

Eco-JOURNAL

Manitoba RESEAU
ECO-NETWORK ECOLOGIQUE
INC. du Manitoba inc.

Volume 1 Number 3

May - June 1991

Groups call for bio-regional assessment of Hydro projects

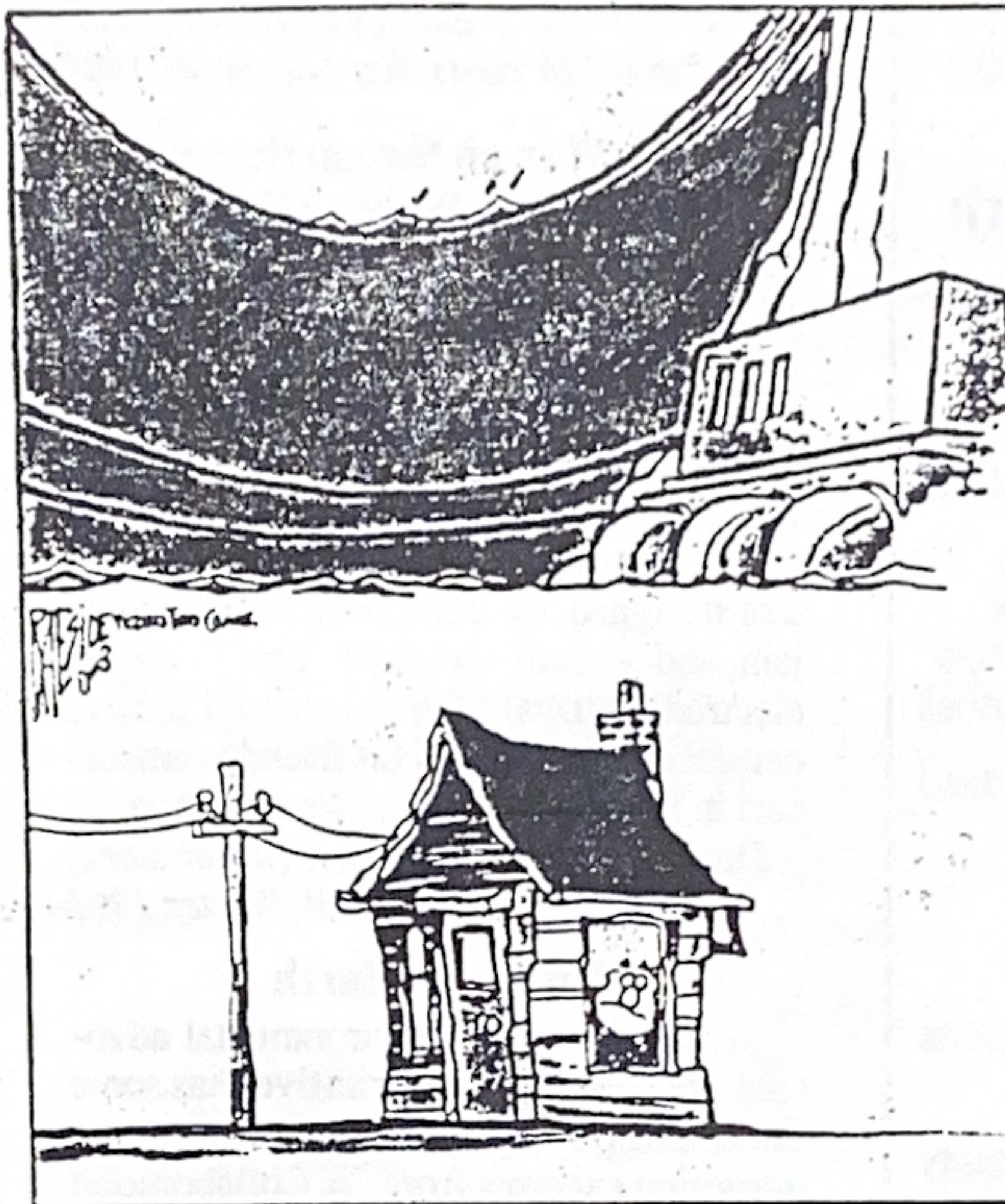
by Anne Lindsey

Several Manitoba groups have joined forces with native and environmental groups in Ontario and Quebec to call for an unprecedented **bio-regional environmental assessment (EA)** of all the new hydroelectric developments currently proposed for the Hudson Bay Watershed.

The groups believe that the environmental and social impacts of hydro development on the Hudson Bay bioregion cannot be fully determined under the current approach of separate EA's for each project and each province. A comprehensive bioregional assessment would determine the **cumulative impacts** of all the new developments in the region *together with the historical impact of past developments*.

On May 8, the groups sent a letter to the new Federal Environment Minister, Jean Charest, and to Environment Ministers in three affected provinces, outlining their

See COALITION — Page 7



HYDROELECTRIC DAM:
USED TO GENERATE LARGE AMOUNTS OF ELECTRICITY FOR CONSUMERS. DEPENDING ON DEMAND, FLOW CAN BE TURNED UP OR DOWN AT WILL.

CONSUMER:
USED TO GENERATE LARGE AMOUNTS OF CASH FOR POWER COMPANIES. DEPENDING ON DEMAND, FLOW CAN BE TURNED UP OR DOWN AT WILL.

Youth updates a highlight of Eco-Network AGM

by Anne Lindsey

Our Annual General Meeting was held on Tuesday, May 14, at our office on James Ave. Twenty of our member groups were represented at the meeting, along with several interested individuals. Although it was hot in the office, people agreed that the updates on activities, and the opportunity to meet fellow environmentalists were valuable and informative.

During the business meeting Steve Rauh and Nick Carter were confirmed as new representatives on the Steering Committee. Three Manitoba delegates to the Canadian Environmental Network's AGM (to be held in October) were elected from a list of six nominees. They are Jack Dubois, representing the Wildlife Society, Bryan Johnson, of Citizens Against Neu-

rotoxins, and Steve Rauh, representing TREE.

