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Water quality objectives murky

by Toby Maloney

The reaction to the City of Winnipeg's position on river water quality objectives heading into public hearings has been one of dismay. Citizens groups and scientists alike are concerned that the City is looking at its impact on river quality through a very narrow glassbottom boat.

The enactment of the Clean Environment Act by the Manitoba Government in 1989 has led, some say too slowly, to the development of proposed surface water quality objectives for the Red and Assiniboine Rivers by the provincial Environment Department. The Clean Environment Commission has been mandated to recommend what those objectives should eventually be and as a result is currently considering submissions from the city, the province and citizens.

The City of Winnipeg has given signs it plans to go down the road to environmental responsibility kicking and complaining. Environmentalists like Dave Taylor, an activist with Concerned Citizens of Manitoba came away from a city open house in November accusing the city of staging an expensive public relations effort to avoid responsibility for dealing with its water pollution problem.

The public debate has focussed mainly on the issue of disinfecting the sewage that is periodically dumped untreated into the Red River because the city's combined sewage and storm drain system can't handle the vol-

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R * E * R * E * A * D

The new and the improved

..... A quarterly magazine that looks at agricultural practices is on the shelves at the Network. **Sustainable Farming** published by REAP (Resource Efficient Agricultural Production in Ste. Anne de Bellevue, Quebec is into its second year of publication as a journal that looks at practices and policies. The summer '91 issue includes an editorial critique of GRIP (Gross Revenue Insurance Program) which the author contends should be reconstituted as Get Rid of Inefficient Practices. The editorial argues that the program caused an increase in planting on marginal lands for several grains and that its linkage of payouts to maximum yields triggers maximum applications of fertilizer and pesticides. "It is a misguided act of faith to believe that environmental improvements, in particular agricultural sustainability, can be left to market forces," it says.

..... In the improved category, **National Round Table Review**, newsletter for those very important folks who have all that power and seldom any inclination to use it in defence of the planet, has suddenly become worth reading. The Fall 1991 issue has articles on the process used to develop Alberta's new "Clean Air Strategy" and an article about the Bay of Fundy Project a community action approach to cleaning up the Bay co-ordinated by Janice Harvey.

Better left UNCED?

.....The Canadian Unified Student Environment Network (CUSEN) reprinted what has been called by some the "Holy Shit Declaration" in its Fall newletter

Eco Liaisons. The statement to UN delegates in Geneva signed by several northern youth coalitions pointedly insists that "northern nations must come (to the Brazil '92 UN Conference on Environment Development -- UNCED) prepared to make the sorts of sacrifices they are demanding from the south." The statement mentions that the U.S. has to look at reallocating its military budget to development projects, the UK has to make commitments to reduce CO2 emissions and Canada has to abandon plans for James Bay. According to the accompanying article "Youth Statement shakes up UN" many delegates gave the youth statement a standing ovation, but delegates from the United States walked out.

This and that

..... School use of pesticides is reviewed (unfavourably) in the October/November issue of **Green Teacher**. Includes resources for convincing your local school to worry about the kids instead of the lawn.

.....**Vegetarian Times** knocks mainline environment groups for refusing to confront the environmental damage caused by meat consumption in its October issue. The feature article says that most environment groups avoid the issue for fear of losing their meat-eating supporters



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A visitor from afar...

by Anne Lindsey

Hasanthi Urugodawatte delights in telling of one of the outstanding events in her life — meeting and hearing Nelson Mandela during his tour of India while she was a foreign student there.

Hasanthi is the Project Co-ordinator with the Sri Lanka Environmental Congress (SLEC), an environmental umbrella group much like the Eco-Network. She was in Canada as the guest of Canadian Lutheran World Relief (an agency which provides some funding for SLEC under an environment/development partnership), and came over to the Network office for a brief visit and exchange of environmental news. Vangile Titi, a native South African, and recent graduate of the Natural Resources Institute, joined us for the meeting.

Hasanthi's story about meeting Mandela was part of a larger discussion about the environmental situation in Sri Lanka, and more specifically, about the effects of limited freedom of speech and action on environmental protection all over the developing world.

The environmental problems facing Sri Lanka are monumental — extreme loss of forest land, massive erosion and siltation from hydro-electric development, depletion of soil nutrients from tea and tobacco production, to name but a few.

They may sound familiar to environmentalists here in Canada, but as I listened to Hasanthi's and Vangile's stories, I realized yet again just how difficult it is for much of the world's population to take effective action on the environment. So many are engaged full-time in basic survival, and many others can act only in the dark shadow of certain reprisal from authorities.

SLEC is one organization that is having a measure of success even under these circumstances. They publish two newsletters, *Mihikatha* (which means Mother Earth in Sinhalese), and *Ecomed*, which focusses on ecological aspects of health issues; hold educational workshops and seminars on a variety of issues, and participate in lobbying efforts for protected areas and improved environmental policies. Like environmental groups all over the world, SLEC is also working with other Sri Lankan organizations in preparing an NGO po-

sition paper for the UN Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil next June.

