

FORUM

ENVIRONMENT IS POLITICS



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NEWS 2

US IN THE DOCK 3

A MATTER OF WORDS 3

HOG FARM 4-5

BICYCLES 6

**NO COMMENT:
IT'S POLITICAL 7**

WHAT'S ON TODAY 8

MAN vs MAN NOT MAN vs NATURE COMMONER TELLS OVERFLOW CROWD



The Environment Forum kicked off its program Monday with A Panel Discussion in the 'White Sea'.

Dr. Barry Commoner and Dr. Josue de Castro led the discussion, with Mr. Allan Williams and Mr. Sid Mills. The panel was chaired by Dr. Margaret Mead.

Reading from his prepared text, Commoner stressed his thesis that 'the root cause of the environmental crisis is not to be found in how men interact with nature, but how they interact with each other.' And, stressing the panel's common theme, he added, "to solve the environmental crisis we must solve the problems of poverty, racial injustice and war." Speaking extemporaneously in French, de Castro echoed this theme, adding that 'the problem of the environment is a problem of prevention...of the unjust exploitation of men and nature' by a privileged few.

De Castro said that in spite of the fact that 'atomic bombs make war between the big powers suicidal, we live in an economy geared to war with over 200 billion dollars a year spent on arms worldwide.' Deaths still result from this wasted spending, de Castro pointed out, because this sum represents the entire GNP of the 'Third World Countries, and this money could save the

children who are now dying of starvation throughout the world.

Williams called the UN 'elite controlled' and emphasised that the environment is only one part of the total problem.

Mills stressed the cultural oppression of the American Indians as another facet of the environment crisis in the USA.

In the discussions following the talks, most of the questions were directed to Dr. Commoner. Mr. Williams began this trend by pointing out that 'the immediate step (in SE Asia) is to win the war by the NLF', not simply to stop it, as Dr. Commoner has said.

A member of the audience, in a statement to Dr. Commoner, emphasised that there is a population problem in the developed countries because they contribute most to the environmental crisis. Commoner replied that the environmental problems in the USA lend themselves to technological solutions. De Castro said, 'forced population control is genocide against the colored peoples of the world,' and Dr. Mead added that if population growth were reduced to zero, 'we would still have a population problem.' The population density of India is only half that of Belgium.

DÉJÀ VU?

Dr Jun Ui, of Tokyo University, headed an emotionally charged presentation of the effects of industrial pollution in Japan at the Dai Dong Centre in the ABF House on Monday night.

An overflow crowd listened passively to a Japanese mother describe the effects of nine years of suffering on her family, victims of the Minamata disease. Speaking with difficulty, she asked "Can you really feel the pain this disease has brought to my family?" adding "If we do nothing, who will stop this pollution?"

As this reporter rode the bus back, he thought back to earlier protests (1965), against the war in S.E. Asia, a war that still goes on. Looking out the windows, he saw the same idealistic youth as before on the streets with their pent-up frustrations. A block further on he saw a police convoy -- five full cars and one full bus -- going in the opposite direction. In T-Central there was an explosion-like noise as the reporter's train arrived. The reporter thought that he had seen it all somewhere before.

Cal Williams

US IN THE DOCK



One subject, not even on the official agenda of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, has been dominating all others, outside the closed world of the Old Parliament Building, during the past few days. That subject is the war in South-East Asia, but more particularly that aspect of it directly related to the work of the UN conference: the Systematic destruction of the natural environment, used as a weapon of war.

On Tuesday the Stockholm newspaper *Aftonbladet* ran a full-width picture (which we reproduce here) of the desolation of a mango forest in South Vietnam, sprayed with

defoliant six years earlier. Above it was the text: '.....ALL THAT WAS LEFT WAS A MOON LANDSCAPE, SADNESS AND FEAR.'

When asked about this sort of destruction at a press conference on Tuesday, an official spokesman for the US government replied that it was political and therefore best dealt with in another framework. Understandably, those whose concern for the environment has brought them to Stockholm from all over the world find it hard to understand or accept such dist-

inctions.

Protests against what the United States is doing have rained like a series of hammer blows in ever more rapid succession since the Sunday press conference of the Convention on Ecocidal Warfare, at which two Vietnamese gave eye-witness accounts of the natural destruction and human suffering in their country.

Outside the Old Parliament building, no serious speaker can avoid this subject. Within, there is silence - from all the delegations. The credibility of the UN Conference may depend on whether that silence can be broken.

