

ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPLEMENT

Our toxic harbour

by Maureen Strickland

On any given day, 10,560 tampon applicators, 8340 plastic grocery bags, 5400 styrofoam cups, and 5400 plastic bottles as well as medical waste, sanitary pads, and condoms may be found on the shore of Halifax Harbour.

This was the finding of a shoreline litter study of the Harbour carried out this fall by a group of graduate students from Dalhousie's School of Resource and Environmental Studies.

The study was undertaken to determine the extent of persistent marine litter in Halifax Harbour. Persistent marine litter is any material lost, discarded, dumped, or discharged into the marine environment, or that blows into the sea, or is carried down rivers and ends up in the sea. To be persistent, the material must also be resistant to rapid breakdown in the environment. Marine litter is found in all seas and on shorelines as far away as Antarctica.

Persistent marine litter has received increasing attention at local, national, and international levels. It is considered a problem because of unwanted ecological, economic, and aesthetic effects. Seabirds

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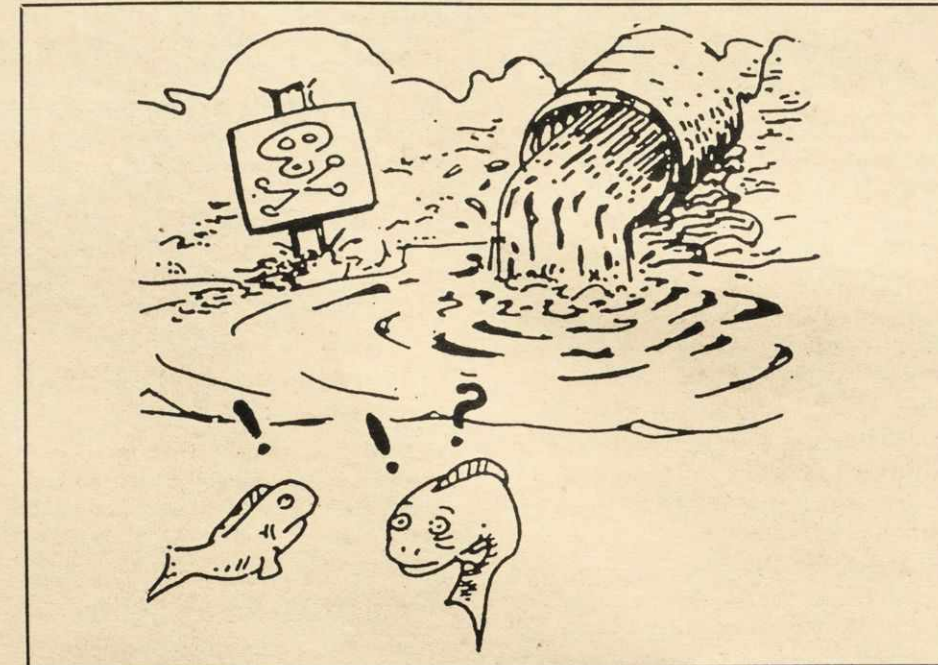
and marine animals, such as seals and whales, are often killed after becoming entangled in or ingesting litter. This is particular problem in the case of sea turtles, all species of which are threatened or endangered.

Marine litter also takes an economic toll on the fishing and shipping industries. Ghost nets, lost at sea, continue to trap fish for years before sinking. Nets and rope also foul the propellers of vessels, and plastic debris can block the intake pipes of ships' engines.

Finally, as is the case in Halifax Harbour, persistent marine litter detracts from the aesthetic value of the harbour shoreline. This aesthetic damage has economic costs, due to lost tourism potential and

of litter. However, the survey of the harbour indicates the vast majority of the litter originates within the Halifax-Dartmouth area.

Almost 80 per cent of the litter could be attributed to recreation, municipal sewage, and land-based sources. Most of this



could be eliminated with primary sewage treatment combined with a transformation of public attitudes and actions concerning litter.

The remaining 20 per cent of the litter was attributed to industry, fishing, shipping, military, and other unidentifiable sources.

