

GREEN LINE

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A NEW AGRICULTURE

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No 12 MAY 1983

GREENS counterpose the values of peace, co-operation and nonviolence to the established norms of violence, fear and exploitation. We seek to work these values out in the personal and political dimensions. Green Line is a link between individuals and groups which are the threads of this movement for inward and outward change.

Green Line is produced by a small group of people, mainly in Oxford and Reading, with diffused editorial responsibility.

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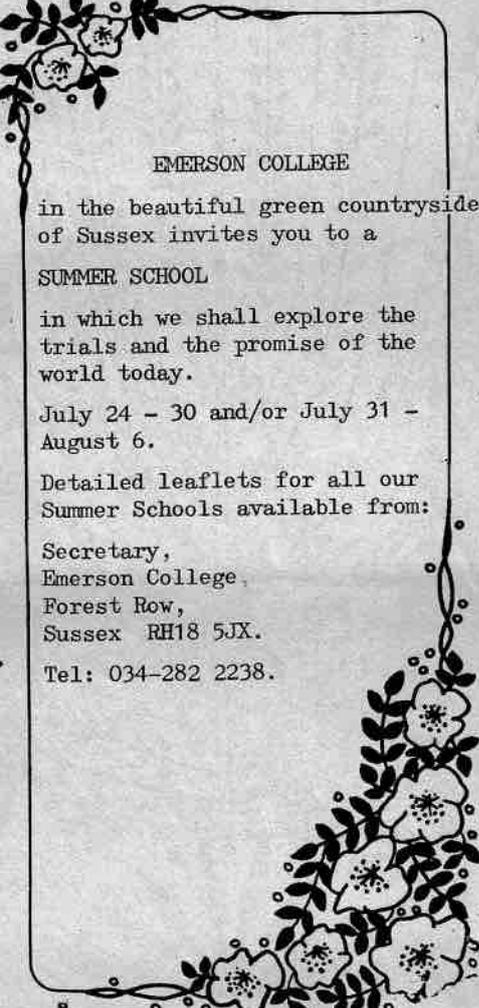
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A NEW AGRICULTURE

(In this article the term 'economic' is used in the botanic sense meaning 'useful to man', rather than the more common-day meaning of 'profitable'. 'Crops' refer to both botanic and biological harvests.)

BY THE TURN of the century the world population will have grown by at least one third, one and a half billion more people.

Simultaneously, and partially resulting from the demands created by this population growth, certain minerals and other resources will become scarce. For those that argue that there are ample resources, or that need will find new supplies and technology will be developed to solve the problem, one should remember that demand growing at 7% per annum exponentially means that each decade will require as much supply for that decade alone as has been used in all time up to the beginning of that decade. The next decade will again require the total used previously, including all that consumed in the previous decade and all before. On this basis most published reserve figures are fictitious.

Parallel to these impending scarcities we should remember that every time we use energy in any form - and everything is a form of energy whether fuel, material, mineral, etc. - we are converting it quickly or slowly to another energy form. Every time a conversion takes place a part of the conversion remains as waste, whether in the form of dust, gas, heat, noise, etc. Much of this waste cannot readily be recycled or absorbed by nature and remains in multiple forms as 'pollution'. Jeremy Rifkin has described pollution as all the accumulated wastes of all the conversion processes that have taken place. Thus every time we use energy in any form we are adding to the accumulated pollution. It is essential therefore that when we do use energy the wastes can be absorbed or recycled through natural systems. That specifically does not happen now.

These and other factors suggest that the highest priorities will have to be given to the creation of the maximum possible quantities of renewable resource materials. These can only come from land and marine cultivation. Fermentation and biotechnology techniques are too infinitesimal in scale: like all new technologies they also have unassessed dangers, and they are often based on fossil fuel derivatives as feedstock.

Land acreage is finite and being depleted through poor husbandry, erosion and infrastructure growth. The present emphasis in Britain is on food production, with resultant high wastage as only a small part of most crops is actually consumed. Forestry is given even less priority, and the remaining land is sparsely used for sheep production or not at all. Even then we produce from a total of 80% of our available land only 68% of our temperate food needs and only 55% of our total needs. Our forestry supplies only

8% of what we consume. The remaining 45% of our food and 92% of our forestry is imported.

However, plants and to a lesser extent animals can provide ALL the materials and fuels we require in greater or lesser extent, including: food, feedstuffs, fertilisers, paints, lubricants, medicines, cosmetics, liquid and solid fuels, plastics, building materials, paper, timber, skins, glues, leather, etc. All are renewable. During the last war the Finns provided almost all of these products and many more from their forests alone, and at the end of the war the Americans were surprised at the high standard of living they had maintained. They did not of course take only one product from each species but as many as they sensibly could. Plants supply multiple products, but present temperate agricultural practice normally harvests for only one product and discards the rest. Despite the inherent waste this makes the main product more expensive as this alone has to pay all the labour, machinery and expensive fuel costs involved.

George Washington Carver, the largely self-educated negro child of southern United States slaves, revolutionised the southern American economy and politics by his research into the peanut, the soybean, and the sweet potato. At that time these plants were hardly known there, or totally uncultivated. The cotton crops were depleting the land, and so he sought nitrogen-fixing crops which could also give better economic returns. In his laboratory he created over three HUNDRED products from the peanut alone including cheese, milk, butter, coffee, flour, ink, dyes, plastics, wood-stains, soap, linoleum, cosmetics, and medicinal oils. From the sweet potato he derived 118 products including flour, vinegar, rubber molasses, synthetic rubber, and others including postage stamp glue.

In this light the production from our agricultural and forestry practices is less than tiny. The emphasis on food only distracts from the problem of what natural resources will have to be produced overall from our limited land supply. In due course production will have to be measured as a total yield of ALL natural products per hectare.

We need a quantum leap in our agro-forestry production. Organic agriculture as currently promoted is a 'cultivation technique' in this context and, however vital in itself, cannot create the multiple increase in yields required. We have to look to other ecologically sympathetic methods which instead of the current 2 - 3 tonnes mono-crop grain yield per hectare (organic or otherwise) can measure total natural product yields from the same area in TENS of tonnes.

Trees are nature's way of creating very high volume for very restricted land space, and perennial plants will have to take on new importance. They require lower fertiliser inputs because of deeper rooting and



LES GRIBOUILLONS DE DuBOUILLON

THIS SWINGING OF THE ELECTORATE FROM RIGHT TO LEFT IS REALLY CURIOUS. IT'S NOT AS STRANGE AS THAT! THERE IS A BASIC RULE, NATURAL AND ECOLOGICAL.

THE BIG ANIMALS HAVE THEIR PARASITES THAT COME AND STICK TO THEM...

EXAMPLE: THERE IS AN ELEPHANT ON THE LEFT AND ANOTHER ON THE RIGHT. AUTOMATICALLY THE PARASITE IS GOING TO CHOOSE ONE OF THE TWO... HE COULD CHOOSE THE ÉLEPHANT ON THE RIGHT FIRST...

AND AT THE END OF A WEEK HE JUMPS ON TO THE ELEPHANT ON THE LEFT...

THE ECOLOGICAL PHENOMENON CAN EQUALLY BE SEEN IN HUMANS...

LEFT-WING VOTERS

RIGHT-WING VOTERS

THEY STICK TO THE RIGHT AND THEN ONE WEEK LATER COME BACK TO THE LEFT...

AND IF THEY STAY WITH ONE GROUP FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS THE DARWIN (-1) EFFECT COMES INTO PLAY AND THEY END UP TAKING ON THE COLOUR OF THAT GROUP, FOR SELF-PROTECTION!

POLITICAL ECOLOGY A LA FRANCAISE



IN THE RECENT French local elections the 'ecologists' ended up with 757 seats. 0.15% of the total of more than $\frac{1}{2}$ -million seats and, as far as anyone knows, that's more than 0.15% better than last time!

How did this happen? Certainly the voting system helped a great deal. And probably the 'Die Grünen factor' too, though to a limited extent as the elections took place on the same day. The press here also gave serious attention to the ecologists among diverse other French political groupings. Even to the extent of automatically counting them apart, when happily lumping the rest into left and right wings. After not a little research I must however agree with Philippe Lebreton who, while delighted that some French see the ecological answer as relevant to today's problems, feels that the success of the ecologists has been despite themselves. More of this later. First to the elections.

They are fought in two rounds and a recent rule change means that if any one candidate on the first round ballot paper gains more than 50% of the vote, he or she takes 50% of the seats (the list system operates here) and the rest are divided proportionally among all the candidates. This assures 75% of the seats for the winner's list and has meant that around 550 ecologists gained seats in this first round with percentages of around 5 and upwards.

If no candidate gains 50% of the vote there is a second-round 'play-off' between the top two candidates. At this point there is a frantic bargaining for the votes of the unlucky candidates of the "you tell your lot to vote to me and I'll give you one seat/push your transport programme/buy you a new car" kind. Although I have been unable to obtain reliable information, I must assume that it is mainly from this bargaining that the balance of the ecological seats come.

After the first round the left was very worried, as it looked like a rout by the right in the Town Halls and a red (!) face for President Mitterand; but, by rallying the troops and by judicious bargaining of the above mentioned sort, the left saved its face and a lot of its ministers in the second round.

