



Manitoba goes hog wild!

Groundwater, rural quiet compromised for industry \$

By Toby Maloney

It's a classic battle between big economic development plans and small groups which are raising environmental concerns.

The province of Manitoba has set a goal of doubling hog production, but even before what would be a massive expansion, complaints about the industry are rolling in from all areas of the province.

In the Interlake, in the southeast, and north of Riding Mountain local communities have been faced with giant hog barn developments, and more are on the way while demand for pork is still rising.

And with an announcement by Schneider's that it will build a new pork processing centre in Manitoba, that trend to corporate-owned factory hog operations will continue for some time.

In Manitoba, when you talk hog barns, you can't avoid talking about Puratone Corporation, a privately-owned company based in Niverville with a controlling or significant investment in 15 sow barns, 7 nurseries and 50 "finishing" facilities, all in this province. The company's output is based on 14,000 sows, but in a race to head off any challenge from multinational hog operators in the U.S., Puratone is planning to expand to 21-22,000 sows within the next four years.

But the boom in giant hog barns will also mean a lot more local land use conflicts and an equally giant waste problem.

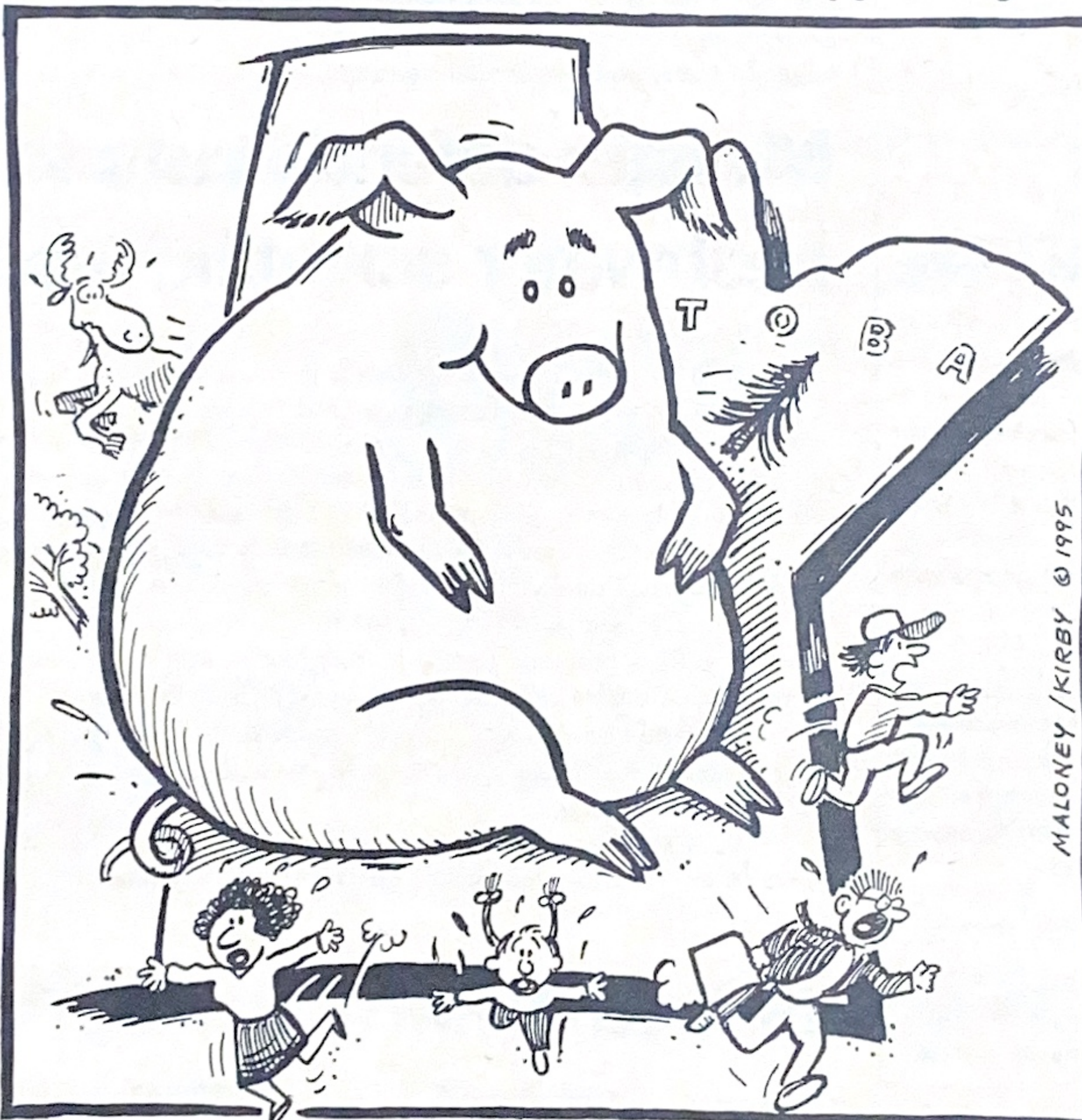
At one time the words "pig farm" would evoke an image of curly tails flicking as little porkers pushed their nose into a trough of slops. Or maybe a picture of pigs wallowing and rooting. That's what pigs like to do, after all.

But that is a quaint image of yesteryear. More often pigs today are kept in an arena-like, noisy building with a slotted floor. No rooting in the dirt here. Maybe there are 2000 or 4000 other pigs, and maybe the sows are in breeding crates. There's no bedding, no straw to soak up the sewage. Instead high pressure hoses wash the waste into lagoons where it settles before being sprayed or spread onto nearby land.

In theory the waste is fertilizer, but increasingly corporate owned hog barns are locating in marginal areas, where the land is cheaper and the feed, because of the end of equalization of grain transportation,

is getting cheaper by the day.

That has also led them away from the clay-base of the Red River Valley, where grain rotations produce a nitrogen deficiency in soil that could benefit from some natural fertilizer. Instead the hog barns are locating where the soil is porous or where drainage is poor, increasing the risk of groundwater contamination from a spill, or



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From almost exactly half way around the earth ...

Dear Friends:

We are regular receivers of your **Eco-Journal**. We extend to you our warmest thanks for keeping us on your mailing list, and send you our heartiest greetings and best wishes for success in your valuable work.

In fact, through your **Eco-Journal**, whose contents and information we appreciate and find very useful in our own work, we follow up your activities and actions, which deserve attention and

praise.

Of particular interest to us are your recycling activities, your assemblies and awareness raising campaigns, as also your fundraising efforts, all of which imply public participation.

We are sorry we have been so late in writing to you and thanking you for your kindness. Please excuse our delay.

Yours sincerely,
John D. Potamitis,
President Environmental
Committee of Limassol
Limassol, Cyprus

LETTERS to the editor

Minister defends cuts to freshwater scientific research

Dear Mr. Maloney

Thank you for your letter of August 15, in which you enclosed your editorial from the July-August edition of **Eco-Journal** (Volume 5, Number 4).

As you know, the federal government is under considerable pressure to get its fiscal house in order. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) in particular, is facing very substantial budgetary reductions and all of our research programs have been affected by program review. These are difficult times and I am sure you appreciate that environmental research programs across the entire government have been affected.

I agree with the sentiments expressed in your editorial about the value of the Experimental Lakes Area (ELA) program. There is no question that the program has produced outstanding scientific achievements and scientists. Moreover it is my hope that the program will continue to produce world-class science. However, in view of the federal government's need to reduce expenditures, the challenge regarding the ELA is to find a financial solution which will allow the program to continue.

The ELA requires approximately \$600,000 per year to operate, plus an additional \$150,000 per year for infrastructure upgrading and replacement. Maintaining this level of

Continued on following page

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Continued from previous page

funding into the future will require the federal government to find partners who have a common interest in the science being conducted at the ELA and who are willing to share the costs. To this end, DFO is pursuing the concept of a small consortium of international universities which would take on the administrative responsibility for the ELA with some form of continued federal participation.