The energy and enthusiasm which goes into the work of SLEC, and organizations like it in developing countries parallels that which occurs here in Canada, but speaking with people like Hasanthi and Vangile always provides me with a humbling reminder of the tremendous inequities that exist across the globe.

Here in Canada we have so many opportunities to act for the environment — if we choose to take advantage of them. Most of us are in little danger of being shot, for example, for speaking out about the environment. The discussion in our office reminded me of Jonathan Schell's comparison of "...autonomy, which is the capacity of each person for acting freely and ...liberty, which is the person's right to do so".

"In the West" Schell says "you might say we as individuals have great liberty but little autonomy. We have the right to determine the shape of our own future, but we do not bother to avail ourselves of it much".*

Schell was discussing the pre-political situation in Poland at the time, but his words present us with a real challenge in the context of our potential to work on the environment, especially given the perspective of the work being done by our sister groups in the developing world.

Hasanthi left us with an invitation to interested folk who happen to be travelling in Sri Lanka to visit the SLEC office, and with some samples of SLEC publications. They are available for perusal in the Manitoba Eco-Network Resource Centre.

* Jonathan Schell's Introduction to *Letters From Prison* by Adam Michnik, University of California Press, 1985.



NETWORK PEOPLE

INTRODUCING...

the Eco-Network's new Director of Development **Sandy Hurwitz**. Sandy was hired with the financial assistance of the Thomas Sill Foundation to begin implementation of our Five Year Plan to "develop sustainability" for the Eco-Network, a plan which grew out of responses to our member groups questionnaire and Steering Committee deliberations earlier this year.

A native of Winnipeg, Sandy is a teacher by profession and has been active in community organizations, including the Jewish Community Council and the Garry-Rouge Vietnamese Refugee Committee.

From 1984 to 1986, she was the Executive Director of the Midwest Region of B'nai Brith Canada and the League for Human Rights.

Sandy is excited by the challenge of developing a long-range funding program for an environmental organization. To her, educating people about the environment is a key to ensuring ongoing financial support for the Eco-Network. She brings a wealth of talent and skills to the job, and we're happy to have her on board!

CONGRATULATIONS ...

to **John Barker**, former Executive Director of the Resource Recovery Institute, and before that, Co-ordinator of the Manitoba Eco-Network, on his new job as the City of Regina's Recycling Co-ordinator. Regina's gain is Winnipeg's loss... John, his partner, Barb Eros, and their daughter Gillian have now taken up residence in Saskatchewan's capital and we wish them all well.

Letters to the Editor

Native Self Government First

Your editorial "Constituting Environmental Mayhem" (*Eco-Journal*, Sept/Oct. 1991) started me thinking about what was said at the Common Property Conference (CPC) held here in late September.

In the Charter debate — if that is what it might be called (when one is in a generous mood) — on the possible inclusion of property rights in the Constitution, I am reminded of the difficulty of the time-honoured approach of the government of running a flag up the pole to see how it flies.

Anyway, to many of the CPC attendees, common property is an achievement of indigenous societies which, in the quest for "adequate" compensation for expropriation or limited use, the Canadian Real Estate Association seems to have ignored. We would be far better off to leave existing law to evolve further and, perhaps, to increase our sophistication in tracking pollution sources than to imbed a new set of woolly statements in the Charter for the Courts to interpret.

It seems to me that our native population should be as concerned as you, Pannell and Kostuch evidently are, less

perhaps on matters of threats to the physical environment and more on a concept of "ownership" which first caused Indians to be moved onto reserves and has since, piece by piece, limited their access to land and resources traditional to their economies. What is meant by "property rights" to aboriginal people if it is not "Treaty Rights?"

Though it is arrogant of me to say that inclusion of property rights is 'too big for the Charter,' in just this one of many possible provisions which affect native people we need to advance very substantially into the concept of aboriginal self-government before we seriously consider the inclusion.

Nick Carter
Winnipeg

Something fishy

With reference to the July-August issue of *Eco-Journal* and the article "Environmentally-Responsible Summer Outings," please clarify the following: did an editorial oversight occur or does the editor believe that fishing is environmentally responsible, as the title of the article suggests?

The stated article proclaims that canoeing is relatively innocuous environmentally because a canoe "doesn't leave ... frightened waterfowl in its wake." This being the case, how does hooking a sentient being with a razor-sharp, metal-pronged lure (baited with a dead/live minnow, worm, etc., or artificially disguised) and then jerking the animal out of his/her natural environment causing pain and suffering rate as an "environmentally-responsible outing?"

Bill Zaretski, president
Manitoba Animal Rights Coalition

Gulf goof-up

A slip of the middle finger caused a large exaggeration of an already serious environmental problem in Kuwait in our September-October issue of Eco-Journal. The number of oil wells on fire in the region was cited as "over 5090," when it should have read "over 500." You've probable heard that the oil fires have since been extinguished.

Also, for those that pay very close attention (I wish I was one of them) here's a bit of typo-trivia: There will never be a Volume 1, Number 5 of Eco-Journal because there were two Volume 1, Number 3's. It took two issues for me to catch on.

