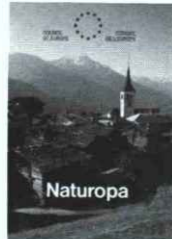


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Naturopa



Naturopa

No. 30 – 1978

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European
information
centre
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conservation



The symbol for the Council of Europe's nature conservation activities. It will also illustrate the Centre's campaign on the conservation of wild flora and fauna and natural habitats, which will be launched in 1979.

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Cover: Reckingen im Goms/Wallis (Photo Giegel, Swiss National Tourist Office)
Back: Daffodils, Lescun, Pyrenees (Photo J. F. and M. Terrasse)

Our contribution

This particular issue of NATUROPA is dedicated to the important role and responsibility which local and regional authorities have and must exercise towards the safeguarding and management of man's natural environment. Thus in Europe's democracies every person's voice can and must be heard. The reader will find here views and illustrations of this aspect of our society.

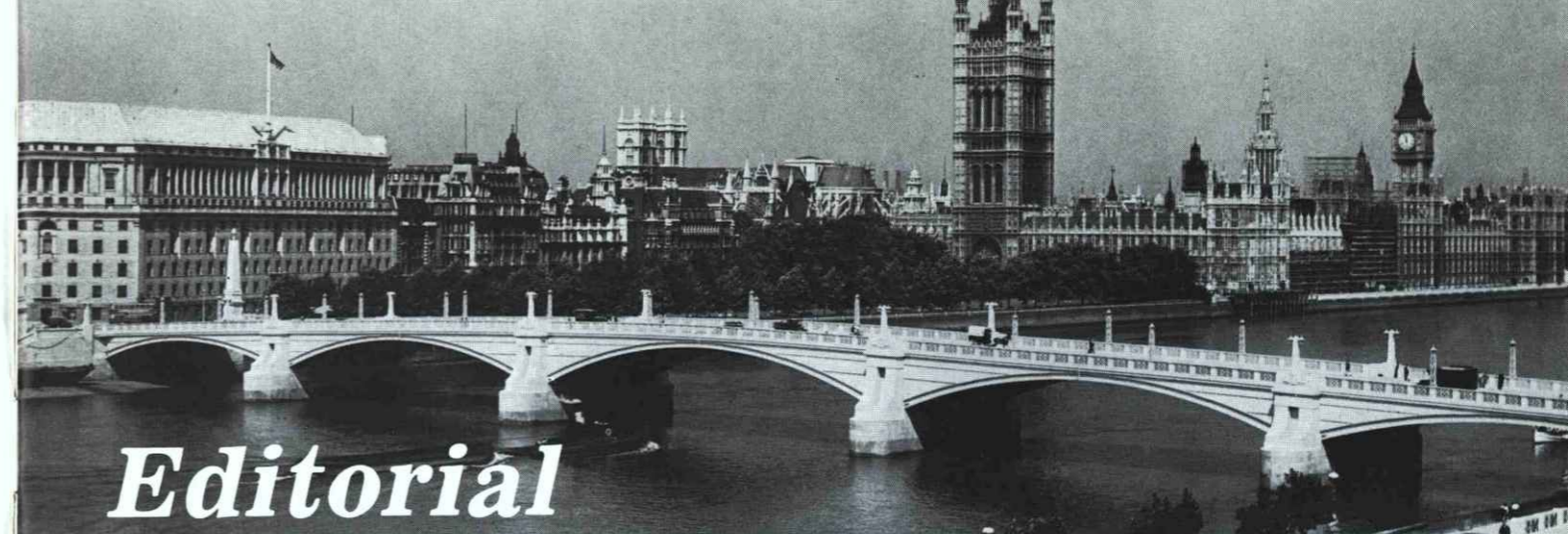
The editors of *Naturopa* are opting for a policy which it is hoped will be continued in the future: giving advice by means of positive examples on how to improve methods of conserving our natural environment and its resources. Thus the reader will not only be confronted with the problems of our ailing world but may also see ways of helping to improve the situation. We are confident that this policy comes through in this issue.

A place of honour is reserved for a contribution from Spain which a few months ago became the Council of Europe's twentieth member country. Furthermore, this article describes how transfrontier co-operation is possible and can grow

from the first tentative contacts to firmly established and official co-operation.

Henceforth, the back cover colour page will symbolically present the next issue. Here, daffodils on the slopes of the pyrenees foretell issue no. 31 of *Naturopa* which will be entirely on Europe's threatened flora and vegetation; the causes for the disappearance and regression of many species will be examined and attention drawn to specific types of threatened landscapes. Finally, we shall provide positive information on how to stop this process of impoverishment.

H. H. H.



(Photo COI)

Editorial

A new way of thinking for land management

Gérard Baloup

"On account of its closeness to the areas concerned and their inhabitants", it is the local authority which bears the main responsibility for the surroundings in which we live — as stated in Resolution 78 (1974) of the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe. It is at this level that the individual comes into contact with the state and decides what shape his future is to take. Each municipality or region will have its own specific quality of life.

What then are you, the individual citizen, making out of your municipality?

All those trees pulled down to broaden a street; squares invaded by waste paper; modest allotments which the bulldozer is wiping off the scene; they are you, the local community. Those new concrete walls in the fields on the town fringes, that stream in which all the village rubbish has accumulated, the countryside disfigured by plastic in every form, the forest criss-crossed by electric wires, the mountain-side scarred by dams or barrages, the river without fish: once again they are all you. The municipality means you. You, who elected the municipal council and are capable of influencing its decisions, You, who may have given the municipality a free hand to destroy its own beauty, sell its dignity, neglect its duties and its rights.

You may answer that the municipality has no power. Why then do you not ask that it be given some? Europe today, that new democratic society founded on participation which is in the process of being built by 370 million free Europeans with the aid of the Council of Europe presupposes strong local government. The Ministers responsible for Local and Regional Government of the Organisation's twenty member states made this point at their three meetings: in Paris, Athens and Lisbon. They will reiterate it once again in Stockholm when they meet in September this year to study how best to increase public participation in local affairs. Intentions should therefore be made reality. Each one of us is responsible.

You may say that your municipality is too large and that the only influence you actually have in the vast city in which you live is the vote you cast into the ballot-box every four, five or six years. Why not start in your own neighbourhood by joining, or if necessary setting up, a district association? At their Conference in Lisbon in October 1977, the European Ministers responsible for Local Government stated:

"One aim is to meet deep-seated aspirations and to provide the conditions for

of member states, was also the first to draw attention to the need to protect the rural environment.

At a time when all too many official bodies were hailing rural depopulation as progress, the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, set up in 1957, underlined the acute problems that accompanied desertion of the rural areas: "Space in the countryside is an artificial thing, created by man, the fruit of long evolution and a delicate balance between man and nature, between human activity and natural processes, between the village and the fields, the town and the country; a balance which is as necessary to nature as it is to man since man needs nature as much as nature needs man;... every study confirms the existence of a depopulation point beyond which any kind of economy, even a tourist economy, becomes impossible and the land returns not to nature but to desert" (Resolution 63 (1968)).

An essential feature of protection of the natural environment is protection of rural life. In this natural environment the physical world is subtly blended with the human, man-made, environment. The two are inextricably interwoven, while man in his turn cannot be dissociated from this environment, this soil on which he has left his imprint over the ages, generation after generation. Like plants, men's roots are embedded in nature: the roots not just of their physical existence but also of their minds and emotions. This unity can be disrupted only at the cost of brutal upheaval, frequently with fatal consequences.

Man's right to "live in his native surroundings" — a right as opposed to an obligation since certain plants need a change of soil and have to be removed from their pots — is undoubtedly the most fundamental ecological right. What quality of life can be expected by the man cut off from his village, the peasant condemned to the monotony of the tube station and the factory bench, the southerner exiled



development of true communities in which man can find his identity and have a share in the decisions taken by the organisations that determine his environment... The reorganisation of authorities on a larger scale must be accompanied by the adaptation of natural neighbourhood communities, such as the ward in towns or the village in the country."

The Conference of Ministers responsible for Local Government therefore did not overlook the village. The Council of Europe, the first, and unfortunately still the only, European or international institution to make provision for representation of the local and regional authorities



Citizens show their concern (Photo Persbureau Stokvis)



to the cities of the north? The "green spaces" (sic) of our model new towns, the grass of squares or attempts to get rid of pollution, all have only a pathetic impact on the natural environment of the uprooted man.

Protection of the environment involves the economic and social development of the poorer regions so that their inhabitants can stay in their natural setting if they so wish. One of the main tasks of local authorities in these regions is indeed to guarantee such development. Otherwise the inevitable consequences will be economic erosion and rural exodus, which go hand in hand. Such development must, of course, be balanced and adjusted to local conditions.

Unless such action is taken, what chances are there of a successful environment policy in the cities, whether on the urban fringes of north-west Europe or in the sprawling conurbations of other countries? It is interesting that most countries on the fringes of Europe have to contend with the same structural imbalance. In all cases an excessive proportion of the national population is concentrated in one or two major urban areas and this imbalance is increasing day by day as a result of the rural exodus and centralisation. No urban environment policy can counteract this continuous inflow into the urban and central regions. As it was summed up in the Declaration of the Galway Convention of the Authorities of European Peripheral Regions, "the continuous movement towards concentration of activities, population and flows of circulation produces increasing financial and so-

cial costs, a tendency for the price of land and consequently the cost of housing, and the cost of living to increase, the necessity to constantly readapt outmoded public equipment, a permanent struggle against the deterioration of the environment and living conditions; various factors which stimulate chronic inflation in Western urban societies".

Protection of the urban environment is conditioned by protection of the natural environment and rural life. The only means of guaranteeing quality of life is a balanced development policy ensuring equilibrium between town and country, Europe and the regions. This principle was stated clearly in 1970 at the first European Conference of Ministers responsible for Regional Planning, organised by the Council of Europe in Bonn, and was endorsed by the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe in its Resolution 78, which declared: "Environmental policy must be based on regional planning aimed both at developing under-equipped fringe areas and effectively deconcentrating the heavily-industrialised, urbanised and overcrowded central areas where the greatest deterioration in environmental and living conditions is generally found".

Action on the part of the rich and developed regions to aid the peripheral and disadvantaged regions can be more than just a fitting gesture of solidarity and equity if it is backed by a dynamic and far-reaching European regional policy. It will then have a positive impact on the environment and quality of life in the over-concentrated central regions.

Everything that has been said above bears out "the over-riding role of the regional and local authorities in formulating and implementing policies for the management of the environment in Europe", as was expressed as early as 1970 at the first European Conservation Conference convened by the Council of Europe in the context of European Nature Conservation Year.

G. B.

DECLARATION

Local authorities commit themselves!

Resolution 66 (1970), adopted in 1970 by the 8th Session of the Conference of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe, is at least as topical now as it was then. It consists of a nature conservation declaration for local authorities who are asked to employ all the resources at their disposal for a comprehensive nature conservation programme designed to provide a healthy and pleasant environment for all.