In several places the ecologists held the all-important balance and the cartoon, I feel, says it all. While there appeared to be an improvement in organisation since the last local elections in 1977 (where you could choose between a moderate and an extreme left ecologist on the same ballot paper!), it has only been cosmetic. The words 'ecologist' or 'vert' covered candidates who were only putting a green border to their intrinsic red, pink or blue platform. Some actually aligned themselves with the left or right for the first round, and the rest jumped either way for the second. M. LeBreton, a professor of zoology here in Lyon and a respected political ecologist who worked hard in the political arena between 1976 and 1981, is thoroughly disillusioned. He gave up Politics with a capita! 'P' because he was tired of struggling with 'people who were not really serious'. He now devotes his time and energy to giving scientific evidence where he feels he can achieve something. He says that until the reds can be shown the door the movement will make little political progress. He is particularly angry with Amis de la Terre and Brice Lalonde and Jean-Calude delaRue. He feels that these two men particularly have had the chance to declare the green movement's political position in the clearest of terms,

especially after the million-plus votes of Brice Lalonde's 'Aujourd'hui Ecologie' list in the 1981 presidential elections. In his view they have "spinelessly - you can quote me on that" vacillated and fudged the issues.

Probably the best way to go on from here is to look at the various components of the political ecology movement.

Amis de la Terre (Friends of the Earth)

Led by Brice Lalonde and, although they put up an unknown (to them as well as to everyone else!) number of candidates for these elections, are described by a spokesman as having no doctrine and therefore definitely not a political party. The same spokesman happily acknowledged the total number of seats gained, was delighted at the political progress being made, but said that 'local elections do not really count as they do not represent real power'. I questioned this political activity, given the denial of being a political organisation. "They (the political parties) are anti-dynamic," he said. "No one has the whole truth. Why be like the others?" He also denied that they were particularly left-wing despite the fact that Brice Lalonde went to Grenoble to support the ecologist candidate there who lined up with the left for the first round. A particularly bad piece of judgement, as the candidate could have held the balance between left and right. Amis de la Terre say they are totally out of sympathy with the Parti Ecologiste, and do not ever see any hope of working together.

Parti Ecologiste

The only 'real' (i.e. officially founded) political party. Formed with a struggle in November 1982 from a previous loose grouping called the Mouvement d'Ecologie Politique (MEP), it now has about 500 members. PE has no general manifesto, but hopes to distil one from several manifesto projects on offer by the end of this year. A spokesman said that they completely reject the left-right axis, and advised its candidates this time not to negotiate for the second round. He does however acknowledge that some of them did, and doesn't know how many seats they have gained - perhaps a hundred or so. Many members of PE are still full of rancour about the Brice Lalonde 'coup' for the 1981 presidential elections, and talk still continues about possible 'misappropriation of funds' by the Aujourd'hui Ecologie office in Paris. It was with MEP that the British Ecology Party first met in 1980 for the 'European Green Co-ordination', and those meetings now continue with the PE. If the local group in Lyon is anything to go by, then they remain very naive and - again quoting M. LeBreton, "seem incapable of learning from and building on past experience."

Confederation Ecologiste

Reported to be a grouping to independents, Amis de la Terre, MEP, PE. Everyone I spoke to seems aware of its long time existence, but no one knows of any particular member I can contact!

Independents

Large in number and varied on colour, but again no definite sighting. They appear to predominate in the more rural, northerly areas, and - at a guess - have sprung from local environmental campaigns.

It would be nice at this point to draw conclusions about the political ecology movement in France, but it is not easy. Despite often badly fought campaigns, the media have given usually kind and regular mention of the ecologists. With a 7 year mandate both locally and presidentially, it means there is a gap of three or more years between elections. Thus public and media interest in the campaign is high, as a high voter turnout (over 70%) and long colourful campaigns

prove. This benefits smaller parties. And despite the fact that ecologists of all political colours abound, the official election results from the Ministry of the Interior put them chastely apart from the left and right, thus giving more cohesion to the movement than actually exists.

** Sara Parkin writes from Lyon.

The Politics of Eating Time for change

Kathleen Jannaway

CHOOSE WHAT IS BEST: HABIT WILL SOON RENDER IT AGREEABLE AND EASY.

So wrote Pythagoras, ancient Greek philosopher, mathematician, and vegetarian. Our lives are largely determined by habits, our own and those of the culture that nurtured us. This is rightly so to a considerable degree, but at times of crisis our very survival may depend on our ability to adopt novel modes of behaviour that, daunting at first, can become easy and pleasant as habit takes over.

Life has now reached a crisis point of greater significance than any since the first stirring in the primeval slime. Our species has developed such stupendous intellectual and technological power that it will destroy itself and most other living creatures unless it chooses to change its age-old habits of warring with its own kind and ruthlessly exploiting other species. The two are intimately connected. When the Bomb fell the poet Auden said, "Now we must learn to love one another or die." Confronted with the ecological crisis, similarly created by our unbridled technology, we must learn to love all life or die.

Exponents of 'technological fixes' assure us that new resources will be forthcoming as the pressure of need increases. The resources we need most are those of the human spirit - Blake's "mercy, pity, peace and love" that, like the coins in the fairy-tale purse, increase as we use them. Guided by these we will develop systems of resource creation that will meet all our needs.

Digby Dodd's article in this issue of Green Line presents the challenge of feeding a rapidly expanding world population from a diminishing fertile land area with a realism sometimes lacking in green circles where people, horrified by the prospect before us, prattle about going back to nature - or at least to before the agricultural and industrial revolutions. But there is no going back: hunter-gather bands, slash-burn cultivators, arable and livestock farmers all require far more land per person fed that will be available in a few decades.

Instead we must use our intellectual and inventive powers to the full to grow those old and newly engineered plant species, especially trees, that can produce the maximum of food and other resource materials from the minimum amount of land. Moreover we must invent ways of using those materials with the minimum waste and pollution.

The practice of animal husbandry must cease because it is uneconomic in material terms, and also because it requires the suppression of the essential spiritual qualities - "Mercy, pity, peace and love."

The economy of feeding directly from the plant kingdom is now well recognised. Animals, however completely immobilised in factory farms, use up the greater part of the plants they eat in their own life activities: only a small proportion becomes available as meat and dairy products. On average an American type diet with high animal protein intake requires 0.62 hectares per head; a vegan diet requires only 0.08 hectares.

Humans, or pre-humans, with a physiology similar to that of the fruit, shoot and nut eating chimpanzees and gorillas of today changed their feeding habits in response to some ecological crisis. Today's crisis requires that we adopt habits much more in accord with our basic metabolism and essential to our spiritual development. To breed, care for, and then ruthlessly slaughter unnecessarily creatures so like ourselves is completely contrary to compassion. It could be excused only on the grounds of extreme need. Decades of successful vegan living and child rearing in this country have removed all plea of necessity...

There is nothing that can be obtained from animals that cannot be replaced with greater economy by plants. While plants react to stimuli, perhaps emotional as well as physical, in the absence of a central nervous system they cannot 'feel' anything that justifies the use of the word 'pain'. Pain is associated in animals with the ability to remove from the source of pain: it would have no purpose in the life of higher, rooted plants and therefore no part in their evolution. Plants do not cry out in terror or plead for mercy with their eyes, so their utilisation does not require the suppression of pity. Plant sensitivity is of a very different nature in accordance with their very different contribution to the whole. We must accept with gratitude the plant's unique capacity to render the elements of air, earth and water into forms capable of nourishing our animal life. We can draw from the beauty and efficiency of plants, inspiration to make our own particular contribution to the evolutionary process.

Our conventional 'meat and two veg., bread, cheese and cake' diet will have to be further changed in view of the fact that trees yield the maximum per

acre of both food and many other necessary materials. They can be grown in areas unsuitable for cereals and vegetables. They once covered the whole of England and were first cleared by neolithic farmers with stone axes to make way for their grazing animals. The grasses from savannah and prairies in other parts of the world can be produced by modern technology, not animal bodies, into food and other necessary materials for humans.

If there is anything in animal manures that is needed for the maintenance of soil fertility that cannot be provided by plant compost and green manuring techniques, it can be got from carefully recycled human excreta. We cannot continue much longer to channel essential minerals and trace elements through sewers into the sea. Vegans' excreta has similar flora and fauna to that of other herbivorous and frugivorous animals. There is no need to use highly sentient creatures so like ourselves as walking compost bins; nor to use resources to slaughter them and process their bodies.

Moreover, grazing animals are the greatest enemies of the forest: forest farming and permaculture advocates conveniently forget this factor.

Of course the prospect of using all the land in the world to meet human needs is unacceptable. The remaining wild life areas must be left as unspoilt as possible, both for their own sakes and as genetic banks of plant species whose value has yet to be explored. Once we can turn our attention positively to the service of life instead of being dominated by the habits of a world-that-has-had-its-day, we will be able to deal with population control.

The green movement in the UK has a special contribution to make to the development of new feeding habits.

Britain is one of the most thickly populated regions of the world, and as our economic domination follows in the wake of our military domination, we have to meet the challenge of feeding largely from our own resources. We have the ability to develop the necessary scientific and technological skills to use plant resources to the full. The vegan movement has advanced furthest in England. Studies are now being made to assess our resources.

Studies published so far fail to face the gastronomical advantages of breaking free from outmoded habits. Kenneth Mellanby's "Can Britain Feed Itself?" (Merlin Press, 1975) claims that people like their meat and it is only right that people should be able to spend their money on what they like. Watkin Williams, Professor of Agricultural Botany at Reading University, maintains that the present population of England could feed from the produce of a quarter of the present agricultural acreage if they ate plant foods direct instead of passing them through animals first, but adds that the diet would be unbearably dull and monotonous. He obviously knows nothing of the way in which vegan cooks have responded to the challenge.

It is quite wrong to equate vegan living with narrow puritanism. As many vegans will testify, freedom from dependence on the slaughterhouse brings new variety in foods, new joy in living, new hope that life will triumph, because killing animals is not part of the essential order of the world. This is as it should be, for "what is life for except to be lived with music and laughter and dancing in a garden, with a community of friends who love one another" (Naomi Mitchison).

And in such communities new levels of creativity not dependent on material resources will be reached.

** See small ad. "The Vegan Way" on page 2.



THE GREENING OF LABOUR ?