As you correctly indicated in your editorial, specific discussions are currently underway to address how the freshwater and marine programs of DFO and the Department of Environment (DOE) can be rationalized. In particular, a priority issue for resolution is how DFO's freshwater science programs, including the ELA, can be cost-effectively integrated with DOE's programs. In addition, the two departments will be developing a national freshwater strategy, within which the role of freshwater science will be developing a

national freshwater strategy, within which the role of freshwater science will be clearly placed.

Budget decisions on a wide range of DFO programs have not been easy but are necessary to meet federal budget reduction targets. I do not wish to understate the significance of the reductions to our freshwater science programs. However, it must be remembered that by far the largest component of the federal government's freshwater science programs resides in DOE. Notwithstanding reductions to DFO's freshwater programs, the government's commitment to freshwater issues and to federal freshwater research will continue to be a priority.

Notwithstanding reductions to DFO's freshwater programs, the government's commitment to freshwater issues and to federal freshwater research will continue to be a priority.

..... Fisheries Minister Brian Tobin

Sincerely,
Brian Tobin,
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans

Eco-Journal article required reading for pesticide class

An article written for the September-October '95 issue of **Eco-Journal** will be required reading for students hoping to become licenced pesticide applicators. The article about aerial spraying of canola in high winds in August included several scenarios faced by rural Manitobans affected by the spraying. Provincial guidelines advise against aerial or "high boy" application of pesticides at wind speeds higher than 15 kilometres per hour, but many rural residents from Carman to the Saskatchewan border reported spraying at much higher wind speeds.

A representative of the Manitoba Beekeeper's Association was quoted as saying individual beekeepers lost as much as \$10,000 each because of increased use of daytime spraying. Organic farmer Celia Guilford was quoted as criticizing the licencing process because, if anything, the situation has worsened since the courses began.

Instructors at ACC have paid heed and have asked for permission to reprint the **Eco-Journal** article for their students in order to create an awareness of the impact of improper applications. (Permission was granted.)

In brief

act, and for the many other atrocities it routinely inflicts on Nigerian citizens.

This issue is yet another example of the linkage of human rights abuses to environmental desecration. (See **Eco-Journal**, Sept-Oct '95, Reread p. 15). The Earth Island Journal reports that Ken Saro-Wiwa was a winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize this year for his work to protect the human and environmental rights of the Ogoni people. Their territory has been virtually destroyed by the impacts of oil drilling. Shell Oil is the major culprit. In a statement smuggled out of his prison cell and read at the prize award ceremony, Saro-Wiwa states that his real crime was "challenging Shell's ecological war on my beloved Ogoni homeland." He was tried before a military tribunal at which Shell was represented by legal counsel.

Shell reacted to the news of the activists' deaths with an expression of "regret." This is not enough. Multinationals like Shell must be called to account for their activities. Greenpeace is calling for an international boycott of Shell Oil and organizing local activities. Contact the Greenpeace office in Winnipeg (942-6119) for further information.

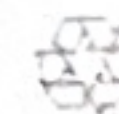
Shell Oil blamed for Ogoni situation

The deaths of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists in Nigeria has sparked reactions of outrage all over the world. The military government of Nigeria is being roundly condemned for this

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Post-referendum federalism:

Decentralizing or stripping away accountability?

It's likely that we are all somewhat tired of referendum talk. In English-speaking Canada there's a generalized sense of relief about the "non" victory, narrow though it was, and a hope that we can take a breather from this issue for a while. But, as the saying goes, there's no rest for the weary. "Decentralization" is the new buzzword - the Premiers and Preston Manning are reminding us of it at every opportunity.

"Canadians want change" they clamour. How they were able to come to this conclusion based on a vote held only in Quebec is beyond me. In fact, if I remember correctly, the last time we in the rest of the country had an opportunity to vote about change it was about the Charlottetown Accord - and we said no! I'm no Constitutional expert, but I seem to recall that many Canadians were wary of the notion of handing more legislative responsibilities over to the provinces - especially in the areas of health and the environment. Yet these are some of the very issues with which Preston and the Premiers want to barter, if Quebec is to be offered some new deal.

Much is being said and written about the tinkering going on with universal health care. And initiatives which will have major impacts in the environmental area have been simmering for the past year: Environmental harmonization was slammed by environmentalists for being a "de facto" constitutional amendment which would result in a lowering of standards for environmental quality and regulation. The process became stalled in the summer when Federal Environment Minister Sheila Copps realized the potential impacts such a process could have.

Another key concern in harmonization is the fact that provinces have little in the way of financial resources for enforcement of environmental regulations (an area in which the premiers allege "duplication and overlap" of services). The end result? Likely more and more private companies "policing" and monitoring themselves.

The day after the Quebec vote, New Brunswick premier Frank McKenna was itching to get moving on some change in this country. Let's implement something doable, he suggested in an interview with Peter Gzowski, like environmental harmonization, for example. Gary Filmon echoed the sentiment in comments from the Western Premiers' meeting.

The Regulatory Efficiency Act is an on-again, off-again (now on-again, in a slightly amended form) piece of federal legislation designed to allow for agreements with provincial governments to regulate and enforce in areas usually under federal juris-

diction. It also allows some parties (read corporations with plentiful financial resources) to literally write their own rules and to enter into administrative agreements with an almost complete lack of parliamentary oversight or public input. The goal of the Act is to reduce - you guessed it - "overlap and duplication of services," but the patchwork of rules and regulations which would result across the country will be anything but efficient.

Since the referendum, "administrative agreements" have been widely touted by the provinces as a potential next step. The proposed devolution of federal powers to the provinces in an amended

Fisheries Act has also set off alarm bells about who will be accountable. Without a doubt, the federal government needs to get its finances in order, and perhaps there has been some movement in public opinion since Charlottetown, but we are not all of a sudden hearing a general public outcry for a Regulatory Efficiency Act, or harmonization of environmental legislation.

In fact, University of Calgary political scientist Roger Gibbons has pointed out that historically, most of Canada (Although, notably, not Quebec) has embraced the federal presence in the grey areas of constitutionality such as the environment, for the "greater good" of the country.

So who really wants these initiatives? The Premiers are gleeful at the prospect of being in charge and "open for business", and the federal government seems eager to accommodate their desires.

The real winners in the decentralization-deregulation arena, however, are the big corporations. Reaping the harvest of our country's plentiful natural resources will be easier and cheaper in a decentralized Canada, and with ever-shrinking coffers, the provinces will be happy to hand over the monitoring and enforcement jobs to their friends in companies like Louisiana Pacific and MacMillan Bloedel. Canada is, to a large extent, already in thrall to the multinational machine (witness the arrival of Wal-Mart or the wholesale sell-off of the Boreal Forest), but as I followed the results on referendum night, I felt a sure chill of premonition about what the future holds for a collection of provinces with no unifying vision. It would be a country with no vision of what makes this society unusual in caring for its people and its environment, and which ultimately puts short term profit above long-term sustainability and health. I waited in vain to hear some discussion in the media of the long-term impacts of dismantling our infrastructure, but most commentators declined to go any further than predicting a "balkanization" of Canada.

Finally, Maude Barlow was quoted: "When any level of government removes itself from the delivery of public services, a huge vacuum opens up and there is a great deal of money to be made. And if you remove the ability of the federal state to maintain and deliver public programs, you're delivering it to the levels of government that either ideologically will give them up or that can't afford them".

"Decentralization" in and of itself may not be such a bad thing. In fact, Mr. Manning has it right when he asserts that Canadians can relate better to a government that's "closer to home". But in the era of World Trade Agreements, in which Canada is a small player on a vast and greedy stage, we had better start asking who will be minding the store.

