

ECOLOGY PARTY

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1977/78

Members of the National Executive Committee this year were :
Jonathan Tyler; Ron Andrews; John Davenport ; David Fleming; Nicholas Hildyard;
Steve Lambert; John Luck; Jonathan Porritt; Keith Rushworth; Peter Sizer;
David Taylor; Sally Willington; Howard Hoptrough and Jeremy Paul.

The NEC met 8 times. Five times all day on a Saturday at David Fleming's flat in Hampstead (and we thank him for all his hospitality and home-made brown bread.) There was a two-day meeting in July at Withiel in Cornwall (and we thank Teddy Goldsmith and Kathy for their kindness and hard work and also Nicholas, Jeremy and Peter Bunyard for their hospitality.)

Jonathan Tyler has been our Chairman and represented us at meetings, on the radio, in Trafalgar Square and overseas.

Peter Sizer, our Treasurer, has kept our accounts and saw to it that we were informed and up to date about our small Party funds.

John Davenport has continued as Membership Secretary with the unenviable task of keeping the membership files up to date. Subscriptions now run from January to January and membership cards have been printed and are now sent to all members who are asked to make use of the Standing Order form. Membership has grown from 300 to over 500.

David Fleming has designed the new Party literature - the two three-fold green leaflets and has written the Paper "After Affluence" which is about to be published.

John Luck produced leaflets for the Anti-Windscale Demo in London which proved a useful way to get some new members. He and Sally Willington dealt with the reprinting of the Manifesto into the "Little Green Book". Our thanks to Steve Aldenberg for prompt printing.

Steve Lambert organized the Party Badges and attended meetings of other organizations on our behalf.

Howard Hoptrough produced 5 editions of the Newsletter despite many difficulties in getting it printed and addressed. It costs 25.7p per member per time.

Ron Andrews edits "Good Earth" which has been subsidized by ECO. It goes out to members with the Newsletter. He also took on the job of 101 arrangements for the Birmingham Conference '78 until his illness. We wish him soon well again.

Jonathan Porritt has kept in touch with other organizations and Groups that we think ECO should have representation on or contact with. These include : National Council for Civil Liberties; Nuclear Information Network; Furning Point; C.H.D.; Save London Alliance; World Information Service on Energy (W.I.S.E.); SCAN ((Scotland anti-nuclear); the Liberal, Conservative and Labour Parties' ecology inside-groups; Conservation Society; F.O.E.; Commonwealth Human Ecology Council; Green Alliance.

David Taylor came to the NEC in February as the elected S.W. Region Member. He organized the South West Region's Policy Conference in Bristol in June for the Party. The S.W. is the only Region of the 12 to be properly set up so far.

Nicholas Hildyard has helped with the Policy and Publicity sub-committee.

Tony Whittaker has kindly housed the Party Printing machine in Devon.

Letters have been printed in the Times, the Financial Times, ^{Specialist} New Ecologist, Voice, Resurgence and in many local newspapers. ~~More~~ More voluntary Press watchers are wanted as letters to the Editor must be sent promptly if they are to stand a chance of being printed and every opportunity to get into print must be seized upon.

During the year there have been various events, meetings and study days. We took part in the Nuclear Power Lobby at Westminster on November 16th. Jonathan Tyler represented us in Paris and again in March at Strasbourg at The Council of Europe Symposium.

The South West Region held its founding meeting in January at Exeter, as did the Norwich Branch in April. In March there was the Windscale Demo in London organized by Friends of the Earth. A large contingent of ECO members marched from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square with Peter Fring's (Denson) marvellous ECO banners held proudly high. Our leaflets were distributed down the March and to the crowds. We sold our ECO badges. Jonathan Tyler marched in the front ranks and was one of the speakers on the plinth with the Lions in the Square. There were film cameras and the Press every where yet, in spite of careful planning by FOE, there was very little news-coverage in the Sunday Press and the Monday was a Bank Holiday. (The Anti-Nazi March on the other hand attracted wide publicity.) However, many an astonished foreign visitor to London that day got the message about our feelings on nuclear power projects. ECO has contacts with New Zealand (The Values Party. Their Chairman, Dave Woodhams was at our recent NEC meeting in Cornwall); Canada; Denmark; Norway; France; The EEC and Brazil.

In Elections this year we again fielded some candidates. At a by-election for Halvern Hills District Council, Guy Woodford gained 34% of the Vote. At the Local Elections in May ECO had 16 campaigns. In four wards ECO soundly defeated National Front candidates and this was noted by The Guardian. Jonathan Tyler said of ECO results: "The Wetherby and Garforth wards in Leeds, Birmingham Selly Oak, both Bath wards and St John's Wood in London all represent significant results which set us apart from the normal squab of minority parties. I draw five conclusions from the results:

- 1.) In all the wards where we have stood before we failed to make substantial progress. St John's Wood was the best, the reward for intensive canvassing. In Selly Oak we did not benefit from 620 floating Liberal votes, perhaps in part because we did not canvass this year. ~~this year~~. It looks as though we have been capturing our "natural" vote but are not yet making inroads into the hard core of other parties' support. In new wards this vote varies from 1.6% (Leeds Harehills) to 5.9% (London Hoe Street). It seems to have a maximum in urban areas of 7%.
- 2.) It is difficult to win significant shares in strong Liberal wards, as at Leeds Horsforth and Armley.
- 3.) Where the ward is small, Labour is weak and there is no Liberal vote, it is possible by intensive canvassing to win significant shares (17-19%) as the credible third party, as at St John's Wood and Bath.
- 4.) We can rise well above the National Front where we run a good campaign (Leeds Talbot and Burley, Selly Oak, Hoe Street), but the impact is reduced by mediocre results as in three other Leeds wards.
- 5.) Where we relax our efforts another minor party can overtake (Leeds Headingley) or our vote can slip right back (Leeds Heortown).

In a year full of continuous interest and hard work it has become more evident to the NEC that the work-load of a growing new Party must somehow be spread. We must recruit and retain members and get the remaining eleven Regions formed as soon as possible. The money for a Party Office and paid full-time workers would be a great boon towards efficiency and well-oiled Party wheels. This NEC has done its best using all reserves of goodwill and spare time.

Good wishes to the next NEC.

Sally Willington

Hon. National Secretary 1977/78