Toby

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 2 to 4: **Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with the Native Peoples** sponsors an art exhibit and sale of work by local aboriginal artists at the Fleet gallery, 65 Albert Street from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The exhibit will feature paintings, masks, rock art, and aboriginal dolls.

December 7: **Manitoba Environment Council** holds its Semi-Annual Meeting. Call 945-7031 for details.

December 7 to 15: The **SAVE (Student Action for a Viable Environment) Tour** visits Winnipeg to speak to high school students about local and global environment issues, and focussing on youth empowerment. Includes workshop on December 13 (see below).

December 10: **Project Peacemakers Christmas Concert** presents the Caledonian Singers, a 30 member male choir, at 7:30 p.m. Emmanuel United Church (Kimberley Avenue and Golsbie). Tickets are \$5 for adults or \$10 for the whole family. Available at the door or from Project Peacemakers office 745 Westminster Ave (2nd Floor Westminster United Church).

December 13: The **SAVE Tour** holds a workshop for interested youth all day. The workshop will include a slideshow and lecture on local and global environment issues, discussion about how youth can empower their peers and suggestions of environmental tactics. For more information on the **SAVE Tour** call Sacha 1-866-3354 (collect).

January 13 & 14: **Canadian Parks Service** public review of Draft Program Policy, Delta Winnipeg Hotel. Workshop format in the afternoon and Open House in the evening. The policy will eventually direct the commemoration, protection and presentation of cultural and natural heritage activities. For more information call Joseph Constant, Canadian Parks Service 1-983-2918 (call collect).

January 20: **Green Light to Rio** stops in Winnipeg at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg. Green Light to Rio is a project created by two environmentalists, carpenter Mario Houle and artist Patrice Boyer to promote and raise awareness about United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil next June. They have created an 8' by 12' postcard of a fetus connected by an umbilical cord to the earth. The postcard will be displayed to collect signatures on a North American tour before going on to Brazil.

February 14: Canada-wide day of protest against individual and environmental destruction caused by the trapping and poaching of fur bearing animals. Sponsored locally by **Manitoba Animal Rights Coalition**. Call James Pearson (477-6203) for details.



February 14 to 16: The third **Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Workshop** will be held in Brandon. Built around the theme of "Integrating Land Use, People and Endangered Species," the workshop will be of interest to naturalists, farmers, academics and agricultural/resource professionals alike. Co-hosted by the Rural Development Institute at Brandon University, Department of Natural Resources, and the Manitoba Naturalists Society. More information from the Institute 727-9734.

February 15: Deadline for submitting nominations to the **Environment Canada 1992 Environmental Achievement Awards**. Five categories include: non-profit organization; outstanding communications for environmental awareness, corporate environmental leadership, lifetime achievement, environmental leadership by a municipality. Information and nomination forms available from Environment Canada Enquiry Centre in Ottawa 1-800-668-6767.

The Price of Power

The Eco-Network resource centre has a VHS copy of "The Price of Power" available. The five-part documentary by CBC 24 Hours looked at the social and environmental effects of Northern Hydro development in Manitoba. Call 956-1468 if you are interested in borrowing it.



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Task Force report has long way to go

by Toby Maloney

A draft report on pesticide use by the City of Winnipeg has so far been met with uncritical acceptance by the media and many citizen environmentalists because it advocates ending mosquito fogging, but may leave a whole new set of questions unanswered.

The major findings in the report include a recommendation that the city shift to what is known as "Integrated Pest Management," a phase-out of most types of chemical pesticides used by the City in favour of less toxic biological controls and the end of mosquito adulticiding in residential areas. Among the 26 recommendations in the draft report are several dealing with public access to information about city practices and some suggesting research be conducted to determine the most effective approaches for pest control in the City.

One of the most damning conclusions reached by the Task Force on the Use of Chemical Pesticides in the Parks and Recreation Department is the revelation that despite assurances from the Insect Control Branch that its Malathion fogging in residential areas is safe, the department was unable to provide the formulation of the chemical it uses. The city's suppliers and other manufacturers refused to provide the formulation to the Task Force, saying that the composition of their product is a trade secret. The report also noted instances of outright falsification of pesticide registration documents by American manufacturers and laboratories, including the registration of

cythion, a form of malathion which the city is currently using.

One of the key questions that arises from the report's findings is the rationale for substituting Integrated Pest Management for the current approach. Essentially IPM means considering the total impact of all pest control efforts, environmentally and in terms of effectiveness and that chemical control is one of the last mechanisms to be applied.

That leaves some citizen opponents of spraying concerned that the use of chemical pesticides would continue unabated:

"I'm sure that if you asked the Insect Control Branch they would say they are using the least amount of chemical pesticides now," said John Miller, an organizer for Links Magazine which conducted an extensive campaign to register citizens against spraying last summer.

Another question that deserves to be raised is that some so-called pest problems may be a problem of design. For example some say that the cankerworm problem in the City of Winnipeg is likely a result of the American Elm monoculture not the presence of too many cankerworms. If we are going to substitute biological controls for chemical spraying we're still not dealing with the root of the problem, which is that like a forest Winnipeg should have a diversity of species of trees and plants.

