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Toronto the Green: Pollution Probe and the Rise of the Canadian Environmental Movement

Ryan Ernest O'Connor
The University of Western Ontario

Supervisor
Dr. Alan MacEachern
The University of Western Ontario

Graduate Program in History
A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy
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TORONTO THE GREEN:
POLLUTION PROBE AND THE RISE OF THE
CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

(Spine title: Toronto the Green)

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Ryan Ernest O'Connor

Graduate Program in History

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada

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THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION

Supervisor

Dr. Alan MacEachern

Supervisory Committee

Dr.

Dr.

Examiners

Dr. Roger Hall

Dr. George Warecki

Dr. Finis Dunaway

Dr. Jason Gilliland

The thesis by

Ryan Ernest O'Connor

entitled:

**Toronto the Green:
Pollution Probe and the Rise of the Canadian Environmental Movement**

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ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

This dissertation utilizes the first fifteen years of Pollution Probe's history (1969-1984) as a prism for examining the origins and development of environmental activism in Canada. The organization was pivotal in the evolution of environmentalist discourse and activism in Toronto, both through its own activities and its role in institution-building. Rooted in Toronto, Pollution Probe provides insight into the early history of the Canadian environmental movement, demonstrating the many ways that this movement differed from the one that took shape in the United States. As will be demonstrated, Pollution Probe was representative of the first wave of Canadian environmental non-governmental organizations [ENGOS] that were formed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Unlike their American contemporaries, which evolved over a period of decades out of existing conservation organizations, Canadian ENGOS such as Pollution Probe appeared on the scene almost instantaneously. Furthermore, the Canadian organizations tended to be highly localized, in contrast to the larger, national ENGOS found in the United States. While the early Canadian ENGOS originally excelled by virtue of their focus on local pollution problems, the shift to more abstract, underlying problems was met with varying success. Ultimately, they were ill-equipped to address the larger, transnational issues that came to dominate the environmental agenda in the 1980s and 1990s.

Pollution Probe; Environmental History; Environmental Movement, Canada; Social Movements, Canada

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Advisory Committee on Energy [Ontario]
AECL	Atomic Energy of Canada Limited
AO	Archives of Ontario
AWL	Algonquin Wildlands League
CAHE	Canadian Association on the Human Environment
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CBCRL	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Reference Library
CCAR	Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain
CCC	Civilian Conservation Corps [United States]
CELA	Canadian Environmental Law Association
CELRF	Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation
CFB	Canadian Forces Base
COPE	Council Organized to Protect the Environment
CRTC	Canadian Radio-Television Commission
DEC	Department of Environmental Conservation
EAA	Environmental Assessment Act [Ontario]
EAC	Ecology Action Centre [Halifax]
EMR	Department of Energy, Mines and Resources [Canada]
ENGO	Environmental Non-Governmental Organization
EPA	Environmental Protection Act
ERCO	Electric Reduction Company
EYCC	East York Conservation Centre
GASP	Group Action to Stop Pollution
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
IJC	International Joint Commission
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
LGP	Larry Gosnell papers
LIP	Local Initiatives Program
MTARC	Metropolitan Toronto Airport Review Committee
NALACO	North American Life Assurance Company
NFB	National Film Board
OAPEC	Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries
OEC	Office of Energy Conservation [Canada]
OFA	Ontario Federation of Agriculture
OMMRI	Ontario Multi-Materials Recycling Incorporated
OPCC	Ontario Pollution Control Conference
OSDA	Ontario Soft Drink Association
PPP	Pollution Probe papers
RAPA	Richmond Anti-Pollution Association
RCO	Recycling Council of Ontario
RIS	Resource Integration Systems Ltd.
SCC	Sierra Club Canada
SEAP	Save the Environment from Atomic Pollution

SPEC	Scientific Pollution and Environmental Control Society, later Society Promoting Environmental Conservation
UCC	Upper Canada College
UDIO	Urban Development Institute Ontario
UTA	University of Toronto Archives
WWFC	World Wildlife Fund of Canada
ZPGT	Zero Population Growth-Toronto

Chapter One: Introduction

One day in September 1969 Tony Barrett and Rob Mills found themselves in the lobby of the Toronto *Telegram*. Friends from their days at the prestigious Upper Canada College, the duo were now waiting patiently to meet the newspaper's owner-publisher, John Bassett, with an unusual proposal on behalf of Pollution Probe, the upstart environmental non-governmental organization [ENGO]. Pollution Probe had recently acquired the *pro bono* services of Vickers and Benson, Canada's leading advertising agency. However, lacking the funds to purchase space in any of the city's leading newspapers, Barrett and Mills had come to propose that *The Telegram* donate space for their full-page advertisements. Having failed to make it past the reception area at the *Globe and Mail* and Toronto *Star*, the duo were surprised to be ushered into Bassett's office and given the opportunity to make their pitch. Mills, who was barely out of his teenage years at the time, can still remember the scene. "He [Bassett] was a scary guy. Very tall, very severe, very gruff He says, 'Why the hell should I bother doing this?'" After delivering a three minute pitch on the societal benefits of their proposal, Mills remembers that "we just about melted when he said, 'Well, I'll give you eighteen pages on the back page.'"¹ Pollution Probe's first advertisement, delivering a message about water pollution, ran on 29 September 1969.

Founded in February 1969 by students and faculty at the University of Toronto, Pollution Probe quickly established itself as a leading force within the nascent Canadian environmental community. Emphasizing the core ideals of sound science, public

¹ Rob Mills, interview with author, 25 September 2008, conducted by telephone.

engagement, and effective utilization of the media, as well as the necessity of accessing the corridors of power, it met with success in its first year of operations, which saw well-publicized confrontations with Toronto's City Hall over the reckless use of pesticides, with Ontario Hydro over air pollution, and with the detergent industry over the phosphate-induced pollution of the Great Lakes. These actions, which inspired the emergence of Pollution Probe affiliates across Canada, were just the beginning for the organization. In the coming years it would address a wide range of issues, from waste reduction to its pioneering work in the energy field, often pushing the boundaries of what was considered a matter of environmental concern. Pollution Probe would also serve as a mentor within the Canadian environmental movement, helping create additional institutions while also sharing its expertise on effective lobbying and fundraising with other organizations.

Pollution Probe's story is a quintessentially Canadian one. Important differences, inspired by geography and history, distinguished a Canadian model of environmental activism from, in particular, that found in the United States. The American environmental movement was marked by large, transnational, and highly specialized ENGOs that received their funding from a variety of sources, most notably private foundations and the general public. In Canada, the environmental community consisted of highly regionalized organizations, the result of the high costs and administrative difficulty of maintaining a truly national presence in a geographically huge, yet sparsely populated country. Canadian ENGOs would find themselves reliant upon government funding and, particularly in the case of Pollution Probe, donations from private foundations and corporations, while financial support from the general public went unexplored. Canadian

NGOs would also emerge with a wide-ranging focus, addressing a plethora of environmental problems.

This dissertation utilizes the first fifteen years of Pollution Probe's history as a prism for examining the origins and development of contemporary environmental activism in Canada. The organization was pivotal in the evolution of environmentalist discourse and activism in Toronto, both through its own activities and its role in institution-building. Although rooted in Toronto, Pollution Probe provides insight into the early history of the Canadian environmental movement, demonstrating the many ways that it differed from the movement that took shape in the United States. As will be demonstrated, Pollution Probe was representative of the first wave of Canadian NGOs that were formed in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Unlike their American counterparts, which evolved over a period of decades out of existing organizations, Canadian NGOs such as Pollution Probe appeared on the scene almost spontaneously. While these groups excelled at their original focus of local, "end of the pipe" pollution problems, the shift to more abstract, underlying problems was met with varying success. Ultimately, they were ill-equipped to address the larger, transnational issues that came to dominate the environmental agenda in the 1980s and 1990s. As such, this dissertation examines Pollution Probe's early role as one of the country's leading NGOs, and its ensuing decline to second tier status.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Modern-day environmentalism evolved out of the ever-changing relationship between humans and their surroundings. While the roots of environmental activism have gone

largely unexplored by Canadian historians, in the United States the origins of environmentalism have been traced back to the antecedent conservation movement. The concept of conservation first arose in the United States during the Progressive era (1890s-1920s), a period marked by an emphasis on efficiency and the utilization of scientific expertise in the making of public policy.² Given that this period coincided with the closing of the American frontier and unprecedented urban and industrial growth, it exposed the strain on the country's natural resources, particularly its forests and wildlife. Concern over the deleterious economic impact of exhausting these resources resulted in government-initiated efforts to ensure long-term sustainable commercial use through careful management. Described by conservationist Gifford Pinchot, a German-trained American forester, as “the development and use of the earth and all its resources for the enduring good of man,”³ conservation nonetheless remained a movement composed of the scientifically-informed elite, sharply opposed by many in the general population, particularly westerners, who viewed the government's restrictions as an infringement of their personal liberties.⁴

² Two classics on the Progressive era are Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.* (New York: Random House, 1955); Robert Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967). More recent overviews include Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003); Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1987); Daniel T. Rodgers, *Atlantic Crossings: Social Politics in a Progressive Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Robert Harrison, *Congress, Progressive Reform, and the New American State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

³ Gifford Pinchot, *Breaking New Ground* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1998), 382.

⁴ This conflict is covered in Samuel P. Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency: The Progressive Conservation Movement, 1890-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969); Edward D. Ives, *George Magoon and the Down East Game War: History, Folklore, and the Law* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois, 1988); Louis S. Warren, *The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists in Twentieth-Century America* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997); Karl Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves, and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001).

While government focused upon the utilitarian value of conservationism, its emergence coincided with the development of an alternate strand, preservationism, which highlighted nature's aesthetic value. Preservation is most commonly associated with John Muir, a Scottish-born naturalist who resided in California. For Muir, nature was the handiwork of God and therefore contained a transcendental value. Describing America's national parks as "places for rest, inspiration, and prayers,"⁵ he also attributed nature with the restorative powers necessary to heal the physical and emotional ailments associated with urbanization.⁶ The divide between conservationists and preservationists was highlighted in 1897 when the United States Forest Service permitted sheep grazing in its reserves, touching off a public feud between one-time friends Pinchot and Muir.⁷ This fissure spread further as a result of the 1906 decision to dam the Hetch Hetchy Valley, part of the Yosemite National Park, in order to supply San Francisco with water. While supported as an appropriate utilization of natural resources by conservationists, it was adamantly opposed by Muir and the Sierra Club, a group of mountaineering enthusiasts he had co-founded in 1892.⁸ While the aforementioned are clear examples of division between conservationists and preservationists, in future the lines between the camps

⁵ John Muir, *Our National Parks* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), 30.

⁶ Stephen Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1981), 58-59. For more on Muir see, Michael P. Cohen, *The Pathless Way: John Muir and American Wilderness* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986); Steven J. Holmes, *The Young John Muir: An Environmental Biography* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999); Donald Worster, *A Passion For Nature: The Life of John Muir* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

⁷ For more on this split see, John M. Meyer, "Gifford Pinchot, John Muir, and the Boundaries of Politics in American Thought," *Polity* 30:2 (Winter 1997): 267-284.

⁸ For more on the Hetch Hetchy controversy see, Roderick Frazier Nash, "Hetch Hetchy," chap. 10 in *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 4th ed. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001); Robert W. Righter, *The Battle Over Hetch Hetchy: America's Most Controversial Dam and the Birth of Modern Environmentalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005); John W. Simpson, *Dam! Power, Politics, and Preservation in Hetch Hetchy and Yosemite National Park* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2005). For the Sierra Club, see, Michael P. Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club, 1892-1970* (San Francisco, CA: Sierra Club Books, 1988).

would often blur. While the term conservation would prevail as a catch-all for the concepts, many historians continue to mark a clear distinction between the two, despite the fact that many of the people under study used the terms interchangeably.⁹

The Sierra Club, which focused its energies on issues affecting national parks and mountaineering, was the first in a long line of membership-driven conservation organizations to emerge in the United States. A series of independent Audubon Societies began to emerge beginning in 1896, motivated by the destruction of bird habitat and the overhunting of birds for their plumage. In 1905 thirty-six state groups united to form the National Association of Audubon Societies, which lobbied for protective legislation, hiring wardens to enforce existing laws, and promoting their message with the help of paid lecturers.¹⁰ The Izaak Walton League was formed in 1922 by a group of Chicago-area hunting and angling enthusiasts. The League adopted the model of the fraternal service organizations then gaining prominence. This fraternal camaraderie became an important factor in its recruiting process and within three years the organization attracted over 100,000 members, a significant feat at a time when the Sierra Club and the National Association of Audubon Societies each had fewer than 7,000 dues-paying supporters.¹¹ Between 1935 and 1937 three more national groups were launched in the United States: the Wilderness Society, which aimed to preserve roadless areas from development; Ducks Unlimited, an organization created by hunters and mandated to protect breeding grounds; and the National Wildlife Federation, which united autonomous conservation groups to

⁹ This is discussed in Alan MacEachern, "Voices Crying in the Wilderness: Recent Works in Canadian Environmental History," *Acadiensis* 31:2 (Spring 2002): 219.

¹⁰ Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy*, 151-155; Frank Graham, *The Audubon Ark: A History of the National Audubon Society* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1990); Oliver H. Orr, Jr., *Saving American Birds: T. Gilbert Pearson and the Founding of the Audubon Movement* (Gainesville, FL: The University Press of Florida, 1992).

¹¹ Fox, *John Muir and His Legacy*, 159-162.

give them greater influence in Washington.¹² As this proliferation of organizations indicates, an increasing number of Americans were becoming engaged in the conservation movement. Nonetheless, the majority of these supporters tended to be of the upper and middle class. As Neil M. Maher argues in *Nature's New Deal*, the Great Depression, and the subsequent creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps [CCC] were responsible for introducing the conservation ethic to the American working class. Between 1933 and 1942 in excess of three million men would gain employment with the CCC, which set about “planting 2 billion trees, slowing soil erosion on 40 million acres of farmland, and developing 800 new state parks.”¹³ In addition to the men employed directly by this program, it also brought the concept of conservation to the residents of communities located near the more than 5,000 CCC camps, as well as the national media coverage.¹⁴

In 1968 historian Roderick Nash, speaking in Calgary, argued that Canadians “currently are at a posture regarding wilderness that the United States occupied in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.”¹⁵ As he explained, this lag between the two countries existed because Canadians “still regard themselves as a pioneering people with an overabundance of wild country.”¹⁶ Unlike the United States, where concern for wilderness extended back to the turn of the century, Nash observed that the conservation movement was just then in its nascent stages in Canada. The first Canadian historian to

¹² Christopher J. Bosso, *Environment, Inc.: From Grassroots to Beltway* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2005), 30-32.

¹³ Neil M. Maher, *Nature's New Deal: The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Roots of the American Environmental Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3-4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹⁵ Roderick Nash, “Wilderness and Man in North America,” in *The Canadian National Parks: Today and Tomorrow, Volume 1*, eds. J.G. Nelson and R.C. Scace (Calgary, AB: The National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada, 1969), 75.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 79.

address these comments was Janet Foster with the 1978 publication of *Working for Wildlife: The Beginning of Preservation in Canada*. While Foster agreed with Nash that there was no widespread conservationist impulse among Canadians, she argued that this simply resulted in a different approach to wildlife conservation. Foster notes that, in the absence of public concern over the matter, “it was left to the federal government to develop an awareness of the need for wildlife conservation.”¹⁷ Beginning with senior civil servants, concern for wildlife stocks spread throughout the bureaucracy, and by 1919 the government’s growing sense of responsibility for protecting this resource was front and centre when it hosted the first National Wild Life Conference. Within three years, the government had fully assumed responsibility for wildlife conservation.¹⁸

George M. Warecki expands upon Foster’s work with *Protecting Ontario’s Wilderness: A History of Changing Ideas and Preservation Politics, 1927-1973*. His book explores “the changing idea of wilderness in Ontario and the impact of significant groups and individuals on public policy.”¹⁹ As Warecki demonstrates, conservationists in Ontario lacked broad-based support for their work prior to the 1970s. Instead, conservation was driven within the province by “an articulate elite of civic-minded citizens and civil servants.”²⁰ This resulted in the birth of numerous conservation organizations in the province, including the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (1931), which aimed to create publicly owned nature sanctuaries that would “preserve wildlands primarily for their

¹⁷ Ibid., 4.

¹⁸ The federal government’s role in managing endangered wildlife habitats and species was examined in J. Alexander Burnett, *A Passion For Wildlife: The History of the Canadian Wildlife Service* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2003).

¹⁹ George M. Warecki, *Protecting Ontario’s Wilderness: A History of Changing Ideas and Preservation Politics, 1927-1973* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2000), 3.

²⁰ Ibid., 5.

own, intrinsic value;”²¹ the Audubon Society of Canada (1948), a Toronto-centric group of bird lovers whose survival was contingent on subsidies from its American parent; and the Conservation Council of Ontario (1951), an umbrella group whose start-up costs were covered by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.²² A sea change occurred in the late 1960s, Warecki explains, as the numbers of Ontario’s “preservationists” increased dramatically, a fact he attributes to “the spread of an ecological conscience.”²³ Frustration among this constituency over commercial logging in the provincial parks led to the 1968 creation of the Algonquin Wildlands League [AWL], which aimed to raise public awareness of the limited protection afforded the parks under the existing multiple-use doctrine. Warecki states that the AWL, focusing upon Algonquin Provincial Park, “advanced the notion of wilderness as a complex combination of ecological processes. Interference with those processes would disturb a dynamic harmony; but left substantially alone, wilderness would maintain an ecological equilibrium.”²⁴ Framed in these terms, the AWL gained the support of the environmentally-conscious citizens, and by 1973 managed to have fourteen percent of the park reclassified so as to be protected from logging.²⁵

In *States of Nature: Conserving Canada’s Wildlife in the Twentieth Century*, Tina Loo examines Canadians’ conservation of wildlife from 1900 to 1970. In so doing, she uses conservation as a means to understand Canadians’ changing attitudes towards the natural world. Strangely, Loo overlooks Warecki’s work – it is not listed in her

²¹ Ibid., 51.

²² Ibid., 103, 108.

²³ Ibid., 144.

²⁴ Ibid., 313.

²⁵ For more on this campaign, see Gerald Killan and George Warecki, “The Algonquin Wildlands League and the Emergence of Environmental Politics in Ontario, 1965-1974,” *Environmental History Review* 16:4 (Winter 1992): 20.

bibliography – and takes direct aim at Foster’s focus on the role of the federal government, countering that much of Canada’s most important conservation work was handled by private individuals and organizations. Where Loo’s work distinguishes itself is in her argument that the conservation movement was not driven by elites. She argues that, to the contrary, prior to “the late nineteenth century, wildlife management, as we would call it now, was a highly localized, fragmented, and loose set of customary, informal, and private practices carried out by a diverse range of individuals and groups.”²⁶ Figures highlighted include Jack Miner, an uneducated farmer of few means, whom Loo describes as “Canada’s first celebrity conservationist.”²⁷ Renowned for his work tracking migratory bird patterns, Miner was self-taught in the ways of nature and imposed characteristics of his Methodist faith on animals, determining robins to be admirable for their industry and geese for their loyalty, while owls, hawks, and crows were admonished for their capacity to dine on other birds’ flesh.²⁸ This folk biology would lead to clashes with scientifically-trained conservationists, whom he held in low regard. Loo also examines the activities of the Hudson’s Bay Company [HBC], whose nature preserves “represented the cutting edge of scientific conservation”²⁹ prior to the outbreak of the Second World War. The HBC’s efforts were noteworthy because they incorporated the work of local people, particularly Natives, which was an approach eschewed by government conservationists.

As Tina Loo states in her conclusion, wildlife management from the mid-1960s on was marked by “an awareness of the interconnectedness and interdependence of living

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 8.

²⁸ Ibid., 74-78.

²⁹ Ibid., 94.

things and a general concern about the state of the earth.”³⁰ This newly emergent environmental ethos, which Warecki notes was seized to great effect by the AWL, has been cited by other Canadian historians. Jennifer Read explains in “‘Let us heed the voice of youth’: Laundry Detergents, Phosphates and the Emergence of the Environmental Movement in Ontario,” that by the early 1960s it had become apparent that phosphate pollution was threatening the Great Lakes ecosystems. The ensuing fight against phosphate pollution, Read explains, involved two distinct phases. The first, beginning in the early 1960s, “was distinguished by traditional business-government problem solving strategies, which rejected non-expert input despite a significant outcry from municipal governments across the province.”³¹ However, she notes that by “1969, public values had changed significantly, enabling non-governmental environmental groups, specifically Pollution Probe, to challenge closed-door decision-making.”³² Arn Keeling, meanwhile, examines changing attitudes towards waste treatment in “Urban Waste Sinks as a Natural Resource: The Case of the Fraser River.”³³ This article demonstrates that Vancouver’s planners and engineers utilized the Fraser River for sewerage disposal beginning in the early 1900s. However, this practice came under increasing critique beginning in the late 1960s as the environmental ethos took root in the city. As Keeling notes, this led to the creation of the short-lived Richmond Anti-Pollution Association [RAPA] in 1968, which focused upon the Fraser River, and the Scientific Pollution and Environmental Control

³⁰ Ibid., 210.

³¹ Jennifer Read, “‘Let us heed the voice of youth’: Laundry Detergents, Phosphates and the Emergence of the Environmental Movement in Ontario,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 7 (1996): 230.

³² Ibid., 230-231.

³³ Arn Keeling, “Urban Waste Sinks as a Natural Resource: The Case of the Fraser River,” *Urban History Review* 34:1 (Fall 2005): 58-70.

Society [later the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation, or SPEC], which took a broader, province-wide approach to environmental activism beginning in 1969.³⁴

While Canadian historians have been clear in pinpointing the emergence of new environmental values within the general public during the late 1960s, they do not explain its origins. This subject is examined on a global scale in sociologist Ronald Inglehart's 1977 book *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics*. As he notes, the "values of Western publics have been shifting [in the postwar years] from an overwhelming emphasis on material well-being and physical security towards greater emphasis on the quality of life."³⁵ This transition from material to post-material values was made possible by the unrivalled affluence and education of the postwar generation. This newfound focus on quality of life issues, Inglehart argues, is at the root of the multitude of social movements that gave rise in the 1960s. As sociologist William K. Carroll notes, the late 1960s and early 1970s were "the climax of a period of social movement activism in Canada."³⁶ A review of the Canadian historiography supports Carroll's statement, demonstrating a wide range of movements, including the gay, students, and human rights movements, as well as the postcolonial, war resisters and hippie movements.³⁷ Conspicuously absent from this list, however, is any discussion of the environmental movement in Canada.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 65.

³⁵ Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), 3.

³⁶ William K. Carroll, "Social Movements and Counterhegemony: Canadian Contexts and Social Theories," in William K. Carroll, ed., *Organizing Dissent: Contemporary Social Movements in Theory and Practice*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1997), 4.

³⁷ General surveys of the period and edited collections include, Myrna Kostash, *Long Way From Home: The Story of the Sixties Generation in Canada* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1980); Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Bryan D. Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University

Samuel P. Hays connects the emergence of post-material values, specifically the desire of the middle class to maintain their newfound affluence, to the environmental movement's evolution out of the conservation movement. As he explains in *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985*, the movement was the culmination of a three stage evolution of societal interests, beginning “with a rapid growth in outdoor recreation in the 1950s,” which “extended into the wider field of the protection of the natural environments,” and later “became infused with attempts to cope with air and water pollution and still later with toxic chemical pollutants.”³⁸

Despite their interrelationship, the conservation and environmental movements differed in important ways. As John McCormick explains in *Reclaiming Paradise: The Global Environmental Movement*,

if nature protection had been a moral crusade centered on the nonhuman environment and conservation a utilitarian movement centered on the rational management of natural resources, environmentalism centered on humanity and its surroundings There was [in environmentalism] a broader conception of the

of Toronto Press, 2009); M. Athena Palaeologu, ed., *The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and Creative Decade* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2009). Specialized studies include, Dominique Clément *Canada's Rights Revolution: Social Movements and Social Change, 1937-1982* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008); John Hagan, *Northern Passage: American Vietnam War Resisters in Canada* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montreal* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Cyril Levitt, *Children of Privilege: Student Revolt in the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984); Gary Kinsman and Patrizia Gentile, *The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009); Roberta Sharon Lexier, “The Canadian Student Movement in the Sixties: Three Case Studies,” unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Alberta, 2009, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk4/etd/MQ82628.PDF>; Stuart Robert Henderson, “Making the Scene: Yorkville and Hip Toronto, 1960-1970,” unpublished PhD dissertation, Queen's University, 2007, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk3/OKQ/TC-OKQ-820.pdf>.

³⁸ Samuel P. Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 3. Some of these ideas were first explored in Hays, “From Conservation to Environment: Environmental Politics in the United States Since World War Two,” *Environmental History Review* 6:2 (Autumn 1982): 14-41. Insight into the transition from stage to stage utilizing the changing concerns of suburban homeowners can be gleaned from Adam Rome, *The Bulldozer in the Countryside: Suburban Sprawl and the Rise of American Environmentalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

place of man in the biosphere, a more sophisticated understanding of that relationship, and a note of crisis that was greater and broader than it had been in the earlier conservation movement.³⁹

This line of reasoning is echoed by Hays, who writes in “A Historical Perspective on Contemporary Environmentalism,” that the “conservation movement was associated with efforts of managerial and technical leaders to use physical resources more efficiently; the environmental movement sought to improve the quality of the air, water, and land as a human environment. Conservation arose out of the production or supply side of the economy, the environment out of the consumer or demand side.”⁴⁰ Political scientist Robert Paehlke, for his part, has emphasized the fact that conservation was not a major concern for environmentalists in the 1960s and 1970s, as they focused upon air and water pollution, as well as the depletion of energy resources.⁴¹

Historians in the United States have attempted to pinpoint the emergence of the environmental movement. Hal K. Rothman, author of *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the United States Since 1945*, argues that the environmental movement was born in the United States during the battle to prevent the damming of Echo Park, located in Dinosaur National Park, during the 1950s. This episode coincided with David Brower’s ascendency to the leadership of the Sierra Club, which resulted in its dramatic transformation from a genteel organization of outdoorsmen into a politically aggressive organization bent on expanding its constituency.⁴² Undertaking a cross-

³⁹ John McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise: The Global Environmental Movement* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989), 47-48.

⁴⁰ Samuel P. Hays, *Explorations in Environmental History: Essays* (Pittsburgh, PA: Pittsburgh University Press, 1998), 380.

⁴¹ Robert Paehlke, “Eco-History: Two Waves in the Evolution of Environmentalism,” *Alternatives* 19:1 (1992): 18.

⁴² While conservationists had long had access to influential leaders, Rothman notes that “they had become reluctant to use the tools at their disposal.” However, with “Brower and [the Wilderness Society’s Howard]

country direct mail campaign against the dam, the conservationist forces, led by the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and the Council of Conservationists, also created an educational film and an edited volume highlighting the valley's unique characteristics. They also utilized the national press to air their concerns with the development. With Congress bombarded by a public opposed to the development, and Brower vociferously challenging the scientific and economic backing of the dam, the battle was eventually won by the Sierra Club and its allies. According to Rothman, the new activist orientation of conservation, utilizing educational and political means, marked the beginning of the environmental movement, even if the name would not come into use for another decade.⁴³ Christopher Bosso's *Environment Inc.: From Grassroots to Beltway* furthers this argument, highlighting the important role of the national conservation organizations in the development of American ENGOS. While he does not pinpoint a date, he does argue that it was the gradual infusion of environmental values into the older groups that marked the transition between the two movements. These groups would also use their large membership bases and financial resources to foster the growth of new ENGOS such as the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund and the Audubon Society-backed Environmental Defense Fund. As Bosso succinctly explains, "the founders and patrons of most environmental advocacy organizations were other organizations."⁴⁴

More popular among historians is the argument that the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, a bestseller about the manifold dangers of synthetic

Zahniser in the lead, any hesitancy disappeared, and the new conservation movement aggressively challenged the dam and its backers." Hal K. Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the United States Since 1945* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1998), 42.

⁴³ For more on Echo Park see Mark W.T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 1994).

⁴⁴ Bosso, *Environment, Inc.*, 45.

chemicals, served as the environmental movement's catalyst. According to Kirkpatrick Sale, author of *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement, 1962-1992*, "there was really no such thing as an environmental *movement* – concerted, populous, vocal, influential, active – before the publication of *Silent Spring*."⁴⁵ Carson, a former biologist with the United States Bureau of Fisheries turned popular science writer, highlighted the interconnected nature of the ecosystem. Noting that the postwar chemicals, including DDT, would not break down naturally, she demonstrated that humanity's efforts to rid the environment of insects was backfiring. Not only did *Silent Spring* terrify the masses with its warnings of imminent calamity, including a claim that one-quarter of Americans would develop cancer, but the subsequent efforts by industry to condemn Carson turned her into a martyr for the cause. In one respect, Carson's ideas were not particularly revolutionary, as humanity's impact on the ecosystem had been addressed in a pair of 1948 best sellers, William Vogt's *Road to Survival* and Fairfield Osborn's *Our Plundered Planet* – and Vogt even discussed the negative effects of DDT upon insects and wildlife.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, Carson's book was perfectly timed to influence the activist-oriented baby boom generation, while many older conservation organizations, in the midst of developing a more rounded ecological focus, came to her defense.⁴⁷ Consequently, as Mark Dowie explains in *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism*

⁴⁵ Kirkpatrick Sale, *The Green Revolution: The American Environmental Movement, 1962-1992* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 6. Italics appear in the original.

⁴⁶ William Vogt, *Road to Survival* (New York: W. Sloane Associates, 1948); Fairfield Osborn, *Our Plundered Planet* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1948).

⁴⁷ For discussion of *Silent Spring* as the environmental movement's catalyst see, McCormick, *Reclaiming Paradise*, 47-48; Sale, *The Green Revolution*, 5-6; Mark Dowie, *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 23.

at the Close of the Twentieth Century, *Silent Spring* “alarmed, angered, and aroused a brand new constituency of middle-class activists.”⁴⁸

Still others pinpoint the celebration of the first Earth Day on 22 April 1970 as the beginning of the environmental movement. As Samuel P. Hays points out, “The most common interpretation is that it [the beginning of what he terms “environmental politics”] started with Earth Day, when an outpouring of student interest on college campuses set things in motion.”⁴⁹ While enthusiasm was particularly rife among university students, Earth Day was observed by an estimated twenty million Americans and was widely covered by the media. This attention, notes Jacqueline Vaughan Switzer in *Green Backlash: The History and Politics of Environmental Opposition in the U.S.*, “was accompanied throughout the new decade by the development of a widespread public support and the creation of a new federal bureaucracy [the Environmental Protection Agency].”⁵⁰

Despite the influence of Echo Park, *Silent Spring*, and the first Earth Day on the history of American environmentalism their direct bearing on the environmental movement’s emergence in Canada is uncertain. There is no evidence within the Canadian historiography that the battle for Echo Park entered the public consciousness north of the border. Carson’s *Silent Spring*, which included a discussion of DDT’s deleterious effect on sport fishing in New Brunswick’s Miramichi River,⁵¹ was a best seller in Canada and

⁴⁸ Dowie, *Losing Ground*, 23.

⁴⁹ Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*, 52. Philip Shabecoff, for his part, calls Earth Day “as good a date as any to point to as the day environmentalism in the United States began to emerge as a mass social movement.” Philip Shabecoff, *A Fierce Green Fire: The American Environmental Movement* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 113.

⁵⁰ Jacqueline Vaughan Switzer, *Green Backlash: The History and Politics of Environmental Opposition in the U.S.* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1997), 7.

⁵¹ Carson, *Silent Spring*, 129-135.

is widely hailed as an influential book by the country's earliest environmentalists, yet the first Canadian ENGO, focused upon air pollution, did not emerge until five years after the book's release. And while the first Earth Day was a major event in the United States, it was virtually ignored in Canada.⁵² In fact, by the time 22 April 1970 rolled along, ENGOs had already taken root in all of Canada's – and the United States' – major cities. As such, the historian is forced to dig deeper for the cause of the environmental movement's emergence in Canada.

Certainly the best known of the Canadian-born ENGOs is Greenpeace. The subject of numerous books and documentaries, the vast majority of these are first-hand accounts of Greenpeace's early activities and are of varying assistance to historians.⁵³ The first comprehensive academic study of this group is Frank Zelko's "Make It A Green Peace': The History of an International Environmental Organization,"⁵⁴ a doctoral dissertation completed in 2003, which examines the organization's origins and development. Greenpeace was founded by a group of Vancouver residents in 1971. Concerned by the environmental hazards of underground nuclear detonations scheduled

⁵² In Toronto, Earth Day celebrations peaked with one hundred celebrants gathered at Queen's Park. "100 bold candle-lit vigil for Ontario parks," *Toronto Star*, 22 April 1970, 3.

⁵³ The best of these books is Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace: How a Group of Ecologists, Journalists and Visionaries Changed the World* (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2004). Others include: Robert Keziere and Robert Hunter, *Greenpeace* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972); Robert Hunter, *Warriors of the Rainbow: A Chronicle of the Greenpeace Movement* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979); Michael Brown and John May, *The Greenpeace Story* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1989); Stephen Dale, *McLuhan's Children: The Greenpeace Message and the Media* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1996); Jim Bohlen, *Making Waves: The Origins and Future of Greenpeace* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2001); Robert Hunter, *The Greenpeace to Amchitka: An Environmental Odyssey* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2004). John-Henry Harter, meanwhile, provides a Marxist critique of the ENGO. As he argues, the "professional managerial class base of Greenpeace's officers is inconsistent with the new social theory literature that often embraces the middle class as the agents of change in society." Subsequently, while Greenpeace advances the notion that its work transcends social class, "the methods they choose often have very real negative effects on one particular group: the working class." Harter, "Environmental Justice for Whom? Class, New Social Movements, and the Environment: A Case Study of Greenpeace Canada, 1971-2000," *Labour/Le Travail* 54 (Fall 2004): 83-119.

