

NEWS RELEASE

ECOLOGY ACTION CENTRE CHALLENGES FEDERAL ENERGY STRATEGY

by Susan Holtz

"The new federal emphasis on energy self-reliance blatantly excludes political, social and environmental considerations", says Ecology Action Centre's Energy Coordinator Susan Holtz. Ecology Action Centre was reacting to a one day energy seminar briefing by federal Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Gordon MacNabb, held yesterday in Halifax as one of a series of cross-country conferences.

The seminar discussed Canada's new energy policies contained in "An Energy Strategy for Canada—Policies for Self-Reliance."

Canada's energy policy in the last three years has moved from a multi-dimensional to a one-dimensional approach. For instance, the 1973 federal energy policy contained in "An Energy Policy for Canada" devoted much attention to environmental and social considerations. In contrast, "Policies for Self-Reliance" focuses almost exclusively on the need to lessen the projected gap between what energy sources Canada will have of its own and what it will have to import over the next fifteen years. Mr. MacNabb presented increased self-reliance as being the key energy policy determinant.

Susan Holtz continued, "It is questionable whether this approach is being applied consistently. In the seminar, a federal government official defined energy conservation only in terms of measures that are economically competitive. If energy conservation is as crucial to closing the gap as Mr. MacNabb emphasized, why not define energy conservation in terms of what is technically feasible? If foreign energy supplies are cheaper than implementing conservation measures, it would appear that the government will permit the continued reliance on foreign energy sup-

ply. This brings into doubt the seriousness of the government's public emphasis on self-reliance."

"Another major thrust of this federal energy policy", Ms. Holtz said, "is to place increasing importance on electricity. This emphasis is supposed to move Canada toward greater self-reliance. However, as Ralph Sultan, chief economist of the Royal Bank of Canada pointed out in Halifax last April, electrical utilities are increasingly dependent on foreign currency markets for capital. Electric utility financing is unlike oil company financing, the latter of which has been largely financed internally.

"Why is it any better to depend on foreign capital supply rather than foreign energy resources? We think it is important to raise this question", concluded Ms. Holtz.

"These contradictions raise questions about whether the federal emphasis on energy self-reliance is a scare tactic designed to prevent energy policy discussion on a broader range of issues, in particular the environmental and social considerations of massive energy projects."

October 6, 1977

Energy Options Meeting Oct. 27, 1977-Minutes

Film - A film entitled "Thoughts on the Future" was shown. This film featured George McRobie and consisted of discussions concerning the earth's resources and technology's responsibility to protect them.

Business Meeting - Susan Mayo provided the members present with a short briefing on the history and concerns of the Ecology Action Centre. Susan Holtz explained where the Center stood on the subject of energy.

Energy Options Meeting - Assistance was requested for setting up a public meeting on November 30, 1977. Dr. David Brooks will be appearing at this meeting.

Canadian Environment Advisory Council -

This council is taking an interest in citizen environment groups. The next meeting was announced as occurring in November in Ottawa which would cover the facilitation of small environment groups and nuclear energy. A representative from the Maritime Energy Coalition will attend the meeting with the hope of making the government aware of public reaction against nuclear energy.

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ecology action centre

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Maritime Energy Coalition - Susan Holtz explained to the group the function and importance of this coalition and announced that she would be representing the Center at its next meeting in Fredericton on Oct. 28-30.

A report was included on the demonstration the coalition staged in Halifax to protest nuclear energy. The demonstration was effective and it succeeded in receiving national coverage.

Meeting with Minister - Susan Holtz will be meeting with Bill Gillis, Minister of Mines and Energy to discuss positive alternative to the energy situation.

Library Materials - A request was made for donations for several specific books for the Action Center's library.

Volunteer - The need for assistance in phone answering and typing was expressed. Anyone interested in donating a few hours a week should contact the Action Center. 422-4311.

Special Presentation - Dr. Harmon Davidson, an employee of the Department of Agriculture of Saskatchewan presented a slide show and commentary on solar and wind energy research occurring in Saskatchewan. Most of the display was concerned with the use of solar energy to dry grain.

Coffee and refreshments were served. The following recipe was used by one of the volunteers to make cookies for the meeting.