The Task Force surveyed several other Canadian and American cities and reviewed available literature before concluding that an IPM approach should be tried here. That said, one Task Force member, Agriculture Canada Senior Research Scientists Oswald Morris cautions there is no hard evidence that IPM will be any more effective.

In other jurisdictions IPM has proved as effective or better and as economical

as piecemeal chemical pesticing, but because results are not extrapolable from other jurisdictions to our ecological, geographical and climatic conditions here, "you have to do it here as well to determine effectiveness," says Morris.

The three volunteers on the Task Force representing the city, academia and interested citizens -- Forest Superintendent Mike Allen, Morris and citizen representative Bryan Johnson -- were appointed by an Ad Hoc Committee of the Parks, Protection and Culture Standing Committee of City Council almost two years ago. The recommendations aren't even the final word of the Task Force and have a long way to go before becoming anything approximating city policy.

That's a point that Task Force member Morris feels hasn't been made clear by media reviews of the draft report. In one instance, citizen concerns that were listed in the draft report were erroneously referred to as the opinion of the Task Force, but Morris' main difficulty was with the way the report was released to media representatives before it was distributed to citizens who participated in workshops or prepared briefs on the topic.

As a result "[Some members of the public] think this report is going to be implemented one way or another," Morris said.

That would certainly be an unfortunate perception since the report still has to be submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee on Pesticides which in turn must submit its own report to the Parks Protection and Culture Committee which then reports to the Executive Policy Committee which finally forwards the whole shebang to City Council of the Whole.

Meanwhile, the chairman of the Ad
(continued on--page 7)

Marianne Cerilli
NDP Environment Critic

*I welcome any suggestions,
information, or questions*

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Wild Cards

(continued from--page 6)

Hoc Committee that appointed the Task Force, councillor Terry Duguid, has been replaced because of a shakeup of the committee structure at City Hall.

Duguid says he asked to stay on as Chairman, but was instead made an associate member of the committee. That bothers Duguid because of the time he has invested in the public process, which he is proud of pioneering, and because he feels he has some personal expertise as a result of managing a large Gypsy Moth control program in southern Ontario at one point in his career.

"I really am annoyed that I've been bumped" he said.

His replacement, Donovan Timmers, has been a member of the Ad Hoc Committee from the beginning, and has a record of involvement with environment groups and voting against mosquito fogging. The wild cards on the committee are the new members councillors Lillian Thomas and George Fraser.

The Chairman of the Parks Protection and Culture Committee Ernie Gilroy, himself new to the position and the issue, says the change was made because Duguid is no longer a member of Parks, Protection and Culture and has a heavy commitment in his new appointment as Chairman of Works and Operations. Gilroy said Timmers will maintain the continuity of the public process and Duguid will still have input as an associate member.

It's difficult to predict what the change in composition will bring to the issue, but it's clear that given past debates on mosquito spraying in particular, conclusions like the ones in the Task Force report are going to need strong advocates that guide them through the system. Even if the recommendations make it out the other end, implementation is another matter.

Media reports have mentioned that the report will have difficulty getting the attention it deserves during winter, but with a vote on the subject predicted for some time in the New Year -- probably February -- for a change the issue may be debated without the hysteria that surrounds the mosquito question in mid-summer.

The draft report is available by contacting Dorothy Browton, Committee Clerk, Committee on Protection Parks and Culture, Council Building 510 Main Street or for examination in the Eco-Network Resource Centre.

NOW THAT WINTER IS HERE: ECO-TIPS ON ENERGY SAVINGS

by Kemlin Nembhard

Saving energy is important year round, but in Manitoba winter is when we use (and waste) the most energy. The potential for savings is great for heat, light and water, all of which increase in consumption at this time of year. Efficiency is the key.

HEAT During the cold months we want to be as warm as possible, but unfortunately we tend to overheat, unnecessarily. Turn down the heat a few degrees and turn off the heat in rooms that are not in use.

The windows and doors as well as the walls and roof of your house can act like large air vents letting out a lot of heat. To prevent this:

- * make sure you have good insulation in the roof and the walls of your home;
- * keep the doors and windows shut (as long as you have good ventilation air change should not be a problem);
- * Check for drafts and leakage around doors and windows. If any are found they should be fixed as soon as possible, through caulking and weather stripping or even by replacing them depending on reparability and affordability.

LIGHT Again, with less sunlight in winter months we tend to want to use more lights and brighten up our lives. Be mindful not to use more than you need:

- * turn off lights that are not being used or that are not needed;
- * invest in longer life, energy efficient fluorescent or halogen light bulbs. They give brighter light as well.

WATER A lot of energy goes into heating water, so although it is nice to take a nice hot bath or shower on a cold winter day or night, do it efficiently:

- * Take a hot bath instead of a shower. All but the shortest showers use more water overall and more hot water.
- * Fill the bottom of the bath with hot water first, then finish with cold water to get the right temperature. This uses a lot less energy than running the hot water continuously to fill the tub.
- * You can save a lot of water and energy, too, by sharing a bath with a friend or reusing the hot water for other family members.

The most important thing is to become conscious of the ways in which energy is used around your house and try to change it. Becoming energy efficient does not have to mean drastic lifestyle change. The changes can be small and gradual and often result in saving not just energy, but utility bills.

