

NEW

WOMAN Struggle

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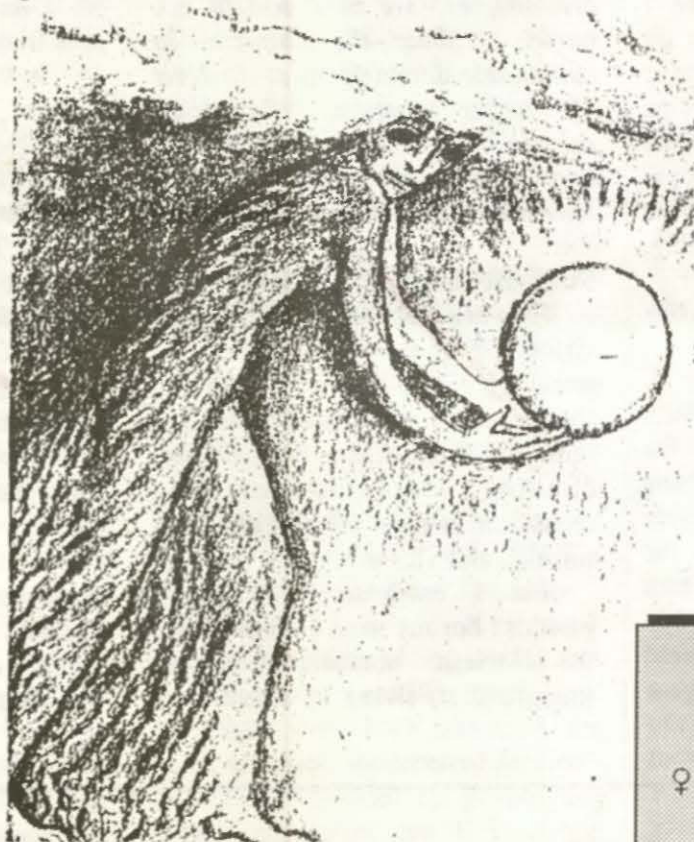
S U S T A I N A B L E

Development

Many years ago, before India became independent of Britain, Mahatma Gandhi, the great advocate for a free India was asked if he hoped to achieve for India's people the same standard of living enjoyed by the British. Gandhi answered: "It took Britain half the resources of the planet to achieve this prosperity; how many planets will a country like India require?"

The earth is finite, which means there are physical limits to what this planet can take or give. There is only so much land, sea, air. It means the earth can be finished.

We are witnessing the decline of the industrial age: a system of production based on non-renewable and therefore highly polluting energy sources (eg. fossil fuels: coal, oil).



Experiments with nuclear fission have so far added to our problems, as Three Mile Island and Chernobyl show. This does not mean that there is no future for life on this planet.

(Continued on Page 3)

◀ *We chose **The Orb** by Edna Manley to symbolise our belief that we, the Caribbean people are capable of transforming the urgent issues for our survival.*

Credits: The young people of Barbados inspired this issue. Many assisted us with questions and insights during production. This edition of **Struggle** is dedicated to you all with our thanks.

Editor: Nan Peacocke
Research: Elaine Hewitt & Letitia Codrington
Layout: Kurlyne Alleyne & Veronica Gaston

Inside:

- ♀ *Sustainable Con Man*
- ♀ *What the Youth Say*
- ♀ *NO to Nuclear Cargoes*
- ♀ *What are We Advocating?*

● Starting Over With Me

It is time that each of us living in the Caribbean drop our bad habits in regard to the environment. We are disposing garbage carelessly, we are not recycling paper, plastic and glass, we are keeping silent while trees are cut down and beaches mined at the hands of people in our own communities. An advertisement in Time Magazine puts it this way:

"We must stop seeing the earth's resources as something that human beings have a right to exploit, regardless of the damage done in the process. Any effort to save the world has to start at home. There are a hundred and one things you can do on a personal level in the everyday choices you make. You may think that one person's actions won't make a difference but when many people make the same decisions about their own health and planet's wellbeing, changes start to happen."

■ TIME - January 3, 1994

YOUTH 'R' IT

The Barbados Community College will soon be switching from the familiar three "Rs" to use the environmental "Rs": re-use, recycle and refill. Students presented the college's principal with two blue bins which will be used for plastics only.

The group of students who head the group Environmentally Intelligent

Students in Opposition to Narcotics, (ENVISION) said the bins were donated to the massive clean-up campaign by a local paint manufacturer. The students, Dionne Clarke, Lisa Elcock, Matthew Wilson and Karen Hunte, said this is just the start of the campaign which they hope will grow to include all members of the campus.

■ The Daily Nation - January 19, 1994

However, if we understand that the whole planetary ecological system is under threat, it is urgent that we understand that the reasons for this are complex. We need also to ask ourselves about the obstacles to sustainable development at the level of larger systems. Barbadian columnist Richard Hoad said it right in a tongue-in-check 'address' to the upcoming Conference.

SUSTAINABLE CON MAN

"My original aim was to extol the virtues of The Efficient Man in a world of scarce resources. And to show that he who requires least to satisfy his basic needs - food, shelter, clothing, transportation and recreation, is most efficient and fit to survive, and vice versa.

