

ECO-JOURNAL

Volume 4, Number 6

November-December, 1994

Future of farming hinges on biodiversity and community

"We need to begin serious research into an agriculture which needs no chemicals, no artificial fertilizers, no two hundred thousand dollar machines — we need to find how to become independent of these things before circumstances make our decision for us."

For Goodlands ecologist and farmer Duncan Stewart, the future of agriculture is bound up in that prescription, because "there is something permanent and inevitable about the lasting power of those in direct connection to the soil."

Stewart was part of a panel at the Marquis Project's recent Symposium on Agricultural Biodiversity in Brandon. Although the topics covered ranged across issues surrounding patenting of plants and even human life forms, traditional farming knowledge around the world, the Endangered Spaces program, and preserving soil diversity, discussion usually returned to the future of farming in Manitoba.

Stewart rejects any inference that he advocates a return to the past, but he does say that we need a cultural change to achieve an ethic of spiritual commitment to the earth so that we would see it as "inhuman and unnatural to do harm to the earth."

That may be why he suggests that we listen more to poets and less to professors.

A workshop on Redefining Agriculture

drew a majority of the symposium's attendance. Rhonda Barr talked about her experience with community shared agriculture at Red Gate Farm in Wawanesa.

definition of progress in agriculture.

"If you're standing at a precipice is progress taking a step forward or a step back?"

Toby Maloney talked about his involvement in food issues as an environmentalist and tried to outline some ways of encouraging resettlement of rural areas. If many people in the city are unemployed or underemployed and dependent on social assistance while organic producers are overworked and farms are increasing in size, why not find ways to bring the two together?

Agricultural academics in attendance in significant numbers disputed some of the assumptions the panel was making about organic being better for biodiversity than "conventional"

agriculture, but conceded that changes are needed for rural communities to thrive.

A very interesting discussion took place in a workshop on "Biodiversity: Common

Please see **NEW PIRATES**, page 8

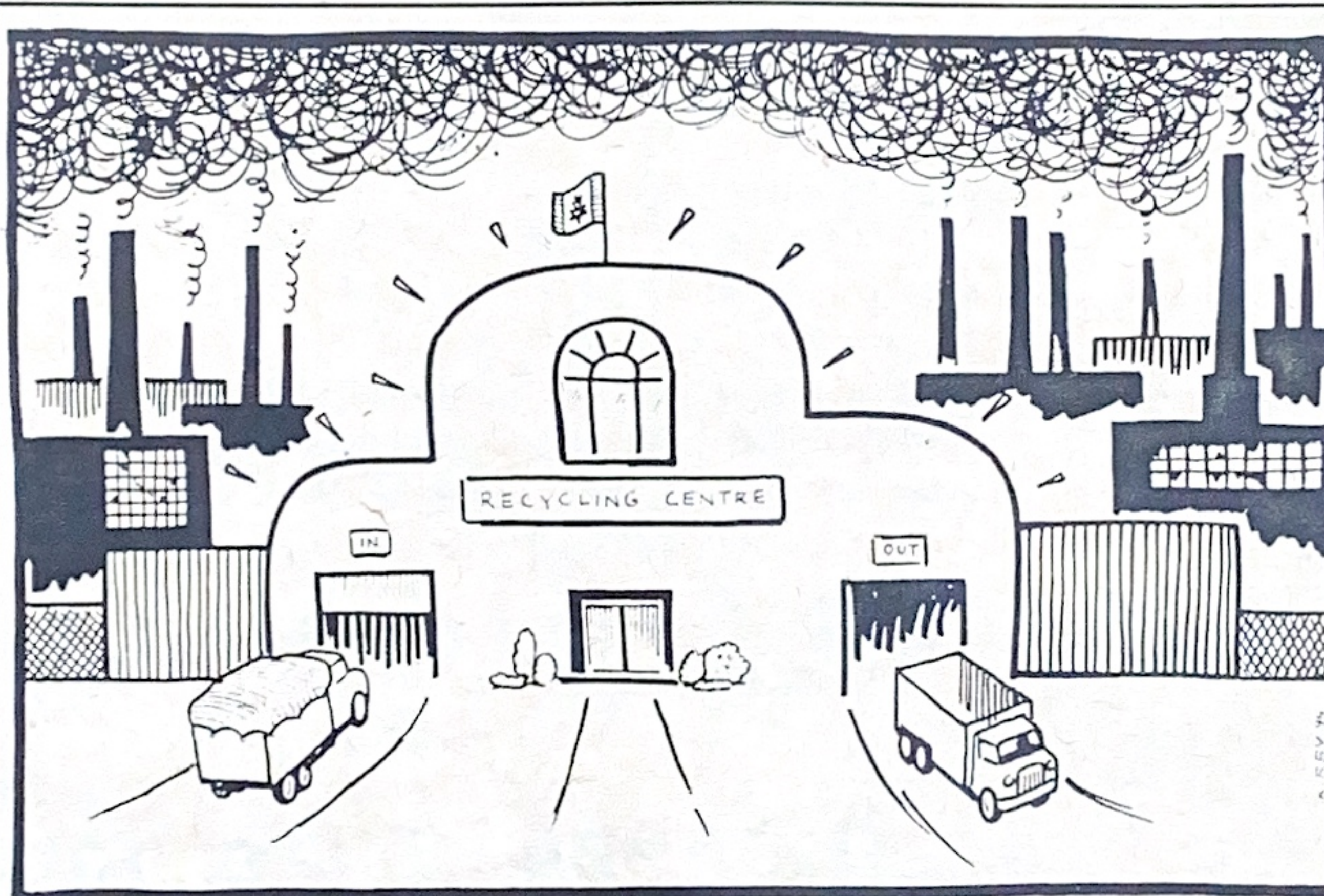


Illustration by Jim Kirby

Recycling in the '90's: Prompt and courteous curbside pickup, efficient processing facilities, and astute marketing of recyclables, but WHAT ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT? Page 10

She passed a bowl of beans including one called Child's Delight which can provide several distinct beans in the same pod. She talked about the diversity of food that she has learned to grow and the importance of living within the region. Boissevain organic greenhouse operator David Neufeld called for a new

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Editor
Toby Maloney

Contributors this issue
Nick Carter, Jessica Dilts, Hendrik Herfst, Valerie Kellet, Anne Lindsey, Coral Maloney, Toby Maloney, Dave Taylor, Janice Westlund
Page One Illustration by Jim Kirby

Advertising representative
Rick Freeman
Executive Director
Anne Lindsey

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B.C. recycling group gets behind junk mail bill

The Recycling Council of British Columbia is campaigning to gather support for a private member's bill to reduce junk mail.

Liberal MP Andrew Telegdi, who represents the Ontario constituency of Waterloo, has a private member's bill before Parliament which would significantly reduce the amount of unsolicited mail received by Canadians by amending the Canada Post Corporation Act. Householders and mailbox holders could notify Canada Post that they do not wish to receive unaddressed mail. The bill does not apply to mailings of a political nature or to mailings by charities.

Currently the only option householders have is to write to direct mail marketing companies and request to be removed from their mailing lists. (A good idea if you don't want to be entered in magazine sweepstakes or receive offers of free vacations for a small registration fee. The address is available from the Manitoba Eco-Network Environmental Resource Centre -- 772-7542.) Although this reduces the amount of addressed advertising mail received, it does not impact unaddressed ad mail.

RCBC has supported anti-junk mail legislation in the past, following the City of Vancouver's attempt in 1992 to pass a bylaw limiting the distribution of advertising mail in the city. City Council ended up scrapping the bylaw and instead asked the federal government to amend the Canada Post legislation.

Private members' bills require massive public support to stand a chance at becoming law. Another junk mail bill was drafted and presented by an NDP backbencher in the last Parliament, but never got past first reading.

For a copy of Bill C-278 contact the Recycling Council of B.C. at 204-683-6009 or Telegdi's office in Ottawa 1-613-996-5928 (fax 992-6251).

Continued on next page

ECO-BRIEFS

The 1994-95 Manitoba Eco-Network Steering Committee

Jack Dubois, Wildlife Society of Manitoba	Chair
Sue Proctor, Harvest Natural Foods Collective	Vice-Chair
Harry Mesman, Manitoba Federation of Labour	Secretary
Steve Rauh, Association of Mental Health Workers for the Environment	Treasurer
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Dennis Bayomi	Winnipeg Vegetarian Association
Bryan Johnson	Citizens Against Neurotoxins
Rick Penner	Recycling Council of Manitoba
Helen McCullough	Winnipeg Water Protection Group
Brian Pannel	Manitoba Environmentalists Inc.
Jason Loughhead/Danishka Esterhazy	Manitoba Animal Rights Coalition
Sacha Kopelow	U of W Students Acting for the Environment

Uranium Biz foiled down under

by Dave Taylor

The pressure mounted as the uranium industry blitzed Australia's news media. For several weeks the industry attempted to paint a rosy picture for the re-birth of nuclear power in Southeast Asia.

Nuclear power, they said, would be the answer to global warming. The spin-off for Australia would be an ever-increasing demand for enormous quantities of uranium.

What they neglected to mention, however, was the hard cold data about the glut of uranium on the world market, and subsequent prices so low it is uneconomical to take it out of the ground. (This rather significant point continues to be ignored even by the Saskatchewan government which has expanded its stake in uranium mining).

The industry's zeal in speculating that a fortune is there to be made became quite infectious as politicians in the Australian Labour Party (ALP) began to take sides just prior to their national convention.