⁵⁴ Frank Zelko, "Make It A Green Peace': The History of an International Environmental Organization," unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Kansas, 2003.

for Amchitka, an island on the southern tip of the Aleutian peninsula, its members resolved to halt the tests by navigating a small fishing vessel into the test zone. Equipped with the latest tools of the electronic news media, the group shared its story with media outlets around the world. While Greenpeace was diverted from the test zone by the United States Navy, and therefore failed to halt the nuclear detonation, its efforts became a *cause célèbre*, and led the American government to cancel plans for further detonations at the site. As Zelko demonstrates, the organization's trademark orientation towards direct action was the result of a cultural confluence unique to Vancouver, but its ideological roots, dominated by the counterculture and draft dodger communities, radical pacifism, the New Left, and popular ecology, were decidedly American. Following the Amchitka voyage, Greenpeace turned its attention to battling the commercial whaling and sealing industries as well as nuclear tests carried out by the French. According to Zelko, Greenpeace was a unique development within the environmental community, marrying direct action, deep ecology, and animal rights. Furthermore, Zelko points out that although the organization was founded in Canada, Greenpeace was rapidly Europeanized, culminating in the creation of the Greenpeace International governing structure, based out of the Netherlands, in 1979.

As the work of Jennifer Read and Arn Keeling demonstrates, however, RAPA, SPEC, and Pollution Probe were already operating by the time of Greenpeace's maiden voyage.⁵⁵ The same can be said of the first two ENGOs in Quebec, *la Société pour*

⁵⁵ Read, "Let us heed the voice of youth;" Keeling, "Urban Waste Sinks as a Natural Resource." The founding of these groups is also mentioned in Doug Macdonald, *The Politics of Pollution* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1991), 97.

vaincre la pollution and the Society To Overcome Pollution.⁵⁶ Unlike the United States, where the environmental movement was dominated by national organizations, Canadian ENGOs were highly localized. Political scientists G. Bruce Doern and Thomas Conway, authors of *The Greening of Canada: Federal Institutions and Decisions*, argue that this was because of the dominance of local and regional environmental issues during the 1970s.⁵⁷ But localized organization is not a feature unique to the environmental movement. Dominique Clément notes in *Canada's Rights Revolution: Social Movements and Social Change, 1937-82*, that Canadian rights associations failed to organize on a national level due to the country's "physically immense, regionally divided, and culturally diverse" makeup.⁵⁸ George Warecki, meanwhile, points out that despite national ambitions, conservation groups such as the Canadian Audubon Society were confined to regional enclaves due to the "huge cost of communications."⁵⁹

METHODOLOGY

Although it has been established that secondary sources on the history of Canadian ENGOs are scarce, this study does not suffer from a lack of documentation. Coverage of first wave environmental activism was quite strong in Toronto's major dailies, namely *The Star*, *Globe and Mail*, and *The Telegram*. The campus press at the University of Toronto, particularly *The Varsity*, was helpful in providing a student perspective, as was *Alternatives*, an environmental journal established by Trent University graduate students

⁵⁶ Jane E. Barr, "The Origins and Emergence of Quebec's Environmental Movement: 1970-1985," unpublished Master's thesis, McGill University, 1995, 65, <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/thesescanada/vol1/QMM/TC-QMM-22560.pdf>.

⁵⁷ G. Bruce Doern and Thomas Conway, *The Greening of Canada: Federal Institutions and Decisions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 101.

⁵⁸ Clément, *Canada's Rights Revolution*, 15.

⁵⁹ Warecki, *Protecting Ontario's Wilderness*, 108.

in 1971. These sources document the public efforts of the environmental activists, provide some insight into the public's reaction, and contain an occasional feature article that provides some in-depth understanding of Toronto's ENGOs, particularly Pollution Probe. In-depth coverage of the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation was provided in the *Environmental Law News*. Valuable understanding of latter-day Pollution Probe and Energy Probe was attained from the *Probe Post*, a bi-monthly magazine that began publishing in 1978. More important still was the presence of a rich trove of archival sources. The Pollution Probe Foundation and Energy Probe fonds at the Archives of Ontario feature extensive papers covering the years 1969 to 1981. These papers contain a comprehensive collection of internal memos, correspondence, and reports. Other key resources have been the Henry Regier, John Swaigen, and Canadian Environmental Law Association fonds at the Wilfrid Laurier University Archives, the Tony O'Donohue fonds at the City of Toronto Archives, the Marshall McLuhan fonds at Library and Archives Canada, and the Omond McKillop Solandt, Douglas H. Pimlott, and Pollution Probe fonds at the University of Toronto Archives. I was also fortunate to gain access to a number of private collections. Merle Chant granted access to the papers of her husband, the late Dr. Donald Chant, which included an unpublished memoir that provided insight into his support for the students who went on to form Pollution Probe. Denise Gosnell, widow of the late filmmaker Larry Gosnell, provided access to his papers, which feature extensive documentation related to the film *The Air of Death*, including his research and transcripts from the ensuing Hall Commission. This is the first time that the Chant and Gosnell papers have been utilized in a historical study. I was also granted access to the Pollution

Probe papers, which contained a complete set of the organization's newsletters and reports. While a portion of this material was utilized by Jennifer Read in the preparation of her 1999 doctoral dissertation on Great Lakes pollution control policy,⁶⁰ subsequent access to the Pollution Probe papers was prohibited by then-executive director Patty Chilton due to the lack of resources necessary to handle an upsurge in requests.

This dissertation also makes extensive use of oral history. Sixty-seven interviews were conducted between 18 November 2007 and 27 May 2010. While the majority of interview subjects were former members of Pollution Probe, leaders of the city's other ENGOs, politicians (such as Premier Bill Davis), and those involved in the production of *The Air of Death* were also interviewed. For some, theirs was a story often told. Others were revisiting events for the first time in decades.

As Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes explain, oral history developed "in relation to the democratizing of history in the 1960s."⁶¹ Part of the move away from "great men" towards the exploration of society as a whole, oral history provided historians the opportunity to bypass government documents and elite-oriented literature and to learn about people's life experiences direct from the source. While a skepticism of the practice of oral history and its utility exists within certain quarters of the academy,⁶² the use of interviews by historians is now commonplace. However, the value of oral history differs from researcher to researcher. According to Alessandro Portelli, oral history's prime

⁶⁰ Jennifer Read, "Addressing 'A quiet horror': The Evolution of Ontario Pollution Control Policy in the International Great Lakes, 1909-1972," unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 2000), http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk1/tape9/PQDD_0013/NQ42551.pdf.

⁶¹ Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes, introduction to *Oral History and Public Memories*, edited by Paula Hamilton and Linda Shopes (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2008), ix.

⁶² For more on this see Ronald J. Grele, "Movement without aim: Methodological and theoretical problems in oral history," in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds., *The Oral History Reader* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 38-52.

contribution to scholarship is that it helps explain the meaning of events. While previously unknown facts may arise in the course of interviews, the real benefit comes in the revelation of how events are interpreted.⁶³ This is a viewpoint shared by Michael Frisch, who declares oral history “a powerful tool for discovering, exploring and evaluating the nature of the process of historical memory – how people make sense of their past, how they connect individual experience and its social context and how the past becomes part of the present, and how people use it to interpret their lives and the world around them.”⁶⁴ An alternate emphasis is presented by Donald A. Ritchie, a former president of the Oral History Association whose work focuses upon American political history. Ritchie’s use of oral history emphasizes uncovering otherwise undocumented facts – what Frisch describes as swing[ing] the flashlight into a previously unknowable corner of the attic.”⁶⁵ This approach, which places a premium on the veracity of the information shared, is the one I follow.

Oral history, poorly handled, can result in skewed and biased data; however, the same case could be made for any source. “Oral history is as reliable or unreliable as other research sources,” argues Ritchie in *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*. “No single piece of data of any sort should be trusted completely, and all sources need to be tested against other evidence.”⁶⁶ While it is true that oral history can contain misremembered and intentionally manipulated information, a published memoir by a war hero contains potential to be filled with historical inaccuracies, just as an unpublished diary kept by a

⁶³ Alessandro Portelli, “The Peculiarities of Oral History,” *History Workshop* 12 (August 1981): 99-100.

⁶⁴ Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1990), 188.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶⁶ Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 26.

politician does. As with written sources, oral history requires critical analysis. However, oral history provides an incalculable benefit insofar that it enables the interviewer to press for details and seek clarification which can help enable one to assess the veracity of the subject's statement – a form of quality control not available to those reliant entirely upon the written word. To maximize the benefit of my oral sources, each interview was preceded by extensive research into the subject's involvement, based upon archival research, newspaper analysis and, eventually, other interviews. Afterwards, the information gathered was cross-referenced with the existing evidence.

This dissertation utilizes oral history in a manner complementary to print sources. In a sense, print sources provided a structural frame for my research by providing an understanding of key events and the broader narrative. What was often left unsaid in these documents, however, was the rationale behind decisions, as well as other descriptive details. Oral interviews proved beneficial in filling these gaps. A clear example of the benefit of utilizing oral history alongside print sources can be found in this chapter's opening anecdote. As was revealed through archival and newspaper research, Vickers and Benson provided a series of *pro bono* advertisements to Pollution Probe early in the ENGO's history. These advertisements, in turn, helped solidify Pollution Probe's image as a well-run organization. However, there was no textual explanation as to why Vickers and Benson provided these advertisements. When raised in interviews with former staff members at Pollution Probe, it was generally assumed that O'Malley was somehow connected to the organization, either as family or friend to one of its members. But as was revealed in my interview with O'Malley, he had no prior connection with Pollution Probe whatsoever. Rather, upon learning about its work via the

media he decided he would like to help them spread their message. This story, which sheds light upon Pollution Probe's relationship with the business community, would have remained undocumented had I not adopted oral history as a component of my research methods. Likewise, the story of how Pollution Probe received free advertising space from *The Telegram* was not documented until I conducted an interview with Rob Mills.

This dissertation also utilizes organizational theory, based upon the work of A. Paul Pross, and resource mobilization theory, attributable to John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald. Mobilization theory provides insight into the conditions necessary for pressure groups, such as ENGOs, to evolve into more sophisticated operations.⁶⁷ Resource mobilization theory, which likens social movement organizations to business operations, provides insight into the selection of priorities and initiatives. These complementary theories are primarily utilized in the third chapter, where they are further explained and applied, although their insights help inform the work throughout.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

By focusing on the contributions of Pollution Probe, this dissertation focuses upon the role of ENGOs in the development of the environmental movement in Canada. A strong case could be made for a dissertation centered upon the role of individual environmentalists, such as Farley Mowat and David Suzuki, in shaping the movement.⁶⁸

However, this approach was eschewed for three reasons. First, ENGOs have been the

⁶⁷ A. Paul Pross, "Pressure Groups: Adaptive Instruments of Political Communication," in *Pressure Group Behaviour in Canadian Politics*, ed. A. Paul Pross (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1975), 1-26; A. Paul Pross, *Group Politics and Public Policy* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1986); A. Paul Pross, "Canadian Pressure Groups: Talking Chameleons," in *Pressure Groups*, ed. Jeremy J. Richardson (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1993), 145-158.

⁶⁸ A mixture of individual biographies and group studies were effectively employed by George Warecki and Tina Loo in their studies of the conservation movement.

driving force behind the creation of the tightened environmental regulations that came into being beginning in the late 1960s, as well as the increased public sensitivity towards environmental issues. In order to achieve its goals, members of an ENGO work together, utilizing their collective knowledge and manpower. The ENGO also enhances the ability to fundraise, which is essential to purchase advertising and to launch educational and political campaigns.⁶⁹ Second, studying ENGOS provides insight into the internal dynamics of people working together for a common cause. Third, it has been noted that studies of Canadian social movement organizations during the 1960s and 1970s are quite rare. As Dominique Clément points out, this is “an unfortunate oversight considering their significant influence during this period.”⁷⁰ As such, by focusing upon the role of an ENGO, this study will make a contribution to the broader study of Canadian social movement organizations.

Chapter two examines the story of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation television documentary *The Air of Death*. First broadcast on 22 October 1967, *The Air of Death* was a damning portrayal of the deleterious impact of industrial air pollution in Canada. While not the first documentary to tackle this subject, it was the first to attract a large audience. Critically hailed, it nonetheless drew the ire of industrial interests, which attempted to discredit the filmmakers and their findings. In the ensuing thirty-two months, the filmmakers were subjected to two high profile investigations, an Ontario-ordered Royal Commission and a Canadian Radio-Television Commission [CRTC]

⁶⁹ This understanding of the role of ENGOS is derived from the John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald’s discussion of what they term “social movement organizations.” John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, “Resources Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory,” *American Journal of Sociology* 82:6 (May 1977): 1212-1241.

⁷⁰ Clément, *Canada’s Rights Revolution*, 5.

hearing. This chapter will tell the story of *The Air of Death*, and will demonstrate how it, and the subsequent controversy, are directly responsible for the creation of Toronto's first two ENGOs, the Group Action to Stop Pollution [GASP] and Pollution Probe.

Chapter three examines the Toronto environmental community, from *The Air of Death* through to the summer of 1970. While GASP enjoyed an initial rush of interest among prominent Torontonians, drawing an estimated 300 to its December 1967 founding meeting, it would never reach such heights again. By 1969 GASP had morphed into the pet project of an ambitious municipal politician. Lacking any measure of broad-based support, it would cease operations in the summer of 1970. Meanwhile, the student-based Pollution Probe, formed in 1969, found itself thriving. This chapter examines the opposing trajectories of these pioneering Canadian ENGOs. It is noted that an important difference was that Pollution Probe enjoyed the institutional support of the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto, which provided credibility to the group, as well as the infrastructure necessary to operate full-time. The support of the Department of Zoology was not in itself a predictor of success, however, as will be demonstrated by the rather ineffectual emergence of Zero Population Growth-Toronto [ZPGT], a neo-Malthusian group dedicated to reducing the human birthrate. Rather, Pollution Probe, unlike GASP and ZPGT, benefited from the energies of a relatively large and dedicated membership. Pollution Probe would also benefit from the presence of a cadre from elite backgrounds who would play an exponential role in shaping its organizational character. This group's willingness to engage the business community for support rendered Pollution Probe unique among ENGOs during the 1970s. While Pollution Probe would inspire the emergence of affiliate groups throughout the country, these groups acted

independently and without oversight. As such, environmental activism, through the summer of 1970, remained a localized matter.

The fourth chapter traces the evolution of Pollution Probe from autumn 1970 through 1976. This was initially a period of growth for the group, as it saw its paid staff expand to twenty-five by 1973. Structural revisions would lead to the abandonment of the organization's Sixties-styled collective format, and resulted in the hiring of its first executive director, which was followed by the adoption of a team-based approach that saw it branch out into a variety of areas not previously associated with environmental activism. This period would also see Pollution Probe develop a number of separate organizations, most notably the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation. However, the onset of a recession in Canada in the wake of the 1973 energy crisis led to a significant cutback in money accrued from the government, foundations, and corporate sponsorship. While this led to a period of austerity at Pollution Probe, the newfound public interest in energy issues resulted in the launch of a semi-independent sister project, Energy Probe.

Chapter five examines the period between 1977 and 1984, which was marked by a significant decrease in the government, media, and public's interest in environmental issues. Throughout the preceding years, Pollution Probe had been the standard-bearer of Toronto's ENGOs. However, the ensuing lull saw Pollution Probe's status seriously diminished. The emergence of new Toronto-based ENGOs, namely Greenpeace Toronto and the Is Five Foundation, would spell an end to Pollution Probe's local dominance. Ongoing financial difficulties at the Pollution Probe Foundation led its more prosperous partner, Energy Probe, to strike out on its own. Ironically, this move would lead to a

partial revival for Pollution Probe, as it resulted in the hiring of a business savvy executive director, Colin Isaacs, intent on putting the organization back into the black. This process was aided by a newfound focus on toxic waste and the safety of the water supply, two interrelated issues that renewed public interest in Pollution Probe's work.

As will be noted in the conclusion, Pollution Probe struggled its way into the 1980s, only to find itself ill-fit for the period. While the late 1960s and early 1970s were marked in Canada by the emergence of localized ENGOS, these were displaced in the mid-1980s by pan-Canadian organizations, such as Greenpeace Canada, the World Wildlife Fund Canada, the Sierra Club Canada, and the Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain. These groups, with their broad-based support, were better equipped to address the defining issues of the period which tended to be international in scale, particularly acid rain, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the decline in global biodiversity. Pollution Probe would continue operations, as would other sub-national ENGOS across the country, but it would not regain the prominence of its formative years.

Chapter Two: *The Air of Death* and the Origins of Pollution Probe

On the evening of Sunday, 22 October 1967 the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation [CBC] pre-empted perennial ratings favorite *The Ed Sullivan Show* in order to broadcast a television production of its Farm and Fisheries Department. Directed by Larry Gosnell and hosted by national news anchor Stanley Burke, *The Air of Death* was an exploration of air pollution's adverse impact upon the environment. Heavily promoted by the CBC, *The Air of Death* proved to be a ratings hit as well as a critical success. It also drew the ire of industrial interests due to its allegations of human fluorosis poisoning in Dunnville, Ontario. Subsequently, the film and the team behind it were subjected to two high profile investigations, an Ontario-ordered Royal Commission and a Canadian Radio-Television Commission [CRTC] hearing.

The Air of Death was a pivotal event in the development of environmental activism in Toronto. Before its broadcast, the city was devoid of ENGOs. Just sixteen months later, however, the city was home to two environmental activist organizations, both of which attributed their founding to the controversial documentary film. It was not the first documentary to raise concerns about Canada's environment, nor was it even the first documentary to address fluorosis pollution in Dunnville. However, due to the high profile of the documentary and the subsequent public inquiries, *The Air of Death* became a *cause célèbre* that mobilized the public in a manner previously unseen in Canada.

As Christopher Bosso bluntly notes in *Environment, Inc.*, "Origins matter."⁷¹ In order to understand the operation and development of an ENGO it is necessary to

⁷¹ Bosso, *Environment, Inc.*, 18.

understand what inspired its creation. While much has been written about the origins of environmental activism in the United States, in Canada the subject has rarely been broached. While there is no denying that the intellectual current of American environmentalism influenced Canadians, as evidenced by the popularity of such works as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* north of the border, this did not launch environmental activism in Canada. Rather, as this chapter will demonstrate, it took a high profile and shocking exposé of homegrown environmental degradation on the national broadcaster, combined with an obvious effort to discredit the filmmakers, to inspire the city's first environmental activist organizations, the Group Action to Stop Pollution [GASP] and Pollution Probe.

THE BIRTH OF *THE AIR OF DEATH*

Larry Gosnell was not the sort of figure who courted controversy in the pursuit of self-aggrandizement. Rather, he was renowned as a hardworking man who preferred to work behind the scenes. Nonetheless, according to Rodger Schwass, a longtime family friend and onetime Dean of the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University, the "self-effacing" filmmaker was also "tough as nails when he had to battle for something he believed in."⁷² It was this aspect of his personality that led the renowned CBC employee Knowlton Nash to remark upon Gosnell's passing in 2004 that "He was a lot of trouble, but he was worth every second of it and more."⁷³ While he would go on to tackle many difficult topics over the course of his award-winning career, his crowning achievement was *The Air of Death*.

⁷² Rodger Schwass, interview with author, 19 April 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁷³ James Rusk, "He was a lot of trouble," *Globe and Mail*, 1 April 2004, R9.

Gosnell was born and raised on the family farm in Orford Township, Ontario on 18 May 1923. Upon graduating from the Ontario Agriculture College in Guelph in 1949 Gosnell was hired by the National Film Board [NFB] agricultural department in Montreal. Beginning as an assistant producer, and upon learning the ropes, gaining promotion to the rank of producer, by 1961 he directed and/or produced twenty-three films for the NFB. While much of Gosnell's early work celebrated the benefits provided by scientific advances in agriculture, by the late 1950s his tone acquired a critical edge and farmers' widespread use of chemical sprays became a point of interest.⁷⁴

In 1960 Gosnell produced *Poisons, Pests and People*, a one hour documentary that explored the uses and effects of insecticides. While not his first work to examine the use of synthetic chemicals – a pair of shorter films, *Chemical Conquest* (1956) and *Let's Look at Weeds* (1959), also addressed the topic – the scope and forum of *Poisons, Pests and People* rendered it unique. A meticulous researcher, Gosnell consulted with a wide range of experts, including the American biologist turned nature writer Rachel Carson, who was then preparing her own manuscript on the subject. According to NFB collection analyst Marc St-Pierre, Gosnell's original script, completed in June 1959, “vigorously denounce[d] the spraying of insecticides,” arguing that it presented “a danger to plants, animals and humans.”⁷⁵ Senior management at the NFB informed Gosnell that his script was unacceptable, and required a rewrite that accentuated the more beneficial aspects of insecticides.⁷⁶ The ensuing production aired in half-hour segments on CBC's

⁷⁴ Denise Gosnell, interview with author, 19 March 2008, Toronto, ON; “Larry Gosnell – Biography,” 21 June 1972, Biography A-Z 1974-1998, CBC Reference Library [CBCRL].

⁷⁵ Marc St-Pierre, “Footprints: Environment and the Way We Live,” National Film Board, nd, accessed 10 August 2010, <http://www3.nfb.ca/footprints/nfb-and-environment/the-early-years.html?part=3>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.; Denise Gosnell, interview.

“Documentary 60” program in February 1960, the first part exploring “the ravages of insects and the centuries-old struggle to control them,” while the second showed “experiments being conducted to find ways of controlling specific insects, while leaving harmless ones unaffected.”⁷⁷ Film historian D.B. Jones describes the version of *Poisons, Pests and People* that aired as “journalistic and unengaged” and “not particularly interesting as documentary art.”⁷⁸ Nonetheless, representatives of the forestry and agriculture ministries still deemed the film to be overly critical after it was shown at a natural resources conference in October 1961; subsequently, the documentary was quietly removed from the NFB’s distribution list.⁷⁹

In 1961 Gosnell, his wife, and their three young sons left Montreal for Toronto, a move necessitated by a new job as a radio producer with the CBC’s Department of Farm and Fisheries.⁸⁰ Here he served under Murray Creed, who had known Gosnell since they worked together in 1948. In this position, Gosnell worked on *Farm Radio Forum*, which served as a platform for discussing rural Canadian social and economic issues, and its summertime replacement, *Summer Fallow*, a series of half-hour docu-dramas concerning farm life. As Creed explains, “I soon found out that he was [a] very competent guy, very thorough, and very committed.”⁸¹ Consequently, when Creed was given the task of establishing a Farm and Fisheries department for CBC television in 1964, he brought

⁷⁷ Quoted in “Poisons, Pests and People,” National Film Board, nd, accessed 10 August 2010, http://www.nfb.ca/film/Poisons_Pests_People. See also, St-Pierre, “Footprints”; Blaine Allan, “Documentary ’60,” *CBC Television Series, 1952-1982*, nd, accessed 10 August 2010, <http://www.film.queensu.ca/cbc/doc.html>.

⁷⁸ D.B. Jones, *Movies and Memoranda: An Interpretative History of the National Film Board of Canada* (Ottawa: The Canadian Film Institute, 1981), 82.

⁷⁹ St-Pierre, “Footprints.” According to Gosnell’s widow, Denise, the decision to pull the documentary was made by executives at the NFB due to industry pressure. Larry was not notified of the decision. Denise Gosnell, interview.

⁸⁰ “Larry Gosnel [*sic*] Joins Staff of CBC Farm Broadcasts,” CBC Radio and Television Information Services, 28 July 1961, Biography A-Z 1974-1998, CBCRL.

⁸¹ Murray Creed, interview with author, 28 January 2008, conducted by telephone.

Gosnell along as his researcher and story editor. Within a year, Gosnell was working as a television producer.⁸²

Given Gosnell's interest in ecological issues, he was sent as the Department of Farm and Fisheries' media delegate to the Canadian Council of Resource Ministers-sponsored "Pollution and Our Environment" conference in 1966. Held in Montreal, this event attracted over 600 delegates representing government, industry, and the public, in addition to 400 observers from across Canada and abroad. Designed as a gathering place for Canada's leading minds to identify key environmental issues, as well as discuss solutions, the conference was subject to criticism on both sides. Industry representatives, such as Aristide Lafreniere of the Steel Co. of Canada alleged that pollution was a minor problem that "fanatics" were overemphasizing, and Olaf Wolff, chairman of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce's natural resources committee complained that delegates were "making industry the fall guy."⁸³ Thomas A. Beckett, chairman of the Hamilton and Region Conservation Authority, led a contrarian group of delegates that denounced the gathering at a 3 November press conference. Frustrated by the supposed domination of industry-friendly civil servants, Beckett informed the media that "All I've heard since I've been here is that the Ontario water resources commissioner says everything is fine, and industry saying they've got their problems licked."⁸⁴

Gosnell's attendance of this conference proved to be a pivotal event in his career. As he later explained, "For me the Conference was a revelation on the degree of pollution

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ "Pollution not bad, meeting told," *Toronto Star*, 1 November 1966, 3; "Industry always pollution fall guy," *Toronto Star*, 2 November 1966, 58.

⁸⁴ Frank Jones, "Dissident delegates think pollution conference a flop," *Toronto Star*, 3 November 1966, 56.

that had already happened in our country.”⁸⁵ His concern was coupled with a sense of responsibility, as a member of the fourth estate, to raise the awareness of a largely oblivious public. Upon his return to Toronto he began to formulate the idea of a three-part prime time television series that would explore air, water, and soil pollution. Gosnell’s idea for the series received the support of his departmental head. However, it still required the approval of the network’s programmers.

The series proposal faced an uphill battle of making it to broadcast. To begin with, the subject matter was rather gloomy fare for prime time. What’s more, the Farm and Fisheries Department had never before produced a single program for this time slot, let alone three. These concerns subsided, however, when Gosnell recruited Stanley Burke, anchor of *The National News*, to participate in the project. One of Canada’s most recognized figures, Burke had a noted background in journalism, having served as president of the United Nations Correspondents Association, as well as the CBC bureau chief in such locales as Washington and Paris. Described in the contemporary press as “glamorous” and a “dashing figure,”⁸⁶ Burke was attracted to the urgent tone of Gosnell’s project. When asked about his decision to invite Burke’s participation, Gosnell would later downplay the relevance of Burke’s celebrity and highlighted his journalistic and scholarly credentials.⁸⁷ Nonetheless, the addition of Burke’s “star power” would prove

⁸⁵ Canadian Radio-Television Commission [CRTC], *Public Hearing, In Connection with the Preparation, Production and Broadcasting of the CBC Television Programme entitled ‘Air of Death,’* (Toronto: CRTC, 1969), 58.

⁸⁶ Ralph Thomas, “So Choose Sides: Earl or Stanley,” *Toronto Star*, 12 November 1966, 28.

⁸⁷ Asked during CRTC hearings whether Burke’s role as a CBC newscaster had any relation to his selection as host of *The Air of Death*, Gosnell replied: “It was a consideration but let me say that if Stanley Burke had been employed in some other capacity in the CBC, in any capacity, any production capacity where he was available similarly, I would have chosen him. It was not because, and I want to make this very clear, he was the National News reader.” CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 330. Burke received a Bachelor of Science degree in agriculture from the University of British Columbia in 1948. Burke’s recollection of how he became

key to getting the project off the ground. On 25 January 1967, Murray Creed had a meeting with Doug Nixon, the CBC's Director of Television (English Network), to pitch the project. As Creed later noted, the idea was met with considerable hesitancy until Creed revealed that Burke had already agreed to serve as host. "This just changed the water under the beams immediately," Creed recalls with amusement. The project proposal was given the green light, with the significant stipulation that the films must be made interesting enough to maintain the interest of a general audience.⁸⁸

Gosnell began researching the air pollution special in February. With no clear vision of what the final product should resemble, he set about educating himself on the subject. Research trips to Ottawa, Montreal, Syracuse, New York City, and Washington, D.C. ensued, as he sought out leading experts. Two researchers, freelancer James W. McLean and Doug Lower, a production assistant for the Farm and Fisheries Department, were put on the job and promptly dispatched to conduct research in the heavily industrialized cities of Windsor, Sarnia, Hamilton, and Detroit. Through April the research concentrated on issues pertaining to urban air pollution.⁸⁹

THE DUNNVILLE PROBLEM

Two vital developments occurred in May. It was decided that the as-of-yet unnamed special would pre-empt the Sunday night ratings hit *The Ed Sullivan Show* in the autumn

involved in *The Air of Death* boils down to this: "He [Gosnell] asked me to. See, I'm the anchor. When you're the CBC anchor you're the front man. Everybody knew me. So you get this guy teeing off your program, its going to attract some attention. And it did." Stanley Burke, interview with author, 2 November 2007, conducted by telephone.

⁸⁸ Creed, interview; Untitled timeline, 20 February 1969, Larry Gosnell papers [LGP], in the possession of Denise Gosnell.

⁸⁹ Untitled timeline, 20 February 1969, LGP.

lineup, thus ensuring a sizable audience.⁹⁰ The project also took a significant twist when Gosnell attended a lecture in New York City on the topic of fluorosis. Dr. Clancy Gordon presented the results of a thorough study of Garrison, Montana, where vegetation, crops, and cattle had been devastated by effluent from the nearby Rocky Mountain Phosphate plant.⁹¹ In March 1966 local ranchers received \$123,000 in damages after a Bozeman court found that “fluorine gas from the plant was disabling cattle and destroying vegetation in the Garrison area.”⁹² However, an effort to close the plant was rejected two months later, as District Judge W.W. Lessley proclaimed: “There are no grounds at present that would justify this court to issue an injunction terminating the defendant’s operation at Garrison.”⁹³

Gordon’s presentation drew Gosnell’s attention to the situation then unfolding in the vicinity of Dunnville, Ontario, where farmers were complaining of fluorine pollution from the Electric Reduction Company [ERCO] phosphate plant in Port Maitland. This situation was examined in a segment on CBC television’s *Country Calendar*, broadcast in 26 February 1966, as well as the 19 October 1966 edition of CBC radio’s *Matinee*. Although these productions failed to garner much attention beyond their intended agricultural audiences, they did provide a starting point for Gosnell’s research on the topic. Particularly useful was the “Air Pollution” segment on *Matinee*, produced by Gosnell’s longtime friend Rodger Schwass. As Gosnell later acknowledged, Schwass

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ K.C. Walton, “Environmental fluoride and fluorosis in mammals,” *Mammal Review* 18:2 (June 1988): 83; Transcript of discussion, Jim McLean, George Salverson, and Larry Gosnell, nd, 1, LGP. Clancy Gordon’s presentation occurred on either 12-13 May 1967, while Gosnell was in town attending the Scientist’s Institute for Public Information Conference. “Dunnville Pollution Investigation,” nd, 3, LGP.

⁹² Quoted in Bruce West, “An old story!” *Globe and Mail*, 24 October 1967, 33.

⁹³ Ibid.

served as his major source, providing background information and contacts.⁹⁴ In “Air Pollution,” Schwass spoke to Dr. Roy Pennington, Vice-President of ERCO’s Agricultural Chemicals Division, who admitted that the plant’s emissions were causing the farmers’ hardship:

[The] Dunnville area apparently suffered extensive crop damage – fluorine emissions, not only to the crops but in many cases to the livestock. This damage was created, at least in part from our operations down there. [The] cause of the damage, we are certain, has been cleared up. We are spending several hundred thousand dollars in putting in equipment to correct this situation, which, prior to it happening, we did not realize that this could happen. As I said before, this situation now is cleared up. Once we realized it happened we immediately took steps to install scrubbing equipment over the winter, and as a matter of fact this year we did not run one of our operations so that there would be no harm done during the growing season until the proper removal equipment was installed.⁹⁵

An arbitrator, appointed by the government of Ontario, had awarded local farmers approximately \$100,000 in damages experienced in 1965. Schwass discovered that, in order to collect, the farmers were required to sign a waiver that prevented future awards for damages to livestock, crops, or real estate; some farmers refused to sign to such terms. While ERCO admitted its plant was damaging crops and cattle, one farmer expressed concern that the fluorine was also taking its toll on the local residents:

What's going to happen to our own health, our children? We're told that if we don't eat our own meat, drink our own milk or eat any produce off the garden that grows above ground we should be all right. What the hell's the sense of having the ground? What's the sense of growing anything? I've been threatening to give the place away and move out because I think the children's health is more important than a job or a piece of land. No doctor, Department of Health or anything else have told us that we can't drink the milk They said 'oh no, it doesn't affect the meat, doesn't affect the milk.' Yet one of my neighbours sent some cattle to

⁹⁴ Transcript of discussion, Jim McLean, George Salverson, and Larry Gosnell, nd, 4, LGP. In an interview with the author, Schwass, a former National Secretary for National Farm Radio Forum, described the segment on *Matinee* as “the first radio edition of *Air of Death*.” Schwass, interview.

⁹⁵ “Air Pollution,” *Matinee*, CBC Radio, 19 October 1966, produced by Rodger Schwass, CBCRL.

Toronto and they got a slip back from the Department of Health – unfit for human consumption.⁹⁶

Gosnell was intrigued by the Dunnville story as it demonstrated that, contrary to popular perception, air pollution was not a problem restricted to urban areas. He explored the CBC's pre-existing research files on Dunnville, and dispatched Doug Lower to assess the situation first-hand. Although Lower met with some of the local farmers and viewed the damages to their land, he advised Gosnell that he found a widespread reluctance within the community to speak. With the prospect of a strong story ahead of him, Gosnell was not going to be easily deterred. As he later explained, "Well, when Doug said don't go I decided that before we'd give up on it I should go out there and see these people myself and so I went out there quite a few times."⁹⁷ Gosnell's persistence paid dividends, and the veil of secrecy that initially surrounded Dunnville began to dissipate.

Beginning in the 1950s the Ontario government had begun to offer a variety of incentives to businesses willing to locate in underemployed areas.⁹⁸ In 1958 Dominion Fertilizer established a plant to produce superphosphate fertilizer in Port Maitland, an agricultural community located in Sherbrooke Township. Two years later the plant was purchased by ERCO, which expanded and converted it to produce triple superphosphate, a popular fertilizer containing a greater phosphorous content. This was followed by Sherbrooke Metallurgical, which supplied ERCO, its next-door neighbor, with sulphuric

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Transcript of discussion, Jim McLean, George Salverson, and Larry Gosnell, nd, 4, LGP.

