

for
Justice and
Peace

One World

Concerns in Telford

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FEBRUARY 1985

We wish all our readers a very happy New Year.

1984 was dominated by the famine in Ethiopia as, sadly, 1985 may also be. Yet hunger and absolute poverty blight many other areas in the world.

Such disasters as famine are not necessarily attributable to 'acts of God' but are more often man-made. Incorrect government policies in agriculture and industrial 'development' can lead to migration, overcropping, overgrazing, soil erosion, pollution, unemployment and so on.

In too many countries governments are pursuing misguided and shortsighted policies, an example being Ethiopia where priority was given to celebrating ten years of (mis)rule. Governments in both East and West failed to react promptly and sufficiently. Rev. Dr. Charles Elliot, former director of Christian Aid, reports that the U.S. and Britain refused to release adequate funds and food to the Ethiopian government for the past two years, hoping that the disastrous famine would bring it down. Similarly, the Russians have done little to help, only offering assistance when shamed into doing so.

Let us all hope for and work toward more enlightened government in 1985.

1985 International Youth Year.

The United Nations (UN) has designated 1985 as International Youth Year to highlight the specific needs and aspirations of young people. The themes of the year are PARTICIPATION, DEVELOPMENT and PEACE.

'Youth' means any person between the ages of 15 and 25.

In Telford the dawning of the new year was heralded by a beacon, lit on New Year's Eve at Spout Mound, Malinslee. The group which organised this event intend to hold other events and carry out various actions during the year.

For further information contact Ruth Griffiths, Woodside Farm, Sherriffhales, Shifnal. Tel Telford 604318

THE POPULATION BOMB TICKS ON

Ten years after the first UN conference on Population the nations of the world have just met again to thrash out the problem of the planet's burgeoning numbers.

- The stark facts are these:
- ⊕ The world's population is increasing at a rate unprecedented in history.
- ⊕ In the past thirty years or so death rates have tumbled everywhere thanks to increased medical aid and other causes.
- ⊕ In the same period, birth rates have fallen a little but not nearly as much as death rates, so there is a considerable net increase in numbers every year.

The aim must be to get the two rates in balance. The two major forces working against this firstly certain world religious doctrines which view interference with procreation as sinful (although they don't object to medical intervention in the dying process).

And secondly, there is the mistrust with which Third World countries view efforts by the affluent nations to help them curb their population explosions (perhaps a justifiable mistrust?). At August's Mexico City conference a new slant on this issue was a right-wing US view that population increase is necessary for a new spurt of economic growth.....

Some countries, like China, have made immense strides towards a stable population, in the past decade - by what seems to us draconian measures.

For environmentalists the prob-

lem of meeting the demands of ever greater human numbers are obvious: more competition for habitat with other species, more intensive methods of agriculture, more pressure on all resources, more energy requirements, more wastes to be absorbed in the eco-system.

Almost everywhere better health care, mass education and old-age security are the best contraceptives - that is, more than anything else they lead to falling birth-rates. So the eradication of poverty and ignorance for millions is part of the survival of all of us.

Originally published in Birmingham Environmental News
by Friends of the Earth, 54-57 Allison St, Digbeth, B'ham.

GREEN LIGHT FOR

lightmoor

After many months of negotiations the Lightmoor Project is airborne. Today, 6th of November, prospective residents celebrated the Department of the Environment's arrival of the Department of the Environment's section 7.1 planning approval, which clears the way for the first group to build their own homes and plan their own neighbourhood.

The land (23 acres in the first phase) is made available by the Telford development corporation to a community Trust representing residents, local authorities and the Town and Country Planning Association. Each householder is leasing a plot of up to half an acre and will share with the others in maintaining and protecting the surrounding countryside.

