

GreenOptions

Richard Oldfield, Editor

Late Autumn 1987

A Journal for Decentralist Greens

Issue No. 3

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SCOTTISH GREEN PARTY GOES FOR INDEPENDENCE - THE INSIDE STORY

This issue contains an important interview with *Ian Smith*, Editor of *EcoNews* (the Green Party's news-paper) and member of the Scottish Green Party Executive. In it he reveals the process - crisis, ultimatum and beyond - which has led the Scottish Party to the edge of independence.

He explains the Scottish discontent which sparked this fresh beginning, describes the constitutional details of the new arrangements and reflects on the issues they raise.

Green Options holds a clear belief in the need for new kinds of decentralist political structures which can best serve the movement as we move into the last decade of this millenium. A near-future issue will describe in detail how one new type of political structure - locally-based Green Confederations - might work, both in the setting up and in operation. It will include an explanation of how they might relate to

concepts such as Bioregionalism and to existing structures within the movement.

However, as suggested in issue No.2, constitutional change *within the UK Green Party* - a subject of heated party debate over the years - is also needed if a potential harmony of politico-structural development between the party and the wider movement is to be fulfilled and the *political* strength of the movement maximised.

Decentralist Greens will applaud the stand which the Scottish Green Party

has taken. Hopefully, the process will not end there, but develop further within Scotland and influence the regions of England (we hope to report on the Welsh dimension in another issue).

Continuing the Green Party theme, this issue also contains "On Being a Green Councillor" - what it's like to be the only Green on a large Tory council. It comes from Dr. Richard Lawson, who writes: *The Tory's attitude to their new Green councillor is oddly friendly, almost obsequious at times privately, but in formal session, fearful to the point of hostility.*"

We also have an article by Ken Jones - *Indra's Jewelled Net* - explaining why Buddhism has *learnings which are of fundamental and urgent importance to the Green movement*".

This - plus ideas for an effective political action programme (*Reclaiming the Town Halls*), "Events", "Connections", News-shorts and more - all inside!

THIS ISSUE

- * SCOTTISH GREENS GO FOR INDEPENDENCE - An interview with Ian Smith, Editor of *Econews*.
- * ON BEING A GREEN COUNCILLOR - Dr. Richard Lawson.
- * INDRA'S JEWELLED NET - A Buddhist Contribution to Greening - Ken Jones.
- * RECLAIMING THE TOWN HALLS - Ideas for an Effective Political Action Programme.
- * PLUS LETTERS, NEWS-SHORTS, "EVENTS" & "CONNECTIONS".



Superman - for Truth, Justice and the American Anti-nuclear Way

Christopher Reeves, the actor best known for his role as Superman, only agreed to don his tights for a fourth time if the film was based on his own original story wherein Superman decides to rid the world of nuclear weapons. To this end the Man of Steel storms into the United Nations building to say "No" to nuclear weapons.

In his final speech Superman announces that by himself he can't end war and that it's up to us to force our leaders to mend their ways.

Source: *Sanity*, Sept. '87

NEXT ISSUE:

AN INTERVIEW IN SAN FRANCISCO WITH BIO-REGIONALIST PETER BERG OF THE PLANET DRUM FOUNDATION!

PLUS: A FIRST-HAND REPORT ON THE SIXTH ASSEMBLY OF THE 4TH WORLD - ALSO FROM CALIFORNIA

ALTERNATIVE NHS

An experiment is under way in the converted crypt of St. Marylebone Church in N.W. London. In response to public demand, the first ever holistic health centre to be funded by the National Health Service is underway.

At the St. Marylebone Healing & Counselling Centre, doctors, priests, counsellors, music therapists, healers, acupuncturists, osteopaths and masseurs work side by side in what is being seen by many as a model for all future health centres.

The capital cost of setting up the centre was about one and a half million pounds, which came from individuals, charitable trusts and business houses. They get basic funding from the NHS, but many of their activities remain unfunded. They were given five years to make a go of it, starting in April '86, by the end of which time they must have provided satisfactory results on four levels.

First, they must supply a caring and reasonably efficient general practice to which patients are happy to come. Second, they must provide evidence to a scientific audience that this way of doing things actually does work. Third, they must persuade the DHSS that this mode of general practice is both economic and efficient. Fourth, they must feel as a team that they are getting something out of it in terms of understanding.

Source: *At last, an alternative*, by Anna Preece, in The Guardian "Health Watch".

HARINGEY ENVIRONMENT FESTIVAL

Labour-controlled Haringey Council, London, who publish their own environmental newspaper, the *Haringey Green Star*, held a Borough-wide Environment Festival from Sept. 7-20th, co-ordinated by its Environment Unit.

The programme included a launch meeting entitled *A Green & Peaceful Future?*, held in the Council Chamber, an environmental tour of the Borough, a dedication of the Hilda Murrell/Dora Russell Peace Gardens by the Mayor, the launch of a Recycling Directory, a Women's Environment Day on the theme of "A Safe Environment for Women", tours of recycling centres, various guided ecological walks, a Peace Picnic, a London Local Authorities Environment Conference, a mass "Fun Run", with Sebastian Coe, to dedicate the Sri Chinmoy Peace Mile and much, much more.

Is Haringey the greenest council in the land? Please send in any other suggestions for this coveted title.

REDUNDANT REACTOR

Austria's Zwentdorf reactor, costing \$645 million and never used, is to be dismantled. Austria abandoned its nuclear power programme after a national referendum in 1978. The owners of the plant hope to make \$20-30 million selling its parts.

Source: The Wall Street Journal, 1st June '87 via The Environment Digest (Sept.)

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FIRST BRITISH WAVE POWER STATION

Britain's first wave power station is to be built on the Island of Islay in the Inner Hebrides, with a £230,000 Dept. of Energy grant. This is a reversal of the government's decision 5 years ago to pull out of all support for wave power research. It will produce about 200 kilowatts and cost around £300,000 in total. The device is cheaper and quieter (being silent) than an equivalent Norwegian model, though it produces less energy.

Source: New Scientist, 9th July '87; The Guardian, 6th July '87 via The Environmental Digest (July)

MR. & MRS. CONSERVATIONIST

This year's Ideal Home Exhibition featured a group called "Happy Families", each tailored to meet a different lifestyle. Part of this merry band were "Mr. and Mrs. Conservationist, who lived at the ASPP/Calor Home of the Year. This house was originally built for the Energy World Exhibition and has the lowest heat loss ever. It includes a system which extracts heat from overheated places like the kitchen or bathroom and whizzes it around the other rooms.

Source: Daily Mail, March 10th '87

GREEN ROCK

In September an organisation called Europa staged a European Rocknight in Basle, Switzerland. The concert was broadcast live on Eurovision with the objective of creating greater awareness of environmental problems, especially among young people.

Source: European Year of the Environment Press Release

ANTI-RACIST COMPUTER

It is now possible to buy computer software that checks your text for racist or sexist language!. "Macproof" is one example. It also checks for bad grammar, mis-spellings, style, slang, word repetition and more. Macproof costs 169.50 plus VAT from any Apple Macintosh dealer.

Source: The Wordsmith (July/August).

HOT ROCKS FIRST

For the first time in Britain, geothermal heating is to be used for a group of buildings in Southampton, including the town hall, Civic Centre, Institute of Higher Education and a department store.

Source: The Financial Times, 6th July '87 via The Environment Digest (August)

GreenOptions



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SCOTTISH GREEN
PARTY

GOING
FOR

INDEPENDENCE

GREEN OPTIONS: In late '85 there was a crisis in the Scottish Green Party. What was its cause? What financial steps were taken to become independent of the UK Party?