⁹⁸ For more on this see chapter ten in K.J. Rea, *The Prosperous Years: The Economic History of Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

acid.⁹⁹ Located in Ontario's smallest township, ERCO had a tremendous presence, accounting for three hundred jobs and three-quarters of its tax base.¹⁰⁰

The first signs of crop damage related to the ERCO plant were reported in 1961, when Port Maitland farmer Joseph Casina and his customers noticed a significant decline in the quality of his produce. Casina suspected industrial fumes from the nearby plant might be at fault, so he contacted the Department of Agriculture, which in turn notified the Department of Health's Air Pollution Control Bureau.¹⁰¹ As the problems continued unabated, Casina struck up a dialogue with W.B. Drowley, Director of the Air Pollution Control Bureau, and Everett Biggs, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, in the hopes of determining the root cause of the damage.¹⁰² Despite their various efforts to measure pollution in the area, the government officials refused to point the blame at ERCO's effluent. Meanwhile, the problem worsened. In 1963, area cows began to exhibit symptoms of foot rot. In 1964, Biggs wrote Casina confirming that the "crop damage ...

⁹⁹ Ella Haley, "Methodology to Deconstruct Environmental Inquiries Using the Hall Commission as a Case Study," unpublished PhD dissertation, York University, 2000), 84-85.

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/ftp03/NQ59138.pdf>. Haley approaches the topic as a sociologist. While I tend to agree with her major points, her conclusions tend to be highly impassioned and are not always backed by evidence. This is likely influenced by her personal opposition to water fluoridation. See, for example, "CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS who Oppose Water Fluoridation – Signed Professional Statement," *Waterloo Watch*, 9 October 2007, accessed 20 September 2008, http://www.waterloowatch.com/Index_files/Canadian%20Professionals%20Opposed%20To%20Water%20Fluoridation.pdf.

¹⁰⁰ Gerald McAuliffe, "Death Fear in Dunnville," *Hamilton Spectator*, 21 October 1967, 12. On 27 October 1967 the ERCO plant in Dunnville was indicted by a federal prosecutor for operating "a combine intended to interfere with the public's access to industrial phosphates" between January 1956 and August 1960. The ERCO plant was also charged with "engaging in a monopoly" from January 1953 through December 1966. In January 1970 it was fined \$40,000 under the Federal Combines Investigation Act. "Dunnville plant charged under federal indictment," *Toronto Star*, 27 October 1967, 2; "Ottawa asked to fire Solandt for ERCO link," *Toronto Star*, 20 January 1970, 1; "Scientist in conflict," *Toronto Star*, 29 January 1970, 6.

¹⁰¹ Gary Dunford, "Farmer's diary tells the story of six-year pollution fight," *Toronto Star*, 30 October 1967, 31.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

appears to be caused by certain industries in the area.”¹⁰³ By August numerous cattle had died under mysterious circumstances, and Casina himself had been hospitalized.¹⁰⁴

The local farmers feared publicity would negatively impact the marketability of their milk. Disenchanted with the government’s apparent inaction, as well as the failure of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture [OFA] to advance their cause, the farmers held a series of township meetings, leading to the creation of the Farmers’ Air Pollution Committee. As evidence continued to mount supporting the belief that fluoride emissions from ERCO were responsible for the cattle and crop damages, negotiations between the OFA and ERCO began. It was not until the summer of 1965 that urinary and bone analysis conducted at the Ontario Veterinary College confirmed bovine fluorosis; monitors set downwind of the plant during this period likewise revealed high levels of fluoride residues.¹⁰⁵

As negotiations began, the OFA entered into an agreement with the provincial Department of Health and ERCO to keep the matter behind closed doors. Don Middleton, Secretary of the OFA and the farmers’ negotiator, later explained, “All we needed was a picture of one of these crippled cows [to go public] and the milk industry could have been seriously hurt, not only for these farmers, but for all the farmers in Ontario.”¹⁰⁶ In September 1965 the parties agreed in the selection of an arbitrator to assess the value of damages. According to the settlement’s guidelines, ERCO agreed to cover the costs of

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ A good review of events as they impacted the farmers can be found in J.S. Cram, “Downwind from Disaster,” *Family Herald*, 26 October 1967, 12-15.

¹⁰⁶ Quoted in Haley, “Methodology to Deconstruct Environmental Inquiries Using the Hall Commission as a Case Study,” 98.

damages to crops, ornamental plantings, and livestock, but only for the current year.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, before payments were made, ERCO required farmers to sign a release acknowledging payment was not an admission of guilt on the part of ERCO, and that the recipient waived the right to further damages from ERCO and the Sherbrooke Metallurgical Company through the end of 1965.¹⁰⁸ The vast majority of affected farmers signed the agreement, either because they felt it was the only available avenue for compensation or because they were forced into it by immediate financial need. As Dirk Boorsma, a farmer located in Port Maitland, explained,

I have tried to battle my way through, to make a living on a dairy farm, while constantly plagued by air pollution destroying my crops, my cattle, and eventually, my income. We have received some compensation for the loss we suffered for the years prior to and including 1965. But this compensation was a long, long way from covering my loss. Financially, I had my back against the wall due to this pollution and therefore had to sign.¹⁰⁹

A total of \$86,188.94 was awarded to the farmers in 1965; an additional \$112,221.74 was secured for damages experienced the following year.¹¹⁰ At the onset of 1966 the OFA announced that the milk supply was safe for human consumption. Middleton therefore decided to take the farmers' plight public in an effort to wrangle additional compensation from ERCO, which resulted in the aforementioned *Country Calendar* and *Matinee* segments.

To this point, attention had been focused on the impact fluoride effluent was having on farmers' crops and livestock. A more eerie possibility would arise in June 1967

¹⁰⁷ Haley, "Methodology to Deconstruct Environmental Inquiries Using the Hall Commission as a Case Study," 99.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹⁰⁹ Quoted in *ibid.*, 102.

¹¹⁰ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County* (Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1968), 346.

when Gosnell met Dr. George Waldbott, a Detroit-based allergist, at the International Joint Commission in Windsor.¹¹¹ In the months that followed, the two held a number of telephone conversations in which they discussed the situation in Dunnville. Gosnell would later describe Waldbott as “certainly the most knowledgeable medical man we’d spoken to about fluoride,”¹¹² and consequently, with the support of local farmers, Gosnell invited him to visit Dunnville on 13 September in order to discuss symptoms with locals.¹¹³ Of the nine farmers he saw, Waldbott determined that two were suffering from fluorine intoxication, a potentially fatal affliction.¹¹⁴

Although Waldbott was a well-regarded allergist who served on the staff of Wayne State University and two local hospitals,¹¹⁵ he was a controversial figure within the medical establishment. A native of Germany who had emigrated to the United States shortly after earning his medical degree in 1921, by the 1950s his research began to link water fluoridation with health problems. While water fluoridation was “one of the most hotly debated issues of the day,”¹¹⁶ as evident in the 136 plebiscites and referendums held on the issue across Canada during the years 1960-66, it had been endorsed by such expert bodies as the Canadian Dental Association in 1953, the Canadian Medical Association in

¹¹¹ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 173. The International Joint Committee met 19-22 June 1967 in Port Huron and Windsor.

¹¹² Transcript of discussion, Jim McLean, George Salverson, and Larry Gosnell, nd, 23, LGP.

¹¹³ The question of who extended the invitation to Waldbott was raised during the CRTC hearing. When Gosnell was asked if it was his idea he responded that “I am not sure about that. I discussed the matter with Dr. Waldbott at the IJC [International Joint Commission] meeting and held a number of other conversations with him about it, and I discussed it with the Federation of Agriculture and the farmers air pollution committee. I must say at this juncture, after the years and the months that have passed, I don’t remember who said, ‘Let’s have Dr. Waldbott come to Dunnville[.]’” According to Gosnell, the CBC did not pay Waldbott for his services; however, it did cover some of his expenses. Since Waldbott was not licensed to practice medicine in Ontario, it would have been illegal for him to conduct physical examinations. CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 370-371.

¹¹⁴ *The Air of Death*, directed by Larry Gosnell (1967; Toronto: CBC Archive Sales, 2008), DVD.

¹¹⁵ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 349.

¹¹⁶ Catherine Carstairs and Rachel Elder, “Expertise, Health, and Popular Opinion: Debating Water Fluoridation, 1945-1980.” *Canadian Historical Review* 89:3 (September 2008): 347.

1954, and the Royal Commission on Health Services in 1964.¹¹⁷ Consequently, while Waldbott's reports on the dangers of water fluoridation were published in numerous peer-reviewed journals in Europe, his research was rejected by the major scholarly publications in North America. As Waldbott wrote in 1957,

[I]t may be noted that commercial interests ... stand to benefit substantially from the fluoridation program, and that these interests have exerted themselves powerfully to bring about its adoption. Sodium fluoride and sodium silico-fluoride are made from waste products of the aluminum, fertilizer and steel industries The same manufacturers have helped to finance the fluoridation research of foundations and university departments which have supported their program.¹¹⁸

The allegedly duplicitous relationship between industry and academia also explained, according to Waldbott, the efforts to suppress contrarian research. Undeterred, he organized his own anti-fluoridation infrastructure, founding the bi-monthly *National Fluoridation News* in 1955, the American Society for Fluoride Research in 1966, and the *Fluoride Quarterly Reports* in 1968, as well as organizing an assortment of symposiums on the subject.¹¹⁹ In 1960 Waldbott appeared before the Morden Commission called to reconsider the established freeze on new municipal water fluoridation programs in Ontario, arguing for a losing cause.¹²⁰ Gosnell later acknowledged that he knew Waldbott was an outspoken opponent of water fluoridation, but that this “was a subject in which I had no professional interest.”¹²¹ This proved to be a major miscalculation on Gosnell’s

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 348.

¹¹⁸ G.L. Waldbott, “The Great Fluoridation Promotion,” in James Rorty, ed., *The American Fluoridation Experiment* (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1957), 193-194.

¹¹⁹ John Colquhoun, “Editorial: Centennial Commemoration,” *Fluoride* 31:1 (February 1998): 1; Albert W. Burgstahler, “George L. Waldbott – A Pre-Eminent Leader in Fluoride Research,” *Fluoride* 31:1 (February 1998): 2-4; Donald R. McNeil, *The Fight For Fluoridation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 159.

¹²⁰ See Ontario Royal Commission on Fluoridation, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon Fluoridation of Municipal Water Supplies* (Toronto: Queen’s Printer, 1961).

¹²¹ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 363.

behalf. Despite his efforts to keep the issues of water fluoridation and fluorosis separate, Waldbott's participation in the making of *The Air of Death* would prove to further inflame an already controversial project.

Efforts to interview an ERCO representative were unsuccessful. According to Gosnell, he attempted to arrange an interview through Dr. Roy Pennington, who had earlier appeared in the "Air Pollution" segment of *Matinee* broadcast on 19 October 1966. In the ensuing telephone conversations, Pennington informed Gosnell that he had not received the necessary clearance from his superiors.¹²² An 18 March 1969 memo by Dr. Omond Solandt, Vice-Chairman of the Board at ERCO, reveals that the company feared being singled out in the documentary. As Solandt explained, "I felt that it was very unwise for a small company such as ERCO, which is a very minor factor in air pollution on a national basis, to appear on such a program. Responsibility for representing industry on such a program should be taken by the big industries for whom waste disposal is a major continuing problem."¹²³

THE AIR OF DEATH BROADCAST

The Air of Death opened with the stark image of black smoke pouring out of an industrial plant. It then cut to video of an expanding human lung, over which Stanley Burke announced in his distinctive drawl that "Every day your lungs inhale fifteen thousand quarts of air and poison." As the camera rotated between an old man being tested for a pulmonary condition, a large smokestack, children playing outside an industrial factory,

¹²² Gosnell claims to have continued checking in with Pennington until the day before the final taping was held in the hopes that ERCO may have reversed its decision. CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 207-210.

¹²³ Omond Solandt to Hugh McMahon, lawyer for ERCO, 18 March 1969, Omond M. Solandt fonds, B93-0041/038, University of Toronto Archives [UTA].

and a hospitalized man with a breathing apparatus inserted through his trachea, Burke continued to set the tone with his voice-over.

You're an old man in a box or a child at play. You can't choose not to breathe. You must breathe fifteen thousand quarts a day, air and poison. You've got to breathe. You breathe sulphur dioxide, which erodes stone. Benzopyrene makes cancer. Carbon monoxide impairs the mind. They cut a hole in your throat. Death has been gathering in the air of every Canadian city. Poisons continue to accumulate and you must keep breathing.¹²⁴

Burke then appeared on camera. With industrial smokestack providing the backdrop he explained that the six months spent researching the program was “a frightening experience.” He continued:

I don't smoke myself, but I now know that I'm getting the equivalent of two packs a day right out of the air. I'm inhaling a cup-full of dirt plus poison. I didn't know what emphysema was and perhaps you don't either, but you will. It's becoming one of the major killers. In fact, lung diseases as a whole are now the number one killer in Canada, and it's rather frightening to realize that most of our hospitals are in polluted areas. There are doctors who won't operate on dirty days. The density of automobiles in Toronto is four times what it is in Los Angeles. I used to think that air pollution was something they had in other countries, but we have it here and now in Canada, and you begin to feel like a fish in a poisoned pond.¹²⁵

Following this dramatic opening, the film began to survey the wide range of air pollution problems experienced in major centres across Canada and the United States. It was revealed that Canadian cities, such as Toronto, Montreal, and Windsor had equivalent air quality to well-known polluted counterparts in the United States. The relationship between Sarnia's highly-polluting oil and petrochemical industries and local physicians' reluctance to speak out against the effects these were having on locals' health was addressed. Industry representatives were interviewed, such as Dr. L.P. Roy of the Laval Industrial Association, defending industry's right to self-regulate their emissions while

¹²⁴ *The Air of Death*, DVD.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

Jean Marier of Montreal's Air Pollution Control argued that the issue could only be resolved if “handled by public representatives.” The film also included an interview with Hazel Henderson of New York City's 24,000 member-strong Citizens for Clean Air. Speaking on her organization's efforts to procure clean air legislation, Henderson explained that “we have made air pollution a household word in New York City” and as a result of their campaign “nobody dared be against clean air.”¹²⁶

The documentary switched gears thirty-three minutes in, putting the focus on the situation in Dunnville. Over a montage of farmers handling shriveled produce and their cattle limping through fields, Burke dramatically summarized the issue:

They noticed it first in 1961, again in '62 – worse each year. Plants that didn't burn were dwarfed – grain yields cut in half. He [a local farmer]'ll show you his fruit trees. The twenty year old orchard, trees that produced so richly for so many years. Now for six years, they've given up no fruit at all for market; random apples not worth picking. Finally a greater disaster revealed the source of the trouble. A plume from a silver stack – once the symbol of Dunnville's progress – spreading for miles around: poison. Fluorine. It was identified by veterinarians. There was no doubt. What happened to the cattle was unmistakable, and it broke the farmers' hearts. Fluorosis – swollen joints, falling teeth, pain – until cattle lie down and die, hundreds of them. The cause: fluorine poison from the air. Under arbitration, the Electric Reduction Company paid the farmers two hundred and eighteen thousand dollars for the loss of crops and cattle. Shriveled crops, limping cattle – but now is there a graver development?¹²⁷

This “graver development” was the suspicion that the fluorine pollution was causing human health issues. To this effect, Burke was shown chatting with farmers Joe Casina and Ted Boorsma, who connected their undiagnosed ailments, characterized by severely aching joints and swollen feet, to ERCO's effluent.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

The documentary then entered its final, most contentious, segment. Burke introduced Dr. Matthew Dymond, the Ontario Minister of Health, who was in studio for an interview. Burke announced that ERCO declined to send a representative; in its place, the set featured an empty chair. Dymond expressed concern regarding the human health problems portrayed but was quick to defend ERCO, stating that their pollution control efforts had limited “at least ... ninety percent of the emissions.” Following up on the human health concern, a video was then introduced of Dr. Waldbott, who announced that two of the nine local farmers he examined displayed symptoms typical of those suffering from fluorine intoxication. Asked what he expected would happen if these two were left untreated, Waldbott’s response was unequivocal: “If they continue to live in this area, eventually they are going to get more serious harm, serious damage to their joints – to their internal organs, particularly to their kidneys, and also to their brain and to the spine, which eventually will lead to death.”¹²⁹ When the documentary returned to the studio Burke asked Dymond for his response. After acknowledging “that Dr. Waldbott has done a very great deal of work in the study of fluorosis” and that he was “among the most extensively quoted [authorities] on the continent and maybe in the world,” Dymond emphasized that the symptoms expressed were likely the result of a more common ailment, such as arthritis.¹³⁰

Discussion then turned to the jurisdiction for controlling air pollution. Dymond placed the onus on the federal government, noting that “air pollution doesn’t recognize any geographic boundaries.” A clip was then shown of Allan J. MacEachen, the federal Minister of Health, who argued that the British North America Act assigns responsibility

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

to the provinces. While he acknowledged that the federal government could play a role coordinating the provinces, MacEachen concluded by stating that “we do not have fresh plans at the present time for presentation to the provinces.” As images of industrial smokestacks filled the screen, Burke delivered his stirring conclusion:

So who will control air pollution? The cities? It’s been tried and it hasn’t worked very well. Among other things cities compete with one another to try to attract polluting industries. The provinces? Of course, but even provinces compete for industry and it’s going on right now. Most authorities agree that it must be a cooperative effort from the federal government right on down, and most agree that it’s urgent. We don’t even have the detailed statistics in Canada. We don’t know what’s going on, and we may be right now well on our way toward our first disaster. We’ve cited some examples in this programme and we could cite others, many others. Out on the prairies, ‘where the skies are not cloudy all day,’ they have fairly serious pollution problems. Jasper, up in the Rockies, is polluted. Banff could become polluted. Vancouver could have another Los Angeles situation, and experience elsewhere has shown that air can be cleaned up. I’ve driven through Germany, the industrial heartland of Europe, and the air is clear. Russia has imposed the highest standards of purity in the world. But in our society not much happens until the average citizen demands it.¹³¹

THE RESPONSE TO *THE AIR OF DEATH*

The Air of Death was a ratings success. According to a study completed by the CBC’s Research Department, 16 per cent of English-speaking Canadians over the age of twelve – or 1.5 million people – watched the documentary. This was considered an amazing achievement for an internally-produced documentary – although it attracted just half the standard viewership of the pre-empted *Ed Sullivan Show*.¹³² While the program attracted a steady audience across the demographics, the report’s authors noted that twelve percent of viewers were teenagers, making it “an audience much younger than that normally

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² “The Audience and Its Reactions to a CBC-TV Documentary ‘Special’ On Air Pollution,” CBC Research Department, December 1967, 3, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation fonds, RG 41, vol. 571, file no. 70, Library and Archives Canada [LAC].

attracted to most CBC information and public affairs programs.”¹³³ The film received “an overall index of enjoyment of 81” which the authors noted “represents a very high level of praise indeed,”¹³⁴ while “90 per cent reported feeling that they knew either ‘a great deal more’ or ‘quite a bit more’ about the problems and dangers of air pollution than they knew before” as a result of viewing it.¹³⁵ In conclusion, the report explained, “This was a program that clearly made a very great impact – on an audience of some one-and-a half million adult and teenage viewers. It was very much enjoyed – unusually so for a serious documentary – and, so far as can be judged from the available evidence, succeeded in getting its main points across to the great majority of those who watched it.”¹³⁶ As Arthur Laird, Director of Research at the CBC, wrote to Murray Creed, “Actually, ‘Air of Death’ was so well received that it is difficult to point to anything in the program that, from the audience’s point of view, went seriously wrong – nor to anything that, had it been done otherwise, would have been likely to increase substantially the program’s general impact.”¹³⁷

The program also proved to be a critical success. According to Roy Shields’ October 23 “TV Tonight” column in the *Toronto Daily Star*, “Today we all feel a little more grimy thanks to Stanley Burke, producer Larry Gosnell and the boys of the CBC’s farm department.” As he explained, “This was a well-researched, highly-documented program that must have shocked thousands of easy-breathing viewers from coast to coast. For taking a firm journalistic position that Canadians have been living in a fool’s paradise

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Emphasis in original. Arthur Laird to Murray Creed, memo, 16 January 1968, RG 41, vol. 571, file no. 70, LAC.

of pollution, the program did the nation a service.”¹³⁸ Bob Blackburn, television critic at the *Telegram*, was equally enthusiastic about the production. Calling it “one of the more venturesome things the CBC has done in public affairs,” he was particularly taken by the manner the message was delivered. “It didn’t get hysterical. It didn’t have to. It just calmly recounted the manner in which not only city-dwellers but some rural folk also are quietly being poisoned while no one does anything effective about it.” If anything, Blackburn posited that the documentary was not sufficiently alarmist to jolt the public into action. “We go on breathing the stuff, indifferent to the arrogance of the offenders and the timidity of the politicians who should do something about it Can a program of the power of this one be broadcast in the prime of prime time without spurring anyone to action? Probably.”¹³⁹

The fallout from the documentary began immediately. On 19 October – the night of the press screening, even before the show went nationwide – Ontario Health Minister Dr. Matthew Dymond announced his department would conduct thorough medical tests in order to determine the source of the farmers’ illnesses.¹⁴⁰ At a press conference held eight days later, Dymond announced a public inquiry into all forms of fluoride pollution in the Dunnville area, exploring its impact on human, animal, and plant health, as well as its financial toll. The press conference was marked by vague and elusive answers and the Minister was roundly lambasted for his performance. Consequently, his department issued a follow-up statement revealing that the government accepted that the fluorosis poisoning found in local cattle was the result of ingesting “crops exposed to fluoride

¹³⁸ Roy Shields, “TV Tonight,” *Toronto Star*, 23 October 1967, 28.

¹³⁹ Bob Blackburn, “In Blackburn’s View,” *Toronto Telegram*, 23 October 1967, 44. There was no critique of *The Air of Death* printed in the *Globe and Mail*.

¹⁴⁰ “Doctor says two struck by fluorosis,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 October 1967, 29.

emissions.” However, it argued that it was far less likely that there were any cases of human fluorosis as a result of ingestion: “Because of the fact that food comes from a variety of sources as far as humans are concerned and also because vegetables are washed and food cooked, the resulting effect on humans is very much less than is produced by the type of exposure experienced by cattle. Only a part of the food ingested would come from vegetable produce grown in the area.”¹⁴¹ For its part, ERCO maintained a steadfast public denial that their plant was causing human health problems. Nonetheless, Omond Solandt, Vice-Chairman of the Board at ERCO, expressed some concern about the company's culpability in a 1 November 1967 letter to Sir Owen Wansbrough-Jones, chairman of the parent company Albright & Wilson Ltd.:

There is only one worrisome unknown factor still to be elucidated. It appears that the well water in some parts of the area contain enough sulphur to be very unpleasant. This condition of course antedates the building of the fertilizer plant and has no connection with it. Unfortunately, this has lead to people who use these wells collecting and drinking rain water from their sloughs. It is highly unlikely but just possible that they could have ingested significant amounts of fluorine from this source.¹⁴²

Wansbrough-Jones asked Solandt, who also served as the University of Toronto's Chancellor and Chairman of the Science Council of Canada, to use his considerable influence in order to promote ERCO's side of the story behind the scenes.¹⁴³

The commissioners charged with operating the provincial inquiry were announced on 6 November 1967. At the helm was Dr. George Edward Hall, who had recently retired as president at the University of Western Ontario. He was joined by Alex McKinney, a

¹⁴¹ Quoted in Terrance Wills, “Province orders fluorosis probe around Dunnville,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 October 1967, 1-2.

¹⁴² Omond Solandt to Sir Owen Wansbrough-Jones, 1 November 1967, Omond M. Solandt fonds, B93-0041/038, UTA.

¹⁴³ Sir Owen Wansbrough-Jones to Omond Solandt, 26 October 1967, Omond M. Solandt fonds, B93-0041/038, UTA.

former president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. The triumvirate was initially rounded out by Dr. Chalmers Jack Mackenzie, the Chancellor of Carleton University and a former president of the National Research Council.¹⁴⁴ However, Mackenzie resigned from the post and was replaced on 11 January 1968 by Dr. William C. Winegard, president of the University of Guelph.¹⁴⁵ The selection of these individuals raised eyebrows. Waldbott alleged that the committee was preparing for a “whitewash job.”¹⁴⁶ He believed a “fertilizer industry combine” was placing “tremendous pressure” on the government in an effort to defend its interests.¹⁴⁷ Not only were all three commissioners partisan Progressive Conservatives, but in the case of Hall and Winegard, they were also well connected with the fluoride industry. Hall had served on the Morden Commission which was held earlier in the decade regarding municipal water fluoridation in Ontario; consequently, he served as the honorary advisory director of the Health League, which Waldbott described as “Canada’s major fluoridation promotion agency.”¹⁴⁸ Opposition to Hall’s appointment was also voiced by the Farmers’ Air Pollution Committee, which unsuccessfully lobbied Dymond to select a new chair.¹⁴⁹ Winegard, who later served as Minister of Science and Technology in the Mulroney administration, had recently received an award from the Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy for “a highly-

¹⁴⁴ R.F. Legge, “Chalmers Jack Mackenzie,” *Biographical Memoirs of Fellows of the Royal Society*, Vol 31 (London, England: Royal Society, 1985), 411-434.

¹⁴⁵ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, xv.

¹⁴⁶ Terry Tremayne, “Fluorides affect 2 more victims, doctor asserts,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 November 1967, 1.

¹⁴⁷ “2 more ill in Dunnville doctor says,” *Toronto Star*, 13 November 1967, 1.

¹⁴⁸ Tremayne, “Fluorides affect 2 more victims, doctor asserts,” 2. This sentiment is shared by historians Catherine Carstairs and Rachel Elder, who describe the Health League as “the most important group promoting fluoride.” Carstairs and Elder, “Expertise, Health, and Popular Opinion,” 353.

¹⁴⁹ Tremayne, “Fluorides affect 2 more victims, doctor asserts,” 2.

significant contribution to the field of metallurgy.”¹⁵⁰ The Farmers’ Air Pollution Committee also raised opposition to the selection of McKinney, claiming that despite his status as a beef farmer, his Tory partisanship meant he would not represent their interests.¹⁵¹

The choice of commissioners drew ERCO’s approval, as Solandt was a longtime friend of Hall. As Solandt noted in a confidential letter to Sir Owen Wansbrough-Jones, “The waste control problem at Port Maitland is still very actively in the press but on the whole we are not displeased with the way things are going We have heard privately that Dr. Ed Hall, who recently retired as president of the University of Western Ontario, is to be chairman of the committee investigating the problem I know him well and think he will probably give us a very fair hearing.”¹⁵² This letter was written five days prior to the official announcement of Hall’s participation. Given that Solandt was in regular contact with Dymond – including a phone call after *The Air of Death* was broadcast in which Solandt “congratulated him on his performance”¹⁵³ – it appears likely that this information had been supplied by the Minister of Health.

THE HALL COMMISSION

Hearings for the Hall Commission began on 22 January and concluded on 21 March 1968. Forty-five witnesses and consultants were heard during eighteen half-day sessions held in Cayuga, the County seat of Haldimand, while another ten were heard during two

¹⁵⁰ “Personal Mention,” *Industrial Canada* [Official Publication of the Canadian Manufacturers Association], January 1968, 53. Winegard was also editor of the *Canadian Metallurgical Quarterly*, an industry newsletter, from 1965-66.

¹⁵¹ “Pollution inquiry rigged claims MLA,” *Hamilton Spectator*, 1 March 1969, 4.

¹⁵² Omond Solandt to Sir Owen Wansbrough-Jones, 1 November 1967, Omond M. Solandt fonds, B93-0041/038, UTA.

¹⁵³ Omond Solandt to L.G. Lillico, 24 October 1967, Omond M. Solandt fonds, B93-0041/038, UTA.

half-day sessions in Toronto.¹⁵⁴ Much of the hearing hinged on the expertise provided by five health consultants. Aside from sharing a pro-fluoridation stance, the consultants lacked experience treating and diagnosing fluorosis. One particularly egregious example of the bias of the experts hired for the inquiry was Dr. Patrick Lawther, Director of the Air Pollution Laboratories of the Medical Research Council in London, England. Lawther was on the record stating, during the Ontario Pollution Control Conference in December 1967, that “Air pollution is a field which contains more cranks and psychopaths ... than any other field I could have stumbled upon.” He also refused to link air pollution to health problems, noting that after thirteen years of studying the matter “we have produced no unequivocal results.”¹⁵⁵ These medical consultants consistently rejected the idea that ERCO's effluent was having a negative impact on the local population's health.

The commissioners also relied upon a selective reading of scientific research. As they explained in the final report:

This report will not contain a complete survey of the [scientific] literature; it is not the responsibility of the commissioners to do so. Since there is, in general, major agreement on the results of experiments, surveys and special studies, certainly amongst the recognized and accepted scientists, the conclusions reached by such eminent workers have been taken as the basis for comparison of the evidence elicited at the Committee hearings, where comparisons were relevant.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁴ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, 15.

¹⁵⁵ Quoted in “Don’t believe the cranks on air pollution – UK expert,” *Toronto Star*, 7 December 1967, 66. As this news article demonstrates, Lawther was particularly critical of those that linked sulphur dioxide emissions from factories with health problems, claiming there was no link. These comments drew criticism from Alderman Tony O’Donohue who referred to Lawther as “the most biased man in the world in his intent to throw air pollution control protagonists into disrepute.” “Dymond influenced, O’Donohue charges,” *Globe and Mail*, 8 December 1967, 5. Lawther’s Hall Commission Testimony is noted in “British doctor first witness at Dunnville fluorosis probe,” *Toronto Star*, 22 January 1968, 26.

¹⁵⁶ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, 12.

Consequently, studies that documented human fluorosis and other forms of industrial fluoride pollution were routinely excluded. Thus the case of Garrison, Montana was never discussed during the Hall Commission.¹⁵⁷

Sociologist Ella Haley argues that “the Hall Commission used [its powers] in order to negate the CBC's version of the pollution problem.”¹⁵⁸ One of the fundamental techniques employed was to alter the hearings’ parameters. The Hall Commission was mandated “to inquire into and report upon the pollution of air, soil and water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke in the County of Haldimand and its effect upon human health, livestock, agricultural and horticultural crops, soil productivity and economic factors within the said area[.]”¹⁵⁹ The inclusion of Dunn Township is ponderous because no reports or accusations of problems associated with fluoride pollution were filed there. Haley suggests it was included in an effort to skew the commission’s findings. As she explains, “Rather than being included for comparison purposes, data (including testimonies) from this township were mixed with data from the ‘polluted area.’ This had the effect of diluting and contradicting the testimonies from the people affected by the pollution.”¹⁶⁰

Haley also demonstrates that evidence of deleterious health conditions caused by ERCO was denied proper hearing. Locals complained on the stand of ill-effects, including sore eyes, burnt lips, and respiratory problems, caused by the industrial dust

¹⁵⁷ Haley, “Methodology to Deconstruct Environmental Inquiries Using the Hall Commission as a Case Study,” 211-214.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, iv.

¹⁵⁹ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, xiv.

¹⁶⁰ Haley, “Methodology to Deconstruct Environmental Inquiries Using the Hall Commission as a Case Study,” 201.

settling in the area. However, the commissioners blocked local physician Dr. F.D. Rigg from discussing the residents' symptoms, alternately arguing that it was inappropriate to discuss patients' symptoms in their absence and that the doctor was not qualified to diagnose fluorosis.¹⁶¹ Most importantly, the commissioners prevented discussion of a report prepared by the Ontario Water Resources Commission in 1965 that revealed fluoride levels as high as 37.8 parts per million – far beyond the danger threshold of 2.4 parts per million.¹⁶² Efforts by the farmers' lawyer to discuss this were blocked, with the promise by the Hall committee's lawyer, R.A. Gordon, that it would be discussed later when an OWRC representative “[is] here to go into these tests and to properly explain them to us.”¹⁶³ When the topic was finally re-addressed, the results were summarily discredited because one of the thirty samples was not properly labeled.¹⁶⁴

Also missing from the Hall Commission were many of the figures central to the creation of *The Air of Death*. From the outset the CBC took the position that it would not participate in the hearings, arguing that provincial commissions do not have jurisdiction over federal agencies. Likewise, the CBC took a strong position in support of those involved in the production of *The Air of Death*, promising to appeal any efforts to subpoena witnesses.¹⁶⁵ The specter of this occurring became particularly worrisome in

¹⁶¹ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 135-141.

¹⁶² “Plant closure unnecessary,” *Toronto Telegram*, 28 October 1967, 4.

¹⁶³ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 120.

¹⁶⁴ Haley, “Methodology to Deconstruct Environmental Inquiries Using the Hall Commission as a Case Study,” 260.

¹⁶⁵ J.P. Gilmore, Vice-President Planning and Assistant Chief Operating Officer, to CBC executives, 24 January 1968, LGP. As Gilmore pointed out, “THE CORPORATION MUST TAKE A FIRM POSITION IN SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAM WORK DONE FOR THIS PROJECT. WE MUST SUPPORT THE PEOPLE WHO DID THAT WORK AND WHO SAW TO ITS PRODUCTION.” As was later pointed out in a memo between the CBC executives, Creed, Gosnell, and their attorneys, “Initial meetings with legal counsel early in January indicated that the Corporation could take one of two positions, no middle ground: 1. A very aloof stance – no participation in the hearings, very bland statements [*sic*] from the President’s Office. 2. All-out fight – but not on the defensive. Use every means at our disposal – press conferences,

the aftermath of a 3 January 1968 telephone conversation between Gosnell and Hall. As Gosnell explained in a subsequent internal memo, he telephoned Hall at his Orillia residence in order to find out the dates and locations of the forthcoming hearings as he intended to produce a documentary about the aftermath of *The Air of Death*. Hall proceeded to denigrate the CBC for utilizing what he considered to be biased and inaccurate information regarding the situation in Dunnville, before ending the conversation with the startling statement that “I’m going to get the CBC, I’m going to get you and I’m going to get you good. I will use the powers of Act to get you.”¹⁶⁶ This conversation was recorded by Gosnell and passed along to his supervisors at the CBC.¹⁶⁷ Although no subpoenas were issued, the commissioners did pressure Gosnell to provide evidence justifying fourteen contentious statements made in the documentary. Although the CBC initially refused to respond – a letter from Marcel Munro, Acting General Manager, Network Broadcasting (English) reminded the Inquiry’s Secretary that the CBC “is accountable to Parliament for the conduct of its affairs and the discharge of its responsibilities”¹⁶⁸ – the network eventually relented¹⁶⁹ and prepared a detailed, seventy-one page response.¹⁶⁹ However, the CBC’s submission was not acknowledged.

Dr. Waldbott was also absent from the inquiry. He wrote the Hall Commission on 1 January 1968, announcing that he would appear; however, he stressed that he required

television programs, etc. it was decided to assume the aloof stance.” “Summary of Meetings March 11 and 12 Re Air of Death,” nd, LGP.

