The Ecologist and the Alternative Technology Movement, 1970-75: New Environmentalism Confronts 'Technocracy'

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Introduction

The themes of modern environmentalism are familiar to most people today. The discovery, and eventual acceptance, of the facts of climate change have focused the attention of the public, the politicians, and the media on carbon emissions. Accordingly, many of the key debates centre on the central issue of energy as alternatives are sought to the damaging effects of fossil fuels. In recent years the debate over some of these alternatives has manifested itself in a range of protests, including the recent 'climate change camp' at Kingsnorth coal-fired power station (Climate Camp 2008) and objections by various local groups to the situation of large wind farms. However, virtually all of these debates take place within a broad agreement over the nature of the problems that humanity faces. This was not always the case.

In the UK in the early 1970s, a loose coalition of social groups formed into the broad movement which later became known as the new environmentalism (Brookes et al 1976, p.253). These rough networks appeared out of an incredible mix of radical student groups, scientists, journalists and establishment figures, as well as many of the traditional conservation and amenity groups in the UK. This movement was broadly inspired by similar developments in the US, where it grew from the 1960s mood of protest and the 'counter culture' (Roszak 1995). Despite this heterogeneous mix of actors, the new environmentalism embodied an

important critique of post-war technological progress, and began, in this period, to question both the direction and pace of change.

Crucial to the sustenance of the fledgling movement was the means to share its message, and, perhaps eventually, to spread it. This required a movement 'journal' to present its arguments in full, and in July 1970, this need was largely met by the first edition of *The Ecologist*. *The Ecologist* was clearly representative of the fledging environmental movement in Britain during the early 1970s, and its views were considered seriously by a range of actors. This claim is based on a range of evidence from the period. This includes the responses, both critical and positive, from influential publications such as *Nature* and *New Scientist*; the widespread coverage given to the views of *The Ecologist* by national newspapers such as *The Guardian* and *The Times* (Kimber & Richardson 1974); the role that the magazine played in assisting the organisations of new environmentalism to establish in Britain, such as Friends of the Earth UK (FoE UK[1]); the invitation from Peter Walker, Secretary of State for the Environment, to the editorial team of the magazine to contribute their ideas to the Government (*The Times* 1972*)*; and the public support for the magazine of many influential figures in Britain, such as Nobel Prize winner Dennis Gabor, and E. J. Mishan of the London School of Economics.

This article will address some of the themes of the resistance against technology that emerged in the 1970s and defined the new environmentalist movement in the UK, through a close study of *The Ecologist* magazine during the first five years of its publication. It was a feature of the magazine that each issue began with an often quite lengthy editorial discussion of a topic current in the British environmental debate, and the main element of the analysis will be based on the content of this discourse. The magazine's editorial coverage of the emergent debates over energy in the period will form the focus of the first part of this article. It is intended that this will

[1] For a full list of abbreviations employed in this article, please see the *Appendix*

reveal the critique of conventional technology that defined the new environmentalism. The article will go on to include a consideration of the important role that the Alternative Technology (AT) movement occupied, as the first solution offered to the dominant technocracy. The combination of these two elements of new environmentalism in the 1970s will illustrate the fundamental 'revision of the ends' (Schumacher 1973, p.278) that new environmentalism proposed.

The Ecologist, 'tub thumping'[2] for the Environment

> 'On Monday we wrote to Tesco's and suggested that they should sell organic food in their shops. Tuesday: drummed up support for fighting radioactive sludge dumping. Wednesday: started a new group to press for new environmental laws. Thursday: began to petition local manufacturers polluting the Derwent. Friday: decided to start up paper recycling centre. Saturday: compiled list of anti-environment M.P.'s. Sunday: looked at the effect of war on the environment.'(Classified advert, *The Ecologist,* 2:3, March 1972)