Opinion by Anne Lindsey

Gavin Hay

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Federal departments lobbying against environmental and health initiatives

(from a press release by J. Palter
posted in web.cengen)

without in any way interfering with provincial jurisdiction as NRCan maintains.

"These departments' understanding of the links between environmental and economic policy are firmly rooted in the past, not the future," said Mark Winfield of Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy. "They fail to recognize the broadly accepted linkages between pollution prevention, environmental sustainability and economic efficiency, or the international trend towards the phase-out of persistent

toxic substances due to their widely acknowledged environmental and human health effects." Environmental organizations publicly challenged Ministers McLellan and Manley to explain: 1) Why their departments are opposing recommendations for strengthening environment and health protection in Canada; and 2) why their departments are undermining legislative initiatives to implement policies such as pollution prevention, or the phasing out of persistent toxic substances, when these policies were part of the Liberal government's election platform.

CEPA, is undergoing a statutory five-year review, which led to the Standing Committee's 141 recommendations for reform, in a report entitled "It's About Our Health: Towards Pollution Prevention."

Canadian environmental organizations are accusing Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) and Industry Canada of attempting to derail a much needed and long-overdue upgrade of Canadian laws protecting the environment and human health. At a Parliament Hill press conference, in October, environmental organizations provided definitive responses to several issues raised by a leaked NRCan and Industry Canada documents reported in the press. The government documents attacked recommendations for reforming the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) developed through nationwide hearings by the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development.

To back their point the groups at the press conference also presented a history of NRCan's dismal environmental track record. "These departments are attempting to undermine crucial legislative reforms that are needed to strengthen environmental and human health protection in Canada by pushing the public fear buttons: job loss, threats to competitiveness, costs and bad science," said Paul Muldoon of the Canadian Environmental Law Association.

In a written brief released at the press conference, the environmental groups answered each of the four issues the two departments have raised in the attempt to prevent effective environmental protection legislation:

- **Science** — Strong scientific evidence supports Canada adopting preventive environmental and health policies, contrary to NRCan's claims of "bad science";
- **Competitiveness** — Regulatory incentives for industries to invest in clean production enhance, rather than diminish, Canada's competitiveness as NRCan claims;
- **Consistent Policy** — The recommendations for strengthening CEPA are entirely consistent with the present Liberal government's environmental policy and election promises, as opposed to NRCan's opposition which stands in stark contrast;
- **Federal Role** — The federal government has a clear role to play in providing national and international policy leadership for Canada,

TO HAVE YOUR SAY:

- Write to Prime Minister Jean Chretien,
- Write to Minister of Natural Resources Anne McLellan
- Write to Minister of Industry Trade and Commerce John Manley
- c.c. Environment Minister/Deputy P. M. Sheila Copps

AT:

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Hog expansion means double trouble

Continued from page 1

from improper application onto the land.

In areas like the northeast Interlake, where the Karst Limestone soils have very little capacity for incorporating the nutrients in the waste, both ground and surface water are

susceptible. In a business that uses a lot of water, easy access is a plus, but contamination is also plausible.

Hog barn critic Ellen Francis lives in Silver, a hamlet south of Arborg. She fought against one of the first modern barns even

though, at two miles upwind from the prevailing winds, she is seldom bothered by the odour everyone assumes is the source of most opposition.

Her opposition, however, is based primarily on a belief that her area is all wrong for this kind of operation. Francis says that frequently crops are harvested after the ground freezes in the east Interlake because it is too wet to do it sooner. In the Spring farmers often have to wait well past ideal seeding time, because of the standing water on their properties.

"I don't think this kind of business is practical in this climate," she says.

And where does all that water go? To Lake Winnipeg. To Lake Winnipeg where many of Manitoba's recreational and cottage properties have located and where fisherfolk already spend

hours cleaning algae out of their nets.

Francis says that Puratone deliberately sited its Interlake Swine Breeders subsidiary in her area, be-

cause in the Local Government District of Armstrong, like in other LGD's, the company doesn't have to face the kind of restrictions and condition set by rural municipalities (R.M.'s) which can exercise authority over local land use planning.

Even two miles away Puratone would have to make a conditional use application to the R.M., post details of its plan and face a public hearing before Council. The R.M. Council would have the opportunity to strengthen requirements, such as setback distances from roads, dwellings and natural features. In many cases municipalities have also required that the livestock waste be incorporated into the soil within days after its application.

Puratone Director of Technical Services Clarence Froese, denies that the company targets LGD's to avoid conditional use by-laws.

"It looks like quite a coincidence, but that's what it is," he said.

Froese says that his company has met all the requirements of the government Technical Advisory Committees (TAC's) that have reviewed the company's operations and is well aware of the risk of contamination and how to prevent it. The drawing card for the Interlake (his company has plans for several more in the eastern part of the region) is a large feed mill Puratone owns in Arborg.

But in the meantime the two giant barns have been approved with very little restriction. The communities have been divided and some residents have been very adversely affected.

Nearby neighbours of the barns cannot even spend time outside in the summer because of the smell. Francis knows of one hog barn neighbour who has been unable to sell her house. Not because of animal or manure smells from a farm, but from constant odour from an industrial-size operation storing sewage comparable to that produced by a town with a population of 4000 people.

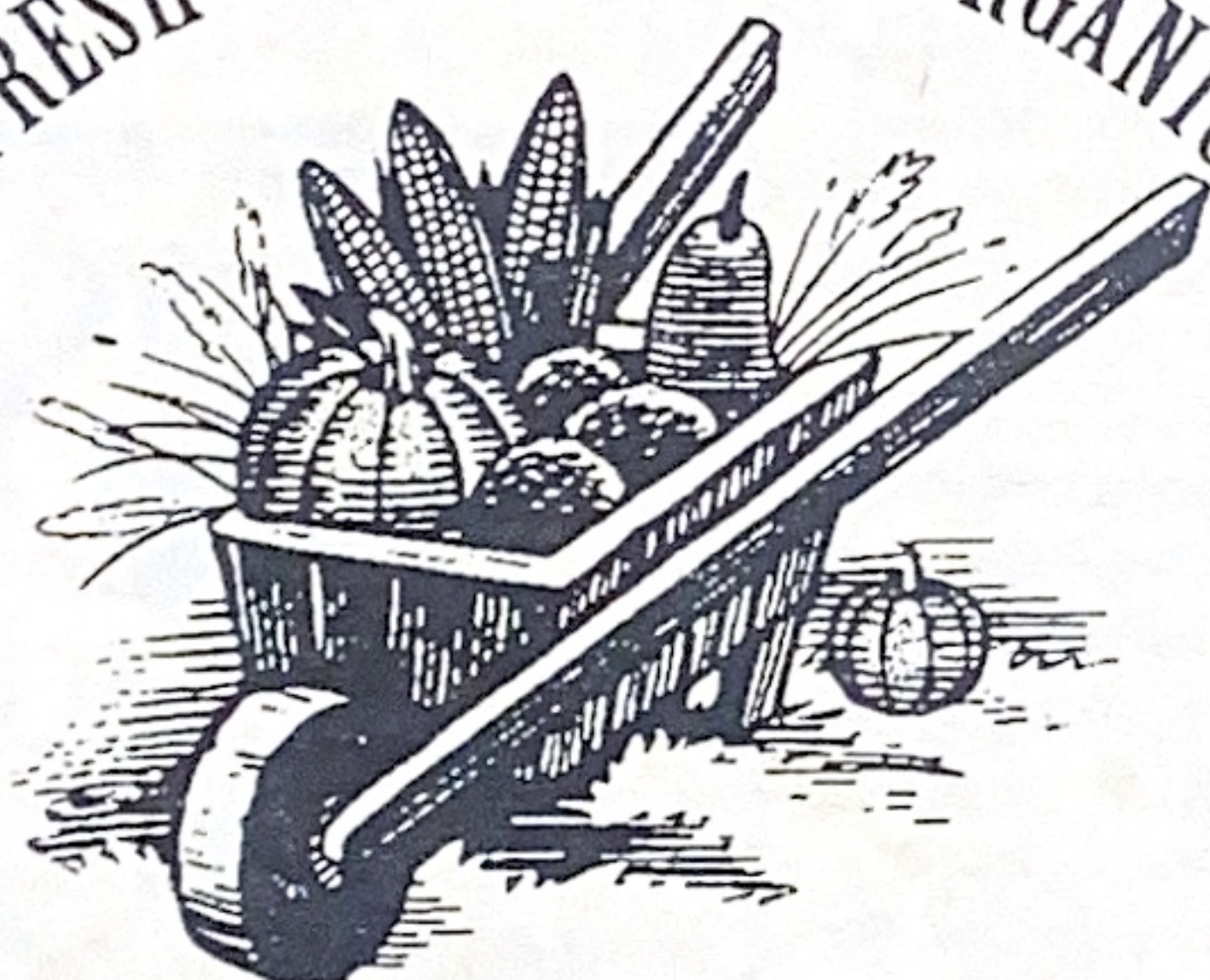
"Everyone was living their own quiet lives here when this was thrust upon us," Francis says.