Plans were drawn up for a mine in the spectacular Kakadu National Park and so-called experts were brought in to downplay the link between civilian and military uses of uranium. An aboriginal tribal group in the area was persuaded to support the concept in hopes of raising their standard of living. Pundits predicted the demise of the Three Mines Policy with very little opposition. (The ruling Labour Party under Prime Minister Paul Keating has had a policy of limiting the number of mines in the country to three for close to a decade.)

The ALP's policy convention got off to a heated start in Hobart, Tasmania, amidst threats by the green movement to abandon the party. This turned out to be the determining factor as the environmental movement clung to its principles. The plans to scrap the policy died miserably as Keating desperately tried to maintain some degree of party unity.

Although Australia has 30 per cent of the world's uranium, and has supported Indonesia's desire to place reactors in earthquake-prone areas not far from its borders; it has learned that the movement which kept commercial reactors out of Australia is still alive and well.

Dave Taylor is a Concerned Citizens member working in Australia

Setting the record straight on nukes and greenhouse gases ...

"A nuclear reactor must operate at full capacity for ten years to repay its energy debt incurred by uranium mining, fuel fabrication, steel and zirconium manufacture, and plant construction (this doesn't include decommissioning) Add to this eight to ten years for plant construction for fuel loading and reloading. It would therefore take approximately 18 years for one net calorie of energy to be generated for societal consumption. These operations generate large quantities of carbon dioxide gas so the nuclear energy advertisements are a lie. Nuclear energy adds to the greenhouse effect."

.... Dr.Helen Caldicott, Nuclear Madness.

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Going 'Up' in the world

The New Uptown, a Winnipeg throwaway, as free distribution Tabloids are sometimes called in the trade, has restyled itself as an alternative weekly. While many of us may maintain some suspicion about a corporate-owned "alternative" there are some features of the new publication worth checking out.

For instance, the Greenspace column is written by Martin Toews, formerly the editor-publisher of *Smack* known for its scathing commentary on the inadequacies of progressive movements, particularly for what he saw as a tendency toward "unilateral intellectual disarmament."

It's a more even tempered Toews that has been reporting on organic agriculture and in the Nov. 3-9 issue, about genetically engineered foods or to use the Health and Welfare Canada euphemism "novel foods." The article skims over the debate between environmentalists (who might prefer the name Frankenfood) and supporters. The interesting thing about the article is that the supporters seem to include the Consumers Association of Canada, a representative of which is quoted as saying that they have a high level of trust in the government departments that are assessing the "novel foods."

... Uptown November-November 9, 1994

Speaking of Biotechnology ...

The Biotechnology Caucus of the Canadian Environmental Network has produced a four page fact sheet *Forging Ahead in Secret, in Haste and for Profit* which is available at the Manitoba Eco-Network Environmental Resource Centre.

The fact sheet outlines the risks of genetic engineering research which is unregulated. The aspect of biotechnology that is new is that

scientists have now crossed the species barrier and are able to splice genetic material from one species or more to another.

Over 75% of the research focuses on creating crops that are resistant to specific herbicides, according to the fact sheet.

Get your copy to understand the ethical, economic and environmental concerns related to genetic engineering.

The best part of the fact sheet is its list of more resources, a good starting place for forming a more in depth opinion on the subject.

Reread

compiled by Toby Maloney

Spunky tabloid

A relatively new publication *EcoCity Report* from EcoCity Society in Edmonton is a good guide for urban greens. It includes articles by Greenpeace climate change campaigner and former Project Peacemakers staffer Kevin Jardine on Green Transport and Green Jobs, grassroots efforts at implementing a Green City Vision and an hilarious photo of cycling guru and Edmonton councillor Tooker Gombert armed with a caulking gun (illustrating an article called *Guns and Rosehips*) and talking about economic opportunities to save energy. It's a spunky Tabloid from a group which seems to be getting somewhere with its city administration.

EcoCity Summer 1994 from EcoCity Society #306 10168
100A St. Edmonton, AB T5J 0R6 (403-429-3659).

Big budget Institute

On the subject of international development, the latest annual report from the International Institute for Sustainable Development lists "Directors' honoraria, travel and expenses" at \$179,000 (down from last year's \$292,000). But spending is up overall at IISD (from \$4.3 million last year to \$5.7 million this year). IISD is funded by Environment Canada (\$2.3 million in '94) Canadian International Development Agency (\$1 million in '94) and the Province of Manitoba (\$1.307 million in '94). For the record, the annual budget of the Manitoba Eco-Network is around \$100,000 and the Environment Canada funding for the CEN is \$600,000 (reviewed annually).

Balancing act

CHO!CES has weighed into the annual budget bonanza at Winnipeg City Hall with a regular news circular the *Balance Sheet*. CHO!CES is organizing to influence the process to avoid cuts to inner city resources like social services, libraries, health, grants to non-profit groups and swimming pools.

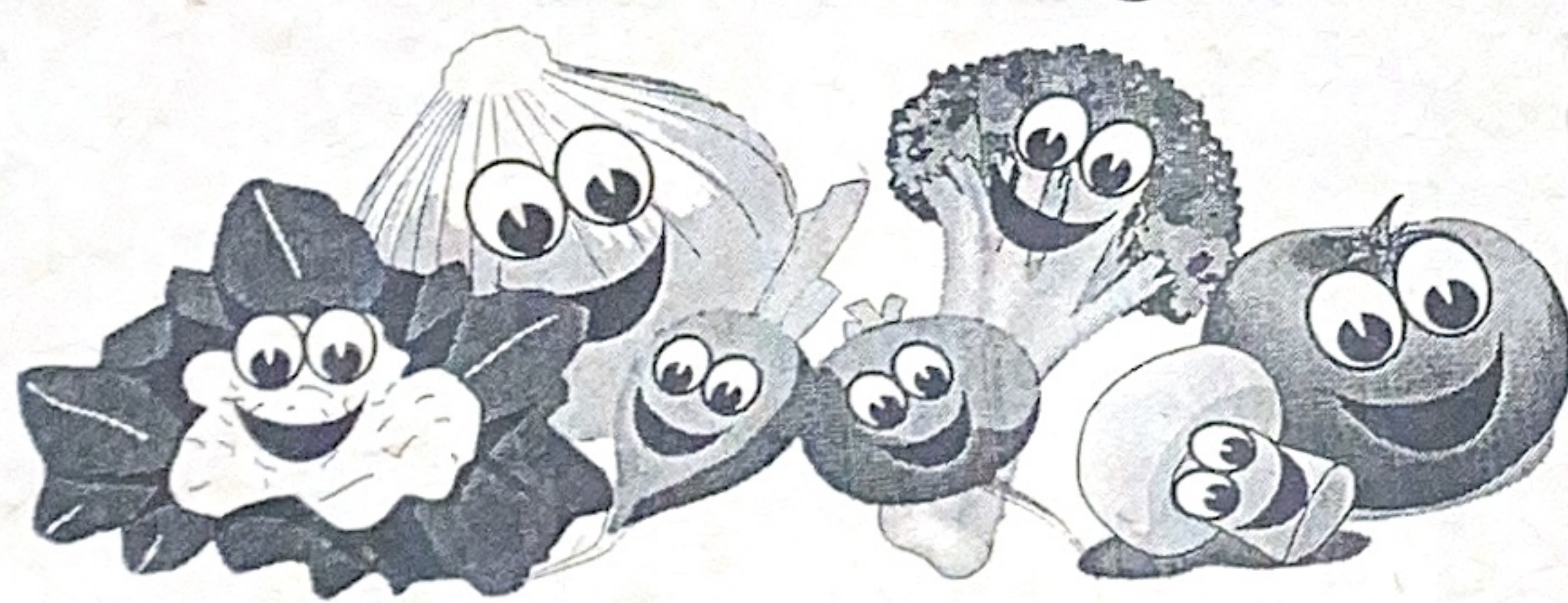
Join in CHO!CES budget process by calling 943-MADD with your suggestions and watch for more info in the *Balance Sheet*.



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Network news file

Toner cartridge recycling? Don't MIND if we do!

In June of this year, Scott Hewitt, the Corporate Sales Consultant at Winnipeg's Mind Computers, had a good idea. He reasoned that starting up a toner cartridge return program could help divert unnecessary waste from landfill and at the same time provide his clients with a high quality reused product at a lower cost than buying brand new.

All previous purchasers of laser printers from Mind have been contacted, and anyone purchasing a printer will find an envelope in the box, outlining the program. All new computer network contracts with Mind are obliged to return laser cartridges. (Mind will also arrange for pickup). The cartridges are sent to Canadian Cartridge Services, another local company, where they are inspected and refilled. Any defective parts are replaced at this time. Because this process is carried out by humans, not machines, the resulting "recycled" product is often of higher quality than the original purchase, Hewitt says. And the cost of the recycled cartridge is about 40% less than that of a new one.

Mind began the program with the intent to donate \$1 to an environmental organization with each cartridge returned. The company chose the Eco-Network to be the recipient of this donation, so Eco-Network supporters can help out the Network while saving themselves cash when in need of a replacement cartridge for their printer. (And while at Mind's showroom, ask if you can see their art gallery which features the compelling multimedia creations of the artist W.S. Littlejohn!)

So far, reports Hewitt, the business in returned cartridges has been limited. But feedback about the idea has been positive, and as word gets out about the program, trade in recycled cartridges will probably pick up. As Hewitt points out: "there are lots of printers out there!"

Good work by good citizens

The following is a list of action-oriented people who have donated time through the Volunteer Effectiveness Program recently. Some have helped the Eco-Network itself organize events like Earthwalk and our Annual Appeal; or have provided a clipping service and the energy to nurture our environmental resource centre.