¹⁶⁶ Larry Gosnell to Murray Creed, 9 January 1967, LGP. As Gosnell noted, “I want to emphasize that nothing I said, nor my tone of voice was of such a quality as to reasonably evoke the kind of response described above Also, I am of the opinion that Dr. Hall did not know it was I who produced the program in question. When he said ‘you’, he was, in effect, saying ‘CBC’.”

¹⁶⁷ Denise Gosnell, interview.

¹⁶⁸ Marcel Munro to Max E. Weissengruber [Secretary of Committee of Enquiry], 22 March 1968, RG 41, vol. 571, file no. 70, LAC.

¹⁶⁹ Jacques R. Alleyn [general counsel], to Murray Creed, March 25, 1969, RG 41, vol. 571, file no. 70, LAC. The response was put together by Gosnell, Creed, and Hallman.

additional time to prepare his documentation. In February he contacted the inquiry's secretary in an effort to arrange an appearance. Despite receiving a letter of acknowledgment, he later insisted the Hall Commission did not attempt to work him into the schedule.¹⁷⁰ The commissioners dismissed this notion in their final report, stating that "he saw fit not to submit himself for cross-examination."¹⁷¹ Waldbott consequently submitted a detailed brief containing updated evidence on examinations of twenty Dunnville residents, in which "10 presented definite evidence of fluorosis, seven should be suspected of ill-effects from fluoride and three believed that their livestock and produce had been adversely affected by fluoride but that they themselves had not suffered ill-effects."¹⁷² Although receipt of this brief is acknowledged in the Hall Report, it is noted that "The Committee rejects many of the statements made by Dr. Waldbott in his brief and accepts the testimony of the physicians and other scientists received in evidence and referred to or quoted in the Committee's report."¹⁷³ In his absence, Waldbott was the target of much mud-slinging. Despite Dymond's recognition of him in *The Air of Death* as one of the leading authorities on fluorosis – recognition that was retracted three weeks later following Waldbott's public critique of the Health Minister's choice of commissioners¹⁷⁴ – he was depicted throughout the hearings as a fanatical and irrational opponent of the fluoride industry.

¹⁷⁰ George Waldbott, "Tried to testify on fluoride," *Toronto Star*, 14 May 1968, 6; CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 432-436.

¹⁷¹ Waldbott, "Tried to testify on fluoride," 6; Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, 347.

¹⁷² Quoted in "Dunnville probe ignored him Detroit fluoride man claims," *Toronto Star*, 3 May 1968, 3.

¹⁷³ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, 347.

¹⁷⁴ "Dymond will talk to critics of his probe into pollution," *Toronto Star*, 14 November 1967, 29.

The Hall Report was tabled in the provincial legislature on 10 December 1968. Although some criticism was leveled at ERCO – particularly that it should “install the necessary equipment and modify their operations to reduce dust emissions from the lagoons, and emissions from the curing sheds, to acceptable limits under full plant operation”¹⁷⁵ – it was generally portrayed as a good corporate citizen that was “generous, and, in some instances, more than generous”¹⁷⁶ when compensating local farmers. While the Committee accepted that ERCO was causing some damage to the surrounding agricultural products, it insisted that there was no evidence of human fluorosis:

The subject of the effects of the pollutants on human health has been presented and discussed in great detail. But here, once more, we wish to emphasize our concern for the several people of the area who felt that they were suffering from, or being affected by, fluorides in the air which they breathed, in the food which they ate, and/or in the water which they drank. We understand their apprehension, but it is still difficult, after these several months, to appreciate the attitude of one of the residents who, after being advised repeatedly by competent and recognized medical authorities that he did not have fluorosis, acted as though he was disappointed with the verdict. However, it was with great interest that we heard indisputable evidence which proved conclusively that none of the persons in the area, who had taken advantage of the offer to be hospitalized and examined by distinguished specialists, had any symptoms or signs suggestive of fluorosis. The people of the Port Maitland area can be assured that there is no human health hazard associated with pollutants being emitted from the industrial plants in the area.¹⁷⁷

The Hall Report directed considerable vitriol towards the CBC:

The Committee has no other alternative but to record that unwarranted, untruthful, and irresponsible statements were made by the publicly-owned and publicly-financed Corporation, the CBC. They treated a complex problem in a way designed to create alarm and fear. Their treatment was not in keeping with the standards which the public is entitled to expect from the Corporation.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁵ Ontario Advisory Committee on Pollution, *Report of the Committee Appointed to Inquire into and Report Upon the Pollution of Air, Soil, and Water in the Townships of Dunn, Moulton, and Sherbrooke, Haldimand County*, 307.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 296.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 302.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 285.

The Committee even recommended that legal action be taken against the CBC:

As a responsible Committee attempting to assess a difficult and complex problem, we are unable and unwilling to conclude our comments on the CBC production entitled “Air of Death” without one further reference to the “Dunnville” problem. The evidence before us makes it crystal clear that the “pollution” problem related only to the immediate area of Port Maitland and that no damage was caused to vegetation or livestock in the immediate vicinity of Dunnville. Through the careless use of the name “Dunnville” the residents of that area have suffered financial loss, which is just as real, and more easily identified, as the losses suffered by those within the “polluted” area. The residents of the “polluted” area have received compensation. Presumably the Dunnville residents will take action, through the courts, as they may be advised.¹⁷⁹

Not surprisingly, the Hall Report’s findings drew support from ERCO. Solandt wrote Hall, noting that “I have watched your pollution investigation from the sidelines because I did not want to have an unfriendly press seize on our longstanding friendship. However, now that the Report is out and I have read it, I feel that I can safely write to congratulate you on doing an excellent job.”¹⁸⁰ Media outlets generally accepted the findings of the Hall Report at face value. Some used the report as an excuse to gripe against the CBC, as in the case of Vancouver *Sun* columnist Shaun Herron who lambasted it as “the bigheads of the communications industry ... who care very little for the truth, or a truth, or a fair view, or a round view of any situation.”¹⁸¹ Others adopted a more critical edge. Those at *Farm and Country*, a newspaper marketed to Ontario’s agricultural communities, linked the press’s wholesale acceptance of the Hall Report with a grander malaise – the decline of contemporary journalistic standards. As was noted in a 29 January 1969 editorial,

With an attitude approaching servility, the reporters of our great newspapers accepted practically every word with reverence usually accorded only Holy

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 286.

¹⁸⁰ Omond Solandt to G.E. Hall, 21 January 1969, Omond M. Solandt fonds, B93-0041/038, UTA.

¹⁸¹ Shaun Herron, “Smart Alecks Rule the Goggle Box,” Vancouver *Sun*, 19 December 1968, 4.

Scripture A careful study of this report makes disturbing reading [due to its omissions and biases]. Even more disturbing is the fact that our great city newspapers repeated whole sections without question. Oh, how some of them turned on the CBC! Oh, the salivating editorials! They gloated like a school boy with his first dirty book.

It is so obvious that the reporters and editorial staff had not read the report in its entirety When the press becomes lazy, freedom faces extinction. And there can be little denying that today our newspapers and radio stations are going through a period of somnolence.¹⁸²

Numerous letters critical of the Hall Report were published in the Toronto *Star* and *Globe and Mail* in the ensuing days. Most notable was a letter printed 27 February 1969 by Gavin Henderson. The first executive director of the Conservation Council of Ontario and a co-founder of the National and Provincial Parks Association of Canada, Henderson wrote of “a disquieting similarity between the efforts to denounce Rachel Carson,” the American author whose bestselling exposé of synthetic chemicals’ detrimental effects, *Silent Spring*, resulted in a vicious backlash from industry, and the attempt to stifle environmental concern in Canada.¹⁸³ Comparisons to the Dunnville situation and Carson’s *Silent Spring* were also observed in the *Family Herald*, which ran a 26 October 1967 editorial titled “How Many Dunnvilles To a Silent Spring?”¹⁸⁴

Furthermore, a wide range of supporters wrote the embattled CBC staffers following the tabling of the Hall Report. Included in this correspondence were numerous prominent scientists. Dr. J.M. Anderson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Society of

¹⁸² “Good reporting – is it dead?” *Farm and Country*, 28 January 1969, 4.

¹⁸³ Gavin Henderson, “Air of Death,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 February 1969, 6. Biographical information on Henderson is derived from Warecki, *Protecting Ontario’s Wilderness*, 104-107; “Obituary,” *The Trusty Servant* [Winchester College Alumni newsletter], 100 (November 2005), 15, <https://wyksoc.com/Document.Doc?id=14>; “Gavin Henderson, C.M.,” *Order of Canada*, 30 April 2009, <http://archive.gg.ca/honours/search-recherche/honours-desc.asp?lang=e&TypeID=orc&id=3150>. For a discussion of the efforts to discredit Rachel Carson, see chapter four of Mark Hamilton Lytle, *The Gentle Subversive: Rachel Carson, Silent Spring, and the Rise of the Environmental Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2005), 125-126.

¹⁸⁴ “How Many Dunnvilles To a Silent Spring?” *Family Herald*, 26 October 1967, 1.

Zoologists and Director of the Fisheries Research Board of Canada Biological Station in St. Andrew's, New Brunswick, wrote, "In my view, the film was a thoughtful, imaginative, and serious treatment of a problem well-deserving of widespread public attention I would like to state most emphatically that the film, in my view, was an excellent one. Those associated with it are to be commended."¹⁸⁵ Dr. Henry Regier, Associate Professor of Zoology at the University of Toronto, stated that "The CBC should be congratulated and honoured for this production when it is considered in a broad scientific ecological viewpoint."¹⁸⁶ Staffers also received a letter from Dr. Donald Chant, Chair of the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto and one of the resource people utilized during the making of *The Air of Death*. After briefly outlining the scientific shortcomings of the Hall Commission, including the failure to conduct bone biopsies that would conclusively determine if there were any cases of human fluorosis, he added that "The Commission's chapter on the CBC seems petulant, almost as if it resented your intrusion into its private preserve, and contains questions out of context from 'Air of Death.'"¹⁸⁷

THE CANADIAN RADIO-TELEVISION COMMISSION HEARING

Sitting on the sidelines during the Hall Commission proved to be a frustrating experience for those involved in *The Air of Death*. "For months we had to sit and hear all the things that were being said about us, many of which were absolutely not true, and we weren't able to fight back," recalls Creed. The ongoing scrutiny was especially bothersome for

¹⁸⁵ J.M. Anderson to Larry Gosnell, 20 January 1969, LGP.

¹⁸⁶ Henry Regier to Larry Gosnell, 16 January 1969, LGP.

¹⁸⁷ Donald Chant to Stanley Burke, 23 December 1968, LGP.

Burke, who had been temporarily removed from his job as newscaster on *The National News* as the investigation unraveled. Added Creed, “I remember sitting with him in a restaurant, [and] he’s saying ‘Can you imagine this happening to Walter Cronkite?’”¹⁸⁸ It consequently came as a great relief when Eugene Hallman, Vice-President and General Manager of Network Broadcasting passed along word that they would have an opportunity to tell their side of the story at a forthcoming CRTC hearing.¹⁸⁹

On 18 December 1968 the CRTC announced:

In view of the public concern aroused by the programme entitled “Air of Death” telecast on the CBC network on October 22, 1967, and the specific reference made to this telecast in the Report of the Committee appointed by the Government of Ontario, the Executive Committee of the Canadian Radio-Television is satisfied that it is in the public interest to hold a hearing into the circumstances surrounding the production and the broadcast of this programme.¹⁹⁰

The ensuing notice of public hearing, dated 4 February 1969, established a mandate to determine whether the CBC had acted responsibly in the production of the documentary.¹⁹¹ It was not established to explore air pollution, and did not allow for “the introduction of evidence, scientific or otherwise of matters arising since the date of broadcast of the program.”¹⁹² These terms proved somewhat disappointing to those involved in *The Air of Death*, as they had hoped for an opportunity to address the various misrepresentations made during the Hall Commission.

Preparations for the CRTC hearing began immediately. While the CBC maintained its support of its embattled employees, recognition that their interests were not entirely congruent led the Corporation to hire Creed, Gosnell, and Burke their own

¹⁸⁸ Creed, interview.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

¹⁹⁰ F.K. Foster, CRTC Secretary, “Public Announcement,” 18 December 1968, LGP.

¹⁹¹ F.K. Foster, CRTC Secretary, “NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING,” 4 February 1969, LGP.

¹⁹² “CRTC ‘Air’ hearing right is asserted,” Toronto *Telegram*, 18 March 1969, p. 8.

separate legal counsel.¹⁹³ They attained the services of Joseph Sedgwick, a prominent Toronto lawyer who had served as treasurer of the Law Society of Upper Canada in 1962-63.¹⁹⁴ The trio also began strategizing with Victor Yannacone, the renowned co-founder of the United States-based Environmental Defense Fund. In these sessions, which involved numerous telephone calls and at least one weekend meeting, Yannacone peppered the Canadians with advice. The importance of having all relevant research and documentation clearly organized and readily available during the hearings was emphasized, as was the necessity of fighting back. Hailing theirs as “the most worthy cause we have had in a long time,”¹⁹⁵ Yannacone described the challenge confronting Creed, Gosnell, and Burke in grandiose terms: “You know this is the way the saints get canonized, and this is how [the Archbishop of Canterbury Thomas] Beckett [sic] and [Sir Thomas] More lost their heads If you are going to be a man you might as well be a hero.”¹⁹⁶

In all, twenty-seven briefs were submitted for consideration of the CRTC Commission. These briefs, while presenting a variety of perspectives, overwhelmingly defended *The Air of Death*. Thomas A. Beckett, director of the Conservation Council of Ontario and chairman of the Hamilton and Region Conservation Authority, claimed that it “would be difficult ... to find a document [i.e. the Hall Report] purporting to be a reasonable study, which displays more prejudice and malign in its findings.”¹⁹⁷ As Beckett continued, “It seemed that the Commission was much more concerned with

¹⁹³ Murray Creed to E.S. [Eugene] Hallman, 17 January 1969, RG 41 vol. 571, file no. 70, LAC.

¹⁹⁴ Biographical information for Sedgwick is derived from “Joseph Sedgwick, a great Canadian advocate, dead at 83,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 December 1981, 20.

¹⁹⁵ Victor Yannacone and Larry Gosnell, transcript of telephone conversation, 1 January 1969 (AM), LGP.

¹⁹⁶ Victor Yannacone and Larry Gosnell, transcript of telephone conversation, 1 January 1969 (PM), LGP.

¹⁹⁷ Thomas A. Beckett, brief to CRTC, 4 March 1969, 3, LGP.

examining the motives and methods of the man who turned in the fire alarm, rather than dealing with the men who set the fire to begin with!”¹⁹⁸ Dr. Donald Chant countered allegations made in the Hall Report that *The Air of Death* was the result of shoddy and biased work. As he explained, not only was he impressed with Creed, Gosnell, and Burke’s extensive research and their openness to criticism, but also “their desire to avoid being unfair to those who differed from their views.”¹⁹⁹ Anthony N. Doob, a social psychologist, argued in his brief “that the fear aspects of the programme were not only effective, but were also necessary in order for the programme to have any effect whatsoever,”²⁰⁰ while the Canadian Broadcasting League highlighted the fact that “Other stations and broadcasts have dealt with the subject matter” covered in *The Air of Death* without repudiation, and questioned why the CBC program should be treated any differently.²⁰¹ The CBC’s moral obligation to present such hard-hitting information was a common theme within the briefs, but perhaps none were clearer than the submission of Isabel LeBourdais. LeBourdais, who rose to prominence upon writing 1966’s *The Trial of Steven Truscott*, argued that “the basic fact is that the CBC belongs to the people of Canada and not to any one province or any special interests The CBC has a grave moral responsibility to tell the people of Canada the truth as well as to give them a broad knowledge of their country and its varied interests.”²⁰²

The CRTC hearing began on 18 March 1969. Chairman of the commission was Harry J. Boyle, Vice-Chairman of the CRTC. He was joined by Réal Therrien, a member

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹⁹ D.A. Chant, brief to CRTC, 19 February 1969, 2, LGP.

²⁰⁰ Anthony N. Doob, brief to CRTC, nd, 3, LGP.

²⁰¹ Canadian Broadcasting League, brief to CRTC, 6 March 1969, 3, LGP.

²⁰² Isabel LeBourdais, brief to CRTC, 13 March 1969, 1, LGP.

of the CRTC's Executive Committee, and Dr. Northrop Frye, the noted literary critic and theorist. The commission began with a screening of *The Air of Death*. Before the first witness could take the stand, Jacques Alleyn, the CBC's general counsel, outlined the Corporation's feelings regarding the hearing:

This hearing is ... unprecedented. We do not know of any previous occasion when yourselves or your predecessors would have carried out an inquiry into the very heart of production. This raises certain very serious problems that we have felt was our duty to bring forcefully if necessary to your attention The rules of law are essential and the workings of our institution must be preserved. This is the price to be paid for democracy. It requires an untrammelled press, free from pressures direct or indirect, other than those resulting from law.²⁰³

The first witness to provide testimony was Eugene Hallman, who discussed the chain of command, job responsibilities, and general broadcasting policies at the Corporation. When Gosnell took the stand next, the CBC's strategy quickly became apparent. After a brief discussion of the origins and development of the project, Gosnell would spend the bulk of the first two days on the stand meticulously introducing into the official record the extensive research behind *The Air of Death*. With three filing cabinets of documentation and a list of approximately 170 research and production contacts at Gosnell's side, this was a move clearly intended to counter the Hall Commission's allegations of shoddy preparation on the CBC's behalf. The approach worked. As Boyle announced partway through the second day of testimony: "If it is a matter of establishing the amount of research that Mr. Gosnell has undertaken with a crew in terms of his actual program, he has demonstrated now that I don't know how he had time for the program I would suggest to you that you have amply demonstrated this point – the degree and the extent of the research of Mr. Gosnell and his group. If it is possible to expedite it by

²⁰³ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 6.

filing it in a group, we would appreciate it.”²⁰⁴ This was followed by brief testimony from Burke, who described his role in the production, contributing to the research when he could spare the time, and serving as the narrator. Asked by Alan Golden, Counsel for the Inquiry, if he felt “that in a program of this nature that there can be exaggeration which is justified?”²⁰⁵ Burke assured him that “I don’t consider that there was any exaggeration in the ‘Air of Death’ program. I think it was understated.”²⁰⁶ On 20 March P.B.C. Pepper, counsel for ERCO, took the stand. He alleged that *The Air of Death* featured material emanating from Dr. Waldbott, “who some people might say was a crank, ... who was emotionally committed, a propagandist for a cause.”²⁰⁷ Pepper concluded his statements by arguing *The Air of Death* must be held to a higher standard of factuality because of Burke’s role as newscaster on the nightly news.

Larry Gosnell’s appearance on the stand drew rave reviews from his superiors at the CBC. As George F. Davidson, the Corporation’s president, wrote in a 31 March 1969 letter, “You made all of us proud, – all of us who belong to and believe in the CBC, – by the quality of your testimony and by the evident integrity reflected by your presence and your evidence given from the witness box. I doubt that we could find many programs given by the CBC over the years which could provide us as complete a record of evidence of careful and conscientious research as you were able to present on this occasion.”²⁰⁸ This was followed by a letter on 1 April 1969 from Eugene Hallman, who noted, “I admired the way you conducted yourself during the CRTC hearings into ‘Air of

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 301.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 430.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 430-431.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 504.

²⁰⁸ George F. Davidson to Larry Gosnell, 31 March 1969, LGP.

Death'. The Corporation could not have had a better witness and I was proud of the way in which the research data had been assembled so carefully, not simply for the presentation at the hearings but for the broadcast itself."²⁰⁹ Gosnell's performance was even more impressive in light of the fact that he was a last-minute replacement for Murray Creed, whose appearance at the CRTC hearings was cancelled two days prior by the onset of labyrinthitis, an inner ear disorder that causes hearing loss and balance problems.²¹⁰

THE CRTC REPORT

The CRTC released its report on 9 July 1970. *The Air of Death* received a general vindication, with the CRTC stating that "The program adequately reflected the information reasonably available at the time of the broadcast and is well able to stand as an example of informational programming backed by a wealth of research and serving a useful purpose."²¹¹ Furthermore, it was added that "It is the opinion of the Committee that Air of Death [*sic*] may well have been one of the most thoroughly researched programs in the history of television broadcasting."²¹² The CRTC Report also noted "that the use of the term 'Dunnville' to describe the area allegedly affected by fluoride emissions was reasonable and proper in this instance."²¹³ The production did not go without critique, however. First, the Committee argued that *The Air of Death* should have

²⁰⁹ E.S. Hallman to Larry Gosnell, 1 April 1969, LGP.

²¹⁰ Creed, interview; "Producer takes blame at 'Air' inquiry," Toronto *Telegram*, 19 March 1969, 3; George F. Davidson to Larry Gosnell, 31 March 1969, LGP.

²¹¹ CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 9. Newspaper coverage of the report included David Crane, "CRTC finds pollution show well researched," *Globe and Mail*, 10 July 1970, 11; "Radio-TV commission finds Air of Death thoroughly researched," Toronto *Star*, 10 July 1970, 23.

²¹² CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 5.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

highlighted the fact that conflicting medical opinion existed regarding human fluorosis. The fact that the information broadcast was based primarily on the opinion of Waldbott, who was “known to hold sharply critical views on the effect of any fluoride emissions upon human health,”²¹⁴ should have been explained, as should the fact that his opinions were highly controversial within the medical community. Second, the Committee argued that the segment of the program featuring the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, Minister of National Health and Welfare suggested “that the Federal government was powerless to do very much about air pollution,”²¹⁵ although unaired portions of his interview indicated the federal government was engaged in extensive research on the subject, and was trying to co-ordinate the provinces in an effort to address the problem.²¹⁶ In light of this, the CRTC Report stated that “constructive statements should be given due prominence.”²¹⁷ The Committee also criticized the fact that Dymond commented on-screen about MacEachen’s statements, but that MacEachen was not given the opportunity to rebut. The exclusion of MacEachen’s more positive statements was a relatively minor oversight; however, the reliance on Waldbott’s diagnosis of human fluorosis without identifying it as a fringe opinion within the medical community cast an unnecessary pall over the documentary. *The Air of Death* contained a great deal of information that would have concerned the general public even without the inclusion of the segment on human fluorosis. The failure to highlight the fact that Waldbott’s views on the subject were a minority among medical doctors ultimately gave the documentary the appearance of an

²¹⁴ Ibid., 7.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 8.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 9.

unbalanced attack against industry, and thereby opened an otherwise masterfully produced program to the scrutiny it received.

Despite the criticism, the CRTC Report was ultimately viewed as a positive step forward by the embattled CBC employees. “All in all I was very happy with the C.R.T.C. findings,” wrote Creed in a 15 July 1970 memo to the CBC’s regional supervisors. “There are things with which one could quibble but there seems to be little point in argument. Better than ‘irresponsible, unwarranted and untrue’ in any case.”²¹⁸ As Creed added, in the last line of the memo, “I believe we can now write Q.E.D. to *Air of Death*.”²¹⁹

THE BIRTH OF TORONTO’S ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

The Air of Death became a key event in the formation of broadcasting standards in Canada, particularly with respect to the creation of “balance of views” requirements by the CRTC.²²⁰ More importantly, the warning contained in the documentary, and the public efforts to discredit those responsible for its production, inspired the creation of Toronto’s first ENGOs, the Group Action to Stop Pollution [GASP] and Pollution Probe. GASP was kickstarted by a cadre of Toronto’s professional elite, including James Bacque, chief editor at Macmillan Company of Canada, Toronto City Council alderman Tony O’Donohue, a noted critic of pollution, and Dr. Alfred Bernhart, professor of civil

²¹⁸ Murray Creed, memo to CBC Agriculture and Resources employees, 15 July 1970, LGP.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ This point is made in Peter G. Cook and Myles A. Ruggles, “Balance and Freedom of Speech: Challenge for Canadian Broadcasting,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 17:1 (1992): np, <http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/647/553#>. The role of *The Air of Death* in this process is also acknowledged in Diane Burgess, “*Kanehsatake on Witness*: The Evolution of CBC Balance Policy,” *Canadian Journal of Communication* 25:2 (2000): np, <http://www.cjc-online.ca/index.php/journal/article/viewArticle/1153/1072>.

engineering at the University of Toronto.²²¹ This group was initiated by Bacque, who was alarmed by *The Air of Death*'s discussion of urban air pollution. Shortly thereafter he phoned Stanley Burke at the CBC headquarters with the idea of forming a citizen-based group to address the problem. "Stanley [Burke] was quite welcoming and cooperative and he offered to help where he could," Bacque explains, "but he's not an organizational type."²²² Bacque recalls recruiting was a simple matter: "When we started phoning around ... everybody that we contacted was in favor of doing something because they'd been alerted by that show [*The Air of Death*]."²²³ The initial meeting, devoted to organizational matters, was held at the home of Joseph Sheard, a prominent city lawyer. According to Bacque, it was a smoke-filled affair: "In our first meeting in Joe [Sheard]'s living room, he was sucking on a pipe and so was I, and probably about a third of the people in the room were poisoning themselves with cigarettes. [*laughs*] We did notice the irony."²²⁴

The group was initially known by the rather formal name of the Citizen's Committee for Clean Air in Metro. This was changed to the more emotionally-driven and memorable name GASP prior to its public launch. As O'Donohue explained to the press, their goal was "to badger these governments who are dragging their feet on air pollution" and to "name names and demand action" against polluters.²²⁵ The group made its public

²²¹ Stanley Burke was credited as a co-founder of this group in contemporary media reports; however, he did not play an active role. James Bacque, interview with author, 24 March 2008, Toronto, ON. "Pollution teach-in," Toronto *Telegram*, 11 November 1967, 9; "Pollution group plans 'breathe-in,'" Toronto *Star*, 14 November 1967, 23.

²²² Bacque, interview.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ This description of the purpose was provided by O'Donohue. "Pollution teach-in," Toronto *Telegram*, 11 November 1967, 9; "Pollution group plans 'breathe-in,'" 23. It is worth noting that in O'Donohue's autobiography, published in 2001, there is no reference to *The Air of Death* as the inspiration for GASP.

debut during the Ontario Pollution Control Conference [OPCC]. Ordered by Premier John Robarts and held in Toronto 4-6 December 1967, the conference aimed to “provide a comprehensive approach to environmental pollution in all its aspects” including “the problems of air, soil and water pollution in agricultural, industrial and municipal contexts.”²²⁶ Given the context of the times – *The Air of Death* was televised weeks earlier and the Hall Commission was preparing to launch its investigation of the broadcast in January – the conference received considerable attention from the local press. GASP piggybacked upon this media convergence. Having circulated pamphlets advertising their first public meeting, scheduled two days after the conference’s conclusion, the group drew further attention by sending gas mask-wearing pamphleteers to greet commuters at the Yonge and Eglinton subway station. The ensuing meeting drew an estimated crowd of 300.²²⁷ Moderator for the event was *Air of Death* host Stanley Burke, who opened the meeting by greeting his “fellow cranks and crackpots” – a clear dig at Dr. Patrick Lawther, a speaker at the OPCC who just days earlier dismissed pollution control advocates as “cranks and psychopaths.”²²⁸ The special guest speaker for the event was Hazel Henderson, who spoke on the experience of New York City’s

Rather, he focuses upon the proliferation of synthetic chemicals and the concern raised in Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring*. He also discusses the group’s founding as if it was a solo activity, stating that “As a young politician looking for an opportunity to change the passive and somewhat dormant environmental views of those involved in decision making, I set up an activist group called Group Action to Stop Pollution (GASP) in 1967.” Tony O’Donohue, *Front Row Centre: A Perspective on Life, Politics and the Environment* (Toronto: Abbeyfield Publishers, 2001), 389.

²²⁶ “Proposed Pollution Conference,” 25 July 1967, Ontario Pollution Control, RG 10-06 b397312, Archives of Ontario [AO]. As the date of this announcement indicates, the conference predates the broadcast of *The Air of Death* by approximately three months.

²²⁷ “No chance of pollution-free society, Simonett tells delegates,” *Globe and Mail*, 5 December 1967, 4; “GASP in the street,” Toronto *Telegram*, 7 December 1967, 41; Mack Laing, “Cough-and-go for GASP,” Toronto *Telegram*, 9 December 1967, 8; “Easter breathe-in to protest pollution,” Toronto *Star*, 9 December 1967, 37.

²²⁸ “Don’t believe the cranks on air pollution – UK expert,” 66; “Crank label or no, GASPer sees victory,” *Globe and Mail*, 9 December 1967, 5; Laing, “Cough-and-go for GASP,” 8.

Citizens for Clean Air, a group she co-founded in an effort to raise public awareness regarding air pollution and to procure government legislation. While government and industry were slow to recognize her group, Henderson urged those gathered to persist, noting that “There's simply no way to halt the public demand for the right to breathe.” Ontario Health Minister Dr. Matthew Dymond sent a note stating that he could not attend and that his Air Pollution Control Service officers were likewise unavailable; this news inspired heckling from the crowd. Also discussed during the three hour inaugural meeting was the cost of cleaning Metro's air quality – which Bernhart pegged at \$540 million, or \$300 million if buildings transitioned to using natural gas – and future GASP activities, such as an Easter “breathe-in.”²²⁹

A twenty member “permanent committee” was established at this inaugural public meeting. Aside from Bacque, O'Donohue and Bernhart, notable members included Larry Gosnell and Stanley Burke, Margaret Scrivener, whose efforts to prevent development of the Toronto ravines system during the 1950s had earned her the nickname “the lady of the ravines,” and Aird Lewis, a corporate lawyer who had among other conservation initiatives co-founded the Nature Conservancy of Canada in 1962.²³⁰ Following the meeting O'Donohue promptly stepped down, informing the press that his status as a city alderman was inconsistent with GASP's need to remain non-political.²³¹

GASP's first major activity was a 25 January 1968 press conference, in which it “deplore[d] the atmosphere of recrimination, distrust and abuse” then underway at the

²²⁹ Bruce Knapp responded to Dr. Dymond's no-show by proclaiming “We should tell him to get off his fanny, get on his feet and use the think box God gave him.” “Crank label of no, GASPer sees victory,” 5; “Easter breathe-in to protest pollution,” 37.

²³⁰ “Crank label or no, GASPer sees victory,” 5; Bacque, interview. Charles Sauriol, *Remembering the Don: A rare record of earlier times within the Don River Valley* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1981), 119-120; Dale Anne Freed, “Hundreds attend funeral for 'the lady of the ravines,’” *Toronto Star*, 17 September 1997, B5.

²³¹ “Easter breathe-in to protest pollution,” 37.

Hall Commission.²³² Bacque, identified as spokesman of the four hundred member organization, accused the inquiry of withholding important medical information from public scrutiny. As he pointed out, two residents of Port Maitland had been placed in the hospital in order to conduct extensive testing for fluoride poisoning, with the provincial government picking up the tab. “If there is no evidence of fluorosis poisoning,” Bacque asked, “why have they been kept in hospital for two months?” Furthermore, he accused the commissioners of ignoring available medical experts.²³³ The following day GASP was officially established as a charitable “corporation without share capital.” The charter, signed by its newly-named directors – Bacque, Bernhart, Sheard, John Hunter Lytle, and Richard Alan Mansfield – described the organization as having an educational emphasis, designed to “educate and inform the general public, particularly of the Province of Ontario, of the health, aesthetic and economic effects of the air, water and soil pollution and the many technological and legal tools presently available for control.”²³⁴

By this point, it appeared that GASP was on solid ground. It had a team of five directors and a twenty-member permanent committee. It had held a high profile founding meeting and, more recently, a widely-covered press conference. On the other hand, the group had yet to make good on earlier plans such as establishing a newsletter and holding protest actions.²³⁵ These shortcomings are attributable to the ENGO's status as a part time pursuit of busy professionals. Moreover, despite having what appeared to be an impressive leadership group in place, it appears that the permanent committee was largely

²³² “Pollution fighters demand disclosure of full medical facts in fluoride probe,” *Toronto Star*, 26 January 1968, 29.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ Charter, Group Action to Stop Pollution, 26 January 1968, Tony O’Donohue fonds, series 1250 file 684, City of Toronto Archives.

²³⁵ “Easter breathe-in to protest pollution,” 37.

honorific, with little or no actual involvement in GASP's activities.²³⁶ The burden of operations fell upon a small core of dedicated volunteers. When Bacque, the most active of GASP's volunteers, left in the summer of 1968 for a year in France, the group fell into dormancy.²³⁷

GASP was given a second lease on life in January 1969 when it was announced that co-founder Tony O'Donohue would return and assume the newly created position of full-time executive director.²³⁸ In order to accept this unpaid position, O'Donohue noted that he would abandon his job as an engineer and live off of his salary as an alderman.²³⁹ Set on running an advertising campaign that highlighted the dangers of air pollution, he also announced plans to initiate a fundraising drive in order to cover the necessary costs.²⁴⁰ In bringing O'Donohue back into the fold, the ENGO replaced one problem with another. True, by taking on the full time position, O'Donohue offered the potential of an organized group that could proceed with fundraising and educational pursuits. Upon departing the organization in December 1967, however, O'Donohue cited his desire to avoid politicizing its operations. But with O'Donohue looking to a 1972 mayoral run, it was inevitable that GASP would take on the appearance of a platform for his political ambitions.²⁴¹ The result was something of a Faustian bargain. GASP as an organization

²³⁶ According to Denise Gosnell, her husband had no involvement with the group. Stanley Burke also denies any involvement, aside from chairing the 8 December 1967 meeting. Denise Gosnell, interview; Stanley Burke, interview with author, 25 January 2008, Stella, ON.

²³⁷ Bacque, interview.

²³⁸ It turns out that Bacque was unaware that O'Donohue resurrected the group in his absence. He had assumed the group died when he left for France; by the time he returned to Toronto, GASP had fallen dormant for the second time. Bacque noted during our interview that this was the first he had heard of the organization continuing in his absence. Bacque, interview.

²³⁹ According to O'Donohue, his monthly salary as an engineer was \$800, while his alderman salary was \$10,500 per annum. "O'Donohue heads up clean air campaign," *Toronto Star*, 31 January 1969, 50.

²⁴⁰ "O'Donohue heads up clean air campaign," 50.

