

POWWOW

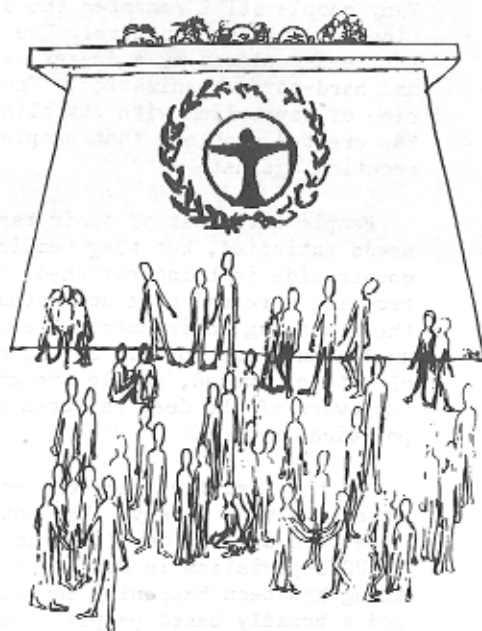
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UN CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT MISSES EXPECTATIONS

UN tries to gain power by making itself "indispensably useful" in the environmental field. But the UN Conference is unable to overcome the political and economic conflicts behind the problems. Page 5.



ACTIONS AROUND THE WORLD TAKE PLACE JUNE 4TH

Individuals and groups around the world to make massive manifestations on the environmental issues the day before the UN Conference. The problems can be solved only by the broad masses of people working together to create a new way of life. Page 13-14

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JOIN IT!



2 A History of the Environmental Movement in Sweden

A people's movement is growing in Sweden. It started on a small scale, working on local environmental problems. But the movement is growing and widening its perspectives from the back yard to the neighborhood to the city to the whole society and the culture.

Since Sweden escaped the ravages of both World Wars, economic so-called "progress" has advanced very far and very fast in this century. Many people still remember the old folk traditions and peasant culture. The old way of life has been replaced by a dreary materialism and hard-core urbanization. The Swedish version of capitalism with its blind technocracy has created problems that people are now reacting against.

People have most of their basic material needs satisfied, but they realize that the countryside is being ravished, the cities are becoming more and more congested and foul, their working environments are stressing and unpleasant, and so on. In the calm political climate of Sweden, people are gradually becoming aware of the deep failures of the whole political system.

In the last few years the radical activists have been very lively. The anti-war groups have been able to develop a growing opposition to US imperialism in Southeast Asia. But something has been happening on the home front also, and a broadly based people's movement is evolving.



Children Play in a public park. Authorities' intervention leads to creation of local environmental group.

Back-yard Parties and Playgrounds

People must be able to see an *alternative* before they will want to dump the present system. So some people tried something different. They tore down the fences that divided the back yards and then arranged parties there. They made different toys and games in which children cooperate instead of compete. The philosophy was to create a good experience of communion and cooperation, thus changing attitudes of isolation and competition, thus leading in the future to a change in the *consciousness* of society.

This kind of experience requires great pedagogical insight, understanding, and imagination. It is not possible to break the long-indoctrinated pattern of living overnight. Real changes can come only when the broad masses of the people have good learning experiences that they themselves are involved in creating.

During the autumn of 1968 there was a festival in one of the parks in Stockholm. A "building play ground" was proclaimed by some activists. There were boards, hammers, nails,



Bicycles instead of cars!

and so on. The children started to build, and they loved it. A play-house grew with many rooms and passages. The parents could see how their children were calm but energetic while working together on their "castle." Suddenly the festival was over, and the authorities wanted to close the whole thing. "What?" thought the parents. "Why? We live here. The park belongs to us, not the bureaucrats who make up the rules!" There they stood having seen the groovy game. During the festival they had gotten to know each other, and now they had something in common to fight for.

Non-bureaucratic Organization

The parents arranged a meeting, and there they decided to meet regularly to discuss what to do with their part of town. Then they formed smaller work groups which worked together to do what was decided. No elected leaders, no board of directors. Everyone participated and felt important. Suddenly small neighborhood groups began to spring up everywhere, and today there are about two hundred such groups. Everywhere it is the same--people getting together and working together on things that interest them. The groups consist of all kinds of people--children, housewives, middle-aged people, teenagers, pensioners, and so on; people who are tired of letting so-called "representatives" decide things for them and who want to work out new forms of cooperation based on direct-democracy and the involvement of the masses.

With these methods the movement has spread rapidly, and it is a good strategy against the authorities, who have great difficulties handling it. They don't find any spokesmen, political parties, or elected leaders--just more and more of those unpleasant and disturbing ordinary citizens. Rhetoric such as "a small minority of dissident students and Communist inspired outside agitators" sounds more and more hollow every day.



The people of Stockholm liberate the streets



"CARS OR PEOPLE"...

Public Transportation Instead of Cars

Stockholm, like other large cities, has a traffic mess. In 1969 a group called "Alternative City" was formed for the purpose of action on a general city level. It was thought of as an independent supplement to all the local engagements in the city. For some time the group dealt mainly with questions of city transportation. Alternative experts in planning, architecture, and medical and social sciences joined together. Alternatives were worked out to replace the private automobile in the entire city, with increased and improved public transportation. From this base a number of good and fairly successful traffic actions have been carried out. City planning authorities have been confronted and some decisions have been reversed.

Of course the demands from a growing movement were neglected from time to time by the authorities. Before the elections the politicians pay lip-service to public opinion in order to get elected, but in reality they refuse to change their aims. Thus the polarization between the broad masses of the people and the city authorities grew. Last spring it culminated in the "aims battle," a milestone in the history of Stockholm.

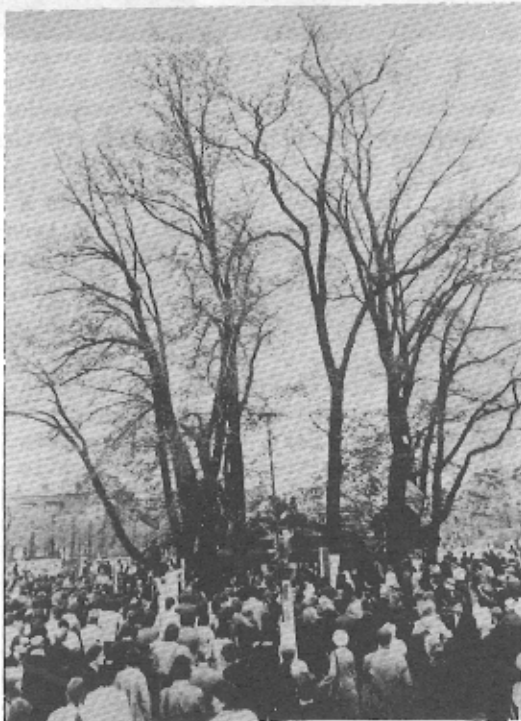
Elm Trees Saved from Technocratic Attack

A subway station containing a drugstore was planned. The drugstore was to be built directly under thirteen beautiful elm trees. For over a year Alternative City and other groups worked hard to change that plan. Actions, petitions, debates, and meetings were arranged.