Others have been referred to our mem-

ber groups for short-term projects. Still others have indicated a willingness to do Committee work or take on the long-term task of delving into the complexity of provincial environmental issues to eventually develop their own long-range view and solutions. Thank you for your time and welcome to you all!

Michael Belbas

Amanda Bosma

Richard Forrest

Nancy Fuller

Keith Candline

Jill Cooke

Jaque Dhaliwal

Susun Duan

Derek Dupont

Kathy Dyszy

Theresa Fitzpatrick

Donna Foley

Sharon Foley

Larry Grenkow

Aric Gudmundsen

Melanie Gustafson

Karen Kampen

Adrienne Moore

Colleen Nikkel

Merrell Ann Phare

Jeff Turner

Antonieta Versace

Shelley Watt

Manitoba Eco-Network presents: Forest Matters

(Part 2 of our 4 part Eco-Information Series)

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7 pm Tues. Jan. 10 Centennial Library Assembly Room

• Hendrik Herfst, Defenders of Nopiming:

Our Living Land - Biodiversity/Support for outstanding aboriginal issues

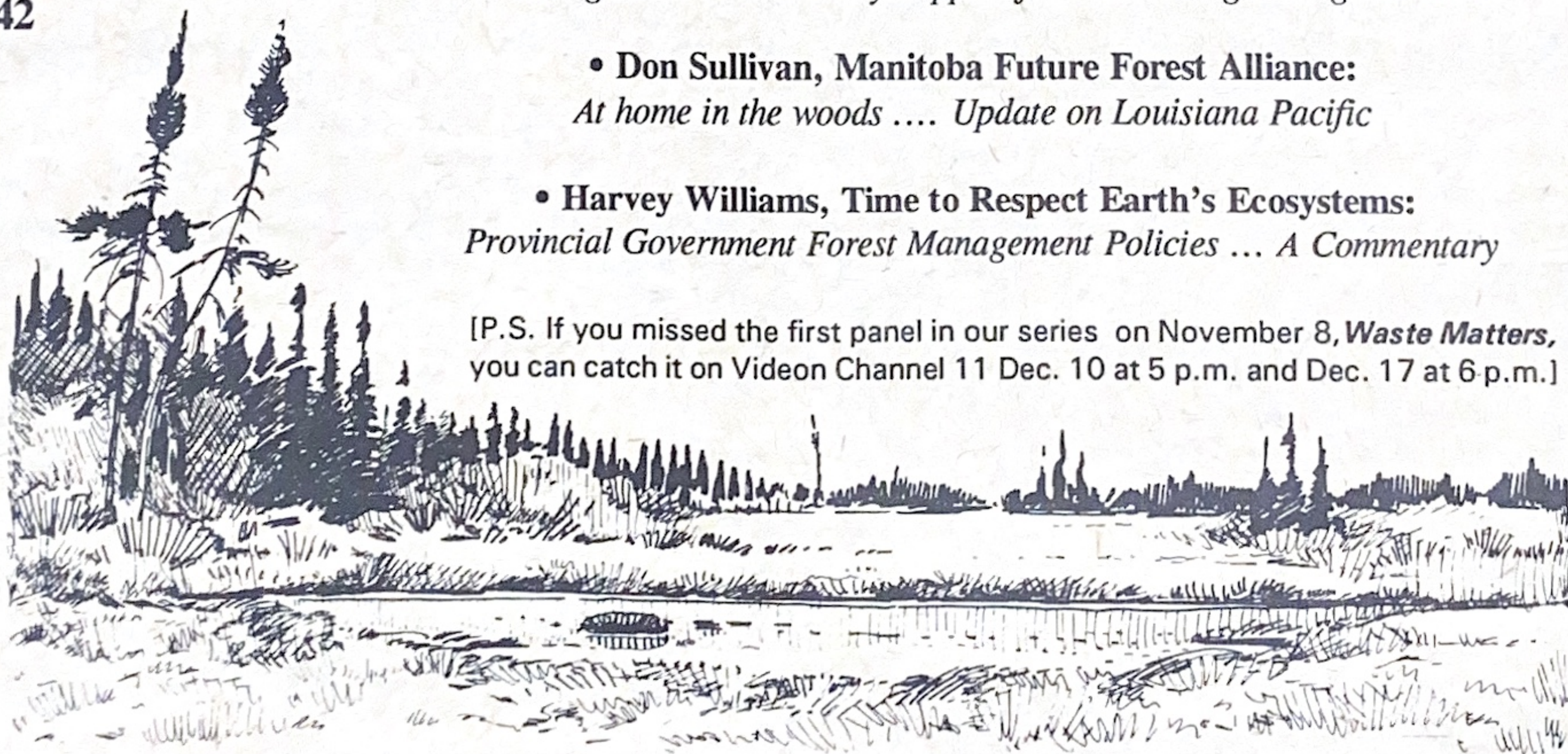
• Don Sullivan, Manitoba Future Forest Alliance:

At home in the woods Update on Louisiana Pacific

• Harvey Williams, Time to Respect Earth's Ecosystems:

Provincial Government Forest Management Policies ... A Commentary

[P.S. If you missed the first panel in our series on November 8, *Waste Matters*, you can catch it on Videon Channel 11 Dec. 10 at 5 p.m. and Dec. 17 at 6 p.m.]



Environmentalists fear federal abdication of responsibility

Harmonization train moving too fast

by Anne Lindsey

For some years now, there have been ongoing discussions between the provincial governments and Ottawa on the subject of "harmonizing" environmental legislation. This process is now forging ahead, under the auspices of the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment (CCME).

Ostensibly, the goals of harmonization are to assist in avoiding duplication of efforts between the two levels of government, in eliminating inefficiencies within regulatory frameworks, and to bring about a more effective separation of roles. However, alarm bells have sounded in the environmental community about harmonization.

Many groups feel that the underlying motivation behind the process has more to do with accommodating the demands of industry and business for de-regulation. Worse, it has been suggested that harmonization might provide a way for the federal government to do an "end run" around its constitutional responsibilities for certain areas of environmental law.

CCME has in place a National Advisory Group to assist in its deliberations, but although some environmentalists are involved, a consensus has emerged that the consultation process is woefully inadequate for meaningful public participation.

Working group walks out

The three Canadian Environmental Network (CEN) members of the Group withdrew in protest when they were denied access to working documents, and to funding which would allow them to consult back with their own constituency, grassroots environmentalists.

In September of 1994, the CEN established a Working Group on Harmonization to inform environmental groups across the country about the issue, and to provide a forum for discussion. Environment Canada relented and agreed to provide a minimal level of support to get the Working Group off the ground.

The first order of business for the Group has been to write a Discussion Paper entitled "An Environmentalists' Perspective on Har-

monization: A Preliminary Analysis". It sets out principles which must be met before harmonization initiatives are approved and explores some of the benefits and pitfalls of harmonization. For example, the goal of reducing or eliminating duplication and inefficiencies is laudable, but it makes the untested assumption that duplication in regulation exists in the first place. The discussion

Canada suffers from underdeveloped environmental regulations and inadequate enforcement...CEN Working Group on Harmonization

paper notes that the experience of most environmentalists is to the contrary: "Canada suffers from underdeveloped environmental regulations and inadequate enforcement."

The paper recommends a study to outline clearly where duplication and inefficiency occurs, and to document any existing detrimental effects of duplication on industry, the public and the environment.

Another example is the quest for greater predictability and consistency in environmental law and policy with the aim of reducing "regulatory competitiveness". Again, it is not clear whether the most consistent or predictable standard will be best for the environment in all cases. Jurisdictions should have the flexibility to be able to enact a more stringent law where local circumstances warrant.

The Discussion paper touches briefly upon the issue of redefining the duties and responsibilities of the levels of government, pointing out that any significant realignment of powers must be thoroughly examined in light of the requirements of constitutional law. For example, if administrative or other agreements allow provinces to play a role in the administration of federal powers (such an eventuality is contemplated in the (federal) Department of Fisheries and Oceans Program Review, which includes the provision that "most federal freshwater responsibilities...be delegated to the provinces and territories"), the federal government must be willing and able to override

provincial actions if it becomes necessary for the protection of Canada's environment.

The Paper was distributed to the Environment Ministers just prior to their recent meeting in Bathurst, New Brunswick, but as yet there has been little feedback except that some form of public consultation will be undertaken, and a confirmation that they are talking about fundamental changes.

While at that meeting, Manitoba Environment Minister, Glen Cummings signed an agreement on the harmonization of environmental impact assessment between Manitoba and Ottawa, to come into effect as of November, 1994.

Essentially this means that from now on, Manitoba developments in which there is demonstrated interest by both levels of government will undergo joint environmental review taking into account the environmental assessment requirements of both jurisdictions. The Harmonization process aims to have nationally consistent Environmental Assessment processes in place for all provinces in the near future.

The Manitoba/Ottawa agreement is an indication that the harmonization process is pushing ahead. The question now is not whether harmonization will happen, but how - and how quickly. As one individual put it, "the harmonization train is moving fast...I think our efforts will have to concentrate on trying to steer this train in the right direction...."

Whether environmentalists can have any significant influence on the process however remains open to question - word from the Bathurst meeting indicates that there is still reluctance to release any of the working documents, and the first four functional areas of the main Framework Agreement on Harmonization are to be completed by May, 1995.