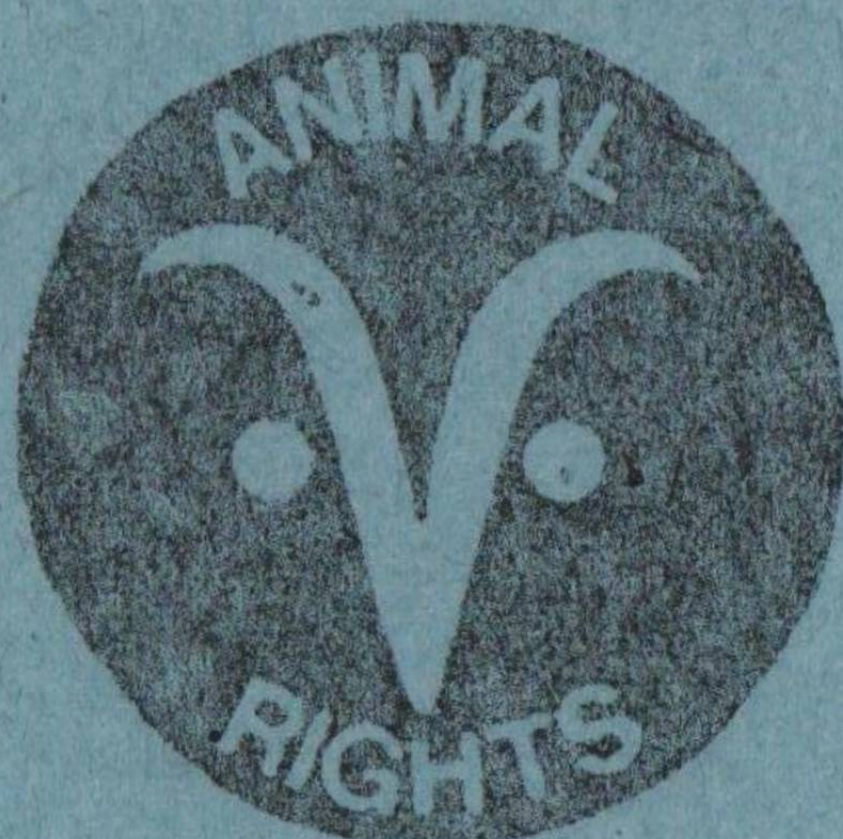
The new settlement echoes the past. Ever since the industrial revolution (birthplace Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale, just down the road) people on lightmoor have been used to having two strings to their economic bow. In earlier days they grew vegetables and

raised livestock in time spared from making bricks or digging coal (from a family mineshaft at the bottom of the garden).

There will be the same belt-and-braces approach to the new project but this time it is likely to be a computer in the kitchen and a pig in the backyard. Or maybe a job as a local bricklayer or a postman, coupled with keeping a couple of goats and running an allotment, or a small precision workshop beside the vegetable patch.

Building society mortgages will finance the self-built homes and basic services, with the land and its development value as security. This is not a soft option for fat cats. It is a very down-to-earth scheme which is attracting people with the pioneering instinct, prepared for tough work in the early stages in order to create a new kind of neighbourhood which takes a hand in shaping its own future.

For further information please contact Mrs Margaret Wilkinson on Telford 613999. This updates the contact previously given.



Why should animals have rights?

Surely the gulf between them and us is enormous!

How else can we explain why we have a right to breed and cram animals in the concentration camp conditions of factory farms, denying all behavioural rights, dismissing their suffering in transport and slaughter, then sit down to enjoy their flesh on our plates?

How else can we accept the infliction of the most unimaginable pain and torture on animals within our laboratories?

How else can we allow their murder because a minority derive amusement from a sadistic sport?

How else can we allow animals to have the fur torn from their bodies to produce coats to satisfy vanity?

Intelligence, co-operation and altruism are allegedly human characteristics, whilst territoriality, aggression and dominance all belong to the realm of non-human animal nature. This myth is no different to the belief of white or male superiority found in racist and sexist attitudes,

and is termed 'SPECIESISM'.

Speciesism enables us to deny other animals' fundamental considerations purely because they happen to belong to another species to us.

It is very important that we realise animals have rights because they suffer much the same as we do. They can feel pain and be frightened, lonely, miserable, bored and frustrated; they can also be happy content and playful.

Thomas Jefferson wrote when opposing the slave trade: "But whatever be their degree of talent, it is no measure of their rights. Because Sir Isaac Newton was superior to others in understanding he was not therefore lord of the property or person of others".

These same words hold true for our relationship with other animals.

Anyone who would like more information please contact Telford Animal Rights Group, Phil Steadman (membership secretary) 78 Wealdstone, Woodside, Telford. Tel 582265.

LONDON PEACE CONFERENCE

The London Peace Conference will have a unique theme. It will explore the relationship between personal commitment to Christ and World peace. It will not be one more peace conference grappling with the problems of justice, armaments and nuclear war. It will seek to present an evangelical, Biblical approach to peace-making.