Plastic represented 54 per cent of all the litter collected. In order of decreasing importance, styrofoam, metal, glass, paper, wood, and rubber accounted for the remainder. The high percentage of plastic is not surprising, given its many uses in everyday life.

Persistent litter on our shoreline is a symbol of our disposable society. Its presence displays the lack of sensitivity by modern society to the destruction of our natural heritage. The fouling of the ocean with litter shows a total disregard for the costly beach clean-ups.

Since Halifax Harbour is used for recreation, shipping, fishing, and military purposes, as well as for the disposal of industrial effluent and municipal sewage, it is often difficult to determine the origin inherent value of the ocean and the many species which depend on it for life.

Because over 80 per cent of the litter in the harbour can be attributed to the actions of individuals, it is possible to reverse the pollution of our shoreline through education to raise awareness of the problem. It is only through personal responsibility on the part of all of us that the problem of marine litter will be solved. Personal responsibility requires attitudinal changes as well as individual and collective action.

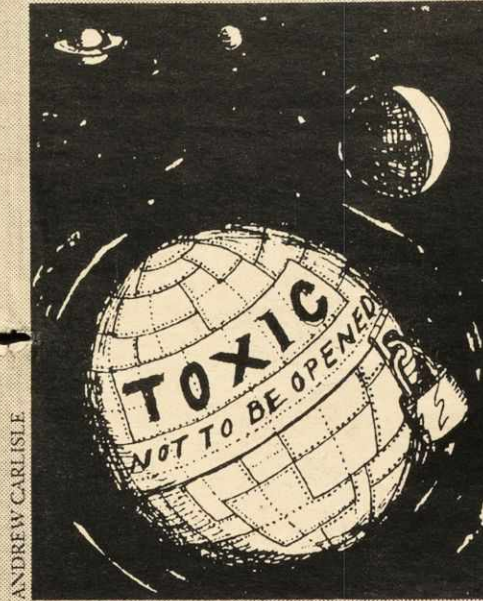
The nature of the garbage found should make us consider further the 5 Rs of waste management: reuse, recycle, reduce, recover, and reject. Garbage is a waste of valuable natural resources. It is a shame that much of the litter generated in Halifax-Dartmouth finds its grave on the shores of our harbour or at the bottom of the Atlantic. Such a resting place generates enormous but overlooked ecological, aesthetic, and economic costs for society and the ocean.

Here are a few things that you can do to help the environment:

1. Keep a compost pile.
2. Make an all-purpose cleaner from 100 millilitres of ammonia, 100 ml of white vinegar, 50 ml baking soda, and 2 litres of water.
3. Place a plastic pop bottle full of water or a brick in your toilet tank to conserve water. (Make sure it doesn't block anything.)
4. Buy pop in returnable bottles or recyclable cans.
5. Recycle paper, bottles, and cans. (All can be recycled in Halifax. Call the Ecology Action Centre or Campus Environmental Action Group for more information.)
6. Do not buy over-packaged foods.
7. Take a knapsack to the grocery store, or re-use your grocery bags.
8. Use rechargeable batteries.
9. Use both sides of writing paper, and write on the backs of computer paper and photocopies.
10. Reuse envelopes, or make your own

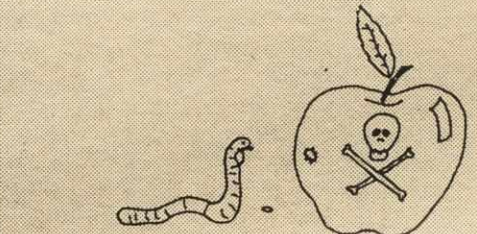


11. Use your dishwasher only when it is full.
12. Do not use disposable dishes or utensils.
13. Turn the water off while you brush your teeth, wash your face, or shave.



14. Use your own mug rather than purchasing throw-away styrofoam and paper cups.
15. Use mass transit — the bus, Acadian Lines, and VIA.
16. Turn off lights when they are not needed.

