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S P E C T R U M

Spring 1989

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Society Promoting Environmental Conservation

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Environmentally Friendly Products logo

CARING CANADIANS

The Canadian government has approved an "environmentally friendly" label that designates products as being free from ozone-destroying chemicals, as well as ones that are biodegradable, recyclable or made from recyclable material.

The three doves on the label - approved last year - symbolize consumers, industry and government, intertwined to work together. Surveys show 94% of Canadians believe they must take personal responsibility for planetary survival and are willing to pay 10% more for environmentally-safe products. (from Organic Gardening - Mar/89 issue)

The labelling program, announced last June by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, has turned out to be far more difficult to implement than the government anticipated. The first products will not appear on store shelves until later this year.

An expert committee searching for environmentally friendly products is having a tough time finding any that qualify for a government seal of approval.

Pat Delbridge, committee chairman, says there is enormous public pressure to make recycled fine paper a product category. There is concern about the process of taking inks out of used paper, which is potentially toxic. Then there is the vexing problem of what to do with the ink after it is removed. "Do we pour it down the drain or put it into landfill sites, where it can leach into the soil?" Because of this and many other complications, no one expects a flood of environmentally preferred products to hit the market this year. The first labels could appear in June, but fall is a more likely target. (excerpt from Ellen Roseman column - Globe & Mail Feb 17/89)

"CYANIDE IN FRUIT IMPORTED FROM CHILE".

by Olga Schwartzkopf

I have too often heard merchants, consumers, and politicians, excuse the conversion of farm land to pavement, warehouses, commercial development, and so on, as progress and a fact of economic life. "They can grow it more cheaply in Mexico, South East Asia, Argentina or Chile". However, with each acre of agricultural land we surrender to "progress" we surrender control over our own food supply and become vulnerable to incidents such as "Cyanide in Chilean Fruit". This may be the beginning of a new form of retaliation.

As much as we complain about pesticides in our foods, or additives, or processing methods, we, in Canada have the most stringent regulations of any country when it comes to the growing, processing and marketing of Canadian food products. And it is our complaining that has brought about those standards. We can all recall the imported watermelons and cucumbers which were withdrawn from market shelves last summer for unacceptable levels of pesticides. We cannot control pesticide application rates, processing methods and food handling in other countries. Therefore, each time we lose another acre of farmland, keep in mind the far-reaching effects this could have on your children and your children's children in this country. This applies not only to B.C. but all the other provinces.

This government should reconsider the plan to flood the Peace River area in the name of hydro exports. The federal government should examine the agricultural practices of the large corporate farms, where a single tract of land being tilled extends to the horizon; and how this contributes to tons of topsoil (black gold) being blown away, lost forever. Especially, in an era when other countries are considering that "no tillage" agriculture is the only way they can preserve that precious resource.

GET WELL:

Vito Palmieri - Sorry to hear about your accident, hope you will be up and running again very soon. We all miss your input of energy into the everyday workings of the society.

CONGRATULATIONS

To Roz Mellander (our former Executive Director) who has gone on to bigger and better things. She has taken on the position of 'Regional Recycling Coordinator' for the Capital Regional District and has moved to Victoria. You did very well on CBC Radio, Almanac, March 6/89, especially when you had to take time out from your Official Opening Day Ceremonies.

GOOD LUCK ROZ.

To Andrea Miller, West Van SPEC, for the interest that she has stirred up with her coffee parties, recycling is becoming quite an issue these days.

You would be surprised at the increase in calls on the 'RECYCLING HOTLINE'.

To The City of Vancouver -- CURBSIDE RECYCLING is coming thanks to the City Council and the many concerned citizens who kept after them requesting this service.

To the Provincial Government -- for banning the use of CFC's (chlorofluoro-carbons) in British Columbia.

To The Vancouver Parks Board -- for cancelling the use of 'Ureabor' spraying of school and playgrounds - through the persistence of Dorothy Beach and Thelma McAdam.