IAN: In early 1985 we had taken a decision to open an office in Edinburgh using a bequest left to us. However, by late '85 it was apparent that running a Scottish office, and thus an autonomous Scottish Green Party, was not sustainable given that 75% of the membership money went to London.

I drafted a proposal which was put to the Scottish Executive in January '86. The office was to be financed by standing orders over a two year period by a number of individuals. We would retain the lion's share of the membership monies and basically pay an affiliation fee to the UK Party in exchange for voting rights at Conference and representation on Party Council. We also recognised the need to help pay for the upkeep of the UK resource centre. We would become self-sufficient in all aspects of administration and pay for any services from the UK office. The UK no longer keeps Scottish membership on file.

"We basically said "negotiate, or accept our unilateral decision." The reaction was mixed."

GO: What percentage of your membership money do you give to London? How much better off is the Scottish Party than a region which has not gone autonomous?

IAN: We send £2 per member, irrespective of subscription (eg. joint, unwaged etc.) to the UK. Other regions send £7 of a £10 subscription. In addition we buy EcoNews at the current rate.

Arguably we are financially slightly worse off, but the benefits cannot be gauged in financial terms. The Scottish Green Party is acknowledged as being one of the stronger constituents of the Green Party and this can be attributed to our independent outlook.

GO: Does this mean you got more members by going autonomous?

IAN: Not as a direct result. But we are taking a leading role in UK policy formation and in campaigning.

Ian Smith is the Editor of EcoNews, the Green Party's newspaper. He is a former member of the Party Council, and has also been on the executive of the Scottish Green Party. Here Ian is interviewed by Mark Kinzley about the Scottish Party.

The Scots have achieved autonomy within the UK Green Party. Ian was involved from the beginning. He financed and budgeted the proposal for autonomy. In March '86 the UK Green Party Council held an emergency meeting during the Malvern Party Conference to react to the Scottish ultimatum. Ian was there to negotiate on behalf of the Scots.

"We recognise the need for a UK resource centre. For the meantime at least."

GO: In January '86 the Scots sent an ultimatum to the UK Green Party Council - negotiate or the Scots would go autonomous unilaterally. If you hadn't presented the GPC with a fait accompli, would they have put up resistance? What was their reaction?

IAN: GPC has a reputation for putting off decisions ad infinitum. Months previously, Hackney Ecology Party had changed its name to Hackney Green Party, and forced a decision on the Party. We therefore decided to follow their decisive action. We basically said negotiate, or accept our unilateral decision.

The reaction was mixed. Many people applauded our initiative. Paul Rynsard, then convenor of the Management Committee, took a very philosophical and pragmatic attitude. But there were those who were, to say the least, not amused - this of course happened at the height of the POWG/DWG confrontation ("Party Organisation Working Group/Devolution Working Group").* However, Standing Orders Committee concluded that the Scottish position was constitutional and negotiations began. Once started, a satisfactory agreement was achieved.

I must stress that the Scottish Green Party never at any time asked for any favours, we only established the right to define our own future.

Since the introduction of the "Scottish anomaly" we have increased in percentage terms the amount of money we send to London. We recognise the need for a UK resource centre. For the meantime at least.

Continued over page

Going for Independence

A centralised Party can never expect to create a decentralised society - to believe otherwise is to take a very paternalistic stance."

GO: In November '85 the Scottish membership voted 55% in favour of an independent party (66% needed), and 97% in favour of confederal status. Was the financial crisis the reason why Scottish members voted for autonomy?

IAN: The referendum was held as a consequence of a motion passed at the '85 Scottish Conference. It was held for philosophical as opposed to financial reasons. As an aside, enough YES votes arrived after the cut-off date to achieve the 66% for independence, but that's democracy. However, having made our point we can achieve independence in an evolutionary as opposed to a revolutionary manner.

GO: What were the philosophical reasons for holding the referendum?

IAN: To our mind decentralisation is fundamental to Green philosophy. A centralised Party can never expect to create a decentralised society - to believe otherwise is to take a very paternalistic stance.



"When we are ready, we will participate in the European Green Coordination as the Scottish Green Party."

GO: What do you mean by "paternalistic"?

IAN: Do as I say, not as I do - that is paternalism. Explaining to a child the dangers of smoking with a fag in your mouth - that is paternalism. Tunnel vision is the main source of any such "centralist tendency" in the UK Green Party. People become so involved in what they are doing that they lose direction. It is soul destroying to see initiatives ruined because of the lax attitudes of some Local Parties, but centralising is not the answer. Devolving responsibility, inspiring and strengthening the Local Parties is the answer.

GO: The Scottish Green Party has its own office, membership administration, Conference and Executive. Is the structure of the UK Party completely duplicated in the Scottish Party?

IAN: The Scottish Green Party is an autonomous Party.

In addition to the points you have mentioned, we have our own International Liaison Officer, George Morton in Stuttgart. When we are ready, we will participate in the European Green Coordination as the Scottish Green Party. There are also moves to have a European Congress in Edinburgh in the near future.

The Scottish Executive is structured to the needs of the Scottish Party and is a more political institution than GPC, making political decisions and statements. This can be clearly seen in responses to discussion documents from organisations such as the Scottish TUC and the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly.

GO: Is the Scottish Executive subject to the authority of the GPC in any way?

IAN: The Scottish Executive is answerable only to the Scottish Green Party Conference.

GO: In what sense is the Scottish Green Party not already independent then?

IAN: The Scottish Green Party is subject to the UK Constitution - ie. we recognise the GPC as the coordinating body for the UK and accept the UK Manifesto for a Sustainable Society.

"A Confederation is composed of totally autonomous groups coming together for a common purpose.."

GO: So when you talked about achieving independence in an evolutionary manner, this meant to end the constitutional link?

IAN: Not exactly. It means reconstituting as a confederation.

GO: But as I understood your answer to the question about the referendum, independence and confederation were alternatives.



IAN: No, they are not alternatives. Confed-

eration is a combination of independence and federation. A Confederation is composed of totally autonomous groups coming together for a common purpose, eg. the European Greens. Thus both options in the referendum entailed independence.

A federation is the union of several entities under federal government, each retaining control of its own internal affairs. A confederation is a number of entities united for joint action. The significant difference is that a confederation has no ruling upper tier, whilst a federation is a two tier system.

GO: Elsewhere you have said that you recognise the need for a UK centre as a stable base from which decentralisation can occur. Do you see any need for a UK Party Office beyond this transitional role?

IAN: As long as the UK Party as presently constituted exists, we will need a UK Resource Centre in London. However, I consider that it has reached its optimum size. We should now be in the business of creating and strengthening a network of regional offices. Once power is devolved from London, the UK coordinat-

Going for Independence

-ing role, if needed, could be rotated throughout the network of offices.

"The Scottish Greens are campaigning for self-government for Scotland. We therefore need a Manifesto of our own."

GO: In May '87 the Scottish Green Party launched a supplement to the UK Green Party election Manifesto. Do you see this as evolving into the production of a comprehensive Manifesto by the Scottish Green Party?

IAN: Yes, we are working towards creating our own Manifesto.

GO: Why? What's wrong with the UK Manifesto?

IAN: The Scottish Greens are campaigning for self-government for Scotland. We therefore need a Manifesto of our own. However, we live in the real world. As long as Westminster exists as the UK Government, we need a UK manifesto.