Socialism Takes To The Countryside

ON MARCH 26 this year, in that well-known rural retreat Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC2, a new organisation was launched: the Socialist Countryside Group.

It is an unlikely coalition of the old farmworkers' union (now the Agricultural Trade Section of the TGWU), the 'green socialists' of the Socialist Environment and Resources Association, and one wing at least of the animal welfare movement, the League Against Cruel Sports (the one you must not let your wife join if you want to be a Conservative candidate...).

It was an inspirational occasion in its way, with Lake District farmers declaring their socialist faith despite all discouragement. Michael Foot made the important point that the "Conservatives" are not conservative at all, as their policies are causing devastation in the countryside with an acceleration of industrialised farming. Socialism has largely been an urban creed, arising out of the human and environmental disaster of the industrial revolution.

In many ways it is the creed of people who have lost their roots. Marx spoke patronisingly of "the idiocy of rural life". Yet he would have had problems accumulating his volumes of Kapital without people working hard on the land growing his food.

Another potential stumbling block is nationalisation. For some labour movement traditionalists it is a touchstone of the true faith to believe in nationalisation of the land. Yet for libertarian socialists like myself in SERA, nationalisation is a nightmare that has done more to discredit socialism than anything else - apart from the Soviet Union!

Yet there is also a tradition of rural radicalism that can be traced from the Peasants Revolt, through the Diggers in the English Civil War to William Cobbett and his 'Rural Rides' - which the Socialist Countryside Group sees itself, in a sense, as heir to. The spirit of Tolpuddle lives on.

John Bradbrook

** Further information from the SCG c/o SERA,
** 9 Poland Street, London W1.



WHO NEEDS ALTERNATIVES?

CHRIS CHURCH explodes the myth that we need an 'alternative' energy source to nuclear power: what is needed is diversity, and the renewables can meet this requirement.

PEOPLE OPPOSED to something must, we are told, be in favour of something else. If we are to abandon something, surely there must be a replacement. This argument is regularly fired at environmental campaigners, yet it is frequently wrong. There is no need for a direct substitute for lead in petrol, for instance. And nowhere has this argument done more to confuse than in the nuclear power 'debate', largely because the enthusiasts for 'Alternative Energy' in the late '70s were happy to present solar panels and small-scale windmills as an alternative to centralised, thousand-megawatt nukes and seemed confused when the archetypal traveller on the Croydon bus refused to take them seriously. There is no doubt that the 'nukes vs. alternatives' argument has done a great deal to obscure and even impede the anti-nuclear case.

For there is no need of an 'alternative' to nuclear power. This country's enormous electricity supply surplus means that we could switch every nuclear power plant off tomorrow without any fear of shortage. While to do so would waste millions of pounds of (very badly invested) public money, we should have stopped the production of Plutonium and of any more nuclear waste. The alternative to nuclear power is not to have any. Supplement this decision with improved long-term conservation planning and investment in cleaning up coal-fired stations, bring in large scale Combined Heat and Power, and ensure that new coal-fired stations use Fluidised Bed Combustion - and we would have one of the most efficient electricity supply industries in the world.

However desirable all that may be, it does not answer the argument that is now forming the 'bottom line' for the pro-nuclear case. Increasing coal use would not bring about increased 'diversity of supply'. Some people in the environmental movement would suggest that to do so we should dismember the national grid and work upwards from village-level energy supply units. While this utopian concept is a nice idea and may well form the basis of a post-industrial late 21st century, it would currently cause far more problems than it would solve - with massive expansion in building a new network to distribute fuels around the country, to say nothing of the problems caused by increased fuel-burning in cities.

The answer to increasing diversity has got to be planning for diversity, and the present policy of pouring ever more millions into one small sector of energy supply is not diversification. Diversification must be a slow process in several directions, and no sector suits this more than the renewables. This is surely where the future lies for renewable energy, not as a direct alternative but as the basis for new supply systems for long-term energy planning, complementing coal and conservation.

How much can we expect from renewables? The CEBG and others have consistently downgraded the renewables, leading to the unsavoury mess last year when grants

for much research in the field were cut, at a time when similar research elsewhere is being steadily increased. But now for the first time it is possible for anyone easily to acquire a detailed perspective on renewables, with the publication of two new books. Firstly there is "Solar Prospects - the Potential for Renewable Energy" by long-time Friends of the Earth energy consultant Mike Flood (Wildwood House, £6.95). This book is quite simply wonderful. It is a straightforward and comprehensive look at all forms of renewable energy, with at all times a perspective on how those energy supplies could be used here. It is profusely illustrated, and while most of the pictures of large-scale applications are from abroad, notably the USA, it is very encouraging to see how much of this technology is quietly being applied on a small scale all over Britain.

After describing each main renewable form (how it works, its applications, drawbacks, etc) he then moves on to implementation and while this section is perhaps less well researched he leaves the reader in no doubt that a government that really cared for our future would be financing development of these technologies now. Much of Mike's work in the latter section has obviously been done in co-operation with the authors of the second book, "Energy-efficient Futures - Opening the Solar Option" (published at £38 (!) by Earth Resources Research who will consider discounts for needy organisations). As you might imagine, this is not a book for the casual reader, though it would be worth hassling any nearby and well-off library to get a copy. Where Mike Flood shows us that renewables are here and can work, ERR shows us how that could happen. In detail that is both astonishing and - to the lay person - at times excruciating, they explore four possible energy scenarios that would take us through the next 45 years. While not quite as 'industry by industry' technically oriented as Gerald Leach's classic "Low Energy Strategy for the UK", one cannot help escape feeling that somewhere in this book the future is waving out at you. Certainly they have attempted to incorporate social and political factors in a unique manner and I would be surprised if some of our more technically oriented sci-fi writers aren't already scanning this in search of new plot material. How far this unique study will affect official policy is unclear, especially since one scenario they use and do not enthuse over is the 'official alternative' produced by the Energy Technology Support Unit at Harwell.

Both these books are important, and if the information in them is used and disseminated we shall be a lot closer to convincing the public at large that a nuclear free future is not just desirable, but that it is technically and economically an optimal choice. The major problem for renewable energy is not anything to do with the short-term technical feasibility of some systems. It is the fact that both the Government and the scientific civil service have set themselves against these systems. It is up to us to see that they change their minds. ::



STAND



WALKING TO ALDERMASTON AFTER THE "LINK-UP", AT ASHFORD HILL.

BELOW ARE two reports from Gloucestershire 'greens' on blockades at Easter. After the 4-day blockade at Upper Heyford, a 10-day action is envisaged at Greenham. Will the movement be able to sustain such actions, and have we enough people for effective support structures? Are we a little naive in thinking these actions will stop the installation? With the news that the launch vehicles for Cruise may be installed (flown in) by the end of May, shouldn't activists be looking at other sensitive military/industrial points to disrupt and dismantle.



A member of our direct action group remarked at lunch time on Thursday that the most effective aspects of the blockade had military associations. Most obvious was the affinity group structure which was insisted on and adhered to throughout. We either arrived in groups or were formed into groups, and were briefed in groups with short periods of nonviolent direct action training. We must be careful not to mystify newcomers. NVDA training begins simply at personal responsibility, learning to express ideas and feelings in a group - often the prerogative of a minority - to listen in an unbiased way and to reach consensus decisions.

Having played with the idea of calling ourselves the Royal Gloucestershire Affinity Group, we arrived in romantic Pitchkettle Wood late on Wednesday evening as plain 'Gloucester', parked in the quagmire, and just managed to squeeze ourselves joyfully onto the 6 am shift. Regrets were detectable at 4.30 am, but the prevailing good nature of the operation had not

died overnight and we arrived cheerfully and punctually at 'Tulip Gate' in the glare of photographers' floodlights. No opposition was in evidence and we sat in front of the gates or supported according to our respective roles.

As a group we kept to our schedule of 4 hours duty, 4 hours stand-by and 4 hours rest, though as the day passed it became clear that the blockade was not going to be challenged. The experience of going on and off duty, new to me on a direct action, with complete trust in the CND organisation and the competence of other groups, opens up many possibilities. Extreme tiredness has often been a feature of past actions. We are also getting used to being in radio contact with other locations. The reception groups at each blockade point were reassuring in their radio vigilance and skill.

Evening shift on the Daffodil Gate. A police sergeant plays through a complete tune on an Irish drum, the police using our flower names for the gates, dancing, singing, a Quaker meeting. If we had to meet the guns and dogs on the other side of the barbed wire, would the same good humour prevail? I think it essential, though I have been slow to learn this. Places like Burghfield have - and can keep - a monopoly in grimness.

The direct action movement has deepened in recent years. Leadership charisma has dissolved and the loneliness of sixties actions and present-day conventional demonstrations is going. The CND NVDA training network is bringing the possibility of action directly within the imaginations of thousands. Meanwhile, Burghfield lost a working day.



We joined the blockade at Greenham on Thursday morning, a group of ten women from Cirencester, all of us nervous first-time blockaders. We sat with about 100 women at the Green Gate. One of the famous Greenham webs of wool was slung across the road and the Cirencester blockaders sat immediately in front of the web, right in the front line in fact. It was amazing how much protection those frail strands seemed to give. The sun felt unexpectedly warm, a women's band played, strolling journalists and newsmen were barracked in a more or less tolerant way.

We had arrived at Greenham, as CND suggested we should, as a support group. Three people were going to act as legal observers for the rest of us in case we were arrested. They also supplied us with food and drinks while we were blockading. When we arrived at Greenham the organisation was excellent. We were given a legal briefing, procedures to follow in case of arrest, a couple of telephone numbers to write on our arms - one to phone if we were arrested and one to phone if we were taken out into the countryside and dumped. We had a brief talk on nonviolent direct action techniques, though we had previously been to a nonviolent direct action day school. We registered our names and addresses, contact names to be informed if we were arrested, then we were off to the blockade.