CORRECTION:

Article in Winter Issue of SPECTRUM on SAVE OUR SUNNYSIDE was written by Roy M. Strange PhD, not Christine George as stated. Sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

AIR POLLUTION UPDATE

by Pamela Graham, SPEC Director

1) Depletion of the ozone layer:

In answer to widespread alarm, the federal government has set as its national objective the complete elimination of controlled Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) within the next ten years, Environment Minister Lucien Bouchard announced. He added that the government is not at all satisfied with the 10-year target deadline. He issued draft national regulations to curb CFC use by more than 85%. Some cannot at present be eliminated without severe social disruption, and, in the case of medical and fire-fighting products, without endangering the lives of Canadians.

This information was issued in an Environment Canada press release on February 28, 1989. It included immediate release of draft national regulations under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA) that prohibits the use of ozone-depleting substances for non-essential uses where substitutes are available. The following will be banned by January, 1990: aerosol products containing CFC's except for certain medical and fire-fighting products; food packaging foam, including food and beverage containers, manufactured or containing CFC's; portable halon fire extinguishers for home use; and small pressurized canisters with CFC's.

Other products, such as insulating foams, car seats and furniture foam, cleaning solvents and refrigerants have later projected prohibition dates, with refrigerants having until 1999.

This action is commendable, but one can't help but wonder, if a deadline is set as late as 1999, any manufacturer will hurry to find alternatives at an earlier date.

2) The Air Management Plan:

The Greater Vancouver Regional District is developing a comprehensive air quality management plan aimed at ensuring that the Lower Mainland has good air quality in future years. It is the first such plan for an urban area in Canada, and covers the municipalities in the GVRD and Langley.

First, emissions and trends will be assessed, and then controls for current and future air quality problems will be undertaken.

There is a liaison committee consisting of federal and provincial government air management personnel. I was asked to join this as a representative of the public, and I attend the monthly meetings. On occasion, I ask for information or action. For example, I asked is the mobile air monitoring unit (MAMU) could be used to pinpoint pollutants in specific areas, such as Massey Tunnel. This cannot be done at present, as the Burnaby Incinerator funds the MAMU and it is for use nearby.

3) Contemporary Oxidant Problem:

I attended a two-day Seminar on the Contemporary Oxidant Problem in Vancouver on February 27th and 28th and gained valuable background to fight ozone.

4) National Energy Board Hearings:

On March 6th and 7th I was an intervenor in the National Energy Board Hearing into B.C. Hydro's request for firm export of energy to the United States, including from the Burrard Thermal Generating Plant (BTGP) near Port Moody. This plant used to be for emergency back-up use only, and has been used little until this winter. However, if B.C. Hydro decides it can profit from selling this thermal power (more expensive than hydroelectricity) in the summer, when California will need it for air conditioners, it will be fired to capacity, and we will all suffer from the emissions that contribute to ozone.

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CARMANAH VALLEY

by Deanne Mineau, Heritage Forests Society

The history of our society's interest in the Carmanah Valley began last spring when we joined with the Sier-ra Club in producing a brief on the valley's recent history and the future logging plans of MacMillan Bloedel. Many of our members have driven the logging roads and descended into the valley to see the giant Sitka in their sensitive environment. We then made a submission to the federal and provincial governments in the hope that there could be found a way of extending Pacific Rim National Park to include this splendid valley.

One of the recommendations of forestry researchers is that areas of intact forest at all altitudes, in all areas, and of all forest types, must be left untouched to serve as a living laboratory. They recommend this because of the growing realization that forests are an extremely complex, slowly maturing ecosystem where water, soil, microorganisms, birds, mammals and trees are all interdependent for continued functioning.

They are noting as well that all aspects of birth, growth, death and decay are necessary parts of the cycle upon which the tremendous variety and health of our forests depends. They go further to talk of the calamitous results of deforestation on the climate, on fish and wildlife habitat, on the greenhouse effect, and on mankind.

