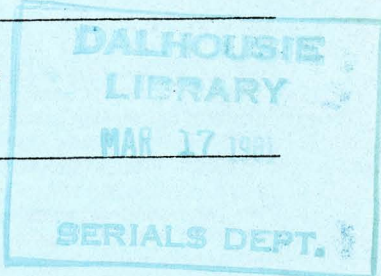


Sp. Coll.

OH
540
FL
52
Sp. Coll.



BETWEEN THE ISSUES



March 1981

How It Is With Us

by Ginny Point

Right now, things are very hectic. I could say a few words about the mounds of paper on each of our desks yet to be worked on, but instead, I think I'll write about "How it Was with Us" on Thursday, February 26th, as I rode back to Nova Scotia from Montreal in the train.

* * * * *

Slowly and steadily, the train I am on is transporting me back to Nova Scotia. I've been away to two different conferences in the past week, one in Moncton on "Radiation Health Effects" sponsored by the Maritime Energy Coalition, and one in Montreal on "Cancer At Work", sponsored by the Canadian Labour Congress. Now, en route back home, I am thinking through and synthesizing what I've gained in the last five days.

Although the subject matter was sobering at best, I feel strangely refreshed and invigorated. At both conferences I sensed a renewed energy and heightened commitment towards positive change. And now as I sit on the train, and watch the unending expanse of forestlands, open fields, and great muddy-red ice blocks in the Bay of Fundy, I am reinforced in my belief that it is not too late to address these serious questions of environmental and occupational health.

It was also good to get out of the office for a while. On a day-to-day basis, it is sometimes difficult to see the "forest for the trees". Our energies are spread out over so many different issues at once. I know that Susan Holtz has been feeling especially torn between her new commitments for various research projects now underway, and her former heavy emphasis on grassroots work. Both Elizabeth and I also have to be careful about overextending ourselves. And beyond that, there is always the proverbial question of financing. Funding is very tight for core activities such as work on the resource library, the newsletter, the lecture series, requests for information, and the various committee activities for example.



Ecology Action Centre

Forrest Building

**Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia**

B3H 3J5

I wish to join Ecology Action Centre and receive free copies of JUSUN, the E.A.C. newsletter.

- \$10 Individual membership
- \$25 contributing membership
- \$75 professional membership
- \$100 corporate membership
- \$10 a month for one year
- \$10 sustaining membership

All payments are tax-deductible.



USE POSTAL CODES / UTILISEZ LES CODES POSTAUX

Serials Department
Killam Library
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 4H6
Expiry: Mar. 82



Now, having met with other groups and individuals during the past week, and having had the quiet time on the train to reassess the role played here at EAC, I feel as though I can again "see the forest". And as I mentioned, there is much "new growth" on many of the trees.

The Centre's greatest asset is its membership - all of you who contribute both time and money. You are the one's who make the Centre the vital place it is. I want to especially thank Barb Taylor, Sandra Haycock, Paul Woodman, Gwen Davies, Rose Alphonse, Tom Rogers, Walter Plaut (who came faithfully every day from 2:00 - 4:00 from October until just recently when he got a full-time job) and Daphne Taylor (who is now coming in every day from 10:00 - 12:00). Your work is crucial to EAC's success.

The train is now approaching Amherst, and the "forest" looks healthier still. It's good to be back in Nova Scotia.

HOW THINGS ARE

Susan Holtz



I find this an unfriendly time of year - the sun is returning but the wind is still cold and, in the bright light, the Halifax streets look dirty and drab. It's nevertheless a busy time at the Centre, with students coming in, the Legislature in session and, for me, a very heavy workload with the research projects on municipal energy, biomass wastes, solar rights and - about to commence - further refinements on a soft energy path for Nova Scotia. All of the demands - deadlines, research time commitments, new environmental problems and the daily requests for information that need attention, as well as the Centre's usual anxiety about where next month's funding is coming from - right now, these are pressing a bit heavily on my mind and on my time.

The Centre has always, as a matter of policy, emphasized equally its role in responding to issues as they arise and in making a long-term contribution through specific projects. These are not inherently contradictory goals - in fact, I think doing both is one of EAC's great strengths. But there are real problems when our human and physical resources are so limited. The Centre has no secretary, no receptionist, no librarian - just to keep the office open, staff must assume these tasks ad lib. And while it's a terrific feeling to know how useful our library is - at the same time, answering phones and showing people where information is in the files is almost a full time job. And so the conflict for me is the fact that, for this spring, my time is committed to project work - but the daily business of the Centre doesn't go away (thank goodness!).