They will join Brian Pannell, who is Manitoba's representative on the National Steering Committee, and Anne Lindsey, as staff person, who will also attend the October meeting. Brief financial and activities reports were given; both will be available shortly in the form of our annual report which will be mailed out to all member groups, and on file for examination at our office.

All agreed that a highlight of the meeting was the updates provided by the youth groups working on environmental issues at the universities. Their efforts seem particularly noteworthy, although one participant noted that she is always impressed at the amount of work environmental groups do, and by their dedication.

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Eco-JOURNAL

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REREAD: A quick flip through other periodicals

by Toby Maloney

Fossil fools

From our mega-nonsense file: Act Too, newsletter for the Newfoundland and Labrador Environmental Network, points out that the same provincial budget that slashed staff and support in the conservation section of the Department of Energy and Mines maintained seven figure subsidies for the Hibernia oil project.

Eulogy or Awakening?

The editor rants, Act Too, April 1991

War on the earth

Check out the Winter 1991 issue of *Earth Island Journal* for a good round up of environmental and other disasters wrought by the Gulf War. There's also an interesting article about the danger of accidental triggering of high tech and nuclear weapons systems by electromagnetic radiation. High powered military transmitters designed for communications and to jam anti-aircraft defences also create an electronic blizzard that is reported to have caused accidental hits on friendly embassies in the 1986 US air strike on Libya.

Devastation in the Deserts (cover story)

Earth Island Journal, Winter 1991

Images of Earth

A cover story on environmental advocacy and the arts in *Alternatives* has some interesting photographs and artwork. Some intriguing excerpts from "A Collaboration with Nature" by Andy Goldsworthy includes a circular icicle painstakingly welded together with spit, a giant snowball packed around some saplings and a sculpture of knotweed stalk pushed into a lake bottom.

Finding a New Voice,

Alternatives, March/April 1991

It all adds up

A Winnipeg teacher relates a classroom experience with mathematics that added up to a learning experience about the environment in *Green Teacher*. Alternative program teacher Shirley Pannell relates how her students collected, weighed and analysed the dry waste they brought from home. The class took a field trip to a recycling plant and then created and solved problems based on the data they collected.

Green Teacher is published in Toronto, but has regional editors across Canada including Kim Tyson and Mahamood Shougee in Winnipeg.

Mathematics and garbage

Green Teacher, April/May 1991

Small is beautiful

Small really is beautiful according to the latest newsletter from the Manitoba Council for International Co-operation. The newsletter article outlines several successful development education projects funded through a Canadian International Development Agency fund. Small projects like a Manitoba Anti-Poverty Organization cookbook of low cost international recipes and a Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba play about racism promote awareness of linkages between conditions in Third World countries and Canada.

Small projects; big results, MCIC News, January 1991

ALL OF THE PUBLICATIONS IN REREAD AND MORE ARE AVAILABLE FOR YOUR USE AT THE ECO-NETWORK RESOURCE CENTRE 201-128 JAMES AVENUE.

*Will Women Have a Say
in Deciding the Fate of the Earth
at the United Nations Conference
on Environment and Development
in Brazil in 1992?*

Yes!

*Support and participate in the
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for a Healthy Planet
November 8-12, 1991
in Miami, Florida*

*Write: Congress Coordinator
Women's Foreign Policy Council
845 Third Avenue, 15th floor
New York, NY 10022, USA*

Deadline for July-August issue of Eco-Journal is July 5. Articles, cartoons and advertising welcome. Suggestions and ideas also welcome. Call 956-1468 or mail submissions to Box 3125 Winnipeg, Mb. R3C 4E6.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday June 4: **Manitoba Eco-Network Open House and Social Evening.** 7 to 10 p.m. Drop by and see our (not so) new office! Refreshments and entertainment.....bring your own mug!

Thursday June 6: **Eco-Network and associated Environment and Development groups: Opening night of A Manitoba Forum on Environment and Development: The Road to Brazil,** Free Public Lecture: John P. Bell, Special Advisor on Environment to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, and head of the Canadian Delegation to the Preparatory Committee for the U. N. Conference on Environment and Development will speak on global preparations for the UNCED conference. 7:30 - 9:00pm, Multi-Purpose Room, Univ. Ctr. U of M. For more info. 474-8501, or 956-1468.

June 6-16 (except Monday). **Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba** presents *Scientific Americans* by John Mighton at the Gas Station Theater at 8 p.m. This "sub-atomic comedy" looks at science and ethics as they apply to the weapons industry. Is this a funny play about serious stuff or a serious play about funny stuff? Co-sponsored by the Winnipeg Co-ordinating Committee for Disarmament. Call 589-8408 for more information.

Friday June 7: Environment and Development Conference continues.

National directory available

The **Green List**, a National Directory of Environmental and Related Groups, is now available. A handy subject index, region by region listings and alphabetical group entries make the directory a must for serious environmentalists. This valuable resource costs \$50.00, or \$35.00 for Network member groups. Contact the Manitoba Eco-Network office at 956-1468 to place your order.

Eco-Alert! Cormorants beware!

Several reliable sources have revealed that the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildlife Branch plans to conduct a 3-5 year cormorant "control" program on Lake Winnipegosis, commencing late May or early June of this year. The DNR apparently plans to destroy as many as 160,000 cormorant eggs, representing approximately 80 per cent of the total breeding population on Lake Winnipegosis. Fingers are pointing to the cormorant for depleting walleye and sausage fish stocks, those species that are fished commercially. However, scientific evidence reveals that the bulk of the cormorants' diet consists of white sucker and perch. The double-crested cormorant is supposed to be protected under the Provincial Wildlife Act. Is there justification for this action?

