline in standards of mental health. The N.H.S. shows a wasteful preference for high technology medicine, yet there are long waiting lists for simple treatment. The structure of the Health Service has created a bureaucracy so inefficient and expensive that basic standards of medical care are jeopardised.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Create an environment which minimises disease, removing the causes rather than alleviating the symptoms.* A stable society will offer self-evident benefits to health, with better food, settled communities, more rewarding employment, reduced exposure to pollutants and less stress.

➔ *Move away from the highly technical and expensive business of curative medicine, to a more cost-effective policy of preventive medicine.*

➔ *Encourage small community hospitals to become the mainstay of the Health Service, reducing the bureaucratic burden on medical personnel. The community will be encouraged to take up its responsibilities as regards geriatric and handicapped patients.*

➔ *Encourage different forms of "alternative medicine" (acupuncture, homeopathy, etc) wherever this is justified.*

➔ *The production and use of all drugs will be much more carefully controlled. The anti-smoking campaign will be vigorously stepped up.*

Food

THE PROBLEM

We are dependent upon imports for over 50% of our food. With our power as a trading nation clearly in decline, it is madness to rely on the continuing availability of these imports.

Ironically, in the developed industrial nations, the current problem is one of surplus rather than shortage. The so-called "diseases of civilisation" have become major killers - and they are clearly linked with eating too much, and eating the wrong kinds of food. Slimming is now a multi-million pound industry - yet many millions throughout the world are still grossly undernourished.

It is not just a food crisis. It is a food scandal.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Learn how to make the fullest use of food grown on British farms.*

➔ *Learn to do with less high protein, high fat foods.*

➔ *Reduce our dependence on the intensive rearing of animals, which is often wasteful and cruel.*

➔ *Introduce an extensive health and diet counselling*

programme. Reduce to a minimum all wastage in the production and consumption of food.

➔ *Recognise that the current reliability of food supplies*

in the United Kingdom conceals considerable uncertainties about the future. The cost of energy and fertilisers and deteriorating soil fertility may well lead to a world-wide decline in food production.

➔ *Start planning for the time when we will be thrown*

back onto our own resources, not least to avoid having to compete for food with countries in which famine is endemic.

Agriculture

THE PROBLEM

Our farms are unprepared for a time when we shall have to be self-sufficient. Many are dependent on cheap energy, fertilisers and chemicals, their high productivity all too often based on cheap imported animal feed or an inflexible system of monoculture. Every year thousands of acres of agricultural land are given over to roads and urban industrial development. Erosion is already a serious problem and there are grim predictions of a long-term fall in soil fertility.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Reduce our dependence on chemicals, fertilisers, non-renewable sources of energy and imported animal feed.*

➔ *Encourage British farmers to grow as much as possible of our food requirements, with the eventual aim of becoming self-sufficient.*

➔ *Abandon the present policy of encouraging large-scale farms, in favour of smaller farms. Farm ownership by business and overseas interests will be strongly discouraged.*

➔ *Put into agricultural use or forestry every possible acre of potentially productive land, and prevent further loss for "development" or road-building.*

➔ *Maintain high yields without reducing soil fertility, by reintroducing flexible, mixed farming, learning to rely on labour-intensive methods, and encouraging the use of organic farming.*

The fundamental belief behind these policies is that the land is an asset of inestimable value, not just another "resource" to be ruthlessly exploited. But farming is also a business, and farmers must obviously adopt those methods most likely to afford them a reasonable standard of living. So they must be given every financial incentive to do just that - in an ecological way.

Energy

THE PROBLEM

The lessons of the 1973 energy crisis seem entirely forgotten. Non-renewable fossil fuels still account for more than 90% of the world's total demand and this demand is increasingly rapidly. So are energy costs. The wastage of energy is enormous. Yet we continue to build huge power stations at ever greater cost.

ECO-POLICIES

(1) NORTH SEA OIL

➔ *Considerably reduce the present rate of extraction.*

Such an asset is primarily important for its use in derivative industries, rather than as fuel. It must not be squandered merely to conceal the chronic imbalance in our trading position.

(2) NUCLEAR ENERGY

➔ *No further nuclear power stations will be built. They*

are prohibitively expensive, unsafe and unnecessary. Development of the reprocessing plant at Windscale should be stopped immediately.

As recent reports have indicated, the so-called "energy gap" simply doesn't exist, and this makes plans to develop the fast-breeder reactor all the more absurd. The security risks are enormous and will jeopardise basic civil liberties. Above all, we still don't know what to do with the waste products. We are not prepared to commit future generations to solve a problem which we ourselves cannot.