One problem is that it is simply difficult to deal with people's expectations of what and how much the staff, or the Centre, can do. But I'm finding it even more difficult to be worrying about developing issues - especially the possibility of uranium mining going ahead in Nova Scotia without adequate public debate - and the fact that I, personally, can't put time into the issue right now. Is there anyone among our membership able to take the initiative on some of the information - disseminating and organizing efforts that many of our members want to see happen?

Excellent information is right here on the Centre's bookshelves: we have all the material from the Bates Uranium Inquiry in B.C. and Ralph Torrie of Friends of the Earth has identified key articles for us. But there's a pressing need to start moving it around while there's still time for public discussion.

On a more cheerful note, though, the recent infusion of energy, involvement and support from new office volunteers is a wonderful help. Actually getting tasks done is important but a friendly cup of tea sometimes with another Centre member, who also, despite everything, thinks the effort is worth it, is a real and needed uplift. And, one of these days, we're going to get a warm day and the first pussy willows will come out and the season will shift from late winter to early spring.

Upcoming Events

Urban Gardening (Farming) Tuesday, March 17th at 8:00 P.M. in the Nova Scotia Museum on Summer Street in Halifax. The fifth in this year's Environmental Lecture Series will feature presentations by Carol Bowlby, an avid urban gardener who is currently working on the construction of an attached greenhouse for her home in Halifax; and Lou Collins, the well-known Halifax Historian and urban gardener who is interested in the historic perspective of gardening in Halifax, as well as the potential for increased gardening in urban areas.

*Einstein's Children Thursday, March 26th at 7 P.M. at 1671 Argyle Street in Halifax. Through portraits of five individuals and families, this tape explores how the fear of (nuclear) catastrophe drive people to escape their powerlessness through religion, recreation, the belief that technology supports human life....an so on.

*Song of the Canary Thursday, March 26 at 8 P.M. at 1671 Argyle St. Halifax. The immediate victims of cancer/sterility from the petro-chemical DBCP and bisonosis (brown lung) are the workers employed by chemical factories and cotton mills respectively. The video tape focuses on the corporate coverups, their growing realizations, and the organized fights that followed in two instances.

* The showing of these two video tapes is sponsored by the Cultural Workers Alliance in Halifax,

Mouling for Oil--Will It Spoil the Offshore Environment?

(by Ginny Point, based on notes from the second of EAC's environmental lectures, delivered by Dr. Bob Fournier on December 1, 1980)

Will offshore oil development spoil the offshore environment? According to Bob Fournier, Professor of Oceanography at Dalhousie University and well-known CBC science commentator, oil development off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador could indeed pose significant hazards in terms of the offshore environment. However, these hazards may not cause long-term damage. He compared the ecology of a marine environment with that of a human body. In each of these two systems, the human body and the marine environment, there is a delicately balanced equilibrium which can be remarkably resilient when exposed to foreign matter. Depending on the toxicity of the substance and the length and frequency of exposure, each system will suffer varying degrees of damage.

Dr. Fournier began his talk by asking how much oil really lies beneath the ocean depths, at Hibernia, off George's Bank or off the coast of Labrador. Clearly, no one can accurately say. However, some people now estimate that Hibernia finds will equal one half of all the known resources in Western Canada. They add that Hibernia's single known field should yield about 300,000 barrels per day, enough to meet more than half of Atlantic Canada's current daily needs for oil. That field should be in production by 1985. Additional fields will no doubt be confirmed, and current exploration leases off George's Banks and off the coast of Labrador may well add to the total known reserves.

Since these areas are highly productive fishing zones, as well as potentially valuable drilling sites, Dr. Fournier stressed the need to critically assess the real impact of offshore oil developments here in Atlantic Canada. He then noted that although his particular remarks would be limited to the effects on offshore environments only, we should be aware that both coastal and inland environments are also very vulnerable, if not more so than offshore systems, to the impacts of offshore oil development.