The World Christian Peace Conference will be held in London from 22nd July to 29th July 1985. It will be centred on Wesley

Chapel and the City University. Two large Peace Events will be held. The Conference will open in Westminster Central Hall on Tuesday night 22nd July when Dr. Alan Walker and Bishop Trevor Huddesfield will speak. On Sunday 27th July, Lord Soper and other speakers will be heard at a Peace Rally in Trafalgar Square.

Details from Rev. Sandra Howes, Telford Youth Chaplain, The Meeting House, Telford Town Centre. Tel 505634.

Groups face up to the crisis

The stresses of living in a high unemployment area like Telford were highlighted last October at a one-day conference on the new town's jobs crisis.

Delegates from 27 local groups heard from experts on the causes and effects of unemployment, including Mr. Andrew Nickson, a lecturer in development economics at Birmingham University.

The conference, backed by Wrekin Council and held at the Council's Malinslee House HQ, had been organised by Telford Town Committee.

Among the leading speakers was Wrekin's employment sub-committee chairman Councillor Jack Turner, who described the horrors of life on the dole in Telford.

Councillor Turner showed that just under a third of local households were without a wage earner, leading to severe financial stress. The growth in the demand for rent rebates was evidence of this.

Unemployment was also causing family stress, marital break-up, more children in care, lower academic achievement and an increasing crime rate.

He said that Wrekin Council had tried its best to deal with some of the problems despite Government limits on council spending.

But only a dramatic change in

Government economic policy could really solve the crisis.

And if low wages really allowed workers to price themselves into jobs, why wasn't Telford an area of high employment, he asked.

Later, after a series of workshop sessions, Councillor Turner promised there would be research into the problem of low pay in Telford.

Mr. Nickson argued that the problems of the West Midlands were caused largely by big firms moving their production overseas.

In the last four years ten of the largest companies had shed 35,000 jobs - a third of their workforce. These jobs had gone to overseas workers.

He stressed the need for an alternative economic strategy to combat the problem.

Telford Town committee convenor, Mr. Denis Ellwand commented: "We are very pleased with the success of the event, which will greatly assist our work over the coming period.

"We also appreciate the support and encouragement given by Wrekin District Council, five of whose members and seven officers were present.

"A full report of the conference is now being prepared and will be available shortly."

Originally published in 'Wrekin Report', Nov 1984

BRING AND BUY

A 'Bring and Buy' and sale of Tradecraft goods will take place on Saturday 2nd March from 10.00am to 4.00pm at 6 Cherry Tree Hill, Coalbrookdale.

Goods on sale include books, cakes, good-as-new children's clothes and plants.

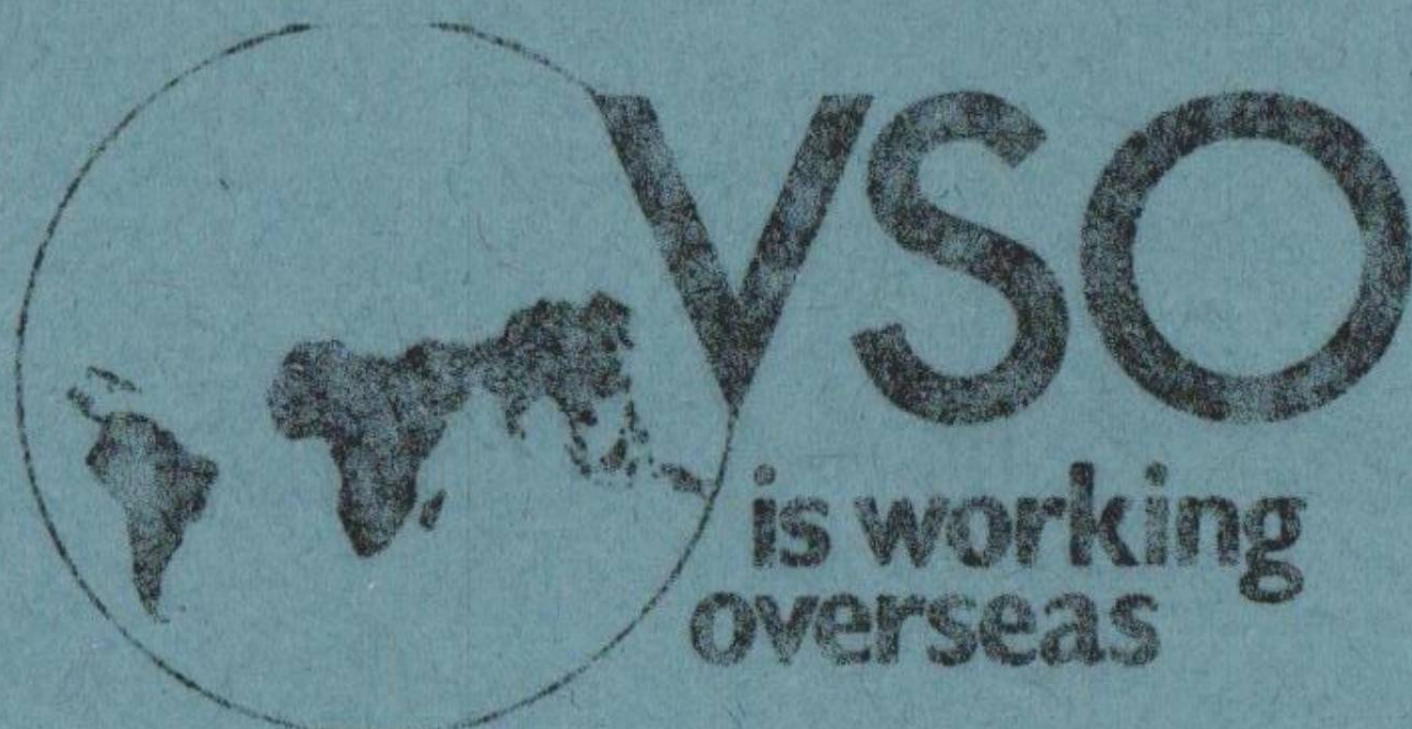
All Proceeds to Tear Fund.