(3) ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

➔ *Research into energy from sun, wind and wave*

must be dramatically stepped up. Choose technologies which encourage local autonomy and initiative, which are non-polluting and renewable, using the earth's "income" and not its "capital".

(4) CONSERVATION

➔ *Treat this as the best "energy source" of all.* Industry

could manage a 40% reduction in its energy requirements without any loss of output. A national insulation programme would provide many jobs. We simply *must* achieve a steady decline in our overall consumption of energy.

Transport

THE PROBLEM

Present transport systems depend on an abundance of fossil fuels. We use 20% of all our energy on transport alone. Such an abundance cannot last much longer. Transport in a modern industrial society imposes a catastrophic burden of noise and pollution on the environment. It makes unacceptable demands on land for road-building and on resources for vehicles that are not built to last. Because the present system encourages *private* transport, it erodes the services provided by the community for *all* its members.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Design our environment so as to minimise dependence on all forms of transport,* breaking

industry down into smaller units, where possible providing goods for local use only, and encouraging people to live closer to their work.

➔ *Develop those forms of transport which use fuel most efficiently - railways, buses and canals.* Move long-distance and bulk freight by rail and water. Build no more major roads.

➔ *Arrange petrol taxes to discriminate in favour of low-consumption vehicles.*

➔ *An efficient, system of cheap public transport, in country areas as much as in the towns, must be treated as an absolute priority.*

➔ *Design streets so that getting round on foot and by bicycle is pleasant and practical.*

➔ *Use the skills and resources of the declining car industry to build vehicles for the traffic system outlined above (including runabout electric cars for towns) and to make other socially useful equipment.*

The Environment

THE PROBLEM

The restless pursuit of growth has led to a catastrophic and perhaps permanent deterioration of our environment! Pollution is the price that has to be paid for our affluent economy. Seveso, the Amoco Cadiz, the Bantry Bay disaster - these are just a few reminders of the toxic and precarious nature of the technology on which our industrial state is built.

There is a new level of urgency in the warnings of scientists: of carcinogens in our drinking water, of profound changes in our climate, of threats to the ozone layer, of a decline in the ocean's rich sources of protein.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Work with industry, through counselling and the provision of grants, to deal with pollution at source.*

Fiscal controls and much stricter government measures may also be necessary to control those who cannot see that in the long run such measures will bring about considerable savings. The costs of pollution control are rising steeply, and a recession will reduce our ability to take essential measures. So we must start now.

➔ *Treat the causes of pollution, not the symptoms.* For example, recent surveys have indicated unacceptable quantities of lead in the brain of many children, causing a decline in intelligence and minor behavioural disorders. The only way to deal with this is to ban the use of lead in petrol - not to build special clinics to look after the victims.

➔ *Revitalize our cities through flexible housing and planning policies.* Small businesses and local industry need every encouragement to get people back at work in their own communities. Waste land should be used for parks, allotments and recreational facilities.

➔ *Develop a broader, "global" approach to the problems of the environment.* Despite rapid growth in environmental consciousness, relatively little is being done to counter the fundamental worldwide problems.

➔ *Look for a long-term change in the system itself.* It is impossible right now to demand that businesses should voluntarily reduce their profitability or competitiveness for a common environmental good. *The balance of profit and loss must be weighed against the balance of Nature.*

Resources

THE PROBLEM

Even if we disregard the worst predictions about when certain resources are going to become scarce, substantial increases in cost are inevitable. There are clear limits to the amount we can substitute one resource for another.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Hold the consumption of the earth's non-renewable resources to a minimum, by making goods that are built to last.*

➔ *Develop our recycling industry in anticipation of the inevitable price rises, sorting and reprocessing all domestic and industrial waste.*

International Foreign Affairs & Defence

THE PROBLEM

As trading conditions become more difficult, and social unrest in other countries increases, we must expect a trend of deteriorating international relations. There will be increased competition for influence over sources of raw materials and energy. By the year 2000 at least fifty of the largest nations may be armed with nuclear weapons.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Do everything possible to prevent further nuclear proliferation.* An absolute priority must be put on the phasing out of nuclear weapons, and we should reconsider the possibility of unilateral disarmament. We seem to have lost our fear of this appalling threat, and the fact that the world has stock-piled nuclear weapons with a megatonnage equivalent to one million Hiroshimas has been helplessly accepted as the price we must pay for a "stable" world.

➔ *Phase out our arms exporting industry as quickly as possible.* The world spends \$300 billion a year on arms - and one third of the world's people still live in hunger and squalor. Regardless of what others do, we must set our *own* record straight.

➔ *Build up our civil defence facilities, which are totally inadequate at present.* A full-scale educational programme should be undertaken. Detailed consideration should be given to the idea of a "citizen's army" with a purely defensive role.