The single most significant effect offshore would be from an oil spill or blow-out. When considering the specific effects, Dr. Fournier stressed that oil is a naturally occurring component of a marine eco-system, and is commonly found at low concentrations of 25 parts per billion in ocean water. In fact, approximately ten percent of all oil introduced into the marine environment each year is via natural seepage. At this

low concentration, oil is readily digestible by some bacteria and often consumed by zooplankton (small marine animals). Interestingly enough, both phytoplankton and zooplankton thrive in waters with slightly higher than natural concentrations of oil. However, his doses of oil, such as 300-500 parts per billion, which can result from oil spills, can be lethal to these same plankton. Furthermore, chronic exposure to oil pollution, even at lower levels than 300 ppm (such as is possible with a partially contained blow-out) can be highly damaging to marine organisms. The effects are most critical in juvenile organisms because the ability to detoxify themselves increases with age. Growth rate and reproductive capabilities can be affected. In addition, some exposed organisms may develop tumours as a response to intakes of oil.

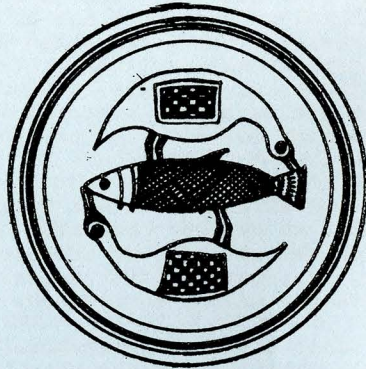
The actual effect of an oil spill will significantly vary according to weather patterns, ocean currents and individual characteristics of affected species. To demonstrate, Dr. Fournier first described what happens when oil enters a marine environment.

Under ideal conditions offshore, about 25-50% of a given spill will evaporate within 24 hours. The lighter, more volatile (and most toxic) compounds are the first to evaporate. Gradually the less toxic residual oil will start to dissolve and disperse into the water, leaving something which vaguely resembles "chocolate mousse". Over time, the oil is separated into smaller parts, at which point it is taken up by certain zooplankton and subsequently expelled in minute fecal pellets which drop to the ocean floor to serve as food for other bottom dwelling organisms. Thus, under ideal conditions the offshore ecosystem does not suffer significant long-term damage from a single spill. (A similar spill in a coastal environment could have much more serious impacts, especially in estuaries which are the breeding grounds for many fish and seabirds).

Repeated exposure to substantial quantities of oil, however, can overwhelm the oil consuming plankton. Since the plankton are a crucial link in the marine food chain, any major changes in the population size or health of the plankton will ultimately affect other organisms higher up in the food chain. This could of course have a significant impact on fisheries.

Furthermore, oil spills do not always occur under ideal conditions. For example, a spill or a blow-out during the spawning season of some fish, like the silver hake, would likely be devastating to whole year classes of fish, because their larvae float on the surface after hatching to feed on surface plankton. Oil on the surface would kill the larvae. Likewise, if a spill or a blow-out occurred during stormy weather, the lighter,

more toxic compounds in the oil would dissolve in the water instead of evaporating into the air. Under very turbulent seas, they could be transported down to the ocean floor, where they could kill many bottom dwelling organisms. Again, such an occurrence could have far-reaching effects throughout the system due to a major disruption of the food chain.



What kind of weather conditions can we expect off the coast of Newfoundland? All too often there is thick fog, turbulent seas, and strong ocean currents. In the spring, there is the serious problem of roving 'icebergs' -- from ten up to ten thousand of them per year. Icebergs weighing two million tons, averaging one hundred by two hundred metres in size are not unusual. The largest recorded iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland is said to have been five kilometres by eleven kilometres. Clearly, icebergs would pose a threat in terms of collisions with ships, oil rigs, and pipelines laid on the ocean floor. Since icebergs can routinely gouge the ocean floor in their meanderings in shallow water, for a pipeline to be safe it would have to be buried ten metres deep in the mud -- a costly and time-consuming measure.

Dr. Fournier concluded that there are significant risks associated with the development of offshore oil, especially given the turbulent weather patterns so common in the area. Put in perspective, however, oil is a naturally occurring substance which can be cleaned up over time by marine organisms. (He added that chemical clean-up programs may cause more damage than the spills in the long run due to toxicity of chemicals used.) Lastly, whatever damage is caused by oil spills, it is likely less devastating than contamination by PCB's or other highly toxic, non-biodegradable materials which are the products of our energy-hungry industrialized society.