In this context, Carmanah is more than an issue of tourism and aesthetic appeal. It is an issue of a successful ecological laboratory where each magnificent Sitka has spent many centuries in an intricate interplay with the microorganisms, water courses, wind, rain, sunlight, mist, voles, owls, etc. to reach its present condition. They are unequalled anywhere on the earth. People from elsewhere will undoubtedly come to see these forests as tourists. However, it is most likely that the Sitka spruce of Carmanah will come to be known as a planetary heritage. The MacMillan Bloedel plan does not adequately assure us that the Sitka will be truly protected once the large scale clearcut logging in the rest of the valley affects the water regime. We recognize MacMillan Bloedel's attempt to find a compromise. Unfortunately their plan does not meet with basic requirements needed to ensure protection for the spruce for many generations to come.

Researchers say that protecting an entire watershed may indeed be necessary at times. We feel this is one of those times and that the Carmanah Valley watershed should be protected.

SQUAMISH DIOXIN SPILLS

Letter to The Editor
from Kory Palmer, SPEC

December 29/88

WHY! WHY! do our politicians find it so difficult to deal with (or should I say stand up to) these companies that continually pollute or damage the environment. These companies have had years to establish their monetary base, without a thought of environmental consequence. When caught after a disaster such as Squamish, the cry is raised "give us time to up-date or modernize", and usually the time spent to convert is used in expanding "Bull Chips"! - we no longer have time to play their waiting games.

If a pulp mill in northern B.C. can produce pulp with a safe environmental process then why can't the coast mills.

Fines mean diddley squat to these merchants of dioxins. The company and shareholders lose so little per share by these fines that it doesn't phase them.

The solution "MR. Politician" is simple. -- Close the offending mill immediately. Require change over to safe environmentally friendly solutions. Force the companies to pay full wages to their employees during the 'down time' (not Unemployment Insurance, the UIC did not cause the problem).

Also, the companies must pay the full loss of income to the fisherman affected. This to continue until the dioxin spill is neutralized, and safe fishing can be resumed.

I'd venture to say, it wouldn't take these companies two years to clean up their mess. No one likes to pay for non-productive employees. All you politicians, tell me, where is your internal fortitude (commonly known as "guts"). Try standing up to these companies -- you might like it -- I'm sure your constituents and the people of B.C. would.

CONTEXT FOR A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

by Bev Clement
Education Officer, SPEC

We have a thinning ozone layer; we have acid rain, and there is a global warming taking place. On a more local level, we have oil spills off our coastline, pesticides in our apple juice, and the whole issue of waste needs our attention.

We're all aware of these issues, and yet, to the majority, they seem to have hit us so suddenly. In actual fact, they have been gradually accelerating in occurrences and impact until it's reached the point where the problems are impossible to ignore. Our environment is speaking to us in a very loud voice.

Let us step back from these issues for a moment, and examine briefly the background from which these problems have sprung. We in the western world came through the pain and hardship of two world wars and a great depression, wanting ease, comfort and abundance. The industrial boom seemed to provide us with those things; and as the technological era gathered speed, so many of us finally felt we had it made.

With business booming we became an increasingly urban society.

We distanced ourselves from our natural environment, and from the vital processes which were our links with the land. In doing so - in reaching for ease and convenience, we've burned millions of tons of fossil fuel, and created a cocktail of chemicals which have no place in nature; which can destroy life. Which can even destroy the possibility for life as we know it.

What is the source of such an incredible breakdown? How could we let this happen? In asking these questions we need to look at ourselves, and at what our approach has been towards life.

We could blame industry....but industry is made up of people like us. We could blame our "leaders".....but the politicians we elect to represent us are also people like us, and in a very real sense, we are the leaders. So no process of blame is going to be particularly useful in reaching the source of the problem.

What we can acknowledge, is that we have been asleep. We've been thoughtless, hasty, and enormously wasteful.

What we've created seems to have come from our attitudes, our ways of thinking - or perhaps un-thinking!

Albert Einstein told us that the problems we've created, can't be solved by the same level of thinking we used to create those problems. So it seems we need a fundamental shift in thinking. What does this mean - what will it mean for the future?