GO: Are you happy with the UK Manifesto for a Sustainable Society (MFSS)?

IAN: There is nothing intrinsically wrong with the MFSS, but it needs a thorough revision. It is up to the Scots, the Welsh and the regions of England to propose those revisions. The Scots must take responsibility themselves for ensuring that the MFSS does not compromise their own policy stance, or relate specifically to England.

GO: If all the regional Green Parties develop their own Manifestos, wouldn't that make the UK MFSS redundant?

IAN: No, it's Yin-Yang - we must achieve the balance. There does not have to be a conflict between the UK and the regions. Take pollution for instance, Poop scoops are organised most easily at the local level, but action against atmospheric pollution needs to be taken at the international level.

GO: Some people say that the Green Party needs to be firmly coordinated in order to be efficient, and to provide a platform for distinctive personalities. Do you agree that high profile in the mass media is the first priority?

IAN: The whole is important, there are no first priorities. We need a strong UK coordination - but we still need a cohesive structure of autonomous Local Parties. We need to campaign with environmental issues to the fore - but we still need policy on the Poll tax and anti-Apartheid. We need to develop a manifesto for the future - but we still need to deal with the problems of today. It is this holistic perspective that makes us Green. To ensure their continued existence, we must see the wood **and** the trees.

GO: Would you be happy if a region of the Scottish Green Party decided to keep its own money, create its own manifesto, and work towards independence from the Scottish Green Party?

IAN: Yes, but again I would stress creating a balance. All Green Parties throughout the world, irrespective of size, are dependent on each other. The six local parties within the Lothian Region (Ian's Region) are formed into the Confederation of Lothian Green Parties. We are all autonomous, but we work together for common purpose. We create our own manifesto and influence the policy of both the Scottish Green Party and the UK Green Party. At the 1978 AGM, the Green Party adopted policy statements on Nicaragua, Namibia and South Africa which originated from Lothian.

The Midlothian Green Party needs the support of her sister parties in the Lothian Confederation, and of the Scottish Green Party, and of the UK Green Party. It's no use breaking the back of the UK Green Party and the Scottish Green Party by withholding all monies - it's like cutting off your nose to spite your face.

GO: The Scottish and Welsh Liberal Parties administered their own membership, held their own conferences, were responsible for raising their own funds. Until the final ballot on merger with the SDP, there were no national records of membership in London. Are you proposing anything more radical than the Liberal Party already had?

IAN: We can learn a lot from the Liberals. However, they advocated a Federation as opposed to a Confederation.

* POWG and DWG proposed differing ways of re-structuring the UK Green Party. Internal structure has been a topic of long (and often heated) debate within the **United Kingdom Green Party** over the years.

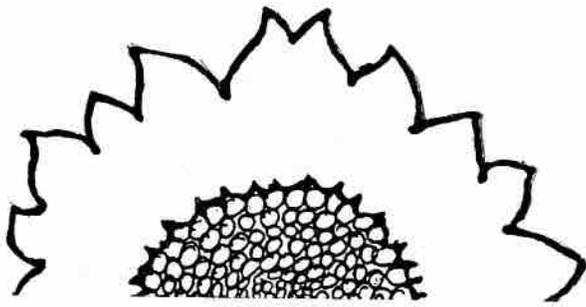
The Scottish Green Party can be contacted at 11 Forth St., Edinburgh, Scotland EH1 3LE



WOMEN'S INSTITUTES - "WOMEN IN THE COMMUNITY"

"The National Federation of Women's Institutes has a long history of concern over environmental and international issues. We are giving wide publicity to the *Battle for the Planet* series and the findings of the Brunland report. We urge our 347,000 members (our emphasis) throughout the country to set up viewing groups, to discuss the questions raised by the programmes and to participate in local events."

Source: Advert in "The Planet" (the International Broadcasting Trust's newspaper which promoted the Channel Four series "Battle for the Planet")



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ON BEING A GREEN COUNCILLOR

Dr. Richard Lawson, 41, is a Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, a GP and a Green Party Councillor on Woodspring District Council (Avon). He was elected in May 1986. Prior to this, Dr. Lawson was active in the successful Campaign Against Sea Dumping. In December 1983 he made national headline-news by offering euthanasia to his patients in the event of Nuclear War - an offer frowned on by the General Medical Council. In May of this year he was re-elected to the District Council with an **increased** majority - **61%** of the vote - despite a strong Conservative campaign to oust him. Dr. Lawson, a member of various environmental organisations, also stood in the recent General Election, receiving 2,067 votes or 3.5% of the total - the best Green Party result in the country! Here he describes his experiences as the only outright green on a large local council.

Being elected onto the Thatcherite Woodspring District Council is like being caught in a time warp, and ending up in a strange wooden replica of the real world. The Council World is uptight yet chummy; language is stilted in formal sessions and in private its meaning is often strangely multiple.

"Most Tory women are markedly nervous when they speak in council and get interrupted a lot, often for the chairman to inform them that they look charming today."

Tory councillors (who have 75% of the membership and 99% of the power) pinch each others bottoms and egos indiscriminately and Tory female councillors are subjected to intermittent pawing which the males seem to regard as their natural right if not duty. Most Tory women are markedly nervous when they speak in council and get interrupted a lot, often for the chairman to inform them that they look charming today. Social relationships among the the Tory councillors is based on a simple dominance heirarchy rather like a

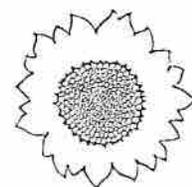
besuited troupe of chimpanzees. Dissent is frequent in private but rare in formal sessions. The only rebellion I have witnessed was on an environmental issue, a scheme to pump raw sewage into the Severn Estuary. Despite the rebellion, the scheme went through.

The Tory's attitude to their new Green councillor is oddly friendly, almost obsequious at times privately, but in formal session, fearful to the point of hostility. I rarely make a contribution without being interrupted at least once. Any attempt to refer the issues beyond the immediate confines of council business, or to link the local issue to the global problem, is liable to be drowned in a sea of noise. One learns to be brief to get the point across before they can react.

"The Labour style is to attack, attack, attack, then sit flinching imperceptibly under the rain of retaliatory blows from the majority."

Relationship with the opposition is easier, a camaraderie generated by a common oppression. The Labour

style is to attack, attack, attack, then sit flinching imperceptibly under the rain of retaliatory blows from the majority. So determined are they not to co-operate with any other opposition group, that recently they actually obtained a reduction of the opposition on the Policy committee to score a political point against the Alliance. The Alliance are more reasonable and co-operative. I think they secretly cherish hopes that they could ingest the Greens. Little do they realise what havoc that would play with their delicate digestive systems.



Local Government Officers, the equivalent of the Civil Service, have to be above all things, apolitical, which means in practice they play a dead bat with a poker face. The most simple question is given an answer of Byzantine complexity, often lasting three-quarters of an hour (they seem to have a greater quantity of time

On Being a Green Councillor

available than do Green councillors). At the end of which you are a) none the wiser, b) confused, c) have forgotten what the original question was and d) have the distinct impression that the short answer was "NO". Despite this, many are secretly sympathetic to our cause. Planning officers and Environmental Health Officers especially are worth cultivating. Young Greens looking for a career could do worse than go into local government.

"The District Council is an energy drain of heartbreaking proportions. If they devoted 10% of the energy, currently used for saying "NO" to saying "YES", the world would be a happier, more creative and constructive place."

If you have the impression from all this that work on the District Council is frustrating, you are right. The District Council is an energy drain of heartbreaking proportions. If they devoted 10% of the energy, currently used for saying "NO" to saying "YES", the world would be a happier, more creative and constructive place.