* * * * *
 HELP NEEDED NOW!
 * AN URGENT CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS
 OF ACCOUNTING SKILLS...TYPING...
 * COMMITTEE ORGANIZING...PUBLICATIONS
 LAYOUT & PASTE-UP...A MAILING CREW
 * AND A HOST OF OTHER OFFICE TASKS
 * * * * *

Demands on staff time continue to increase:

- Issues proliferate, requests for information are diversified and often urgent (uranium exploration and toxic chemicals are two current areas of concern);
- Staff time (as planned for this year) is heavily committed to research and education projects. We are also working on proposals for other projects in priority areas -- projects which (if funded) would enable us to extend the work of the Centre by hiring some extra people on a term basis;
- We have participated in and/or helped organize conferences, press conferences, interviews, lectures, etc.;
- Urban, Agriculture and Energy Committees continue to engage staff time;
- The library resource centre must be maintained;
- Six newsletters a year must somehow be planned, written and published.

The paper flow is awesome!

The phone continues to ring!

We need help - now!

Fortunately, we are becoming more organized, better able to identify our exact needs and ready to use your time to best advantage when you come in - and train you as needed.

CAN YOU - WILL YOU - DO ANY OF THESE?

ANSWER STUDENT REQUESTS - We have a collection of materials for hand-out. Other material may be photocopied from the library at your discretion. An hour or two a week.

MEMBERSHIP - Learn how to handle renewals, new memberships, corporate memberships, changes of address, enclosures etc. One to three hours a week.

MAINTAINING THE LIBRARY - As many hours as you like, once you've learned how the library works, filing clippings in the right folders. (A good way to 'keep up' - no charge for reading as you file.) Or reorganize a section that has gotten 'out of hand.'

PHOTOCOPYING - There is always a collection of things that needs to go to the Technical University for multi-copy or to the Tupper library for single copies. Trips to the bank or post office are sometimes needed too. Good for a bike-rider.

MAILING CREW - We need people who may not want to commit time regularly but who can be called on short notice to address, stamp, staple and mail newsletters. Good conversation guaranteed.

TYPING - We have eight to ten hours typing (counted at a good speed) every week! Learn to decipher Susan's and Ginny's handwriting and keep up with the latest news by typing letters, newsletters, notes, committee minutes etc.

LAY OUT AND PASTE UP "BETWEEN THE ISSUES" and JUSUN - If you have a good eye and a steady hand we'll train you in no time. Demystifying media!

ANSWER THE *\$#@ PHONE - We're the first to admit it's kinda lonely if the phone does NOT ring but it is hard to do detailed work with constant interruption. Many routine calls - including wrong numbers for MT&T and the Labour Relations Board - could be attended to by someone else. Help us by taking messages for us when we're out or in meetings, direct people to Scotia for paper recycling, supply addresses for other environmental groups, tell people what time the lecture is, etc.

A REGULAR TIME COMMITMENT IS NEEDED FOR MOST OF THESE BECAUSE WE NEED TO SCHEDULE THE WORK. FOR OTHERS WITH A SHORT TERM OF TIME AVAILABLE: WE COULD PROBABLY WELCOME YOU FOR SOME SPECIAL PROJECT LIKE REORGANIZING THE STORAGE CUPBOARD OR A SECTION OF THE FILES.

* * * * *

\$\$\$ ADVANCED BOOKKEEPING SKILLS
URGENTLY NEEDED

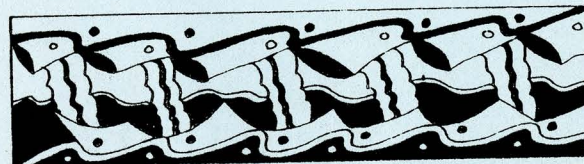
SOMEONE TO MAKE THE AUDITORS' ADJUSTMENTS FROM LAST FISCAL YEAR AND POST THE LEDGER

SOMEONE TO DONATE 3 TO 4 HOURS MONTHLY CONSOLIDATING THE WORK DONE ON A DAILY AND WEEKLY BASIS by Elizabeth, who will oversee cash flow, preparation of budgets, handle accounts receivable and payable, keep the journal, do the banking, file invoices, handle petty cash - but needs help with unusual transactions and someone to do the rest of the bookkeeping (so she can be free for other organizational and administrative tasks which are also needed and which she does better).

Good News as We Go To Press

Susan Holtz has just been appointed by the federal Minister of the Environment, John Roberts, to the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (CEAC)! Her three year appointment begins April 1, 1981. CEAC is an appointed group of about fifteen knowledgeable individuals whose function is to advise the Minister directly on environmental issues.

This appointment is only the second in the Council's nine year history to be drawn from a citizens' environmental group. This is a very important step. Congratulations Susan!