But I encountered a strange paradox. For my most efficient man - the African nomadic tribesman (meagre diet, living in a tent, loin

cloth, walking everywhere and game of warri taking up only two square feet) made minimal demands on the world's resources but was facing extinction.

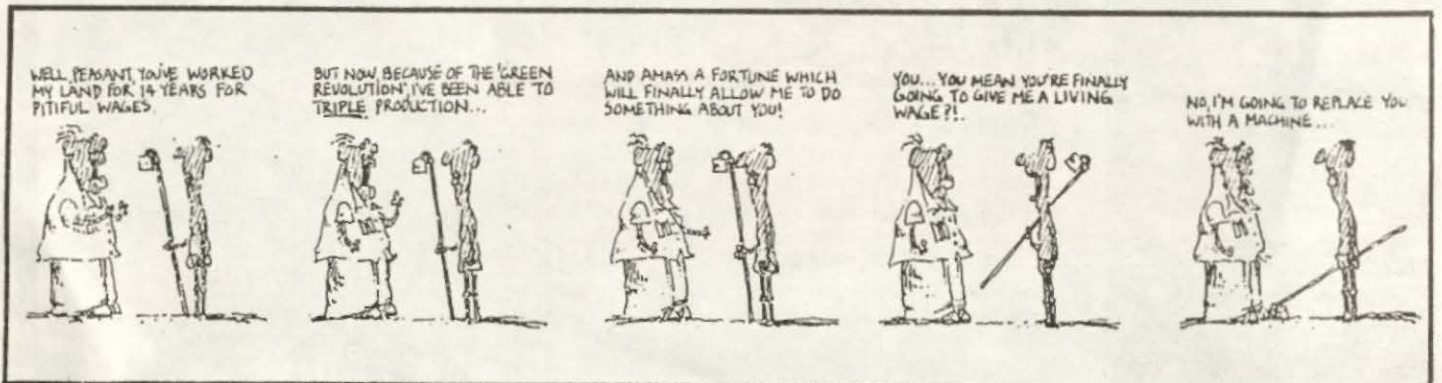
While my least efficient man - the average American (tons of wasted food each year, million-dollar house, wardrobes stacked with clothes, gas-guzzling motor cars and requiring 400 acres to play a game of golf) squandered the world's resources but yet flourished.

I was thus forced to conclude that efficiency, conservation, ecology and economy don't count for one damn. And that 'waste not, want not' is a joke, at least if you live in a developed country. For when your own resources (oil, minerals, food, whatever) aren't enough, you simply take from those less developed."

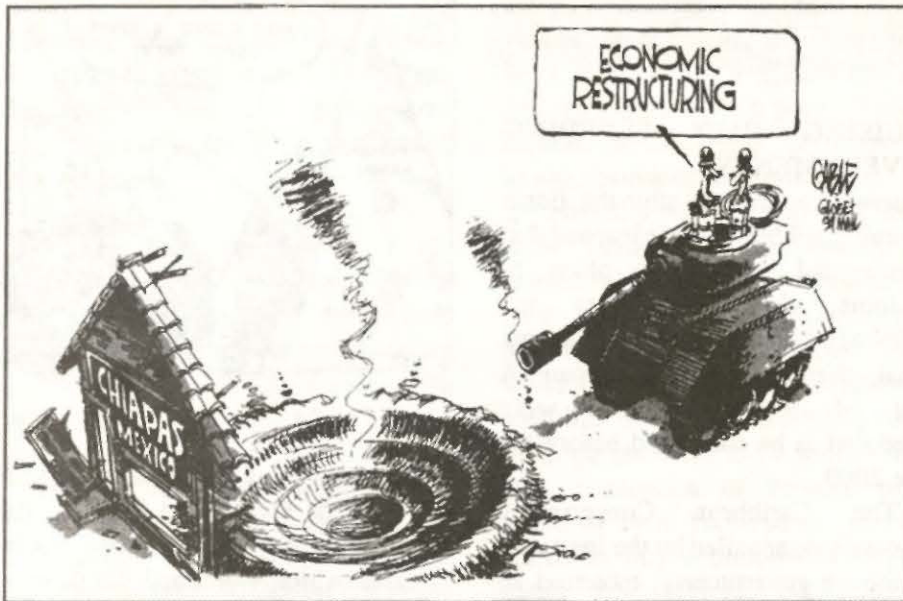
■ Weekend Nation- January 14, 1994.

"MY PEOPLE DO NOT WANT DEVELOPMENT, THEY ONLY WANT TO LIVE"

This stunning condemnation of the "Third World's" sacred cow was spoken by a Latin American citizen observing the suffering in peasant communities. Since the 1980s governments in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and elsewhere, under pressure from the International Monetary Fund, have been imposing Structural Adjustment Policies. SAPs were intended to correct declining economic growth but they bring with them social



PUNCHLINE BY @CHRISTIAN



The Globe and Mail - January 13, 1994

problems: unemployment, political tensions, cultural alienation, and the breakdown of community structures. The 1990 demonstration against Structural Adjustment Policies in Barbados was the biggest of its kind in the English speaking Caribbean. It did not succeed, yet it was only one of many attempts by people all over the world to get governments to consult with them in working out the terms of economic restructuring. Governments struggling to bring their economies in line with the free market system are finding themselves in confrontation with their own citizens.

