IN DEFENCE OF HOME PLACES:
ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVISM IN NOVA SCOTIA, 1970 - 1985

by

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Abstract

This dissertation traces the origins and development of environmental activism in the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, from the late 1950s to 1990, with a central focus on the period from 1970 to 1985, during which the structure of the lasting movement took shape. The crucial events or issues that both produced and molded the movement in Nova Scotia are discussed in detail over three chapters of the dissertation. They include a foray into nuclear energy promotion by the provincial government in the 1970s, a set of controversies over chemical biocide use in industrial forestry from 1975 to 1983, and a fight to prevent uranium mining in the early 1980s. Each campaign brought activists closer to recognizing the differences that divided them. The factor that unites the three central controversies and the many others that join them in this dissertation is the ideological content of their history, specifically the progressive divergence of activist organizations inspired by fundamentally different views of the nature of environmental problems and the potential for their solution within the existing modernist industrial society. It is the tensions between the eco-modernist mainstream and the radical minority that account in large part for the successes and failures of activists in the province, as well as for the nature of their interactions with governments, industries, and fellow activists outside of Nova Scotia. Indeed, the relationship of centres and peripheries -- intraCanadian or intraprovincial -- constitutes a vital theme in explaining the origin of environmentalism as well as its fragmentation. This account of Nova Scotian environmental activism addresses the common reality of environmentalism in Canada. As this research suggests, the country's environmentalism can only be understood, in any era, through the lens of its provincial components and through an analysis that relies on ideological difference as much as the material factors of social movement mobilization.

List of Abbreviations Used

AECB	Atomic Energy Control Board
AECL	Atomic Energy of Canada Limited
APES	Association for the Preservation of the Eastern Shore
BBPCC	Bedford Basin Pollution Control Committee
B.t.k	*Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki*
CANDU	Canadian Deuterium-Uranium Reactor
CAPE	Citizen Action to Protect the Environment
CARE	Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment
CAUM	Citizens Against Uranium Mining
CBLAS	Cape Breton Landowners Against the Spray
CCCC	Concerned Citizens of Cumberland County
CCNR	Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility
CEAC	Canadian Environmental Advisory Council
CEN	Canadian Environmental Network
CEPA	Chaleur Environmental Protection Association
CFS	Canadian Forestry Service
COPE	Communities Organized to Protect the Environment
CSG	Conserver Society Group
DDT	Dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane
DLF	Department of Lands and Forests (Nova Scotia)
DOA	Department of Agriculture (Nova Scotia)
DOE	Department of Environment (Nova Scotia)
EAC	Ecology Action Centre
ECC	Environmental Control Council
EMR	Energy, Mines, and Resources
ENGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organization
FACT	Fundy Area Concern for Tomorrow
FOE	Friends of the Earth (Canada)
FON	Friends of Nature
HFN	Halifax Field Naturalists
HFS	Herbicide Fund Society
IEL	Industrial Estates Limited
IMR	Institute of Man and Resources
JAG	Joint Action Group
KASE	Kings Association to Save the Environment
KEG	Kings Environment Group
LIP	Local Initiatives Program
LWR	Light Water Reactor
MEC	Maritime Energy Corporation
MEC	Maritime Energy Coalition
MOVE	Movement for Citizens Voice and Action
NBEPC	New Brunswick Electric Power Corporation
NIMBY	Not In My Back Yard
NPSG	Nuclear Power Study Group

NSEA	Nova Scotia Environment Alliance
NSEW	North Shore Environment Web
NSFI	Nova Scotia Forest Indistries
NSLPC	Nova Scotia Light and Power Corporation
NSPCC	Northumberland Strait Pollution Control Committee
NSRC	Nova Scotia Research Council
NSRF	Nova Scotia Research Foundation
NSSA	Nova Scotia Salmon Association
OFY	Opportunities for Youth
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
PAN	Pesticide Action Network
PCAC	Purcell's Cove Action Committee
PEP	People for Environmental Protection
RESCUE	Residents Enlisted Save Communities from Uranium Exploration
SCC	Science Council of Canada
SEC	Small Earth Community
SEP	Soft Energy Path
SEPOHG	Socialist Environmental Protection and Occupational Health Group
SKMS	Save Kelly's Mountain Society
SSEPA	South Shore Environmental Protection Association
TCDD	Tetrachlorodibenzodioxin
VOW	Voice of Women
2,4,5-T	2,4,5-Trichlorophenoxyacetic acid
2,4-D	2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

"In Defence of Home Places" is an account of the origins and development of environmental activism in Nova Scotia from the 1960s through the 1980s. It is at the core a story about the recognition and consequences of ideological differences within the environmental movement of a modern country. The substance of the dissertation consists of three case studies of major controversies that contributed to the shape of the environmental movement as it stood in the late 1980s, which is very much as it stands at the time of writing. In every issue they pursued, environmental activists struggled to negotiate differences of opinion on the basic questions of environmentalism: the causes of environmental problems; the proper relationship of humanity to the rest of the world in which we live; and the actions most likely to achieve that relationship. By the conclusion of the third major controversy in 1985, insurmountable differences that had existed from the beginning of the movement were recognized and acknowledged by enough of its members that it became necessary to speak of mainstream and fringe environmentalisms, offering quite different answers to each of these three major questions.

The ideological differences dividing environmental activists turned on the basic structures of modern society. On the one hand, those who believed that environmental problems were mainly unintended and technologically remediable side-effects of otherwise desirable industrial processes saw the best chance of successfully solving those problems in cooperation with the state and industry. They sought to reform an environmentally destructive society without challenging its commitment to the principles of modern life, including large-scale industry, economic growth, and science as the sole

legitimate form of knowledge. On the other hand, those who viewed environmental problems as the necessary consequences of those very principles envisioned various radically different social arrangements as ideals. They recognized that neither the state nor industry would willingly participate in any attempt to subvert the modernist project, and that both would in fact desperately oppose such attempts, and they accordingly pursued pressure politics rather than consultative politics.

Together, the case studies and supporting narratives contained in this dissertation trace the development of Nova Scotian environmental activism from the early days of determined but fairly amorphous organization against certain industrial projects to the end of a process of differentiation in which those activists prepared to accept the premises of modern society moved and were moved into a stance from which they found cooperation with their more radical allies difficult and occasionally impossible. Nonmodern argument was rarely articulated in theoretical terms, and not until the end of the 1970s, partly in reaction to the consolidation of an ecomodernist mainstream. As an analytical term, nonmodernism describes the suite of arguments deployed by activists since the 1960s to contest political centralization, capitalist industrialization, and the devaluation of personal experience and emotion as forms of knowledge. Much of the argument in this work therefore focusses on describing modernist and nonmodernist positions as forming a divergent mainstream and fringe. Competing tendencies within the movement existed all along, however, and division was mainly the result of the nascent mainstream moving incrementally away from acknowledging the very personal and emotional foundation of all environmental activism in the province. Thus another central argument is the predominance of personal vulnerability as an initial motivating factor in

all environmental activism. This personal vulnerability was experienced most often as a defence of meaningful relationships with local places, including both economic and affectionate relationships. The relatively large rural population in the province during the 1970s drew both new industrial development and environmentalist reaction toward rural communities, resulting in a strong record of place-based environmental argument. In each chapter of this history, new activists and organizations are introduced, invariably reacting to the degradation of the environment in which they lived, rather than to some distant prospect or "the environment" in the abstract. The movement of activists from strictly local to more global perspectives is a recurring theme, but so too is the persistence of the personal and local within the (environmental) political. Corollary to this argument, the defence of home places only ever ceased being a point of reference for those modernist activists whose sense of political expediency prevented their acknowledging the central importance of local and individual experience, which is an illegitimate source of knowledge in the modernist worldview. In all of this, this dissertation emphasizes the weight of ideas and the defence of place as explanatory factors in the growth of environmentalism, outweighing (though not totally displacing) the more familiar terms of network formation, resource distribution, class, race, and gender.

Finally, the third major argument pursued in these pages focusses on the decisive effect of the modernist/nonmodernist division on the course of environmental politics. In this the history of Nova Scotian environmentalism reflects the history of Canadian political culture in the 1970s and 1980s. Government influence, both federal and provincial, helped to drive mainstream activists toward conciliatory politics and by unwitting extension helped to solidify the radical critique. Where the two strands of

activism worked in concert, or at least in parallel, governments threatened with the environmental populism of the radicals were much more inclined to accede to the demands of the ecomodernists. The broadly-based and successful resistance to budworm insecticide spraying and uranium mining in Nova Scotia were examples of this dynamic. As the division developed toward the 1980s, however, occasions arose for mainstream activists to exclude their more radical peers from consideration, which they did with the perverse result of blunting the influence of both radical and ecomodernist environmentalism. The most infamous example of this change came in the 1983 herbicide spray controversy. This dissertation shows how political change happened in Canada in the 1970s and 1980s, how several groups of agents -- governmental factions, activist factions, and various industries -- negotiated the politics of social movements to achieve or fail to achieve their goals.

The environmental movement in Nova Scotia both reflected the state of the movement in other part of the country and participated in shaping a common narrative of environmentalism in Canada, as well as internationally. In each of the case studies that follow, environmentalists in Nova Scotia participated in a national and international conversation about particular environmental hazards. The issues in question -- nuclear power, chemical forestry, and uranium mining -- were invariably subjects of major controversies across the country and around the world, where others took careful note of events in the province and, in every case, attempted to intervene and shape events in Nova Scotia to the advantage of whatever party they represented in Ottawa, Washington, Stockholm, or other locales. In each of the three controversies, Nova Scotians contributed to what national cooperation existed, in federal non-governmental groups such as the

Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility (CCNR) and Friends of the Earth Canada (FOE), or in consultative groups like the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (CEAC) or Canadian Environmental Network (CEN), but the substance of the national story, the real action, took place within provincial, not federal, arenas. The story of environmentalism in Nova Scotia is thus a particularly clear window into the story of the movement in Canada.

The virtues of focusing on a single small province, especially one so generously supplied with independent local activist groups as Nova Scotia was in the 1970s and 1980s, are twofold. First, to highlight the salience of the provincial level in Canadian environmentalism, leaving space in the narrative for the many relationships within the province that shaped its activism: the intragovernmental squabbles, the industry-government collusion, the small rural activist groups' interaction with their better-funded urban peers, the cooperation between First Nations activists and other environmentalists, and the collaborations with peace activists, conservationists, and various social justice advocates. There is a tendency in national studies (and a temptation in provincial or single-group histories) to focus on the major players, the Greenpeaces or Pollution Probes, or on the federal and provincial government agencies established in the 1970s to deal with environmental problems. These offer the most accessible sources and the clearest impacts for study. Yet intraprovincial relationships best define environmentalism in Canada, because despite the salience of the provincial level and the slight increase in the importance of the federal level of activism over the period of this study, the principal lesson of the history of Nova Scotian environmental activism is that the local level has remained the source and motive force of the environmental movement. As the following

chapters demonstrate, the relationship between the larger mainstream groups and government evolved as it did thanks in large part to the third point of the triangular relationship between them and the smaller, usually rural groups whose stubborn defence of their home places led them to reject (at least in part) the conclusions that the other two offered about the causes of environmental problems, the role of humanity in nature, and the role of environmentalists in the political process.

The second reason to focus on Nova Scotia is its unusual relevance to the national dynamic. That there ever was a Canadian environmental movement is a matter of some debate, sides in which depend heavily on the debaters' respective definitions of the word "movement." There have always been commonalities among provincial and local groups across Canada that can be attributed to the unique political history of the country: the declaration of provincial jurisdiction over natural resources, for example, or the long history of rivalry between federal and provincial levels of government (and among provinces) coloured the environmental activism of Canadians in every province. Yet there was very little formal cooperation at the federal level among Canadian environmental activists until the late 1970s, and even then what cooperation existed seemed often tangential to the most vital emerging concerns of provincial and local movements. The shared political context of Canadian federalism also went a remarkably short way toward distinguishing pan-Canadian cooperation in practice from Canadian-American or other international alliances. There was simply far more coalition, cooperation, and common concern among groups within single provinces. For these reasons, the present study speaks of a Canadian environmentalism made up of provincial movements rather than a single Canadian environmental movement, an important distinction.

Despite its smaller political profile, national activism remains a real issue for the history of environmentalism in Canada, and Nova Scotia has been the home of an unusual congregation of major events of national and international significance. In the span of a little more than a decade, the province witnessed the largest marine oil spill the country had ever seen, an attempt to organize a regional nuclear-powered electrical utility, the improbable success of an anti-insecticide campaign on Cape Breton Island, the rise to prominence of a young Elizabeth May, an internationally infamous provincial Supreme Court ruling on herbicides, and the beginning of a decades-long fight for the clean-up of the Sydney tar ponds, still the most toxic site in the country. The province's rich history of environmental controversy also uniquely illuminates the social history of environmental activism on the national scale. Environmentalism, often thought of as a leisure pursuit or product of affluent urban societies, especially in North America, appears a far more complex social phenomenon in its Nova Scotian iteration, reacting to federal-provincial development schemes designed to alleviate regional economic disparity and frequently reshaping those plans when they conflicted with small communities' visions of a viable, desirable, and just economic future.

Green History and the World

Historians are indeed known by the causes they select for emphasis, but the history of environmentalism and environmental movements has been marked since its beginning by a difference of interpretation over both causes and the effects they are meant to explain. One set of researchers has long favoured an exclusive definition, insisting for more than three decades that the “lifestyle” environmentalism of the affluent

world in the 1960s -- characterized by the pursuit of clean air, clean water, and outdoor recreation -- is a qualitatively new development in the social history of the Western world, uniquely deserving of the label "environmentalism," a product of demographic and economic changes following the Second World War, and a social movement set apart from contemporary and antecedent movements. Others favour instead a more inclusive definition, ranking such lifestyle environmentalism alongside prior anti-industrial movements and contemporary environment-themed activism in the less wealthy world, all of them motivated by reactions against modernity, specifically against the undesirable effects of industry, capitalism, and the dominance of scientific thinking.

The roots of the former (exclusive) view lie with one of the earliest and best known theories of the origin of 1960s environmentalism, put forward by the sociologist Ronald Inglehart in 1977 in a book called *The Silent Revolution*. Inglehart insisted on the newness of environmental concern above all. According to his theory, unprecedented postwar North American affluence freed a generation from exclusive fixation on "material well-being and physical security" and allowed it to pursue "belonging, self-expression, and quality of life," defined as racial, sexual, and generational equality, participatory democracy, clean air and water, and opportunities for recreation in nature.[1] These "post-material" values were not ideals but "amenities," objects of consumption distinguished from consumer items only by their immaterial nature and their appeal to those whose material needs were already satisfied. In other words, "the environment" was a luxury commodity invented in the wealthy West. The theory of post-materialism offered an easily understood explanation for the social movements of the 1960s, and it has

[1]Ronald Inglehart and Jacques Rene-Rabier, "Political Realignment in Advanced Industrial Society: from Class-based Politics to Quality-of-Life Politics," *Government and Opposition* 21:4 (1986), 456-479.

proven enormously popular among sociologists and historians of environmentalism, who since the 1970s have often preferred to focus their energies on quantifying or recording the conditions under which new movements emerge and flourish rather than complicating the explanation of why they emerge. Using measures of resource mobilization, social network integration, and political opportunity, they have pursued the how of environmentalism, frequently to the exclusion of the why.[2]

The historian best known for leaning on the post-materialist thesis is Samuel Hays. Already well known for his 1959 history of American conservation politics, in later works he insisted that conservation "gave way to environment after World War II amid a rising interest in the quality of life beyond efficiency in production," and that the two distinct movements "often came into conflict as resources long thought of as important for their material commodities came to be prized for their aesthetic and amenity uses."[3] His *Beauty, Health, and Permanence* is an excellent history of environmental politics in the United States, but the only variation it acknowledged in the nature of the popular movement was limited to the pace of change in one region or another and the different nature of the issues encountered by, say, rural and urban environmentalists. Hays did not dwell on the possibility of different reasons for action, because the reason was provided by the post-materialist definition of environmentalism.

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[2]Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977). This is not actually a very new idea of environmentalism, especially if one adheres to a broad definition including the Romantic movement; it echoes what Aldous Huxley wrote in the essay "Wordsworth in the Tropics", in *Do What You Will* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1956 [1929]). For the sociologists of environmentalism, see Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements," *Annual Review of Sociology* 9 (1983), 527-53; David Snow, Louis Zurcher, and Sheldon Ekland-Olson, "Social Networks and Social Movements," *American Sociological Review* 45:5 (1980), 787-801; Peter Eisinger, "The Conditions of Protest in American Cities" *American Political Science Review* 67:1 (1973), 11-28.

[3]Samuel Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: environmental politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 3.

Hays' work has been powerfully influential in propagating Inglehart's post-materialist theory, but the work of like-minded sociologists is just as comprehensive. *Environmental Movements: Local, National, and Global*, edited by Christopher Rootes, offered a much more detailed examination of variation and change in environmental activism in Europe, and in doing so gave the clearest yet set of definitions for the varieties of activist organizations and their phases of development since the 1960s. Mario Diani and Paolo Diani's essay in particular debunked the classic normative assumption of institutionalization as marking maturity among activist groups, and introduced a complementary axis of protest-lobby action to go alongside the old axis of voluntary-professional organization. Yet the variation examined by Rootes' authors was limited to just those tactical styles and organizational structures. Like Hays, what they and their colleagues all take from Inglehart is an assertion that 1960s environmental activism was qualitatively new and remains easily defined as the pursuit of environmental amenities.[4]

The common element among Hays and those who share his view is the assumption that environmentalism as a social movement is exclusive to the affluent global North. That much is to be expected from a group so steeped in post-materialist theory. Turning to the more inclusive analyses, it is appropriate therefore that the major challengers to the post-materialist group come from the fields of global and post-colonial history, and doubly so that they are led by the same man who challenged Hays' careful separation of nineteenth century conservation and the twentieth century environmental movement. Ramachandra Guha's work with the Spanish environmental economist and historian Juan Martinez-Alier has revealed a world full of different environmentalisms:

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[4] Christopher Rootes, ed., *Environmental Movements: local, national, and global* (Portland: Frank Cass, 1999).

reactions to industrialism based on the defence of traditional economies, home places, and non-economic values. Martinez-Alier's best-known book, *The Environmentalism of the Poor*, traced such activist movements in Peru, Ecuador, Indonesia, India, and more. At the heart of their analysis is a return to genuinely environmental explanations for historical change: diverse environmental values are a given, and activism arises when environmental degradation results from industrial development and inequality of power:

> Wherever there is autocracy there are dissenters asking for democratic rights. Where there is capitalism, socialists will rise to oppose it. Where there is patriarchy, there will be women who resist it. The form, shape, and intensity of these protests varies; the oppositional impulse remains constant. So, one might say, wherever there is industrialization, there is environmentalism.[5]

This alternative approach owes a great deal to European social movement theorists, especially Jürgen Habermas, who focused on the role of new social movements as a step beyond the Marxist fixation on distribution struggle as the central conflict of society, and into a more complex set of values and grievances triggered by the rise of modernity. Accordingly, the varieties of environmentalism studied by Guha and Martinez-Alier find their origins in the nature of the relevant power relationships. In the United States, for example, it may take the form of a race-based environmental justice movement, fighting the disproportionate exposure of poor Black and Native communities to environmental hazards, while in India it manifests as agrarian villagers bodily intervening between their village forests and loggers sent by the Indian Forest

[5]Ramachandra Guha, *How Much Should a Person Consume? Environmentalism in India and the United States* (Los Angeles: U of California Press, 2006), 8. Guha credits the definition to G.M. Trevelyan in the 1931 Rickman Godlee Lecture, titled "The Calls and Claims of Natural Beauty." Similar ideas appear in Mahesh Rangarajan, *Fencing the Forest: conservation and ecological change in India's Central Provinces 1860-1914* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996); E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London: Merlin Press, 1991).

Department. Nor is there any restriction in this analysis to the post-1945 era; Indian resistance to the Forest Department, for example, was just as fierce when the department's name was prefaced by the word "British." In response to the post-materialists, Martinez-Alier has pointed out that while "the hierarchy of needs among poor people is such that livelihood is given priority over marketed goods […], livelihood depends on clean air, available soil, clean water." Moving on to his analysis of non-economic values, he argued that many third-world environmental conflicts are "ecological distribution conflicts" provoked by the imposition of an unfavourable monetary "discount rate" on the sacred sites, home places, and other economically incommensurable values held by poorer people.[6]

By extending their analysis of anti-industrial reaction across eras and nations, Guha and Martinez-Alier made it necessary to offer some more complex explanation for the genesis of environmental concern than post-materialism alone could provide. In that sense at least, their insistence on material causes in the form of degraded environments and on diverse values has been as influential in recent years as Inglehart's thesis before it. But there has never been broad agreement on the terminology with which to describe the social factors driving activism. Michael Egan's 2007 history of American biologist Barry Commoner's activism, for example, emphasized both the new post-war technologies as

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[6]Ramachandra Guha, *The Unquiet Woods: ecological change and peasant resistance in the Himalaya, 2nd edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Juan Martinez-Alier, *Ecological Economics: energy, environment, and society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Martinez-Alier, *The Environmentalism of the Poor: a study of ecological conflicts and valuation* (Northhampton: Edward Elgar, 2002); Guha and Martinez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism: essays North and South* (London: Earthscan, 1997); Jurgen Habermas, "New Social Movements," *Telos* 49 (1981), 33-7. Also, with Habermas, Nick Crossley, *Making Sense of Social Movements* (Buckingham: Open U Press, 2002).

Unfortunately, much of the international history remains trapped in the post-colonialists' jaundiced view of the global North: with the exception of the environmental struggles of a racial underclass, post-materialist notions of privileged "amenity" or "full-stomach" environmentalism dominate the view of activists in Europe and North America. See for example, Ramachandra Guha, "Radical American Environmentalism and Wilderness Preservation: A Third World Critique," *Environmental Ethics* 11:1 (1989), 71-83.

"the most significant threat to the human environment in human history" and Commoner's socialist beliefs in explaining the nature of his work.[7] Robert Gottlieb's comprehensive and well-received history of American environmentalism did something similar and came close to a synthesis accounting for the full variety of environmentalisms (within the context of the single country), tracing various manifestations of class and race-based environmental justice to early twentieth century urban sanitation reform campaigns, for example.[8] It is nearly at the point of cliché to cite Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* as formative for 1960s environmentalism -- Kirkpatrick Sale and others insist that the late twentieth century environmental movement did not begin until its publication in 1962 -- yet in the larger context, her warnings about the unintended consequences of unchecked scientific hubris still stand out as a factor, along with the conspicuous mid-century signs of environmental change (giant oil spills, burning rivers, and radio-isotope contamination of human bodies) and the challenges to authority posed by the civil rights, feminist, and counterculture movements, as the physical and ideological shapers of popular post-1960 environmentalism.[9]

The complex of factors highlighted by various historians of environmentalism as triggers for the movement – especially the growth of global industry, capitalism, and the exclusivity of scientific knowledge – has been given different names (or simply described as an unnamed, functioning whole) by different scholars, by environmentalists, and by those who straddle the two categories. Social theorist Theodore Roszak in 1969 referred

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[7]Michael Egan, *Barry Commoner and the Science of Survival* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT, 2007).
[8]Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: the transformation of the American environmental movement* (Washington: Island Press, 1993).
[9]Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Green Revolution: the American environmental movement 1962-1992* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993); Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1962).

to it as "the technocracy."[10] Philosopher Jürgen Habermas preferred "the system."[11] Political scientist Andrew Dobson used the term "industrialism."[12] But the most popular terminological alternative simply borrows the common name for the era in question: "modernity." All of them were describing, in Dobson's summary, a "political, social, and scientific consensus that has dominated the last two or three hundred years of public life," a way of thinking and living with as many aspects as a dominant, comprehensive worldview can be expected to have, including the three listed above, a progressive theory of history, nation-state polity, increased use of inanimate energy sources, and a social and intellectual "system of objectification" by which uniquely local or personal forms of knowledge are replaced by a more legitimate universal way of thinking and speaking.[13]

The growing acceptance of "modernity" as denoting the worldview just described has left scholars of environmentalism to puzzle further over how to describe the opposition to it. As Dobson pointed out in 1990's *Green Political Thought*, environmental activists and thinkers who reject the premises of modernity are qualitatively different from those of their peers who do not. His solution was to name for the objectors a new ideology, "ecologism," to sit alongside socialism and liberalism and the rest, but over the

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[10]Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture* (Garden City, New York: Anchor, 1969).

[11]Tod Sloan, "The Colonization of the Lifeworld and the Destruction of Meaning," *Radical Psychology* 1:2 (Fall, 1999), <http://www.radpsynet.org/journal/vol1-2/Sloan.html> (accessed May, 2013); Jürgen Habermas, "New Social Movements," *Telos* 49 (1981), 33-7; Jürgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action,* volumes 1 and 2, (Boston: Beacon, 1984, 1987).

[12]Andrew Dobson, *Green Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 2000 [1990]), 9.

[13]Dobson, *Green Political Thought*, 8; Alf Hornborg, "Environmentalism, ethnicity, and sacred places: reflections on modernity, discourse and power," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 31:3 (1994), 245-267, quoted from 258; Alf Hornborg, "Undermining Modernity: Protecting Landscapes and Meanings among the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia," in Susan Paulson and Lisa Gezon, *Political Ecology across Spaces, Scales, and Social Groups* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2004), 196-216; Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 4-6; Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993 [1991]). The idea owes much to an earlier theorist of similar ideas: Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962). Similar ideas can be found in the work of Arne Naess and David Pepper: Naess, *The Ecology of Wisdom: writings by Arne Naess* (Berkeley: Counterpoint, 2008); Pepper, *Modern Environmentalism* (London: Routledge, 1996).

years "political ecologist" has failed to catch on as a designation.[14] "Postmodern," "altermodern," and "antimodern" have each seen use. Much as literary theory has claimed postmodernism to describe something far removed from a functioning political theory, however, the most attractive alternative, antimodern, has been appropriated by historian Ian McKay and others to describe a kind of cultural atavism far too narrowly defined to encompass the variety of positions involved.[15] There is in this dissertation no antimodernist pining for the nineteenth century, and no postmodernist who despairs of the possibility of objective knowledge, only those who reject one or more of the claims of modernity, and they are diverse in their dissent. Throughout this dissertation, there appear men and women like Murray Prest, a Halifax County mill owner and bitter opponent of large-scale industrial forestry. Prest's self-interest in preserving a smaller-scale sawn lumber industry and his ecological arguments against clear-cut chemical forestry seem at first to invite a distinction between values and interests, but his position actually expresses a commitment to a nonmodern way of life in which the continuity and meaning of the human (and economic) community depended on a relationship with the forest in which small trees were left for later generations of woods workers, and the forest cover was left intact to preserve the various ecological amenities (food, clean water, etc.) that the community required. Prest was not concerned with the philosophical coherence of his position or with acquiring a label for it; he accepted capitalism, for example, but rejected large-scale industry, political and economic centralization, and the total commodification of the forest. With people like Prest in mind then, that which is in one way or another not

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[14]It has seen use, for example in Grahame Beakhust "Political Ecology," in William Leiss, ed., *Ecology Versus Politics in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 20-33.

[15]Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: antimodernism and cultural selection in twentieth-century Nova Scotia* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1994).

consistent with the modernist worldview will be referred to in this study as simply nonmodern.[16]

The notion of environmental values as a legitimate factor in the rise of environmental activism has advanced from the economic to the religious and political and philosophical realms, but Canadian environmentalist history still tends heavily to the story of conservation, and in that field as well as in examinations of post-1960 environmentalism its focus has usually been on questions of "when" and "where," almost to the exclusion of "why." Outright statements on environmentalism's origins, post-material or otherwise, are rare. Tina Loo's *States of Nature* (2006) added an understanding of emotional appeal and popular support to the tale of dispassionate bureaucracy told in Janet Foster's earlier account of governmental wildlife conservation, but offered little to complicate a story of a single dominant conservationist imperative to keep a lasting supply of whatever is valuable. Loo described her chosen end-point of 1970 as having "marked the beginnings of a shift in the nature and tactics of the debate over how to treat wildlife - something associated with the establishment of Greenpeace," and treated it as the end of the conservation story.[17] When environmentalists do intrude on conservationist histories, as they do in some forest histories, it is as one-dimensional characters with a single goal and few disagreements on how to achieve it: hands-off wildlife or wilderness preservationists, for example, in Loo's book and in Richard Rajala's history of the British Columbia forest industry. This firm division between conservation and environmentalism is itself a reflection of the post-materialist thesis and its insistence on the newness and economic-demographic origin of twentieth century

[16]This is the solution adopted by Latour in *We Have Never Been Modern*.
[17]Tina Loo, *States of Nature: conserving Canada's wildlife in the twentieth century* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 3-4.

environmentalism.[18]

Other authors have taken more care to distinguish groups within "environmentalism," notably wilderness perservationists from nonmodern environmentalists, as is usually done in world-wide environmental scholarship. Fourteen years before Loo's close look at wildlife conservation in Canada, Gerald Killan and George Warecki made an equally close examination of the origins of wilderness preservation in Ontario. Unlike in the United States, where older preservation organizations like the Wilderness Society had a formative effect on the new environmental movement, in Ontario both groups came into being around the same time. Killan and Warecki acknowledged considerable overlap between the constituencies of the preservationists (especially the Algonquin Wildlands League, founded in 1968) and the environmentalists, but kept the distinction intact. Their characterization of both groups as middle-class, educated, male recreationists followed the post-materialist theory loyally, however, as did the singular goals of the preservationists (for parkland) and environmentalists (for pollution abatement).[19]

The first study of environmental politics in Canada, as opposed to specifically conservation or preservation politics, was *The Greening of Canada* by Bruce Doern and Thomas Conway, in 1994. A political/institutional history of the federal Department of Environment, it began with the creation of the Department in 1971 and followed its

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[18]Richard Rajala, *Up-Coast* (Victoria: Royal BC Museum, 2006). Other Canadian forest histories in this mold include Wilfrid Creighton, *Forestkeeping: a history of the department of lands and forests in Nova Scotia 1926-1969* (Halifax: DLF, 1988); Peter Gillis and Thomas Roach, *Lost Initiatives: Canada's forest industries, forest policy, and forest conservation* (New York: Greenwood, 1986); Ralph Johnson, *Forests of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: Four East and DLF, 1986); Jim Lotz, *Green Horizons: the forests and foresters of Nova Scotia* (East Lawrencetown: Pottersfield, 2005); Arthur Lower, *The North American Assault on the Canadian Forest* (New York: Greenwood, 1968 [1938]).

[19]Gerald Killan and George Warecki, "The Algonquin Wildlands League and the Emergence of Environmental Politics in Ontario, 1965-1974," *Environmental History Review* 16:4 (Winter, 1992), 1-27.

rising, falling, and rising fortunes within the federal power structure. Environmentalism as a concern outside of government was essential to the creation and development of a federal environmental bureaucracy, but there was no place in Doern and Conway's political history for environmentalists whose goals the Department viewed as politically impossible, nor even any acknowledgment that they existed. According to the authors, the Department sought environmentalists to form a "constituency" and lend public support to a legislative program, and as a result, their history of the Department follows activists in that same role, one in which no one disagrees on the destination, only the speed at which government gets there.[20]

What Doern and Conway offered was a political context for environmentalism, analogous to what Janet Foster offered for Canadian conservation history. In the years since they wrote, several historians have taken up the task of filling in the public side of the story, and notions of ideological difference have trickled into Canadian environmentalist history. In 1995, Jennifer Read published an essay on the early anti-pollution movement in Ontario, showing that Ontarian environmentalists in the 1960s were motivated by human health concerns, real changes in the natural environment, and "an evolving set of values" that included a challenge to scientific expert authority, in total a more realistically complex explanation than the mere consumption of environmental "amenities." Read was mainly interested in locating the birth of mass environmental protest in time, however, and looked no further into the diversity of environmental

[20]Bruce Doern and Thomas Conway, *The Greening of Canada: federal institutions and decisions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994). Neil Forkey has offered a brief overview of Canadian environmentalism that does include the non-governmental agents, and acknowledged their reactions to real environmental problems, but did not examine differences among them: Neil Forkey, *Canadians and the Natural Environment to the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012).

values.[21] Alan MacEachern's 2003 history of the Prince Edward Island Institute of Man and Resources, which operated from 1975 to 1990, brought to light more of the links between governmental and popular environmentalism, and he too looked for more complex reasons for the rise of environmentalism. The relationship between environmentalists and government certainly changed over the years of the IMR's life, and MacEachern described the Institute's brief heyday as a lesson on the obstacles governments can place in the way of environmental movements, but he too left the question of different kinds of environmental movement to others.[22] In 2010, fifteen years after Read's essay, Ryan O'Connor revisited the birth of Pollution Probe for a dissertation on the origins of environmentalism in Toronto and presented much the same story of young, educated activists responding to real changes in the natural environment. Anxious not to be "reduced to the status of a howling pressure group," the members of Pollution Probe made their organization into a nationally influential organ of science-based advocacy, and in this, O'Connor suggested, it represents the norm for most early Canadian environmental groups. With a focus squarely on the determinedly institutional Pollution Probe, however, there was little room in the story for different kinds of environmentalism, though O'Connor did allow that groups with differing views of the issues existed (Zero Population Growth, for example).[23]

The fact that environmentalists have differed over the basic premises of their actions is not entirely absent from other Canadian histories. In fact, one of the earliest

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[21]Jennifer Read, "'Let us heed the voice of youth': Laundry Detergents, Phosphates, and the Emergence of the Environmental Movement in Ontario," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 7:1 (1996), 229.

[22]Alan MacEachern, *The Institute of Man and Resources: an environmental fable* (Charlottetown: Island Studies Press, 2003).

[23]Ryan O'Connor, "Toronto the Green: Pollution Probe and the Rise of the Canadian Environmental Movement," PhD dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 2010, 81.

studies of public activism after Doern and Conway's book focused on exactly that issue. Jane Barr found a full set of "counterculturalists, political or social ecologists, conservationists, and reform environmentalists," but conspicuously no wilderness preservationists, in Quebec's environmental movement from 1970 to 1985. If the members of *la Societe pour Vaincre la Pollution* and their peers were still primarily young and middle-class, they also reacted to real environmental degradation and acted out of values other than the mere post-materialist desire for environmental amenities or the desire for merely political reforms.[24] Other than Barr's sadly ignored work, the only history of environmentalism in Canada to give a full account of diverse values came from Frank Zelko. While his history of the creation of Greenpeace was mainly a matter of where and when, the central explanation he gave for the rise of direct-action environmentalism was centred on a deeply felt and diverse set of political values, including deep ecology and radical personal moral accountability, brought to the city by immigrant American Quakers and hippies with experience in the American anti-war and anti-nuclear movements.[25] Zelko insisted, however, on the story's unique applicability to the city of Vancouver.

The picture of Canadian environmentalism to date, and the history thereof, is a composite of provincial or sub-provincial movements made up of local activist groups with frequently uncertain or uncomplicated values. Any deficiency lies in an incomplete

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[24]Jane Barr, "The Origins and Emergence of Quebec's Environmental Movement: 1970-1985," MA thesis, McGill University, 1995, 53.

[25]Frank Zelko, "Making Greenpeace: the development of direct action environmentalism in British Columbia," *BC Studies* 142:143 (Summer, 2004), 197-239. Alf Hornborg also showed a keen eye for such diversity in "Environmentalism, ethnicity, and sacred places: reflections on modernity, discourse and power," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 31:3 (1994), 245-267. A different sort of ideological difference, class difference, was the focus of analysis in John-Henry Harter, "Environmental Justice for Whom? Class, New Social Movements, and the Environment: A Case Study of Greenpeace Canada, 1971-2000," *Labour/Le Travail* 54 (Fall, 2004), 83-119.

ideological analysis, not in its composite nature; regionalism is a familiar, even normal and desirable, condition of Canadian history. The historiography of the Atlantic Region in particular offers an ideologically aware foundation for a contribution to the history of environmentalism in Canada. Historians of the Maritime and Atlantic regions have been enthusiastic in their pursuit of Canadians' multiple or "limited" identities for several decades now, and have been well aware of the impact of ideological variety (socialism, feminism, or nationalism for example) on those identities. Jacob Remes' 2010 study of the Antigonish Movement, for example, emphasized the essentially conservative and reactive nature of the Catholic hierarchy's participation. According to Remes, the crucial support of Bishop Morrison that allowed the institutionalization of the co-operative movement in Saint Francis Xavier University's Extension Department owed mainly to the bishop's desire to undermine labour radicalism, especially in Cape Breton. The various intersecting influences of labour radicals, labour reformers, religious leaders, government, and industry account for most of the explanatory power of Remes' argument.[26]

The Acadiensis school of historical research has dealt at length with regional inequality and with the consequences of the idea of relative poverty within Canada since the end of the 1960s, though most often from a perspective that shares modern assumptions about the value of industrial development on the central Canadian model. Histories of social activism and political initiatives in response to the Maritime region's relative decline in industrial output and employment have concentrated on explaining

[26]Jacob Remes, "In Search of 'Saner Minds': Bishop James Morrison and the Origins of the Antigonish Movement," *Acadiensis* 39:1 (Winter/Spring, 2010), 58-82. Only two of many possible examples of this historiography are John Manley, "Preaching the Red Stuff: J.B. McLachlan, Communism, and the Cape Breton Miners, 1922-1935," *Labour/Le Travail* 30 (Fall, 1992), 65-114; R.J. Brym and R.J. Sacouman, eds., *Underdevelopment and Social Movements in Atlantic Canada* (Toronto: New Hogtown, 1979).

how the decline came about and how it might be reversed. Since before the publication of Ernest Forbes' *The Maritime Rights Movement* in 1979, and continuing with the work of scholars like Donald Savoie, much of the region's scholarship has been openly developmentalist in response to regional inequality, rather than a study of the value of development.[27] The means by which the region might achieve prosperity through the promotion of industrial growth has preoccupied these authors, even when their attention has been firmly on the inequities of capitalism. Environmental activists, however, asked different questions in response to the same economic discontent, debated the meaning and value of development as a goal for the future, and questioned if all economic inequities stemmed from capitalism or if some came from industrial growth in general. A history of their activism must likewise question modern developmentalist assumptions.

Maritime environmentalist history does offer some precedents for questioning modern developmentalism, although despite a well-developed history of conservation, not many historians have yet looked to the more comprehensive and popular forms of environmental activism.[28] Acadiensis Press' 2013 collection on the environmental history of Atlantic Canada has suggested a more complex interaction of people and place, and

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[27]Ernest Forbes, *The Maritime Rights Movement, 1919-1927* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 1979); Donald Savoie, *Visiting Grandchildren: Economic Development in the Maritimes* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006). Further examples include Raymond Blake, *Canadians at Last: Canada Integrates Newfoundland as a Province* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Don Nerbas, "Revisiting the Politics of Maritime Rights: Bourgeois Saint John and Regional Protest in the 1920s," *Acadiensis* 37:1 (Winter/Spring, 2008), 110-130; John Reid, *Six Crucial Decades: times of change in the history of the Maritimes* (Halifax: Nimbus, 1987). There is a counter-position that does question the assumptions of developmentalism, for example in David Alexander, *Atlantic Canada and Confederation: Essays in Canadian Political Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).

[28]Bill Parenteau, "A 'Very Determined Opposition to the Law': Conservation, Angling Leases, and Social Conflict in the Canadian Atlantic Salmon Fishery, 1867-1914," *Environmental History* 9:3 (July, 2004), 436-463; Mark Leeming, "Contested Conservations: Forestry and History in Nova Scoita," *Past Tense* 1:1 (2012), 50-66; Thomas Roach, and Richard Judd, "A Man For All Seasons: Frank John Dixie Barnjum, Conservationist, Pulpwood Embargoist and Speculator!," *Acadiensis* 20:2 (1991), 129-144; Graeme Wynn, "Exciting a Spirit of Emulation Among the 'Plodholes': Agricultural Reform in Pre-Confederation Nova Scotia," *Acadiensis* 20:1 (1990), 5-51.

also included nods in the direction of environmentalist history, but none of its collected essays addressed the question of ideological difference among environmentalists.[29] In addition to Alf Hornborg's study of the Kelly's Mountain controversy in the 1990s, there have been essays published recently on reactions to New Brunswick's high-modernist hydro-electric program and longstanding chemical forestry habit.[30] James Kenny and Andrew Secord's study of the construction of the Mactaquac dam during the 1960s suggested a significant opposition to the project by residents of the Saint John river valley, based on their personal attachment to their homes.[31] Mark McLaughlin's article on the insecticide program begun in 1952, in contrast, focused on dissent among professional scientists more than among the general public and only ended with mention of populist activism in the mid-1970s.[32] Both works suggest parallels with Nova Scotian history, particularly in the dominance of the provincial and local levels of organization and the questioning of developmentalism, which indicates that within the Atlantic region generally the nonmodernist ideological history of environmentalism might be more readily apparent than in the rest of the country. Neither, however, deals with differences among environmentalists. In fact, none of the small selection of historical works that deal with environmental activism on the east coast of Canada (apart from sociological studies by Hornborg and by Bantjes and Trussler with limited historical content) deal with

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[29]Claire Campbell and Robert Summerby-Murray, eds., *Land and Sea: Environmental History in Atlantic Canada* (Fredericton: Acadiensis, 2013).

[30]Alf Hornborg, "Environmentalism, ethnicity, and sacred places: reflections on modernity, discourse and power," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 31:3 (1994), 245-267; Alf Hornborg, "Undermining Modernity: Protecting Landscapes and Meanings among the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia," in Susan Paulson and Lisa Gezon, *Political Ecology across Spaces, Scales, and Social Groups* (New Brunswick: Rutgers, 2004), 196-216.

[31]James Kenny and Andrew Secord, "Engineering Modernity: Hydroelectric Development in New Brunswick, 1945-1970," *Acadiensis* 39:1 (Winter/Spring, 2010), 3-26.

[32]Mark McLaughlin, "Green Shoots: Aerial Insecticide Spraying and the Growth of Environmental Consciousness in New Brunswick, 1952-1973," *Acadiensis* 40:1 (Winter/Spring, 2011), 3-23.

ideological differences.[33]

This dissertation is not a challenge to these elements of the region's historiography, but a complement and addition to them. It echoes the repudiation of simplistic stereotypes of the conservative or backward Atlantic Canadian. The conclusions other scholars have drawn about social movement complexity in the region are entirely consistent with the vitality and variety of environmental activism in Nova Scotia, though the history of environmentalism finds the roots of that variety in deep ideological differences over the value of modernity. The reality, unreality, or cause of "underdevelopment" are not at issue, and in as much as other works have relied on it in order to explain or endorse developmentalist policies, this dissertation takes a very different approach. Development of a particular sort, after all, was what provoked environmental activism, and many activists persisted in resisting the modern idea of economic development. This dissertation does acknowledge economic and demographic differences between the Atlantic region and others, however, in as much as those differences have here curbed the national trend to urbanization, and therefore made clearer the differences between urban and rural environmentalisms.

A Note on Sources

This dissertation is the first study to make any use of the archives of the Ecology Action Centre, a wonderfully varied collection of documents originating not only with the Centre but with many other organizations with which its members corresponded. The EAC collection at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia has been relocated to the Dalhousie

[33]Rod Bantjes and Tanya Trussler, "Feminism and the Grass Roots: Women and Environmentalism in Nova Scotia, 1980-1983," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 36:2 (1999), 179-197.

University Archives since the time of its use for this study. I believe this is likewise the first academic use of the Haase papers, in the possession of Mr. Martin Rudy Haase of Chester, Nova Scotia, the Kings Environment Group fonds at Acadia University's Esther Clark Wright Archives, and the records of the Royal Commission on Uranium Mining. These and other collections constitute a massive trove of primary source material that had to be sifted for relevant selections. The survival of records of multiple people's perspectives on the issues makes it easier to write with confidence about facts and trends in the past, once the appropriate sources are matched to each other. However, finding and matching them was at times difficult in such large and often casually organized collections.

The sources used in this research constitute a record of the organized activism of environmentally concerned Nova Scotians, not a record of environmental problems or development policy generally. There is much additional material available in government records on, for example, forest policy and the forest industry that is not especially relevant to an account of forestry activism. There is not, however, an abundance of material on environmental controversies in the archives of most commercial daily newspapers in the province. Larger controversies do intrude there, having once become political issues rather than simply environmental issues, but most of the smaller local campaigns discussed in Chapter Two for example do not. This in itself is telling. Especially for those cases of "estuarine environmentalism," but also for the major debates, comparatively radical periodicals offer a better record of activist thought, and they have been used extensively in this research. Those include newspapers and news magazines such as *The 4th Estate*, *Mysterious East*, *New Maritimes*, or *Rural Delivery*,

journals with more or less intense, but consistent, editorial positions of suspicion toward government and support for changes in the basic political culture of the province (or region). The value of such sources is undiminished or even enhanced by their authors' reluctance to affect journalistic neutrality. A number of reporters and editors appear throughout these chapters as activists in their own right. Mainstream newspapers should also be recognized, by their silence, as somewhat partisan on these issues. The reluctance of the large Halifax newspapers to break the Reyes Syndrome story in Chapter Four stands out, but minimal reporting and commentary on environmental debates has been a hallmark of the mainstream press since the movement began. A conservative position regarding the basic assumptions of society, masquerading as factual objectivity, should not be considered a neutral position.

There is a minor element of oral history in this work. Several former environmental activists were generous with their time and provided corroboration and anecdotal recollections that helped to colour and fill in some unclear areas of the past. That said, this is not primarily a work of oral history, and the results of interviews did not have a substantial effect on the analysis. The main arguments presented herein took shape through the encounter with the documentary record, and that record proved mostly sufficient to support them. It is another advantage of working with such a voluminous amount of material that even small activist groups are represented in the archives, sometimes quite well, and interviews dedicated to redressing an imbalance in print sources were unnecessary.

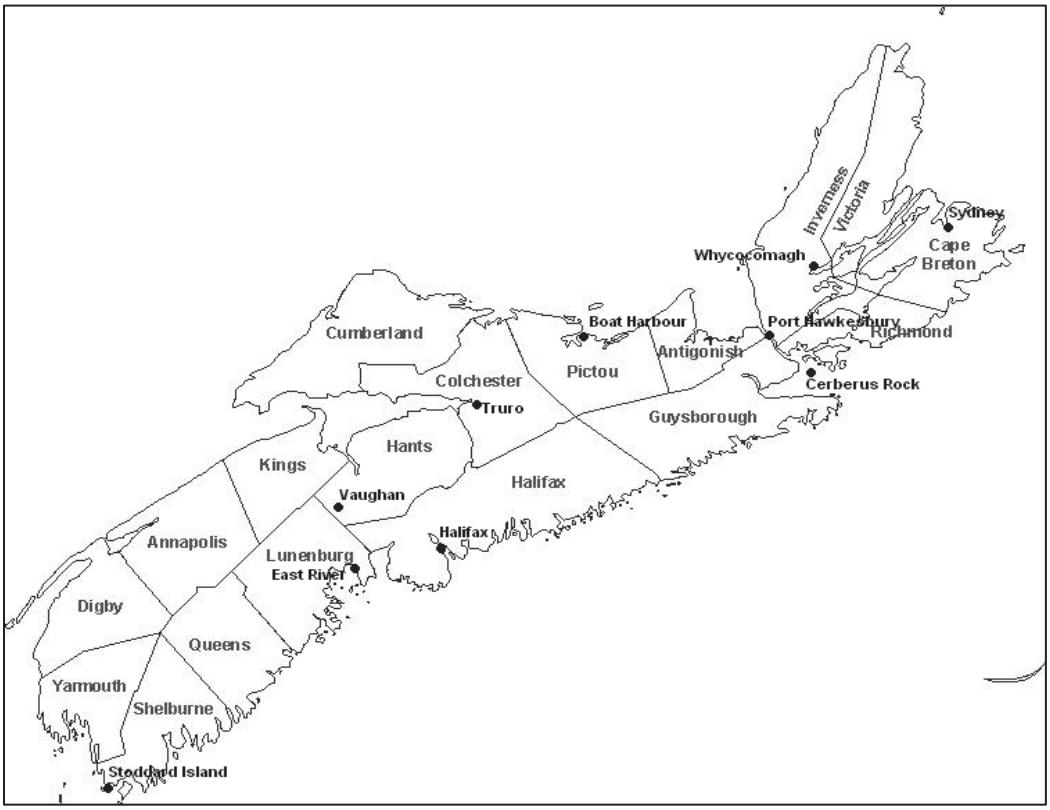
Like oral history, there is little visual analysis in this work, though the reason differs. Graphic material was not unnecessary, but often unavailable. It is perhaps one of

the minor negative effects of a great textual record, being the product of a movement dedicated to presenting itself publicly in an era when doing so meant accessing (or creating) print media, but there is surprisingly little graphic visual material in the archives. What exists is mainly maps and a few drawings, some of which are reproduced here. There were also films made during the forest controversies, discussed briefly in Chapter Four, and the "Dioxin Trail" road signs from Chapter Six, but for the most part the frequent use of visual propaganda associated with Greenpeace and its direct action peers was absent from the Nova Scotia movement in the 1970s, perhaps due to the provincial movement's minimal engagement with the animal rights controversies where use of shocking visuals was more common. There exists enough visual material only to support the argument that Nova Scotian activists began to move toward increasing use of it in the 1980s.

Organization

The arrangement of chapters in this dissertation is roughly chronological. Chapter Two, "At Home and Abroad," deals with the earliest origins of environmental awareness in Nova Scotia, recounting a diverse set of relatively minor controversies from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. From Boat Harbour to Mahone Bay to Chedabucto Bay, these early struggles established the lasting pattern of environmental activism in Nova Scotia as a movement primarily motivated by rural communities' reactions to the negative consequences of industrial modernity: the pollution, the centralization of power in the city, the increasing exploitation of the hinterland, and the threatened destruction of traditional economies. These initial actions make it clear that environmental activists in

the province already held well-developed and diverse opinions on the nature of their



(Figure 1.1: Map of Nova Scotia counties and relevant sites.)

movement, some the intellectual brothers of the technocratic nineteenth century conservation movement, others radically suspicious of government motives. They were themselves a diverse group of people as well, coming from starkly different economic and geographic origins, including fishermen, trappers, medical doctors, Mi'kmaq band chiefs, farmers, students, and more. In every case, they were well aware of the currents of popular ecology in the world at large. Government attempts to manage political radicalism, not limited to environmentalism, helped to create environmental activist organizations such as the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax, as they did elsewhere, and those groups showed an early tendency to focus on public education rather than on political pressure, and a generalized concern for “the environment” approximating

Inglehart's commodified quality of life. Meanwhile, outside of the city, activists grew increasingly effective at challenging and changing the course of developmentalist policies that drew new industrial projects into their communities. By the end of the 1960s, they had begun in earnest to muster scientific argument to the task of shaping public opposition to destructive industries, inadvertently assisted by the provincial government's stubborn secrecy. In the early 1970s, this growth of the rural movement's political power culminated in the ignominious defeat of a federal-provincial plan to create a new national park on the province's eastern shore, after a protracted controversy featuring some explicit and forceful nonmodern argument on the part of activists. As links among activists of all types and locations grew stronger and they began to take up more ambitious causes, such as the circumscription of pesticide use, the government in Halifax moved to blunt the impact of the critique by forming its own environmental regulations and agency, only the first instance in which the environmental movement forced action from government.

The first major intraprovincial collaboration is covered in Chapter Three, “The Two MECs,” which tracks the development of anti-nuclear activism from 1972 through to the provincial government's decision in 1980 to abandon plans for a single Maritime electric utility. Beginning with a plan to build a large nuclear power plant on the south shore to generate electricity for export to the United States, the narrative tracks a series of external factors responsible for seismic changes in the Nova Scotian movement: the oil price shocks of the early 1970s that ignited speculation about the need for nuclear generation in the Maritimes, the limits to growth theory that widely popularized the notion in 1972 that economic growth could not continue forever on a finite planet, and

the Three Mile Island nuclear disaster in 1979 that revitalized anti-nuclear politics across many jurisdictions, including the Maritimes. One of the central themes of this chapter is the importance of political jurisdiction in shaping Canadian environmentalism, as the attempt to unite the energy agencies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island produced an activist backlash that strengthened and drew together the movements in all three provinces but collapsed with the end of the regional utilities unification plan. In Nova Scotia, organization against nuclear energy brought the first long-lasting and multi-issue activist groups to wide public notice. It also led many activists to realize the possibility of making their appeals directly to government, remaining within the parameters of the existing modernist energy policy rather than continuing on a course of total rejection of large industrial electricity generation. A politically conservative (though still strongly reformist) group of religious peace activists who eventually formed the energy committee of the Halifax-based Ecology Action Centre were crucial and early actors in this shift toward modernism and government consultation, and therefore remained central figures in the movement for many years thereafter. The sense of personal vulnerability of farming and fishing communities remained a central motivating factor and sustained the defence of home places as a theme in environmental argument, but it was joined by the less geographically fixed contributions of immigrant American Quakers. Another central theme of this and following chapters, mistrust of the very secretive provincial government, was a source of disagreement between the more urban ecomodernist activists and their rural peers. Nevertheless, both remained committed to a vision of the movement as a grassroots coalition of local groups with a common, province-wide purpose, so far as anti-nuclear activism was concerned; in neither the

nascent ecomodernist mainstream nor the nonmodernist groups was the notorious NIMBY (Not-In-My-Back-Yard) activist ever to be found.

In Chapter Four, “Power From the People,” the focus shifts to a hard-fought battle over the use of chemical pesticides in forestry, beginning in 1976 with a famous (and successful) campaign to keep Nova Scotia from following New Brunswick's lead in spraying insecticides from the air in a futile bid to reduce the numbers of spruce budworm on Cape Breton Island. The events recounted in this chapter demonstrate the growing determination of government and industry to resist environmentalist pressure and the equally growing determination of some activists to change the minds of their opponents in the bureaucracy without resorting to radical tactics or rhetoric. The collision of the two played out in the infamous (and unsuccessful) herbicide trial of 1983, with which the chapter ends. The importance of global trends is central to the narrative of this chapter, with both environmentalists and the forest industry reaching beyond the province's borders for resources in their conflict, as well as for new arenas in which to make use of their respective gains within the province. But the limits of international assistance are fully on display as well in the second half of the chapter, as international connections help the more modernist activists pursue their case in court, where nonmodern arguments carried no weight. Several secondary themes rise to prominence here, such as the agency of the news media, the internal politics of the provincial bureaucracy (and conversely its universal commitment to the preservation of its own power), the continuing vitality of the resource conservation movement, and the rhetorical power of jobs and immigration status both to the advantage and detriment of activists.

From the air above to the stones below, Chapter Five, “Two Environmentalisms,”

examines a comparatively brief but intense campaign from 1981 to 1985 aimed at the prevention of uranium mining in the province. Most of the action in this chapter occurred in and around the hearings of the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Uranium Mining, during which activists who disagreed on the best tactics to pursue finally realized and acknowledged the full extent of their differences. This is a story of fragmentation, and the fracture in the movement was bitter, but the campaign to halt uranium mining was a surprising success, owing in large part to the persistence of the radicals who continued fighting desperately to defend their homes. Links with peace and conservation groups are once again on display in this chapter, along with the urban activists' greater tendency to modernism and the global links of every set of actors. Among the central themes, the influence of (and rejection of) metropolitanism ranks high as a factor in Canadian environmentalism brought into focus by the vitality of rural activism in the Nova Scotian movement. Indeed, Canadian environmentalism as seen through the prism of the Nova Scotian experience appears inextricably bound up with the discontents of metropolitanism, between regions of the country as well as between rural and urban locales within provinces. So, too, do the results of the activist schism reflect a national reality: the increased articulation and political consciousness of radical environmental critique, and the increasing commitment of the ecomodernist mainstream to consultative processes. Government action around uranium mining in Nova Scotia also illustrates the extent to which judicial and quasi-judicial forms -- courts and commissions -- serve to reinforce the modernist mode of thought, as well as the extent to which pressure politics continued to win results.

At last, Chapter Six, “Watermelons and Market Greens,” offers a short overview

of some major environmental controversies of the 1980s and demonstrates the persistence of the fissure in the province's environmental movement, a schism begun years before when Nova Scotians first took up the struggle against the dark side of modernity. Important to note is the ability of radical and mainstream activists to cooperate despite their differences, when involved in such issues as the threatened demolition of Kelly's Mountain for a granite quarry. Local grievance and defence of home places still drove environmental activism in the 1980s, as it does today, and the provincial and federal governments still encouraged modernist positions. The provincial movement, however, settled into a new pattern in the 1980s, with radicalism centred geographically on the north and south shores and on Cape Breton Island, with modernist environmentalism predominant in the central mainland.

The process by which the ill-defined activism of the late 1960s became the theoretically and politically articulate alternative environmentalisms of the 1980s, the narrative contained in these chapters, is not a decline-and-fall story. It is a story of intellectual growth and differentiation in a diverse movement. If environmental activists erred at times in pursuing modernist policies too stridently, they also demonstrated the power of both strands of the movement to effect change in development policy by working, if not in close collaboration, at least in parallel tracks. If there is a lesson to be taken from these pages, it is not that environmentalism in Nova Scotia failed, but that it has always contained the elements of success and at times has even managed to make them work.

Chapter 2 - At Home and Abroad: the genesis of environmentalism

Environmentalism in North America is typically characterized as an urban phenomenon, but the strength of rural activism in Nova Scotia in the 1960s demonstrates the centrality of rural protest groups to the establishment of a provincial movement. Building on the tradition of resource conservation, and augmented by back-to-the-land immigrants comfortable with social movement politics, activists in Nova Scotia reacted to the personal experience of industrial developmentalism by drawing on a global rhetoric of environment, social justice, and democracy. The change from relatively conservative and elite activism in the 1950s to a scientifically populist style in the late 1960s, with the promise of sustained future opposition to government development plans, alarmed the government in Halifax, much as 1960s radicalism alarmed governments everywhere. There was tremendous variety within environmental activism in Nova Scotia in the 1960s, and attempts by government to control and channel the energy of public opinion with targeted funding produced yet more, leading to the creation of less politically contentious groups in the city, such as the Ecology Action Centre (EAC). Yet the defense of home places from the negative effects of state-directed industrial modernity remained central to environmentalist argument everywhere in the province.

An efflorescence of environmental activism at the end of the 1960s built, piecemeal, the conditions for a sustained movement, beginning mostly around polluted harbours such as Boat Harbour in Pictou County and Chedabucto Bay in Guysborough and Richmond Counties, and moving from there to other areas and issues. As that movement coalesced, governments, conservationists, pollution fighters, and political

radicals each began attempting to mold the emerging environmentalism into something that conformed to their own respective interests. The events at which they met and clashed, such as the Encounter on the Urban Environment in 1970 and the Anil Hardboard hearing in 1974, permanently changed the shape of environmentalism in Nova Scotia. In the process of negotiating a place for environmental activism in the provincial polity, activists proved that they had the power to alter and sometimes entirely frustrate centrally-dictated modernist development policy. By the time eastern shore activists defeated plans for a new national park at Ship Harbour in 1973, environmental activism was an established political force, awaiting only a broad enough controversy to form it into a truly province-wide movement.

The Deep Roots of Activism

The Nova Scotian conservation movement was for many decades largely an expression of the power of the state, especially the colonial state, and had mostly to do with Crown forests. In keeping with the style of politics of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, early non-state conservation in Nova Scotia comprised a few attempts at corporate self-regulation and a wan extension of British imperial state managerialism into the upper tier of private professionals: professors, sportsmen, and bureaucratic retirees. In the late 1950s and the 1960s, however, the traditional resource management regime begin to show a capacity to integrate a small measure of true populism and a conception of nature as more than simply a storehouse of resources. Eventually, conservationists provided allies and a political foundation for the less radical segment of the environmental movement, while adapting themselves to participation in

the new environmental politics.[34]

Beginning in 1728, Surveyors General appointed by the colonial government in Halifax bore responsibility for ensuring a ready supply of mast trees and other special ship timbers for the use of the Royal Navy. This they accomplished, or tried to accomplish, by reserving promising tracts of forest from grant or sale and marking Crown trees with the King's broad arrow, three converging axe strokes that could in theory spell trouble for any timber merchant in whose inventory they appeared without permission. Nova Scotian white pine forests remained key strategic resources through the end of the Napoleonic wars, but forest protection in the sense understood by colonial officers and surveyors meant only accelerated consumption by the appropriate consumers. The first significant legislative action for the protection of forests from fire and illegal cutting arrived only after the late eighteenth century wave of Euro-American settlement in the Nova Scotian countryside. Even then however, most of the effort was dedicated to the protection of farm property (or the Royal Navy's prospective property) and not to slowing the destruction of the grand forests encountered by the first settlers.[35]

Colonial era conservation began the valorization of scientific resource management that has since continued to thrive. Samuel Hays' classic *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* explains how the centralization of power at the federal level of US government at the end of the nineteenth century advanced with the application of "efficient" conservation science, and *vice versa*.[36] Richard Grove followed much the

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[34]The idea of conservation as proto-environmentalism is contested but not new. See: Ramachandra Guha, *Environmentalism: A Global History* (New York: Longman, 2000); George Sessions, "The Deep Ecology Movement: A Review," *Environmental Review* 11:2 (1987), 105-125.

[35]Mark Leeming, "Contested Conservations: Forestry and History in Nova Scoita," *Past Tense* 1:1 (2012), 50-66.

[36]Samuel Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* (New York: Atheneum, 1975 [1959]).

same pattern in his history of British imperial forestry in India, culminating in the creation in 1864 of the British Indian Forest Department, now simply the Indian Forest Department and still the largest central forest agency on Earth.[37] Nova Scotia kept pace with both centres. Here as in British India and the USA, scientific survey bolstered the state's claim to ownership, a union of knowledge and dominion embodied by Titus Smith Jr., whose 150-day forest survey trek across the Nova Scotian interior in 1801 preceded the contentious international Maine-New Brunswick border survey by 16 years and the Great Trigonometrical Survey of India by but a single year. Smith was as ecologically aware as any scientific conservationist in the British Empire, and his work, especially his warnings about the deteriorating condition of the forests, signalled the beginning of a new era in forestry law in the colony (if not very much in forestry practice): the active combination of scientific knowledge, law, and state power in pursuit of not just supply directed to the rightful owners, but timber supply in perpetuity.[38]

The government of Nova Scotia's commitment to conservation and its science was real enough; over the course of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, various new statutes enacted by the legislature allowed government to lease, rather than grant, tracts of forest land to timber companies, and even to dictate the

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[37]Richard Grove, *Green Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

[38]Richard Field, "Colonizing Nature: Titus Smith Jr. and the Making of Nova Scotia, 1800-1850," in Claire Campbell and Robert Summerby-Murray, eds., *Land and Sea: Environmental History in Atlantic Canada* (Fredericton: Acadiensis, 2013), 45-59. Terrence Punch, "Titus Smith," Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. VII, <http://www.biographi.ca/EN/009004-119.01-e.php?id_nbr=3668> (accessed March, 2013). Matthew Edney, *Mapping an Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). Francis M. Carroll, "Highlands and the Source of the St. Croix," in *A Good and Wise Measure: The Search for the Canadian-American Boundary, 1783-1842*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 47-70.