The Ecologist first appeared in July 1970; its founder and editor was Edward (Teddy) Goldsmith of the famous European banking family. Born in Paris in 1928, Goldsmith enjoyed a privileged childhood living in various hotels (owned by his family) in the South of France, which he later described unsurprisingly as 'one long holiday' (Pearce 1991, p.10). Later he attended Millfield School and Eton, before going to Magdalen College at Oxford in 1947 to read PPE. Following the death of his father, Goldsmith was relieved of any financial worries, and spent some time pursuing his studies and travelling the world with his close friend from Oxford, the noted gambler and private zoo owner, John Aspinall (Kingsnorth 2007). During his travels, Goldsmith had begun to be concerned over the impact that modern progress was having on traditional cultures, and in 1968, helped to found The

[2] John Elkington, interview, 2 August 2007

Primitive Peoples' Fund, later to become Survival International. These experiences, combined with a voracious appetite for wide reading that he developed as a child, were to mould Goldsmith's personal philosophy, and led to the founding of *The Ecologist* (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007). As Goldsmith explained later:

> I began to realise that the survival of primitive peoples and of the environment were inseparable. I realised that the root problem was economic development. So I decided to start a paper to explore these issues. (Pearce 1991, p.11)

This quote from Goldsmith illustrates clearly the theme that was to become the overwhelming concern of the magazine for the period 1970-75, certainly in the case of Goldsmith himself. Goldsmith's preoccupation with — what he regarded — the damaging consequences of economic development provided the direction of the magazine, and this was presented in the language of a radical new environmentalism. From its foundation, the magazine produced many editorials and features on what it saw as the desperate shortcomings of technological progress in the advanced industrialised nations. According to Michael Allaby, an early member of the editorial team, Goldsmith demanded firm control of the magazine's content throughout his tenure (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007). The editorial section of *The Ecologist* was dominated by Goldsmith in the period between 1970 and 1973, and therefore reflected his particular brand of environmentalism. Editorials with titles such as 'Science: redefine it or abolish it?'(Goldsmith 1970b) and 'The Prostitute Society' (Goldsmith 1970c) illustrated the direction of Goldsmith's thinking at the time. Despite his tendency to over-intellectualise, Goldsmith was a highly regarded figure and seen by many as a prophet for the new environmental movement, and as a consequence his views were hugely influential in the period (Pearce 1991, p.9; Kingsnorth 1997; John Elkington, interview, 2 August 2007).

After 1971, Goldsmith's initial grip on the editorial content of the magazine loosened somewhat, and other members of the editorial staff began to appear in the editorial page (see Chart 1).

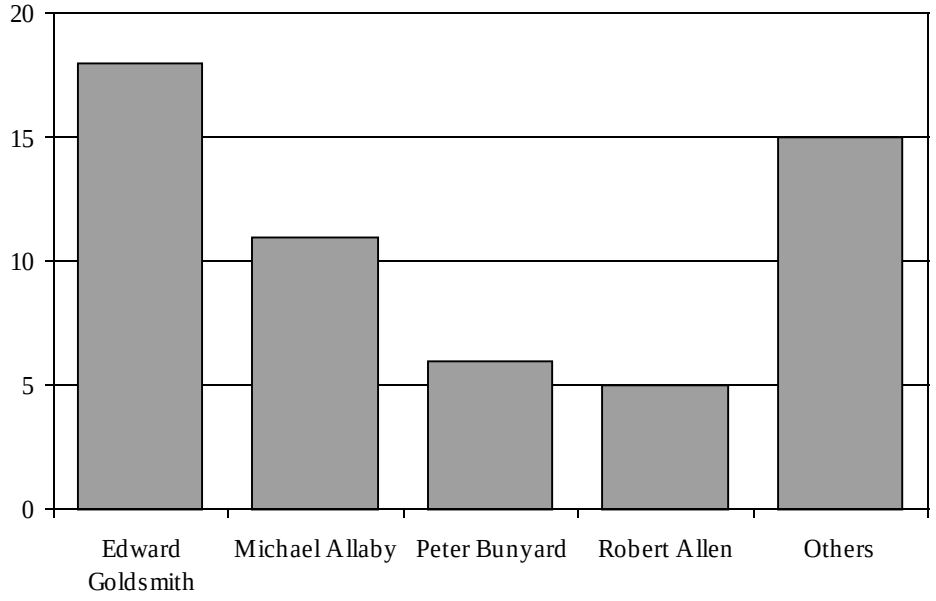

Chart 1 Editorial author by number of editorial contributions: The Ecologist, 1970-75