Architects showed how a simple redesigning of the station could save the trees. But once again, the authorities refused to listen to the people. Stubborn technocrats and prestige-filled politicians lied about technical details and spoke about the lack of time to develop new plans. The plan was challenged through the courts and went to the Parliament, which decided in favor of cutting.

Everyone wanted to keep the trees, and there were no rational arguments for cutting them down. But fighting the legal way was obviously not enough. A telephone alarm list was made up in order to get people to the trees when they were to be cut down.

The chain saws arrived a few hours after midnight twenty-four hours before the government had said they would come. But the people were prepared, and the alarm list worked like a chain reaction. Within the hour thousands of people took their stand around the trees. Trained dogs and mounted policemen were unable to move them, and finally the authorities gave up.



People save elms from city authorities. Spontaneous folk-fest celebrates victory.

The "elms-battle" then developed into a spontaneous folk-fest, with day and night entertainment by volunteer troubadours, musicians, and other entertainers. The Royal Opera singers saluted the moment together with the hippies. This people's manifestation went on for a week, and finally the politicians gave in. The trees still stand, and it is unlikely that they will ever be able to cut them down. The underground station is now being redesigned.

The importance of the elms-battle went far beyond the trees themselves. If the action was, as the politicians claimed, a "violation of democracy," then what is democracy? Would

it have been more democratic to cut the elms down? Many people began to wonder, and an intense debate around the concept began in the press. It was a good learning experience for everyone. It showed that people are ready to act if the issues are clear to them. It showed that if we are many who cooperate, we can really change things, even political decisions. But most important was that everyone began to reflect on the changing environment. Where were the next trees to be cut down? Are they really going to double the number of private automobiles in the city within the next fifteen years? Is that what we want?

Protest Expands in Involvement and Scope

The protest is growing, as people begin attacking the myths on which our present way of life is based--myths such as the need for continued economic growth, growth of cities, the need for a huge private transportation system and so on. As the movement grows it will widen its perspectives, from the backyard to the neighborhood to the city to the whole society and the culture.

This increased level of consciousness is reflected in the rising protests against the so-called Stockholm Region Plan. This plan describes the continued wild city expansion. It will be decided upon in the spring of 1973, and a lot of trouble can be expected if the authorities persist with it.

Study of UN Preparations Begins

Some people within the Swedish environmental liberation movement got together one year ago to study the UN Conference. Before long they realized that it could accomplish very little. They discussed the idea of doing something alternative. When they wanted to find a name for the group and their alternative they looked in a synonym dictionary under the word "conference." Among the words (such as "meeting," "gathering," "council," and so on) was "powwow." This is an American Indian word meaning a gathering of people talking about important things or performing magical feasting and dancing for the cure of disease or to reach victory. At first it was used as a joke--it sounded funny--but gradually it was used more seriously as a name for the group.

It has been difficult to use the name Powwow publicly in countries other than English-speaking ones, and in the June actions it will be just one of the many groups participating. The "umbrella name" for all of the alternative events will be People's Forum.

June 1972--A Learning Experience

Now the United Nations Conference, where the great bureaucracy of bureaucracies will try to make our decisions for us, is about to provide another important learning experience in Stockholm and around the world. The polarization has already begun. And so has the cultural revolution!

What Can the UN Achieve

The UN Conference is unable to overcome the political and economic conflicts which lie at the roots of the environmental problems. What is needed is fundamental change in the way of life in the so-called "modern" world. This change must be brought about by the broad masses of the people working together, and cannot be solved by the UN, its member governments, or great corporations.



Over its lifetime the UN has had a record of very limited success. Many people inside the UN now hope that the environmental problems will provide a basis for a new feeling of unity, understanding, and cooperation among the member states and thus enable the UN to take some decisive action at last. Some even regard the UN Conference in Stockholm as the last chance to get the organization to function. They feel that the environmental problems are somehow less "political" than the security issues which are generally

the main ones before the UN. Some inside the UN are less hopeful but believe that the preparatory work will be an important stimulus to governments. They believe that it will increase the awareness of governments to environmental problems and thereby contribute to their solution.

Three Kinds of Problems

However, a survey of environmental problems will show that even these faint hopes are unrealistic. The problems are just not of a character that they can be solved by governments as we know them today.

Environmental problems can be divided into three broad categories:

1. *Those for which the solution requires the application of some specially developed technology;*
2. *Those for which the solution requires changes in consumption patterns and production methods;*
3. *Those for which the solution requires fundamental changes in life-styles, the organization of production, and the political-economic structure.*



Environmental Technology

Problems of the first category are already being worked on. An example is untreated sewage that is brought under control by a purification plant. Another example is soot and other air pollutants that are controlled by means of a waste-gas scrubbing device. These problems thus require the addition of some device to complete the already existing

system. These are "bandage solutions." In Western industrialized countries this means increasing aggregate demand which stimulates an already stagnant economy. "The environmental market is worth millions," say the businessmen hopefully.

Pollution Spreads Internationally

There are, of course, international aspects to the first kind of problems. Many pollutants spread from one country to another via waterways or winds--for example, combustion of sulphurous coal or oil in the Ruhr and Great Britain results in sulphuric acid in the rain over Norway and Sweden. This amounts to chemical warfare, complicated by the fact that the production which spreads these agents is often profitable to some

very powerful interests inside the "aggressor" country. It will be very difficult for the UN to deal effectively with this kind of international warfare. Judging from the UN's lack of effort to stop the chemical warfare in Vietnam, one should expect the UN not to intervene, at least not against the "great powers."

Some pollutants pose a common threat to all nations by changing climate (for example carbon dioxide and fine particulates), or by entering and concentrating in the biomass (for example, pesticides and some radioactive elements). A similar threat to all nations is posed by the arms race. The basic problem in taking action internationally is the same in all these cases: the country which unilaterally takes the first step toward de-escalation suffers economic or military disadvantages, and each country has economic or military incentives to break the agreement unilaterally. The UN's attempt to negotiate a general disarmament has had little success so far, which casts great doubt on its ability to reduce pollutants.

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Change Consumption Patterns; Change Production Methods!