A file on the situation is available for examination at the Eco-Network office. Contact the Department of Natural Resources for more information.

June 14-20: **Aboriginal Cultural Society International Pow-wow and Environmental Gathering.** Theme is "Mother Earth's People." Pow-wow at Convention Centre, June 14 to 16. Environmental gathering at the Forks June 17-20, featuring Dr. David Suzuki and aboriginal women speakers. More info: 582-2383.

Saturday June 15: **Winnipeg Co-ordinating Committee for Disarmament, 10th Annual Walk for Peace,** starting at the Legislative Grounds at 11:30 a.m. Speakers include Karen Ridd, Keith Fulton and Phil Fontaine. More info: 786-8938.

June 18-19: **Oxfam-Canada** sponsors speakers from the International Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples, at the Aboriginal Cultural Society Environmental gathering.

June 20-22: **Marquis Project and United Nations Association Conference on Sustainable Development, with a focus on primary production.** Speakers include Maude Barlow, Pat Mooney, Brewster Kneen and national Aboriginal spokespeople. Simultaneous translation will be in effect. (To be held in Brandon). More info. 1-727-5675 or 489-8303.

July 21: **Manitoba Provincial Parks** sponsors *National Parks Day*.

Various activities will be scheduled throughout the province. More info. Jim Crone, Manitoba Natural Resources.

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Apprenticing to create a sustainable society

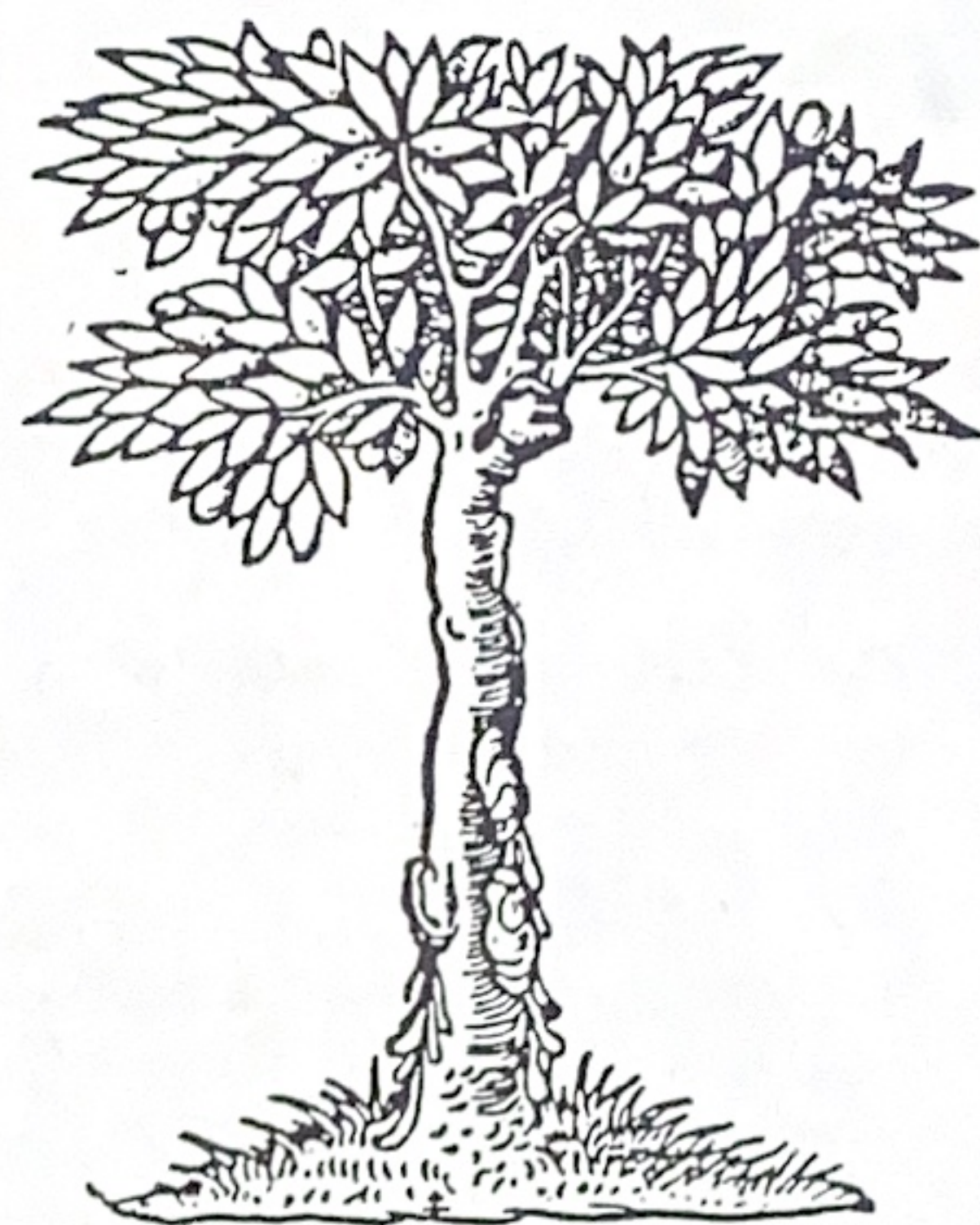
A university instructor and free-lance writer has established an apprenticeship program in rural Saskatchewan to teach the skills for creating a socially and ecologically sustainable society.

Betty Ternier Daniels plans to offer the Rural Apprenticeship in Social Ecology as a residential work-study program at her farm in the parkland area of central Saskatchewan from September 16, 1991 to August 28, 1992.

Students will spend approximately 20 hours per week engaged in academic work and another 20 in the application of theory to "real life situations." Students will work approximately four hours per week in exchange for room and board and pay a tuition of \$400 to \$800 depending on ability to pay.