Resources: The Eco-Network Resource Centre has a copy of *Environmentalists Perspective on Harmonization* and background documents from CCME. The Water

Caucus of the CEN has sent out some material on DFO's program review, and is urging interested groups to take action.

Contact Anne at 772-7542 for info.

ECJ

WWIII is over dramatic human trespass -- crimes against nature and the awesome breakdown in the health of eco-systems

A recent news report quoted Nobel Prize winner David Kendall as saying that "we cannot control environmental damage unless we control population. This isn't understood."

In a careful and well referenced but extraordinary book, Michael Tobias takes up the cause. Some conventional beliefs are challenged -- for example that population growth declines as prosperity increases and that wealth translates into environmental restraint.

Tobias has had to take great pains to point to some successes that might engender a modest optimism about the survival of our species. You might doubt this optimism after reading the book. You will, most certainly, get closer to the understanding Kendall is seeking.

Tobias travelled and looked, visited and interviewed in China, India, Indonesia and Africa. His comprehensive treatment is illustrated in his description of the Indian State of Kerala's success in establishing a two child family norm when compared to the situation elsewhere on the subcontinent. Its comparatively higher levels of literacy, female emancipation, contraceptive use and government leadership in education and health are explored.

Yet even Kerala's resources are still extremely limited. Overfishing has wrought havoc in coastal waters, abstraction of land from forest for agriculture is at its limit, and eco-system destruction is characterized as "dramatic human trespass."

30 million people live in area a third the size of California and 18% are unemployed. In a locale where well educated residents are articulate and -- horror of horrors -- unionized, who would set up a sweat shop operation?

So, if Kerala is doomed to poverty and denudation, despite its enlightened social outlook, what hope is there for India as a whole? One senses despair.

In a chapter on the price of development the reader is asked if there is a numerical threshold where ethical thinking undergoes epiphany, where we are suddenly transformed by the data. When we are pre-occupied with taxes, crime and health care, we ignore the over taxed biology, the crimes against nature, and the awesome breakdown in the health of eco-systems, all of which are symptoms of an unsustainable population in most developed countries.

There is no immediate prospect of an official population policy in the United States, for instance. Take the example of California. The state's population was growing at 646,000 per year in 1990, not including unregistered "illegal" immigrants. This 84.6 per thousand should be compared with the average of 31 per thousand in India and 21 per thousand of China. The total population of California is expected to more than double to 63 million by 2040. The forecasters believe that traffic congestion will increase by a factor of five in southern California and 8000 new homes and a school will be required every day. It is not difficult to imagine the parallel demands

for space, roads, waste disposal and water supply, nor the local deterioration of the air, water, and soil which must accompany such growth.

The crude mathematics of the swarm (the civilised world in his words) knocks at the door of all biological laws. We appear to have opened that door via the great urban agglomerations of the world, and social catastrophe threatens.

Tobias leads the reader into the primary areas in which WWIII must be waged "at the same level of national and global mobilization as to fight the Axis powers in 1941."

The first of these areas is the expansion and nurturing of an ecological conscience. Tobias refers us to Jainism -- lives lived in non-violence and ecological sustainability, safeguarding and shepherding the interdependency of all biological beings. A single measure -- the widespread adoption of vegetarianism and the international marshalling of vegan clout -- as an alternative to violence against animals could change human behaviour and get us off the development treadmill.

Tobias then focuses argument for drastically enhanced population funding, citing UNICEF's contention that family planning is the "single most important technology known to the human race." He estimates that an annual contribution of \$15 billion is needed to stabilize world population at 10 billion. The present level is about \$4.5 billion, less than a quarter of which comes from OECD countries. Compare this he says with \$89 billion spent by the U.S. on new weapon systems in 1993 and NATO spending of \$350 billion on weapons in the same year.

These notes do not do justice to the book. I should not omit Tobias' penchant for detail, chapter and verse. My reading has prompted one idea which may be useful at once in Manitoba. Provide each MLA with a copy of World War III and defer any further consideration of a sustainable development Act until all members of the legislature have had a chance to read it.

ECJ

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The new pirates: claiming common property and enforcing "intellectual property rights"

Continued from page 1

or Private Property:" Dr. Fikret Berkes, Director of the Natural Resources Institute at the University of Manitoba gave an overview of what constitutes ownership and the differences in common and private property.

Ian Davidson-Hunt, also from NRI outlined, a local case of common property -- aboriginal use and harvesting of wild rice. Davidson-Hunt said a case could be made under the Biodiversity Convention that the Nishnawbe of Treaty 3 in Northwestern Ontario hold the rights to the genetic material that has been developed in their lakes. He outlined how wild rice bosses decide which lakes to seed and when and who to invite to the harvest. That contradicts the common misconception that wild rice is there for the taking and that aboriginal people just show up at harvest time.

He also pointed to a recent study that showed documented the deliberate promotion of berry and certain wildlife habitat by aboriginal communities through controlled burning in Boreal Forest eco-systems as evidence of what Europeans cultures would consider to be agriculture.

COPS and Robbers

On the international scene, Right Livelihood Award winner and Marquis Project founder Pat Mooney gave an overview of the upcoming Conference of the Parties (COPS) to the

Biodiversity Convention in the Bahamas in early December.

"The first and last thing you hear about (the conference in) the Bahamas in the news media might be now," he said. The conference, which he plans to attend as an observer on behalf of the non-government Rural Advancement Foundation International is expected to spend a week debating procedures and a week talking about budget.

"It's not going to save a single damn bird, or plant or animal..." Mooney warned.

He still sees NGO involvement in the process as critical be-

Continued on next page

PUNCHLINE

by

@CHRISTIAN

SEÑOR, THE EEC MAKES MORE MONEY TAXING COFFEE COMING FROM LATIN AMERICA...



THAN WE IN LATIN AMERICA EARN EXPORTING IT TO YOU! EVEN IN THE EARLY 1960S...



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cause of the need to educate the bureaucrats from various nations. Typically they are oriented towards parks and are unaware of the impact of their decisions on agriculture.

The Biodiversity Convention signed by about 60 countries at the Rio de Janeiro Summit in Brazil in 1992 was hailed as progress by many, but opposed by Mooney and his group because it left the multinationals free to impose their view of "intellectual property rights" on the world.

The very last draft of the convention that was signed suddenly excluded all biological materials that had been collected prior to the agreement which left an estimated 68 per cent of plant genetic resources, 85 per cent of livestock genetic resources and 86 per cent of microbial plasm outside the convention.

It also could mean that the south has relinquished any legal right to the genetic material that has already been gathered. That's something the south has never agreed to, and could mean as much as \$4 to 5 billion in agricultural genetic property rights and \$23 billion in medicinal property rights the north would owe the south each year.

According to an internal newsletter, Ciba Geigy, the giant seed, drug and chemical, company sees the Biodiversity Convention as beneficial because it has the potential to do what GATT couldn't do in enforcing intellectual property rights.

Giving that away "is a very bad deal for the south ... It's piracy," said Mooney.

The good news is that the parties have agreed to more study of the issue of traditional farmers' rights over the material they

have developed and to revisit the issue of the exclusion of the majority of genetic material.

The election of a majority of Republicans in the U.S., believe it or not, is good news on this issue, said Mooney, because it means the U.S. is unlikely to join the convention. If the U.S. stays away for a few years that might give the signatories a chance to work out a better deal for the south.