I do not wish to give a wholly discouraging outlook, and it may be that John Marjoram of Stroud and Guy Woodford of Malvern* have had happier experiences than myself. Being elected is an empowering experience, and we are able to give assistance to requests from constituents, to influence discussion in Council in some small degree, and even to on occasions, to get propositions voted through (given an acute sense of timing and an intuition of what the chairman and officers wish to come about).

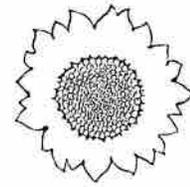
On the Housing Committee I was instrumental in getting them to look

at all the houses that are under closing orders. We found 112 and are now contacting the owners to get them onto the market again. With others, I am bringing constant pressure on them to provide more hostel accommodation for the homeless. On the Works Committee, to everybody's surprise, they supported the Severnside Counties Independent Radiation Monitoring initiative. I have also been on the Dog Control Working Party, the successful outcome of a long and sometimes smelly campaign by the local Green Party.

Council work consumes a lot of free time, so that I sometimes think I have never been out in the Environment since becoming an "environmentalist". The energy required required though is less than the equivalent amount of time spent in surgery. Regrettably I am significantly out of pocket through paying locum fees, and as time goes on, this may become a limiting factor.

"Our true political identity as the inheritors of the rainbow Warrior prophecy remains inviolate. I feel it is mistaken for Green party members to fear for identity by worrying about take-over bids by larger parties."

For the future, I am convinced that Green politics has to avoid Labour-style confrontation and has to be the politics of manipulative co-operation. There is an inherent attachment to nature in the hearts of all sentient beings. This attachment or inner resonance is buried deeper in some parties than others, and people whose hearts are genuinely concerned with nature, may be involved with parties whose policies and actions are hostile to nature. We must learn that despite the grave frustrations born out of the powerlessness of our position, to draw on that light that is in the hearts of all people, and educate (draw out) actions that are consonant with their love of life and nature.



We know that Green Politics is the only viable option available to humanity at this time, but we are seen by the old parties as apolitical or non-political. We can exploit this confusion of identities by crossing Party boundaries under the cover of being non-political. Our true political identity as the inheritors of the rainbow Warrior prophecy remains inviolate. I feel it is mistaken for Green party members to fear for identity by worrying about take-over bids by larger parties. Materially and numerically other parties tower over us, but in terms of ecological morality and future-directed political economics, those parties are of no significance whatsoever. The future is Green, because if the future is not Green, it is not a future.

* The Green Party's two other District Councillors. In Devon there are also two "Independent Green" District Councillors. In addition, there are at least 9 Town Councillors and 27 Parish/Community Councillors elected on a Green ticket, though some of these also stood as Independent Greens.

BELFAST SLUMS

Belfast slum tenants are organising their own solution to inner-city despair. Residents of the high-rise Divis Estate are re-planning their own community - with demolition of the estate as the first step. After a 16-year campaign they have persuaded the authorities to knock down the notorious estate and rebuild it to their own design.

Source: "The Planet" (International Broadcasting Trust's Newspaper)

ELECTRIC GREENS

An editorial attacking the Green movement appeared in the July issue of *Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) News*. It provoked "a number" of protesting letters from the membership. A "typical selection" appeared in the IEE News September issue. As an illustration of support in perhaps unsuspected quarters, we reproduce extracts of three such letters below:

"... Are we to understand that you dismiss worries about the worldwide proliferation of nuclear power stations, the poisoning of Scandinavian lakes, the destruction of large areas of European forest or the rapid exhaustion of many of the world's non-renewable resources? Even sadder, coming from the mouthpiece of a professional engineering institution, was the implication that all "Green" concepts are anti-technology and backward looking. On the contrary, many of us believe that they represent the best way forward. The challenges to the engineering profession posed by the harnessing of renewable energy, combined heat and power, quieter aircraft and safer road transport are, or should be, just as great as anything we have tackled so far ... With respect, Sir, it is you who are behind the times. And if the Institution could learn to lead from the front, rather than dragging its feet, we could yet attract the brightest and best into our profession."

AND: "The writer did not explicitly challenge the evidence that severe environmental problems do exist in Europe, perhaps because the facts would be difficult to dispute Often we see letters which bemoan the fact engineers are not held in sufficient esteem by the public ... Perhaps the fault lies with us. The industrial and technological development of the recent past have brought with them huge environmental problems which, quite rightly, have a high profile in the media. The solutions to these problems must come from the engineering profession. The B.Sc course I attended included such subjects as marketing, industrial relations, accountancy and industrial law, but no environmental studies ... The writer suggests that the Greens are the perpetrators of dissent towards industrialised society. I would dispute this and say that they provide a focus for justifiable concern about the environment. We in the engineering profession do neither ourselves nor anyone else any favours by maintaining such attitudes as those presented (in the editorial)..."

AND: "... in your leader ... there was a polemical attack on the Green, or ecology, movement and the consequences of such ideology on the general welfare of the nation. On the contrary, if such attitudes fail to reach the ears of those in power, the consequences have been predicted by the scientific elites the writer holds in such esteem ... In particular, it was stated that the Green movement is "anti-industrial". In fact the Greens have coherent policies for the economic development of the nation which avoid unnecessary exploitation of the environment for the sake of short-term monetary gain. ... Green teachers are held to blame for the falling numbers of students applying for engineering courses by indoctrinating their pupils. If we wish to find the real reason for this, I believe we should look to the divide being created between engineering and other subjects by the narrow-minded views expressed in your article. Engineers should be able to respond rationally and positively to the issues highlighted by the ecology movement, rather than cowering behind a facade of facts and figures that demonstrate that such ideas are not cost-effective. Only then can we begin to attract the sort of people with flair, imagination and creativity that engineering needs."

As a footnote to the above, it's worth noting that Intermediate Technology and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers are co-sponsoring the Leonardo da Vinci school lecture series entitled "Design for Need". In part, this aims to encourage future generations of engineers to take a responsible attitude towards the environment.

Source: Institute of Electrical Engineers News, Sept. '87 via Mick Black; European Year of the Environment Press Info. 26th Oct. '87

CHARIOTS OF GREEN FIRE

David Puttnam, who produced the film *Chariots of Fire* and who is ex-head of Columbia Pictures, has warned British industrialists that they would ignore the environment "at their peril".

"The stakes could hardly be higher," he said, livening up the Confederation of British Industry conference with a hard-hitting attack on British industry's failure to respect the environment.

Puttnam was invited to put the case for the environment on behalf of the Council for

the Protection of Rural England, of which he is President. He said it would be "a great break for us to get British industry to acknowledge that it has a responsibility for the environment."

A fierce debate was sparked among delegates when he asked how many of them would be prepared to invest in the privatisation of electricity. "How many of you will truly be rushing forward with your pension fund money when the Government offers us all the chance to buy a share in seven gigawatts of used nuclear reactors, decommissioning and insurance costs unknown?" he asked.

Puttnam challenged delegates to show

they were committed to "environmental excellence". This was essential if British industry was to win full public support and compete successfully in an environmentally aware world. He pointed to the fact that the Government had recently estimated that the OECD market for pollution control equipment was no less than £50 billion.

However, a substantial number of delegates insisted on voting against the proposition that "business accepts its responsibilities towards the environment and recognises that it is not someone else's problem".

Source: The Guardian, November 3rd.

