

ecology party

newsletter

OCTOBER 1978

No. 6 (new series)

We are gathering speed - we are on the way! Members are rolling in, our name is being mentioned much more on the media, active work is going on for the first fifty candidates, and money to back them is being sought from every direction. Sally Willington, is working hard to create our regional and branch organisation. Now that we have the momentum, what we need to do is to make sure that we keep it up - enthusiasm and hard work are asked for from ALL OUR MEMBERS

Newsletters of organisations vary considerably in the stance they take up - they may simply record, they may be just the mouthpiece of the governing body, or they may be collections of gossip. I, as editor of this Newsletter, regard it as a means of communication and a media for congratulation and constructive criticism, without fear or favour, from the NEC to any one individual member. I do not seek to stir up hornets' nests, nor do I wish the membership to be in ignorance of matters I consider they should know about. No one part of our Party - our Party above all - should be afraid of the voicing of fears, favours and opinion on any matter with which it is concerned.

(This issue of the Newsletter has some material on the Annual Conference, but little on the actual proceedings. The next issue - which should follow very shortly - will either be devoted to the Annual Conference, or it will have a substantial supplement dealing with it)

Howard S Hoptrough
5 Morrab Terrace
Penzance 4880
Cornwall

OTHER PEOPLE'S CONFERENCES

Lab, Con and Lib have days of TV time when their conferences are on. Why didn't Robin Day come to the ECO Conference? Why did no reporter of any kind come? They missed a good thing. Next year you must make sure they are there. Transmissions of other people's conferences on BBC2 are interrupted every morning in the middle of a debate by 'Play School'. I do not want to deprive any child of its own programme, but there must be a different channel to which it could be moved. There are surely other idiots like me who are interested in the processes of Democracy and would want also to see Parliament relayed full-time? Why can't one of the sound channels be used? We don't need to see the speakers, although it is sometimes very revealing! Well, I saw a lot of the Lib. conference where 'Fellow Liberals' were exhorted to adopt an ecological plank in their programme for the purposes of getting votes in the General Election (Ron Andrews has a tape recording of the Lib. ecology debate (except for the 'Play School' gap, of course). Their weak resolution was described by Liberals as one being in isolation from the rest of Lib. policy and a 'mish-mash' full of irrelevant cliches which stated nothing new; it was a 'wet nothing' - a 'Lump of flob'; it was trivial and it lacked a basic intellectual basis. Although ECO Party was mentioned twice in the debate (and Keith Rushworth and friends were lobbying outside the hall - see report elsewhere), the Libs. tried to claim they were the only Party in the public mind which wants to support the survival of this planet! David Steel spoke of resources shortages leading to changes and fitted in the fashionable reference to 'Small is beautiful'. But who are they trying to kid? They are a 'growthist' Party until they state otherwise. They failed to do this Comrades at the Lab. Conference, as far as I could find out, only had one statement from the executive on 'Environment'. It covered, hurriedly, everything from pollution and Third World technology to paper waste and bottle-banks. The P.M. seemed to think that the various pressure/action groups around meant something and that Labour should scoop them into the general socialist fold. There was much talk about micro-chips and unemployment, but no new ideas. The Home Secretary thought that anyone interested in what should happen in eight years time and in the future should 'join a debating society'. Let ECO tell you, comrade.....!

ECO friends, the Con. conference I have not yet viewed (written before the Conference -- Ed.), but it is unlikely to change my view that there is a huge political gap in this country (and the World) for the ECO Party to fill. We need the World, the World needs us!

Sally Willington

ON TO OUR 50!

You will by now have received a letter explaining our general election strategy, and appealing for the money that is needed to bring this strategy to fruition.

It is still a little early to report on how that is going, but the response so far has been really encouraging. Many of you have already replied enthusiastically and generously - but it does without saying that there is still a mighty long way to go. Please don't delay; the sooner we get the money in the bank, the easier it becomes to co-ordinate the most effective campaign.

This business of the timing of the election is obviously all-important, and we must hope that we are granted sufficient respite to prepare as fully as possible

Once the funds are secured, we then have to find the rest of our 50 candidates I shall be writing to all branches shortly to suggest how this might best be done, but each individual member might give some thought to the possibility of coming forward!

At the moment we are about half-way there!