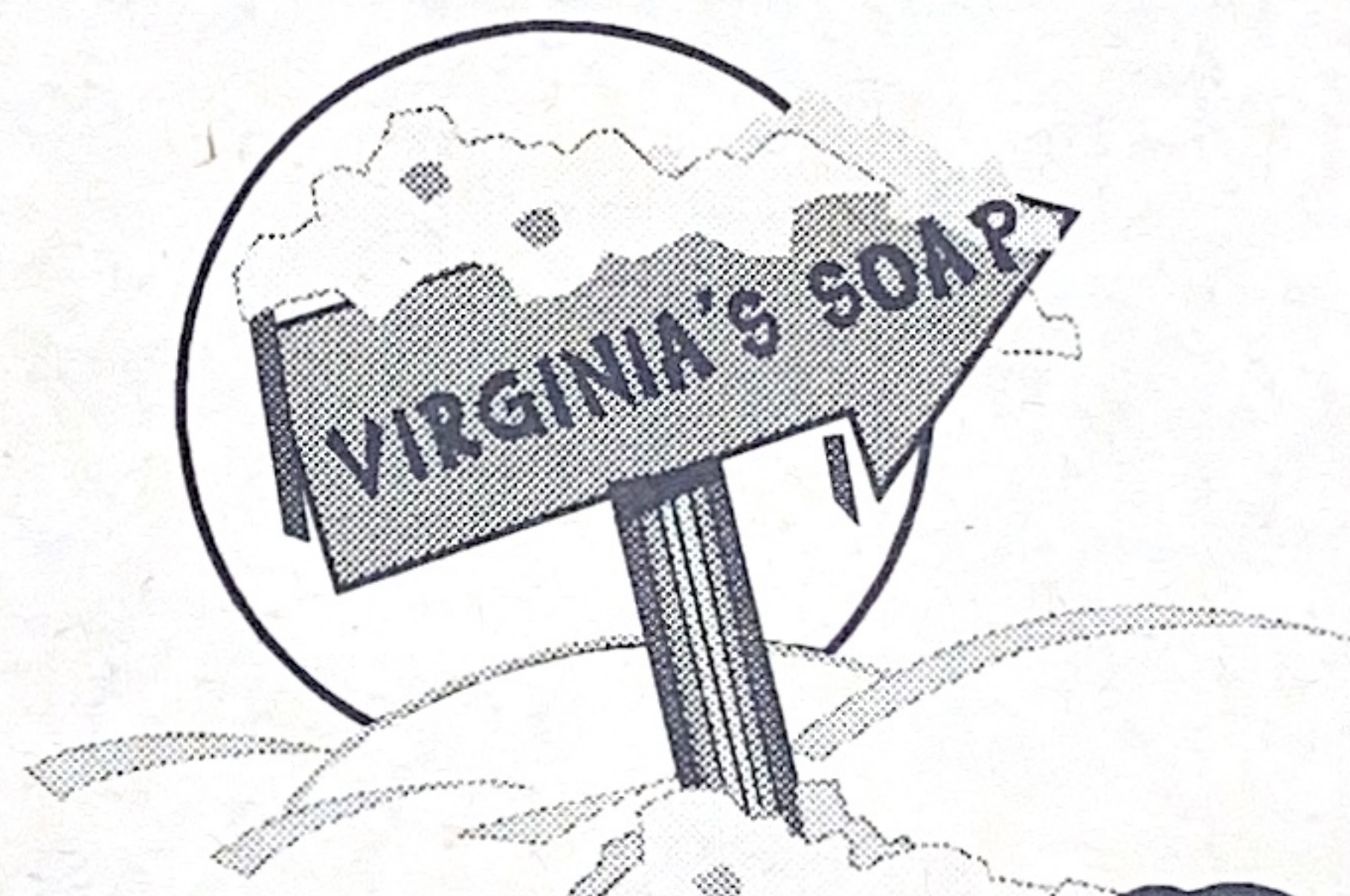
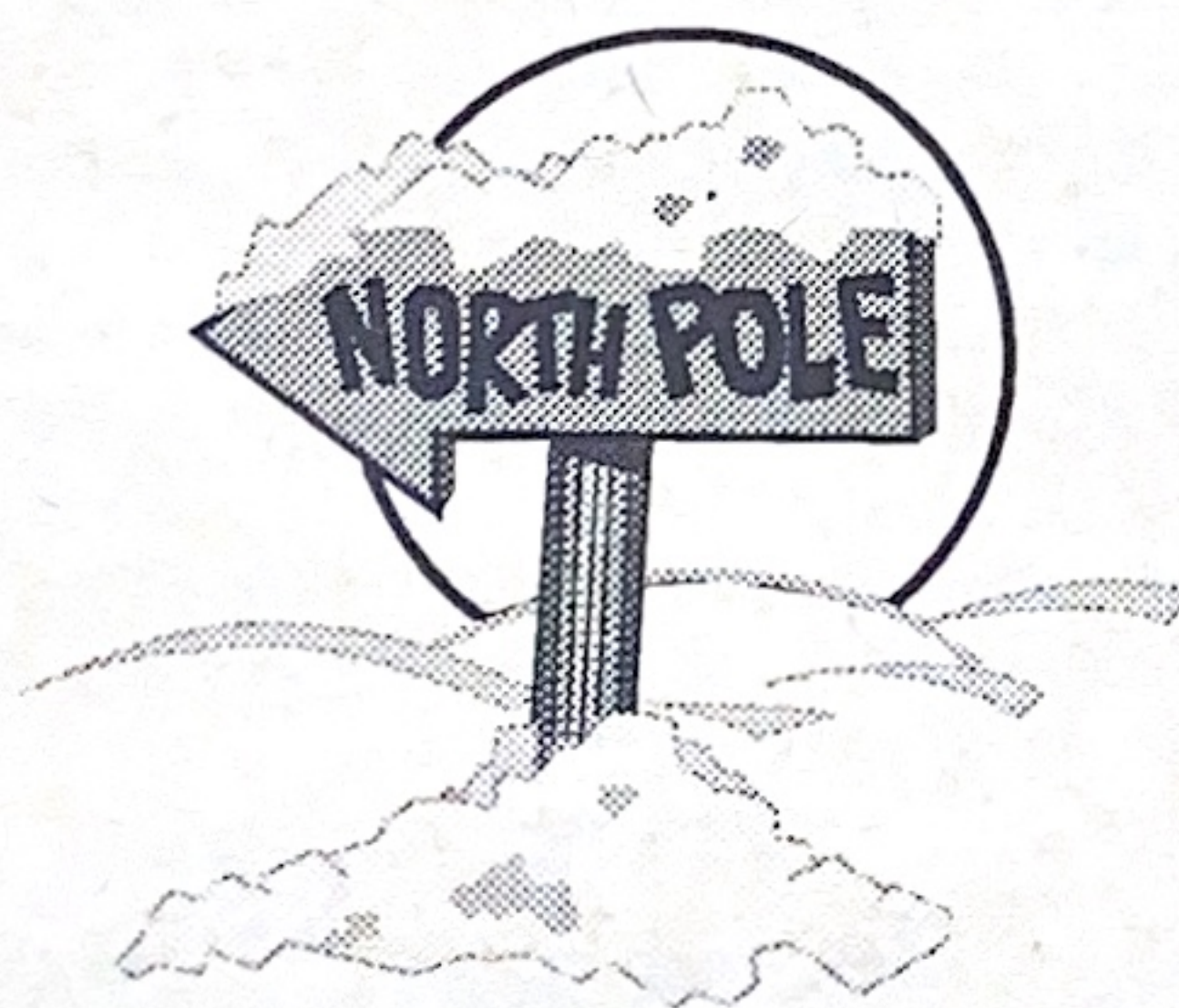
Otherwise the situation looks bleak, especially considering that companies like Merck are picking off countries like Costa Rica one at time in their conquest of MesoAmerica's genetic resources. Mooney and RAFI are

The two week Conference of the parties is not going to save a single damn bird, or plant or animal Pat Mooney

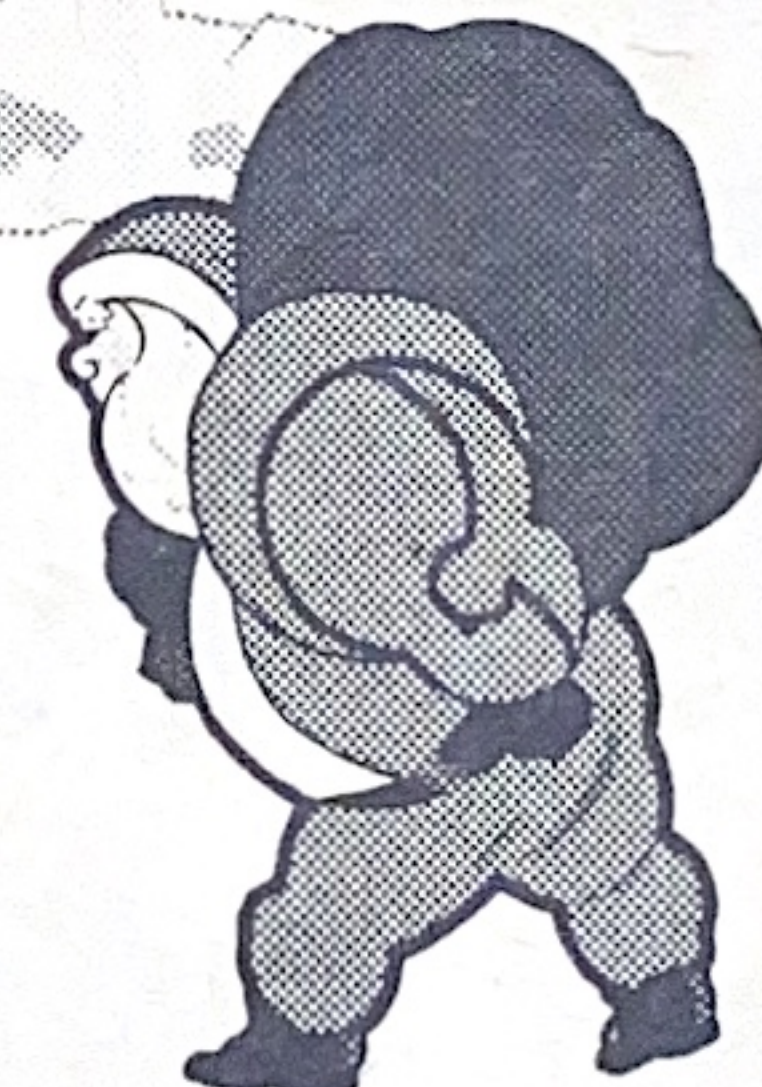


plugging away, calling for a moratorium on collection of germ plasm until the issue of rights is resolved to the benefit of indigenous people.

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Looking beyond solid wastes to deal with our actual environmental impacts

It is the analysis of some, but not my opinion, that the City of Winnipeg, is faced with either taking or leaving the Manitoba Product Stewardship Program.

I see the program as inadequate for many reasons but mostly because it learns nothing from the mistakes in other jurisdictions. After having virtually no action on recycling services here, while other jurisdictions delivered curbside service to a majority of their citizens, we're now supposed to be happy with a proposal that might be called Greatest Hits of the mid-80's. Unfortunately we will have this system in 1995 and beyond.

It's my opinion that the City of Winnipeg should tell the province of Manitoba what kind of system is appropriate for this community and insist that enabling legislation reflect that need. In so far as the province acts or reacts to this, the following areas should be examined:

Looking at only the end zone of the "level playing field"

I've said before that stewardship doesn't end at the cash register. Well it doesn't end at the dump either. If we truly want to get at the

serious environmental problems our society faces we have to look at the life cycle impact of the product, not just their disposal or recycling costs. The industry advocates of CIPSI and this son of CIPSI (both are really just revamped versions of the Ontario Multi-

Material Recycling Initiative) claimed they wanted a "level playing field."