The course emphasizes a bioregional response to global problems and attempts to find solutions to the ecological crisis. Its five study components include interdisciplinary academic study focussing on the relationship between culture and nature, the development of practical skills necessary for a sustainable society, the study and practise of social change, the creation of a life-enhancing culture through the arts and spirituality, and the creation of a supportive community that fosters personal growth.

Daniels has been active in the ecology and nuclear disarmament movements for nearly 20 years. The Rural Apprenticeship Program in Social Ecology represents her effort to integrate her own academic work



with a strong commitment to ecological sustainability.

For more information: Betty Ternier Daniels, Rural Apprenticeship Program in Social Ecology, Box 116, Cochin, Saskatchewan, S0M 0L0 (306) 386-2532.

Canadian Organic Unity Project: Developing organic standards

by Bryan Johnson

The agricultural practices that produced the "Green Revolution" left a wake of environmental destruction that touches every living creature on this planet. The motivation for this mayhem ranged from simple ignorance to the cold blooded, death for profit motivation of Industrial Bio Test Labs and the Monsanto Chemical Corporation. Until recently, Agriculture Canada would have insisted that it was the only way to feed the starving people of the world. However, in 1990 Agriculture Canada provided financial support for its second important effort to green Canadian agriculture: the Canadian Organic Unity Project (COUP).

Organic Farming has always provided an environmentally sustainable approach to food production. The most obvious example being the requirement that absolutely no synthetic chemicals may be used on a field for a minimum of 3 years before that field can be considered organic. The question is, how do you know if food really is organic?

The answer is to buy certified organic foods. However with 25 different organizations certifying organic food in Canada,

the standards vary considerably. The situation is even worse if you are an organic farmer trying to export your crop because there are only a few certification agencies that are well recognized internationally and their seal does not come cheaply. This is where COUP Phase II comes in.

In Montreal, during the spring of 1990, the organic foods production industry, with the support of Agriculture Canada, mandated two working committees to develop a uniform set of organic production standards and an accreditation body to oversee them. Agriculture Canada volunteered to provide partial funding and supporting legislation on the basis of recommendations from the project. The process was called the Canadian Organic Unity Project Phase II, or "COUP" for short.

The Standards committee, through an arduous and expensive series of conference calls, reviewed all of the organic production standards in Canada and synthesized them into a single draft document. Some of the highlights of this discussion document are a written soil care plan, tighter control of materials that are border line organic, and a three-year written audit trail on a field by field basis. It is by far the most comprehensive set of Canadian production standards to date.

The Accreditation committee has issued a call for papers. The current working model (others are welcome) is that there will be a body that inspects and accredits the bodies that inspect and certify farms. The main purpose for having this added level of bureaucracy is to insure that standards are kept high. In practical terms, this means that if multinational agribiz wishes to become involved in organics, they will have to play to our rules.

Because the process is an example of grassroots democracy, all people are encouraged to submit models for the structure of the accreditation body. These models should include: requirements for accreditation, size and sectoral representation on accreditation committee, length of term on committee, standards amendment process, arbitration process, funding mechanisms, vehicle of administration, and frequency of meetings. Participation by the environmental community is specifically encouraged (three out of four co-ordinators are active environmentalists). Interested individuals are requested to submit their proposals in accordance to the following call for papers.

For more information contact Bryan Johnson 453-7026

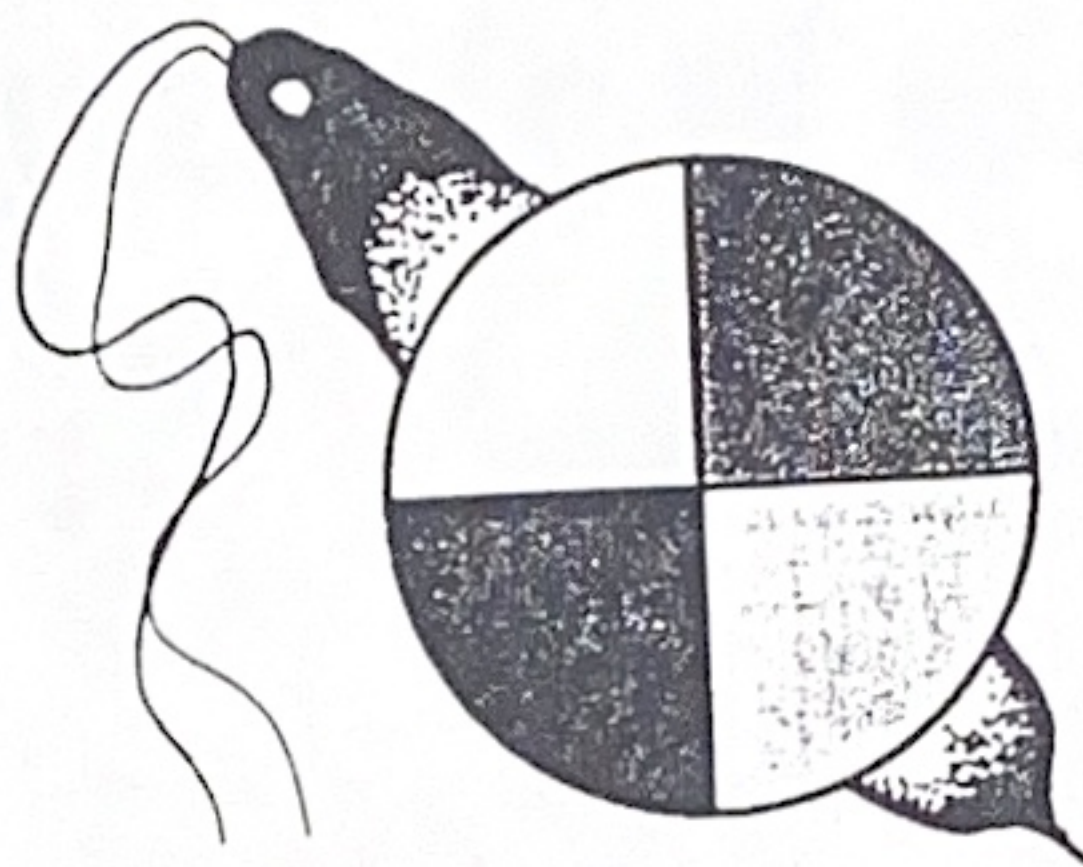
Mother Earth's People: Environment symposium featured at international Pow Wow

A four day international symposium on the environment hosted by aboriginal elders is being organized by the Aboriginal Cultural Society for Winnipeg this June.