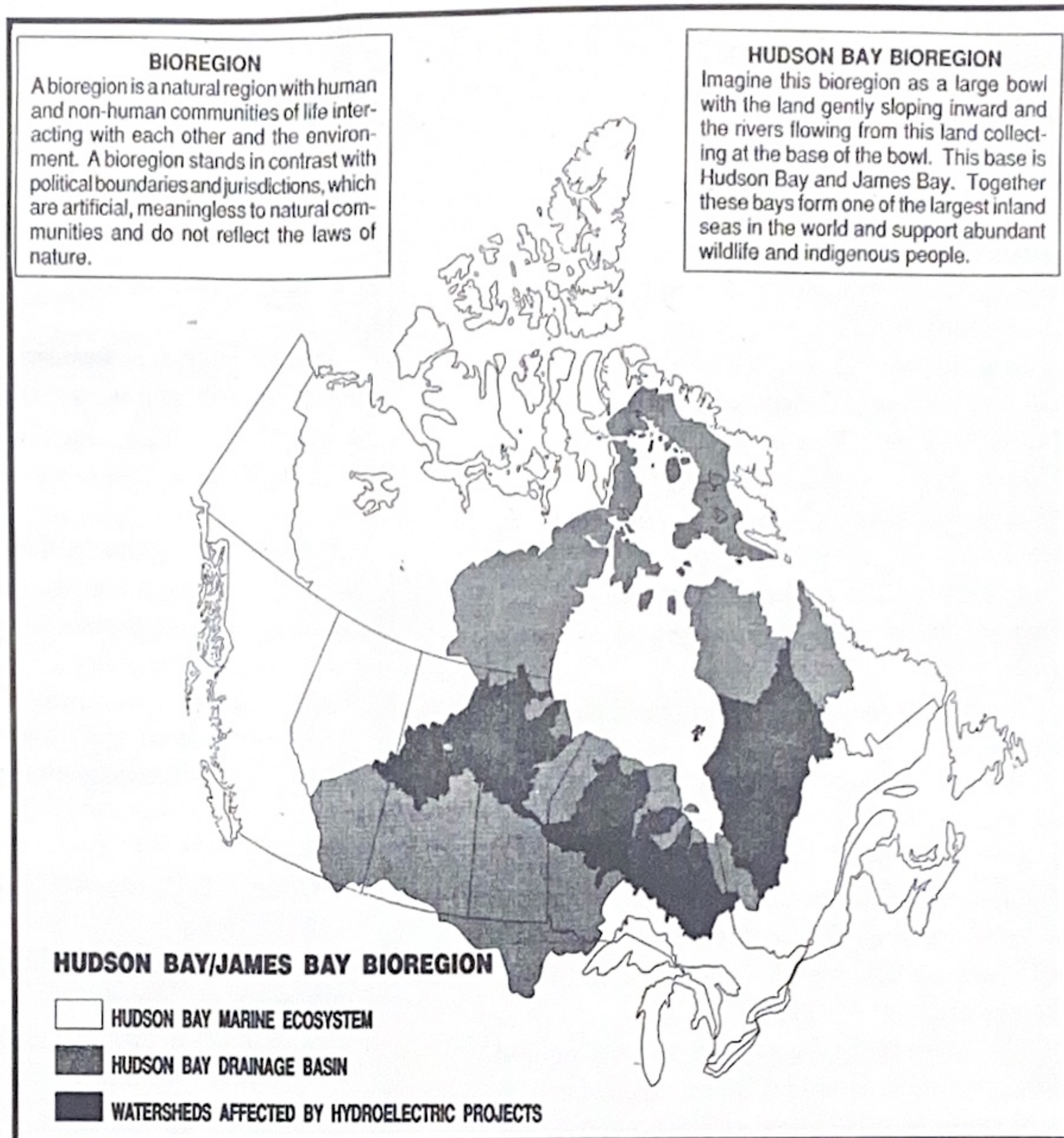
Aboriginal organizer resists colonization

by Toby Maloney

Environmentalists should cast a critical eye on the positions of aboriginal leaders the same as they would for provincial or federal politicians say local organizers for the Lonefighters Communications Network.

Linda Clarkson and Larry Morrisette both of Winnipeg spoke to the semi-annual meeting of the Manitoba Eco-Network in early November. As local representatives for the new national support network, set up by Peigan defenders of the Oldman River in Alberta, Clarkson and Morrisette explained that three centuries of colonization have erased any semblance of homogeneity even among any single First Nation. The Lonefighters Communications Network is a coalition of groups united to support direct action in defence of traditional aboriginal lands, most often from environmentally destructive mega-projects.

So-called 'development' in aboriginal lands -- hydro projects or mining or forestry operations -- actually fences aboriginal people into underdeveloped enclaves. Where First Nations in Canada or the United States have participated or shared in resource development or management they have been forced to spend their share of oil and gas revenues or other compensation on repairing the social costs of the ventures. Leaders who sign agreements rather than fight to preserve traditional uses of the land may mean well in trying to improve living standards for their people but they are unwitting agents of the process of colonization that is still



underway, Clarkson says.