Agriculture Committee Notes by Ginny Point

Work on the Traveling Workshop was put "on hold" for this year due to lack of time to organize it properly, and lack of financial support. The committee has redirected its energies into organizing a day-long workshop on April 11 at the Atlantic Christian Training Centre in Tatamagouche. The purpose of the workshop would be to develop a network of people currently practicing sustainable agriculture, and/or people deeply interested in the issues, for the purpose of identifying barriers and incentives to the practice of sustainable agriculture, and developing plans for concrete action. Interested? Call David Butlin in Tatamagouche at 657-2771, or Don McDougal at ACTC at 657-2231.

News From the Single Member Membership Committee

There have been 85 renewals of both ordinary and contributing and pledge memberships since the beginning of January, 50 or more being renewals of lapsed members. Thank you for your response. I still have hopes that there will be further renewals from the 82 Halifax residents whose membership is overdue, and the 89 out-of-towners. If you happen to be one of these people and are reading this piece, please send in your \$10 or \$25 right away.

My next task will be to contact our faithful pledge members to ask for their renewals.

- Daphne Taylor

PROPONENT	ACREAGE	PRODUCT	AREA
N.S. Department of Transportation	2,700	Dycleer 24 Princep	Roadsides throughout the province
N.S. Department of Lands and Forests	80,000	Thuricide 16B (Bacterial Agent)	Cumberland, Victoria, Inverness, Colchester
N.S.P.C.	4,500	Tordon 10K Tordon 101	Various Rights-of-Way
Maritime Aerial Spraying	20,000	Variety of Agricultural Chemicals	Fannlands in Annapolis Valley
Standish Bros.	445	Dycleer 24, Spike, Silvaprop 112, Simmaprim 80W, Hyvar X, Krenite, Krovar I, Triton XA	Industrial sites throughout the province.
N.s. Forest Industries	1,400	Roundup	Keppoch, Antigonish County.
Town of North Sydney	N/A	Warfarin, Diphacinone	Municipal Dump
Leroy Wright	40	Dylox	Christmas Tree Farm in Kings Co.
Oxford Frozen Foods Ltd.	1,000	Benlate, Easout	Blueberry fields near Parrsboro.
Maritime Tel & Tel	50	Tordon 10K, Primatol	Transmitter Sites throughout Province.
N.S. Department of Lands & Forests	1	Nursery Pesticides	Provincial forest nursery, Wittenburg, Colchester County.
Christy Crops Ltd.	1,000	Benlate, Sinbar	Blueberry fields in Cumberland and Colchester Counties
onn Enterprises (?)	125	Atramax, Princep Gramoxone, Amitrol-T	Gulf Oil Refinery, Pt. Tupper.
N.S. Deaprtment of Lands and Forests	175	Variety of tree nursery pesticides	Provincial Nursery at Strathlorne, Inverness County
William Bezanson	40	Dylox	Christmas Tree Farm in Annapolis County.
Scott Paper Ltd.	100	Brushkiller 96	Brush control on logging roads in Kings, Annapolis and Lunenburg Counties.
N. S. Department of Lands and Forests	100	Variety of Nursery Pesticides	Provincial Tree Nursery at Lawrencetown.
City of Dartmouth	less than 40	Dipel (Bacterial Agent)	Municipal Grounds - Dutch Elm Disease Control.
Bowater-Mersey	550	Brushkiller 96, Roundup, Krenite, Velpar L.	Annapolis County.
Town of Windsor	2,000 elm trees	Dursban 4E	Town of Windsor, Dutch Elm Disease Control.
N. S. Forest Industries	1,200	Esteron 96	Trafalgar, Sunnybrae
N. S. Department of Lands and Forests	617	Roundup, Krenite, Garlon, 2,4-D	Various silviculture sites throughout the Province.
Scott Paper Ltd.	8	Brushkiller 96	Logging roads in Hants County.
Scott Paper Ltd.	324	Brushkiller 96	Various Silviculture sites in Colchester and Pictou.
I.M.A. Aquatic Farming Ltd.	3.5 (pond)	Rotenone	Pond in Yarmouth County.

* Permits issued for sprays by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment - 1980. EAC received a copy of this list from an outside source who thought it should be circulated for informational purposes, and wanted feed-back regarding the relative toxicities (and generic names) of these various trade name chemicals.

Did you know these permits were issued? Can you provide any additional information? Please contact the office.



Atomic Energy
Control Board

Commission de contrôle
de l'énergie atomique

AN INVITATION

As explained in the enclosed news release, the Atomic Energy Control Board, Canada's nuclear regulatory agency, is introducing a system for receiving written comments from the public, special interest groups and industry on certain proposals prior to their being put into practice.