The subject and contents of this text give it a natural place in this issue of *Naturopa*, devoted to the "Role and responsibilities of local and regional authorities in relation to the natural environment" and to "frontier co-operation".

Resolution 66 (1970) on the role of local authorities in the conservation of nature and natural resources

The Conference,

Recalling the importance of the part played by the local authorities in nature conservation, which was recognised in the Declaration on the Management of the Natural Environment of Europe adopted by the European Conservation Conference and which found expression in the following terms:

"This Conference affirms the overriding role of the regional and local authorities in formulating and implementing policies for the management of the environment in Europe and invites local authorities to define common principles for guiding their activities on the basis of the report presented to the Conference by the delegates of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe and the European Conference of Local Authorities",

Reaffirms the principle that safeguarding the human environment henceforth transcends the purely national context to become increasingly the subject of a genuine European policy;

Considers that an all-embracing and concrete solution of this problem calls for schemes of regional plans at all levels (European, national, regional and local), which must be mutually co-ordinated and

worked out in conjunction with plans for economic development;

Notes furthermore that since the quality of the environment is increasingly becoming one of the most sought after conditions for the location of new activities, it is thus in the interests of the local authorities to ensure that any new installations, and particularly industrial installations, do not seriously impair that environment;

Considers that at the local level the local authorities have a special part to play in this field, in the regional context and through increasingly intensified inter-authority co-operation.

Adopts and calls upon the local authorities to adopt and implement, to the fullest extent possible, the following Declaration:

Nature Conservation Declaration for Local Authorities in Europe

1. a. The council will strive with all the means at its disposal to promote nature conservation within its territory.

b. Its contribution shall be designed to ensure the effective protection of flora and fauna, improve the quality of the natural environment, enhance the local countryside and generally enable the physical surroundings to meet the aesthetic, economic and social needs of both inhabitants and visitors.

Moreover, this will stimulate civic pride and revive local values.

2. a. The council will seek the support and assistance of all inhabitants and try to bring home to each of them the value of a drive to guarantee pleasant surroundings in which to live.

b. Everything possible will be done, and in particular campaigns will be launched, to educate and inform the general public so as to encourage the active participation of all, and more especially of teachers, cultural or scientific associations and young people.

c. The council will put into action an educational programme in both primary and secondary schools, stressing the moral, social, economic, scientific and aesthetic importance of nature conservation.

It will organise an annual "Conservation Day", in which all educational establish-

ments will be invited to participate. The programme might include: field studies, with if possible the installation or inspection of nesting-boxes, an essay competition on appropriate subjects, lectures illustrated by educational films, participation in the practical management of reserves, etc.

3. The council will draw up regulations to ensure the conservation of the natural environment within its area, so far as its authority and powers allow.

Such regulations will be based as far as possible on the standards agreed at European level.

They will be designed to combat pollution, especially water pollution, to reduce noise and to prevent industrial and urban developments that offend the eye or are a threat to health.

They will prohibit all unauthorised hunting, fishing and picking of flowers on land and in waters belonging to or managed by the local authority.

They will include measures to ensure that derelict and vacant land is kept tidy.

4. The council will make a detailed inventory of the natural resources in its area in order to rationalise the planning and execution of its responsibilities in this field.

5. The council will take all practical steps to enable vacant or derelict land and sites, such as former industrial sites, quarries and mines, to be reclaimed and brought back into use.

Such areas could be set aside for leisure activities, such as sports fields or playgrounds, as wildlife reserves, or quite simply as public open spaces.

The main emphasis here should be directed towards publicly owned or common land, rivers, streams and canals, roads and lanes, lakes and ponds, etc.

6. a. The council will draw up long-term plans for the rational use and management of land, including measures to ensure restoration, improvement and conservation of the environment in both rural and suburban areas.

b. In the preparation of any town planning or development scheme, the council will

Local authorities commit themselves!

attempt as far as possible to retain intact any sites of natural interest within its area (trees, open spaces, stretches of water and marshlands), whether owned by the council itself or by private individuals. Landowners will be invited to assist in such conservation schemes.

Planning permission in rural areas should only be granted subject to the submission of acceptable landscaping plans.

7. a. The council will take action, within the limits of its resources, to secure for itself the management and control of the most interesting sites, by means of purchase or lease, in order to preserve them as nature reserves. These areas will thus be safeguarded according to the criteria most likely to support the existence of particular animal or plant species.

b. Certain areas thus protected will be planned and developed, as appropriate, for educational or tourist purposes. To this end they may be provided with nature trails and facilities for observing flora and fauna. Guided tours will be organised, together with a programme of activities aimed at nature conservation.

c. Others will be the subject of scientific studies and research, for which the support and collaboration of the competent regional and national authorities might be invited.

Some areas could be set aside as "closed reserves", for purely scientific purposes, to which all public access would be prohibited.

d. Country-dwellers should be given special assistance: they play a key role in nature conservation, and if they were to leave the countryside the success of the conservation drive would be jeopardised.

e. The establishment and maintenance of nature parks will ensure that a rich and varied fauna survives, such as the small mammals and certain insects which play a vital part in maintaining the biological balance.

f. The council and the owners or tenants of land situated in both urban and rural areas will be invited to set up sanctuaries or reserves in the area under their control. They will install selective nesting-boxes or sanctuaries and rescue species threatened as a result of prolonged bad weather.

8. The council will act in a number of capacities with regard to problems of pollution of all kinds:

— by availing itself of the opportunity to direct pollution control operations and so to select the firms and methods to be employed;

— by helping in the work of the appropriate national or regional bodies;

— by arranging for the public authorities, industry and all users to work together in making proper economic use of the resources which they have in common;

— by collaborating with water boards and other bodies responsible for the planning of public amenity projects on and around large stretches of water.

9. In the execution of its plans for protecting the flora and fauna, the council will seek the assistance of qualified persons, preferably living or working within its area, such as conservation experts, ecologists, consulting biologists, landscape architects, etc.

10. A local nature conservation committee will be set up, to frame proposals and suggestions for:

— dealing with the problems of planning, management, maintenance and surveying of natural features of interest;

— preparing a programme of initiation in natural sciences (lectures, exhibitions, articles, guided tours, competitions);

— promoting scientific research into means of combating environmental contamination;

— teaching proper behaviour in and respect for the countryside, by drawing attention to fire risks, the problem of litter, noise and pollution of various kinds;

— taking care of the fauna as necessary during bad weather;

— encouraging public authorities at all levels, industry and private individuals to combine their efforts so as to resolve certain conservation problems.

11. The council will place signs on roads leading into its area, indicating the importance of its nature conservation campaign. These signs might bear the words: "The... Council is engaged in nature conservation".



Bonneval-sur-Arc lives!

lives!
lives!

André Letourneux

"Mr Gilbert André, the mayor of Bonneval-sur-Arc, whom we had asked to write an article describing how, thanks to his efforts and those of his small commune, it had been possible to preserve and develop an outstanding site, did not feel capable of recounting his own part in the tale. We have therefore had to turn to one of his friends to relate the ups and downs of this interesting experiment."

Once upon a time — it was the summer of 1953 — a young student by the name of Gilbert André, the son of a forester in the Vosges, was making his way through the Alps, when one evening he came upon a rustic chalet, around which a farmer and his numerous family were busily reaping and spreading the hay. He set to and worked alongside them, stayed on for supper, listened to their evening fireside chat, and enjoyed their cordial hospitality.

From this chance encounter sprang the amazing alliance between a young nature lover and a Savoyard village which has survived intact from centuries untold. Bonneval-sur-Arc (population 130, altitude 1 850 m) stands at the extremity of the Maurienne Valley... at the end of the world!

After having been, for a week, the guest of the village patriarch Jean-Claude Blanc (father of ten), Gilbert André is still at Bonneval today, a quarter of a century later, and still "just for a week".

Dark days

Many young people at that time were leaving the village, and Gilbert's first care was to consider how they could be persuaded to remain or return. What was needed was to restore the pride of the locals in their age-old knowledge, abilities and traditions; to give them new confidence in the future; to safeguard what was good, whilst constantly progressing towards fresh goals. But it must be a cautious



Bonneval-sur-Arc, a fine example of how man has come to terms with modern society by living in harmony with nature and remaining true to himself (Photos B. Judet)



progress; they must keep their feet on the ground, seek all the advice they required and act only by general consent.

And then fate intervened: Gilbert André was elected mayor in 1956, and at twenty-eight was launched on his first battle — to rescue the commune from the iron grip of the electricity producers. He won, but only just; and thereafter was able to conclude contracts with his former adversaries that were favourable to both sides.

In June 1957 came the hardest trial of all. The River Arc, in sudden furious spate, rushed through the village with a fearsome cargo of rocks and tree trunks. The inhabitants took to the hills, half the houses were ravaged and disembowelled, filled with stones and mud; 30 km of roads and ten bridges were destroyed. The temptation was strong, this time, to drop everything and follow the considerable number of villagers who had already left Bonneval and installed themselves in the towns below. Spurred on, however, by their mayor, the Bonnevalains decided to stay: and then began a labour of Titans which was to give them back their houses, their streets, their whole way of life.

Relying on teams of volunteers, and with the powerful aid of the Bridges and Highways Department, they hoisted thousands of loads of rubble on to lorries, which took back to the mountains all the earth and rocks they had released. But their experience brought its lessons: the Arc was controlled by dykes and its course was

straightened. Bonneval lived again and, confident in its vigour and courage, was no longer in danger of dying.

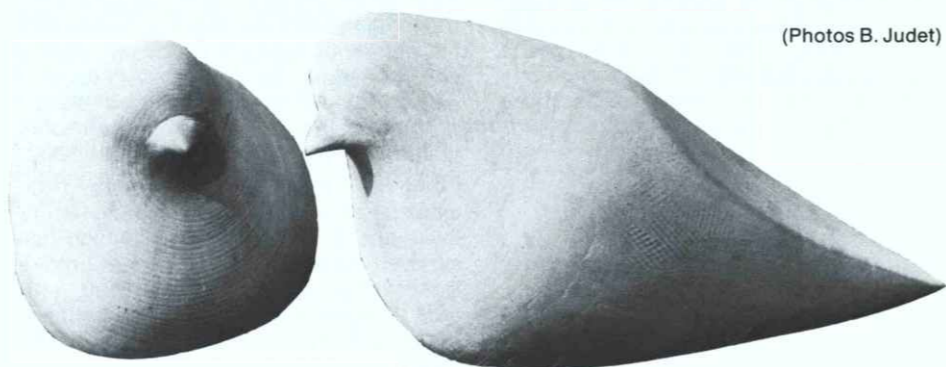
And now the battle became a daily one. It was a battle against the elements, against the hesitations of a minority, against the knowing sceptics who refused to see any future for this tiny community, lost in the mountains and to all appearances highly vulnerable.

A common will

However lucid it may be, in such conditions the will of one man cannot suffice. It must be surrounded, bolstered and upheld. The great virtue of the mountaineers, farmers and shepherds of Bonneval has been to form a united front

alongside their mayor, while providing him unstintedly with the most valuable of counsels, those born of experience gained through the ages.