PEASANTS VS PUBLIC RELATIONS HYPE

This was the year when Mexico was to have stood poised for a leap into the future - with a strong assist from the North American Free Trade Agreement. Instead, 1994 began with an unexpected peasant uprising that seemed to come straight out of the country's turbulent past. On New Year's Day, the Zapatista Army of National Liberation, an obscure guerrilla group named for Emiliano

Zapata, a hero of the 1910 Mexican Revolution, launched an offensive in the southern state of Chiapas, a dirt-poor region inhabited largely by descendants of the ancient Mayas.

■ Newsweek - January 17, 1994

It appears that the Mexican government is conducting a deliberate campaign of misinformation about the situation in Chiapas to ensure that the attractiveness of Mexico as a place to invest is not damaged.

■ The Globe and Mail - January 14, 1994

Waving placards reading "All of Mexico is Chiapas" and "Mexico First World - Ha, Ha, Ha!", demonstrators in Mexico City shook the government by adding mainstream weight to the guerrillas battle cry. Together, they have shattered the myth of a slick, modernized Mexico - an image cultivated by government with the help of the U.S. public relations giant Burson-Marsteller, which collected some \$7.7 million fees and expenses to promote Mexico's cause in NAFTA talks since 1990.

■ Maclean's - January 21, 1994

Continued from Page 1...

Other forms of energy abound: solar, hydro, wind, and could be the energy source of another kind of civilization. The crisis we are living through is the result of an economic system and a mentality which "takes things from the environment and emits things into the environment without considering the effects" (Norman Girvan, UWI).

The Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States will be held in Barbados April 25 to May 06 1994. The parallel Non Governmental (NGO) Conference starts April 20. It has come about by teamwork. The Alliance of Small Island States of the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean and the South Pacific has been agitating the bigger boys within the UN about their special concerns regarding climate change and sea-level rise. At the Earth Summit in Rio, 1992, their persistence paid off. It was agreed that they could have a separate global conference at which the whole international community would give attention to their special problems.

This issue of *Struggle* is WAND's contribution to the youth of Barbados on the occasion of this meeting. We don't know whether the people of small islands and coastal societies will find our lives changed for the better by this assembly any more than by the Earth Summit. Many people say all that will happen is just more words. This time it's **sustainable development**. The purpose of this issue is to explain the term and, we hope, assist people with a better understanding of what we are advocating when we say "sustainable development for the Caribbean".

The logo for the Global Conference on SIDS designed by Donna Millington of Barbados.



• Who's In Charge Here?

One of the reasons some people don't want to hear about "sustainable development" is because they distrust "bigups" who talk but don't act. The following items illustrate doubts many Caribbean people have about the ability of our political system, and the men who guide it, to carry this region ahead.

One of the major planners of April's United Nations development conference in Barbados has accused CARICOM governments of paying no more than lip service to the concept behind the conference.

Dr. Mark Griffith, technical coordinator for the UN's Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States made the criticism as he addressed regional and international journalists at an eco-journalism workshop in Kingston, Jamaica.

Stressing he was speaking in his personal capacity, Griffith said: "I don't think that the governments in the region have really taken on board the concept in a real way." To embrace sustainable development would require "fundamental changes" in the way regional governments do things. Those changes, he explained further, would mean the erosion of the "power base of politicians." He said the removal of that power base is required to allow participation of civic societal groups.

Griffith cited the "poorly equipped" CARICOM Secretariat has to be the leader with respect to sustainable development issues. On the other hand, the governments have not yet made a decision to equip the secretariat with the capacity to deliver."

■ The Nation - January 22, 1994

CRUISING PAST SLEEPING GOVERNMENTS

A mere three months after the Earth Summit Caribbean people learned that France and Japan had plans to transport plutonium across the Caribbean Sea, through the Panama Canal, then the Pacific to Japan. A total of forty shipments were scheduled to be completed before the year 2000.

The Caribbean Conservation Association, appalled by the inertia of Caribbean governments, mounted an intense and varied Caribbean wide campaign to educate both governments and people as to the seriousness of the Japanese intention. CCA wrote letters to governments and CARICOM requesting that



they protest the planned shipments at the level of the United Nations. At the same time the CCA issued media releases which explained the danger which plutonium poses to humans and to the environment. In addition CCA mobilised people everywhere to sign petitions seeking governments' protest of this shipment.

■ CPDC Bulletin - Vol. 1, Nos. 1 & 2

• How We Got Into This Mess

If we look back at how the debt crisis developed we see how the global economy has worked against sustainable development. The decade of the 1960s was one of healthy growth for developing countries; world prices for their basic commodities were increasing and countries were confident. Governments sounded the call for a New Economic Order to alleviate poverty. On the other hand, commercial banks were pregnant with money from the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Money lying in bank coffers is never profitable for banks; they need to make the interest promised to their depositors plus a profit for themselves. Banks were eager to lend, interest rates were low. Borrowing was made irresistible for developing nations, and borrow they did. By the end of 1989 the developing countries had borrowed a

staggering \$1.3 trillion. The stage was set for development, based on industrialisation and the infusion of foreign capital, technology and ideas.