One aspect of this system is the automatic mailing of information to addressees who have expressed an interest in being part of the consultative program, whenever a new regulatory document proposal is published.

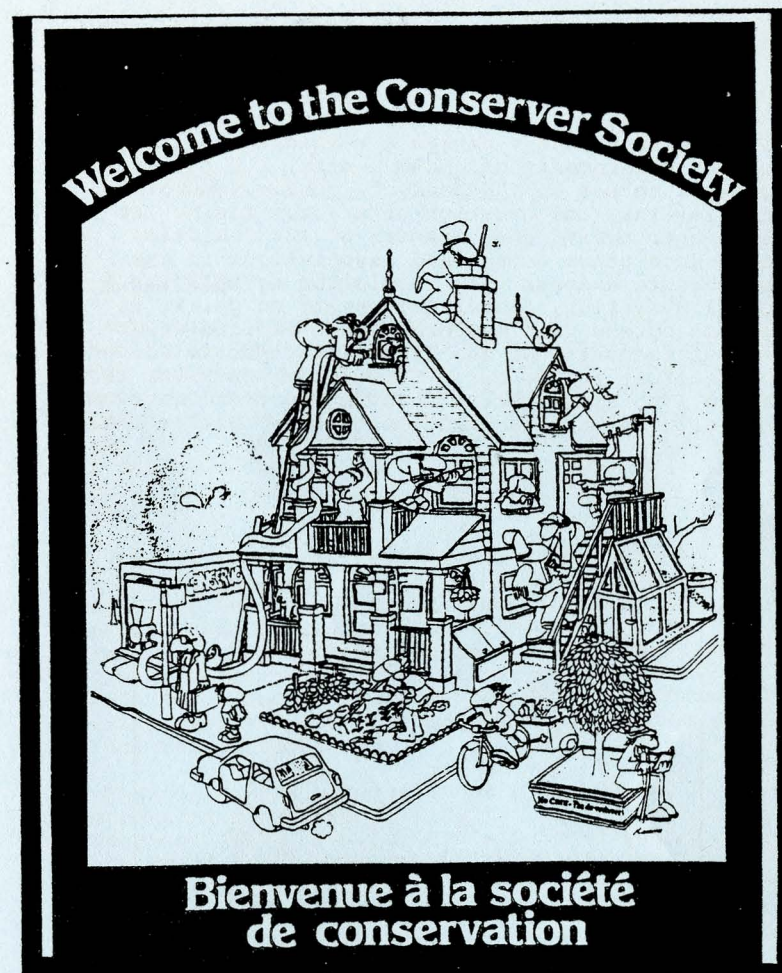
Office of Public Information
Atomic Energy Control Board
P.O. Box 1046
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada K1P 5S9

Please send notices of all AECB consultative documents published in future.

Please send a copy of each AECB consultative document published in future. I understand each will be accompanied by a notice which may be posted to inform others that the document is available.

For documents printed in separate English and French editions, I wish to receive those in

ENGLISH
FRENCH
BOTH



The Conservation Council of New Brunswick is now selling the colour version of this wonderful poster for \$2.50, (includes postage and handling). To obtain a copy, write:

Conservation Council of N.B.
180 St. John Street
Fredericton, N.B.
E3B 4A9

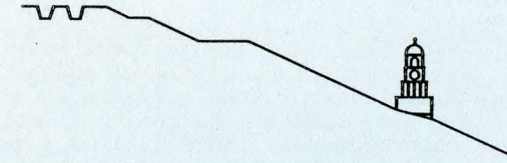
Energy Committee Meeting Wednesday, March 18, 7:30
at the EAC offices.

At the Moncton Conference on Radiation Health Effects on February 20 -22, members of the Maritime Energy Coalition unanimously passed a resolution calling upon the Governments of Nova Scotia, P.E.I. and New Brunswick to set up independent, public, judicial inquiries into the question of uranium mining. It was further agreed that members of the Coalition should urge other groups and associations in the provinces to endorse this resolution as well (i.e. Medical Societies, Labour Groups and so on..). It was also agreed that members should explore other means of focussing on the issue (i.e. public education, rallies and so on). The meeting on March 18 will be a working meeting to plan and coordinate our local efforts on this important issue. Please come if you can.



"These fireplace logs are just pieces of a tree. Haven't you got any of the real plastic ones?"