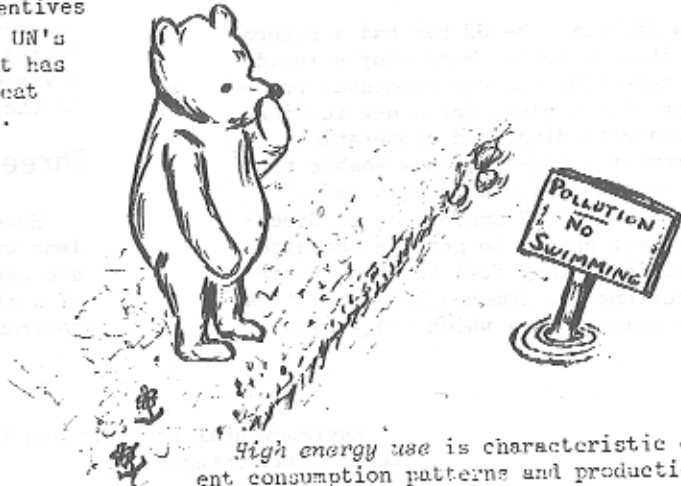
Changing consumption patterns and production methods is a first step toward solving the environmental problems threatening the world today. However, by taking these steps we can only buy time. Unless we change our culture in several quite fundamental ways, the problems will not only persist but increase.

Only a small part of the environmental problems can be solved by making minor "bandage" technological changes. Both consumption patterns and production methods today create environmental problems. This can be seen by considering some of the major kinds of environmental problems we face.

Pollution in consumption can be seen both as a problem of waste disposal and as a problem of harmful use. A good example of the

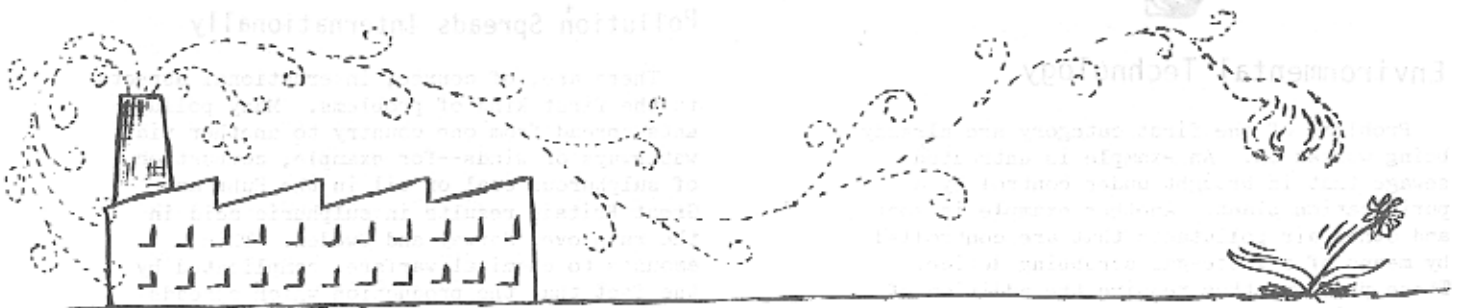
former is the recent trend toward "containerization" of almost everything. The containers, often made of plastic, which is not biologically degraded, must also be disposed of. An example of the problem of harmful use is the use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, such as tranquilizers, marijuana, etc. Their use results in "internal pollution."

Pollution in production results when poisons from the production processes enter the biosphere. The paper industry and large parts of the chemical industry, especially the plastics and pesticides industries, use production processes which poison the biosphere. Another example of pollution in production is the use of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides.... all the chemical warfare that "modern" agricultural methods use against nature.



High energy use is characteristic of present consumption patterns and production methods. The use of plastics instead of wood or natural fibers and the use of electrical air conditioning are examples of consumption patterns which have high energy demands. Likewise the present technologies for producing light metals such as magnesium and aluminum are examples of production processes which have high energy demands. Common to both consumption and production is the transportation system based on private individual transport, such as automobiles and trucks instead of public transport, such as bus or rail, which use much less energy.

Depletion of renewable resources (that is, the stable elements and most of their compounds except for biologically created resources such as coal, oil, and guano) results from locking these resources into produced goods and dispersing them in waste products. The solution to these problems requires a complete recycling system for produced goods, and production processes which have no waste effluence.



Depletion of non-renewable resources, such as oil, coal, and uranium results from the use of resources which are fixed in quantity. In a sense these resources belong to all of humanity--past, present, and future--but twentieth-century man will have used up most of the coal and oil reserves produced by natural processes over a period of millions of years. The rape of these resources has resulted largely from the *scale* of production processes (for example, to some extent oil and coal have replaced wind, animal, and hydro-mechanical power, which can be used more easily for small- than large-scale production processes) and the *level* of production (that is, the Gross National Product).

Simplification of the ecological system results from the use of monoculture (that is, single-crop agriculture, which is practiced on large plantations in many developing countries), the replacing of hundreds of local varieties of wheat and other crops with only a few varieties all over the world, the killing of "undesirable" plant life with weed killers, and the extinction of entire species of plant and animal life, such as whales now in danger of extinction due to over-killing. Simplification of the ecological system also results when huge cities are built. The ecosystem of cities contains only a few species of animals and plants--mainly man, dogs, cats, rodents, and birds, and a small quantity of trees and grasses. This in turn leads to simplification and instability of the microflora, giving rise to the epidemics so common in urban areas.

Change Creates Havoc in Capitalist World

The problems that have been mentioned here originate in large and important sectors of the economy--the chemical industry, large-scale capital-intensive agriculture, transportation, the energy industry, and so on. And it is in these large and important sectors that change must occur.

In the capitalist countries products and methods of production are usually decided solely or largely by private interests. Governments generally lack power to force producers to take environmental deterioration into account more than marginally. A massive and vocal public opinion might help, but only if it remains strong as long as it takes to develop and institute new methods of production. But change will be resisted by producers, and they will have economic incentives to continue polluting, especially if other

producers are *not* polluting. Moreover, if the shifting of consumption patterns and production methods is made within the existing economic system, other problems are likely to occur--higher levels of unemployment, regional imbalances, flight of capital, and weakening of trade balances for those countries which try to deal effectively with their environmental problems.