Groups of policemen advanced purposefully on us from time to time. I realised just how intimidating solid ranks of policemen can be. I was grateful for the wit of the Greenham women, as a line of silver helmets walked towards us. "They're changing guard at Buckingham Palace!" Laughing diffused the fear.

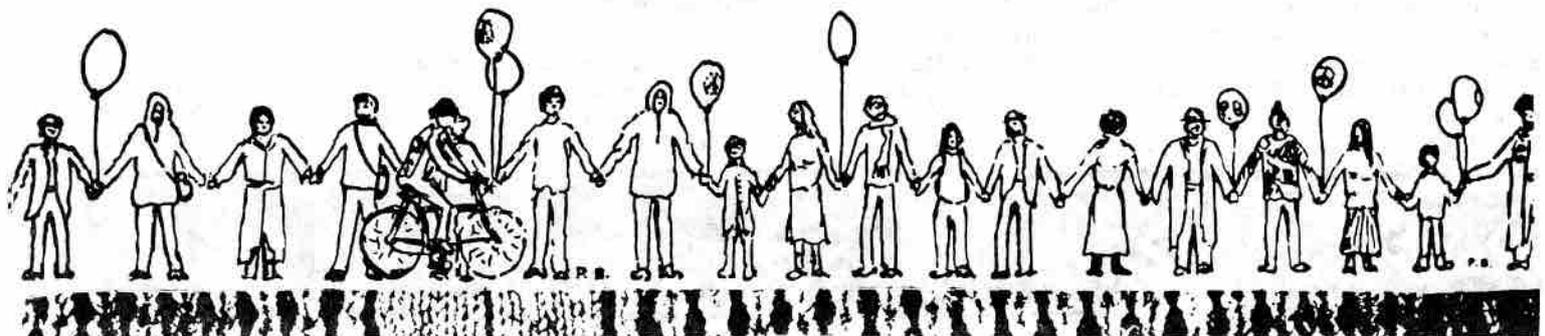
Then about 4 pm greater numbers of police began to gather. Police on horses joined them. One of the horses did that sideways nervous trot and the women clapped, "Just like Chipperfield's Circus! Do it again!" - another good tension diffuser. Then, as if at a signal, great dark clouds covered the sky, it started to hail, a group of policemen strode up to the web, we were warned that we were obstructing the highway and that unless we moved they'd be obliged to do it for us. They ripped the web apart. Arms linked we were all lying down in the streaming wet. Then policemen dragged us off and dumped us into the side of the road. I sat for a minute or two in the tangle

of bushes and looked at the melee. Rain streamed down, women formed an interwoven barrier that the police never managed to shift. But policemen and women worked like Trojans, hauling women off, sidelines of women clapped and sang at a high tempo of excitement and very movingly. "You can't kill the spirit, she's like a mountain, she is old and strong, she goes on and on." Cameramen and journalists joined avidly in the crush, filming and photographing. Of course, we stood for a minute or two to recover and then went back in and lay down again. I heard a policeman say to a girl he'd just dumped into a bush, "Count a hundred before you go back in again."

I suppose it all went on for about $\frac{1}{4}$ hour or so, then the police withdrew and didn't return. Many of us were shaking with excitement, cold, wet and fright. In retrospect it was all a diversion. If they'd really wanted to move us, they'd have sent in many more police. Perhaps they were keeping us occupied so that we didn't join the main gate where about 400 policemen had cleared the blockaders.

Three of us from Cirencester stayed the night. Our shift was from 2 am to 5 am. We slept in a marquee with other women. One canvas wall of the marquee was lit all night with bright lights which they kept burning on the missile site. There is an atmosphere at Greenham of which I was deeply aware. Although the environment seemed hostile, bristling with police, and with the formidable building structures for the missile silos, I was conscious of a pervasive sense of peace. Although the weather was damp and raw and our sleeping bags were lying on one thin sheet of plastic and damp straw - and I'm certainly not one of the world's best sleepers - yet I went to sleep quickly and with a total feeling of peace. It was as if the smaller concerns of living, the problems of one's ordinary life, had fallen away, as if one's life had become simple and directed. There was a feeling of closeness, of a shared and very special experience between those of us who did the blockade.

The women of Greenham, by their action, have created a very positive spirit of peace at Greenham. There is a sense of release, of simplicity, of creativity, the sense of elation which comes when you realise the power of the positive expression of the human spirit. The power of these spirits joined together is very great.



TOWN POLLS

Tim Eiloart

EVER SINCE 1972 it has been possible to call a Town Poll, provided that you can find 9 other electors in the town who want one. But few people seem to be aware of this. For example, CND is organising a Peace Canvas, with five questions, but has not suggested that such polls might be called as part of the Canvas. A poll is a referendum, with as many questions on it as you want: the procedure is in itself quite dramatic and, since few people have one, can be newsworthy. Here is what you could do...

The announcement itself must call not for a poll but for a town meeting, at least 7 days in advance, after 6 pm and before 10 pm. You have to book a hall for the meeting, not a pub unless it is the only place available. The district council will pay for the room.

Find a local VIP - whether the oldest resident, the one fresh out of prison, or whatever. Get six people to agree to sign an announcement. Tell the local press and radio about it - in confidence. Try to find a time they both like. Assemble a large crowd of supporters. The VIP strides out of the crowd and nails the announcement to a prominent place - such as the door of the Town Hall, the local cathedral, or wherever. She or he makes a short speech about the value of democracy, and you hope the story will be used.

Your announcement may be vague or explicit, but it must describe the "business to be transacted" at the meeting. So it could say "A meeting to discuss the Town Plan", or it might say "A meeting to consider the question: should more time be allowed for democratic discussion of the Town Plan before it is adopted?" If you work out your questions in advance, then no one can insist at the meeting that it is undemocratic to ask them. On the other hand, if you only describe vaguely which business is to be transacted, then the meeting can search for consensus questions such as "Should Cruise Missiles be postponed for a year, at least, to allow time for democratic debate?" Every question put to such a meeting must be answered YES or NO; and it may not be a leading question such as "Should dangerous and expensive new weapons systems be introduced only after a full referendum?" You cannot label the beastly things "dangerous and expensive".

I have called this a Town Meeting, but it is in fact a Parish, Town or Borough Meeting, and wherever it is held in England it will be called a Parish Meeting. In Wales it will be called a Community Meeting. Town Meeting is the traditional term.

One point that few people realise is that the wording of a question is all important. "Should Britain apply to join the Common Market?" made us sound like a supplicant to a grubby company. Two out of three people voted "No". But "Should Britain become part of a united Europe?" sounds much more grand and inevitable. Two out of three people voted "Yes".

So it is wise to specify the questions to be put on the original announcement and to be sure they are worded well. Unscrupulous people on the other side might well call their own poll if they get wind of yours. They would probably ask, "Should Britain risk going without the protection of its nuclear weapons?" While the Peace Canvas puts it, "Do you think this country needs nuclear weapons for its defence?" The moral is: get out there today and call a Parish meeting in 7 days' time. They can't beat you to it if you do. Remember to book your room first.

If you want to use the five Peace Canvas questions, they are:

- 1 Do you think that American Cruise missiles should be based in Britain?
- 2 Should our government spend £10bn on new Trident nuclear submarines?
- 3 Do you think that Britain should get rid of American nuclear bases?
- 4 Do you think that this country needs nuclear weapons for its defence?
- 5 If there was a General Election tomorrow, would nuclear disarmament be an important issue for you?

Most meetings and polls have a poor turnout. The well-attended ones have a burning local issue. The best idea I know is to ask something such as, "Should our High Street's name be changed to Peace Street?" This is entirely local and will create controversy in most towns.

These polls happen in the evening. The poll itself will be 14 to 25 days after the Parish Meeting. The chair at the meeting will be taken by the chair or vice-chair of the parish, town or borough council. But if neither is present, then the meeting may elect a chairperson. No one else has any preference, so don't let a councillor say, "Well, since I am the most senior person here, I will take the chair." At the meeting you need either ten electors or one third of those present to demand a poll. That means 5 electors in a meeting of 14 electors can call a poll. In a meeting of 1,000 electors, just ten can call a poll. It costs the council about 5p for each elector, but you only pay whatever you spend to persuade people to vote. Your local returning officer at the district council may have run polls, may have heard of them, or may be totally ignorant of them. I've met all types. Don't be put off. It is the returning officer's job to take over after the meeting and set up the poll, whether they know it or not. You do not need to seek their consent to call the meeting, or to consult them about the questions. If you have two sympathetic parish councillors, then they can call for a meeting alone. So can the chairperson of the town, borough or parish council.

** This is all described in Cmnd 1911 (1973): The Parish and Community Meetings (Polls) Rules 1973, available through bookshops or from HMSO, P O Box 569, London SE1 (01-928 6977).

WHEATLEY FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

58 Mickle Way, Forest Hill, Oxford.
ATTRACTIVE, HISTORIC, WILDLIFE SITE FOR SALE!

OTMOOR is a large area of semi-wetland 6 miles north of Oxford. The tiny fields of Otmoor were the inspiration for the Chessboard in Lewis Carroll's 'Alice through the Looking Glass'.

One of these tiny fields has been offered for sale to Wheatley Friends of the Earth. The 2.3 acre field is on the centre line of the Dept. of Transport preferred route for the M40 Motorway Extension.

After a long and costly Inquiry the DTp seem determined to go ahead with the M40. An alternative route, avoiding Otmoor and Britain's prime butterfly habitat, Bernwood Forest, would cost just £3 Million more than the preferred route. This is a small sum in comparison with the £250 Million cost of the whole scheme and the value of saving Otmoor and Bernwood Forest.