"You have to understand there are traditional people and there are Indian Act people. Indian Act chiefs," Clarkson said.

"Unfortunately we have to fight our own people (to stop mega-project development)" she told the meeting.

Clarkson and Morrisette were preceded at the meeting by Brandon educator and pipe carrier Roy Mason. Originally from Island Lake, Mason outlined the traditional Cree relationship with the environment. He told stories and explained that Waysakeejic or Nanabush the trickster is a teacher who spends time as various animals, and plants, and assumes human form, retaining the memory of each experience of Mother Earth. The knowledge is available for those that combine close observation with real understanding to derive meaning from

the lessons.

Ceremonies connect the people with Mother Earth. Hunters, for instance, must learn from the wolves who are the best hunters in the forest. A healer must observe closely to understand the part of a root that will give medicine. When Nanabush was a tree he learned about that root and showed the humans how to find it, he said.

Mason also talked about cross-cultural tension. Many aboriginal people are scarred from their virtual abduction into the residential school system and cannot deal easily with non-aboriginal people, he said. That makes it difficult for them to be patient with non-aboriginal ignorance of their culture.

A regular feature of the Network's two general meetings each year is the reporting by member groups on their recent activities. Only 25 people made it to an otherwise excellent meeting, because of the blizzard conditions, November 2, but several groups reported extensively on their efforts.

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All water issues need to be considered

(continued from page 1)

ume of effluent that results during heavy rains. The city's position is that despite coliform bacteria counts in the Red River that are clearly over the acceptable level for primary recreation (swimming) the expense to fix the problem could be too high and have too little benefit for a river that is poor for swimming in any case.

"They really don't intend to do anything. There's a serious lack of intent (by the city)" says Taylor.

Part of the debate has centred on the human health effects of the coliform problem—studies of the effluent and the Red River north of the city have found ten pathogenic organisms or agents ranging from salmonella to polio are present in the water.

The City's Medical Officer of Health Dr. Richard Stanwick has determined, however, that the human health effects are not serious because of a relatively low incidence of gastro-intestinal illnesses that result currently. On the other hand, spending money on emergency health services rather than on an effective system for disinfecting the sewage would save actual lives, Stanwick argues.

Taylor rejects that argument totally, saying the cost is just not the issue the City would like us to believe it is. He says the city has taken \$18 million out of sewage revenues and put it into the general budget since 1988 and is contemplating an increase in sewer charges to generate more tax revenue.

To press Concerned Citizens' point Taylor and his group were planning to serve "polio cocktails" — river water in wine glasses with a garnish — to Clean Environment Commissioners at the hearing.

Others, like University of Winnipeg biologist Eva Pip are concerned that the process won't yield the right answers to our river's problems because the right questions aren't being considered. She says that studying the Red River from the south boundary of the city to the mouth at Lake Winnipeg and the Assiniboine from Elie to the mouth ignores completely the impact that pollutants, including those from within the city limits, are having on Lake Winnipeg, the largest tourism/recreation area in the province and an important commercial fishery. She notes for instance that the Red River is responsible for almost half of the phosphorous loading in the south basin of Lake Winnipeg even though the river contributes only six per cent of the water volume.

She also says that the study should include the whole question of water supply, including options being considered for alternate sources to Shoal Lake. That

question is being posed by the city in an entirely separate process. The quality of that water and the issue of conservation of water will certainly impact on the eventual quality of the river water, she says.

As well, not enough is being done to study the impacts on the Assiniboine by the City of Portage la Prairie, by the hog farms along the route and by waste producers like the Simplot fertilizer plant in Brandon.

"You can't set water quality objectives for this isolated area and pretend it hangs out there in space," she said.

*You can't set
water quality
objectives for this
isolated area
and pretend it
hangs out there
in space...*

As for the sewage question, Pip is flabbergasted that the city or anyone would argue against disinfecting, if only for esthetic reasons, although she lists several serious environmental impacts. Those range from the eradication of all but a few aquatic invertebrate organisms living in the Red River south of Winnipeg, but disappearing by the time the Red reaches the northern end of the city, to impacts on sport fishing by the ammonia content in the sewage.

"How can you not disinfect with the hundreds of thousands of coliform? It's beyond belief that [the city] can take a stand like that," she said, adding that she has seen lower coliform counts in sewage lagoons than in the Red River at the north perimeter at times.

Then there's the whole question of toxics, everything from the salt and automobile exhaust on the roads, to the homebrew of hazardous waste being flushed by householders and small and large industries.

In fact, heavy metals won't be considered properly at all unless the province sets guidelines and monitors for the quality of the sediment in the rivers, according to a brief being presented by the Manitoba Environmental Council. Biologist Diane

Malley, who wrote the report with colleague Derek Muir says that the sediments contain the history of Winnipeg's past mistakes, in particular heavy metals, most likely from the snow dumping carried right up to 1990.