Where private interests controlled woodland and practiced some form of scientific conservation, their activities were never significantly in concert with the state or each other, nor did they openly proselytize within the colony the way advocates of scientific agriculture or the authors of conservation law did. See Graeme Wynn, "Exciting a Spirit of Emulation Among the 'Plodholes': Agricultural Reform in Pre-Confederation Nova Scotia," *Acadiensis* 20:1 (1990), 5-51.

allowable diameter of merchantable trees (the Small Tree Act) or buy back forest land that had been ill-used by its owners. As well, in 1912, as a centennial counterpoint to Smith's work, the province and the Canadian Commission of Conservation produced a new forest survey by the founding Dean of the University of Toronto's forestry school, one even more freighted with dire warnings than the original. Such occasional far-sighted warnings of resource exhaustion aside, however, the province rarely saw reason to keep up with the intensively managerial and centralized practice of forest conservation in the USA or Europe. In those places, the imposition of central control held political advantages for those instituting it, while in Nova Scotia the necessary financial resources and political will were lacking. It was only in 1921 that the government in Halifax acquired its first genuine forest agency in the Department of Forests and Game, partly in response to incursions on provincial jurisdiction by the Dominion government and partly in response to encouragement by private timber operators. The latter, men like Thomas McMullen or F.J.D. Barnjum, comprised the only really coordinated conservation movement in Nova Scotia during the progressive era. Accustomed to viewing the reduction of forest cover as agricultural "improvement," average Nova Scotians played scant role in the early history of forest conservation and science. After a brief interval, the influence of the timbermen produced a Department of Lands and Forests (DLF) that, from the early 1930s, saw its proper function as cooperative rather than antagonistic toward the forest industry, and considered conservation in general a matter for experts and large landowners, not for farmers or small woodlot owners.[39]

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[39]Mark Leeming, "Contested Conservations: Forestry and History in Nova Scoita," *Past Tense* 1:1 (2012), 50-66. Thomas Roach, and Richard Judd, "A Man For All Seasons: Frank John Dixie Barnjum, Conservationist, Pulpwood Embargoist and Speculator!," *Acadiensis* 20:2 (1991), 129-144. Compare the case in New Brunswick, where large corporate forestry held priority earlier: Bill Parenteau,

Nova Scotians were similarly ambivalent about changes to other parts of the landscape, at least when they were noticed. The earliest large hydro-electric dams in the province, as elsewhere, were both remote from settlement and able to be dismissed as merely larger versions of the small mill dams and coffer dams that had dotted the province's rivers for two centuries. The creation of Lake Rossignol in Queens County by the Mersey Paper Company in the 1920s, for instance, drowning 10 natural lakes and over 10,000 acres of land in the process, passed without significant objection.[40] By the end of the 1950s, however, the qualitative difference in the biological impact of small and large dams was better understood and free-flowing rivers better appreciated as refugia for Atlantic salmon.[41]

Coincident with the dawning realization of rivers' value and vulnerability came a project to dam the Gold River in Lunenburg County in order to provide power for peak demand times by the Nova Scotia Light and Power Company (NSLPC). Though the Gold River valley is relatively narrow compared to the Mersey River lands flooded to create Lake Rossignol, the project would still have flooded slightly more than 2,000 acres from the village of Chester nearly to the border of Kings County, creating two long flowages where once there had been a single river channel and eight natural lakes. Worse, two sections of riverbed between dams and powerhouses would be left permanently dry. Had the power company's engineers set out deliberately to demonstrate their ability to utterly unmake a river, they could not have designed a better exhibition piece.

"'Making Room For Economy, Efficiency, and Conservation': Progressive Forest Conservation in New Brunswick, 1900-1918," in Claire Campbell and Robert Summerby-Murray, eds., *Land and Sea: Environmental History in Atlantic Canada* (Fredericton: Acadiensis, 2013), 121-141.

[40]Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, "Mersey Messages - Old Lake Rossignol," 10 March, 2009, <http://www.merseytobeatic.ca/pdfs/Mersey%20Messages/Mersey%20Messages%20March%2010%202009.pdf> (accessed March, 2013).

[41]William Herrington, and George Rounsefell, "Restoration of the Atlantic Salmon in New England," *Transactions of the American Fisheries Society* 70:1 (1941), 123-127.

There was no questioning that NSLPC's plan would have meant the end of salmon fishing on the river, and it attracted immediate vocal opposition from sport fishermen in the province, especially in the city of Halifax. There, a sufficient number of them managed to keep the issue alive in the press that the Stanfield government resorted to the creation of a Royal Commission in the summer of 1961 to settle the question. The McInnes Commission, under Halifax lawyer Russell McInnes, operated on a tight schedule, wishing to give some definitive advice to government before NSLPC's preferred starting date for the project in 1962. Nonetheless, McInnes immediately chose to expand his own inquiry's terms of reference to include an investigation of existing dams and fisheries on other rivers, partly to better understand the uncertain future of the Gold River. Opponents of the project represented an elite segment of the population and "consisted almost wholly of persons interested in sport fishing; particularly salmon fishing by rod." They were supported by the federal Department of Fisheries, whose representative called it "a mistake [to] absolutely destroy salmon and other anadromous fish" on a biologically healthy river merely for "the cheapest possible power."[42] More relevant perhaps, opponents included and had the support of powerful members of the province's economic elite, including Frank Sobey, then head of the province's industrial development agency.[43]

With remarkable speed, McInnes issued a recommendation before the end of the year condemning the project and endorsing the conservationist gospel. Since European settlement, he wrote, "the peoples and Governments of this province have used, abused,

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[42]Russell McInnes, *Report of the Royal Commission into the Nova Scotia Light and Power Company Ltd. Gold River Hydro development* (Halifax: Government of Nova Scotia, 1961).

[43]Frank Sobey to Russell McInnes, 18 July, 1961, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, McInnes fonds, RG44, volume 22, number 4.

and for the most part indiscriminately destroyed its natural resources with a prodigality that would be incredible if it were not so patently and painfully obvious."[44] His recommendations included a stay on any and all hydro-electric works anywhere in the province until a long-term planning exercise could be completed and a sport fishermen's licensing system created to support a program of scientific conservation. Significantly, he also adhered to the classic conservationist's elevation of the common good over the local preference: the "large majority" of residents near the Gold River had registered support for the project in hope of new jobs, but McInnes insisted that such jobs would be few and that "the Gold River and every other natural resource and tourist attraction of this province belongs to the people of the province as a whole [and] it should not be available to satisfy the whims or desires of the persons living closest to it."[45] Public opinion carried a weight in his ruling that it did not carry in much conservationist writing -- McInnes stopped short of insisting that only scientific experts could determine the common good, and he acknowledged the legitimacy of popular opposition, so long as all citizens of the province enjoyed equal influence -- but apart from the threat of public disapproval implicit in the use of newspapers as a forum for elite dissent, genuine popular resistance had very little role in the fate of the Gold River. Nevertheless, unlike the narrowly institutional forest conservation of the DLF, river conservation in the 1960s, while still far from a mass movement, reached out to average Nova Scotians with the message that industrial development could be dangerous, and could be stopped.

For the most part, opposition to the Gold River project came from a like-minded

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[44]Russell McInnes, *Report of the Royal Commission into the Nova Scotia Light and Power Company Ltd. Gold River Hydro development* (Halifax: Government of Nova Scotia, 1961).

[45]Russell McInnes, *Report of the Royal Commission into the Nova Scotia Light and Power Company Ltd. Gold River Hydro development* (Halifax: Government of Nova Scotia, 1961).

but unorganized group of sport fishermen. One exception, a group of scientific conservationists outside of government calling themselves the Nova Scotia Resources Council (NSRC), had been active since only 1959, dedicated to "ensuring the cultivation and the optimal use of the Province's resources [via] carefully considered land use and sound management of plant and animal life."[46] Though a private association, the NSRC was no protest group. Its members represented the professional scientific establishment outside of government. Their representative at McInnes' inquiry was Harrison F. Lewis, retired chief of the Canadian Wildlife Service, and their recommendations to the commissioner (largely reproduced in his own recommendations to government) earned praise for their "reasonableness."[47] They did, however, represent a trend in the province that saw natural history clubs seeking incorporation in part with the intention of pushing government to act on a conservation agenda. The national scene shared much the same development in the mid-twentieth century, according to Tina Loo, whose book on Canadian wildlife conservation traced the rise of groups using both elite status and popular pressure to exert influence on the state, especially in the west.[48] Wildlife conservationists in Nova Scotia, whose legislative victories dating back to 1794's Act for the Preservation of Partridge and Blue-Winged Ducks were dismissed by Lewis as "a sop to an advanced minority and not meant to be taken seriously," were particularly keen to organize and willing to use the weight of membership numbers to subtly bolster their groups' influence.[49] The Nova Scotia Bird Society preceded the NSRC by four years,

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[46]"NSRC" document, 1981, Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, EAC fonds, MS-11-13 (hereafter DAL-EAC), box 33.2.
[47]Russell McInnes, *Report of the Royal Commission into the Nova Scotia Light and Power Company Ltd. Gold River Hydro development* (Halifax: Government of Nova Scotia, 1961).
[48]Tina Loo, *States of Nature* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2006).
[49]"Wildlife Conservation," n.d. [c.1950s], Harrison Flint Lewis fonds, Esther Clark Wright Archives, accession 2006.020-LEW/36.

founded by Lewis, Robie Tufts, and other professionally interested naturalists, and celebrated the rapid growth of its membership over the following months.[50] Later, in response to the Gold River episode, another group of sportsmen and scientists formed the Nova Scotia Salmon Association. Aware by the late 1960s of a need to incorporate pollution abatement into habitat protection, these new conservation organizations were at once more than the simple "wise use" conservationists of Loo's story and less than the radically skeptical environmentalists of the late 1960s and early 1970s. They also remained active and collaborated with various environmental groups in the 1970s and 1980s.

What the classic scientific conservation movement in the USA had, and the Canadian movement acquired only at a later date, was a counterpart in organized public support for wilderness preservation. Hays explored the difficult alliance between US preservationists led by the "wilderness prophet" John Muir and the conservation movement embodied by the forester Gifford Pinchot in the late nineteenth century, but in Canada there were far fewer of Muir's type. Apart from Ducks Unlimited and its habitat protection programs designed to produce waterfowl for sport hunters' consumption, only Tommy Walker and Andy Russell, two westerners active in the 1960s, appear in Loo's account to bridge the conservation/preservation divide. (Popular preservationists like Bill Mason and Farley Mowat existed as well.)[51] Elsewhere, Gerald Killan and George Warecki have written about Ontario's Algonquin Wildlands League, established in 1968 to push for the creation of recreational wilderness areas in that province, where like

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[50]"Organization of the Nova Scotia Bird Society," 1955, Harrison Flint Lewis fonds, Esther Clark Wright Archives, accession 2006.020-LEW/24.

[51]Loo, *States of Nature*, 149-209. There is also a full suite of conservationists in Loo's account, including some populists like Jack Miner.

Russell and Walker in the west, they relied on public sympathy and support and, in achieving success, confirmed popular appreciation for the wilderness idea in Canada.[52] In every case of successful action, preservationists forged an alliance with conservationists, be it through scientific research or the preservation of habitat as "game factories" or, more often, both. On the east coast there were similar singular cases of preservation, such as the protection of Bon Portage Island in 1964 by Evelyn and Morrill Richardson and Acadia University, with help from Harrison Lewis and the NSBS, but there also existed an unusual international preservation organization, the Friends of Nature (FON).

The first FON group was created in Maine in 1954 by a young publisher and shipwright named Martin Rudy Haase and a small number of associates. Their sole purpose at first was to preserve as recreational wilderness one small island (McGlathery) in Penobscot Bay, then under threat from a pulp and paper company. Success breeds confidence, however, and the group's attention soon turned to similarly threatened wildernesses elsewhere. Unconcerned with the national loyalties that hemmed in so many other groups, FON set out to assist in the creation of wilderness parks in Costa Rica and Tasmania, with uncommon success. In 1967, Haase and his family relocated to Chester, Nova Scotia, in a bid to keep his two young sons out of the way of the seemingly interminable Vietnam war, and FON came with him. More accurately, Haase was FON, and he found in Lunenburg County a new set of associates with whom to continue his wilderness advocacy. The organization, now bipartite with newsletters published in both

[52]Gerald Killan, and George Warecki, "The Algonquin Wildlands League and the Emergence of Environmental Politics in Ontario, 1965-1974," *Environmental History Review* 16:4 (1992), 1-27; Ian MacLaren, *Culturing Wilderness in Jasper National Park* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2007).

US and Canadian editions, carried on internationally and in its two host nations.[53]

Despite their jaundiced view of America's military adventures and nuclear arsenal, the FON was never a politically radical group. Its mode of operations was a natural extension of the privileged milieu from which it came: letters and direct appeals to the political elite achieved virtually all of the group's victories. The personal intervention of President Kennedy's adviser and head speechwriter, Ted Sorensen, for example, opened the door to the creation of the Cabo Blanco Nature Reserve in Costa Rica, on FON's advice. In that sense there was little to differentiate FON from the earlier tradition of both conservation and preservation in North America, in which elite recreationists (hunters, hikers, and mountaineers) and elite technocrats (foresters, biologists, and engineers) pursued novel goals via traditional politics. In another sense, however, their philosophical position linked them much more closely to the new environmentalism of the 1960s. Preservation in the style of John Muir or the Algonquin Wildlands League is about land and habitat, and little else; Haase's FON linked those concerns to pollution, population, and lifestyle questions. In 1955, seven years before the publication of *Silent Spring*, FON began a campaign to encourage a permanent ban on DDT and similar pesticides, which transitioned into a fight against the US defoliation program in Vietnam (and in the Cold War context, linked their anti-chemical work to their anti-nuclear advocacy). The group also frequently insisted that “people must voluntarily turn to a 'lower' standard of living commensurable with available renewable resources,” and helped to popularize the ideas of the afforestation advocate Richard St. Barbe-Baker and back-to-the-land gurus Helen

[53]Martin Rudy Haase, interview with the author, 9 October, 2011. Sterling Evans, *The Green Republic: a conservation history of Costa Rica* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1999), 62.

and Scott Nearing.[54]

The combined activities of forest and wildlife conservationists and wilderness preservationists in the 1950s and 1960s demonstrated a wide-ranging concern for resource depletion as well as environmental deterioration. The conservation movement in Nova Scotia adapted to the observation of greater industrial impact, rather than remaining mired in an unchanging "raw material" view of nature and the rationalization of its exploitation. The defenders of the Gold River, for instance, argued not only for a fishing river but one of the last *healthy* salmon rivers in the province, and their successors in the NSSA, along with Rudy Haase at FON, were well aware of the expansion of clearcut pulpwood forestry in the province and the annual DDT spray program in neighbouring New Brunswick, as well as the fatal consequences of both practices for the insect and fish life of rivers.[55] If their political habits still generally directed them toward technical and scientific expertise and gentlemanly lobbying out of the public eye, there were also hints of a new awareness -- in the NSBS' quest for membership numbers, and in the use of the press in defense of the Gold River -- that public opinion might now support a reaction against the intrusion of industrial modernity into more and more corners of the land. There were even hints of the deeper challenge to come, questioning the need, the value, and the possibility of continued accelerating exploitation of nature. At the end of the 1960s, all of these disparate trends came together, far too quickly for single-issue conservation groups to keep up, but those groups did not fade away or reject the new political reality. They continued to adapt and forge alliances with their new and more

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[54]Martin Rudy Haase, interview with the author, 9 October, 2011. "FON newsletter," n.d. [c.1970s], Rudy Haase papers.

[55]"DDT: Who It's Killing And Why," *Mysterious East* (December, 1969), 19-26. See also chapter 4. The story of New Brunswick's rivers and the effect of DDT on them appeared famously in Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1962).

radical peers, subtly moulding the future of the environmental movement in the province.

“Calamity Howlers”: Estuarine Environmentalism

The Gold River episode was, in addition to a conservationist rallying point, a portent of things to come. Threats to bodies of water signalled the beginning of a new age in environmental concern at the end of the 1960s. In this, as in so much else, Nova Scotia's experience reflected and amplified the pattern in the rest of North America and the world. The provincial government's quest for economic development during the prior decade had literally changed the face of the province, often for the worse, and the change was not evenly distributed. New industrial projects tended to cluster around harbours for a number of reasons, including ease of access, available workers, clean water supplies, and the availability of the ocean as a sink for industrial waste. By natural extension, the new activism of the era centred on the same locations, the majority of them rural, as local residents fearing for their traditional lifestyles and livelihoods under new land-use and water-use regimes found the traditional politics of dissent ineffective against polluters working hand-in-hand with government. Fed by direct observation of environmental ills and mistrust of government, as well as by a rising global environmental consciousness, new ideas and patterns of activist behaviour spread across the province from their estuarine enclaves. Environmentalists made increasing use of scientific research, not to convince politicians of their claims as their conservationist forebears had done, but to draw ever greater popular support to their campaigns of political pressure. And with the new style of environmental politics came a new and lasting pattern of participation, with a much greater presence of women, young people, Mi'kmaq, and working class Nova

Scotians.

One of the first instances of the new activism came in Pictou County. In 1965, when the provincial government finally enticed the Scott Paper Company to build its newest, state-of-the-art kraft pulp mill at Abercrombie Point, an unusual provision in the agreement had the province rather than the pulp company operating the mill's effluent treatment facility. Seizing on the natural lagoon of nearby Boat Harbour as a cheaper alternative to a purpose-built treatment plant, the Nova Scotia Water Resources Commission put up dams in the lagoon to divide settling and aeration ponds, walled it off from the sea, and constructed a pipeline underneath the East River of Pictou to carry 25 million gallons each day of effluent water, dissolved and suspended bits of wood pulp, and various toxic left-overs from the kraft bleaching process to the new facility. Economically, at least, it was a success story; the Scott mill prospered. Boat Harbour, on the contrary, died. Once a popular site for swimming, boating, and fishing, its waters promptly turned black after the mill opened, as the oxygen demands of decomposing wood pulp left nothing to support life.[56]

Particularly keen to celebrate their sense of belonging to a particular place and particularly ill-treated during the creation of the facility, the Mi'kmaq of Pictou Landing were among the first to react to the environmental downside of developmentalism, though even at Pictou Landing they were not alone. From the perspective of the band's negotiators, the destruction of the harbour was not even supposed to have happened. They had been dispatched to meet with federal and provincial officials early in the province's talks with Scott, after the band indicated that they would not accept the conversion of

[56]Rust Associates, *A Review of the Boat Harbour waste treatment facilities for Nova Scotia Water Resources Commission* (Montreal: Rust Associates, 1970).

their reserve's beautiful natural harbour into an industrial facility. In 1966, they were taken to a pulp mill in Saint John, New Brunswick, where water issued clear and clean from the outflow pipe, and were reassured that the same conditions would prevail in Pictou. With an offer of $60,000 compensation for fishing rights on the table, and according to Pictou delegate Louis Francis, a generous supply of alcohol as well, the band's team agreed to the government's terms. When effluent began flowing into Boat Harbour, they realized their mistake. The Saint John lagoons they had been shown were not even receiving effluent at the time of their visit, and $60,000 was a pittance next to the millions it would cost to build a truly state-of-the-art facility, e.g., $4 million for the most modest improvements at Boat Harbour proposed by the optimistic and quite conservative Rust report in 1970.[57]

Members of the Pictou Landing Band had good reason to feel helpless in 1970. "I guess we're beaten," was Chief Raymond Francis' assessment, but they would not give up, and in their fight they had allies as well, willing as never before to challenge the authority of the state.[58] Though environmentalist coalition across the province was not yet common, local solidarity was, and non-Native residents of Pictou Landing felt nearly as deceived as the band. Since 1965 they too had been demanding answers from the Water Commission, and had received similar assurances that no pollution of water or air would result from the project. As the progressive degeneration of the harbour and its surroundings confirmed their fears, however, more and more residents turned to a local citizens' committee (eventually named the Northumberland Strait Pollution Control

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[57]"Special Report: The Death of Boat Harbour," *Mysterious East* (September, 1970), 20-27.

[58]*Ibid*, 22. The Pictou Landing Band did eventually win in court a recognition of the deception perpetrated in part by the federal government, and a settlement in 1993 that paid $35 million: Settlement agreement, 20 July, 1993, <http://boatharbour.kingsjournalism.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/15.199335millionagreement.pdf> (accessed March, 2013).

Committee - NSPCC) to press for answers. Municipal councillor and NSPCC member Henry Ferguson wrote for the people of Pictou Landing in 1970:

> with the winds down the harbour we get air pollution from Scott Paper, then with the winds east we again get pollution, this time from Boat Harbour. The fumes are really terrible, almost unbearable. Then we get water pollution coming down the East River from leaks in the pipe across from the Scott Paper Co. to Pictou Landing. Then water pollution from Boat Harbour when the tide is coming up and runs along Lighthouse Beach and into Pictou Harbour.[59]

To that, he added swarms of mosquitoes and gnats, expropriation through flooding of harbour-side land without notice and with minimal compensation, and threats to the Northumberland Strait lobster fishery. The last was particularly worrying in communities along the shore, where the Maritime Packers Division of National Sea Products reported a 26.7 percent drop in lobster landings in 1968 and a 42.2 percent drop in 1969.[60]

Official response to public outrage at Pictou Landing was muted at best. Accustomed to working without heed to local opinion, E.L.L. Rowe, the chairman of the Water Resources Commission and a former chemical industry employee who had designed the leaking sub-river pipeline and had promised minimal disruption to life around Boat Harbour, doubled down on his defence of the facility. He insisted that he personally found the smell of the rotting lagoon and the "rotten egg" hydrogen sulfide fumes from Scott's stacks inoffensive, and that the province could not make funds available for the solution of merely aesthetic problems. He also made it clear that mercury contamination of the mill effluent from the associated Canso Chemicals plant would have to be tolerated, as the development of the plant had "gone too far" and cost

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[59]Henry Ferguson to Rust Associates, 24 March, 1970, <http://boatharbour.kingsjournalism.com/wordpress/documents/> (accessed March, 2013).
[60]"Special Report: The Death of Boat Harbour," *Mysterious East* (September, 1970), 22.

too much to be altered.[61] Other officials and politicians holding similar views attracted attention from time to time, including the agriculture minister Harvey Veniot, who dismissed the affected locals with the oddly poetic epithet, "calamity howlers," or the fisheries experts at the Department of Fisheries in Ottawa who would only repeat that Boat Harbour's effluent had been tested and proven non-toxic to lobster larvae.[62] But it was Rowe who earned the greatest ill will as the man directly in charge of the facility, whose public pronouncements so often failed to hold up to scrutiny, and who had been more than usually candid about his priorities in the use of public funds. More inclined to talk about municipal sewage treatment than the effluent of privately owned industries, he played what Tom Murphy in the *Mysterious East* called "the little verbal game called 'Why-Don't-You-Talk-About-The-East-River-And-Shut-Up-About-Boat-Harbour.'"[63]

Local activists refused to be put off the issue. Unable to secure a hearing and unable to sue the province for nuisance without permission from the government, they turned fully to public opinion as a source of influence. And as a tool for generating public support, they turned to science. The NSPCC commissioned a report from Delaney and Associates that followed the brown film of Boat Harbour effluent twenty kilometres down the shore and calculated that about 185 tons of organic solids spilled into the sea

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[61]*Ibid*, 26. Reverend D. Glass, Sharon-Saint John United Church Stellarton, to Premier G.I. Smith, 16 August, 1970, <http://boatharbour.kingsjournalism.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/09.1970smithfromchurch.pdf> (accessed March, 2013). Dr. J.B. MacDonald to Rust Associates Consulting Engineers, 22 March, 1970, <http://boatharbour.kingsjournalism.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/07.1970macDonaldLetterComplete.pdf> (accessed March, 2013).

[62]"Special Report: The Death of Boat Harbour," *Mysterious East* (September, 1970), 23. Reverend D. Glass, Sharon-Saint John United Church Stellarton, to Premier G.I. Smith, 16 August, 1970, <http://boatharbour.kingsjournalism.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/09.1970smithfromchurch.pdf> (accessed March, 2013).

[63]Tom Murphy, "Why don't you talk about the East River and shut-up about Boat Harbour," *Mysterious East* (October, 1970), 29-30.

from the harbour each day.[64] D.C. MacLellan at the Marine Studies Centre at McGill University found the effluent resulting in an unusually great mortality among the plankton at the base of the Northumberland Strait food chain, and Dr. J.G. Ogden at Dalhousie University answered the federal fisheries experts by reminding them that, toxic or not, dark brown effluent that blocked sunlight from reaching the sea floor would deprive lobster of both food and sheltering seaweeds. "A sheet of opaque glass put over the lawn is not toxic," he said, "but it will kill the grass. The effluent from Boat Harbour is as effective as a sheet of black plastic."[65] So armed with expert authority of their own, the NSPCC members pursued their environmental justice arguments in the press on behalf of the Mi'kmaq and Northumberland Strait fishermen deceived or ignored by the federal agencies designated to safeguard their interests. Nor were their aims narrowly or selfishly defined; one fisherman-activist told Tom Murphy that compensation for losses might not be welcome, if it allowed the condition of the Strait to continue deteriorating. "We want our environment cleaned up, rather than subsidies for a dirty environment," he said.[66] Dr. J.B. MacDonald, MD, one of the NSPCC's leaders, explained that he had come to the issue out of concern for his own summer home at Pictou Landing, but quickly discovered the medical risks of SO2 in the air and a stew of unknown chemicals in the harbour's water, as well as the injustice of secretive government deals drawn up without "explanation, justification, or revelation of alternatives" to the public.[67] In the early 1970s the NSPCC expanded its range of concerns to include the whole of industrial and

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[64]"Report by J. A. Delaney and Associates on Pollution in Boat Harbour," Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, Dalhousie University Institute of Public Affairs/Henson College fonds, UA-26, box 116.6.
[65]"Special Report: The Death of Boat Harbour," *Mysterious East* (September, 1970), 22, 26.
[66]*Ibid*, 22.
[67]J.B. MacDonald to Premier Stanfield, 19 March, 1966, <http://boatharbour.kingsjournalism.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/pdfs/03.1966Macdonaldhammletter.pdf> (accessed March, 2013).

municipal pollution affecting the Northumberland Strait, no longer content to entrust the solution of any such problem wholly to the Water Resources Commission or Department of Fisheries.[68] "Regrettably," noted MacDonald, "one must be hurt to become an active and sustained anti-pollution fighter. This is not as it should be. Intelligent people should not see their environment, their homes, their country being destroyed and sit back placidly and take it."[69]

Boat Harbour represents the most bitterly fought of the late 1960s battles, but it was far from the only one. At the same time as Dr. MacDonald was discovering the need for citizen activism, other groups were forming in the province after their own personal experiences with the dark side of developmentalism. In Halifax, residents on the shores of the Bedford Basin and Purcell's Cove learned much the same lessons derived from Pictou Landing's experience. Like Pictou, urban Halifax was no stranger to industry, but new developments in the 1960s brought an intensification that seemed to threaten residents' traditional recreational use of the harbour. Increasing population in the Halifax area had the city government searching for a site for a sewage treatment system more advanced than its existing system.[70] At the same time, proposals for new industrial developments at previously unused locations, such as a container ship terminal at Navy Island in Wright's Cove on the Dartmouth side of the basin, came up frequently. Also like Pictou, the reaction against environmental costs imposed from above came early in the planning process: both the Bedford Basin Pollution Control Committee (BBPCC) and the Purcell's Cove Action Committee (PCAC) began protesting in 1969 that the decision to dedicate greater and greater proportions of the basin's shore to industrial purposes, and

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[68]"Ecology Supplement," *The 4th Estate*, September, 1972, 19.
[69]"Special Report: The Death of Boat Harbour," *Mysterious East* (September, 1970), 23.
[70]A pipe.

the decision to flatten and infill 30 acres in the village and harbour at Purcell's Cove for a massive central sewage treatment plant, were both unjustifiably undemocratic and would subject locals to unanticipated and irreversible environmental dangers. Robert Martin's complaint about the level of public consultation at Purcell's Cove might have come from the pens of any of his peers on the basin or in Pictou County: he asked, should citizens "wait until City Council has done all the thinking they expect to do before expressing their views? Are they to be given a chance to let off steam only after City Council has made its decision?"[71]

Residents of both communities demanded a say in development schemes before plans were finalized, but in Bedford they faced a potential multitude of future projects that could only be addressed with regular public input into the planning process. Accordingly, the BBPCC set to work compiling a major report, which they released in 1970, on the future of industrial and recreational development on the basin, making use of the lawyers, engineers, and planners among their number to argue against unrestrained industrial growth in the city planners' own terms.[72] There was no official response. If the somewhat less wealthy and professionally resourceful defenders of Purcell's Cove, fighting to stop a single project, could be publicly dismissed as ignorant of the inevitability of development, the BBPCC required a different tack on the part of the city and province: silence in public, while internally the ever-present and tight-fisted Mr. Rowe at the Water Resources Commission circulated a dismissive assessment of the

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[71]Robert Martin, "Purcell's Cove: Look Quick A Sewage Treatment Plant," *Mysterious East* (June, 1970), 11-13. J.J. Betlam, Bedford United Church Social Action Chairman, and R.G. McClung, United Church Women President, to Premier Regan, 13 January, 1971, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Regan fonds, RG 100 (hereafter REGAN), volume 78, number 36-6b.

[72]Bedford Basin Pollution Committee, *Report of the Bedford Basin Pollution Committee of the Council of the Bedford Service Commission* (Bedford: Bedford Service Commission, 1970).

activists as impractical "academic" people with a "lack of appreciation of priorities in the expenditure of public moneys," selfish, unscientific, and not to be taken seriously in their "public relations" exercise.[73]

In the face of such official intransigence, the genuine public relations efforts of Purcell's Cove met greater success. Their hectoring methods, undeterred by the condescension of experts or the hostility of bureaucrats, eventually prompted the City Council to issue a promise that the Cove would not be infilled, scuttling the previous odds-on favourite site and sending the search for a sewage plant location off on its own long and eventful history.[74] The BBPCC, conversely, barely stumbled into 1971 as an active organization, "embittered and in disarray" from their failed attempt to appeal to provincial and city planners.[75] Though certainly possessed of more economic power on average than the Cove residents, the BBPCC had no great deal of political clout with which to force their perspective onto the planning agenda, no equivalent to the political power of massed public anger. Successful or not, the lessons learned by both groups echoed the experience in Pictou County, where the NSPCC's public pressure campaign finally saw some acknowledgement of the problem at Boat Harbour and some investment in improvements in 1972, without any corresponding acknowledgement of the activists' role in bringing them about.[76] Government could be moved on single issues, it seemed, but only grudgingly and only under threat of political embarrassment, and not to the

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[73]S.R. Kerr, "The McLaren Report: A Treatment Plant At Purcell's Cove," *Mysterious East* (December, 1970), 19-20. E.L.L. Rowe to D.R. MacDonald, Minister under the Water Act, 14 August, 1970, REGAN, volume 116, number 1.

[74]Major site proposals during the following years included the tip of Point Pleasant Park, McNab's Island, the area around York Redoubt, and the locations of the plants existing at the time of writing.

[75]"Brief to Canadian Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on the Human Environment," 28 April, 1972, Dalhousie University Archives and Special Collections, MOVE fonds, MS-11-1, box 6.35.

[76]"Pictou area successfully combating water pollution at Boat Harbour," *Chronicle Herald*, 2 January, 1974, 25.

extent of giving up its control of development planning.

If Boat Harbour's ruination was not sufficient warning against the urge to "sit back placidly" and let the state's planners have their way, the Canso Strait industrial complex rang in the new decade in 1970 with an infamous debacle, the *Arrow* oil spill. It was the construction of the Canso Causeway in the early 1950s that turned Port Hawkesbury into a viable deep-water port, and the encouragement, financial and otherwise, of the provincial government that brought a pulp mill to the area in 1962, a heavy water plant in 1970, and an oil refinery in 1971. Port Hawkesbury was to be a "growth pole" for western Cape Breton and the eastern mainland, areas appearing in desperate need of an economic boost.[77] The urgency of industrial growth targets, however, left no room for the assessment of environmental risk, much less for the avoidance of it. Discontent with scantly-regulated development existed, but the hundreds of jobs that came with the complex were welcome relief for many, and Dr. MacDonald's assessment held true: people had to be hurt before they could become active pollution fighters.[78]

At 9:30 a.m., on 4 February 1970, a Liberian registered tanker carrying 16,000 tons of thick Venezuelan Bunker C oil struck Cerberus Rock in Chedabucto Bay on the approach to the Canso Strait. Damage to the ship was not great, but the captain was unable to free it from the rock. There it languished for eight days, attracting barely any attention from Canadian authorities, before a salvage attempt on the twelfth caused the hull to break in half, spilling part of its cargo into the sea and sending the stern to the bottom of the bay, still full of oil. Imperial Oil Ltd., owner of the cargo, attempted with a

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[77]Donald Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Canada's Search For Solutions* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1992), 6-7.
[78]Silver Donald Cameron, interview with the author, 1 November, 2011.

little success to burn off and disperse spilled oil, but neither the company nor anyone else had any experience dealing with spilled oil in such cold waters. For a further eight days, Imperial vainly tried to contain its mess, before the federal government finally stepped in an appointed a three-man task force with instructions simply to "deal with" the oil.[79]

"Operation Oil," as the task force called its work, was a three million dollar cleanup that managed, at least, to prevent a bad situation becoming worse. Dr. Patrick McTaggart-Cowan, Executive Director of the Science Council of Canada, Dr. H. Sheffer, Vice-Chairman of the Defence Research Board, and Captain (N) M.A. Martin, the Deputy Chief of Staff at Maritime Command, presided over a three-pronged mission: remove the oil remaining inside the broken *Arrow*, collect as much as possible of the spilled oil at sea, and clean up more than a hundred and twenty-five miles of coastline already painted black with crude. Each objective presented novel problems. The bow section of the tanker was largely emptied in the spill, but the oil remaining in the stern section, at rest on the bottom of frigid Chedabucto Bay, had thickened into an immovable mass due to the cold. At sea level, booms could no longer contain the froth of oil and water drifting about, but dispersant chemicals were deemed too toxic to be used in the bay's rich fishing grounds. And on shore, oil clung to rocky cliffs, sandy beaches, and drifts of sea ice soon to melt and re-oil anything the task force managed to clean. The three men in charge and the corps of military engineers and civilian researchers under their command had to invent new techniques for each situation; despite the mania for development at Port Hawkesbury and the predictably difficult environment of the Atlantic Ocean in winter, and despite recent high-profile oil spills in California and the English

[79] *Report of the Task Force Operation Oil (Clean-up of the Arrow oil spill in Chedabucto Bay) to the Minister of Transport* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970), 9.

Channel, no one in the provincial or federal governments had ever prepared for the possibility of an oil spill.[80]

The cleanup operation took roughly seven weeks. Navy divers managed to tap a new valve into the hull of the sunken stern and inject steam to warm up the congealed oil enough to pump much of it out into a waiting barge, the *Irving Whale*.[81] Their engineer counterparts worked simultaneously at a furious pace to design and build "slick lickers" to pick oil from the surface of the sea and de-oiling washers to clean fouled fishing gear. On shore, everything from shovels to bulldozers collected oil from the beaches. The task force expressed pride in their achievement; locals expressed frustration at a job half-done. A great deal of oil remained within the sunken hull, occasionally oozing out during stretches of warm water temperatures over the following years, and as a result small oil slicks still regularly gummed up beaches as far away as Sable Island. As for the oil-crusted cliffs along Chedabucto Bay, even McTaggart-Cowan had to admit that the oil on rock was "there to stay," and would eventually harden into something like asphalt.[82]

Perhaps surprisingly, the wreck of the *Arrow* did not provoke activist organization on the scale that Boat Harbour or the various developments of Halifax Harbour did, mainly because fishermen already had their own associations through which to urge on the cleanup, and the small number of other activists from communities around the bay seem to have found the issue too large and intractable to deal with. There briefly existed a

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[80]*Report of the Task Force Operation Oil (Clean-up of the Arrow oil spill in Chedabucto Bay) to the Minister of Transport* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970).

[81]Ironically, the *Irving Whale* also sank with a load of Bunker C oil, north of Prince Edward Island on 7 September, 1970, causing another major spill and necessitating a laborious recovery. Environment Canada, "Irving Whale," <http://www.ec.gc.ca/ee-ue/default.asp?lang=en&n=337D8D4B> (accessed March, 2013).

[82]Silver Donald Cameron, interview with the author, 1 November, 2011. *Report of the Task Force Operation Oil (Clean-up of the Arrow oil spill in Chedabucto Bay) to the Minister of Transport* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970). "Chedabucto Bay: Waiting for the End," *Mysterious East* (July, 1971), 34.

group called Action Arrow, and the author Silver Donald Cameron remembers joining a small group who sealed up the corpses of oiled seabirds in plastic bags and mailed them to Ottawa in protest, but in truth Operation Oil had done about as much as was technically possible at the time, and along the way the federal scientists and naval personnel involved had learned a great deal about how to handle oil spills in cold seas. The fate of the bay seems to have been treated less as a winnable fight and more as an object lesson in the consequences of waiting too long to start fighting. "The Gulf Refinery is still there," wrote the *Mysterious East*, "Cerberus Rock is still there. All over the world the big tankers are slipping off the ways into the water. Which one will give Chedabucto Bay its next coating?"[83] What the *Arrow* did for environmental activism in Nova Scotia was confirm the growing suspicion that government planners, the duly appointed experts, could not be trusted to pursue industrial development unsupervised by a concerned public.

The brief and isolated adventures in environmental activism at Boat Harbour, Halifax Harbour, and Chedabucto Bay, among others, shared a few common elements.[84] One was mistrust of government. Another was the very local focus of concern and the unity of purpose among the more and less wealthy residents of those local places, as well as the roughly equal participation of men and women.[85] The age of men's club

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[83]"Chedabucto Bay: Waiting for the End," *Mysterious East* (July, 1971), 34. The answer took eight more years to arrive, with the wreck of the *Kurdistan* on 15 March, 1979. "Oil clean-up continues on Cape Breton coast," *Mail-Star*, 18 April, 1979, 2. Environment Canada, "Kurdistan," <http://www.ec.gc.ca/ee-ue/default.asp?lang=en&n=D685606E> (accessed March, 2013). However, spills from the Gulf refinery itself were frequent enough that the management called a 12,000 gallon spill in 1972 "one of the mildest ones we've had." David Bentley, "Bunker C Spill: no danger," *Chronicle Herald,* 22 June, 1972, 23.

[84]Shelburne Harbour, Sydney Harbour, and Cole Harbour were notable others.

[85]Silver Donald Cameron, interview with the author, 1 November, 2011. Alan Ruffman, interview with the author, 21 February, 2012. The Bedford Basin group listed 91 members in their report, about half to each gender. Bedford Basin Pollution Committee, *Report of the Bedford Basin Pollution Committee of*

conservationism, when sport fishermen from Halifax could save the Gold River with minimal public involvement, was clearly at an end. Finally, the truth of Dr. MacDonald's recipe for activism bore out in every case: either prospective or concrete, some actual personal environmental harm was required to inspire a pollution fighter and defender of home places. Nova Scotia's leap into industrialization by invitation, its participation in federal-provincial development schemes and its pursuit of foreign direct investment through the Stanfield government's own development agency, Industrial Estates Ltd., brought a scale of industry previously unknown to rural corners of the province, and a corresponding surge in the number of affected individuals. Also, once active, no group ever entirely disappeared. The NSPCC carried on its struggle with Boat Harbour and other threats to the strait for years, as did the Pictou Landing First Nation. The dead bird mailing activists of Chedabucto Bay went on to lead a rural recycling campaign in Richmond County and open an environmental education centre in Port Hawkesbury.[86] Even the Bedford Basin and Purcell's Cove Committees, both soon nominally defunct, contributed members and experience to successor organizations in the city. The new pattern, the politically populist and scientifically literate activism crossing lines of race, class, gender, age, and geography, was in other words the new normal for Nova Scotian environmental activism, and it provided the basis of further organization in years to come.

Aspects of a Global Whole

Personal experience of environmental harm was the norm among Nova Scotian

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the Council of the Bedford Service Commission (Bedford: Bedford Service Commission, 1970).
[86]Silver Donald Cameron, interview with the author, 1 November, 2011.

activists at the end of the 1960s, as expanding industrial presence in rural areas was the norm in many areas of Canada, but it is not sufficient on its own to explain the rise of environmentalism. The new spirit of activism had roots as well in new ideas about the environment, the state, and democratic power that were anything but local. The previous decade had changed the political landscape of the world, nowhere more so than in Europe and North America. Opposition to the state and industrial society fuelled New Left and Civil Rights movements that violently challenged the legitimacy of existing social and political systems. A generation of openly critical and rebellious young people joined forces with labourers and racial minorities to protest the Vietnam War, the nuclear bomb, the excesses of capitalism, and the marginalization of the politically weak.[87] Meanwhile, a counter-cultural movement within the greater uprising encouraged the articulation of alternative possible ways of living. It was in this context that an international environmental consciousness formed. Concerned people made connections between nuclear warfare, chemical pesticides, economic imperialism, and the inequity of capitalist industrialism and drew conclusions about the welfare of the most voiceless of all politically weak constituencies, the natural world. At the same time, the kind of quality of life concerns that had long vexed urban sanitary reformers -- clean water, clean air, and the like -- appeared to have reached a global scale.[88]

Part of the global reach of the new activism owed to the spread of colour television and the realization among network programmers that environmental disasters

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[87]Donald Worster argues that the "age of ecology" began with the explosion of the first atomic bomb in 1945. Donald Worster. *Nature's Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 342.

[88]Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*; Juan Martinez-Alier, *The Environmentalism of the Poor: a study of ecological conflicts and valuation*; Ramachandra Guha, *How Much Should A Person Consume?: Environmentalism in India and the United States*; Samuel Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: environmental politics in the United States, 1955-1985*.

made good dramatic content, but a larger part of it owed also to the genuinely novel scale of real and potential environmental harm. The discovery of worldwide radioactive fallout from nuclear weapons tests, biologically mobile transborder chemical pollution as detailed in Rachel Carson's 1962 bestseller *Silent Spring*, and the disastrous consequences of marine oil spills such as the infamous *Torrey Canyon* in 1967 were real, and their reality only magnified their impact as shared experiences in the age of televisual mass media. A series of popular publications in the years following Carson's both fuelled and fed on the anxiety: Garret Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons" (1968), Meadows *et al*'s *The Limits to Growth* (1972), and Fritz Schumacher's *Small Is Beautiful* (1973), to name but three, recounted the realities and offered a diagnoses in dangerously out of control modernity.[89]

All of these new ideas about environment, politics, and the value and possibility of perpetual economic growth were as current in Nova Scotia as elsewhere. They permeated popular culture, and they inspired any number of the small, local anti-pollution fights of the late 1960s. In the city of Halifax and along the eastern shore, the intellectual inheritance of US and Central Canadian environmentalism played an especially visible role in shaping the new movement where back-to-the-landers and other immigrants brought their personal experience to bear. Provincial and municipal leaders were also unintentionally helpful in providing a vehicle for the transmission of subversive notions into Nova Scotia on a large scale in 1970, when in the pursuit of their own set of popular ideas about urban planning they invited and empowered some radical thinkers from the

[89]Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring;* Garret Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162:3859 (13 December, 1968), 1243-1248; Donella Meadows, et al, *The Limits to Growth* (New York: Universe, 1972); Fritz Schumacher, *Small is Beautiful* (London: Blond and Briggs, 1973). For an overview, see Gary Haq and Alistair Paul, *Environmentalism Since 1945* (London: Routledge, 2012).

United States, the United Kingdom, and other parts of Canada to dissect the social problems of the city of Halifax.

The Progressive Conservative government of Premier G.I. Smith (1967-1970) held great faith in central economic development planning, as had the Stanfield government before it, and relied extensively on its Cabinet Committee on Planning and Programs -- a group of experts better known as the secretariat -- to direct development spending. Like Premier Smith himself, the secretariat enjoyed the exercise of power for a rather brief window of time, but they came determined to shake up the structure of power in the Halifax region, where they believed political stagnation limited politicians' willingness to follow planners' advice. To that end, they managed just before Smith's ouster to organize a week-long public consultation and investigation of the city in February 1970 by twelve world-class experts in everything from tourism and labour to public finance and the structure of government. They called it the Encounter on the Urban Environment. The format was virtually unheard of, having been modelled on a singular event in Australia two years before, and few people outside of the secretariat seemed to understand what was intended. The Voluntary Planning Board, which provided funding, expected a major, but more or less conventional, development study. The host city's mayor, Allan O'Brien, wanted a list of policy proposals. What they got was a structured confrontation, the brain-child of the secretariat's Len Poetschke, in which the visiting experts called on all levels of private and public life in the city to explain and account for its problems.[90] Open microphones and open minds brought hundreds of speakers to the panel's daily hearings to expose the frustrations and social tensions of the city, while detailed television coverage took those hearings to the population at large. Nor did the

[90]Ken Hartnett, "Encounter on the Urban Environment: Historian's Report," MOVE, box 25.13.

panellists sit silently; they queried, probed, and sometimes criticized those who came to speak. The churches in Halifax, they said, were out of touch, newspapers plodding and conservative, and citizens walking in the political darkness with their eyes closed. Discontent was plain to see, but Haligonians displayed a "reluctance to come to terms with the political process," according to Dr. Martin Rein of the UK's Centre for Environment Studies: all they had was "indignation without information, without tactics and so no strategy."[91]

Len Poetschke was no subversive, much less the rest of the secretariat. They hoped to harness the energy of public participation coming out of Encounter as "part of a planning process" in which government (planners) provided the "framework" for decisions, such as the necessity for industrial economic development or the central importance of the core business district of Halifax, and the people provided the political firepower with which to overcome bureaucratic inertia.[92] Boiled down to essentials, they hoped to manage and direct the power of public opinion the way a road planner directs the flow of traffic. But the secretariat's days were numbered once Gerald Regan's government took office in 1970 -- the new premier had his own set of expert advisers -- and the people provoked to action by Encounter were not at all keen on working for someone else's empowerment. Neither were all of the Encounter panellists. Last-ditch efforts by Poetschke and his colleague Fred Lenarson to create a citizens' arm for the Halifax-Dartmouth Municipal Area Planning Committee (MAPC) in the year following Encounter brought together a coalition of peace, environment, and social justice groups (eventually settling on the name Movement for Citizens' Voice and Action, or MOVE)

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[91]"Encounter on Metro Area," MOVE, box 25.10.
[92]"Kentville Meeting minutes," MOVE, box 25.8.

who, rather than settle for a subordinate role in MAPC, immediately challenged its closed-door planning process, with help and funding from Encounter panellist Reverend Lucius Walker, Executive Director of the Interreligious Foundation for Community Development in New York.[93] Walker's participation points up the degree to which Encounter and its consequences represented an accelerated version of trends happening in the rest of the industrial world, in which diverse activists and civil society leaders formed new coalitions and negotiated difficult relationships with politically powerful sponsors. The Nova Scotian version of the story also highlights the participation of environmental activists in those coalitions.

The events of Encounter week and the creation of the MOVE coalition changed the shape of environmental activism in the city, and eventually across the province. The experience of activists during the Purcell's Cove and Bedford Basin controversies, ongoing at the time, was much the same as the experience of the Africville Action Committee or the Heritage Trust, diverse groups united by their confrontations with the stone wall of government.[94] As *The 4th Estate* newspaper put it, "our government, politicians, civil service, and government agencies are all somewhat paranoid. They won't answer questions. It is extraordinarily hard to find the real roots of power."[95] But complaints didn't satisfy the Encounter panel. When a witness at one hearing mentioned a common front of area environmental groups (the "ECO" coalition) dedicated to public

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[93]"Kentville Meeting minutes," MOVE, box 25.8. Brenda Large, "Kentville Huddle Huge Success," *The 4th Estate,* 4 March, 1971, 1.

[94]Africville was a Black community in Halifax demolished in the 1960s, leaving a lasting feeling of anger among many of its former residents. The Heritage Trust group simply wished to curb the city's habit of demolishing many other venerable neighbourhoods and buildings. See Jennifer Nelson, *Razing Africville: A Geography of Racism* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2008); Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, *Annual Report 1970-1971* (Halifax: The Trust, 1971).

[95]Carla Laufer, "Information Must be Taken to the People: Where is the Real Power Behind Metro Planning?," *The 4th Estate*, 14 January, 1971, 3.

participation and education, panellist Edward Logue replied that such groups "merely preserve the survival of the current changes" (an adequate summary of the secretariat's hopes for MOVE), and Dr. Rein reminded the audience that there is "no non-political way of effecting changes," and citizen participation without political action is "a grandiose way of preserving the status quo."[96] The critique hit home, and the members of the loose-knit, "amorphous and anonymous" ECO group, still little more than a mailing list put together at the end of 1969, recognized that even though their goal of public education was sound, they could "never be a force in political terms [without...] achieving form in the eyes of government."[97] In the MOVE coalition they saw a chance to be something more, and as it took shape it therefore included representatives from the fast-fading BBPCC, the PCAC, the Eastern Shore District Pollution Committee, the Cole Harbour Environmental Council, the Halifax Wildlife Association, and a number of other environmentally concerned small groups and individuals.[98] It also included, in the later stages, a new organization called the Ecology Action Centre (EAC).

The EAC, which would go on to have a hand in virtually every environmental controversy in the province for the rest of the century, was born from a bit of experimental pedagogy at Dalhousie University, one of that institution's own responses to the student unrest of the 1960s and demands for more student autonomy. For a brief time, groups of eight or more undergraduates with a faculty sponsor were allowed to design and conduct their own courses. Few applied (do-it-yourself course design was never really a high priority for student radicals), and fewer were approved, but one group did

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[96]"Encounter on Metro Area," MOVE, box 25.10.
[97]"ECO Newsletter," March, 1970, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Ecology Action Centre fonds, MG20 (hereafter PANS-EAC), volume 3434, file 28.
[98]"Kentville Meeting minutes," MOVE, box 25.8. Brenda Large, "Kentville Huddle Huge Success," *The 4th Estate,* 4 March, 1971, 1. "MOVE Bulletin," 1:1 (September, 1971), MOVE, box 6.31.

earn approval in the 1970-71 year to run a course on "Ecology and Action," and one of the students who led the effort, Brian Gifford, made it his class project to create an organization in Halifax dedicated to public environmental education (ironically, exactly the insufficiently political goal the ECO group was talking itself out of at the same time). The ecology course and the EAC that came out of it were well aware of the difficulties faced by their activist peers in dealing with the provincial and municipal governments: NSRC's Dr. Ogden, PCAC's Alan Ruffman, and BBPCC's John Bentley each conducted classes for the group, and Gifford, in the process of investigating the role his new association might play in the city, took time to consult with activist and editor of the radical paper *The 4th Estate*, Frank Fillmore.[99] But the student group, unique among environmental associations in the province, did not find its motivation in personal vulnerability to some specific harm or experience of environmental injustice. As students, middle-class professionals in training, they came nearest of any activist group in the province to the post-materialist definition of environmentalism. They took their inspiration solely from the generalized culture of environmental concern in the industrialized world, and their organizational models from distant student peers like Pollution Probe, not nearby groups familiar with the context of Nova Scotian politics. "Information and education" rather than political action, said Brian Gifford, "are what the Centre is all about."[100]

The earliest concerns of EAC activism were recycling projects, urban air quality, and urban planning: things for which the students could secure federal government funding. Doing so was vitally important. The first two years of the EAC's life, the period

[99]Brian Gifford, interview with the author, 22 February, 2013. "Experimental Ecology 300000: a resume of the first term," Brian Gifford papers.
[100]Brian Gifford to Hal Blackadar, CHNS Radio, 17 April, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 42.3.

in which it established itself as a resource centre for the city, were funded through yet another response to sixties youth unrest, this time on the part of the Trudeau government: the Opportunities for Youth (OFY) and Local Initiatives Programs (LIP), which funnelled hundreds of thousands of dollars to youth groups across the country in the early 1970s. With OFY and LIP funding, the EAC was able to run a demonstration paper recycling project and keep a shifting set of five to eight student staff busy adapting a Pollution Probe environmental education kit for schoolteachers and compiling information kits on forestry, energy, and public transit.[101] Eventually, their persistence earned the group a reputation as a reliable source of information, and people in the city began to contact them for answers to pollution and resource-related questions.[102]

While it was, and remained for years, a very local student organization of small influence, the creation of the EAC (as well as the MOVE coalition) demonstrates powerfully the currency of combined environmentalist and social justice ideas in Nova Scotia at the end of the 1960s. Federal spending provided the necessary support, but belief in the importance of the issues provided the people willing to take it up. The EAC did not often share the sense of urgency or political cynicism that drove groups born of single issues to oppose the provincial government's plans so completely. They did not agree with their own associate in Cape Breton, *Arrow* protest veteran Margo Lamont, for example, when she urged the Centre to oppose the entire Canso Strait development plan.[103] But they did share with the rest a genuine concern over environmental harm, and a belief in the imminence of a resource supply crisis according to the projections laid

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[101]*Fine Print*, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 38.1.
[102]Brian Gifford, interview with the author, 22 February, 2013. "Ecology Action Centre - L.I.P. Project & MOVE," October, 1972, Brian Gifford papers.
[103]Brian Gifford to "Ian [MacDougall], Linda [Ruffman], Bernie [Hart], and Dennis [Patterson]," 31 October, 1973, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 17.

down in the Limits to Growth theory.[104] They also held a firm commitment to public participation, to the point that they were willing to accuse the Regan government of "offending the doctrine of democracy itself" by leaving the mechanisms of citizen input out of its Environmental Protection Act in 1973.[105]

Urban activists, with their focus on education and principle, were joined in the quest for democracy in land use planning by yet another group of issue-specific rural activists fighting a bitter campaign on the Eastern Shore in 1972 and 1973, a group whose new brand of environmental activism was clearly well-informed by the world-wide movement. While almost every environmental controversy at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s in Nova Scotia centred on a harbour or a river, water woes were not alone in feeding the new activism of the era. Where once land conservation was the purview of fringe preservationists like the FON group, by the late 1960s provincial governments had once again hit on the idea of promoting tourism in the region through the designation of national parks.[106] The ideal and greatest victory of the US wilderness preservation movement was to the government in Halifax simply another form of economic engine with which to raise the province out of relative poverty. Unfortunately for the government, Nova Scotia's coast (to their eyes the obvious and only choice for a tourist landscape) offered no convenient unsettled patches. A park, as then understood, had to comprise a natural landscape without human habitation, apart from the transient

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[104]The limits theory held uncommon currency in 1972 and 1973, attracting support from a visiting Roman Catholic Archbishop and a Universalist Unitarian Minister in the city, for example, in addition to the more expected enthusiasts like Gifford at the EAC. "Society Must Change or Collapse - Bishop," *Chronicle Herald*, 8 June, 1972, 21. "Universalist Unitarian Church newsletter," 7:23 (27 March, 1972), Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Universalist Unitarian Church fonds, MG4, volume 347, number 2. For more on limits thinking, see chapter 3.

[105]"EAC Brief on Environmental Protection Act," 3 March, 1973, PANS-EAC, volume 3432, number 18.

[106]Alan MacEachern, *Natural Selections: National Parks in Atlantic Canada, 1935-1970* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens Press, 2001).

paying tourists, and therefore in order to create one people living on park lands would have to be removed. That was exactly the plan proposed at the end of the decade for Ship Harbour National Park on the eastern shore, and exactly the occasion for Nova Scotians to demonstrate that the new environmentalism posed a much more radical political threat than its conservationist antecedents.[107]

Plans to create a new national park on the eastern shore existed as early as 1965, but the normal planning process and Premier Stanfield's preoccupation with the leap from provincial to federal politics delayed negotiations for years. By the time federal-provincial talks came to light in 1969, there were still multiple proposals on the table, all of which involved the removal of well over a hundred permanent and seasonal residents' homes between Musquidoboit and Sheet Harbour in Halifax County, and none of which involved inviting those residents to help determine the final shape of the park. Despite some initial resistance from locals who petitioned the federal government to avoid expropriations in the creation of the park, both Premier Regan and Halifax Eastern Shore MLA Garnet Brown were eager to see the plan go ahead, and very little concerned with local sentiment. Negotiations continued behind closed doors, arriving after more than another two years at a plan that would remove about 250 homes from newly designated federal lands.[108]

Reaction on the eastern shore was swift and angry. A group of residents came together, calling themselves the Committee to Prevent the Proposed Park (later the Association for the Preservation of the Eastern Shore -- APES), and from the summer of

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[107]Claire Campbell, ed., *A Century of Parks Canada, 1911-2011* (Calgary: University of Calgary, 2011).
[108]Alison Froese-Stoddard, "Ship Harbour National Park: the breakdown between national agendas and local interests," unpublished manuscript (2011-2012). Adapted to Alison Froese-Stoddard, "A Conservation "Could Have Been": Ship Harbour National Park," NiCHE Canada, *The Otter* blog, <http://niche-canada.org/node/10446> (accessed March, 2013).

1972 to the end of 1973 pursued an ever more insistent campaign. The APES comprised both life-long residents and new immigrants, though their opponents in government found it convenient to focus their criticism on one of the leaders, Gordon Hammond, who had been involved as a young man in the successful fight to halt construction of the Spadina Expressway in Toronto.[109] The focus on Hammond highlights again the combination of local grievance and a more widely-shared culture of populist activism, though it also shows the determination of the provincial government to undermine and marginalize the protest. Hammond became the favourite target of politicians determined to paint him as an outsider, troublemaker, and "a welfare case who drives a car" (that is, a possible criminal), and the whole of his organization as a "group of johnny-come-latelys, people on welfare, kooks, hardline Conservatives, and small children," selfishly preventing the development of the eastern shore.[110]

Unfortunately for Regan and Brown (as well as for federal minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Jean Chrétien), the kooks went from strength to strength. Four years previously, they had gathered 500 names on a petition sent to Chrétien's office; after the controversy broke in earnest in 1972, they gathered nearly 3,000 names, carried out a letter-writing campaign to Province House, conducted two marches on the legislature, and won ninety percent support in a *Dartmouth Free Press* poll of the eastern shore.[111] Angered by Brown's talk of kooks and welfare cases, activists struck back, calling the premier (who had stealthily avoided one protest rally on his way to work at Province House) "Rear-Door Regan" and earning press coverage all the way to

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[109]Danielle Robinson, "Modernism at a Crossroad: The Spadina Expressway Controversy in Toronto, Ontario ca. 1960-1971," *Canadian Historical Review* 92:2 (June, 2011), 295-322.
[110]Editorial, *Dartmouth Free Press*, 12 July, 1973, clipping file, REGAN, volume 84, number 38 ; "March of the 'kooks'," *Mail-Star*, 15 May, 1973, 6.
[111]APES to Jean Chretien, 9 July, 1973, REGAN, volume 84, number 38.

Toronto with their criticism of his "callous disregard for the existing population of the area, for their ancestors who cleared the land, built their houses and worked so hard that we might enjoy what we have today."[112] Others literally struck back, such as one of Brown's constituents who launched a punch at the MLA a few days after the "kooks" comment, or threatened to do so, on protest rally banners promising "THIS IS YOUR LAST PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATION" or in Hammond's slightly more subtle predictions of "civil unrest" if the plan should go ahead.[113] APES tactics included support for much more popular provincial park proposals and for a conception of parkland that included the "existing mutual harmony between man and nature," on the European model of national parks containing human settlements. They also made time for a frank and factual deconstruction of the province's unsupported assumptions about the job-creating potential of a national park. They knew enough not to be trapped into top-down consultation processes, as well, and turned the first of the public meetings held by a federal-provincial advisory committee into a debacle for the park planners, complete with threats of arson and armed resistance.[114]

Opposition to national park development was not exclusive to this one instance in the early 1970s, but the fortuitous coincidence of provincial politics put Regan in a more difficult position than most premiers.[115] APES activists made frequent reference to an

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[112]"Rear door Regan ducks park protestors," *Dartmouth Free Press*, 16 May, 1973, 1; APES to Jean Chretien, 9 July, 1973, REGAN, volume 84, number 38.

[113]"Kooks Win! Regan dumps federal park plan," *Dartmouth Free Press*, 26 December, 1973, clipping file, REGAN, volume 84, number 38; *Evening News*, 11 May, 1973, clipping file, REGAN, volume 84, number 38; Gordon Hammond, "Government should withdraw its proposals," *Chronicle Herald*, 12 March, 1973, 7.

[114]MOVE Bulletin, 13 December, 1972, MOVE, box 6.23; "Kooks Win! Regan dumps federal park plan," *Dartmouth Free Press*, 26 December, 1973, clipping file, REGAN, volume 84, number 38; Gordon Hammond, "Government should withdraw its proposals," *Chronicle Herald*, 12 March, 1973, 7.

[115]P. Thomas, "The Kouchibouguac National Park controversy: over a decade strong," *Park News* 17:1 (1981), 11-13.

autocratic and bitterly resented eviction process at New Brunswick's Kouchibouguac National Park, and many Nova Scotians remembered with ill-will the expropriation of land for Cape Breton Highlands National Park. On top of that, Regan's government had underlined the average citizen's political weakness by happily acceding to a plan to reconfigure the Cape Breton park's boundary and allow the conversion of Cheticamp Lake into a hydroelectric reservoir.[116] With a provincial election expected in 1974, Regan did not wish to be vulnerable to charges of treating the electorate as "sheep that are driven from pasture to pasture," and to the consternation of both Brown and Chrétien, the premier abruptly reversed course in December to endorse the alternative plan for a series of provincial parks and to sink Ship Harbour National Park for good.[117] While Regan tried to shift blame onto Chrétien's federal office, the victory of the APES campaign was very clearly something new: a victory by an environmental grassroots organization over the provincial government. The decisions taken in prior years -- such as to preserve the free flow of the Gold River or direct a million dollars or two toward cleanup programs at Boat Harbour, even the decision to cancel negotiations on a US investor's electricity generation scheme in 1973 -- scarcely dented the developmentalist direction of provincial policy. But on the eastern shore a project championed solely by the cabinet in Halifax had been turned aside through popular political pressure, by average citizens who refused to accept the government's modernist assumptions, who in APES director Irene Edwards' words, "were able to see beyond the 'riches' promised and hold onto a normal love and

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[116]Wilfrid Creighton, and Kenneth Donovan, "Wilfrid Creighton & the Expropriations: Clearing Land for the National Park, 1936," *Cape Breton's Magazine* 69 (August, 1995), 1-20; "Regan government regenerates interest in Wreck Cove hydro-electric development," *Chronicle Herald*, 9 April, 1974, 25.

[117]"Park Controversy Ended?," *Mail-Star*, 21 December, 1973, clipping file, REGAN, volume 84, number 38; "Kooks Win! Regan dumps federal park plan," *Dartmouth Free Press*, 26 December, 1973, clipping file, REGAN, volume 84, number 38.

desire to keep that which is ours."[118]

Edwards might well have been speaking for the entirety of Nova Scotia's environmental activists. An attachment to place, as intense as it ever was, combined around 1970 with a growing world-wide awareness of pollution and "the environment" as ways of framing the experience of industrial society intruding more and more into rural spaces. To this, the activists added a new determination, also born of the new global political culture, to exercise a measure of control over government development policy, as citizens, and a conviction that there existed at least the possibility of successfully forcing policy-making out of the secrecy of closed-door cabinet meetings and bureaucratic backrooms and into the open, where it might become the focus of normal political processes. In short, activists began in earnest (and in concert) to question the promises and premises of modernity. And even more worrying to the acolytes of modernism, activists in the early 1970s no longer quite faded away after each controversy. Instead, they began to work together.