If Wheatley F.O.E. can sell portions of this field to thousands of people all over the world, it would pose such serious and costly problems to the DTp that they might just opt for the alternative route. For under present U.K. law notice must be served on ALL affected land-owners before that land can be compulsorily purchased. Those land-owners have the right to object and cause an Inquiry.....

The field will be divided into small plots, each to be sold for £2. Groups and organisations are encouraged to buy multi-plots for resale to their members. Individual plot-holders are encouraged to sub-divide their plot for resale as £1 or 50p plots. The resale of such plots to Uncle Jim in Australia, Aunt May in New Zealand, or Grandma in Tibet is especially encouraged.

Wheatley F.O.E. will only sell enough £2 plots to buy the field (the exact price for the land has not yet been finalised). In this way, each 'owner' can be sure that he /she will eventually get their money back. If the M40 takes the land the 'owners' will be reimbursed by H.M. Government. If the land is not taken it can be resold so that 'investors' may even make a profit.

This, then, is an opportunity for environmentalists to resist the wanton and needless destruction of a piece of beautiful countryside. Please help Wheatley Friends of the Earth to secure this field on behalf of future generations who have more right to it than the Dept. of Transport. Fill in the form below and return it with a S.A.E. to the above address by the **SECOND WEEK IN JUNE**. To secure the sale we must have the money by **JULY 1st 1983**. However do not send any money with this form. We want to ensure that enough money is promised before we actually receive any. For more details please phone Wheatley (08677)2679.

DO NOT LEAVE THIS UNTIL NEXT WEEK - FILL IN THE FORM AND POST IT TODAY!

Thankyou

**Joe Weston,
Wheatley F.O.E.**

Please make copies of this form and distribute it.

NAME (in caps).....ADDRESS.....
.....
.....

I would like to buy.....no. of plots
in the field at MURCOTT in Oxfordshire
which is to be known as ALICE'S MEADOW

On receipt of all the necessary documents, relating to the sale of this land, I promise to pay
WHEATLEY F.O.E. £..... being the agreed price for the above no. of plots.

Signed.....

Date.....

GREEN CND

Notes from the Green Peace front

John Marjoram

Nuclear Waste dumping

Four unions have agreed in principle to support a ban: the National Union of Seamen, TGWU, and the two rail unions. If these unions refuse to co-operate, it would seem that the UKAEA would have an impossible task before them.

Campaign (15p) is the CND activist paper, now greatly improved (better than Sanity). A forum for ideas. Green CND will have a regular slot in future.

CND National Council Meeting, April 16/17

It was agreed that as far as CND is concerned, any future actions at Greenham will be women-only events. This was quite contentious, but they won the vote. This does not apply to the Star Marches, which are independently organised.

A new national CND group has been set up to organise NVDA against Tarmac and the MAN/VW bus and truck company. MAN is making the transporter which will move the ground-launched missiles. There was also a suggestion for a mass withdrawal of National Savings if Cruise were actually to arrive.

The slogan for the CND election campaign hasn't finally been decided. It will probably be "No Cruise, No Trident" plus an essential unilateral demand. There were fears at one stage that CND was watering down its demands for the election.

"The Invisible Event" is the title of a new book by Stewart Britten (Menard Press £1.20). In a chapter Perception of Risk and Risk-Taking, the author says that when people are faced with a choice between accepting what they perceive as a low risk with a large consequence and a higher risk with a smaller consequence, they tend to choose the former. Perhaps we need to re-think our campaign tactics?

Memories of Harrisburg

THE Fallout Marching Band lead demonstrators in a sing-in in the Electricity Board showroom in Ipswich on March 26. Outside the

town hall a Magic Recycling Machine was in operation - recycling CEBG lies and misinformation. On Monday 28 there was action at Sizewell Halt, where nuclear waste trains leave for Windscale. About 10 people climbed the loading gantry and occupied it for two hours. Sizewell Nonviolent Action Group say police were 'co-operative'.

Hunger Strike plan

At least four people are planning an indefinite hunger strike to start on August 6th, Hiroshima Day and the day the star marches arrive at Greenham Common. Fast for Life Newsletter is 50p from Flat 4, Bridge House, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs.



Women For Life On Earth Star Marches 1983



Our latest information on the Star Marches (all arriving at Greenham Common on August 5th) is as follows:

ISLE OF WIGHT Leave Newport I.O.W. July 30; route via Cowes, Southampton, Winchester, Whitchurch, Kingsclere. There may be a number of quite young children who will be bussed in advance of the marchers: offers of facilities on the route for children particularly welcome. Jenny Milne, 1 Mertoun, St Boniface Rd, Ventnor, IOW.

SOUTH WALES Route via Cardiff, Newport, Chepstow, Lydney, Westbury ('sparse and difficult area here'), Gloucester, Stroud, Cirencester, Swindon, Hungerford. Margery Lewis, 216 Cyncoed Road, Cardiff (0222-753961).

SUFFOLK A few Ipswich women 'eager to do it and trying to drum up support'. Maggie Lack, 1 Gainsborough Road, Ipswich.

LEICESTER In the making: contact Kim Chenoweth, 26 Waterloo Cres, Countesthorpe, Leics.

CAMBRIDGE 'A fairly direct line from Cambridge to Greenham, exact route to be confirmed.' Elspeth McLean, Gravel Diggers Farm, Long Drove, Cottenham, Cambs.

WREXHAM Leave Wrexham July 23 (sub-group leaves Denbigh 21st, staying one night in Mold); Chirk 23, Oswestry, West Felton 24, Shrewsbury 25, Much Wenlock 26, via Severn Valley Rly, Bewdley 27, Worcester 28, Pershore 29, Broadway 30, Westcote 31, Brize Norton Aug 1, Faringdon 2, Wantage 3, Welford 4. (Dates provisional). Janet Tyrrell, 10 Greenfield, Rhosddu, Wrexham, Clwyd LL11 2NR.

NOTE All Star Marches welcome offers of hospitality and entertainment on or near their routes, and the organisation of meetings/events. Each march is likely to be at least 50 strong, and local participants are welcome to join.



Other local organisers of Star Marches include:

Loppy Garrard: 4 Chase Crescent, Woodcutts, SALISBURY, Wilts.

Barbara Heslop (S London march) 01-699 6712.

Polly Lery: 7a Cliff Road, North Petherton, SOMERSET.

Bonny Landsborough: c/o The Other Branch, Gloucester Street, LEAMINGTON SPA, Warwicks.

Jan Whitehead: 6 Crosshay, Handbridge, CHESTER.

Yvonne Innes, Brice's Farm, Debenham, SUFFOLK.

Heather Berridge: Blaencwm, Llanwrda, DYFED, Wales.

Sue Cowgill, Chapel House, Ellel, LANCASTER.

Jean Jarvis and Kim Besley, 109 Stockbridge Road, CHICHESTER, West Sussex.

Imogen Jay, 13 North Gardens, BRIGHTON.

Maylin Heard, 33 Phoenix House, Julian Road, BATH.

Mandy Coe, Houseboat John P., Harelands Road, Horsell, WOKING, Surrey.

** We are awaiting news of these marches and their itineraries. If you have any information, please write/ring us at once.



WALK FOR LIFE

HERE IS the provisional itinerary for "A WALK FOR LIFE". Further details from 31 Ickburgh Road, London E5 (01-806 4615).

PLACES NAMED ARE NIGHT STOPS.

May Faslane 18, Dumbarton 19, Glasgow 20/21, Coatbridge 22, Kirk 0' Shotts? 23, Bathgate 24, Kirknewton 25, Edinburgh 26/27, Longniddry 28, East Linton 29, Torness 30/31.

June Eyemouth 1, Berwick 2, Alnwick 4, Druridge Bay 5, Morpeth 7, Newcastle 8/9, Sunderland 10, Durham 11/12, Darlington 13, North Allerton 14, Coxwold? 15, York? 16, Wetherby? 17, Harrogate? 18/19, Leeds 20, Bradford 21, Halifax/Hebden Br? 22, Hebden Br? 23, Littleborough 24, Manchester 25/26, Chapel en le Frith 27, Hope Valley 28/29?, Sheffield 30.

July Chesterfield 1, Mansfield 2/3, Nottingham 4/5, Ilkeston 6, Derby 7/8, Burton on Trent 9, Rugeley 10, Wolverhampton 11, Dudley 12, Birmingham 13/14, Solihull 15, Coventry 16/17, Warwick 18, Stratford 19/20, Brailles 21, Banbury 22, Upper Heyford 23/24, Bicester 25, Aylesbury? 26, Princes Risborough 27, High Wycombe 28/29, Maidenhead 30, Bracknell 31.

August Reading 1/2, Burghfield 3, Aldermaston 4, Greenham Common 5.

Scottish Leg of the March

A reception has been organised at Torness on the Bank Holiday Monday (May 30th). There will be a festival arranged by SCRAM at Barns Ness/Whitesands, 1 mile west of Torness (camping available Sat - Wed, 60p). Info: SCRAM, 031-557 4283/4.

Women Strike for Peace

MAY 24 is Women's Day for Disarmament. Every woman is being urged "to leave her usual occupation for the day and to take creative and imaginative actions to STOP the siting of nuclear weapons throughout the world." Join your local action, and make sure that all the women you know are striking for peace on May 24. Info: May 24th, 16 Arundel Road, Brighton, E Sussex.

REVIEW

DENNIS GOULD has been reading "The CND Story", edited by John Minnow and Philip Bolsover, published by Allison and Busby at £1.95.

IN THE shortened version of The Golden Bough, a treasure house of ceremonies, festivals and folk customs, Frazer relates the following law which would admirably suit our scientists devoted to 'pure' research within the fields of nuclear power and nuclear missiles:

"The punishment for such as dared

to peel the bark from a standing tree was as follows: The culprit's navel was to be cut out and nailed to the part of the tree till all his guts were wound about the trunk. The intention of the punishment clearly was to replace the dead bark by a living substitute taken from the culprit's. It was a life for a life, the life of a man for the life of a tree."