"Mother Earth's People" starts off with a huge three day Pow Wow at the Convention Centre from June 14 to 16 with drum groups and dancers from all over North America. Up to 20,000 people will celebrate the new beginning of life in Spring.

The focus of Mother Earth's People will then move to the Forks for the environmental gathering from June 17 to 20. Women representing several aboriginal nations will lead participants through themes such as "Living together on Turtle Island"; "Honouring Mother Earth - Honouring Women"; "Protecting and Defending Mother Earth and its People"; "Strategies of Resistance; and Healing Ourselves and Mother Earth." Environmentalist David Suzuki will also be one of the keynote speakers.

The environmental symposium will rely heavily on traditional aboriginal elders to supply the context for protecting the



earth with their traditional spiritual and cultural teachings. The four days will look at the role of women in traditional and contemporary aboriginal society and examine their special status in protecting the earth. Other workshops will examine self-determination, racism, culture in resistance and building local alliances.

A Festival of Aboriginal Artisans running concurrently with the pow wow and the environmental symposium will showcase indigenous artists from Winnipeg, other parts of Canada, the U.S. and even

Mexico. The Festival starts at the National Historic site at the Forks on June 15.

The environmental gathering is also an excellent opportunity to involve your children. A children's village will be set up on the site where children can get involved in activities like beading, headband making, storytelling, traditional aboriginal games and even the face-painting will be in traditional First Nations designs.

Seven large teepees and an Arbor will be on site to set the scene for the presentations and discussions. The Aboriginal Cultural Society is hoping to strengthen pride in aboriginal identity while challenging racial and cultural stereotypes. Organizers say they want to "increase understanding and respect among aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples. Only through reviving and sharing the traditional aboriginal ways can we arrest the destruction of the natural environment."

To register for the program or to get more detailed program information call Tammy Wiebe or Leslie Spillet at 582-2383.

On the Shelf: New books at the Manitoba Eco-Network bookstore

LESSONS OF THE
RAINFOREST



edited by
BIZANNE HEATH and STEPHEN J.



THE SEA AROUND US, by Rachel Carson (special edition), 250 pp., \$25.80

The Sea Around Us is one of the most remarkably successful books ever written about the natural world. This classic work remains as fresh today as when it first appeared in 1951.

Today with the oceans endangered by medical waste and ecological disasters, this illuminating volume provides a timely reminder of both the fragility and the importance of the ocean and the life that abounds within it.

LESSONS OF THE RAIN-FOREST, essays by Norman Myers, Randall Hayes, Frances Moore Lappe and others, 275 pp., \$18.50

Responding to accelerating world-wide destruction of tropical rainforests, **Lessons of the Rainforest** gathers essays from twenty-four leading authorities in a variety of fields—all committed to finding alternatives to rainforest decimation. Bringing together the insights of biologist, ecologist, historian, anthropologist, lawyer, economist, and activist, these pieces examine the many interrelated issues surrounding tropical deforestation and offer strategies for slowing the destruction that threatens life on Earth.

FOR THE COMMON GOOD Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future, by Herman E. Daly and John B. Cobb, Jr., 490 pp., \$18.50

World Bank economist Herman Daly and theologian John Cobb, Jr. demonstrate how our growth-oriented, industrial economy has led to environmental disaster and offer an exciting new paradigm for economics, public policy, and social ethics. With broad implications for global environmental problems, this is a visionary and immensely important work.

FOREST PRIMEVAL The Natural History of an Ancient Forest, by Chris Maser, 282 pp., \$25.88

In this unique "biography" of a beautiful forest in Oregon's Cascade Mountains, Chris Maser traces the growth of the forest from its birth in 988 to its current glory as an ancient forest. He offers precise yet evocative accounts of the diverse lives and events within the forested portion of the ecosystem. Maser contemplates this burgeoning forest's enduring grandeur against the ephemeral, contemporaneous events of human history.

The Sea Around Us \$25.80
Lessons of the Rainforest \$18.50
For the Common Good \$18.50
Forest Primeval \$25.88

Designing a culture of activism to achieve peace

by Toby Maloney

One of the lessons of the Gulf War, with polls showing 52 per cent opposed to Canadian involvement at the start of the war and then only 26 per cent at the end of the war is that the peace and environment movement has to do a better job of communicating ideas and alternatives to destructive behaviour.

