

Ecology Week kicks off March 23

Conservation Council launches Fredericton's first Ecology Week this weekend at Conserver House. Beginning Saturday, March 23 and carrying through to Thursday, March 28th, this will highlight the work of groups and individuals involved in environment and peace issues in New Brunswick.

Ecology Week organizer, Janet Parkhill, explained that this week-long event is a response to the high level of interest and concern of New Brunswicker's for the state of our environment, and how we are managing of natural heritage.

Two days of open house activities at Conserver House will launch this week. On Saturday and Sunday, representatives from several environmental and peace organizations will be at Conserver House to chat with visitors about their group's activities.

These groups include Concerned Parents, active for ten years in pesticide spray issues; Sprayer of Dioxin Association, a group of former herbicide sprayers for NB Power who are now suffering severe health repercussions; HELP, an Oromocto-area citizen's group active in hazardous waste

issues in their area; ECOALERT, a research group of the Conservation Council looking at groundwater quality and the environmental health of the Bay of Fundy; CCNB's Nature Conservation Committee, which is surveying the critical ecological areas of the province; the Fredericton Chapter of the Voice of Women, active in peace and environmental issues for two decades; WORD, a campus based disarmament group; The Good Sort Shop, Fredericton's non-profit recycling operation; Conserver House, CCNB's energy conservation and renewable energy information team; and the Conservation Council itself, the provincial environmental organization active on a broad spectrum of environmental and energy issues.

Also scheduled during the Open House are seminars on regenerative gardening, energy conservation in existing homes, and low energy house design and construction. Several films on environmental and energy topics will be shown continuously.

Monday evening's session will look at the emerging issue of indoor air pollution. CCNB researcher David Coon has recently authored a national overview of this issue for the Ontario government, and will be the resource person.

On Tuesday evening (26th), energy researcher Janice Brown and Saint Thomas Economics professor, Andrew Secord will address the topic of New Brunswick's electricity exports policy. The 1984 CBC documentary, "Electricity: the Cost of Too Much Power" will introduce this session.

"Acid Rain: New Brunswick's Perspective" is the title of Wednesday's seminar. A panel discussion involving political, scientific and environmental resource people will follow a screening of the award-winning NBF film, "Acid Rain: Requiem or Recovery".

The final session on Thursday, the 28th, will address a 32-year old problem in New Brunswick. Hajo Versteeg, former member of the Spitzer Task Force on Cancer and the Environment and president of the Conservation Council, will discuss the health and environmental impacts of pesticide use in this, the heaviest sprayed province in Canada.

"We have organized Ecology Week", said Parkhill, "because we feel it is important that the public have the opportunity to thoroughly discuss those issues which impact so directly on us. Too often newspaper headlines are the only source of information available. This often results in

an imbalanced view of questions."

Open House at Conserver House will run from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm on Saturday, March 23 and from 12:00 pm

to 4:00 pm on Sunday, March 24th. This week's evening sessions begin at 7:30 pm and are all held at Conserver House, 180 St. John Street. phone 454-6062 or 454-7655.



POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

By R. HUTCHINS

"Ours is a Sovereign Nation.
We bow to no foreign will.
But when they cough in Washington,
They spit on Parliament Hill."

Joe Wallace

Mark Twain once said; noise proves nothing. Often a hen who has laid an egg crackles as if she had laid an asteroid. If Brian Mulroneý had read Mark Twain then he would have known that the "Blarney Summit" of 1985 was nothing more than a staged propaganda victory for the United States. All the noise that was made about constructive agreements on acid rain and military sharing being pro-Canadian was nothing more than an attempt by Mulroneý to satisfy his public whilst continuing to downplay our true National interest. Agreed, an egg was laid, lo and behold, we find once we try to make our breakfast that it is only an empty shell and once again we are left without a square meal or deal!

Canadians are becoming sick and tired of agreements on acid rain that involve more "investigative committees", or as the Americans cannot deny "stalling inquiries", designed to postpone the inevitable need for both governments to tackle the issues with the necessary financial resources and policy commitments. We know there is a problem, we know something must be done but both governments are willing to put such an issue on the back-burner in fear of alienating Industrialists right at the peak of financial recovery. I don't deny that the chief motivation for such a summit was financial but Canada cannot simply trade off our values to the Americans in return for financial security.

On the issue of defense sharing I believe that we have to be extremely leery of American intentions. At present the Americans are experiencing great difficulty in dealing with their European allies and know that most of these governments would not agree to an escalation of the arms race by participating in Reagan's star Wars initiative. Therefore, Canada obviously plays a large part in American strategic military planning. As a passive, non-aggressive ally we are becoming more and more accessible to the whims of Washington's military establishment. If a majority of Canadians wish to keep our country a nuclear free zone why can our prime minister not make a public statement reinforcing our desire to remain outside the American nuclear build-up.

Why must we sit by idly while Reagan plucks the Canadian Goose and supplies nothing but financial commitments in return? There is no doubt as to the magnitude of free-trade with the US, the impact on jobs and a tentative recovery are obvious priorities but so too are the issues of acid rain and nuclear disarmament. Can we put a price tag on our national interest?

Many Canadian leaders have faced the problem of American power with fear and apprehension, the immense power of persuasion that accompnys our relations with Washington is not a new phenomenon but is one that must be dealt with. If we did share everything with our US neighbours there would be no need for such a perspective but if we could find an idealistic Canadian view it may be that of John Diefenbaker who said, "We shall be Canadians first, foremost, and always, and our politics will be decided in Canada and not dictated by any other country."

I support the United States and our long undefended border, our common interests, and belief in democratic values but I am first and foremost a Canadian, by choice! It is therefore my choice to speak out against our indifference to issues like acid rain even if it means angering our powerful American allies!

The Student Activity Awards Committee is tentatively scheduled to meet Tues. March 26 at 3:00 p.m. Anyone who cannot attend should contact Derrick Stanford, Chairman at 453-4983

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Thursday, April 4th

6:30 - 1:00 am

SUB Ballroom

Free Admission

-Remember the 60's-

A WORD Presentation