■ World YWCA Advocacy Newsletter
- Vol 1. No. 2. December 1993

GETTING & SPENDING

The money borrowed was used for various purposes such as the construction of roads, water systems, boosting of agricultural production, development of local manufacturing capacity and the attempt to expand health and education services. Some projects were ill-conceived, some clearly wasteful. For example, the Philippine government constructed a \$2.1 billion nuclear plant (Bataan) in the middle of the Pacific fire rim earthquake zone at the foot of a volcano. Fortunately the plant has not been in operation.

■ World YWCA Advocacy Newsletter
- Vol 1. No. 2, 1993

Related to this governmental big spending were the rich and famous lifestyles to which our people began to aspire, and the consumerist appetites our elites developed during the oil boom.

MATERIAL WHIRL

The elite of the developing countries went on a shopping spree and imported mega amounts of western consumer goods while investing in nothing for the future. Chile's entire loan was spent in this manner. Somoza in Nicaragua pocketed most of the loan that was meant for the reconstruction of Managua after the 1972 earthquake. Although not to the degree mentioned above, all debtor countries are guilty of this practice.

■ World YWCA Advocacy Newsletter
- Vol. 1, No. 2 December 1993

"Sustainable development" is a concept that's hard for people to grasp because the causes of poverty and environmental destruction are connected to unintended consequences of economic growth in ways that are not fully understood. For example, there is a widespread belief that poverty causes environmental destruction. Yet millions of poor people who had developed ecologically sustainable economies over time have been displaced by modern agricultural practices which impoverished both the people and their land.

SLIP SLIDING AWAY

In Senegal traditional, small-scale forms of agriculture have always been practised. Famines were rare, thanks to proper land distribution, and when drought threatened their herds the herdsmen moved to wetter areas.

This situation continued unchanged until the introduction of money and frontiers, which gave Senegal a place in the world economy. As the land proved to be very suitable for peanut cultivation, thousands of hectares of the best land

were used to grow peanuts for the export market. Major investments were required for irrigation facilities and transport to the ports. Foreign capital, in the form of loans and grants, provided the solution.

How did this 'development' affect local farmers, and especially the women? They and their families lost their best land. The valleys were deforested and used for export crops, while farming families still growing food had to move to the hills, where no good land was to be found. They took possession of meager plots. Some of them received government grants to buy a plot, others had to spend their savings, but many of them moved in illegally. The land was so poor that in a few years it was virtually exhausted. Thousands of families grew poorer and poorer. The soil was rapidly washed away, causing massive erosion of the hillsides. The rain created deep gullies in the mountain slopes. The rivers became brown with the soil they carried away. In short, an environmental disaster.

Is poverty to blame for this? In this case, and the same holds for most of the environmental disasters in the Third World, the cause was exploitation of people and the soil for exports to the Western world.

■ Beyond Brundtland:
Green Development in the 1990s

The 'Green Revolution' of the 1960s and 70s was intended to overcome environmental obstacles to increased agriculture production. It involved much greater use of chemical-energy inputs, which had the desired effect on yields only when they were applied to the new genetic varieties of wheat and rice. The success of these chemical technologies, then, was bound up with new advances in plant breeding: it was 'biorevolution' as well as a chemically based 'revolution'. Since 1955, about one-third of the gain in agricultural productivity of the developed countries has been linked to this process (Brundtland). The industrialised countries, as we have seen, have relatively easy access to germplasm originating in the South. The apparent success of agriculture in these developed countries owes a considerable amount to the earlier investment in food staples, particularly wheat, in the developing countries. One aspect of this situation is that the disposal of food surpluses in the North (itself partly the consequence of animal and plant breeding programmes in the South) now represents a formidable obstacle to sustainable agricultural development in the South.

■ Michael Redclift,
Sustainable Development: Exploring the
Contradictions. Routledge, 1992



DEVERIC Resource Catalogue

The average domestic cat in the United States now consumes more beef than the average Central American.

■ Environment

WAND staff conducted an informal survey among young men and women between the ages of 15 - 27 years in Barbados using face-to-face, telephone and 'fax' interviews. Most people we interviewed knew that the Barbados government is hosting the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, in April 1994. This is what they said:

1. What do you think the outcome will be?

- » *A lot of talk and no action as usual.*
- » *Same as the Earth Summit in Rio - Nil.*
- » *Heads getting together talking bullshit and as a result nothing happening.*
- » *Good economical benefits, recognition.*
- » *International exposure for Barbados thereby providing a boost for our tourist industry and well needed foreign currency.*
- » *Small islands will become more aware of the hazards that are presently affecting them.*
- » *Productive resolutions made during the conference would be of great benefit to the islands involved. However, as is the case of many of these conferences, I am skeptical as to whether the proposals coming out of the conference will actually be put into practice.*
- » *I think the Conference is about environment, recycling, preserving the island, pollution and energy. I figure these all go hand in hand - saving our resources, population - what is called social geography.*
- » *Don't know initial reason for conference but I hope it would have some positive meaning.*
- » *Laugh! For Caribbean people it would give some short term focus i.e. people would be aware that we exist. We are so small that we are negligible in the larger scheme of things. Benefits will be derived by the larger countries.*
- » *Wow! At this stage I am still awaiting to attend the community meetings to find out the aims, objectives and what is being planned. I would have to wait till the end of the conference to see the outcome.*
- » *A fantastic publicity opportunity for Barbados. However, it needs to be properly planned. Are we ready for it? The way it is now with so many things still uncertain some political jackass will try to mess it up. There is a possibility of it becoming another talk shop. Nevertheless, I hope that it will have some positive effects on manufacturing, agriculture and tourism.*

What is Sustainable

Sustainable Development is a new catchphrase to be sure. But let us make it our own, since there is so much confusion about its meaning anyway! After all, Caribbean people have sustained themselves for generations, without any assistance from governments or the World Bank, or the IMF, or development assistance. We have done it through our families, through our communities, and when we couldn't find a way to sustain ourselves here, have migrated to make use of opportunities abroad: to build the Panama Canal, to work in the oil refineries of Curacao and Aruba, to operate the buses in London, to run households in New York, and hospitals in Toronto. From there we have maintained our links with our families and communities: facilitating the migration of other members of our families so that they might get an education, an income, a chance. We sent home barrels and money to purchase land and build houses, sometimes naming whole communities for the source of their capital (eg. Largo Heights in St. Vincent). The value of these remittances far surpass aid: in the 1950s at the time of the first Immigration Act in Britain the value of remittances to Jamaica in one year was more than the value of Colonial Development and Welfare (CD&W) grants to the entire region for four years.

And we have sustained ourselves in those hostile and unsustaining environments by re-creating there our life styles, transplanting cricket and carnival and coming home to the communities of our



Development?

By Peggy Antrobus

childhood periodically to remind ourselves who we are - Bajan Yankees and Trinis and Vincies coming home to join the party every year!

We can find entrepreneurs at every level of our society, we must identify them and nurture them, and I would add, appeal to their love of the Caribbean. Anyone who saw the moon this morning would know why there are some Caribbean people who would rather work for a fraction of what they might earn in North America just to be able to stay here and see that moon lighting up the water, as if it were the sun! Let us not destroy that with development models and technologies that are unsustainable anyway.

The development model to which Caribbean governments have adhered for the past three decades of development experience is unsustainable - as witnessed by the crises which some of our countries have been experiencing - and the problems anticipated as a result of the Single European market in 1992. Our pattern of growth increased social stratification and social alienation without generating the level of savings/investment or technology required to sustain high growth rates. In our efforts to keep up with world markets let us not forget, neglect or destroy what sustains us.

Peggy Antrobus speaking at a CARICOM Regional Economic Conference, Feb '91.

She is the Tutor/Coordinator of Women and Development Unit (WAND), and the General Coordinator of Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN).

2. What does the term 'sustainable development' mean to you?

- » Nothing.
- » Don't have a clue.
- » A big term which all politicians use.
- » Developments made must be maintained and improved as necessary.
- » Collaboration of efforts in order to maintain standards already established.
- » Well, the Caribbean doesn't do much on recycling. A place better able to support its population inexpensively and with no side effects.
- » A country that can survive without the help of others.
- » The ability of an island to grow in terms of the economy and otherwise, without succumbing to the adverse conditions of the changing world situation.
- » The ability of a state to fulfill the basic needs of its population without sacrificing its independence to neocolonisation.

3. What would you like the Caribbean to be like in 25 years?

- » United in all respects, environmentally clean, (yeah right), internationally recognised, crime free (yeah right).
- » In 25 years, I would like a free and totally unrestricted Caribbean, where one language is spoken by all, where one can speak the other's language, and all cultures are acceptable. I would also like to see freer access to countries without the hindrance of passports.
- » The Caribbean to be totally self-dependent, and be able to engage in the wider markets of trading.
- » Good heavens! For the Caribbean to be more united that we can travel and invest uninhibited within neighbouring territories. Barbados cannot carry itself in the world.
- » Looking at Jamaica, Trinidad and Guyana, if the conference does not give people a better idea of how to develop themselves the Caribbean would be like one big ghetto. When the IMF gets hold of us we will really come tumbling down.
- » Unified region eg. the EEC with corresponding economic, political and social powers on the world scene.
- » Environmentally conscious.
- » Free of pollution - not a dumping ground for others. To see the sugar industry revived.
- » A prosperous region working together.
- » Completely connected - re communication, trade, commerce and travel.
- » I would like to say that "I am a citizen of the Caribbean."



● *Dignifying the Citizen*

IN THE CITY...

Jaime Lerner, mayor of Curitiba, Brazil, has the enviable problem of trying to be modest about his city's success.