Films There will be a selection of NFB films shown on Thursdays at 11:30 in the Ocean Studies Seminar Room, 1321 Edward St., Halifax. The films are sponsored by the Institute for Environmental and Resource Studies. For more information, please call Susan Guppy at 424-3632.



The Friends of the Citadel Society

by Betty Pacey

New Group Forms

For more than 30 years, National Parks in the United States have been aided by volunteer, non-profit associations. In general, the cooperating associations publish books and pamphlets about the particular Park, and operate sales outlets at the Park. Because of the success (both financial and educational) of the U.S. cooperating associations, Parks Canada became interested in the concept about 1975.

Recently, a number of cooperating associations have been established in the Atlantic Region. For example, in Newfoundland the Historic Trust has agreed to take on the role of a cooperating association at Signal Hill, while at Louisbourg, there is Les Volontaires de la Fortresse de Louisbourg. In Halifax, a new group, The Friends of the Citadel Society, was formed to become actively involved at the Halifax Citadel.

The Friends of the Citadel Society was formally incorporated under the Nova Scotia Societies Act in December 1980. The Society's purpose, which is not as broad as those of established groups like Heritage Trust, Ecology Action Centre or others, is: "to promote public awareness and protection of the historic and environmental value of the Halifax National Historic Park, to enhance the cultural and educational aspects of the Park by the provision of programmes and visitor services, and to support and participate in appropriate humanitarian activities related to heritage preservation.

In mid-January, the founding members of the Friends of the Citadel Society signed an official agreement with Parks Canada which establishes the fledgling group as a cooperating association. The special role of the Society, similar in function to that of a hospital auxiliary group, will enable its members to take part in the activities at the Citadel. For example, it is hoped that the Society will be able to open a sales outlet at the fort this summer, and there is also the opportunity that the Society may be able to provide special information services to visitors.

In the future, the Society may want to participate in the period, mid 19th century soldiers' coffee bar and officer's dining room that are part of the long term plan for the Citadel. As the multi-million dollar restoration progresses, there will be a variety of opportunities for interested citizens to become involved in this project.

The Friends of the Citadel Society will hold its first general meeting on Tuesday, March 24, 1981 at 8 p.m. at the Halifax Citadel in Gallery #1. If you would like to become involved, please attend. The membership fee is \$2.00 per person. Join now by sending your fee along with your name and address to the Friends of the Citadel Society, P.O. Box 3666 South Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3J 3K6.



Book Available

Environmental Quality in the Atlantic Provinces 1979 is now available from the Environmental Protection Service of Environment Canada. It is a one hundred page book, with a good summary of current environmental conditions in the Atlantic area, with particular respect to: Air Quality, Water Quality, Ecology and the Use of Terrestrial Resources, Toxic Substances, and Energy. Copies are available upon request for no charge at:

Environmental Protection Service
Environment Canada
5th Floor Queen's Square
45 Alderney Drive
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
B2Y 2N6

Future Articles for Between the Issues

We are looking for more input into "Between the Issues". Book reviews, commentaries, informational pieces, letters to the editor - you name it - we hope to include more of your thoughts in upcoming issues. Thanks.

Shopping Malls Reexamined - Tuesday, January 20th

There was an extremely good turnout at this lecture - students, members of the public and some small business retailers affected by the growth of shopping malls in their area.

The evening began with a showing of "Anatomy of a Shopping Mall", a CBC documentary narrated by Jim Lorimer, and produced for the CBC Harris Lorimer Report. Focusing specifically on the Halifax Shopping Centre, Jim explained that the layout of a shopping mall is extremely significant: the developer encourages two large wellknown national chains to join his new complex which are situated on at each end of the mall. They act as jaws of the lobster trap, and the smaller retailers are placed in varying attractive patterns between them. There are no windows in the mall - the shopper must be unaware of the reality of the outside world. (Is the sun shining yet? If it's raining, we should get home to bring in the washing, and so on.)

Jim exposed the current system of preferential leasing arrangements for the large anchor stores and national chains, which serves to discriminate against the small locally owned retailers. The assumption is that the large anchor stores should pay less rent because it is they who attract shoppers to the mall in the first place. The national chains also pay less per square foot than the local independent merchants (although more than the anchor stores) because they are also "recognised" retailers, and they have enough capital to commit themselves to a space in a mall long before it is built. The developer needs such commitments in order to obtain construction financing from the banks. The local independently owned stores then are charged the highest rates per square foot, as much as ten times more than the anchor stores at times. During the question period afterwards, we were told that the developer makes sure that the rental agreements are signed at different times during the year, so that the small retailers cannot join with others to negotiate more equitable leasing arrangements.