John Lambert

A MATTER OF WORDS

An interview with ELISABETH WETTERGREN, Executive-Secretary of the Environment Forum

FORUM: The Environment Forum seems to be somewhere in the middle between the official UN Conference and the alternative meetings like People's Forum or Dai Dong.

What is its status?

WETTERGREN: The decision to organise it was taken by the United Nations when it was clear that only governmental delegates would be attending the UN Conference. The idea was to give NGO's and individuals....

FORUM: Is it going to be different in any way from all the other international meetings we have ever been to?

WETTERGREN: Forum means a meeting place. This is an open meeting for groups and individuals to speak out on the human environment.

It doesn't have to have an agenda, though certain things are planned in advance.

FORUM: What sort of things will actually happen at this open meeting place?

WETTERGREN: It will be open; there will be no registration. There will be workshops - seminars - and discussion groups.

FORUM: How many people will be coming?

WETTERGREN: We do not know; perhaps thousands.

FORUM: When you look at the programme you still see big names and panels. There is not much sign of participation by individuals.

WETTERGREN: But people will be free to interrupt. If Prof. Friedrich talks about working conditions, someone can stand up and tell him that they are using workers as guinea-pigs. I shall do so. At the Environment Forum we are building bridges. Between scientists, politicians, the public.

FORUM: Is it not hard, with people who are in a foreign country and don't know each other, to get this kind of two-way communication going? People in our societies are not used to communicating.

WETTERGREN: It is a problem. That is why the Forum is flexible.

FORUM: Do you see your meeting as an echo of the UN Conference. Should people go home more aware - or is it your aim that they should go back and start acting?

WETTERGREN: The problem is to get the awareness to the level at which they can start acting.

FORUM: In a column in *FORUM* yesterday the People's Forum criticised the Environment Forum as being co-opted by the UN.

WETTERGREN: No. Ours is an independent meeting just as theirs is. We have different ways of operating but the same goals. But I should add that we do attach very great importance to contacts with the UN Conference and to having delegates attending our activities.

(Interview by Erik Centerwall and John Lambert)

DOING NOT TALKING

IN STOCKHOLM TODAY THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE TALKING. THERE IS ONE GROUP THAT IS DOING,

IT IS CALLED HOG FARM. 'WE CAME HERE BECAUSE WE HEARD THERE WAS A LARGE CROWD COMING, AND THERE MIGHT BE NO FACILITIES FOR THEM,' says Lou Todd.

Already now there are 500 people coming out at the old Skarpnäck airport, where Hog Farm set up their teepees. 'THERE WERE OVER 200 FOR DINNER LAST NIGHT,' says Lou Todd calmly.

And for the moment, Hog Farm is feeding them free. So they need gifts of any kind of food (and also 6,000 sq.m. of polyethylene sheet - to make awnings). They have built a stage and fitted up amplifiers. They work all the time.

AN ATMOSPHERE WHERE VIOLENCE DOES NOT HAPPEN. WE MAKE SURE PEOPLE HAVE FOOD AND FACILITIES.

Hog Farm have video recording equipment available and will be making their own films of what is going on in the rest of Stockholm to be shown on closed circuit TV on at Skarpnäck in the evening.

EVERYONE SHOULD GO OUT TO SKARPNÄCK, AND SPEND SOME TIME WITH THESE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN ANOTHER WAY. We asked Lou Todd if he would like for all of the official delegates to come out to Skarpnäck YES WE WOULD LIKE THEM TO COME

THE BIG EVENTS OUT AT SKARPNÄCK: DAI DONG DAY ON WEDNESDAY, WHALE NIGHT ON THURSDAY. A BIG POPULA-



TION DEBATE ON FRIDAY, AMERICAN INDIAN NIGHT ON SUNDAY - WILL BE HIGH POINTS OF STOCKHOLM, 1972.

HOG FARM are a commune - a group of about 25 people who live and travel together. IT IS A SORT OF SHOW: BUT WITH NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN LIFE AND THE SHOW (Lou Todd). They started in California seven years ago. They have traveled all over the United States; they came to Europe three years ago and forty people went over land by coach to Nepal. They have been there, living their own way, making music, helping people to relax at a mental asylum, at schools, at the Woodstock Festival.