TEAR FUND SUNDAY

Sunday 3rd March is Tear Fund Sunday.

Anyone wishing to have Tear Fund materials or further information please contact Sue Hawthorne, 6 Cherry Tree Hill, Coalbrookdale. Tel Ironbridge 2561.

Tear Fund is the accredited UK relief and development agency of the World Evangelical Fellowship. Through its various ministries, Tear Fund seeks to express its faith by practical service and evangelism, endeavouring to meet the needs of all members of a community irrespective of their philosophy or ideology.



Each year Voluntary Service Overseas sends over 500 women and men to work on projects in 36 developing countries. We do so in response to specific requests from countries who want to use the practical experience and skills we can provide in their fight against poverty, disease and malnutrition.

Volunteers live and work as members of the community and work alongside their colleagues on similar pay. Whatever the project the aim is the same, that the volunteer should pass on his or her skills and experience so that the local counterpart can carry on the work once the volunteer's term of service expires.

Basic requirements of volunteers are that they are aged between 20 and 65, without dependent children, a UK, commonwealth or EEC citizen living in the UK with unrestricted right of re-entry,

able to spend two years overseas and willing to work for local pay only. Volunteers fit into five categories: Agriculture, Business and Social Development, Education, Health and Trades, Crafts and Engineering.

If you are not able to volunteer why not help us on the Shropshire group of V.S.O.? We meet monthly, usually in Telford and we aim to fundraise, publicise and recruit for V.S.O., keep in touch with Shropshire volunteers abroad and generally promote V.S.O. in Shropshire. You need have no prior knowledge of V.S.O. and anyone would be most welcome. We need jumble sale sellers and V.S.O. speakers and everything in between. If you can help please contact the secretary of V.S.O. Shropshire, H. Sullivan, at 42, Beckbury, Nr Shifnal, Shropshire, TF11 9DF.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2nd FEBRUARY: Telford Anti Nuclear Group minibus to Molesworth, location for next set of Cruise missiles. Details from John, Telford 587947 or 44 Victoria Rd, Madeley.

7th FEBRUARY: 'South Africa at the Crossroads' - a public meeting with Mr. Charles Worth, Christian Aid, who recently returned from S. Africa. 7.30pm at Malinslee House, Telford Town Centre.

Organised by Wrekin Anti Apartheid Movement.

12th FEBRUARY: TANG meeting, 7.30 pm at Dawley Information Centre.

26th FEBRUARY: TANG meeting. Mr. Richard Hunt to talk informally on Molesworth.

2nd & 3rd MARCH: see 'Bring & Buy' article.

12th MARCH: TANG meeting as above.

26th MARCH: TANG meeting as above.