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INDRA'S JEWELLED NET

THE BUDDHIST CONTRIBUTION TO GREENING

by Ken Jones

"We believe that as Buddhists we are called upon to compassionate action both as a means of overcoming egoism and as the fruit of a growing empathy with other beings' sufferings. Since economic, political and social structures condition and co-evolve with consciousness, we must constructively engage with them to produce conditions conducive to spiritual growth." (Opening paragraph of a statement of members of the international, Buddhist Community at the 14th General Conference of the World Fellowship of Buddhists, Colombo, 1984).

Buddhism is well known as an ancient religion of peace, tolerance and compassion which is also very compatible with many humanistic and scientific perspectives. It appeals to people who are drawn towards experiencing underlying, transcendental reality, but who find it unhelpful to see that reality personalised in the form of an omniscient Creator. Forget the oriental packaging and the Buddhist religious trappings: institutionalised Buddhists have a lot to learn from the Green movement (notably about patriarchy and feminism). But that's another story. The point of this article is that in basic Buddhism there are, I believe, learnings which are of fundamental and urgent importance to the Green movement.

Buddhism is not primarily a body of doctrine seeking converts. It is more a method, a way, of developing deeper insight and awareness of how things really are, a kind of experimental inner exploration out of which a more peaceful personality grows. Buddhist ideas fit that insight well, but it can also be expressed in Christian or humanist terms. You don't have to be a Buddhist, or even a buddhist. Just experiment with whatever you feel makes sense.

Inner and outer peacemaking are interconnected. Ultimately you can't have one without the other, and both need to be worked on. Green and other social radicals have tended to over-emphasise outer peacemaking, with rather disappointing results. Inner peacemaking, curiously labelled "spirituality", has been put on the backburner these last 300 years. It was assumed that mysticism and militancy didn't mix. Increasing numbers of people are becoming

aware that only this mix can get the human race out of its present big trouble.

In each of us there's a root fear and insecurity. It's normally kept under wraps, but can come into awareness in times of personal crisis, or through meditation. Our characteristic and historic response is one of acquisitiveness, ill-will, separation and hanging on to things and ideologies - all so that we can feel a more secure and strong sense of identity, both personal and collective, even if at the expense of other people. These are the tap-roots of the urge for mastery over "the environment", of men over women, haves over have-nots, the industrial world over the "Third World". Ultimately it is fear and greed that drive the arms race. We have developed useful social sciences and psychology to give us a better intellectual understanding of this process. But the power-house is the existential human condition. Unless we do some-



thing about that, social and political change will remain shallow-rooted.

The meditation cushion is the most effective potential transformer of social reality that we have.

Buddhism offers a system of meditation balanced with self-and-other-awareness-in-action. Through this we can come to see what drives us, divides us and distorts our view of the world. There's a heartfelt opening to inner and outer reality in place of every imaginable form of evasion, subtle or bloody-minded. When we can see clearly and selflessly without "having to prove something" or "getting in our own light", then personal and social action becomes that much more effective. The meditation cushion is the most effective potential transformer of social reality that we have.

So, Buddhism is about the development of less self-distorted ways of experiencing and changing reality. The words I am typing can be no more than pointers to such a changed consciousness, rooted in the heart and the guts. Buddhism is about becoming a different kind of person, and ultimately about a different kind of society quite familiar to Greens. But to be going on with it offers ideas and perspectives stemming from that

Indra's Jewelled Net

consciousness which we can use as guidelines. Two which I shall discuss in the remainder of this article are about "deep ecology" and about the problem of Green ideology.

In Zen Buddhism especially there is a lean and frugal simplicity in which nothing is wasted and everything is honoured.

Both Buddhist and Greens affirm the interconnectedness and mutual dependence of things. This is much more than a political programme for "protecting the environment". It is a "deep ecology" wherein humankind alone carries the burden and privilege of fully conscious decision-making. Yet we are also just another element in a potentially harmonious planetary system with other creatures, plants and micro-organisms. In Zen Buddhism especially there is a lean and frugal simplicity in which nothing is wasted and everything is honoured. The ultimate expression of interconnectedness is found in the metaphor of Indra's Jewelled Net. At each intersection is found a jewel in which is reflected the light of all the other jewels, but which itself therefore contributes to the reflected light in each and every other jewel in the net. The jewels could denote any entity, such as different species of an ecosystem, or different human communities of a society. Each is autonomous yet dependent. Each defines the whole but the whole defines each. There is not only interconnectedness, but also wholeness, at-oneness, and, **at the same time**, an individual autonomy to be affirmed and honoured.

Buddhism also helps to explain the major disease threatening Green thinking: going stiff with ideology.

Yet it is one thing to agree with this intellectually, but much more difficult to feel it so deeply as to act it out naturally and spontaneously - as we



may know from experience in affinity and action groups. This is what so-called "spirituality" is about. Spirituality, whether it has a Buddhist or other tag, offers the most refined and fundamental Green perspective, without which nonviolent action, for example, tends to be only a shallow rooted tactic.

Buddhism also helps to explain the major disease threatening Green thinking: going stiff with ideology. By ideology I mean a logic-chopping belief system, advocated with a dogmatic zeal, which exists to provide emotional support to me and my group/movement as much as to throw explanatory light on the world out there. Instead of using ideas the better to understand reality, for the ideologist ideas become a **substitute** for awareness of reality. Hence, the working of a computer is no longer just usefully suggestive of certain mental faculties; the mind is a kind of computer. Similarly, the bureaucratic mentality can only experience social reality in bureaucratic terms. For the Buddha, to live thus was to be a veritable "dead head":

*"Those who go by names, who go by concepts,
Making their abode in names and concepts,
Failing to discern the naming-process,
These are subject to the reign of death."*

Similarly, Jonathan Porritt has written of Green ideology that although "one certainly requires a set of minimum criteria to establish the essential nature of the green alternative, to

fashion these criteria into an inflexible and narrow diktat is to become hooked on ideology as a substitute for real politics. Such an approach is incompatible with the fundamental green principles of diversity (hard to achieve to when everyone is being told exactly what they should be thinking), decentralisation (impractical if party elites insist on passing down homogenised greenery from on high) and participation (which is unlikely to result from the paper politics of those who demand unanimity on every crossed "t" and dotted "i"). The alternative to industrialism is green, not green-ism!" (Resurgence, Sept. - Oct. '85)

What Buddhism does is to make us realise how deep-rooted ... is that existential fear, insecurity, and desire for certainty and the reassurance of belonging, which make ideology so tenacious in the face of both love and reason.



Making the dictum "Small is beautiful" into a test of faith is typical of Green ideology. But small isn't always beautiful. It's not the founders but the followers who tend to be ideologues. Thus, in **Small is beautiful** what Schumacher actually said was that:

Today we suffer from an almost universal idolatry of giantism. It is therefore necessary to insist on the virtue of smallness - where this applies. If there were a prevailing ideology of smallness ... one would have to try and exercise influence in the opposite direction".

The Indra's Net metaphor suggests

Indra's Jewelled Net

suggests that what we should be aiming at is a qualitatively higher synthesis of small and large. This implies, for example, **combining** local autonomy with mutual dependence between communities, and shifting the balance according to circumstance, not dogma. For instance, the centralising tendency of confederation might be needed to uphold the liberties of minorities threatened by red-neck bigotry in autonomous local communities.

What Buddhism does is to make us realise how deep-rooted in self and others is that existential fear, insecurity, and desire for certainty and the reassurance of belonging, which make ideology so tenacious in the face of both love and reason. And when we do wake up to this, Buddhism can offer an "inconceivable liberation" based on techniques of meditation and spiritually engaged social action.