Alan Ruffman, moderator for the evening, then introduced Michael Irsha, Associate Professor of Civil Engineering at the University of New Brunswick. Mike began by linking the growth of shopping malls to the increased number of families owning their own cars after World War II. In Canada there has been a 577% increase in the ownership of cars from 1945-73, whereas there has only been a 73% increase in population. There were 250 shopping malls in 1973, and 840 in 1979, an increase of 340%.

During the early 1970's, there was a major trend of shopping mall development in the big cities in Canada. However, by the second half of the 1970's, this trend had spread to the small town and rural areas. One of

the main reasons for this change according to Mike Irsha was Ontario's 1976 Downtown Revitalization Program, which drove developers eastwards where there were no effective land use regulations to prevent the spread of shopping malls. The first wave spread over the Atlantic Provinces in 1973, built mainly by local developers. Later in 1977 out of town developers made up the second wave.

Statistics from the Canadian Directory of Shopping Centres show that by 1980, approximately fifty-four percent (54%) of the shopping centres in the Atlantic Provinces were owned by out of Province developers. Since usually fifty percent (50%) of the retailers in a given shopping mall are nationally owned, and since they are privilege to preferential leasing arrangements, there is "net flow of money out of the Atlantic Region to Central Canada in terms of profits".

Moreover, Mike stressed that shopping centres are significantly undermining the viability of formerly active "downtown" shopping districts. His research indicates that a full forty-six percent (46%) of retail type sales (excluding gas stations, motor vehicle sales, garages, and grocery stores) now take place in shopping centres; whereas they accounted for only 7% of those sales in 1961, 13% in 1966, and 18% in 1971.



Prince Edward Island now has a moratorium on the construction of shopping malls, and Nova Scotia has instituted a review process, the topic of a presentation by Joanne Lamey of the Nova Scotia Branch of Community Planning Association (CPAC).

She first explained the history behind the Nova Scotia legislation on shopping malls. In response to public concern, and in order to spark government action, CPAC held a conference in October 1979 which passed the following resolution:

"Whereas uncontrolled development of shopping malls has the potential to destroy downtown centres through the Province" we request the government to "pass an order-in-council placing a moratorium on the development of new malls or the expansion of existing malls until such time as the government could consult with municipalities and other interest groups to determine to what extent and how shopping centre development should be controlled."



Soon thereafter, in December 1979, the Government of Nova Scotia passed Bill 105, the effect of which was to regulate the development of all shopping centres except those built within the development boundaries of the Halifax Dartmouth Regional Plan, in communities with approved Municipal Development Plans, in circumstances where a development permit had already been approved, or where existing shopping centres were scheduled for expansion on land already owned by the developer (or the developer's agent) as of December 4, 1979.

In the municipalities which are not exempted from the Act, any new mall or major expansion of an existing mall requires approval by the Planning Appeal Board. In reviewing the application, the Board would be required to hold a public hearing, notifying residents within a fifty mile radius of the proposed mall. The Board's final decision would be based on the need for and desirability of additional retail space, the effect it might have on existing or proposed retail space, and "any other considerations" which the "Governor in Council" might prescribe. Joanne felt that this last clause was too vague, and should be clarified to include environmental and social impact studies in addition to the land use studies.

Shopping mall proposals for communities which are exempted from the Act because they already have Municipal Development Plans for example, would not be reviewed by the Planning Appeal Board. Nor would they be reviewed by the appropriate municipal council, unless a zoning change were required. Thus, if a property is already zoned "commercial" approval would be purely an administrative matter under the jurisdiction of the Development Officer in charge. Joanne was critical of this system, noting that existing MDP's have not necessarily been prepared with regard to the particular problems caused by shopping malls, and hence are not equipped to adequately regulate them in terms of the broader socio-economic and environmental considerations.

During the discussion that followed the presentations, Mike suggested that we should try to distinguish between the people who are making a living, and those who are making a profit - between the small businessman and the large developer - in looking for solutions to problems caused by shopping mall development. A retailer in the audience asked if, by regulating the construction of new malls, and hence eliminating future competition to existing malls, might we not be giving an unfair advantage to the existing mall owners, and retailers who currently lease space there. Needless-to-say, there were no final answers to questions raised.

(For more information, Joanne and Mike left copies of their papers at Ecology Action Centre.)

by Daphne Taylor