Her group Interlake Citizens for a Clean Environment (ICCE) has been documenting various events it considers noteworthy and violations of the guidelines hog barns are supposed to operate under. For instance, members of her group have witnessed broadcast of manure onto snow and attempted to get

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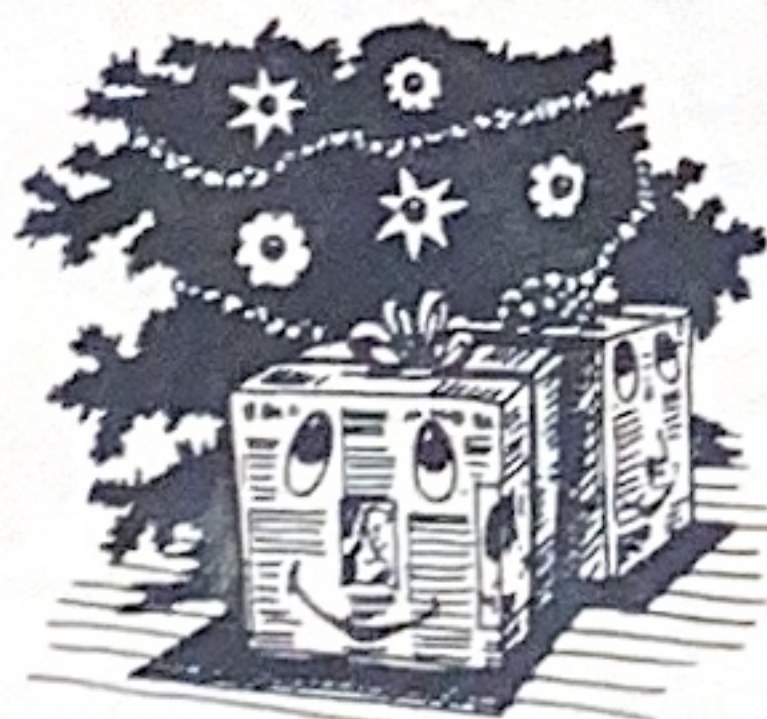
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action from the local environment officer, but to no avail.

Francis says official told the group the department couldn't act if the manure was bound in the snow on the property. Francis says that at the first melt, surface run-off into the ditches will almost certainly occur.

In another instance reported in the Interlake Spectator, a Puratone subsidiary with 1000 breeder sows at Chatfield southwest of Arborg, spread manure "slurry" at twice the concentration per acre as permitted under the guidelines.

Froese is forthright about the incident, saying the acreage calculation was off by about 50 acres, but didn't benefit the company. Froese says the Department of Environment issued a warning that any future incidents would be prosecuted.

Dennis Brown is District Supervisor for Eastern and Interlake region of Manitoba Environment in Steinbach. He says that his department is concerned with two aspects of hog operations. It approves permits for "earthen storage" of livestock waste — clay-lined lagoons — and it enforces the regulation where groundwater, surface water or off-property migration of waste occurs.

Despite the incident at Chatfield, and notwithstanding the porous soils or nearness of surface water in most Interlake locations, he insists that hog operations are perfectly safe for the Interlake.

"If things are built and constructed carefully there should be no problems."

Groups like ICCE and the Agassiz Sierra Club believe, however that the Interlake is no place for the hog barns. Both Francis, and a reporter at the Interlake Spectator, Jim Mosher, who has covered the hog story from the beginning, say that the TAC's are only advisory bodies to the local government. In cases where the local government has been adamantly pro-development, the TAC recommendations have been ignored, they say. Currently a proposal is proceeding north of Riverton, within spitting distance of Washow Creek which drains into Washow Bay immediately north of Hecla-Grindstone Park.

Mosher says that a certain percentage of the local population won't accept any criticism of agriculture, but that opposition seems to be growing all the same.

A similar scenario to the Interlake experience was played out in the Rural Municipality of Dauphin. Cattle farmer and teacher Barry Kutcher and his neighbours fended off a Puratone proposal on land about three miles from Dauphin Lake.

Kutcher, who lives east of Dauphin says he and his neighbours raised a petition of 200 names that included farmers and cottagers at Dauphin Lake and the golf course. Again the concern was water, ground and surface, and the proximity to a water body widely used for recreation.

Kutcher said the operation was drawn to Dauphin by the promise of cheap feed from a dairy which was paying to dispose of its whey. Sustainable agriculture they called it. But Kutcher, who is personally comfortable now that the proposal for his neighbourhood was defeated is unimpressed with the operation that eventually located elsewhere in the R.M. but west of Dauphin.

He says that the hog barn is now a mile from a river and that it isn't meeting the conditions that the R.M. placed on the operation — requiring the company to work the manure into the field within 48 hours after it was spread.

Sandra Conway, a market gardener at Gardenton south of Vita in the LGD of Stuartburn, raised concerns about a hog barn that was constructed in her area even though she isn't personally affected by the odour. Conway says that because the LGD doesn't have land use planning authority no bylaws exist for posting of the proposed development. When she went into the LGD office to complain the secretary-treasurer responded with what she called an "absolutely violent reaction."

"This is farming land. Where do you expect people to farm?" she was told.

"This isn't some little farm, this is a factory," Conway said.

Conway admits there is probably broad support for the operation locally because of the promise of jobs. But she is incensed that the barn has been built where she says water contamination is sure to occur.

"Any idiot could just drive by and see it was a swamp," she said. She's even heard the centre of the main building is sinking.

She has no illusions about why Puratone selected her community — "Cheap land and no restrictions!" she said.

Froese says that environmental concerns are valid and that citizens who raise them are "doing their civic duty." He does say, however, that frequently opposition is based more on "Not In My Backyard" responses.

Meanwhile, Francis and her group are bracing for as many as a half dozen more proposals in the area around Arborg, and starting to get annoyed at the province for what they see as its hands off favouritism toward the industry.

Francis objects to the protection of the barns under the Farm Practices Act and what amounts to an exemption from the kind of environment licensing procedures in place for other types of factories. She says the modern hog operations bear little resemblance to farms and ought to be treated and taxed like factories.

"If someone put up three buildings and started turning out shoes or sweaters they'd be paying an awful lot of [property] tax but because they're producing hogs they don't have to."

ECJ



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What if we cared as much about waste as hockey?

An ideal waste management plan for the capital region

by Alex Morrison

We live in the ultimate consumer culture. Our economic system is based on this reality -- a reality whose fundamental reason for being is "growth."

This growth is achieved by an increase in consumption of goods and services. An increase in consumption means an increase in waste. The more we buy, the more we have to throw away. So, as the economy grows, so grows the garbage.