"Curitiba is different from other Third World cities because it has made an effort to be different," says Lerner. Beginning in 1970 he launched low-cost programs to build parks, control garbage, house the poor and develop a mass-transit system. Two decades ago, Curitiba had 0.46 sq. m (5 sq. ft.) of open space for every citizen, now it has 51 sq. m (550 sq. ft.). New York City, by contrast, has 14.5 sq m (156 sq. ft) of open space per capita. Most astonishing, Curitiba has added parks and plazas even as its population increased 164% since 1970.

"Services like parks and high-quality public transportation give dignity to the citizen," says Lerner, "and if people feel respected, they will assume responsibility to help solve other problems." Lerner has used his high public approval ratings to mobilize support for such initiatives as the establishment of 40 centers that feed street children and teach them simple skills.

Some of Lerner's innovations have caught the attention of others.

Last spring, for instance, New York City began experimenting with a low cost bus system invented in Curitiba as an alternative to subways. Curitiba's "speedy line" uses express street lanes from which cars are banned and loading platforms where passengers pay their fare before boarding the bus. The buses travel through the city at an average speed of 32 km/h (20 m.p.h.) and can transport 3.2 times as many passengers as standard buses can during a given interval.

■ TIME - January 11, 1993

... IN THE FOREST

Amerindians from the interior of Guyana have called for a halt to a US\$45 million 'sustainable forestry' project being backed by the British Commonwealth. The project, which set aside some 3,600 square kilometres of tropical forest for 'sustainable' management, is being held up as a showpiece of environmental cooperation between North and South.

The Amerindian Peoples Association of Guyana announced that "the project should be halted until adequate protective mechanisms have been created". The APA notes that

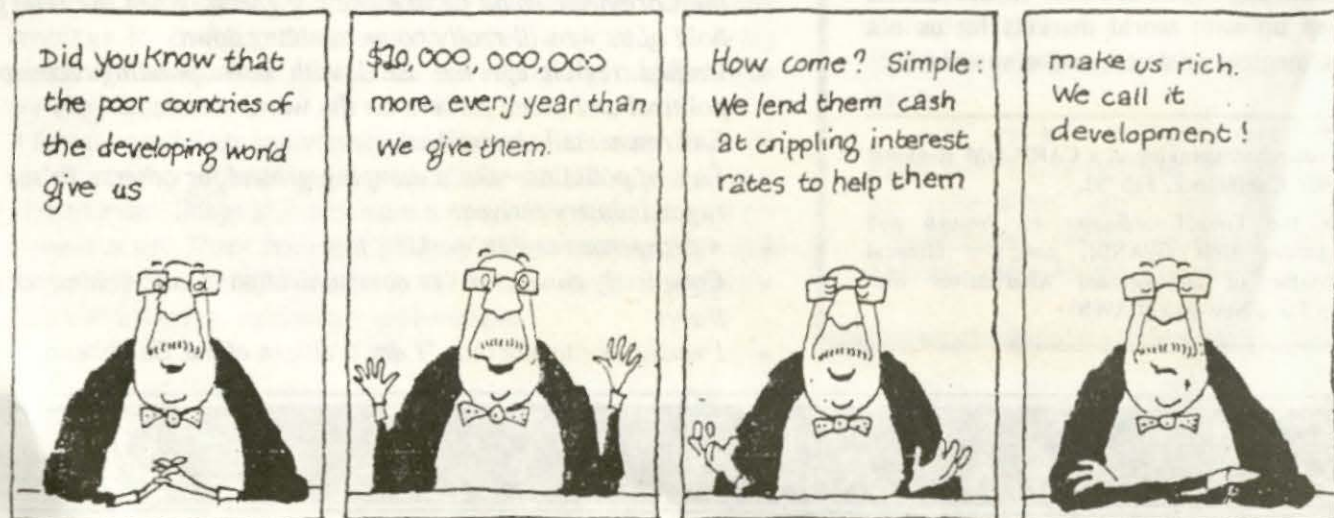
more Amerindians are being affected by the project than the project report has accounted for and one community is already 'suffering from the fact that hunters from the United Dutch Timber Company (which operates a neighbouring logging concession) are depleting stocks on which their livelihood depends.'

'Amerindians were not consulted prior to this project being established. Nor were any studies published which assess the impact of this project on Amerindian life. Amerindians as a source of information for companies producing medicinal products is cited as an important benefit from the project,' but, 'no mention is made, however, of compensating them for this invaluable information. Like the forests, minerals and rivers, Amerindians are seen as simply a source to be exploited.'

Preliminary versions of the project set aside 400 km² for mining, while the rest of the project area was to be divided between 'sustainable forestry' (logging), and an off-limits area dedicated to biogenetic research for new medicines.

The reserved area is cut in two by the new Brazil-Guyana highway, which is being created with Brazilian Government money and by a Brazilian mining transnational to give northern Brazil easy access to a Caribbean port.

■ Resurgence - Issue No. 21, 1992



"Trying to resist the tide of change and preserve precrisis social relations rarely works. A more creative approach that tries to influence the terms of restructuring for disadvantaged groups may have more chance of success".

■ Diane Elson, Unequal Burden
Economic Crises, Persistent Poverty
and Women's Work.

... IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

There is a crisis in the 51 year old credit union movement in Barbados. Three bodies have pulled out of the Barbados Cooperative Credit Union League (established in 1957) taking over 60% of the 42,211 members with them. As the issue heated up in the press the familiar note of bitterness and accusation sounded in the arguments.

One evening, a member of WAND staff and her husband were listening to *Tell It Like It Is*, a radio call-in programme aired in Barbados where the issue was being discussed. "Call after call we heard only men's voices. I said to my husband that we should call in and say, 'This is really what happens when men are in crisis. I think women better take over this movement and sort it out.' My husband laughed and said, 'Yes, do it!' But we couldn't get through; the lines were all tied up."

A statement from the departing organisations published on January 27 '94 reads in part, "The primary reason for the decisions by the Boards of these three credit unions was the protection of members' funds. The Cooperative Societies' Act 1990 - 23 and the accompanying Regulation require that investment of credit union funds comply with the provision of the Trustee Act, Cap. 250 of the Laws of Barbados. Current and proposed investments by the Barbados Cooperative Credit Union League Ltd., in our opinion, do not comply with these provisions."

In an interview with WAND, Oriol Doyle, Chief Executive Officer,

of the League put his viewpoint. "In the past we've given members the means to 'buy goods in town'. But realising that we have amassed BDS\$200 million in assets, we want to introduce a new element of investment: a portion of our resources could be directed towards more involvement in the economy of the country. We can give men and women the means to buy shares in strategic industries of the economy. We can also use the cooperative approach to pool funds marked specifically for investment: collectively this pool would represent the interest of all contributors and invest those monies in clearly identified, viable projects be they in the public or private sector. In this way more people who don't normally consider themselves as owners, can own and direct important economic entities.

We (credit unions) should be repositioning ourselves to take advantage of the opportunities which come, when important entities are being divested."

VALUING OUR JUDGEMENT

The debate within the cooperative movement brings out some of the issues we need to work through when defining what as citizens of this region we mean when we say "sustainable development."

At the conference in April, we will hear some environmentalists speak of "ecologically sustainable development" and others of "sustainable livelihood". They are making a distinction between what they want sustained and what multinationals have in

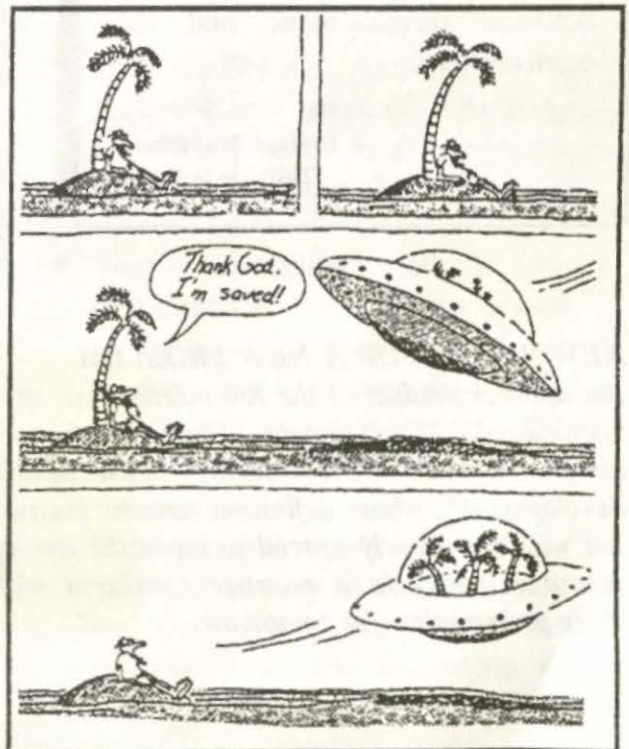
mind. As some of the comments in the **Caribbean Feature** show, young people are aware that "sustainable development" is a bandwagon that anyone can jump on and can be used to the disadvantage of the citizens of this region. Worse yet, since global finance *owns* the bandwagon, we have to be aware that what they want to sustain is their profits and not poor people's livelihood, or the genetic integrity of wild species, or the sovereignty of two-by-four nations.

VALUING SELF MANAGEMENT

Caribbean youth have very difficult problems to solve in planning our future. How do we secure our small economies, sustain the health of our physical environment (including our bodies) and create a more humane society? There is a conflict between environmental policy advocates, advocates of economic growth and advocates of socio-economic justice, and it has to be resolved.

What we must advocate for at this conference and in other areas of activity is a stronger voice in the

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The Origins of "Sustainable Development"

"Development" was usually defined as economic growth. "Environmental protection" was a separate concept concerned only with the effects of environmental degradation. In the 1970s "think tanks" began to send out a message: The enormous global economic expansion initiated after the Second World War could not continue forever. The world would run out of natural resources, and the environment become poisoned. Because of the destructive way economic growth was taking place the United Nations organised the first major conference on the environment, in Stockholm in 1972. Out of it came...



IF Illustration No.81

BRUNNER

THE BRUNDTLAND COMMISSION

A Commission, under the energetic leadership of Norway's prime minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, consisted of twenty two people from both developed and developing countries. Their task was to look at the causes of environmental problems. Their method was to undertake public hearings in various countries, at which members of the public and community leaders could give evidence about the relationship between development and the environment.