Goldsmith recruited a team of experienced and committed environmentalists — most of whom had journalistic experience — to *The Ecologist,* and from 1972, the editorial column rotated between Goldsmith, Michael Allaby, Robert Allen, and several others. This extended the scope of the magazine and introduced a less ponderous tone to the content of the editorials, which came to reflect the broader constituency of interests that made up the new environmental movement in the UK. Allaby, who had come to *The Ecologist* from the Soil Association (SA), concentrated mainly on issues relating to food production, farming, and health. Robert Allen, who had worked for Methuen, the publishing house, before joining *The Ecologist,* had lived with a tribe in South America for a short time, and his

interests were more closely aligned with those of Goldsmith (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007). By 1973, another member of the editorial team, Peter Bunyard, also began to contribute to the editorials. Bunyard was interested in energy and he provided much of the energy-related content to the magazine after 1973.

The Ecologist carried many energy related articles within the magazine both before 1972 and after. In the eighteen issues prior to 1972, there were 15 articles devoted mainly to energy. These ranged from issues such as resource depletion (Cloud 1970) and nuclear safety, to more practical topics such as using methane as an alternative power source (Puffet1970). Peter Bunyard was the biggest single contributor to this set of articles, and he was mainly concerned with the problems attendant on nuclear power. In the very first issue of the magazine, he had contributed an article titled 'Is there a peaceful atom?', which discussed the dangers of nuclear energy. Although employing some lurid description, Bunyard, over a lengthy 5-page article, listed many of the known and suspected hazards of nuclear energy, and concluded by writing, 'if we are going to commit ourselves to nuclear energy we are going to leave our successors with some very unpleasant disposal problems, even if no major radiation accidents should occur' (Bunyard 1970). Written in the summer of 1970, this article indicated that environmentalists in Britain were keenly aware of the debates over nuclear power, and significantly, that it was considered a sufficiently important topic for inclusion in the first issue of *The Ecologist*. Indeed, if we include the 4-page article that Robert Allen (1970) contributed to the same issue on the proposed Alaskan oil pipeline, energy-related material constituted nearly twenty per cent of the first issue of the magazine.

To allow some assessment of the editorial content in the period, it is necessary to define broad topic categories. The three common concerns of the environmental movement of the period — Pollution, Conservation, and Population — were expanded to include what emerged as the specific

concerns of the new environmentalism and *The Ecologist*; Agriculture, Society, Politics, Critique (both economic and scientific), and Movement. This resulted in a table of ten categories that are explained below (see Table 1). This table also serves to give some sense of the range of influences that formed the new environmentalism in the period.

Category	Explanation
Population	A fundamentally Malthusian concern over population growing exponentially against the linear growth in food and the depletion of resources. The most famous advocate for this view in the period was the controversial American entomologist, Paul Ehrlich (1971), who wrote The population bomb in 1968. Ehrlich's book contained spectacular claims about the rapid disintegration of society due to growing population levels.
Pollution	This category was inspired by Rachel Carson's Silent Spring (see below), which focussed on air and water pollution, and became the focus for much environmental activity from the mid 1960s. The target for much of the protest was large industrial corporations.
Conservation	This was an enduring concern from the 'traditional' environmental groups, such *as Nature Conservancy*, *National Trust*, *RSPB*, *CPRE*, and the *Ramblers' Association*, for natural places.
Agriculture	This category had several elements. There was concern over the 'Green Revolution' in the less developed countries and the advent of industrial-scale farming. It also included an interest in organic farming techniques through the magazine's connections with the Soil Association.
Critique (Economic)	The development of economic thought and modern economic organisation, which the magazine regarded as fundamentally flawed, was often the target of the magazine.