Ginger Sparklers

	2 cups flour
Cream together	2 teas. baking soda
3/4 cup margarine	1/2 teas. salt
1 cup brown sugar	1 teas. ginger
1/4 cup molasses	1 teas. cinnamon
1 egg	1/2 teas. cloves
	sugar in a bowl

Sift dry ingredients and stir into creamed mixture and form into small balls. Roll into sugar. Put on greased sheet for 10 minutes at about 350__. Enjoy.

Concerned about CITIZENSHIP PARTICIPATION, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION?

Read **Understanding Canada: Regional and Community Development in a New Nation**, by Jim Lotz. Paperback \$6.95, 158 pp. Biblio., Index. Published by NC Press.

Traces the origins and history of community development, and examines the way in which it has been used—and abused—in Canada. Contains case studies from Atlantic Canada. At all good bookstores.

CITIZENS CALL FOR IMMEDIATE HALT TO HALIFAX TREE SPRAY PROGRAM

June 15, 1977

City environmental groups have today called for an immediate halt to the Halifax tree spray program. The program was termed a threat to human health, city wildlife and a waste of taxpayers' money.

Paul Keddy, past president of the Halifax Field Naturalists, stated: "Parks and Grounds has claimed the spray is being used to control leaf miners, cankerworms, and aphids. This city department could give me no evidence whatsoever of a potential serious insect outbreak. Trees, after all, always lose a few leaves to insects; but this will not harm them. Yet the City of Halifax is proceeding with an expensive program and using dangerous insecticides."

Dr. Scott Cunningham, of Dalhousie University Biochemistry Department, said: "Sevin, a principle component of the spray, was recently judged too dangerous to spray on the forests in Cape Breton in spite of the threat of serious economic consequences. Yet here in Halifax, with no clear and definite reason, this same chemical is being dispersed throughout a densely populated area. Sevin is suspected by the United States Environmental Protection Agency of causing birth defects in humans."

Bystanders reported that pedestrians and bicyclists in the spray areas were being exposed directly to pesticide mist. In addition, it should be noted that the air carries the toxic chemicals into nearby homes.

Parks and Grounds refused to comment on the cost of the program. An annual spray program has apparently been conducted in the city for over ten years without any yearly follow-up evaluation studies.

Mr. Keddy continued: "With no proven need for such a spray program and no real measure of its effectiveness the city is wasting taxpayers' money. Not to mention risking the health of citizens. Moreover, the timing of this program could not be worse as it coincides with the fledging of young birds who will now face a diet of pesticide-laden insects."

Citizens groups calling for an immediate halt to the tree spray program included Halifax Field Naturalists, Ecology Action Centre, Nova Scotia Resources Council and the Nova Scotia Bird Society.



RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING TREE INSECT CONTROL IN THE CITY OF HALIFAX

Brief to City Council on June 22, 1977 by Ecology Action Centre, Halifax Field Naturalists, Nova Scotia Bird Society, Nova Scotia Resources Council.

Biological Background

It is important to understand that trees— even perfectly healthy trees—always have insects living on them. It is natural for trees to lose some of their foliage to insects each year—it does them no harm. Even complete defoliation will not kill a tree; however, control is sometimes used in these cases purely for cosmetic reasons. At one time, entomologists tried to eliminate pest insects. It is now thought to be biologically impossible to eliminate pest insects with any program; the best that can be hoped for is control.

Many entomologists now feel that it is **beneficial** to have pest insects present at low population levels, as this ensures that natural predators will always survive to keep pests in check.

All pest insect species have natural predators which attack them. Species of wasps, flies and beetles, as well as birds, consume vast numbers of pest insects. In most cases, these natural predators keep pest insect numbers too low to cause visible damage

to trees.

It is a well-documented biological fact that indiscriminate use of pesticides such as Sevin does more harm to helpful predatory insects than to pests. For example, when Pennsylvania orchard owners sprayed to control codling moth, it led to a prodigious outbreak of woolly aphids. The aphids had previously been controlled by a parasitic wasp; however the spray was more poisonous to the wasps than the aphids. Similarly, ladybird beetles controlled scale insects in California orchards. When these orchards were sprayed for another pest, the ladybird beetles were killed. The result was a massive outbreak of scale insects.

Thus, spraying can **cause** severe outbreaks by killing off natural predators.