It is worth adding that clinging to the other bank of the river can be as self-deluding as the ideology which is being rejected. This is a clinging to what has been called "the tyranny of the structurelessness", where confusion and ineffectiveness are mistaken for flow and spontaneity, and where strong and charismatic personalities find it all too easy to get their own way. Anti-ideology becomes just another ideology. Buddhism claims that if we could become more peaceful within ourselves and a

little kinder to ourselves then we would be free of the urge to turn helpful guiding ideas into weapons and useful structures into prisons and straight-jackets.

In short, Buddhism suggests that we need to be more aware of what there is about us that makes us feel, think and behave as we do and which so colours and distorts our picture of reality. And it claims that there is a way out of this self-centred delusion to a kind of personal liberation which is very much tied up with economic, political and ecological liberation.

*Ken Jones explains the above in greater detail in a Buddhist Peace Fellowship pamphlet, **Buddhism and the Bombs**, which sells at £1.20, inc. P & P, from Plas Plwca, Cwmrheidol, Aberystwyth, Cymru SY23 3NB.*

Reclaiming the Town Halls

by Richard Oldfield

What would an *effective* political action programme look like? What would be its key issues and the campaigning approach to them? One thing is sure, such a programme, one based on sharp political instincts and insight, is badly lacking at the moment.

Such a programme should focus on issues that are of *strategic* importance, the aim being two-fold. Firstly, to achieve campaigning success by engaging with winnable issues in a winning manner. Secondly, to help create greater unity within the movement through a more specific, shared campaigning focus. A campaign of the type outlined below holds out the additional prospect of further radicalising those involved through the emotive nature of the actions entailed and the strong reactions to them that would almost certainly develop.

However, in order to bring key issues to the centre of the political stage, we must first decide what those issues are and how to bring them to the boil. Here is one suggestion, to which feedback would be welcome. A few details have been sketched in to try and convey the sort of imaginative, exciting and committed (yet fun) spirit required for any campaign of this sort to really catch fire:

The sham, undemocratic nature of British elections is one major theme with the potential to so raise the political temperature that change is forced upon the government. Whilst democratic reform obviously means much more than simply switching to a Proportionally Representative (PR) voting system, PR is a key issue, not least



because this one change would open the floodgates to a much stronger expression of green politics. It is also a key issue in that the reservoir of potential sympathy and support is very large, spread right across the political spectrum. But how to make it a super-hot issue?

Continued over page

Reclaiming the Town Halls

Continued from over page

The existing groups campaigning specifically on PR are too hedged in and muted by conditioned notions of "politeness", of not rocking the boat "too much". Whilst their support and involvement in the issue is extremely valuable, and whilst they deserve much credit for having sustained things thus far, the time is ripe for a much more robust, imaginative and confrontational approach.

Votes for Women

When the last major change occurred in the democratic franchise - "Votes for Women" - the funeral pyre of the existing system was finally lit by widespread and radical direct action. Energies of such a nature were generated that the government feared for the civil order of the country unless they gave way. Is it any different today? Have any deep-seated democratic reforms ever been given willingly by the authorities? No, they have always been wrested from reluctant hands by insistent, forceful and popular agitation.

A good start here, come next May (or May '89), would be the widespread organisation of "elections" to be run in parallel to the official "first-past-the-post" local polls, the local level being where we can most easily expect concessions on PR (and the town-hall focus being ideal for co-ordinated local action). These could be based on professional opinion poll surveys of what the vote would have meant for Greens had they been conducted under the auspices of the W.German AMS (Additional Member System) PR system.

An equivalent number of Greens in each case could then claim their rightful democratic dues, right across the country, by simply and nonviolently occupying the council chambers. This could occur both on the day after polling day and again at the first and subsequent Council meetings. Their impact could be tremendous and shocking, especially if accompanied by mass blockades of various town and city halls to exclude the excessive numbers of wrongfully elected councillors.

Such a campaign could be the perfect setting for political theatre at its most dramatic

and symbolically meaningful level. If no change was forthcoming, the levels of disruption could rise rise each year, rippling outwards to all areas and intensifying in frequency. The price of desisting? A binding referendum on the principle of PR.

The present voting system benefits the present government far and away over its rivals and has done for decades. The likelihood is of several more Tory governments stretching into the next century. Does anyone seriously think they are going to abandon the Golden Goose unless the countries of Britain are made virtually ungovernable as the years roll on towards the next General Election?

A Voice of Experience

The words of *Freda Meissner-Blau MP*, 60 year-old spokesperson on international affairs for the Austrian Green Party (interviewed in *Sanity*, July '87) are instructive here:

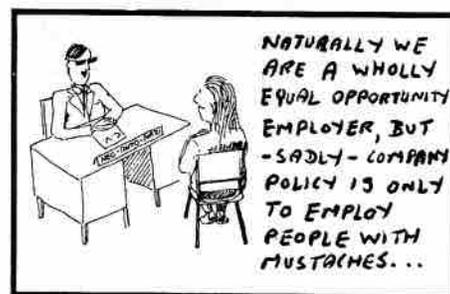
"I have now come to realise that those in power now, especially hardliners like Thatcher, will not understand the language of reason". In Parliament, she feels that facts, convincing figures and the new information the Greens present count for nothing to those in power.

She feels that *"the only way you can instigate change is to threaten them in their power. This language they understand. They are very quick to know when they start to get insecure in their position. That means the only way we can force them to change.... is by the force of people. This is our only chance because that threatens their power."* She believes that *"... the Greens, Friends of the Earth and CND" might ... "all together move things, but only under the conditions of threatening the power game."*

Whilst this might not be the "only way you can instigate change", it is time to put more restrained (and dull and unimaginative) forms of lobbying on the back-burner. What we have isn't democracy and we must stop pretending that it is, stop playing polite English games! Only by openly declaring in large numbers that we do not accept, and will not accept (without a referendum), any

election results the non-PR system produces, or the legitimacy of laws it creates, only by declaring that we are out to disrupt and bring down the whole pack of cards, can we raise the stakes enough to stir the nation and shake the government. The theme is clear and popular - democracy. The cause - just. The need - imperative. It really is that simple.

Green Options is a journal, and as such is obviously not in a position to try and organise campaigns. Thus, there is a kind of artificiality in our putting forward such ideas. Nonetheless, the ideas are there to be taken up, and we are certainly willing to do what we can to help in this.



ICELANDIC WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

Iceland is the only country in the world where a women's party has succeeded in gaining representation in a national parliament.

The *Kvænnalistinn*, or Women's Alliance, was founded in March '83. It's formation was greatly encouraged when 2 women were elected to the city councils of Reykjavik and Akureyri, immediately doubling the proportion of female communal councillors from 6% to 12%. The two women were concerned about the lack of women in local government. They also wanted to see women's work re-evaluated on the job market, including the taking into account of work experience in the home in applications for the paid-job market.

In May '83 the *Kvænnalistinn* gained 3 seats with 5.5% of the vote. On April 25th '87, they doubled their seats with 10.1% of the vote. And, although the word "green" is not used once, their programme reads as Green as Green can be.