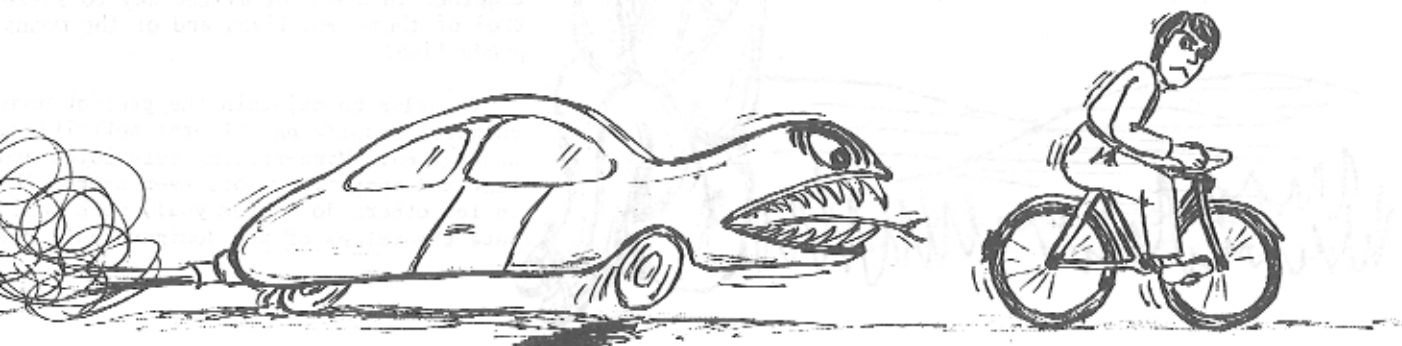
Changing consumption patterns and methods of production thus cannot become issues before the UN Conference and be dealt with in its resolutions and conventions. That would be strongly resisted by both governments and powerful corporations. In these realms the UN is powerless.



Make Cultural Revolution!

Environmental problems of the third category are the most difficult to solve, for they originate deep within our way of living and within the political-economic power structure and the ideology which serves to legitimate, strengthen, and develop this structure. The many problems in this category cannot be viewed in isolation, for at the roots they are all interrelated.

Problems of the third category include the ever-increasing centralization of control over people's lives and over the means of production. This growing centralization of power is a major cause of the growth of huge urban centers--organized concentrations of labor and capital. Since cities are created not for the sake of people but for the sake of control of labor and capital, they are inhuman--noisy, congested, and polluted, filled with artless concrete ghettos, increasingly devoid of trees



and grass, and filled with the constant propaganda of advertizing forever seeking control of the minds of the people. Many cities, both in the industrialized countries and the Third World, are unsanitary. Especially in the Third World cities are often centers of mass unemployment and bottomless poverty side by side with great luxury.

Also the centralization of power and the consequent growth of huge cities is a major cause of the growth of massive, energy-consuming transportation systems to carry people, raw materials, fuels, and unfinished and finished goods to and from huge centralized places of production. The land is covered with pavement to make highways, and employment is moved to the cities while economic stagnation is left in its place.

Centralization of power is a major cause of the growth of huge bureaucratic governments, gaining ever more control over people's lives and becoming further and further removed from the influence of the vast majority of the people--huge impenetrable machines, without human values, capable of declaring war at will on ourselves and our brothers and sisters around the world.

Insane Goal of Economic Growth

In the Western industrialized countries the third category of problems also includes the continued economic growth. Indeed centralization of control and continued economic growth go hand in hand, each assisting the other. Continued economic growth depends on the growth of centers of production, transportation systems, and governments. But it also requires a growing supply of resources which, as a result, are plundered as rapidly as is consistent with expectations of profit or expansion in the market. It requires an endless succession of wars and coups, engineered by the industrialized countries and carried out in the Third World. It requires the destruction of pleasant living areas, wilderness areas, and historic places for the sake of industrial parks, highways, airports, and ugly housing developments.

Continued economic growth also requires the inducement of wants. People are induced to want to feel superior to their neighbors and to feel that their level of consumption displays their superiority. People in highly industrialized countries are induced to believe that the endless stream of stupid new goods are really needed. They are induced to believe that their needs for belonging, for understanding and for a meaningful life can be fulfilled by consuming goods and services.

For the sake of consumption people are induced to feel that private individual transportation is better than public transportation. More and more highways are built, more and more automobiles congest the cities, and more and more non-renewable fuel and other resources are consumed. For the sake of continued economic growth piles of waste grows endlessly, threatening to bury us in the plastic excrement of our own rampant but unfulfilling consumption. For the sake of profit and economic growth man is treated as an object and is alienated from the product of his own work and from his fellow man. Nature is treated as an object to be conquered.

In order to solve these problems of the third category it is necessary to change society in fundamental ways. The trend toward increasing urbanization and increasing centralization of power must be reversed, and economic growth must be rejected as a goal all over the world, and it must be stopped--possibly even reversed--in the industrialized, perverted, developed countries.



There Can be No Construction Without Destruction

No technology can solve the problems we create by our way of life. No technology can give meaning to the meaninglessness of the dominant culture of the so-called "modern" world and the culture it seeks to impose on the rest of the world. No technology can remove our alienation from our fellow man and from nature. No entrenched bureaucracy, such as the UN and the governments of its member states, can solve the problems of which they are part. Instead they will try to increase their power by focusing only on the most visible symptoms rather than the problems, and by promising to solve these for us so we don't have to do it ourselves. They will ceremoniously present their grand scheme in a shower of mixed technical jargon and political rhetoric, hoping to persuade people that now the problems are being solved.

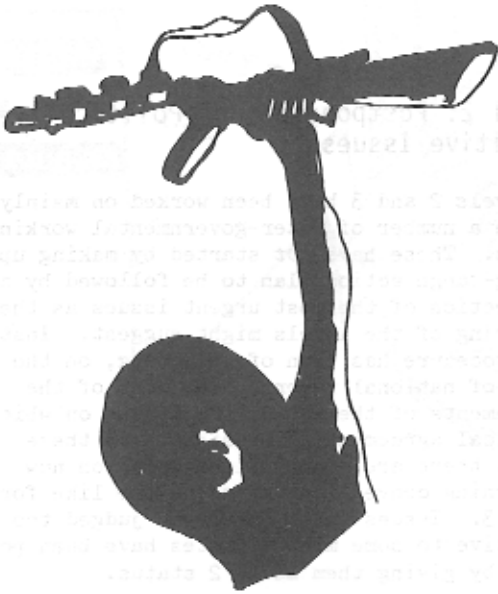
Governments, political parties, other bureaucracies, corporations, and elite groups can not create *for the people* a new way of life which is human, balanced, and in harmony with nature. Instead the broad masses of the people must be actively involved in creating a new culture which is consistent with their innermost values.

What is needed is nothing less than a cultural revolution! It must begin on a grass-roots level, with groups of people working together in a decentralized way to seize control of their own lives and of the means of production!

In order to maintain the present dominant culture, stupefying cultural activities are propagated. Mind-rotting television and violent and competitive observer sports (be sure to let others do it for you!) seek to inculcate the values of the dominant culture.