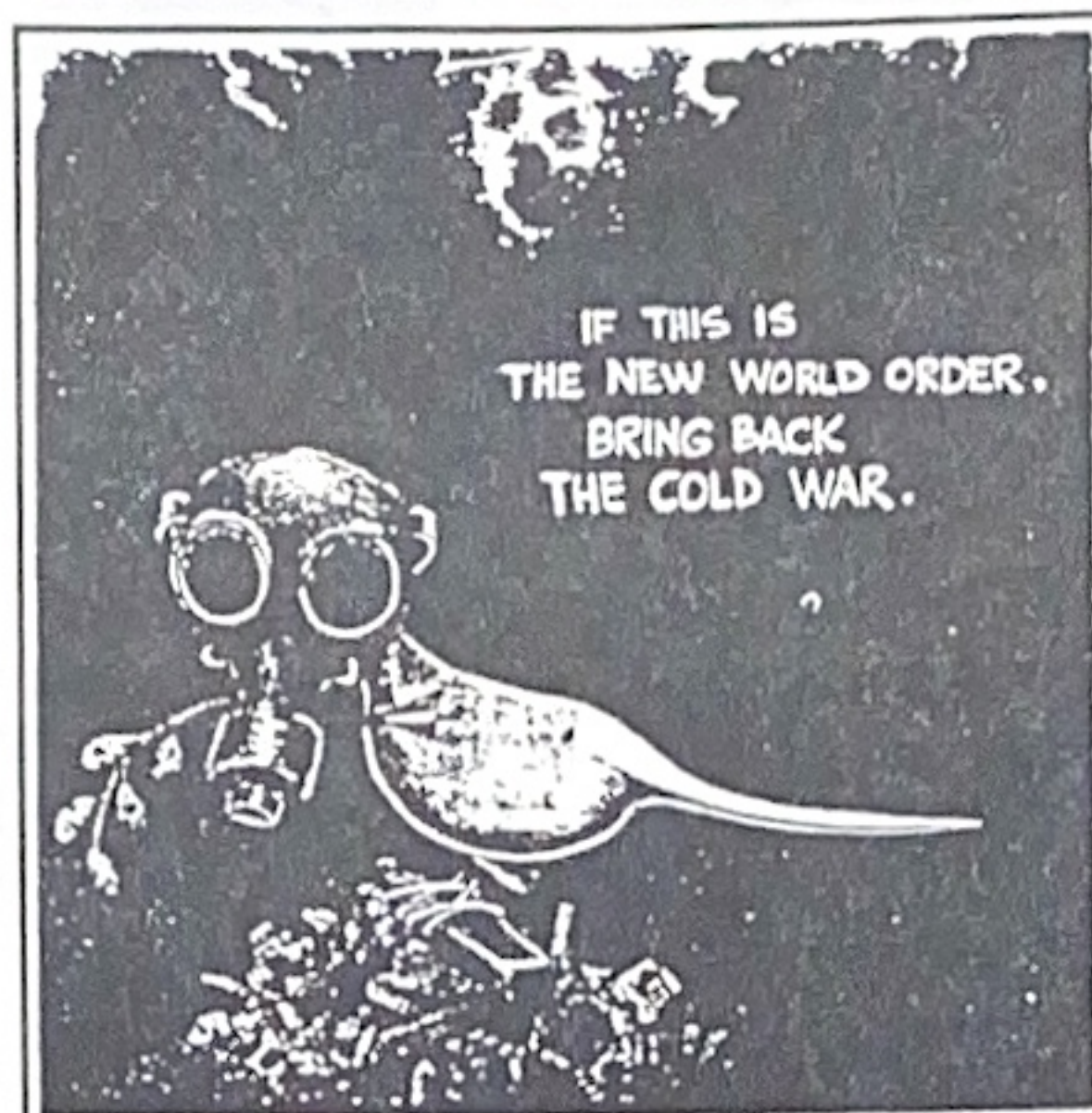
Since the mid-60's grassroots groups have wielded a great deal of influence largely based on their communications savvy -- an ability to mobilize public opinion for change. But that influence is on the wane, partly because corporations and governments have become more effective at neutralizing our impact on public opinion and partly because the peace and environment movements have themselves become institutionalized and predictable.

I'm not saying we shouldn't have larger financially stable institutions with offices and staff -- these are important resources for grassroots activism and public education -- only that we need to be less reliant on formal groups to lead the way in a crisis.

The strength of spontaneous grassroots action is that it doesn't require approval from a board of directors, it doesn't have to cost money (and consequently doesn't jeopardize funding sources) and it can happen quickly and spread into the community. It also doesn't memorialize the role of "activist" because it presumes that every citizen is also a potential activist rather than a consumer of a protest organized by someone else or a lobby fed by regular donations but little direct involvement.

The weakness of grassroots action is that it can be disorganized, manipulated by hidden agenda and too small to communicate the message widely or consistently.

A relatively new group in British Columbia, Adbusters, thinks that the next wave of communication for citizen action groups is advocacy advertising on television. Because of the saturation of local television markets, advertising time at certain points in the program schedule are affordable even to activist groups. There we can provide a foil to the promotion of consumption as the pinnacle of human endeavour and go head to head with developers each with our own brand of packaged salvation.



I wish them well, but I tend to think that real change is going to come the old fashioned way -- by developing a culture of activism.

We need to pry people away from, rather than contribute to, their television viewing. We need to do it by making citizen action and involvement in the affairs of the community as the basis of our "leisure" time. I'm not advocating that we all spend all our time at meetings -- that's what a small number of activists across Canada are already doing at the constant risk of isolation and burnout.

What I'm saying is we need to bring our families with us, old and young, and meet informally in modern versions of coffee houses and labour temples. We need to support existing arts/entertainment vehicles for social change like Al Cafe or the Popular Theatre Alliance of Manitoba. We need more socials like the West End Cultural Centre's Sing out for Peace and others that are even more geared to supplying a forum where citizens can exchange ideas and information as well as sing along and dance.