"Organisms can become contaminated either by living in [the sediments] or by eating it. [The contaminants] are fed back into the water column," she said. The report recommends that the province adopt sediment quality objectives being worked on now by the federal government as soon as they are accepted by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

The report also recommends that:

- * all the water bodies meet the provincial standards, not just for primary or secondary recreation but for drinking, since they are currently being used for drinking;

- * three areas be protected by the highest level of quality because of their special characteristics;

- * disinfection would be required so the quality of the Red River exiting Winnipeg is equivalent to the quality of the Red upon its arrival at the south opening to the Floodway.

Another issue that is bound to arise is the preferred method of disinfecting for sewage. The city has released, subsequent to its open house and just prior to the hearings, a technical report detailing the various options. The standard chlorination treatment will likely raise some environmental concerns because of the tendency for the chlorine to form toxic organochlorine compounds with suspended solids in the water bodies. Other methods such as ozonation, exposing the sewage to ultra-violet radiation and even irradiation with gamma rays are outlined in the report.

It's anyone's guess what the Clean Environment Commission will make of the various submissions in its eventual recommendations to Environment Minister Glen Cummings who will actually decide the issue with regulations. The first stage of the process will determine what the water quality objectives should be and a second stage will develop the actual requirements for licensing the city's discharges into the rivers.

Technical studies and background documents for both the city and the provincial Environment Department for the water quality hearings are available in the Public Registry file at the Manitoba Eco-Network Resource Centre.

Food for Thought

by Sacha Kopelow

Many people are surprised when I tell them that becoming a vegetarian benefits the environment. They see it as an animal rights issue, or a health choice. Both of these make the world a better place, and this benefits the earth, but there are many more 'directly environmental reasons' reasons to reduce or eliminate meat and dairy products in your diet. before I start reeling off some of my limitless facts and figures about vegetarianism, here's a little vocab so's you all know what I'm talking about:

Vegan (vee-jin or vay-gan) -- some nifty person who eats NO animal products at all (ie. no cheese, fish, or ice cream)

Vegetarian (vej-it-air-ee-en) -- likewise a cool person who eats dairy products, but no flesh (ie. no cows, ducks or fish)

Factory Farm (fak-tor-ee/f+arm) -- a horrid place where most meat comes from; animals are raised here, often mistreated, malnourished, and crowded.

OKAY here is EVERYBODY'S FAVOURITE FOOD FACTS LIST

* Rainforests are cleared to make grazing land for cattle. This adds to global warming both by destroying trees which absorb carbon dioxide and because the forests are usually cleared by burning which releases CO₂.

* Cattle have micro-organisms in their stomachs which digest cellulose and produce methane gas -- a major contributor to ozone layer depletion and global warming.

* 40 times more fossil fuels have to be burned to produce one pound of protein from beef than one pound of protein from

grain.

* 25 gallons of water are needed to produce one pound of wheat. 2500 gallons of water are needed to produce one pound of beef.

* 25000 pounds of animal excrement is produced every second in the United States. There are no sewage systems to treat this waste, so it is allowed to pollute the rivers and streams. This also happens in Canada.

Being a vegetarian doesn't mean you can only eat vegetables! How about some pizza, spaghetti, lasagna, fries, cake, pie, perogies, soup etc.?

Your Average Jo(sephine)'s guide to Vegetarianism

1. Don't eat meat. This includes fish, poultry and red meat such as from our friend the cow.

2. Beware lard! This ingredient is often found in store-bought cookies and cakes, and is sometimes used to fry french fries. [lard\n: a soft white fat obtained by rendering fatty tissue of the hog ~ Merriam-Webster Dictionary]

3. When ordering food, always make it clear that you don't eat THIS, and THIS, etc. Sometimes there are bacon bits on salads, or some other easily forgotten animal products hidden in food. Don't be shy to ask if the soup has a beef or vegetable base, or if the sauce has any meat etc.

4. When eating out, there is usually a vegetable platter, or coleslaw and a sandwich that you can eat. If you know it'll be tough to find food, bring a snack with you. If you are bothered, say you are a diabetic or something, and on a strict diet. I usually tell people who wouldn't understand, that I'm allergic. However try to be honest whenever possible ... the person you're explaining it to may even try it themselves, or at least become more broad-minded.

5. There are different reasons for being a veggie...it helps to know yours. Do you object to how the animals are treated? Then why are you wearing leather, or drinking milk? Do you object to the taking of a life? Plants are alive, too. And some aboriginal peoples have respect for the animals they kill and are thankful to them. Is it just the factory farms that bother you? What about free range chickens? Do you kill mosquitoes?

6. Beware "Jello!" It contains gelatin (which comes from hooves and bones). Marshmallows also contain gelatin.

7. Becoming a vegetarian is NOT a health risk for the average person (ie. you aren't diabetic, or anemic or something). In fact most vegetarians are healthier and have more endurance than others. Your diet should not have to be vitamin-supplemented, but you should eat a variety of foods. No one needs as much protein as society makes you think, but you are losing some protein

and iron by cutting out red meat. Try peanut butter and bread, beans, and tofu (made from soybeans..available at SuperValu, health food stores and in Chinatown) for protein, and broccoli, spinach, and raisins for iron.