High-equipment (capital-intensive!) participant sports and "mod" clothing style changes seek to induce consumption for "play." Political party campaigns and election fun and games seek to fill people's minds with stupid trivialities so they won't think about the real issues. Commercial advertizing fun and games seek to persuade people that they really want to consume more and more useless and unfulfilling jet-age toys.



In all countries increasing numbers of people must escape from the tyranny of the dominant culture! In many countries of the world the first step is national or social liberation, to throw off the bonds of foreign domination or the domination of a corrupt or oppressive regime. In the most highly industrialized countries the dominant ideology is so thoroughly ingrained in the culture, since capitalism has existed for so long, that a reawakening of true human values must occur in the broad masses of the people.



It is clear that the dominant culture, with its firmly centralized and very powerful political economic system can be successfully attacked only in a decentralized and diversified way. People must free their minds and become conscious of their organic relationship with other people and with their whole environment. Then they must begin working together with others to create a new way of life and to develop new ways of organizing production, of sharing the fruits of production, and of making decisions on matters that concern many people.

In many countries local groups are being formed, which involve families and all ages and kinds of people, working together on problems that concern them, such as their neighborhood environment, air and water pollution, war, education, and so on. As these groups grow in diversity and strength, as they develop their economic base, and as they develop their cooperation with other groups in a decentralized way, they will gradually change and evolve.

There will be many failures, because of incorrect ideas. There will be many defeats, because of the resistance of the forces of the present dominant culture. But the way of life involving people working together to determine their own lives will prevail. Indeed the essential features of government in the new culture can be seen already today in the evolving pattern of large and small groups of people working together collectively for their own liberation.

The solution to the problems in the third category will not be found by the UN Conference or by governments as we know them today. Instead they will be found by the broad masses of the people creating a new way of life. The solution will grow out of practice in the cultural revolution which has begun around the world.

Risks With the UN Conference

From the reasoning outlined above it should be clear that any benefit from the UN Conference, either direct or indirect, must be small compared with the problems that exist. Moreover there are risks with the Conference. Many persons might be persuaded that, after all, the authorities have now acted to deal with the problems so that ordinary people don't have to bother. Also because of the complicated language that will be used and the foginess created by hired experts, there is the risk that many persons will believe that the problems are too complex for ordinary people to comprehend. If these views prevailed, the creation of a new culture would be slowed.

If, on the other hand, the consciousness of the UN's shortcomings and the risks of the Conference stimulate broad actions and a new and more integrated analysis of the nature of the problems and of suitable political strategies, then the Conference will have had a positive function. Then also we can welcome any contributions that the Conference makes.



How has the UN Prepared Itself ?

The possible results of the Conference are published long in advance, and they show how little it can achieve. The preparations made so far show a masterpiece of political opportunism.



...but Man tearing it apart!

The limited perspectives of the UN Conference can be seen in the preparations that have already been made. The Conference originated with a Swedish proposal to the UN to hold a conference on the human environment. The UN accepted the proposal, and in December 1969 it set up a twenty-seven nation Preparatory Committee. This Committee has met formally three times, and a fourth meeting will be held in March.

One difficulty facing the Conference is the question of whether the Soviet Union and the rest of the Eastern Bloc will participate. This has been widely discussed in the press. The preparations so far reveal other serious problems.

The Structure of the Preparatory Work

The Secretary-General of the Conference, the Canadian ex-industrialist and foreign aid administrator Maurice Strong participated for the first time in the preparations at an informal meeting with the Preparatory Committee in November 1970. He then introduced a three-level framework for the preparations and the Conference itself.

Level 1: Investigation of problems and concepts within the environmental area.

Level 2: Long-term action plan.

Level 3: Actions that can be decided upon by the Conference.

Level 1: A Book

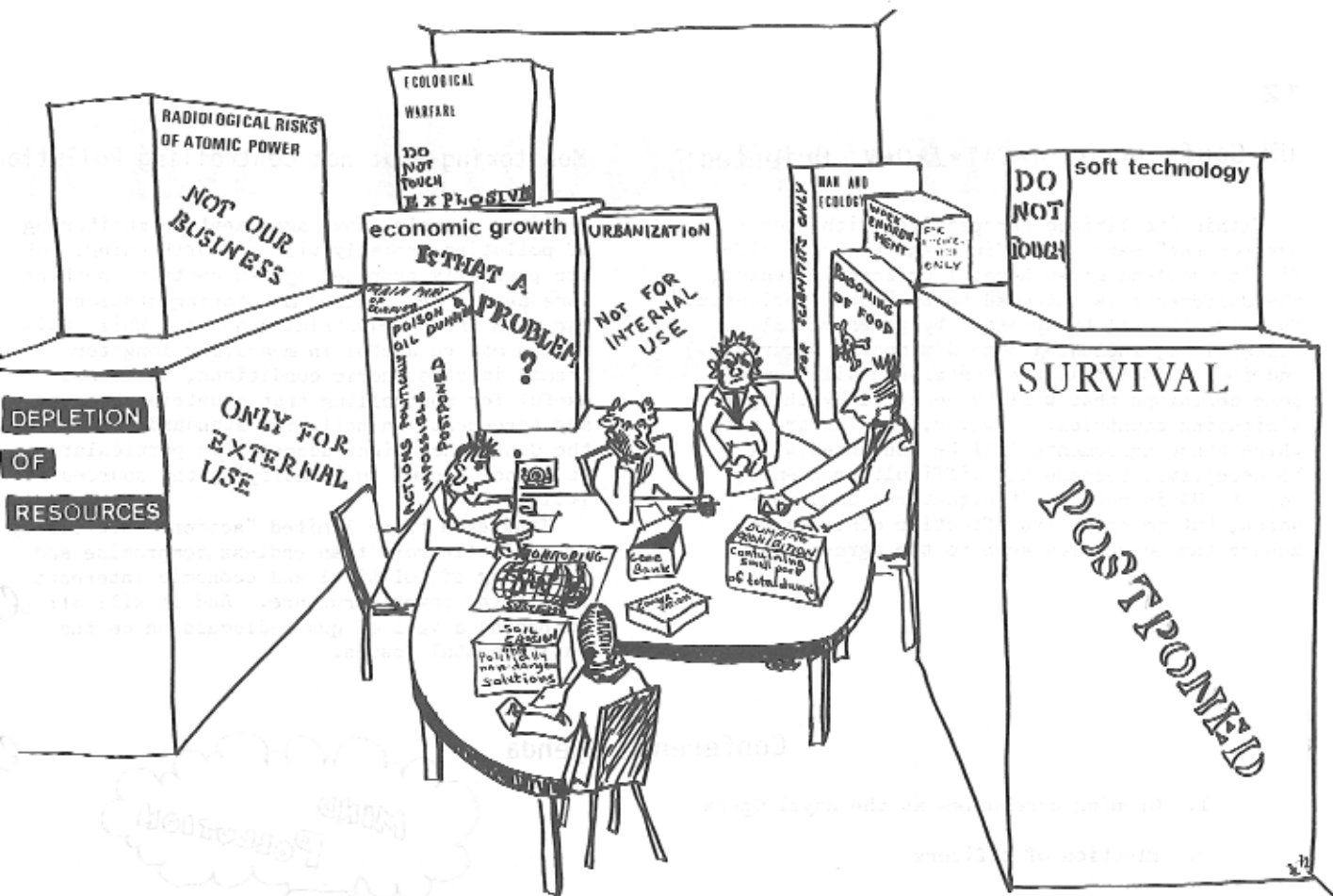
The work of Level 1 involves a group of scientists, headed by the American author and professor of Biochemistry René Dumas, writing a book on environmental problems. The book is based to a large extent on the background materials prepared for Levels 2 and 3. Thus Level 1 does not influence the other levels.

