

Turning off lights for a brighter future

BY JUDY MEADES

Costly and environmentally destructive waste of energy due to lights being left on in the classrooms and offices for no apparent reasons was brought to CEAG's attention.

Since most buildings at Dalhousie were constructed before energy concerns became common, they are not equipped with technical solutions to this problem. An automated turn off system would be the answer to such a energy waste problem but the retro-installation of such equipment would be costly. One assumes the users of a building without automated switch off lights would be in the habit of turning off the lights manually but this does not appear to be the case here at Dalhousie.

Environmental issues, such as the amount of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere from the burning of oil and coal to produce electrical power by Nova Scotia Power are seriously implicated in the global warming known as the Green House Effect. It is hard to believe that we are allowing carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere at all considering the importance of the ozone layer to life and health as we know it. The realization that so much of the inefficiently produced electricity is being totally and unnecessarily wasted is frightening.

CEAG decided to investigate by looking at a common used group of classrooms to see if there might be a low cost and environmentally friendly solution to the problem. Accordingly, a group of CEAG members

surveyed the LSC common areas from 14-19 February to see what the potential might be for conserving energy. The survey indicates that the classrooms in the common use areas (excluding the Biology, Psychology, and Oceanography blocks) contain lights with a total wattage of 46.1 KW. Most of the lights were found to have been left on from Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon (when we turned them off) and found on at 0900 the next morning despite the fact that we had turned them off the previous evening. This survey leads us to believe that the lights are often not turned off on nights, weekends, and holidays.

We are aware both security and custodial functions involved must be taken into consideration. However, we concluded the existing practise does result in a considerable waste of energy, and money.

CEAG proposed a pilot project which would create jobs for the purpose of turning off unused lights in the classrooms and common areas of the LSC.

There are two options under consideration. Option A; The lights would be turned off late Friday afternoon, saving a total of \$4,182 over an eighth month school period. Option B; Lights would be turned off both weekday evenings as well as weekends, saving a total of \$6,041. Remember these figures apply only to the LSC. CEAG intends to implement option A immediately since there would appear to be no major custodial issues involved, financial savings will occur immediately, and as well as an estimated decrease of 45

metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere. Option B will be considered for a later date, based on the experience gained with option A and after working out any problem areas related to security and/or custodial issues.

CEAG proposed that if successful, the pilot project (funded by physical plant and planning) be expanded to other buildings starting in 1992. A student conservator patrol, akin to the

Tiger Patrol could be a part of the existing student job program but with no net cost to the university. In fact there would be considerable financial savings.

A lot of excitement has already been generated. CEAG proposals were well received by the DSU and Bill Lord, Physical Plant Director. Of course there are a lot of logistics yet to be worked out but the wheels are in motion. This project is going to need both students and the adminis-

tration working together in order to be successful.

Therefore until such a time as the University undertakes a technical solution to the problem and/or an Energy Patrol Group is organized. CEAG is appealing to everyone here at Dalhousie to take an awareness approach to this issue, (both financial and environmental) PLEASE TURN OFF THE LIGHTS THAT ARE ON FOR NO APPARENT REASON.

Mother of an earth summit

BY LISA MITCHELL

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), often referred to as the Earth Summit, will bring together over 130 heads of state to attempt agreement on fundamental issues of environment and development.

The idea is fascinating for several reasons.

1. First of all, this is the largest conference of its kind. There will be more than 20 000 people travelling to Rio, Brazil, to participate in the Conference or the events surrounding the Conference.

2. This is the first time international governments have agreed to listen to the voices of non-government sectors, such as women, industry, indigenous people and youth.

3. This is the first time developing countries have had any power to make bargains with developed countries. In the past, the developed world has simply laid out its own path and followed it, but things are changing.