Time is also crucial as regards publication of our election literature, preparation of an 'Advice for Candidates' booklet, the holding of a press conference to announce our 50 candidates, and the work that needs to be done for any election broadcast

By committing ourselves to 50, we have committed ourselves to the Big Time! And that means that the work-load will increase correspondingly for each and every one of us

So let's get down to it!

JONATHON PORRITT (NEC Elections Coordinator)

LIBERAL CONFERENCE PICKET

Seven ECO members from Birmingham, Wales, Yorkshire and Lancashire descended on the Liberal Conference at Southport on the day of the Ecology debate. We achieved blanket leaflet coverage of the delegates, got filmed for German TV, met and had coffee with members of the Liberal Ecology Group, assailed delegates through a public address and in a phrase 'made our presence felt'. Picketeers thought the experience both enjoyable as well as valuable, and it would seem to be worth making a demonstration of some sort at all the party conferences a regular feature of our calendar. Many thanks to those who attended. More information in 'Good Earth'.

Keith Rushworth

P.S. The Party was mentioned three times during the debate - broadcast on two TV channels! Can't be bad!

ENERGY SEMINAR

To all interested and concerned (and particularly those in Northern Scotland!), a seminar will be held at the St. Austell Sixth Form College, Cornwall, on Saturday, 25th November at 2.15. Well known personages in attendance are Walt Patterson (Friends of the Earth), Teddy Goldsmith (of Teddy Goldsmith) and possibly a Minister of the Crown!

FUN RAISING FOR FUND RAISING. Some members will be puzzled by the letter they will have received appealing for donations to the election campaign fund, and which refers to a non-existent slip which they are asked to complete; this was inadvertently omitted in some cases. Jonathon Porritt says that notwithstanding this omission will you please send your donations to Peter Sizer, together with a note of your name and address.

STRUCTURE PLANS - A REPORT FROM THE DEVON BRANCH

What is a structure plan? Since 1971, all County Councils have a statutory duty to draw up a structure plan 'containing broad statements of policy for the development of land in the county'. And that is basically what a structure plan is: a framework for all planning decisions over the next 15 years or so.

How are they drawn up? The County Council is legally supposed to 'consult the public' in the preparation of the plan. This is a very novel concept for most planners, who in the absence of any idea of how to go about this, generally substitute public information for public participation. This aside, plans are drawn up in a series of phases; notably the identification of key issues around which plan proposals will be centred (e.g. housing, employment, transportation, etc.), special studies of particular major problems (e.g. transportation in large conurbations), public 'consideration' of several options for development, and finally the publication of a Draft Structure Plan, which supposedly draws together information gathered during all the previous phases. The Draft Structure Plan is then presented to the public for comment, and then, after a suitable interval, is submitted to the Secretary of State for the Environment. When he has considered any final representations from the public, the Draft then becomes the official plan.

What the Devon Branch did. When the Council's 'Options for Change' were published, we printed and distributed a leaflet describing an additional option. We argued that all the Council's options contained proposals aimed at stimulating industrial expansion and the further centralization of services, and differed only in geographical detail. Our claim that the Council should have given the public the opportunity to consider an ecological option such as ours met with considerable press sympathy, but we failed to make much public impact, and were largely ignored by the County planners. This summer, when the Council published its Draft Structure Plan, we printed a 7000 word pamphlet entitled 'Rethinking Devon's Future', a critique of the plan proposals, and a description of an alternative ecological strategy. A copy of this was sent to all County Councillors, and also to all Devon newspapers, together with a comprehensive package of press releases, background information on the Ecology Party, copies of letters to County councillors etc. We were delighted to see our press statements appearing verbatim in almost every Devon paper. We also got onto the local Radio 4 Station, and received newspaper editorial support ('A deeply thoughtful manifesto'; 'reasoned argument ... which we would do well to heed'). We were also lambasted by a councillor for inhabiting 'cloud cuckoo land'. Several of the papers were good enough to publish our address, resulting in about 40 enquiries. We also attended 5 public meetings on the Structure Plan, where we distributed several hundred copies of 'Rethinking Devon's Future', and presented our arguments; we generally met with an encouraging level of public support.