Level 2: Postponement of Politically Sensitive Issues

Levels 2 and 3 have been worked on mainly inside a number of inter-governmental working groups. These have not started by making up a long-range action plan to be followed by a selection of the most urgent issues as the numbering of the levels might suggest. Instead the procedure has been of selecting, on the basis of national reports from most of the governments of the world, the issues on which political agreement is possible. On these issues there are negotiations going on now concerning convention texts and the like for Level 3. Issues which have been judged too sensitive to some member states have been postponed by giving them Level 2 status.

On the environmental problems of urbanization, to take one example, it has not been possible to reach consensus around a single action at Level 3. Instead there will be vague recommendations to governments urging them to improve their planning. But the "golden model" for this is the region planning and national physical planning as employed, for example, in Sweden. Thinking about that could discourage even the most optimistic person. In Sweden more and more people have become aware that this "planning" in reality means preparing us for and adjusting us to so-called "development," which does not aim at fulfilling human needs or ecological requirements.





Issues which are clearly controversial will not even be discussed between governments. These issues include, for example, the hazards of rapid economic growth, radiological risks of atomic power, ecological warfare in South-east Asia and elsewhere, the use of non-polluting production processes, and the use of products which are not environmentally harmful. To be sure, some of these issues may be discussed in Level 1--the book. This way the issues can be presented to the public without getting them in the way of the discussions of the Conference. That effectively stops action.

The procedure thus appears to be one of political opportunism rather than a serious attempt to act effectively against the difficult environmental problems involving political and economic conflict.

Level 3: The Tangible Results of the Conference

Despite the problems discussed above, some tangible results will very probably be forthcoming

- Prohibition on dumping of toxic substances into international waters.
- An agreement on monitoring poisons in nature.
- An agreement on conservation of some wet lands, national parks, and islands.
- Establishment of a "gene bank" to preserve samples of species in danger of extinction.
- Some action against soil erosion.

Also the establishment of an *Environmental Secretariate* within the UN can be expected. This body is to deliver an annual report to the General Assembly on the state of the environment and to give recommendations. The "long-term action plan" will be decided upon, and a *Declaration on the Human Environment* will be adopted. This declaration is conceived of as a kind of counterpart to the UN Declaration on Human Rights. The drafts made so far have been very carefully watered down. Probably there will also be a decision to have another Conference in 1976.

What did you expect? Lots of ceremonies, lots of talk, a fairly mild Declaration, some swamps, a gene-bank to ease our consciences as we continue to destroy, and another conference!

UN Conference *A*C*T*I*O*N* Oriented!

Monitoring--but not Controlling Pollution

Within its limited perspective, with "human environment" narrowly defined and the more difficult problems given Level 1 or level 2 status, the Conference is intended to be "action-oriented." That is, it will be attended by governmental delegations, including some diplomatic figures, and it is hoped that the Conference will come to some decisions that will be accepted by the participating countries. However, the fanfare with which these agreements will be announced will be deceptive, because the difficult problem for the UN is not to get signatures on a document, but to establish effective controls to assure that countries keep to the agreements.

As an example, some agreement on monitoring of pollution probably will be forthcoming, but the presently proposed system contains nothing more than a few hundred monitoring stations far from urban industrial centers. While this system may be useful in measuring long-term trends in atmospheric conditions, it is not useful for controlling that countries keep to any agreements on pollution standards which the Conference might accept. In particular, it is not useful in identifying the sources of pollution.

Thus even these limited "actions" are likely to be little more than endless compromise and marketing of political and economic interests within the power structure. And it will all go on behind a veil of quasi-discussion on the environmental issues.

Conference Agenda

1. Opening ceremonies at the Royal Opera
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Introductory statement by Maurice Strong
5. Formation of committees



	Committee 1	Committee 2	Committee 3
Week 1.	6. Plenary (statements by government officials)	8. Environmental aspects of natural resource management	9. Identification and control of pollutants of broad international significance
Week 2.	7. Planning and management of human settlements for environmental quality	11. Environmental quality and economic development	12. International organizational implications of the action proposals
	10. Educational, informational, social, and cultural aspects of environmental issues		

13. Adoption of long-term action plan
14. Decisions on concrete actions (that is, conventions, and so on)
15. Adoption and signature of the Declaration on the Human Environment
16. Closing ceremonies



The plenary runs parallel with the committees because the prestigious government officials would not come to the conference, if they have no plenary to address their statements to.

What Happens in Stockholm...

Stockholm will see a lot of activities this summer besides the yackety-yack of the UN delegates. In the so-called ABF House, a big hall in the city center, there will be teach-ins, exhibitions, and so on, with more than thirty groups participating. And in the streets a lot of actions will take place....

Many groups in Stockholm look at the UN Conference as a marvelous opportunity to spread alternative views and to get many people involved in radical activities.

The Powwow group took the initiative a year ago with studies and discussions on the UN Conference, environmental problems, and related matters. Now the circles of involvement are spreading, and many other groups are joining in the preparations. There will be many manifestations of a growing people's movement to liberate the environment.

People's Forum

An important feature in the context of the alternative activities is a series of *teach-ins* in the spring, dealing with issues that the UN Conference will either miss completely, treat in inadequate depth, or treat badly. Such issues are not hard to find, since the UN Conference will either miss or mistreat a lot! Here are some possible topics:

- Ecology.
- The poisoning of food.
- Sharing the Earth's natural resources.
- Energy and environment.
- The work environment.
- The political-economy of environmental destruction.

So far more than thirty groups have become involved in the People's Forum. They are quite diverse in character. In addition to ecology groups there are political groups, anti-imperialist groups, and so on. There are differences in the analyses and ideologies of these groups, but the cooperation has developed very well so far and it seems to give quite interesting results.