It most certainly will mean change! Changes in attitude, and a willingness to change our habits. It will require us to be innovative - to keep looking for alternative ways of doing those things which have a harmful impact. Change will certainly bring with it a measure of discomfort, inconvenience, and perhaps uncertainty at times. It may mean a return to old ways of doing things, and the ability to see this as progress, rather than as a step backwards. It will mean being unwilling to settle for easy answers, and the ability to ask good questions. Finally, it will mean making choices consistent with a new stand for life, and for the healing of the wounds we've inflicted on the planet, and on ourselves.

Which brings us to the subject of the choices. The power of choice is fundamental to any conversation about the environment....but the specific choice we are addressing here, is that of confronting the environmental breakdown from the point of view of an ominous probability, or from the perspective of an enormous opportunity.

We all have the power to choose the view we take. The truth is that this has been such an uncontrolled experiment that we've been conducting on ourselves and our environment.

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CRIPPEN REGIONAL PARK

by Heather LeDuc

There are no absolute, carved-in-stone rules for the degree of preservation and/or development in regard to parks. Different people with varying interests have conflicting ideas of what exactly a park should be. Parks have come to have a number of uses and appearances; however, parks comprised of wilderness features are generally appreciated as nature parks. Still, some parks are meant to be a combination of natural features and recreational facilities. This multi-use approach serves to satisfy a lot of people, but also leads to conflict and debate as opposing interests collide. Such is the situation in Crippen Regional Park on Bowen Island, where proposals for a nine-hole golf course has stirred up strong opposition and calls for natural preservation. The golf course will seriously jeopardize the existing forest, and any trees left standing will be token samples rather than integral features of a self-sustaining ecosystem.

The original Draft Plan for Crippen included two concept plans, one with a golf course, one without. The most recent golf course proposal encompasses some forty acres of land situated in the Killarney Meadows Management Unit of Crippen. Forty acres may not seem like a big dent in a six hundred acre park. However, the Park is not made up of one uniform geographic and ecological landscape; only one hundred acres are comprised of flat or gently-sloping land, and the golf course would take up almost half of it. Left in its present state, the forest provides a very accessible hiking area appropriate for all ages.

In human terms, the forest is appreciated for its educational potential and its natural beauty. The same features that give the area its beauty have inherent ecological significance. To a wilderness-rookie such as myself, slogging around in the mud in my high-tops, the forest is a great place to hang out and "get back to nature". But SPEC director Will Paulik has a more sophisticated grasp of what makes a forest. During an outing through the proposed golf-course boundaries, Will pointed out "nursing trees", (fallen logs that provide nutrients to living trees), are essential to the forest's regeneration. Will also identifies a stand of Sitka Spruce, significant because of the rarity of this species in the Lower Mainland. Those opposed to the golf course are concerned with the fate of these trees, as well as with the wildlife and salmon whose habitat is threatened if the forest is changed to the extent that a golf course would demand. Furthermore, if the forest is opened up, shallow-rooted trees will be more vulnerable to windthrow. At present, the forest is unique ecosystem, and is vital to such features as wildlife and water drainage in the area.

The GVRD has approved the golf course "in principle". There is still an environmental impact assessment pending, so any firm decision on the fate of Crippen will be held off until the completion of this study. It is hoped that those who want to golf will opt for private land for their course, as approval for the Crippen proposal would not only threaten the forest there, but could also set a precedence for golf course construction in other regional parks. The GVRD Concept Plan comments that the golf course will "...radically alter the character of the forest." The fact of the matter is, the forest doesn't need any radical alterations, and Crippen doesn't need a golf course.

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There is no precedent for it, and there is so much we can't predict. Anything is possible. I suggest that it is much more powerful and creative, to have our driving force be one of a possibility for a healthy future for all of us.

And there is something very exciting inherent in the fact that pollution knows no boundaries, no borders. What gets dumped into the ocean in Russia, surfaces in the seal meat in Alaska. Therefore, in order to solve the problems that we've created, communities, countries, nations, all people will have to work together, for the first time towards a common peaceful goal. We can already see signs of that taking place.