The meetings of the Village Council are a significant example of this co-operation which has increased with every passing year. It would be wearisome, no doubt, to retail all the innumerable actions that followed each of the joint decisions taken by "those people from Bonneval", as it would be to list the administrative proceedings which led them, by ways that were often arduous and vexatious, to narrow victories and confirmed successes. Basically, everything has depended, and still depends, upon their unity, their clarity of view, and their spokesman's obstinate resolve.



(Photos B. Judet)

From past to present

A systematic desire to preserve the quality of life, to combine past and present, old traditions and new technology, harmoniously for the good of all — such is the mainspring of each new endeavour. It can be briefly illustrated by the following milestones in the development of the village: 1958: Dairy products and local crafts. It seemed to the villagers that these natural riches were under-exploited and restricted to local consumption. They needed to be marketed on a larger scale, and so a cheese factory and local craft workshops were started in order to develop profitably certain original forms of production that would revive traditional industry: ceramics, iron and wood working, leather and woollen goods.

1964–77: Travel broadens the mind. Men who have lived for centuries in an unchanged environment are avid for progress, but the danger is that they will be seduced by the first "different" process they encounter — often with disastrous results. Might not this or that Bonnevalain succumb to the apparent convenience of corrugated iron?... They needed, therefore, to be shown some good examples of villages that had remained true to themselves and yet had succeeded in combining the exploitation of their natural resources with respect for their surroundings.

And so a series of one-week study tours, six in all, were organised for the people of Bonneval, and especially the younger generation. With the mayor as their guide, they went each year to such places as the Valais, the Grisons, Vorarlberg and Tyrol, visiting villages that have expanded without losing their soul, in marked contrast to others which, taking the easy way out, have become a prey to the promoters at the expense of their personality.

The quality of restaurants and hotel rooms was assiduously studied, without too much attention to price. Great emphasis was laid on the beauty of the natural sites, as compared with the ugliness of certain mushroom resorts which have sprung up solely with an eye to quick profits.

All who went on these trips came back with food for thought, whose fruits were plain to see: the streets and lanes of Bonneval today bear eloquent witness to this.

1967: Underground garages. With growing prosperity came the motor-car; everyone wanted his own, even if money had to be borrowed to buy it. Plans began to appear for sheet-metal structures to serve as garages, scattered between road and village. The mayor called a meeting of the population, and these plans were scrapped in favour of an 800 m² communal garage excavated under the mountain, with room for twenty-eight individual lock-ups. Each car-owner paid a sum of money into

a joint fund which would be used to buy the materials and pay the builders — these last being none other than the subscribers themselves, paid by the hour. And later the notary was to hand over to each individual the title deeds of his garage.

1968: Tourism. This was something that had to be envisaged, for the young needed additional work. But tourists, as we know, have a habit of increasing too fast and hence of destroying the very things they have come to seek: beauty, peace and quiet, a change of scene — and, having barely arrived in the paradise of their dreams, they set about reconstituting the inferno of the cities they are trying to escape! Whilst the older folk dithered the younger ones were envying their neighbours who had become ski-instructors at Val d'Isère.

If their own village were not made into a ski resort, they hinted, they would be off to work elsewhere. Once again apparent contradictions must be overcome. In his search for a solution, Gilbert André succeeded in getting three guiding principles across:

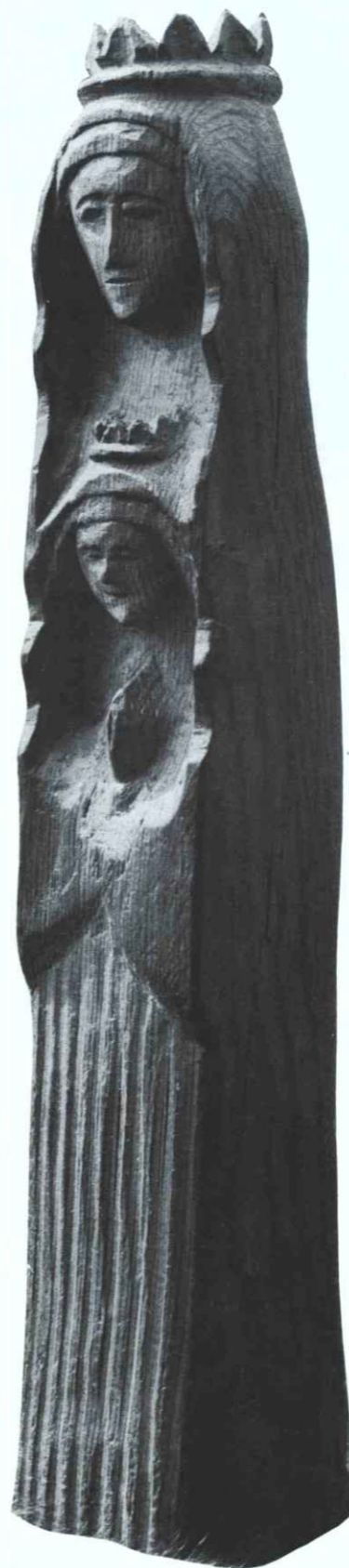
1. There would be no promoters, and the fewest possible salaried staff: the Bonnevalains would themselves build the chalets intended to house the city dwellers on holiday. They would be the personal owners of the chalets and would thus develop qualities of initiative, enterprise, responsibility and a taste for the calculated risk. At no price did they wish to form a "snow proletariat": their aim was to experience together the adventure of starting up a new resort on the scale of the population and the surroundings.

2. The future buildings were to fit into the landscape: the houses would be made exclusively of material found on the spot; they would be of low profile and unostentatious, but inside would be fitted out with the maximum of comfort.

At the start a few minor mistakes were made, it is true; they were the fault of architects insufficiently imbued with the spirit of the undertaking. Later, however, once the locals had regained faith in themselves and their birthplace, they built the houses by their own means, with admirable feeling for the natural beauty of the site. Last summer, for instance, fifteen stone-built houses were put up, in the style of the old houses of the village, by the Bonnevalains themselves without the help of professional architects.

3. The expansion of traditional local crafts and activities would be promoted in order:

- a. to attract and interest visitors by the originality of the products,
- b. to save the cost of processing, transport and commissions, and
- c. to maintain ancient customs and allow the village to remain true to itself.



Bonneval-sur-Arc lives!

Future plans

The commune is thinking of buying and renovating a huge mediaeval house on the village square, to be used for craft workshops and boutiques selling farmhouse bread, dried meat and woollen yarn, and to serve as a cultural centre.

Protection of the natural heritage. Efforts to improve the quality of life would be vain if life could not evolve in a natural setting in proper harmony with it. We have already seen that protection of the natural environment is one of the essential principles governing every achievement of Bonneval. In all their campaigns to date the inhabitants have fought under one banner only: 'to develop such tourism as is economically necessary, to benefit from the advantages to be gained from the marvellous natural area of the Vanoise, but to place the maximum limitations on its reception capacity so that nature should not be the prime sufferer.

This resolve is also reflected in a number of initiatives that are of more direct interest to nature. A few examples follow:

— **1954: The National Park.** In that year, Gilbert André made a round tour of all the ministries concerned. His idea — its application, originally limited, in his mind and that of his team, to the development of the commune alone — finally led to the

creation of the first French National Park, the Vanoise. Later, by means of contacts established through joint studies with other French action groups, it was to result in the creation of the National Association of French Nature Parks, culminating on 22 July 1960 in the adoption by the French Parliament of the National Parks Act.

Thanks to the creation of this park, which takes in nearly half the village, the balance of nature presents no problems at Bonneval-sur-Arc. Contrary to what is happening in other tourist areas, its natural species are on the increase.

— **The planting of 50 000 larch trees** was put in hand between 1960 and 1965. Alas — and on his own admission this has been a great disappointment to Gilbert André — about 75% of the saplings were destroyed by the village's flocks of goats. There we have an example of the difficulties with which local authorities may have to contend in their efforts to combine the protection of nature with the economic interests of the inhabitants.

Prohibition of the picking of certain flower species

An order by the village council, dated 24 June 1971, prohibits the picking of edelweiss, Alpine yarrow, artemisia (wormwood), mushrooms and dandelions. Here the main idea of the mayor was to protect the hay meadows from the trampling of tourists; the measure has also had a beneficial effect in preserving floral species.

If we were to make a list of all the achievements of the mayor of Bonneval and his fellow villagers, together with other projects under consideration, it would still be a long one. But, in conclusion, what we should not forget is that all these achievements are of value only in so far as they enable men to remain true to themselves and to love and conserve all that is beautiful.

A. L.

Another solution: Le Corbier
(Photo Ph. Roy — Explorer)



In Britain's city farms animals become reality to the cities' youngsters (Photo Inter-Action Centre)

City – Children – Countryside

Ed Berman

In 1972, a pioneering British community organisation, Inter-Action, started a unique experiment — a farm in densely populated central London. It was called City Farm 1.

At first, City Farm 1 was no more than sixteen garden plots on a derelict site. Gradually the interest grew as old buildings were renovated by Inter-Action and local volunteers. Soon a Noah's Ark approach (two of each) brought piglets, lambs, chickens, ducks, kids, rabbits and calves. In the nature of things, two did not remain two for very long. The local children who care for the farm and animals began to learn naturally about nature. This farm-yard of hand-raised animals was perfect for visits by school parties from all over London. Children could enter the animal's pens and touch animals they had previously only known from story books.