Organization and Reaction

Cooperation among environmental groups in the province appeared far from inevitable at the end of the 1960s. Though there was a measure of shared knowledge among Nova Scotian activists -- Boat Harbour, Anil (see below), and the *Arrow* spill were common cautionary tales outside of Pictou, Lunenburg, Guysborough, and Richmond Counties, for example -- there was very little shared action. Local groups carried on their campaigns mainly in isolation. The incident that first challenged that isolation was as local as it might be, affecting a handful of farms in Annapolis County, but it also ran close

[118]Irene Edwards to Premier Regan, 6 July, 1973, REGAN, volume 84, number 38.

to the main spring of environmental anxiety in North America since the publication of *Silent Spring*: the dangers of biocidal chemicals. Tentative though its gestures toward unity may have been, the anti-herbicide campaign of 1970-1972 epitomized a developing provincial environmentalism that compelled government reaction. The Gerald Regan government (1970-1978) dealt with more unexpected environmental campaigns in its first four years in office than any other government in Halifax encountered in a similar period, while holding only minority control of the Legislature, and it took very little time for them to realize that environmentalism held the potential for real power and that they needed to act to defuse campaigns like the anti-parks movement that threatened development objectives and to channel activists in a more manageable direction.

The trouble with herbicides began not with a celebratory announcement of some new industrial development, but with the incremental expansion of an existing government program. The use of herbicidal chemicals 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T on roadsides by the Department of Highways as well as at the behest of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) for the control of farm weeds began in the early 1960s and quickly expanded across the province.[119] Chemical weeding was fast, effective, and cheaper than manual clearing -- everything the officials in charge could hope for -- and the obvious choice when the DOA wished to remove farm weeds from its Crown farmland on the lower Belleisle marsh in Annapolis County. So it was done, on the third and fourth of June, 1969, by a Maritime Air Services plane hired to spray 2,4-D, 2,4,5-T, and Dicamba over the province's 580 acres. But the plane delivered both more and less than promised. Spraying in a strong breeze, the pilot spread his payload over thirteen or more nearby

[119]W.P. Kerr, Deputy Minister of Transportation, to Alan Steel, coordinator of the Royal Commission on Forestry, 3 August, 1982, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Royal Commission on Forestry fonds, RG44, volume 186, number 5.

farms, damaging crops two miles from the marsh. The chemicals used left grasses unharmed, as intended, but drift onto vegetable crops was ruinous. It was also undeniable. Local farmers were quick to band together, forming a "disaster group" to press for action and winning a fast response from the DOA, which investigated and awarded about $30,000 in compensation to thirteen farmers, including Robyn Warren, whose ten acres of cauliflower abutting the government land were utterly destroyed.[120]

It was only after the initial drama that an unfortunately common agriculture misadventure in the application of pesticides became something more. Believing the DOA's claims that the herbicides used were safe for their intended use, on grazing land, as well as harmless to animals (including humans), Warren continued to pasture his dairy herd on the marsh and thought little of the direct exposure of himself, his father, and his brother, all working in the fields as the spray plane did its work upwind. During the winter of 1970 however, Warren's cows began to abort pregnancies, 14 times over the next 16 months, bore stunted calves, and showed a remarkably high rate of twinning (most of them stillborn). The family, meanwhile developed abnormal heartbeats and swollen thyroid glands, symptoms consistent with but not conclusively traceable to herbicide poisoning. Doctors advised them to stop consuming the produce of their own farm.[121]

At the very least, the afflictions of the Warren farm could be expected to pass. According to both the manufacturer and the DOA, any herbicides on the ground would have been destroyed by soil bacteria within days. In 1970 Warren replanted his

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[120]Bill Templeman, "The Soft Spray Job," *Mysterious East* (October, 1971), 7-14; "The Warren Story," *SSEPA NEWS* 2:3 Summer 1983, 24-26; Brenda Large, "2,4,5-T Leaves Path of Destruction," *The 4th Estate*, 17 June, 1971, 14-16.
[121]Bill Templeman, "The Soft Spray Job," 8.

cauliflower and lost the crop, along with his lettuce, celery, and corn. All of them grew quickly to unusual size before withering away. Tissue samples sent to an independent lab returned positive for 2,4,5-T, 2,4-D, and Dicamba, impossible according to the DOA, which began insisting that the spray plane carried no 2,4,5-T (though they admitted requesting all three chemicals). The department refused to test for 2,4,5-T itself because, as the deputy minister said, "2,4,5-T was not used. Therefore why test for it?"[122] But Warren did continue testing for it, at his own expense, and continued to receive results showing the chemical in significant quantities in both vegetables and cattle foetuses, well into 1971. In one minor moral victory, the department -- while still refusing to accept a link between its own spray and Warren's troubles -- took to advising farmers that herbicides might last weeks, months, or longer in cool, salty soil such as in the Belleisle marsh.[123]

Warren's mounting calamities attracted national attention in the press. *The 4th Estate* in Halifax and the regional magazine *Mysterious East* investigated, as did the Toronto *Globe and Mail* and the CBC's *Sunday Magazine* program.[124] By the time the *Mysterious East* reporter arrived in mid-1971, half of Warren's apple trees had died -- not half of the orchard, but half of each tree, facing the direction from which the spray had drifted -- and the ordeal had gone far enough to catch the eye of the medical profession.[125] Doctors who treated the family knew they could never prove conclusively the cause of their ills, but the Medical Society of Nova Scotia nevertheless called on the

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[122]*Ibid*, 8.
[123]*Ibid*, 12.
[124]*Ibid*, 8; Nick Fillmore, "A Long Nightmare Follows Defoliant," *Globe and Mail*, 10 April, 1971, 8; Brenda Large, "Chemical Kills N.S. Animals: No Action on Warren Farm Case," *The 4th Estate*, 17 June, 1971, 1, 18; Brenda Large, "2,4,5-T Leaves Path of Destruction," *The 4th Estate*, 17 June, 1971, 14-16.
[125]Bill Templeman, "The Soft Spray Job," 12.

provincial government in 1970 to review the use of chemical herbicides in roadside and agricultural spray programs.[126] In turn, environmental activists already aware of the problem made use of the Medical Society's announcement to push for a ban on the use of the chemicals in question by any government department until such a review could be completed. Rosemary Eaton of the Cole Harbour Environment Committee took a particular interest and a leadership role in the campaign, having made it a part of that association's advocacy to oppose the use of chemical herbicides on the CN railroad passing through their harbour.[127] In November 1972, beset from all sides, Premier Regan acted to ease the pressure on his government, suspending chemical sprays for a year while the Nova Scotia Research Foundation (NSRF) investigated their safety. He even convinced CN to do the same, and spoke to reporters about chemical persistence, groundwater contamination, and destruction of wildlife.[128]

A year's suspension is little more than a scheduling adjustment, without some further success, and despite the novel common front on a single issue, the campaign against chemical pesticides lacked the cohesion to survive through a year of quiet research by the NSRF. Worse, for the activists, despite the premier's use of environmentalist buzzwords, the investigation he instigated adhered religiously to what Bill Templeman in 1971 called the "legal logic" of the Warren case: proof of harm required that a causal chain, A to B to C to D, be traced backward to establish that only A

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[126]*Ibid*, 13.

[127]Letter from Rosemary Eaton, Cole Harbour Environment Committee, to J.E. Hutchinson, NSRF, 6 April, 1972, DAL-EAC, MS-11-13, box 24.5; *MOVE Bulletin*, 11 January, 1973, MOVE, DAL, MS-11-1, box 6.21; Roger Bacon, MLA Cumberland East, to Premier Regan, regarding Amherst Pollution Committee , n.d., REGAN, volume 78, number 36-6b; Province of Nova Scotia, *Annual Report: Environmental Control Council: for the year ending Dec. 31 1974*, Department of Environment library, reference number 354.33, 14-15.

[128]Letter from Glen Bagnell to Rosemary Eaton, 6 December, 1972, DAL-EAC, MS-11-13, box 24.5; *Chronicle Herald*, 19 October, 1972, Clipping File, Gerald Regan Fonds, PANS, rg100, volume 94, number 3.

and nothing else could have caused B, then C, then D. It was a standard of proof virtually impossible to meet within the dense web of ecological connections found at an average farm.[129] Unsurprisingly, the NSRF was not satisfied that chemical pesticides posed a risk. A year passed, and spraying resumed on roadsides, railways, and power line rights-of-way.

The nascent anti-chemical coalition was a turning point in the province's history, in as much as it opened the eyes of the newly elected Regan government to the potential power of environmental activism and the need to do something to direct it away from conflict with government objectives. The subsequent serial shocks of pollution fighters, popular democrats, and park opponents ensured that the problem stayed at front of mind. Duplicity was one response, a natural feature of a bureaucratic system facing such challenges; even as the premier praised activists' concern for a healthy agricultural system, for example, the DOA reacted "as if it were defending Moscow," compiling stacks of public relations material with which to defend and promote the use of herbicides.[130] Something more substantive than the usual stubborn bureaucratic diversity of opinion and objectives was required, however. The Regan government had to develop an environmental program of its own, and in haste; the political demands of a minority government wait for no man's thoughtful consideration. "It is essential that the image of a reform be established quickly," wrote the premier's head policy man, Michael J.L. Kirby, to his friend David Watts at the US Department of the Interior, "in order to indicate to the public that we are a reformed [sic] minded government and are serious about solving the

[129]Bill Templeman, "The Soft Spray Job," 11.
[130]*Ibid*, 13.

problems of pollution."[131] Essential as well that the government take command of the definition of "pollution," and not only for the sake of the next election or to counteract the "scare propaganda which is so common today."[132] Provincial governments were not alone in seeking to harness public opinion about the environment in the early 1970s. The new federal Environmental Protection Service had recently begun pushing into areas of provincial jurisdiction, attempting to impose national standards through the complementary promise of federal funding and threat of less wealthy provinces being seen to fall behind "real" environmental protection, as defined by federal action. Kirby was deeply anxious at the dawn of the decade that the triple threat of electoral politics, environmentalists' demands, and federal interference would scuttle the already shaky ship of Liberal government.[133] Cost-conscious environmental skeptics in the bureaucracy, like E.L.L. Rowe, were equally frightened that feckless, pandering politicians at two levels of government would trap the province into spending promises that it could not afford, or worse, that that federal government would seize jurisdiction and render the province's efforts at crafting industry-friendly regulations moot.[134]

The urgency to be seen to take control of environmental issues gave form to the Nova Scotia Environmental Protection Act. Legislative summaries that Kirby had acquired from his friend in the United States ("so that we can, quite frankly, steal some of them") sped the legislative process along and bolstered the "image of a reform."[135] Above

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[131]J.L. Kirby to David Watts, US Department of Interior, 15 January, 1971, REGAN, volume 78, number 36-6b.
[132]Memo on "Possibilities of co-ordination and integration of effort in the field of environmental affairs for discussion at the forthcoming meeting of the Premiers of the three Maritime Provinces," May, 1971, REGAN, volume 78, number 36-6b.
[133]Kirby to Rowe, 26 March, 1973, REGAN, volume 83, number 10.
[134]Rowe to Kirby, 17 April, 1973, REGAN, volume 84, number 37; Rowe to Bagnell, 22 March, 1973, REGAN, volume 83, number 10.
[135]J.L. Kirby to David Watts, US Department of Interior, 15 January, 1971, REGAN, volume 78, number

all, however, the Act had to co-opt at least a portion of environmental activists, and at the same time, restrict the definition of environmental problems to the kind of sewage-and-smoke-stacks treatment systems that the Smith government had been pursuing in the late 1960s.[136] Certainly it had to include nothing that might encourage doubts about the manageability of the problems created by modernist economic development or about its sustainability. Activists were invited to comment on draft legislation, and did, but from the beginning the centrepiece of the Act and its primary concession to popular environmentalism was the creation of an Environmental Control Council, including a large number of non-government members, to investigate environmental issues at public invitation and report back to the minister. As a replacement for the Smith government's Environmental Pollution Council, an inside-government body widely criticized for its insularity and secrecy, the ECC was supposed to be public, "apolitical, and independent of government."[137] All this it achieved by being also entirely powerless, unable to even initiate hearings or release reports without the minister's permission. For a short time, however, the council was granted freedom to act, and it attracted the interest and participation of some of the more optimistic members of the activist community, Alan Ruffman of the PCAC and MOVE for example, and Dr. Ogden of the NSRC.

The Regan government's attempt to take the reins of environmental politics met its first test in 1974 in Lunenburg County at the Anil Hardboard plant, at the peak of a classic estuarine campaign for the defence of a home place. The controversy in Lunenburg was near enough to Halifax to attract the attention of the EAC and MOVE

36-6b.

[136]Summary of points on citizen input, Glen Bagnell, Minister of Environment, 1973, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Man and Resources Program fonds, MG20, volume 891; E.L.L. Rowe, "Brief on Pollution for Premier," 19 January, 1970, REGAN, volume 78, number 36-6b.

[137]Memo, "Environmental Conservation Council," REGAN, volume 78, number 36-6b.

coalition -- another sign of the tendency toward cooperation -- but it was almost entirely the work of another small group of affected locals, this time people in and around the village of East River. The leader of the effort, Robert Whiting, was a hunter and trapper living in East River in 1967, when the provincial government proudly announced the opening of a hardboard fabrication plant next door to his home. Touted as a triumph of industrial developmentalism, the largest plant of its kind in the world, and the first direct North American investment by an Indian firm, the project came complete with promises that there would be no noise and no pollution of the East River or Mahone Bay.[138] Much like what was happening at the same time around Boat Harbour, it did not take long for Whiting and his neighbours to see that the reality was rather less than promised. The water of the East River ran red and brown after Anil began production, and the stain of dissolved and suspended wood particles spread well out into Mahone Bay. Salmon declined in the river, and not long afterwards shellfishing was prohibited in the bay. It was not until 1974 that the company admitted to the presence of phenol, formaldehyde, parraffins, and aluminum sulfate in its effluent, in addition to the load of organic matter.[139] Noise and light from round-the-clock operations vexed those living nearby, and a combination of ash and red dust reached somewhat further afield, while a rotting stench lifted from the abandoned quarry converted into Anil's effluent treatment facility and from the swamp through which it discharged into the East River.[140]

Residents "grumbled among ourselves," according to one activist, until Whiting

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[138]Joan Fraser, "New Hardboard Plant Opens in Nova Scotia," *Montreal Gazette*, 5 July, 1967, 23; William Chanclor and Pat Murphy, "Robert Whiting: What One Man Can Do," *Axiom* 2:4 (May, 1976), 9.

[139]Brief to ECC on "Potential Effects of Anil Effluent That Could Not Have Been Detected in Prior Surveys" by Norman Dale, Dalhousie University Institute for Environment Studies, PANS-EAC, volume 3432, number 19.

[140]ECC (C.A. Campbell, Malcolm Moores, and Dr. J.G. Ogden) to G.M. Bagnell, Minister of Environment, 31 January, 1975, Department of Environment library, reference number L778 75/01.

began to organize resistance. Having sold his own home next to the plant, he could easily have left the problem behind. Instead he began launching reams of letters to the company, the media, and every level of government, and urging his neighbours to do the same. Allies came slowly: Al Chaddock, a newly-arrived artist from Halifax, remembered, "when I first met Bob I thought he was crazy, like just about everyone else did at the time."[141] Nothing coming out of the mouths of government spokesmen encouraged people to think otherwise. Already in 1969 the highways minister, I.W. Akerley, who served as president of the National Council of Resource Ministers, was telling reporters that the problem at Anil had been "cleaned up," while E.L.L. Rowe reminded them that with "a new industry like Anil establishing [itself], you have to bend over backwards."[142] Those who took Akerley at his word might have been surprised to read about Rowe and a new minister, Glen Bagnell, back in the newspapers three years later celebrating a new cleanup plan and reassuring locals that the plant's effluent, still brown, "does not contain the harmful wood fibres."[143] Residents of East River had long since learned not to take anyone in government at their word, however. It took long and patient effort at recruitment and public pressure, but when the newly formed ECC decided on East River's problematic development for its first public hearing, Whiting's "small army" -- now organized as the East River branch of the South Shore Environmental Protection Association (SSEPA), with the support of the FON in Chester -- was ready for an official confrontation with Rowe and the management of Anil.[144]

The Council's hearing, held in a school auditorium in Chester in December 1974,

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[141]Chanclor and Murphy, "Robert Whiting: What One Man Can Do," 9.
[142]Martin Hunt, "The Brave New World of the Canada Water Act," *Mysterious East* (November, 1969), 10.
[143]"Anil Complies With Cleanup," *Chronicle Herald*, 1 June, 1972, 4.
[144]Chanclor and Murphy, "Robert Whiting: What One Man Can Do," 6-9, 21; Martin Haase, interview with the author, 9 October, 2011.

was a ringing success for the East River SSEPA and a demonstration of the power inherent in the combination of local grievance and scientific abstraction in Nova Scotian environmental controversies. Witnesses ranged from local schoolkids speaking about the loss of their swimming and fishing areas, to the artist Chaddock who arrived carrying a thick slab of matted wood fibre pried from the floor of Mahone Bay, to Norman Dale of Dalhousie University's Institute for Environment Studies, who urged the council to examine sea life in the bay for objective evidence of the effluent's effect.[145] Three presiding council members, finally face to face with the problem, were forced to conclude that the Little East River was "grossly polluted" and to recommend a more comprehensive treatment and monitoring system.[146]

In Chester the ECC appeared to be a viable forum for change, but that was soon to change. After the Anil hearing, the council's freedom was reduced and its members soon complained that they were being ignored by the Department of Environment.[147] The eventual results of their report on Anil also failed to satisfy activists, who expressed disgust at the provincial government's plan to dilute the plant's effluent in the wider reaches of Mahone Bay, where it might not provoke broad public reaction. "It's not over yet," Whiting said, "it's no good to build a pipeline if they'll be sending the same stuff offshore."[148] There would never be another ECC event quite like the fiery confrontation

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[145]Brief to ECC on "Potential Effects of Anil Effluent That Could Not Have Been Detected in Prior Surveys" by Norman Dale, Dalhousie University Institute for Environment Studies, PANS-EAC, volume 3432, number 19; Martin Haase, interview with the author, 9 October, 2011; Alan Ruffman, interview with the author, 21 February, 2012; Chanclor and Murphy, "Robert Whiting: What One Man Can Do," 6-9, 21.

[146]Chanclor and Murphy, "Robert Whiting: What One Man Can Do"; ECC (C.A. Campbell, Malcolm Moores, and Dr. J.G. Ogden) to G.M. Bagnell, Minister of Environment, 31 January, 1975, Department of Environment library, reference number L778 75/01.

[147]Province of Nova Scotia, *Annual Report: Environmental Control Council: for the year ending Dec. 31 1975*, DAL-EAC, box 41.20; Alan Ruffman, interview with the author, 21 February, 2012.

[148]Chanclor and Murphy, "Robert Whiting: What One Man Can Do," 9.

in Chester however.[149] By 1975, it had served its political purpose. The results of its first hearing had met government expectations, kept the focus on pollution abatement and off of development policy generally, and convinced some of the most vocal environmentalists to limit their attacks during a time of political weakness for the Liberal government, but that time had passed.

Conclusion

Through such means as the Environmental Protection Act and the ECC, the Regan government attempted with some success to mute and redirect the most radical environmental protest into channels more consistent with the "end of pipe" version of environmental regulation. In this they were assisted by the fact that their rivals at the federal level were equally intent on preserving the planning prerogative of experts and administrators, and therefore offered no greater opportunities for more profound activist input. The traditional conservationism of the early twentieth century was vastly preferable, for government experts, to a populist nonmodern activism that threatened to catch governments in a bind between an unavoidable obligation to be seen to do something about declining environmental quality and the unchangeable imperative to continue with the industrial developmentalism that seemed to offer the only hope for

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The Nova Scotia government also participated in a national consultative process called the "Man and Resources" program in 1971-1973, which once again left activists disappointed with the results. *Bulletin of the Man and Resources Conference Program*, 2:2 (November, 1972), Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Man and Resources fonds, MG20, volume 891; *Bulletin of the Man and Resources Conference Program*, 2:6 (April, 1973), Public Archives of Nova Scotia, Man and Resources fonds, MG20, volume 891. "Environmental Improvement Committee - notes of first meeting," 2 February, 1973, MOVE, box 11.12.

[149]There was one other notable public hearing by the ECC, into a landfill siting process in Halifax County, but the minister refused to release the Council's report for publication. Alan Ruffman, interview with the author, 21 February, 2012; Gordon Black, "Jack Lake - 'Interference at the highest level'," *Chronicle Herald*, 10 March, 1976, 7.

prosperity. Many no doubt hoped that environmental activism was a passing political fad, soon to fade into yet another regulatory commonplace managed by the appropriate experts, and that a few years' temporizing would suffice to escape the trap. Though they acknowledged environmentalism's growing political power in Nova Scotia, few in government appreciated the mutual reinforcement of environmentalist ideas and awareness of industrial blight, or the inevitable continued growth of the former in lockstep with the latter, as more and more rural residents found their own homes and livelihoods placed in jeopardy by developments that, from the planner's perspective, promised to be more profitable on balance.

APES' Irene Edwards accused the province's politicians in 1973 of being "in a state of shock," panicking and in search of scapegoats on whom to pin the change because they, the politicians, lacked "the ability to comprehend that these people [...] could see beyond the rosy future painted for them."[150] About their panicked response she could not have been more right, but in fact there were some in government who realized more quickly than anyone else that not all activists rejected the rosy future of modernism, that the link between environmental activism generally and the radical politics of local place defence might be mutable, that there might be common ground with a segment of the growing movement willing to support the prerogatives of science and expertise. The triangular relationship between those perceptive few in power and the modernist and nonmodernist sides of the growing environmental movement, slowly acknowledging the fact of their difference, shaped environmental activism in Nova Scotia over the following decade.

[150]Irene Edwards to Premier Regan, 6 July, 1973, REGAN, volume 84, number 38.

Chapter 3 - The Two MECs: anti-nuclear environmentalism

The broad extent of environmental activism during the decades leading up to 1972 make it plain that public awareness of environmental issues did not emerge in Nova Scotia only with the nuclear issue. Yet it was around anti-nuclear activism that the first real collaboration happened, the first sustained "movement" as such, and by extension the first indication that there might be significant differences among activists. Disagreements over the fundamental culpability of government, industry, and science came to a head in 1975 at the Halifax "Energy and People" conference, and began thereafter to mark a division between urban activists more inclined to accept the tenets of modernity and rural activists more committed to nonmodern arguments about the unsustainability of modern society and the environmental injustice of risks imposed from a distant metropolis. Nevertheless both types cooperated fully in opposing nuclear development. In earlier controversies, small local groups formed and carried on campaigns, more or less successfully, with little cooperation from groups in other areas, before fading from public notice. In contrast, the nuclear problem produced the first lasting, multi-issue groups of the new "ecological" era, wholly integrated into a global anti-nuclear movement as both recipients of outside influence and agents whose actions produced national and international results, and the change came in no small part thanks to the persistence of the provincial and federal governments in their promotion of nuclear energy for the Maritimes. Nova Scotian anti-nuclear activism revealed the extent to which activist organization was conditioned by the jurisdictional limits of the Canadian constitution, as environmentalists first followed the three Maritime governments into regional

cooperation and then followed them out of it and back to primarily provincial networks. It also revealed, through the revival of place-based rhetoric in response to the Three Mile Island disaster in Pennsylvania in 1979, the undiminished power of political pressure tactics when the varieties of environmentalist action worked in concert.

Nuclear promotion was another small step in a long line of industrial promotions for Nova Scotia. Since the election of the Stanfield government in Halifax in 1956, the provincial government had negotiated secretly with a succession of multi-national corporations to bring new industries to Nova Scotia through an arms-length Crown Corporation called Industrial Estates Ltd (IEL). The kind of developmentalism that produced IEL, the notion that a well-chosen set of incentives and subsidies can overcome the structural disadvantages of the region within Confederation and re-industrialize its economy, necessitated certain omissions and alterations in the province's industrial regulations. Unionization, for example, was not considered a selling point and was therefore to be actively discouraged, as offshore fishermen around the Canso Strait learned in 1970 and 1971.[151] Transparency in negotiation was also consistently eschewed. Environmental concerns were inevitably discounted as well in IEL negotiations, and environmental activism tended to follow when and where the bio-physical consequences of industrialization threatened people's homes, farms, or businesses. More generally there was a growing impression in the province that IEL's secrecy effectively served as an environmental equivalent to anti-union regulations, keeping any activist backlash from emerging until it was to late. In that sense, IEL's combined record of secrecy and environmental damage was of primary importance in uniting environmentalists in

[151]Silver Donald Cameron, *The Education of Everett Richardson: The Nova Scotia Fishermen's Strike 1970-71* (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1977).

opposition to a possible IEL-sponsored nuclear energy project.

Suspicion of IEL and of the province's apparent willingness to sacrifice the environmental good in the name of development joined a well-founded suspicion that the federal government would sacrifice even more in its quest to promote nuclear technology. Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. (AECL) was 20 years old in 1972 and enjoyed an uncommon measure of support from the government of Canada. Originally, nuclear reactor technology had been the domain of the military, part of Canada's contribution to the Second World War Manhattan Project, but over the previous two decades the federal government had spent billions developing the Canadian Deuterium-Uranium (CANDU) reactor system with the hope of becoming a major world supplier of civilian nuclear technology. The high technology sectors of reactor design and construction, heavy water production, and nuclear fuel fabrication drove Canadian ambition, but at every link of the fuel chain there was a great deal of money to be made in the business of nuclear energy, and had the federal government succeeded in its goal, the benefits would also have been felt in the country's uranium mining industry, which had already achieved the fourth rank among Canadian export commodities in 1959 even though almost all of the uranium exported at that time went only to build bombs. The results never did quite live up to the promise, though Canadian CANDU salesmen did at least manage to sell reactors to India, Pakistan, Argentina, and South Korea. Sales slowed even further in the mid-1970s, after India's first nuclear weapons test in 1974 using plutonium created in their Canadian reactor; stricter safeguards against the diversion of weapons-grade material blunted the appeal of a reactor that, civilian or not, had always been advertised as the world's most efficient plutonium-maker. Nevertheless, Canadian governments of every political stripe

continued to support the agency, and vigorously encouraged domestic sales to provincial electric utilities to compensate for deficient overseas demand. In fact, regardless of civilian or military status and public or private ownership, from the days of its infancy during the Second World War, the Canadian nuclear industry was not so much supported by government as a part of the government, and any challenge to that relationship would have to be formidable indeed.[152]

The immense and long-term challenge of opposing nuclear energy in Canada brought the environmental activists of Nova Scotia into their first lasting coalition. Reminiscent of Dr. MacDonald's assessment of activism at Boat Harbour, most came to the issue out of concern to protect their own home places, and found that they could not do so without aligning themselves against the whole nuclear industry. That was equally true of life-long residents and newly arrived back-to-the-landers, though a large number of the latter also brought their experience of American cold-war anti-nuclear activism into the Nova Scotian movement. In the city, a loose network of those activists and their Nova Scotia-born peers were inspired primarily by the New Left ideal of public participation in government decisions, and by ideas about ecology and pacifism current around the industrialized world, but in general Nova Scotian environmentalists reacted to the physical impact of regional economic development policy, rather than any newly discovered environmental idealism. Very few outside of Halifax would have recognized themselves in Ronald Inglehart's description of the postmaterialist activist, concerned for the environment only in as much as an affluent economy shielded them from personal

[152]Gordon Edwards, "Canada's Nuclear Industry and the Myth of the Peaceful Atom," in Ernie Regehr and Simon Rosenblum, eds., *Canada and the Nuclear Arms Race* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Co, 1983), 122-170; Robert Bothwell, *Nucleus: The History of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

economic worries.[153] There were, though, vastly different political ideologies at work within the anti-nuclear coalition, and the rise of a sustained form of activism meant that the province's activists could finally discover their own diversity in the 1970s, and in doing so take the first steps toward the creation of mainstream and fringe environmentalisms.

The dawn of anti-nuclear activism in Nova Scotia in the mid-1970s belongs to a particular historical moment. The coincidence of the limits to growth concept reaching maximum cultural currency and the global energy price crisis that helped to push it there offered an uncommonly fertile field for the propagation of resistance to capitalist and globalist modernity. That Nova Scotia felt the sting of rising oil prices so sharply, that the province's economic development schemes produced a massive nuclear project when they did, and that the provincial government so stubbornly resisted opening its development policy to public scrutiny -- these facts transformed the province's nuclear energy proposal and its aftermath into a stark illumination of environmentalist nonmodernity, its internal tensions, and the reaction it provoked from governments.

The Unlikely Battle for Stoddard Island

The triggering event that brought the province's scattered environmental activists together in a lasting way was a surprise to almost everyone. The first indication to the public that the new Regan government might be considering a nuclear project came in June of 1972 from the Halifax *Chronicle Herald*. Claiming to have information from a source inside government, the newspaper reported that the premier had met personally

[153]Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: changing values and political styles among Western publics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

and in secret with representatives of a US company, Crossley Enterprises Ltd., that wished to build a nuclear plant on tiny Stoddard Island, near the southwest tip of the province.[154] Details remain scarce, because the project never moved past the informal proposal stage; however, the plan, as it emerged from further leaks and admissions over the rest of the summer and the following winter, was to build ten US-style light water reactors on Stoddard Island and transmit the electricity generated there directly to New England via undersea cable. Had it been built, the complex would have been the largest generating station in the world, at 12,000 megawatts, though some immediately doubted that the plan could even work.[155] But the details, or indeed the feasibility of the plan, were not at issue in the summer of 1972, for the simple reason that the details were not available. Members of the Regan government and the publicly owned Nova Scotia Power Corporation (NSPC) initially refused to comment on the leak for several days, and when the premier did eventually speak, he offered only equivocal denials that any earnest negotiations were afoot, which did nothing to quiet speculation.[156] By then, it was too late. The opposition Progressive Conservatives had discovered the issue and happily forced Regan into fresh and ever less credible denials as more information came to light, repeatedly highlighting the government's reluctance to volunteer any facts on new developments.[157] If any issue can be said to have initially united those opposed to the Stoddard Island proposal, it was the secrecy around the project. For every declaration of disinterest by the federal energy minister ("unless," he said, Canadian CANDU reactors could be used instead of American LWRs), there was a countervailing shock, as when

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[154]"Air of secrecy surrounds talks," *Chronicle Herald,* 6 June, 1972, 1.
[155]Alan Ruffman, interview with the author, 21 February, 2012.
[156]"Regan denies talks," *Chronicle Herald,* 8 August, 1972, 3.
[157]"Nuclear danger feared," *Chronicle Herald,* 13 June, 1972, 17.

Crossley Enterprises' Canadian holding company was revealed to have purchased Stoddard Island in 1971, or when the man who handled the acquisition, Halifax lawyer Ian MacKeigan, was appointed Nova Scotia's new Chief Justice in 1973.[158] Through a year of uncertainty, suspicion of the government's intentions was the link that bound environmentalists together.

Unsurprisingly, the earliest reactions from existing ENGOs focused on the issues of government secrecy and public participation. First sought out for comment by the press were members of the Nova Scotia Resources Council (NSRC). The Council was hopeful of a new attitude of openness to scientific advice on the part of government in 1972, embodied in the new Department of Environment and proposed Environmental Control Council. Their optimism was tempered by experience, however. No doubt any scepticism they harboured grew stronger after they drew the premier's ire by insisting on a public examination of the risks and benefits of nuclear power -- conducted by the appropriate experts, of course -- and by wondering aloud, in the case of former NSRC chairman Dr. Donald Dodds, how it squared with the provincial development plan to build light water reactors in Nova Scotia while the safety of their design was under investigation in the United States. As the journalist Ralph Surette later reported it, the premier was incensed and "had no intention, he said, of scaring off investors by making public the terms of negotiations, no matter what the project was."[159]

Surprisingly even less critical in its public statements was the younger (both in

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[158]"Federal assistance for proposed nuclear plant 'not likely unless...'," *Chronicle Herald,* 10 June, 1972, 2; Ralph Surette, *Montreal Star,* 22 September, 1973, clipping file, PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 2.

[159]Ralph Surette, *Montreal Star,* 22 September, 1973, clipping file, PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 2; "N.S. Residents should demand answers - Doane" *Chronicle Herald,* 7 June, 1972, 4; "Former resources official concerned by nuclear plan," *Chronicle Herald,* 7 June, 1972, 4; Ralph Surette, "What is public, what is secret?" *The 4th Estate*, 15 October, 1975, 7.

terms of the members and the organization) and typically more radical Halifax-based MOVE coalition. The coalition had come together only in 1971 and was still struggling to negotiate funding from the federal government when called upon to state its position on nuclear power. The executive, while privately noting its own unanimous opposition to the project, decided to restrict its public statements to a call for open public negotiations.[160] Political calculation may have played a role in the decision, but it is just as likely that the nuclear question represented one of the first of many cases in which the coalition struggled to reconcile the views of its diverse membership with its leaders' desire to use the coalition's higher profile for specific causes. In their different ways, then, the NSRC and MOVE were both reluctant to antagonize the provincial and federal governments, so while they both declared an interest in educating the public about the dangers of nuclear energy, the real work of doing so fell to newer organizations.

Into the role of public educators came four Acadia University academics calling themselves the Nuclear Power Study Group (NPSG). From October of 1972 to the following March, under the leadership of professor John Brown, the NPSG produced six bluntly factual and scientifically grounded articles detailing the likely biological, toxicological, and economic effects ten nuclear reactors would have operating at Stoddard Island, as well as noting what kind of effects could not be predicted ahead of time. Chief among the unknowns were: what might happen as a result of discharging 10 million gallons every minute of 20-degree warmer water into the ocean in the smallest and richest lobster fishing district in the province, from which a quarter of the annual catch was landed. Radiation dangers, accidents, and employment also offered unknowns.

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[160]Nuclear Power Plant Sub-Committee Meeting minutes, MOVE, box 11.16; Letter from S. Baskwill, MOVE, to the Editor, *Chronicle Herald*, n.d., MOVE, box 11.16.

The NPSG's stated purpose was to "contribute to informed public discussion." As such, they explicitly eschewed an "alarmist position," to the point that their writing sometimes drifted away from the matter of nuclear risks into textbook style scientific exposition -- perhaps unsurprising, given that physics professor Roy Bishop, who was largely responsible for their lengthy explanations of the science of nuclear fission, later went on to produce pro-nuclear material for AECL -- but the four were not reluctant to take a stand. In summing up the series, they dispensed with scientific reserve long enough to observe that, in contemplating the US connection, including the burden of risks and the disposition of benefits, "the word 'exploitation' comes to mind."[161]

By early 1973, anti-nuclear ENGOs in Nova Scotia were establishing links with each other, and although the NPSG was not heard from again (likely due to Dr. Brown's departure from Acadia), their essay series was reproduced in the press and by groups across the province who wanted to borrow the scientists' mantle of legitimacy and authority. One group that did so, and also provided some of its own research, was the fledgling Ecology Action Centre (EAC) at Dalhousie University in Halifax, a member of the MOVE coalition and sometime collaborator with the NSRC.[162] Though dependant on government funding, the initial membership of the EAC was, unlike MOVE, wholly environmentally focused and eager to expand beyond its initial preoccupation with urban issues of city planning and recycling. The Centre's first publication on nuclear power, in December 1972, was openly opposed to the Stoddard Island project. Citing routine radiation exposure, accidental releases, thermal pollution, radon from uranium mine

[161] Information packet on Stoddard Island, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 37.3; Dr. Roy Bishop, interview with the author, 16 January, 2012.

[162] "Some Facts on the problems and dangers of atomic energy," December, 1972, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 20.

tailings, and the unsolved problem of nuclear waste storage, the document concluded that "the electricity, the profits, and even many of the jobs would go to Americans, while Nova Scotians would take the risks." After such a litany of complaints, their closing recommendation for open, public negotiations between Crossley Enterprises and the provincial government seemed comically redundant.[163] In its policy statements and grant proposals throughout 1973, the EAC repeated its emphasis on the injustice of Nova Scotia's assuming nuclear risks for the benefit of the United States, but it also kept up its agitation for public participation, and showed as well a strong commitment to the limits to growth thesis. The Centre warned that the province would eventually have to deal with its own energy shortage, and by the end of 1973, a year when the international politics of oil pricing bolstered the theory that hard ecological limits existed to the continuation of economic growth, its coordinator was advocating a policy of zero demand growth at home in addition to opposing energy export projects.[164]

Another group that leaned on the scientific ammunition provided by the NPSG was the new South Shore Environmental Protection Association (SSEPA), which would go on to hold a central role in the province's environmental movement for a decade. Organized over the winter of 1973, the Association targeted all three levels of government in an attempt to defeat the Stoddard Island proposal politically, rather than merely request public participation or work at public education. Following the lead of the Southwestern Nova Scotia Lobster Fishermen's Association (and sharing members with it), the SSEPA won unequivocal support from Barrington and Yarmouth municipal

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[163]"Policy Statement on the Proposed Stoddard Island Nuclear Power Plant," 20 March, 1973, DAL-EAC, box 37.3; "Some Facts on the problems and dangers of atomic energy," December, 1972, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 20.

[164]"Participate in Energy Policy," EAC application to O.F.Y., 1973, DAL-EAC, box 39.6; Brian Gifford to Ian MacLaren, CNF Halifax, 16 November, 1973, DAL-EAC, box 42.3.

councils, PC offshore resources critic and MP for South Shore Lloyd Crouse, and Liberal Social Services Minister and Shelburne County MLA Harold Huskilson, by impressing upon them that, in the words of fishermen's association president Glen Devine, "this whole area [and its voters] depends entirely on fish."[165] Under the leadership of author and activist Hattie Perry, the SSEPA found its greatest success in October 1973, when Premier Regan attended a public meeting in the tiny village of Barrington Passage, about 10km from Stoddard Island, and found waiting for him hundreds of nearby residents who wanted only one thing. He gave it to them: a clear promise for public consultation on any proposed nuclear plant in Shelburne County, and another that no project would be approved that might harm the fishery.[166]

Political pressure won a victory for SSEPA. The assurances given at Barrington Passage, combined with the failure of the proponent to quickly address the federal AECB's suggestion of CANDU reactors, seemed to spell the end of the Stoddard Island proposal by 1974. There was, however, no corresponding revival of trust in government and no dissolution of the groups that led the fight. If anything, the continued commitment of the Regan government to two badly functioning heavy water plants built to supply the Canadian nuclear industry in the late 1960s at Glace Bay and Port Hawkesbury suggested a continued interest in nuclear technology.[167] Hattie Perry continued enthusiastically to lead SSEPA's opposition to any and all nuclear development schemes through her

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[165]"Lobster fishermen would fight plant," *Chronicle Herald,* 17 June, 1972, 4; "Some facts on the problems and dangers of atomic energy," December, 1972, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 20; "Necessary to get all the facts, says Regan," *Chronicle Herald,* 25 October, 1973, 10; "Participate in Energy Policy," EAC application to O.F.Y., 1973, DAL-EAC, box 39.6.

[166]"Necessary to get all the facts, says Regan," *Chronicle Herald,* 25 October, 1973, 10.

[167]Bruce Little, "Glace Bay plant: trying to fix costly blunder," *Montreal Gazette,* 16 May, 1973, 33; AECL, *Canada Enters the Nuclear Age* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 337; Robert Campbell, "Heavy Water: Jewel to Millstone," *Mysterious East,* August, 1970, 11-13. The Glace Bay plant was officially opened in 1967, but did not function until 1975, while the Port Hawkesbury plant began operations in 1970 but operated at far less than full capacity until refurbished in 1974.

writing, leaning on the NPSG's research, adding her own on alternative energy sources and the health effects of radiation. She drew on an international discussion of nuclear dangers but always returned to the threat posed to the local fishing economy and the lack of appreciable local benefit.[168] SSEPA also showed its continuing concern over the threat of government secrecy at an ECC public hearing in Yarmouth a month after the Barrington Passage meeting, where according to the ECC, "the people present cited the example of the apparent lack of an environmental assessment study for the Strait of Canso [refinery and shipping complex] as evidence that these kinds of projects and developments can and will go forward without public approval."[169]

Not in Anybody's Backyard

Anti-nuclear activism in all areas of Nova Scotia was fully immersed in a world-wide movement of the same type. As an issue it attracted the attention of pacifist immigrants, especially Quakers, veterans of American anti-war protests who worked to draw attention to the links between nuclear war and nuclear power, and to introduce other Nova Scotians to a placeless international peace movement. Anti-nuclear protestors in Nova Scotia were well aware of the actions of the Clamshell Alliance group in Maine in the late 1970s as well, where activists resorted to civil disobedience to fight nuclear development. The strongest and earliest connections outside of the province, however, were with the anti-nuclear movement in New Brunswick, where protestors faced an energy project that enjoyed the full support of the AECB. New Brunswick's activists, like

[168]The risks posed by low-level radiation exposure were (and still are) a well-known and bitterly contested point of debate among activists, nuclear scientists, and medical researchers in much of the world, as they had been since the famous Russell-Einstein Manifesto on radioactive fallout in 1955.
[169]ECC meeting report, 26 November, 1973, DAL-EAC, box 41.20.

Nova Scotia's, found their strength in determined defense of local places and economies, especially rural places, and as the two governments (and Prince Edward Island's) planned new collaboration, these primarily rural activists demonstrated the emptiness of the parochial "NIMBY" ("Not-In-My-Back-Yard") stereotype by reaching out to each other to form a common regional front.

Premier Regan's clearly reluctant climb down over Stoddard Island and continued support for the heavy water plants were not the only reasons to fear a resurgence of the nuclear idea in Nova Scotia. Even as word of the South Shore project spread in 1972, news broke of another nuclear plant proposal across the Bay of Fundy in New Brunswick, which would eventually become the Point Lepreau generating station.[170] NSPC's general manager immediately denied having any interest in the project, but with the failure of the Stoddard plan activists grew wary of the Nova Scotia government's intentions. Within a year, Regan and the same NSPC official turned wariness to alarm by promising to decide on whether to buy into New Brunswick's planned second reactor or to build one of their own instead, perhaps somewhere in north-east Nova Scotia. The unexpected success of the OPEC oil cartel in 1973 gave proponents of atomic technology a second chance to sell their wares to the public, and statements like "we have to get into nuclear power" from the provincial energy agency ensured that activists in the two leading organizations had to remain ready to push back.[171]

If the SSEPA carried on with a more or less seamless transition to general anti-nuclear activism however, the Ecology Action Centre had more trouble. As it turned out, the Centre's student staff had found better reason than most to appreciate the limits of

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[170]Adrian Egbers, "Going Nuclear: the origins of New Brunswick's nuclear industry, 1950-1983," MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 2008.
[171]"Nuclear route likely for N.S.," *Mail-Star,* 2 October, 1974, 1.

finite resources in 1973: that was the last full year of federal government funding they would ever see. Across the country, student groups that had enjoyed the largesse of the federal Opportunities For Youth and Local Initiatives Programmes during the heyday of student radicalism found the government's commitment to youth empowerment fading along with the threat of youth rebellion. Many groups simply melted away, as MOVE would soon do, but the EAC staff were determined to find the means to keep the organization running. Remarkably they did, but the transformation from fully-funded organization to registered charity -- in a sense a liberation from the government purse -- had the perverse effect of blunting the Centre's radical spirit. With a newly-formed Board of Directors drawn as much from the academic and business communities of Halifax as from the Centre's older constituencies of student leaders and environmental activists, the EAC returned to the nuclear power issue in late 1974 at the request of the SSEPA and immediately fell into disagreement over what position to take. Some of the new directors insisted on hedging the Centre's opposition to nuclear energy in case of social and economic need, while others argued that such ill-defined hurdles would vitiate any real opposition, and urged a categorical rejection of nuclear power. While a vote did end with a statement of opposition, the Centre chose to refocus on the less controversial issue of public participation as the central matter of energy policy going into 1975, rather than the limits to economic growth or environmental justice arguments that still preoccupied their south shore peers.[172] The year ended with the Centre's survival in doubt and its ability to function severely compromised, leaving a void in the Halifax activist scene, promptly filled by a group of very different origins but very similar tendency to look first beyond

[172]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 7 October, 1974, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 18; Brian Gifford to Bill Zimmerman, 13 November, 1974, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 17.

the local context.

During the peak of the Stoddard Island controversy, another gathering of Haligonians opposed to the scheme and to nuclear development in general had taken shape from elements of the Voice of Women organization (VOW) and the Halifax Friends Meeting (Quakers). Both groups had a long association with peace and social justice issues, and in at least the case of the VOW a history of connecting environmental and anti-nuclear activism, though their work had mainly been in opposition to nuclear weapons rather than energy. The first branch of the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace formed in Toronto in 1960, after *Toronto Star* columnist Lotta Dempsey challenged Canadian women to take action against the nuclear brinkmanship of the Cold War. Response was fast, and within a year the VOW had over 100 local branches across Canada, members of which presented themselves as informed non-experts and claimed an explicitly female perspective on Cold War politics. When the call for independent chapters of VOW reached Halifax, it came first to Peggy Hope-Simpson, whose husband David chaired the city's branch of the Canadian Committee for the Control of Radiation Hazards (itself only a year old in 1960). She and veteran social justice activist Muriel Duckworth gathered a resourceful group of well-to-do Halifax women and quickly turned the local VOW into the most active branch in the country outside of Toronto. One of the first concerns of the Halifax group was the prospect of US nuclear waste dumped offshore near Nova Scotian waters, though for the first decade the Voices kept mainly to more conventional peace issues.[173] At the Halifax hearing of the federal Man and Resources program in 1972, however, the group presented a keen appreciation of the link

[173]Francis Early, "'A Grandly Subversive Time': The Halifax Branch of the Voice of Women in the 1960s," in Judith Fingard and Janet Guildford, eds., *Mothers of the Municipality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 258.

between peace, environmental justice, and the limits to growth. In support of "zero economic growth and zero industrial growth" and in opposition to what they called the "consume-exploit-pollute society," they explained:

> the Voice of Women has found that we cannot merely espouse an end to war, we must espouse a way of life free from the gearing toward war. Voice of Women cannot advocate a rise in living standards for the rich nations when this rise means a consequent depletion of the resources necessary for the survival of the poor nations.[174]

Both nationally and in Halifax, the VOW had close links to the Quakers. From their beginnings as a group of religious dissidents in seventeenth century England, the Quakers (or Friends, as they call themselves) have maintained a strong commitment to pacifism and to actively opposing violence, warfare, and injustice by moral pressure and "bearing witness." Their anti-nuclear weapons actions in the United States during the 1950s included trespassing at nuclear weapons test sites and at arms manufacturing plants (with the clear intention of being arrested), and attempting to sail a yacht into a Pacific Ocean test site in 1958. The American Friends' Service Committee also published a widely influential critique of the inequality and violence of modern industrial societies in 1955 under the title *Speak Truth to Power*, which was one of the first selections for the Halifax VOW's study group in 1960. The woman who suggested it, Dorothy Norvell, was a recently arrived immigrant from the United States, a Quaker, and a third-generation peace activist. Muriel Duckworth, Peggy Hope-Simpson, and Helen Cunningham were also Quakers. Historian Frances Early credits the influence of these Quaker/Voices for the Halifax VOW's "consensual decision-making process."[175]

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[174] *VOW national newsletter* 9:3, November, 1972, PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 28; "MOVE bulletin," 13 December, 1972, MOVE, box 6.23.
[175] Early, "A Grandly Subversive Time," 263.

When Stoddard Island and nuclear power hit the province's front pages in 1972, the Halifax Friends Meeting, lacking any consensus, felt the need for a more complete understanding of nuclear power issues and their relationship to nuclear weapons, war, and social justice. They asked another newly-arrived American member named Susan Holtz to do some research for them. Holtz was an English literature graduate from Massachusetts who moved to Nova Scotia with her husband Fred in 1971. As a researcher for the local Friends meeting, she quickly arrived at conclusions in line with the VOW statement at Man and Resources. "Power for what?" she wrote to New Brunswick anti-nuclear activist Doris Calder, "for a way of life for the affluent in North America which is entirely oriented toward disastrously wasteful consumption? For a way of life which cannot be continued if everyone in our global village is to share together our world's resources?"[176] In a matter of months, Holtz became an activist as much as a researcher and deliberately chose to devote herself to the more technical issue of nuclear risk, rather than ecological limits or environmental justice. Those, she told Calder, could be taken care of by other Friends in her group.[177] In reality, the group tends to follow the leader, and Holtz, who brought nearly endless energy to her role, soon became the de facto leader. Fellow activist Alan Ruffman remembers her as a particularly "intellectual" sort (rather than political), and the same might be said of the group she gathered around herself in 1974 to encourage public opposition to nuclear power and discourage government's nuclear ambitions.[178] The group of Quakers, Unitarians, and VOW members, including Norvell and Duckworth, soon began to refer to themselves as the

[176]Susan Holtz to Doris Calder, 1 November, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 41.7.
[177]*Ibid*.
[178]Alan Ruffman, interview with the author, 21 February, 2012.

Conserver Society Group (CSG).[179]

The anti-nuclear CSG spent most of 1974 making connections with like-minded activists and organizations across Canada, gathering information and encouraging the formation of a national coalition to take the fight to AECL and Ottawa. Duckworth, Norvell, and Holtz wrote to activists in Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and elsewhere, and tried to persuade organizations like the Canadian Wildlife Federation into a common front. They also cultivated contacts with sympathetic journalists like Ralph Surette and the editors of the *4th Estate*, much as the VOW had done in the 1960s.[180] Their approach was decidedly non-local, however, consistent with their peace movement background, and what they did not do was approach the SSEPA, at least not until the latter organization's secretary, Anne Wickens, wrote to Holtz with an invitation to join the south shore group. It was their correspondence that brought the CSG into contact with a growing Maritime coalition.[181]

As the CSG's activities suggest, shared concern over nuclear power tended to draw activists together, despite membership in different groups. It also tended to do so at the same level of geographic integration as the program they opposed. The federal jurisdiction of the AECB/AECL provoked some limited national coalition, but provincial jurisdiction and the actions of the three maritime governments drew more attention to the regional level. Only three months after their apparent success in October 1973, the SSEPA was confronted with Nova Scotia's possible investment in the proposed Point

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[179]Susan Holtz to Anne [Wickens], 14 February, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 41.7.

[180]Dorothy Norvell to Donna Elliott, VOW Ontario, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 42.3; Dorothy Norvell to Orville Erickson, CWF, 11 December, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 42.3; Lille d'Easum to Dorothy Norvell, 28 December, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 42.3; Susan Holtz to Dick Lurie, 9 December, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 42.3; Susan Holtz to Karen Alcock, Energy Probe, 12 May, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 38.16; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 9 January, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 19.

[181]Anne Wickens to Susan Holtz, 4 October, 1974, 25 October, 1974, PANS-EAC, volume 3423, number 30.

Lepreau nuclear plant in New Brunswick, geographically closer than Halifax to the Association's home in Shelburne and Yarmouth Counties. Once again the provincial government stubbornly refused to share information about the negotiations, and New Brunswick's premier certainly could not be influenced in the same manner Gerald Regan had been. In response, the Association reached out and formed a coalition with New Brunswickers organizing against the Hatfield government's nuclear plans.[182] In fact, the SSEPA played a major part in drawing together the first New Brunswick anti-nuclear coalition, along with representatives of the Moncton branch of Pollution Probe, the Eel River Bar Mi'kmaq Band Council, and two other local groups.[183] In its first incarnation, as the Chaleur Environmental Protection Association (CEPA), the coalition set out in the spring of 1974 with "no immediate plans to seek meetings with public officials" about Lepreau or about another nuclear plant proposed for New Brunswick's Northeast coast. Instead, they said, "we're going to bring experts in to inform the public about the dangers of nuclear plants" and provoke popular opposition in the affected areas, much as local opposition in south west Nova Scotia had fed into a provincial and regional movement.[184] By the end of the year, support for nuclear development by the governments of the two provinces had provoked a wide enough reaction that a broader coalition became necessary, and CEPA gave way to the Maritime Coalition of Environmental Protection Associations, which was later rechristened the Maritime Energy Coalition (MEC) for publicity purposes. (It was shorter, a clearer statement of the group's interests, and needled the provincial governments by borrowing the acronym of the proposed regional

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[182]SSEPA press release, 7 October, 1974, SSEPA, PANS, mg20, volume 1016, number 27-27j; "Nuclear route likely for N.S.," *Mail-Star,* 2 October, 1974, 1.
[183]"Nuclear Power in Eastern Canada," Hattie Perry, n.d., SSEPA, PANS, mg20, volume 1016, number 27-27j.
[184]"Group Formed to Oppose N.B. Plant," *Chronicle Herald,* 8 April, 1974, 2.

utility, the Maritime Energy Corporation.) Official statements of support for the MEC came in from Women's Institutes, fishermen's associations, nurses' associations, the NSRC, the VOW, and the EAC, along with an application for full membership from the Halifax Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, though the Nova Scotian membership remained limited to the SSEPA and CSG for months.[185]

Anti-nuclear organization by local rural activist groups under the MEC banner contributed the greatest vitality to the regional movement during the mid-1970s, and kept questions of limits and local economic autonomy at the forefront. In later years, the supposed self-centeredness of local single-issue groups would lead to their being labelled "NIMBYs" and dismissed as unsophisticated reactionaries happy to foist the projects they rejected onto some less fortunate community. Such positions were rarely in evidence. Activists initially motivated by personal risk, usually those like the SSEPA living nearby potential nuclear construction sites, consistently joined forces to oppose nuclear development anywhere in the region. Continuing their focus on public outreach rather than bureaucratic consultation, MEC groups planned alternative energy festivals on New Brunswick's Kingston Peninsula and in Middleton, Annapolis County, in 1976, trying to convince the public to work toward generalized local independence and the dissolution of central energy agencies like NBEPC and NSPC.[186] In Halifax, meanwhile, the EAC was scarcely active in 1974 and in early 1975, uncertain of its position on

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[185] "Maritime Coalition of Environmental Protection Associations," document, n.d. [1974], SSEPA, PANS, mg20, volume 1016, number 27-27j. Participation from Prince Edward Island was small, rather like its participation in the proposed energy corporation. Though the Institute of Man and Resources was widely admired, it did not join in activist activity and was generally seen as a government agency. Only one group from PEI in the late 1970s, Help Our Provincial Environment (HOPE), is recorded to have participated in the MEC.

[186] "CCNR newsletter," August, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 1; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 1 April, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 20; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 4 March, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 20.

nuclear power and suffering through the end of federal funding and the steep learning curve of charitable fundraising. By fall of 1975, however, the CSG had merged into the EAC as its new energy committee, bringing the volunteers and the financial support of the Halifax Friends Meeting into the Centre's established structure (and into its free office space at Dalhousie University), and uniting most of Halifax's anti-nuclear activists under the EAC name.[187] If unity was truly the prerequisite for effective action, the stage was set for it in 1975.

Citizen-Science and Political Power

The coalition-building of the mid-1970s was a bottom-up effort on the part of environmentalists. No central agency corralled them into coalition, and activists initially chose not to focus on any differences that might have existed. Rather, from the city to the farm, they echoed the sentiment of Donald Hamilton of the Northumberland Regional Development Association, that "unity is the only way that we can effectively combat the nuclear power menace."[188] Moreover, no single group had achieved a dominant position in the province from which to press forward a specific position that might alienate others. As in the past, it was most often the case that local groups each continued to carry on parallel campaigns without cooperation or even knowledge of the others, despite nominally being in coalition. This would change, but not before the Halifax activists developed a more scientific environmental rhetoric and a willingness to collaborate with

[187]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 25 June, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 19; Susan Holtz to Joe and Helen Bongiovanni, 5 February, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 41.7.

The CSG presence within the EAC remained for many years, long enough to remake the organization entirely, especially during the "two Susans" era, from 1975 to 1980, when Susan Mayo as Coordinator and Susan Holtz as energy researcher put their stamp on every aspect of the Centre's activity. For some examples, see: Board of Directors membership lists, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23-24.

[188]Donald Hamilton, NORDA, to Susan Mayo, 29 July, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 42.4.

the environmental agencies of the state. In the process of doing so, and especially in the process of organizing publicity for the anti-nuclear coalition, a division began to show between the more modernist activists and those who wished to persist in the bottom-up promotion of decentralized, low-technology living.

From the beginning of the CSG, the Quaker anti-nuclear activists of Halifax were eager to appear respectable and to appeal to federal and provincial bureaucrats (and corporations) in intellectual terms. Even when asserting limits ideas, as she did in correspondence to the deputy minister of the federal department of Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR) and to AECL managers, Susan Holtz cavilled on implementation, suggesting "an immediate and serious energy conservation policy" instead of a policy of zero economic growth.[189] Nor did the CSG ever share the SSEPA's commitment to argument based on local environmental justice, preferring to argue from the general principle to the specific case, rather than *vice versa*. Holtz remained the public face of the CSG and a prolific letter-writer who never forgot her mission to highlight the technical risks of nuclear technology. One of the events that reinforced that determination was the Critical Mass conference in Washington DC in November 1974, where the US consumer advocate and anti-nuclear leader Ralph Nader brought together citizens' groups from all over North America to share information, and where Holtz learned that "from a political point of view, it is just as effective to put real doubt in people's minds as it is to bring them, 100% committed, to your side -- and it's far easier."[190] As she told SSEPA's Anne Wickens shortly after returning from Washington, the lesson for Nova Scotia activists,

[189]Susan Holtz to Liberty Pease, AECL, 5 May, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 20; Susan Holtz to J. Blair Seaborn, Deputy Minister Environment Canada, 8 June, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3423, number 7.
[190]Susan Holtz to Anne Wickens, 25 November, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 42.3.

unsure about how far the premier's anti-nuclear promise would carry, was a pragmatic and practical one: to win over decision-makers, "one needn't push one's absolute convictions quite so hard, but one does need lots of facts and credible experts."[191] Facts and experts might be just as convincing to the wider public, in order to build a mass political movement, but Holtz, who saw her job as a bridge between the public and the powerful, immediately began planning a venue in which decision makers could be convinced by the intellectual merit of anti-nuclear views.

The *Energy and People* conference took place at Saint Mary's University in Halifax on 19-21 September, 1975. Outside of environmental activist circles, its general context was the global "energy crisis," still in full swing since the OPEC cartel moved to reduce the supply of crude oil to world markets in October, 1973. World oil prices had tripled by the end of that year, and would continue to rise through the rest of the decade, to the point that a barrel of oil that had cost $2 before the crisis cost an unprecedented $35 in 1981.[192] Atlantic Canada felt the sting of rising prices most severely of all the regions of the country, because of its greater dependence on imported crude for electricity generation. Meanwhile, uncertainty surrounding the three Maritime governments' plans to use nuclear generating stations to replace some of their oil-fired generators fanned continual speculation and anxiety among much of the public. Despite the promise extracted from him at the Barrington Passage meeting, Nova Scotia's premier had spent the following year alternately issuing promises of a major nuclear project to come and statements denying that any such project was being entertained. New Brunswickers

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[191]"Dorothy" to "Carla," November, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 41.7; Susan Holtz to Anne Wickens, 25 November, 1974, DAL-EAC, box 42.3.

[192]Francisco Parra, *Oil Politics: a modern history of petroleum* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2004); Alan MacEachern, *The Institute of Man and Resources: An Environmental Fable* (Charlottetown: Island Studies Press, 2003), 12-13.

remained unsure if or when or where a companion project to the Point Lepreau reactor would be announced, and the question of purchasing electricity from Lepreau still lay unresolved in Prince Edward Island. Given the context, *Energy and People* could hardly have avoided becoming a forum for nuclear debate, but its organizers hoped for, and achieved, a much wider-ranging discussion of related energy and economic issues.[193] As such, it serves as a record of the environmental values underlying various positions in the nuclear debate in the middle of the decade.

The idea for the conference (and the largest contribution of money for it) came in the fall of 1974 from several Quaker members of the Conserver Society Group, who hoped that a well-publicized conference catering to a non-expert lay audience might help advance the notion from which their group drew its name. The conserver society was a term coined by the Science Council of Canada in its 1973 report on *Natural Resource Policy Issues in Canada*, in reference to a society, unlike our present consumer society, in which resource decisions would recognize total costs (account for externalities, in other words), respect the limits of the biosphere, and bear in mind costs deferred to the future as well.[194] The term achieved unexpected popularity following the SCC report, and the Council issued three follow-up reports over the next ten years, including one in 1977 written under the chairmanship of Ursula Franklin, then a renowned scientist, anti-nuclear activist, Voice of Women member, and Quaker.[195] As a general principle with uncertain implications for economic growth, the phrase "conserver society" served, like "sustainable development" after it, to bring together people with varying interpretations

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[193]*Energy and People Conference Proceedings*, October, 1975, MOVE, box 22.1.
[194]Science Council of Canada, *Natural Resource Policy Issues in Canada*, Report #19 (Ottawa: SCC, 1973).
[195]Science Council of Canada, *Canada as a Conserver Society: Resource Uncertainties and the Need for New Technologies*, Report #27 (Ottawa: SCC, 1977).

of the meaning of "wastefulness" and the possibility of continued economic growth. Once together, however, activists discovered deep divisions between their respective interpretations and political intentions. When planning for the *Energy and People* conference began, in accordance with the consensus principle borrowed from the VOW and with committees drawn from several co-sponsoring organizations, those differences fuelled conflict: some wanted an event with strictly public appeal and a strong anti-nuclear and anti-growth message, while others wished to use the conference to make connections and build support within federal and provincial bureaucracies, where talk of limits to growth could close doors rather than open them. After three months deciding and six preparing, the organizers did manage to achieve the mixed audience and "balanced presentation of controversial issues" they sought, but tensions between alternative visions of the conference only grew sharper as the event got underway.[196]

Limits to growth were a prominent theme at the conference, beginning with the keynote address given by Gordon Edwards of the fledgling Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility. The CCNR represented the fruition of Holtz' (and others') campaign for a federal-level lobbying organization made up of ENGOs from across Canada, and in 1975 it was in the process of developing a more-or-less technical rhetoric of radiation hazards and the hidden costs of nuclear energy, rather than an explicit attack on economic growth or modernist society.[197] Though he stopped short of offering specific answers or policy prescriptions at *Energy and People*, Edwards nonetheless spoke at length on the illusion of scientific analysis of mathematically incalculable values such as

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[196]*Energy and People Conference Proceedings*, October, 1975, MOVE, box 22.1.