Occasionally, natural pest outbreaks do occur. It is important that the method selected to control the pests be carefully chosen so as to do minimal damage to helpful predators. The natural temptation is simply

to spray the pest and hope to eliminate it. We are now learning, however, that complex biological systems don't always react as simply as this.

The control method should be carefully chosen so that it will cause maximum harm to the specific insect species causing the damage, with minimum effect on all other species. Similarly, only severely affected trees should be treated to prevent unnecessary damage to predator populations in healthy trees.

SHORT TERM ALTERNATIVES TO IN-DISCRIMINATE SPRAYING

The city tree insect control program should be carefully thought out and scientifically applied. No further widespread spraying should occur, and there should be a detailed examination of both pest and natural predator levels in the city. If natural predators are common, professional entomologists tell us that they alone can keep the pests under control.

We advise that only those particular trees with a definite insect problem should be sprayed. Such a program would have the following advantages:

- (1) no money wasted spraying healthy trees
- (2) no unnecessary killing of helpful insect predators
- (3) no large scale human contact with potentially dangerous sprays

We suggest that city homeowners could watch for particular trees with severe defoliation. Parks and Grounds personnel could then, if necessary, undertake appropriate control methods. (Consent of nearby homeowners should be obtained before spraying is initiated.)

It is important that the choice of spray should be based upon knowledge of the particular pest insect species it is desired to control. We cannot make specific recommendations because the choice of control agent would depend upon factors such as insect

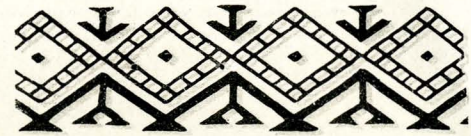
species to be controlled, stage of life history of the insect, time of year, etc. Dr. Albert McPhee, an insect control specialist at the Kentville Research Station, has kindly volunteered to advise the city on a suitable control method **once** a careful study of the problem has been made.

Insecticides which attack only specific pests tend to be more expensive than indiscriminate sprays. However, since they would be applied on much smaller areas, a net saving would likely result from their use.

Past indiscriminate use of Sevin may have severely affected natural predators in the city. It may take one or two years for these natural populations to fully recover. Slight increases in insect pest problems may occur until these natural populations re-establish. This should not be used to justify the renewal of widespread spraying. It is important to break out of the vicious circle which indiscriminate spray use can cause.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) No further spraying should occur until a detailed study is made of both pest and predator levels in the city.
- (2) We strongly recommend against any widespread general spray program. Only individual trees with particularly heavy infestations and/or severe defoliation should be considered for spraying. City residents could assist the city in watching for local infestations.
- (3) Based on information from recommendation 1, and in consultation with the Kentville Research Station, control methods could be selected to combat particular pest species. Indiscriminate poisons can do more harm than good.
- (4) The timing of a control method should also be carefully selected (see recommendation 3) to control particular pest species. However, critical times for city wildlife such as the late June-early July fledging period for birds should be avoided.



JUSUN

by C. Russell Elliott

JUSUN—to the original settlers of Nova Scotia a word that meant "wind" in the Micmac language. Wind is an ever-present reality in this province, one which we often deplore and castigate and try to brace ourselves against in the artificial cocoon of our sophisticated urbanized society. Ill winds blow no good, and all winds are ill.