Children learn from experience

By this time, after two years, there was an Old People's Gardening Club and a sixteen-family vegetable patch. Both of these were managed by the participants themselves. A picnic area appeared behind the rear wall of a nineteenth century primary school. There was also a series of animal pens with different age groups of local children taking responsibility for different animals. A group of nine-year olds became "The Chicken Club". They proceeded to run a small egg business once they realised they had to put something in

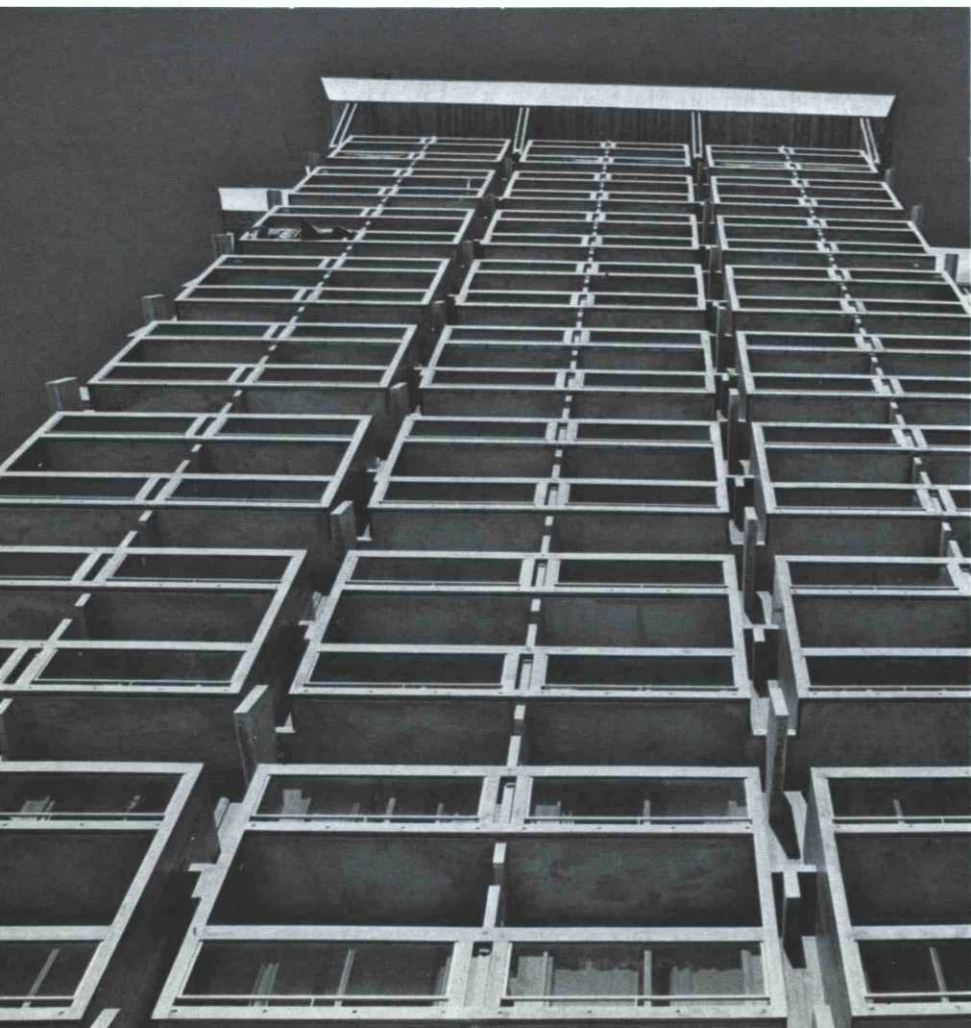
one end to get something out the other (a basic lesson in economics).

Flushed with the success of turning two and half acres of derelict land into a mini-farm, with gardens and small animals, Inter-Action became more ambitious. The old stable block on the premises was restored. A large hangar which had been used to cut and store timber was renovated into an indoor horse-riding school. It became the only indoor riding establishment in Central London not owned by Queen Elizabeth.

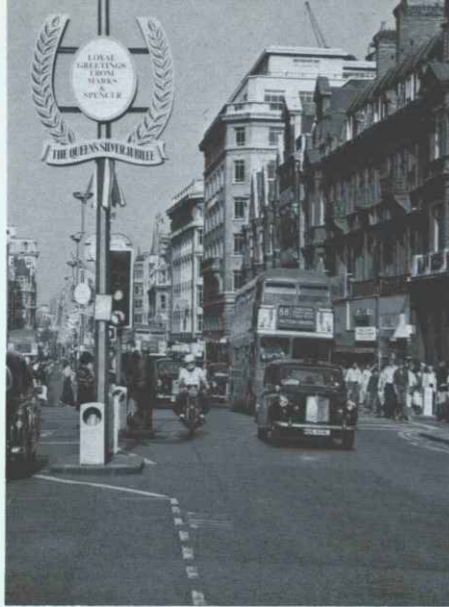
Local children who had never ridden before now joined eight Pony Clubs to take weekly lessons. Youth clubs, playgrounds and special schools for the disturbed and the delinquent also had regular riding lessons, special weekend sessions were set up for mentally handicapped children to learn to ride, helped by the other children.

These other children, from nearby Council housing estates had never been in a position of care and responsibility before, neither for animals nor for people. The change in them was remarkable. Instead of breaking windows, jamming the lifts and tormenting old people in the tower blocks, these young people began to understand other things — that the old people could help the farm by growing food for the animals, that real responsibility is more challenging than breaking windows.

They even began to understand the value of things. If it cost £10 a week to feed one



Oxford Street
(Photo Le Bastard — Explorer)



An unexpected discovery
(Photo Inter-Action Centre)



project populated with animals and vegetables. Some low-ranking official simply assumed that, without permission, nothing should grow. Now Camden Council, to their credit, take pride in having fostered the first of some twenty-five city farms in the United Kingdom, and which is used regularly by 300 children, visited annually by 25 000 children and 15 000 adults and old people.

All too slowly, however, are other local authorities clearing the red tape to allow this very inexpensive back-to-nature project to revitalise derelict inner city sites. The low level finish of "farm" buildings is uninviting as a target for vandalism. The natural quality of this finish also fits nicely into any landscape. It is, of course, temporary, with no permanent structures to hold up future civic developments on the land, as and when they may arise.

Inter-Action helps other groups

In 1976, the United Kingdom Department of the Environment gave the Inter-Action Advisory Service a grant to extend the expertise gained on City Farm 1, throughout the country. Neighbourhood groups who wish to bring children and adults into contact with nature in the inner cities come to this branch of Inter-Action for advice, training and pump-priming money.

Inter-Action, being one of the largest community animation centres in Europe, has many branches of its organisation which help other groups. Along with City Farm 1 and the City Farm Advisory Service, the organisation has fourteen teams of workers, including a training unit to develop animators, a Community Arts Centre and a publishing company devoted to self-help publications.

Perhaps the most striking of Inter-Action's mobile facilities is the community media van with its back projection film and slide facility, three screen video capacity, printing equipment and loudspeakers. This media centre on wheels is used to develop self-help of all kinds. Recently, of course, the media van has concentrated on bringing the images and inspiration of city farms to street corners, housing estates, and market places up

and down the country. Several of the artists in the organisation have contributed their skills to making city farms extraordinary places. Murals and concrete sculptures of horses, pigs, cows (and once even a giant giraffe) are made by local people under the guidance of an Inter-Action artist. This adds a sense of participation and identity to the beginnings of a project. In addition to this, the concrete sculptures are not only decorative but functional. The number of frightened children and mentally handicapped persons who have overcome fear on a "slow" moving concrete horse is very great indeed.

It is envisaged that before 1980 over fifty city farms will exist in the United Kingdom. Each will be managed by local people for the benefit of neighbours. The support received from British Rail, the National Farmers' Union, the Agricultural Association along with the backing of leaders from the major political parties means that the red tape faced in the earlier days can now be overcome more quickly. Expertise can be made available to any local group that wants it.

Farmers on "real" farms throughout the country have proved most willing to "partner" real city farms nearby.

City children are beginning to visit the country where previously they rarely left their own neighbourhood. Thus a curious partnership of voluntary and statutory agencies is beginning to green the cities of Great Britain through city farms. E. D.



Castor fiber — rare rodent reintroduced in frontier regions



Symbol of co-operation

The return of the beaver

Winfred Herbst

Extermination

The beaver (*Castor fiber*), Europe's largest rodent, was pushed to the brink of extinction even during the nineteenth century. There were only a few places in Europe where small populations still managed to survive in an extremely inhospitable environment — in Russia and Norway, in the Elbe river-meadows near Magdeburg and along the lower Rhône.

In the rest of Europe, once wholly colonised by beavers, the species was decimated by human greed and folly. Its flesh could be eaten even during Lent, its fur was thick and beautiful, its scent glands yielded the cure-all *castor*, its teeth

seemed as charms: in short, the beaver was desirable from his snout to his scaly tail. And so man pursued him ruthlessly, ignoring both his biology and faint-hearted attempts on the part of the land-owning nobility to protect him.

Over large areas of Europe, this master hydraulic engineer and dam-builder became no more than a mythical beast, or else a relic preserved in names (e.g. Biberach, or Beaverbrook).

Reintroduction

The realisation that the fauna had thus been sadly impoverished prompted a handful of people to think about reintroducing the beaver in areas from which it had vanished. After a timid start Sweden, Canada, Russia and the USA embarked on massive resettlement programmes. In the United States, where fur-traders had quite systematically emptied vast areas of an animal which the Indians had hunted within careful limits, tens of thousands of beavers were moved back into their old territories.

But in the densely populated regions of central Europe, the rapidity of progress had affected virtually every natural landscape. Many former beaver biotopes had been destroyed when riverside woodlands were cut back or rivers became too heavily charged with effluent.

A number of small-scale trials were carried out in Germany and Austria before an area was discovered, almost by accident, which seemed admirably suited to a large-scale experiment — the frontier area be-

tween Germany and Austria around the lower Salzach and the lower Inn rivers. Here, human agency had not yet produced disastrous effects on nature, while on the other hand splendid new water-meadows had been created from silted up reservoirs.

But co-operation across the frontier was essential if the prospects of success were not to be diminished from the outset. German and Austrian nature conservation associations got together and assumed responsibility for the resettlement project. The many personal meetings of the initiators were soon followed by technical meetings of scientists to discuss the biological problems involved. Thorough biotope studies were carried out. Before a start could be made on resettlement, however, the beaver had to be given legal protection. The species is now fully protected under new Bavarian nature conservation legislation; in the Austrian provinces of Salzburg and Upper Austria it is still classed as a game animal but is protected by an all-year close season. Thus an important obstacle has been overcome very rapidly, thanks to great understanding on the part of the authorities.

Transfrontier co-operation

The Nature Conservation Association has gradually built up the beaver population in the Inn water-meadows to twenty animals. Unfortunately there are losses from migration or as a result of such unpredictable events as fatal bacterial infections, so that the colony is not growing as fast as was hoped, despite successful breeding.

It was therefore all the more important that the Austrian Nature Conservation Association should also take rapid steps to release beavers in the area. The Bavarian Nature Conservation Association, which had initiated the resettlement project, placed its contacts with the Swedish authorities at the disposal of its Austrian counterpart: the beavers released in the German-Austrian frontier area come from Sweden, where the species is protected by law, animals being captured in areas where, for example, the long-term survival of a beaver colony seems unlikely.

The animals were taken to their new home by air and released within a few hours of capture. In view of the great importance of this resettlement experiment, the red tape of customs formalities was minimised, with the result that not only were the associations spared further financial outlay but the beavers were not kept in captivity any longer than was necessary.

On 16 September 1977, the first pair was released in a state-owned forest near the Salzach River in Upper Austria. The Austrian federal forestry authorities were most co-operative, and showed keen interest in actively helping to enrich the local fauna.

The first Austrian pair of beavers on the Salzach, donated by the European Hunting Order *Silberner Bruch*, will be followed by many more, the aim being to merge this colony and the Bavarian colony in the Inn area. This would ensure a viable, growing population with no need of human intervention, and even make it possible for migrating beavers to settle in suitable biotopes in the surrounding region. W. H.



(Photo J. Vilanova)

The Pyrenees

A frontier, but no longer a barrier

Juan Roch Carulla

Humans have lived so long with nature and on nature, and are so proud of their power over it, that they have forgotten to take measures to protect it and have thereby jeopardised its survival. The alarming situation resulting from their blind egoism has now compelled them, however, to mend their ways, and they have begun lately to prepare to meet the challenge of development.