What we learnt. Planners live in a world of their own, and suffer from an unshakeable belief that 'trend is destiny'. In addition to the tunnel vision that this belief produces, planners are also absolutely convinced of their own competence: they know best. In their view, public meetings on the plan are held to enable them to explain their proposals in detail, and not for the public to question basic assumptions implicit in the plan. Ecology Party branches should not therefore participate in the formulation of structure plans under the illusion that they will have any influence whatsoever over the final result. They won't. They will,

however, have an excellent opportunity to put across ecological ideas to many people for the first time, and will probably get very sympathetic coverage in the media. Equally important, they may, by their actions, encourage other people to participate in local government: such involvement is an essential pre-requisite for a decentralized, participatory democracy.

Two brief final points: we found it counterproductive to mention the words 'no-growth'. To avoid the charge of wanting stagnation, substitute words such as 'stable' or 'balanced'. Secondly, write press releases in the style of a newspaper report. Journalists are lazy (or over-worked) and appreciate someone doing their job for them!

THE GREEN ALLIANCE

You will shortly be hearing a lot more about the Green Alliance, for, after a decidedly hesitant start, it is now beginning to get properly underway. Tim Beaumont, the Liberal peer, has been appointed as its official coordinator, and he attended our conference in that capacity.

It is still not easy to say exactly what role the Green Alliance will take on - they don't yet know themselves! It is probably best described as a broad movement, falling halfway between the Ecology Party and Friends of the Earth.

There is no doubt that we should welcome this initiative. We all know just how much there is to be done in terms of promoting awareness of long-term problems, and creating the sort of climate in which eco-ideas will get a more enthusiastic hearing. There are many people sympathetic to the broad principles of ecology, yet not adequately committed to join the Ecology Party. These are the people the Green Alliance is hoping to mobilise.

There seems little reason to see them as rivals -- we are both in the same business, but the way we go about it will be very different. There are many areas in which we can be of great assistance to each other, and at a meeting at the end of this month all these issues will be discussed in full.

JONATHAN PORRITT (Green Alliance Liaison)

MORE LETTERS

Dear Sir,

I have just joined the Ecology Party - in fact I sent my membership form off this morning. I have for quite a while thought it would be a good idea to have a party such as ECO, but never realised that one actually did exist, so I was really happy to discover (during the anti-Windscale Rally) that there was such a party in existence. However, there is one point in your policy with which I strongly disagree, and that is over the question of immigration.

All your other policies seem to be a move towards greater individual freedom through decentralisation, but surely your immigration policy opposes this trend by having a central body to decide who should live here and who should not. We could try to be as self-sufficient as possible whilst still allowing a free movement of all people all over the Earth.

Cont...

Your immigration policy seems to be in line with your siege economy which was questioned by Ian Hatwell in the March Newsletter. We should try for self-sufficiency through self-determination, but not at the expense of other people's freedom. I hope you will consider this point, as I believe it to be of great importance.

Yours faithfully

Howard Barker, Edmondbyers, Co. Durham

Dear Sir,

I am trying to set up a NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL on this estate. I think that the Ecology Party could look into this and Parish Councils with the view to their promotion. People then might realise their lack of power and demand a change. Your views and ideas on this would be appreciated. Would it be possible to issue a sheet with the Newsletter giving details of the Ecology Party in the news as most members read different newspapers and it would be useful to know what is in other papers, especially local, and perhaps also parallel parties in other countries.

Yours faithfully

Pete Rout, Machen, Newport, Gwent

LANCASHIRE ECOPOT?

A letter from John Wareing and Anne Allister informs us that a meeting is to be held soon to inaugurate a branch of the Party at Lancaster University. They also intend to follow this up with further meetings in Manchester and possibly Preston. Robert Anderson in Birkenhead is also contacting people in the Liverpool area. Members interested in supporting branches at any of these places should write to: 329 The Green, Ecclestone, Chorley, Lancs. PR7 5TJ

THE SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

As Conference 78 decided to find at least 50 Parliamentary candidates for the coming General Election (and therefore qualify for 5 minutes of TV time), I must first ask you, member-reader, to find at least one other member before Christmas. As the re-elected National Secretary, I have taken on the urgent job of forming the rest of the twelve regional divisions of the Party. This implies the formation of branches. 50 candidates means 50 branches. At present we have a possible 20. So come on! We don't know when the P.M. will call the General Election (November? February? June?) We must recruit over 1000 members by the end of this year. We all believe in what we say - now is the time to do something about it.