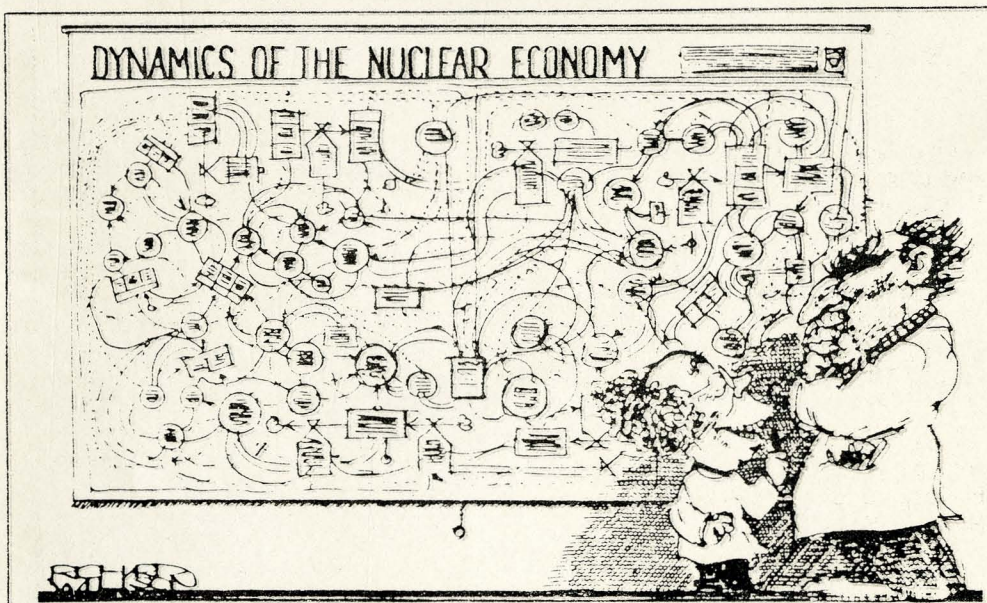
To the Micmac, winds were also ill to some extent. Yet it fanned their campfire to life, carried away the smoke from the tepee, and filled the sails of their water crafts as they made their first tentative experimental venture on lakes and harbours in other than man-powered boats. In all languages and in all periods of human history Wind has been a good word.

Consider some words that are closely related and frequently used interchangeably with wind, such as air, breath, spirit. The Scriptures begin with primal matter which is without form and void, and darkness everywhere—changelessness and therefore lifelessness. But then things began to happen: the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters. Have you ever watched the gentle breeze touch the calm surface of a lake? Wind or spirit moves, brings to life, creates. In that same primitive process we are told that when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life man became a living soul.

It was no accident that the Israelite experiences of God in the wilderness were centered in the boisterous and sometimes terrifying thunderstorms and erupting volcanoes with their invisible but body-shaking winds. Nor was it accidental that the Christian Church came to life at Pentecost with the mighty rushing wind of the Holy Spirit descending.

To the sensitive citizen of Nova Scotia today, as for the earlier residents, wind is again being recognized as the source of life, life itself. It has limited capacity in removing the polluted and death-laden emissions of dirty industries and gas-guzzling urban traffic. It filters and dilutes the evil air made available to the already over-burdened lungs of twentieth-century man. Wind has unlimited capacity in turning fans that turn turbines that produce the electric energy which is the major article of consumption in this all-consuming generation.

JUSUN reminds us of the trouble we are always in when we do not cooperate with nature and the benefits that accrue when we do cooperate. It reminds us that we have an obligation not only to subdue but to replenish the earth. Man cannot ultimately destroy nature—but he can be destroyed by it. What better word than **JUSUN** to describe and define the life and work of Ecology Action Centre?



"The gist of it is that after we have built the reactors, refined the uranium, and buried the waste, there is enough energy left to boil a kettle."



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wishes to thank all the people who supported the Centre's involvement in the Nova Scotia Board of Commissioners of Public Utilities hearing into the N.S.P.C. rate revision application.

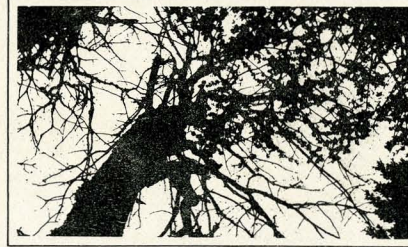
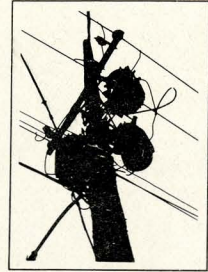
Special thanks go to the following professional people who volunteered their time: Bruce Preeper, lawyer; Craig Laurence, lawyer; Ford Clements, Bill Biggs and Kenzie MacKinnon, assistants to counsel; Murray Davidson, C.A.; Bill Zimmerman, P.Eng. and E.A.C. witness; Debbie Shewchuck and other office helpers; E.A.C. witnesses Sanford Osler, Chris Conway, and Dr. Richard Bower. The Centre is grateful to Halifax Quaker Meeting and a "vitally interested citizen" for their financial contributions for witness expenses.

Ecology Action Centre is entirely dependent upon public support. Tax-deductible donations can be made payable to Ecology Action Centre, Forrest Building, Dalhousie University, Halifax.

*"At winter's table
may we all
think upon
the first green shoots
those gone
and those to come."*



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