So when you look in the face of this disaster....when you open your newspaper in the morning and read the latest disclosures, you're invited to rejoice that at last the conversation is taking place. And it's taking place in a way which provides an opening for action from each one of us.

THE MAIL BOX

TO S.P.E.C.:

Enclosed please find cheque for \$150. I was going to send \$100, and \$50, to Social Credit Hdqts., but I told them I was sending it all to SPEC instead when they called people "crazy environmentalists"! Hope I get time eventually to promote recycling, etc. here.

Yours truly,
Margaret Whitaker

TO S.P.E.C.

Enclosed is my check in amt of \$25. Carry on the good work. I do not have time to do much reading, so please do not expend postage and other expenses sending information. I know you are working to the best advantage and do not need to be reminded. Keep it up!

Henry E. Metke

TO ROZ

The 6th Vancouver Pathfinders would like to thank you for coming out to our meetings to talk to us about recycling.

From,
Shuma Senft, 6th Pathfinders

"HONOUR ROLL"

(in addition to list in Winter Issue):

H.D. Arnold; E. Bastable; E. Campbell; M. Carley; A. Clark; Mr & Mrs E.S. Collins; A. Coppard; M. Ennberg; R. & B. Faulks; A. Ferris; D. Fitzgerald; M.E. Grant; H. Hardin; R.B. Hawkesworth; J. Herbert; J.E. Heron; S. Holt; B. & A. Hourston; J.B. Howie; IMPERIAL OIL LTD; D. R. Jaeger; C.R. Jonsson; L. King; Land Sense Ltd.; R. Legge; B. MacLean; M. Mahoney; M.A. Mahoney; S.M. Mahoney; J. McIntyre; P.M. McNee; H.E. Metke; A. Miller; I.M. Moffatt; A. Monahan; K. & N. Morton; A. Moysuk; E.C. Norton; M. Owen; A. Peacock; B. & L. Phillips; N. Pursell; K. Raab; I. Ralph; G. Robinson; R.C. Roy; K. Rumsby; M.D. Schimmeyer; I. Schreffels; G.R. Sigmund; T.A. Stanway; V.T. Strandberg; R. Summer; M. Symons; VAN SOUTH NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE; E.E. Wallach; E. Ward; S.M. Weaver; M.I. & G. Webb; Mrs. M. Whitaker; B. & J. Whitten; P. Widmer;

S.P.E.C.

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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE REQUIRED

We in British Columbia need the federal government's assistance. We are facing a dilemma similar to that of the Amazon River Basin; namely, the inordinate destruction of rainforests and accompanying wetlands. In respect to B.C., the Fraser River watershed, our great basin which engulfs one third of the province, has had its Old Forests decimated and its lower basin wetlands depleted.

The wetlands are invaluable and irreplaceable habitats for migratory birds and raptors (predatory birds). As signatory to the Migratory Birds Conventions Act, the federal government has an obligation to sustain these wetlands, thereby protecting the Great Pacific Pathway.

Examples of B.C. wetlands recently lost:

- 1) Terra Nova lands in Richmond, situated in the Fraser River Flood Plain.
- 2) The Tsawwassen Development Lands in Tsawwassen, all in the Flood Plain.

These areas have been designated for development in spite of their environmental sensitivity and their subjectivity to floods. In April, 1988, both Canada and B.C. signed an agreement to map the flood plain; flood-prone areas in the province will be identified through a joint mapping program designed to discourage land development in such areas.

Flooding is a serious concern in many parts of B.C. because land development is concentrated in river valleys. Major floods on the Fraser in 1894 and 1948 were particularly destructive. More recently, Lower Mainland and coastal areas have suffered heavy loss of property.