According to a 1989 study, Canadians are the world's greatest producers of waste. If an economy is not growing it is stagnant or shrinking. Economists call this "recession." It is bad news for capitalists who rely on this linear model of economics. As a result, the impetus for more economic growth is powerful. But this kind of economic growth equals depletion of natural resources, destruction of the environment and an increase in the amount of garbage that humans generate.

The cycle of consumption, extraction, destruction and waste is part of our daily lives. All the things that we buy eventually become garbage. Once these items have been discarded, we replace them with new things. This increases consumption. These things are all created by the extraction of primary resources which are then manufactured into new goods. These manufacturing processes create air and water emissions, toxic by-products, solid wastes, the diversion of rivers, clear-cutting of forests and the displacement of indigenous peoples.

Here are some examples of the trend of increased consumption. Between 1970 and 1987 paper and paperboard consumption increased by 26%. Consumption of shoes increased by 50% between 1980 and 1986. Soft drink consumption grew 45% between 1970 and 1986. Consumption of packaging increased 9% between 1978 and 1985 (Hirschhorn and Oldberg, *Prosperity without Pollution*). What kinds of impacts on natural capital did these activities have? The depletion of resources, the costs of pollution and the handling and disposal of waste have not been calculated or factored into the current economic picture.

Moving Ahead

A solution to this cycle of ever-increasing depletion of resources is a conserver ethic. People are reluctant to embrace a conserver ethic because they feel that their lifestyle will be compromised. For many people shopping, purchasing and consuming are recreational activities and rank in entertainment value as high as hockey and television. When confronted with the idea of changing personal behaviour, desires, and consumption patterns to achieve a future good, many will question this need to change. In the environmental area, many people believe that forecasts of doom and gloom are pure fantasy and that given the choice between perceived personal sacrifice and optimism about future technological solutions, most will opt for personal gain now and wait for the techno-fix of the future. It is not surprising then to learn that garbage, or the by-product of consumption is not a hot topic of conversation around the dinner tables of most Manitobans. As long as it has been "taken out"

of sight, it remains out of mind.

Most people do not understand the underlying ramifications of garbage and waste; most do not care about the politics of garbage and many never give any of it a second thought -- until refuse collection is curtailed or access to recycling services is denied. In fact, most people do not respond to any perceived environmental threat until it affects them personally.

But what would happen if people cared deeply about waste? What would happen if they cared about waste and garbage the same way they care about the success of their children's sports team, or their new car, or the survival of the Winnipeg Jets? What would a waste management system for the Winnipeg region look like if people really thought it important? How would it function in terms of waste reduction?

THE FUTURE: A WASTE-FREE SOCIETY

If people really cared about garbage and everything that surrounds the issue, the provincial and municipal governments would react accordingly. Consider the reaction of the provincial government and the City of Winnipeg when the masses gathered in frenzy to "save the Jets." Substitute "environment" for Jets and you get the picture.

Headlines would read: "Thousands Gather at the Forks to Support their environment" "Children Break open Piggy Banks to Contribute." The business and governing elites would convene emergency meetings on Broadway. Mayor Susan Thompson would offer the city's charitable tax status for donations to the "Save the Environment" fund.

The end result of this outpouring of generosity is not an arena, but a magnificent waste reduction and waste residuals management system that benefits everyone. The federal government would join the excitement, loosening its definition of "infrastructure" in order to put funds toward the plan.

Given this scenario, envisioning a waste-free community is not an arduous task. It begins with individuals believing they can make a difference. They start to understand that it is through their individual responsibility that they can affect change. Their values dictate that they must prevent waste and waste is a phenomenon that they can control. It also must become a personal issue. This is most often achieved by economic instruments, such as user pay refuse collection, retail levies, deposit systems and green taxes.

Let's start with the residential component of the municipal waste stream. Beginning with the most abundant waste in the residential stream (food and yard waste at 35%) we find that simple, low tech solutions exist for minimizing waste. These solutions do not require major changes in lifestyle and so are more easily adopted.

All households in the region could be supplied with a green-cone anaerobic digester. These units "compost" all kinds of kitchen wastes from chicken skin, to bones, to vegetable wastes. Because the bacteria that break down the wastes are anaerobic (In the absence of oxygen) these digesters can virtually eliminate all wet wastes, animal and dairy products included.

They are easy to use and the small amount of compost that results can

be used in flower beds, vegetable gardens, or for house plants. These units retail for about \$30.

If the Winnipeg region followed the example of Seattle which supplied water saving devices, and did likewise with solid waste reduction here we could realize large reductions in overall waste.

Similarly, vermi-composting units could be provided to apartment dwellers. Although the units process fewer types of materials they could still facilitate substantial reduction of wet waste.

The green cones and vermi-composters could be distributed by local environment groups who would install them and provide instruction and training to the householders. Funding for the educational component and the units themselves would come from a provincial stewardship levy, such as the one in place now.

Industrial, Commercial and Institutional Wastes

The industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sector can also benefit from composting programs. In Ontario, the London Psychiatric Hospital has instituted an in-vessel composting system which will accept meat and dairy products. The Department of National Defense, the Ontario Science Centre and Natural Resources Canada have all developed similar systems.

In Manitoba, a major hospital is exploring options to compost or otherwise utilize food wastes. They have implemented a pilot project to have food scraps sent to a boar farm, where this waste is used as feed.

The province could cooperate with municipalities who will implement landfill bans in which certain materials will no longer be accepted in any landfill in the province. This must be a province wide program to prevent small rural landfills from being the receptors of large amounts of material. When these types of programs are judiciously implemented, there have been good successes in reducing and eliminating waste. Alternatives will develop.

Business associations could take an active role in researching and developing waste reduction systems for their members. Some such groups in Winnipeg are already in motion. Cooperative programs so far seem to be the most feasible; costs are shared between many but the benefits accrue to all.

If all wet wastes and food wastes along with construction and demolition wastes were eliminated from the landfill, business and property taxes could be reduced to reflect the corresponding decrease in effort now required for waste handling. Jobs would be created as reuse industries open up to take advantage of the new resources. There are several such operations in Winnipeg now and more are springing up across Canada.

Recyclables

The current two cent levy that is applied to beverage containers must be applied to all types of packaging material. The true cost of all products would be included in the retail cost. A product that is less harmful to the environment would bear a lower levy, whereas products that have deleterious impacts on the environment would have higher levies. Consumers would ultimately make the choice.

As manufacturers catch on as to whose products are selling and whose are not, they will be forced to incorporate the best environmental practices into their processes. In this way, much of the recyclable

component will be reduced. As products become more expensive because of full cost accounting, they will be less attractive to consumers. Reducing consumption reduces waste and conserves resources.

The government could also set targets for reduction of ICI wastes. If the targets are not met, the government would set stricter goals and enforce them. (This was tried in Manitoba with the former beverage container regulation. However when the industry-set targets were not met, the government declined to impose any penalty).

We have the framework of a potentially innovative waste reduction program (such as the one described above) in Manitoba now. However, the public education component for this program has been demonstrably absent and the implementation of the Product Stewardship Program has met with frustration and confusion. Entire sectors of the public are being neglected, such as apartment dwellers, and no one has stepped forward to explain why. Although many elected officials know the reason, nothing is being done to communicate the transition clearly.

Many people also feel that now that they have a box of colour (blue, green, red etc.) to recycle with, their part is complete. As we know, this is just the beginning. A high profile, well-managed educational campaign is now required to ensure that everyone understands the issues surrounding waste.

A cynic, however, may feel that the only way to fire up the public is to threaten to cancel this program after a few years.

Don't count on the government

Unfortunately we can't count totally on the government for any kind of proactive program. Governments aren't organized in a manner that promotes creativity and activism. Governments generally have woefully dismal records on any prevention issues although they readily admit that prevention is both prudent and necessary. Health care policy, in which government reacts to and treats illness, is a good example. In environmental protection government currently tends toward site remediation rather than resource conservation or pollution prevention.