They are concerned about violence. WE ARE GOOD AT CROWD CONTROL - AT CREATING



the tale of the not so white bicycles

Once upon a time in Amsterdam there were Lovely People, who called themselves the Provos. To help the good people of Amsterdam they invented WHITE bicycles. All bicycles painted with white were there for anybody to use, to ride from Here to There, or from There to Somewhere Else.

Many years afterwards, the legend of the White bicycles reached the ears of the wise Technocrats who were organising a festival called the Great Unche.

They told the artisans to prepare many white bicycles. But for each of them, there was a key, so that only the Unche People could use them.

The first Unche People who were given a key were very happy.

They said to themselves: 'The wise Technocrats have given us each a White Bicycle because we are Special People.' And they put the keys in their pockets and left the bicycles in the street.

Soon there were no more keys, and all the White Bicycles stood unused in the streets. And the Unche People who came later found that they were Not-So-Special People, who did not have Keys or Bicycles.

So it was that the wise Technocrats again did as they always have done, and created an Elite who Had Things, and Others Who Did Not.

When the Provos heard the story, they laughed Very Much Indeed.



"OI" ARRIVES

Speaking at the Environment Forum, Prof. Benjamin Linsky of West Virginia University proposed a new language pattern that could bring war closer to people and help them to think about it in everyday terms, instead of keeping it in a separate compartment.

I suggest that a general air pollution control general nuisance law clause be used: It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation or government agency to permit or cause the escape of such quantities of noxious acids, fumes, gases, or dust or larger particles in such a place or manner as to be detrimental to any person or to the public or to endanger the health, comfort and safety of any such persons or of the public, or in such a manner as to cause or have a tendency to cause injury or damage to property or business.

'It is recognised that large solid particles include bullets, serial bombs and missiles.'

'The list of undesirable air pollutant effects includes:

-Malodor sensations from burned ammunition and scorched earth,

Eye irritation from primer and cartridge gases and jeep, truck, and tank engine exhausts.

Sky darkening and visibility interference

from burning property and concealing smokes,

Damage to property, including factories, forests and fields,

Interference with production and civilian services,

Bodily injury and death with more malodor from the stench from the wounds of other people—

'If the Environment Forum attendants take these commonplace words away with them, their impact may help involve other decision shapers and decision makers, especially politicians who dread ridicule.'

NO COMMENT: IT'S POLITICAL

PROTEST...

"The war in Vietnam is a typical result of neo-colonialism.... The pollution of the industrial countries is not as bad as the exploitation of natural resources and human beings in the third world...created by the western industrialised countries' governments".

These were among the statements made by Peter Limqvist, of the Philippines, and Sergio Schneider of Brazil in the course of a debate held in the framework of the Environment Forum on Monday evening. Many of the speakers at a well-attended meeting took a similar line. They also pointed out the scandal that the UN Conference will not be dealing with the fundamental issues behind the environmental crisis and the link with warfare.

..AND DENIAL

Russell Train, US delegation head at the UN Conference, said on Monday at a press conference that the problem of large-scale and deliberate destruction of the environment by bio-chemical warfare was political and could not be solved in the UN Conference. "We are concerned with ocean dumping and pushing legislation on toxics".

There is no basic conflict between continued economic growth and environmental protection. The problems are technical and technology will find an answer, he asserted. The fact that 6% of the world's population (the USA) was consuming half of the world's production was a 'valid point' and 'resource allocation is important.' Train rejected the criticism that many of the suggestions from the US President's advisory committee had been dropped from the State Department's final report. A lot of proposals were accepted and their basic ideas left intact.

The generalised hope that 'the UN Conference will lead to heightened concern for environmental problems and a strong coordination unit in the UN on these problems' showed the extent to which the US is willing to go.

MERCURY: 15.000 VICTIMS

The five Japanese victims of the 'Minamata' mercury poisoning disease, who were presented yesterday by Dr. Jun Ui at a Dai Dong press conference, are not isolated cases. The disease is already known to have affected 15,000 victims. Dr. Ui said. The five who have come to Stockholm are lobbying on behalf of a nationwide Japanese movement to warn the whole world of the dangers of what the doctors call PCB poisoning.

The disease causes a loss of hair, loss of hearing, enlarged fingernails, tumors, pigmentation disorders, skin eruptions, genetic mutations and much pain to the individuals.