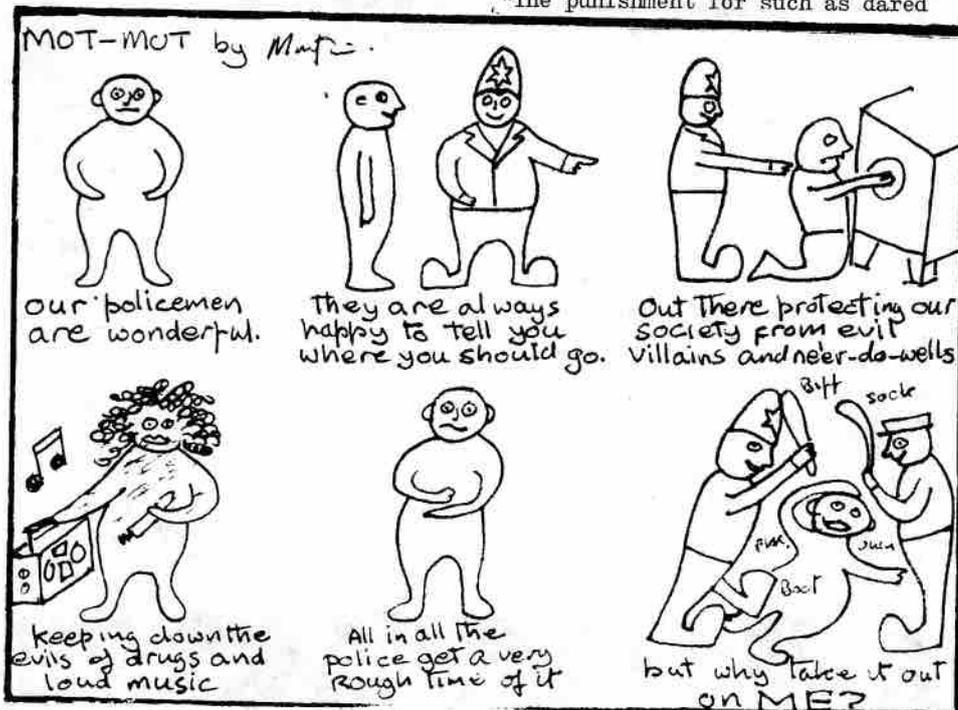
If this sounds rather a cruel form of justice, shouldn't we be asking ourselves what is the effect of the work carried out by thousands of individuals each contributing not to the death of one tree but the deaths of many hundreds of thousands of trees. Also, if a society could be so sensitive to the tree, its myth and magic, its life, couldn't it be considered more in harmony with the earth than ours?

It is difficult for many people in our society to consider the issues involving nuclear energy, whether for peace or war, when they are jobless, homeless and without any idea of the direction they are going as individuals, never mind the direction of our society. So that what might seem to be the most important issue to writers of The CND Story and to readers of Green Line might be totally ignored by people like those in Poor Law (an account of 286 people maltreated by Social Security and police in Oxford).

I happened to be in the army when CND came into existence in 1958. All I knew about nuclear weapons was that we should dive into the nearest 'hollow' or 'depression' in the ground and look away from the flash! As advised in our training film. This had always seemed to me rather an inadequate response, but fortunately I have as yet not been forced to try it. I came out of the Royal Engineers as politically ignorant as when I went in, except for a vague feeling of internationalism through being stationed in Cyprus and mixing with Greeks and Turks rather than soldiers. Football had been one form of contact through which their hospitality, when we travelled to villages, was unlimited and extremely generous.

On working with IVS (International Voluntary Service) I discovered people of many different countries, with many different ideas. Political and social ideas like pacifism and anarchism, quakerism and socialism. I met deserters and conscientious objectors whose lives were examples to those of us coming from an apolitical family or community.

I discovered magazines like Peace News and Freedom and subsequently



became involved with both selling and writing for them, since it seemed that one way of helping others to discover their very own libertarian beliefs was by providing the magazines which stressed the importance of a wide political awareness which might prevent the worst idiocies of priests and politicians? At the same time around 1960 I formed a CND group within the Selly Oak Colleges based in Woodbrooke College. This we launched with a (Concord) film show of The Aldermaston March (Lindsay Anderson's) and Hiroshima Mon Amour, plus the Czech cartoon Attention. Plus speakers and open discussion. This was supported by pacifist speakers since it has seemed to me that it is impossible to separate weapons of mass destruction from weapons of lesser destruction - whatever our 'conventional' weaponry strategists say to the contrary. (Remember we have nuclear shells now). This is why I feel the necessity for a movement and campaign against militarism which recognises we face a timescale of abolition like that of the campaign to abolish slavery which took over a hundred years. (We can hardly prevent an 'accident' in the short term?)

Meanwhile in this kaleidoscopic history 40 contributors give an interesting account of some of the many sides to the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. What is not adequately conveyed is the overall secular crusade created by writers like Bertrand Russell and J B Priestley, Naomi Mitchison and Doris Lessing. But within the contributions are the very detailed and informative introduction by the editors; plus April Carter, Pat Arrowsmith, Tony Simpson and Andrew Papworth on Direct Action, Civil Disobedience and Nonviolent Resistance. Adrian Mitchell writes an important chapter on writers' and poets' resistance. Green CND being so new has no paragraph, although there is a chapter on environmental issues. But readers should know that if they feel Green Line to be as important as I do in reaching open-minded individuals, they should also feel concerned to become involved with Green CND - stressing as it does the areas that The CND Story does not. However, it would be petty of me not to encourage you to join national CND as well since, being under attack, it needs more membership and - more importantly - committed supporters who distribute leaflets, put up

posters, and sell literature in their own backyard. Beyond CND lie initials like WRI, FOR, PPU, NPC, CAAT, CAM, PTC, QP&S.⁽¹⁾ Unilateral nuclear disarmament cannot be separated from a moral and political awareness that nuclear weapons come out of a military hierarchy and civil government which employs countless thousands of individuals who do not question the end product of their work. This is not just common to those within the arms industry: it is a failing of 'mass industrial society' where most people will work at most jobs for the money without ever questioning seriously the nature of their work.

Each individual who works without his or her conscience being aroused over the meaning of their work contributes directly or indirectly to the poisoning of our planet, unless of course they are the lucky few who work for environmental groups; for ecology groups; for anti-militarist and pacifist groups; for libertarian and anarchist groups; for organic farming and non-profit-making collectives; for community bookshops and nonprofit-making wholefoodshops; for 'green' movements and individualist anti-war artists? Peggy Duff, whose hectoring on the 1963 Aldermaston March I shall never forget - for many of us who had distributed the Spies for Peace pamphlet which arrived through our letter boxes were determined to visit Warren Row, site of RSG 6 (a secret Regional Seat of Government) - writes in her autobiography Left, Left, Left:

"What can the campaigns do? They can wrap themselves up in their single issues and in the purity of their pacifist concerns ignoring the essential links between repression and arms, between imperialism and the arms race, between liberation, revolution and peace. If so, they will no doubt survive and do good work, mounting small campaigns on single issues in Ruislip, Porton or Nancekuke. But in my view this is a form of escapism, like peace research. If we want to be an integral part of a world movement seeking a dual liberation - of the oppressed of the Third World, and of the repressed of the developed world - we have to relate to that, for wars will cease and disarmament will become a practical possibility only in the context of these two liberations."

I cannot forgive the scene of CND

officers ripping off the back pages of the second special issue of Sanity, Easter 1963, because it had reprinted the Spies for Peace revelations. I find almost totally disregarded (in The CND Story) the major contributions made by many pacifists and quakers who did not push themselves into the forefront nationally but who did play a major part in building up CND into the force it became between 1958 and 1964. And yet I find little to argue with in the above quote from Peggy Duff's book. The CND Story is essential reading for an understanding of the breadth and depth of the early movement. It should be read in conjunction with Keeping the Peace (editor Lynne Jones); Feminism and Nonviolence (various contributors); Protest Without Illusions (Vernon Richards); From Protest to Resistance; and John Hersey's Hiroshima. As Hersey says at the end of Hiroshima:

"It would be impossible to say what horrors were embedded in the minds of the children who lived through the day of the bombing of Hiroshima. On the surface their recollections, months after the disaster, were of an exhilarating adventure. Toshio Nakamura, who was 10 at the time of the bombing, was soon able to talk freely, even gaily, about the experience, and a few weeks before the anniversary he wrote the following, matter-of-fact essay for his teacher at Nobori-Cho Primary School:

'The day before the bomb I went for a swim. In the morning I was eating peanuts. I saw a light. I was knocked to little sister's sleeping place. When we were saved I could only see as far as the tram. My mother and I started to pack our things. The neighbours were walking around burned and bleeding. Hataya-San told me to run away with her. I said I wanted to wait for my mother. We went to the park. A whirlwind came. At night a gas-tank burned and I saw the reflection in the river. We stayed in the park one night. Next day I went to Taiko Bridge and met my girl friends Kikuki and Murakami. They were looking for their mothers. But Kikuki's mother was wounded and Murakami's mother, alas, was dead.'

(1) War Resisters' International, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Peace Pledge Union, National Peace Council, Campaign Against the Arms Trade, Campaign Against Militarism, Peace Tax Campaign, Quaker Peace and Service.

LETTERS

How green was our Tatchell?

Dear GL,

I will not try to dignify all the points raised at such length by Martin Stott by individual rebuttal; but some points must be answered.

The first and most offensive error of fact is that I did not "travel down from Norwich for a couple of weeks". Mr Stott is apparently bemused by the statement in my election address that I "stood in Norwich North in the 1979 General Election," but ignores, two sentences previously, "lives on the Kinglake Estate", and the following sentence, "He has lived in Southwark for the last two years."