²⁴¹ O'Donohue has been accused of political grandstanding in order to further his ambitions. In his coverage of Toronto's 1973-1974 City Council, Jon Caulfield notes that the alderman "had an eye for easy, popular

was revived and once again gained visibility from the general public. However, it would become inexorably politicized, thereby limiting its long-term appeal to the wider populace.

The ENGO returned to action in March 1969, submitting a brief to the CRTC investigation held on *The Air of Death*. GASP's brief, presented by Bernhart and O'Donohue, summarized the deleterious effects of air pollution upon human health, and defended the film's more controversial statements. Calling *The Air of Death* "a very promising first step in making people aware of the filthy conditions of the environment in which we live," the brief also credited the documentary with mobilizing a previously dormant populace. As it explained,

It also helped this organization – Group Action to Stop Pollution – to become organized and increase in strength and attract more members. It was gratifying to see so many people not associated with pollution previously take a keen interest in combatting [*sic*] the legacy of polluted air that we have left and are continuing to leave to succeeding generations of Canadians. We, as ordinary citizens, have been able to band together for the one big purpose: and that is, to halt the expanding pollution of our environment. We feel that the CBC's program 'The Air of Death' has been of tremendous value to us in recruiting the average citizen to our ranks and we would hate to see the CBC, or any of the news media, be they press or radio, muzzled and made the puppets of big business or political parties.²⁴²

Furthermore, the brief highlighted GASP's concern "that the whole battle against all types of pollution has been dragged through the credibility filter." As they noted,

the average citizen is witnessing a display that will only weaken the cause of air pollution control, because very obviously it is an open battle between a news media on one hand and the 'powers that be' on the other side. The man in the

issues. This paid off with more headlines mentioning his name than any other Council member got with the possible exception of [John] Sewell. Most Toronto people with even marginal interest in local politics could at least identify O'Donohue's charming smile." Jon Caulfield, *The Tiny Perfect Mayor* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1974), 25-26. Sewell, O'Donohue's longtime political rival, argues that O'Donohue's overtly political ways tarnished his sincere efforts to seek environmental reform. As he explained, "I think he went about it in a way that said 'I'm Tony O'Donohue,' as opposed to 'Here's the issue – let's deal with it.'" John Sewell, interview by author, 5 March 2008, Toronto, ON.

²⁴² Dr. Alfred Bernhart and Tony O'Donohue [GASP], brief to CRTC, 6, 4 March 1969, LGP.

middle is Joe Doe and Family, down the street, who will still have to live with their children in an increasingly polluted environment with not much hope of ever halting the deadly fumes that daily are pumped into our atmosphere.²⁴³

Another group inspired by *The Air of Death* was Pollution Probe. The roots of this group can be traced to the University of Toronto's student newspaper, *The Varsity*, whose staff was concerned that the documentary's warnings of environmental degradation were being overshadowed by efforts to discredit the filmmakers. Staff at *The Varsity* spent their February study week investigating pollution levels in Toronto. In a 24 February 1969 article by news editor Sherry Brydson, it was announced that they were sufficiently concerned that they had formed "a group action committee, the U of T Pollution Probe." As she explained, the nascent organization was mandated to investigate the origins and effects of pollution, as well as "mobilizing the public, private and government sectors to action in removing the poisons from our air – before it's too late."²⁴⁴ Brydson followed with two more articles on the subject, the first of which questioned the veracity of the Hall Report in light of the fact that "the commissioners did not hear testimony from a **single doctor who had personally diagnosed or treated a case of flourosis [sic],**" while the second questioned the role of the University of Toronto in the Dunnville affair, highlighting that its chancellor, Omond Solandt, was Vice-Chairman of the ERCO Board.²⁴⁵

Brydson's message resonated with the university community. The first two meetings, held in the spring of 1969, each attracted several hundred. In one respect this

²⁴³ Ibid.

²⁴⁴ Sherry Brydson, "Pollution: Is there a future for our generation?" *The Varsity*, 24 February 1969, 1.

²⁴⁵ Bolded text in original. Sherry Brydson, "Pollution Probe: Is Dunnville Dying?" *The Varsity*, 26 February 1969, 4-5; Sherry Brydson, "People may be dying in Dunnville: Why, Dr. Solandt?" *The Varsity*, 3 March 1969, 25. Biographical information on Brydson is derived from Susan Goldenberg, *The Thomson Empire* (New York: Beaufort Books, 1984), 69; Margaret Webb, "The Age of Dissent," *University of Toronto Magazine*, Spring 2002, <http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca/02spring/dissent.asp>.

was hardly surprising, given the powerful student movement then found at the University of Toronto. While many issues had been addressed and debated during this period at the University of Toronto, two ultimately took precedence among the students: reforming university governance in an effort to increase their influence, and voicing opposition to the war in Vietnam.²⁴⁶ Amidst the teach-ins and protests of the period, students were politicized in a manner unimaginable in their parents' generation. This climate proved integral to the creation of Pollution Probe. As co-founder Dr. Stanley Zlotkin explains, "In the sixties we, the people at the university, really had the sense that a. we had the obligation to move things along in the right direction and b. we had the capacity to do it. It was a period of fairly non-passive thinking, and I think Pollution Probe was a manifestation to a certain extent of that. You know, we really did feel we could influence what happened in the future and it was ours to influence."²⁴⁷ Just as important as *The Air of Death's* alarming message in attracting support from the university community was the ensuing controversy. When asked why the documentary inspired so many to react, Brian Kelly, another Pollution Probe co-founder, explains that "it was not just a story about industrial air pollution, it was a story about Canada's economic elite having the power to suppress that information It was a classic late-sixties struggle between the economic elites versus the public interest. It was an issue about power, not pollution necessarily."²⁴⁸

²⁴⁶ See chapter 36, "Student Activism" in Martin L. Friedland, *The University of Toronto: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 525-542; chapter 8 in Claude Bissell, *Halfway up Parnassus: A Personal Account of the University of Toronto, 1932-1971* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974); Webb, "The Age of Dissent." As Roberta Lexier argues, the University of Toronto's "students initially maintained a cooperative relationship with administrators; however, activists pressed for a more radical approach when university officials refused to address their concerns." Lexier, "The Canadian Student Movement in the Sixties," 7.

²⁴⁷ Stanley Zlotkin, interview with author, 19 February 2008, Toronto, ON.

²⁴⁸ Brian Kelly, interview with author, 12 January 2009, conducted by telephone.

Another noteworthy feature of the upstart organization is that it was officially registered as a project of the zoology department. This came as a result of a meeting Brydson held with the Department Chair, Dr. Donald Chant, seeking assistance in writing a brief to the CRTC. Chant, a native Torontonionian, was an acarologist whose work focused on the use of mites and ticks as an alternative to pesticides to control insect populations harmful to forestry and agriculture. A second generation academic – his father served as head of the Department of Psychology at the University of British Columbia [UBC] – he grew up with a deep-rooted love for the natural world. As a child he joined the Young Field Naturalists of Toronto and took weekend nature classes at the Royal Ontario Museum. While working on his undergraduate and Master's degrees at UBC he had summer jobs with the International Halibut Commission, researching the fish species in the Bering Sea, and studying spruce budworm and mites in British Columbia for Canada Agriculture.²⁴⁹ Following his receipt of a PhD in 1956 from the University of London he led a varied career, first as Director of the Research Laboratory, with offices in St. Catharines and Vineland, Ontario, and from 1964 to 1967 as Chair of the Department of Biological Control at the University of California, Riverside, before assuming his post at the University of Toronto.²⁵⁰ Years later, he reflected upon Brydson's request for help with the brief, and the consequent decision to support the students' decision to form an anti-pollution organization:

I thought this was a fine idea, not only because I thought the program was fair but also because here was a group of young students who were concerned enough about, not Woodstock, or student power, or the Berkeley riots or whatever, but

²⁴⁹ *A Celebration of the Life of Dr. Donald Chant* (self-published booklet, 2008), 3-5.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 3; Donald Chant, interview with author, 18 November 2007, conducted by telephone; Vikram Prasad, "Donald A. Chant (1928-2007) – A Personal Farewell," *International Journal of Acarology* 34:3 (September 2008): 317.

about the *environment* and its integrity to actually stand up, do some hard work, and be counted. It was for that reason that I did not turn them away or give only token support, but rather committed departmental resources and space to help them.²⁵¹

This departmental support would prove invaluable. In one respect, this provided them with the physical infrastructure necessary to operate. Office space was provided – initially at 91 St. George Street and by September 1969 in the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories.²⁵² While this set-up was not always ideal – Pollution Probe members from this period recall working long hours amidst Bunsen burners and other scientific equipment – it provided the group with a place to meet and do their work. More importantly, the affiliation provided Pollution Probe with an instant source of credibility. From the outset, the organization emphasized the need to back their activities with sound science; otherwise, Rob Mills noted in the 1 April 1969 newsletter, “we are reduced to the status of a howling pressure group.”²⁵³ While Chant would remain Pollution Probe's most vociferous champion, providing them with the necessary support and often serving in the early days as a public spokesperson and adviser, he was by no means their only ally within the Department of Zoology. In fact, the department was rife with faculty who shared an activist orientation, and were willing to lend their expertise. In October 1968 Dr. Henry Regier, a limnologist, and Dr. J. Bruce Falls, a behavioural ecologist, organized an International Teach-In on campus, devoted to issues related to human population growth. The event, which attracted over 3,000 participants, later spawned the edited

²⁵¹ Donald Chant, “CODA,” unpublished memoirs, Donald Chant papers, in the possession of Merle Chant.

²⁵² “We Have An Office,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:2 (1 April 1969), 1, Pollution Probe papers [PPP], located at the Pollution Probe headquarters; *Probe Newsletter* 1:5 (19 September 1969), 1, PPP. The Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories opened in 1965, and provided 260,000 square feet for the department's usage. E. Horne Craigie, *A History of the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto Up To 1962* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 96.

²⁵³ Rob Mills, “Letter From The President,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:2 (1 April 1969), 5, PPP.

collection *Exploding Humanity: The Crisis of Numbers*.²⁵⁴ Dr. Chris Plowright, an entomologist who co-founded a Zero Population Growth chapter at the university in March 1970, and Dr. Ralph Brinkhurst, a specialist in aquatic worms, were also noted early supporters.²⁵⁵

Within a month Pollution Probe had attracted over 140 members. Its first action was the creation of its CRTC brief, which stressed the importance of allowing the CBC to continue its “public education” productions unencumbered. As was noted, “Many of us [Pollution Probe members] were not previously aware of the seriousness and complexities of air pollution problems.” Stating that the documentary was factual and not overly sensational, the brief also raised the fear that a verdict otherwise by the CRTC would dissuade the CBC from producing comparable, much needed, programming. Pollution Probe’s brief also emphasized the need to deal with the health problems in Dunnville. As it explained, “it is evident that there is some sort of health problem in Dunnville, and although we are not 100 per cent positive about the source of the problem, it nevertheless seems obvious to us that Dunnville is still in trouble This is a frightening and serious reality and we hope the CRTC will not forget this.”²⁵⁶ This brief

²⁵⁴ Henry Regier and J. Bruce Falls, eds., *Exploding Humanity: The Crisis of Numbers* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1969).

²⁵⁵ John Ayre, “A student puts the case for reform as our new campus activists see it,” *University of Toronto Graduate*, 3:4 (January 1971), 16; Chris Plowright, interview by author, 30 January 2008, conducted by telephone; Ralph Brinkhurst, interview by author, 8 August 2008, conducted by telephone; Henry Regier, interview by author, 14 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

²⁵⁶ Pollution Probe, brief to CRTC, 5 March 1969, “‘Air of Death’ Pollution Probe Brief to CRTC 1969,” PPP. There was also a brief submitted by Michael Kesterton, features editor at *The Varsity*, regarding a viewing of *The Air of Death* hosted by the campus newspaper. As he explained, the crowd of 242 was overwhelmingly in support of the CBC program. Michael Kesterton, brief to CRTC, 5 March 1969, LGP.

was well received; subsequently, Pollution Probe was invited to appear before the Commission, a privilege extended to just four other interested parties.²⁵⁷

CONCLUSION

When Larry Gosnell first envisioned *The Air of Death* his aim was to raise public awareness of the widespread problem of air pollution. In attracting 1.5 million viewers, it can be safely surmised that he succeeded in this mission. Despite popular and critical acclaim, the program's harsh depiction of industry's willful contribution to the problem would result in a campaign to discredit those involved with its production. This would lead to nearly two years of anxiety and uncertainty for Gosnell, his colleagues, and their families, but the filmmakers would ultimately receive exoneration from the CRTC.

At the conclusion of *The Air of Death*, Stanley Burke announced that "not much happens until the average citizen demands it."²⁵⁸ If this was intended as a challenge, it was one duly met by those that created and filled the ranks of GASP and Pollution Probe. While some were driven to action upon realizing the severity of the air pollution problem, the founding of Pollution Probe reveals that many others responded to the persecution of its messengers. In this sense, the embattled filmmakers came to represent something more than the story they covered. Instead, they came to represent the suppression of the public good by members of the corporate community. As such, ERCO's efforts to discredit those

²⁵⁷ The only other groups called to appear, aside from the CBC and ERCO, were the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists, the Canadian Broadcasting League, and CTV. Pollution Probe was represented by Brydson, who provided testimony on 20 March 1969 CRTC, *Public Hearing*, 486-498.

²⁵⁸ *The Air of Death*, DVD.

involved with the CBC production would have major repercussions, as *The Air of Death*, and the surrounding controversy, inspired the creation of Toronto's initial ENGOs.

Chapter Three: The Emergence of Pollution Probe

In May and June 1969 a number of lifeless mallard ducks were found off the shores of the Toronto Islands. Their deaths, attributed to the spraying of the pesticide diazinon by Metro Toronto Parks Department employees, were seized upon by GASP and Pollution Probe as an example of society's careless use of deadly chemicals. In order to raise public awareness of the dangers of diazinon, the ENGOS organized a public inquiry concerning the dead ducks. This inquiry, which featured a panel of distinguished commissioners including Dr. Marshall McLuhan, confirmed diazinon as the cause of the ducks' demise, and therefore recommended that the use of the pesticide be severely curtailed.²⁵⁹

Just days later, on 18 July, Pollution Probe received an early morning tip that the Metro Toronto Parks Department was once again spraying trees on the Toronto Islands with diazinon. At 6:00 AM Pollution Probe's Tony Barrett hurried over to the islands aboard a rented watercraft in order to capture samples of the chemical. Dismayed by the Parks Department's continued usage of diazinon when less lethal alternatives existed, the members of GASP and Pollution Probe filed a writ of mandamus in the Supreme Court of Ontario, asking that the court prohibit the Parks Department from using the chemical. While the writ was rejected, the ENGOS' campaign against diazinon ultimately resulted in the creation of a provincial inquiry that addressed what killed the ducks and the utilization of synthetic chemicals in Ontario. While the campaign against diazinon did not

²⁵⁹ "Thompson refuses to give data at inquiry into Island duck deaths," *Globe and Mail*, 8 July 1969, 3; "Public Inquiry into the Death of Ducks on Ward's Island: Recommendations," 8 July 1969, Duck Inquiry – Correspondence, Toronto Island – Pesticides 1969, F1058 MU7338, AO.

proceed entirely as planned, it marked GASP and Pollution Probe's first foray into the world of high profile environmental activism. It would not be their last.²⁶⁰

Despite sharing a common catalyst – *The Air of Death* – the overlapping histories of GASP and Pollution Probe offer up a study of contrasts. GASP was the part-time pursuit of members of the city's professional class. While it enjoyed an enthusiastic inception, the group would lumber its way along for two and a half years before going defunct in the summer of 1970. Pollution Probe, primarily composed of university students, was able to garner a popular following upon its February 1969 launch. Unlike GASP, Pollution Probe would thrive, and developed into one of the leaders of Canada's early environmental movement.

This chapter will examine the history of Toronto's original ENGOS through the summer of 1970. During this period the benefits of Pollution Probe's affiliation with the University of Toronto's Department of Zoology would become apparent as it provided the ENGO with the resources necessary to pursue its activities on a full-time basis. Support from the Department of Zoology was not a guarantor of success, however, as demonstrated by the rather lackluster emergence of Zero Population Growth-Toronto [ZPGT] in the spring of 1970. Rather, Pollution Probe's success was the result of its institutional support, the involvement of a dedicated core membership, canny leadership, and its ability to tap into Toronto's business community.

THEORY AND THE MOVEMENT

²⁶⁰ "Probe will ask writ against insecticide," *Globe and Mail*, 19 July 1969, 5; untitled article, *Probe Newsletter* 1:5 (19 September 1969), 1, PPP.

Some insight into the development of the environmental movement can be gleaned from organizational theory, particularly that pertaining to pressure groups. A. Paul Pross has noted four stages of pressure group sophistication within the Canadian political system.²⁶¹ Most basic are what he terms “issue-oriented” groups, characterized by a narrow focus on one or two issues, fluid membership, limited organization cohesion, focus on publicity-seeking events, a “considerable difficulty in formulating and adhering to short-range objectives,” and a confrontational approach towards officials.²⁶² The next stage along the continuum is the “fledgling” group, defined by multiple, closely related objectives, a small paid staff supported by membership, the utilization of briefs to public bodies, and a transition from a purely confrontational relationship with officials to somewhat regular contact.²⁶³ Further along is the “mature” group, which features broadly defined objectives, a staff that is, at least in part, professionally-trained, regular contact with officials, and a transition from submitting briefs to using the media for public relations purposes, including the use of image-building advertisements. The most developed is the “institutionalized” pressure group, which features a broadly defined, yet selective set of objectives, a stable membership which provides the resources – financial and human – to pursue their needs, easy access to government policy makers, representation on advisory boards, as well as clear and immediate operational objectives.²⁶⁴ As Pross points out, the “ideal institutional pressure group ... rarely exists, and is probably non-existent in

²⁶¹ Pross defines pressure groups as “organizations whose members act together to influence public policy in order to promote their common interest. The chief characteristic of the pressure group is the fact that it tries to persuade governments to pursue the policies it advocates. In doing so it uses various techniques of persuasion – the force of public opinion, the threat of economic sanctions, the logic of well-prepared arguments – which exert political pressure on government. Pross, “Pressure Groups,” in Pross, *Pressure Group Behaviour in Canadian Politics*, 2.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 11.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 14-15.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 10-15.

Canada,” noting that even the most well-established groups, such as the Canadian Manufacturers Association, operate with relatively limited finances.²⁶⁵ Most pressure groups begin as issue-oriented groups, but some advance from one category to another. In the period immediately following the CRTC hearings into *The Air of Death*, GASP and Pollution Probe were issue-oriented groups. While their foci would soon expand beyond the defense of *The Air of Death*’s filmmakers into broader environmental issues, they maintained relatively small memberships. And although their CRTC submissions were indicative of the more sophisticated actions of a fledgling group, both GASP and Pollution Probe lacked the two things necessary to qualify as such: a steady budget and a paid staff.²⁶⁶

Additional understanding can be derived through the application of resource mobilization theory. Originated by sociologists John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald, this theory argues that formal social movement organizations, including ENGOs, operate in a manner akin to firms insofar that they aspire to accumulate resources, employ staff, and sell their work to potential contributors. Just as there is competition among retailers to attract business from a limited pool of clientele, according to this theory ENGOs must compete with one another for funding. This competition often results in specialization among ENGOs in order to alleviate competition; however, in other cases the organizations can go head-to-head for funding.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 11.

²⁶⁶ As Paul Pross notes, “With a steady budget the group may take on a modest staff, a move that usually ensures that finances are better managed and that the members are served more consistently These are the first steps in institutionalization.” Pross, “Canadian Pressure Groups,” in Richardson, *Pressure Groups*, 151.

²⁶⁷ McCarthy and Zald, “Resources Mobilization and Social Movements.” In the United States, for example, the Sierra Club spawned the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, which filled a niche role and did not provide it with direct competition. However, following David Brower’s ouster from the Sierra Club in

ORGANIZING POLLUTION PROBE

Within just a month of launching, Pollution Probe had delivered a brief to the CRTC. However, it still lacked an organizational structure. Initial plans had been for the organization to choose its executive via mail ballot, with each member receiving a single vote. The vacant positions were listed in the initial *Probe Newsletter*, published on 8 March 1969, and include a Chairman, “to act as general spokesman and co-ordinator,” a Vice-Chairman, two Public Relations Chairmen, and a Secretary-Treasurer. In addition to these positions, the executive would be rounded out by unelected Research Committee Chairmen, responsible for heading committees dedicated to addressing specific environmental problems.²⁶⁸ However, these plans were tossed out when it became apparent that the group was destined to be overtaken by hippies and more radical elements that approved of violent actions against polluters.²⁶⁹ John Coombs, who was attracted to the early meetings because of his friendship with fellow Upper Canada College alumnus Tony Barrett, recalls prompting the decision to hold their elections prematurely at the sparsely attended meeting on 17 March 1969. As he explains,

I remember Don Chant looking very disconcerted and frustrated that they weren't going to get this thing, Pollution Probe, going the way they wanted, so on an impulse I just got up and a bit like an impromptu dictator said, 'Well, we don't have time for elections, we're just going to have to appoint people.' I just sort of said, 'Who would volunteer to do this role, who would volunteer to do that role,' pretending that I didn't know anyone there, that I was just sort of taking over as [an impartial] group moderator.²⁷⁰

1969 he formed the Friends of the Earth, which was a direct competitor for funding. Bosso, *Environment, Inc.*, 40-43.

²⁶⁸ “Elections,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:1 (8 March 1969), 3, PPP.

²⁶⁹ Sarah Elton, “Green Power,” *University of Toronto Magazine*, Winter 1999, <http://www.magazine.utoronto.ca/feature/canadian-environmental-movement/>; John Coombs, interview with author, 13 November 2008, conducted by telephone; Chant, interview.

²⁷⁰ Coombs, interview.

Subsequently, Coombs' colleagues from Upper Canada College Rob Mills and Tony Barrett were chosen President and Vice-President (Administration), while Geoff Mains was elected Vice-President (Research), and Sandra Woodruff became Vice-President (Communications).²⁷¹ In the ensuing *Probe Newsletter*, dated 1 April 1969, the group excused its actions by explaining that there was a consensus among the thirty-five in attendance that it was necessary “to elect a temporary government which would carry us through the exams and the summer. While not an entirely democratic move, we felt that with the membership at 150 and growing every day, it would be impossible at this time to do anything else.”²⁷²

The structure of Pollution Probe's provisional government demonstrates that initial plans had been for the group to assume the model of traditional campus clubs. The group, as such, was designed to be a part-time student operation that investigated pollution in the city, and drew attention to the problems. In an ironic twist, given the previous efforts to root out hippie elements from the group, a dramatic restructuring occurred in autumn 1969 which saw the abandonment of the executive positions in favour of a flat organizational structure. Monte Hummel, who joined Pollution Probe shortly after the organizational makeover, would later explain in an interview with Farley Mowat that “We had a very egalitarian group; the process was as important as the goal; we had no hierarchies; we had no bosses. Titles were very sensitive, so we didn't have them; everybody was a 'co-ordinator,' and not a leader or president, or anything like

²⁷¹ “Meeting: Monday, March 17,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:2 (1 April 1969), 1, PPP.

²⁷² Quoted in *ibid.*

that.”²⁷³ Further extending the principle of equality within the group, Pollution Probe’s weekly meetings were operated according to the belief that each member deserved equal say.²⁷⁴ These meetings soon became notorious for the seemingly never-ending debates that would emerge over matters big and small, and the tendency for meetings to last for hours.²⁷⁵

Pollution Probe’s membership was primarily composed of the middle class, a reflection of the standard makeup of Canadian universities during the period.²⁷⁶ The common denominator among the early membership, aside from the obvious concern for the environment, was having summer camp and cottage experience while growing up. As Lynn Spink noted, “We were all campers and canoers.” As she further explained, “I think that direct connection to the land, to the water, to the environment, had something to do with the passion in which we wanted to save what we experienced directly.”²⁷⁷ Other members of Pollution Probe would end up spending their summers working in the many

²⁷³ Farley Mowat, *Rescue the Earth! Conversations with the Green Crusaders* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc, 1990), 33.

²⁷⁴ This format was quite prevalent among social movement organizations in the 1960s and was attributable to a belief that changing society began by striking down traditional hierarchies. For more on this see Joyce Rothschild and J. Allen Whitt, *The Cooperative Workplace: Potentials and Dilemmas of Organisational Democracy and Participation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

²⁷⁵ This was a matter addressed in many interviews. Monte Hummel, interview with author, 23 January 2008, Toronto, ON; Zlotkin, interview; Peter Middleton, 21 February 2008, Toronto, ON; Mills, interview; Kelly, interview.

²⁷⁶ Owrain, *Born at the Right Time*, 113; Levitt, *Children of Privilege*, 4.

²⁷⁷ Lynn Spink, interview with author, 12 March 2008, Toronto, ON. The important role of summer camp was a common theme in interviews. It was raised by: Middleton, interview; Hummel, interview; Mills, interview; Gregory Bryce, interview with author, 18 March 2008, conducted by telephone. The important role of summer camp is noted widely in the secondary literature. As Samuel Hays points out, the “rapid growth in outdoor recreation in the 1950s, extended into the wider field of the protection of natural environments, then became infused with attempts to cope with air and water pollution and still later with toxic chemical pollutants.” Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*, 3. See also: Jennifer Read, “Pollution Probe: The Emergence of the Canadian Environmental Movement,” in Char Miller, ed., *The Atlas of U.S. and Canadian Environmental History* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 164; Mark Harvey, “U.S. Wilderness Recreation,” in Char Miller, ed., *The Atlas of U.S. and Canadian Environmental History* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 138-139; Gerald Killan, “Outdoor Recreation Boom: Parks for the People, 1945-1967,” chap. 3 in *Protected Places: A History of Ontario's Provincial Parks System* (Toronto: Dundurn Press Limited, 1993).

camps that blossomed in postwar Ontario, particularly those in Haliburton and Muskoka which catered, in the words of historian Sharon Wall, “to a well-to-do, upwardly mobile, middle-and-upper class clientele.”²⁷⁸

Although Pollution Probe’s membership was primarily composed of the middle class, a small group with elite connections would play a pivotal role in its shaping. Sherry Brydson, whose articles for *The Varsity* were central in kick-starting Pollution Probe, was the granddaughter of Roy Thomson, the 1st Baron of Fleet, founder of The Thomson Corporation, and Canada’s richest individual.²⁷⁹ Tony Barrett, a popular and energetic commerce student credited with keeping Pollution Probe afloat during its early years, John Coombs, and Rob Mills, who was elected president of its “temporary government” at the 17 March 1969 meeting, were graduates of the prestigious Upper Canada College [UCC]. According to Mills, not only did UCC instill upon its students the need to take a leadership role, but growing up in an environment where friends and family were influential figures provided an ability “to find the cogs of power and influence society.”²⁸⁰ As he explains, “We were aware of where power came from and where money came from.”²⁸¹ As Dr. Ralph Brinkhurst notes, this core also helped defend Pollution Probe from disparaging critiques: “One of the impressive things was that they couldn't be dismissed as sort of hairy radicals because they were all so conformist looking. You

²⁷⁸ Sharon Wall, *The Nurture of Nature: Childhood, Antimodernism, and Ontario Summer Camps, 1920-55* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2009), 20.

²⁷⁹ Brydson is widely credited with coming up with the name Pollution Probe. While she graduated in the summer of 1969 and did not remain involved in the day-to-day operations, Brydson remained an important supporter of the group’s activities.

²⁸⁰ Mills, interview. For more on Upper Canada College and the sense of leadership it instills upon its students, see: Richard B. Howard, *Upper Canada College 1829-1979: Colborne's Legacy* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1979) and James Fitzgerald, *Old Boys: The Powerful Legacy of Upper Canada College* (Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross, 1994).

²⁸¹ Mills, interview.

know, tall, upright, white Anglo Saxon. Clean, short haircuts. [laughs] All of the right accents.”²⁸² This fact did not go unnoticed by the members of Pollution Probe. According to Ann Rounthwaite, the daughter of a prominent London, Ontario medical doctor, its establishment appearance enabled them “to be heard by the media as well as our target audience in a way that a group of hippie environmentalists wouldn’t have been.”²⁸³ This set in place a unique characteristic of the organization. Although Pollution Probe regularly singled out and criticized companies that were harming the environment, it was also quick to seek allies and cooperation from within the business community.

Barrett’s involvement would prove vital in the development of Pollution Probe. The son of an affluent Toronto advertiser, Barrett graduated from Upper Canada College in 1964 and promptly enrolled at Trinity College, the smallest and most exclusive of the University of Toronto’s federated colleges, where he studied commerce. Barrett’s elitist upbringing was rounded out by his attendance of Camp Hurontario, first as a camper and later as a counselor.²⁸⁴ Plans for a career on Bay Street were halted, however, when Barrett read Brydson’s call to arms in *The Varsity*. As Rob Mills explains, immediately thereafter “he just quit everything and spent full-time working on it [Pollution Probe].”²⁸⁵ Blessed with a dynamic personality, he served as a magnet that drew old friends, such as Coombs, Mills, and Monte Hummel, into the Pollution Probe fold, while also attracting others.²⁸⁶ Barrett was also known for his keen sense of humour. Often found wearing a green military helmet while in the office, he used his humour to break the ice when

²⁸² Brinkhurst, interview.

²⁸³ Ann Rounthwaite, interview with author, 10 July 2008, conducted by telephone.

²⁸⁴ For more on Camp Hurontario see Claire Elizabeth Campbell, “‘We all aspired to be woodsy’: Tracing environmental awareness at a boys’ camp,” *Oral History Forum d’histoire orales*, forthcoming.

²⁸⁵ Mills, interview.

²⁸⁶ As Coombs noted in an interview, “I would not have done it [joined Pollution Probe] if Tony hadn’t been involved.” Coombs, interview.

contacting business leaders. Peter Middleton recalls Barrett phoning Xerox's Canadian headquarters, at which time he mimicked a photocopier by duplicating everything he said. He also had the audacity to greet prominent business leaders and politicians by their given names. According to Middleton, "Some people, it made their day. They were amused, charmed. Others, they sort of said, 'Who is this freak?' But the folks who said 'Who is this freak?' would never have been attracted to do anything with Pollution Probe anyways, so there was little to be lost and much to be gained trying."²⁸⁷ Aside from breaking the ice with potential supporters, Barrett's humour helped bring levity to the often gloomy work of environmental advocacy. However, Barrett's most important contribution to Pollution Probe was that he helped infuse the group with a business sensibility, which would prove to be integral in its development from a student club to a high profile ENGO.²⁸⁸

One of Barrett's first organizational projects was the creation of a Board of Advisors. Plans for this body were first announced in April 1969, and was proposed for the dual purposes of providing advice "on our approaches to and management of our projects" and "to carry back to their outside colleagues word of Our Cause and to express and seek support for Pollution Probe."²⁸⁹ The initial version of the Board of Advisors, in place by September 1969, included Drs. Chant, who served as chairman, Brinkhurst and Regier of the Department of Zoology, Dr. R.W. Judy of the Department of Political Economy, Dr. Phil Jones of the Department of Chemistry, Dr. J.H. Dales of the

²⁸⁷ Middleton, interview.

²⁸⁸ Barrett passed away in 2002.

²⁸⁹ Tony Barrett, "... And From the Administration," *Probe Newsletter* 1:2 (1 April 1969), 3, PPP. A letter from Donald Chant outlining key dates in the ENGO's history states that on 25 March 1969 "Tony Barrett, others, and I met to set up the first Board of Directors." While this suggests the finalization of the Board, in actuality it was likely a preliminary discussion of the subject. D.A. Chant to Colin Isaacs, 13 March 1989, Donald Chant papers.

Department of Economics, Dr. Marshall McLuhan of the Department of English, and CBC broadcaster Stanley Burke.²⁹⁰ The composition of the board, coupled with Dr. Chant's visible role in the ENGO's early history, resulted in some suspicion that the group was dominated by university faculty and their interests. This notion is sharply rejected today by Pollution Probe's founders who, while admitting the importance of having a reputable board for opening doors in the business and political worlds, note that it had no impact on their day-to-day activities and provided advice only when it was requested.²⁹¹

Pollution Probe's affiliation with the university was not without controversy. There was a clear sense of animosity between the ENGO and University Chancellor Omond Solandt. This was demonstrated during the June 1969 convocation ceremony. "As you walked across the stage he was the guy that shook your hand and gave you your degree," recalls Brian Kelly. "A number of us ... put a Pollution Probe button on our lapels and as we came up to him either pulled our gowns aside or turned our lapels over to flash the Pollution Probe button at him."²⁹² Solandt, for his part, was known to have raised objections to Pollution Probe's university affiliation in meetings of the Board of Governors, which were ultimately parried by Chant and University President Claude Bissell.²⁹³ Bissell's defense of the group was outlined in a 27 May 1970 speech. As he

²⁹⁰ Brian Kelly, "How to Form Your Own Pollution Probe Group," 22, Projects/Reports/Submissions 1970s, PPP.

²⁹¹ The role of the Board of Advisors was discussed in a number of interviews conducted by the author. Chant, interview; Burke, interview; Middleton, interview; Brinkhurst, interview; Regier, interview; Mills, interview; Kelly, interview.

²⁹² Kelly, interview.

²⁹³ Chant, interview; Hummel, interview. Solandt was interviewed by *Canadian Research & Development* in early 1970, and stated his attitude towards Pollution Probe as follows: "I've not been directly in touch with Pollution Probe. As I understand it, it is a student organization that has a good deal of backing and support from some of the faculty. I think that, speaking now as chancellor, within reason, this sort of thing is good in the university. But I feel it's quite important that organizations like Pollution Probe are not regarded as official spokesmen for the University. They are more accurately spokesmen for groups of concerned individuals within the university The public believes that they are responsible and

explained, Pollution Probe's affiliation did not mean that its actions were endorsed by the university, but rather "that its work will be serious, with a scientific basis." Noting that the group would occasionally be wrong on issues, he nonetheless ended his speech by calling them "a happy harbinger of a saner world."²⁹⁴ Bissell's support for Pollution Probe and its activities seems to be the result of two factors. First, he was an ardent backer of Donald Chant. Given Chant's intimate connection with the group, this support was naturally extended to Pollution Probe. Second, the group arose at a time of increasingly strident unrest among the university's student population. During the 1960s university students throughout the western world were politicized to an extent never before seen. In some cases, this led to violence. While the University of Toronto managed to avoid the worst of this, President Bissell was in constant fear that the peaceful protests on campus might escalate, particularly after Steven Langdon, president of the Students' Administrative Council, mused openly about increased tensions in the 1969-70 school year.²⁹⁵ In light of this, he was heartened to see these students dedicating themselves in a peaceful and generally orderly fashion to a constructive purpose.²⁹⁶

Although Pollution Probe drew its support from across the university community, active members with a science background were a rare commodity. This rendered the contribution of Brian Kelly all-important. A zoology student in the last year of his three year degree at Scarborough College, Kelly joined Pollution Probe upon reading

authoritative members of the academic community, so they have to be much more careful than the ordinary man in the street to be sure that when they say something, it's true, as far as can be proven. I'm unhappy that in many of the debates on pollution, particularly those centred on Pollution Probe, emotions have run a little too high and people have been occasionally rather careless about their facts." "Dr. Omond Solandt: Man in the Middle," *Canadian Research & Development*, March/April 1970, 33-34.