Will any member who will stand as a candidate, or is willing to get a branch together, or can offer to organise a region, please get in touch with me at once. I have lists of members who may be near you.

We need volunteers to monitor press, TV and radio. If you take a paper or magazine regularly, or watch or listen to regular programmes, please do so with an eco-eye and pounce immediately if there is anything of interest or an opportunity to write in at once to put our point of view. During the last three months we have had quite a lot of letters published which mention the words 'Ecology Party', including one in the 'Radio Times'. If

you get results (and don't be discouraged - keep at it), then let me and the Newsletter Editor know

We need members singly or in small groups who like looking up useful facts and figures and listing them under various headings. This has been requested to help branches when they are compiling local literature and speaker's notes. Double check your facts, please, and always give your reference source in full.

I am compiling loose leaf note sheets for branches. If you have a branch can you please let me know of things you have found useful when setting up or running a branch? I especially want to know what would have been useful information at the start of founding a branch. Also, what sort of information would branches find valuable in the future?

It was agreed by those who attended the 1977 and 1978 Conferences that we must try to get the price of going to conference as low as possible for members. Many younger members could not afford to come and suggested a camping conference. The only answer I can think of (bearing in mind our rising membership - the only 'growth' we believe in - and the fact that 100 members attended the 78 Conference) would be to hold our Conference at a County Agricultural Show Ground. These often have a covered meeting hall and some have boarding and catering premises as well as camping facilities. Do you know of any such place and the costs? We must look into this for next September as soon as possible or (as this year) there will be no choice. Some branches have asked to 'twin' with our sister Party in New Zealand - the Values Party. This can be done, and I am in touch with Heinz Dessau, Courthouse, The Green, Rottingdean, Brighton, Sussex (their man in Europe), and Terry McDavitt, Box 137, Wellington, N.Z. (their General Secretary).

THE 73 CONFERENCE

Several weeks have now passed since that amazing week-end in Birmingham when we met at Conference. I must say that I drove back to Lancashire rather 'stoned' by the experience! While I have been active in 'environmental' matters for some years now, I have never met such a highly motivated and articulate group of people. Now, weeks later, the feeling of unreality has been replaced by the re-assuring knowledge that scattered throughout this country is a growing community of men and women who are aware that the industrial way of life is breaking down, and who nevertheless look to the future with hope because they can already discern the outlines of a much more humanly desirable way of life beyond it. It is deeply satisfying to feel part of this cultural renaissance. When I attempt to persuade hard-headed academics that we should treat the dilemmas our society faces as a central focus of education, it certainly helps to know that one is part of an extended community that takes these issues seriously.

Given the constraints of time, space, and, of course, the fact that all the labour was on a voluntary, unpaid basis, I felt that the Conference went very smoothly indeed. The many opportunities for informal discussion nicely complemented the more formal sessions, and there seemed to be very few hitches in the running of the latter. It was, of course, ironic that the bar had to be stocked with returnables - a reminder, perhaps, that for the present at least we have to deal with the world as it is! The decision to ban smoking from the conference hall was a good one in my view (and one that was copied by another party not long afterwards). While we all may retain the dubious right to poison our own body, the time has long passed when we can allow unrestricted smoking in public - particularly in the context of ecological principles.

One thing that could perhaps be improved in the future is the scope of the bookstall. While it was indeed useful to have party literature, copies of the 'Ecologist' and some FOE publications available, it occurred to me that it might also be a good idea to invite one of the commercial agencies dealing in environmental books to set up a stall.

One of the great successes of the conference was the Birmingham FOE supper. It was obvious that a great deal of work had gone into this, and it showed how satisfying good vegetarian cooking can be. We should also not miss the symbolic implications of the supper: while FOE and ECO may be treading slightly different paths, we are essentially working towards the same ultimate goals and must be prepared to help each other in just such practical ways.

For me the high points of the Conference were Jonathon Porritt's introduction to the values and philosophy session, and Tom Burke's talk about the nature and role of the environmental movement. I can't do justice to either here, but I must say that I agreed wholeheartedly with Jonathon that we need 'to distinguish between nostalgia and learning from the past', that we should 'avoid blanket rejections of technology', that the issue of women's roles in an ecological society have not yet been properly tackled, but above all that the ecological viewpoint is particularly significant because it offers resolutions (although not easy ones, of course) to existing contradictions. I hope that he will make an expanded version of this talk available in due time.