These groups have rented a large "activities" hall--the so-called ABF-House--in the center of Stockholm. In that hall there will be seminars,

teach-ins, learn-ins, public hearings, exhibitions, films, and many other kinds of activities. Scientists from many countries, including the Third World, will be involved in discussions from an alternative point of view. The discussions will not be the kind of closed sessions that will characterize the UN Conference, because ordinary people off the streets will be involved.

Actions Around the City

However, *actions* that aim for even wider participation among the broad masses of people are needed to balance the flow of words from the ABF House.

Many activities are planned, such as demonstrations, happenings, and so on. Some of the activities are described below.

Alternative Menus at Restaurants

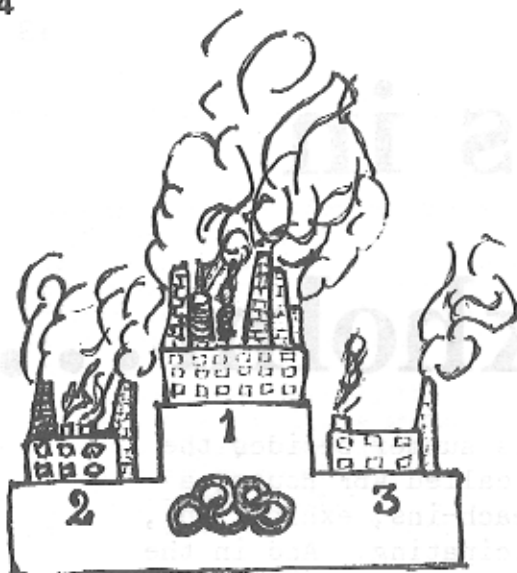
When journalists, delegates and others go out to restaurants for dinner they will be provided with alternative menus informing them what they really are eating: how much lead in this, how much mercury in that, how much pesticide in the other.

Alternative Sight-seeing

Stockholm has been brutally raped in the last few decades, as have most other large cities. Swedish authorities propagandize that Stockholm is one of the best-planned cities in the world, but in fact it is a typical example of today's horrible artless city planning. So alternative sight-seeing tours will take interested visitors around to the new nightmare suburbs and to natural areas about to be raped for the sake of what the city planners call "progress." And they will have the joy of travelling on the exhaust-filled, congested spaghetti highways.

Olympic Games of Pollution

The UN Conference stresses "common interests" in environmental affairs ("Only one earth" is their motto). But in fact many



corporations around the world make a hell of a lot of money by polluting our environment, and *their* interests lie in continued destruction of the environment. This must be stated in a way that everyone can understand, and the Olympic Games of Pollution provides a good opportunity. The most "successful" corporations and other institutions will receive medals for their "outstanding accomplishments."

The UN Forum

The UN took the initiative to arrange their own *alternativus* alternative shortly after they heard about our plans. At first this so-called Environment Forum was to be held in the Royal

Tennis Hall, which is conveniently isolated from the parent Conference, and was to be tightly controlled from the UN Secretariate in Geneva. However, in a magnificent show of "repressive tolerance" they have now moved closer into the city, and the bonds with Geneva are said to be broken. Still, it is now controlled by the Swedish National Youth Council and the Swedish UN Association, and almost all of the Swedish activist groups are boycotting it.

At the UN Forum many more or less establishment organizations that can't participate in the UN Conference will have an opportunity to do their thing--Boy Scouts, the Red Cross, perhaps the great multinational corporations or even the CIA (but let's not kid ourselves--these latter two will certainly be well represented at the UN Conference). For the Boy Scouts and the Red Cross to do their thing is, of course, a good thing. The main objection one can have to the Environment Forum is that it may confuse things and blur the distinction between the UN Conference (which includes as a side show the Environment Forum) and the criticism of it. But in spite of that there is room for diversity, and the more that happens the better, and we will not waste our energy throwing shit at the UN Forum. So to clarify, since at least some of the journalists will get things confused, there are three centers of activity:

- + *The UN Conference* for governments,
- + *The UN Environment Forum* for non-governmental organizations,
- + *The People's Forum* for and by the broad masses of the people.

... and Elsewhere ?

Actions Here and There and Everywhere

The People's Forum and the people-based actions in the streets of Stockholm are only two aspects of the alternative manifestations in connection with the UN Conference. The third and perhaps most important aspect is the international parallel action. The UN gets a bunch of so-called "representatives" together to talk among themselves, and we get actively involved here and there and everywhere. For about one year now we have been getting in contact and trying to stimulate people and groups in other countries to prepare actions where they live. In some places we know that people are doing that, but at this stage there is not so much information about what is actually being planned.

Concentrate on June 4th!

For practical reasons we have urged people who are interested to focus their activities on one special day, June 4. For an optimum

effect it is probably wise to focus sharply. Many groups will only be able to do something on one day. Also it is the day just before the UN Conference. Finally, it is a Sunday, which means easy mobilizing possibilities. But this does *not* mean that you should not do anything before or after June 4! If you have ambition to do so, *right on!*

We have heard about some activities in other countries. In *Denmark* a wide spectrum of activities will take place. In the *Netherlands* a group is working on an alternative report to the Dutch National Report to the UN Conference. In *London* a bicycle march is scheduled for June 4. In *Geneva* a mass petition against the city officials' traffic policy will be handed over to the authorities. In *New York* there will be teach-ins, and from *Tokyo* we have heard of an escalation in the protest against the factory responsible for the Minamata mercury catastrophe of a few years ago.

We know, however, that there are groups planning things in other countries too, and we hope to be able to tell more in the next Newsletter, scheduled for May.

GET IN TOUCH AROUND THE WORLD

IS ANYONE THERE?

We feel that in our efforts to construct a new way of life it is necessary for all of us to be in contact so that we can exchange ideas, information, and experiences throughout the whole transnational counter culture. Every aspect of the dominant culture must be rethought, and new ways of doing things must be tried out--new ways of producing, new ways of living together and working together, and new ways of making decisions that affect other people.

In this revolutionary struggle it is necessary to have a wide perspective. Today the "movement" covers a fairly broad front in some countries, but we can all gain by sharing ideas, information, and experiences with our brothers and sisters in other countries.

This Newsletter is the attempt of the Powwow group to get in touch and let people know what we are doing. We have tried to get as wide a contact network as possible. The Newsletter will go to about five hundred active groups in many countries. Regretfully our contacts outside Western Europe and North America are very limited, but gradually and with the help of you, our readers, we will expand our network.

Please write to us and tell us about active groups you know and the actions they engage in.



Send information, publications, films, and tapes that they have produced.

Send pictures or news clippings of previous actions.

We will use these to show to the news media assembled in Stockholm that a people's movement is growing around the world.