²⁹⁴ Claude Bissell, "Remarks to Pollution Probe meeting on May 27th, 1970, at the St. Lawrence Centre," Office of the President, A77-0019/024, UTA.

²⁹⁵ Friedland, 526-535.

²⁹⁶ This interpretation was confirmed by Donald Chant. Chant, interview.

Brydson's articles in *The Varsity*. As he recalls, "Being a zoology student in the late sixties, you couldn't help but be interested in environmental issues."²⁹⁷ This, combined with a predisposition to activism, made him a natural fit for the upstart group. At the time, Kelly had planned on continuing his education, first by completing the fourth year of undergraduate studies at the University of Toronto's downtown campus, then pursuing a Master's degree in California, before returning to Scarborough College to pursue a PhD under Dr. Fred Urquhart, who was famous for his work on butterfly migration patterns. During the summer of 1969 he initiated his first action as part of Pollution Probe when he noticed raw sewage floating in the Highland Creek. Tracing the problem to the Cumber Street Pumping Station, Kelly contacted the Metro Toronto Public Works Department. Kelly was unhappy with their response and therefore contacted the local CTV affiliate, which featured the story in its nightly news. Upon enrolling at the downtown campus in September, Kelly's plans for a career path began to shift. As he explains, "I spent nearly all of my time working for Pollution Probe and frankly very little of my time attending classes. [laughs] So I withdrew, with the intention ... [that] I was going to take one year off to work for Pollution Probe and complete my makeup year and then go on with my academic career."²⁹⁸ This plan was never implemented, as he would remain with Pollution Probe until 1974.

THE DEAD DUCK CONTROVERSY

Despite a growing presence on campus it was not until a bizarre series of events regarding the spraying of pesticides on Toronto Island that the organization began to

²⁹⁷ Kelly, interview.

²⁹⁸ Kelly, interview.

capture the attention of the city's population. On 16 and 23 May 1969, William Carrick, a wildfowl expert with the Ontario Waterfowl Research Foundation, visited the Toronto Islands in order to capture mallards for experimental purposes. To help facilitate their collection Carrick baited food with alphachloralose, a narcotic used to immobilize birds. When consumed in heavy doses alphachloralose is known to render mallards unconscious, and in this case resulted in the drowning death of no fewer than twenty-seven ducks. Upon discovering numerous birds in varying stages of paralysis, Robert Van der Hoop, superintendent of the Toronto Island Park, informed Carrick that "his presence was no longer appreciated."²⁹⁹ Van der Hoop, however, did not immediately inform his superiors of these events.³⁰⁰

Later that month, Algonquin Island resident Martin Sawma contacted the Metro Toronto Parks Department numerous times, inquiring about the pesticides that were then being sprayed on the islands' trees. Parks employee Robert Siddall, unsure what chemicals were being used but frustrated by the repeated calls, picked one from a list of chemicals he saw posted near the telephone. He told the caller that they were spraying diazinon, an organophosphate pesticide that causes death through the overstimulation of neurotransmitters. As Siddall later explained, "It (diazinon) sounded like a good term so I told him that was it If it had been bicarbonate of soda [on the list] that is what I would

²⁹⁹ "Probe of duck deaths told of experiment," *Globe and Mail*, 10 December 1969, 5; D. Edward Hofman and Harold Weaver, "Immobilization of Captive Mallards and Pintails with Alpha-Chloralose," *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 8:2 (Summer 1980): 156-158.

³⁰⁰ Martin H. Edwards, *Did pesticides kill ducks on Toronto Island? Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Use of Pesticides and the Death of Waterfowl on Toronto Island* (Toronto: Queen's Printer, 1970), [1].

have told him.”³⁰¹ Sawma then phoned Dr. Chant to inquire about the toxicity of diazinon. After looking into the matter, Chant informed Sawma that it was a highly toxic chemical, particularly for waterfowl. Confusion was multiplied further when Tommy Thompson, Toronto’s Superintendent of Parks, impulsively announced that diazinon had indeed been sprayed on the islands. As he explained at the time, “Hell, when one of my men called and said he thought they should spray I told him that some birds might die and I also told him to go ahead It’s either that or have the trees dying and people getting covered in slimy caterpillars when they visit The Islands.”³⁰² The blustery superintendent would shortly thereafter retract his story, admitting that he never actually verified the chemical's usage, but by that point members of the city’s environmentalist organizations sensed a cover-up in the works, and Thompson was unable to convince anyone otherwise.

Events escalated further in June. Eleven dead ducks were found in waters surrounding the Toronto Islands and were sent to the Department of Physiological Hygiene at the University of Toronto for analysis. The tests were assigned to a junior member of the department, Dr. Hubert Hughes. His test results consequently revealed levels as high as 66 parts per million, which Dr. Chant would refer to as “the highest level [of diazinon] ever recorded anywhere in the world.”³⁰³ These test results hardened the environmentalists’ belief that pesticides were being used recklessly in Toronto which, although only affecting ducks at the moment, had the potential to endanger human health

³⁰¹ “Diazinon,” Sierra Club Canada, nd, accessed on 5 June 2009, <http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/programs/health-environment/pesticides/diazinon-fact-sheet.shtml>; “Ex-parks man tells duck probe he faked diazinon story,” *Toronto Star*, 12 December 1969, 35.

³⁰² Michael Fitzgerald, “Dead Ducks Don’t Faze Tommy,” *Toronto Telegram*, 4 June 1969, 41.

³⁰³ “Island ducks ‘set pesticide record,’” *Toronto Telegram*, 7 July 1969, 1.

in the future.³⁰⁴ Frustrated with Thompson's flippant behavior – he was quoted in the press describing the affair as “a tempest in a teapot”³⁰⁵ – and convinced that theirs was an open and shut case that deserved further publicity, the members of Pollution Probe and GASP decided to launch a public inquiry into the matter.³⁰⁶ Although the event was officially co-sponsored by the two groups, GASP's participation was overshadowed by that of Pollution Probe, and its only members involved were O'Donohue and Bernhart.

The ensuing public inquiry was held 7-8 July at City Hall. Although lacking certain powers, such as the ability to subpoena witnesses and hear testimonies under oath, the two-day event benefited from the participation of three high profile commissioners: Dr. Ernest Sirluck, the Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Toronto; Dr. Robert McClure, the Moderator of the United Church; and Dr. Marshall McLuhan, Director of the University of Toronto's Centre for Culture and Technology. The Department of Physiological Hygiene's test results were presented as the central evidence, alongside Thompson's earlier statements verifying the use of diazinon on the islands. Although Thompson initially announced that he would boycott the event, he appeared on the second day. Having reviewed the spraying records, he testified that a substantially safer pesticide, methoxychlor, not diazinon, had been used on the islands.³⁰⁷ The commissioners, suspicious of Thompson's changing story, sided with the evidence

³⁰⁴ This point was clearly articulated in Stanley Zlotkin, “Insecticides,” *Toronto Star*, 21 July 1969, 6.

³⁰⁵ “Insecticide blamed in duck deaths,” *Toronto Star*, 26 June 1969, 39.

³⁰⁶ “The Diazinon Story,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:4 (1 July 1969), 1, PPP. O'Donohue's telling of GASP's history essentially begins and ends with this inquiry. While he does note his group was founded in 1967, he goes on to say “It was our plan to pick an issue, which could be readily identified as one which had to be corrected because of the obvious destructive impact on the environment. This was not difficult. Numerous examples were all around us. It was just a question of picking the right one to start.” O'Donohue then describes the dead duck inquiry of 1969. There is no explanation of his December 1967 departure from GASP, or any of the events that occurred prior to his January 1969 return as executive director. O'Donohue, *Front Row Centre*, 389.

³⁰⁷ “Parks chief's evidence contradicts TV interview,” *Toronto Star*, 8 July 1969, 17.

provided by the Department of Physiological Hygiene's tests, and attributed the ducks' deaths to diazinon.³⁰⁸

The diazinon issue would not fade with the passing of the public inquiry. In a 16 July story in the *Star*, Metro Chairman William Allen described the inquiry as a “witch hunt,” further decrying it as “unauthorized and unqualified.” Furthermore, while it was revealed Mayor William Dennison and city controller Margaret Campbell had wanted Thompson to cooperate fully with the public inquiry, they were overruled by the Metro Executive Committee.³⁰⁹ On 18 July, Pollution Probe's Tony Barrett was tipped off by an island resident that the Parks Department was applying pesticide to trees on the islands. Barrett rented a boat and raced to the islands. After catching the Parks staff in the act of spraying, he took a sample of the pesticide they were applying, which was revealed by tests undertaken at the University of Toronto's School of Hygiene to be diazinon. Pollution Probe and GASP responded by filing a writ of mandamus in the Supreme Court of Ontario, with an eye towards forcing provincial Health Minister, Dr. Matthew Dymond to cancel the Metro Parks Department's license to spray pesticides. Dymond instead requested that Metro voluntarily refrain from spraying diazinon until its usage was reviewed by the Ontario Pesticides Advisory Board, a move that caused the ENGOs to suspend their legal proceedings.³¹⁰

The situation began to move towards resolution during the Pesticides Advisory Board hearings. Beginning in July the Board interviewed twenty-one people, including

³⁰⁸ “Public Inquiry into the Death of Ducks on Ward's Island: Recommendations,” 8 July 1969, Duck Inquiry – Correspondence, Toronto Island – Pesticides 1969, F1058 MU7338, AO.

³⁰⁹ “Allen says ducks inquest ‘witch hunt,’” *Toronto Star*, 16 July 1969, 41.

³¹⁰ “Pesticide that killed ducks used on Island today,” *Toronto Star*, 18 July 1969, 1; “Court injunction to be sought to stop island spraying,” *Toronto Star*, 19 July 1969, 12; “No poison spray on Island pollution group urges,” *Toronto Star*, 21 July 1969, 3; “Dymond asks Metro to stop using insecticide until probe,” *Toronto Star*, 24 July 1969, 3.

Dr. Hubert Hughes. Sufficient doubt was cast upon the conclusions reached in the public inquiry that on 2 September the Pesticides Advisory Board recommended “that a Committee of Inquiry be appointed to investigate the matter on a judicial basis.”³¹¹ This suggestion was endorsed by the provincial government and on 19 September, Dr. Martin Edwards, head of the Department of Physics at the Royal Military College and president of the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, was appointed head of a Royal Commission on Pesticides. Held 8-16 December in Toronto, the Edwards Inquiry focused on the validity of Hughes’ test results. After hearing testimony from Carrick and Hughes, and re-analyzing the available data, it became apparent that Hughes had botched the initial tests. Not only did he fail to include a “blank,” non-poisoned duck by which to compare the results, but he also failed to accurately measure the level of diazinon present.³¹² Edwards concluded, “THE ONLY WATERFOWL WHOSE DEATHS ARE DEFINITELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE USE OF PESTICIDES ON TORONTO ISLAND BETWEEN APRIL 1ST AND AUGUST 1ST, 1969 DIED AS A RESULT OF THE USE OF ALPHACHLORALOSE.”³¹³

Although the environmentalists were wrong in asserting that diazinon was responsible for the death for the ducks, they were correct that it was attributable to the careless usage of chemicals. Fortunately for them, this fact was overlooked, and Pollution Probe continued to forge its reputation as favorites of the press, an ironic development considering the group’s emphasis on “sound science.” Even more so, they tapped into

³¹¹ “Annual Report of the Pesticides Advisory Board [1969],” 5, Pesticides Advisory Board, RG 12-48, b352562, AO.

³¹² Edwards, *Did pesticides kill ducks on Toronto Island?*, [6]; “No accurate test for pesticides in ducks: Scientist,” *Toronto Star*, 11 December 1969, 4.

³¹³ Edwards, *Did pesticides kill ducks on Toronto Island?*, [8].

preexisting concerns that synthetic chemicals were deleterious to the environment when used carelessly. Edwards' report called for an end to alphachloralose's use in capturing live ducks; likewise, he recommended that the provincial and federal authorities pass an environmental quality act similar to the National Environmental Policy Act recently enacted in the United States. As Monte Hummel recalls, "We were convinced it was the pesticides. They're poison, [they] spread poison, ducks died; *ergo*, diazinon killed ducks. It turned out not to be that at all. We lost the battle but we won the war Our tilting at windmills had actually raised our profile."³¹⁴

HIGHWAY LITTER AND NON-RETURNABLE CONTAINERS

Pollution Probe made its first foray into waste issues in August 1969. The group decided to tackle the problem in its most superficial and easy to remedy form: highway litter. Roadside cleanups had become a popular aspect of civic pride in the United States, largely as a result of the Keep America Beautiful public education campaign, which was funded by glass, steel, aluminum, and paper container manufacturers in a concerted effort to place the onus on individuals for maintaining an aesthetically pleasing environment.³¹⁵

As Pollution Probe would later acknowledge, although "the consequences of littering are hardly serious – relatively," it was "really a state of mind in the public, an attitude towards the environment which we tested."³¹⁶ On 1 August 1969 nine of its members gathered the soft drink bottles and cans found along a two mile stretch of highway 400 to the north of highway 7, and along the highway 400-Finch interchange. Over the course of

³¹⁴ Hummel, interview.

³¹⁵ As Samuel Hays notes, this was undertaken in an effort order to avoid legislation that mandated deposits and returnable containers. Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*, 322-323.

³¹⁶ "Anti-Litter Campaign," *Probe Newsletter*, 1:5 (19 September 1969), 3, PPP.

ninety minutes they filled ten potato sacks with roughly one thousand discarded beverage containers. Eighteen days later, on 19 August 1969, Pollution Probe held a press conference at Queen's Park. With the sacks of refuse emptied on the legislature's front steps,³¹⁷ the group's leader, Tony Barrett, addressed those in attendance. Wearing his trademark plastic military helmet,³¹⁸ Barrett explained that he and his colleagues “carried out this demonstration today in order to illustrate graphically and tangibility [*sic*] the dimensions of one aspect of the problem of pollution and to show that the cause and the remedy ultimately lie at the doorstep of the individual.”³¹⁹ Barrett further explained that highway litter was not just an “aesthetic burden” but also a financial one, as the Ontario Department of Highways spent one million dollars in roadside cleaning each summer. Subsequently, in an effort to reduce littering by motorists, he announced that Pollution Probe was launching a roadside monitoring project during the forthcoming Labour Day weekend. Teams of five would be posted along select stretches of highway. The teams would consist of two “spotters” to catch passers-by in the act of littering, a cameraman, responsible for photographing the offender's license plate, a “fetcher,” responsible for retrieving the item of litter, and a secretary, who was responsible for recording the pertinent information. “Once the drivers [*sic*] name has been obtained from the registry bureau,” Barrett explained, “information will be sworn out against him and he will be required either to pay the fine on the summons forwarded to him (\$5 - \$50) or contest the issue in the local magistrate's court.”³²⁰

³¹⁷ The refuse was promptly cleaned up following the event. “Group plans to nab road litterers,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 August 1969, 5.

³¹⁸ This helmet was pointed out in “Pollution probers turn on highway litterbugs,” *Toronto Star*, 19 August 1969, 2.

³¹⁹ Untitled press release, 19 August 1969, Pollution-General 1969, F1058 MU7338, AO.

³²⁰ *Ibid.*

As hoped, the press conference garnered considerable media attention, including a same-day second page story in the *Toronto Star* and page five coverage in the *Globe and Mail*.³²¹ It also ignited a minor controversy in the *Globe and Mail's* editorial pages, when a condemnation of Pollution Probe's "plan to initiate a guerrilla police action" was greeted by letters supporting the anti-litter campaign.³²² While the members of Pollution Probe were pleased with the awareness they raised, the ensuing action was disappointing. Just days later on 25 August 1969, Harold Adamson, the Metro police force's deputy chief, was called before the Toronto buildings and development committee. Asked to enforce the existing anti-litter bylaw, Adamson responded that the police were powerless unless the offender cooperated – an unlikely event.³²³ Furthermore, when Pollution Probe attempted to bring its first case to court in September 1969, it was rejected by a Justice of the Peace. Despite these setbacks, the increased attention devoted to the issue enabled Pollution Probe to enter a working relationship with the Department of Transport in reforming the relevant legislation and the Department of Highways on "experimental approaches to the litter clean-up problem."³²⁴

Emblematic of the highway litter problem was the increasing use of non-returnable soft drink cans. First introduced to Canadians in the mid-1950s, cans initially failed to gain widespread popularity because they tended to develop a "tinny" flavour. It was only after glass manufacturers introduced the disposable bottle in the 1960s that non-returnables containers began to gain significant market share. Promoted as a convenience

³²¹ "Pollution probers turn on highway litterbugs," *Toronto Star*, 19 August 1969, 2; "Group plans to nab road litterers," *Globe and Mail*, 20 August 1969, 5.

³²² "No place for amateur policemen," *Globe and Mail*, 22 August 1969, 6; "Amateur policemen," *Globe and Mail*, 26 August 1969, 6.

³²³ "Can't enforce litter laws police admit," *Toronto Star*, 26 August 1969, 1.

³²⁴ "Anti-Litter Campaign," *Probe Newsletter* 1:5 (19 September 1969), 3, PPP; Coombs, interview.

item, in 1970 these accounted for thirty-five percent by volume of all soft drinks sold. However, they resulted in twice as much waste as returnables. While this was reason enough for concern, recent announcements that leading soft drink brands Pepsi and Coca-Cola were set to begin marketing their products in non-returnable plastic containers demonstrated that these convenience containers were likely to continue to increase their market share.³²⁵

Pollution Probe issued its first public denunciation of non-returnable containers on 19 August 1969, in conjunction with its Queen's Park press conference. In a separate press release issued that day, the organization made it clear that it held the soft drink industry responsible for “encouraging an unnecessarily wasteful and polluting packaging system by promoting soft drinks in cans and non-returnable bottles.”³²⁶ Noting that each returnable container was used ten times, the press release explained that this made it a more cost-efficient choice for manufacturers and consumers, costing \$1.13 per gross of ten ounce bottles, compared to between \$3.40 and \$4.60 for the equivalent ten ounce non-returnable bottles. As the press release concluded, “When there is an alternative to such a wasteful and costly system, an alternative that would cut the garbage from one industry alone down to 10% of its present rate, surely we should do all possible to see that the alternative is followed.”³²⁷ However, as would become apparent, the driving force behind the growth of non-returnable soft drink containers was the retailers. Returnable containers required retailers to provide storage space, as well as additional

³²⁵ Peter Taylor and Clive Attwater, “Probe Report on Soft Drink Containers,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:6 (October 1970), 5, PPP. For more on the rise of single use products see, Louis Blumberg and Robert Gottlieb, *War on Waste: Can America Win Its Battle With Garbage?* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1989), 228-230.

³²⁶ Untitled press release, 19 August 1969, Probe – Misc. Press Releases, F1058 MU7330, AO.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

handling costs, while both of these concerns were negated when they sold non-returnables. This perspective was made abundantly clear in a letter from the president of the Mac's Milk Limited convenience store chain to Pollution Probe: "We have recently made a decision on handling glass in the stores, and due to the very high labour factor involved in returnable bottles, we have had to, unfortunately, discontinue them."³²⁸

The issue of non-returnable soft drink containers faded from the forefront in the ensuing months. However, behind the scenes Pollution Probe began to push the Ontario government for a ban on non-returnable containers.³²⁹ On 20 May 1970 George Kerr, the Minister of Energy and Resources Management announced a forthcoming June meeting with soft drink container manufacturers "to discuss the whole question of non-returnable bottles and the litter problem."³³⁰ As Kerr explained, he hoped to convince manufacturers to voluntarily stop using non-returnables. Likewise, he hoped to convince them on the merits of increasing deposits paid for returnable soft drink containers from the current two cents to five cents on the grounds that it would encourage the public to bring the bottles back to the store.

THE VICKERS AND BENSON CONNECTION

Pollution Probe's burgeoning reputation received an unexpected boost during this period. One of the parties watching with interest was Terry O'Malley, Vice-President and Creative Director at the Vickers and Benson advertising agency. O'Malley grew up in St.

³²⁸ Ken McGowen to J.R. Thomas, 9 June 1970, Soft Drinks Containers – Correspondence, F1058 MU7336, AO; Taylor and Attwater, "Probe Report on Soft Drink Containers," 6-7.

³²⁹ Donald Chant, "A Brief to Prime Minister John P. Robarts," *Probe Newsletter* 2:3 (8 April 1970), 3, PPP; Chant, interview.

³³⁰ "Kerr to press for 5-cent bottle deposits," *Toronto Star*, 21 May 1970, 77.

Catharines, where local industry dumped untreated waste into the Welland Canal. Having previously taken this sort of action for granted, he was heartened by Pollution Probe's efforts to clean up the environment. Crediting the group with raising his environmental consciousness, he recalls that "I thought, 'You know, this is a chance for me to try and do something that I hadn't even thought of before.' I called them up and said anything I could do I would do *pro bono*."³³¹ Pollution Probe was initially skeptical of O'Malley's offer, considering that his agency's clients included major corporations such as Ford, McDonalds, and Gulf Oil.³³² However, after sending a deputation to meet with O'Malley, it was determined that his intentions were genuine. O'Malley consequently developed a slogan for the organization – "Do It" – which highlighted Pollution Probe's belief that the responsibility to address environmental issues rested in each member of the community.³³³ This slogan immediately began to appear in all Pollution Probe documents and correspondence. As Peter Middleton notes, the Vickers and Benson connection "made an impact. It made us look professional"³³⁴ – a significant achievement for an upstart organization with limited funding.

Pollution Probe now had a world-class advertising agency offering its services for free. However, the organization did not have the budget necessary for an ad campaign. This failed to deter Barrett, the inveterate optimist, who began the quest to wrestle some free print space from one of Toronto's prominent newspapers. As Rob Mills recalls, this was one of the moments where Barrett's personality shone through.

³³¹ Terry O'Malley, interview with author, 8 July 2008, conducted by telephone.

³³² A short profile of O'Malley, listing his various clients and awards won, can be found in Sandra Peredo, "They Chose Toronto – The Place To 'Do Their Thing,'" *Maclean's*, October 1968, 28. He would also go on to design the iconic hockey jerseys used by Team Canada in the 1972 Summit Series. *Ibid*.

³³³ O'Malley, interview.

³³⁴ Middleton, interview.

Tony Barrett was such an enthusiast. We headed down to get something from the *Globe and Mail* and they gave us a nasty ‘no.’ We went to *The Star* and they wouldn’t even let us pass the front desk. [laughs] And Tony says, ‘Well hell, we’re down here. Let’s try *The Telegram*.’ [laughs] ... I think I probably would have been the one that said, ‘Jesus, we’ve just been battered like hell, let’s go back and think of another way to do it.’ And Tony’s standing on the corner of ... King and Bay and says, ‘Well shit, its only five blocks to *The Telegram*. Let’s try that.’³³⁵

Barrett and Mills talked their way into a personal hearing with John Bassett, *The Telegram*’s owner-publisher, and convinced him to donate full-page advertising space to the fledging organization.³³⁶ At first glance, Bassett and Pollution Probe appeared to be unlikely bedfellows. A prominent Tory, the businessman did not tend to sympathize with student activists. However, as Maggie Siggins explains in her biography of Bassett, *The Telegram* was on its last legs and struggling to find new niches within the Toronto newspaper market. As such, it is likely that Bassett saw connecting with Pollution Probe as a way to appeal to an emerging audience, the environmentally conscious.³³⁷ Pollution Probe’s first full-page ad ran on 29 September 1969. Under the heading “How would you like a glass of Don River water?” the ad featured a black and white photo of a glass containing the river’s sludge. Accompanied by a description of the river’s contents, an appeal for the public to raise their concerns with their political representatives, and an address to direct financial donations, the slickly produced ad was also the first to feature Pollution Probe’s new “Do It” slogan. The advertisements would continue on a regular basis until *The Telegram* closed shop in October 1971.³³⁸

³³⁵ Mills, interview.

³³⁶ Ibid.; Elton, “Green Power.”

³³⁷ Maggie Siggins, *Bassett* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1979), 173.

³³⁸ For more information on *The Telegram*’s closing see Jock Carroll, *The Death of the Toronto Telegram & Other Newspaper Stories* (Richmond Hill, ON: Simon and Schuster of Canada, 1971); Siggins, *Bassett*, 151-188. Pollution Probe wrote of *The Telegram*’s closing in its newsletter. As was noted: “Pollution Probe laments the loss of this most generous friend. From the very beginning the Telegram through John Bassett

THE FUNERAL FOR THE DON RIVER

The Don River would also figure prominently in Pollution Probe's next major campaign. A prominent figure in the Toronto landscape, the Don served as a major waste sink for the rapidly industrializing city. With human sewage-induced bacteria levels recorded as high as 61 million per 100 milliliters of test water – exponentially higher than the safe limit of 2,400 – the river that ran through the heart of Canada's largest city posed a health hazard to the residents.³³⁹ Although the general population was largely resigned to the fact, the members of Pollution Probe were not content to let the issue slide. Recent events in the United States had suggested that the public's attitude towards the health of its waterways was beginning to change. A June fire on the Cuyahoga River garnered national attention, in large part due to coverage by *Time*. The ensuing calls for a cleanup of the industrial sinkhole far exceeded those surrounding the river's previous fires, which dated back to the nineteenth century. Likewise, the summer saw the maiden voyage of the *Sloop Clearwater*, a vessel designed to draw public attention to the efforts underway to revive the Hudson River ecosystem.³⁴⁰ In order to draw attention to the Don, as well as the

lent its voice and support to the environmental concerns that Probe fought for in Toronto, Ontario and Canada as a whole. For example, the many environmental ads so generously created for Pollution Probe by Vickers and Benson were published free of charge by the Toronto Telegram. This often meant that matters of urgent public concern were drawn to the attention of thousands of concerned citizens The other papers certainly have contributed in terms of news coverage and financial donations to Probe's work, but the Telegram's contribution certainly deserves special mention for the consistent generosity and concern it manifested in the public interest." "THE TORONTO TELEGRAM IS DEAD," *Probe Newsletter* 3:5 (November 1971), 6, PPP.

³³⁹ Thomas Claridge, "Pollution Probe mourns for beloved, dead Don," *Globe and Mail*, 17 November 1969, 1.

³⁴⁰ See Allan M. Winkler, "Sailing Down My Golden River," chap. 6 in *'To Everything There Is A Season': Pete Seeger and the Power of Song* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 137, 176; David Stradling and Richard Stradling, "Perceptions of the Burning River: Deindustrialization and Cleveland's Cuyahoga River," *Environmental History* 13:3 (2008): 515-535; Tom Lewis, *The Hudson: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005), 269-270. Water issues were

fragility of water ecosystems elsewhere, Pollution Probe decided to hold a mock funeral for the river.³⁴¹

Held on Sunday, 16 November, the Don River Funeral began at 1:00 PM with a hundred car procession, complete with a hearse, traversing from the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall to the Prince Edward Viaduct. Represented by a black makeshift casket, the Don was then carried to the riverbank, where it received a forty minute funeral ceremony presided over by a campus chaplain. Attended by an estimated two hundred "mourners," those gathered listened to descriptions of the river's past grandeur read by Pollution Probe member Meredith Ware in full period costume. The entry from the diary of Elizabeth Simcoe, wife of Upper Canada's first lieutenant governor, was particularly poignant, as it highlighted the river's beauty and its ready supply of fresh salmon. The funeral featured costumed individuals playing the roles of weeping mourners, as well as Sir Simon Greed, a wealthy industrialist played by a top hat and tailcoat clad Barrett who derided those in attendance, extolling the virtue of development and minimizing the significance of pollution. At the end of his speech, Barrett was pined by John Coombs, to the crowd's applause. In a final, unintentionally ironic gesture, the funeral ended with the tossing of a wreath into the river.³⁴²

also a key component in the development of the environmental movement in Vancouver, British Columbia. This is addressed in Keeling, "Sink or Swim," 69-101.

³⁴¹ The reason for this approach was explained as follows: "Pollution is a doom and gloom topic, particularly for those of us who fight it every day. We all needed a lift, a new, a unique, a lighthearted, a refreshing, an enjoyable and yet purposeful approach to the problem. We chose farce; therefore, we exaggerated, therefore, we sang, we wept, we threw pies, therefore, we had a hell of a lot of fun and made our point." "ON FUNERAL'S [*sic*] AND THE LIKE," *Probe Newsletter* 2:1 (January 1970), 5, PPP. See also, "Don River dead," *The Varsity*, 12 November 1969, 10; Claridge, "Pollution Probe mourns for beloved, dead Don," *Globe and Mail*, 17 November 1969, 1.

³⁴² Thomas Claridge, "Pollution Probe mourns for beloved, dead Don," *Globe and Mail*, 17 November 1969, 1; "Don River dead," *The Varsity*, 12 November 1969, 10; "Mock rites mourn death of Don River killed by pollution," *Toronto Star*, 17 November 1969, 21; Mills, interview; Coombs, interview; Meredith Ware, interview with author, 2 December 2008, conducted by telephone.

The theatrical nature of the Don River Funeral is reminiscent of the guerrilla theatre common among contemporary activist groups. The art form emerged in 1965 from the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Using public areas as performance venues, the troupe aimed, in the words of founding director Ronnie Davis, to “teach, direct towards change, [and] be an example of change.”³⁴³ Utilizing humour, particularly satire, in order to parlay the intended message, guerrilla theatre became most commonly associated with the Youth International Party, or “Yippies,” a United States-based organization that gained considerable notoriety for its protests at the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. Pollution Probe's adoption of these tactics in the Don River Funeral proved successful in garnering media attention, including front-page coverage in the *Globe and Mail*, national television coverage on W5 and the *CTV National News*, as well as spots in the local CBC and CTV television news, the *Toronto Star*, and *The Telegram*.³⁴⁴ “I was on the cover of pretty much every newspaper across the country,” recalls Ware. “I have an aunt in Vancouver and she phoned my dad and said 'Meredith's on the cover of the Vancouver Sun!'” [laughs]³⁴⁵ It appears that this media convergence renewed interest in the state of the Don River. While the river became an area of interest for school field trips, it also entered the political arena in August 1970 following a riverbank tour by federal Progressive Conservative leader Robert Stanfield.³⁴⁶

³⁴³ Quoted in Michael William Doyle, “Staging the Revolution: Guerrilla Theatre as a Countercultural Practice, 1965-1985,” in *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s*, ed. Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (New York: Routledge, 2002), 74.

³⁴⁴ “On the Death of the Don,” *Probe Newsletter*, 1:7 (December 1969), 2, PPP.

³⁴⁵ Ware, interview.

³⁴⁶ As Stanfield remarked to the gathered media, “It’s a bigger mess than I expected.” “Stanfield sees Don River, says ‘It’s a mess,’” *Toronto Star*, 14 August 1970, 1. The benefit of school trips to the river, principal C.H. Carter explained, is that it helped “students to relate what they’re learning in school to the realities of life.” “150 skip classes, study pollution,” *Toronto Star*, 9 April 1970, 63.

THE CITIZENS' INQUIRY INTO AIR POLLUTION

During this period, attention also turned towards Ontario Hydro. In September 1969 the Crown corporation announced plans to replace the existing smokestacks at Toronto's Richard L. Hearn Generating Station with a 700 foot "superstack." The coal-burning Hearn, which had a generating capacity of 1.2 million kilowatts, emitted 69,000 tons of sulphur dioxide in 1966, making it, in the words of *Telegram* reporter Mack Laing, "the worst single air polluter in the city."³⁴⁷ The \$9 million superstack, recommended in a 1968 report commissioned from Stone & Webster, was designed to help alleviate the city's smog problem, particularly in the east-end, by dispersing the effluent over a greater distance. As Ontario Hydro chairman George Gathercole explained before Toronto's Buildings and Development Committee on 22 September, "A higher stack reduces pollution by achieving greater dispersal or dilution."³⁴⁸ According to Gathercole, sulphur dioxide concentrations would be reduced by 90 percent in the city's downtown, and yet the effluent would not harm those living farther downwind as it "is measurably weakened and changed by the combined influences of weather and dilution."³⁴⁹ While Gathercole admitted that converting the station to natural gas would eliminate the sulphur dioxide pollution completely, he claimed Ontario Hydro was unable to secure a steady supply of the fuel.³⁵⁰

Opposition to the superstack plan emerged immediately. Numerous letters to the editor appeared in the city's newspapers, suggesting that Ontario Hydro would better

³⁴⁷ Mack Laing, "Power plant's evil waste," *Toronto Telegram*, 3 November 1967, 10.

³⁴⁸ Quoted in "City told giant stack will help cut pollution," *Globe and Mail*, 23 September 1969, 10. See also, "Metro, Hydro agree to replace smokestacks," *Toronto Star*, 19 August 1969, 2; Frances Russell, "Hydro will build 7000-foot stack at Hearn plant," *Globe and Mail*, 19 August 1969, 1.

³⁴⁹ "City told giant stack will help cut pollution," 10.

³⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

serve the public by investing in pollution-reducing technology. As Thomas Beckett, chairman of the Hamilton and Region Conservation Authority, wrote to the *Globe and Mail*, “It is most unfortunate that Ontario Hydro ... has now adopted the philosophy that the solution to pollution is dilution This will bring some relief to the individuals in the neighborhood of the plant. It will not reduce the total pollutants added to our atmosphere.”³⁵¹ On 24 September, Dr. Ross Hall, chairman of the McMaster Department of Biochemistry and one of the first to publicly condemn Ontario Hydro's plans,³⁵² wrote Chant “to inquire whether you know if anyone plans to publicly raise the questions of human health and well-being related to the proposal.”³⁵³ Chant replied that “This was very timely because ... Pollution Probe is looking around for new projects.”³⁵⁴

Pollution Probe kicked-off its campaign in October with two advertisements in *The Telegram*, attacking industrial air pollution. On 22 October 1969 it issued a press release that raised numerous concerns with the proposal. After pointing out that sulphur dioxide kills the green plants necessary for producing oxygen, the press release emphasized that the “fact that the stack is higher does not get rid of the sulphur.” Pollution Probe also sought clarification from Gathercole's earlier statement that an adequate natural gas supply could not be secured, quoting Oakah Jones, the president of The Consumers' Gas Company, that “We can supply the gas if they'll tell us how long the plant is going to be in operation.” The press release also challenged Gathercole's statement that a technology developed by the Monsanto Company enabling users to

³⁵¹ Thomas A. Beckett, “Air pollution,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 August 1969, 6.

³⁵² Ross H. Hall, “Air pollution,” *Globe and Mail*, 25 August 1969, 6.

³⁵³ Ross H. Hall to D.A. Chant, 24 September 1969, Hearn Generating Station Hydro – Inquiry 1970, F1058 MU7339, AO.

³⁵⁴ D.A. Chant to R.H. Hall, 31 September 1969, Hearn Generating Station Hydro – Inquiry 1970, F1058 MU7339, AO.

capture and re-sell sulphur dioxide was incapable of working at a generating station as large as Hearn. According to a quote attributed to Dick Barnard, a Monsanto Company employee, “We gave Ontario Hydro a price on installing our system on one boiler, and haven't received a reply.” The press release ended with a request for a copy of the 1968 Stone & Webster study. Pointing out that it was funded by \$150,000 in taxpayers' funds, they noted, “The stack will not be private, and neither should the report be.”³⁵⁵

Five days later, Pollution Probe member Paul Tomlinson, along with GASP's Tony O'Donohue, and Drs. Ross Hall, Colin Locke, and J. Hodgins of McMaster University, attended a meeting with George Kerr and representatives from Ontario Hydro. On the day of the meeting Pollution Probe ran its first advertisement to take direct aim at Ontario Hydro. Underneath a heading that read, “The Ontario Hydro is getting ready to give it to you from great heights,” it featured an ominous plume of black smoke emerging from a smokestack high above a crowd of onlookers. The advertisement proceeded to highlight the health and environmental problems associated with sulphur dioxide, the futility of simply spreading the Hearn Generating Station's effluent over a greater distance, and the evident contradiction of Gathercole's statement that sufficient natural gas supplies could not be secured. The advertisement ended by encouraging citizens to write to Kerr to “register your feelings with him while you're still healthy enough to do something about it.”³⁵⁶ Following the meeting O'Donohue announced plans for a public inquiry into the Ontario Hydro superstack, co-sponsored by GASP and Pollution Probe.

³⁵⁵ Untitled press release, 22 October 1969, Hearn Gen. Station Hydro-Inquiry, F1058 MU7339, AO.

³⁵⁶ “The Ontario Hydro is getting ready to give it to you from great heights,” Toronto *Telegram*, 27 October 1969, 54. This advertisement ran three days earlier in *The Varsity*.

Modeled after the dead duck inquiry of July 1969, the organizers were promised full cooperation by Kerr and officials at Ontario Hydro.³⁵⁷

The Citizens' Inquiry into Air Pollution was held in New City Hall, 23-24 February 1970.³⁵⁸ The first day, which explored the general topics of air pollution in Toronto, featured headline-grabbing testimony from Dr. Joseph McKenna, a general surgeon at York-Finch Hospital. As he explained, there was “irrefutable medical evidence that the air pollution of our atmosphere with extraneous material is responsible for more than 50 per cent of all diseases seen in man.” Furthermore, he blamed air pollution for a 700 percent increase in “respiratory cripples” in the city over the previous fifteen years.³⁵⁹ The second day focused upon the plan to build the 700 foot stack at the Hearn Generating Station. Gathercole presented a brief in which he blamed those opposed to the project with “depriving people of a definite improvement in air quality in Toronto and surrounding areas.”³⁶⁰ While he admitted that the superstack was only the beginning of necessary improvements to be made, Gathercole maintained his argument that the sulphur dioxide would dilute in the atmosphere, therefore eliminating a problem for the city's downtown and the surrounding areas. This testimony was sharply contradicted by Professor Benjamin Linsky of the University of West Virginia. Appearing via telephone, Linsky, a former pollution controller for Detroit and San Francisco, argued that without

³⁵⁷ “Toronto group plans probe of 700-foot Hydro stack,” *Toronto Star*, 27 October 1969, 34.

³⁵⁸ The commissioners for this inquiry were Dr. A.D. Allen, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science at the University of Toronto, Dr. William F. Graydon, Associate Dean of the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Toronto, Dr. Brian Dixon, Professor of Business Administration at York University, William Grierson, a partner in the Brook, Carruthers, Grierson, Shaw Architects firm, and Tiny Bennett, Outdoors Editor at the *Toronto Telegram*. “ENQUIRY INTO AIR POLLUTION,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:2 (31 March 1970), 7, PPP.

³⁵⁹ “Surgeon links air pollution to rise in 'respiratory cripples,’” *Toronto Star*, 23 February 1970, 1.

³⁶⁰ “Remarks by George Gathercole, Chairman, Ontario Hydro, to the Inquiry Into Air Pollution,” *Probe vs Ont. Hydro* 1973, 24 February 1970, 9, F1057 MU7352, AO.

the installation of scrubbers, the superstack would merely serve as a “garden nozzle to spray” the sulphur dioxide further afield.³⁶¹ The ensuing commissioners' report recommended the superstack be built on the condition that Ontario government ban the use of fuels containing a sulphur content in excess of one percent.³⁶² The commissioners also recommended that the province alter its standards for sulphur dioxide to reflect the more stringent legislation in the United States, and to significantly increase research into air pollution.³⁶³

On 29 June 1970 Gathercole announced plans to convert the Hearn Generating Station to natural gas by year's end. The move, which would cost \$4,000,000 in renovations and an increase in rates, was made after signing a ten-year contract with The Consumers' Gas Company. The environmentalists' campaign was fundamental to this shift, as Gathercole informed the media that “Anti-pollution measures are costly but our customers have indicated to us that they are prepared to pay for them.”³⁶⁴

While this served as a hard-fought, high profile victory, the battle against Ontario Hydro had broader implications for Pollution Probe. As its members explored the local issue, they came to realize that it was rooted in the growth ethos that dominated economic planning. As Brian Kelly explained, “At the time Ontario Hydro banked their whole business plan on a seven percent annual growth in electricity consumption in Ontario. That caused us to say, 'Well, what about conservation? What about efficiency? What about alternative forms of generation?' And that got us into national energy policy

³⁶¹ “Hydro says 700-ft. stack best way to clean air,” *Toronto Star*, 24 February 1970, 9.

³⁶² “Commission on Air Pollution in Metropolitan Toronto,” 23-24 February 1970, Hearn Generating Station Hydro – Inquiry 1970, F1058 MU7339, AO.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁴ “Hearn to switch to gas, see rise in Hydro rates,” *Globe and Mail*, 30 June 1970, 5. See also, “Hydro switching plants to gas to cut pollution,” *Toronto Star*, 29 June 1970, 1; “Good news for us all,” *Toronto Star*, 30 June 1970, 6.

issues.”³⁶⁵ This realization prompted further consideration of Canadian energy policy, which would develop into one of Pollution Probe's central issues during the 1970s.

BREAKING THE PHOSPHATE IMPASSE

Pollution Probe further solidified its national profile when it weighed in on the already brewing debate concerning phosphate content in laundry detergents.³⁶⁶ During the first half of the 1960s Canada and the United States dealt with the problem of “excessive foaming” in the Great Lakes, a problem that was resolved when industry switched to a biodegradable formula.³⁶⁷ No sooner was this resolved than concern shifted to the massive algal blooms found on lakes, which were the product of cultural eutrophication.³⁶⁸ In December 1965 the International Joint Commission [IJC], an intergovernmental body assigned with resolving issues in Canadian-United States boundary waters, urged the respective governments to immediately reduce the amount of phosphate discharged into the waterways. However, the IJC's recommendations were non-binding, and little progress was made on the issue. A follow-up report was issued by the IJC in October 1969, recommending the lowering of phosphate levels in detergents. This was fiercely opposed by the detergent industry, which countered that the best solution would be to improve sewage treatment facilities.³⁶⁹

³⁶⁵ Kelly, interview.

³⁶⁶ William McGucken, *Biodegradable: Detergents and the Environment* (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1991) explores the history of synthetic detergents and the associated environmental problems in the United States, and to a lesser extent, Great Britain.

³⁶⁷ Read, “Let us heed the voice of youth,” 230.

³⁶⁸ Cultural eutrophication is a human-initiated “increase in nutrients, in biological activity (productivity), and in sediments and organic matter from the watershed that fill the water basin.” Wayne W. Carmichael, “Toxic Microcystis and the Environment,” in Mariyo F. Watanabe et al., eds., *Toxic Microcystis* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 1996), 1.

³⁶⁹ Read, “Let us heed the voice of youth,” 242, 245-247.

The lack of progress did not go unnoticed by the members of Pollution Probe. Rather than waiting for industry and the various levels of government to come to an agreement, the organization decided it would take it upon itself to break the deadlock. A group of students, led by Brian Kelly, spent the Christmas 1969 holidays holed up in Dr. Phil Jones' laboratory at the University of Toronto, analyzing the phosphate content of laundry detergents. The results were verified with industry and government scientists³⁷⁰ and released during a twelve minute segment on CBC television's "Weekend" on 8 February 1970. The list, read by Kelly and Middleton, revealed a vast range in phosphate levels, from a high of 52.5 percent of the total content in Amway Tri-zyme, to a low of 10.5 percent in Wisk. When asked for recommendations on how consumers should proceed, Middleton urged them to use the low phosphate options, noting that "The figures are out now – the consumer can make an intelligent choice."³⁷¹ The television appearance was an unnerving experience for Middleton. "Sunday night, on national tv. Live! For the first time I was on tv that was pretty scary. They had to give me gum, [laughs] trying to calm me down."³⁷² Nonetheless, Pollution Probe's television appearance had an immediate impact on the viewing public. By the end of March 1970 over 7,000 requests for copies poured into their mailroom; likewise, it was reprinted in

³⁷⁰ Although all the major manufacturers were contacted, only Lever Brothers responded to Pollution Probe's request for data concerning phosphate content in its products. "Dishing the dirt on phosphates," CBC Digital Archives, originally broadcast on *Weekend*, 8 February 1970, accessed 9 July 2010, <http://archives.cbc.ca/environment/pollution/topics/1390/>. Government scientists had conducted research into the phosphate levels of detergents, but were not permitted to release this information. However, they did provide "quiet encouragement" to Pollution Probe during its investigation, and verified the student organization's results. Kelly, interview. This cooperation casts a different light upon the relationship than that provided by Jennifer Read, who suggests Pollution Probe and the civil servants were antagonistic. *Ibid.*, 250.

³⁷¹ "Dishing the dirt on phosphates." The list was also broadly distributed to media across Canada. "Phosphate Pollution and Detergents, Including Phosphate Analyses," 9 February 1970, Phosphates 1970, F1058 MU7338, AO.

³⁷² Middleton, interview.

numerous magazines and newsletters. Consumer demand for this information proved so high that copies of the list were prominently displayed in Loblaws, Dominion, and Steinberg's grocery stores.³⁷³

On 9 February 1970 – the day after Pollution Probe released its list – the Ontario Department of Energy and Resources Management announced it would reduce phosphate levels over five years. Pollution Probe believed this phase out was too slow, and in April presented Premier Robarts with a brief calling for a maximum phosphate content of 0.5 percent by January 1972.³⁷⁴ Shortly thereafter the provincial and federal governments made an agreement to incorporate phosphate limits into the Canada Water Act, which would bring the legal limit down to five percent by the end of 1972.³⁷⁵ Although the federal government was already in the process of acting upon the IJC's recommendations, and Ontario was considering following suit, Pollution Probe, argues historian Jennifer Read, “helped to concentrate public concern and kept the issue before the government while the parliamentary committee considered the legislation.”³⁷⁶ Pollution Probe's greatest impact, however, was among consumers. Sales of high phosphate detergents began to erode as low phosphate options gained in popularity.³⁷⁷ This was brought to life in the April 1970 edition of *Maclean's*, which documented the list's impact on West Hill, Ontario housewife Rita Boston. Not only did Boston switch from Tri-zyme to a less harmful detergent, but she also convinced her Amway saleslady to do likewise.³⁷⁸

³⁷³ “Detergents,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:2 (31 March 1970), 3-6, PPP.

³⁷⁴ This widely-reprinted document can be found in “A BRIEF TO PRIME MINISTER JOHN P. ROBARTS,” 3-5.

³⁷⁵ Read, “Let us heed the voice of youth,” 249.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁸ “How Mrs. Boston burst a great detergent bubble,” *Maclean's*, April 1970, 3.

POLLUTION PROBE'S RISING PROFILE

A telling sign of Pollution Probe's rising status can be gleaned from the pages of the *Globe and Mail*. In November 1969 provincial Liberal leader Robert Nixon incorporated Pollution Probe into a speech delivered to a gathering of the Ontario Student Liberals, stating that every campus across the province should have a branch of the organization.³⁷⁹

While Pollution Probe was quick to issue a press release emphasizing that they were politically non-partisan,³⁸⁰ it would prove to be just the first instance of politicians attaching themselves to the fast-rising organization. On 3 March 1970 the newspaper featured a cover story about a speech delivered by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau at a Liberal Party fundraiser at the Royal York Hotel. The accompanying photograph features Trudeau examining one of Pollution Probe's "Do It" buttons, which he had just been handed. Apparently he liked the button. As was noted, "After the dinner, the Prime Minister danced to the music of Ellis McClintock and the flashes of photographers. He wore a pink carnation and a Do It button."³⁸¹ Two months later, Opposition leader Robert Stanfield was in Toronto, drumming up support in a city that had elected no Tories in the previous election. It was noted that while touring environmentally-themed displays in Nathan Phillips Square, he was "Sporting a pollution fighter's Do It button."³⁸²

³⁷⁹ "Students exhorted to fight pollution," *Globe and Mail*, 1 November 1969, 5.

³⁸⁰ "A Statement of Sorts," nd, Press release, PPP.

³⁸¹ Michael Enright, "PM was warmer this year," *Globe and Mail*, 5 March 1970, 1. As Dr. Ralph Brinkhurst explained, "We didn't get along with Trudeau as [much as] the rest of them What he needed was a Gladstone to his Disraeli. [*laughs*] So he got away with being sort of arrogant and smart-assed at times. One perfect example: he looked at the same young man [Tony Barrett] we'd been talking about, and he was wearing one of Pollution Probe's 'Do It' buttons And there was this Trudeau, looked very archedly at this young man, and sort of cocked an eyebrow and said, 'Oh, what does that mean?' with obvious innuendo. And the guy instantly reported 'It means think clean, sir.' [*laughs*] We were dealing with some smart kids It really took him aback." Whether this was the same day covered in the *Globe and Mail* article is unclear. Brinkhurst, interview.

³⁸² David Crane, "Tory talks to protesters," *Globe and Mail*, 11 May 1970, 5.

From the outset, Pollution Probe established educating the general public on environmental issues as one of its central concerns. This resulted in the creation of a program that saw it send speakers to schools throughout Metro Toronto. The presentations, which emphasized basic concepts such as ecology, the benefits of a healthy environment, and tips for living an environmentally-friendly lifestyle, were seen as a vital component in empowering the public to make educated decisions. Beginning with just two speakers in June 1969, demand increased steadily as Pollution Probe's community profile increased, and by March 1970 speakers' co-ordinator Stanley Zlotkin made an appeal to members, noting that an influx of speakers would be necessary to accommodate bookings for the duration of the school year.³⁸³

While Pollution Probe proved itself adept at garnering the attention of media, governments, and corporations, important changes were occurring behind the scenes. From the outset, Tony Barrett, the organization's self-proclaimed "eco-financier," had taken it upon himself to handle its books. In the September 1969 edition of the Pollution Probe newsletter, he laid out the organization's first budget, covering the ensuing twelve months, which amounted to \$54,750.³⁸⁴ Two months later he released a revised budget, covering from 1 October 1969 to 31 July 1970, for \$79,600.³⁸⁵ These financial targets demonstrated an increase in ambition for the group which, at the time of the second budget, had raised only \$7,900, against \$4,000 in total expenses.³⁸⁶ Most of Pollution Probe's early revenue came from the sale of pins and t-shirts bearing its logo, and from

³⁸³ One of the initial speakers was William Rees, who went on to originate the concept of the ecological footprint. Rob Mills, "Letter from the President," *Probe Newsletter* 1:2 (1 April 1969), 5, PPP; "Schools," *Probe Newsletter* 1:3 (4 June 1969), 2, PPP; Stanley Zlotkin, "Public Education," *Probe Newsletter* 2:2 (31 March 1970), 10, PPP; Zlotkin, interview.

³⁸⁴ Tony Barrett, "Financial Campaign," *Probe Newsletter* 1:5 (19 September 1969), 4, PPP.

³⁸⁵ "Breadman's Report," *Probe Newsletter* 1:7 (December 1969), 6, PPP.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

memberships. However, the profit margin here was minimal. In fact, in many cases memberships were money losers, as they originally were sold for \$2.00, less than the cost of mail-outs. The price of membership was hiked to \$3.00, and \$5.00 for non-students, effective August 1970.³⁸⁷

The growth in Pollution Probe's planned expenditures coincided with the decision to make the group a full-time endeavour. Whereas the group had previously survived entirely on the energies of its student volunteers, including some who abandoned their academic obligations to focus on Pollution Probe's operations, it was now felt that paid staff was necessary to facilitate continued growth. Four full-time coordinators were hired: Barrett, Brian Kelly, Paul Tomlinson, and Peter Middleton. According to Terry O'Malley, these four employees formed a sort of aggregate persona for Pollution Probe. "As one they were formidable," he recalls. "The intellectual [Tomlinson], the 'out front' guy in Tony [Barrett], the science guy in Brian [Kelly], and Peter [Middleton], the organizer."³⁸⁸ Each was budgeted to earn \$6,000 per year, although a lack of cash flow meant they were typically paid just \$250 per month.³⁸⁹ While the pay was minimal, the fact that these four were being paid makes them the first professional environmental activists in Toronto – and quite possibly Canada. More important than the actual money paid, however, is the fact that staff was hired. This, in combination with Barrett's recent budgets, marked Pollution Probe's transition from an issue-oriented group into a fledgling lobby group.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁷ "Membership," *Probe Newsletter* 1:3 (4 June 1969), 5, PPP; Tony Barrett, "Membership Fees," *Probe Newsletter* 2:3 (8 August 1970), 2, PPP; Zena Cherry, "FOE focusses [sic] on pollution problems," *Globe and Mail*, 16 April 1970, W2.

³⁸⁸ O'Malley, interview.

³⁸⁹ As Barrett noted in the *Probe Newsletter*, plans were made for staff to receive pay retroactive to the full amount once adequate funding was secured. "All's Well That's Financed Well," *Probe Newsletter* 2:1 (January 1970), 1, PPP.

³⁹⁰ Pross, "Canadian Pressure Groups," in Richardson, *Pressure Groups*, 151.

Of the initial hires, Middleton, at twenty-five, was the oldest. He was also the most recent to join the group. A native of Etobicoke, “the suburban desert,” he was the son of a bank manager. An avid Boy Scout in his younger days, and an experienced camper whose grandfather owned property along the Bruce Peninsula, he spent five summers working at Kilcoo Camp near Minden, Ontario, the first three leading its nature lore program and the last two as executive director. Valedictorian of his high school’s graduating class, Middleton went on to study French at Victoria University in the University of Toronto, where he kept busy volunteering with the music club and heading the student council. “I was on the nerdy side,” he recalls of his extracurricular activities.³⁹¹ Upon graduating Middleton lived in Paris from 1966-68, which resulted in a firsthand experience with the mass revolt in French society that ultimately led to the dissolution of parliament. The use of street theatre and the media by protesters would have a lasting impact on him. In September 1969 he returned to the University of Toronto in order to pursue doctoral studies in French. The following month, after watching Larry Gosnell’s third pollution special on the CBC, *Our Dying Waters*, he was moved to visit the Pollution Probe office, where he was greeted by the ever-present Tony Barrett. As Middleton recalls, “I made the mistake, so to speak, to ask ‘Is there anything I can do to help?’” Subsisting on his salary as a don at the Victoria College residence, in short order, his PhD studies were put on the back burner in favour of work at Pollution Probe, where his extensive leadership skills were put to good use.³⁹²

With ambitions of growing the organization, Pollution Probe required money. As such, it set its sights on the Toronto business community. Pollution Probe's efforts to

³⁹¹ Middleton, interview.

³⁹² Ibid.

extend its support into the business community was both a natural progression and a deliberate policy. Initially, support came from within the inner circle of its membership. Pollution Probe's first major corporate donation came in autumn 1969 from the North American Life Assurance Company [NALACO].³⁹³ David Pretty, the vice-president of finance at NALACO, had been Rob Mills' Scoutmaster in Lawrence Park. As Mills recalls, "It was a natural fit because I knew the guy really well. I mean, it wasn't a big deal getting into his office He was a fabulous Scoutmaster. He took our group on canoe trips and [to] Temagami, and other places. He was a bit of a naturalist So I think he just seemed like a totally logical person. I had no doubt he would support it."³⁹⁴ Another important contact was Gage Love, president of W.J. Gage Ltd., and former chairman of the Toronto Board of Trade. His son, Peter, and daughter-in-law Ann, were among Pollution Probe's early members. According to Peter, "He certainly wasn't an environmentalist to start with, but he became very interested in it. And as it turns out, two of my brothers, and two of my sisters-in-law were also [eventually] staff at Pollution Probe. So he was pretty well surrounded at the dining room table."³⁹⁵ These contacts were used to leverage additional credibility for the group via its rechristened Board of Advisors, as well as with invaluable advice on such matters as fund raising. Some members of the business community took it upon themselves to publicize Pollution Probe and its work among their peers. W.B. Harris, president of the investment banking firm

³⁹³ *The Continent* [NALACO newsletter], 5, November 1970, Probe – Educational – Public Meetings 1970, F1058 MU7342, AO.

³⁹⁴ Mills, interview. An example of Pretty's service to Pollution Probe can be seen in his efforts to cajole fellow members of the business community to support Pollution Probe. In the summer of 1974, with a major Pollution Probe fundraising effort underway, Pretty wrote a supporting letter to Mr. Deane Nesbitt of Nesbitt, Thomson and Company, Canada's largest stock brokerage. Sanford Osler to J.J. Deutsch, 12 June 1974, NEB – Interprov. Pipeline Hearings, F1057 MU7348, AO.

³⁹⁵ Peter Love, interview with author, 10 March 2008, Toronto, ON.

Harris & Partners Limited, was so taken with their “dynamic personalities and desire to undertake responsible research” that he organized a dinner at Hart House to introduce others to the activities.³⁹⁶ Likewise, Pollution Probe organized a two day conference aimed at further incorporating this sector. As Mills wrote in a letter soliciting attendance, “We believe the business community has not been able to meet as a group to obtain a wide-ranging analysis of the cost and consequences of environmental pollution. Pollution Probe considers it essential to provide you with such an opportunity.”³⁹⁷ Subsequently, the 27 May session was designed “to enable you to come to a clear understanding of the ecological concepts involved in environmental contamination and man's place in the ecosystem,” while the 3 June session, which featured the Honourable George Kerr among its speakers, aimed to clarify “Government positions on various pollution issues” and to “provide Business and Government with an opportunity to ascertain the responsibilities which lie ahead in the abatement of pollution.”³⁹⁸ Featuring an opening address by Bissell, whose support was sought “to assure the audience that our intent is honourable and that we are not just a radical student movement,”³⁹⁹ the event was endorsed by such notables as Gage Love; Dean J. Gilles, Head of the York University School of Business of Administration; J.B. Vaughan, President of Vickers and Benson Ltd.; F.S. Eaton, President of Eaton's of Canada Co. Ltd.; J.K. Macdonald, Chairman of the Board at Confederation Life Association; and Raymond Moriyama, the architect responsible for

³⁹⁶ W.B. Harris to Claude Bissell, 7 January 1970, Board of Governors, A77-0019/035, UTA.

³⁹⁷ Rob Mills, letter to supporters, 24 April 1970, Zoology, A77-0019/024, UTA.

³⁹⁸ Rob Mills, letter to supporters, 14 May 1970, Zoology, A77-0019/024, UTA.

³⁹⁹ Peter Love to Claude Bissell, 13 March 1970, Zoology, A77-0019/024, UTA.

the Ontario Science Centre, the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre in Toronto, and the Ottawa Civic Centre.⁴⁰⁰

Pollution Probe was even able to derive support from a company with which it had waged a public battle. In the aftermath of the phosphate campaign, Tony Barrett arranged a meeting for himself and Brian Kelly with John Bowle, the president of Proctor and Gamble's Canadian operations. As Kelly recalls,

We went in and told him about the phosphate thing and he certainly acknowledged the impact that it had on Proctor and Gamble and so forth It kind of appeared that we weren't going to get support from Proctor and Gamble. Towards the end of the meeting he reached into the desk drawer, pulled out an envelope, slid it across the table to Tony, and said, 'Here, go and kick some more corporate ass.' It was a cheque for \$5,000, and that was big money in those days. But that was his expression. Corporately, he didn't want to admit that we really put the pressure on Proctor and Gamble, but privately [*laughs*] he relished the fact that we were, in his terms, 'Kicking corporate ass.'"⁴⁰¹

Pollution Probe's relationship with the business community was ahead of its time. As Mark Dowie points out in *Losing Ground: American Environmentalism at the Close of the Twentieth Century*, ENGOs operating in the United States did not embrace corporate support until the 1980s.⁴⁰² Through the mid-1970s, for example, the venerable Sierra Club derived seventy percent of its revenue from membership dues, the sale of merchandise, and wilderness outings.⁴⁰³ By and large, partnering with business clashed with the notion found within the New Left and counterculture that the root of environmental degradation was corporate greed; as such, financial support from corporations would be tainted money that provided legitimacy to an unworthy source. Pollution Probe's stance was largely influenced by Tony Barrett, who as a result of his

⁴⁰⁰ Rob Mills, letter to supporters, 24 April 1970.

⁴⁰¹ Kelly, interview.

⁴⁰² Dowie, *Losing Ground*, 106-107.

⁴⁰³ Bosso, *Environment, Inc.*, 108.

upbringing viewed the Toronto business establishment as potential allies rather than an automatic enemy. More concerned with the ultimate outcome than the means of achieving it, Barrett was described by his peers as a pragmatic, middle-of-the-road reformer who stood in sharp contrast to the ideologues found elsewhere in the movement. While it would be remiss to suggest that the environmental movement elsewhere was entirely devoid of moneyed interests – in the United States, many ENGOs received initial funding from private foundations, while the nationwide Earth Day celebrations in 1970 were partially funded by corporations⁴⁰⁴ – none of this equals the very open relationship between Pollution Probe and the Toronto business establishment. In short order this would become a model for ENGOs elsewhere in Canada, which would seek the assistance of Pollution Probe in establishing similar relationships.

By April 1970 Pollution Probe had grown into a major presence in the city. The group had 1,500 members. It had four full-time co-ordinators, a secretary, and an office manager based out of the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories.⁴⁰⁵ It was also a magnet for media attention, averaging an appearance once a week in the *Globe and Mail* and twice a week in the *Toronto Star*.⁴⁰⁶ It had made inroads with the local business community, and had found itself connected in the media with leading politicians. Despite the attention devoted to Pollution Probe's activities, however, it continued to emphasize the message that everybody had the ability to do good work on behalf of the environment. It could begin as simply as being conscientious of the amount of waste being generated,

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid., 36-39; Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 154. In Philadelphia, for example, donations came from the Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Philadelphia Gas Works, the latter of which provided a \$10,000 grant to local organizers. "Environmental pollution 'crusade du jour,'" *American Gas Association Monthly*, July-August 1970, 33; Katherine Gregor, "The First Earth Day, 1970," *Austin Chronicle*, 23 April 2010, <http://www.austinchronicle.com/gyrobase/Issue/story?oid=oid:1018735>.

⁴⁰⁵ Cherry, "FOE focusses [*sic*] on pollution problems," W2.

⁴⁰⁶ This is based on a calculation of appearances between 30 May 1969 and 31 March 1970.

or by writing a letter to a politician, asking for anti-pollution regulations. This message of personal agency also led Pollution Probe to encourage those living outside of Toronto to develop their own, independently operated affiliates. It was felt that having a network of environmental activist organizations in Ontario and across the country would help spread the heavy workload and strengthen the recognition of the Pollution Probe brand.⁴⁰⁷ A guide for this process, “How to Form Your Own Pollution Probe,” was created and sent out to interested parties. Aside from providing the guide, which included advice on the best ways to start the group, establish its structure, draw public interest to their work, prioritize projects, and procure funding, those at Pollution Probe at the University of Toronto offered to send representatives to towns across the country to help organizers on the ground. The initiative would prove to be a success, as affiliates soon thereafter sprung up across Canada. While the greatest concentration would be located in southern Ontario, where fifty affiliate groups were in place by the end of 1971, they could be found as far west as Winnipeg, Manitoba, and as far east as Moncton, New Brunswick.⁴⁰⁸ These groups varied greatly. While many were relatively minor operations that featured a few keen environmentalists, others, such as Pollution Probe at Carleton University, featured a paid staff and a broad-based agenda combining educational endeavours and political lobbying.⁴⁰⁹ Other affiliates would carve out specific niches for themselves, with the Peterborough group founding *Alternatives*, Canada’s environmental studies journal, in

⁴⁰⁷ See discussion in Brian Kelly, “The Environmental Liaison Conference,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:6 (31 October 1969), 3, PPP; “High School Members,” *Probe Newsletter* 1:7 (December 1969), 1, PPP.

⁴⁰⁸ Pollution Probe Moncton and Winnipeg Pollution Probe were both established in 1970. Brian Land, ed., *Directory of Associations in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 569; Winnipeg Pollution Probe Inc. *Ecospeak* 1971, PPP; Kelly, “How To Form Your Own Pollution Probe Group,” 11.

⁴⁰⁹ “Carleton students' 'Pollution Probe' goes into action,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 10 December 1969, 38.

1971, while the Kitchener-Waterloo group would make a significant contribution to the advancement of recycling in the province.⁴¹⁰

The sheer number of Pollution Probe affiliates that emerged across Canada demonstrates the national prominence the University of Toronto-based ENGO had attained. It also indicates that the country's environmentalists saw the appropriation of the Pollution Probe name as a source of credibility within the broader community. This, however, had a negative side. Whereas Pollution Probe at the University of Toronto worked hard to maintain its credibility, the emergence of the affiliate groups meant that practically anybody could now speak on behalf of Pollution Probe. This failure to maintain a measure of quality control reveals a certain naïveté among those at the University of Toronto group, whose desire to spread the environmental movement led them to overlook the potential harm that could result from uncontrolled growth.

Pollution Probe's attention also turned to cottage country. As was noted, the organization saw the "pollution of our inland waterways and lakes and the ruin of campsites and parklands as a life and death question for both camps and the resort areas in general."⁴¹¹ The organization therefore set forth organizing Summer Project '70, designed to educate campers and cottagers of environmental issues concerning the water and to motivate them to find solutions.⁴¹² Pollution Probe was willing to devote its summer program to cottage country because, as previously noted, summer camping was a formative experience widely enjoyed by its membership. Furthermore, it was reasoned

⁴¹⁰ Robert Paehlke, interview with author, 19 April 2010, conducted by telephone; Eric Hellman, interview with author, 12 January 2010, conducted by telephone.

⁴¹¹ "Summer Project '70: A Proposal from Pollution Probe," 1970, Proposals re Summer 1970, F1058 MU7330, AO.

⁴¹² "Summer Project '70 – A Proposal from Pollution Probe," *Probe Newsletter* 2:2 (31 March 1970), 2, PPP.

that working with the established associations would allow Pollution Probe to reach affluent Ontarians, an important consideration for the ambitious ENGO.⁴¹³

In many respects, Summer Project '70 was the most ambitious event yet undertaken by Pollution Probe. Seven couples (married or dating) were hired and assigned a region.⁴¹⁴ Funds for the project, which cost \$45,000, were accrued from a variety of sources both public and private, including the Ontario Water Resources Commission, the federal Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the National Capital Commission, John Labatt Limited, Loblaw Groceries, the White Owl Foundation, the *Globe and Mail*, the *Toronto Star*, and Coles Ltd.⁴¹⁵ The project also marked the initial collaboration with an affiliate, in this case Pollution Probe Ottawa, which provided one of the teams. It also required the coordination of schedules with the cottage associations and camp owners, as well as with local newspapers and radio stations, whose help was enlisted in publicizing the coming visits.

Having spent May and June preparing, the seven teams hit the road in July. Over the next two months the teams spoke to an estimated 25,000 people. The major environmental hazard was found to be inadequate sewage treatment, particularly among individual cottagers, and a lack of nutrient-removing facilities in the local community sewage plants. While there was discussion of infrastructure developments that could alleviate this problem, the teams also discovered that a significant problem of over-development on the lands in question. Noting that lots as small as seventy-five feet across

⁴¹³ Middleton, interview; Zlotkin, interview; Kelly, interview.

⁴¹⁴ The regions covered were Haliburton, Hastings County, Muskoka, Ottawa, Parry Sound, Simcoe County and Georgian Bay, and West Kawartha.

⁴¹⁵ "Summer Project '70: Final Report," 20 October 1970, 24, PPP; "A note from the eco-financier," *Probe Newsletter* 2:5 (nd), 2, PPP.

were being sold, the teams highlighted the need for individual municipalities to pass retroactive bylaws concerning minimum lot sizes. The Pollution Probe teams also discovered that stores and laundromats in cottage country still favoured high-phosphate detergents, which had been at the centre of the recent eutrophication issue concerning the Great Lakes. Aside from educating local residents about the necessity of addressing these problems, the Pollution Probe team taught cottagers how to test their own water, and encouraged them to establish a system of self-policing. Upon completion of the project in late August a report of the findings was assembled, and the results were distributed to cottage associations, government, and the project sponsors.⁴¹⁶

POPULATION CONTROL AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

One of the more contentious aspects of first wave environmentalism that Pollution Probe struggled with was the neo-Malthusian argument that the ever-growing human population was primarily responsible for the planet's environmental degradation. This concept traced its roots back to the work of Thomas Robert Malthus, a British scholar best known for his 1798 publication, *An Essay on the Principles of Population*. As Malthus explained, population increases in geometric progression, while subsistence increases arithmetically. Left unchecked, he argued, population would inevitably outstrip subsistence, leading to calamity.⁴¹⁷ The concept was revived in the postwar period by Fairfield Osborn's *Our Plundered Planet* and William Vogt's *Road to Survival*, two 1948 environmental treatises. Historian Samuel Hays has linked the publication of these books to a postwar attitudinal

⁴¹⁶ "Summer Project '70: Final Report," 24, PPP.