[197]See for example, Doris McMullan, Probe Ottawa, to Susan Holtz, 11 August, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 1. McMullan was on CCNR's steering committee, and Holtz was on its policy committee. Also, describing the group's "rather conservative approach" as a positive feature: Susan Holtz to CCNR, 14 March, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 44.1.

wilderness (he cited the current debate over the damming of B.C.'s Skagit river) or of unknown quantities such as accident probabilities at nuclear reactors. For him, the path to a conserver society lay not in the recognition of some narrow technical risks and substitution of lesser risks, but in giving up the obsessive "idea of a machine" and admitting the ecological context of society, complete with limits and unmanageable unintended consequences.[198]

Along with Edwards' warnings about the impossibility of continued exponential growth, others presented radical policy proposals and openly questioned the role of government as an honest regulator and interpreter of policy ideas, particularly where the balance of evidence and argument pointed to conclusions that contradicted economic orthodoxy. Dalhousie University environmental lawyer and EAC board member Ian McDougall argued against continued electricity exports to the United States due to the inevitable exhaustion of Canadian energy sources, a theme echoed by Bill Peden of Ontario's Energy Probe. Challenged by government representatives who claimed that a transition to renewable technologies through a period of rising energy use was the only way to avoid massively increased unemployment in Canada, MOVE member Don Grady replied for the limits theorists that changing the basic nature of society required "unacceptable" actions, and that in order to avoid such actions, governments would always attend conferences like *Energy and People* "to lie."[199]

Such outbursts of hostility toward the bureaucracy probably went some way to inspiring the conference chairperson's retrospective assessment that citizens must do more to "encourage governments to trust groups," but in truth there was at least as much

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[198]"Keynote - Dr. Gordon Edwards," *Energy and People Conference Proceedings*, October, 1975, MOVE, box 22.1.
[199]"Energy Policy Panel," *Energy and People Conference Proceedings*, October, 1975, MOVE, box 22.1.

opportunity at the conference for government and corporate attendees to present their views, beginning with their presence on the discussion panels. Compromise and consensus in event planning worked against those who wanted an ideologically consistent presentation. Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd., Gulf Oil, Nova Scotia Power Corporation, and the federal Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources had displays of promotional material throughout; Robert Stanfield, then leader of the federal opposition Progressive Conservatives, gave an anodyne opening speech; and EMR's direct contribution, an energy primer pamphlet called *See Energy Run*, was distributed to attendees despite organizer Bill Zimmerman's complaints that it was "slanted" and not at all what was promised. Organizers even attempted to prevent the drafting of resolutions for the conference, not wanting to alienate the bureaucratic contributors. Yet this last attempt at achieving the appearance of balance came to naught, as attendees assembled on their own to vote and approve a resolution that:

> this conference rejects nuclear power in its present form as the energy source of the future and calls for a moratorium on the licensing, construction, and sale of nuclear power plants until full national, public, and parliamentary debates are held.

While the anti-nuclear resolution certainly highlights the perceived urgency of the nuclear issue in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (which between them supplied well over two thirds of the attendees at the conference), the fate of the limits thesis may better demonstrate the will of the organizers. A proposed resolution to encourage priority in both funding and planning decisions for "small-scale, decentralized" projects was voted down.[200]

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[200] *Energy and People Conference Proceedings*, October, 1975, MOVE, box 22.1. An account of the resolutions debate was also printed in the activist paper *Nuclear Reaction*, Winter 1975-76, DAL-EAC,

The *Energy and People* conference marked a turning point for the anti-nuclear activist community in Halifax. At the time the conference was planned, the CSG were deliberately embarking on a path of technical argument as a means to attract the ear of government and bolster anti-nuclear elements within the bureaucracy. The compromises inherent in consensus decision-making put their reasonable and unthreatening modernist approach, which did not question the possibility or desirability of economic growth or the value of centralization and the power of expert decision-makers, directly next to the more radical activists' attempt to attract media attention and convince the public of the relevance of self-sufficiency, local autonomy, and ecological limits to energy planning. Given the choice, the media unsurprisingly tended to report more favourably on the former, and as a consequence the more radical conference planners seem to have abandoned the cooperative effort as a vehicle for political pressure.[201] The explicit insistence on limits and distrust of government were absent from the continuing committee's follow-up report in October, 1975, replaced by an emphasis on public education, a national lobbying effort, and a commitment to pure "facts and figures," such as were being compiled at the energy library that Holtz built in the EAC's offices with funding from the Halifax Friends Meeting and the Canadian Friends Service Committee. The continuing committee itself, top-heavy with engineers and professional planners, reflected the near disappearance of radicals from the Halifax coalition, as it settled into its new identity as the EAC's energy committee.[202]

The sort of energy policy advocated by the EAC's committee following *Energy*

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box 41.7.

[201]For example, "Some energy proposals 'irresponsible'," *Mail-Star,* 22 September, 1975, 5.

[202]"Follow-up notes from Energy and People conference," 30 October, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 21.

and People -- a technologically radical but economically orthodox mix of wind power and solar, with some conservation measures to go with them -- required financial incentives and investment more than social change, and therefore required more convincing of politicians and bureaucrats than of the public. It also encouraged a national perspective, when activists across the country could direct their efforts in common toward the largest relevant energy technology research body, the federal office of Energy, Mines and Resources. Cultivating connections outside of the region could take two forms: bringing the rest of the country and continent to Nova Scotia, or sending Nova Scotians out to meet them. As one might expect, the most persuasive anti-nuclear spokesmen came from those jurisdictions where the industry had been longest established, in Ontario and the United States particularly, and in 1976 the EAC's energy committee led the effort to bring those speakers to Nova Scotia. Following Gordon Edwards, the first prominent visitor was American energy expert Amory Lovins, whose concept of a "soft energy path" was just beginning to achieve global recognition. The two key characteristics of a soft path are renewability (using solar, wind, or geothermal sources for example) and appropriate scale and quality (warming houses with on-site heat, for example, rather than with distant, central electric generators). The congruence with conserver society ideas was obvious, and the Science Council of Canada eagerly sponsored a speaking tour. The EAC, for its part, just as eagerly encouraged Premier Regan to attend. He declined.[203] In fact, despite the energy committee's best efforts to attract them, provincial politicians continued to disappoint.[204] Appeals to corporate self-interest were about as productive; when activists sent a five-person delegation to the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council

[203]J.R. Helliwell to Susan Holtz, 3 March, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 42.4.
[204]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 6 May, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 20.

seminar on energy in January, 1976, one reported back that the regular delegates would only ever be tempted away from their support for nuclear power if they could be shown "how to make their money back on the initial cost of alternative energy development and begin to show profit."[205] It was a position to which the committee spent more and more time appealing, but it was hardly a recipe for a radical economic revision of consumer society, and it encouraged a disproportionate focus on the technology of the soft path rather than the issues of scale and ownership.

Outside of the province, the leaders of the Halifax anti-nuclear network continued to be heavily involved in the CCNR and found, in Susan Holtz' words, "some openness" to public input in Ottawa, especially from the EMR. It was a welcome change from the secrecy and stonewalling back home in the country's "most secretive jurisdiction."[206] Yet the CCNR's strategy itself was essentially conservative. In order to "be taken seriously on technical and policy issues," its arguments inevitably circled the familiar ground of radiation risks and reactor safety, and the constant demand to which all of its public efforts bent -- the nuclear responsibility weeks, rallies, and national petitions in which the EAC participated -- was for nothing more than a national inquiry into nuclear power.[207] Even so, it was all to no avail, at least in the offices of Ottawa. EMR listened, but preferred the advice of AECL vice-president A.M. Aikin, who warned against any forum that allowed demagogues to abuse "honest, capable scientists," and who went on in 1977 to co-author the EMR's wildly optimistic Hare Report on the management of nuclear

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[205]Notes from APEC energy seminar, 21 January, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 18; Energy Options Committee Meeting minutes, January, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 32.32.
[206]Energy Options Committee minutes, 29 November, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 32.32; Ralph Surette, "What is public, what is secret?" *The 4th Estate,* 15 October, 1975, 7.
[207]Susan Holtz to CCNR, 14 March, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 44.1.

waste.[208] The over-representation of nuclear science in EMR's research and development budget indicated their preference just as clearly. What the department wanted, and offered, was an energy conservation and renewable generation program that Canadian ENGOs might support, and which might be kept at a safe distance from the work of forming a more fundamental energy policy based on the increasing use of nuclear energy and fossil fuels. In one telling example, the EMR's Office of Renewable Energy, along with the Ministry of State for Science and Technology, sponsored a series of conferences in 1977 around the conserver society concept, the Halifax edition of which focused on renewable energy sources. Local activists did much of the organizational work, but when EAC's Susan Mayo discussed the preparations with the ministry's Ray Bouchard, her frustration was plain and her assessment blunt: "the fuckers didn't ask us about nuclear power!"[209] Nor was she alone in noticing that, for federal bureaucrats at EMR and Environment Canada, "alternative" energy seemed more often to mean "additional" energy and a reason to avoid discussing the nuclear issue.[210]

Despite its frustrations, the task of working within a coalition of Canadian ENGOs to access the levers of power in Ottawa preoccupied the EAC's energy committee at the end of 1977. Holtz argued to the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council (CEAC), a federally funded panel of experts and activists among whose number she would soon find a seat, that the federal government's power to seize jurisdiction, as it had

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[208]"Discussion on the Nuclear Option - Some Impressions," EMR planning and evaluation note, 21 November, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 42.4; Gordon Edwards, "Nuclear Wastes: What, Me Worry?," 1978, <http://www.ccnr.org/me_worry.html> (accessed January, 2013).

[209]Call transcript, Susan Mayo and Ray Bouchard, 12 August, 1977, PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 5.

[210]In New Brunswick, activists complained that "the federal government is buying off opposition to its policies" with empty consultation: *Nuclear Reaction*, 9-11 June, 1978. The same journal had noted the previous year that "renewable energy is receiving attention mainly through the political expedient of keeping a vocal (eg: anti-nuclear) group quiet": *Nuclear Reaction*, 30 April, 1977. Even one of Susan Holtz's friends at EMR told her that "Alastair [Gillespie of EMR] may be trading off renewables and conservation": John [MacEwan] to Susan [Holtz], n.d., PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 38.

done over the nuclear industry, meant that ENGOs had to "get beyond local issues," and concentrate on winning over members of the federal bureaucracy.[211] And the perennial dream of recapturing the policy initiative and influencing the most basic assumptions of Canada's energy economy did not fade. When the CEAC invited ENGOs to formal consultations in 1977, so that it might "better advise the minister," activists aware of their creeping marginalization used the opportunity to form a new national coalition, aiming in the words of its first president David Brooks, "to raise the issue from particular[s ...] to the question of a conserver society."[212] Their efforts were somewhat confused, however, and the organization that resulted, Friends of the Earth Canada (FOE), immediately became a gathering of the more professional ENGOs, reluctant to be seen as radicals. The new organization was also supposed to be independent of government funding, reflecting some awareness of the distortions wrought in the conserver society concept by bureaucratic agenda-setting, but the need to avoid competing with its own member organizations for donations left the FOE no other option but to depend immediately on government research contracts for its operating budget. That FOE still met a hesitant reception from the EAC's Board of Directors says something about how cautious the Centre had become; some wondered if the EAC could fully support the more ambitious version of the conserver society notion, or if it would prove "too political" a goal for the Centre's tax-exempt charitable status.[213] Nonetheless, Holtz continued to represent the Centre at FOE and to the CEAC's National Steering Committee (later to evolve into the Canadian Environmental Network), and when the former group acted to put Amory Lovins' soft energy path on the national agenda, she became part of the effort.

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[211]Notes from CEAC meeting, 15 March, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 39.1.
[212]Notes from CEAC meeting, 21/22 November, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 39.1.
[213]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 1 June, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 22.

With the financial backing of EMR, the SCC, and Petro Canada, the first FOE soft energy path study (SEP) began in late 1978, only four months after the formal creation of the coalition. Though ambitious, it was not without precedent, even in Canada. While leading the EMR's Office of Energy Conservation in 1977, David Brooks had drafted a national SEP study with the help of the University of Waterloo's John Robinson, which was itself intended to be a more detailed and complete version of Amory Lovins' SEP paper for Canada, commissioned the previous year by the SCC. Unsatisfied with the result, Brooks proposed a study that accounted for the full diversity across Canada's provinces. The FOE study, then, was to be yet another refinement of the basic argument Lovins made in 1976: that a future in which Canadians relied primarily on "renewable, decentralized, and ecologically sustainable" energy sources was both feasible and not even particularly difficult to achieve.[214] The influence of Susan Holtz was all over the decision to take the SEP concept to the next (national) level of collaboration. Having sponsored a panel (including Brooks) on Nova Scotia's SEP in November of 1977, for a largely bureaucratic audience, and pursued provincial funding for a study on the same from early 1978, Holtz' energy committee was clearly eager to advance the concept among the bureaucratic elite.[215]

In inevitably Canadian fashion, the first set of provincial SEP studies completed and published in the FOE journal *Alternatives* in 1979 and 1980 were written without common metrics and could not be compiled into a single combined set of data. A revised

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[214]Robert Bott, et al, *Life After Oil* (Edmonton: Hutig, 1983), 9; "FOE Workshop, 8-10 October, 1978," DAL-EAC, box 28.15.

[215]"A Soft Energy Path for Nova Scotia," EAC press release, 24 November, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 28.14; Even the press noted the elite status of the audience for the soft path effort: Michael Shea at the CBC called the Halifax event a "bauble of the rich" and pointed out that nearly all of the attendees earned 20,000 or more annually: Sylvia Mangalam to Michael Shea, December, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 42.9.

set was undertaken in 1980, this time funded by Environment Canada and EMR, and the results published in 1983 as *2025: Soft Energy Futures for Canada*. It was by the lead authors' own admission a remarkably conservative document, explicitly disavowing calculation of the social and environmental costs of various technological options in favour of a strictly economic calculus based on projections of future energy demand drawn from Statistics Canada's and EMR's economic models. Political considerations were absent as well. Amory and Hunter Lovins wrote in the introduction that "this Canadian study's technical assumptions are so conservative that only a concerted drive for *in*efficient energy use and deliberate *suppression* of cost-effective renewable sources could achieve a Canadian energy system needing more fossil or nuclear fuel than is calculated here."[216] Neither they nor the authors suggested what to do if such a policy did in fact prevail.[217]

One of the intriguing practices of the FOE study was called "backcasting," another term borrowed from Lovins' work. Recognizing that typical economic forecasts subsume the categories of what can happen and what should happen into the seemingly objective category of what probably will happen, backcasters pick a desired economic condition at some point in the future and attempt to determine how and if it can be achieved. The subjectivity of desirability and probability are acknowledged, and feasibility comes to the fore. So do the author's assumptions about what is politically palatable. In the case of the FOE study, a hypothetical Canadian economy in the year 2025 provided a "desirable" end-point in which the "hard" technologies (central, large-scale, non-renewable, and environmentally destructive) were foregone. In practice, this

[216]Amory Lovins and Hunter Lovins, "Introduction," in Robert Bott, et al, *Life After Oil* (Edmonton: Hutig, 1983), 4. (emphasis in original)
[217]Bott, *Life After Oil*, 18-19.

meant that the authors ruled out only nuclear energy, arctic oil, and coal liquifaction as unacceptable.[218] For the sake of a convincing future scenario, it also meant that the appropriate scale of acceptable technologies disappeared in the analysis, along with questions of ownership, whole-system analysis (including non-energy resources), and any doubts about continued economic growth. Considered politically impractical, those ideas fell outside the category of the "pragmatic."[219] The Nova Scotian segment of the study for example, Susan Holtz' own work, shared the general premise of "strong economic growth and substantial increases in material standards of living" and assumed an increased industrial output for the province of 1.3 to 1.9 % per annum, as well as a 50 % increase in population.[220]

The *2025* feasibility study, addressed in large part to an audience within government, was intended to lay a foundation for policy. Its omissions provide a sense of just what Canada's first national-level, general interest, nominally independent environmental coalition felt it needed to sacrifice in order to be heard at the end of the 1970s. One of the most obvious omissions was the matter of political agitation and social change. The EAC and its Canadian allies wished as much as ever for an equitable and clean energy system in the country, but an apolitical feasibility study in which none of the scenarios approaches the goal of a conserver society -- not even one so conservatively defined as in the description Holtz and Susan Mayo of the EAC gave in 1979: a "higher

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[218] *Ibid*, 15-21.
[219] "Special Report: A Soft Energy Path for Canada," *Alternatives* 12:1 (Fall, 1984).
[220] Susan Holtz, *2025: Soft Energy Futures for Canada, Volume 3: A Soft Energy Path for Nova Scotia* (Ottawa: Energy, Mines and Resources, 1983). The population of the province in fact grew approximately 8.7 percent from 1981 to 2011. Statistics Canada, *Census divisions and subdivisions, population, occupied private dwellings, private households and census and economic families in private households, selected social and economic characteristics, Nova Scotia* (Toronto: Statistics Canada, 1983), <http://archive.org/details/1981959851983engfra> (accessed May, 2013).

efficiency" society with less material throughput[221] -- and which carefully avoids any hint of lifestyle changes was nonetheless a far cry from the kind of populist, limits-aware environmentalism that initially responded to the threat of a nuclear facility on Stoddard Island in 1973. By demonstrating the supposed ease of the transition to a soft energy path, the study's authors hoped to force bureaucrats to acknowledge its viability and justify any different choice of energy policy; in reality, they removed the need for anyone to seriously address the SEP. Presenting the soft path as not only possible but profitable encouraged, if anything, a feeling that the usual mechanisms of a market economy should produce the desired society with little or no public encouragement.

1979: "It Can Happen Here"

While *Energy and People* gave the Halifax-based anti-nuclear activist network a chance to set the agenda in discussions of energy policy, the luxury of doing so proved short-lived. The years 1976 and 1977 saw the resurgence of participation in the Maritime Energy Corporation as a viable policy option for Nova Scotia and the beginning of talks to that end between the Nova Scotia Power Corporation, New Brunswick Electric Power Corporation, and federal department of Energy, Mines, and Resources.[222] Word that Ottawa would move to exempt AECL projects from the new federal environmental assessment program -- and news that NSPC might have already been searching for a nuclear plant site in the central or northeastern areas of the province since 1974 -- compounded the renewed sense of urgency.[223] Hatfield's government had committed New

[221]"Interview with Susan Mayo and Susan Holtz," *Dartmouth Free Press,* 31 January, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 39.7.
[222]"Energy Corporation Urged for Maritimes," *Chronicle Herald,* 20 October, 1976, 1.
[223]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 14 April, 1977, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 21; EAC

Brunswick to a policy of electricity exports to the US northeast, and EMR's newest "energy strategy," according to Susan Holtz' assessment, "blatantly exclud[ed] political, social, and environmental considerations," as well as other forms of energy, in favour continually expanding the supply of electric power produced in Canada.[224] With a majority of the decision-making power between them, it seemed that NBEPC and EMR might turn the proposed regional utility into little more than an eastern subsidiary of AECL, and potentially remove the ability of the provincial government in Halifax to reject nuclear energy proposals. Facing the possibility of losing what small influence they had already gained over the province's energy policy, the Halifax network increasingly turned to their federal connections in hope of ending Ottawa's love affair with one of its most protected and promoted agencies. In the rest of the province, however, a new popular activism began to take root, and it provided the basis of the burst of political pressure that scuttled the regional utility proposal for good after 1979.

Ironically, part of the explanation for the new intensity of local activism lies with the same federal connection sought in Halifax. Offers of funding from Ottawa to small local groups willing to focus on renewable energy and conservation tended to distract activists from anti-nuclear activism, while reinforcing their local character. New Brunswickers opposed to the Point Lepreau project suggested that the federal government was using targeted funding to "defuse strong polarized resistance to nuclear power in particular and large scale energy projects in general."[225] If so, it was a successful strategy:

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press release, 11 June, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3432, number 19.

[224] *Jusun* 5:5, November, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 28.14.

[225] *Nuclear Reaction,* 9-11 June, 1978.
Many directed the same critique at EMR's Committee on Nuclear Issues in the Community, created in 1978 "to ease fears" among the public. An ecologist among its founding members promptly resigned from the panel of nuclear apologists, but FOE's David Brooks did later join, along with Greenpeace's Patrick Moore: "Committee on Nuclear Issues in the Community," March, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume

during most of the late 1970s, new energy activist groups in Nova Scotia struggled to muster public pressure on elected officials, to imitate the success of forestry activists in Cape Breton, and to lift their political profile beyond basic energy conservation advocacy. That was true even when some of their founding members were keen to make a more direct attack on the political scene, as Paul Armstrong was for the Fundy group People, Tides, and Energy in 1978.[226] Both the Annapolis Valley Energy Centre and the Amherst Energy Conservation Information Centre were new to the provincial scene in 1978 and looked to the well-established EAC for guidance, learning from the Centre's staff how to access federal funds and how to undermine the nuclear sales pitch with talk of alternative technologies and energy conservation. Even veteran SSEPA activists began to pursue the funded information centre model during those years.[227]

Unexpected circumstances turned this low-profile wave of local energy conservation activism into just what EMR seemed eager to avoid: a renaissance of anti-nuclear political pressure. The Stoddard Island proposal was long dead at the beginning of 1979, but another nuclear island was about to make world headlines: the accident at Three Mile Island generating station in Pennsylvania on 28 March, 1979 reinvigorated popular opposition to nuclear energy everywhere and a political style of energy activism in Nova Scotia. In the aftermath of Three Mile Island and with construction on New Brunswick's first Point Lepreau reactor at a peak of activity (along with speculation on

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3422, number 1.

[226]Paul Armstrong to unknown recipient, 5 May, 1978, DAL-EAC, box 28.1.

[227]Tricia O'Brien, AVEC, to "Susan(s)," EAC, 17 April, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 19; Hattie Perry to Tony Reddin, HOPE (PEI), 21 December, 1977, PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 1. There was also by 1978 a group in Antigonish, the "alternative energy group," that followed a similar path without creating a "centre" of any sort, and a Cape Breton Alternate Energy Society, a Fundy Solar Research group, and other smaller congregations: Sister Donna Brady to Susan Holtz, 12 January, 1978, DAL-EAC, box 42.9; Notes from EMR Office of Energy Conservation Atlantic Group Workshop, 23-25 February, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 27.

the expected second reactor), new groups took on a more explicitly political and anti-nuclear character. One of the first and most active began in the Annapolis Valley, much of which lies geographically closer to Point Lepreau than to Halifax and, as the new group liked to point out, downwind of Lepreau as well. The Fundy Area Concern for Tomorrow (FACT) group began at a meeting on nuclear energy organized by the provincial New Democratic Party, held by odd coincidence on the very day of the meltdown in Pennsylvania. Within a few weeks a non-political follow-up meeting was held to formally launch FACT, which proceeded to bombard provincial and municipal politicians (and the general public) with the message that nuclear power was unnecessary, unsafe, and most of all unethical, especially from the perspective of the farming communities of the Valley that stood to bear the brunt of contamination from any Three Mile Island type accident at Point Lepreau, without ever having had a chance to even comment on the project in New Brunswick.[228]

The remainder of the year passed in similar fashion, with mass movement anti-nuclear activism at every turn. Concerned Citizens of Caledonia, Opponents of Nuclear Energy, Citizens Against a Radioactive Environment (CARE), and more stand-alone groups arrived, as well as anti-nuclear committees from the Black United Front Yarmouth, Yarmouth Women's Institute, Cape Breton District Labour Council, North Shore Organic Growers Association, and more again.[229] The local character of activism

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[228]Barb Taylor to Susan Holtz, 31 March, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.3; Barb Taylor to Ian MacPherson (federal candidate), 10 April, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.3; FACT committee to Premier Buchanan and all MLAs, April, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.3; FACT (David Simon) to all Councillors, Commissioners, and planning advisors in Annapolis County and the towns of Annapolis Royal, Bridgetown, Digby, Lawrencetown, Kingston, and Middleton, n.d. [April-May, 1979], DAL-EAC, box 41.3; George deAlth to Susan Holtz, May/June, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.3. The group reported 16 core members and strong public support in 1979, enough that they could later split into eastern and western branches: "FACT Newsletter," October, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.3.

[229]"MEC (NS)," PANS-EAC, volume 3423, number 29; "HOPE of Colchester County brochure," 1979,

remained unchanged, but the drive to cooperate and to take the fight to Halifax and Ottawa surged. The basic critique of the modern consumer economy -- once relegated to the nearly invisible local energy centres -- returned to visible public presence, though now in the shadow of a more centralist, technocratic national alternative energy movement. The Cape Breton Alternate Energy Society declared its philosophy to be "one of relative deprivation and changing ways of living," and set about to convince the island population to adopt it,[230] while EAC member Ron Loucks wrote to the premier with a lengthy exposition of consumer society's degrading effect on human happiness and enclosed a copy of Dennis Meadows' *Alternatives to Growth*.[231] Loucks did not represent the public view of the energy committee, but in other respects the EAC followed along with the new popular movement. The dominant narrative in which all participated was a return to public political pressure based on fear of nuclear disaster and a defense of one's immediate community, one's place. The title of one widely distributed leaflet told readers, "It Can Happen Here," while the SSEPA put words into action by releasing balloons at Point Lepreau, several of which were soon picked up in the Annapolis Valley.[232]

The climactic event in a year of anti-nuclear protest occurred at the Maritime premiers' conference in Brudenell, PEI, on 4 June, 1979. Having assembled to discuss privately the details of a regional utility, the three premiers were reluctant to accommodate requests for a meeting with ENGO leaders. As a result, nine days ahead of the event, the collected anti-nuclear groups of the three provinces, acting under the name of the Maritime Energy Coalition, called for a rally outside the resort in Brudenell. 600 to

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PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 21.

[230]John Morrison, "NS Energy Awards application for CBAES," 1978/79, DAL-EAC, box 42.9.

[231]Dr. Ron Loucks to Premier Buchanan, 7 April, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 14.

[232]*It Can Happen Here*, leaflet, May, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 16; Hattie Perry to the premier and all MLAs, 11 April, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.3.

800 people answered.[233] Unable to ignore the crowd, Hatfield, Buchanan, and MacLean made a very brief appearance on the steps of the hall and spent ten minutes accepting a four-point statement from a quartet of rally leaders, including Susan Holtz and Elizabeth May, two EAC Board members representing Nova Scotia and the Island of Cape Breton, respectively.[234] With the rally coming barely two months after the accident at Three Mile Island, the number of participants is not altogether surprising. Nor is the fact that the three premiers wished to be seen to appreciate their concerns (even if New Brunswick's Hatfield was "clearly upset," according to the EAC's post-rally report).[235] What the event demonstrates best is the extent to which conservative, bureaucratically agreeable, and scientifically optimistic statements had become the default rhetoric of the anti-nuclear coalition's leadership, to the exclusion of the limits to growth. As one of Susan Holtz' collaborators in Nova Scotia put it in a letter to her about a month before the rally, ideas about changing the capitalist consumer society "in their raw state [...] are probably unsalable" and "better introduced by the back door" of safety arguments and alternative energy research as a paying investment.[236] Such ideas, already in accord with the kind of action the EAC, FOE, and CEAC were seeking from Ottawa, prevailed in the correspondence of the EAC energy committee in early 1979, correspondence in which Holtz disclaimed as unreal "the allegedly widely different assumptions held by proponents/opponents about lifestyle and economic growth," and in which Elizabeth May advertised the Brudenell rally in support of "conservation and the development of

[233]Multiple newspaper clippings, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 16.
[234]Dana Silk represented New Brunswick and Tom Reddin Prince Edward Island. *The Eastern Graphic*, Clipping File, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 16.
[235]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 13 June, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23.
[236]J. Wilson Fitt to Susan Holtz, 27 April, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 14.

renewable alternative sources."[237] The four points delivered to the premiers at Brudenell, and the petition of thousands collected to support them, followed the same script, stressed the safety concerns and asked for a series of public inquiries into nuclear energy projects. "Realistic" alternative energy policies, the brief noted, are "ones which take into account general social goals such as economic growth, jobs, and environmental protection."[238]

Following the Brudenell rally, the resurgence of MEC anti-nuclear activism in the summer of 1979 included renewed protests against the Point Lepreau generating station, as well as against the nuclear fuel plant in Moncton, and a new front of resistance to heavy water shipments to Argentina. The rhetoric of place defence intensified, reviving the environmental justice arguments of the SSEPA's Stoddard Island campaign and their worldly view of shared responsibility for others' places as well, powerfully enough to obscure the differences between the economically radical and orthodox positions. And in little more than a year, the anti-nuclear backlash bore fruit: the lack of interest from Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia finally laid to rest any plans for a unified Maritime Energy Corporation (at least until the twenty-first century). A meeting between the premiers and the federal energy minister in October 1980 offered New Brunswick's Hatfield one last chance to convince the others to share the burden of Point Lepreau, but that was the end.[239]

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[237]Susan Holtz to Ursula Franklin, SCC, 9 January, 1978, DAL-EAC, box 32.7; Susan Holtz to Premier Buchanan, 18 June, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 44.1; Susan Holtz to Premier Buchanan, 24 May, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 16.

[238]Brief to the Premiers at Brudenell, 4 June, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 16. The petition they offered accumulated 15,000 names by early 1980: EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 12 March, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 4.

[239]David Folster, "Double Trouble - power bubble," *MacLean's,* 6 October, 1980, 38-39.

Conclusion

Though confirmation was longer in coming, in the estimation of the EAC's energy committee a week after the Brudenell rally, success was already at hand. “It seems,” they wrote, “that the Maritime Energy Corporation as a facilitator of nuclear energy is dead.”[240] In fact, their success -- the success of the Maritime Energy Coalition in its last real appearance as a genuine regional coalition -- was more complete even than that. Adrian Egbers claims that the strong public reaction following Three Mile Island was a crucial factor in the abandonment of plans for a second reactor at Point Lepreau.[241] In the glow of success, however, it is hard to believe that some of the long-standing activists did not feel a profound disappointment at what had been left behind in the race to Ottawa and Brudenell.

The limits thesis never disappeared from the province's environmental scene in the 1970s, but despite the occasional warnings that “the ethical and moral problems are overlooked in favour of technological problems,” its proponents did slowly and steadily recede into the shadow of a dominant, economically orthodox citizen-scientist mode of operations.[242] In the early days of anti-nuclear activism, the South Shore Environmental Protection Association's fight for environmental justice for local fishermen and Hattie Perry's adept use of public pressure against the premier sat next to the Nuclear Power Study Group's highly technical exposée of nuclear technology and the profound ethical convictions of the Halifax VOW that a high-energy consumer society could never be an equitable society. The nearer a group was to the scene of environmental risk, the more

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[240]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 13 June, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23.
[241]Adrian Egbers, “Going Nuclear: the origins of New Brunswick's nuclear industry, 1950-1983,” MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 2008.
[242]The warning came from Walt Patterson, in a letter to Susan Mayo, 12 November, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 29.

radical their activism tended to be, but all participated alike in pressure politics. By 1979 the sense of common purpose had dulled. A temporary resurgence of anti-nuclear political pressure based on feelings of personal vulnerability succeeded in finally killing the Maritime Energy Corporation in 1980 (and with it the common front of Maritime activists), but the environmental movement as a whole was far different from what it had been when the same sort of action crushed the Stoddard Island proposal on the rocks of Barrington Passage in 1973. Still primarily a common front of small local volunteer organizations, it now faced a division (still unrecognized as such) between a nascent mainstream that eschewed the radicalism of the counterculture or the uncomfortable predictions of the limits theory, and those who clung to both. "The dramatic language [of political radicalism and limits] which raised ecology-consciousness 10 years ago is missing," wrote Amy Zierler, who claimed to see a brief resurgence of it in the nuclear debate. "The laws and procedures we drew up to institutionalize our concern swallowed up much of its spirit, without eliminating its causes."[243]

Led by the Halifax Friends Meeting and the Voice of Women, and especially by the small group of research-inclined activists behind Susan Holtz who eventually formed the core of the EAC's energy committee, the network of anti-nuclear environmentalists based in the city embraced the laws and procedures of the bureaucratic system and turned toward rigorous analysis of nuclear safety and promotion of research into alternative energy technologies. They began to downplay, then conceal, and finally denigrate as "extreme" and "unacceptable" any arguments that focused on the unsustainability of an expanding capitalist economy and consumer society, and especially any that placed

[243] Amy Zierler, "Laws to Protect our Environment are Feeble. They Just Don't Work," *Atlantic Insight* 1:10 (December, 1979), 44-49.

government in the role of villain.[244] Apart from the generous continuing support of the Halifax Friends Meeting and their national coreligionists, more and more of the group's funding came from research contracts with the provincial and federal governments. Very much reminiscent of the Quaker notion that everyone has the potential to access divine truth, no matter how committed to a wrong course of action they may be at the moment, this science-inclined network sought relentlessly to access and influence the ranks of the provincial and federal bureaucracies and corporate and political decision-makers, and by mid-decade the constant refrain of "respectability" began to appear in the documents of the EAC, a group derided as "ecology freaks" by the premier himself only a few years before. Susan Holtz described the change herself in 1977:

> I've come to feel that one of my most important roles is acting as a human link between people and ideas usually opposed or not in contact, notably environmentalists and decision-makers in the civil service, the Power Corporation, or politicians. I feel that to change, at an emotional level, a situation from one in which people feel they're opponents to one in which they feel they're working on the same problem but with differing views is to change radically the possible outcome not only of that situation but of all future situations.[245]

In September of 1978, Holtz travelled to Arlington, Virginia, to attend a Solar Energy Research Institute symposium, one of very few Canadian attendees. There she heard Lee Schipper of California warn the assembly to "honestly follow through the consequences of some of today's attitudes and policies (right or wrong) that our friends

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[244]Notes from interview with minister Bill Gillis, by Susan Holtz, 29 October, 1977, PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 11.

[245]Personal Report, Susan Holtz, 6 January, 1977, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 34. The Board of Directors explicitly validated the strategy of "affecting policy decisions" by building the Centre's "credible and respectable image and develop[ing] a sound basis for the policy options it presents." EAC, "Ecology Action Centre: A Public Interest Group Using Conservation and Renewable Energy," n.d. [c.1979], PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 4.

are advocating, lest we find that our friends have led us to our enemies."[246] Back home, eight months later, she sat in attendance at an EMR workshop on Energy Conservation and Community Economic Development in Truro and heard Dan McInnis turn the story of the Antigonish Cooperative Movement into an even more explicit cautionary tale for advocates of a conserver society. The Antigonish Movement, he said, was "ultimately crushed by government in its response to profit-oriented business."[247] Both views of activism were utterly different from her own; as far as Holtz was concerned, and as far as the EAC and the Halifax network of energy activists was concerned, environmentalists had no enemies. Within a few years, however, even she would find some.

[246]Solar Energy Research Institute symposium, 12-13 September, 1978, DAL-EAC, box 28.13.
[247]"Workshop on Energy Conservation and Community Economic Development," 24-26 May, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 32.14.

Chapter 4 - Power From the People: the anti-chemical campaigns

A lasting environmental movement in Nova Scotia may have begun with opposition to nuclear power, but it waited on a more immediate threat to finally expand from one end of the province to the other. In 1976 a campaign to prevent the provincial government and Stora Forest Industries spraying the insecticide fenitrothion over tens of thousands -- soon millions -- of acres of Cape Breton Island achieved massive popular support. It created, for many, the appearance of an environmental movement springing up from nearly nothing, brought about entirely by a small number of recent immigrants. Yet the initial success of popular resistance to industrial forestry was anything but *sui generis* or foreign; it depended on the environmental activist organizations built up since 1970, as well as on the support of the conservation movement and on an even longer-standing quiet resistance to chemical forestry and agriculture among life-long Nova Scotians and recent arrivals alike. The use of chemicals in forestry was a world-wide issue, however, and the provincial insecticide controversy morphed into an international herbicide controversy at the end of the 1970s, in which links with environmental groups abroad helped ecomodernist activists in Nova Scotia change the manner of opposition to industrial forestry from mass political pressure toward the more politically legitimate channels of direct lobbying and court challenge. So too did the response from government evolve, from mere developmentalist secrecy to overt anti-environmentalist hostility, accusing activists of economic naivete and outsider status, especially after the election of the Buchanan government in 1978. In the end, the change of tactics, produced in part by some activists' desire for official recognition and in part by the provincial

government's own strategy of intransigence, proved both disastrous and divisive to the movement, as the nascent mainstream pursued their chosen path into the courts, a forum into which their nonmodernist peers could not follow.

The occasion for the initial burst of forestry activism was a massive spruce budworm irruption, the product of a set of economic and biological changes in the Nova Scotian forest reaching back more than seventy years. The pulp and paper industry came to Nova Scotia in the late nineteenth century, and from the beginning -- from at least the 1899 Lease Act -- it was encouraged and legislatively accommodated by a provincial government eager to attract foreign investment. Rarely was this more true than at the end of the 1950s, when in order to attract a new mill the recently elected government of Robert Stanfield conceded a series of demands by the Swedish papermaker Stora Kopparberg that left the corporation in control of approximately one million acres of Crown forestland on Cape Breton Island and in the three eastern counties of the mainland. While not significantly different from the sort of lease arrangements previously negotiated by Mersey Paper and Scott Paper in more western areas of the province, the Stora lease was very large and went some way toward tipping the balance of power in the forest industry in favour of the large pulp corporations and away from lumberers and private woodlot owners. The 1965 Scott Maritime Limited Pulp Agreement Act went the rest of the way. Certainly the opposition in the Legislature thought the deal would “be a millstone about the necks of the people of Nova Scotia for many years to come, and [would] serve to depress, not only the price received for pulpwood off the Crown lands of the province, but by analogy off the lands owned by small woodlot owners in the

province, for 30 years to come."[248] It was a prescient prediction, but incomplete. Domination of the market by three large mills was not the only consequence of Stora's arrival in Nova Scotia.

The political influence of the pulp and paper industry grew apace with its economic power. The provincial government wished to emulate the success of its New Brunswick counterpart in promoting industrial forestry, and ended up paying a similar price in ecological liabilities. Conservation law felt the change almost immediately. Diameter limits imposed (albeit rather laxly) by the province's primary conservation statute, the Small Tree Act, threatened the asset value of large transferrable leases like Stora's.[249] Not long after Stora's arrival, the Act was repealed and replaced with a progressive-seeming piece of legislation called the Forest Improvement Act.[250] Had it been promptly declared, the new legislation would have empowered local Forest Improvement Boards, which might have given small landowners a counterweight against the large pulp companies' ability to hold out for the lowest possible price for wood. But it was not, and in practice Nova Scotia's forest industry operated under no major conservation statute at all until 1976. What that meant in practical terms was clearcutting and -- given the size of the leases -- clearcutting on a scale never before experienced here. Despite some doubts, government foresters went along with the change but advised, at minimum, cutting older stands first, especially on the Cape Breton highlands, where about 440,000 acres of mature forest in the "Big Lease" had been left mostly unattended by the prior lease-holder, the Oxford Paper Company. The economic interests of the

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[248]Nova Scotia *Debates* (1960), 73-4. Cited in L. Anders Sandberg, "Forest Policy in Nova Scotia: The Big Lease, Cape Breton Island, 1899-1960," *Acadiensis* 20:2 (Spring 1991), 105-128 (quotation at 126).
[249]*Statutes of Nova Scotia*, c.6, 1942.
[250]*Statutes of Nova Scotia*, c.5, 1962.

industry, however, dictated cutting the most accessible stands first, leaving the rest as "standing inventory" for later years and for leverage against private pulp suppliers. Building roads into remote forests was expensive work, and time-limited incentives such as the tax holiday offered to Scott Paper in 1965 encouraged even more profligate pursuit of the nearest and easiest trees.[251]

The spruce budworm came to Nova Scotia somewhat earlier than the pulp and paper industry, likely around the time that the first spruce trees came, some centuries after the retreat of the glacier, and since then it has periodically irrupted in population blooms whenever the climate and the proportion of old spruce and fir trees in the forest allowed. During the 1950s an outbreak on Cape Breton Island was allowed to eat itself into collapse despite the availability of chemical insecticides, largely on the advice of the Assistant to the Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, Lloyd Hawboldt.[252] The highlands forest, however, remained in near-ideal condition for budworm outbreaks, and grew ever more so as a result of Stora's cutting practices: after decades of disuse, following prior decades of ill-use, and a dose of natural fluctuation in the form of a disease called birch die-back, the Cape Breton softwood forest in 1970 was 62 percent fir and 90 percent "mature" or older, according to government surveys.[253] Foresters who had spent years warning government and urging action to forestall the natural and predictable result of

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[251]Harry Thurston, "Prest's Last Stand," in Harry Thurston, *The Sea Among the Rocks* (East Lawrencetown: Pottersfield Press, 2002), 184-220; L. Anders Sandberg, "Forest Policy in Nova Scotia: The Big Lease, Cape Breton Island, 1899-1960," *Acadiensis* 20:2 (Spring 1991), 105-128; Memo Lloyd Hawboldt to Burgess, 29 December, 1975, Department of Lands and Forests fonds, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, mg20 [hereafter DLF], volume 890, number 1; Memo N.A. Wiksten to E.S. Atkins, 16 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2.

[252]Susan Mayo to Lloyd Hawboldt, 15 October, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 42.5; L.S. Hawboldt, "Toward 'budworm-proofing' the forests of Nova Scotia," 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2.

[253]Department of Lands and Forests, *Nova Scotia Forest Inventory: Cape Breton Island Subdivision 1970* (Halifax: Lands and Forests, 1970), 17, 25.

those conditions knew it, but so did Stora.[254] The corporation simply held a different view of the forest, one in which the asset, the "standing inventory," could be protected from harm when need arose, rather than through expensive preventative measures.

There was nothing new about the budworm irruption in 1975, just as there was nothing new about the idea of using herbicides to kill off hardwood competition in softwood plantations in the early 1980s.[255] All that had changed since 1955 was the economic and political clout of the pulp and paper industry, which saw Cape Breton's forests not as a natural system to be managed and fitted to human needs when possible, much less a system to which human needs must be fitted, but through the eyes of modern capitalism as an asset to be preserved from depreciation (by the cheapest method available) for the sake of market dominance. The political and environmental histories of the province came together in one extended forestry conflict, from 1976 to 1983, but it was never about forestry or budworms or "conifer release." It was about the definition of the forest as asset, natural resource, or home place, and about the contest for the power to dictate the choice. The great conflict among environmentalists, in turn, was all about the failure to recognize what they were really fighting for.

"Fatal to Children": Insecticide Spraying in Cape Breton

The endemic spruce budworm had indeed eaten itself into obscurity on Cape Breton Island in the 1950s. Although many, perhaps most, residents recognized the

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[254]L. Anders Sandberg, "Forest Policy in Nova Scotia: The Big Lease, Cape Breton Island, 1899-1960," *Acadiensis* 20:2 (Spring 1991), 124, note 86; Memo N.A. Wiksten to E.S. Atkins, 16 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2. Wiksten was blunt, insisting that "the company knew what they bought."

[255]Nothing new about resistance to the idea of chemical forestry, either. New Brunswick presented a quite different political context but a similar system of industrial forestry, and reaction to it among scientists, in the 1950s and 1960s: Mark McLaughlin, "Green Shoots: Aerial Insecticide Spraying and the Growth of Environmental Consciousness in New Brunswick, 1952-1973," *Acadiensis* 40:1 (Winter/Spring, 2011), 3-23.

budworm as a New Brunswick problem, there was not an immediate recognition of the incipient irruption in the summer of 1975, when fir trees on the highlands began to turn rust red.[256] Foresters working for Nova Scotia Forest Industries (NSFI), Stora's Canadian corporate identity, certainly recognized the signs, however, and before the season ended, had made a request to the provincial department of Lands and Forests to begin aerial spraying over 100,000 acres with the same chemical insecticide, fenitrothion, in use in New Brunswick. The campaign of opposition to this spray proposal was the agent of unification that brought environmental activists from across the mainland and Cape Breton Island into collaboration with each other, and both of them into contact with the wildlife and forest conservation movement.

Initial resistance to NSFI's plans centred on Halifax and a swiftly-formed coalition of new environmentalists and older wildlife and resource conservation groups. During the winter of 1976, members of the EAC joined representatives from five conservation groups to organize a debate-style symposium on the budworm issue, where speakers in favour of a chemical spray program essayed their arguments against the anti-spray position. It was as even-handed a format as one could imagine.[257] The chief organizer from the EAC, Jim Reid, may have absorbed the lessons of the previous year's *Energy and People* conference; no resolutions from the floor would marr the objectivity of this symposium. Perhaps his coalition partners encouraged, rather than challenged, the Centre's quest for political respectability; certainly there was a wide range of opinions apparent among the six groups, who admitted in their joint statement that “the problem exists [and] some of us became convinced that aerial spraying of insecticides may at

[256]Elizabeth May, *Budworm Battles* (Halifax: Four East, 1982), 8.
[257]*Halifax Field Naturalists Newsletter* 3, January-February, 1976, 11-14.

present be the only recourse in some circumstances where there are extreme social and economic imperatives."[258] Whatever the reason for its equivocal presentation, the symposium made desperately poor political theater. Not long afterward, the Department of Lands and Forests registered its own opposition to pesticide sprays, using much the same data and language they had advanced in the 1950s (delivered by the same experts), but no one credited the activists with any influence over the Department's position. Nor did it make much difference. Within a few weeks the provincial Cabinet met and over-ruled the department's foresters: NSFI would be permitted to spray fenitrothion on the Cape Breton highlands.[259]

The man who drafted the joint statement on behalf of the six Halifax groups was one of those who plainly did not think the chemical option was necessary, or even viable, and appreciated a more antagonistic approach toward government. Unlike the others, however, Scott Cunningham had access to information about the health risks of aerial pesticide sprays that he decided was better used to spring some bad publicity on the spray effort, a mission made all the more urgent by Cabinet's decision to grant NSFI's request. As a doctoral student in biochemistry at Dalhousie University and a member of the EAC, Cunningham was aware of the research of Dalhousie's Dr. John Crocker into the incidence of Reyes Syndrome among children exposed to pesticide sprays in New Brunswick. Rare, difficult to diagnose, and often swiftly fatal, the syndrome had appeared in several children living near spray areas, prompting Crocker to investigate the

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[258]Scott Cunningham, "Aerial Spraying plan dangerous," *Chronicle Herald,* 1 March, 1976, 7; Susan Mayo, 12 April, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 42.5; "The Spruce Budworm Problem," April, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 24.5; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 17 December, 1975, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 19.

[259]"Cabinet approves budworm spraying request," *Chronicle Herald,* 27 March, 1976, 1; "The Spruce Budworm Problem," April, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 24.5; Lloyd Hawboldt to Burgess, 29 December, 1975, DLF, volume 890, number 1.

cluster of cases. Later research would reveal more of the exact mechanism of the disease, but by the winter of 1976, he had already determined that exposure to the petrochemical emulsifiers used to dilute the insecticide and make it stick to trees could enhance the virulence of otherwise common and mostly innocuous viruses. The research was incomplete -- Crocker himself was not comfortable at first discussing it publicly -- but it was advanced enough to be powerfully persuasive in the public arena, and Cunningham began searching for someone in the press to break the story.[260] He found Parker Donham at the *Cape Breton Post*.

In Parker Donham and Scott Cunningham, the Cape Breton and Halifax movements to oppose a spray program met, though they had otherwise little contact through the first year of the controversy. From the beginning the Cape Bretoners had a more directly political approach to activism than the Halifax groups. Resistance in Cape Breton had not got underway until February, when the provincial government decided to approve the spray. Then, working quickly, a loosely-organized group of residents from communities around the highlands began circulating a petition asking the Minister of Environment, John Hawkins, to approve hearings by the Environmental Control Council before allowing NSFI to go ahead, a deliberately moderate demand that would have meant the cancellation of the spray program anyway. At the same time, they began collecting information on the budworm, chemical insecticides, and industrial forestry for use in direct appeals to the people of Cape Breton. News of Donham's impending Reyes Syndrome story at the *Cape Breton Post* soon reached the group, and at their first meeting in Baddeck in March they decided to coordinate their use of public pressure with his headline. When it came, on 31 March, 1976, the front-page headline demonstrated

[260]May, *Budworm Battles*, 16, 28-29.

Donham's own understanding of the power of public outrage. It read, "Fatal To Children."[261]

The pressure tactics of the newly-christened activist group, Cape Bretoners Against the Spray, bore fruit immediately. Overwhelmed by a barrage of protests by telephone, Premier Regan and his Minister of Public Health, Cape Breton lawyer Allan Sullivan, emerged from an emergency Cabinet debate the day after the *Post*'s bombshell to announce the cancellation of the spray program. From the initial relief of the DLF's declared opposition, through Cabinet's approval and subsequent reversal, the whole fight -- the first of the "budworm battles" -- had taken only two months.

The two centres of opposition never had time to collaborate that winter, but apart from their different tactics, the Halifax and Cape Breton activists were not so different. Both were essentially local movements with few outside connections, comprised of both long-time Nova Scotians and a conspicuous number of more recent arrivals, which prompted both groups to attempt to forestall the "outsider" label they knew would be directed at them. In Halifax the attempt contributed to the retreat into scientific respectability, itself a form of localism in the province's administrative centre. In Cape Breton it led to the avoidance of publicity by the most recent immigrants. Elizabeth May, for example, who would eventually become the face of the anti-spray movement, admitted a few years later that she initially stayed in the background, aware of her problematic image as a young American woman only two years into this country.[262] In both areas as well, activists drew on links with local wildlife conservation organizations and with ongoing campaigns against the use of biocides on farms, roadsides, and city

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[261]Parker B. Donham, "Fatal to Children: Disease May be Linked to Budworm Spray," *Cape Breton Post,* 31 March, 1976, 1; May, *Budworm Battles*, 19.
[262]May, *Budworm Battles*, 12.

streets and parks. In fact, as 1976 dragged on and more of the province had time to notice and discuss the flurry of activity during the previous winter, more associations cropped up, and more half-forgotten chemical controversies gained new vigour, especially the Warren farm episode.

The Warren family's frightening story had only become more so in the intervening years, as illnesses persisted or worsened. (Robyn Warren's brother would die of a rare soft-tissue sarcoma in 1978.) Along with their tale came a reminder of the failure of activists in the early 1970s to adequately defend the "ecological logic" of epidemiology. Ian McLaren of the NSRC began explaining in April, in terms similar to those John Crocker would soon use to explain his own work, that "nothing short of taking several dozen children and exposing them to the same procedure would ever resolve the question of 'proof'."[263] The government's role in scattering the first anti-spray movement and stymieing Robyn Warren's efforts to learn even the names of the chemicals contaminating his farm was also remembered, especially among the network of organic farmers who participated in the initial petition campaign in Cape Breton. In fact, over the years to come, how far to trust apparent allies in government would become one of the greatest fault-lines of the anti-industrial forestry campaign.

"The General Public's Over-reaction"[264]

Within the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and the Department of Lands and Forests during the 1970s, battles were fought analogous to the battle between NSFI

[263]Ian McLaren, NSRC, "Spruce Budworm Spraying - human health hazard," *Mail-Star,* 2 April, 1976, 7; David Folster, "The agonizing fight over budworm spray," *Atlantic Insight* 1:3 (June, 1979), 34-36.
[264]Proceedings of Regional Meeting "Forest Protection Against Spruce Budworm in Maine, Quebec, and New Brunswick," 2 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2.

and the local activists in Cape Breton and Halifax, though they usually went unnoticed outside of government. In 1976, Lloyd Hawboldt, still Assistant to the Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, led a faction of foresters and entomologists opposed to chemical sprays against the efforts of his department's Director of Forest Planning, R.M. Bulmer, and a pro-spray group.[265] Both groups attempted to win over the Deputy Minister: the anti-spray faction relied on Hawboldt's decades-old argument against the "vain attempt to offset a natural trend," while the pro-spray side pressed the advantage of its alliance with industry and with natural resource departments in Maine, New Brunswick, and Quebec, where chemical spraying was already in practice.[266] Though the anti-spray position enjoyed greater success, it was a heavily-qualified opposition. The forester's professional commitment to the ideal of environmental management and control and to the preservation of his status as an expert was well in evidence: no one in the department was willing to advocate that the spray option be removed from the table for good. Hawboldt himself worked to restrain his allies' more strident statements in order not to "sabotage the department if it chooses to spray in 1977" or to allow activists in New Brunswick to "use us for their own particular purposes."[267] Despite being so completely submerged in the politics of forestry, and strongly opposed to a spray program, the department's foresters remained thoroughly committed to modernist thinking and could not countenance what they saw as the "politicization" of the expert's natural right to decide.

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[265]Lloyd Hawboldt to Gary Saunders, 14 May, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 1; R.M. Bulmer to E.S. Atkins, 16 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2. The anti-spray group included Gary Saunders and N.A. Wiksten, the pro-spray included Ed Cloney and E.S. Atkins, Planning Services Coordinator.

[266]Lloyd Hawboldt, "Toward 'budworm-proofing' the forests of Nova Scotia," 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2; R.M. Bulmer to Hollis Routledge, NSFI, 16 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2; Proceedings of Regional Meeting "Forest Protection Against Spruce Budworm in Maine, Quebec, and New Brunswick," 2 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2; The other jurisdictions' spray programs were established since 1954 (Maine), 1952 (New Brunswick), and 1970 (Quebec).

[267]Lloyd Hawboldt to Gary Saunders, 14 May, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 1.

The activities of the pro-spray faction within Lands and Forests were never curtailed, despite the Minister's decision to oppose NSFI's request. Their cooperation with industry began to bear fruit in the fall of 1976, as NSFI took the initiative against the activists ahead of the winter decision-making season. Their first approach took advantage of yet another jurisdictional rivalry and regulatory power struggle between the province's forest agency and its pro-spray federal counterpart. In late September, the Canadian Forestry Service released its predictions for the following year, forecasting a large increase in the budworm population. The Director of the Maritime Forest Research Centre promptly recommended a preventative chemical spray.[268] A public meeting in Truro organized by Lands and Forests' Bulmer spread the news to the largest possible audience, presenting it as a disastrous consequence of the government's refusal to act sooner, rather than the expected progress of an insect population bloom.[269] A month later, another Forest Planning Division man, Ed Cloney, attended a regional meeting in Fredericton on "Forest Protection Against Spruce Budworm," where forest experts concluded -- somewhat contradictorily but again as publicly as possible -- that the harmful environmental effects of chemical insecticides "are insignificant, short-lived, and sensationalized by the general public's over-reaction -- but that environmental monitoring is essential in detecting any long range effects which may arise."[270]

The real offensive push came at the beginning of December. A report issued on the first of the month by the Budworm Committee of the Voluntary Planning Board recommended spraying, after an investigation led by John Dickey, a Halifax lawyer and

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[268]May, *Budworm Battles*, 27. Budworm forecasts are accomplished by counting the number of egg masses on conifer branches in the fall, which eggs will provide the following year's budworm population.
[269]Editorial, *Evening News,* n.d., Clipping File, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3469, number 8.
[270]Proceedings of Regional Meeting "Forest Protection Against Spruce Budworm in Maine, Quebec, and New Brunswick," 2 November, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 2.

President of NSFI's Nova Scotia holding company, and including as well the ever-present Mr. Bulmer as Lands and Forests' representative. Finally, the day after the release of the Voluntary Planning report, the President of Stora Kopparberg, Erik Sunbladt, arrived in Nova Scotia from Sweden with a bombshell announcement: without a campaign of chemical control against the budworm menace, he would surely be forced to shut down the paper mill in Port Hawkesbury within the next five years. To back up Sunbladt's claim, his employees at the mill had produced a 65-page report of their own detailing the future of pulpwood supply on Cape Breton and concluding with a demand for insecticide sprays over not 100,000 acres this time, but two million acres -- the entire island of Cape Breton.[271]

Environmental activists had not been idle since their precipitous victory in April, though most of the action during the summer was on the Halifax side of the still-disconnected Halifax - Cape Breton axis. What activity there was through the quieter months suggested that the urban activists had finally accepted that the provincial Cabinet's decision on spraying would "be an almost purely political one."[272] The EAC, Halifax Field Naturalists (HFN), and other groups that had worked together during the previous winter turned their attention to the press, and thus to the public, or worked to recruit other interested groups into a strong public lobby. As a result, when NSFI and its allies reignited the controversy in the fall, a host of newly interested parties reacted to the expanded spray proposal, and the Halifax and Cape Breton campaigns finally coalesced into a truly province-wide collaborative effort, with statements of support cropping up

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[271]Scott Paper, Bowater-Mersey, Minas basin Pulp and Power Co. Ltd., McLelan Lumber Company, Cobequid Lumber Company, to Vincent MacLean, Minister of Environment, 8 December, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 3.

[272]"Budworm Politics: while larvae sleep, political forces clash over spraying," *The 4th Estate,* 13 October, 1976, 4.

from the Municipal Council of Shelburne to the Women's Institute of Marion Bridge.[273]

If Halifax provided the organizational push, the most effective *action* in response to Sunbladt's ultimatum continued to originate from Cape Breton. There the Cape Bretoners Against the Spray met to plot strategy two days after his visit. This included, at the suggestion of Ron Caplan, editor of *Cape Breton's Magazine*, renaming their group Cape Breton Landowners Against the Spray (CBLAS), to emphasize their status as locals facing off against a foreign multinational. Their official response to NSFI's pro-spray blitz included a careful deconstruction of the mill's wood supply predictions by the ex-insurance accountant John May, and a report on "Alternatives to Spraying" written with the aid of Frank Reid, a leader of the anti-spray forces from the Victoria County Woodlot Owners and Operators Association. Reid, who had grown up in industrial Cape Breton, understood well the economic reality of the forest industry, where NSFI's large crown leases enabled the company to push down the prices paid to small woodlot owners. Spraying in the highlands, he insisted, was mainly an attempt to preserve the unused "standing inventory" that allowed the company to control the pulpwood market.[274] The CBLAS analysis met a favourable reception on Cape Breton and earned endorsements from primary producers associations across the island, but achieving recognition in the

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[273]Miss Lettice Edwards, Shelburne, to Lands and Forests, 6 December, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 3; Susan Mayo to Norma Mosher, Women's Institutes of Nova Scotia, 20 December, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 24.5; Susan Mayo to David Steadman, Association of Outdoor Nova Scotians, 23 December, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 24.5; Anne Wickens, SSEPA, to all Cabinet members, 2 December, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 24.5; Martin Haase to Ministers of Lands and Forests, Recreation, and Public Health, and the Premier, 3 December, 1976, DAL-EAC, box 24.5.

At the intended date of decision, the Department of Lands and Forests had logged 899 letters and signatures recieved in opposition to the 1977 spray request, including the above as well as the Inverness/Guysborough Presbytery of the United Church, the Cape Breton Metropolitan Alliance for Development, and DEVCO's Marine Farming Research Branch at baddeck. There were only 7 in favour: "Spruce Budworm Spray Program -1976," 15 December, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 1.

[274]May, *Budworm Battles*, 33, 45-46.

Halifax media proved more difficult.[275]

The anti-spray movement's break in Halifax came on 6 January, 1977, with a major press conference downtown. NSFI's move in late December to request a permit for the insecticide "Sevin" (carbaryl) in 1977, rather than fenitrothion, left environmentalists struggling to learn about the new chemical and share the information over the Christmas holiday. In Cape Breton they posted handbills in restaurants and post offices, but it was at the Halifax press conference that they put into practice what they had learned from watching the pulp company's attack on multiple fronts in the fall.[276] A new petition effort and announcement of support from the provincial Medical Society on the conference day helped draw and keep the media's attention long enough for activists to state their case. And cognizant that they could not rely on fear of Reyes Syndrome alone twice in a row, especially with the New Brunswick government working hard to discredit Dr. Crocker's findings, environmentalists struck all of NSFI's rhetorical weak points at once. Two woodlot association presidents, Frank Reid for Victoria County and Dan Alfred MacDonald for Inverness, presented their associations' positions, while John May spoke as a tourist operator. Biologist Ian McLaren joined Lloyd Hawboldt to offer a scientific perspective on forestry, and Dr. Earle Reid, Chief of Medicine at the Halifax Infirmary, discussed Reyes Syndrome and the other dangers posed by human exposure to pesticide chemicals. Together they argued that NSFI's proposal was unnecessary, iniquitous, uncertain of success, potentially counterproductive, and still possibly dangerous. Any pretense of objectivity was abandoned, and the event was a great publicity success.[277]

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[275]CBLAS Poster, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 28.14.
[276]Memo on CBLAS handbills, DLF, volume 890, number 4.
[277]Jon Everett, "More scary questions in the spray debate," *Atlantic Insight* 4:7 (July, 1982), 12; May, *Budworm Battles*, 57-59.

The province's much delayed decision on a 1977 spray program came almost four weeks after the anti-spray coalition's appeal to the Halifax media, and not before Premier Regan walked into an unexpected face-to-face meeting with activists, reminiscent of his visit to Barrington Passage in 1973. The Port Hawkesbury Chamber of Commerce might have been a refuge for NSFI's side of the fight -- certainly the mill turned out a large number of its employees for the Chamber's public meeting -- but the CBLAS turned out more of its own supporters. Nor were the millworkers necessarily the bulwark of support that the pulp company hoped for. Many followed the lead of Ken Calder, NSFI chemical engineer and the Landowners' best source of information from within the corporation.[278] If Reid's contribution to the CBLAS position can be taken as indicative, forest industry workers on Cape Breton well understood that economic desire, not ecological necessity, drove the company's push for a spray program. The combination of strong attendance by anti-sprayers and lukewarm opposition from the millworkers turned the event into an environmentalist set piece, with the premier himself as guest of honour. Not missing a chance to press the advantage, CBLAS released its phone poll results for the island of Cape Breton a day later, showing 75 percent of residents opposed to the spray. Results were swift, only this time it was not the Health Minister, or even the new Environment/Lands and Forests Minister Vince MacLean, but the premier himself who stepped up to announce the decision to refuse NSFI's request for a second time.[279]

The years 1977 and 1978 saw the refinement of environmentalists' use of the power of popular pressure. Appeals to the public along all possible lines of argument

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[278]Betty Peterson to Dorothy Norvell, 7 February, 1977, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3469, number 8; May, *Budworm Battles*, 74. Betty Peterson described the audience, which she put at above 500 and decidedly anti-spray, as "organic food growers, beekeepers, oystermen, owners of lobster pounds, mothers with children, small woodlot owners, [and] rugged oldsters."

[279]May, *Budworm Battles*, 76-77; "Spray Program Turned Down," *Chronicle Herald*, 4 February, 1977, 1.

obviated any need for consistency among arguments: the economic case for full industrial exploitation of the forest, but without chemicals, might sway one segment of the population, while the ecological case against all pulpwood-focused forestry practices could sway another group. So long as the objective was to convince the public, rather than the premier or any of his Ministers, any and all lines of argument would do. As a tactic for generating pressure on political leaders, it was hugely effective.[280] As the industry became progressively more antagonistic toward the Regan government, and MacLean in particular, anti-spray activists began to reach beyond provincial borders (imitating their industrial opponents) to recruit expert supporters, and Elizabeth May drifted toward the original Halifax-based coalition's conciliatory methods out of a desire to support MacLean's position.

The end of 1977 and the beginning of 1978 were Elizabeth May's coming-out season as the public face of the anti-spray movement. Having come to the attention of the media during another anti-spray coalition press conference, May then participated in a pair of televised debates that put her squarely in the public eye, a position she grew quickly to enjoy.[281] Further publicity came from a series of running debates for local audiences across the province, pitting May against Kingsley Brown, the maker of a NSFI-sponsored pro-spray documentary called *Mr. Regan's Choice*. Brown too had a measure of public recognition, at least among those employed in forestry. He had been in the early 1970s an advocate for small woodlot owners, and despite coming off worse in his broadcast exchange with May, still enjoyed a positive reputation in the province. By the spring of 1978, as the public awaited a third decision on a chemical spray program,

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[280]May reported that information from Vince MacLean put the final number of supporting names at more than 7,000 (versus 18 in favour of spraying): *Ibid*, 78.
[281]*Ibid*, 107-120.