Such a situation warrants repeating the warning that every generation is entitled only to the use and enjoyment of the fruits of nature, and is in duty bound to preserve the natural heritage and pass it on unimpaired to subsequent generations. This inevitably implies that space and renewable resources must be used properly, their proper use necessitating consideration, not only of the needs and criteria of the moment, but also of prospects and forecasts for the future.

Frontier and international co-operation

If a nature conservation policy is not to conflict with economic and social development, one of the most spectacular aspects of which is tourism, it presupposes a catalogue of the purposes for which the land may be used. It must be based on a strategy for the location of these different uses and a tactical programme for the activities to be put in

hand. A prerequisite for such a policy, however, is an overall view of the situation which can be obtained only from methodical planning.

The planning process depends on full and accurate data and, for this, exchanges of information with other countries are often necessary. These can develop into a helpful and constructive dialogue and ultimately lead to transfrontier co-operation.

Spain and France have felt this need very strongly. Contacts have been made on both sides of the frontier with a view to establishing, as far as possible, a concerted policy for nature protection in the Pyrenees. The desire for concerted action was prompted by the fact that, as the problems of nature protection on one side of the mountains are often identical to those on the other side, it is comprehensive and not piecemeal solutions that are called for. To this end Spain and France have accordingly been trying, during the past few years, to work out a transfrontier co-operation policy encompassing all the nature protection problems in the Pyrenees. These efforts are still tentative and diffident, however, and have not yet been incorporated into a general co-ordinated plan.

From official contacts...

The most official and organised attempt has been that made in the framework of



The beaver's influence on its environment is far from negligible!
(Photo M. Blanchet)



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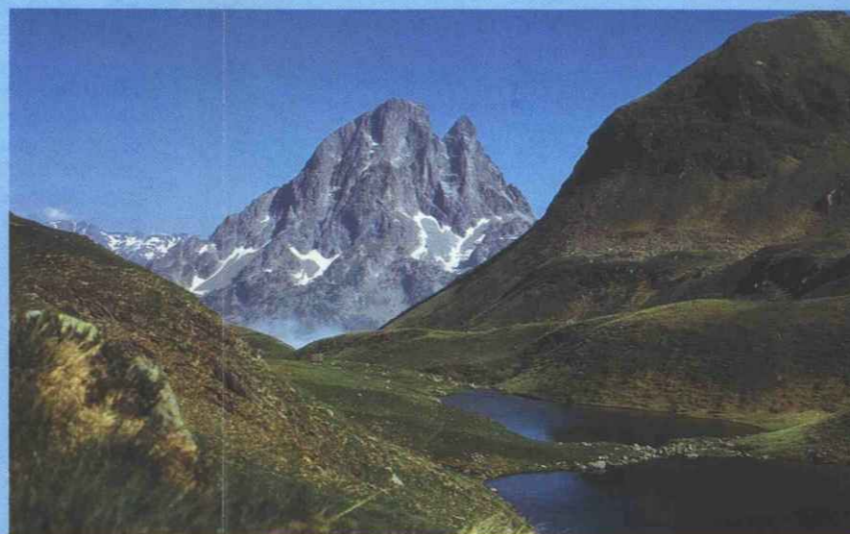
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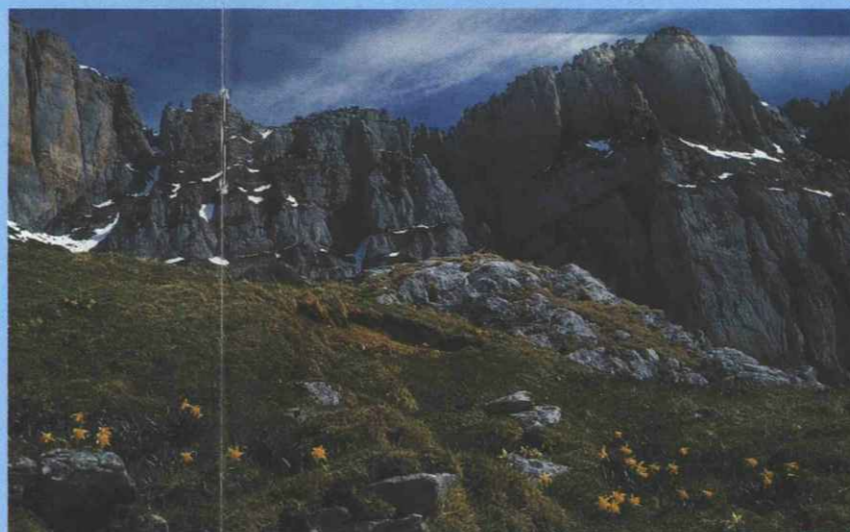
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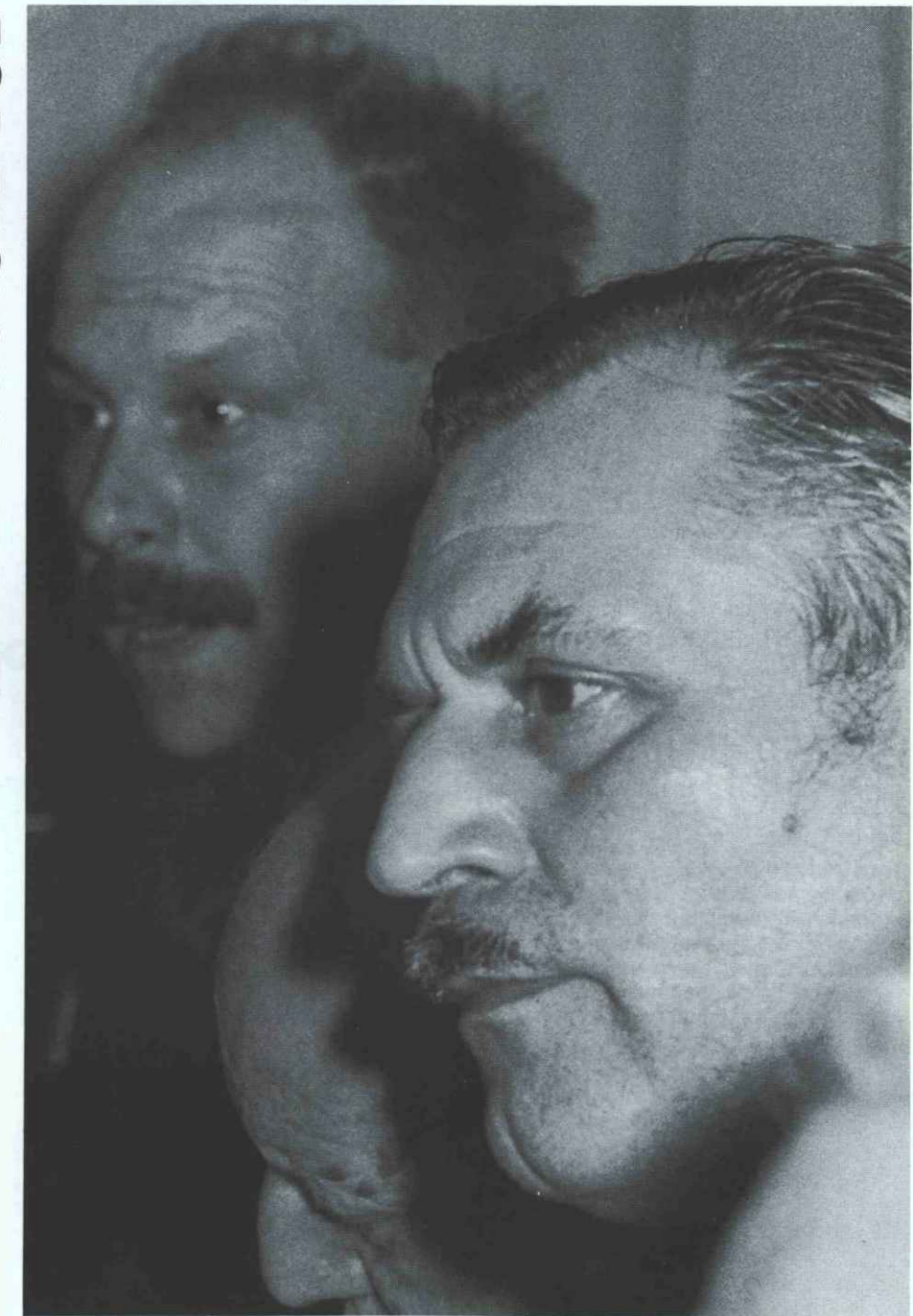


6



7

Citizen action for



(Photo Dienst Publieke Werken)

Sven-Runo Bergqvist

Conflicts

During the past few years demands for greater citizen influence have been made in many countries. This has often happened in connection with threats to essential environmental interests such as the establishment of polluting industries or the expansion of urban settlements. In many cases politics and environmental in-

terests have come to form opposing interests and sometimes this opposition has erupted into violence: representatives of environmental interests have occupied land, preventing the commencement of building operations, or have chained themselves to helicopters to prevent the aerial spraying of pesticides over forests and woodlands. The methods used have been many and varied. The representatives of the community

have reacted in different ways to these manifestations. In some cases they have called in the police so that the policy decisions already taken could be put into effect. In other cases they have revised the content of the decisions, which has often involved a considerable increase in costs. Whatever their outcome events of this kind have quite often revealed deficiencies in the workings of democracy, not least at local government level.

The Pyrenees: a frontier, but no longer a barrier

the Pyrenees International Frontier Commission. At a meeting of the commission in Paris in December 1976, France proposed that a "joint Franco-Spanish working party for the protection of nature, parks and reserves" be set up. This working party's terms of reference are extremely broad, embracing all nature protection problems (including erosion) in the frontier area. Meetings are held alternately in France and in Spain, with no specific agenda; they are arranged in response to a request to deal with some particularly pressing problem. This shows a desire on the part of those who set up the working party not to imprison it in an administrative straitjacket or allow it to become an unwieldy, cumbersome machine, but to make it a flexible instrument capable of answering the needs of nature protection and frontier co-operation.

Since its institution the working party has met once, in Tarbes (France) on 3 and 4 March 1977, at the headquarters of the Western Pyrenees National Park. The meeting discussed a wide and varied range of subjects, including the possibility

of an agreement for the joint repression of hunting offences, with special reference to the legal problems raised by rangers' movements in the frontier zone, and the specific measures to be taken to prevent the invasion of the frontier forests by bark beetles. The working party also considered ways of improving exchanges of information across the frontier, especially with regard to the national park animal counts, the introduction of certain species of fish, and the supply of fry. The advancing rabies front and its consequences for wildlife in protected areas, which are causing the nature protection authorities particular concern, were also discussed by the working party.