We need meeting places like the Co-op Book Store more than ever (even as its very existence is threatened), so that the work of fighting to improve our communities is not so much work, so it becomes a part of daily life for more and more of us, and not just another oppressive meeting to add to our datebooks. We need alternative publications like Links Magazine and Canadian Dimension to spread the message and we need to participate in those publications, obviously by subscribing, but also by writing, advertising in and promoting these and

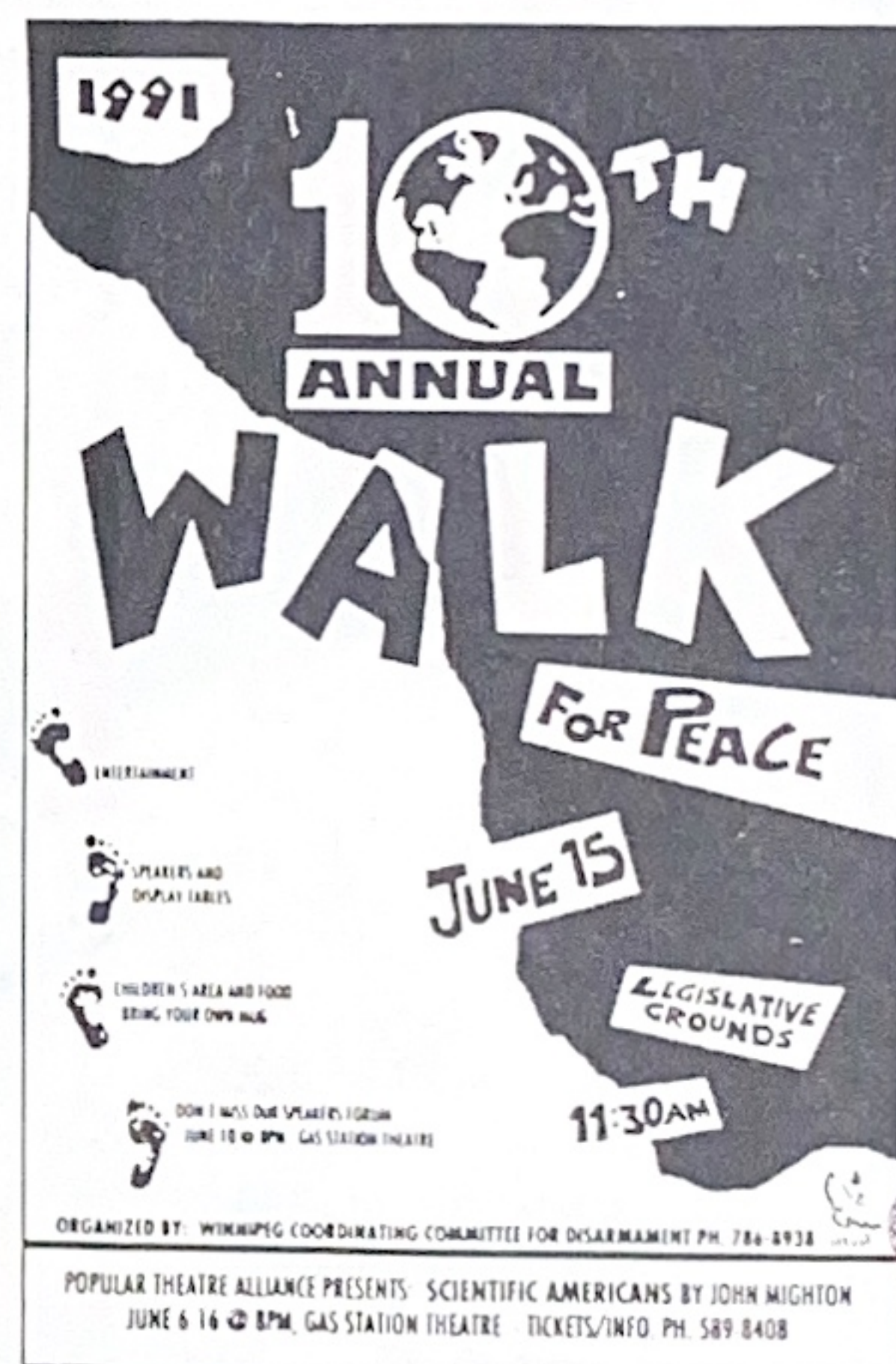
other efforts at independent journalism. We probably need at least one alternative weekly newspaper in Winnipeg. We have to be ready to support these efforts by criticizing them as well.

We need to have places for people to go where they don't have to spend a great deal of money to participate in community affairs, where there is support for the principles that environmental, ethnic, peace and social justice groups share.

We need to have more co-op stores like Harvest Natural Foods Collective and Neechi Foods where we can work together on our basic needs. We need to turn to self-reliance efforts like the Community Circle Barter Credit system and to businesses that are sincerely interested in being a vehicle for change and not merely an exploiter of current sentiment.

We need a culture of activism where it is not the oddball on the street who acts in a community way rather than sitting in a dark living room with fluorescent shadows flickering on the walls. We have to resist the creation of a new class of prophetic experts who tell the rest what to do.

When we have all that we will be ready to fill the streets like they did in Leipzig and Tsimishoara and Prague and Tiananmen Square and Winnipeg in 1919.



Coalition wants complete assessment

Continued from Page 1

concerns about the new projects.

The amount of hydro development planned for the north over the coming decade is truly staggering. In Manitoba, the 1,390 megawatt Conawapa dam and accompanying transmission line have received the approval of the Public Utilities Board, and is heading for a **Joint Federal/Provincial EA**. (The first of its kind). Conawapa is to be the sixth generating station on the Nelson River, harnessing the increased water flow resulting from the massive Churchill River Diversion Project in the 1970's.

Ontario Hydro plans a total of 12 hydro plants in the Moose River Basin, for a total of 1,890 megawatts. Hydro-Quebec is currently planning the largest hydro-electric project in the world - James Bay 2. The first phase, named Great Whale, will involve the diversion of 5 rivers and the flooding of 4,400 square km. for a total of 3,100 megawatts. Phase 2, the NBR, is to follow and is planned to produce a total of 8,700 megawatts from the construction of 12 dams and flooding of a vast forested area. The Quebec projects add to the massive James Bay 1 development, which resulted in extremely adverse impacts, including mercury pollution of fish, a staple food source for the residents of the area.

All of these projects are slated for some kind of EA process, usually with roads and other access infrastructures (which have their own adverse effects) being examined

separately. But many environmentalists, scientists and aboriginal inhabitants of the Hudson Bay watershed are convinced that this piecemeal approach will not be sufficient to determine overall effects on sedimentation and erosion, salinity in estuary areas, ice formation, patterns of wildlife migration, and the way of life of the Cree and Inuit people, especially when added to the previous developments in the region.