Both speakers attempted to relate the movement to its wider cultural context, and both stressed the integrating value of the ecological perspective. I particularly like Tom's characterisation of a 'new model of wealth' (ownership of the technology to make use of ambient energy flows, ownership of the land to grow food, access to older, more enduring home appliances, the possession of greater control over one's well-being and time...), and his insistence on the fact that we must co-operate with other groups in society with related aims.

Some of the other, more formal sessions were perhaps less satisfying, partly because there was so little time to debate issues properly, and partly because the present conceptual framework of the parties' policies (as expressed in the Manifesto) is so clearly in need of improvement. The issues raised by the Party are important issues, but they are also deep-seated and complex. The policies as they stand represent, in my view, a courageous attempt to translate the ecological perspective into political terms. Clearly this is no easy task, and it will require a great deal of work to mesh our ideals with the social and political realities of the real world in any coherent way.

So I left Birmingham greatly encouraged and stimulated by all that had happened, but also convinced that there are many basic issues that must be thought through much more carefully. If the first draft of 'After Affluence' is anything to go by (and here I apologise to David Fleming, who I know has worked very hard on this), then we have a long way to go yet. And as Jonathan Tyler pointed out, we must be careful to distinguish between the various time scales that our policies and proposals relate to. The latter will probably vary according to whether we are thinking of (a) working with the present political and economic set-up (and I submit that we must at least begin here, certainly any successful ECO M.P. would have to do so), (b) transitional strategies for the period of expected upheaval, or (c) the 'ideal' state that we

would like to reach. Clearly we have a daunting task ahead of us, but I do believe that it is a creative and positive task, and I am glad to be a small part of it. No other political party is yet prepared to face up to the impending collapse of large sectors of the industrial system and attempt to put forward policies that seek to establish a more stable society based on universally applicable ecological principles.

From what I can gather both of the two dominant political parties are still wedded to the ideology of industrialism. The Liberal Ecology Group was established partly as a response to the formation of the Ecology Party, and it does have some good ideas, but it only occupies a precarious position at the periphery of its parent party. The same is true of S.E.R.A., which is a fringe group of the Labour Party. That this group has little purchase on the party leadership or little support among the general membership was very clear on the last day of the recent Labour Party conference.

Several ECO members turned up at Blackpool to distribute leaflets, but most were unfortunately prevented from entering the building. Fortunately, I was able to get in (quite openly), just in time for the debate on the environment. It soon became clear that most of the half dozen or so speakers were primarily concerned with the improvement of the built environment. However, two speakers (both women) attempted to address broader issues. One criticised the way the government was allowing mining to take place in the Peak District, National Park, and also suggested that the government had 'surrendered to the road lobby' by allowing minerals to be transported by an endless stream of lorries, rather than by rail.

But it was Lena Jeger, M.P., who, in summing up from the platform, showed the broadest grasp of environmental issues (understandable, since she has been the chairperson of the Labour Joint Working Party on the Environment for several years). She suggested that the environment should not be considered as a separate subject but 'should be taken into the mainstream of political thinking and policy making'. If this did not happen, then 'people will turn elsewhere'! and set up new organisations to do this. Despite the fact that she was clearly raising an unpopular set of issues, she time and again exhorted the conference to 'put political muscle' behind environmental issues, and emphasized the need for a completely different kind of society. 'We can't make progress', she said, 'on the basis of a wasteful, throwaway, commercial society'. She touched on many other issues that concern environmentalists: the need for recycling, the importance of solar power, the need for democratic participation in decision making, and so on. The speech stood out from the rest of the morning's proceedings because it was the only one that attempted to locate human activity in its wider ecological context.

However, it was also obvious that Mrs. Jeger's speech fell largely on stony ground. The Prime Minister was clearly unmoved and spent most of the time reading and chatting with Shirley Williams - and most of the other ministers were not even present! In fact, the loudest applause of the session was reserved for the delegate whose 'environmental concern' impelled him to suggest the need to 'build a socialist Britain using socialist builders'! It occurred to me that perhaps Mrs. Jeger is in the wrong party. I wonder if we should send her a membership application form? I have no doubt that the Ecology Party could use her talents more wisely than the Labour Party, which, as its title suggests, takes a wholly man-centred approach to what it thinks of as 'the environment'.