But we aren't able to move the ball out of the end zone. We only focus on the end use of a product because consumers must be protected from the knowledge of how much waste goes into the manufacture. (Otherwise they might choose differently or not at all.) Meadows, Meadows and Randers as quoted by the Toronto

Environmental Alliance in "Moving Up the Ladder" show that the problem is much greater at the front end of the product's life cycle:

For every tonne of solid waste created by consumers, five tonnes of waste are produced at the manufacturing stage and twenty tonnes at the extractive.

It seems that the level playing field competition will not be for the least environmentally damaging product, but for the product which is cheapest or easiest to divert from the landfill.

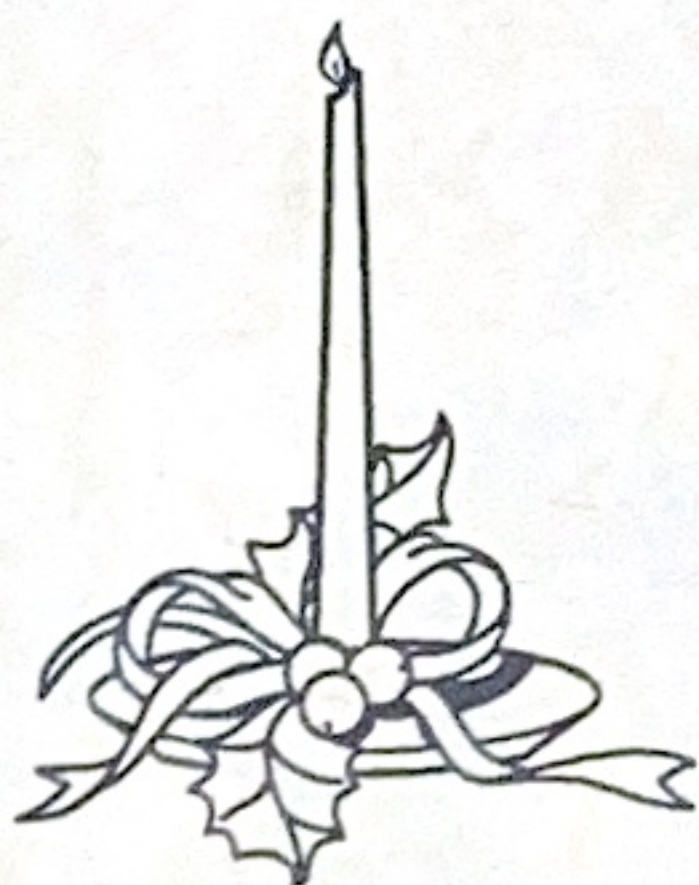
This is seductive, because the cost to the forest, or the oceans or the atmosphere, is not necessarily in the City of Winnipeg's jurisdiction. The City of Winnipeg is not directly responsible for the mountainous deficit of action in these areas, but it is responsible for the direct costs of disposal of garbage. In the prevailing climate of ignorance of environmental impacts a curbside recycling program that avoids consideration of real environmental problems is quite saleable politically.

That said, I still hope that the City of Winnipeg decision on this issue will be forward thinking, if only for the reason that sooner or later the senior levels of government will pass along the costs of mismanagement in their jurisdictions. I hope the City will resist the sirens' calls for instant recycling and instead advocate for a system that will truly measure the costs of products.

Continued on following page

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Rewards for continued resource exploitation

Continued from previous page

I'm talking about costs to the environment through extractive wastes into ground and surface water and into the atmosphere, the contribution to atmospheric and other pollution including solid wastes as a result of the transportation of products over long distances, the wastes and toxins introduced into the environment during the manufacturing stage, AND the waste produced as a result of the retail and disposal of the product.

Then we should rate the relative durability of the product. Did we expend all this effort for a single use product that will go to landfill or be recycled, or can it be reused over long periods, re-sold over and over, or refilled?

I don't expect the widespread application of this basic principle of sustainability will happen tomorrow, but I believe the groundwork has to be laid now, and the option left open for sanity to win over expediency.

For instance, policy decisions should be guided by life cycle analysis. If we're going to have a levy system, then we certainly should not reward any product which has the advantage of ease of diversion, but which adds a greater burden to the environment in general. Transportation packaging and other industrial-commercial wastes should all be part of the levy system, so producers cannot hide waste ahead of the consumer purchase.

The Manitoba Stewardship Program doesn't look at reuse or refill of soft drink containers, something that we've had in the past, and instead proposes to enshrine 1980's profligacy into the next century. Advocates of this proposal claim that individual consumers could have had, but didn't prefer to buy, refillable containers. But that's because the prices of the two options didn't reflect the actual cost to the environment that would have made refillable the cheaper of the two. This also ignores the role of advertising and marketing by the companies, which failed to inform consumers about which was better environmentally. If anything advertising favoured disposable, by phasing out images of refillable containers with new images based on their replacement.

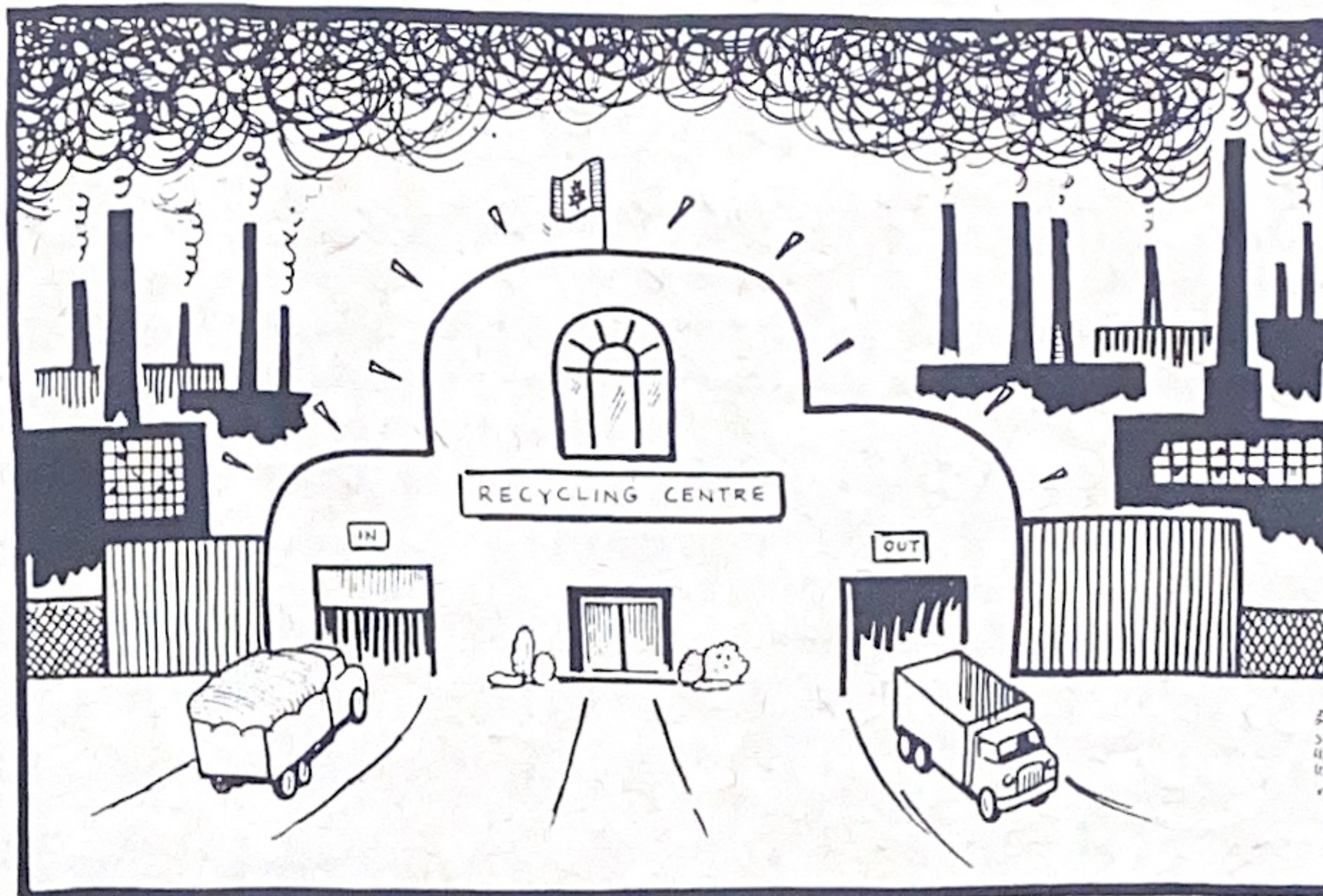
I would also point out that this pseudo free market view -- that society as a whole chooses the products it gets or deserves the products they choose, overlooks the reality that someone who doesn't choose to purchase any kind of soft drink has no influence on the question but still suffers the same burden of litter and environmental degradation from the manufacture of same.

We should be looking for ways to introduce life cycle analysis into pricing, rather than making excuses for corporate expediency.

It may be that instead of applying a minimal levy for some packaging products which are lightweight and relatively easy to recycle, that some products will become so costly they are withdrawn from the market altogether. This is not a bad thing in a society that is consumed with consumption.

What happened to polluter pays?