It is through the working party that the French and Spanish authorities are kept informed of extensions to parks and reserves. The French delegation gave a brief account of the early phases of a project to establish a new 80 000 hectare nature park in the Ariège department adjoining Spain and Andorra. The Spanish side reported on the enlargement of the Ordesa (Huesca) national park bordering on France, which was established as a national mountain park by a royal decree of 16 August 1918. This enlargement has incorporated the Añisclo valley in the park, increasing its area from 2 166 to 15 074 hectares. The park has also been equipped with excellent facilities: a reception centre, parking area, 50 km of trails, several pedestrian bridges, shelters for visitors, observation towers in picturesque places and educational walks all add to the pleasure of a visit to the park.

Also in the interests of co-operation and the provision of information, the Spanish delegation presented a report on the Aigües Tortes national park and the San Mauricio Lake in Lerida province; this area of 10 500 hectares was made a "mountain park" by a decree of 21 October 1977. A study is being made with a view to its possible enlargement to include the upper Aran Region (Aran Valley) and right bank of the Bonaigua river at Valencia de Aneu. The farms purchased and mountain areas taken over for public purposes would also be included in the planned extension. At a later stage it is hoped to extend the park still further by incorporating the land on the left bank of the same river as far as the French border.

As far as the exchange of information is concerned, results have been most encouraging, as witness the examples mentioned above. But as regards concrete action, a certain prudence is called for. Franco-Spanish frontier co-operation is in its infancy and so far matters have not gone beyond contacts and discussion, either in the case of the proposed agreement on the joint repression of hunting offences or in that of the measures to be taken to combat insect attacks or rabies.

All these matters discussed at the working party's first meeting in Tarbes will be on

the agenda again at the next meeting, which will probably take place at Viella (Lerida) in Spain in March or April 1978. No doubt new questions will also be considered: e.g. the problem of erosion and water and forestry operations.

...To friendly meetings

Alongside the activities of the "Joint Franco-Spanish Working Party for the Protection of Nature, Parks and Reserves in the Frontier Area", various less official contacts are being made with a view to broadening the base for frontier co-operation in nature conservation. Though still desultory, such meetings have been held between park authorities on both sides of the frontier; the Pyrenees Park director calls more or less regularly on his opposite number at the Ordesa Park in Spain, and vice versa.

The working party has recommended that the French and Spanish nature protection authorities keep in touch and exchange information, in particular, the lists of local nature protection agencies.

Lastly, mention should be made of the contacts that take place outside the official structures, namely those between private nature protection associations on both sides of the frontier.

A promising future

Although all these efforts are still hesitant, they augur well for the future of frontier co-operation in nature protection. Since the established machinery for co-operation is highly flexible and largely informal there should be no impediment to the preparation of the legal basis needed for the development of transfrontier co-operation in nature conservation. We consequently feel confident that the great hopes placed in the "Joint Franco-Spanish Working Party for the Protection of Nature, Parks and Reserves in the Frontier Area" will be justified.

J. R. C.

Captions to colour illustrations

1. Griffon Vulture (*gyps fulvus*)
(Photo M. Terrasse)
2. Fritillaria meleagris
(Photo F. Merlet)
3. Ursus arctos
(Photo F. Merlet)
4. Massif d'Ivraty
(Photo J. F. and M. Terrasse)
5. Pic du Midi d'Ossau
(Photo J. Remazeilles)
6. Cirque de Lescun
(Photo J. F. and M. Terrasse)
7. Liliun martagon
(Photo J. F. and M. Terrasse)

Crisis

Without hesitation one can say that the 1970s witnessed in many countries what can be termed a crisis of representative democracy. In several countries survey reports point to a widening confidence gap between politicians and citizens. There are a number of possible reasons for this. Generally speaking there appears to be a great deal of unrest and insecurity present among people in today's modern industrial society. Changes occur very quickly and have a decisive effect on people's living conditions. Unrest is often concerned with the preservation of indispensable natural assets sometimes taking the form of civic action. It is, however, probably no less common for people to evade their problems by taking refuge in a passive attitude since they feel that in any case there is nothing they can do to influence developments.

It should be added that local government activities themselves have been radically transformed during the past few years in many countries. Municipal business has grown considerably and this has placed heavier demands on local government representatives and administration. To cope with the increased work load reorganisation and rationalisation measures have been taken which have often been detrimental to democracy.

Thus representative democracy, as it has generally operated at local level, has had difficulty in adjusting to the radically changing circumstances of the past few decades although in recent years politicians have given attention to these problems both at national and at local level.

In many quarters a process of development has been set in motion which, it is to be hoped, will eventually reform the working methods of local government.

New priorities

Assessments of future prospects regarding citizens, influence on environmental issues are inevitably coloured by one's general anticipations concerning the future of European countries. As a general premise, however, one is bound to assume that the whole of the industrialised world has come to a crossroads in that the previous unrestrained exploitation of natural resources of various kinds will have to be superseded by strict management. The task now will be to define priorities so as to conserve natural resources which will have a crucial bearing on the living conditions of future generations. This definition of priorities will have to be accomplished during a period of considerable and world-wide economic difficulties in the shadow of a shortage of energy and raw materials and the threat of permanent mass unemployment.



It is everybody's duty to protect our natural environment (Photo G. Duboutin — Explorer)

A substantial redefinition of priorities in favour of the preservation of natural resources will, accordingly, make very heavy demands on the viability of the political system. Many civic groups may be faced with a noticeable deterioration of material standards to facilitate an improvement of the quality of life.

Decentralisation

To ensure a powerful degree of citizen influence on environmental issues decision-making responsibilities must be located as close to individual citizens as possible. It is at local government level that citizens are in a position to survey the consequences of various policies concerning the natural environment, and it is here too, that the practical problems connected with the insensitive handling of natural resources are most readily apparent. A large measure of local responsibility is therefore needed, for example, concerning the siting of environmentally hazardous industry, the construction of

roads in sensitive natural surroundings, the supervision of industrial pollution and the use of open country near lakes, along coasts and in mountain areas for the building of holiday homes.

The results of the Conference of European Ministers responsible for Local Government, which was held in Lisbon in the autumn of 1977 under the aegis of the Council of Europe, show that in most member countries there is a powerful tendency towards the decentralisation of decision-making from central to local government level. Efforts in this direction are likely to become progressively more apparent during the next few years.

One of the main points at issue, however, is how we can establish effective planning instruments in local government whereby priorities can be defined on a long-term basis, and also how we can increase opportunities for citizen influence, so that planning can be influenced by the public. This problem has not yet been solved but much has already been achieved in the majority of countries during the 1970s.

Citizen influence

Studies carried out within the Council of Europe Steering Committee for Regional and Municipal Matters and reported in a series of studies have shown that in many countries today measures are being taken to increase opportunities for citizen influence. The object of these efforts is to deepen representative democracy by facilitating active communication between voters and elected representatives, even between elections.

Previous experience has shown that there is no universal solution to the problems of municipal democracy. Neither can it be said that the results of efforts made so far have come up to expectations. Even where considerable information campaigns have been organised active participation has often been confined to a relatively small proportion of citizens. In many cases, however, it has proved possible to involve a much larger number than ever before.

Some of the measures taken have been aimed at bringing about a general improvement of municipal democracy, i.e. by improving the working conditions of elected representatives, by bringing committee work further into the open, by actively providing information and by devolving municipal business onto local bodies.

Measures of this kind are, of course, interesting as regards influence on environmental questions, since they transform the general conditions in which representative democracy has to operate.

But the measures taken to reform local government planning activities have an even more vital bearing on the ability of citizens to influence environmental conditions.

Measures

These measures are various and of different kinds. They can take the following forms:

— a clearer division of the planning process into different stages featuring, for example, programmes indicating the aims of planning, alternative draft solutions and, in a subsequent stage, definitive proposals and follow-ups;

— active measures at various stages to make it possible for citizens to state their views before decisions are made. This includes wider consultation procedures, information meetings, exhibitions, wider circulation of draft measures and reports, selected reference groups of citizens to monitor the planning process, and interviews and questionnaire studies among citizens.

As a rule the best results have been obtained from combinations of several different methods and repeated activities on several occasions parallel to the compilation of plans. Sometimes, in order to engage citizen groups which do not normally participate in these activities, local authorities have approached citizens and invited them to take part in discussion groups concerning a current planning process. In some cases this has appreciably increased the number of persons taking part.

Planning material can be adapted to make it more readily intelligible to all citizens. For example, maps and tables can be supplemented by exhaustive verbal descriptions of the various consequences of the plans concerned, language can be simplified and use can be made of various modern aids (e.g. realistic maps, air photographs, films and photographs of sensitive natural areas, sound filmstrips and models) to provide better illustrations of plans.

In Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Great Britain, citizen influence at local government level has been a subject of national enquiry resulting in the drafting of practical recommendations. In many other countries too, widespread efforts are being made to increase citizen influence at local government level.

The Conference of the European Ministers Responsible for Local Government will be held in Stockholm in September 1978 on the subject of "citizen participation". The question of citizen influence on environmental questions will naturally be a point for discussion. The choice of conference theme should be viewed as a reflection of the great importance attached to the issue today by governments throughout Europe. It is to be hoped that the results will make it possible for the problems of local democracy to be tackled successfully and for wider citizen influence to be developed. This in turn would greatly enhance the possibilities of creating a more human society and an environment in which natural resources are conserved for the benefit of future generations.

S.-R. B.



Information — Reflection — Action (Photo Svenskt Pressfoto)

Looking after nature

Information campaign in Switzerland

Jürg Rohner

For a long time nature conservation was a matter of protecting rare or particularly seriously threatened forms of animal or plant life. And indeed the protection of particular species and biotopes of outstanding importance is still a major object today.

However, with the increasing demands on the countryside owing to industrialisation, urbanisation, the building of roads and the rationalisation of agriculture it has become clear that nature conservation must be more broadly based. The countryside as a whole has come to be seen as something worthy of protection; it should not be interfered with unless there is a clear need to do so — and even then only with the greatest care. This means that nature conservation should be concerned not only with protecting popular beauty spots or areas of national importance but also the everyday surroundings in which we live. Every locality still possesses some natural features and their importance must be recognised by its inhabitants so that they may be duly protected.

The importance of local authorities in Switzerland

Probably in no other country in Europe do local authorities have as much scope to

shape the environment as in Switzerland. This scope does, of course, differ from *canton* to *canton* and is increasingly restricted by the powers of the *cantons* and the Confederation, but in comparison with other countries Swiss local authorities have nonetheless retained much of their traditional independence. Hence their considerable responsibility for the present and future state of the natural surroundings in their areas.

Under federal law, nature conservation is a task for the *cantons*. The Confederation has only limited powers in the matter and these mainly relate to the protection of species. The *cantons* leave questions of local importance to local authorities themselves and confine their own role to exercising supervision and dealing with problems of supra-local significance. The scope available to local authorities is explained in greater detail below, nature conservation being construed in its narrower sense. Technical environmental protection measures are left out of consideration.