In summary, there is clearly a small minority of genuinely concerned people in the Labour Party, but necessarily the context in which they work is antithetical to any real progress towards a stable society. It's ironic

really to think that the government is so worried about things like unemployment, but cannot perceive that the solution to this and many other problems lies in a reversal of some of its major policies

Richard Slaughter

WILTSHIRE WAKES:

On Tuesday 5th September last a group of about thirty ecologists met in the heart of rural Wiltshire, in Wootton Bassett Town Hall, to form the Wiltshire Ecology Party. Herbert Pettitt, the Wiltshire contact, opened the meeting by welcoming all those present, and by outlining the structure of the meeting; he then introduced David Fleming, the meeting's guest speaker from the NEC.

David began by outlining the history behind the Industrial Revolution, looking at Adam Smith's economics, and at the general optimism and hopes that inspired the early industrialists. It soon became evident, however, that all was not well with the Industrial Society, and on a number of occasions David emphasised the depressive nature of this part of his talk. Very much at the core of our economic problems lies our increasing inability to earn food. He saw our recession being aggravated by the advent of micro-electronics, by the EEC demands for a large share in North Sea oil, by the rise in distribution costs and by the unknown costs of pollution already all around us and being perpetuated at this very moment. Although many individual problems can be disputed, taken together they seem insurmountable. The Ecology Party exists to recognise the conditions for a sustainable society. This involves abandoning the concept of economic growth, maximum self sufficiency, smaller communities, less travel, more people employed on the land, the replacement of energy intensive machines, and the recognition of the benefits of technology. David encouraged everyone to debate the issues, to raise money, and to recruit new members. When asked why ECO doesn't work through the existing parties, David replied that a holistic approach is needed -- a piece-meal approach wouldn't work.

David Taylor then gave a short talk, welcoming Wiltshire ECO into the South West Region, and explaining the structure and intentions of the Party. He explained the Party's response to the Liberals' approach, and their reasons for not wanting an alliance.

The meeting ended with the election of officers. The Chairman is Herbert Pettitt, the Secretary Terry King, the Treasurer Steve Hills and the Press and Publicity Officer Julia Leyden.

The branch also decided to make an official protest on the use of the Ridgeway by motorbikes and cars.

And so another new branch is formed. Congratulations, Wiltshire -- who's Next?

NEC MEETING - 30 SEPTEMBER 1978

Points raised:

Administration: Jonathan Tyler proposed a scheme of allocations of duties and administrative fields of activity. After some discussions the following were adopted:

Jonathan Tyler:	National Chairman
Jonathon Porritt:	Deputy National Chairman and
	Election Campaign Co-ordinator

Sally Willington:	National Secretary and Regional Co-ordinator
Andrea Hodgkinson:	Deputy National Secretary
John Davenport:	Membership Secretary
Peter Sizer:	Treasurer
Jeremy Faull:	Policy Co-ordinator

Membership: John Davenport reported that he had the membership list sorted out into Regions and was up to date. He was now in a position to send on enquiries to branches.

Election: This was discussed, and it was stated that the NEC would 'approve' candidates, and that unapproved candidates would be regarded as unofficial. No election policy matters were discussed. It was agreed to approach Mike Benfield and ask him to be National Fund Raiser.

Literature: 'The Reckoning' - after any points had been made - was to be printed by 3 November. Study Groups were to be set up, co-ordinated by Jeremy Faull, as a basis for policy making and revision of the Manifesto (suggested subjects with Jeremy Faull's message elsewhere). The Little Green Book is to be reprinted. 'After Affluence's' final draft would be put before the NEC as soon as possible - now to be regarded as a discussion paper.

Newsletter: It was agreed that the possibility of printing the Newsletter on the Party's printing machine be investigated if it could be rehoused in Exeter. There was some criticism of the Newsletter's editorials in the past year. The Newsletter editor, Howard Hoptrough, was co-opted as a full member of the NEC.

Liberals: Several members of the NEC reported on talks and letters with official Liberals - including the President of the Liberal Party. Sally Willington and Howard Hoptrough registered their view that there should be no more contact with the Liberal Party during the Election year.