May had already become a seasoned activist, an eager participant in government-sponsored consultations, and a convert to the economically and politically unthreatening style of activism advocated by the EAC. She also at times performed as a defender of the Regan government. Only a few years later she would remark on her position during this third protest season: "I believed then, and to this day, that they [Regan and MacLean] acted out of personal conscience and informed, rational judgement when they opposed spraying."[282]

On 17 March, May's faith appeared to be vindicated when MacLean once again refused to permit aerial insecticide spraying on Cape Breton Island. Even better, the following fall produced sound evidence (much to the distaste of the CFS) that the budworm irruption in Nova Scotia was finally collapsing on its own. Three years of effort had met apparently unlikely success; environmentalists had prevented Nova Scotia following New Brunswick's lead into a permanent spray program despite the industry's best efforts. They had won. Celebrating what they took for a new policy of ecological forestry, few activists took note of the fine print on the province's five-year $62 million investment in "silviculture." Far from accommodating the will of natural systems, the new policy encouraged replanting with "commercially desirable" species, especially white spruce and tamarack, in single aged, single species stands suitable for mechanical cutting, and suitable as well for future insect blooms. There was also too little recognition that an additional $35 million available to dry-store budworm killed wood over the following decade would effectively insulate NSFI from the negotiating power that the budworm had granted to small woodlot owners, and preserve the corporation's growing

[282] *Ibid*, 116.

political influence.[283] Finally, almost no one seemed to appreciate that the fine balance between pro- and anti-spray factions within the Department of Lands and Forests (as well as around the Cabinet table), which had lent such decisive power to activists' own orchestration of public pressure, could shift abruptly, or that the logic of industrial forestry guaranteed a return to the battlefield.

An Uncertain Relationship with Power

The position of government, either provincial or federal, had never been to side unequivocally with environmentalists. Rather, they wished to shape the movement. As early as 1976, the federal Department of Environment recognized the value of environmental activist groups as a constituency, a tool with which to turn public opinion in favour of the department's legislative agenda. Like any other legislative constituency, environmentalists required careful management, perhaps more careful than most given the difficulty in separating and discouraging any members who held on to unlegislatable ideas about the unsustainability of industrial society as an enterprise.[284] In Nova Scotia, as in most provinces, the federal department's cultivation of the movement began with informal meetings between Environment Canada's Atlantic Regional Board and a select few activists, and progressed quickly to invitations for formal participation in national

[283]Ralph Surette, "Effort made to end abuse of forests," *Globe and Mail,* 5 August, 1978, 8. There was pressure within Lands and Forests to access even more federal money available to provinces with spray programs, such as the 7 million additional funds granted to New Brunswick in 1976: Richard Butler, Administrative Assistant to the Deputy Minister of Environment, to Lloyd Hawboldt, 6 April, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 1.

[284]Bruce Doern, and Thomas Conway, *The Greening of Canada: Federal Institutions and Decisions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 104-106. The Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources did likewise in 1975, but soon lost interest: "Discussion on the nuclear option - some impressions," EMR planning and evaluation note, 21 November, 1975, DAL-EAC, box 42.4.

Canadian Environmental Advisory Council meetings.[285] Funding made available directly from the Department brought activists from across the country to Montreal in 1978 for two days of meetings to draft "position papers on environment, wildlife, pesticides, and the conserver society."[286] It was only one of many such meetings convened during the last half of the 1970s in which the logic of consensus could work on squeezing out ideas that might seem too extreme. Federal funding placed only one major restriction on participation: groups receiving funds had to maintain "non-political" registered non-profit status.[287] Those selected soon provided their own additional strictures. After resolving in 1978 to create a permanent committee of environmental groups beneath the CEAC (what would become the Canadian Environmental Network), a Steering Committee went in search of "broadly based" groups capable of responding quickly to queries from the Advisory Council -- in other words, professional groups, rather than unincorporated "single issue" groups composed of local activists.[288] By the following year, much of the advice conveyed by those groups to federal bureaucrats consisted of requests for ever closer integration, and for dedicated funding to the groups who would participate.[289]

Those groups in Nova Scotia that saw federal consultations as a route to real

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[285]The EAC met with the Atlantic Regional Board in 1976 and 1977: EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 8 July, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 20; EAC to Environment Canada Atlantic Regional Board, 13 April, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 41.11.

[286]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 1 June, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 22.

[287]Environment Canada, "Announcement: Public Consultation Transportation Expenses Assistance," 1984, DAL-EAC, box 43.5.

[288]Joanne Lamey, Community Planning Association of Canada, "Notice of CEAC Meeting, Ottawa, 25-29 May, 1980," 18 April, 1980, DAL-EAC, box 44.2. The threat of "co-optation" was consistently misunderstood by those who accepted such funding, even warily; there is little or no evidence that the money ever changed anyone's opinions, only that those already holding the desired opinions were selected (and self-selected) to receive the money. This is another case where blindness to the diversity of the environmental movement has created the illusion of novelty out of simple changes in the internal balance of power.

[289]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 14 November, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23; Gilbert Savard, Citizens' Group Liason, Department of Fisheries and Environment, to Susan Mayo, 14 June, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 43.1.

influence sought to enjoy the same sort of relationship with the provincial government, and the budworm spray issue evoked from them a concerted effort to achieve it. The EAC and CBLAS, working together closely by the end of 1977, each attempted to convince MacLean to impose an anti-spray member or two from their ranks on the new Task Force on Wood Allocation.[290] EAC leaders also pushed for the ECC to work more closely with environmentalists and put funds toward research conducted by professional activist groups.[291] This quest for access soon led to even greater emphasis on those areas where some environmentalists could agree with professional foresters' insistence on environmental management and control. EAC and CBLAS propaganda, often jointly produced with conservation groups like the Canadian Nature Federation, Halifax Field Naturalists, or Nova Scotia Bird Society, lent support to the provincial government's new large industry-oriented silviculture plans, which Minister MacLean insisted would obviate the need for budworm control and also "increase the productivity of our forests by two and one-half to three times its present allowable cut."[292] They also enthusiastically endorsed non-chemical control measures meant to achieve the same effect as chemical insecticides, apparently willing to undermine their and their allies' ecological argument that the budworm belongs in the forest and must be allowed to run its course.[293] Elizabeth May was particularly keen to encourage aerial applications of the biological control agent *Bacillus thuringiensis kurstaki* (B.t.k) as an alternative to

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[290]Brian Gifford to Vince MacLean, 14 April, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 24.5.
[291]Memo, "Pete Ogden: Saturday March 9," DAL-EAC, box 41.20.
[292]Vincent MacLean, n.d./n.s., Clipping File, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3469, number 8.
[293]As an example of the use of concepts borrowed from industry, few can surpass the brief to the Task Force on Wood Allocation by the NSRC (and endorsed by the NSBS, HFN, and CNF). In it, these groups agreed on the need to "manage the threat of budworm," ideally with biological controls, to maximize the use of the forest resource, and to practice the most "intensive silviculture [...] for the benefit of the total resources of Nova Scotia." DAL-EAC, box 24.5.

insecticides.[294]

Even if some environmentalists were willing to shift their positions toward the Regan government's ideal of industrial promotion, or take on an "advisory arm" made up of businessmen to boost their orthodox economic credentials (as the EAC did in 1978), government proved less flexible. Meeting in the middle works only if both sides move, and the province was never willing to match the federal Department of Environment's efforts to court activist participation. Bureaucrats in Halifax favoured secrecy over manipulation as a tactic for the management of public dissent, and federal-provincial rivalries did not spur the search for legislative constituencies in Nova Scotia as powerfully as inter-departmental rivalries did in Ottawa. MacLean's response to requests for environmentalist representation on the new Task Force was a casual "no," and his rationale for refusing to order an ECC public hearing was transparently inadequate: he claimed that the Council had never requested authorization.[295]

Doubts about the wisdom of professionalization and of accepting too readily the economic growth assumptions of the province's industrial development policy were never far away. With decision-making power within the organization growing ever more remote from the membership, the EAC's leaders defended their role as a "counterweight" to the power of business and government within the existing system, prompting one member, Eve Smith, to reply that the fundraising required by that approach "has become a way of

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[294]Elizabeth May, *Budworm Battles* (Halifax: Four East, 1982), 132; Elizabeth May, "Qualified approval given spray test," n.d., Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3469, number 8.

[295]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 4 May, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 22; Vince MacLean to Brian Gifford, 20 April, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 24.5; Vince MacLean to Gary Harris, Halifax, 6 December, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 3. It was also a false claim, as the ECC had requested, directly to the previous Minister himself, permission to hold hearings into the budworm spray issue 10 months earlier: "Points for information discussion about spruce budworm control in Nova Scotia from technical advisory sub-committee, Nova Scotia Environmental Control Council," 27 January, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 1; E.L.L. Rowe, ECC, to Bagnell, Minister of Environment, 4 February, 1976, DLF, volume 890, number 1.

life, and leads at times to modification of approach or policy, or is unequally distributed. It sometimes gives more power to a few who control policy. [...] this is a money oriented society and we may be corrupted by it, almost without recognizing our own corruption."[296] A few years later, the Centre's closest ally on the ECC, the ecologist Dr. Gordon Ogden, insisted that the Council would not fund action groups, for their own good.[297]

Until the very end of the peak period of forestry conflict, from 1976 until 1983, misgivings about environmentalists seeking professional status or a direct role in government remained at the level of Ogden's advice or Smith's warning, and did not flare up into open recrimination. That could be due in part to the short time since the EAC's transformation into a professional group, and the even shorter time since Elizabeth May and the CBLAS formed their organization amid a direct challenge to government. It was likely also due in part to the incompleteness of both groups' drift toward conciliatory activism: the Centre still regularly debated its own structure and methods during those years, and May, ever more the de facto spokesperson for the Cape Breton group after 1977, remained equivocal for years, alternately defending government actions or participating in direct consultations and then insisting that "power is not achieved through government grants, large budgets, or paid full-time coordinators. Power is people."[298] Perhaps because of such statements, environmentalists making firmly ecological and anti-managerial arguments, even the few still making anti-economic-growth arguments, could

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[296]Eve Smith, B.C., to the Editor, *Jusun* (EAC), n.d. [c.1978], DAL-EAC, box 42.8. The Queens/Lunenburg SSEPA also warned Nova Scotian environmentalists to "approach with caution" the Atlantic ENGO meeting arranged by Environment Canada, quoting David Brooks on the "threat of co-optation [...] any time you take money." *Q/L SSEPA NEWS* 1:9 (January, 1983).

[297]Memo, "Pete Ogden: Saturday March 9," DAL-EAC, box 41.20. (The EAC staff member who spoke with Ogden was quite defensive about it and preferred to see Ogden's position as an "anti-action-group stance.")

[298]Elizabeth May, "A Case History of Citizen Action Victory," *The PEI Environeer* 6:3 (1978), 23.

still see a measure of common ground with the ecomodernists leading the publicity drive. More important, so long as the tactics of the anti-spray campaign encouraged environmentalists to reach politicians via the intermediary of public pressure, all lines of argument -- health, economic, ecological, social justice, emotional, or epistemological -- and all types of activist could coexist. Adopting the opposing side's terminology and assumptions in a battle of ideas does have consequences, however, and the longer the conflict over industrial forestry dragged on, the more those consequences began to reshape the face of the environmental movement, driving a wedge between the ecomodernists and those who remained skeptical of government's willingness to change.

The Other Spray

The budworm spray controversy of the late 1970s and the herbicide spray controversy of the early 1980s tend to be remembered as quite separate events. In reality they were two sides of the same policy coin: both the government/industry axis and the environmentalists carried forward into the new decade much of what they had learned since 1976, including what they had learned from each other. What the ensuing controversy revealed was that the political context of environmental activism mattered a great deal to its effectiveness, as a change in government brought the full power of the state into action opposing the environmentalists' anti-spray campaign.

Herbicide sprays were even more familiar in Nova Scotia than insecticides in 1979, when environmental activists took note of their increasing use in forestry. The connection with the brief anti-herbicide campaign of the early 1970s was certainly more direct. In fact, one of the first actions by the EAC in 1979 was an attempt once again to

stop Nova Scotia Power using chemical herbicides on its power line rights-of-way.[299] Local agitation against roadside spraying of farm weeds by the Department of Agriculture also continued apace, feeding into the province-wide movement, and organic farmers had for years maintained their case against the use of herbicides, even more than insecticides.[300] In each case, the chemicals in question were old and well-studied agents, most often 2,4-Dichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4-D) and 2,4,5-Trichlorophenoxyacetic acid (2,4,5-T) -- albeit often used under the trade names "Tordon" or "Brushkiller."[301] But if environmentalists could arm themselves with more and better information about such long-used chemicals, they also faced an even more entrenched opposition.

The herbicide issue highlights the extent to which Nova Scotia's environmental controversies belonged to a global trend, and occasionally achieved world-wide prominence within it. In the roster of chemicals made common by the so-called Green Revolution in industrial agriculture, 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T earn special mention for military service. Originally discovered during the Second World War and researched in secret by the US government as potential biological weapons, the phenoxy herbicide group to which 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T belong narrowly missed seeing action in 1945 and instead became, along with DDT, the most popular of hundreds, eventually thousands, of new agricultural biocides introduced after the war. Herbicide production in the United States alone ballooned from a national total of less than 2 million dollars in 1940 to an industry

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[299]"Harmless Spray?," *Rural Delivery* 4:7 (December, 1979). "EAC Brief to Public Utilities Board," 3 April, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 21.

[300]*Rural Delivery* 5:10 (March, 1981); "Waste Farm Chemicals," *Rural Delivery* 6:11 (April, 1982); Chris Wood, "Crop sprays: Sickness and death down on the farm," *Atlantic Insight* 4:2 (February, 1982), 38-43.

[301]The Royal Commission on Forestry eventually collected records from various departments and corporations, showing herbicide use (often 2,4-D / 2,4,5-T) by the Department of Transportation back to 1964, Department of Agriculture back to 1960, and Nova Scotia Power Corporation back to 1970 (an incomplete record). "Memos on chemicals," Royal Commission on Forestry fonds, PANS [hereafter RCOF], volume 186, number 5.

worth 270 million in 1962, with 2,4-D leading the way.[302] The United States also vigorously encouraged the adoption of chemical methods outside of its borders as well.[303]

In 1962, the same year that Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* famously warned of the pitfalls of chemical optimism, the phenoxy herbicides finally saw their first military application. It was in Vietnam, where a 1:1 mixture of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T went by the code-name Agent Orange, owing to its transportation in barrels marked with an orange stripe.[304] Millions of gallons of Agent Orange and other colour-coded herbicides were aerially dispersed over South Vietnam between 1962 and 1971.[305] 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T are arguably dangerous chemicals on their own, but unfortunately for the Vietnamese, and for the American and Canadian soldiers and civilians made unwitting test subjects for the wartime defoliation program, the mixtures used during the war were heavily contaminated with 2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzodioxin (TCDD), a particularly toxic form of dioxin. The consequences -- the death, disease, and deformity -- among those exposed in Vietnam or in North America were horrific, but it took years for the US and Canadian governments to grudgingly admit that the chemicals were dangerous, and longer yet to admit that the dioxin contamination had already been recognized by the time of their use during the war.[306] It was only in 1969 that the US government made public some of the damning figures it had collected on birth defects caused by 2,4,5-T, and by 1979 neither the US nor the Canadian governments had yet repudiated the chemical manufacturers' claim that preventable TCDD contamination was responsible, and not the 2,4-D/2,4,5-T

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[302]In 1964 alone, 53 million pounds of 2,4-D were synthesized in the United States. Gale Peterson, "The Discovery and Development of 2,4-D," *Agricultural History* 41:3 (July, 1967), 243-254 (252).
[303]David Kinkela, *DDT and the American Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).
[304]Gale Peterson, "The Discovery and Development of 2,4-D," 253.
[305]Chris Arsenault, *Blowback: A Canadian History of Agent Orange and the War at Home* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2009), 60. The total use of Agent Orange alone in Vietnam is estimated at about 45 million litres.
[306]*Ibid*, 13.

mixture itself, despite the accumulation of studies suggesting just the opposite. Critics of both governments' actions have suggested that their reluctance stems from a too-close relationship with industry, from a desire to limit compensation claims by soldiers and civilians exposed to the chemicals, and from a determination to not acknowledge the use of chemical weapons against human targets in Vietnam.[307] Whatever the reason, mounting public opposition to the use of phenoxy herbicides, or even to all herbicides, during the 1970s met a stone wall of regulatory indifference and bureaucratic secrecy.[308]

American veterans of the Vietnam War contributed a powerful constituency to anti-herbicide efforts in the course of pursuing compensation and treatment for illnesses related to their exposure, as did their counterparts and allies in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.[309] Collectively, their activism contributed to a larger anti-chemical effort spurred by world-famous chemical disasters like the Love Canal episode, where a residential neighbourhood in New York state was found to be built atop a Hooker Chemical company dumpsite in 1976, or the contamination and eventual permanent evacuation of the town of Times Beach, Missouri, due to the use of dioxin-tainted waste oil to suppress road dust from 1971 to 1976.[310] Around the world, chemical disasters seemed to pile upon disasters in the late 1970s, profoundly shaking public confidence that the balance of benefits in fact outweighed the costs of the postwar chemical revolution.[311]

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[307]*Ibid*, 95-98.
[308]*Ibid*, 65.
[309]Edwin Martini, *Agent Orange: History, Science, and the Politics of Uncertainty* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012).
[310]Elizabeth Blum, *Love Canal Revisited: Race, Class, and Gender in Environmental Activism* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Martini, *Agent Orange*, 126-137.
[311]Others included the 1976 dioxin explosion at Seveso, Italy, the onging revelations of mercury poisoning and cover-ups at Minamata, Japan, and among the Grassy Narrows First Nation in Ontario, for example. Bruna De Marchi, "Seveso: from pollution to regulation," *International Journal of Environment and Pollution* 7:4 (September, 1997), 526-537; Paul Almeida and Linda Brewster Stearns, "Political Opportunities and Local Grassroots Environmental Movements: the Case of Minamata," *Social*

As the controversy peaked in the United States, activists responded to government intransigence in 1979 with the largest ever class action suit in American legal history, on behalf of veterans exposed to toxic herbicides, a massive effort but one also easily isolated from the rest of the anti-chemical movement by the terms of the settlement.[312] In Canada, scattered veterans of herbicide testing at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in New Brunswick struggled to form a common front, and the first major challenge to the continued use of the same chemicals came not from veterans but from environmental activists in Nova Scotia.

In the forest industry, application of "selective, systemic" herbicides -- those able to kill an entire plant after application to only one part of it, without harming nearby plants of desirable species -- was an innovation of the pulp and paper sector. With the discovery of phenoxy herbicides in the 1940s, foresters recognized an ideal tool with which to solve the problem of unwanted hardwood species invading their woodlots. With a single application, chemicals like 2,4-D could kill birch, oak, ash, and the like and leave behind a pure softwood stand for easy mechanical harvest, or wipe out the raspberries and low shrubs and forbs that spring up in a recent clearcut, leaving replanted softwood seedlings full access to sun, soil, and water. The latter operation, called "conifer release," accelerates the growth of seedlings, but at the cost of an impoverished soil; without the first stage of succession to restore nutrients, or the deep roots of hardwoods to stabilize the regrowing trees, exhaustion and erosion threaten (usually answered with the promise of chemical fertilization, and insecticides to protect the weakened trees).[313]

Problems 45:1 (February, 1998), 37-60; George Hutchison and Dick Wallace, *Grassy Narrows* (Scarborough, Ontario: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1977).

[312]Arsenault, *Blowback*, 91.

[313]Herbicides were used in forestry in New Brunswick as early as 1970: "Monitor," *Mysterious East*

Despite all of this context, and the continuities with their campaign against the budworm spray, it took some time for environmental activists in Nova Scotia to take note of the province's nascent forestry herbicide program. Concerned with insecticides, they were slow to shift attention to herbicides, while industry pursued both as part of the same policy of ecological control. In 1978 the NSRC alerted the ECC to a series of experimental applications conducted by Lands and Forests. The ECC attempted to investigate further, but the new Minister of Environment, Roger Bacon, showed little interest in approving new hearings, reviving the Council's moribund public relevance, or any action that might draw attention to the issue.[314] In fact, the political context of the fight over industrial forestry had changed sharply with the election of John Buchanan's Progressive Conservative government in September of 1978. While some environmentalists continued to praise what they saw as a turn away from industrial conifer monocultures, the pro-spray faction within Lands and Forests continued to work on promoting the industrial model from a new position of strength. The new Deputy Minister, former forest industry association head Don Eldridge, had supported NSFI's position during the budworm debates, and with the retirement from public service of anti-spray stalwarts like Lloyd Hawboldt and A.M. Wiksten, little impediment remained to Eldridge's promotion of industrial forestry.[315] Certainly the new Minister of Lands and Forests would be no obstacle; George Henley, who held the Minister's chair from 1978 to 1983, proved an equally staunch supporter of the forest industry's chemical ambitions. In

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(November, 1971), 24.

[314]"ECC Annual Report, 1978," DAL-EAC, box 41.20; Alan Ruffman to Roger Bacon, Minister of Environment, 16 July, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 41.20.

[315]Government of Nova Scotia, *Supplement to the Public Accounts of the Province of Nova Scotia for the year ended March 31, 1977* (Halifax: Queen's Printer, 1978), 67; N.A. Wiksten, forestry economist, to Earl Atkins, Lands and Forests, 9 January, 1978, DLF, volume 890, number 6; Memo from N.A. Wiksten to R.H. Burgess, 20 October, 1977, DLF, volume 890, number 5; Parker Donham, "Who's winning the war over chemical spraying?," *Atlantic Insight* 4:1 (January, 1982), 22-27 (24).

1979 his department undertook further spray tests with 2,4-D, glyphosate (trade named Roundup), and fosamine ammonium (trade named Krenite), including a large plantation site near Trafalgar, Guysborough County, adjacent to the headwaters of both the Saint Mary's River and the East River of Pictou. Challenged by some Pictou County residents, Henley explained that the failure of the prior government to control the budworm meant reforestation was urgently required, and that once planted, softwood trees required chemical "protection" to speed their growth and forestall a disastrous wood shortage.[316] In general, the Buchanan government pursued a much closer relationship with the pulp and paper industry than had the Regan government, ensured that herbicide spraying on forest land got started with minimal public attention, and encouraged the industry to proselytize its view of forests as crops rather than living systems.[317]

One of the most effective means by which industry and government could promote the strictly economic agro-forestry perspective was to do exactly as environmentalists had demanded since 1976: not use chemical insecticides against the spruce budworm. The Department of Lands and Forests eagerly seized upon every chance to employ the relatively new bacterial agent, *B.t.k.*, endorsed by the CBLAS and the EAC as an organic alternative to synthetic chemicals, even after the collapse of the budworm population in 1978. Lands and Forests sprayed 20,600 acres of forest with *B.t.k.* in 1979, 70,260 acres the following year, and continued the program indefinitely

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[316]Gary Baudoux, New Glasgow, to George Henley, 30 August, 1979, DLF, volume 887, number 3; George Henley to Gary Baudoux, n.d., DLF, volume 887, number 3; A.A. Pearson, Stellarton Town Clerk, to Doug Carter, Deputy Minister of Environment, 20 September, 1979, DLF, volume 887, number 3; George Henley to Frank Craig, Trenton, 10 September, 1979, DLF, volume 887, number 3.

Eldridge himself represented the NS DLF at the Eastern Spruce Budworm Council (with members from ON, QC, NS, NB, NL, ME, and CFS) where he worked with spray advocates like CFS's I.W.Varty, who in 1980 offered a novel rationalization of the safety of insecticide sprays: no spray onto uninhabited land could be pollutant by definition, since only upon reaching people could any substance be considered pollution. *CANUSA Newsletter* 8 (January, 1980), DLF, volume 604, number 5.

[317]"Forest industry 'needs' informed public," *Forest Times* 3:2 (March, 1981).

thereafter.[318]Dubious necessity paled to irrelevance beside the opportunity to advance the idea and practice of industrial forestry -- to insist on the need for "control," by one means or another -- with a method already declared safe and acceptable by the leading voices against chemical sprays. Thus environmental activists began their anti-herbicide campaign at a severe disadvantage, fighting a practice that had already begun, and one that could be presented by government as a mere extension of the long-established use of the same chemicals on farms and roadsides, all while having undermined their own ability to use ecological arguments against the managerial logic of control.

The move toward annual use of *B.t.k.* did arouse some activist resistance in Nova Scotia, despite the refusal of leading anti-spray activists like Ms. May to cease defending it. Biological though it may be, *B.t.k.* tests by Environment Canada included additional anti-evaporants and adhesives (plus a chitinase enzyme), and most often measured the effect on budworm populations and defoliation rates to the exclusion of wider ecosystem monitoring.[319] That sort of tunnel vision alarmed those who saw in it echoes of chemical insecticide testing. Opposition in Cape Breton led some members of the CBLAS to form their own organization in response to the "unacceptable compromise" made by its leaders. The Crowdis Coalition, named after the primary test site at Crowdis Mountain near Baddeck, accused May of "selling out" the ecological argument in favour of a purely scientific approach to chemical safety and a managerial idea of forestry. At a time when the anti-herbicide campaign was warning the public how "in the fast world of chemical discovery and analysis 'safe' is a risky word," the new critics wondered why a broadcast

[318]*CANUSA Newsletter* 8, January, 1980, DLF, volume 604, number 5; Nova Scotia Government Press Release, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 24.5.
[319]Environment Canada Press Release, 23 August, 1978, DAL-EAC, box 24.5.

biological agent should be held to a lower standard.[320]

The EAC attracted some criticism on similar lines after sponsoring an equivocal public lecture on agricultural chemicals in February of 1980, but as with the Crowdis Coalition, the critique failed to penetrate the fresh attempt at achieving respectability and expert status.[321] Convinced more than ever that their victories in the "budworm battles" had rested on sound scientific argument first and public pressure second, Susan Holtz, Susan Mayo, and others at the EAC, along with May (who joined them on the Centre's Board of Directors in 1980 while continuing to represent a loosely organized group of Cape Bretoners[322]) put ever more of their attention and energy into winning the battle of facts. Wholly in the citizen-scientist mode, they carefully avoided being seen to "blindly oppose any action which may affect the environment."[323] Too much faith in scientific fact, though, can just as easily blind a person to the power of politics, a desperate liability when called upon to formulate new tactics against an unsympathetic government.

Unlike the proposed massive insecticide sprays of the previous decade, herbicide applications in the early 1980s were individual and relatively small operations carried out by various forestry companies, subject to the approval of the Departments of Environment and of Lands and Forests. Accordingly, the campaign against herbicide sprays built momentum in a piecemeal fashion, jumping from one local battle to another until coming together in a province-wide effort, something industry and government tried very hard at first to prevent. Henley and Eldridge at Lands and Forests bore responsibility for regulations around public notification, and they took every opportunity to limit the

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[320]Quoted from Dirk VanLoon, "Roadside Spraying," *Rural Delivery* 7:2 (July, 1982). On the Crowdis Coalition see: Elizabeth May to "Susans," n.d., DAL-EAC, box 44.1.
[321]Val Blofeld, Tantallon, to Susan Holtz, 21 February, 1980, DAL-EAC, box 43.1.
[322]"80/81 Board of Directors," *Jusun* 8:3 December, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 3.
[323]Vincent MacLean to Susan Mayo, 21 September, 1977, DAL-EAC, box 42.6.

time between notice and spray. Where environmentalists had enjoyed months of foreknowledge even for the first 1976 budworm spray proposal, herbicide spray applications became closely guarded secrets, received, reviewed, and approved behind the closed doors of the Department of Lands and Forests, and announced with only weeks to spare. The DOE for its part signed off on any spray application using chemicals approved by Environment Canada and showed even less concern for public awareness. Secrecy, in short, was policy. An opposition motion in the Legislature in the spring of 1982 would have forced Lands and Forests to publish applications upon receipt; the government voted it down.[324]

But if secrecy made activism difficult, it also sometimes provoked it. Rural Nova Scotians are frequently distrustful of the Halifax government and sensitive to rules imposed from the city. In the summer of 1980 NSFI received government permission to use 2,4-D on 500 acres of leased Crown land at Big Pond, Cape Breton County. When news of the impending spray reached the community two weeks ahead of the event, residents were incensed. Public notification rules did not specify who should be directly notified, and the pulp company made minimal effort. As one farmer later told *Atlantic Insight* magazine, "it's the goddamn way they were going to do it. We have a priest, fire chief, school principal, and Community Council in this town and NSFI said they didn't know who to contact." DOE and Lands and Forests officials reacted to the controversy with a redoubled commitment to secrecy, but Big Pond residents were not inclined to wait. Taking their case to the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, they won an injunction

[324]George Butters, "Spray Wars, part two," *Atlantic Insight* 4:10 (October, 1982), 10-11. The government also issued permits for the 1982 season on the day after the Legislature finished its session: "After the Herbicide Trial" (draft), DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

preventing the spray.[325]

Within months of the Big Pond settlement, another of NSFI's plans met local opposition in the village of Lochaber, in Antigonish County. The area approved for herbicide treatment was only about 150 acres this time, but the chemical would be a mixture of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T -- the infamous Agent Orange. Once again a community reacted en masse, and this time, with the assistance of Antigonish MLA Bill Gillis, pressured the DOE into a "reinspection" of the site -- and NSFI into abandoning the plan -- without resort to the courts.[326] In Lochaber, as in Big Pond, it was local activists who began the agitation against herbicide spraying, most of whom had never before been involved in the province's environmental movement, demonstrating once again the centrality of place-defence in generating environmental activism. All of the newcomers reached out to the established groups, the EAC and CBLAS, for advice and help in acquiring the factual ammunition with which to fight, but decided which course to take on their own, with two results. First, this new generation of activists discovered a provincial network in need of new energy. Rather than settle their own problems and retire from the field, they pushed for a united front. Vicki Palmer of Lochaber was at the forefront of the effort. "Although the issue is resolved for the moment in Lochaber," she wrote, "it is plain that the time has come for the government to take a good hard look at their policy on herbicides. Local skirmishes are just symptoms of a greater problem."[327] In the New Glasgow *Evening News* she was quoted calling for the creation of a provincial

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[325]The injunction and suit were settled the following January without going to court. EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 25 March, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 25; J.D. Smith, Lands and Forests, to D.L. Eldridge (marginal notes), 18 August, 1980, DLF, volume 608, number 13; Sheila Jones, "Big Pond goes after a big fish," *Atlantic Insight* 2:11 (November, 1980), 26-27.

[326]Vicki Palmer, "A Report on the Lochaber Spray Situation, Summer 1981," DAL-EAC, box 29.10; Petition, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 29.10.

[327]Vicki Palmer, "A Report on the Lochaber Spray Situation, Summer 1981," DAL-EAC, box 29.10.

organization to carry the fight beyond one small controversy at a time.[328] The second result of the new activists' work, however, was a stark choice of tactics that made close cooperation difficult. Big Pond had enjoyed enviable success in convincing one judge of the potential risks of chemical sprays, while Lochaber did equally well in cowing the DOE. Obviously, an extended campaign would have to be mainly a political effort, but it is a rare environmental campaign that takes its impetus from anything but an imminent threat, and the question of whether to respond to the immediate threat in the legal or political arena would have to be answered. Complicating the question, the pro-spray forces had taken their own lessons from the season of failure in 1981 and would not so easily succumb to either tactic again.

The new united front of forestry activists took the form of a committee of the EAC during the winter of 1982, a choice of venue that immediately put the group's focus on information dissemination and attempts to directly influence government. On the first account, the Forestry Committee can only be counted a success. Members from the full breadth and length of the province met in April to plot a strategy, many of them representing newly christened environmental organizations in their home counties. Vicki Palmer from the Antigonish Environmental Coalition and Dan MacGillvray from the Big Pond Environmental Association brought the previous year's experience to a group comprising scientists, foresters, and activists both veteran and novice.[329] As Don Eldridge feared, the dual controversies of 1981 had given "the advocates of no spray a

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[328]"N.B. Looking at same defoliants planned for Lochaber spray area," *Evening News,* 16 July, 1981, 3.

[329]Ginny Point, EAC, to "friends," 14 January, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.1; Forestry Management Committee Strategy Meeting minutes, 20 April, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 28.25. The 20 April meeting had 16 attendees, all from the mainland; within about two months, the Committee had collected representatives from several Cape Breton groups. The Committee also went through several name changes, from the "Forestry Management Committee" initially, to the "Forestry (toxic substances) Committee" while still mainly a mainland group, to simply the "Forestry Committee." EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 23 March, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.

platform,"[330] and they refused to relinquish it, sending their most persuasive speakers around the province to high schools and community halls to explain once again the dangers of chemical sprays and argue for alternatives.[331]

Unfortunately for the activists, their second principle of action -- to directly influence government -- led much of their proselytizing into wasted effort. The Buchanan government readily obliged their desire for formal consultation, but lacking the established infrastructure of Environment Canada's public participation process, reached instead for a time-tested tool and declared a Royal Commission on Forestry. According to Adam Ashforth, public inquiries function to legitimate "the idea of the state," something of particular value when an organized citizenry is attacking government for trading away the interests of the population in exchange for industrial development.[332] They also make effective distractions from the usual political process. Alexa McDonough, leader of the provincial NDP, wrote to the EAC in April to caution them against placing too much faith in a process "really only intended to be a further delaying tactic and a ruse for the industry interests."[333] Three weeks later, just as the Forestry Committee noticed a "drying up of information sources regarding the granting of spraying permits," the government announced its official policy that permits and applications would be kept secret from the

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[330]J.D. Smith, Lands and Forests, to D.L. Eldridge (marginal notes), 18 August, 1980, DLF, volume 608, number 13.

[331]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 May, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 2; Q/L SSEPA Press Release, 30 April, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.9; Notice of Public Lecture "You and me and 2,4-D" by Murray Prest, Vicki Palmer, and Dr. Cameron McQueen, 20 April, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.1.

[332]Adam Ashforth, "Reckoning Schemes of Legitimation: on Commissions of Inquiry as Power/Knowledge Forms," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 3:1 (March, 1990), 1-22.

[333]Alexa McDonough to EAC, 27 April, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.1. There was also the coincidence of a resolution by the Canadian Institute of Foresters, asking Nova Scotia to repeal the Forest Improvement Act. EAC Press Release, 24 March, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.9.

public.[334] Previously faint hope that the province might prohibit all spraying during the Commission's deliberations faded entirely, only to be replaced by anger when the continued advance notice of approved sprays promised by the Environment Minister turned out at times to be a week, or less.[335] Nevertheless, most activists persisted in asking the public to turn their attention to the three Royal Commissioners, in the hope of convincing them to recommend against continued spraying. No hope was ever so vain. Though the records of the Royal Commission show a tremendous intellectual variety among anti-spraying advocates, including a strong showing by witnesses arguing in favour of emotion and experiential knowledge as a counterweight to scientific reductionism, the three Commissioners were hostile to any but the managerial and economic perspectives on forestry, and eventually became open public advocates of industrial forestry.[336] In the meantime, the process provided a screen behind which the premier and his ministers might hide in a time of crisis. And crisis was coming.

On 21 June, the DOE approved permits to all three large pulp companies in the province for the use of a 2,4-D/2,4,5-T mixture ("Esteron 3-3E" to the department and companies; still "Agent Orange" to activists) on 15,000 acres throughout the province.[337]

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[334]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 May, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 2; Ginny Point, EAC, to Greg Kerr, Minister of Environment, 2 June, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.1; Greg Kerr to Ginny Point, 17 June, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.1.

[335]EAC Memo on FACT meeting with John Sansom, Department of Environment, 19 April, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.7. Laura Colpitts joined the Women's Health Education Network presentation at the Royal Commission on Forestry to tell of her experience with public announcements coming after spraying had already been done: Presentation by WHEN, 24 March, 1983, RCOF, volume 159, number 4.

[336]Alternative modes of argument were best represented, incongruously, among the rural Cape Breton activists who made up the strongest supporters of the 17 plaintiffs in the herbicide trial. Presentation by FALASH, 8 October, 1982, RCOF, volume 158a, number 2.

[337]"SSEPA fact sheet," May, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 28.28; EAC Press Release, 2 July, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 28.28; "Forest Herbicide Trial - Background," Betty Peterson Fonds, mg1, volume 3469, number 8; Peter Cumming, "The Herbicide Fight," *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983), 32.

Disputes over terminology were numerous. Perhaps the best example came in the course of Murray Prest's testimony before the Royal Commission on Forestry, when challenged by Fr. MacKinnon:

Initially, DOE proved surprisingly forthcoming with news of the permits, making them known almost immediately, but activists still faced a dilemma: try to pull together an effective pressure campaign against an intransigent Cabinet (after having invited the public to direct their letters to the Royal Commission), or attempt to halt all three spray programs in court.

The first reaction was political and could hardly have been otherwise. As was ever the case with new activism in Nova Scotia, committees formed without any outside encouragement in communities near spray sites, as locals learned about the pulp companies' plans. Public meetings, petitions, and delegations to Halifax followed, the same tactics proven effective in Lochaber. Under the tutelage of the EAC-based coalition however, nothing disturbed the respectable, scientific appearance of the movement, at least not until the first week of July. With time running out and no hint of compromise from government, the Whycocomagh Mi'kmaq Band had earlier decided to issue their own deadline: an NSFI spray site on Skye Mountain, nearby the community's water supply, outraged Chief Ryan Googoo, and he vowed to uproot 1000 of the company's seedlings if the permit were not withdrawn. It was not, and on 7 July the band turned out *en masse* to fulfill the promise. As other activists in other times have learned, nothing moves a government to action like a challenge to its legitimacy, and that is what Whycocomagh's tree-pulling day presented. Inverness South MLA Billy Joe MacLean arrived immediately to promise personal intervention, and (with Chief Googoo's threat of

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"**MacKinnon**: I don't think it's fair. I think it's using scare tactics to talk about Agent Orange. You know, that conjures up all kinds of things from Vietnam, when in fact the solution they were using was in fact laced with dioxin. I've seen the figures, I can't remember but --

Prest: Up to 70 parts per million, as compared to our levels now is 0.1 parts per million. But the thing is, it's still poison at parts per trillion so, you know --

MacKinnon: Well, of course.

Prest: You can only kill a fellow so dead, you know. The overkill doesn't matter."
Presentation by Murray Prest, Mooseland, 22 April, 1983, RCOF, volume 159, number 9.

a repeat performance weighing heavily) Cabinet moved the following day to suspend all aerial spraying permits granted for 1982 and until the report of the Royal Commission on Forestry.[338]

Victory was short-lived. By the end of July, ground spraying of 2,4-D / 2,4,5-T had begun on some mainland sites. It took a few days longer to learn why, but in the early days of August the DOE revealed that the aerial spray permits suspended by Cabinet had been automatically converted to ground spray permits. Activists were stunned and faced once again the choice of tactics: pressure (demonstrably ineffective, short of vandalism, which Elizabeth May and the EAC called "a defeat for the democratic process"), or litigation.[339] And this time they deliberated without the luxury of delay. NSFI published its newspaper notices on 4 August, promising to begin spraying on the 11th. Driven to their "last resort," in the words of Vicki Palmer, they chose to go to court.[340]

Playing by the Rules: The Herbicide Trial

The rules of the courtroom are never simple, but the principles are usually straightforward. The court, according to Justice Merlin Nunn of the Nova Scotia Supreme Court, is the "final and proper forum" for determining the veracity of facts and their adequacy to a certain standard of proof.[341] That far, and no farther. To acquire their temporary injunction, the plaintiffs seeking to stop herbicide spraying in Nova Scotia

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[338]"MLA supports band's efforts to stop spraying," *Chronicle Herald,* 8 July, 1982, 21; EAC Forestry Committee Meeting minutes, 14 July, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.7.

[339]"Forest Herbicide Trial - Background," Betty Peterson Fonds, mg1, volume 3469, number 8; Peter Cumming, "The Herbicide Fight," *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983), 32; EAC Press Release, 8 July, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.9. It is important to note that May and the EAC were not criticising Googoo or the people of Whycocomagh for their choice, only the fact that they should have had to make it.

[340]George Butters, "Spray Wars, part two," *Atlantic Insight* 4:10 (October, 1982), 10-11.

[341]Peter Cumming, "The herbicide case: Part I: plaintiffs against the spray," *Rural Delivery* 8:1 (June, 1983), 24.

needed only to prove the possibility of harm to themselves or their property, not the probability, and to do so to the satisfaction of Justice C. Denne Burchell, who had heard and been swayed by many of the same arguments from the residents of Big Pond a year earlier. That, and they needed to promise to pay the costs incurred by the defendants, if the case should ultimately go against them. In 1981 it had been a relatively quick task, but in 1982 the pulp companies were better prepared to argue. And argue they did, for six days -- the longest chambers proceeding in Nova Scotian legal history -- bringing experts to testify from across North America. Eventually, Scott Paper and Bowater-Mersey were dropped from the injunction when Burchell ruled that no plaintiff lived close enough to the western spray zones, and NSFI alone faced 17 plaintiffs from Cape Breton and the eastern mainland, who found that they had successfully argued themselves into a neat trap. The pulp companies' procedural intransigence had driven legal costs high enough already that to withdraw would invite financial ruin (and allow the spray to go ahead), while a loss at trial could be much worse. Having won their injunction, they had little choice but to go ahead with a protracted courtroom battle against an expanding cast of opponents. NSFI's name may have appeared on the suit, but Scott and Bowater kept their lawyers on the case, and were soon joined by the US multinational Dow Chemical, manufacturer of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T.[342]

Dow's interest was only the beginning of the internationalization of Nova Scotia's forest controversies. The anti-herbicide movement in Nova Scotia had indeed "unwittingly stumbled into a battle with the international pesticide industry," as

[342]"Publicity Sheet," [late] 1982, DAL-EAC, box 28.28; *Q/L SSEPA NEWS special edition* 1:5 (August, 1982), Betty Peterson Fonds, mg1, volume 3469, number 8. In fact only 15 of the "plaintiffs" were true plaintiffs. Elizabeth May had been rejected by Justice Burchell as a representative of all Nova Scotians, but she and Ruth Schneider of North River Bridge, Cape Breton County, kept their financial undertakings before the court in solidarity with the 15 class-action representatives, making 17 in total.

environmentalists themselves quickly realized, and if anyone doubted the costs of defeat, they were swiftly educated by the Scott Paper corporation. Scott had no official role in the proceedings after the first four days of hearings in Justice Burchell's chambers, but for those four days the company demanded 23,000 dollars in costs from the plaintiffs. Appeals reduced the amount by about a third, but having effectively already lost their case against Scott (and despite the ongoing case against NSFI), the plaintiffs were held liable and given a week to pay.[343] It was an ominous beginning, but driving home the reality of the threat also helped draw attention and supporters to the plaintiffs' side.

The herbicide trial, as it came to be known, was one of the milestone events in the formation of a provincial environmental movement that was more than a mere congeries of independently operating parts. Groups that had existed before the herbicide issue turned much of their attention and energy to it, and new associations found their *raison d'être* in support of the plaintiffs. Rudy Haase's Friends of Nature (FON), oldest of the new groups formed since 1960, pledged to raise 10,000 dollars toward the legal costs.[344] At the same time, a new organization in Annapolis County, People for Environmental Protection (PEP), which had been speaking out against chemical biocides since only mid-year, legally incorporated in the fall of 1982 and set about fundraising for the case.[345] The plaintiffs even found a lawyer via the provincial network, Richard Murtha, a member of

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[343]The total in the end was $14,465.17, and it was paid by Stephanie and John May selling property near Baddeck. Peter Cumming, "The Herbicide Fight," *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983); *Mail-Star,* 27 April, 1983, Clipping File, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3469, number 8; Bruce Wildsmith to Peter Bessen, United States, 8 December, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 29.6.

[344]Elizabeth May to the plaintiffs, 1 February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 24.7.

[345]Presentation by PEP, 22 March, 1983, RCOF, volume 159, number 3; Rhonda Ryan, ed. "PEP TALK newsletter" 1, February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 40.13; Rhonda Ryan to EAC, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 28.25. New groups, small and local, continued to arrive throughout the approximately year and a half of high controversy, including those like PEP who jumped into the job of province-wide organization, and those like the Concerned Citizens Against 2,4-D in Yarmouth and Argyle, who spent most of their efforts on local proselytizing and left a very scant documentary record despite, in their case, successfully halting a roadside spray program in Yarmouth County: Veralyn Rogers to Roger Bacon, Minister of Agriculture and Marketing, 24 June, 1983, DLF, volume 882, number 3.

the Sackville Environmental Protection Association and a Vietnam veteran who attributed his own chloracne affliction to Agent Orange exposure.[346] Initially concerned to avoid duplication of effort and share news quickly, the leading activists formed a phone tree, and by the time the trial began in May of 1983 the list of individuals and group representatives they had compiled constituted the first so-named Nova Scotia Environmental Network.[347]

From the beginning the mobilization of public upset and activist energy around the trial looked very different from the budworm battles of a half-decade earlier, when multiple lines of argument had converged on the Cabinet table in Halifax. Quite apart from the possibility of having to pay NSFI's court costs, simply fighting the case was a massive financial undertaking for 17 plaintiffs. Though some expert witnesses could be recruited from supporters within the province, such as the veteran anti-budworm spray activist and surgeon from Digby, Dr. William Thurlow, others could only come from abroad. Ultimately, nine of the plaintiffs' fourteen witnesses named for the discovery phase of the trial lived outside the province, and each one had to be brought to Cape Breton, housed for the duration of their testimony, and returned home, some of them with witness fees in hand. Sympathetic lawyers could serve at reduced rates, especially with the assistance of Elizabeth May and some of her fellow Dalhousie law students, but reduced is not free. Necessarily, then, most of the work done in support of the plaintiffs was fundraising. A band of Cape Breton supporters quickly organized an association -- the Herbicide Fund Society (HFS) -- dedicated to collecting money for the trial, and other

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[346]Heather Laski, "A costly fight in Cape Breton," *MacLean's,* 9 May, 1983, 20; "Sackville Environmental Protection Association" document, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 43.2.

[347]Mailing List, July, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 29.1; "Nova Scotia Environmental Network, 82-83" document, DAL-EAC, box 28.25.

groups began to direct donors to them.[348]

Understandably, the environmental movement as a whole had only so much effort to spend, and however necessary was the fundraising effort, it could not help but draw attention away from the work of creating political pressure. PEP, for example, after participating in one of Environment Canada's public consultation meetings, writing a brief for presentation to the Royal Commission on Forestry, and soliciting donations to the HFS, might have laboured for half a year without even once coming to the attention of the provincial Cabinet, if not for their help organizing a phone-in day to Premier Buchanan's office.[349] Even there however, political efforts suffered the additional handicap of having to penetrate the bubble of shifted responsibility the trial and the commission had placed around Province House. Whatever could not be dismissed with "it is before the court" could be handily redirected with "tell it to the Royal Commission." For some activists, the chance to prove their case "objectively" was a welcome alternative and much more respectable behaviour than forceful lobbying. For others it was a handicap, tolerated out of the necessity to support the plaintiffs who had put so much on the line on everyone else's behalf.

One new development that under better circumstances might have proven a potent political weapon was the extent of collaboration with environmental groups outside of Nova Scotia. Certainly there had been exchanges of information and nominal association with other Canadian and American groups since the early 1970s, when the infant EAC reached out to Ontario's only slightly older Pollution Probe. And the "budworm battles"

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[348]The EAC, mired in perennial fund-raising difficulties of its own, was happy to direct support toward the HFS and use its own fund-raising energies to find its own funds. EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 16 February, 1983, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 3; EAC Communications Resource Group Meeting minutes, 27 January, 1983, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 11.

[349]Rhonda Ryan, ed. "PEP TALK newsletter" 1, February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 40.13.

had seen more of the same, as well as some genuine influence by Nova Scotian events on the course of a similar campaign in New Brunswick, in which the Reyes Syndrome episode in Nova Scotia provoked the first mass popular resistance to insecticide spraying across the border.[350] But the end of 1982 for the first time saw active collaboration between Nova Scotian environmentalists and their foreign peers, aiming at achieving victory not only in a Sydney court room but in a much larger campaign. Cape Breton's trial became news around the world. As the newsletter of the worldwide Pesticide Action Network (PAN) put it in 1983,

> the potential implications of the court case are more far reaching than the plaintiffs imagined in that first day in court. Proving to the court's satisfaction that the use of admittedly dangerous substances in dilute quantities according to government approved procedures constitutes nuisance, actionable at law, would broaden the potential for environmental litigation against other hazardous materials.[351]

By early 1983, the EAC's Forestry Committee was also talking about a ban on 2,4-D / 2,4,5-T "across Nova Scotia and Canada."[352] Like the writers at PAN, most out-of-province environmentalists tended to see the widest implications to their cooperation -- a chance to use the Sydney proceedings as political ammunition -- while the Nova Scotians with whom they connected, mainly in the EAC and CBLAS, remained caught up in the fundraising effort. The EAC quote on national ambitions, for example, came quite typically in the course of a fundraising appeal letter. Speaking tours by herbicide trial plaintiffs to Ottawa, Vancouver, Washington, and points in between were also, for the

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[350]McLaughlin, "Green Shoots," 22.
[351]Pesticide Action Network, *Pesticide Digest* 2, (1983). The world-wide PAN was created in Malaysia on 28 May, 1982 at a NGO workshop on the global trade in pesticides.
[352]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 23 March, 1983, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 3.

speakers transfixed by their financial peril, mainly fundraising tours.[353] The connections built between Nova Scotian environmental activists and Swedish environmentalists in particular brought profound pressure to bear on Stora Kopparberg's headquarters -- probably forced the company to seek a settlement with the plaintiffs at the end of 1983[354] -- but never achieved any noticeable pressure on the government of Nova Scotia. In that sense, it, and most of the out-of-province collaboration built around the herbicide trial were mostly wasted potential.

The reason Nova Scotians had to reach beyond the provincial border to recruit witnesses was the extreme complexity of the set of ideas they had to argue in court. At trial they would be expected to prove the potential for harm within a narrow definition: human health could only be taken as isolated from environmental health, affected by the latter but never part of it, and a legal / scientific standard of proof would apply, meaning that all other possible causes of a given effect would have to be ruled out before the court would accept any herbicides as being responsible for it. The kind of medical research that might produce such results is expensive and rare, and even bringing the researchers themselves from Sweden or the United States could not prevent NSFI's lawyers arguing the absence of direct, verifiable links. It was the same argument used by the New Brunswick government to defend its insecticide program during the Reyes Syndrome controversy. At that time it led Dr. John Crocker to complain that, short of

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[353]"HFS public relations committee note: fund-raising tours," DLF, volume 882, number 3; Stephanie May, "Getting into PAN," *Between the Issues* 4:1 (May-June, 1984), on her trip to see the PAN-North America in Washington in November, 1983. Support, financial and otherwise, did come from all over: Farley Mowat, Ralph Nader, the Ontario Fedreation of Labour, and similarly diverse sources. Elizabeth May to the plaintiffs, 1 February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 24.7; "Draft Motion from the Ontario Federation of Labour Health and Safety Committee, re: 2,4,5-T / 2,4-D use in Nova Scotia," DAL-EAC, box 24.7.

[354]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 5, DAL-EAC, box 24.8; Liz Calder, EAC, to Lars Moberg, Sweden, 25 Jan 84, DAL-EAC, box 44.7.

experimentation on humans, no researcher could ever produce the kind of proof they were demanding of him.[355] The plaintiffs could only hope to educate the court on the nature of epidemiological evidence as the trial progressed. Even so, they would still have to overcome an insurmountable problem of scientific uncertainty, arguing for the effective prohibition of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T when even the best research sometimes failed to make clear whether the possible danger stemmed from the named phenoxy compounds themselves, from the products of their breakdown over months in storage or in nature, or from dioxin contaminants that occurred in vastly different concentrations from one chemical or one manufacturer to the next. And all the while they would face the attempts of NSFI's lawyers to prolong the court's confusion, arguing the need to sort out every nice distinction before pinning any blame on the chemicals in question, and insisting on the clearest "smoking gun" evidence of their harmfulness. In effect, the plaintiffs had shouldered the nearly impossible burden of transforming a precautionary case into a deductive one -- a "probably" into a "definitely." Justice Burchell had warned them in the summer of 1982 that the issue of chemical safety belonged properly to politicians, not judges, but once he granted his injunction, there was little chance to back away.[356]

Given the clearly poor odds of success, the question, "why go to court," was on many minds in late 1982 and through much of 1983, though the urgency of the process precluded its becoming a matter for much open debate until after the settlement with NSFI.[357] Having had so little time to decide, and such profound fear of what Agent

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[355]David Folster, "The agonizing fight over budworm spray," *Atlantic Insight* 1:3 (June, 1979), 34-36.

[356]*Between the Issues* 3:2 (May-June, 1983). Amusingly, NSFI's lawyer George Cooper said almost the same thing in May: *Chronicle Herald,* 6 May, 1983, Clipping File, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3469, number 8.

[357]The nearest to open discussion was Peter Cumming's comment on the decision to go to court that, "the issue seems to have taken on even more of a 'technical' and 'scientific' nature and less of a 'political' and 'social' and 'philosophical' and 'values' nature [;...] the change from a 'people's case' to an 'expert's case'

Orange exposure might do, was certainly a major factor. For some activists injunctions were seen as primarily a delaying tactic anyway. Yet haste alone cannot explain it; the first successful challenge to the budworm spray in the winter of 1976 had turned around a Cabinet decision in a matter of weeks using political tactics. One reason for the difference was surely Elizabeth May's entry to law school at Dalhousie University. May enjoyed a well-earned respect among anti-spray forces, especially on Cape Breton, and she led every legal effort since Big Pond in 1980. Most of all however, the reason for May and her allies in the EAC and other established Halifax groups to pursue the legal route was their maturing faith in scientific argument and the ability to sway politicians (or judges) with statements of pure fact. The EAC since 1975 had pursued the image of respectability, based on the understanding that a place at the policy-making table and a chance to state their case would be enough to convince anyone; Susan Holtz' insistence that the environmental movement had no real enemies epitomized that attitude. Their allies in forestry activism, the old-style conservationists, were the heirs of a long tradition of even more strict scientific optimism, not always as keen on public education and democracy as the new environmentalists, but very much committed to the idea that technocratic foresters, free of the corrupting influence of politics and commercial interest, could be counted on to follow the dictates of sound science. May and the CBLAS might have begun in 1976 with some antipathy toward government, but the experience with Vince MacLean and with Environment Canada's public consultation had turned some heads, especially hers, and close cooperation with the EAC encouraged the change.

With confidence in their facts and experts, then -- only slightly shaken by Justice

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may prove to be the most expensive few minutes of these 'ordinary people's' lives." *Between the Issues* 3:2 (May-June, 1983).

Merlin Nunn's decision to hear the case alone, without a jury[358] -- the plaintiffs put together a set of arguments around four essential points: the physical evidence of spray chemicals' mobility beyond the spray site; the ecological evidence of their damage to the forest system; the economic evidence of the lack of necessity for herbicides in pulpwood forestry; and the medical evidence of their harmfulness to human health. Their witnesses' combined testimony would present a damning description of NSFI's practices and of the government's oversight. Optimistically, supporters hoped that politicians, bureaucrats, and Royal Commissioners might "hear the crucial evidence that will help them make sane decisions."[359] In reality, none of them were listening, and if they had been they would have heard Justice Nunn dismiss each of the first three approaches summarily as irrelevant to the question of human health and safety. If the chemicals could not be proven harmful, he reasoned, NSFI might waste money, kill forests, or spray water supplies at will, even when instructed not to, and the court should still be satisfied that no criminal trespass existed.[360] Arguments that had won over the public against insecticide spraying fell flat in front of Nunn's insistence on the strict legal standard of proof of harm.

According to Nunn's preference, the majority of testimony, from the first day of the trial on 5 May to the last day on 1 June, concerned the effects of phenoxy herbicides on human health, and it was here that NSFI came prepared to fight. Plaintiffs' witness John Constable, surgeon at Harvard Medical School and one of the world's foremost epidemiologists regarding the effects of Agent Orange in Vietnam, started the contest by

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[358]Bruce Wildsmith and Richard Murtha to Plaintiffs, 17 December, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 24.7. Nunn decided against a jury trial on account of the complexity of the evidence expected to be presented.
[359]*Between the Issues* 3:2 (May-June, 1983).
[360]Logan Norris, Oregon State University Forest Science Department, to the President, Dean, and Directors of the same, 20 October, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

detailing the very recent evidence of birth defects there, and suggested that though newer phenoxies had less dioxin, no one could yet know if it was little enough to be harmless. "It is unreasonable," he said, "to use human subjects to determine the minimum toxic dose of a very deadly chemical."[361] It was exactly the argument that the plaintiffs offered again and again, even as the central point of Elizabeth May's closing statement: to proceed in the face of scientific uncertainty amounts to human testing. NSFI responded by minimizing both the scientific disagreement and the potential harm, producing experts to contradict each of the plaintiffs' experts, and yet more experts to insist on the relatively higher cancer risk from, variously, vitamin A, aspirin, cigarettes, contraceptives, diet soda, peanut butter, milk, and oxygen.[362] Uncertainty, yes; but certainly not very much. As testimony went on, witnesses attacked other witnesses' work. Lawyers for both sides attacked the other side's experts for their experimental procedures, grasp of statistics, or closeness to industry. It became, in Richard Murtha's words, "the world series of scientific evidence."[363]

If the trial was a ball game, the plaintiffs struck out often. They seemed to be playing by rules different from those imposed by the umpire. Mikael Eriksson, a Swedish cancer researcher, objected to NSFI's simplistic numeric assessments of risk: "risk to whom? Benefit to whom?" he asked. With the herbicides themselves as well as their various dioxins and other contaminants under-studied, he added, "we just know for sure about sarcomas and lymphomas." Other cancers might well be caused by the same array

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[361]Cumming, "The herbicide case Part I," 26.
[362]*Ibid*, 24-26; Peter Cumming, "Herbicide case Part II: expert dispute," *Rural Delivery* 8:2 (July, 1983), 24-27.
[363]Fred McMahon, "Residents 'guinea pigs' in spray plan," *Chronicle Herald,* 7 June, 1983, 4.

of toxins.[364] Susan Daum, another epidemiologist from New Jersey, carefully explained to Justice Nunn that rare cancers and birth defects may be "markers" for more common ones whose causes can't be discerned with enough certainty. If thalidomide had caused a common birth defect, she said, its effects would have disappeared into the statistical background and no one might ever have realized what it was doing.[365] In granting the injunction in August, Justice Burchell had mentioned thalidomide and DDT, saying that people do have a right to fear "approved" substances.[366] Nunn would not have it (or simply could not grasp it).[367] The question of risk inequity was beneath mention, but during the trial as well as in his final ruling, Nunn insisted that any chemical as bad as environmentalists made TCDD dioxin out to be should have obvious effects.[368] Barring such effects, no evidence would satisfy him. When plaintiffs' lawyers pressed one of NSFI's witnesses about full or partial bans on 2,4,5-T in Sweden, Italy, Holland, Norway, Japan, and the Soviet Union, Nunn interjected to dismiss "political" matters: "I have received no evidence of any country that has banned them on the basis of scientific evidence." On another occasion, he vented his frustration with inconclusive studies and suggested the scientists "scrap them all and start over again," as though one good experiment would settle the question forever. Finally, on the last day of the trial the plaintiffs attempted to call Robyn Warren to the stand, hoping to use his story of herbicide poisoning to "rebut the theory that nothing happens in real life." Nunn refused

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[364]Cumming, "Herbicide case Part II," 24-25.
[365]Cumming, "Herbicide case Part II," 22.
[366]*Between the Issues* 3:2 (May-June, 1983).
[367]Members of the EAC Board of Directors were quite worried that "the Judge does not appear to understand some of the very basic scientific principles involved." EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 18 May, 1983, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 3. Nunn himself asked the assembled lawyers and witnesses at trial how "can I possibly absorb all this stuff?" Cumming, "Herbicide case Part II," 26.
[368]Fred McMahon, "Residents 'guinea pigs' in spray plan," *Chronicle Herald,* 7 June, 1983, 4.

to hear him.[369]

Justice Nunn's ruling, when it came on 15 September, could hardly have been a great surprise. In insisting on the strictest standard of proof, he had earlier said that the "reasonable fear for safety and health" criterion could shut down almost any industry if consistently applied.[370] Those who had attended the trial might have heard echoes of the startling honesty of Dr. Marshall Johnson, witness for the defense, who said "if you took everything that causes terata [birth defects] off the market, we wouldn't have anything."[371] Only "smoking gun" evidence could have met Nunn's standard, and that ("John Doe's cancer was definitely caused by 2,4-D") is exactly the kind of evidence epidemiology cannot produce. There was no shortage of criticism for the ruling during the late months of 1983, but in truth Nunn had carried out his assigned task as well as should have been expected. The court is an inherently conservative institution. Arguments in favour of precautionary principles cannot be expected to move a judge when the law he applies has no space for such considerations. May, Murtha, and Wildsmith crafted a case best suited to the court of public opinion and gambled on its success in a court of law.

Criticism of Nunn's ruling on the merits of the case quickly fell away behind rising criticism of his ruling on costs. The plaintiffs had indeed gambled, and stood to lose everything. Not even pausing to hear arguments from either side, the judge awarded full court costs to NSFI. Though the plaintiffs had acted in the public interest, normally a

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[369]One witness for the plaintiffs, Theodore Sterling, statistician and epidemiologist at Simon Fraser University, was incensed at Nunn's attitude, asking why only Nova Scotia of all jurisdictions in the world still allowed 2,4,5-T aerial spraying: "Even the Russians don't use it now." Cumming, "Herbicide case Part II," 26-27.

[370]Fred McMahon, "Residents 'guinea pigs' in spray plan," *Chronicle Herald,* 7 June, 1983, 4.

[371]Peter Cumming, "Herbicide case Part II," 27.

mitigating factor in costs rulings, the final ruling seemed better suited to a frivolous suit. This, along with Nunn's direct criticism of the plaintiffs' witnesses' "lack of objectivity" caused the greatest anger and worry among environmentalists.[372] Regardless of the outcome of the trial, the feeling that a ruling on costs had been used to punish activists and discourage further opposition to chemical forestry incensed their supporters. Sydney City Council (already upset during the trial when one of NSFI's witnesses suggested the city's tap water was more carcinogenic than 2,4,5-T) passed a unanimous resolution asking the provincial government to pay the costs on behalf of the plaintiffs, and fundraising efforts increased with the help of the Dalhousie University Student Union, the Nova Scotia Liberal Party, and provincial Federation of Labour, along with environmental groups in several other provinces. Pollution Probe bought an ad in the *Globe and Mail* asking for donations in support of the 17 Nova Scotians and their families facing financial ruin; Friends of the Earth Canada did the same in the *Ottawa Citizen*.[373] Nevertheless, the precedent set by Nunn's ruling could scarcely be undone by a simple show of support, no matter how strong. The provincial Minister of Environment made it clear that he had no intention of interfering in the case in any way and saw "no need to finance the court battles of environmentalist groups,"[374] and the EAC reported that a group of activists in Calgary had abandoned court action against Amoco Petroleum over a sour gas leak in 1982, for fear of a similar ruling on costs.[375]

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[372]Glen Wannamaker, "Spray opponents lick their wounds and get ready for another fight," *Atlantic Insight* 5:11 (November, 1983), 7. Anger among the witnesses as well: the Swedish researcher Mikael Eriksson complained that, "the judge himself admitted that he had difficulties comprehending, yet he acquits the company and accuses me and other independent researchers of being partial." *Dala-Demokraten,* 10 November, 1983, enclosed with Letter from Hollis Routledge, NSFI, to D.L. Eldridge, 21 November, 1983, DLF, volume 882, number 3.
[373]*Between the Issues* 3:4 (October, 1983).
[374]Peter Cumming, "The Herbicide Fight," *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983).
[375]*Between the Issues* 3:5 (December, 1983).