What nature conservation involves

No one, presumably, disputes today that effective protection of nature and land-

scapes is possible only within the framework of town and country planning, which must cover the whole of a local authority's area and deal at least with the following:

- clear demarcation of building land;
- designation of priority areas for agriculture and forestry;
- selection of sites for public works and installations, and designation of protected areas.

Nature conservation is concerned principally with the last of these and care should be taken to see, for example, that there are sufficiently larger buffer areas around protected zones. Those responsible for nature conservation must, however, also concern themselves with planning as a whole. There are many instances of provision for cemeteries or sports grounds being "overlooked" and the omission being repaired later, at the expense of a protected area or a forest. Such errors in local planning should be precluded from the outset. Vigilance must also be exercised when plans are subsequently revised so that protected areas are not made still smaller than they probably are already.

The designation of an area as a protected zone does not normally ensure adequate protection for it. Further measures are required such as detailed restrictions and specifications concerning the area's use and responsibility for its maintenance. Swiss local authorities have an important role to play here. They are empowered — and, in many *cantons*, even required — to lay down such measures wherever protected areas of local importance are involved. Some discharge this responsibility admirably, but the majority have made far too little use of their legal rights, or even none at all.

In addition to this special sphere of nature conservation local authorities have a whole series of responsibilities in connection with which conservation needs should be taken into consideration. These include:

— land consolidation and similar so-called rationalisation measures. In Switzerland these can hardly ever be decreed from above; usually they originate from local landowners. Such measures are usually accompanied by drainage schemes, river diversions, the straightening of forest boundaries, the removal of hedgerows and trees or the making-up of farm roads, which are all undesirable from the point of view of nature conservation.

— building of mountain and forest paths. About three-quarters of Switzerland's forest land is publicly owned, most of it by local authorities. The part played by the latter in development decisions affecting such land should not be underestimated,



Swiss local authorities are in the enviable position of still largely being able to shape and maintain the environment in their areas with the co-operation of individual citizens (Photo O. Ruppen)

even though path building is heavily subsidised by the *cantons* and the Confederation.

It also depends largely on local initiative whether positive and creative nature conservation measures are implemented. These include making ponds, converting exhausted gravel pits and creating nature reserves for educational purposes.

The role of private associations

Local authorities are helped in their efforts by private associations and individuals. Throughout Switzerland there are small associations which up to now have been primarily concerned with protecting birds. Potentially, however, they could

deal with a much wider range of nature conservation activities. Many of them have already realised this and are, for example, giving their attention to the preservation of individual biotopes. Others are particularly active in the field of information, organising excursions and exhibitions, which are well-tried means of publicising nature conservation problems.

Such associations as well as individuals can also pave the way for political decision-making by compiling inventories of items of biological value as a basis for suggestions concerning new protected areas. If the activities of the authorities are closely monitored projects with an environmental impact are frequently better thought out from the beginning. Alternatively, attempts can be made to forestall, or at least improve bad projects, by lodging objections and alerting the public to the dangers.

The information campaign's aims

For these various reasons the Swiss League for Nature Protection (SBN) has adopted "Nature conservation at local level" as the theme for its efforts this year and in the years to come. This campaign will not replace current endeavours to protect particular species or rare biotopes, but rather complement them. It has become clear that in many places there is a willingness to work for nature conservation more actively than before at local level. Often, however, there is a lack of knowledge of how to tackle the problems arising.

This is where the "Nature conservation at local level" campaign will play its part by providing practical assistance. The campaign will include the following:

- publication of a handbook on nature conservation for local authorities entitled "Looking after Nature" (*Natur als Aufgabe*);
- preparation of instruction sheets, etc.;
- organisation of a travelling exhibition on nature conservation;
- provision of a wide variety of courses for laymen on the main aspects of nature conservation at local level, and
- publicising of exemplary schemes through the mass media.

The aim of the campaign is to stimulate a practical contribution to nature conservation by a large number of Swiss local authorities. The most important thing is not that as many people as possible should talk about the campaign but that as much as possible should actually be done as a result of it. Swiss local authorities are in the enviable position of still largely being able to shape and maintain the environment in their areas with the co-operation of individual citizens. It can only be hoped that they will make the most of this opportunity.

J. R.



Aerial view of the park: Sûre Valley (Photo J. Proess)

One park, two countries

François-Christian Muller

The German-Luxembourg Park is crossed by two rivers, the Our and the Sûre, which mark the frontier between the two countries. It is a concrete example of what has been achieved by practical co-operation between Luxembourg and the Land of Rhineland-Palatinate in the matter of landscape protection and recreational facilities.

The natural park, on the territory of two sovereign states, was established by an international treaty signed on 17 April

1964 by the government of the Land of Rhineland-Palatinate and the government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It has a total area of 789 km², of which 357 km² are on Luxembourg territory.

The first trans-frontier natural park in Western Europe, it covers a magnificent area with highly varied landscapes, mainly of two kinds: in the north there is Ardennes schist, with gently undulating plateaux of farmland and deep sinuous valleys whose slopes are covered by

forest; below which rivers and streams flow between narrow meadows; in the southern part we find beech forests and many-shaped rocky formations of Luxembourg sandstone, which provide a backdrop for villages spread out on the heights or on a river bank amidst fields, meadows and pastureland.

Joint management

The *Verein Naturpark Südeifel* association on the German side and the Luxembourg section of the *Groupement européen Ardennes-Eifel* are the founder members of the natural park.

The two countries have undertaken to protect the landscape in the natural park according to identical principles as far as possible. Efforts over ten years to preserve the area as one of outstanding natural beauty were recognised on 19 November 1973, when the Council of Europe awarded it the European Diploma.

The treaty establishing the natural park set up a Joint International Commission. Each country is represented by four members. As a rule, two meetings a year are held. The commission sees to the planning of the park as a whole, makes suggestions to the two governments for amenities in the park and tries to harmonise initiatives taken on the two sides. In addition to this work of harmonisation, the commission sees to matters that require attention on both sides of the frontier. It is chaired alternately for a year at a time by a German and a Luxembourger. The commission is assisted by a working party whose duties include forestry services. A further international working party looks after propaganda.

The two founder members also established a joint management body, the *Ver-einigung Deutsch-Luxemburgischer Naturpark*. Continuity of management is ensured by a permanent secretary.

On the Luxembourg side the park is managed and watched over by the Water and Forestry Department in co-operation with the Ministry of Tourism. On the German side the *Verein Naturpark Südeifel* is directly responsible and is assisted by the Forestry Department. A plan was drawn up in 1972 for both parts of the park with the aim of reconciling tourist and recreational development with protection of the environment. Management of the park embraces its forests, open country, water-courses and villages. The legislation and the rules by which the park is managed in the two countries differ greatly.

The German part of the park is governed by the Regional Planning Act of 1966 supplemented by an Order of 25 June 1971 laying down prohibitions and obligations.

In Luxembourg the 1965 Nature Conservation Act applies.

However, the two acts have similar objectives and the International Treaty of 1964 serves to harmonise them.

The park's achievements: Material amenities

The existing facilities are already large. They include sheets of water, recreation centres, camping sites, swimming pools, an animal park, youth camps, circular cross-frontier walks, cycle tracks, bridle paths, tracks and overnight huts for hikers, car parks and rest and picnic areas. The development stage may now be considered complete.

Among the achievements particular mention should be made of the bridges. Four international bridges for walkers have been built across the Sûre and the Our, facilitating frontier crossings within the park. Each of them represents an advance towards a united Europe. The especial interest of the bridge above Echternach is that, in crossing the Sûre, it connects the German and Luxembourg parts of the Ardennes-Eifel way, which leads through the park to the Belgian frontier near Martelange.

At Ouren, where Belgium, the Federal Republic of Germany and Luxembourg meet, an international monument to the "Founders of Europe" was erected in 1977 by the three countries, in co-operation with France.

Under the 1974 treaty between the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the Land of Rhineland-Palatinate on joint water management by local and other authorities, a

biological purifying station has been built at Echternach to treat the waste waters of several local authorities in the German and Luxembourg parts of the park.

The Park Commission and the working parties are also engaged in less spectacular work, such as the publication of maps and propaganda leaflets, the issue of a film on the park, the harmonisation of legislation on camping sites and their integration in the landscape.

Protection of landscape, flora and fauna and archeological features

The park authorities have not neglected action to protect the landscape, the flora and fauna and their biotopes. An inventory has been made of wetlands and chalky grasslands containing orchids, and natural reserves are in the process of establishment in the German part.

In the Luxembourg part the features of interest are included in the "nature protection" sectoral plan of the overall town and country planning scheme. An area of forest land has even been proposed as part of the European network of biogenetic reserves. The forests concerned are those in the ravines surrounding the Berdorf plateau near Echternach.

In the matter of fauna, mention must be made of the Bollendorf Ornithological Centre, where eagle owls are acclimatised with a view to their release in the area.

Where the protection of archaeological features is concerned, great efforts are being made to preserve the Roman towns of Echternach, Irrel and Bollendorf and,

above all, the Celtic sites on the Ferschweiler plateau.

Stocktaking and prospects for the future

In general it may be said that the tourist achievements of the German-Luxembourg Natural Park are positive. Where nature protection is concerned it must be admitted that the fact of making the region a natural park has been only partially successful in giving the landscape and its flora and fauna the effective protection that their great natural beauty, their originality and above all their vulnerability demand. Protective measures need to be taken even further. In the first place, stricter rules must be laid down to prevent the landscape from being spoiled by secondary residences and a proliferation of camping sites.

To this end the Luxembourg Government has tabled with Parliament a bill on the establishment of natural parks, protected landscapes and natural reserves. This includes provision for making available to the park an engineer from the Water and Forestry Department, two foresters and a number of permanent workers. On the human plane the park has greatly encouraged contact between people on the two sides of the frontier and has made it easier for those responsible for nature protection, and above all local authorities in the two countries, to compare notes.

The joint achievements are already appreciable; they should encourage the authorities managing the park to continue their efforts.

F.-C. M.

The Alfred Toepfer Bridge symbolising the communal management of the Germany/Luxembourg national park (Photo F. C. Muller)



The world's largest port . . .

500 000 containers with a capacity of 10.8 million tons
30 000 boats
38 million tons of oil
8.8 million tons of coal
21 million tons of iron ore
pass through Rotterdam each year

... at the mouth of the Rhine

which flows into the Netherlands laden with 11.6 million tons of chloride
5.3 million tons of sulphate
766 tons of phenol
11 141 tons of oil
1.18 million tons of nitrate
975 tons of copper
6615 tons of zinc
28 tons of mercury
1462 tons of lead¹

¹ These figures are supplied by the International Committee of Rhine Basin Water Services, Amsterdam



(Photo Aero-Camera)

Rotterdam, the world's largest port

André van der Louw,
Mayor of Rotterdam

Rotterdam: the world's largest port

Rotterdam and its outskirts, forming the world's largest port, has been able to take full economic advantage of its privileged geographical position at the mouth of the Rhine and the Meuse. Of course, such a fast and dynamic development as Rotterdam's has its drawbacks, as the inhabitants are fast discovering.