17. Turn down the heat at night and when you are not home during the day.
18. Reuse glass or plastic containers to store leftovers.
19. Plant a garden, a tree, a shrub, or flowers.
20. Hang your clothes up to dry.
21. Ride your bike or walk.
22. Avoid styrofoam egg cartons, coffee cups, and food packaging.
23. Boycott hamburgers from fast-food chains, most of which get beef from the tropics where rainforests are being destroyed to make way for cattle pasture.



24. Do not dump solvents, paints, or other household hazardous wastes down the drain.
25. Buy quality, durable products that do not have to be replaced as often.
26. Avoid excess packaging — buy items in bulk if possible.
27. Shower instead of taking a bath.
28. Repair leaky faucets.
29. Write letters to politicians.
30. Demand tougher environmental controls and legislation.

NATO flights wage war on Innu

by P.J. McGregor

The Innu have lived in the area non-native Canadians call the Quebec-Labrador peninsula for at least nine thousand years. Traditionally they were hunters, and despite pressure from government to integrate into Canadian societies, hunting, trapping, fishing and gathering remain essential to the Innu culture.

During the height of the second world war (1941-42) the Department of National Defence (DND) established a military base in Goose Bay, Labrador. Since the early

"Some of the flights drop dummy bombs."

1980s, military activity at this Canadian Forces Base (CFB) has intensified with the commencement of low-level flight training over Innu homeland.

The DND has made an offer to NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) to make CFB Goose Bay a tactical fighting training base.

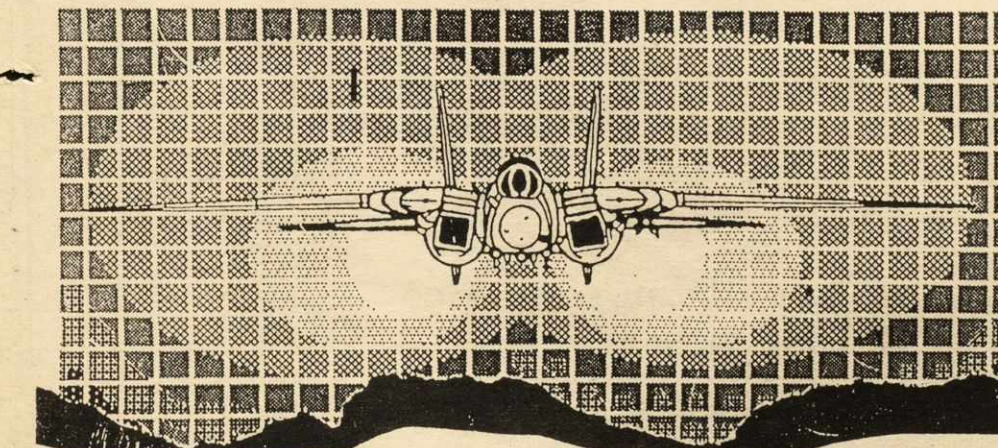
Already approximately 8000 low level flights are conducted over Innu territory every year from April to November. If the tactical flight training base is approved, low level flights over Innu homeland will increase to five times the present rate.

The planes fly as low as 30 meters. They disrupt caribou herds and migrating birds. The Innu are not sure of where and when the flights will take place. The deafening noise from the jets and the unpredictability of the flights terrifies children and adults alike. Some of the flights drop projectiles or "dummy" bombs.

This practice is threatening the very sur-

vival of the Innu culture.

Following a \$6 million study, the DND released an environmental impact statement that states low-level flight training and the Innu population can co-exist. Because the report was written in part by the DND it is biased in favour of the NATO base. Out of eighteen panel experts ten have identified major deficiencies.



The DND believes the solution is for the Innu to telephone the base to keep the military informed of their location.

Is this fair? Whose land is this anyway? This land, which the Innu call Nitassinin, has never been transferred to any foreign power. The land belongs to the Innu.

Anthropological studies have shown that the Innu have a very intricate hunting culture. Part of their hunting/leadership relationships are based on the spontaneity of the hunters. Traditionally, the Innu

hunters do not plan where they will be hunting even one day ahead. Our Canadian mindset certainly falls short here.