Critique (Scientific)	The magazine, despite the scientific background of many of its editorial staff, regularly attacked the progress of science, for what it saw as its central role in bringing about environmental damage. Some of the influence for this view arose from Silent Spring, but the views of Barry Commoner also informed much of the magazine's output. Commoner was an American biologist who became Vice-President of the Soil Association in the period (under the seminal figure of E. F. Schumacher). He wrote Science and Survival in 1966, and The Closing Circle: Nature, Man and Technology in 1971, both of which had a wide readership in the UK. Commoner and Ehrlich were bitterly critical of each others views.
Politics	The Ecologist launched several political movements, beginning with the *People Party* which became the *Ecology Party*, and then ultimately the *Green Party* (Garner, 2000, p.134). The publication of the Blueprint for Survival was a key element in the formation of this active political dimension to the new environmentalism, with its call for the creation of a 'Movement for Survival' (The Ecologist,1972).
Movement	Some editorial comment sought to define the new environmentalism, although this was often combined with the other categories above. These editorials (and the letters section of the magazine) are useful in identifying the divisions that existed in the movement during this period.
Society	The Ecologist extended its purview into a broad critique of modern society. This was often the most controversial element of the magazine's output - and also the area that attracted some dissent among the magazine's editorial staff, according to Michael Allaby (interview, 24 July 2007). Robert Allen produced an editorial ('The City is Dead', The Ecologist, 5:6) in 1975, praising Khmer Rouge actions in Cambodia, and Goldsmith was later accused of promoting fascist views (Monbiot 2002; Hildyard 2007).

Table 1 Editorial topic categories: *The Ecologist*, 1970-75.

Before 1972, the editorials, written exclusively by Goldsmith, were dominated by the two 'critique' categories (see chart 2), and these set the tone for the magazine's other content in the period. He produced 17 editorials in the period which ranged across a number of specific topics of current concern, but they were all underpinned by a 'doomsday' narrative that led back inexorably to the evils of modern progress. For Goldsmith, the cause of this was to be found in the organisation of the economy. In the

magazine's very first editorial, Goldsmith contended that both the agricultural revolution and, more pointedly, the industrial revolution would 'if unchecked…transform [the planet] into a lifeless waste', and he described the industrial revolution as 'cataclysmic' (Goldsmith 1970a). Despite the sensational language that Goldsmith employed, his was a very early voice in the call for the closer integration of the economy and the environment more familiar to us today (Stern 2006). In the July 1972 editorial 'Economics', he contended that the economy and the ecosystem were 'disassociable'.

Despite Goldsmith's dogged adherence to his own analysis, it became apparent during 1971 that the magazine was also beginning to recognize specific issues, such as the plans for a third London airport (Goldsmith 1971). Much of this shift in focus was arguably inspired by the formation in 1971 of Friends of the Earth UK. Graham Searle, one of the founders of FoE UK, had been contributing a regular 'Student Action' column to *The Ecologist* since 1970, whilst serving as vice-president of the National Union of Students (NUS).[3] This relationship was to continue when a FoE UK newsletter appeared from February 1972. From the outset, FoE UK pursued a campaigning strategy that focused on well-defined and achievable targets, and this influenced Goldsmith's editorial subject matter (if not his analysis).

[3] Under the Presidency of Jack Straw.