In the fall of 1983 the herbicide issue was as vital as it had ever been. If government and industry had hoped to squelch opposition in the wake of a harsh court ruling, they were disappointed. Measured by fundraising effort, press attention, and the geographic reach of both, the protest was if anything gaining momentum. Yet the whole effort in Nova Scotia -- and by extension the connected efforts beyond -- was still tethered to court proceedings, and to the shaken confidence and fading energy of seventeen average Nova Scotians. None of them could have expected in the summer of 1982 that sixteen months later they would be contemplating appeal proceedings that might drag on for months or years longer, and the strain of Nunn's costs ruling was wearing them down. The example of Scott Paper's costs award during the injunction hearing was never far from mind: if NSFI made a similar precipitous demand for payment, despite all of the fundraising, the plaintiffs could not hope to produce the amount needed. Some of them also questioned the value in an appeal, when the injunction that had grounded NSFI's planes had expired with the end of the trial. They might go through all of the additional expense of an appeal only to be sprayed before ever meeting another judge. Peter Cumming wrote,

> They had become become representatives of all Nova Scotians, personally responsible for reforming Canadian law for all environmental and citizen groups who might take a corporation or government to court over anything, figureheads, martyrs, and torch-bearers for people across Canada, the United States, and Sweden [...] sooner or later the question must be asked as to how much any group of people should be expected to bear.[376]

For plaintiff Vicki Palmer, the answer was already clear: "people are burnt out."[377] For

[376]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 3, DAL-EAC, box 24.8.
[377]Susan Murray, "Trouble in the anti-spray house," *Atlantic Insight* 6:6 (June, 1984), 7. At least one plaintiff, Bob Sampson, also told the CBC that he would have given up much sooner if he could have:

almost three months the plaintiffs debated whether or not to proceed with an appeal, until deciding in the early days of December to "get out of a bad situation as cheaply and quickly as possible."[378]

The settlement that the plaintiffs signed with NSFI was a divisive one. The final debate over whether to accept the deal was tense and ran late into the night, and when they did finally decide, it was in part based on the advice of a corporate lawyer who enjoyed less than perfect trust from all seventeen plaintiffs. The settlement would mean turning over remaining funds raised to NSFI (not a significant amount) and surrendering the right to appeal, but would also finally end the plaintiffs' financial peril. Ryan Googoo, keen to appeal Nunn's brisk dismissal of the Aboriginal rights argument, and Elizabeth May, who wished to keep the debate in a legal forum, initially refused to sign off on the settlement, though Googoo eventually agreed to abandon an appeal in order to preserve the settlement for the other plaintiffs' sake.[379] The Herbicide Fund Society, not itself a plaintiff, had no need to sign but was asked to give up its funds or risk scuttling the settlement. After some debate, its members decided to capitulate but also to dissolve their society and begin anew, hoping to raise funds to repay the costs left out of the settlement, and also to operate at a greater remove from most of the now-former plaintiffs.[380] Money

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"Transcript of CBC Inquiry," 16 March, 1983, DLF, volume 882, number 3.

[378]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 4, DAL-EAC, box 24.8.

[379]United Press Agency of the Swedish Press, 13 December, 1983, Clipping File, DAL-EAC, box 29.9. May had no right to appeal on her own, as she was not a true plaintiff. Stephanie May, "Getting into PAN," *Between the Issues* 4:1 (May-June, 1984); "Interview with Ryan Googoo," *Between the Issues* 3:6 (February-March, 1984).

[380]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 8-9, DAL-EAC, box 24.8. In the end only $3,993.91 went to NSFI : "Details of Finalization of Settlement," DAL-EAC, box 24.8. The HFS steering committee that formed the initial executive of the new Citizens Against Pesticides (CAP) group, decided on 14 December, 1983, was John Shaw, Jeff Brownstein, Aaron Schneider, Peter Cumming, and John Roberts, with support from Margaree Environmental Association, FALASH, Victoria County Landowners, Mabou Support Group, Glendale Against Herbicide Spraying, Whycocomagh Against Herbicide Spraying, Antigonish Support Group, Baddeck-Middle River Support Group, Sydney-Big Pond Support Group: "Announcement: 1st AGM of CAP - 11 February 1984, Baddeck," n.d., DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

questions strained the cohesion of the anti-herbicide forces -- HFS's Peter Cumming believed NSFI had drafted its offer with that result in mind[381] -- but most everyone was reluctant to criticise too heavily the plaintiffs who had done so much. Financial disagreements alone did not drive the acrimonious debate of late 1983 and 1984; instead fundamental disagreements about how to wage the campaign were breaking through after months of enforced solidarity.

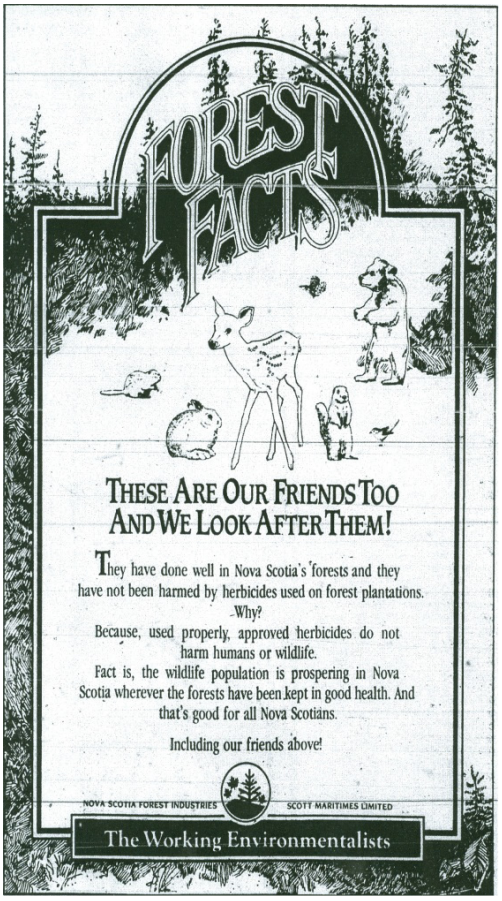
The Sting of Defeat

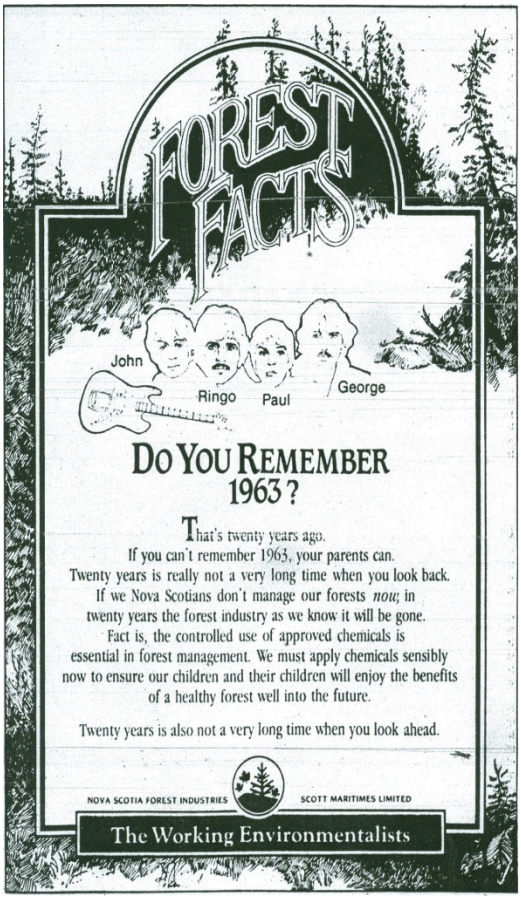
For a certain sub-set of the anti-pesticide movement (well represented in the EAC, and including Elizabeth May) court action presented the ideal vehicle for environmentalism: objective, scientific, and respectable. At a time when environmental activists were being accused of harbouring anti-business feelings -- dangerously close to anti-capitalist, with all of its sinister Soviet connotations -- any method of argument that could borrow the legitimacy of the judicial system was an advantage. Unfortunately the tactical choice that was supposed to "balance the image" of the movement did nothing to increase their influence on forest policy or alter the growing frequency of attacks against environmentalists, except perhaps by restraining their ability to effectively respond.[382]

Industry spokesmen rarely missed a chance to criticise environmentalists, but predictably so and to muted effect. Far worse were attacks from high-ranking members of the Buchanan government. With the pro-chemical faction in ascendancy within Lands and Forests and the DOE there were few curbs on comments such as Deputy Environment Minister E.L.L. Rowe's, associating activists with "violence and civil

[381]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 6, DAL-EAC, box 24.8.
[382]EAC Communications Resource Group Meeting minutes, 27 January, 1983, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 11.

disobedience," or Attorney General Harry How's suggestion that half of the movement in Nova Scotia was made up of Americans.[383] The long serving and prominent Lands and Forests Minister George Henley gave the most thorough denunciation of





environmentalists, as a small group operating in Nova Scotia with the "support of

(Figure 4.1: The backlash against activists included a mostly fruitless attempt to usurp the word "environmentalist" and a much more successful attempt to present them as a meddling leisure class. Chronicle Herald, 16 December, 1983, 7; Chronicle Herald, 10 December, 1983, 7.)

subversive elements from both within and without the nation by both political philosophy and financial assistance and under the guise of environment." The solution to this

[383]Elizabeth May to the Editor, *Chronicle Herald,* 25 February, 1983, Clipping File, DAL-EAC, box 39.7; *Q/L SSEPA NEWS* 1:12 (May, 1983).

pernicious influence, according to Mr. Henley (and despite the efforts of the most scientifically inclined environmentalists to appropriate managerial language) was to "base our educational program on facts, on scientific facts so that we may go forward with our forest management despite the preoccupation of those I have mentioned who through distortion, through vandalism, through supposition, through emotion, based without truth would destroy the very principle of forest management."[384]

Activists understood what the critics intended. One remarked that, "Mr. Henley [...] is well aware that about 50 per cent of all those who heard or read his statement already have implemented in their minds the connection between anti-spray and communism."[385] Yet their response was remarkably confused. Since the end of the budworm fight, the largest environmental coalition in the province had grown lax in its public outreach, while pursuing legal solutions and bureaucratic access. As one measure, EAC's formal membership declined to about 300 in 1982, from more than 600 just two years earlier.[386] Members who identified as part of the movement were replaced by supporters, who stood outside of it. And while some in the movement fretted over the potential loss of social influence as a consequence of the drift toward elite or expert status, it is not clear that anyone anticipated how much easier the change made it for people like Henley or How to portray them as a clique of subversives and outsiders. Nor

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[384]Speech by George Henley, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 24.5. Connie Schnell in South Haven, Victoria County, soon began making "I'm an ENVIRONMENTAL SUBVERSIVE" buttons to sell for the HFS: Peter Cumming to EAC, DAL-EAC, box 24.5.

[385]John Goodall, Stellarton, to the Editor, *Chronicle Herald,* 12 October, 1982, Clipping File, RCOF, volume 192, number 2.

[386]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 May, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 2; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 13 February, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 24. The EAC's leaders discussed the change themselves in 1978, noting the organization's "lack of contact with membership," "lack of outreach," and poor "relationship of centre to hinterlands." (The fact that they viewed the Centre as "the centre" is also quite telling, given the great vitality of environmentalism outside of Halifax.) Special Meeting of Board of Directors minutes, 9 December, 1978, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 22.

does it seem that anyone realized how badly losing in court had undermined their own claims to scientific expertise and credibility, or the power of the propaganda weapon that Justice Nunn's decision would deliver to the movement's critics. By impugning the scientific objectivity of the plaintiffs' witnesses in his ruling, Nunn effectively gave the endorsement of the court to the statements of the defense, which Lands and Forests' Eldridge immediately began circulating to forestry agencies across the country. (The PAN cited a particularly egregious example by a witness supplied by Dow Chemical, who described Agent Orange as "a mythical substance which caused tremendous damage in Vietnam in the newspapers, but nowhere else."[387]) Even when environmentalists did attempt to buttress their mass-movement credentials, they faced criticism designed to undermine their reputation as honest information brokers. A public opinion poll showing 61 percent of Nova Scotians opposed to the use of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T on forests prompted a DOE spokesperson to suggest the numbers had been "cooked."[388]

Henley's talk of an "educational program" was much more than a rhetorical stick with which to pummel environmentalists. It was policy. In an ironic reversal of the trend among the nascent environmental mainstream, the Department of Lands and Forests avidly pursued public outreach from 1983, continuing under Henley's successor, Ken Streatch. Active support of industrial forestry had been growing in the department, and in the DOE, since shortly after the Progressive Conservative government took power in 1978 and brought Don Eldridge from the Nova Scotia Forest Products Association into

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[387]Quoted in *Pesticide Action Network Newsletter* 2 (1983), PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 3. It is worth noting that Nunn's ruling was against the plaintiffs, but not necessarily for the defense -- the failure of one to make the case does not necessarily mean that the other's position is therefore correct -- but that kind of nice distinction rarely comes across.

[388]Department of Environment Spokesperson Linda Laffin quoted in *Between the Issues* 3:4 (October, 1983).

the Deputy Minister's office, but it took the herbicide trial to finally shock the chemical proponents out of the narrow reaches of interdepartmental committees and the Eastern Spruce Budworm Council and into acting on Eldridge's exhortations to publicly "answer [the] anti-spray people."[389] 1983 brought active cooperation between pulp and paper companies and government on public woodlot tours to sprayed and unsprayed stands, and on attempts to counter negative publicity by seeking out media attention. As momentum gathered for mass public appeals by industry during the winter of 1984, plans for the first Nova Scotia Forestry Exhibition were drawn up and funding secured from Lands and Forests.[390]

Critics of the industry operating within the reach of government agencies found their positions increasingly untenable in this new era. Some, like the ECC, simply swam with the tide, calling it "encouraging" to see industry "beginning to combat this [environmentalist misinformation] with information and education programs."[391] Others resisted. Minister Streatch personally took over as the Chairman of the Forest Practices Improvement Board, which had given a voice during the controversy to small woodlot owners opposed to chemical forestry. The former Chairman, Hugh Fairn, complained that Cabinet was stacking the Board with "people dedicated to the destruction of the [Forest Practices Improvement] Act," while Board member and fierce critic of industrial forestry Murray Prest accused the Minister of attempting to "cripple" the Board and with it one of

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[389]"Minutes of joint meeting, Deputy Ministers of Health or representatives with ESBC," 1 May, 1980, DLF, volume 604, number 5.

[390]Christine Blair, "Tour provides sobering look at budworm-damaged forest," *Forest Times* 5:3 (August, 1983), 8; T.D. Smith, Lands and Forests, to R.E. Bailey, Lands and Forests, 10 June, 1983, DLF, volume 882, number 3; "Misconceptions about forest industry must be corrected," *Chronicle Herald,* 19 January, 1984, 40; "Funding approved for N.S. Forestry Exhibition," *Chronicle Herald,* 21 January, 1984, 18. (The amount was 4,270$, from Lands and Forests.)

[391]Environmental Control Council, "Discussion Paper on Herbicide Use in Nova Scotia," n.d. [c.late 1983], DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

the few means for small landowners to resist the pulp companies market control.[392] But industrial forestry advocates refused to cede either media dominance or control of the Board to their critics. Just as environmental activists had learned from their opponents during the budworm controversy, their opponents now borrowed environmentalists' tactics and appealed to aesthetic arguments (contrasting the "terrible looking grey mess of trees" killed by the budworm with the "lovely little green trees" in herbicide and insecticide treated plots).[393] They also continued to consolidate their claim on scientific expertise, and began crafting forestry education curricula for elementary students. Thanks to "public education" subsidies included in federal-provincial forestry agreements, Canadians' own money brought the inaugural "People of the Forest" lesson to Pictou County at the end of 1983, where students learned the value and necessity of chemical treatments.[394]

Environmentalists recognized what was happening. Some could even appreciate the irony of their unintended achievement. In one of the first CAP newsletters, Peter Cumming noted on a list of activist accomplishments that, while they had earned support from literally all around the world, "we have also mobilized the forest industry, Lands and Forests, Canadian Forestry Service, Truth in Forestry, etc. etc. into trying to sell the chemical forest to Canadians."[395] It is questionable, though, how many realized that public education was only necessary as a weapon against environmental activists. After all, unlike environmentalists, industry had no need of public pressure to turn policy

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[392]Alan Jeffers, "Streatch will take over forestry board," *Chronicle Herald,* 30 March, 1984, 17; EAC Press Release, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 29.9.

[393]Blair, "Tour provides sobering look at budworm-damaged forest," 8.

[394]EAC to Charles Caccia, federal Minister of Environment, 20 February, 1984, DAL-EAC, box 29.9; "Forestry Taught in Schools," *Chronicle Herald,* 17 December, 1983, 23.

[395]Peter Cumming, "CAP RAP," 2 May, 1984, DAL-EAC, box 24.9. "Truth In Forestry" was a pro-spray pressure group originating in Cape Breton but registered to NSFI's lawyers' firm in Halifax: *Between the Issues* 3:6 (February-March, 1984).

decisions in its favour. The provincial government had made perfectly clear its intention to continue herbicide spraying, even as the legal drama unfolded. While waiting for a decision, the Environment Minister publicly vowed to treat the upcoming ruling as applying only to the few thousand acres covered by the injunction, and Lands and Forests finally removed the last official requirement for prior public notification before spraying. Aerial application of 2,4-D / 2,4,5-T was still off the table thanks to the pressure tactics of the Whycocomagh Band the previous summer, but there was nothing to prevent spraying them from the ground. In 1983, as in 1982, Lands and Forests approved ground permits for scattered sites across the province and even conducted its own program on 500 acres.[396] (See Figure 4.2) Their secrecy was imperfect -- the Scott Paper company was more open than government, and the information could be extracted from the DOE by persistent enough asking -- but it hardly mattered. Letters of protest from the EAC and the provincial NDP were no more effective than last-minute protest marches by the residents of Orangedale, Inverness County. Government had simply stopped listening.[397]

In the aftermath of Nunn's ruling and the subsequent settlement, as bureaucrats and elected officials joined industry spokesmen in denouncing "ignorance and irrational

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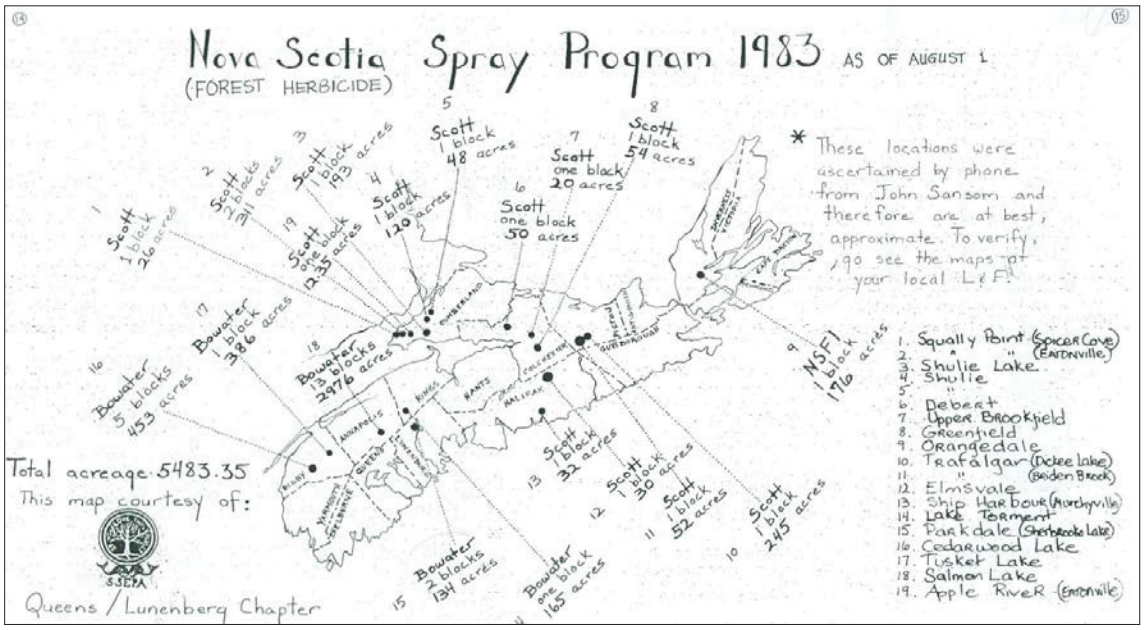
[396]On ground sprays: D.L. Eldridge to G. Kerr, Minister of Environment, 12 August, 1983, DLF, volume 606, number 8; Gerard MacLellan, Department of Environment, to D.L. Eldridge, 19 August, 1983, DLF, volume 882, number 3; Greg Kerr to Ake Thor, NSFI, 4 August, 1983, RCOF, volume 186, number 10. (Environment and Lands&Forests also encouraged Scott Paper to use ground spray on Christmas tree farms when aerial permits were denied by the Department of Public Health due to the nearby source of water for the Town of Wolfville: D.L. Eldridge to G. Henley, 28 April, 1983, DLF, volume 606, number 8.) On the Minister's vow: M. Haase to Premier Buchanan, 15 July, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 43.5. On the end of public notice: George Moody, Minister of Environment, to Ryan Googoo, 6 November, 1985, DAL-EAC, box 43.7; Letter discussing end of newspaper notification, from E.L.L. Rowe, Department of Environment, to file, 5 January, 1983, DLF, volume 606, number 8.

[397]EAC Press Release, 17 August, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 24.7; "NDP protest spray plans," *Chronicle Herald,* 26 August, 1983, 15; "NSFI target of anti-spray protestors," *Chronicle Herald,* 16 August, 1983, 21.

Government had of course not stopped listening to the pulp and paper industry, and it is in that correspondence that Kerr revealed the total acreage sprayed with chemical herbicides, mostly phenoxy, in 1982 (15,000 acres, both aerial and ground), and pushed for more "public education" from industry. Greg Kerr, Minister of Environment, to Ake Thor, NSFI, 4 August, 1983, DLF, volume 186, number 10.

fear,"[398] the rain of secretly-approved herbicides resumed. New occasions were found for insecticide applications as well, as the gypsy moth moved into southwest Nova Scotia.[399] Environmentalists, largely cut off from information sources in government and fighting on multiple fronts (now against a revived roadside spray program with 2,4-D in various counties), could draw some meager comfort from the fact that 2,4,5-T, suspended from use by the American Environmental Protection Agency in 1979 and finally discontinued by the Dow corporation, was no longer available. The herbicide program in



(Figure 4.2: map of spray sites for 1983. *Q/L SEEPA NEWS* 2/2 (1983), Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3470, number 6.)

1984 would see instead the first widespread use of glyphosate on Nova Scotia's forests.[400]

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[398]Quote from Agricultural Association of Canada President Jack Elliott, at a Department of Agriculture workshop, "Pesticides in Perspective - an educational seminar," 9 April, 1984, quoted in *Between The Issues* 4:1 (May-June, 1984).

[399]"Infamous gypsy moth found in alarming numbers in western half of Nova Scotia," *Chronicle Herald,* 7 February, 1984, 25. The pressure to spray chemical insecticides to kill spruce budworm never really ceased either: "Cape Breton Landowners Information Update," January, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

[400]Most, possibly all, of the sites at issue in the trial (among others) were sprayed with glyphosate and 2,4-D in 1984: *Between the Issues* 4:1 (May-June, 1984); George Moody, Minister of Environment, to Ryan Googoo, 6 November, 1985, DAL-EAC, box 43.7; Paul Schneidereit, "Varying Views on Herbicide Spraying," *Chronicle Herald,* 21 July, 1984, 21.

But the change was due entirely to outside factors, and the last stockpile of 2,4,5-T had still made its way into the forest, albeit by the more laborious method of ground spraying. The herbicide trial, epitome of a provincial movement based on science and the law, had in the end achieved only the peculiar and unintended effect of driving the provincial government to abandon any pretense of impartiality. There were now, at least, very clearly opposed camps on the issue of industrial forestry, though not everyone in the movement was willing to acknowledge it.

Conclusion

The court challenge that had effectively locked nonmodern arguments out of the contest for more than a year had proven disastrous, and mistrust of government among those who would make such arguments was stronger than ever. It was joined by a growing mistrust of those who had led the movement into court as well. The failure of the legal effort and the shock of Nunn's costs ruling preoccupied the province's environmental activists, and the eventual settlement even more so, but it also freed them from the enforced solidarity of the courtroom proceedings. Peter Cumming, who had exercised his alternative views fruitlessly before the Royal Commission during the trial preparations, wrote several essays in the aftermath. In *The Stink of Defeat* he called it "amazing [...] that our shaky structure has held together as long as it has,"[401] but admitted that the effort had left the entire movement "demoralized, burned out, and fighting among themselves."[402] In *Out of the Courts and Back to the Issue* he suggested that "the legal

[401]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 7, DAL-EAC, box 24.8.
[402]Peter Cumming, "The Stink of Defeat (draft)," 10, DAL-EAC, box 24.8. Much the same sentiment came from Hester Lessard of the SSEPA: Susan Murray, "Trouble in the anti-spray house," *Atlantic Insight* 6:6 (June, 1984), 7.

child [had] gobbled up the larger parent, the herbicide issue itself."[403] In both essays the advice was the same: return in earnest to the political pressure tactics of the budworm era and leave the divisive post-mortem analysis for another time (perhaps never). Too many activists, though, were unwilling to let it go at that. Freed to express their frustration, groups like the Cape Breton Wildlife Association lashed out at a "red herring" legal effort that focused on human health and left no room for defense of wildlife or landscapes,[404] while others -- likely influenced by the activist schism around uranium mining -- saw behind the question of tactics a deeper division between those who would work within the boundaries set down by government and those who would challenge them.[405]

The power of governments to shape social movements has to do with more than simply tempting offers of consultation or research funding. It comprises also their withdrawal of the same, as well as of basic information, in order to protect the prerogative of final decision-making, and the powerful instruments -- e.g., Royal Commissions' Terms of Reference, parliamentary procedure, court rules, bureaucratic compromise -- with which they influence the sort of arguments and ideas deemed legitimate in official proceedings, in the press, and in the public mind. The Queens-Lunenburg SSEPA complained in the summer of 1983 that,

> we have been telling the government how we feel about its forestry and public notice policies, especially regarding herbicide spraying. We have followed all the proper channels -- letters, phone calls, telegrams, petitions, and even litigation. We have made submissions to the Royal Forestry Commission. Still we are ignored. Still government will not meet with us. Still government

[403]Peter Cumming, "Out of the Courts and Back to the Issue," *Between The Issues* (October, 1983).
[404]Cape Breton Island Wildlife Association, "Spraying: Removing nature's food supply," *Chronicle Herald,* 15 December, 1983, 7.
[405]David Orton's opinion was that success against biocides would require civil disobedience, and activists ought to know that "the provincial government will be on the other side of the barricades." David Orton to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 8:1 (June, 1983).

> issues permits while the Royal Commission on forestry is deliberating; while the Nova Scotia Supreme Court weighs the evidence. Still the government reduces further the feeblest of public notice regulations.[406]

The Q/L SSEPA members were feeling the effects of this whole suite of conditions as well as describing the sort of activities that it was designed to evoke. Confronted with such an apparently insuperable challenge, activists were forced to decide between acquiescence and rebellion, but the process of following "all the proper channels" had already set a large proportion of the movement on the path to acquiescence.

As much as the contest over industrial forestry demonstrates the power of the modern state to shape social movements, the state never acts alone. These conditions, this exercise of government power, require as well the tacit consent of the governed. It requires their own agency, and in the summer of 1983, a number of environmentalists in Nova Scotia had already demonstrated their determination to remain within the boundaries of respectable discourse, no matter what the cost.

[406] *SSEPA NEWS Q/L* 2:2 (July-August, 1983).

Chapter 5 - Two Environmentalisms: uranium and radicalism

The Royal Commission on Uranium Mining in Nova Scotia (1982-83) provided environmentalists in the province with ample time and opportunity to focus on their own growing differences. Ever since the push to create government environmental agencies around 1970, and increasingly so since Gordon Edwards' advice to Canadian energy activists in 1976, to co-opt the co-opters in government, reformists had steadily sought more and more official recognition, more opportunities to participate in formal consultative processes, and more appreciation of their self-consciously respectable, objective, and scientific positions.[407] At the same time, environmentalists with more fundamental critiques resisted what they saw as processes designed to wear out their energies in futile and unproductive consultation on epiphenomenal issues while ignoring the real roots of the crisis in basic social or economic structures. The former group tended to be urban activists, while the latter often lived, worked, and organized at a greater remove from the city, where the defense of home places and rejection of metropolitan domination continued to fuel new activism. The cost of victory aginst the uranium industry was an admission that such differences could no longer be bridged by blithe assurances of unity in the movement.

Nova Scotia's anti-uranium campaign was brief but crucially significant to the formation of the provincial environmental movement. While it confirmed the lasting trends -- the power of political pressure, the influence of global environmentalism on the

[407]Bruce Doern, and Thomas Conway, *The Greening of Canada: Federal Institutions and Decisions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994); Gordon Edwards to CCNR, 15 August, 1976, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 1: "It [a meeting with EMR] is clearly an attempt to 'co-opt' our efforts, but we feel [...] it is better to accept the offer and try to turn it to useful purposes."

provincial movement, the defense of home places as a motive, and the relevance of the modern/nonmodern distinction in environmental arguments -- it also impelled the makers of modernist arguments into closer cooperation with government and industry, and their nonmodernist peers into the firmest rejection yet of the state's power to set the parameters of acceptable discussion.

Nova Scotia's initial venture into uranium mining during the 1970s had little to do with energy policy and much to do with the continued quest for regional economic development. With the encouragement and assistance of the federal government, provincial governments in Atlantic Canada set about in the middle years of the decade to attract capital investment in the form of geological exploration and active mining. Just like oil and gas extraction, also on the province's development agenda, mining rarely makes for stable or lasting economic blessings, but from the perspective of a growth-hungry polity, potentially mineable deposits of zinc, lead, silver, copper, iron, tin, and uranium were too tempting to resist. The first hint that uranium might be found in commercially attractive quantities sent geologists rushing into the sandstone region of the province's north shore and Fundy shore in 1976, and from there into the Cobequid Highlands and the vast South Mountain Batholith, stretching from Halifax to Yarmouth.[408]

Regardless of government support, the claim-staking rush of 1977 should have fizzled. Even the inveterate optimists at the Nova Scotia Department of Mines and Energy admitted in 1982 that a nation-wide recession and declining metal prices had

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[408]Bruce Little, "Shades of the Klondike in Atlantic Canada," *Atlantic Insight* 1:2 (May, 1979), 25; Province of Nova Scotia, Department of Mines and Energy, *Uranium in Nova Scotia: A Background Summary for the Uranium Inquiry - Nova Scotia, Report 82-7* (Halifax: Government of Nova Scotia, 1982), 3-9. Companies exploring for uranium in the province included Lacana, Gulf, and Noranda on the north shore; Esso, Aquitaine, Shell, Eldorado, Norcen, and Saarberg on the southern mainland.

already made most Nova Scotian mineral claims untenable.[409] But uranium in Canada is not like other minerals. As the first link in the nuclear fuel chain, uranium has had a special status with the Canadian federal government since the Second World War. Ottawa initially took a proprietary interest in nuclear technology and continued to promote it after nominally turning its military nuclear program over to civilian purposes. The same applied to uranium. State ownership evolved into state sponsorship of private profit in the 1950s, enthusiastic to the point that the Canadian government joined six private and Crown corporations to participate in a secretive global price-fixing cartel in the early 1970s. For various reasons the price of uranium shot up several times over in 1975, making any cartel a moot proposition, but the point had been made: the Canadian government was clear in its determination to protect uranium producers' investments. [410]

Opposition to uranium mining in Saskatchewan met the full force of state power in the late 1970s. So successfully did the first provincial public inquiry there in 1977-1978 deflect activist energy that not a single anti-uranium group was willing to participate in the second in 1979-1981. British Columbia's anti-uranium movement began with a militant act of civil disobedience -- a blockade of roads leading to a uranium prospecting site near the water supply of the town of Genelle. Rather than repeat Saskatchewan's unproductive experience, however, British Columbian activists used their government's public inquiry process to gather a broad public coalition and apply even more direct pressure on the government, winning a seven-year moratorium on uranium

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[409]Lawrence Welsh, "Uranium Industry faces low sales, poor prices as power demand falls," *Globe and Mail,* 29 March, 1982, B3; Department of Mines and Energy, *Uranium in Nova Scotia*, 8.

[410]"Uranium cartel probe reports laws broken," *Globe and Mail,* 27 May, 1981, quoted in Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 116-117. All of Canada's uranium producers were involved in the cartel, some possibly reluctantly, including Denison, Eldorado, Gulf, Rio Algom, Uranerz, and Uranium Canada. Overseas partners included the UK, France, South Africa, and Australia.

exploration and mining in 1980.[411]

Opposition to uranium mining and prospecting flowered across Canada in the closing years of the 1970s: from Saskatchewan and British Columbia to the Northwest Territories, where Canada's first-ever uranium mine at Port Radium still awaited decommissioning. Newfoundland and Labrador conducted a short inquiry of its own in 1979 into a Brinex mine proposal in Labrador's central mineral belt, and withheld permission for the project.[412] Meanwhile, trust in government as a neutral regulator withered. The Saskatchewan and British Columbia experiences with public inquiries effectively broadcast nationally the role of Royal Commissions as "political 'steam valves' to reduce public pressure on government."[413] They also offered a solution to those willing to subvert the official process. The question of whether to do so proved unexpectedly divisive in Nova Scotia, however, as the province moved into the centre of the national anti-uranium spotlight.

A Dawning Realization of Risk

The story of Nova Scotia's anti-uranium movement, like any such movement, was one of leaders and organizers; the longer the controversy dragged on, the more organized resistance became and the more individuals arrayed themselves behind outspoken leaders representing their opinions. It is worth remembering, however, that these were also stories of individual Nova Scotians concerned for the integrity of their own relationships

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[411]Ralph Torrie, "BC's inquiry and moratorium," *CCNR's Transitions* 3:1 (May, 1980); Jim Harding, *Canada's Deadly Secret: Saskatchewan uranium and the global nuclear system* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2007), 28.

[412]Document on Inuit opposition to uranium mining, DAL-EAC, box 42.9; Amy Zierler, "Labrador's great debate: Who wants a uranium mine?," *Atlantic Insight* 2:4 (May, 1980), 18.

[413]Ralph Torrie, "BC's inquiry and moratorium," *CCNR's Transitions* 3:1 (May, 1980); Saskatchewan Environmental Society and Regina Group for a Non-Nuclear Society to Susan Holtz, 1977, PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 14.

with their natural environment, and that in the beginning the anti-uranium campaign was entirely their story. One of them, a man concerned for his place in the world and unwilling to accept the provincial government's wait-and-see approach to the risks, was Alan MacKenzie of Rossville, Colchester County. Like many others in the province, MacKenzie became aware of uranium exploration only in the summer of 1978, when prospectors from the Wyoming Mineral Corporation knocked on his door looking for permission to drill test holes on his farm. Anxious and uncertain of his legal right to prevent exploration on his property, he sought advice from the Ecology Action Center in Halifax.[414] As prospectors narrowed in on uranium deposits, moving from aerial surveys to drilling and trenching, their activities became more noticeable on the ground, and more and more landowners followed MacKenzie's lead, some certain that uranium ought not be mined, others still only curious and concerned to find out the risks. Like most of his peers, MacKenzie never became a major player in the dramas of judges and Royal Commissions, but there would never have been an anti-uranium movement without him and those like him.

The other half of the equation was of course the people to whom those like MacKenzie turned for help. The anti-nuclear movement in Nova Scotia was well prepared in 1978 to share information on the new issue. As the first link in the nuclear fuel chain, uranium and its dangers had long since been recognized as a fruitful avenue of anti-nuclear argument: granted a hypothetical accident-free nuclear energy system, uranium mines and tailings piles would present the largest single source of additional radioisotope releases by the nuclear industry. The established groups therefore had information ready to hand on the anti-uranium experience in Saskatchewan, British

[414]Alan MacKenzie, Rossville, to Susan Holtz, 19 March, 1979, DAL-EAC, box 44.1.

Columbia, and the United States. Organized activism, beyond merely sharing information, gathered steam slowly during 1979 and the early months of 1980. Prodded by a growing stream of letters and phone calls from worried landowners, and enjoying a partial respite from campaigning against the *use* of nuclear fuel in the region after the Brudenell rally, the established groups gave some attention to cooperation on the issue of its production in the winter of 1980.[415] The key event came in January, when the Community Planning Association's inveterate coalition-builder in Halifax, Joanne Lamey, moved to assemble interested parties from around the province into a common front, and then quickly deferred to the EAC's Energy Committee.[416] Though there was a gathering on 20 February, the initial action at the EAC was cautious and conservative. Susan Holtz remained determined to cultivate a bridge-building mode of operations, according to which the EAC made direct calls upon the Minister of Mines and Energy, Ron Barkhouse, to "follow BC's lead," but offered him little reason to comply.[417] The Center's information-sharing role certainly aided in drawing more attention to the issue, but the EAC (as well as the FACT group in the Annapolis Valley) generally integrated anti-uranium campaigning into their well-established routine of anti-nuclear activism. There appears to have been little effort to collaborate on a strategy with the growing number of citizens alarmed about uranium mining quite on its own.

The first new citizen action against uranium exploration in Nova Scotia came from an unexpected source: the Women's Institutes. Nova Scotia's Women's Institutes

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[415]Ken Kelley, Sable River, to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 4:4 (September, 1979); Ken Kelley, "Mining for Death," *Rural Delivery* 4:6 (November, 1979); EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 8 August, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23; Ron and Ruth Loucks to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 4:8 (January, 1980); FACT Newsletter, March, 1980, DAL-EAC, box 41.3.

[416]Joanne Lamey, CPAC, to Ginny Point, EAC, 14 January, 1980, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

[417]Joanne Lamey, CPAC, to Ginny Point, EAC, 13 February, 1980, DAL-EAC, box 30.8; *Jusun* 8:2 (Summer, 1980), PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 24.

began existence early in the twentieth century as service clubs for rural women, promoting education, civic engagement, and cultural activities. By the 1970s, however, they were often dismissed as conservative assemblies of older women still in the "citizen-apprentice" mode, and rapidly being left behind by the more progressive and politically savvy "citizen-activist" organizations like the Voice of Women and its even more recent peer organizations.[418] Yet the Institutes were far from moribund or unresponsive to changing times, and in fact had much in common with the feminist peace groups that joined the earliest anti-nuclear activism in Halifax. The pesticide debates of the late 1970s drew a great deal of attention in agricultural communities and among Institute members who considered the health of farm families a traditional women's issue. Some institutes also enjoyed a reinvigorated membership with the arrival of back-to-the-land families including women with experience in peace and social justice activism. Early in 1980, several Women's Institutes received information and assistance from the Department of Environment toward setting up Environmental Awareness Committees, and within months Institutes in Hants and Kings Counties were already at work gathering information on uranium mining.[419] By November, the Women's Institutes of Hants County moved from gathering information into building support for an anti-uranium movement, via presentations at the Farm Women's Conference in Truro and preparations for a very leading questionnaire to be printed in the local paper, supposedly to determine the extent of popular concern about the health and economic effects of uranium

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[418]Frances Early, "'A Grandly Subversive Time': the Halifax branch of the Voice of Women in the 1960s," in Judith Fingard and Janet Guildford, eds., *Mothers of the Municipality: women, work, and social policy in post-1945 Halifax* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 28, 36.

[419]Jocelyn Rhodenizer, South Berwick Women's Institute, to EAC, 17 September 1980, DAL-EAC, box 43.2; Document on NS Women's Institutes, 21 January, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3433, number 38.

mining.[420]

In early 1981, one of the rare Maritime-wide anti-nuclear gatherings under the banner of the fast-fading MEC served to unite interested parties in demanding a moratorium and inquiry into uranium mining, but a common set of demands alone made for neither a full-scale movement nor a strategy for organizing one.[421] What remained to be found was a triggering event, something personal, something analogous to the Genelle blockade in British Columbia. The winter of 1981 provided one, as news spread that one of the companies with claims in the Vaughan's/New Ross area south-west of Windsor was no longer looking for uranium so much as looking at a mineable deposit of it. If any single factor turned uranium from the obscure preoccupation of a relatively small number of peace activists, anti-nuclear groups, and Women's Institute members, into the third major environmental controversy since the 1960s, it was the prospect of an actual uranium mine operating within a few years at a known site, and the reaction of the Women's Institute members who had spent most of the previous year studying the issue. With their encouragement, statements of support for a British Columbia-style moratorium on uranium mining and prospecting came from the Hants and Digby Counties' Federations of Agriculture, and from the provincial NDP leader Alexa McDonough. Most worrying of all from the industry's perspective, the West Hants Municipal Council's vote to request a provincial moratorium, was the direct result of the work of the Women's Institutes.[422]

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[420]"Farm Women's Conference," *Rural Delivery* 5:8 (January, 1981). Burlington and Summerville Women's Institutes, *The Hants Journal,* 25 February, 1981, 5.

[421]"Conference on Health Effects of Radiation, Moncton," 20-22 February, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.

[422]Al Kingsbury, "Uranium moratorium urged," *Mail-Star,* 13 March, 1981, 52; "Aquitaine mines a rich vein of controversy," *Atlantic Insight* 3:8 (October, 1981), 16; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 28 January, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 25; Burlington Women's Institute, "Brief Presented to the West Hants Municipal Council on the Subject of Uranium Mining," 12 March, 1981,

The local leaders of the anti-uranium forces from Hants County continued their drive for support during the winter and spring of 1981, urging more action from other members of the Voice of Women (several "Voices" were already among them) and from other groups in the province.[423] At the same time, Aquitaine, the French mining company that had made the discovery near Vaughan, and its allies in the provincial government began a counter-effort. At a 6 April public meeting at the Windsor exhibition grounds, Aquitaine's senior Vice-President of Explorations and Special Projects, Mike Hriskevich, joined environmental consultant Leo Lowe and the company's regional office head, Don Pollock, on a mission to defuse local opposition. In the co-ordinator's chair sat Jack Garnet, Nova Scotia's Director of Mineral Resources and a champion of uranium mining. One of the province's up-and-coming anti-uranium leaders, writer and English professor Donna Smyth, later described the meeting as decidedly hostile toward the presenters. Whether it actually was so, the men from Aquitaine gained few allies by underestimating the store of knowledge built up by local activists over the previous year; claims that yellowcake uranium is "not radioactive," or that Ontario's Elliot Lake mines (with their long, dead river) represented safe and successful industrial practices, met instant rebuttal and featured in anti-uranium propaganda for the next two years.[424] A similar performance followed at the West Hants Municipal Council on 13 April, when Pollock gave a rebuttal to the Women's Institute presentation a month earlier and insisted that there was no additional radiation measurable in the town of Elliot Lake (an arguably true claim, but

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Royal Commission on Uranium Mining fonds, PANS [hereafter RCU], volume 206, number 28.

[423]SSEPA Resolution, 26 March, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8. EAC Resolution, 25 March, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 41.21; VOW Meeting minutes, 4 May, 1981, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3470, number 6.

[424]VOW Atlantic Newsletter, 1 May, 1981, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3472, number 1; Donna Smyth, "Selling Radon Daughters: Uranium in Nova Scotia," *Canadian Forum* 61:714 (December/January, 1981), 6-8.

quite beside the point of radioisotope contamination of food and water). The Council declined to withdraw its moratorium request.[425] Pollock was one of two leaders of the mining industry's own propaganda effort, but consistently gave ammunition to his opponents by his extreme statements and accidentally revealing gaffes.[426] The provincial government, on the other hand, apart from Jack Garnet, tried at first to evade rather than confront public fears by appointing a Select Committee of the Legislature on 2 April to study the hazards and benefits of uranium mining. The Committee seems mainly to have existed for the purpose of providing the appearance of action, and on 28 August it died with the dissolution of the Legislature for an election, having made no findings, held no public meetings, and heard no witnesses. In any event, it attracted little attention, most of it skeptical.[427]

As the campaign turned into a contest, the growing activist group in Hants County decided to organize formally, and Citizen Action to Protect the Environment (CAPE) was born. Their open letter to Premier Buchanan at the end of June displayed all the hallmarks of the group's activism: requests put to the premier served more to inform other readers of alarming facts, such as that the Ministers of Health and Environment had not been chosen to sit on the Select Committee, or that the Department of Mines and Energy was both regulator and promoter of mining, or that exploration continued while the Committee supposedly sat to determine its dangers.[428] The members of CAPE had already decided

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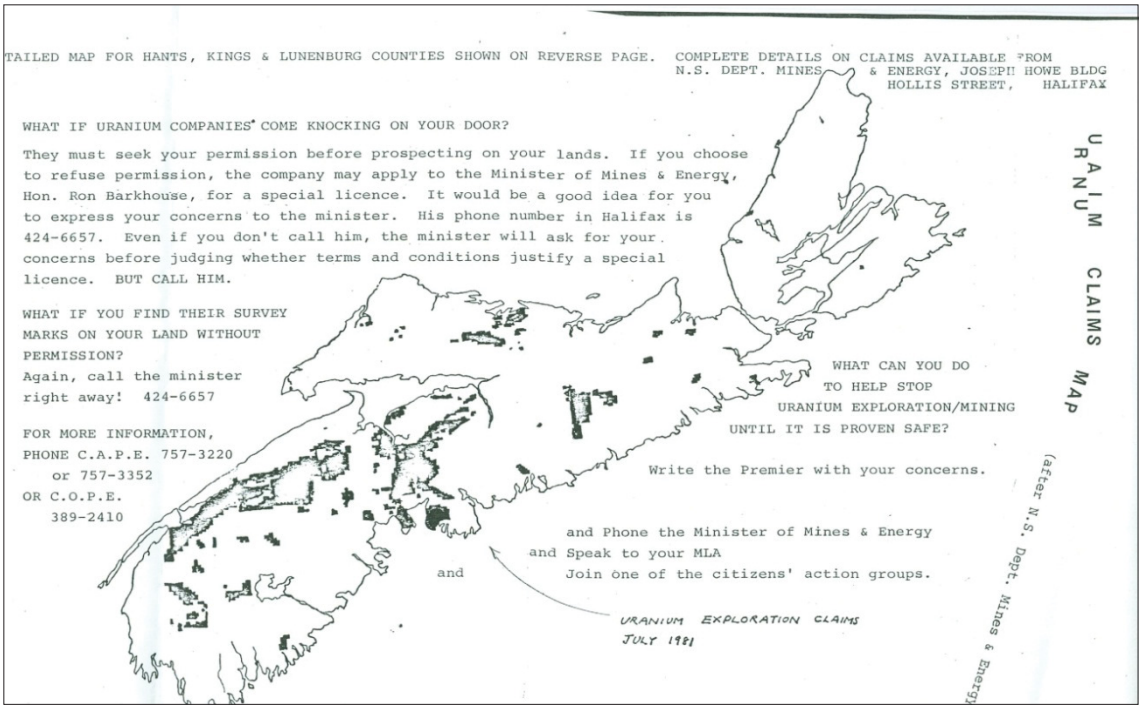
[425]Al Kingsbury, "Hants uranium prospects good," *Mail-Star,* 13 April, 1981, 19.

[426]Ralph Loomer, "Nova Scotia can do without uranium invasion," *Chronicle Herald,* 29 June, 1981, 7; VOW Atlantic Newsletter, 1 May, 1981, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3472, number 1.

[427]Nova Scotia, *Hansard*, 2 April, 1981; Gwen Davies, and Bill Johnston, "Aquitaine mines a rich vein of controversy," *Atlantic Insight* 3:8 (October, 1981), 16; Hal Mills and Ron Loucks, "Uranium Mining Meeting notes," 6 April, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10; MLA David Nantes, Select Committee on Uranium Mining, to Susan Holtz, 3 September, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.4.

[428]"New group joins anti-nuclear drive," *Chronicle Herald,* 2 June, 1981, 22; CAPE Press Release, 1 July, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.



(Figure 5.1: Uranium Claims Map, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.)

that the Select Committee was a dead-end process, but writing as though it was not allowed them to point out the de facto support the government gave to mining and the effective lack of regulation in the province. Publicly needling politicians in order to attract the support of people who did not already identify as "environmentalists" was an effective strategy for CAPE in 1981, though it did not always please their allies at the EAC, who persisted in a conciliatory approach.[429] Less controversial were the appeals CAPE put directly to the public, such as the much-publicized map produced to show areas of the province under claim by uranium prospectors. As geographer Brian Harley

[429]Gillian Thomas, CAPE, to Daphne Taylor, EAC, (marginal notations) 25 May, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

remarked, "maps are never value-free images."[430] CAPE's choice to map claims, rather than focus on the one existing site of potential development, encouraged people in broad areas of the province to think of themselves as being personally under threat. (See Figure 5.1)

The success of CAPE's more aggressive tactics, along with the steady contribution of the established groups' publicity and public education, attracted fresh counter-measures. Aquitaine's Don Pollock travelled to the annual meeting of the Mining Society of Nova Scotia in June with a stark warning and a request: "if these groups [of environmentalists] are successful in creating a seven-year moratorium in Nova Scotia as they have done in BC, exploration in the North West Territories could also fall and Canada could wind up with no uranium whatsoever," a fate only preventable if mining interests could organize political pressure of their own.[431] Whether or not Pollock truly believed that Saskatchewan's entrenched uranium industry was under threat, his advice was sincere. Just like the spokesmen for pulp and paper interests in the province, he wanted industry to strike back publicly against environmentalists. By the end of the year his prodding would produce a new agency, the Chamber of Mineral Resources, to advocate for industry, but Aquitaine's commitment to confrontation was more urgent. Under its corporate successor name in Nova Scotia, Kidd Creek Mines, the company brought in its head of environmental affairs, Roy John, to lead the attack in the summer of 1981. An urgent response was imperative; on 28 August Nova Scotia's Legislature dissolved for nearly six weeks of election campaigning, during which Alexa

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[430]J. Brian Harley, "Maps, Knowledge, and Power," in D. Cosgrove and S. Daniels, *The Iconography of Landscape* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 277-312 (quoted from 277).

[431]Clayton Campbell, "Pressure groups threaten uranium mining operation, conference told," *Chronicle Herald,* 25 June, 1981, quoted in Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 63.

McDonough's NDP promised to give the anti-uranium forces a voice that government members could no longer ignore.[432]

To the members of CAPE and its peers, an election campaign in 1981 was a precious opportunity. Armed with the results of a year and a half of research and self-education, organized, and drawing on the support of agricultural and medical advocacy groups, the activists were better prepared for the campaign trail than some MLAs. In print, in person, and on the airwaves they repeated the facts on radioisotope contamination of water and agricultural produce, reminded their audience of the limits of humanity's technological prowess, and challenged politicians to state a clear position. And they urged more people to join the fight. "The government of Nova Scotia seems in a mad rush to encourage this industry," wrote Muriel Siemers of Centre Burlington in the *Chronicle Herald.* "Uranium is a relatively common ore. It is mined in places where public opposition is weak, or where the public is not aware of the hazards."[433]

Making the public aware meant appealing to people's personal identification with their home place. The combined claims map did that. So too did the constant refrain about the incompatibility of uranium mining and agriculture, an echo of the economic justice arguments made by south shore fishermen during the Stoddard Island nuclear debate. But the greatest coup in the effort at personalizing the issue for Nova Scotians was the discovery of a uranium claim overlapping the Pockwock Lake watershed, which supplied drinking water for the entire city of Halifax. When the EAC exposed the claim (by the German company Saarberg) two weeks before polling day, and revealed that the provincial Department of Environment was apparently not even aware of Saarberg's

[432]Alexa McDonough to Ginny Point, EAC, 18 December, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.
[433]Muriel Siemers, "The uranium issue: the harmful effect on agriculture," *Chronicle Herald,* 24 September, 1981, 7.

activities in the watershed, it threatened to turn the mainly rural issue into a major urban issue as well, and hugely increase its press coverage.[434] Politicians on all sides jumped on the new information. The NDP's McDonough accused Buchanan of attempting to "absorb and silence the protest" with "unenforceable" voluntary guidelines for prospectors and the unproductive Select Committee.[435] The government, having vested control of exploration licences with Cabinet in August in a bid to reassure the public ahead of the election, found itself directly responsible for the Pockwock claim, and had little choice but to respond. Within three days of the EAC's press release, Mines Minister Barkhouse announced a freeze on new exploration permits until the Select Committee gave its report on exploration. Existing permits would not be renewed, and the last active permit would expire in May of 1982.[436] Representatives of Saarberg also came forward immediately to announce that nothing more than aerial surveys had been done near Pockwock Lake, and no more exploration would be conducted there.[437] After nearly two years of silence and misdirection, draft exploration guidelines and second-draft guidelines, never with the force of true regulations -- a "talk and dig" policy anticipating BC's infamous "talk and log" -- the provincial government had taken its first substantive action on the uranium issue by committing to an investigation that included exploration, just what the activists had aimed at since early in the year. Whether the same success could have come without the support of the NDP during the election, or without the early alliance with established anti-nuclear campaigners, is debatable. Certainly the process of education activists had to go through, learning not only the facts but how to find them, would have been much

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[434]Press release, 21 September, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 33.4; Alan Jeffers, "Issuing of Drilling Permits 'madness'" *Chronicle Herald,* 22 September, 1981, 2.
[435]Alan Jeffers, "Issuing of Drilling Permits 'madness'," *Chronicle Herald,* 22 September, 1981, 2.
[436]Department of Mines and Energy, *Uranium in Nova Scotia*, 13.
[437]"Saarberg drops plans for uranium exploration," *Chronicle Herald,* 24 September, 1981, 5.

slower and more difficult without the assistance of the EAC, FACT, and SSEPA. But public pressure is what compelled action from the Buchanan government, pressure which could never have been brought to bear without the local upstart activists' aggressive publicity.

If Buchanan's government (returned to office after polling day) or Kidd Creek Mines hoped that their desperate concession during the election would quiet the opposition or finally channel activists' energy into a less public direction, their hopes were soon crushed. Few in the anti-uranium camp were prepared to trust the government to produce a report truly addressing their concerns. The four months following the election, into early 1982, saw redoubled efforts by activists to reach the public and persuade Nova Scotians of the danger and foolishness of uranium mining, and more results. The Annapolis Valley Branch of the Nova Scotia Medical Society resolved in November to join the call for a full moratorium, followed two weeks later by the General Council of the provincial Medical Society.[438] Agricultural groups continued to lend their names to the effort as well: the Cream Producers Association, the Kings County Federation of Agriculture, and more.[439] And new local anti-uranium groups sprang up like spring grass. Rather than expand the CAPE group geographically, its members helped local activists start their own in Kings County (Kings Association to Save the Environment - KASE), in Vaughan (Residents Enlisted to Save Communities from Uranium Exploration - RESCUE), in New Ross (Communities Organized to Protect the Environment - COPE), and in Chester (Citizens Against Uranium Mining - CAUM). In

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[438] *Chronicle Herald,* 6 November, 1981, Clipping File, RCU, volume 206, number 28; "Medical Society of Nova Scotia General Council, Community Health Committee Report," 20-21 November, 1981, RCU, volume 201, number 10.

[439] *Chronicle Herald,* 26 October, 1981, Clipping File, RCU, volume 206, number 28.

Cumberland County and in Colchester County, established anti-nuclear activists launched into anti-uranium campaigns as well, all of them like the South Mountain groups borrowing heavily from the EAC's collection of videos and documents on radiation health risks.[440]

Local groups borrowed more than just books and pamphlets from their Halifax peers. Elizabeth May became the environmentalist equivalent to Kidd Creek's Roy John, travelling from one local event to the next, where she and he would replay some version of their initial meeting.[441] John, who quite readily admitted having been hired by Aquitaine to combat "the anti-nuclear activist groups," kept up a constant stream of critiques of activist statements and aimed always to bring the debate back from the unscientific realm of nuclear weaponry and technological uncertainties to the firm ground of fact and comparative risk, a battle ground where he expected to hold the advantage but where May presented a uniquely capable opponent.[442] While his allies in government employed emotional language of their own (at times verging on Red-baiting, such as the Department of Health's radiation expert Ted Dalgleish's insistence that activists "are only trying to gain some personal notoriety or wish to expand upon some personal anti-social dogma"[443]), John insisted on "a rational judgement based on logic and truth rather than emotion and lack of information."[444] And environmentalists replied in kind, with peace activists pointing out the contribution of Canadian uranium to the global nuclear arms race while others, like May, hammered back at John with an equal command of nuclear

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[440]Donna Smyth, "The Public Debate Begins," *Rural Delivery* 6:7 (December, 1981).
[441]Daphne Taylor, EAC, to Betty Peterson, 17 December, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8; Donna Smyth, "The Public Debate Begins," *Rural Delivery* 6:7 (December, 1981).
[442]Roy John to Fred Barrett, FACT, 9 December, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.
[443]Unknown to the Editor, *The Mirror*, Digby, n.d., Clipping File, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.
[444]Roy John to Fred Barrett, FACT, 9 December, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

jargon, exposing the unspoken assumptions beneath his statements (such as that tailings can be contained for millennia with yet-undiscovered technology, or that radiation exposure can always be expressed as a whole-body average).[445] Nor did either side stop at the provincial border in recruiting new authorities to join the fight. As would soon happen in the lead-up to the herbicide trial, Nova Scotia's environmental controversy became the focus of attention from far beyond. The quartet of Garret (Mines and Energy), John, Pollock, and Dalgleish (Health) regularly joined forces with men from AECL and Environment Canada, who often found themselves addressing points put by Gordon Edwards of the CCNR or Doctor Rosalie Bertell, who returned to Nova Scotia in November to speak at Wolfville and Halifax and so provoked Dalgleish, with her talks on the "bureaucratic exclusion" of the public from decision-making and government's deliberate misrepresentation of health risks, as to inspire his comments on activists' supposed sinister self-promotion.[446] Dr. Woollard, one of the authors of the B.C. Medical Association's anti-uranium report, proved a champion of the cause in Nova Scotia as well. Indeed, the battle over uranium mining in Nova Scotia became one of the three great nationally-significant challenges to the industry in the years around 1980, alongside Saskatchewan and British Columbia.

The level of cooperation and coordination among anti-uranium groups in 1981 was greater than it had been at any time to that point. By the start of 1982 the new acronyms on the scene -- CAPE, KASE, COPE, and so on -- could field capable public speakers well-versed in the technical jargon of nuclear risk. The EAC and its library had

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[445]"Hazardous Wastes in Atlantic Canada," Acadia University Conference notes, DAL-EAC, box 35.12.

[446]Notice of Bertell's press conference, 12 November, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 33.4; Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update," *Rural Delivery* 6:8 (January, 1982). At the request of some Nova Scotian activists, Bertell took the time to pen a withering response to Dalgleish in a letter to Joan Brown-Hicks at the Halifax library, 16 December, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.

played an important role in the process of education. So did the networks provided by the existing anti-nuclear and social justice groups, drawing on the resources of national and international activist allies.[447] But the vigour for organizing the public into an effective force for political pressure came always from the local level, from residents wanting at first to protect the integrity of their own relationship to the natural environment -- their farms, gardens, and wells -- and discovering by accident that the one issue came hitched to a whole system of political ecology, a system that required them to become true political activists and fight for the recognition of an ecological perspective as well as for a forum in which there existed a possibility for meaningful public input into policy decisions, before those decisions were made. Unsurprisingly, there were also differences of opinion among local activists as to how profoundly they should oppose the system; different networks reinforced different views, and acted at times less like neutral repositories of resources and contacts and more like ideological police.

The Cracks Appear

Differences in activists' approach to government appeared early in the campaign against uranium in Nova Scotia, well before the election campaign produced such encouraging results. As time passed, those differences seemed more strongly linked to the geography of dissent, with rural activists presenting the most consistent political pressure and stridently nonmodern arguments against uranium mining as a threat to local communities and economies, while urban activists continued trying to convince regulators of the factual merits of the anti-uranium position. When the FACT group

[447]Rod Bantjes and Tanya Trussler, "Feminism and the Grass Roots: Women and Environmentalism in Nova Scotia, 1980-1983," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 36:2 (1999), 179-197 (194).

joined the Bear River Board of Trade to organize a public information meeting at Bear River, Digby County, in May of 1981, Jack Garnett attended to defend his department's handling of mineral exploration in the Digby backcountry and spent considerable effort to convince the assembly of the strength of the province's draft exploration guidelines, drawn up under his supervision. The guidelines, he said, the "most stringent in Canada," had been re-drafted after "constructive comments from numerous exploration companies and environmental groups."[448] It was a well-practiced line. Garnett, at that point the leading pro-uranium figure in the province, offered much the same defence each time his voluntary, accommodating, and still-unfinished (after five years of exploration) guidelines came under attack.[449] In response, Robbie Bays and David Orton, aghast at how debate had been cut off without an effective anti-uranium speaker sharing the stage at the Bear River meeting, issued a press release deriding the guidelines and "strongly repudiat[ing] any claims that environmental groups contributed to or approve of these guidelines, which do not protect the health of Nova Scotians."[450] Garnett, though, was not lying, even if he did put the most favourable spin on the truth. He had sought input from at least one source within the environmental movement, and received it: from Susan Holtz at the EAC.[451] For her part, Holtz remained entirely opposed to uranium mining and exploration, and she did not believe that offering comment on Garnett's first-draft guidelines compromised her position. Rather, she saw it as a second front, pushing for the best possible rules and a place at the negotiating table if in fact exploration did go ahead.

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[448]EAC press release, 10 May, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.
[449]"Health Hazards of Mineral Mining," EAC lecture (John Hartlen, Jack Garnett, Ralph Torrie), 17 February, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.
[450]EAC press release, 10 May, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10. CAPE's Gillian Thomas also objected in a letter to MLA Ron Russell, 17 May, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.
[451]Susan Holtz to Jack Garnett, 20 December, 1980, DAL-EAC, box 30.11.

Unfortunately, the mere fact of commenting did provide political cover for Garnett, and her refusal to admit as much proved an ongoing bone of contention between the EAC and environmentalists who, like Bays and Orton, recognized little difference between government and corporate actors.

Differences of opinion on strategy or theory brought tension, but internal confusion at the Ecology Action Center as to its own power structure and role in the anti-uranium fight caused the most significant fracture among allies in 1981. Since the winter of 1980, the EAC's Energy Committee had been the nominal gathering-place for anti-uranium activists, but for much of the following year the Committee did not meet. Instead, uranium was folded into the activities of a person-to-person network of anti-nuclear activists. After the events of April 1981, a uranium sub-committee began to meet, bringing together CAPE and EAC members with a few other peace activists and environmentalists mainly from Halifax,[452] but from the beginning confusion reigned over the question of their autonomy from the EAC's Board of Directors.[453] By the end of May a confrontation over the Board's power to veto the group's more overtly anti-government statements provoked the resignation of David Orton and the eventual departure of most of the members from rural areas.[454]

David Orton exemplified the growing ideological diversity of the environmental movement in Nova Scotia since the late 1970s. Moving to the east coast from British

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[452]EAC Energy Committee Meeting minutes, 18 March, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.11; EAC Energy Committee Meeting minutes, 13 May, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 25.