Europe

THE PROBLEM

The Ecology Party acknowledges that the U.K. has an important role to play within Europe, and that it will continue to do so in the future. The nature of this involvement must, however, be reviewed, for in its present state the Common Market demonstrates the worst failings of an over-centralised, growth-orientated bureaucracy. The Common Agricultural Policy is quite simply a disaster.

As such, the EEC is merely a reflection of its member states. But there is no fundamental reason why the EEC should be slower to adopt ecological principles than any national government. Indeed, current directives on pollution control require some governments to do more than they would if left to their own devices.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Promote the development of the EEC as a federation of self-reliant regions rather than as a gathering of competitive nation states.*

➔ *Join with other ecological parties and environmental groups throughout Europe to reverse the EEC's present commitment to economic growth, as embodied in Clause 2 of the Treaty of Rome.*

➔ *Prepare coherent European policies on energy, raw materials, the environment, and especially agriculture and food, working together to establish a stable and self-sufficient European Community.*

The Third World

THE PROBLEM

Over the next twenty years, world population will increase from 4 billion to 6 billion. Two out of three people live in poor Third World countries. Yet the gulf between the rich and the poor countries is still widening - they are simply not catching up. The developed countries consume 90% of the world's oil, 80% of its minerals and fertilisers, 75% of its entire fish catch. There is a growing demand for a "New International Economic Order", a demand for justice rather than an appeal for charity. Many predict that we are locked on a collision course.

ECO-POLICIES

➔ *Recognise that our present way of life is only attainable by exploiting the resources and poverty of others.* We must reduce our dependence on their cheap materials and agricultural produce - one third of the cereals grown in the world go into fattening up the livestock of the richer countries.

➔ *Only by setting an example ourselves will we be able to discourage Third World Countries from pursuing full-scale industrial development and growth.* They themselves must recognise that such a policy can only cause increased poverty and food shortages.

➔ *Massively increase the amount of aid we give; the government should write off those debts that just cannot be paid back.*

➔ *Aid should be given to initiate self-help schemes, to reduce the dependence of Third World countries on overseas trade, and to help re-establish their ecological "capital", through re-forestation schemes and suitable agricultural assistance.* We should provide appropriate technological help for specific, small-scale local projects, with the emphasis on decentralised, labour-intensive methods. We must give every assistance to voluntary schemes, to control population growth.

➔ *Recognise, above all, that we have no immunity from the problems of these countries.* The satisfaction of basic needs for the *whole* of mankind is an essential condition for long-term global stability. For this reason alone we must change our expectations, so that all countries move as rapidly as possible towards stable, essentially self-reliant economies.

So Why Vote Ecology ?

It is clear that this present crisis is different from anything we've experienced before.

The time has come when we can no longer take for granted our own or our children's survival. You may argue that there's always a way out, that the scientists will come up with another breakthrough, that man has survived so far, and will continue to survive.

But what price are we prepared to pay for that survival ?

Whatever happens, these are going to be unsettled times. It will be difficult to persuade people to adjust to different circumstances. For many, the appeal of the "strong hand on the tiller" will become irresistible. Everyday worries and complaints will spill over into serious political disillusion, and the possibility exists that government will then take the sole remaining option of establishing a totalitarian state.

THE ECOLOGY PARTY EXISTS NOT TO FIGHT FOR OUR SURVIVAL ON ANY TERMS, BUT FOR OUR SURVIVAL THROUGH DEMOCRACY

And that's why we need your support. If you're concerned that to vote Ecology would be to "waste" your vote, ask yourself whether it's really a waste to vote for a new and positive approach to politics, even without the prospect of immediate success, instead of voting "because that's the way it's always been".

Political loyalty is fine, but it should never stand in the way of political awareness. We cannot make the politicians scapegoats for our own blindness, and must all look at our own way of life, question our own values and political convictions, before we can expect anyone else to come up with the solutions.

It's not an easy choice. Either you go on as before, indifferently supporting policies that in the long-term will quite literally cost us the Earth.

Or you consider the real alternative, of an ecological, sustainable future - even though at the moment it may seem an alternative fraught with difficulties.

If you are even now concerned for the real quality of life, concerned for the future of your children, concerned for our very democracy, then that is the only alternative that you have.

SO LET US JOIN TOGETHER, TO MAKE A FUTURE.

ABOUT THE PARTY

The Ecology Party was founded in 1973 after the publication of the *Blueprint for Survival*. It has no political connection with either Right or Left. It has put up candidates in national and local elections, and has won seats on county, district and parish councils.

The party is organised into branches within twelve regions. Each elects one representative to the National Executive Committee, which elects the Chairman. The party's funds are contributed by members.

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