A complete assessment would of course be expensive and time-consuming, which suggests that the proposal may not win the favour of the utilities or governments involved. For example, when the question was raised in the Manitoba Legislature recently, the response from the Environment Minister was a definitive "no". Hydro-Quebec and Manitoba Hydro have also gone on record as being opposed to the idea, while Ontario Hydro has indicated that it would participate in such a study. The Federal Environmental Review Office (FEARO) is seriously examining the question.

Matthew Coon Come, the Chief of the Grand Council of the Cree in Quebec, has appealed to Canadians to ensure that the James Bay 2 project does not go ahead. He believes that the costs to his people will simply be too great.

In Manitoba, environmental groups have been arguing for some time that a vigorous program of energy efficiency, and development of "alternative" sources

of energy, would preclude the need for more hydro development in the province. At the same time, they say, such a program would result in more long-term (read "sustainable") jobs for Manitobans, in both the south and the north. Evidence presented at the PUB hearings by experts for the environmental groups showed that this approach would provide much greater economic benefit for Manitobans *over the long term*. They reasoned the billions of dollars earmarked for dam building could be better spent on community development and economic diversification programs around the province, something which is sorely needed if we are to weather the current recession.

Mega hydro development is clearly an area where economics and the environment overlap. It is a major test for "sustainable development". Groups are calling for the most vigorous EA process to be carried out - in this case cumulative effects on the entire bioregion must be examined and serious consideration must be given to whether or not the region and its peoples can survive such an onslaught of projects. Governments must be prepared to meet the challenge of considering alternative proposals for meeting the energy and economic needs of all Canadians.

To contact or join with the coalition groups, call the Eco-Network office at 956-1468. The list is growing daily.

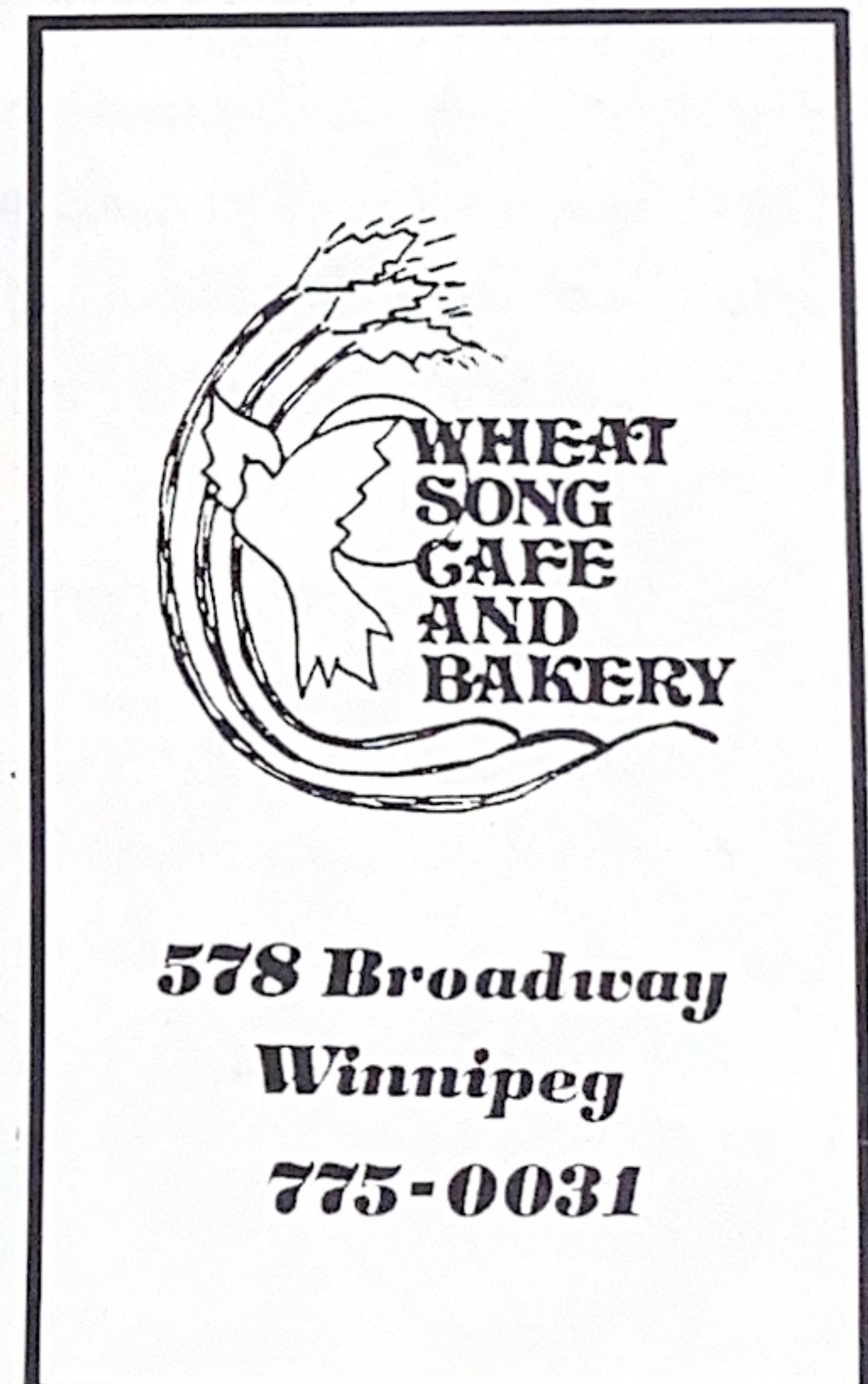


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* Membership is open to any non-government, non-profit group that has as one of its objectives the enhancing or furthering of environmental quality, protecting the environment or environmental