If we really wish to change the present apathy surrounding waste, citizens need to understand the problems and communicate to governments that they demand change.

There are few technical barriers to recycling of wastes. Most everything can be recycled if facilities and markets exist. The barrier to a waste-free society is environmental literacy and understanding of human nature. Fine examples of pollution prevention exist all over the world, in Seattle, in Germany, in small communities in Manitoba.

Just as certain Manitobans believed that their small donations would make a big difference in saving the Jets, the belief that we can make a difference for the environment is vital to the shift in values needed for a waste free culture. With a little education, cooperation from governments and incentive from industries, it will come to pass.

Access to information poor, no intervenor funding

CEC process for BFI landfill too narrow

(Excerpted from a Manitoba Eco-Network presentation to the Clean Environment Commission on the proposed Browning Ferris Industries landfill in Rosser)

The process employed for scrutiny of this particular proposal has been deficient at best. At worst, if one had a bent for conspiracy theory, one might suspect that the process was manipulated deliberately to make effective and meaningful public participation all but impossible.

Narrow scope

Concerns have been expressed regarding the narrow scope of the assessment. Government's own policies call for broad environmental, economic, health and social considerations to be taken into account in waste reduction and management activities, yet this proposal appears to be narrowly focussed on the Rosser landfill. Virtually no reference is made to the recent investigation into solid waste management in the Capital Region, undertaken by the Clean Environment Commission.

Surely there must be some overlap of concern here. And surely it would make sense for the government to be clear what that overlap is, and to require BFI to address its proposal to the broader issues.

The details of those issues are best articulated by groups with specific expertise in waste management. Suffice it to say here, that had guidelines been in place for this assessment, with an opportunity for public

input, as was requested by at least one group, the broader concerns would have had to be examined overtly. Instead the public is faced with the frustrating experience of two sets of hearings, and can only speculate on how they may relate to one another.

While it is not a legal requirement of the Minister to require that Guidelines for an assessment be set out, it would seem prudent to ensure as broad a coverage as possible of issues of concern. Setting Guidelines, with an opportunity for public input at the early stages, would be a logical first step towards fulfilling this goal.

Lack of access to vital information

An economic study which supports the proponent's claims of major economic benefit from the proposal has been kept secret. This is unacceptable if potential intervenors are to have full understanding of the costs and benefits of the proposal, and to whom they will accrue. Meaningful and effective participation implies full, complete and timely access to information.

Poor timing

The proponent's responses to questions from various parties regarding the Environmental Impact Statement were received at the Public Registry at the Manitoba Eco-Network Resource Centre on Monday morning, October 16 – the day hearings were scheduled to begin. Obviously, if intervenors had an interest in studying the proponent's

responses and incorporating them into their presentations, they would be unable to do so.

Lack of intervenor funding

The Minister of the Environment is empowered to award funding to potential intervenors in an assessment, but in only one case -- the joint Federal-Provincial Assessment of Conawapa -- has he done so. In this case, the Recycling Council of Manitoba applied for funding to better examine the technical aspects of the proposal, but was denied funding.

The public and environmental interest is best served when there is detailed third party oversight of the technical aspects of a proposal. In fact, the events of the last few days regarding the Louisiana Pacific Forest Management Plan, wherein the federal departments reviewing the plan have identified all manner of problematic areas not previously noted by Technical Advisory Committees here in Manitoba, is illustrative of this point. In the case of the BFI landfill proposal, we do not have the benefit of federal screening, making the case for intervenor funding even stronger.

History has shown time and again that a cautionary approach to developments, which would include expert scrutiny, can prevent costly and often irreparable damage to the environment. In addition, the credibility of the proponent can only be enhanced if there is a willingness to subject its technical claims to outside scrutiny.

Conclusion

The Manitoba Eco-Network strongly protests the public process in place for this assessment. The government, and the Clean Environment Commission should be doing all they can to facilitate meaningful public participation in environmental assessments since this is really the only place in which public input is sought.

Impeding public process will only add to the level of cynicism and mistrust currently pervasive among the general public on the subject of environmental management. Finally, neither the public nor any proponent will benefit in the long term from a degraded environment and/or socio-economic milieu.

A thank you to our business supporters

Production of this issue of *Eco-Journal* was greatly assisted by the contributions of progressive business owners in Winnipeg. Among them were Green Earth (with stores on Corydon and Westminster) which generously donated paper; Home of Instant Printing (at Princess and McDermot) our printer since 1990, which offered printing at a generous discount for both this issue and the last; Gavin Hay, Indigo Communication, who offered additional typesetting; and The Hemp Exchange, which unfortunately was unable to provide hemp paper for the centre spread this issue, but which is valiantly attempting to do so for subsequent issues.

Thank you from *Eco-Journal* and the Manitoba Eco-Network to:

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- GREEN EARTH
- GAVIN HAY, INDIGO COMMUNICATION

AECL fails to demonstrate safety

Regulator recommends go ahead anyway

Submitted by Concerned Citizens of Manitoba Inc.

In a review of plans to dispose of radioactive waste deep underground in the Canadian Shield, Canada's nuclear regulator, has raised serious questions about the research that has been conducted so far.

Inexplicably, the Atomic Energy Control Board has recommended that the research be extended to specific sites anyway.

About a year ago, Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL) released its *Environmental Impact Statement on the Concept for Disposal of Nuclear Fuel Waste in the Canadian Shield*. The majority of the research in support of the concept has been carried out at the Underground Research Lab near Lac du Bonnet, Manitoba. The concept is being reviewed by a federal panel, which will eventually convene public hearings. (Concerned Citizens of Manitoba (CCM) has intervenor status for this review).

As Canada's nuclear regulator, the Atomic Energy Control Board (AECB) issues licenses for any operations using radioactive materials, and provides the regulatory regime under which AECL must operate.

The AECB recently released its staff review of AECL's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The 80-page review concluded that AECL has failed to demonstrate the safety of the concept, and contained a multitude of criticisms about the research undertaken by AECL over the past 15 years.

The AECB utilized a multi-disciplinary team of 20 professionals in the areas of geosciences, biological sciences, engineering, materials, safety, security, safeguards, transportation and quality management over a nine month review period. Their highly technical review has confirmed many of CCM's concerns, most of which arose from a common sense examination of the plans.

However, when it comes to drawing a conclusion, AECB staff are recommending to the Review Panel that proceeding to siting is the most appropriate next step!

This is an astonishing conclusion considering the nature of the deficiencies and criticisms on the EIS in their report. We can only speculate on AECB's reasons for what seems to be an otherwise inexplicable recommendation.

One possibility might be that the nuclear industry is desperate to deal with the waste issue once and for all. Another might be that they are feeling pressure from the Auditor General to speed up this process, which costs millions of dollars.

A third possibility is that AECB has finally seen the limitations of this "generic" research program (AECL contends that research conducted in one location can be transferred to other sites in the Canadian Shield). On page 5, the report states "Staff also considered the benefits to be gained from a second phase of research designed to address the deficiencies and have concluded that a continued generic research program would not likely prove effective in resolving many of these deficiencies."

CCM has always maintained that a generic research program would not be appropriate. Regardless of their reason, CCM feels that the AECB critique should be brought to the attention of the general public.

Put simply, our main concern over the last years about this "disposal" plan is that groundwater will become contaminated with radioactive materials and will eventually surface in lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands causing irreversible ecosystem contamination.

AECL acknowledges that the waste will eventually deteriorate and "leak" but they claim that their "multiple barrier" system will preclude significant exposures.