Floods threaten developments; in turn, development threatens vital agricultural and wildlife habitat areas that are rezoned to allow for commercial, residential, and recreational facilities. Terra Nova and the Tsawwassen Development Lands are exemplary, as is Boundary Bay "the last unprotected resting area on the migratory flight between South America and Siberia", which is presently endangered by a proposal for golf course development. The more our wetlands diminish, the more crucial it becomes to preserve areas such as Boundary Bay. Such preservation is recommended by the Canadian Wildlife Service:

...a belt of farmland on the landward side of the dikes around Boundary Bay, and south of Highway 99 should be secured for waterfowl, shorebirds, gulls, herons, and raptors.

Boundary Bay, a critical wildlife habitat, is threatened by 19 proposed golf courses, a non-conforming use of wetlands. I am here pleading for federal government assistance in protecting this and other wetland habitats.

From a Presentation Given by Will Paulik
to Mr. Jim Fulton, M.P. February 20/89

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I hope the permit will be denied, but apart from Ian Waddell, NDP M.P. for the area, there was nobody with any clout to fight it. The few individuals who spoke against it must have felt, as I did, like David against the B.C. Hydro Goliath with its seven or eight high-powered representatives, including a lawyer.

Ian Waddell was right when he said that Environment Canada, with its manpower and wealth of information on this matter, should also have been speaking against the permit.

UPCOMING EVENTS

RECYCLING PUBLIC MEETINGS

(Greater Vancouver Regional District)

The GVRD has retained consultants to prepare a regional multi-material recycling program - give the consultants your ideas. All meetings are scheduled for 7:30 pm.

Wednesday Apr. 5th
Kyle Centre
125 Kyle, Port Moody

Thursday Apr. 6th
Silver Harbour Centre
144 E. 22nd, North Vancouver

Tuesday Apr. 11th
Surrey Municipal Hall
14245 - 56th Ave., Surrey

Wednesday Apr. 12th
Old Library - Maple Ridge
11963 Haney Place, Maple Ridge

Monday Apr. 17th
VanDusen Gardens
5251 Oak St., Vancouver

Tuesday Apr. 18th
Bonsor Park Complex
6550 Bonsor Ave., Burnaby

Wednesday Apr. 19th
Minoru Pavilion
7191 Granville Ave., Richmond

Thursday Apr. 20th
Langley Civic Centre
20699 - 42nd Ave., Langley

For further information call the
GVRD at 432-6200

CANADIANS END WOLF KILL IN B.C.

WOLF KILL CANCELLED AS HERD REVIEW CALLS FOR FOUR-YEAR FREEZE

Excerpt from MEMORANDUM by Sherry Pettigrew, Executive Director of N.W.P.S. (Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society).

B.C. WOLF CONTROL PROGRAMS STATUS:

Essentially, there are no British Columbia formal wolf control programs occurring at the present time.

*The northeastern Muskwa is "on hold" for approximately four years;

*Vancouver Island's trapping control program expires March 31, 1989;

*The Quesnel (Cariboo) program will not go ahead in 1989.

However, wolf control is still very much considered as a management tool to increase ungulate populations for hunting communities.

As you know, the B.C. Ministry of Environment and the Wildlife Branch received hundreds of letters protesting wolf control, but they've not received one letter condoning their decision to halt the Muskwa program.

I appeal to each of you to please write to them letting them know how you feel about their decision this year.

Write to:

Hon. Bruce Strachan	Mr. Jim Walker, Dir.
Minister of the Environment	B.C. Wildlife Branch
Parliament Buildings	780 Blanshard Street
780 Blanshard Street	Victoria, B.C.
Victoria, B.C., V8V 1X4	V8V 1X5

Writing a pro-active letter NOW, rather than re-acting after decisions have been made, may very well give the Ministry and the Wildlife Branch more strength to stand by their decision in the coming year(s). Please write!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

AUDIO/VISUAL presentations, sponsored by N.W.P.S., to be held at Pacific Cinematheque, 1131 Howe Street, Vancouver. \$5.00 at the door.