I am not, nor did I claim to be, a "Bermondsey Boy", and the voters apparently saw through any such claims implied by Peter Tatchell to the almost unprecedented extent of him being humiliated in what

was a safe seat. I gained 45 votes, and Tatchell lost thousands. I do not apologise for receiving such a small vote, as I was standing, honestly, for what I believe in. Peter Tatchell confessed to me at the public meeting prior to the by-election organised by Bermondsey CND (and coincidentally to our branch secretary on the same day) that he believed everything we had to say about nuclear arms and power: then proceeded to outline Labour Party policy, which I don't call green, even if Mr Stott does. Neither do I believe Peter Tatchell to be green, and my reply to Mr Stott is the same as my reply to Peter Tatchell, "If you believe that,

Tatchell's manifesto

BRING BACK JOBS

A Labour Government will spend more money on essential services — like employing more workers to build houses with gardens, drive extra local buses and staff re-opened hospital wards at Guy's and St. Olaves.

When these people have more money to spend they create jobs for even more people.

IT'S A CHAIN REACTION!

BUILD HOUSES WITH GARDENS

The planners have only just realised what they did to our communities when they put us into faceless tower blocks.

We could have told them years ago how bad they were. We've had to live in them.

Labour's plan is to build houses with gardens round them. Then we'll feel like real people again, not numbers in high-flying boxes.

With fewer offices we'll have more space for more houses.

PENSIONS & BENEFITS UP

Labour used to link pensions to prices and wages. The Tories have stopped this.

We all know how pensioners struggle to live on their low incomes. Labour is committed to an increase in pensions.

The next Labour Government will move towards a target of £53 per week for a single elderly person, and £80 for a married couple.

Child benefit will go up by £2 per week.

Labour will also boost unemployment benefits and scrap the shamefaced Tory taxes on dole money.

Labour will bring in a system of fuel allowances for people on low incomes so they can afford to keep warm in the winter.

ABOLISH THE LDDC

The London Dockland Development Corporation (LDDC) wants to squeeze out local people & take over prime riverside land for the rich.

The LDDC can't convince local people so it's trying to bribe us with a few puny grants to tenants associations and the like.

In return for these crumbs, the LDDC is trying to grab all the rest of the riverside and Surrey Docks.

That land was earmarked by our Labour council for new houses and an industrial estate for local jobs. Instead the LDDC is selling it to speculators. Compared to the hundreds of millions of pounds profit they will make, they are giving our tenants associations peanuts.

This kind of 'deal' is a big con.

Only a **LABOUR** Government will abolish the LDDC.

FREEZE ALL RENTS

The Tory government has stolen millions from local people.

- £21 million in Rate Support Grant stolen since 1979

- £40 million slashed off the Housing Investment Programme in 1983

That's why repairs take so long and so few houses are being built.

The next Labour government will **FREEZE ALL RENTS** for at least one year and then strictly control any rent rises.

There would be no need for rent rises if central government gave councils like Southwark enough money.

RE-OPEN ST. OLAVES

St. Olaves stands empty when there are thousands of doctors and nurses unemployed in Britain.

Working class people suffer more illnesses than the idle rich, but the Tories have closed our local hospital.

We **NEED** St. Olaves open.

Only a Labour Government will put money back into the NHS. Only that can cut Guy's waiting lists and re-open St. Olaves.

QUIT THE COMMON MARKET

The Common Market means:

- Less control over our North Sea oil and fishing grounds.
- Wine lakes, butter mountains and higher prices — butter is twice the world price!
- Cheap imports ruin our industry.
- Government aid to create new jobs is restricted.

Britain pays **A MILLION POUNDS A DAY** to fatten the rich farmers and Brussel's bureaucracy. Londoners alone pay £100 million a year into the Common Market and get only £1 million in grants.

The Tories, Liberals SDP and Independent **ALL** support this daylight robbery! **LABOUR** is the only party pledged to get Britain **OUT** of the Common Market.

A NON-NUCLEAR DEFENCE

There will be no fighting in a nuclear war. London is a prime target. We will be incinerated before we know about it.

This could happen if Britain is a base for America's nuclear weapons. In a nuclear war everything we know would be destroyed to stop these American missiles being fired first.

Labour is against this kind of suicidal 'defence'.

Vote **LABOUR** for an effective non-nuclear defence, and a future longer than a three minute warning.

HOW WE'LL PAY FOR IT

- By creating new jobs for the unemployed **LABOUR** will save a lot of the £17,000 million the Tories currently pay out in dole or lose in tax every year.
- Despite the recession, the banks and oil companies are making huge profits. Labour will make them pay a fairer share of the taxes.

then why don't you join the Ecology Party?"

In any case, I do not trust the Labour Party on any, but especially on the nuclear issues, any further than I could throw Denis Healey. I do not claim to represent the whole of the green movement (I certainly don't represent SERA) but there can be no doubt that Eco is greener than the Labour Party! Labour's recently discovered, possibly temporary, commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament is inconsistent (e.g. they are still for nuclear power) and inadequate when the rest of their centralised, bureaucratic, growth-biased policies are considered to qualify it for green, surely.

Let's cut through the hypocrisy. The Ecology Party is Britain's green party, and it is people like Mr Stott who are fudging the issues. He should be ashamed of himself for not voting Eco and not joining the Ecology Party. Forget all this tactical voting nonsense, do what the Women for Life on Earth are doing, and act on what you really believe, for goodness' sake.

George Hannah
36 Amery House
Kinglake Street
London SE 17.

Dear GL,

Whilst agreeing with Martin Stott on the futility of "carpet-bagging" Ecology Party candidates (GL 11), I think "unforgiveable" is perhaps a little absolute, especially as the fellow in question has already been punished by the electorate.

I suspect this was a little tongue-in-cheek anyway, because anyone who can believe in the capitalist unions and the party that brought us Chevaline has just got to be very forgiving.

Perhaps it is divisive and unkind to point this out, but Peter Tatchell did not publicly support the various factions of the green movement when interviewed: I understood that he was representing the Labour Party. However, knowing what happens to people in the Labour Party who show militant tendencies, Peter's denial is perhaps understandable and certainly forgivable - nothing to crow over, anyway.

SERA must be the only fruit that's red to start with and turns green after it's picked.

Harry Alderslade
47 Lake Street
Oxford.

Dear GL,

Could I point out to Martin Stott (Letters, GL 11) that Lord Such of the monster raving loony party might have been the greenest candidate at the Bermondsey by-election. Having heard Lord Such speaking in Midweek on March 30, I was impressed by what he had to say in a short space of time - particularly on abolishing road tax and increasing fuel taxation (an ecologically fairer system); and changing the deposit system for elections to that of a minimum number of nominators.

Obviously, standing as a monster raving loony candidate (apart from the obligatory anarchist-poet vote), but if you are judged on what you say rather than what label you carry and can still increase your Bermondsey 97 votes to over 300 at Darlington, could GL please find out whether the man really is green?

Philip Windwood
c/o Harper Adams Agricultural Coll,
Newport, Shropshire.

Dear GL,

As a member of the Ecology Party, two letters in GL 11 interested me greatly. The first was Martin Stott's letter about Peter Tatchell and the Bermondsey by-election, the other Mark Kinzley's letter about Tony Benn. Sometimes I feel that members of the Ecology Party may be too sectarian and idealistic - but then often, particularly when I allow myself to be subjected to the media, I feel thoroughly justified in belonging to an organisation that is clear enough in its motivation to call itself the Ecology Party.

Several months ago I also read Rudolf Bahro's article 'Red or Green'. To me also, the ecology crisis is the totally dominant problem facing planet Earth today. Without coming to terms with the ecological imperative above all else, material security will become increasingly impossible and social equality an utter irrelevance.

It seems quite clear to me that the 'Militants' - and certainly the traditional Labour Party - are simply not motivated from this basic problem, and do not take it into significant account. If they did, there would not be any need for SERA, which in all the time of its existence has had about as much influence on the Labour Party as CEG (the Conservative Ecology Group) has had on the Tories. The

'Labour' Party is the product of the philosophy of industrial expansion, a philosophy that it takes quite for granted and that it urgently seeks to continue without any significant modifications. Some Labour members are 'militant' in their intent to share the industrial spoils equally.

So, when Martin Stott says that Peter Tatchell sees the green movement as one of the vital forces for change which he "supports", it just strikes me as so much more empty rhetoric. (In early 1979 Maggie Thatcher told the members of the CEG more or less exactly the same thing.)

All this makes me wonder what are Militant's (and the general Labour Party's) policies for such things as the population explosion, Third World poverty, desertification, deforestation, extinction of species, dwindling mineral and energy resources, nuclear power, British dietary habits, health. Perhaps through Green Line's pages Militant could give their views on these issues one at a time, giving the consensus view of their membership and making reference to their own publications and those of the 'official' Labour Party to show that these views are in fact actively accepted by the rank and file membership.

An exercise like could be good for us all, as it would doubtless clarify everyone's thinking about the real issues and priorities. In Germany the two main threads for social change are Green and Red. They are working together - could we in this country too? I wonder.

Dave Rowsell
90 Gorwydd Road
Gowerton, Swansea SA4 3AN

Where's the spiritual bit?

Dear GL,

Readers of GL 11 will have noticed in the piece on the Ecology Party Spring Conference the emphasis on the (I quote) "human and spiritual aspects of political ecology" - to the exclusion, it seems, of everything else. As someone who was at the conference, I would say this report was a pretty fair account of what went on, although of course it omits the details of decisions taken about the party's General Election manifesto.

Now, I am becoming increasingly worried by this trend away from ECOLOGY, both in the Ecology Party

and in the green movement at large, in this country. (I was therefore very pleased to see in the same issue of GL the articles on Sizwell and on dumping of atomic waste - but such pieces stand out these days as exceptions.)