Source: *EcoNews* No.35



EVENTS



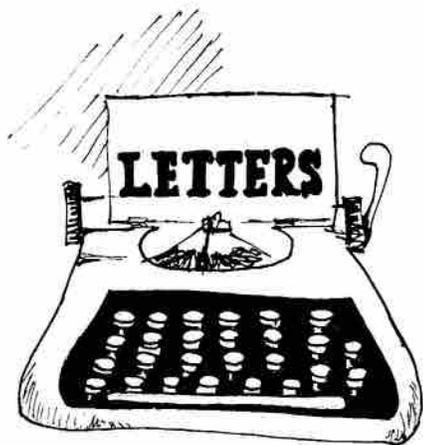
- Nov. 14th** (Sat., 10 - 4pm): *Newcastle Green Fair*, Newcastle Arts Centre, Westgate Rd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Stalls, workshops, music, drama etc. Contact Penny Hardman, 59 Cavendish Rd., Jesmond, Newcastle. Tel. (091) 2817310
- Nov. 15th** (Sun.), 7pm: *Yin & Yang - Defining and Integrating the Feminine and Masculine* - Jane Malcomson. Part of the "Turning Points" programme. St.James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V. Tel. 01-734-4511 2 (1 unwaged)
- Nov. 16th** (Mon), 1.05pm: *"The Anti-Bodies": the state of the Green Movement in Britain today* - Jonathon Porritt (Director, FoE). St.James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V. Tel. 01-734-4511
- Nov. 21st** (Sat., 10.30 - 5.30pm.): *"Healing Humanity - Building a Healthy World"*. A one day seminar, programme available on request. Royal Commonwealth Society, Commonwealth Hall, Northumberland Ave, London WC2
- Nov. 23rd** (Mon), 1.05pm: *"The Wholistic World View"* - Walter Schwartz, Religious Affairs Correspondent, The Guardian. St.James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V. Tel. 01-734-4511
- Nov. 23rd** (Mon.), 7pm: *Science & Spirituality*, a lecture by Dr. David Ash. Part of the "Turning Points" programme. St.James, Piccadilly, London W1. 2 (1 unwaged)
- Nov 28th** (Sat.), 10am - 6pm: *"The Conscious Consumer"*. What can we do to help one another to use (and withhold) our consumer and taxpayer power to create a greener world? What can we do to persuade industry, government etc. to respect and serve us as conscious consumers?. Venue: Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London W1 4 or 2 unwaged from Turning Pt., The Old Bakehouse, Cholsey, Nr.Wallingford, Oxon. OX10 9NU.
- Nov. 30th** (Mon.), 1.05pm: *"Putting People into Politics"* - Sara Parkin (International Liason Secretary of UK Green Party, and Co-Secretary, European Greens). St.James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V. Tel. 01-734-4511
- Nov. 30th - 6th Dec.:** *Skills and Sharing Week at the New University*. Contact 24 South Rd., Hockley, Birmingham. Tel. 021-551-1679
- Dec. 1st** (7 - 8.30 pm): The Institution of Environmental Sciences (IES) - *"The Workings and Effectiveness of Green Organisations"*. Tom Burke (Green Alliance), Robin Grove-White (ex-Director, CPRE) and Jonathon Porritt (Director, FoE) discuss the activities of green organisations. How are decisions made? Should there be more effort to work with environmental practitioners in industry? Cost = 1. Venue - Commercial Gas Centre, 139 Tottenham Court Rd., London (opp. Warren St. Tube station).
- Dec. 5th - 9th January:** *"A Worlds Waste - Cumbria, Sellafield & Nuclear Reprocessing"*. Photographic and visual arts exhibition, being an in-depth look at Sellafield's impact on life in Cumbria. Watershed Media Centre Gallery, Bristol.
- Dec. 14th** (Mon.), 1.05pm: *"Making Green Dreams Come True"* - Paul Ekins (Research Director of the Right Livelihood Award). St.James, 197 Piccadilly, London W1V. Tel. 01-734-4511
- Jan 5th 1988** (7 - 8.30pm): The IES - *"Environmental Planning in British Gas plc"* by P.G. Parkinson, Senior Environmental Planning Officer, British Gas. What are the constraints on environmental planning; what are the many factors that have to be considered in the development of a large gas installation in rural areas? Venue and cost as for Dec.1st event.
- Jan 31st - March 5th:** *"A Worlds Waste"* (see Dec. 5th above) exhibition. Impressions Gallery, York, & York City Arts Gallery - Joint venue.
- April 15th** (Fri. 6.30pm): *"The Life Style Movement"*. The Very Revd. Horace Dammers (Founder). Charing Cross Hotel, London.

Please send in news and details of your events

ECO-BANK

The world's first ecology orientated bank has been set up in Frankfurt, W.Germany. It will open its doors in January 1988. Run as a co-operative, the **Oekobank** will lend money on a priority basis to companies using or developing new forms of waste recycling and clean energy, as well as for other "alternative" cultural and social projects. The legally required 6 million DM was raised through individual subscriptions and from shareholders who agreed not to expect a return on their money for 2 years.

Source: The International Herald Tribune, Aug. 21st '87 via The Environment Digest (Sept.)



Dear GO,

Decentralisation is an absolute priority if we are to have the politics we need to cope with present-day problems. However, I question the view put forward by Pam Woodin (*Viewpoint- Issue 2*) that this is to be achieved by a process of nucleation around individual consciences. I do agree that all lasting culture is spontaneously generated, but Green politics have grown out of reaction to a culture, not out of idealism or altruism, but out of anger at the misuse of ourselves and the rest of creation. It's essential to know how it has come about that when we have knowledge enough to guarantee a good life for everyone on the planet, the basis of that good life is being destroyed by the over-consumption of a privileged minority of nations whose people feel increasingly out of control of their lives, frustrated by indifference, isolated by rivalries and nullified by complacency. I believe a scientific attitude is essential in order to get answers that are not just

a reflection of prejudice, whether justifiable or not.

All knowledge is interpretation, and scientific knowledge is no exception, no matter how much supported by fact, no matter how much proved by its predictions. The inclusion of the human element, our limitations as physical beings, our future hopes and present fears, influence all results and the interpretation of those results. There is no perfect knowledge either of ourselves or of the Universe, but there is an absolute obligation on us all to attempt the most comprehensive description of the world and our place in it that we are capable of. Of course we can all do this, but for my own part I value the fact that there are some individuals who can do this very much better than most. I do not feel that I have to be able to verify everything that such people say so long as it is evident that respect for knowledge and for life supervene over economic arguments.

Whenever a transformation of the human mind has taken place in history it has always been led by people of vision who have been able to interpret the mind of their fellow beings so that they could act with meaning in the world. Of course there have been villains as well, but they can only succeed where there is a desire in the people for evil. This then is my prescription for our ills, that we cultivate what is good in ourselves and listen to those best able to make sense of our possibilities and limitations.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Green

24 Boyar Walk, Derby DE3 3TF

Dear GO,

I was pleased to see your commitment to decentralisation. But do you understand the costs?

If you decentralise power to the regions (by decentralising the levying, collection and spending of taxes), you can then no longer redistribute wealth between regions. You've no mechanism left. You can't have things like National Income Schemes or Land Tax. After decentralisation of power, redistribution of wealth by land reform will be difficult. Will Cornwall be pleased to accept London's overspill population? Should you redistribute land before you redistribute power?

Nevertheless, could I offer you a slogan? "If it's important, decentralise it."

Best wishes,

Richard Hunt

19 Magdalen Rd.

Oxford

LETTERS

Green Options
Lockyer's Farm
Durdon, Somerset

Your letters are welcome. Please keep them as short as possible.