I question why the "stewards" are not being asked to pay the complete cost of recycling etc. in this proposal. Considering that the



system, in its earlier incarnation as CIPSI (and OMMRI for that matter) was conceived largely as a way of dodging unfavourable regulation such as deposits or a German "green dot" system, I think we've got a lot of room to put some reality behind the rhetoric of stewardship.

The provincial government should be urged to bring the Grocery Products Manufacturers' Association and the Canadian Soft Drink Association back to the table, this time with some environmentalists

Continued on following page



Our Pledge...

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Continued from previous page

For integrated corporations with centralized top down decision structures, it matters little where recyclables are processed. Again, by externalizing costs such as depletion of non-renewable resources, atmospheric pollution and the depopulation of rural areas into unsustainable large metropolitan areas, it is likely that it will be

Pollution Process

producers were at any time prepared to act out of altruism, is that this issue has not been examined in public to the extent it ought to be. Most of the public fails to see any connection between this kind of decision and deforestation or the production of toxic wastes, but they can be forgiven because it does not appear to be a concern of the governments that represent them either. It is instructive that packaging producers could not find agreement with a government that has shown its willingness to facilitate destructive developments in

forestry and hydroelectric production and has a pitiable record on enforcement of environmental regulations.

The only way to remedy this severance of solid waste issues, which are really only symptoms, from the much larger issue of our total impact on the environment, is to foster public debate about this pro-

posal and others like it, to include examination of alternatives, to revisit the goals of this kind of "initiative" and to collectively set new ones. The province spent a year playing footsie with industry and gave us nothing but vague promises about recycling for everyone at no additional cost.

A year with no draft regulations, a year with no background reports, no business plan with numbers, nothing but overheads and flow charts showing "rollout" dates by Spring '94. But not everyone will receive recycling services and it certainly won't be without cost. And now we have draft legislation and despite ignoring its citizens for a year, the province is "fast-tracking" consultations. Those consultations appear to be a series of closed door meetings with selected groups, again skewed numerically and qualitatively in favour of the packaging industry.

Even if the province never had another meeting about the product stewardship plan with packaging producers, corporations will have had more access to the political process on this issue than individual Manitobans will have a chance to exercise. This is objectionable. As the sector most responsible for the pollution, they have been allowed to influence the process in their self-interest, which is contrary to the interest of the environment more often than not. The province's economic and political agenda once more intrudes on its professed adherence to the principles of sustainable development.

The City of Winnipeg should refuse to sanction this proposal because of the process alone, rather than participate in an attempt to produce blue boxes in time for the next provincial election. Since we've waited a decade for decent recycling services, why accept a fast track when the proposal fails any objective standard of sustainability whether it's the 3R's or the Brundtland Commission guidelines.

Resources: Moving up the Ladder: The Place of Reuse and Refill in Canadian Waste Management Strategies. Toronto Environmental Alliance, Report on the Public Consultation Program Pursuant to Recycling Opportunities in the City of Winnipeg by John Sinclair, Chair, City of Winnipeg Waste Minimization Advisory Committee

ECJ

PAGE 12 • November-December, 1994 • Eco-Journal

A tale of three towns

How rural communities are responding to recycling

While Winnipeg remains mired in indecision between curbside or depot, user pay vs. product stewardship, private vs. public, small towns and rural areas have got on with the job of recycling and waste reduction.

Innovative local solutions dreamed up by dedicated volunteers have brought service unheard of by urban dwellers to small towns all over the province.

For instance, the Town of Souris has had free curbside recycling pick-up once per month since July of 1990 courtesy of the non-profit group CLEAN (Citizens Lobby for Environmental Action Now). The first Saturday of each month volunteer drivers for CLEAN travel the community's front streets in private vehicles to pick-up up weatherproof bags of recycling.

CLEAN founder Gary Einerson says that the group originally was intending to educate, lobby and recycle, but is "mainly pre-occupied with recycling at this point."

He told a recent meeting at Westman Recycling in Brandon -- Innovations in Recycling in taining the volunteer problem for the pick-up has been added for ing centre.

He estimates a 35 pation rate from the 1760. The groups' recycling and garbage Souris.

Other communities to create local markets they collect rather than paying to ship them to city markets. Carberry's Gary Sallows says that his group's objective from the beginning was to use as much as possible locally. Ironically that effort has led to his community collecting newsprint from several surrounding communities in order to supply a market that was created in the Thoroughbred horse racing industry.

The Carberry Recycling Committee had experimented with shredding and baling newsprint for bedding in cattle and poultry barns. Through a connection with horse racing, Sallows discovered that the Thoroughbred horses are skittish and "snotty" from allergies and that their general condition improves when strips of newsprint replace straw in their stalls.

Carberry has also been experimenting with using crushed glass in local projects. The glass can be added to road asphalt, but not concrete, which does make a good base for concrete because it packs well and provides for good drainage. The town works department is using the materials more and more.

Carberry uses a depot system with some curbside pick-up service for seniors by student volunteers students. Sallows says the community has looked at extending the curbside service, but is currently getting about 20 per cent of the householders in the area to bring recyclables to bins and depots.

Paper shipping a money problem

Boissevain Recycling also faced a paper problem. The newsprint that is collected is too expensive to ship for the amount of return. According to the group's treasurer Marion Glover, the community now is able to use much of its newsprint in cow barns where farmers report improvements in disease frequency.

Boissevain has also experimented with using bales of newsprint in external wood burners. They found that jamming two bales into a furnace kept the burner going for six to seven hours. A business owner who heated his workshop with the paper bales found that he reduced his heating costs from \$1200 to \$300 last winter.

Glover says Boissevain Recycling's participation rate for its depot system has gone from about 25 per cent up to as high as 50 per cent of the householders in Boissevain and the surrounding Rural Municipality of Morton.

The groups met at an Annual General Meeting of Westman Recycling which operates a depot in Brandon and serves as a processing centre for some other communities in the region.

Westman itself is a bit of an innovator with a mix of paid staff, volunteers and community service order workers. The group has a working relationship with the City of Brandon which collects newsprint city-wide with an Autobin automated system and delivers it to the Westman depot.

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**The Town of Souris
has had free
curbside recycling
pick-up once per
month since July of
1990 courtesy of the
non-profit group
CLEAN.**

Westman -- that main-system has been no up but some paid staff sorting at their process-

to 40 per cent partici-town's population of eventual aim is to have pick-up integrated in

have focused on ways and uses for the materi-



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Canada looks to polish international image of forestry

The federal government is very active in trying to redeem its reputation in international circles after the Clayoquot Sound debacle and the publication of Brazil of the North, which documented poor forestry practices in all parts of Canada.

Discussion at the Canadian Environmental Network Forest Caucus meeting September 24, indicated that heavy Canadian government participation is expected in the upcoming session of the U.N. Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD).

The CSD will be meeting in New York in April of 1995. General discussion at the Forest Caucus focussed on environmental non-governmental organizations' participation in the process, specifically on the lack of effectiveness of the CSD; using it as an opportunity to lobby governments and sympathetic delegates; and on opportunities for international networking.

Also, an indigenous people's conference is taking place in Kamloops, B.C. aimed at linking indigenous issues with the CSD's New York session.

Since the International Affairs Caucus is already working on CSD, it was decided to express interest by the Forest Caucus in participating. Canada and Malaysia (imagine!) are co-hosting an international working group on global forests to develop action items for the agenda of the CSD.

It seems Canada will be trying to establish a positive forestry image for itself at CSD. It has embarked on a Criteria and Indicators for Sustainable

Global Convention on Climate Change. Each province is asked to co-ordinate possible legal actions.

In its meeting with Environment Minister/Deputy Prime Minister Sheila Copps (which I did not attend), the Forest Caucus chose a question on

Clayoquot. She replied that it depends on an initiative from B.C.

In the subsequent general discussion Ms. Copps asked for a very short statement from each Caucus as to which federal programs are supported and useful, and which are not. (Federal funding cuts coming up or what?)

The actual business meeting of the Forest Caucus was quite productive. The fact that it was action oriented was the most encouraging part and, if the general initiatives for re-organizing pan out, will result in a much more influential caucus.

Hendrik Herfst represents Defenders of Nopiming and was a Manitoba delegate to the Canadian Environmental Network Annual General Meeting.

Report from the National Forest Caucus by Hendrik Herfst, Defenders of Nopiming

Development initiative.

This is a workshop developed by the Canadian Forest Service and contains criteria for certifying sustainability under the headings of Economic Criteria (4 criteria), Social (7), and Environmental (6) criteria. It has a decent appearance. Watch for slippery sections!