To return if I might to the Ecology Party conference as an example of this worrying trend: not only was there little time given to discussion of 'non-political' ecology, but when ecological topics did come up people displayed a lack of interest in and often downright ignorance of the issues. For example, there was a paper on marine pollution which was quite rightly referred back, being a very inadequate document. I was horrified however by the impression I got that people didn't think marine pollution was very important - that it could safely be subsumed in pollution in general. Presumably they think it can be dealt with adequately in a brief paragraph or two. I can only remind people (and I shouldn't need to) that if the sea dies we all die: a nuclear holocaust isn't the only way in which we may be exterminated, and is in fact more easily averted than ecological catastrophe. The latter process, once a certain point is reached, will be irreversible, however much the human race may want to turn back: the same is not true of war.

Similarly I was rendered literally speechless by the reaction of conference participants to an amendment to the General Election manifesto on the subject of forestry. Apparently Ecology Party members are against trees! Presumably then they're in favour of grouse moors? How can people who use the word 'ecology' to describe their political views be defenders of the present state of the uplands of this country, most of which are eco-systems that are dying - or for that matter of the present state of many lowland areas, especially in the south of England that have been turned into deserts in order that the Royal Navy might have ships? I have a nasty feeling that I may know an answer to that question,

namely that British greens are as ignorant of scientific matters as are British people of all other political persuasions. OK, so we blame the British education system again, do we? How feeble!

No one is more anti-"soft environmentalism" than I; but it is precisely that which is exemplified by people who want Dartmoor and other similar man-made ecological disaster areas to remain as they are, because they enjoy walking over them. Let's get away from "soft environmentalism" by all means; but let's develop "hard ecology" instead. If people who regard themselves as being green already are so indifferent to and ignorant of ecology, how on earth can we presume to educate others?

Susan Miles
12 Blacklands Road
Benson, Oxon.

Dear GL,

I agree with John Papworth (GL 10) that the forces of technology have been used to destroy our human-scale communities, and have now given immense power to a privileged few. However I cannot agree that the only way forward is to recreate our human-scale communities in village and town. There is just no time to try to set up autonomous communities, admirable though such a concept may be.

Nonetheless Mr Papworth's "community morality" is already with us, bursting out at such places as Greenham Common, the Sizwell B Inquiry, and the victory of the Greens in the German elections. These activities cause people to think and talk instead of apathetically accepting whatever their governments say is good for them. As a result people are everywhere asserting their "right to decide and to dissent."

As I see it, this groundswell of public morality is the only hope we have of dissuading the super-powers from dragging us all into the abyss.

Irene M Giles
121 Stakes Road
Purbrook
Portsmouth, Hants PO7 5PD

Dear GL,

Peter Mutton (GL11) talks of defending freedoms but does not explain what freedom. Perhaps he has a different concept of freedom from mine. I understand it to be an inner awareness without need of external restraint from man-made laws. Responsibility springing from self-imposed standards or morality. Since most states have an interest in retarding this kind of individual maturity, absolute freedom does not exist anywhere in the world to be defended.

The statement that we must fight for peace also has me perplexed. If carried to its logical conclusion we would always be in a state of war. If war could establish peace, then conflict should have ceased with the first war fought. The idea that we need not hate those we kill sadly means little to the men killed or their relatives. It seems to me to declare love and kill at the same time.

Pat Isiorho
435a Kingswood Road
Nuneaton, Warwicks.

CND bashing

Dear GL,

It was disconcerting to read the remarks made about CND by Jonathon Porritt in his 'conference speech' to the Ecology Party conference (GL 11). Whilst appreciating the vital need to promote a holistic approach - seeing disarmament within the wider context of being stewards of the planet, as Jonathon Porritt says - it does not behove any one section of the peace movement to attempt to undermine any other. This can only be counter-productive. The peace movement, as we all know, has enough external pressure to bear without any additional burden of internal backbiting.

Elizabeth Crosier
23 Wharnccliffe Gardens
London SE25 6DG.

GREEN CND MEETING

GREEN CND's next meeting is to be held in London on June 12. The venue has yet to be confirmed. To increase the efficiency of these meetings, it has been suggested that agenda items and discussion papers/reports should be sent in advance to John Marjoram, Green CND secretary, at 23 Lower Street, Stroud, Glos. Any member attending the meeting will

be able to get copies of these papers and the agenda by writing to John before the meeting.

The Green CND pamphlet (a title of "Embrace the Earth" was agreed at the last Green CND meeting) will not now be published before June. Though the text was finally agreed some weeks ago, there have been delays at the design stage. New people have now agreed to do the design.

NOTEBOOK

Greens in Europe

THERE are now green parties in 11 European countries. The most recent are in Finland (two members just elected to parliament), Italy, Spain, and Switzerland (where the greens are part of a green federation. West Germany, Belgium and Austria have two green parties each, while France has three.

Permaculture

IT is hoped to open a permaculture bookshop and garden centre at 5 Market Street, Hay on Wye later this year. A new organisation, Permaculture British Isles, was set up in February: amount of subscription is voluntary, and the newsletter is informative. Write to PBI, 6 Loughborough Park, London SW9 8TR.

Cork Goes It Alone

The Cork branch of the Irish Ecology Party has decided to opt out of the party's 'hierarchical structure', which it says is 'inconsistent with the concepts of consensus and decentralisation'. The group, which claims some 70 activists, plans to liaise with kindred bodies to present a united front on issues of common concern.

Aquarians at Holy Loch

THE Aquarian Peace Camp was set up outside the US Polaris base at Holy Loch on January 29. The camp stresses nonviolent opposition, and welcomes contact with other people in Scotland dedicated to nonviolent resistance. They are two miles outside Dunoon by the village of Sandbank. Address: Aquarian Peace Camp, outside Holy Loch Submarine Base, Sandbank, Dunoon, Argyllshire (phone Linda 0369 4942).

Popular Planning for Social Need

is the title of a one-day conference for trade unionists and labour movement activists to develop the debate around the Alternative Economic Strategy, and look at ways of ensuring democratic participation in industrial and economic planning. Venue: Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, N7; date: Saturday 21 May (11-5); info: CAITS at the above address.

Peace Displays

NUNEATON Peace Action have three different peace exhibitions for hire: details from 435a, Kingswood Road, Nuneaton (phone 387159).

Anti-Militarist Week (May 14-21)

THIS coincides with the first anniversary of the landing of British troops on the Falklands. Ideas and information from the Peace Pledge Union, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1. Make it a local event.

Newbury Traders Oppose(d) Base

A Town Meeting called by Newbury Chamber of Commerce on March 22 1951 passed a resolution expressing "dismay and distress" the proposal to construct a "permanent aerodrome" at Greenham Common: "the loss, now and for ever, of ancient Common Lands and Liberties would be a disaster: these are for us parts of that peaceful way of life for the protection of which the Defence Programme has been undertaken."

Green Gathering International

THE first ever International Green Party Gathering takes place in Lundsberg, Sweden from August 7-14. A relaxed and beautiful setting to meet like-minded people from all over the world. 50 places have been allocated for this country: first come, first served. Cost: bedroom + food £60, camping £15. Details and registration form in return for a s.a.e. from Anne de Boisgelin, Felin Newydd, Gellywen, Carmarthen, Dyfed SA33 6DY.

Holiday Actions

IF you're in Europe this summer, you might like to know that:
May 21/22 Mass Action for Disarmament in Finland.
May 22 6th International Marathon Peace March, Marathon-Athens.
July 6 - August 6 Women's Peace March Dortmund-Holland-Brussels. (Info: E Bentfeld, Finckstrasse 8, 4600 Dortmund 1, West Germany).
July 11-15 Bicycle for Peace (cycle rides from all over Denmark converge on Silkeborg).
August 3-9 Programme of training in Gandhian philosophies, at Communauté de l'Arche, Montpellier. (Info: Robin Waterfield, 110 St Mary's Road, Oxford).

GREEN GATHERING

THE GREEN GATHERING takes place at Lambert's Farm, Pilton (near Shepton Mallett, Somerset) from July 26 - 31. Tickets £7.50 in advance from Dean Holden, 5 Tor Park Road, Paignton, Devon (tel: 0803 552397). It is being emphasised that NO generators are wanted on site, and that this is NOT a 'festival'. More information in return for a s.a.e. from the above address.

Other Green Gatherings

- May 28 Holywell Peace Gathering, High Wycombe, Bucks. Info: 06284 4664.
June 4 Kettering Green Day. Info: 08012 2187 (6 - 8 pm).
June 25/26 Bradford Green Gathering (university campus). Info: 336 Barker End Road, Bradford.
July 1 - 3 Norwich Peaceful Green Festival (university campus). Info: UEA CND, Students Union, University of East Anglia, Norwich. (0603 618467).
July 15 - 17 Green Moon Gathering, Nenthead, Alston, Cumbria. Info: 0498 81512.
July 26 - 31 The Green Gathering (details above).
August 25 - 29 Welsh Green Gathering, Maesteg, Mid-Glam. Info: 0639 52223.
August 25 - 29 Sizewell Green Gathering (free: bring what you expect to find) on the beach.

There may be gatherings in East Anglia (ask Mike Bell, 022023 3200), and at Sharpness (ask Richard Lawson, 0934 835140). Also North Devon (ask Bobby Basilgate, 05983437), and a Green Economics Gathering (ask Tim Eiloart, 0480 65856).

Up-to-date info on all gatherings in return for a s.a.e. from 4 Bridge House, St Ives, Huntingdon, Cambs.

Green Line is published monthly by a small collective based in Oxford and Reading. Subscription and other details are on page 2.

We welcome news, letters and articles, as well as photographs, cartoons and illustrations.