8. Make sure people know before they ask you over for dinner that you're a vegetarian.

9. There are imitation hotdogs and burgers available. Ask at your local health food store.

10. Smile - You're saving the world!

I'm not asking you to become a vegetarian right away. It will probably take more thought and some time. Try eating less animal products, and cut out beef (the worst for our world). Read "Diet for a New America" by John Robbins and remember: Every bite counts!

Sacha Kopelow is a member of Youth Planet. Article reprinted from "The Daily Planet" available for perusal at the Network or by writing c/o Miles Littman, 29 Cuthbertson Ave. Winnipeg R3P 0S6.

Dancing off the dessert

The Manitoba Eco-Network's first Pot Luck Dinner and Social Evening on November 9 was a great success. A big thank you is due to Rhoda Rempel for doing the lion's share of organizing the event, along with other members of the organizing committee, Kim Monson, Sandy Bissoon and Steve Rauh. Also to Klaus Buller for his gentle style of ballroom dancing lessons which made even the most clumsy of us feel quite graceful!

The food was fabulous and wonderfully varied - everything from bannock and blueberries to curries. We have excellent cooks amongst us.

A highlight of the evening was the dessert auction, with auctioneers Rob Altemyer and Steve Rauh putting in superb performances in the cause of a little fundraising for the Network. As for the desserts....well, just ask Alison Elliot, President of the Naturalists Society, about that Chocolate Amaretto Torte...or City Councillor Donovan Timmers about the Chocolate Cake which he wanted so much he bid against himself!

Our thanks to all who donated those wonderful desserts:

* Samantha's Restaurant, 4-660 Osborne Street * Tall Grass Prairie Bread Company and Deli, 859 Westminister * Aggie Klassen * Sandy Hurwitz * Steve Rauh * Rob Altemyer * Anne Lindsey * Brian Pannell

Look out for another Pot Luck and Social sometime in the New Year.



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Contemplating methods of change

by Marianne Cerilli, MLA

I cannot believe that it has only been a year since I became the MLA for Radisson and the NDP Environment Critic. Although I did not come to the portfolio with a lot of specific technical expertise I do have a strong sense of the need and method for social change. In keeping with the community development, feminist and education model I advocate, here are some of the things I have learned in my first year as environment critic:

1) Take care of yourself first. As activists we are not much good if we are over-extended, exhausted and have not done the laundry, shopping or talked with friends and family in weeks. Self-care is primary as we work for change or we never enjoy our successes.

2) Get support. The Lone Ranger approach does not work, especially since, as individuals, we are already trying to let go of authoritarian/domination models of power, control and leadership in our culture and our society. Individuals can get burnt-out when they are isolated and take more responsibility than necessary. If we share informa-

tion, responsibility and authority we are healthier.

3) Think globally, act locally, but think beyond your own back yard. Just like the right wing has manipulated the concepts of global village and sustainable development, self-interest has created the NIMBY syndrome. There is this bourgeois liberal notion that all we need to be concerned about is our own little "corner" of the world.

In my opinion, feeling overwhelmed by the enormity of the pollution problem and the unsustainability of our society is a step in breaking through our own denial and moving towards action. It is the key in working for change that we use a systems change approach and political action at the local level to set up a chain reaction that reverberates into city-wide, provincial, national and international change.

4) Our thinking and understanding must be holistic. We can each only do one thing at a time, but we have to do and understand something of everything. We know that ecology, development/economics, social welfare and culture/

education issues are all connected and the real challenge is to shift the balance of power away from those that hold the money and authority, to the rest of us. Developing links with other movements -- labour, youth, aboriginal groups, the women's movement, community-based health advocates, and peace activists -- is the key to having that understanding.

5) The Department of Environment and all departments, have become so politically controlled that one of the key environ-

ment issues is ensuring the "authorities" release full and complete information. All government studies, tests, impact assessments and research are public property in a democracy. Withholding, losing, or denying access to this information for political purposes by government should be illegal.

6) When we adopt the value that our work is something to be avoided, escaped, or gotten over with it makes it easier for banks, businesses, courts, industry and establishment politicians to control us. Our need to earn a living, to feed ourselves, may mean we have to be employed at something we dislike, but we can do what we love in our spare time. The social justice movement can provide an avenue for people to do meaningful work. When we really believe what we do, the distinction between work and play becomes blurred.

7) This notion that societal change is slow because we are trying to change people's attitudes and values is a crock. The easiest thing to change is our mind or someone else's. From my experience canvassing door-to-door and talking to groups I have learned that it is easier to come to consensus with your average citizen than to get Repap to design a mill without chlorine bleaching, or to convince another company not to move south or to get the city or provincial governments to really start reducing, reusing and recycling. But the average citizen is aching for change. We have to find new modes of political action to reach the "non-converted" and get them active and aware. We also need to change our institutions from both inside and out because the establishment resists change.

When I was working as a school counsellor a number of us who were starting peer support programs were feeling overwhelmed by the number of young people who were in pain, serious pain and trouble. We began meeting to support each other to work co-operatively rather in isolation. In my way of thinking this is necessary if we are going to survive as activists, educators, caregivers, leaders and people with humanity.



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