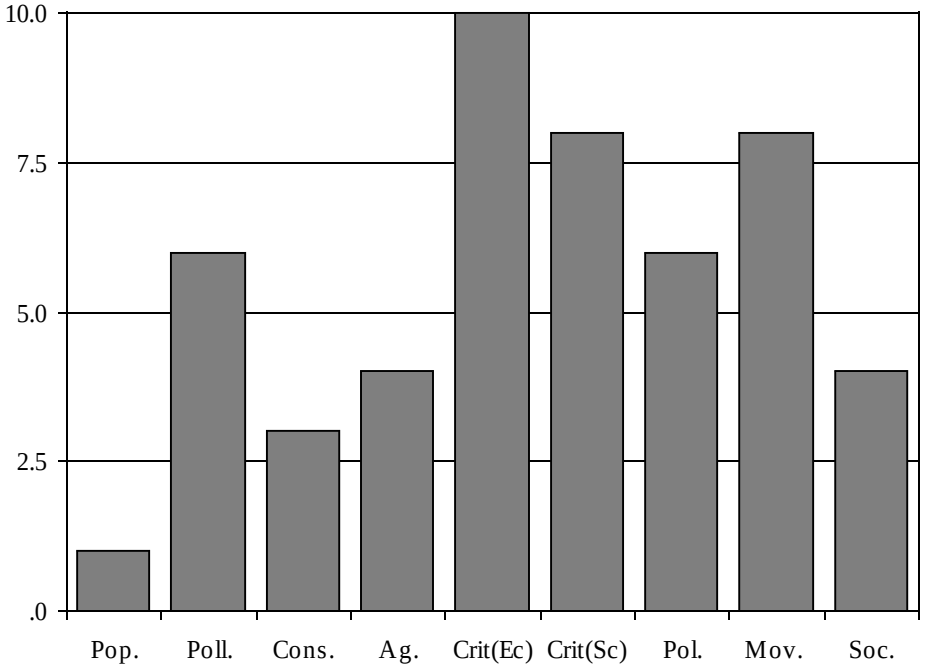

Chart 2 Editorials by topic category: *The Ecologist*, 1970-75

A Blueprint for Survival

No discussion of *The Ecologist* in the period would be complete without some acknowledgment of *A Blueprint for Survival* (BFS), which formed the entire content of the January issue of 1972. In a recent scholarly survey of environmental politics, Garner (2000, p.35) described BFS as 'definitive'. Presented as the work of a group of writers, it was, in fact, written largely by Robert Allen and Goldsmith (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007). In it, Allen and Goldsmith set out their proposals to save the world from environmental collapse. Their thesis followed the general Malthusian 'limits to growth' theories that had grown through the 1960s, which saw growing population and growing consumption depleting the world's resources at an ever-quicker pace. Goldsmith had got a hold of an advance copy of the MIT study *The Limits to Growth* (LTG) and its influence was acknowledged in the

text of BFS (Meadows *et al* 1974). With the quicker turnaround of magazine publication, *The Ecologist* was able to 'scoop' the subsequently more famous LTG in Britain by some months. When the January issue of 1972 containing BFS came out, it caused a sensation (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007; Walt Patterson, interview, 2 August). BFS introduced the term 'sustainable' into the environmental lexicon, and provided the first clear and comprehensive statement of the new environmentalism. BFS appeared only a few months before the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment (UNCHE) in Stockholm (Ward & Dubois 1972), and interest in the environment was rising. Government reports on the environment had been commissioned in advance of Stockholm, and FoE UK was gaining notoriety for high-profile campaigns like the Cadbury Schweppes protest in May 1971 (Lamb 1996, pp.39-40).

In an inspired move, *The Ecologist* had sent advance copies of BFS to many leading academics and asked for their endorsement, and to their surprise, thirty-three had agreed (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007). Included in this number were some leading figures in the UK scientific establishment, such as Sir Frank Fraser Darling and Sir Julian Huxley, and the appearance of their names displayed prominently on the report added credibility to the importance of BFS. This caused consternation among some elements of the scientific establishment, and prompted the bitter exchange between John Maddox, the revered editor of *Nature,* and editorial staff of *The Ecologist.*This was mainly played out in the editorial pages of the respective magazines, but also featured in the columns of *The Times*. Maddox, who went on to write a strong critique of the environmental movement in *The Doomsday Syndrome* (1972), accused the magazine of being 'False Prophets of calamity' (*The Times,* 3 February 1972, p.14). Robert Allen responded for the magazine under the heading 'Why the ecologists must be heard' (*The Times* 23 February 1972, p.12). The magazine quickly

sold out and a paperback edition was rushed out by Penguin books which quickly became a bestseller, shifting 750,000 copies (Pearce 1991, p.13). BFS established the new environmentalism as a force to be considered seriously by policymakers, and along with *Limits to Growth*, it served to raise further the profile of environmental issues in the period.