NEC delegation: It was agreed that for taking Party decisions between meetings the minimum number to consult should be four - i.e. Chairman, Deputy Chairman, National Secretary and A.N. Other.

Date of next meeting: 4 November 1978 in London

STUDY GROUPS

At the Conference it was agreed that Study Groups should be formed of all those willing to participate in order to prepare papers on various aspects of party policy. Jeremy Faull has been appointed to co-ordinate the work of these groups, and he asks that anybody who wants to write on a particular topic to get in touch with him at Bosneives, Withiel, Bodmin, Cornwall (tel: Lanivet 236). Suggested subjects are Lane (which already has a group working), Education, Employment and Industry, Economy, Foreign Policy, Defence, Social Welfare and Health, Agriculture and Food, Building and Housing, Law and Order, and Energy. Any other suggestions are welcome.

LITHO PRINTING COURSE IN LEEDS

Keith Rushworth is running a weekend course in Litho printing and peripheral processes on a date yet to be fixed. It is designed for Party members who are likely to use the Party's machine or acquire their own branch machine in the future. It is anticipated that four or five people with no knowledge of printing will take part and, in the course of learning, will produce a leaflet.

on headed notepaper for their branch. The course will cost about £6, including accommodation and food, paper, ink, plates, etc. Please contact Keith if you are interested at 8 The Mount, Leeds 18 (Tel: 0532-672198)

A LIST OF THE REGIONS

A standard list used for official documents which is being used - partly amended -- by ECO to organise its regions

1. Scotland
2. Wales
3. Northern Ireland
4. Yorkshire and Humberside
5. North (Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Cumbria, Cleveland)
6. North West (Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Cheshire)
7. West Midlands (Staffordshire, Salop, West Midlands County, Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Warwickshire)
8. East Midlands (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire)
9. East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridge)
10. South East (North) (Northants, Bedfordshire, Bucks., Oxfordshire, Herts., Essex)
11. Greater London
12. South East (South) (Berks., Hants., Surrey, East and West Sussex, Kent)
13. South West (Gloucestershire, Avon, Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire, Devon, Cornwall)

AN ECO BOOKLIST

General introductory by Richard Slaughter

- ✓ ALLABY, Michael. *Inventing to-morrow* 1976. Accurately described on the dust jacket as 'a book of optimism in the face of Britain's economic deterioration and deepening world crisis... (which) ... places the ecological debate in an historical context and suggests ways in which industrial countries can adapt to changing conditions'
- ✓ BARR, John. *The environmental handbook* 1971. A very fine introductory anthology of short pieces on a variety of environmental topics. Includes classics like Boulding's 'The economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth' and Hardin's 'Tragedy of the Commons', and much, much more.
- ✓ GOLDSMITH, Edward (and others). *Blueprint for survival* 1972. Exactly what it says it is. Ambitious, controversial, essential reading. Don't believe everything that Teddy and co. write, but read this.
- ✓ MEADOWS, D. (and others). *The limits to growth* 1972. A turning point for the environmental movement. Attempts to treat the world as a single, interconnected system -- with dramatic results. The first of a growing number of studies that try to interrelate the basic problems on a global scale.
- ✓ SCHUMACHER, E.F. *Small is beautiful* 1974. One of the most influential books of our time. It is highly critical of conventional economics, and puts forward alternative views about many important issues. Read it as soon as you can. There is more here than the catchy title suggests.
- ✓ TOFFLER, Anton. *Future shock* 1970. Although neither we or the planet could survive an infinite extension of the process he describes, Toffler has characterised the emptiness of the 'throwaway society' and some of the dangers of technological overdevelopment in a very impressive manner. A book to read critically, but which contains many very useful insights.

✓ WARD, Barbara and DUBOS, R. Only one earth 1972 Subtitled 'The care and maintenance of a small planet' Possibly a little dated now, but a good, and well written, account of the major global problems Fills out the details that the Meadows study (above) necessarily omitted Not without its faults, but a good place to begin

X WILSON, C.L. and S.C.E.P. Man's impact on the global environment and? Shows that in some cases the scale of human activity is comparable to that of natural forces Provides some good, basic data.

All the books in this list are available in paperback

P.S. A list of ECO fiction books by Richard Slaughter will follow in the next issue of the Newsletter

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