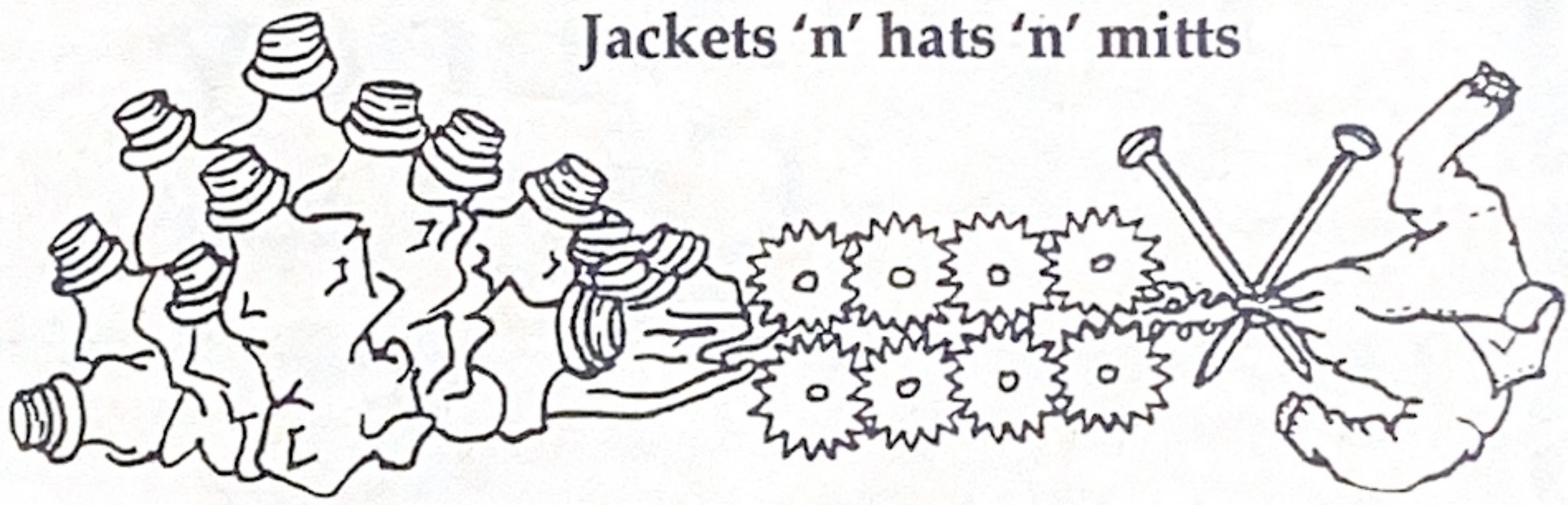
We are talking about a system which relies on computer modelling to simulate the extremely long time frames involved, and on engineering standards for containers that have a use with no precedent in history.

No matter how high the quality of research and development, making predictions based on such long time frames as are required here is rather like playing God. Groundwater resources are too precious to take such risks.

The AECB report corroborates this, and to make matters worse, offers substantial evidence to show the research has not been of high quality.

Manitoba has legislation to prohibit the underground "disposal" of high-level nuclear waste in this province, but it may not hold up if the federal government decides to locate a repository here.

As Manitobans, we have a right to be concerned when a technical review from a body as close to AECL as the Control Board is, tells us that the concept has not been proven safe.



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Moving from growth to sustainability

by Mike Nickerson

Economic growth is not an accurate measure of well-being. The following story helps explain.

One dark evening a man was on his hands and knees under a street light looking through the grass. A pedestrian asked what he was looking for.

"The keys to my car." replied the man.

Having some time and feeling helpful, the pedestrian joined the man in his search. After a while, with no success, the pedestrian asked:

"Where were you when you lost your keys?" "Over there by my car." the man gestured.

The pedestrian was puzzled. "Why are you looking for them here?" The man without keys explained: "The light's better!"

This story illustrates why so many interest groups seek to solve societies problems

by promoting growth. People are familiar with the idea of economic growth. And there is no question that the light of the media and the power brokers shines more brightly on such solutions.

Herman Daly put it well: "The growth

The fact that more fish were taken than were replaced by their natural processes was not considered relevant.

2) The practice of obsolescence presents even clearer contradictions. Making things to wear out, break, go out of style or in some other way pass from use as quickly as possible is essential to maintain current levels of GNP.

Durable and easily repaired goods would be a recipe for economic decline in conventional terms. As would any reduction in

people's consumption levels.

From the perspective of sustainability however, the energy and resources saved and the reduction of waste would increase our prospects for well-being.

The possibility of damaging the economy by eliminating obsolescence is based on what John Maynard Keynes once called "false analogies from an irrelevant accountancy."

People keep throwing out governments because they want change. But they are only shown options under the same old street light.

The examples here and many more show that something is mistaken in the established order.

Sustainability is the bottom line in human and planetary well-being.

If the people already aware of this can clarify the difference to the general public there may yet be the opportunity for countless new generations of people to enjoy a place under the sun.

Much advantage could be gained by pressing into the public forum the question of which value should public decisions be based on: growth or sustainability?

Mike Nickerson is the originator of the Sustainability Project. To find out more or to join in on the sustainability cards (business cards with principles of sustainability on the back) write to: Box 374, Merrickville, Ont. K0G 1N0, phone 613-269-3500 or email sustain@web.apc.org.

Shedding the false analogies from an irrelevant accountancy

ideology is extremely attractive politically because it offers a solution to poverty without requiring the moral disciplines of sharing and population control."

Two examples reveal shortcomings in the growth ideology:

1) The cod fishery on Canada's east coast was considered an economic success because it expanded year after year. More fish caught, more money made.



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Record arms sales to Third World

Hypocrisy in Canadian arms control policy

(from Ploughshares Monitor
published by Project Ploughshares)

Bucking a global downward trend, Canadian arms sales to the Third World jumped more than 40 per cent in 1994 to reach an all-time high, the latest government records show.

While other weapons suppliers experienced a drop in Third World shipments, during 1994 Canada was able to boost military sales to its largest Third World buyer, significantly increase sales to several Pacific Rim countries, and improve on 1993 sales to about three-quarters of its developing country customers.

Beyond the official trade, Canada exported equipment for Third World military end-use that did not appear in the government report because the shipments did not require export permits. Meanwhile, the 1994 record of Canadian arms sales to human rights violators or countries in conflict did not improve, and Canadian weapons continued to reach repressive regimes and embattled governments in spite of government guidelines designed to restrict such shipments.

In sum, during a period when Canada was also increasing resources and personnel for peacekeeping missions, the 1994 arms export figures paint a sorry picture of the first full year of the current government's export controls.

In a survey published in the September edition of the Ploughshares Monitor, Project Ploughshares analysed the latest trade figures published by the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade in its report, *Export of Military Goods from Canada: Annual Report 1994*. The major findings of the survey were:

- Canadian arms sales to the Third World in 1994 reached a record high of \$342.6 million. The 1994 total is a jump of \$100 million, or more than 40 per cent, above the 1993 total.
- Since 1987 global arms sales to the Third World have dropped by three-quarters. During the same period Canadian military exports to developing countries almost tripled.
- The US Congressional Research Service

recently ranked Canada as the seventh largest arms supplier to the Third World for the four year period 1991 to 1994.

- If military end-use defined Canadian arms exports, the value of 1994 sales to the Third World may have been 15 to 30 per cent higher than the reported total. If deliveries of "dual-purpose" goods such as the Bell 212 helicopters shipped to the Thailand Army last year were included in official military export figures, Canadian arms shipments to the Third World may have approached half a billion dollars in 1994.

- Canadian arms sales to the Third World in 1994 were more than two and half times arms sales to Europe, traditionally the largest Canadian weapons market outside the US.

- In 1994 more than half of all non-US Canadian military exports (and three-quarters of Third World exports) arose from one contract, the supply of light armoured vehicles (LAVs) by General Motors of Canada to the National Guard of Saudi Arabia. In 1994 LAV shipments to Saudi Arabia totalled \$255.7 million, up \$43.8 million from the 1993 delivery value.