[453]"(EAC) Environmental Action Task Force report," 30 March, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 June, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 25.

[454]EAC Uranium Committee Meeting minutes, 8 February, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.11; EAC Uranium Committee Meeting minutes, 23 June, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.11; EAC Uranium Committee Meeting minutes, 7 July, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.11; EAC Uranium Committee Meeting minutes, 9 June, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.11; David Orton, "Draft Resolution Regarding the Terms of Reference of the Uranium Committee, EAC," 27 May, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.11.

Columbia in 1979, Orton had brought with him long experience as an organizer for various leftist groups in Ontario and Quebec, and a familiarity with direct action protest. He also had his own experience of the limits of government toleration toward dissenters and of the extent to which government and industry interests aligned against environmentalists during BC's early forest controversies in the 1970s.[455] The networks of peace activists and scientific conservationists who had so powerfully shaped the province's environmental scene through the Stoddart Island episode and the "budworm battles" were often politically conservative, and their members within the Ecology Action Center and the peace organizations that initially took up the uranium issue were uncomfortable with overtly political critiques of the government-industry relationship. The new network of politically leftist environmentalists in the province, however, shared a structural view of social and economic power in which government was never neutral and could only be moved to act against the interests of its corporate partners if sufficient numbers of citizens demanded it. This was the thinking behind Orton's proposed coalition statement for the EAC sub-committee, which dismissed the government's Select Committee as a political sedative and insisted that "our [environmentalists'] main task should be one of convincing and mobilizing the public."[456] Despite agreeing with much of his position, other members of the sub-committee dismissed his draft as "seditious," "one-sided," and "too revealing."[457]

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[455]David Orton, "What makes an activist? (part 1)," *Deep Green Web*, 2 April, 2011. <http://deepgreenweb.blogspot.ca/2011/04/what-makes-activist-part-1.html> (accessed May, 2012).

[456]David Orton, "Uranium Mining: hearings into dangers needed," *Chronicle Herald,* 24 August, 1981, 7.

[457]EAC uranium sub-committee minutes, 27 May, 1981, and 9 June, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.11. Orton was far from the only one to press a critique of the EAC's methods during this time. See also: Michael Clow, "A Left-Environmentalist Perspective on Canadian Industrial Strategy," paper presented at the Ecology Energy and Resources section of the Canadian Political Science Association 1981 Annual Meeting, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 27-29 May, 1981; Peter Rowbottom, Cape Breton, to Susan Hotlz, 11 March, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.3; "Moncton Conference Notes:

The conflict begun at the Bear River meeting with Jack Garnett's "environmentalist approved" guidelines festered for months, unresolved by David Orton's departure from the EAC's sub-committee scarcely a month later. Discontent over the EAC's close relationship with government was openly discussed, and finally erupted into public animosity around the issue of the speakers selected for a public lecture series at the Halifax library, for which EAC planners had scheduled one entirely pro-uranium panel.[458] Three critics offered much the same opinion in September and October, ahead of the 5 November event, but only one, Sherri Cline from the north shore group CARE, offered it without appending further and more profound criticism.[459] On behalf of his new Socialist Environmental Protection and Occupational Health Group (SEPOHG), David Orton made a pointed and public reminder in a letter to the *Dalhousie Gazette* of Susan Holtz' inadvertent hand-up to Jack Garnett (one of the speakers lined up for the library), and even quoted her assessment of his guidelines as "a fairly good first draft."[460] It was the third critic, though, who struck closest to the heart of their various objections. Long-time anti-nuclear ally, the South Shore Environmental Protection Association, went so far as to issue a press release instead of direct criticism, decrying the 5 November slate on the simple grounds that "claims by government and mining companies are not reality," and taking the analysis of the guidelines incident one step further: "we [SSEPA] neither solicit nor accept money from corporations or the government to fund our organization, [and] although our association is one of the most prominent environmental groups in the

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'Experts in Society' by Dr. Woollard," *Southern New Brunswick Nuclear News* 15, (February-March, 1981); "Conference on Health Effects of Radiation, Moncton," 20-22 February, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.10; David Underwood, Sable River, to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 5:11 (April, 1981); Linda Christiansen-Ruffman, "The Ecology Action Center in the Seventies," February, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23.

[458]*Chronicle Herald,* 6 November, 1981, Clipping File, RCU, volume 206, number 28.

[459]Sherri Cline to EAC, 1 October, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.4.

[460]David Orton to the head of the Halifax City Regional Library, 1 October, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

province, we were *not asked to comment* on the guidelines for uranium exploration."[461]

In the end, the Centre did accept the judgement of its peers, and on 5 November Elizabeth May was on hand at the library seminar to offer a formal rebuttal.[462] By then, however, Susan Holtz had already moved to defend her methods against what she termed "gratuitous attacks," and to vent lingering ill-will for "spiteful and unscrupulous" David Orton, whom she accused of trying to "take over the [uranium sub-] committee as a political vehicle for his Marxist-Leninist philosophy."[463] As for her commentary on Garnett's exploration guidelines, she insisted on the value of "a precedent for consultation" in case the prospectors could not be stopped, and reassured her critics that, after all, "our two major points were not incorporated into the final version," though how she imagined that fact would help her case is unclear.[464]

The two months of strained and bitter correspondence that followed, between Holtz and Anne Wickens at SSEPA or Holtz and Sherri Cline at CARE, was about as public as a private correspondence can be, and each page laid bare more of the mistrust many activists felt toward the EAC, especially those at the greatest remove from the city of Halifax. In the sharpest blow, Wickens explained that the SSEPA had decided on a press release in order to achieve "an element of surprise against the pro-nuclear people," something of which the EAC was obviously not considered capable. She went on to repeat the earlier accusation that, due to its reliance on government funding, the Centre could not be expected to be as aggressive against the uranium industry as "we ... who are

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[461]SSEPA press release, n/d, DAL-EAC, box 44.6. (emphasis in the original)
[462]Donna Smyth, "The Public Debate Begins," *Rural Delivery* 6:7 (December, 1981).
[463]Susan Holtz to Hattie Perry, 29 October, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.
[464]Susan Holtz, "EAC's position on uranium development and the N.S. Uranium exploration guidelines/regulations," 18 November, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3431, number 7, and in PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 12.

being poisoned first and worst."[465] On the same theme, Cline offered two pointed questions: "Do you feel it is better to be conciliatory and let the mining companies/government get away with their misleading and/or false statements? If so, is this because EAC would not jeopardize getting the next corporate contribution or government grant?"[466] Holtz' personal criticism of David Orton prompted a similar rebuttal. As it turned out, Orton's SEPOHG had worked effectively with several other anti-uranium groups in the province after his departure from the EAC's sub-committee, and "as for his Marxist-Leninist views," wrote Anne Wickens, "they may well exist,... [but] SSEPA does not, and never has refused membership to, or assistance from, any person or group because of race, colour, or creed."[467] According to the critics, it was much more likely that his politics had proven incompatible with the EAC's "respectable" image.[468]

Demanding as they did proof of direct opposition to government, in the form of public criticism, as evidence of the EAC's environmentalist credentials, its critics held a very different view than did the Centre's staff and Directors about what it meant to be an environmentalist. Despite the warning offered by one of their own in 1979, when former Board member Linda Christansen-Ruffman described the organization's development through the 1970s as a turn away from the public and toward experts and policy-makers (a "professionalism and legitimacy... which will undermine EAC's long-standing advocacy of public participation"), the "two Susans" era EAC remained committed to conciliatory methods and believed that no insurmountable differences divided them from

[465]Anne Wickens to Susan Holtz, n/d, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.
[466]Sherri Cline to Susan Holtz, 20 January, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.
[467]Anne Wickens to Susan Holtz, n/d, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.
[468]Dorien Freve to Hattie Perry, 8 December, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.

less established groups.[469] As Holtz insisted on the Centre's behalf in January of 1981, "I see little evidence that 'professionalism' has weakened grassroots support."[470] Christansen-Ruffman, though, had the better eye. As the winter of 1982 wore on, the war of words between the EAC and its critics petered out. The President of the Centre's Board of Directors took over the correspondence and closed the file with a bland insistence on its independent voice, regardless of funding.[471] No one, though, would call it a resolution; the major collaborative effort of the winter, a six-group mission to lobby Gerald Regan, included none of the Centre's critics.[472] And the EAC, though it continued to debate the propriety of government and corporate funding internally from time to time, remained committed to its respectable path: "we have achieved, over these ten years, high credibility across the province and indeed all over Canada, and have no intention of compromising that."[473]

The Royal Commission on Uranium Mining

The results of the 1981 provincial election in Nova Scotia left the Buchanan government in a difficult position. The first venture into making Cabinet directly responsible for the granting of exploration permits had failed spectacularly to silence opposition to uranium mining during the election. It had exposed government ministers to

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[469]Linda Christiansen-Ruffman, "The Ecology Action Center in the Seventies," February, 1979, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 23.
[470]Susan Holtz to Bob Paehlke, 14 January, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.4.
[471]Bessa Ruiz to Sherri Cline, 11 February, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1. The Center also denied its reliance on government funding, an effort undermined by their explaining the need for more of it in the press: Sandy Smith, "Government funds needed to continue EAC's work," *Chronicle Herald,* 20 September, 1981, 5.
[472]EAC News Release, 13 January, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 33.4; "Nuclear Technology in Nova Scotia and Canada: An Unacceptable Risk," 1982, DAL-EAC, box 37.4. Groups represented were VOW, EAC, CAPE, FACT, KASE, and Project Ploughshares.
[473]Gwen Davies, and Ginny Point, "Looking Back over the Past Two Years," draft, EAC Annual Report 1980-1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 4.

blame during the Pockwock watershed episode. Reconvening the Select Committee on Uranium Mining could not have been a popular option, either, for ministers who might have been called upon to join it. Rather than continue to attempt reassuring activists with political attention, the government returned to a policy of distancing itself from the issue and channelling activist energies into a less damaging forum. Reaching once again for the quasi-judicial form that granted government so much power to define the terms of debate, on 22 January the Buchanan government announced a Royal Commission of Inquiry into Uranium Mining, set to officially begin on 9 February under Judge Robert McCleave.

Anti-uranium activists in Saskatchewan and British Columbia had learned to recognize the potential for inquiries to marginalize opposition or compel participation in a specific discourse (usually scientific, or legalistic, but not emotional or ethical), and the lesson was not lost on their Nova Scotian peers. If the Buchanan government's intention was co-optation, however, it could not have chosen a less appropriate Commissioner than it did. If ever there was a man who could test a dissident's commitment to cooperation with government, it was Judge McCleave. A 60-year old judge of the Provincial Court, former Progressive-Conservative MP for Halifax, and current Chairman of the NS Labour Relations Board, in which position he had helped squash the unionization of the Michelin Tire plant at Granton, McCleave was well-known but not well-liked among labour activists in the province. His intense attachment to judicial propriety extended to his other public roles, where he felt compelled to defend his own authority from any perceived slight. As an unnamed Halifax lawyer put it to a *Toronto Star* reporter in 1983, McCleave's politics and his judicial role couldn't be separated: “he's firm in his

conviction he always knows what is right."[474] In short, he was a democratic authoritarian, suited to the court room perhaps, but immediately ill at ease in the Commissioner's chair.

In keeping with their year-old strategy, environmentalists were initially pleased at McCleave's appointment. The effective use of public inquiry proceedings in British Columbia had allowed activists there to intensify the pressure on politicians, rather than be pushed aside. The first step toward repeating the process in Nova Scotia would be to achieve the widest possible terms of reference for the inquiry. The terms set out by the Order in Council establishing the inquiry eschewed "moral" issues such as the connection of uranium mining and nuclear weapons manufacture, but terms of reference are mutable things.[475] An appeal to McCleave himself was clearly in order.

The results of a multi-group meeting of activists in Truro on 14 February offered the first major clue that McCleave might not present the picture of reasonable accommodation that normally draws participants to an inquiry. The nine groups meeting in Truro included SEPOHG and CARE. The EAC's Uranium Committee had a representative there as well, though the Centre itself later disavowed involvement. Despite their well-established differences, the activists in Truro agreed to act as if they accepted the inquiry as a genuine venue for public participation in policy-making, at least until and unless it became clear that McCleave would not play along enough to accept the recommendations that would allow them to use the proceedings to generate publicity and political pressure.[476] A CARE press release following the meeting expressed support for

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[474]*Toronto Star,* 12 March, 1983, enclosed with letter from G.C. Eglington, Ottawa, to McCleave, 25 May, 1983, RCU, volume 204, number 14. McCleave had inquired about possible libel action against the newspaper.

[475]Order in Council #82-200, 9 February, 1982, in *Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry on Uranium* (Halifax: Government of Nova Scotia, 1985).

[476]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 February, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1. The nine groups were: CARE, CCCC, EAC, SEPOHG, Fish or Cut Bait Collective, Recreation Directors of

the inquiry and asked that McCleave (who had not by that time set out any rules of procedure) hold preliminary hearings on the conduct of the inquiry, and that the government consider appointing two additional Commissioners and establishing more specific and comprehensive terms of reference.[477] McCleave reacted angrily. Already feeling "insulted"[478] and "pressured"[479] by the advice offered by the EAC and extra advertisements for the inquiry published by CAUM, he lashed out in interviews against "some Colchester groups ... anonymously spreading false information" and "making unprincipled attacks on the inquiry," and he threatened to suspend three unnamed people from the inquiry.[480] Nor did it end with CARE. As the judge's plans for the inquiry slowly became clearer, more reactions from environmentalists appeared, more "attacks" in McCleave's eyes, and he moved beyond threats of suspension.[481] Threats of subpoena and contempt charges followed, and after McCleave took it upon himself to investigate the fairness of some newspaper reporting, prompted by an editorial in one paper that mildly rebuked him for his over-reaction, the *Truro Daily News* briefly refused publication of any inquiry related material for fear of the same threats.[482]

Reactions to McCleave's unusual behaviour and apparent intention to treat a public process as if it were taking place in his courtroom covered a spectrum from total non-cooperation to apology and favour-seeking. Activists already skeptical that the judge

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NS, Taxpayers for a Safe Environment, WHEN, and the United Church - Church in Society Committee.

[477]CARE Press Release, 14 February, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

[478]EAC Brief to McCleave, 29 January, 1982, marginal notations, RCU, volume 201, number 10.

[479]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 February, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1.

[480]Hattie Dyck, "McCleave asks groups' cooperation in inquiry," *Chronicle Herald,* 27 February, 1982; "Susan Holtz time allocation sample," PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 1; Martin Haase to McCleave, 6 March, 1982, RCU, volume 202, number 5.

[481]McCleave to Glenys Livingstone and Stanley Forgeron, Inquiry staff, 18 March, 1982, RCU, volume 203, number 6.

[482]Editorial, *Truro Daily News,* 9 March, 1982, 4; Robert McCleave to John Conrad, Managing Editor, *Amherst Daily News*, 9 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 7; Unknown to Gillian Thomas, 24 March, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.9.

would allow a truly free debate took his intemperate reaction and his interference with the press as a sign that he would work actively against any attempt to use the inquiry as an engine for publicity. The logical next step, then, was to turn the inquiry itself into a public issue. Some carried on participating, like Robert Whiting, the veteran pollution fighter from East River, Lunenburg County, who recognized no distinction between government and inquiry Commissioner, and who informed McCleave of his intention to pursue charges under the Federal Fisheries Act if the Nova Scotia government allowed uranium mining.[483] His strategy was simply to make a publicity-worthy presentation within the inquiry, when his chance came. Some others mocked McCleave's over-developed sense of propriety, like Judy Davis of CARE, another long-experienced activist who had attended the Truro meeting and wrote to the judge explaining that she saw his job as deciding "questions of how mining will be done," not if it should be done, and accusing him of scaring the public away from his own inquiry.[484] Others needled McCleave, aiming to draw him further into a debate that could only cast doubt on his political neutrality. Winston Settle made a public response to McCleave's public critiques, in a letter copied to multiple politicians and the press, in which he refuted the judge's accusations against CARE (namely, that they had corresponded with him anonymously) and called his conduct "paternal, if not threatening." The public "consider themselves as respectable," he wrote, "and do not intend to be talked down to as if they were little children. If this is the type of inquiry we are to have, I for one will have no part of it, and I do reserve the right to write and talk to anyone as is the right of a free citizen of this

[483]Robert Whiting to McCleave, 2 March, 1982, RCU, volume 202, number 5.
[484]Judy Davis, Tatamagouche, to McCleave, 4 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 2.

country."[485] Settle's political tactics and those of several groups from the Truro meeting who wrote to the Attorney General to demand McCleave's removal paid off with the entry of the provincial Liberal leader, Sandy Cameron, into the debate, asking for McCleave's removal due to his "contempt for free speech."[486] It was not enough to move Buchanan, but pressure from Cameron and NDP leader Alexa McDonough did inspire McCleave to retreat from his legal threats for a while.

Some on the anti-uranium side persisted in trying to guide the province's mercurial uranium Commissioner into a more populist-democratic position. One wrote to McCleave with a copy of the proceedings of the 1979 National Workshop on Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making, perhaps hoping he might appreciate its warning against an approach that is "highly discretionary, favouring the rich, the well-informed, and those who have access to the corridors of power, [and which]... has helped to frustrate many groups, and has tended to make them believe that confrontation, rather than cooperation, is the best way to deal with government."[487] McCleave, however, remained adamant that he would offer no funding to presenters and would treat volunteer organizations no differently than the nuclear industry.[488]

Given McCleave's well-known conservatism and his open resistance to any action that might turn his inquiry into "some form of popularity pressure contest," those attempting to nudge him in the opposite direction faced a daunting task.[489] One of the most common tactics during the initial controversy was to put distance between those

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[485]Winston Settle to Robert McCleave, 27 February, 1982, RCU, volume 203, number 6.
[486]"Liberal MLAs believe Uranium Inquiry chairman Judge Robert McCleave has displayed a contempt for free speech and they want the government to remove him from the post," unknown publication, 5 March, 1982, Clipping File, DAL-EAC, box 33.3.
[487]Jim Lotz to McCleave, 8 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 1.
[488]McCleave to Alexa McDonough, 17 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 10.
[489]McCleave to Gillian Thomas, 10 April, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.9.

already subject to the judge's ire, whom he called "the lunatic fringe," and the rest of the movement.[490] Here the activists from Halifax and the Annapolis Valley area had an existing hostility upon which to draw, and in David Orton an ideal figure from the political left upon whom to place the blame. CAPE member Ralph Loomer wrote to McCleave in February to express his support for the judge's criticism of CARE, and to explain why the Truro meeting must have behaved in so "unprincipled" a fashion:

> The valley group with which I am associated did not send a representative to this meeting because we are aware of an attempt by a declared Marxist-Leninist person to dominate groups in the Colchester area. His tactics and attitude are repugnant to those of us who are members of Ecology Action Centre and our valley groups who oppose the idea of uranium mining here. We rejected this person's attempts to compromise us in his pursuit of class struggle. After he declared his politics and was excluded from further discussions of our committee he became involved with the Colchester and Amherst groups.[491]

Apart from the few early boycotters like Winston Settle and David Orton, the vast majority of the anti-uranium movement decided to participate in McCleave's inquiry. Despite the short deadline imposed by the judge for people to request time to present to the inquiry, letters poured in from activists, and from those who had never before considered themselves activists. Some still hoped to use the proceedings for publicity, counting on attention from news media that never did muster great interest in the minutia of inquiry hearings. Many truly believed in the inquiry as a vehicle of public input into policy, while others seemed unsure to what extent they ought to attempt to win over

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[490]McCleave to Russell Logan, President, Maritime Diamond Drilling Co. Ltd., n/d, RCU, volume 201, number 2.

[491]Ralph Loomer to Robert McCleave, 27 February, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 2. The Women's Health Education Network and EAC also distanced themselves from CARE: Janet Campbell (WHEN) to Robert McCleave, 11 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, file 8; Dr. J.E. Baker (EAC) to Robert McCleave, 4 March, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 30, number 8.

McCleave and to what extent keep their attention on building the movement. One thing immediately apparent was the wisdom of the decision to ask for a public inquiry, at least in as much as new groups of activists continued to gather across the province, inevitably forming around a small set of local leaders and extending over a single town or set of villages.[492] The official venue of an inquiry also attracted vastly more attention to the issue from Church groups of every denomination, whose insistence on addressing the moral issues may have convinced McCleave to give up any attempt to rule the nuclear weapons connection out-of-bounds.[493] Despite the gains, active opponents of uranium mining remained a small minority of the whole population, easy enough to ignore if they ceased to accumulate support. As the winter of 1982 melted away and Nova Scotians prepared for the first hearings of the Royal Commission on Uranium Mining, members of the Buchanan government could have been forgiven for thinking they had finally shunted the uranium issue off to a politically safe venue. Whatever new local opposition arose could be directed toward McCleave, away from the daily conduct of politics in Halifax and out of view of the general public.

Homeland Defence

The testimony given at McCleave's 44 hearings represented a true cross-section of Nova Scotian views on uranium mining in 1982, and revealed a movement divided

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[492]For example, a new branch of the CCCC in Parrsboro: Environmental Protection in Cumberland South (EPICS) Press Release, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 33.4.

[493]McCleave to Archbishop Hayes (Catholic), Halifax, 23 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 10; Betty Peterson, Halifax Monthly Meeting of Friends (Quaker), to McCleave, 5 February, 1983, RCU, volume 202, number 1; McCleave to Reverend Archdeacon C.R. Elliott (Anglican), Halifax, 10 April, 1982, RCU, volume 202, number 1; W.R. MacDonald, Clerk of Session, Saint Andrew's United Church, Wolfville, to McCleave, 22 February, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 2; Reverends Clint Mooney, Donald McLeod, and K.O. Robinson, to McCleave, 8 March, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 8; Joan Cunningham, NS Provincial Council of the Catholic Women's League of Canada, to McCleave, n.d., RCU, volume 201, number 10.

between the seekers after expert status - the citizen-scientists - and the disciples of political ecology, who relied upon various nonmodern normative arguments to make their case. Among the latter there persisted a small number of activists still willing to base their presentations on the limits to growth thesis or appropriate technology movement, like native Haligonian and filmmaker Ian Ball, a larger number intent on denouncing the environmental injustice of the distribution of risks and benefits between rural and urban areas, and quite numerous witnesses presenting anti-uranium activism as a defense of home place.[494] By far the most common, however, were presentations assailing the modern politics of expertise.

From the very first hearing, in New Ross, Lunenburg County, where Michael Keddy warned the audience that "it is only after exploration has taken place that the Landowner sees the folly of putting his trust in someone whose interests lay not in the land but in the provincial deficit,"[495] presenters returned again and again to a claim of authority based on a close relationship with the land. The home place theme was neither parochial nor always confined to the countryside (though it did predominate there): the small activist group RESCUE explained the plural "communities" in its name as an acknowledgement of the duty to stand up for others in the same situation, and Dr. C.J. Byrne in Halifax complained about "some bloody economist or systems analyst talking about costs as if he or she were talking about buying jellybeans down at the corner store or Woolies [when] they never talk about the other and more serious cost, the heartache

[494]Anne Bishop, Lismore Community Concern Committee, and Umbrella Co-operative Ltd, transcripts of Pictou hearing, hearing #16, 15 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 5&6; Robert Whiting, transcripts of Chester hearing, hearing #21, 7 July, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 3; Jeffrey Gold, for Beverly Brett, transcripts of Baddeck hearing, hearing #31, 8 September, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 23; Ian Ball, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #34, 17 September, 1982, RCU, volume 199, number 5&6.

[495]Michael Keddy, transcripts of New Ross hearing, hearing #1, 2 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 12.

and sorrow brought about because people have to leave an area they have learned to live with and love."[496] By implicit, and occasionally explicit, contrast, a mining company could make all sorts of legal and economic commitments to a community, yet as Ron Leitold of New Germany said, "the one it can't make is a personal commitment - concern, devotion, loyalty, love (call it what you will) for a particular area and its way of life - only the people who live there permanently can."[497] Though it is sometimes common to attempt a distinction between environmental defense of a home place and economic defense of the same, it is clear from the testimony of those who made such claims that the idea of pristine nature and the division between human and environment held little sway over their minds. The most articulate statement of their indivisibility came when Muriel Maybe and the Lunenburg County Women's Group drew upon Leopold's land ethic to describe how "we are obligated to respect and cooperate with the land if we hope to ensure our continued existence ... we are, in fact, members of a community of interdependent parts. We need the soil, the water, the plants, the animals."[498]

Presenters who made place-defense arguments were aware of their exposure to attack, in particular regarding a distinction that clearly did prey on the minds of many witnesses, between native Nova Scotian and recent arrival from outside the province. No doubt frequent accusations of environmentalists being "foreign troublemakers" were well remembered. In a significant way, the claims of authority based on close relationships with a given place served to short-circuit the discount on come-from-away opinion, or

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[496]Norma Flynn, RESCUE, transcripts of Vaughan hearing, hearing #19, 25 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 12; Dr. C.J. Byrne, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #10, 21 May, 1982, RCU, volume 196, number 6.

[497]Ron Leitold, New Germany, transcripts of Bridgewater hearing, hearing #3, 20 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 16.

[498]Muriel Maybee, Lunenburg County Women's Group, transcripts of Bridgewater hearing, hearing #3, 20 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 16.

even to turn it back against the critics. As Erin Gore said at the Chester hearing on 30 April, "we are not outside agitators; we have lived here eleven years and are permanent residents. Our would-be corporate neighbours, the mining companies, are only temporary residents; what responsibility are they willing to accept?"[499] The taint of emotionalism also preoccupied the defenders of local place, almost as much as did claims and counter-claims of insider status. More than a few presenters took time out of their presentations to defend the role of emotion in normal decision-making processes, denying in some form or other the fallacy of rational choice (the idea that any decision can be made without reference to first principles based on emotion) and reminding the audience of the positive role of emotion in the history of the anti-slavery movement, struggles for economic justice, or democratic political reform.[500]

The more explicitly political presentations to the inquiry frequently included a variation on the localist theme in the form of environmental justice arguments. In this, the presenters drew upon a durable tradition in Nova Scotian environmentalism going back to the SSEPA's defense of south shore fishermen's interests against the nuclear industry in 1973, but also reflected a national trend. In fact, the discontents of metropolitanism formed a shared language of environmental activism across Canada. In British Columbia and especially in Saskatchewan, anti-uranium activists had vigorously challenged the imposition of environmental risks on western Canadian hinterland areas in order to

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[499]Erin Gore, transcripts of Chester hearing, hearing #5, 30 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 21. Bantjes and Trussler surveyed women involved in the anti-uranium movement in Nova Scotia and found a majority -- 78% of those who could be placed -- had come "from away," that is had been born out of the province: Bantjes and Trussler, "Feminism and the Grass Roots," 192.

[500]The clearest such argument came from Ross Baker, transcripts of Truro hearing, hearing #24, 13 July, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 9. Several female presenters also explicitly tied the legitimacy of their moral arguments to their status as mothers, for example: Cathleen Kneen, Pictou County VOW, transcripts of Pictou hearing, hearing #16, 15 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 6.

produce benefits that would accrue mainly to urban centres and to the national capital.[501] Much the same arguments appeared in the chemical forestry controversy as well, still in full swing in Cape Breton and the northern mainland as the uranium inquiry progressed. The economic politics of the province since the 1920s has consisted largely of a series of rebellions against an exploit-and-export economy imposed by a central-Canadian dominated system, and it had not escaped notice that since Aquitaine's withdrawal from Nova Scotia, the Millet Brook project had been pursued by the federal Canada Development Corporation, with the support and encouragement of AECL.[502] "They are here in Nova Scotia," argued CAUM's Brian McVeigh, "because this province acts as a hinterland for exploiting cheap resources to feed the manufacturing mecca of the central region of Canada, where one in three light bulbs are powered by nuclear power."[503] Worse yet, for several of the rural presenters, was the compounded imperial pressure from the provincial capital; as an angry Robert Finck complained to McCleave in Bridgewater, "it's just another example of second-class citizens getting the dirt while the Halifax gentry get the gravy."[504]

Nearly 200 witnesses can cover a broad and diverse rhetorical territory. More than motherhood and limits, however, more even than the defense of home places and

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[501]Ralph Torrie, "BC's inquiry and moratorium," *CCNR's Transitions* 3:1 (May, 1980); Jim Harding, *Canada's Deadly Secret: Saskatchewan uranium and the global nuclear system* (Halifax: Fernwood, 2007).

[502]Ernest Forbes, *The Maritime Rights Movement 1919-1927: a study in Canadian regionalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1979); Margaret Conrad, "The Atlantic Revolution of the 1950s," in Berkeley Fleming, ed., *Beyond Anger and Longing: Community and Development in Atlantic Canada* (Fredericton: Acadiensis, 1988), 55-98; Jennifer Smith, "Intergovernmental Relations, Legitimacy, and the Atlantic Accords," *Constitutional Forum* 17:3 (2008), 81-98.

[503]Brian McVeigh, transcripts of Chester hearing, hearing #5, 30 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 21. Michael Marshall pointed out that mining companies accustomed to operating in the Canadian north, where they felt few constraints on their activities, failed to see the difference between Nova Scotia and Canada: transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #10, 21 May, 1982, RCU, volume 196, number 6.

[504]Robert Finck, transcripts of Bridgewater hearing, hearing #3, 20 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 16.

environmental justice, what united the makers of normative arguments among anti-uranium activists was a rejection of the politics of expertise. When McCleave held his first hearing at New Ross on 2 April, one of the first complaints he heard was from a sawmiller at the Ross Farm Museum, Kenneth Seaboyer, one of scores of non-expert laymen self-educated in the nuclear industry's track record. "The experts on the safety of uranium seem to me to be experts only when everything functions properly," he said, and inaugurated a seven-month long litany of criticism toward the technological optimism - the hubris - of the scientists who presumed themselves able to contain mine wastes that would remain a radioactive hazard for half a million years or more.[505] "We must face the simple reality of Murphy's Law," insisted Muriel Maybe shortly after Seaboyer, "what can go wrong, sooner or later will. The Titanic did sink, Three Mile Island did leak, the Ocean Ranger did go down. Uranium tailings cannot be 100 percent contained."[506] When with unintentional irony, AECB's Kenneth Bragg appeared at the inquiry in June to claim, "it is reasonable to assume that future generations are going to be at least as smart as we are," and to detail the new methods in state-of-the-art tailings disposal at Key Lake, SK, and Quirke Lake, ON (really doing himself no favours by describing Quirke Lake's deep-lake disposal scheme as being "completely out of the environment"), he was answered two weeks later by Valerie Wilson for People for Environmental Protection (PEP) in Annapolis Royal, quoting Hannes Alfven: "if a problem is too difficult to solve, one cannot claim that it is solved by pointing out all the efforts made to solve it."[507]

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[505]Kenneth Seaboyer, transcripts of New Ross hearing, hearing #1, 2 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 12.

[506]Muriel Maybee, Lunenburg County Women's Group, transcripts of Bridgewater hearing, hearing #3, 20 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 16.

[507]AECB, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #17, 22 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 7; Valerie Wilson, transcripts of Annapolis Royal hearing, hearing #20, 6 July, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 1.

The practice of science, in addition to its capabilities, came in for occasional critique by the most politically savvy activists. FACT's Robert Bays made reference to the "gambling game" of scientifically-derived but constantly revised safe exposure standards (once more conveniently supported by a remarkably candid AECB brief describing the "as low as reasonably achievable" principle of occupational radiation exposure, or ALARA, as having its basis in "social and economic factors"[508]). But Dr. Linda Christansen-Ruffman and Dr. Karen Flikeid for the Nova Scotia branch of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women offered the most comprehensive deconstruction of the sociology of science: the unequal distribution of resources, the assumption of safety until proven otherwise, the use of politically convenient assumptions in the design of studies.[509] In fact, the Commissioner heard, science and politics could scarcely be distinguished in Nova Scotia's uranium debate, when the Department of Health dispatched its Radiological Health Officer to discredit Dr. Rosalie Bertell in the press.[510]

Unusual as it may seem for environmentalists with a nonmodern perspective to have come in such numbers to present their views to Judge McCleave, who had in one of his rare clear statements of intention promised to base his report on scientific fact and consult heavily with experts of many sorts during the second phase of his inquiry, those were the presenters with strategic considerations foremost in mind, less intent on convincing the judge and more on reaching and politicizing other Nova Scotians. Judy

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[508]Robert Bays, "Uranium Exploration and Mining: Fact and Fiction," RCU, volume 198, number 2; AECB, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #17, 22 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 7.

[509]Drs. Linda Christansen-Ruffman and Karin Flikeid, Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women - Nova Scotia, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #15, 11 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 4.

[510]Martin Haase, transcripts of Chester hearing, hearing #5, 30 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 21.

Davis expressed the attitude in *Rural Delivery* during the early days of the inquiry: "CARE does question whether or not our group - or any other environmental group - can receive a fair hearing from the Inquiry," but they would participate none the less.[511] Veteran of the Anil Hardboard campaign, Robert Whiting demonstrated much the same sentiment at the inquiry, virtually ignoring McCleave to lecture the audience on industrial pollution as "political murder" and warn them, "don't trust the government!"[512] Similarly skeptical presenters took the opportunity presented by McCleave's invitation to "be creative" and performed music impugning the honesty of supposedly neutral leaders in Halifax and Ottawa,[513] but Susan Hower took the creative pursuit of publicity several steps further than anyone else, at the Liverpool hearing on 27 April, when she delivered a short speech on the need for a "responsible, informed electorate" who would care enough to notice events like McCleave's inquiry, then pulled a black hood over her head and performed a mock suicide with a loaded starter's pistol.[514]

Hower's shocking performance was only the most spectacular of many attempts to make people notice what was going on at the inquiry hearings. As most activists were painfully aware, apart from Donna Smyth's regular reports in *Rural Delivery*, there was precious little press coverage of the inquiry's progress in the press or on the air. It was rare that a reporter would even show up to witness a hearing. Partly that was because Royal Commissions are known for their dry and technical hearings; partly it was due to the press having been long conditioned to view them as fact-finding exercises, only

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[511]Judy Davis, CARE, to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 6:12 (May, 1982).

[512]Robert Whiting, transcripts of Chester hearing, hearing #21, 7 July, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 3; Tape recording of the same, RCU, Ac673. Whiting's speech also included one of several open threats of violent civil disobedience received by the inquiry.

[513]Gordon Campbell, "Our Ways Never Failed Us," music and lyrics, performed at Parrsboro 7 October, 1982, RCU, volume 199, number 23.

[514]Susan Hower, transcripts of Liverpool hearing, hearing #4, 27 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 18.

newsworthy when making their final recommendations to government; but it was also a failure on the part of environmentalists to make full use of their allies in the press. In Nova Scotia the major news media are concentrated in the city of Halifax and emerge only reluctantly to cover events in the rest of the province when those appear most newsworthy. Few of McCleave's hearings were held in the city, and the environmental groups based there, with the best contacts in the press, sought the legitimacy of expertise and dedicated themselves more to influencing the Commissioner than the public, failing to create the kind of spectacle that might have drawn greater attention.

The command of nuclear and geological science brought to bear on the McCleave Inquiry by Nova Scotian environmentalists was impressive. Following the lead of activists in BC during the Bates Inquiry, they recruited from the medical field as much as possible,[515] and a battery of professional and citizen-scientists from EAC, CAPE, KASE, and CAUM seldom let up on their barrage of facts related to the failures of tailings management and the viability of alternative energy systems. Ralph Torrie, Friends of the Earth Canada's resident expert on uranium, travelled from Ottawa to present for CAUM in Chester and gave an impeccably thorough description of all the many failures of the industry-standard “modified dumping” process. (He refused to use the terms “management” or “disposal” because, he said, “they aren't.”) Again the influence of a continent-wide anti-uranium movement came to the fore, as Torrie described the enormity of the Church Rock tailings spill in the United States, which only three years

[515]Dr. William Thurlow, Digby, transcripts of Bear River hearing, hearing #6, 6 May, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 22; Dr. A.R. Robertson, for staff group at St Martha's Hospital and Antigonish Committee Concerned with Uranium Exploration, Antigonish, and Dr. Robert Sers, Antigonish, transcripts of Antigonish hearing, hearing #37, 28 September, 1982, RCU, volume 199, number 11; Drs. W.L. Phillips and J.D.A. Henshaw, Valley Medical Society, transcripts of Wolfville hearing, hearing #9, 19 May, 1982, RCU, volume 196, number 4.

before had spread thousands of tons and tens of millions of gallons of radioactive mine waste across New Mexico and Arizona. He drew special attention to acid leaching at tailings dams in Ontario as well. His presentation concluded with a list of potential avenues of technical development including vitrification and the removal of radium and thorium from tailings - none of which were being pursued by the mining industry, nor likely would be so long as it was permitted to dump radioactive elements in tailings heaps.[516] The EAC's own presentation included a similarly technical dissertation on the Soft Energy Path, the failure of tailings containment, and the dangers of low-level radiation exposure. The Centre also made time to detail an acceptable regulatory regime, in the event the province should decide to ignore the rest of its advice.

The presentations of the EAC, CAUM, KASE and to an extent CAPE at the inquiry suggested nothing so much as a spirit of technological optimism equal to the best the AECB could offer. For them, it seemed as though there was nothing mankind could not do, only that which for reasons of ignorance and greed it chose not to do, and the remedy, far from being a renewed commitment to the local place or a re-evaluation of economic or ecological justice, was the recognition of scientific truth. Their moral arguments -- for they were far from amoral technologists -- revolved around the contribution of uranium to the nuclear arms race and carefully skirted the political ethics of dissent and public participation which had demonstrated such a great capacity to enrage McCleave. As for publicity, they seemed not to connect the inquiry hearings with the wider campaign for political pressure.[517] While the technically-inclined presenters

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[516]Ralph Torrie, Ottawa, transcripts of Chester hearing, hearing #21, 7 July, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 3; Judy Pasternak, *Yellow Dirt: A Poisoned Land and a People Betrayed* (New York: Free Press, 2010).

[517]One very good example is the May family presentations in Margaree Harbour on 7 September, 1982,

prided themselves on their ability to "make the uranium companies squirm," in Donna Smyth's words, their willingness to burnish the legitimacy of McCleave and his inquiry caused at least as much discomfort among the provinces environmentalists, many of whom saw uranium companies as nearly irrelevant distractions from the real work of making government squirm.[518]

A Parting of the Ways

The attitude taken toward McCleave and his inquiry remained the single most salient dividing line among anti-uranium activists in Nova Scotia, even after the initial controversy between the judge and CARE died down. With the political left on one side and the presenters offering primarily scientific testimony on the other, the McCleave test came to reflect all of the unresolved tensions from the previous two years, about the politicization of environmental issues, the propriety of government funding, and the participation of environmental groups in non-public processes of consultation like the one around Jack Garnett's exploration guidelines. The positions taken reflected the intensification of the activist divide, with both sides arguing more forcefully than ever for or against cooperation with the judge. The conflict reflected as well the similar tensions among forestry activists, who were ever more constrained by the legal process of the herbicide trial; having once decided on the tactic of a court challenge against the safety of chemical forestry, it became very difficult if not impossible for the same activists or groups to pursue alternative political, economic, or social critiques of industrial forestry. McCleave presented no such barriers. Despite his continued and ever more desperate

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hearing #30, which included (from Elizabeth May) criticism of the mining industry for attempting to politically influence government during the inquiry: RCU, volume 198, number 21.

[518]Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 233.

attempts to impose courtroom conventions on the inquiry and discourage debate in the press, he could do nothing to prevent activists using the question of the inquiry's legitimacy as a political weapon, the way Paula Scott in Chester did in a letter to Mines and Energy Minister Ron Barkhouse. Barkhouse had inaugurated a trend among MLAs by refusing to attend the initial hearing in New Ross, his own hometown and constituency, and Scott chided him for his absence:

> I'd like to believe that we - the people - have the last word, but our cynicism tells us that you - the government - have already made up your collective mind under pressure from the mining industry and that the inquiry is merely a formality undertaken to quiet public opinion by going through the motions of asking our opinion. We've been disappointed too often to believe you easily.[519]

Her letter was copied to the three political party leaders, seven newspapers, and to Judge McCleave.

Few if any environmentalists were willing to suspend their anti-uranium activities for the public while McCleave made his wandering way around the province. Lectures continued, as did letters to politicians, the collection of petitions, and attempts to win the support of municipal councils.[520] But even among those who did not openly challenge the inquiry's legitimacy there was suspicion that the mining industry hoped to "wear out the energies of the industry's opponents" in the forum of a public inquiry.[521] McCleave's declared intention to have three phases of increasing scientific and legalistic complexity did nothing to dispel such fears, though some persisted in distinguishing between the

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[519]Paula Scott to MLA Ron Barkhouse, 3 April, 1982, RCU, volume 201, number 3.
[520]Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update: Trouble in the Barnyard," *Rural Delivery* 6:11 (April, 1982); EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 24 May, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 2.
[521]Gillian Thomas, transcripts of Vaughan hearing, hearing #19, 25 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 12.

judge's intentions and the industry's. For those who did not, the obvious solution was to not only use the inquiry as a venue for publicity-seeking, but to make publicity out of the very fact that the inquiry served to stifle meaningful dissent. Those already on the fringes of political life had no great difficulty challenging McCleave. Sitting in front of the judge in Chester, Robert Whiting barked at him, "if I sound like a radical, then I damn well am!"[522] But it was the self-identifying leftists who had the greatest success at irritating him, correctly estimating that "every time McCleave opens his mouth, more people are mobilized against him,"[523] and gambling that a collapse of the inquiry, or at least its transformation from easily-ignored side-show to source of political embarrassment, would be of greater benefit to the anti-uranium effort than seeing it through, at least once the proceedings had been thoroughly exploited for their organizing potential. It had worked so in BC, after all, as everyone knew thanks to the cross-country participation of Dr. Woollard. Conveniently, the Commissioner's conservative political history and his continued position at the head of the Labour Relations Board gifted him with a strong contempt for persons of the left, who made excellent use of his prejudice. After a presentation in Amherst by Don Rushton of Concerned Citizens of Cumberland County (CCCC), on government collusion with corporate capitalism, a presentation that included material critical of the judge's conduct during the inquiry, McCleave traced the ownership of a slide show used there back to another group in Halifax (specifically to Charles Lapp), noting in his records that "the groups did not seem to be related except in political philosophy, which was violently opposed to the Commissioner and the Inquiry, and the

[522]Tape recording of Chester hearing, hearing #21, 7 July, 1982, RCU, Ac 673.
[523]David Orton, quoted in Susan Murray, "Sour notes in the 'Judge McCleave Waltz," *Atlantic Insight* 5:6 (June, 1983), 12-13.

beliefs of more than 99% of the people living in Nova Scotia."[524] The Nova Scotia Federation of Labour took subtle aim at McCleave's Labour Board, and obliquely at his inquiry, when they insisted that government alone could not be trusted to keep uranium miners safe; "over the years any progress that has been made has been more as a result of confrontation than by any rational process of scientific enlightenment."[525] And Tony Seed, freelance journalist and candidate of the Marxist-Leninist Party, who had twice run against Robert Stanfield in Halifax when McCleave stood down for him, managed to get under the skin of both the Commissioner and his supporters at the EAC by speaking well over time at a Halifax hearing in September, forcing the EAC presenters to reschedule for another day.[526] The irritants piled up, and McCleave wrote to a friend that he felt under attack by "an unholy crowd of Marxist-Leninists, some fellow travellers in the Legislature [the NDP], some pretty irresponsible journalists ... and a few paranoid parties."[527]

If the voices from the left saw reason to question groups that refused to take issue with McCleave's behaviour or with his inquiry's legitimacy -- if they wondered, with David Orton, "what kind of openness is it when the inquiry process is seen as one of educating Judge McCleave and not the public"[528] -- their frustration was matched on the other side by those who questioned why anyone would give more ammunition to a pro-uranium effort that already made a habit of painting all environmentalists with the same red brush. What began early in 1982 with the Department of Health's Ted Dalgleish

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[524]Transcripts of Amherst hearing, hearing #42, 7 October, 1982, RCU, volume 199, number 20.
[525]Nova Scotia Federation of Labour, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #22, 9 July, 1982, RCU, volume 198, number 5.
[526]Tony Seed, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #38, 29 September, 1982, RCU, volume 199, number 13.
[527]McCleave to Vivian Wittenburg, 3 May, 1983, RCU, volume 203, number 7.
[528]David Orton to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 8:3 (August, 1982).

telling a reporter for the *Digby Mirror* how, in his view, environmental activism led to "mob violence," picked up in intensity and frequency later in the year (after the overwhelming negative response to uranium mining at the inquiry became clear).[529] Kidd Creek's Roy John tried to be subtle at an Air Pollution Control Association meeting in Saint John, NB, in September, referring to "a segment of the population who have different social and political aspirations," but he was able to rely on his ally Greg Isenor, President of the Chamber of Mineral Resources, to offer some more explicit context by borrowing Lands and Forests Minister George Henley's term "subversive" to describe an "anti-development lobby" opposing uranium mining.[530] Far from presenting environmentalists with an ally, the Deputy Minister of Environment joined the fun early in 1983 with the most elegant innuendo yet against protestors of "particular political persuasions" and their association with "violence and civil disobedience."[531] None of this was unique to Nova Scotia; similarly targetted activists in the United States eventually named the anti-environmentalist campaign of the 1980s a "green scare," referencing the "red scare" persecution of nearly anyone with left-leaning politics.[532] For environmentalists hoping to achieve a place at the regulatory table, any taint of "subversion" could only be seen as counterproductive.

The easiest way to counter the charge of disreputable political leanings (aside

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[529]Unknown to the Editor, *Digby Mirror*, DAL-EAC, box 30.10.

[530]Atlantic Canada Chapter, Northeast Atlantic International Section, Air Pollution Control Association, *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Technical Meeting*, 29-30 September, 1982; Don MacDonald, "'Subversives holding up uranium development'," *Chronicle Herald,* 3 September, 1982, with brief by Elizabeth May, RCU, volume 198, number 21.

[531]Fred McMahon, "Environmental activists' motives questioned," *Chronicle Herald,* 23 February, 1983, with brief by Elizabeth May, RCU, volume 198, number 21.

[532]David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens: The 'Wise Use' Movement, The New Right, and Anti-Environmental Violence* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1994).

from directly, as was often done[533]) was to redouble one's visible support for the legitimate consultative process, that is, for McCleave. Statements of support during the hearings usually came to McCleave himself. A good example is Ginny Point's expression of gratitude for the inquiry's "enabling people to publicly voice their thoughts through a legitimate process."[534] After the first stage concluded and Kidd Creek Mines announced its withdrawal from the process in November (to be replaced at the head of the pro-uranium side by the Chamber of Mineral Resources, and soon by the Chamber's new President, Don Pollock), the EAC had to resort to a press release in order to be seen to "reaffirm its commitment" to the process.[535]

Unfortunately for those seeking a reputable route to influence, Judge McCleave was not one to forget his enemies. Despite having been requested to make time for the north shore CARE group to speak about inquiry procedure and organization at the Pictou hearing on 15 June, McCleave reacted with hostility to the brief read by CARE's Dean Whalen. Among other critiques, Whalen objected to the fact that inquiry transcripts were only available in Halifax and could only be photocopied either in the presence of McCleave or the inquiry coordinator, Stanley Forgeron, or by borrowing them to be copied elsewhere.[536] He also asked McCleave to explain, at last, just what he had found "false, misleading, or unprincipled" about CARE's February press release.[537] Claiming to have been blindsided by this "attack on the inquiry," the judge wrote a letter the

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[533]Elizabeth May complained about "a kind of McCarthyism" in a letter to Robert McCleave, 23 February, 1983, RCU, volume 203, number 6. Marilyn Manzer did similarly in a letter to McCleave, 1 October, 1982, RCU, volume 202, number 2; Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update: can it!," *Rural Delivery* 7:5 (October, 1982); Dirk van Loon, Editorial, *Rural Delivery* 7:5 (October, 1982).
[534]Ginny Point, transcripts of Halifax hearing, hearing #15, 11 June, 1982, RCU, volume 197, number 4.
[535]EAC Press Release, 18 November, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 33.4.
[536]Dean Whalen (CARE) to Robert McCleave, 4 March, 1982, RCU, volume 203, number 6; CARE brief, 15 June, 1982, RCU, volume 203, number 6.
[537]CARE brief, 15 June, 1982, RCU, volume 203, number 6; "CARE presentation to the NS Uranium Inquiry," 15 June, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

following day barring Whalen from any further role in the hearings until he apologised for the "slur" of implying that McCleave and Forgeron had been absent from the office without reason during Whalen's visit.[538]

The personal animosity between CARE and Judge McCleave coloured the remainder of the inquiry. Regardless of some expressions of confusion from the public as to how Whalen's story could be construed a slur, or why McCleave refused to consider his request to place hearing transcripts in regional libraries outside of Halifax (as one writer pointed out, leaving the supposedly villainous CARE as the only ready source of information on the north shore[539]), the judge refused to back down or explain himself. He even went so far as to suppress the CARE brief when finally he did relent and send copies to the libraries.[540] The facilities for photocopying also became more accessible after the Pictou episode, yet CARE members received no credit for inspiring the reforms. Instead they remained *persona non grata* at the inquiry, (officially, only Whalen, "for his deceit," and Sherri Cline, "for her insolence" during the Pictou hearing, remained barred from participation[541]), and enjoyed scant support from their peers in the more southerly groups. Donna Smyth largely avoided publicizing the drama in *Rural Delivery*, which, publicity being the whole point of challenging the judge, prompted an angry Don Rushton to ask "why would she rather identify herself with McCleave?"[542] For its part, the EAC's Board of Directors voted to "not publicly affiliate itself with the positions of

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[538]"Dean Whalen - Sherri Cline Incident at Pictou," RCU, volume 203, number 6; McCleave to Dean Whalen, 16 June, 1982, DAL-EAC, box 30.9.
[539]Tony Law, Scotsburn, to Robert McCleave, 22 June, 1982, RCU, volume 202, number 7.
[540]Stanley Forgeron, inquiry secretary, to Fred Popowich, assistant librarian, Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library, 17 November, 1982, RCU, volume 203, number 3. The librarian was told that CARE had never submitted a written brief.
[541]"Dean Whalen - Sherri Cline Incident at Pictou," RCU, volume 203, number 6.
[542]Don Rushton to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 7:2 (July, 1982).

other groups addressing the inquiry" when asked by CARE to speak out.[543]

Rather than attempt to repair the gulf between the inquiry Commissioner and CARE, or join the latter in further foredoomed criticism of McCleave's conduct, anti-uranium groups in the city and in the nearby mainland instead moved to formalize their own coalition ("publicly affiliate" one might say) ahead of Stage Two, isolating the north shore groups and the leftists. As the first stage of the inquiry closed, a committee of four activists from the central mainland area circulated (in their areas only) a proposal for the second stage, primarily requesting funding for their own expert witnesses, and suggesting McCleave take over all questioning of witnesses himself.[544] Reaction from the north was predictably negative. Sherri Cline (CARE), Gail Fresia (CCCC), Don Rushton (CCCC), and David Orton (SEPOHG - and on the verge of moving from Halifax to Truro with his family) wrote together to *Rural Delivery* to decry "a group putting itself forward as *the* representatives of the environmental movement - even though there was no open invitation to all interested parties," and a proposal that "reeks of faith in the system and authority."[545] The coalition's reply, that the northerners ought to make their own proposals and "embrace a range of divergent attitudes," left the distinct impression that the move to unify attitudes in and around the city had little to do with diversity and much to do with delegitimizing those who would not accept the premises of the supposedly impartially scientific second stage.[546]

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[543]EAC Board of Directors minutes, 23 June, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 2.

[544]Multiple letters, RCU, volume 200, number 9; Gwenyth Phillips (KASE) to Robert McCleave, 26 February, 1983, RCU, volume 202, number 4; Gillian Thomas, Bill Zimmerman, and George Gore, the Western Group Drafting Committee, to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 7:8 (January, 1983). The four were Ruth Conrad, Ron Leitold, Elizabeth May, and Martin Haase.

[545]Sherri Cline (CARE), Gail Fresia (CCCC), Don Rushton (CCCC), and David Orton (SEPOHG), to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 7:7 (December, 1982). (emphasis in the original)

[546]Gillian Thomas (CAPE), Bill Zimmerman (SSEPA), and George Gore (CAUM), the "Western Group Drafting Committee," to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 7:8 (January, 1983).

Implosion

Events do sometimes overtake expectations, and though no small number of activists in the province clearly expected a long and bitterly controversial second stage of Nova Scotia's uranium inquiry in 1983, in the end the battle was decided inside of a single Halifax courtroom -- perhaps even inside of one man's mind -- over the course of two angry days in March, a catharsis that forced both sides of the environmentalist conflict to finally acknowledge the deep roots of their differences. The departure from script began with a letter sent by McCleave in February to the participants of the first stage of the inquiry. Apparently feeling pressured by activists eager for word on the planning of the second stage (much as he had felt ahead of the first), the judge asked everyone to "please hold your fire," and enjoined all parties to avoid "speculation" on the inquiry's future.[547] No one really did. Faced with a bitter exchange in the press between Deputy Environment Minister E.L.L. Rowe and Elizabeth May, and wishing to pass judgement on some of the presenters whose "perverse ideology" had so bothered him in recent months,[548] McCleave convened a "special session" of the inquiry at the Halifax Law Courts on 4 March, and requested the presence there of May, Rowe, Dean Whalen, Sherri Cline, Don Rushton, and a *Toronto Star* reporter (and yet another former Marxist-Leninist Party member) named Alan Story. Charles Lapp, creator of the slide/tape show presented by Rushton in Amherst, titled *Uranium: The Nova Scotia Experience*, was subpoenaed and arrived with a lawyer.[549] Story was there because he had interviewed

[547]McCleave to participants, 18 February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.
[548]Uranium Commission press release, n/d, RCU, volume 203, number 6; McCleave to all stage 1 participants, 18 February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.
[549]Subpoena to Charles Lapp, RCU, volume 203, number 6. Lapp later sent a bill to McCleave's office for

McCleave by telephone the day before, acting on a tip from Lapp, and McCleave felt it "most improper that a witness should be talking to the press."[550] That the member of the press in question was a man who had only recently embarrassed the entire Nova Scotia judicial system by exposing the wrongful conviction of Donald Marshall Jr. surely added to the impropriety. Over the course of the afternoon, McCleave made a remarkable series of rulings: that Lapp should return to court in two weeks to show and be judged for his slide/tape show (for reasons the judge refused to specify); that Story was forbidden to use two words from his interview with McCleave, "censorship" and "kangaroo," on pain of a contempt charge; that Rushton apologise to the inquiry for alleging slander by McCleave; and that Alan Ruffman, Howard Epstein, Tony Seed, and Gail Fresia were in "default of the inquiry" for not having produced written copies of presentations, and also had two weeks to comply or face the unspecified consequences of an unheard-of ruling.[551] It was by even the most generous assessment a bizarre performance, made only more so when McCleave addressed the Rowe/May controversy by asking the assembled audience to deliberate on "free speech [and]... the limits that should be made on anything that is being said" in or out of the inquiry, presumably without using the word "censorship."[552]

Reactions to McCleave's extraordinary performance certainly exceeded any environmentalist's grandest hopes for generating publicity out of the inquiry. His treatment of Alan Story in particular inflamed other members of the press, who repeated and reprinted the story of an "arrogant" and "paternalistic" judge making a reporter sit on

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$905.30 to cover his lawyer's fee: RCU, volume 203, number 6.

[550]Transcript, 4 March, 1983, RCU, volume 200, number 10; McCleave to David Chipman, President of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society, 6 April, 1983, RCU, volume 210, number 10.

[551]Transcript, 4 March, 1983, RCU, volume 200, number 10; McCleave to Don Rushton, 7 March, 1983, RCU, volume 203, number 6.

[552]Transcript, 4 March, 1983, RCU, volume 200, number 10.

the prisoner's bench and refusing him access to a lawyer when requested.[553] Inside the Legislature, McCleave came under repeated attack, and the Liberal and NDP leaders both requested his removal from the inquiry.[554] Perhaps worst of all for McCleave's immutable sense of the respect due his position was the ridicule; posters soon appeared around Halifax advertising a public screening of Charles Lapp's slide/tape show, and they were decorated with a picture of a kangaroo.[555] By the time of his second "special session," McCleave had clearly reached the end of his ability to handle the pressure.[556] "Beset by a radical group and beset by certain members of the press," the judge treated the assembly on 18 March to a long diatribe on the responsibilities of the press, while a crowd of protestors from CARE, CCCC, SEPOHG, and some Haligonian allies milled about the entrance to the Law Courts, holding signs reading "BOYCOTT THE INQUIRY" and "STOP ATTACKS ON ENVIRONMENTALISTS."[557] Those inside had been made to pass through a metal detector and a line of police to reach the courtroom. After Lapp's slide/tape show played, to loud applause, McCleave simply ended the session. "We leave the courtroom wondering what has happened," Donna Smyth wrote, "Nobody has been charged with anything."[558]

No one ever was charged with anything, nor could they have been. Although the

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[553]*Truro Daily News,* 14 March, 1983, 4; Transcript of CBC Radio Noon, 7 March, 1983, RCU, volume 203, number 6.

[554]*Truro Daily News,* 14 March, 1983, 4; Nova Scotia House of Assembly Debates and Proceedings, 7 March, 1983, RCU, volume 204, number 13.

[555]"Public Screening of: Uranium The Nova Scotia Experience - the 30 minute slide-tape show subpoened by Judge McCleave," poster, RCU, volume 203, number 6. Donna Smyth's account of the whole episode in *Rural Delivery* also came with a small drawing of a redacted kangaroo, added by the publisher: Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update: beyond uranium," *Rural Delivery* 7:11 (April, 1983).

[556]Transcript, 18 March, 1983, RCU, volume 200, number 11. McCleave admitted to requiring medical advice to handle the pressure in a letter to E.L.L. Rowe, Deputy Minister of Environment, 3 May, 1983, RCU, volume 201, number 10.

[557]Transcript, 18 March, 1983, RCU, volume 200, number 11; Don Rushton, "So Long, Stage II: McCleave Gets Set to Ride Off Into the Sunset," *New Maritimes* 2:6 (March, 1984), 10-11. Smyth estimated 20 protestors, Rushton 30.

[558]Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update: to be continued...," *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983).

Attorney General's examination (pointedly not an "investigation") of the situation ended publicly with his reaffirming McCleave's power to conduct the inquiry as he wished, privately the Deputy Attorney General informed McCleave that his powers as a Commissioner allowed him to compel only testimony and evidence under threat of contempt, and not to dictate anyone's speech or conduct inside or outside of the inquiry. In other words, while acting as a Commissioner, he had not the powers of a judge.[559] McCleave, disappointed with "so little protection" offered him, retreated from public view, leaving environmentalists to debate the future of the inquiry among themselves without any hint of whether or when stage two would begin, or who might be called to account in court before then.[560]

Debate they did. Rather than unite against a Commissioner whose own suspect political neutrality offered a clear chance to avoid the objectively scientific phase of the inquiry and return the debate fully to the political realm, the anti-uranium forces only deepened their internal divisions in response to McCleave's apparent breakdown. Susan Holtz did write to the Attorney General on behalf of the EAC to lodge a formal complaint over the "curtailment of freedom of expression," but refused to join the chorus of calls for McCleave's ouster and replacement, advising instead a six-month recess.[561] Beyond the single complaint, in fact, those who had previously supported McCleave continued to do so. CAPE's Ralph Loomer even wrote again to the judge to "share [his] repugnance and distaste for the sleazy fanatics who would replace the institutions of democracy and

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[559]Jim Vibert, "How will 'examine' opposition charges," *Chronicle Herald*, n.d., Clipping File, RCU, volume 202, number 10; Attorney General Press Statement, 22 March, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 30.8; Deputy Attorney General to McCleave, 22 March, 1983, RCU, volume 204, number 4.
[560]Robert McCleave to Clive Schaefer, 6 May, 1983, RCU, volume 203, file 7.
[561]Susan Holtz to Harry How, Attorney General, 9 March, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 43.6; Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update: to be continued...," *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983).

jurisprudence of British tradition with a one-party dictatorship. Their strategy is intentionally disruptive and destructive of any worthy cause in which they participate."[562] Only slightly less divisive, but much more public, the EAC's Uranium Committee wrote in an open letter to the premier that "the recent series of criticisms and allegations in the House, the Courtroom, the media, and on the streets would seem to place the future of the Uranium Inquiry in jeopardy. Ecology Action Centre has not participated in these activities, nor does it intend to, because they are damaging to the process."[563] As their choice of language suggests, being seen to support the process meant more to the EAC than merely preserving another chance to reiterate its position on the science of radiation exposure. Its Board of Directors made it clear that the "Centre has been careful not to be entangled in any of the 'side shows' around the Inquiry and hopes to maintain its image as a responsible, credible organization whose attention remains focussed on the issues which generated the Inquiry."[564]

Those whose participation in any future inquiry stages was dubious at best maintained that a process without potential for organizing the public into a political pressure group could be no more than an "expensive pressure valve for public opinion" and a force for delegitimization of non-scientific positions.[565] They objected to any support given McCleave as a distortion of the truth -- that he had attempted for a full year to stifle any dissent against his right to make the final decision -- and they resented CAPE's and EAC's refusal, as the best-known groups in the fight, to speak out against

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[562]Ralph Loomer to Robert McCleave, 10 March, 1983, volume 202, number 2. Stephanie May also wrote to reassure McCleave that the May family was still "singing your praises": Letter from Stephanie May to McCleave, 7 July, 1983, RCU, volume 203, number 7.

[563]Hal Mills, co-chair, EAC uranium committee, to Robert McCleave (copy open letter to Premier Buchanan), cc to the Attorney General, 21 March, 1983, RCU, volume 203, number 4. Also printed in *Between the Issues* 3:2 (May-June, 1983).

[564]EAC Board of Directors minutes, 23 March, 1983, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 3.

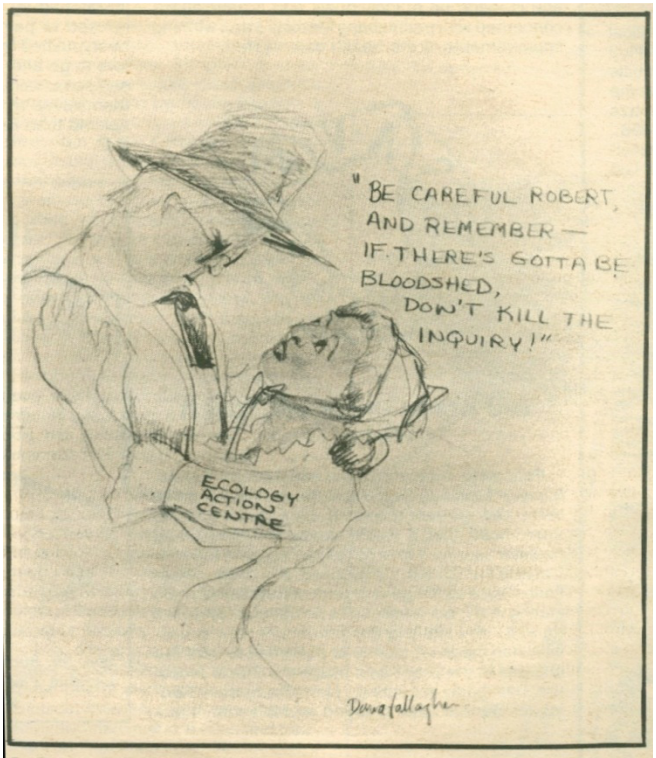
[565]Sherri Cline to Susan Holtz, 28 March, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 30.8.