Provincial issues

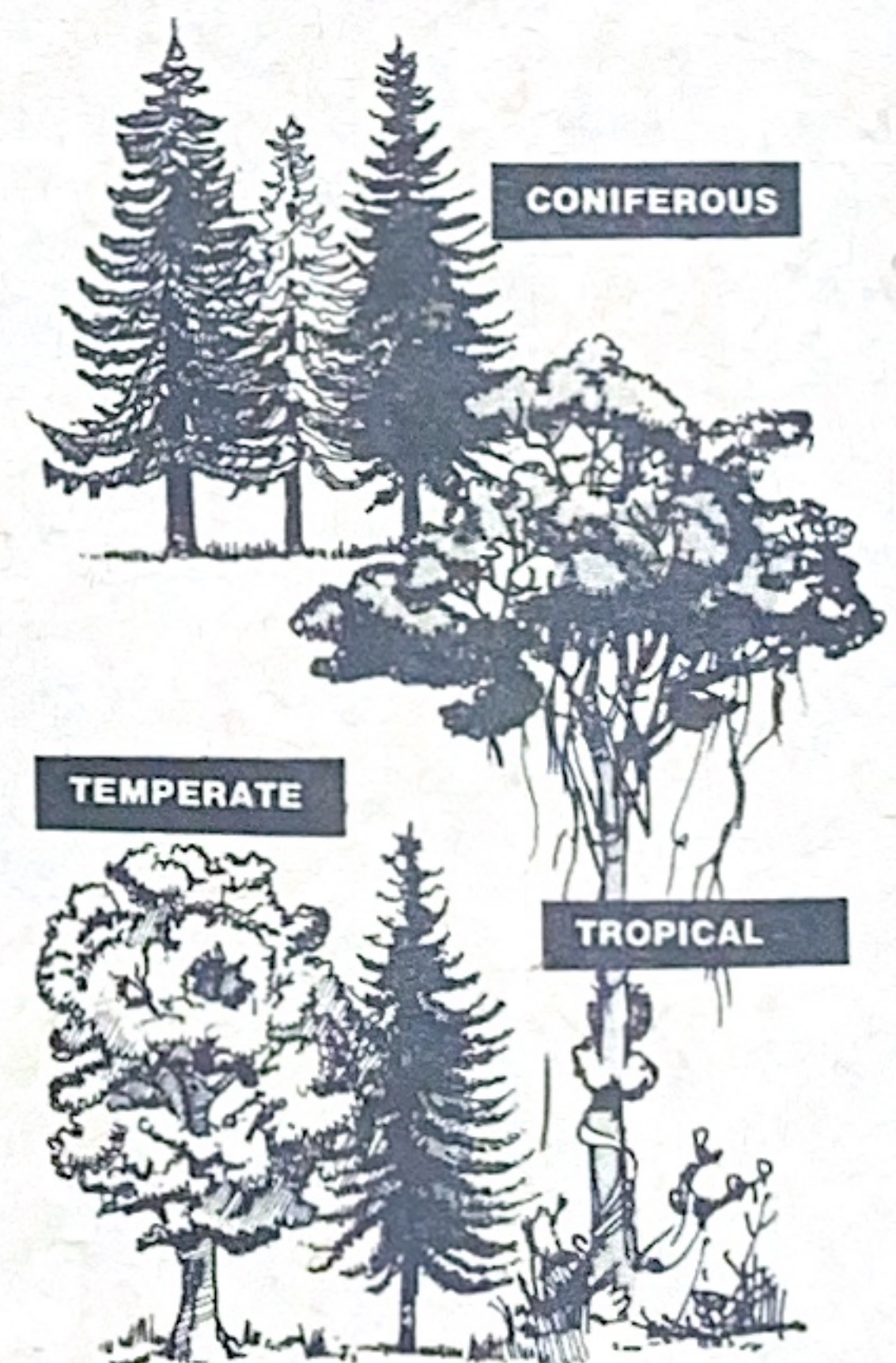
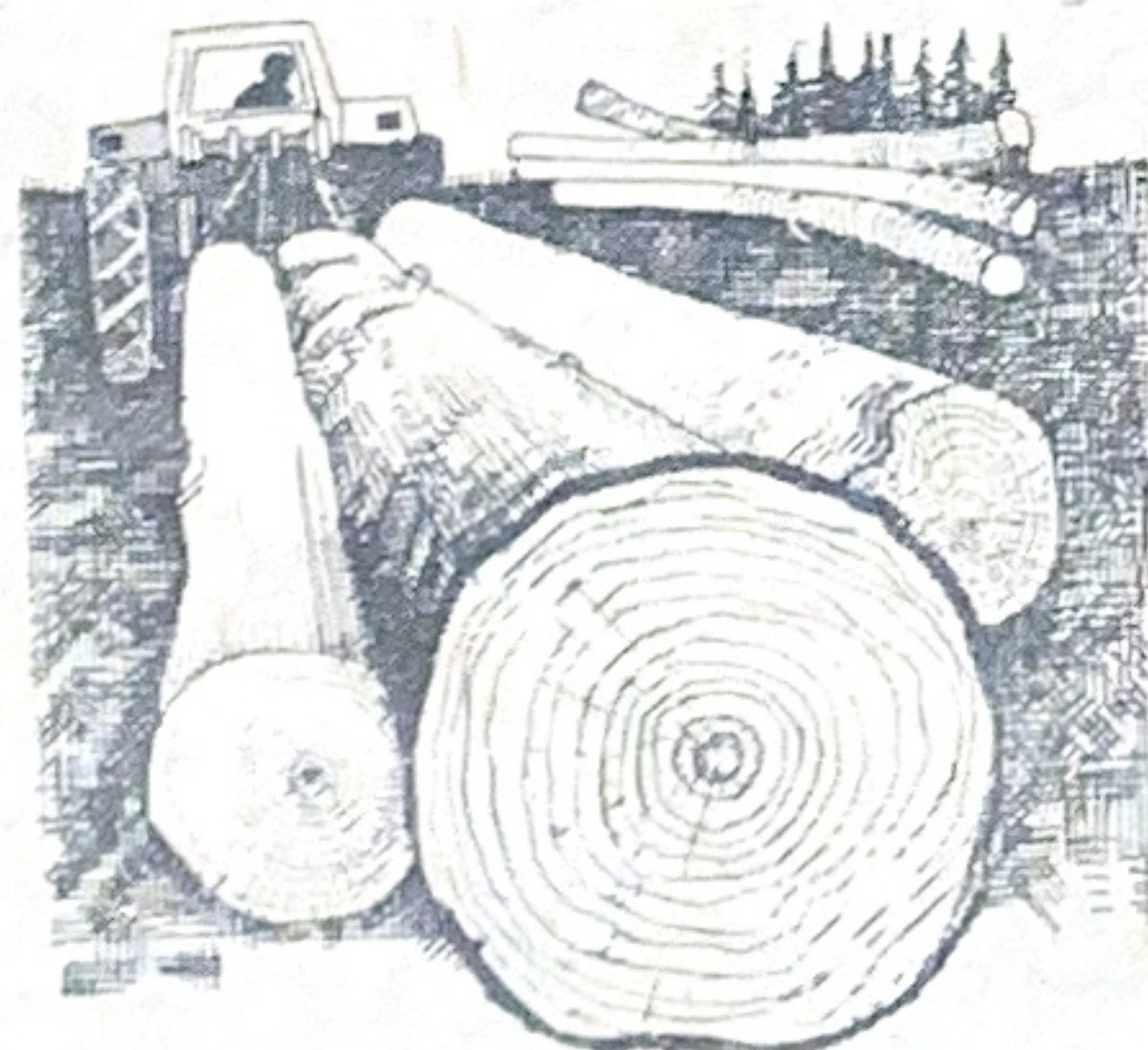
As representative for Manitoba I reported on Louisiana-Pacific, its American record, and our provincial government's inadequate action concerning the assessment.

On REPAP I reported the ongoing cutting without proper public review. In general, I commented on dissatisfaction with the government's 20 year Integrated Forestry Management policy review with some hopeful opportunities.

I declined to describe the Nopiming situation at this meeting in the interest of getting to work on the caucus' agenda.

John McInnis of Alberta reported on the meeting of the circumpolar Taiga Rescue Network in Edmonton which had representation from all over northern Europe and Russia, Japan, Canada, and the U.S.A. The Sierra Club announced the beginnings of a Boreal Forest Campaign at the meeting.

One of the members reported on a proposal to sue provincial governments for non-adherence to the Biodiversity Treaty and the



Making the grade on ... product packaging

Conclusions excerpted from a school report on packaging

by Jessica Dilts and Valerie Kellet

- All companies should change to recycled products to reduce the amount of garbage dumped in landfill sites and eliminate excess packaging to save our natural resources (excess packaging wastes non-renewable resources like petroleum, as well as hydro-electric power and trees).

- Governments could put more laws into effect that would make companies cut down on packaging. An example would be for companies to reduce packaging by 50 per cent in the next ten years. Penalties and fines could be imposed for companies who do not cooperate. Maybe the government could offer tax breaks or incentives for companies who cooperate and exceed the reduction targets.

- Consumers should be aware of how products are packaged and whether or not they are recyclable. We could write letters to companies asking them to reduce their packaging. When we buy a product we could send the excess packaging back to the company

instead of throwing it out, and ask that they reduce the amount of waste. If they do not cooperate we could buy from companies which do not overpackage and want to protect the environment.

- Make garbage-less lunches and use reusable con-

tainers. Avoid tetra juice packs. Avoid buying aluminum six-packs with plastic rings because the rings can choke and kill animals. Cut the rings before throwing them away, if you do have them.

- Use canvas shopping bags instead of plastic when going shopping. You can buy them or make them.

- Use plastic containers instead of using Saran Wrap for storing foods.

- Buy bulk family-sized items instead of small, individually wrapped items.

- Buy products that are recyclable instead of those that aren't (e.g. recyclable glass, plastic and paper containers).

- Excess packaging is a big problem that will not go away by itself. If consumers, companies and governments work together to reduce, reuse, and recycle packaging materials, our Earth will be a beautiful place to live for a long time.

Jessica Dilts and Valerie Kellet are Junior High students at Balmoral Hall School.



Save Our Earth Word Find Puzzle

by Coral Maloney, Age 9½

Circle the words on the list and find the scrambled message from the remaining letters:

ACID RAIN	MOSS
ACT	PLANET
ANIMALS	PLANT
BIRDS	RECYCLED
EARTH	SAVE
GRASSES	SOIL
HABITAT	WORMS
HOME	

ANSWER: (NO PEEKING)
environment

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