- In 1994 eight Third World nations imported Canadian military goods worth at least \$1 million more than their 1993 imports. A total of 25 developing countries received higher values of Canadian military goods in 1994 than in 1993.

- Of the 34 Third World customers for Canadian arms in 1994, 18 were involved in significant human rights violations. Eight recipients were sites of major conflict in 1994 and three more were "flashpoints" where minor conflicts may escalate. According to Canadian export control guidelines, Canada "closely controls" arms exports to human rights violators and to countries involved in, or threatened by, hostilities.

- More than half of the 1994 Third World recipients of Canadian weapons did not report to the UN Register of Conventional Arms. The Canadian government meanwhile has stated it will press "UN member states to make use of [the Registry]."

- In the period 1993 to 1994, during which Canada's total non-US military exports increased 48 per cent, the number of Canadian peacekeepers posted abroad increased 52 per cent.

The recent growth in Canadian arms sales to Third World countries underlines the need for a review of Canadian export control policy. The changed geopolitical environment and broader security context that the Liberal government acknowledged in recent foreign policy statements have yet to be reflected in new export controls.

As demonstrated by the number of Third World recipients of Canadian arms that are involved in human rights violations or conflicts, and the number of sales of "dual-purpose" materials to overseas military customers, the existing controls are not up to the realities of today's world.

In the interim the government could regain lost credibility on its export control practices by taking immediate steps to reduce Canadian military industry dependency on Third World sales. It could begin by more rigorously applying existing export control guidelines, such as those concerned with human rights and hostilities.

It could introduce new guidelines, such as mandatory participation in the UN Arms Register, that would contribute to global arms trade restraint. The government could also end its institutional support for overseas arms sales, such as government-sponsored exhibits at international arms trade shows, trade missions involving military export promotion, and equipment demonstrations by Canadian Forces personnel designed to market weapons systems.

The government has accepted the new, wider security agenda of the post-Cold War era. It has given its rhetorical support for the conversion of the Canadian military industry. The challenge now is to put the theory into practice.

Project Ploughshares can be reached by email at plough@web.apc.org or by phoning (519) 888-6541.

Editor's footnote: A Globe and Mail article of November 10 reported that Canada allowed refuelling of French aircraft en route to nuclear bomb tests in the Mururoa Atoll. "Despite officially deploring (the tests) ... the Liberal government turned a blind eye to the major airlift to support the three nuclear explosions," the Globe article reported.

New co-op needs support

Start-up debts hamper smooth sailing at Sunflower

by Harry Berbrayer

Sunflower Community Market Co-op has been in business on Corydon since June 1994. As many readers of *Eco-Journal* know, Sunflower is a store emphasizing organic foods.

Its shoppers are encouraged to become members at a lifetime cost of \$100 payable in a lump sum or in instalments. Sunflower now has nearly 300 memberships, as well as many occasional and regular shoppers who have not purchased memberships.

Members receive a 5 per cent discount on almost all purchases, and can take advantage of monthly member-only specials. They receive a newsletter and are entitled to vote in the Annual General Meeting. Members aren't required to contribute volunteer labour to the store. Several part-time staff work under the direction of manager Gil Dumont, an experienced grocer who took over in mid-August.

As with any enterprise, whatever its objectives and principles, Sunflower has experienced difficulties. However, its current difficulties are largely a result of much earlier expenditures and decisions. Renovations prior to opening have made Sunflower a very attractive place, but start-up and other costs have meant that debts have become a serious concern.

Judy Marchand, current President of the Sunflower Board, acknowledges the irony of the situation.

"We're actually doing quite well, and yet money remains a problem. Sunflower's first year sales were in fact very good, over \$450,000. And sales are good now. And we continue to learn, and to modify what we do. We've learned, over the time we've been in operation, which suppliers are most reliable, and what products our regular customers seem to want. Our manager and staff have rearranged sections of the store to best display the products and serve our customers. We had a successful summer, during which we emphasized Manitoba-grown organic produce. Of course, street work on Corydon interfered with business. So what else is new!"

Another member says: "Realistically, only

a small percentage of people are so aware and concerned about organic food production and the associated ecological and health considerations, as to be committed to searching out organic products. And now with winter upon us, our fruits and vegetables are imported again, which can sometimes mean higher prices than other types of food stores. Of course the quality and the taste is much better."

more frequently -- now."

I wondered whether Sunflower sees itself as competing with Harvest Natural Foods Collective, itself a storefront co-op emphasizing organic foods. The same Board Member stated that "we hope there are enough people who value organic foods and this type of store to support us both. You know some Harvest members were among the founders of Sunflower. It would be a mistake,

really counter-productive to compete with one another."



Sunflower

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"Organic farming is in the best interests of the natural environment, and of future generations!"

"But most people will still buy cheaper foods grown using damaging, dangerous practices, and containing chemical residues. I think Sunflower, and all people and groups working for social change have to work harder to inform and enlighten people as to the reasons why organic farming should be the way of the future."

And the way of the present!

Indeed in a conversation with three Board members, all identified two overlapping thrusts for Sunflower's future. These are: public education emphasizing the reasons why organic farming should be promoted and supported and a campaign to encourage members and non-members to shop more at Sunflower.

"It would be a terrific shame," one said, "if, after so many have worked so hard to establish and improve the store, bank debts were to prove an insurmountable obstacle."

I asked if the situation is so serious. As one Board member replied, "I wouldn't say that. But let's just say we need the people who believe in what we are doing to shop

I browsed in the store. Sunflower stocks fruits, vegetables, dairy products, soy-based cheeses, tofu, tempeh, soy-burgers and wieners, eggs, organically-raised chickens, sauces, spreads, sweeteners, grains, legumes, nuts seeds, breads, and baked goods, pastas, locally-made fresh take-away foods, breakfast cereals, snack foods, herbal teas, coffees, baby foods, pet foods, health and body care products, cleaning items, plus magazines and a small reference library. There's a children's area for doing artwork or reading while parents shop.

Sunflower really is a friendly neighbourhood food store. It's also a spirited experiment that deserves to flourish.

Harry Berbrayer is a Sunflower board member. Sunflower is located at 664 Corydon, near Hugo, in Winnipeg.

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There's also the option of a gift membership (\$25) or a tax-deductible donation in your friend's name.

The Recycling Council of Manitoba offers the following ideas for a green holiday season:

Instead of a material gift, give your time, give an experience;

Give something you've already enjoyed... toy, book, etc. (an especially nice idea for children);

Give a coupon promising your services for babysitting, etc.;

Make an audio tape or video of a family event;

Donate money usually spent on gifts;

When you do purchase, shop with a conscience at self-help craft boutiques;

Choose environmentally responsible products;

Use reusable gift boxes, tins and bags;

Wrap gifts using the comics from the Saturday newspaper;

Reuse gift wrap and recycle that which is not reusable;

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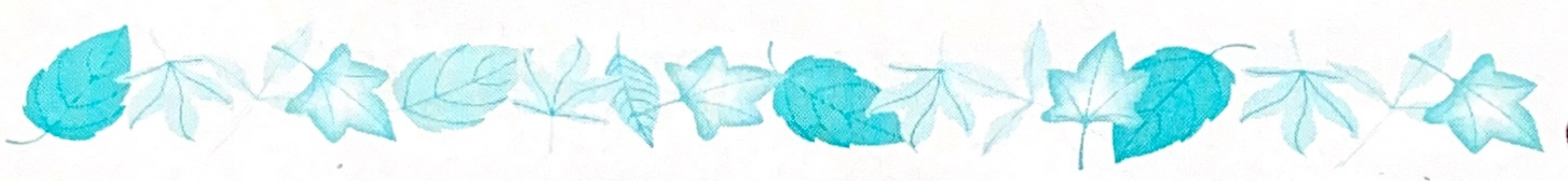
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