McCleave's attacks on leftist environmentalists. Only a little more than a year before, Susan Holtz had been bitterly upset at Sherri Cline's and Hattie Perry's promoting "disunity" within the movement, and protested her toleration of political philosophies other than her own. Yet after McCleave's letter and his first special session made it clear to all that his anger was directed at "perverse" leftists, her concern was to protect the inquiry and the judge from criticism. A CAPE spokesperson at the same time explained to a *Mail Star* reporter that McCleave was upset at "a few people isolated from the environmental movement [who] had it out for him" from the beginning.[566] The northern groups, for their part, renewed their criticisms of the EAC as "establishment bound," dependent on government and corporate funding, and (along with CAPE) simply politically naive.[567] (See Figure 5.2)

Rather than the strength in diversity that some optimists tried to make of it, the stalemate between participants and non-participants in the inquiry reflected the most basic differences in political assumptions. While Donna Smyth lamented that personalizing the conflict with McCleave meant the "moderate, reasonable people who put such a lot of hard work into Stage 1 are being ignored and forgotten,"[568] Don Rushton insisted that "the discussion can never be completely separated from the forum in which it takes place." And if the two camps willingly debated in the press, they could not manage to discuss strategy in person. Rushton's attempt on behalf of CCCC to convene a provincial meeting to discuss whether or not to pursue a boycott of the inquiry by all groups was not so much rebuffed as ignored by all of the leading groups other than

[566]McCleave to participants, 18 February, 1983, DAL-EAC, box 30.8; Rushton, "So Long Stage II," 11.
[567]Rushton, "So Long Stage II," 11; Sherri Cline to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 7:12 (May, 1983).
[568]Donna Smyth, "Uranium Update: beyond uranium," *Rural Delivery* 7:11 (April, 1983).

SEPOHG, CARE (whose boycott could just as well be called a ban), and SSEPA.[569] The fact that both sides had come to recognize was that their two positions were not only



By Dawna Gallagher, this drawing satirizes the roles of McCleave and the Ecology Action Centre in the Inquiry.

(Figure 5.2 : A drawing of McCleave and the EAC. Dawna Gallagher, in Don Rushton, "So Long Stage II," 11.)

incompatible, but at cross-purposes. One held that participation in and endorsement of the official system of decision-making was the only effective way to convince political and industrial leaders of the truth of environmentalists' claims, the other that only political pressure from large numbers of citizens could overcome the established unity of political and industrial interests which the official system is designed to uphold, and that "playing the game" made it look like the problems were well in hand, and therefore hindered the growth of political consciousness. Each attacked the legitimacy of the other.

[569] *SSEPA Q/L NEWS* 1:12 (May, 1983).

Conclusion

Nova Scotia's Royal Commission on Uranium Mining ended not with a bang, or even with a whimper, but with a long shrug of confusion. McCleave's disappearance from the public eye as an inquiry Commissioner lasted a full year, and his reappearance in the winter of 1984 consisted of nothing more than the announcement of the premature end of the inquiry. The final report of the McCleave Inquiry was submitted to the Lieutenant Governor on 30 January, 1985, nearly three years after it began (and about three and a half years after the moratorium began).[570] On 19 March, it was released to the public, and the reception among environmentalists revealed just how little had changed since March 1983. Despite McCleave's complete repudiation of most environmentalist claims about the dangers of radiation exposure, the impossibility of safe tailings disposal, and the inseparability of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons, the response was remarkably positive in Halifax and in Hants County.[571] The Buchanan government had accepted McCleave's recommendations to extend the moratorium until 1990 (on uranium only - releasing prospectors from the legal bind that prevented their seeking other minerals in uranium claims) and erect a regulatory system based on "scientific assessment of risk and level of risk considered acceptable."[572] McCleave had also expressed a "personal preference" that any uranium mined in Nova Scotia be used in the province for electricity generation only, at least unless the tailings disposal could be proven safe, in which case

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[570] *Report of the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Uranium Mining*, 30 January, 1985.

[571] EAC Uranium Committee minutes, 10 April, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 5; Lyndon Watkins, "Anti-uranium winners plan picnic," *Mail-Star,* 20 March, 1985, quoted in Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 262-3.

[572] *Report of the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Uranium Mining*, 30 January, 1985; "Position paper," RCU, volume 195, number 3.

export might be acceptable. Elizabeth May, Susan Holtz, and Donna Smyth insisted that the recommendations meant uranium mining would never happen in Nova Scotia, despite warnings from others that the report could as easily be interpreted as an instruction to wait five years before declaring the tailings "safe" and carrying on with mining.[573] A regulatory system that made an honest assessment of the science, they believed, would find a safe nuclear energy system "of course impossible."[574]

Optimism aside, the close relationship between politics, the law, and the nuclear industry in Canada had certainly not changed during McCleave's absence from the scene. Even some of the faces remained the same. After a disastrous spill of radioactive water from a tailings pond at Key Lake, Saskatchewan, in the winter of 1984 -- the same tailings system presented to McCleave as state-of-the-art -- there was considerable work to be done in rehabilitating the image of uranium mining in Canada, work contributed to by the federal government's National Uranium Tailings Program and its newest recruit, Mr. Roy John.[575] And Kidd Creek's Nova Scotia lawyer, Ronald Pugsley, had filled his time since the hearings representing Dr. Leo Yaffe in the latter's libel suit against Donna Smyth. Smyth's trial was a nationally infamous bit of litigation in which only the author of the supposedly libellous text faced trial. The fact that the publisher was left off of the suit had activists convinced that the accusation was meant only to silence and punish a particularly outspoken anti-uranium leader. Having waited two years for a trial (the same two years spent waiting on judge McCleave), Dr. Smyth took two days to convince a jury

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[573]EAC Uranium Committee minutes, 10 April, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 5; Lyndon Watkins, "Anti-uranium winners plan picnic," *Mail-Star,* 20 March, 1985, quoted in Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 262-3.

[574]EAC Uranium Committee minutes, 10 April, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 5.

[575]McCleave to Roy John, National Uranium Tailings Program, 12 April, 1984, RCU, volume 203, number 7; Martin Haase to McCleave, 3 February, 1984, RCU, volume 203, number 3.

that it presented no risk to Dr. Yaffe's reputation to be described as "one of many 'experts' that the nuclear industry will parade in front of us."[576] A good deal of her success can be attributed to her own foresight in electing a jury trial, apparently having decided that, in her own case, faith in a judge's impartiality was probably not the wisest course. Indeed, the presiding judge seemed inclined to convict.[577] In any event, during the two years of waiting, Smyth was partially handicapped as a campaigner, unable to comment publicly on the case.

From the earliest days of the struggle in 1979 and 1980, Nova Scotian environmentalists had been fighting against not only (not even mainly) the mining industry, but the provincial and federal governments and their commitment to nuclear technology. They had been fighting, without always recognizing it, against a modern conception of economic development and risk assessment that devalued the personal experience of place, of home, discounted the inequity of metropolitanism, and preserved the privilege of expertise. In this, Nova Scotia serves as a synecdoche for the nation, or a prism through which to view the trends of Canadian (and worldwide) environmentalism. The Uranium Commission, like the herbicide trial and the Royal Commission on Forestry, exemplified the use of judicial or quasi-judicial forums to dissipate activist energy and to enforce that same modernist discourse. McCleave may have made an unusually enthusiastic guardian of the traditional prerogatives of experts and duly constituted authority, adding to the value of the provincial story as an exemplar of

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[576]Michael Doyle, "Use of word 'parade' is defamatory: Dr. Yaffe," *Chronicle Herald,* 18 January, 1985, quoted in Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 257; Gillian Thomas to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 8:4 (September, 1983).

[577]*Arts Magazine*, n.d., Clipping File, Betty Peterson Fonds, PANS, mg1, volume 3470, number 6; "Civil jury rules Dr. Smyth did not defame Dr. Yaffe," in Donna Smyth, *Subversive Elements* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1986), 258.

environmentalist history, but it was not an accident of personality (his, or Orton's, or Holtz') that the process of the inquiry completed the schism of the environmental movement in the province. None of them (not even McCleave) was a singular force of nature; they represented groups of like-minded activists or officials, who represent in turn the strands of environmental thought common throughout the international movement.

That the McCleave Inquiry ended when and how it did was almost entirely the work of the "radical" environmentalists he so despised, and given McCleave's repudiation of most of the arguments put to him by environmentalists, it would have been in 1985, as it is now, a reasonable conclusion to say that they were responsible for the moratorium that prevented uranium mining in Nova Scotia for years thereafter. They were responsible for turning the inquiry into a source of political pressure rather than a brake on it. But the mainstream groups in the province did not say so in 1985, because they could not accept the idea that conciliatory environmentalism had failed to do what it promised, to gain a seat at the regulatory table. (So complete was his disdain for the activists' position that the government committee McCleave recommended be created to dictate safe standards had no room for even token public representation.)[578] Given the opportunity that McCleave provided, Nova Scotian environmentalists first drifted then raced in opposite directions entirely under their own power, to the point that formal coalition was no longer possible. There was no longer an environmental movement in Nova Scotia; there were two. The fracture had been exhausting, embittering, and for most of the anti-uranium activists, McCleave's moratorium was victory enough.

[578] *Report of the Nova Scotia Royal Commission on Uranium Mining*, 30 January, 1985; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 17 July, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 5.

Chapter 6 - Watermelons and Market Greens: legacies of early activism

By the middle of the 1980s, the division of Nova Scotian environmentalism into mainstream and fringe was complete. The remainder of the decade established a new pattern of cooperation, disagreement, and occasional hostility between the two sides, but they remained two sides. New environmental issues rose to prominence, such as the contamination of the Sydney tar ponds, inviting cooperation and even collaboration across the spectrum of environmentalism. At the same time, the wounds inflicted during 1983 festered whenever forestry issues came to the fore, which they did frequently, without any apparent hope of reconciliation. Activists who remained committed to consultation and government lobbying continued to pursue the same at the highest levels of government available to them with the full encouragement of those with whom they wished to consult, despite their bruising failure to win allies in power during the early 1980s campaigns. And the populists redoubled and even formalized their commitment to grassroots pressure politics and antagonism toward government, industry, and the ideology of economic growth. A tendency toward geographical division remained as well, following the events of 1983, with concentrations of radical activists on the north and south shores and on Cape Breton Island, while the more numerous mainstream activists worked throughout but found particular strength in and around the city.

The schism of Nova Scotian activism into modernist and nonmodernist streams -- demonstrated so clearly by the events of the 1980s -- has frequently disguised the continuity that remains within the causes of both sorts of environmental action, equally the product of a reaction to the downside of industrial modernity. The mainstream, born

of the same reaction but intent on using the language and tools of modernity to ameliorate its evils, has often downplayed the value and prevalence of place defense and associated nonmodern rhetoric. Most new activists in Nova Scotia in the late 1980s, however, continued to find their initial inspiration as Dr. MacDonald had at Boat Harbour twenty years before, in the defense of the places and lifestyles they loved against encroaching industrial modernity. This is as true of environmentalism in the rest of Canada as it is of Nova Scotian environmentalism.

The Enemy of My Enemy

Agitation against nuclear energy remained a vital issue in Nova Scotia throughout the 1980s, although steadily diminishing in relative importance, and it illustrates well the ability of activists holding different views on politics and economics to cooperate when and where their objectives aligned. But for the reduced intensity of activism, little about the nuclear issue changed following the Brudenell rally in 1979. The demise of the regional Maritime Energy Corporation only briefly slowed AECL's ambition to sell a second reactor in the Maritimes, and the agency pressed on with its sales pitch and its attempts to dismiss the Three Mile Island disaster as a minor event.[579] Meanwhile, the reluctance of US regulators to approve new nuclear construction in that country drove utility companies in New England to pledge support for a second reactor at Point Lepreau, to the delight of the Canadian and New Brunswick governments, which began planning to proceed with the project in spite of the lack of interest from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island.[580]

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[579]"AECL confident Candu markets can be found," *Chronicle Herald*, 2 May, 1981, 17.
[580]Ken Kelley, "Why New England looks to Lepreau," *Rural Delivery* 7:8 (January, 1983); "'Millions' to be

The nuclear industry might no longer have worn a regional face, but activists kept up a small measure of regional cooperation for several years. The "No to Lepreau" rally in 1982 drew participants from all three provinces, as did a conference held in Antigonish in the same year on "Alternative Energy Futures in Atlantic Canada and the Third World."[581] Participation extended as well to both sides of the then-growing divide between modernist and nonmodernist environmentalists, who shared an understanding (on nuclear issues at least) that government would not be swayed by quiet discouragement. North shore groups like CARE and mainstream groups like the EAC were both represented in the common front, and continued to cooperate at least until the early 1990s, when they joined an unsuccessful nation-wide attempt to push through a private member's bill in Ottawa that would have halted any new nuclear projects.[582]

But the nuclear industry disappointed everyone's expectations in the 1980s. Federal and provincial nuclear enthusiasts and their potential US customers could ignore activists, but they could not ignore the fact that the first Lepreau reactor, projected to cost $466 million, ended up costing well over $1.2 billion to build.[583] The Chernobyl explosion in 1986 promised a resurgence of anti-nuclear activism, if plans for a second reactor ever got seriously underway, yet in the absence of such plans activists admitted to being "exhausted" from their decade-long battle, and were unable to press their

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gambled on nuclear power for U.S. Market," *Chronicle Herald*, 21 January, 1984, 15.

[581]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 28 April, 1982, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 2; "Nuclear power 'unacceptable' say people at StFX for 'Alternative Energy Futures in Atlantic Canada and the Third World' conference," 25 January 1982, DAL-EAC, box 33.3; "No to Lepreau," 1982, DAL-EAC, box 32.28.

[582]"Nuclear 1979-1991," n.d., KEG, file 25; Martin Rudy Haase to the Editor, *Atlantic Insight* 6:4 (April, 1984), 5; "MEC-CARE Wentworth Conference," January, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 1; "Coalition wants safety review at Point Lepreau power plant," *Chronicle Herald*, 22 September, 1981, 4; "CCNR Citizens Council member list," 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 2.

[583]Jon Everett, "Lepreau: Splitting the atom - and New Brunswick," *Atlantic Insight* 4:2 (February, 1982), 22.

advantage.[584] Other, more urgent problems displaced nuclear power at the forefront of environmental consciousness in the later 1980s, diminishing both the likelihood of anti-nuclear cooperation repairing rifts in the movement and the influence of activists over government.[585] The legacy of 1979 was powerful enough in combination with the economic reality of nuclear power to prevent new construction, but in terms of political impact nothing activists did in the 1980s ever measured up to the action that closed out the previous decade.

The greatest influence of the nuclear issue in the 1980s lay in the movement of activists from anti-nuclear work to other forms of environmentalism, and the same can be said of opposition to uranium mining after 1985, when victory seemed secure for the remainder of the decade and people were able to turn their minds elsewhere. In Kings County for example, a centre of both anti-nuclear and anti-uranium activism, a group of anti-nuclear activists called the Small Earth Community (SEC), formed in 1979, spun out a remarkable legacy. The SEC was one of the more determinedly local organizations in the province, vowing to "stick close to home" despite an obvious concern with nuclear construction in New Brunswick.[586] It was also a small group that didn't last very long. After participating in the actions that doomed the Maritime Energy Corporation, the SEC "fell apart" in 1981, leaving anti-nuclear activism in the area to a small group of church-affiliated peace activists (including some former SEC members) who in 1985 formed the Annapolis Valley International Community Center (AVICC) in order to run public

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[584]Chris Wood, "Waiting for Lepreau," *Atlantic Insight* 6:2 (February, 1984), 6-7.
[585]Susan Holtz, "Report on United Church of Canada Committee on Energy and the Environment meeting with Energy Minister Jean Chretien," *Between the Issues* 3:2 (May-June, 1983).
[586]"Small Earth Community formed," n.d., KEG, file 80; "SEC first general meeting minutes," 5 December, 1979, KEG, file 80.

education programs on peace and rural development.[587] The AVICC, along with the anti-uranium group KASE and organic farming advocates in the short-lived Maritime Sustainable Agriculture Network, made Kings County into a thriving centre of local activism in the mid-1980s, while nonetheless cooperating in provincial and national efforts to curb the uranium and nuclear industries.[588] In 1986, a fire at an agricultural chemicals warehouse in the village of Canning spurred greater alarm over chemical pollution and led to the creation of another organization, Citizens Concerned about Canning, when no agency of government appeared willing to take ownership of 160 drums of "chemical soup" left behind after the clean-up operation.[589] Out of this web of organizations, the various surviving groups finally came together in 1987 as the Kings Environmental Group (KEG), a large organization with committees dedicated to the various interests of its members and a "grassroots" philosophy that deliberately echoed the SEC's commitment to local activism.[590] KEG activists achieved a rare formal union of local populism and government lobbying by explicitly limiting its activity to matters of local concern.

Kings County was not a unique case. All over the province, new issues brought new activists into contact with their more experienced peers. Much like the members of KEG, rural victims of industrial blight usually viewed the EAC as a strictly urban group, a useful resource and ally but not an effective advocate for the rest of the province.[591]

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[587]Larry Bogan, SEC, to "Susan," EAC, 12 March, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.4.
[588]"AVICC Director's Report, 1985-1987," PANS-EAC, box 3434, number 1.
[589]Press Release, A Group of Citizens Concerned About Canning, 10 July, 1986, PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 20.
[590]Andy Haggart, Glen Kelly, Greg Krustudic, and Matt Young, "Environmentalism in Kings County: A perspective through the Kings Environmental Group and the Acadia Environmental Society," 1991, KEG, file 51. KEG had approximately 95 members in 1991.
[591]Andy Haggart, Glen Kelly, Greg Krustudic, and Matt Young, "Environmentalism in Kings County: A perspective through the Kings Environmental Group and the Acadia Environmental Society," 1991,

New independent small groups therefore sprang up wherever enough residents felt sufficiently threatened by new development, following the pattern that had prevailed since the late 1960s, and the urban-rural divide encouraged diverse perspectives on the problems. In Cumberland County in 1981, for example, residents organized to oppose construction of a central Maritime hazardous waste dump, sought aid from the EAC, but staked out their own, more radical position: if the experts could not be trusted, they said, the only consistent response was to "learn to live without the products these companies manufacture."[592] Nearly a decade later, Cape Bretoners belonging to the Save Boulanderie Island Society attempted a court challenge with EAC support, after the federal government cancelled an environmental assessment process for the new Point Aconi coal-fired power station, but they were just as prepared with threats and civil disobedience when the court ruled against them.[593] The value of Nova Scotia as a lens through which to view Canadian environmentalism in general is particularly great regarding the persistence of this rural vitality: while much of the rest of the country continued in rapid urbanization throughout the 1980s, Nova Scotia's proportion of rural population remained large and consistent throughout the late decades of the twentieth century.[594]

KEG, file 51.

[592]Barbara Clark, Wallace, Cumberland Resists Unhealthful Development (CRUD), to the Editor, *Rural Delivery* 5:11 (April, 1981); Harry Thurston, "The C.R.U.D. Hits the fan in Cumberland County," *Atlantic Insight* 3:6 (July, 1981), 21-22; Chris Wood, "The toxic time bomb," *Atlantic Insight* 3:7 (August/September, 1981), 84, 87-88, 91.

[593]Civil disobedience in this case included dumping 20kg of nails on the road to the site, among other actions. Kevin Cox, "Power but no glory in Point Aconi," *Globe and Mail* 16 March, 1991, D2; Campbell Morrison, "Appeal judges reject Aconi foes' arguments," *Daily News*, 7 June, 1991, 3; Susan LeBlanc, "Trial begins for Greenpeace activists," *Mail-Star*, 14 December, 1990, D20; Alan Jeffers, "C.B.'s future black like coal," *Chronicle Herald* 6 December, 1990, D8; Patricia Lynn Hutchinson, "Committee concerned over effects of proposed Point Aconi project," *Chronicle Herald*, 26 June, 1990, D8.

[594]Nationally, the percentage of rural population fell from 24 to 19 percent from 1981 to 2011; in Nova Scotia it fell only slightly, from 45 to 43 percent. New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island shared

Activist cooperation did not exist in a political vacuum or rely solely on the capacity of mainstream and fringe to abide each other. The state also maintained a role in their relationship. Official processes were often fruitless and divisive avenues of dissent, as those activists learned who tried to force the federal and provincial governments to clean up Sydney Harbour and the tar ponds site. Despite air pollution up to 6,000 percent higher than the standard, pollution in industrial Cape Breton had attracted little attention in the 1970s. As one resident recalled, "we just didn't want to hear, 'cause we wanted those damn jobs so bad."[595] It was, in fact, the Department of Fisheries that spurred the first major organized activist effort in 1982, by closing the lobster fishery on the south half of the harbour, citing as justification the 735 lbs. phenol, 10,447 lbs. ammonium, 919 lbs. cyanide, and 2,058 lbs. thiocyanate dumped there every day by the Sydney Steel Corporation.[596] Once begun, however, public activism accelerated rapidly. Faced with contamination of such magnitude -- approximately 250 acres of tar ponds and former coke ovens sites, to a depth of 24 meters, arguably the largest concentration of toxic chemicals on the continent -- there was no question that activists would target government directly, and groups of every sort contributed. Even the most determined opponent of government consultation could support direct lobbying for the relocation of residents away from the edges of the site (combined with a public pressure campaign, of course). The lessons of the 1970s were not lost on the environmental agencies of Ottawa and Halifax, however, and in order to contain the threat of radical-mainstream

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similarly high proportions of rural residents. Statistics Canada, *Population, urban and rural, by province and territory*, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/l01/cst01/demo62d-eng.htm> (accessed May, 2013).

[595] Maude Barlow, and Elizabeth May, *Frederick Street: Life and Death on Canada's Love Canal* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2000), 55.

[596] *Ibid*, 75; G.L. Trider, and O.C. Vaidya, *An Assessment of Liquid Effluent Streams At Sydney Steel Corporation* (Ottawa: Environment Canada, Environmental Protection Service, Atlantic Region, 1980).

cooperation, the federal, provincial, and municipal governments created a Joint Action Group (JAG) to decide on clean-up methods. Ostensibly meant to include members of the public in the decision-making process, the JAG served equally well to focus discussion on the very questions -- scientific versus experiential knowledge and the legitimacy of political positions -- that put environmentalist participants at odds with each other. In the very long run, the JAG proved little more than a tool to leach activist strength and a diversion behind which politicians might hide.[597]

The tar ponds were the best-known of the decade's controversies, but possibly the best illustration of the capacity for collaboration between different types of environmental activist was the fight to prevent the demolition of Kelly's Mountain in Victoria County at the very end of the 1980s. In 1989, site preparation began for a "mega quarry" on the edge of St. Anne's Bay, a project that would have blasted out and crushed 6 million tons of granite annually to make gravel for sale to the United States. Local reaction was swift and typical: the Save Kelly's Mountain Society (SKMS) immediately began the familiar campaign to have environmental assessment hearings, and reached out to the EAC resource centre to for help.[598] They also reached out to allies among Mi'kmaq traditionalists on Cape Breton Island, who objected to the presence of a quarry next to a sacred site at Gluscap's Cave. Mi'kmaq activists in the fight for Kelly's Mountain made use of racial rhetoric in a way that Chief Ryan Googoo and the other Native participants in the herbicide trial had only begun to explore in the early 1980s. Traditionalists stood to

[597]Bruno Marcocchio to the Editor, *Cape Breton Post*, 7 February, 2004, <http://www.safecleanup.com> (accessed May, 2013); Glenn Hanam to the Editor, *Cape Breton Post*, 6 March, 2004, <http://www.safecleanup.com> (accessed May, 2013) . Much the same process was applied to the Point Aconi controversy: Randy Jones, "Citizen's groups want to be taken seriously," *Mail-Star* 3 March, 1993, D5.

[598]Dr. Beth MacCormick and Leon Dubinsky, to EAC, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 45.11.

gain in both their own communities and in the wider Canadian culture by promoting the image of an "Ecological Indian" whose unique cultural traditions put him or her into a privileged relationship with the natural world.[599] The SKMS, meanwhile, recognized the political power of the Native leaders' argument and did all they could to support it. Differences among environmentalists certainly did not disappear during the controversy, but they were contained by an agreement on rhetorical tactics and a refusal by all parties to be drawn into discussion of amelioration or remediation of environmental damage. As so often before, the provincial government was not very interested in indulging any obstruction to industrial development, but it was very difficult to ignore the combination of scientific argument about noise, dust, toxicity, and fisheries from the SKMS, vandalism along the road to the quarry site by unknown agents, and promises by the Mi'kmaq Warriors Society to "wage war" in defence of the mountain. Though the "Battle of Kelly's Mountain" nearly became a genuine battle in the process, the activists got their hearings, preserved their common front, and unlike the tar ponds clean-up advocates or the Point Aconi power plant opponents, emerged victorious.[600]

Ever at Odds

Successful collaboration on new issues relied on mainstream activists' ability to refrain from attacking their allies in order to buttress their own legitimacy. That in turn relied on a measure of good will and a perception of common goals between the two

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[599]Shepard Krech, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999).

[600]"The Battle of Kelly's Mountain," 1989, KEG, file 74; Alf Hornborg, "Environmentalism, ethnicity and sacred places: Reflections on modernity, discourse and power," *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 31:3 (August, 1994), 245-267.
The business of quarrying gravel for the US market moved on to Digby County soon after the Kelly's Mountain failure, and spent many years attempting to find a foothold there: "Society for the Preservation of the Eastern Head," 13 August, 1990, KEG, file 81.

groups. Stopping a certain project, be it power plant or quarry, made an appropriate common goal. Changing a broad policy did not. Activists concerned with industrial forestry in the 1980s had great difficulty agreeing on which policy to endorse and how to go about achieving it in the aftermath of their great failure at the herbicide trial.

While undeniably discouraged by the ignominious denouement of the trial settlement process in 1983, those activists who had led the legal effort remained determined to fight the use of herbicides in forestry (as well as the resurgent use of insecticides) by direct appeal and through the courts. In 1984, the EAC proposed a mandamus lawsuit against the provincial government, essentially an attempt to convince the Supreme Court that the Buchanan government, by refusing public hearings, had been negligent in its duty as a regulator. This "plan B," as they called it, carried less personal risk than a nuisance suit against the pulp companies, though everyone admitted that it might at best be considered a "stalling tactic."[601] Meanwhile, they pursued a more cooperative relationship with the federal bureaucracy, applying for funding to produce reports on the risks of various pesticides or run conferences on "the ethical dimensions of risk."[602] Ottawa was unsurprisingly reluctant to underwrite anything so public, but it was happy to offer support for the Atlantic Environmental Network or for Environment Canada's "stakeholder meetings," in which to discuss the same issues out of the public eye. Environment Canada was even happier to recruit Elizabeth May to work for the minister of environment as a liaison with the environmental movement and a distributor

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[601] EAC to "Friends," 8 March, 1984, DAL-EAC, box 29.6; "Plan 'B': The Administrative Law Route," n.d., DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

[602] "Grant application to Public Awareness Program for Science and Technology" (rejected), 14 May, 1984, DAL-EAC, box 37.10; "Grant application to Public Awareness Program for Science and Technology" (rejected), 15 October, 1985, DAL-EAC, box 37.10; "Report on FOE pesticides lobby," 1983, DAL-EAC, box 37.8.
EAC also pursued more consultation with the province: memo, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3433, number 27.

of funds. Minister McMillan's trust was well placed; May directed the bulk of funding to the CEN network, and not to any public advocacy efforts. Some activists even complained that she tried to stifle criticism of McMillan's Environmental Protection Act.[603]

A great many activists in Nova Scotia felt differently than May and the EAC about the efficacy of direct appeals to politicians' better natures, and very differently about the usefulness of further legal efforts. Premier Buchanan and his ministers, who held the true decision-making power, had made it clear that they did not wish to listen to environmental activists and would do whatever possible to discourage them and squelch dissent. As Ralph Surette put it, "we may safely assume that if the government of Nova Scotia knew of hazards [from chemical spraying] it would not admit it."[604] The next step could only be to force them to listen by raising the number of voices, and voters, in the game. Even before the decision had been made to abandon an appeal and settle with Stora Kopparberg, several groups in the province had soured on the search for legitimacy. A large coalition of groups planned a major publicity campaign in 1983, designed to embarrass the government at the peak of the tourist season with a coordinated, province-wide distribution of information on the "Dioxin Trail," a play on the province's promotional names for its coastal highways such as the Sunrise Trail and Cabot Trail. Only days before the campaign was to begin, however, the EAC, Herbicide Fund Society, and Women's Health Education Network abandoned the plan and sent the printer's plates

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[603]Clipping file, Betty Peterson fonds, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, MG 1, volume 3469, number 8; David Israelson, *Toronto Star*, 10 January, 1987, clipping file, PANS-EAC, volume 3433, number 29.

[604]Ralph Surette, "Fear of spraying," *Atlantic Insight* 5:7 (July, 1983), 32. Forester and author Ralph Johnson, for example, had his history of the forests of Nova Scotia edited by government printers to remove anti-clearcutting sections. Johnson to T.C. De Fayer, 7 February, 1985, PANS, volume 2863, number 40, cited in Paul Webster, "Pining for Trees: The History of Dissent Against Forest Destruction in Nova Scotia 1749-1991," unpublished MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 1991.

for the campaign leaflet, unused, to the Queens/Lunenburg SSEPA. "The only explanation we could get," wrote the latter, "was that those concerned in the pull-out thought the pamphlet was an unwise tactic." Activists on the south shore and north shore felt "anger and betrayal" but could only begin planning for the following year's campaign.[605] (Someone in Cumberland County did go ahead and erect the Dioxin Trail signs, but without the accompanying literature, it must have been a puzzling protest to the few who noticed it.[606])

The strongholds of radical activism were located on the province's north and southwest shores, as well as on Cape Breton Island. There, at some remove from Halifax, activists continued with their more populist style of advocacy without much assistance from the city. The Q/L SSEPA joined its north shore peers in the Scott Boycott Committee in late 1983, and the Concerned Residents of Clare and South West Environmental Protection Association organized public meetings on the continued use of 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T in the province's roadside spray program. One prominent speaker for the two groups was a familiar face in anti-chemical circles: Robyn Warren.[607] On forestry matters the rhetoric and action of the rural populists in the mid and late 1980s began to move towards overt challenges to government consultation. Charlie Restino and the Cape Breton Coalition Against Pesticides (CAP) declared that "more headway can be made by mobilizing public opinion" than by visiting politicians, and worked with David Orton and the North Shore Environmental Web (NSEW) on public appeals.[608] NSEW was even more forceful, uniting as it did many of the activists targeted by Judge McCleave and

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[605]*SSEPA Q/L NEWS* 2:3 (September/October, 1983).
[606]*Chronicle Herald*, 31 August, 1983, 2.
[607]*SSEPA Q/L NEWS* 2:3 (September/October, 1983).
[608]Duncan MacLellan, "A Study of Selected New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Regional, and National Forestry Sector Interest Groups," report for the Council of Maritime Premiers, n.d., DAL-EAC, box 46.13.

many who had been dropped from Justice Burchell's anti-herbicide injunction, overlooked in favour of the Cape Breton trial while the Scott Paper Company remained free to spray chemicals at will. Its members insisted that "it is usually foolish to look to governments (or the court system) to significantly redress environmental damage."[609] Diana Cole of the Concerned Residents of Clare group took such feelings one rhetorical step further. She had participated in one of Environment Canada's national ENGO conferences in 1983 and returned home describing the experience as an exercise in "totalitarian democracy," "empty rituals for the sake of the prestige and perpetuation of those in power," and an "exhausting and debilitating" distraction from real change. What was more, she suggested, this was exactly the intention of the agency, which "exists to preserve a repressive society and neutralize opposition." Activists from the north shore and Cape Breton applauded her statement.[610] Later in the decade, when the provincial government began drafting a new Pest Control Products Act and seeking responses from environmental groups, the harshest critics of consultation recalled the Department of Environment's testimony at the Royal Commission on Forestry in 1983, when a delegation led by E.L.L. Rowe spoke of the need for new legislation solely to raise "public confidence [and] reduce the level of public opposition to forest management programs involving the use of pest control products."[611] Rather than go along with the province's consultation as the mainstream groups did, unwilling groups followed the NSEW's lead in promoting an "informed consent or informed rejection" policy among

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[609]David Orton, "Deep Ecology and the Green Movement," 1986-1987, Greenweb, <http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/DE&Green_Movement.html> (accessed April, 2013).
[610]Diana Cole, "National ENGO Meeting in Ottawa, 1983," *SSEPA Q/L NEWS* 2:1 (June, 1983).
[611]Presentation by Nova Scotia Department of Environment, Halifax hearing, 27 January, 1983, RCOF, volume 158b, number 3; "EAC response to the NS Pest Control Products Act," October, 1985, DAL-EAC, box 41.15.

municipal councils, which would have given local residents living within one kilometer of a woodlot a veto over chemical applications.[612] Ironically, despite refusing to participate in the formal consultation process, their challenge may have helped block Lands and Forests' attempt to exempt woodlands from regulation under the new Act.[613]

Radical-mainstream conflict was never entirely limited to forestry debates. Since the early days of the uranium mining controversy, government funding of environmental groups had been a bone of contention, and the issue had not faded with the end of the Uranium Commission hearings in 1983. When funding or political philosophy came up for discussion, sparks flew. When activists associated with the Sprayers of Dioxin Association in New Brunswick, a group representing victims of Agent Orange testing at CFB Gagetown, attempted to organize a Maritime Environmental Coalition in 1984 as a lobby group successor to the Maritime Energy Coalition, the response among more radical groups indicated just how far apart the factions had drifted. "We would not be involved in any group that accepts funds from those we're fighting," wrote Sherri Cline and Judy Davis of CARE, NSEW, and the Scott Boycott Committee, and "we prefer to put our energy and any funds into raising public awareness rather than into establishing a coalition oriented toward lobbying politicians or trying to match the opposition financially to fight on their terms through their channels."[614] Their critique targeted the EAC and its taste for legal tactics as much as any possible regional coalition. Unwilling to admit that the herbicide trial had been a disaster (May insisted it had prevented 2,4,5-T spraying) and dependent on government funding for its survival, the EAC drew heavy

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[612]David Orton, "Informed Consent or Informed Rejection of Pesticide Use: A concept for Environmental Action," *Philosophy and Social Action* 16:4 (October/December, 1990), KEG, file 61.
[613]Charlie Restino, CAP, to Premier Buchanan, 26 May, 1988, KEG, file 61.
[614]Jerry White, Sprayers of Dioxin, to Neil Livingston, 10 September, 1984, DAL-EAC, box 24.9; Sherri Cline and Judy Davis, to Neil Livingston, 15 October, 1984, DAL-EAC, box 24.9.

criticism among the radicals.[615] Diana Cole's reaction to the trial was as sharp as her critique of Environment Canada: it was, she said, a case of "poor leadership [...], worse than no leadership at all because it lures the people to defeat in a dead end, making the failure appear as victory."[616] Rather than raise money for use in futile lawsuits, the radical activists preferred action, and in 1988 they blockaded roads to a woodlot in Colchester County for six weeks to prevent herbicide spraying there.[617]

Differences over funding were bound up with more profound disagreements about the relationship with government. The NSEW developed a written policy that "environmentalists should not work with corporations or government" on principle, and the more often instances of disagreement arose, the more clearly the radical activists articulated a philosophy that rejected economic growth, the primacy of scientific expertise, and homocentric ethics. These were the articles of faith for modern society that they believed had led the mainstream down its mistaken path. Nor were they alone in staking an ideological territory (though the radicals were usually more explicit in their rationale); the mainstream redoubled its own commitment to cooperation with government and industry throughout the 1980s. Nova Scotian environmentalists played as great a role in the promotion of the Soft Energy Path in the late 1980s as they had at the end of the 1970s. A 1988 update to the FOE SEP study maintained the original document's insistence on the viability of the alternative energy scenario "under conditions

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[615]Farley Mowat, "Grass Roots Crusader: Elizabeth May and the Budworm Battle," in *Rescue the Earth; Conversations with the Green Crusaders* (Toronto: McLelland & Stewart, 1990), 188-205; *Between the Issues* 4:2 (July/August, 1984).

[616]Quoted in David Orton, "Problems Facing the Green Movement in Canada and Nova Scotia - Greenweb Bulletin #17," Greenweb, <http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/%20Problems_Green_Movement.pdf> (accessed April, 2013).

[617]"Problems Facing the Green Movement in Canada and Nova Scotia - Greenweb Bulletin #17," Greenweb, <http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/%20Problems_Green_Movement.pdf> (accessed April, 2013); Paul Webster, "Pining for Trees: A History of Dissent Against Forest Destruction in Nova Scotia 1749-1991," unpublished MA thesis, Dalhousie University, 1991, 209.

of strong economic growth and substantial increases in material standards of living."[618] In 1984, and again in 1986, the province's flag-bearer for SEP promotion, Susan Holtz, repeated the study's premise, that lifestyle change was a "primarily research question" and should be secondary (in environmentalist and government minds) to "a clear focus on environmental quality as the overriding value."[619] In doing so, she articulated what had become the basic assumption of the mainstream position: that it was possible to address environmental problems without significant or even noticeable change in the nature of society.

The logical extension of mainstream thinking about the minimal importance of social change was the expectation of government action. If environmental problems were "primarily the unintended effects of human activities and technical capabilities," then all that was required to solve them was to muster the political will needed to over-rule those profiting from the status quo and simply "change our institutions to avoid or correct" the problems.[620] Pursuing such a goal meant launching ever more appeals to those in power, and sparing ever less attention for the public -- not a new condition for the EAC and its national allies in the 1980s, but pursued with greater self-awareness than ever before. The EAC's Board of Directors openly described the Center's changing role in 1988: "we'll be expected by business, industry, labour, and government to act co-operatively in new forms for multistakeholder consultation on environmental and economic

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[618]"II. Energy Conservation - Economic Aspects," CCNR briefs, 3 June, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3422, number 2; "A Soft Energy Path for Canada," *Alternatives* 12:1 (Fall, 1984); "2025: Soft Energy Futures for Canada - 1988 Update," DAL-EAC, box 12.8.

[619]Susan Holtz, report on Environment Canada's stakeholder group - State of the Environment Advisory Group, May, 1986, DAL-EAC, box 32.16; Deborah Jones, "Energy conservation saving money in Atlantic Canada," *Atlantic Insight* 6:11 (November, 1984), 19-21; Susan Holtz, "Energy Policy From An Environmental Perspective: The Core Elements," September, 1987, DAL-EAC, box 15.15.

[620]Susan Holtz, "The Philosophers Confer," *Between the Issues* 3:6 (February/March, 1984).

development."[621] Earlier in the decade, they had noted that "the role of environmental organizations has shifted from one simply of creating environmental awareness to one of identifying the issues and proposing alternatives."[622]

Governments, especially the federal government, did what they could to encourage mainstream environmentalists to cooperate, offering more opportunities for consultation with every passing year. The Canadian Council of Resource and Environment Ministers' National Task Force on Economy and Environment; the federal Energy Options Review; the Canadian Environmental Protection Act; the Environmental Assessment and Review Process; the OECD review of Canada's environment and energy policy; the Canadian Environmental Advisory Council; and of course the federally-funded CEN and its regional parts -- the list of round tables surpassed the dreams of twenty King Arthurs, though with rather less than a Camelot atmosphere of equality.[623] Fewer results than hoped followed the flurry of consultations as well: neither the federal gatherings nor their provincial counterparts (Voluntary Planning, the Nature Reserves Liaison Committee, and consultation on various new legislation) ever diminished the speed with which new problems prompted controversy at the local level. The EAC celebrated "politicians finally [realizing...] that their constituents really care about the state of the environment," but at the same time found itself further away than ever from those constituents, who could not match the financial contributions on offer from Ottawa

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[621]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 5 November, 1988, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 6.

[622]"Proposal for an Atlantic Environmental Newsletter" to Environment Canada by EAC, 12 February, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.3.

[623]Susan Holtz to "environmentalists," 7 October, 1980, PANS-EAC, volume 3434, number 9; Susan Holtz, "Report on 1987-88 Activities of Ecology Action Center Senior Researcher Susan Holtz," 30 April, 1988, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 6; Annual Report 1987-1988, 30 April, 1988, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 6.

and Halifax.[624]

The not-so-secret ingredient that sweetened government consultation was participant funding. In 1981 the EAC admitted that it "cannot exist financially solely on its membership," and it became progressively less self-conscious about reaching for other sources of money as the decade went on.[625] Publication grants from Environment Canada supplemented payments for travel and for contribution to various consultative panels, encouraging further applications for carefully-screened "public awareness lecture" grants, "job strategy" grants, student employment grants, and more.[626] Funding applications took up activist time (another reason to avoid topics likely to be rejected), but they represented a safer source of money in one significant way. After an audit by Revenue Canada following the herbicide trial, the EAC's Directors became concerned with the security of the Center's tax-exempt charitable status and debated the legality of its actions: under the law, they found, charities were enjoined from attempting "to influence the policy making process [or] promote a change in the law," from lobbying politicians, and from demonstrating with the intent to embarrass or pressure a government.[627] Officially sanctioned processes slipped the noose of charitable status, offering an apparent route to influence without the legal liability. The carrot and the stick both encouraged mainstream environmentalists to pursue consultation and funding from government in the 1980s. The same activity saw more Nova Scotian environmentalists step onto a wider world stage as well, more often. Early participation by May and Holtz in the Canada-USA

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[624]EAC Annual Report 1987-1988, 30 April, 1988, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 6.

[625]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 25 February, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 25. Membership supplied 10 to 11 thousand dollars, less than a third of the Center's total funds, in 1986 for example, declining to only about 8 thousand the following year. "EAC unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 1986," DAL-EAC, box 23.19; "EAC unaudited financial statements for the year ended March 31, 1987," DAL-EAC, box 23.19.

[626]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 4 December, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 5.

[627]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, multiple dates, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 3.

Environmental Council brought the EAC into global campaigns against whaling, ozone depletion, and transboundary pollution, especially acid rain. By the end of the 1980s, the Center was fully integrated into global networks with the World Wildlife Fund, Friends of the Earth, the Canada-United States Acid Rain Project, the New England Environmental Network, and the Fate of the Earth conferences, all of which increased the Center's profile and reputation as the main Nova Scotia activist group, but none of which brought them any closer to those who remained in the province.[628]

In 1988, EAC coordinator Lois Corbett claimed that the environmental movement had matured from its antagonistic youth in the 1970s and now addressed itself to "two publics": the "grassroots supporters who may sometimes challenge the status quo, and bureaucrats and professionals whose interest may lie in a more mainstream image for the group."[629] Their radical critics, however, recognized that the Center leaned far more toward the latter group, and deliberately so. "There are various tendencies which are essentially in contention for the soul of the movement," wrote Orton, and for those who would indeed challenge the status quo, "government lobbying or appeals to industry are seen as a waste of time" and a loss of power.[630] How could anyone celebrate concessions from above when they had so often turned out to be hollow? Activists who kept a close eye on the provincial government recognized the weakness of the "two publics" strategy at work in the EAC's cheerful announcement in 1986 that the environment minister had finally agreed to cease issuing permits for 2,4-D in the province, followed by a quiet

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[628]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 15 May, 1985, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 5; EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 25 March, 1981, PANS-EAC, volume 3420, number 25; Lois Corbett, "Co-Director's Report," 21 April, 1990, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 8.

[629]EAC Board of Directors Meeting minutes, 13 June, 1988, PANS-EAC, volume 3421, number 6.

[630]David Orton, "Problems Facing the Green Movement in Canada and Nova Scotia - Greenweb Bulletin #17," Greenweb, <http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/%20Problems_Green_Movement.pdf> (accessed April, 2013).

resumption of its use on the power corporation's rights-of-way.[631] As Ian Sherman, one of the earliest opponents of Cape Breton insecticide spraying in the 1970s, wrote in the early years of the following decade:

> The last battle to stop chemical spraying back in 1976 was won *not* by environmental group pressure or media events but because all kinds of people in communities throughout Cape Breton stood up to voice their opposition to chemical spraying. It was a door to door, face to face, grassroots petition campaign [...and] ultimately, only a similar grassroots movement of local people, especially those whose livelihoods depend directly on the forestry industry, will prevail to stop the spraying and regain control of local forest management.[632]

The myth of the neutral regulator held least sway over self-described "Greens," who insisted on the need for wholesale social change, beginning with the demise of industrial capitalism. A socialist strand in environmental thought was certainly nothing new in the 1980s. It had been known long enough to earn its proponents a nickname: "watermelons," green on the outside and red on the inside. Like the mainstream's commitment to cooperation with government and industry, however, the fringe's antagonism toward both grew more intense. In 1981, Michael Clow argued that "it is very unlikely that an attempt to fuse a liberal understanding of capitalist society with an ecological awareness will be able to grapple with the dynamics of capitalism as a social system [that] requires growth to continue."[633] Six years later, after the herbicide trial, the uranium inquiry, and the associated activist schism, CAP's Charlie Restino observed in

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[631]EAC Press Release, 9 October, 1986, DAL-EAC, box 38.15; "Application for Approval - Resource Management and Pollution Control Division, NSPC," 1990, KEG, file 66.

[632]Ian Sherman to the Editor, *Scotia Sun*, n.d., RCOF, volume 191, file 1 (Emphasis in original).

[633]Michael Clow, "A Left-Environmentalist Perspective on Canadian Industrial Strategy," paper presented at the Canadian Political Science Association 1981 Annual Meeting, 27-29 May, 1981, DAL-EAC, box 44.4. An earlier example of socialist ecological thought in Canada was the editorial position of the radical leftist journal *Our Generation*, which insisted on the common opposition to "a system of natural and human exploitation and domination." *Our Generation* 7:1 (January-February, 1970), 4.

less academic terms that, "when it comes to corporate profits, more is always better, even if it should mean the destruction of a forest ecosystem developed over thousands of years."[634] And there was nothing unintended about the destructive consequences of economic growth, they added.

Though the network of Greens centred on the north shore was determined to remain primarily concerned with local bio-regional politics, they were equally committed internationalists and coalition-builders, "part of a worldwide ecological movement."[635] The "informed consent or informed rejection" concept originating with the NSEW spread quickly into the rest of the world in 1987 and 1988, and the members of the NSEW and its successor organization, the Greenweb, participated in a truly global discussion around the theory and politics of "socialist biocentrism" or "left biocentrism."[636] In 1990, they joined as well in forming a new provincial coalition, the Nova Scotia Environment Alliance (NSEA), which made its philosophical foundations (and distinction from the mainstream) clear: the NSEA, they wrote, "believes in the fundamental right of all living beings to clean air, clean water, and clean soil. The natural world has a right to exist as an entity unto itself, independent of its utility to humans. We believe it is not possible to have infinite growth in a finite world. In questions of economic development versus the environment, the earth comes first."[637]

The NSEA statement was indeed a far cry from Holtz' complaint that talk of

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[634]Charlie Restino, article clipping, 1987, DAL-EAC, box 29.9.

[635]David Orton, "Discussion Paper: The Green Movement and our Place in it - position of the North Shore Environmental Web," 1988, Greenweb, <http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/NSEW_Position_on_Green_Movement.pdf> (accessed April, 2013).

[636]David Orton, "Informed Consent or Informed Rejection of Pesticide Use: A concept for Environmental Action," *Philosophy and Social Action* 16:4 (October/December, 1990), KEG, file 61; Patrick Curry, *Ecological Ethics: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), 84-88.

[637]"Gathering of the Greens," 3-5 August, 1990, Betty Peterson fonds, Public Archives of Nova Scotia, MG 1, volume 3476, number 12; "NSEN," 1990, KEG, file 66.

nature's rights "is a distraction from the main human issues facing us," but then, it was meant to be.[638] The Greens were contemptuous of the "belief that the existing political and economic system can be reformed -- if only the 'political will' can be summoned."[639] In their view, the attempt led to the kind of craven compromise that turned Elizabeth May and the EAC into advocates of *B.t.k.* spraying and, by extension, defenders of the industrial forestry system.[640]

This conflict between the environmental mainstream and fringe was not, like so much else examined in previous chapters of this work, a factor in the shaping of the provincial movement. It was the *shape* of the movement, and would remain so for long after the events described herein. It should be noted that the factions did not persist in isolation. Cooperation was the norm, if not always the rule.[641] Ironically, the EAC and NSEW comprised together the entire Nova Scotian component of the International Uranium Congress in 1988, for example.[642] Theoretical differences might be left off the agenda in mixed company, yet the differences were so profound between the two sides that never could anyone speak honestly about a single movement, and never could any attempt at collaboration pass without debate over consultation versus confrontation as the proper stance toward those in power.

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[638]Susan Holtz, "The Philosophers Confer," *Between the Issues* 3:6 (February/March, 1984).

[639]David Orton, "The Greens: An Introduction," in Scott Milsom and Ian McKay, eds., *Toward A New Maritimes: a selection from ten years of New Maritimes* (Charlottetown: Ragweed Press, 1992 [1990]), 281-285.

[640]David Orton, "The North Shore Environmental Web," n.d., PANS-EAC, volume 3423, number 14; Letter Elizabeth May to "Susans," n.d., DAL-EAC, box 44.1; David Orton, "Forestry Herbicide Use: a hazard to our environment," 1988, Greenweb, <http://home.ca.inter.net/~greenweb/Forestry_Herbicide_Use.pdf> (accessed April, 2013). *SSEPA Q/L NEWS* 2:1 (June, 1983).

[641]"Building a Green Nova Scotia," NSEN submission to Nova Scotia Roundtable on Environment and Economy, 1991, DAL-EAC, box 19.4; "AEN meeting: general footage, May 11-13, 1990," video, DAL-EAC, box 5.53.

[642]"International Uranium Congress," 15 June, 1988, PANS-EAC, volume 3424, number 28.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

> "Show me a man who cares no more for one place than another, and I will show you in that same person one who loves nothing but himself." -- Robert Southey, *The Doctor* (1812)

The initial motive for investigating the history of environmentalism in Nova Scotia -- one province among ten possible subjects and a great many more possible combinations thereof -- was unabashedly grounded in present-day observation of an environmental movement seemingly uncomfortable acknowledging the clear divisions within itself: between for example those who would resist the further industrialization of the rural countryside and those who believe that the stabilization of the global climate somehow depends on the construction of wind turbine arrays. It was obvious early in the process that the variety and geographic distribution of environmental organizations in Nova Scotia warranted the focus on a single province; the wider the scope of investigation, the more small groups would necessarily be overlooked or omitted in the final account, and those small groups clearly carried the greatest vitality in the movement. They also presented the greatest contrast with the peripatetic, professional global environmentalism that formed such an insistent public face of environmental concern in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. That contrast proved the central fact of the story and came to explain most clearly both the present-day divisions within environmentalism and the history of their development: environmental activism in Nova Scotia has always been essentially local in its inception, in its organization, and in its reason for being. The modernization of one segment of the movement marks the greatest change in its history. A plan to divide the study into topical chapters -- on nuclear power, pesticides, and uranium mining -- survives in the structure of this dissertation, but

each issue-based chapter has become the account of a different phase or aspect of the struggle between the place loving soul of the movement and the temptations of a placeless modernity.

The essentially local nature of environmental activism is concealed not only by its rejection among some present-day modernist environmentalists, but by the direction of past activism toward the appropriate jurisdiction, which was not often the local municipal level. The Canadian constitution places responsibility for natural resources at the provincial level, and activists attempting to influence the course of environmental policy most often cooperated on that level, forming issue-based coalitions or common fronts like the CAP or the Uranium Committee. Extraordinary cooperation among provinces can and did pull activist cooperation toward the same level, as when the Maritime Energy Corporation begat the Maritime Energy Coalition. Once the immediate exigency had passed, however, the activist MEC dispersed back into mainly provincial networks. Federal-level coalitions proved more lasting, but those too simply followed jurisdiction; responsibility for atomic energy regulation or for the negotiation of international agreements dealing with acid rain belonged to Ottawa, for example, and the CCNR or Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain formed to address that responsibility.

Environmentalist cooperation at the higher levels of geographic integration -- the provincial and federal levels -- was sustained by the political structure of the Canadian state, but it never diminished the centrality or energy of the local. Every Nova Scotian group discussed in this dissertation had its roots in a local reaction to environmental harm, either actual or prospective. Even the EAC, eventually the staunchest champion of modernist environmentalism, began as a small group at Dalhousie University concerned

with recycling, urban air quality and sanitation, and municipal planning, local issues that earned the Center enough support among Haligonians to survive the end of full government funding in 1974. It is worth noting that localism is not a quality exclusive to environmental activist organizations. In contrast to the US experience, where unitary national groups existed from the early days of many social movements, Dominique Clément observed that Canadian social movement organizations as a rule remained sub-national in the 1970s. Her explanation singled out logistical difficulties -- "no electronic mail and a costly long-distance telephone service" -- that prevented sufficient communication, and unequal access to financial resources across regions, leading to imbalance and resentment against the heartland of activism in Ontario. This is not obviously false, but neither is it entirely satisfying in accounting for the difference between Canada and the United States.[643] As suggested above, Nova Scotia's environmentalist history demonstrates the importance of local, lived reality as a driver of activist recruitment. It is likely that social movement activism of any type that questions systems of modernity is inherently and normally local, and other explanations (from political culture and legal history for instance) should be provided to account for national or provincial unity, rather than for its absence.

More than other kinds of activists, however, environmentalists of all types have a particular attachment to the local level as a function of their origin in a reaction to industrial modernity's destructive effects. The modernist ethos is "a strategy of conceptual encompassment" of identities defined in relation to specific places and

[643]Dominique Clément, *Canada's Rights Revolution* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 204. The US comparison may be made with Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002).

communities.[644] That is, it forces people to speak and think in the language of a universally applied scientific and technological idiom that makes any place interchangeable with any other. Those standing against it and defending specific places intuitively understand that an assertion of the irreducible local experience must necessarily end up in "some kind of boundary-drawing between the local and the global," implying a challenge to the combined forces of modernity: global capitalism, industrialism, normal science, and the rules of governmentality.[645] The story of Nova Scotian environmentalism set out in the previous chapters offers clear proof of the continuity of nonmodern argument: from the south shore fishermen who in opposing the Stoddard Island nuclear plant defined their community as a fishing community and defied the language of cost-benefit analysis that suggested they might more profitably become a high-technology community, to the stubborn insistence of woodlot owners that local industry was preferable to multi-national pulp and paper forestry and not readily compatible with it, to the many arguments presented against uranium mining in 1982 (and aggregate quarrying a decade later) that relied not on science alone but also on the meaningfulness of the provincial environment and the idea that a project might be legitimately resisted in order that a region or a mountain might continue to "be seen to be beautiful" or sacred.[646] The argument only gains from the move toward explicitly formulated localism by the most radical groups in the 1980s, such as the Greenweb's "informed consent or informed rejection" proposal, a profoundly subversive doctrine of extreme local democracy that effectively attacked every one of the modernist systems

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[644]Alf Hornborg, "Environmentalism, ethnicity, and sacred places: reflections on modernity, discourse and power," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 31:3 (1994), 259.
[645]Hornborg, "Environmentalism, ethnicity, and sacred places," 263.
[646]Marie Vandergraaf, transcripts of New Ross hearing, hearing #1, 2 April, 1982, RCU, volume 195, number 12.

listed above.

Initially, in the early 1970s, activists with more or less radical views worked side by side in the same groups, defending harbours from destructive development, using rhetorical ammunition based on the language of environmental justice, biological science, traditional moral economies, precautionary principles, economic theory, and violent resistance. The nonmodernist strand within early activism could not be eradicated, and finding a way to separate its most committed advocates from their more modernist peers was therefore essential for governments wishing to defuse the challenge. Eventually, they did just that: by the end of the story related in these chapters, the movement had decisively failed as a challenge to modernity. Activists in general never achieved the power to subvert modernity itself. Rather, large segments of the movement, large enough to define themselves as its mainstream, were subsumed into the modern, accepting the discursive sanctity of economic growth, capitalism, industry, scientism, and political liberalism. Government and industry cooperated in supporting the activists most likely to form a mainstream, while vilifying those who resisted. Consultation and red-baiting, respectively, were the two most common idioms in the 1970s, but they were not alone, and the process continues in the twenty-first century with wilderness areas and “green energy” megaprojects to tempt the biddable activists and “ecoterrorism” to marginalize the rest. Since the end of the 1970s, the radical remainder relegated to fringe status has enjoyed only enough power to mount occasionally successful challenges under the most favourable circumstances, as the Mi'kmaq Warriors Society did by capitalizing on the popular notion of native people's ecological spirituality in order to advance a nonmodern sanctity argument in defence of Kelly's Mountain in 1990.

The place for the analysis of activist networks and other resources is in the explanation of this differentiation. The balance of evidence from the history of Nova Scotian activism suggests that urban activists, closer to the physical seat of bureaucratic power as well as to the sources of funding in government and major industry, more readily adopted modernist assumptions (or more often came with such assumptions already installed). Possibly as well, activists whose first campaigns deal with urban planning and sanitation, areas of interest in which some form of managerial control is unavoidable and debate centres on which planning regime is best, are on the track towards a universal, modernist sort of activism from the beginning (which oddly would constitute a form of local peculiarity unique to the city, masquerading as a universally applicable set of ideas and policies). That the same groups tend to be populated by middle class professionals, especially academics, could be a piece of demographic coincidence owing to their concentration in urban environments, but for the fact that the same class of activists has displayed at every location a greater level of comfort with the jargon of expertise as well as with the bureaucratic system in which facility with that language functions as a passport to greater access. For example, the relationship between the academic Acadia NPSG and the much more working class SSEPA in chapter 3, the former abstractly scientific and the latter viscerally political (and successful), finds a parallel three chapters and nearly twenty years later in the tension between the SKMS and the Mi'kmaq Warrior Society. Out-of-province origins account for no apparent difference in this regard (though there does appear to have been a larger proportion of immigrants among activists than in the general population), and neither does gender (which presents no clear over-representation of either men or women in the movement): for every Susan

Holtz there was a Ralph Loomer, immigrant and native modernists respectively, and for every David Orton a Judy Davis, their radical equivalents.[647] The geography and demography of dissent by which those closer to the city and higher on the economic scale are faster to abandon antagonism for conciliation is a tendency, not a rule, but as an exemplar few could match Elizabeth May, whose move from Cape Breton to Halifax and enrolment in law school in 1980 coincided with her shift in tactical choices.

The solidification of the mainstream's dominance required a rewriting of the history of the movement in the late 1980s. Thus May's insistence that the herbicide trial had, by forestalling aerial spraying, prevented the use of Agent Orange in Nova Scotia, or that the better natures of Gerald Regan and Vince MacLean had been awakened in time to prevent insecticide spraying in the 1970s.[648] Thus as well the suggestion that Judge McCleave's recommendations in 1985 constituted a rejection of uranium mining on terms articulated by environmentalists. In truth, however, the victories of environmental activists in Nova Scotia were invariably built on pressure politics and appeals to the interests of the local area over and against the modernist claims to represent a wider society. The fishermen of the Yarmouth and Shelburne areas who cowed Premier Regan into shelving the Stoddard Island plan explicitly rejected the blithe assurances of the

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[647]As remarked by Rod Bantjes (and in chapter five of this dissertation), this is not the story often told of a female-dominated movement: Bantjes and Tanya Trussler, "Feminism and the Grass Roots: women and environmentalism in Nova Scotia, 1980-1983," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 36:2 (1999), 183. For similar findings in places outside Nova Scotia, see S. Cable, "Women's social movement involvement: The role of structural availability in recruitment and participation processes," *Sociological Quarterly* 33:1 (1992), 35-50. The mythology however has had a strong grip on the movement itself, as seen in Elizabeth May's statement that "women are essentially *different* from men [...] operate more from a left-brained intuitive thought process. We are biologically and spiritually connected to the cosmos [...] by nature, much more *selfless* than men." May, "Gaia Women," in Farley Mowat, ed., *Rescue the Earth!: conversations with the green crusaders* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), 249.

[648]Elizabeth May, *Budworm Battles* (Halifax: Four East, 1982), 116; Elizabeth May, "Gaia Women," in Farley Mowat, ed., *Rescue the Earth!: conversations with the green crusaders* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), 247-265.

federal fisheries scientists and atomic energy experts who cooperated in the Canadian government's nuclear boosterism. The budworm battlers of Cape Breton Island knew enough to present themselves as the defenders of small lowland woodlot owners against the depredations of the foreign multi-national, Stora. And McCleave's antagonists during the Uranium Commission saw clearly the fallacy of public consultation and the utility of political embarrassment. Every one of them sought to mobilize the public *en masse* as well, and made frequent reference to the failure of the government in Halifax to uphold the interests of the hinterland, showing contempt for the "growth centre" concept that sought to raise the sum total of wealth in the province by discounting the value of slower-growing (or non-growing) rural economies.

The radicals (for that is what an insistence on nonmodern localism made them) did not operate alone at any phase in their development; the organizational resources of the mainstream or those who would later form it most often created the conditions in which pressure politics could function, and armed all segments of the movement with the most compelling scientific arguments. Indeed, the radical approach did not ever function without a more rhetorically respectable counterpart, often voiced by the same people. The two strands of the movement grew distinct, but remained intertwined, even within individuals. Every anti-nuclear campaigner in the province leaned gratefully on the research of the Acadia NPSG for instance, every anti-uranium campaigner on reports of the British Columbian experience circulated by the EAC. The Mi'kmaq Warriors Society readily acknowledged the value of its partnership with the research-heavy advocacy of the SKMS. May herself, who helped lead the greatest political pressure campaign in this story during the budworm spray controversy, frequently returned to praising the virtues of

populist activism in later years, even as she pursued the lobbyist style. It was when the modernist tendency within the movement completely lost sight of its topophilic roots and contrived to act alone, excluding the radicals or softening the impact of their mass movement politics, that environmental activism failed. The herbicide trial, forcing submission to the rules and procedures and evidentiary standards of the court, demonstrated the impotence of the method. Later, so did the Sydney tar ponds battle with its duly-constituted but ineffective consultative bodies, and the fight over Point Aconi's power station, bringing yet another doomed legal challenge to court.

A lasting environmental movement in Nova Scotia began as an undifferentiated mixture of modern and nonmodern activists. Conservationists, planners, and scientists worked alongside back-to-the-landers, student radicals, and the defenders of traditional economies. An eventual organizational distinction was probably inevitable, but the imbalance of political influence was not; it required a combination of encouragement for the modernists, from two levels of government both wishing to marginalize the radicals, willing participation by the modernists in the marginalization of their allies, and a global modernist environmentalism for the chosen few to participate in. What the creation of a mainstream could not do, however, was abolish the entirely local experience of environmental harm. There were a few genuine post-materialists in the 1980s, those who came to environmental activism out of concern for the issues in the abstract, but most environmentalism in Nova Scotia remained an expression of love of place and a determination to defend it.

<FIN>

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