The five witnesses put the blame for their own suffering on a nitrogen factory - not named - and the Kumamoto local authorities for the dumping of the poisons into the Minamata-wan Bay. Each of the victims wore an apron saying 'An individual cannot be replaced.' One victim said, 'We are here too late. We now show the world what can happen to them.'

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Swedish UN Association (chairman: Ingrid Segerstedt Wiberg) and the National Council of Swedish Youth (chairman: Pär Granstedt) are jointly responsible for the organisation of the Environment Forum. Between them the two organisations cover a wide range of Swedish political parties, trade unions and youth organisations.

ENVIRONMENT FORUM

For all those coming to the debates and discussions at the Forum, interpretation is available between French, English and Swedish.

A PRAYER FOR THE U N CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

The First Sunday of Advent
Stockholm, Sweden 1971

ONLY ONE EARTH- LORD

To this place they will come O Lord,
Your human family
To whom you have given 'Only One Earth'.
The United Nations Conference on
The Human Environment
Stockholm, Sweden, June 5-16, 1972

O Lord through this historic gathering
of your diverse peoples
May we learn to live in harmony
With the Land
With the Air
With the Water
With the Biosphere
On 'Only One Earth'.

Help us O Lord to cease
Poisoning the atmosphere
Polluting your oceans
Raping the fragile surface
Decimating the gene pools of life itself
On 'Only One Earth'.

Stir us O Lord to
Transcend national boundaries
Subsume our ancient animosities
Rise above our ideological quarrels
On 'Only One Earth'.

Yes O Lord we your human family
Would choose life
Far as the curse is found
The curse of fouling our own nest
On 'Only One Earth'.

This is the nations' chance to prove
The glories of righteousness in responsible
stewardship
The wonders of love in common creative caring
For 'Only One Earth'.

Here O Lord in Stockholm June 5-16
May the world concretely experience
the Reality of the words of Archibald Mac Leish:

'To see the earth as it truly is,
small and blue and beautiful
in that eternal silence where it floats,
is to see ourselves as riders on the earth
together, brothers on that bright loveliness
in the eternal cold - brothers who know no
they are truly brothers.'

-- Dr Gary Herbertson
Religious Task Force on Global Environment

WHAT'S ON TODAY

ENVIRONMENT FORUM

TUESDAY, June 6, 1972

Konstfack, Valhallavägen 191

- 10.00 Welcome to the Forum
Per Granstedt (Chairman)
Elisabeth Wettergren
Jan Fjellander
Arne Nilsson
- 12.30 Press conference with the speakers of the day
- 14.00 Causes of environmental degradation: Exploitation of nature and resources
Dean Abramson: Chairman
Malcolm Caldwell, School of Asian Studies, England
Jaime Hurtubia, Chile, Universidad Astral.
Wilfredo al Clemente, Philippines
Edgar Wayburn, Sierra Club, USA
- 19.00 Causes of environmental degradation: Exploitation of People
Alan McGowan (SIP), chairman
Taghi Farvar, Speaker
Harrison Wellford, Center for Responsive Law
Santiago Torres, Universidad Astral de Chile
Bo Gustavsson, Sweden
Thomas Banyacya, Hopi Nation

FOLKETS FORUM

June 7 10.00 - 22.00

ABF House, Sveavägen 41 - 43, Z and Zandersalen.

United NLF groups in Sweden have invited the American environmental scientists E.W. Pfeiffer, J. Lewallen and A. Westing and they will present their results from studies in Indochina.

Program

- 10.00 Lewallen
- 11.15 Representatives from the United NLF groups and biologists in the field will present the biological effects of war on human beings.
- 12.00 Intermission
- 13.00 Westing
- 15.00 Sven Ekberg will speak about the migration of people
- 18.30 Pfeiffer - a talk and films
- 20.00 H.G. Franck on ecocide and international law
- 20.40 Sven Ekberg - continuation
- 21.30 An NLF activist will talk about the development of war from a specific to a total war against human beings and the environment
Solidarity in Sweden

Between presentations there will be songs, and poetry readings. Films and exhibitions about Indochina will be presented all day.

UN CONFERENCE

TUESDAY, June 6, 1972

- 10.00 Plenary session, New Parliament Building
- 13.00 Sessions can be followed by the public on closed circuit TV in the Folkets Hus.
- 15.00 Plenary session

HOG FARM

Members of Dai Dong conference have been invited for an informal day including some discussions of Dai Dong philosophy and alternative declaration - come join us!

Forum is produced by Environment Forum.

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