April 17th	7:00pm	Dr. Louise Goulet, Ministry of Parks
	8:30pm	Topic: <u>Ecological Reserves in British Columbia</u> Anthony Marr, Save Our Wildlife World Expe
		Topic: <u>Tropical Rainforest Devastation</u>
May 8th	7:00pm	Kevin Gibson, Sunshine Coast Environmental
	8:30pm	Topic: <u>Acid Rain in B.C.</u> Silvaine Zimmerman, Greenpeace
		Topic: <u>Oil Spills and Offshore Drilling</u>

These are but two of the six evenings of presentations -- for further information please call Northwest Wildlife Preservation Society at 736-8750.

ROBSON SQUARE MEDIA CENTRE:

April 20th 7:30 pm (Re) Admiral Eugene Carroll, USA

New Directions in the Post Reagan Era??

The Implications for Canada.

Sponsored by: Veterans Against Nuclear Arms

(VANNA) Phone: 874-9302

WALK FOR PEACE -

April 22nd Details: Phone 736-2366

S.P.E.C. JOINS COALITION FIGHTING PULP POLLUTION

by: Kristen Eirikson

One of the most serious environmental issues ever faced in B.C. is pollution caused by pulp mills. B.C.'s 22 pulp mills together discharge over 2.5 million cubic meters of effluent into our coastal waters, lakes and rivers everyday. These wastes contribute to both the short and long term degradation of the environment. Most seriously, **toxic contaminants** are introduced into our waters. Air pollution from pulp mills is also a major problem in many B.C. communities.

Most mills use vast quantities of chlorine to bleach pulp, resulting in many extremely harmful **organochlorines**, including dioxins, being discharged. These substances are harming our fisheries and wildlife, and are a threat to human health. Animal studies, including studies of monkeys, have shown that minuscule amounts of dioxins lead to birth defects and cancer. Some scientists believe that certain forms of dioxin are the most toxic substances known and that they represent significant health hazards to humans. No level is believed to be safe and the current federal standard of 20 parts per trillion for fish is apparently being revised downward. Many of the other organochlorines released by pulp mills, though not yet fully studied, are also believed to be extremely harmful.

On December 1, 1988 the federal government was forced to close **crab, shrimp and prawn fisheries** in portions of Howe Sound and crab fisheries near Prince Rupert due to high dioxin and furan levels. In addition, shellfish sampled at various sites throughout B.C. contain elevated levels of the most toxic dioxins and furans known. Recently released **salmon studies** show that one-half the salmon tested, taken from both fresh and sea water, are also contaminated.

Elevated dioxin levels are also believed to be seriously affecting **heron colonies** in Georgia Strait. Twelve of the 34 known heron colonies (used to monitor changes in the coastal environment) have abandoned their nesting sites in the last year. At a heron colony near Crofton, dioxin levels climbed from 90 to 252 parts per trillion between 1986 and 1987. During the last two years few eggs were laid at this colony and all the chicks that hatched were abandoned. In addition to the use of chlorine by the pulp mills, the use of wood preservatives by the saw mills may be a factor contributing to this problem.

Harmful dioxins and furans are also present in pulp itself, and find their way into **consumer products**. These include milk and juice cartons, coffee filters, diapers, tampons, paper plates and a host of other consumer products in daily use. Significant levels of these substances have also been found to migrate from ordinary bleached paper milk cartons into milk itself.

It is possible for B.C. mills to adopt pulping and bleaching methods that will drastically reduce the discharge of organochlorines into the environment, yet it is unlikely most of them will do so without being pressed. Current solutions proposed by the pulp industry only go part way towards solving the problem.

Over the past few years the pulp industry has been experiencing record profit levels. New mills are being planned and old ones are being expanded. **NOW** is the time for the federal and provincial governments to require that the pulp mills meet **stringent pollution standards** for all organochlorines, as well as conventional pollutants...

S.P.E.C. has joined with a loosely knit coalition of nearly 40 environmental, union, consumer and social justice organizations, to help fight pollution. The organizations are represented in this campaign by lawyers at the **West Coast Environmental Law Association**, a society in existence since 1975 for the purpose of promoting environmental law reform and providing legal assistance to organizations concerned about the environment.

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