Our overbearing cultural imposition also leads to other questions. Who will the NATO base benefit? The DND claims that the expansion of the base will create jobs. But jobs for whom? People immigrating to the area? Military personnel? Any employ-

A slushy cycle

by Aaron Idono

This article is for those of you who pack away your bikes from October to March, and rely on cars instead. *Don't do it!* Winter biking is great — it keeps you fit, it doesn't pollute, it's cheap, and it's a lot of fun.

But you have to adapt. First, you may need to buy a few things to cope with bad weather.

In case of rain and snow (or some Haligonian mixture of the two) get rainpants with zippers up the side — they'll slide off over your shoes when you get where you're going. Also a hat and some boot-type things would be good. Sunglasses are a must. They keep the cold wind out of your eyes, and also keep out snow and rain. At higher speeds these are important considerations — every drop of rain is like a bullet. Also get some gloves — you make your own wind on a bike, and you usually can't put your hands in your pockets.

When there's snow and ice around, you're laughing if you own a mountain bike. Just deflate your tires a bit for better grip. And remember — don't change direction or brake when on ice, or you'll get a

rudie lesson in simple physics. Watch the road ahead, set yourself on the right course, and there will be no problem. You can ride on sheer ice for miles if you keep to a straight line.

Of course, the slush and salt will eat your chain. At least twice a month, get a container with some gasoline and soak your chain in it overnight. If you use a frigateal with a lid, you can do this right in your apartment. Then dry the chain, spray it with silicone lubricant and put it back on. Don't use heavy oil — it attracts grime. Maintenance on the rest of the moving parts can wait until summer, when you can sit on the steps outside and be thorough. If this maintenance stuff doesn't appeal to you, drop your bike off overnight at a shop, and they'll do it for ten bucks or less. Compare that to what you spend in gas and maintenance on your infernal combustion rig.

A couple more assorted notes: Riding on busy streets is gross; pick yourself a nice backstreet route, for your sake and that of the cars. Lock your bike to something real — thieves broke a wooden fence to get my buddy's bike, and someone broke a tree (yes, in front of the Law building) to get another. If you've got a quick-release seat, take it or lock it; they got mine last week. I swear to you — winter bicycling is fun. I'm not demented. You'll never know till you find yourself cruising quietly at night through soft new snow on some little backstreet. It's the closest thing you'll find in town to that magic first run on the ski hill.

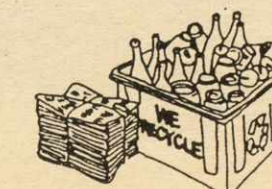
There are also reports that children have been born to Innu women as a result of

"Their culture is dying in this mock war zone."

short-term relationships with military men. These men then leave the area and do not provide support for their offspring. The DND claims low-level flights are defensive technology which we need to protect ourselves against Warsaw Pact forces. However, since the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, these Warsaw forces are virtually non-existent. Why is NATO responding so slowly to the events in Eastern Europe? Just who are we protecting? It's certainly not the Innu. It is their culture that is dying in this mock war zone.

If someone, ignorant to the way the Canadian government treats its native population, were to pick up a government tourist brochure showing our native peoples, they would get a very deceiving picture. We depict them as beautiful, glamorous, and alive with rich culture. In reality they are oppressed and exploited and their culture is dying.

Most of our concern for the preservation of our native cultures manifests itself in museum displays.



Hey, get a load of this! What has just fallen out of your Gazette Environmental Supplement is an example of glossy paper. This type of paper cannot be recycled.

This Tribute insert is another example of how we sometimes seem like hypocritical assholes. We take these inserts to help pay for your education.

Since this Tribute insert is here, we dare you to take some action on it. We would like you to write to tell our friends at Tribute magazine that you would go and see their movies, but only if they printed their ads on recyclable paper.

Follow this handy guide.
1) Get a piece of paper and your pen. Stay seated.

2) Write (legibly, if possible) "Dear Friends at Tribute, your magazine is great, but it is no fun to read because it's on glossy paper. I feel guilty every time I touch glossy paper because it can't be recycled. I would be really happy if you would print Tribute on another type of recyclable paper. Love, _____ (your name here)"

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