Alternatives

The pages of *The Ecologist* were replete with critique of technocratic society, but the magazine was also concerned to promote some alternatives for a new society. Many of these were presented in BFS, and then continued to be played out in the pages of the magazine. An important development of new environmentalism was the Alternative Technology (AT) movement. Adrian Smith (2005, p.106) noted that the AT movement provides a rare example of a technologically focused social grouping, which was defined by pro-activity rather than pure critique (such as the early anti-nuclear movement). Many of the factors that combined to produce the new environmental movement were also present in the AT movement, and the AT movement itself was subsumed under the environmentalist banner. Smith (2005, p.107) wrote that, 'the AT movement emerged on a wave of environmental concern over the impacts of industrial society, and a radical, counter-cultural critique of its technocratic tendencies'. AT advocates were motivated by this essential critique of capitalism, but in contrast to many of their fellow travellers on the counter culture trail, they offered alternatives, in terms of both product and lifestyle, as well as critique.

Langdon Winner (1986, p.63) saw the movement's rejection of technological 'progress' as just the latest manifestation of a periodical social phenomenon that, in the past, had produced a range of reactions, from key historical figures like Robert Owen, Peter Kropotkin, William Morris, and Gandhi, and had inspired the earliest environmental groups in the UK, as described above. For many scholars, therefore, the counter culture of the

1960s that spawned the AT movement was simply the latest wave of social disillusionment and disquiet over the nature and rate of progress. A new critique of technology emerged from these swirling influences, which followed a tradition established in the 1930s by the work of Lewis Mumford. In *Technics and Civilisation* (1934), Mumford set out his version of the development of technology, which emphasised the social, political, and moral aspects of technological choice. In the 1960s, a huge number of books appeared, particularly in the United States, which took up Mumford's themes. Prominent among these was the seminal *Silent Spring* (1962) by Rachel Carson. The focus of the book was the use of pesticides and the potential harm that these caused to humans and animals. However, Carson was herself a scientist and the thrust of her study was not 'anti-science', but rather a critique of the uncontrolled use of new technology and the collusion of the state, in the form of public officials, in covering up the potential harms of that technology. Her message appeared to strike a chord with many, and her book became a worldwide best-seller. Other important contributions in the 1960s came from Herbert Marcuse's *One-Dimensional Man* (1964) and Jacques Ellul's *The Technological Society* (1965), both of which contained a bitter critique of the technocratic state.

Perversely, the impetus for much of the early AT movement was created and developed through traditional commercial methods and channels. In the US in 1968, Stewart Brand produced the first of many subsequent and highly successful editions of his *Whole Earth Catalog* (1968), which presented readers with the opportunity to purchase from an array of small-scale, 'back to nature' technologies. In many senses, the *Catalog* offered a comfortable, consumerist vision of a different world, at a safe distance from the increasing violence of public demonstrations in the late 1960s. According to Winner (1986, p.65), amid the apparent political and social disintegration of the globe, its readers could imagine themselves as 'hippie

environmentalist spacemen in the tradition of Buckminster Fuller'. The *Catalog* included articles about specific pieces of technology, accompanied by details of suppliers.

In the UK, *The Ecologist* also adopted this highly successful model early in the 1970s, when it set up a company called Low Impact Technology Ltd (LIT). LIT was established by the magazine's first energy editor, Andrew McKillop, and sold a range of goods similar to the *Whole Earth Catalog,* such as 'Cinva Rams' for making building blocks from compressed earth, solar panels, and 200w Winco 'Wind Generators'. The magazine used its regular alternative technology columns to develop the market for its products amongst its readership. The company also undertook some experimental work of its own, but it is uncertain whether this research ever produced any finished products, let alone any commercial success (Michael Allaby, interview, 24 July 2007).

Intentional communities

By the start of the 1970s, some among this new breed of AT/environmentalists established the early 'intentional communities' that were to characterise them, often in a rather pejorative sense, throughout the decades. This move was encouraged by many advocates of AT, including *The Ecologist,* which had called for 'decentralised, self-sufficient communities' in BFS (1972). The most significant of the early examples of intentional communities in Britain were The Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT), established in 1974 at Machynlleth, Wales, and Biotechnical Research and Development (BRAD), which had been set up at Eithin y Gaer in Wales the previous year.