INROADS: TOWN AND COUNTRY TWINNING

How do people change from being competitive to being cooperative? Dorothy Peart, who is involved with the *New University Project*, found a gradual inspiration in answer. "First of all I discovered that far from having to create neighbourhood spirit, there was quite a lot of it around. Secondly, I discovered it had even crossed the racial and cultural barriers here and there.

It was a Pakistani women who suggested that I arrange a picnic, which I did for herself and her two West Indian neighbours, as they had got to be friendly with each other over the garden fence. Rather than go somewhere impersonal, I thought it would be good if we could go to a private farm for the day and be shown round.

With this thought came the idea that if this spirit of neigh-

bourliness could spill over into the relationship the town group and the farmer's family, they would discover ways in which they could help each other.

... It occurs to me that there is a possibility that town people could do processing work to their own and the farmers benefit :

FRUIT: Jams, preserves, pickles

CORN: Flour, bread etc.

WOOL: Spinning, weaving etc.

They could also go to the farm to which they were linked to do seasonal work. ... The same people would come each year...

Let's suppose we set up a bureau for towns people and farmers to get in touch with each other. Then perhaps this could happen. What do you think? Something similar is already working in Tokyo and Switzerland." **Source: New University News**

RECLAIMING POLITICS

What does "politics" actually mean? How has this become corrupted, a term of abuse? How do we reclaim a politics which many regard as hijacked by the central government machine/Parliamentary process (the grotesque centralisation, party "whips", Whitehall dictat, the adversarial structures etc.)? Future issues of Green Options will contain occasional contributions on the theme of "Reclaiming Politics". Please write if this might include something from you.

INROADS

Inroads will be an occasional feature in Green Options. It will cover ideas for (and experiences of) effective ways of spreading the green message to "ordinary" people and new areas of society. How do we make green politics far more relevant to the everyday lives of most people? What are the attractive, constructive alternatives which can begin to engage genuinely popular support and involvement? Perhaps the answers are more difficult than simply opposing unpopular or un-green policies; they certainly relate to a very neglected aspect of green politics. Please get in touch if you have information or ideas - minor snippets or major schemes - along these lines.

VIEWPOINT

What is the green movement's current state of health? Where is it going? Where should it be going? How can the movement develop real "bite"? What strategies should we adopt? What kinds of political and organisational structures should we seek to develop? Green Options will contain occasional contributions to a "Viewpoint" series: a political forum where various people can express their thoughts on some or all of these questions.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INVOLVED WITH GREEN OPTIONS?

Do you subscribe to (or read anyhow) other green, greenish or even non-green publications? If so, maybe you could send in any snippets, large or small, which relate to our intended coverage of the greening process and/or new developments in green thought or action! Perhaps you're even in a position to take on editorial responsibility for a whole subject "field"? Or maybe you'd like to become a reporter/correspondent for Green Options in your local area? If you might be able to help in any of these ways, please get in touch.

ADVERTISING RATES

Future issues may carry a maximum of one page (side) of adverts. For camera-ready artwork, a full page (189 mm width by 250 mm) will cost £45, smaller sizes pro rata. An artwork design service (including near-typeset (i.e. laser) quality print), which can incorporate your logo, is available for an extra £5-10 depending on advert size. Inserts of leaflets etc. cost £25 per thousand (i.e. 2.5p each). Contact the back-page address, or telephone Compton Dundon 74130 for further details.

HELP! DISTRIBUTORS WANTED

Green Options is looking for people to help distribute copies in their locality. All offers of assistance, as well as information on possible sales outlets - bookshops, community centres, cafes/restaurants etc. - gratefully received.

BACK ISSUES

Issue No. 1
Issue No. 2 - Sold out.

Send 50p (includes postage) per copy.

"Symposium" ie. "Drinking Together" and the fact that the first universities of the Western world, in Ancient Athens, were fellowships of the drinking table. Now we are pleased to report the following from The Guardian of Sept. 3rd 1987: The Workers' Educational Association (WEA) has decided to hold a philosophy course in a pub.

Students in Merthyr Tydfil will spend 10 sessions in the Crown Hotel, fuelled with drinks and crisps, to consider topics like collectivism, human rights and democracy in the workplace. The pub had already offered room to Open University courses and Welsh Language classes. Pauline Enoch, a WEA organiser said, "We thought that the course subject, social and political philosophy, would go down well in a pub, rather than a church hall or a school."

AN ADDRESS CORRECTION

In the last issue of Green Options we printed an out-of-date address for "RELAY - A Community Radio Magazine". Apologies - the right address is now Unit 109, Bon Marche Building, 444 Brixton Rd., London SW9 8EJ. Tel. 01-274-4000 Ext. 312. RELAY is a 20 page bi-monthly available for £5.50 to individuals (Britain & Ireland), £10 Institutions. It is also produced in tape form to help convey what community radio might sound like. RELAY also offers training in radio production and media awareness.

CHANGING TIMES

A planned £100,000 public convenience in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, is to have a nappy-changing room in the men's lavatory.

Source: Observer, 9th Aug. '87

Connections



In each issue the addresses of various kinds of groups and organisations will be listed. Where large numbers are involved, they will be spread over more than one issue. **This time around we focus on Trees!**

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers
36 St. Mary's St.
Wallingford, Oxon.
0491-39766

Celtic Friends of Trees
Flat 1
23 Upton Park
Slough, Berks.

Chipko Information Centre
P.O. Silyara via Ghansali
Tehri-Garwhal
U.P. India 249155

Forest (magazine)
15 Tadmore St.
London W12

Friends of the Earth (Tropical Hardwoods Campaign)
26-28 Underwood St.
London N1 7JQ
01-490-1555

Green Deserts
Rougham, Bury St.Edmunds,
Suffolk IP30 9LY
0359-70265

Green Party (Forestry Working Group)
27 Monmouth Ave
Topsham, Exeter, Devon
0392-874035

Men of Trees
Crawley Down, Crawley
W. Sussex RH10 4ZB
0342-712536

Men of Trees (International Section)
7 Abbotsfield Crescent
Tavistock, Devon
0822-3722

Rainforest Action Network
99 Prospect Rd.
Portstewart, N.Ireland
026583-2301

Rainforest Information Centre
PO Box 368
Lismore, NSW 2480
Australia

Robin's Greenwood Gang
80 Kingsdown Parade
Bristol 6
Avon

Sacred Tree Trust
31 Kings Avenue
Leeds
LS6 1QP

The Dendrologist
3 Arnett Close
Rickmansworth
Herts. WD3 4DB

The Tree Council
35 Belgrave Square
London
SW1X 8QN
01-235-8854

The Tree Trust
Hermitage Rd.
Upton, Long Sutton
Langport, Somerset
0458-34567

Tree Spirit
Hawkbatch Farm
Arley, Worcs. DY12 3AH

Trees For People
71 Verulam Rd.
St.Albans
Herts. AL3 4DJ

Woodland Trust
Autumn Park,
Dysart Rd., Grantham,
Lincs. NG31 6LL
0476-74297

World Forest Campaign
Forest Cottage
Trelleck Rd., Tintern
Chepstow, Gwent
0291-8392

Please send in any up-dates or additions to this listing

(NB. Copies of the listings from previous issues - Issue 1: Green Groups; Issue 2: Animal Rights - are available for 25p each plus an SAE)

GUIDES & SCOUT'S "ECO-CAMP"

The World Scout Bureau held an international "eco-camp" recently at de Kluis, near Brussels. Some 300 guides and scouts from all over Europe took part in activities ranging from practical environmental exercises and debates with experts to workshops and cultural events.

Source: European Year of the Environment News No. 5 (Sept.)

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