■ Beyond Brundtland
- Thijs De la Court

The findings of the Brundtland Commission were published in 1987 as *Our Common Future* which pointed out a strong link between poverty and environmental problems. Brundtland was also optimistic about the future believing in "the possibility of a new era of economic growth, one that must be based on policies that sustain and expand the environmental resource base. And we believe such growth to be absolutely essential to relieve the great poverty that is deepening in much of the developing world".

Twenty years after Stockholm, in June 1992 the changing perspectives on environmental issues were highlighted at...

THE EARTH SUMMIT

At what is now known as the "Earth Summit," or the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), more than a hundred heads of state met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to declare a new direction in environmental and economic policy the first time in history so many world leaders had convened in one place to address one subject. And while the mostly male leaders met, hundreds of non-governmental organisations and thousands of committed citizens, including many women from all over the world, also gathered at a "people's forum" to share ideas, energy, vision, experience and hope that the trends contributing to severe degradation of the earth can be reversed before the end of the century. The UNCED meeting established environmental subjects as forevermore political and newly responsive to positive political action.

■ The Women's Review of Books
Vol. XI No. 1 Oct '93

NEW WORDS FOR A NEW PROBLEM

But another product of the Rio meeting was new vocabulary. "Environmental protection" was absorbed into the term "sustainable development", whose definition remains elusive, but which is loosely agreed to mean the use of resources today in a manner consistent with their preservation for tomorrow.

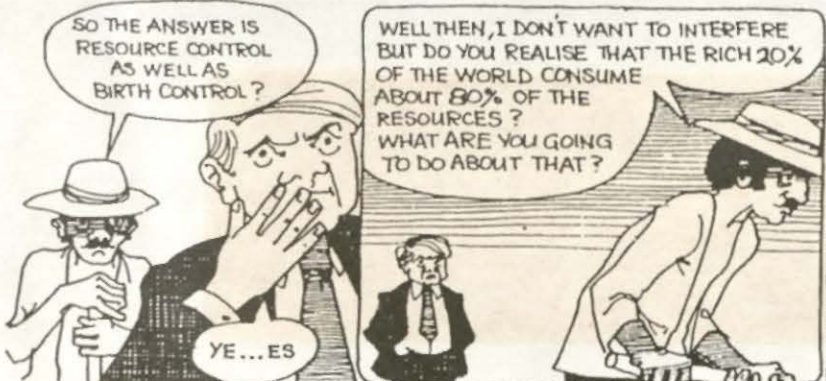
What is being Advocated by Sustainable Development?

The term means different things to different people and that is why we in the Caribbean need to be clear about what we mean. If by the end of the **Global Conference on Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States** we have become better advocates of what is best for the future of this region then the conference will have been a success. We would like to suggest that these are things we recognise when we say "sustainable development":



TIME - No. 43, October 25, 1993

▲ *Not this!* ▲



- That human beings are as "sacred" as all life forms including other endangered species.
- That we must come to grips with the central issues of economic growth as the motor behind development and reject the argument that the function of economies is only to sustain profits.
- That Caribbean people have to seek out new ways of organising our society so we benefit from our material and cultural wealth.
- That assemblies of people characterised by differing social realities which came out of our history are democratic civic institutions and can reshape the political structures of this region.
- That women and youth have a vital role to play in the leadership of the Caribbean and are demanding a new leadership of accountability.

Illustration: Clive Offley

New Internationalist

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decision making processes that determine our lives. And we can find out more by looking around at what we have going for and against us. One example: there is a lot happening in community organising in separate Caribbean territories. Much of this work concerns the empowerment of women living in economically deprived environments. The emphasis is on participatory methods of communication through which people identify their needs, recognise obstacles and take charge. It is a kind of management-by-the-poor of community activities which can alter the power balance in a given situation. The relationship between self-empowerment and economic activity is vital.

VALUING UNITY

... in organising their economic activities, women go beyond the narrow definition of 'economic' drawing on various resources and networks.

■ Diane Cummins, Grenfruit Case Study.
DAWN

Perhaps the methods being developed by women's organisation have a message about sustainability for everyone.

In the role plays, participants highlighted situations they wanted to change in their lives ... the presentations revolved around the question of power (and how power can be expressed in new ways) including: power relations in man-

woman relationships; power to share ideas, struggles; the idea that the power to change existing negative or oppressive situations resides in the woman or person willing to make a change.

■ Report on CARFA/WAND Summer University, 1992

There's a new world coming and it's just around the bend. There's a new world coming this one's coming to an end. There's a new world coming the one they have visions of. Coming in peace, coming in joy, coming in love."

■ Sung by Nina Simone

New Woman Struggle is a news clipping service. Each issue deals with a topic. The material is organised in an effort to explain issues from the perspective of the regional women's movement and illustrate them with news items from all over the world. Included is a **Caribbean Feature** which gives the point of view of Caribbean citizens on the subject. Your comments are welcome.



WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT
School of Continuing Studies - UWI
Pinelands, St. Michael
Barbados, West Indies