Robin Clarke, a science journalist, established BRAD, taking as his inspiration the New Alchemy Institute in the US (set up in 1969) which pursued a policy of fully accessible research into organic farming and renewable energy (Winner 1979, pp.75-86). Clarke had a background in

science, and was keen to establish a serious-minded alternative technology R&D establishment. Ultimately it was to prove a short-lived affair, lasting just three years (Clarke left after only fifteen months), which ended amid personal rancour. Philip Brachi was one of the founder members of BRAD, who later recalled his experience ruefully:

> […] the essential message from here seems to be that building a solar roof, one's own house even, is child's play compared with close, honest, open communal living therein (Smith 2004, p.9).

CAT was set up in a disused slate quarry in Wales, and planned as an intentional community. Established by a group of volunteers led by Gerard Morgan-Grenville, it later grew under the guidance of the influential AT activist, Peter Harper, who had lobbied for Alternative Technology at the UNCHE in Stockholm in 1972. Unlike BRAD, which was established solely by a financial contribution from each of its members, CAT sought donations from a range of external sources — including industry — to set the centre up. CAT benefited from contributions of money, materials, and products from over 60 companies at the outset — in a rather ironic contrast to its stated anti-industrial ideals. Furthermore, the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to the centre in 1974 arguably further undermined any desire it might have had to claim 'outsider' status. In some senses CAT initially represented a retail version of the *Whole Earth Catalog,* as it struggled to establish an identity between its aim of an intentional community dedicated to R&D, and its need to fund the research through sales of its products. In this sense, it was confronted with a set of challenges familiar to most innovation-led businesses. However, for CAT and other intentional communities, a further challenge was presented by the avowal of many radical AT advocates to remain outside of industrial society.

Adrian Smith (2004) has called these, 'R&D labs for utopia', a description that reflects their idealistic and somewhat isolated nature, but also gives some hint as to their ideological position, which was soon to cause divisions within the AT community. Both of these ventures embraced a range of environmental ideals and sought an alternative lifestyle based on organic food production and renewable electricity. That this idea had such common currency at the time is supported by the appearance of the hugely popular BBC TV comedy series *The Good Life* in 1975, which depicted a suburban couple pursuing an 'alternative' lifestyle.

The intentional communities of BRAD and CAT may have grabbed the headlines in the 1970s, but these initiatives also created ideological divisions within the AT movement between those who favoured removing themselves from society, and those who sought to integrate their ideas into wider society. In ideological opposition to the intentional communities of BRAD and CAT, was the 'communities of intent' approach favoured by other key AT activists in Britain, such as Andrew McKillop, who derided the 'street farmers' of the off-the-grid communities (Andrew McKillop, personal communication, 2008). Important figures like Lawrence Hills, who was a regular contributor to *The Ecologist* in his 'Down to Earth' column, and the founder of the Henry Doubleday Research Foundation, criticised intentional communities for being unrealistic about the scale of the challenge in alternative technology. Others, such as Dave Elliott, were critical of the retreat-like nature of these communities, and instead sought to integrate the development of alternative technology into the existing industrial system, such as in the Lucas Plan (Wainright & Elliott 1981). The nature of the division appeared to be both technical and political, and was a broad reflection of the different approaches that the variations in description often concealed.

Conclusions

> 'Ecologists, let the bastards freeze in the dark' (US bumper sticker, quoted in Goldsmith 1974)

The views of *The Ecologist,* with its explicit critique of capitalism and the progress of industrial society, had resonated with many in the early 1970s as the first signs of the economic turbulence that were to characterise the decade dominated the headlines. It has been well established that this growth in the new environmentalism faded around the time of the 1973 oil crisis, and remained a more marginal issue until its resurgence in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Sandbach 1978; Lowe & Goyder 1983; McCormick 1991). During this period, the UK economy presented the symptoms of a failing system, reeling from high inflation and high unemployment, as international commodity prices rocketed and the era of fixed exchange rates ended (Coopey & Woodward 1996). However, the realities of power cuts and fuel shortages after October 1973 did not result in society at large reaching the conclusions proffered by the editorial columns of *The Ecologist*, much less adopting the solutions that had been set out in the BFS. The message of new environmentalism began to sound shrill amid the darkness and queues.