If you know of any groups which will join in the widespread manifestation on June 4, let us know about it. As soon as you can get documentation on these actions--news clippings, photographs, films, or anything--get them here.

How to Get a Copy of the Next Issue

Our contact list is growing quite rapidly, and by the time we are ready to send out the next issue of the Newsletter, we will have more addresses than we will have resources to send copies to. Therefore we will send only to addresses where we have reason to believe that people are interested. The best way to get the next issue is to write to us and ask for it.

We are looking for people to sell this in different countries. This is partly to get a wide distribution and partly to cover our costs. If you are interested in selling some copies, please let us know.



COMMUNICATION

For the next issue we plan an annotated list of environmental literature from around the world. We have already received a limited amount of material from groups in several countries. Realizing that the list is ethnocentric and the comments not so deep, we nevertheless indicate some of the material we now have.

From a Danish group called Noah we have "Nogle Onlysninger om Den Jord, Vi Sammen Lever På." ("Some Information About the Earth, on Which We Live Together." English edition under way.) It is a broad presentation of the situation of mankind on our planet, based on a splendid interplay of pictures and text.

"Ecology and Revolutionary Thought" is an inspiring pamphlet by the American author Murray Bookchin. He argues that in order to live according to ecological laws we must create a varied, decentralized society of self-sustaining units of humane size. Also from the US we have Kennedy's Ecology issue which contains lots of thoroughly worked-out arguments and well-documented material, especially from the US scene.

The January '72 issue of The Ecologist gives a "Blueprint for Survival," covering ecological, economical, and other arguments for a non-growth society, and an outline of a strategy to reach that goal. Although it does not analyze the political viability of the strategy, the blueprint is excellent discussion material.

We have been promised some highly relevant material from Japan that we hope we can present in our next issue.

Addresses appear on the next page.

ADDRESSES

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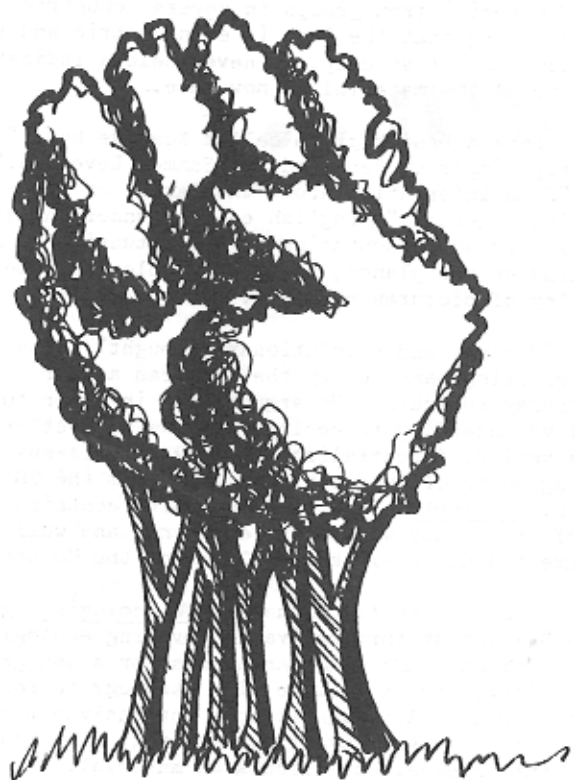
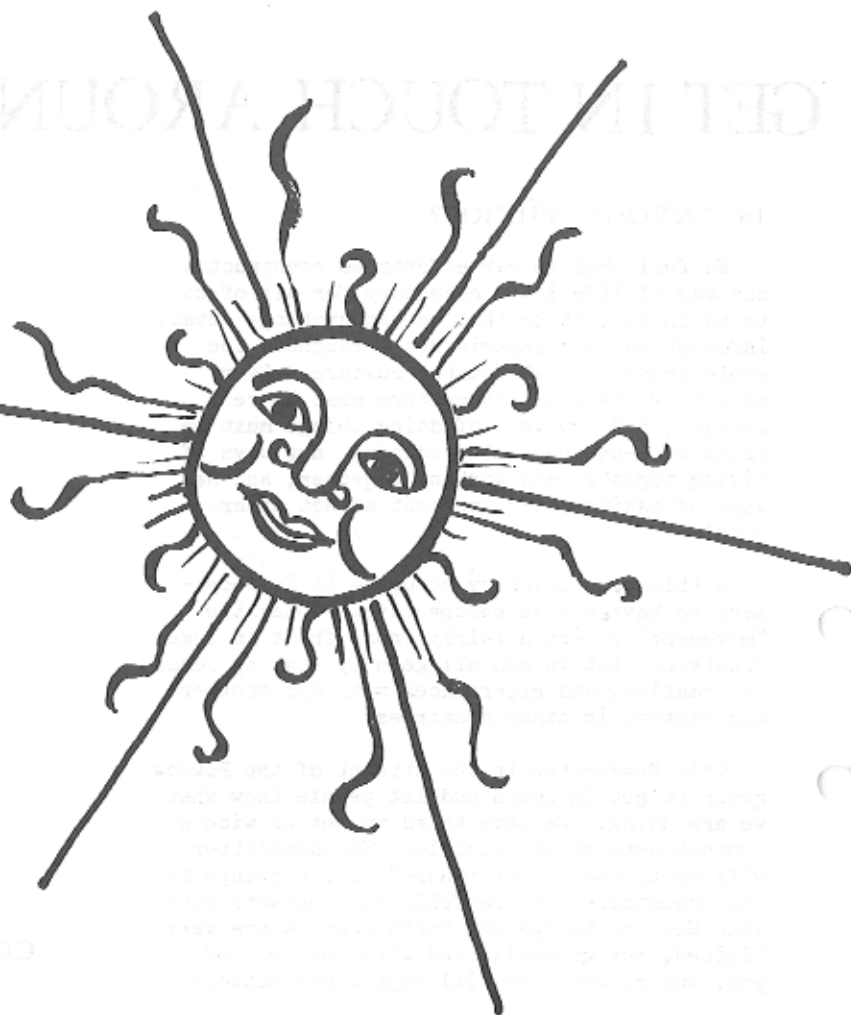
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HEAR ME MY FRIENDS

We now have to deal with a people which was weak and small in number when it met our ancestors but which now is powerful and overwhelmingly strong. These people have a strange desire to plough the land, and a longing for property has become an illness among them. They claim our Mother Earth for their own use and by fences cut off their neighbors from Her and deform Her with their buildings and their rubbish. They force Her to bear fruit out of season and if She refuses they give Her medicine. This is a sacrilege. This people is like a spring-stream which overflows its banks and destroys everything in its way. We can no longer live side by side.

Sitting Bull
Powwow, 1875