An *entrepôt* for goods from all over the world, Rotterdam is also the place where the ships crowd in to unload their ore and oil to satisfy the needs of our modern civilisation and its many petrochemical industries. Famous for its shipyards, Rotterdam can also boast the most advanced technology industries. Factory chimneys punctuate the skyline, spitting out their multi-coloured smoke to pollute the air. In an effort to keep pollution in check, *Snuffelpaal* (literally, "sniffing poles") sound the alarm as soon as the maximum air pollution level is reached.

The Rhine at its mouth, where the city and port of Rotterdam lie, is swollen with all the waste matter it picks up as it winds through the industrial heart of the continent and only too well deserves its name of the "sewer of Europe".

In this modern and dynamic city, surrounded by hundreds of square kilometres of industry, sliced in two by the malodorous waters of the Rhine and asphyxiated by the fumes and gas of the very industries which give it life, live one million people.

So now we have to set about remedying the drastic effects of such dense industrialisation and immoderate growth.

The first question to be asked is who is competent to take action to protect the environment and improve the quality of life.

The municipality of Rotterdam is, obviously, the most directly concerned, but the scale of the problem is far greater for Rotterdam is now a great regional metropolis managed by regional authorities. The solution of Rotterdam's problems is also a matter to be dealt with at national level and even, where some aspects are concerned, at international level.

Furthermore, a co-ordinated and concerted overall policy is needed for the problem can no longer be tackled piecemeal. The local authorities of Rotterdam are therefore working to enlist the active support of the national authorities.

Air pollution: some progress has already been made in this field. This has come principally from the municipalities of the Rijnmond (Rhine mouth) area. In collaboration with the Rijnmond Central Agency for Environment Management and Protection (DCMR) which they have set up, they have set about monitoring and checking pollution. The industries concerned are active participants in the scheme and it is hoped that such a concerted effort will bear fruit.

Water pollution: this is a crucial problem for Rotterdam, especially where the Rhine is concerned. However, as the river is an international one, the solution cannot come from the city alone but must be found at international level.

Nevertheless the city also shares responsibility for water pollution and must take steps to find a remedy. For this purpose

there are plans to build a water-purification plant in a disused part of the old port. This could solve the problem of foul smells and could even do something towards nature conservation as it is also planned to build a public park above the plant.

The polder councils are also working on anti-pollution measures to prohibit the discharge of industrial waste into sewers. Non-biodegradable and dangerous industrial effluents will have to be stored, not discharged.

The Nuisances Act, implemented by the Rijnmond authorities and by the municipality of Rotterdam, imposes penalties on industries and firms responsible for pollution.

Green spaces: these are conspicuously absent from the port area. However, the city itself is a green one. Gardens and public parks abound both in the centre and in the new districts.

Besides this, Rotterdam is encircled by a belt of small lakes and green spaces which are recreational areas particularly popular with the public. The "Kralingse Bos" (Forest of Kralingen), as well as the Kralingen and Berg ponds on the outskirts of the city provide leisure facilities where the people of Rotterdam can relax and leave the fatigue and bustle of the city behind them. To the west and south are lagoons formed by the old, long-since vanished, arms of the sea. These are becoming increasingly important for recreation while the dunes and beaches — with their own problems — are still favourite tourist spots.

A. A. L.



"Recreation" overlooked by petrol tanks (Photo Provincie Zuid-Holland — Arnold Bosmans)



The green revolution!

A green belt

Özdoğan Aktar

The City of Ankara can boast a number of age old parks which have contributed to its celebrity. Suffice it to mention Kugulu Park, Genglik Park and the Botanical Gardens of Gankaya Park. These parks are veritable oases where it is a pleasure to relax or take a walk. However, the continued growth of the city, due largely to its functions as a capital and to the influx of peasants from the country, has now rendered the number of parks insufficient. During the last few years there has been a growing demand on the part of the population for open spaces where adults can stroll and children can play. Unfortunately, the municipality does not possess

much land and little money is available for buying it. However, it has been decided to plant more trees in the existing parks. Moreover the local authorities have given priority to the planning of relatively modest-sized parks endowed with the simplest facilities for passive entertainment. The same policy is being applied to small playgrounds for children. This led to the creation in 1977 of twenty-one parks and playgrounds. It is hoped to be able to add the equivalent of about 3.60 ha of open land.

The municipality is also planning to create sports grounds and playgrounds for chil-

dren from ten to fifteen years of age. This is top on its list of priorities, for the young spend their free time playing ball in the streets of Ankara.

To improve the quality of life in the capital a new plan is under way for the old centre, the Ulus Square, with a view to adapting it to modern traffic conditions and modern needs. The old buildings surrounding it are to be protected.

At the same time, in an attempt to make Ankara into a green city which is pleasant to live in, an ambitious reforestation scheme has been undertaken around the town itself. For the once densely-wooded hills which surround the city have become stripped of vegetation by the excessive use of their trees for firewood and building. These denuded hills are wide open to erosion. In order to remedy this situation and to bring back to Ankara the greenery and oxygen which she so badly needs, it was decided, in the sixties, to replant both evergreen and deciduous trees. However, this is a long-term operation and it is still too early to measure results. All too often it is difficult for man to make good the damage which he has wrought so quickly and unthinkingly. Ö. A.



An opportunity to forget the environmental problems of Ankara

Ankara must breathe!

Ali Dinger Mayor of Ankara

Galloping Urbanisation

Created almost out of nothing, Ankara is the city where the most interesting system of urbanisation in the twentieth century has been attempted. It is also the city in which the municipal authorities are confronted with the most delicate environmental problems.

Jansen, the most highly regarded town planner of his age, was given a free hand and expense was no object. Seldom have such means been deployed in building a town. The only comparable examples are Brasilia in Brazil and Chandigar in India.

The most interesting characteristic common to all these cities, models of contemporary architecture and town planning, is that they are all surrounded by slum districts. Ankara is typical: its layout and its infrastructure are a faithful record of more than fifty years of the ups and downs of Turkish democracy. A cursory glance at a plan of Ankara will show that the city is composed of a highly organised central area encompassed by straggling shanty towns (*Gece-Kondu*).

Such a striking urban and geographical design can only be explained by looking back into the history of the city. The centre proper was a symbol of the war of national independence. As time passed it was increasingly enveloped by an urban belt typical of the capitalist socio-economic system. As a result of this system millions of villagers who had been forced to migrate to the towns were obliged to live in the slum areas, built on land which did not belong to them, and bereft of the most elementary facilities.

Today, 70% of the population of Ankara live in slums. Ankara is the only city in Turkey where they have increased so fast.

The environmental problems can be explained largely by two errors made by the planners when transforming the old town of Ankara whose history goes back to Roman times, into a modern city. The first error was that the new city was designed for a population of 300 000; today, this limit has been reached ten times over. The first urban plan, because of the low population catered for, was developed along two main intersecting axes. As the city had been designed for a population of 300 000, the town planners saw no reason to develop it along concave lines for reasons of air pollution. Later the unexpected population explosion made air pollution the most important problem facing the city, and the town council now has to come to grips with it.

The approved limit for air pollution is 80 microgrammes per cubic metre. However, in Ankara, air pollution can reach, though rarely, 656 microgrammes. Under such conditions, and especially during the winter months, it gets difficult to breathe in the centre of Ankara.

Breathing space

Although a complete solution to this essential problem is difficult to find, short-term measures must be taken in order to secure a respite. At the same time efforts must be made to develop long-term pre-

ventive measures. Short-term measures include:

1. The banning of polluting energy sources, such as lignite and sulphur-rich fuel oil. In buildings heated by boilers, coke should be used, or, if this is not sufficient, high-grade lignite low in sulphur content.

The municipality has already taken the first short-term measures. It has approached the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, the Ministry of Local Affairs and the Ministry of Transport and Communications. By means of public vehicles and facilities sufficient quantities of high-grade coal have been withdrawn from the state coal reserves and delivered to the inhabitants, with the help of municipal staff. Moreover, in co-operation with the government, the local authorities have arranged for firms to import crude oil from Libya suitable for refining into low-sulphur fuel oil. Thus, the local authorities have trained consumers to decrease their consumption of sulphur-rich fuel oil.

2. Brief mention should be made of the "regulation on economy in the consumption of fuel oil and the reduction of air pollution", published in the *Official Gazette*, No. 16102, of 3 November 1977. As a result, the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and the Ministry of Education, whose responsibility it is to train central heating operators, must step up and expand their training programmes.

The municipality of Ankara, with the help of specially qualified staff, is now able to check the amount of smoke from chimneys by using "smoke control cards". This method is, of course, only effective where the boilerman himself is trained and where low-sulphur coal and fuel oil are used.

3. Air pollution can also be alleviated, however modestly, by using dust filters and gas-absorbing apparatus. These can be installed in the chimneys of public buildings and on other large structures which constitute the main sources of air pollution and are all situated in the suburbs of Kizibay, Sihhiye and Ulus.

Ankara must breathe!

What next?

Among the long-term solutions proposed by the municipality are the following:

1. The further development of the city must be orientated westwards in order to facilitate the dispersal of polluted air by the wind. The new urban centres must also be placed along the same axis. The municipality is to make it obligatory for new workers' housing estates to have a central heating plant serving several thousand people. With this in mind, it has nationalised an area of 11 million square metres.
2. The installation of production units for low-sulphur fuel oil within existing refineries is not yet planned. These "desulphuration" units will, however, have to be installed in one of the existing refineries as well as in the central refinery in Anatolia which will commence operation in 1981. These measures will free the city of Ankara from its dependence on foreign supplies of high-grade fuel oil.
3. The factory of Seyitomer, which was originally designed to produce dry-burning coal from lignite for use in coalheated residences and buildings as from 1975, should be completed as soon as possible.
4. The municipality plans to create recreational "green lungs" both inside Ankara and in the suburbs. At present there are only 0.81 m² of green space per person in the capital. This is, of course, very little. 100 000 trees are to be planted in 1978

with the help of the Technical University of the Middle East and the Ministry of Forestry. 30 000 of the 100 000 trees planned were planted in January and February of this year. This number will be progressively increased and the "green revolution" will thus be continued.

5. Central heating plants are to be installed in certain suburbs, such as Kizilay, Sihhiye and Ulus where air pollution is very dense. If the state agrees to help, the municipality of Ankara will be able to take on this task. These stations will also be able to produce electric power. In order to perfect the master plan of such a central heating plant, which is to be installed in a modified thermo-electric energy plant situated in the town centre, the technical staff of the municipality and of the Technical University of the Middle East have been working together.

According to the municipality's preliminary estimation, this new power station will be able to heat 5 000 apartments of 100 m² each. Identical central heating plants are to be installed elsewhere immediately, in suitable numbers, in order to do away with the intense air pollution of the city centre.

The problem is not just Ankara's, but that of the whole country. It is the task of both municipality and government to find a solution. For this to be done, municipality, government, research centres, universities and all appropriate institutions must work together. A. D.

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(Photo Cochet — Explorer)

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