Indeed, the failure to surmount the challenges of the oil crisis gave support to the argument that the new environmentalism could be viewed with hindsight as a 'luxury' cause in a period of plenty: a comfortable and ultimately limited expression of guilt at the decadence of personal consumption by the middle classes of the industrialised nations, who were becoming increasingly aware of the problems of the 'Third World' (Galtung 1973; Lowe & Goyder 1983). During this period, the charge of elitism was made most famously by Anthony Crosland, who suggested in *A Social-Democratic Britain* (1974, p.78) that environmentalism had a 'class bias' and suggested that those 'middle- and upper-class' champions of the cause

wanted to 'kick the ladder down behind them'; a charge that has also been levelled at the sponsors of LTG, The Club of Rome (Golub & Townsend 1977). This is, of course, a criticism of environmentalism that continues on to the present day (Burchill & Newkey-Burden 2008)

Despite this, it is the contention of this article that *The Ecologist* of this period helped to encourage the spread of alternative technology, and established a new critique of conventional technology that would eventually lead to the creation of Government funded research programmes into 'alternative energy sources' from 1975. Former editor, Michael Allaby, claimed rather self-effacingly that 'it was just a magazine' (Interview, 24 July 2007), but the evidence suggests that *The Ecologist* represented more than that. It not only reflected the growth of the new environmentalism, it also shaped that growth. Much of this influence came through the intellectual lead that the magazine provided, by forcing its readership to consider what Goldsmith (1972) called 'a different goal'. *The Ecologist* encouraged — and participated in — the alternative technology movement that emerged as the first practical response to the economic and technological orthodoxy. Many of the early experiments in intentional communities can appear today as mere extensions of the 'hippie' culture of the late 1960s, but it is clear that many pioneers in the UK renewable energy field drew inspiration from the wave of innovation that took place in the period.

Although this article has shown that the publication of BFS in 1972 was the starting point for Green politics in the UK, and the content of much of the developing debate over the environment since the 1970s has been conducted in language set out by *The Ecologist*, the editorial team at the magazine gave the environment a push up the issue agenda. This paper suggests that the important role that the new environmental movement played in Britain in this period should be more widely recognised. Although heavily criticised by many, the environmental movement influenced the course of many debates; for example, by forcing the 'private' debate over

energy into the public sphere, particularly over nuclear power. The practical approach of the AT community often provided an example to the Government about some of the ways to reduce energy consumption, such as the national home insulation schemes that were established during the troubled 1970s. Furthermore, the repetition of the intellectual and moral arguments over pollution and finite resources from *The Ecologist*, among others, led to the routine consideration of these issues by policymakers always keen to demonstrate their responsiveness to the concerns of the public.

Abbreviations

AT - Alternative Technology

BFS - A Blueprint for Survival

BRAD - Biotechnical Research and Development

CAT - The Centre for Alternative Technology

FoE UK - Friends of the Earth United Kingdom

LTG - The Limits to Growth

NUS - National Union of Students

SA - Soil Association

UNCHE - United Nations Conference on the Human Environment

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Environmentalism or environmental rights is a broad philosophy, ideology, and social movement regarding concerns for environmental protection and improvement of the health of the environment, particularly as the measure for this health seeks to incorporate the impact of changes to the environment on humans, animals, plants and non-living matter. While environmentalism focuses more on the environmental and nature-related aspects of green ideology and politics, ecology combines the ideology of social One environmentalist has realized that Technocracy is destructive to the environment and to mankind in general. He suggests that modern Luddism is anti-Technocracy rather than anti-technology.Â Technocracy is the heartbeat of modern globalization that promotes increased development by scientific innovation and social control. In sum, Technocracy is no friend of anyone, regardless on their political position. â*ƒ* TN Editor. A little over two centuries ago, on March 11, 1811, a small band of weavers and other skilled textile industry workers broke into a shop in the village of Arnold in Nottinghamshire, England, and smashed several â€œwide stocking framesâ€ â€” mechanical knitting machines, relatively new at the time, that could mass produce knitted material for stockings.