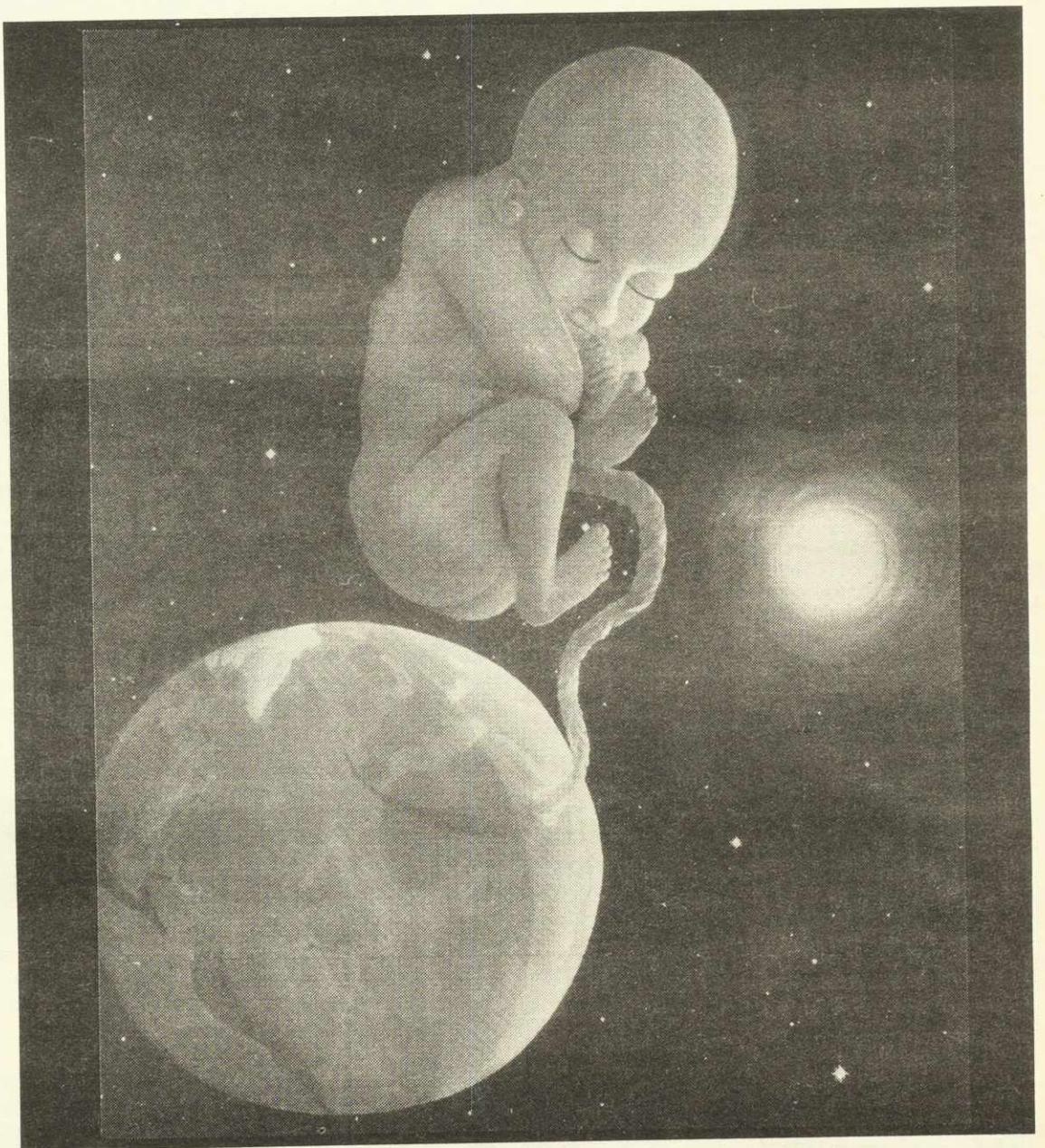
The power remains unequal, but environmental devastation recognizes no political borders. The rich developed world, unmoved by compassion, are moved by fear.

What will happen at UNCED?

Conventions on climate change, forestry and biodiversity; an Earth Charter on relations with the environment and each other; a plan of action for the 21st century and; new ways to transfer money and technology, will all be laid on the table.

These are volatile issues. Developed countries want to concentrate on environmental protection and "sustainable development," while developing countries want to talk about equality, power, forgiveness of debt and the death of their children.

The media has done very little to make people aware of this Conference. The lack of awareness is unfortunate, but somewhat irrelevant, because in the end we will all be affected by the Earth Summit, whether we know it or not.



Carrying cloth to the cafeteria

BY JUDY MEADES

The magnitude of paper garbage collected on Dal campus is embarrassing and totally unnecessary. Each month over one hundred pounds of paper garbage (that can not be recycled) is removed from the SUB alone.

Last year CEAG introduced plastic cups to help reduce the use of styrofoam on campus.

This year CEAG wants to reduce the amount of paper garbage thrown into campus disposals.

A paper napkin has one life cycle and it is a short one. It is used once and thrown away. Recycling paper napkins is problematic as they are

usually contaminated through use or by other garbage, and thus rejected for recycling.

Paper napkins are a waste. Removing the garbage they create is a waste of time and money. The expense of the paper napkin is usually absorbed in the price of the food. Most important they are a waste of trees, as well as emitting chemicals into the environment during the process of making paper!

Dalhousie and associated businesses are concerned about the environment. At present CEAG is working with Beaver Foods and Major Foods on campus in hopes of finding solutions to reduce the amount of

paper garbage. A campus-wide Cloth Napkin Campaign is the favoured solution.

We need student support to make it a success. Just like the successful Coffee Cup Campaign before it, the Cloth Napkin Campaign will use the same logic:

Students buy it, use it, wash it, and use it again and again and again...

Come by CEAG's table in the SUB Tuesday, March 17 and design your cloth napkins at our cloth napkin promotion and watch out for CEAG's Cloth Napkin Design and Logo competition!!

Reduce Re-use and Recycle