⁴¹⁷ See, for explanation, J.L. Anderson, *Explaining Long-Term Economic Change* (New York: University of Cambridge Press, 1995), 27-33.

shift “from optimism to a guarded pessimism.”⁴¹⁸ As he explained, “both of them [are] infused with Malthusian pessimism, both emphasizing the enormous problem of population growth and the world’s limited food supply. Both warned that technology was not enough; resources were not unlimited; the pressure of population itself must be reduced.”⁴¹⁹ This concern would reach its apogee with the 1968 publication of Paul Ehrlich’s *The Population Bomb*. An entomologist at Stanford University, Ehrlich successfully brought the message of population control to the mainstream, as evidenced by the millions of copies sold, not to mention his six guest appearances on the *Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* between 1970 and 1972.⁴²⁰ Ehrlich’s book, an environmental jeremiad, opened with the declaration that

The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970’s the world will undergo famines – hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death in spite of any crash programs embarked upon now. At this late date nothing can prevent a substantial increase in the world death rate, although many lives could be saved through dramatic programs to ‘stretch’ the carrying capacity of the earth by increasing food production. But these programs will only provide a stay of execution unless they are accompanied by determined and successful efforts at population control. Population control is the conscious regulation of the numbers of human beings to meet the needs, not just of individual families, but of society as a whole.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁸ Samuel P. Hays, “The Mythology of Conservation,” in *Perspectives on Conservation*, ed. Henry Jarrett (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1958), 41.

⁴¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴²⁰ See “Paul Ehrlich (II),” *The Internet Movie Database*, accessed 14 July 2010, <http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1693584/>.

⁴²¹ Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (New York: Ballantine Books, Inc., 1968), 11. For a discussion of Osborn and Vogt’s influence on Ehrlich’s work, see Pierre Desrochers and Christine Hoffbauer, “The Post War Intellectual Roots of the Population Bomb: Fairfield Osborn’s ‘Our Plundered Planet’ and William Vogt’s ‘Road to Survival’ in Retrospect,” *Electronic Journal of Sustainable Development* 1:3 (Summer 2009), <http://www.ejsd.org>. Desrochers and Hoffbauer argue that Ehrlich should have learned the lessons of his predecessors and used less bombastic rhetoric. However, Ehrlich maintains the basic premise of his signature publication. As he noted in a 2004 interview, “Anne [his wife and frequent collaborator] and I have always followed U.N. population projections as modified by the Population Reference Bureau – so we never made “predictions,” even though idiots think we have. When I wrote *The Population Bomb* in 1968, there were 3.5 billion people. Since then we’ve added another 2.8 billion – many more than the total population (2 billion) when I was born in 1932. If that’s not a population explosion, what is? My basic claims (and those of the many scientific colleagues who review my work) were that population growth was a major problem. Fifty-eight academies of science said that same thing in 1994, as did the world scientists’

The Population Bomb, which rooted the cause of all environmental problems to overpopulation, was adopted by many within the environmental movement, placed alongside *Silent Spring* as a “must-read” for those concerned with the state of the planet.

Capitalizing upon the attention provided his book, Ehrlich and his colleagues launched Zero Population Growth, a group dedicated to “press for legislation to implement far-reaching birth control programs, repeal of archaic legislation that runs counter to these objectives, and to press for allocation of funds for more research into population problems and research for better methods of contraception.”⁴²² By 1970 the organization, which urged parents to “Stop At Two,” had 380 chapters and 33,000 members across the United States.⁴²³ More importantly, by the time of the first Earth Day, many of the leading environmental groups in the United States had adopted, or were considering adopting, population control as an important part of their environmental platforms.⁴²⁴

As noted in the previous chapter, the University of Toronto played host to an International Teach-In on population issues in October 1968. The event, headed by Drs. Henry Regier and J. Bruce Falls of the Department of Zoology, featured a number of prominent chairmen, including Donald S. Macdonald, the President of the Privy Council;

warning to humanity in the same year. My view has become distressingly mainline!” “Paul Ehrlich, famed ecologist, answers questions,” *Grist*, 9 August 2004, accessed 17 June 2010, <http://grist.org/article/ehrllich/P2>.

⁴²² Quoted on last page advertisement in Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb*.

⁴²³ Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 382.

⁴²⁴ Roy Beck and Leon Kolankiewicz, “The Environmental Movement’s Retreat from Advocating U.S. Population Stabilization (1970-1998): A First Draft of History,” in *Environmental Politics and Policy, 1960s-1990s*, ed. Otis L. Graham Jr. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000), 123. Incidentally, it was David Brower, executive director of the Sierra Club, that convinced Ehrlich to write *The Population Bomb*. Brower subsequently wrote the foreword, while the Sierra Club co-published it in conjunction with Ballantine Books.

the Reverend Dr. Frank P. Fiddler, the Past-President of the National Council of Churches in Canada and President of the Family Planning Federation of Canada; Father Gregory Baum, a St. Michael's College-based theologian who served as a consultant to the Second Vatican Council; and George Cadbury, the former president of the New Democratic Party of Ontario.⁴²⁵ Cadbury and his wife Barbara, wealthy British immigrants who were prominent in the local and international birth control movement, were largely responsible for bankrolling the event.⁴²⁶ Dr. Chris Plowright, an Englishman who joined the University of Toronto's Department of Zoology shortly before this event was held, had a concern for population issues dating back to 1960 when he read *Adam's Brood: Hopes and Fears of a Biologist*, written by prominent British eugenicist Colin Bertram. Plowright recalls, "That book was a shock because it had never occurred to me that human numbers were a threat to the planet."⁴²⁷ Plowright was enthused by the response to the teach-in, which drew over 3,000 participants and significant media coverage. As he notes wryly, "Some of us, in our ignorance and naiveté, were even encouraged to think that maybe this was going to make a difference."⁴²⁸ Subsequently, in March 1970 he headed the launch of Zero Population Growth-Toronto [ZPGT], an independent affiliate of Ehrlich's organization.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁵ Regier and Falls, eds., *Exploding Humanity: The Crisis of Numbers*, 7.

⁴²⁶ The Cadburys founded the Planned Parenthood Association of Toronto, while George was a former executive director of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. Jacalyn Duffin, *History of Medicine: A Scandalously Short Introduction* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 269; Heather McDougall, *Activists and Advocates: Toronto's Health Department, 1883-1983* (Toronto: Dundurn Press Limited, 1990), 225; "Cadbury, George (1907-1995) and Barbara (1910-)," in *Encyclopedia of Birth Control*, ed. Vern L. Bullough (Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2001), 41; Penney Kome, *Women of Influence: Canadian Women and Politics* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1985), 71-72.

⁴²⁷ Plowright, interview.

⁴²⁸ Ibid.

⁴²⁹ Ayre, "A student puts the case for reform as our new campus activists see it," 16; "Announcements," *Probe Newsletter* 2:2 (31 March 1970), 1, PPP.

Like Pollution Probe before it, ZPGT received the support of Dr. Donald Chant, who ensured that the upstart organization received office space on campus. In fact, there was considerable overlap between the two groups. While Pollution Probe failed to undertake any sustained campaigns on neo-Malthusian grounds (with the notable exception of the Energy and Resources Project, to be discussed in the next chapter), many of its members were firm believers in the link between population growth and environmental degradation. Pollution Probe greeted the launch of ZPGT with open arms, noting in the *Probe Newsletter* that “The issues of pollution and population growth are inseparable. Pollution Probe welcomes the birth of ZPG-Toronto and has decided to hand over its work on the population problem to its new little sister.”⁴³⁰

Those promoting the population control message had a difficult message to sell. As Donald Worster explains, “Here the environmentalists confronted deeply seated attitudes among traditional economists, business leaders, politicians, and the public about the virtues of economic growth, attitudes underlying the modern economic system and indeed the whole materialistic ethos of modern culture.”⁴³¹ More importantly, support for population control challenged common moral and ethical codes pertaining to human sexuality and reproductive rights, and was fiercely opposed by groups such as the Catholic Church. As Ralph Brinkhurst, himself a supporter of ZPGT’s fundamental message, notes, “The whole idea of imposing population limits on people is a whole lot harder to sell than the idea of cleaning up the environment, which could be, and too often

⁴³⁰ Chris Plowright, untitled article, *Probe Newsletter* 2:2 (31 March 1970), 2, PPP.

⁴³¹ Donald Worster, *Nature’s Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 354.

is, hitched to an idea that it is about human health.”⁴³² A major challenge facing population control advocates in Canada was that the country’s low population density, coupled with its wealth of natural resources, rendered their claims of oncoming population-induced apocalypse difficult to fathom. Likewise, Canada’s birth rate was in the midst of a steady decline. As Premier John Robarts wrote to a ZPGT member in May 1970, “Where overpopulation may become a problem on a world basis some time in the future, it is certainly not the case in Canada nor even here in Ontario As a matter of fact, the birth rate in Ontario has been dropping over the last few years and will likely continue to do so.”⁴³³ Against this socio-cultural setting, ZPG failed to take root in Canada, peaking in 1971 with a total of eight independent chapters and approximately 500 members, the majority of whom resided in Ontario.⁴³⁴ According to Plowright, ZPGT felt isolated from the rest of the environmental movement: “Pollution Probe, in all its public statements, they never would say anything about population growth, and that was generally the thing in those days. Us Zero Population Growth people were nuts on the left fringe and the middle of the environmental movement preferred not to get into it, for obvious and very good reasons.”⁴³⁵ While this statement that other groups avoided the controversial issue is not entirely accurate – members of Pollution Probe had gone on the public record advocating population control as an environmental necessity⁴³⁶ – minutes

⁴³² Brinkhurst, interview.

⁴³³ John P. Robarts to Mary Ambrose, 28 May 1970, Zero Population Growth 1970-71, F1058 MU7341, AO.

⁴³⁴ “Zero Population Growth Toronto Program and Budget 1970/71,” 12, Zero Population Growth 1970-71, F1058 MU7341, AO.

⁴³⁵ Plowright, interview.

⁴³⁶ Examples of Pollution Probe’s support for ZPG principles are numerous. Bob Spencer, an early Pollution Probe co-ordinator, is quoted saying “We’re trying for a whole new way of life based on zero population growth and zero economic growth.” Ayre, “A student puts the case for reform as our new campus activists see it,” 14. Dr. Chant, speaking to the Ontario Public Health Association, suggested that

from a 17 February 1971 Pollution Probe meeting reveal that it rejected the idea of absorbing ZPGT because it was “felt that we would be labeled [*sic*] as ZPG and this would hamper our effectiveness.”⁴³⁷ Likewise, there was considerable hesitancy within Pollution Probe regarding taking any population projects, for fear that they be confused with ZPGT.⁴³⁸

The very idea of absorbing ZPGT was on Pollution Probe’s agenda because the population group began to fall apart nearly as soon as it was formed. Led by Plowright and Dr. Dennis Power, an evolutionary biologist at the Royal Ontario Museum, neither was able to devote the full-time energies necessary to properly launch such a project. Furthermore, as Power notes, “I was naïve enough in those days to not even think about having to incorporate as a nonprofit organization. Anything smacking of ‘business’ on top of academic work may have taken [away] some of our missionary zeal.”⁴³⁹ This absence of business acumen was aggravated by Plowright’s personal difficulty addressing the subject. As he explained in an interview, “I found nothing more depressing than working on population control [and] population problems. It’s just the most awful, horrible, miserable, depressing subject possible to imagine. I eventually sort of retreated and gave up because I couldn’t stand the depressive pressure of it.”⁴⁴⁰ This was not a case of gradual burnout with Plowright. As he noted, “The whole thing was miserable from the

the existing baby bonus should be replaced with a bonus for those without children. “Bonus for no babies suggested by Chant,” *Globe and Mail*, 23 October 1970, 9. Dr. William Geiling, a Pollution Probe member speaking to the Brampton branch of the Consumers Association of Canada, argued that overcoming pollution may require Canadian families to limit their size to two children. “2-child family suggested,” *Toronto Star*, 27 February 1970, 33.

⁴³⁷ “Whither Probe? A Play in IV Parts,” 17 February 1971, 3, Whither Probe?, F1058 MU7329, AO.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid.*; “Minutes of the Board of Advisors Meeting,” 11 March [1971], Advisory Panel – Board of Directors, F1058 MU7329, AO.

⁴³⁹ Dennis Power to Ryan O’Connor, personal correspondence, 21 July 2010.

⁴⁴⁰ Plowright, interview.

start. It really was. And I'm afraid for much of my subsequent life, and you can quote me on this, I've just tried to forget about it [population growth] for large periods of time."⁴⁴¹

GASP'S LAST GASP

On 10 April 1970 GASP held its first "annual" meeting at City Hall. Just twelve people turned out. As O'Donohue informed those in attendance, GASP's finances were in shambles. While he had hoped to have raised \$145,000 to fund its work, the organization only had \$178.70 in its coffers.⁴⁴² Citing the group's 450 members – a number largely based on the turnout and subsequent sign-up from their founding meeting in December 1967 – O'Donohue noted that very few had bothered to pay their \$2.00 yearly dues. Having approached a number of union locals for support he was roundly rejected by all but one labourers' local. While other organizations exhibited, in O'Donohue's words, "tremendous support" for GASP's work, they stopped short of donating to the cause. The suggestion of approaching industry for funding was rejected by O'Donohue, who argued such funding could put the group in a compromising position.⁴⁴³

GASP's final undertaking, announced in conjunction with Pollution Probe, was a plan for a Leave the Car at Home Week, to be held 12-19 July 1970. As O'Donohue explained at the initiative's public announcement, "We want people to walk to work, take

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² At the 26 June 1969 weekly meeting, Pollution Probe member Jim Nasmith sought clarification on the relationship between Pollution Probe and GASP, given the recent decision that the two organizations would co-sponsor the upcoming public inquiry on the dead duck found off the Toronto Islands. In an ironic twist, the ensuing discussion resulted in the conclusion that "GASP is wealthier, more willing to undertake the expensive advertising campaigns and legal cases, but there is room for cooperation." "Other Business From Thursday Meeting," *Probe Newsletter* 1:4 (1 July 1969), 2, PPP.

⁴⁴³ "Plea for Funds Ignored Pollution Groups Says," *Toronto Star*, 10 April 1970, 7. The following month GASP received a boost of \$110.50 raised by students who organized a school walk. An equal amount went to Pollution Probe. "Students raise \$221 to fight pollution," *Toronto Star*, 6 May 1970, 54.

public transportation or form car pools so we can measure the effect fewer cars in downtown Toronto has on air pollution.”⁴⁴⁴ O'Donohue noted that he hoped to receive cooperation from City Hall, particularly in closing a number of streets in the downtown core, namely “Bay and York Streets from Front to Queen, Markham Street south of Bloor and Yorkville Avenue from Bay to Avenue Road.”⁴⁴⁵ As fellow GASP member James Karfilis added, closing the downtown area would enable scientists to test and see whether there was a significant decline in carbon monoxide and nitrous oxide, which could have a long-term impact on city planning.⁴⁴⁶

The unique feature of this initiative is that, unlike previous GASP-Pollution Probe collaborations, GASP appeared to take the leading role. Unfortunately, their efforts were for naught. The city's Public Works Committee initially appeared open to a partial closure of Bay Street; however, it was noted that this would leave the city open to being sued, under the Municipal Act, for financial damages suffered by local businesses. While the committee initially supported pursuing the option of having those affected sign waivers releasing the city of liability, this was subsequently rejected by the Public Works Committee.⁴⁴⁷ Later in the month the event was formally delayed. A joint Pollution Probe-GASP press release explained the decision was the result of three factors. The groups claimed to have underestimated the popularity of the event, and given their lack of resources and the short notice, felt a delay would be vital to ensure its success. The desire to reverse the Public Works Committee's decision to keep Bay Street closed was also

⁴⁴⁴ Quoted in “Alderman plans leave-car-at-home week,” *Toronto Star*, 6 April 1970, 5.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁷ “Officials say Pollution Probe plan to close Bay Street won't work,” *Globe and Mail*, 23 May 1970, 5; “City committee votes to limit Bay traffic,” *Globe and Mail*, 26 May 1970, 5; “Cass opposes traffic tests in Leave Car Home week,” *Toronto Star*, 30 May 1970, 6; “Committee rejects closing of Bay Street,” *Globe and Mail*, 9 June 1970, 5.

cited. Finally, it was noted that “We want to provide more than a public relations campaign to encourage people to try other transit. While we are a minority committed to seeing cleaner air in Toronto and we realize our serious air problem, we know that most people will not take public transit unless there are lower fares (or none at all) and increased convenience.” As such, they announced their plan to co-sponsor “a citizens [*sic*] inquiry into the pollution controls and fuels available for cars and to survey transit systems in Toronto and in other parts of the world.”⁴⁴⁸ However, GASP would cease operations for a second and final time shortly thereafter, as O’Donohue focused on his 1972 mayoral bid.⁴⁴⁹

CONCLUSION

As of summer 1970, Pollution Probe had entrenched itself as a pillar of the burgeoning environmental community. It had a paid core staff, a rising profile, and had even inspired a series of affiliate groups across Canada. Meanwhile, GASP was defunct. At first blush this may seem surprising given the circumstances of GASP’s inception, as it was launched just weeks after the highly controversial broadcast of *The Air of Death*, as well as the fact that GASP appeared to have the benefit of affluent professionals backing its launch.

⁴⁴⁸ “Leave Car week is rescheduled,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 June 1970, 5; “Leave the Car at Home Week – Cancelled,” 26 June 1970,” Pollution – General 1969-, F1058 MU7338, AO. Despite carrying a story announcing that the event would be delayed until October, the *Globe and Mail* nevertheless ran a photograph of heavy city traffic in its 14 July 1970 issue, noting underneath the caption that “Leave Your Car at Home Week began yesterday, but ... there was no noticeable decrease in the volume of traffic.” “Campaign to Forgo Car Is Ignored,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 July 1970, 5.

⁴⁴⁹ An otherwise cooperative O’Donohue acted confused in an interview with the author when asked about GASP’s fate, stymieing further discussion of the subject. Tony O’Donohue, interview with author, 10 October 2007, Toronto, ON.

Organizational theory provides important insight into GASP's stagnation and Pollution Probe's growth as organizations. GASP was established by a group of prominent Torontonians; however, it was a part-time pursuit. Although it enjoyed a high profile public launch with 300 in attendance, this did not translate into an active membership, as the group relied primarily on the work of a small group of individuals throughout its rather short history. The initial public meeting was also held just over a month after the broadcast of *The Air of Death* and, given the presence of Stanley Burke as moderator of the event, it is possible that many spectators were drawn by his presence, given his popularity and the media controversy surrounding his recent work. With its key members preoccupied by full-time jobs and familial responsibilities, the organization did not have the opportunity to pursue government grants or other forms of funding necessary to hire staff and fund projects. And, while GASP did receive a full-time executive director in Tony O'Donohue in January 1969, this failed to make much of a difference in its fortunes, since it tied the organization to his political ambitions. As such, GASP never advanced beyond the status of an issue-oriented group.

Pollution Probe, on the other hand, benefited from the support it received from the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto. Being provided with office space, telephones, and a forwarding address enabled Pollution Probe to continue its operations without worrying about the burdensome overhead costs. Furthermore, its association with the university provided an important measure of credibility. All of this, however, would have been meaningless without the organization's dedicated volunteers and membership. While a small core of volunteers provided the group with direction, they were able to call upon a paid membership that reached 1,500 in April 1970 to orchestrate newsworthy

events such as the Funeral for the Don. These factors enabled Pollution Probe to initiate its fundraising efforts, which enabled it to hire staff. This, in turn, marked Pollution Probe's transformation from an issue-oriented group to the more advanced fledgling group.

Observed from the standpoint of resource mobilization theory, the reason for Pollution Probe's success vis-à-vis GASP is even more clear-cut. While the two organizations shared the common goal of combating pollution, they ultimately competed with one another for funding. While Pollution Probe established itself as a media darling with its high profile activities, it was easy to overlook GASP, which did little beyond the two public inquiries it co-sponsored with Pollution Probe. Unable to differentiate itself from its more youthful counterpart, GASP doomed itself to an unsuccessful head-to-head competition for funding that it could not win.

Chapter Four: Growth and Retrenchment, 1970-1976

In September 1970 Pollution Probe expanded from a base staff of four to sixteen. This growth was made possible by a coinciding increase in funding for the organization. That month saw the release of Tony Barrett's latest budget, which called for \$291,100 in expenditures over the coming year – a nearly six-fold increase over the budget introduced in September 1969.⁴⁵⁰ In order to raise the necessary funds a new Board of Advisors was created. Whereas the initial Board placed a heavy emphasis on scholars, a logical move for a young ENGO still in the process of establishing its credibility, the new edition featured just a single holdover, Dr. Chant, and five prominent industry leaders: R.D. Brown, a Partner at Price Waterhouse & Co.; J.H. Davie, Vice-President and Director of Dominion Securities Corporation; C. Halim Harding, Chairman of the Board, Harding Carpets Ltd.; D.W. Pretty, Vice-President at North American Life Assurance Co.; and David Purdy, Vice-President Finance, Imperial Life Assurance Co. of Canada.⁴⁵¹

At the same time that Pollution Probe was expanding its staff it also began to widen its scope. Up to this point the ENGO had earned its reputation addressing “end of the pipe” pollution issues. As rapidly became apparent, however, pollution was only one aspect of environmental degradation. Recognition of the need to address the underlying

⁴⁵⁰ B. Anthony Barrett, “A note from the eco-financier,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:5 (September 1970), 3, PPP.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid. There is a discussion of D.W. Pretty's role on Pollution Probe's Board of Advisors in the November 1970 edition of the North American Life Assurance Co. in-house magazine, *The Continent*. As it explains, “Consisting of Dr. Donald Chant, Chairman of Pollution Probe and head of the Department of Zoology at the University, Tony Barrett and five industrial leaders, the Board meets regularly to review performance, discuss budgeting, help set salary policy and guide fun[d] raising. Last fall, while discussing the latter, it was realized that some definite action was needed to “help break the ice” and to set an example for other industries to follow. Thus, Nalaco became a ‘leader’ in the fight against pollution. The first industrial contributor to Probe, was none other than Nalaco!” *The Continent*, 5, Probe – Educational – Public Meetings 1970-, F1058 MU7342, AO.

environmental problems led to the autumn 1970 creation of the Energy and Resources Project, which cited a link between Canada's energy sector and the consumer-driven growth ethos that imperilled modern society. By 1973 Pollution Probe's focus expanded to incorporate land use planning and the urban built environment. While the ENGO continued to address matters of air, land, and water contamination, its broadened perspective resulted in its rebranding. "Very quickly it wasn't Pollution Probe, it was Probe," explains Peter Middleton, "because pollution was just one angle."⁴⁵² The full name was retained for legal reasons, but the ensuing publications and promotional materials featured the shortened version.⁴⁵³

This period of growth also saw Pollution Probe foster the development of an assortment of complementary environmental organizations. Most notable of these are the Toronto-based Canadian Environmental Law Association, formed to provide local environmentalists with a legal arm, and the Canadian Association on the Human Environment, the first national body to unite ENGOs. Pollution Probe also demonstrated its leadership role within the Canadian environmental movement, providing fundraising and organizational assistance to environmental organizations such as British Columbia's Scientific Pollution and Environmental Control Society and Halifax's Ecology Action Centre.

However, this period of growth and prosperity would not last. An economic recession, sparked by the 1973 energy crisis, led to a major decline in revenue. Staff cuts ensued. While the period would see one bright spot – Pollution Probe's work on energy

⁴⁵² Middleton, interview.

⁴⁵³ The transition from "Pollution Probe" to "Probe" was addressed in "Probe Annual Report 1972," 2, Annual Reports, PPP.

issues gained newfound relevance, leading to the birth of the semi-independent Energy Probe – the organization as a whole would enter the late 1970s lacking direction. This would have severe implications on the organization’s long-term prospects.

Tony Barrett’s September 1970 budget and the coinciding shakeup of the Board of Advisors signaled a new, aggressive approach to fundraising. Nonetheless, Barrett recognized that Pollution Probe was fighting an uphill battle in securing funds. As he wrote in the *Probe Newsletter*,

donors usually have policies of giving to causes or charitable organizations within defined categories they choose – we don’t fit into anyone’s category so new ground must be broken with most prospective donors [Furthermore] the general economic climate being what it is, donations budgets are facing cuts. The result is that the established charities like hospitals, schools, United Appeal are given priorities, emphasizing that the broad spectrum of environmental problems and that donations should be going more to root problems.⁴⁵⁴

Barrett’s caution was warranted. Pollution Probe’s 1971 year-end budget reveals that the ENGO raised \$184,805 over the preceding twelve months. While this demonstrates a significant increase in its fundraising capacity, it also fell short of what it had aspired to raise during that calendar year.⁴⁵⁵ While no breakdown of the sources of revenue is provided, a review of the report’s following page, headlined “MAJOR CORPORATE DONORS – 1971” is telling. Aside from three foundations and four government bodies, the remaining seventy donors are corporations. This reliance on government, private foundations, and corporations would typify Pollution Probe’s revenue stream over the next decade.

⁴⁵⁴ Barrett, “A note from the eco-financier,” 3.

⁴⁵⁵ Pollution Probe, “1971 Year-End Report,” 14, Annual Reports, PPP.

Despite the professionalization of Pollution Probe, as evidenced by the expansion of its paid staff, and the creation of the Pollution Probe Foundation in June 1971, which lent it charitable status,⁴⁵⁶ little was altered in the organization's manner of operation. As such, there remained a degree of creative anarchy within Pollution Probe, as individual members were encouraged to undertake whatever projects struck their fancy. This freedom was exemplified by staff member Terry Aldon, an MIT graduate who pursued projects ranging from a Donner Canadian Foundation-funded study of noise pollution in the city to an exploration of the effects of radiation pollution from the Pickering Generating Station.⁴⁵⁷

One of the most ambitious group projects undertaken during this period was the creation of an eco-holiday, Survival Day. Earmarked for 14 October 1970, Survival Day emerged as a Canadian equivalent to Earth Day. While the first Earth Day celebration on 22 April 1970 involved twenty million Americans, it was a relatively minor event in Toronto, highlighted by an all-day vigil at Queen's Park that drew a peak crowd of one hundred and members of the provincial Liberals handing out packets of phosphate-free laundry detergent in Nathan Phillips Square.⁴⁵⁸ Pollution Probe chose to skip the first Earth Day entirely. As Brian Kelly explained to a *Globe and Mail* reporter, "As for Earth Day, let the United States do that and it's great. But it's the wrong time for us, right in the

⁴⁵⁶ "Co-ordinator's Meeting," 1 June 1971, Minutes of Meetings, F1058 MU7328, AO.

⁴⁵⁷ Untitled press release, 10 February 1971, Financial Statements, F1058 MU7329, AO; Terry Alden, interview with author, 19 January 2010, conducted by telephone. For more on Alden's work on noise pollution see Graham Staffen, "Noise pollution is running amuck: Probe," *The Varsity*, 14 January 1972, 11. An example of his work on radiation pollution can be found in Terry Aldon, "Radiation Pollution," *Probe Newsletter* 2:5 (September 1970), 11-14, PPP.

⁴⁵⁸ "100 hold candle-lit vigil for Ontario parks," *Toronto Star*, 22 April 1970, 3; "MPPs hand out 'pure' detergent for Earth Day," *Toronto Star*, 22 April 1970, 69. An interview with the vigil's organizer, local educator and writer Wayland Drew, can be heard online at the CBC Digital Archives. "Earth Day comes to Canada," CBC Digital Archives, 22 April 1970, accessed 9 July 2010, http://archives.cbc.ca/environment/environmental_protection/clips/15200/.

middle of exams, and we have to rely on students. We have Oct. 14 as a tentative date to do our own thing in Canada – major speeches, tours of pollution highlights, and so on.”⁴⁵⁹

Pollution Probe organized six days of activities preceding Survival Day. The appropriately named Survival Week, beginning 7 October, featured seminars, public lectures and debates, tours of conservation areas and a local sewage facility, a bicycle parade from Lawrence and Yonge to City Hall, and performances by Pro-Seed, an ecologically-themed theatre group.⁴⁶⁰ Survival Day was highlighted by the burying of a time capsule at the site of the planned Humanities Research Library at the University of Toronto.⁴⁶¹ The capsule, lowered into the ground by Chant, contained vials of DDT and water from the Don River, a recording of noise pollution in the city, various newspaper clippings concerning environmental degradation, and a bronze plaque with an apocalyptic message: “In the hope that this time capsule will be found by a civilization wiser than our own, we have buried here a record of man’s folly on the planet he has outgrown.”⁴⁶² The day also featured a gathering of 250 high school students at Convocation Hall to hear Stanley Burke and Dr. Chris Plowright discuss methods of addressing environmental problems, and a “general pollution debate” hosted by Drs. Claude Bissell and Donald Chant, and featuring Donald Collins, chairman of the Ontario Water Resources Commission, Liberal MPP Murray Gaunt, and NDP MPP Fred Young.⁴⁶³

⁴⁵⁹ Cherry, “FOE focusses [*sic*] on pollution problems,” W2.

⁴⁶⁰ “Survival Week and Survival Day,” nd, Survival Week Oct. 1970, F1058 MU7342, AO. See also, “Bad Day to stress survival,” *Globe and Mail*, 8 October 1970, 5; “Pollution of statistics angers meeting,” *Globe and Mail*, 9 October 1970, 5; “Carbon monoxide study,” *Globe and Mail*, 9 October 1970, 5.

⁴⁶¹ This is the Robarts Library.

⁴⁶² Quoted in “Capsule to mark ‘man’s folly’ buried in anti-pollution program,” *Globe and Mail*, 15 October 1970, 5.

⁴⁶³ “Survival Week and Survival Day,” nd, Survival Week Oct. 1970, F1058 MU7342, AO.

The turnout for Survival Week events in Toronto proved discouraging. While the bicycle parade was cited as a success – despite heavy rain, approximately 200 turned out, including Liberal power couple Stephen and Adrienne Clarkson aboard a tandem bicycle – most events were sparsely attended.⁴⁶⁴ Furthermore, despite national ambitions for Survival Day, the only other major city that appears to have marked the occasion was Ottawa, where the Board of Education authorized its schools to devote their afternoon classes on 14 October to anti-pollution activities and education.⁴⁶⁵ Pollution Probe had initially planned to revive the event in 1971,⁴⁶⁶ but these plans were eventually abandoned.

BIRTH OF THE ENERGY AND RESOURCES PROJECT

In 1964 the administrations of Lester Pearson and Lyndon Johnson commissioned a study on bilateral relations between their respective countries. Among the points made in the highly influential Merchant-Heeney Report that resulted was “the economic advantages to both countries of disregarding the boundary for energy purposes.”⁴⁶⁷ This idea of a continental energy pact began to gain some momentum in 1969 when J.J. Greene, the Canadian Minister of Energy, Mines, and Resources went on the public record in favour of the concept, proclaiming that “people will benefit, and both countries will benefit,

⁴⁶⁴ Bob Attfield, “Survival Week,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:6 (October 1970), 11-12, PPP; “Pollution of statistics anger meeting,” *Globe and Mail*, 9 October 1970, 5. Ontario’s seventeen community colleges spent \$10,000 advertising on-campus seminars. However, turnout for these events was characterized as “distressingly small.” “Up and Coming Action Seminars,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:6 (October 1970), 16, PPP.

⁴⁶⁵ “Ottawa Schools to Observe Survival Day,” *Probe News* [Pollution Probe at Carleton University] 1:7 (September 1970), 6, PPP. Pollution Probe North Bay held Survival Day on 15 May 1971. Advertised activities “include huge clean-ups by students of all ages and distribution of trash barrels, plus a membership drive.” “Important Bulletin to Ontario Anti-Pollution Groups,” nd, F1057 MU7361, AO.

⁴⁶⁶ Bob Attwood, “Survival Week,” 12.

⁴⁶⁷ Quoted in Livingston T. Merchant and A.D.P. Heeney, “Canada and the United States – Principles for Partnership,” *Atlantic Community Quarterly* 3:3 (Fall 1965): 387; Robert Bothwell, *Alliance and Illusion: Canada and the World, 1945-1984* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007), 229.

irrespective of where the imaginary border goes.”⁴⁶⁸ That same year the Nixon administration appointed the George P. Schultz-chaired Cabinet Task Force on Oil Import Control to examine how the United States could double its consumption over the next thirty years, despite the fact that domestic energy production was leveling off. The ensuing report, released in February 1970, advocated the establishment of a continental energy pact with Canada.⁴⁶⁹ As it laid forth, the “risk of political instability or animosity is generally conceded to be very low in Canada. The risk of physical interruption is also minimal for those deliveries made by inland transport.”⁴⁷⁰ Negotiations between the two countries were scheduled to begin in November 1970.

Concern for the proposed continental energy pact gave rise to Pollution Probe’s initial work on energy and resource issues. This developed as an unintended offshoot of its earlier battle against Ontario Hydro’s plans to build a 700 foot “superstack” at the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station. While the initial concern was that Ontario Hydro would merely disperse the station’s sulphur dioxide effluent over a greater area, rather than reducing the pollution, attention soon shifted to the growth ethos guiding the corporation’s business plan. The ensuing Energy and Resources Project, first described in the October 1970 *Probe Newsletter*, was the undertaking of Brian Kelly and Geoff

⁴⁶⁸ Quoted in James Laxer, *The Energy Poker Game* (Toronto: New Press, 1970), 1. It appears Greene toned down his pro-continental rhetoric as the Nixon government’s strong-arming tactics grew unpopular among rank and file Canadians. Taymaz Rastgardani, “Energy Security for Canada: A Comparison of the Self-Sufficiency and Continental Strategies,” unpublished Master’s thesis, Simon Fraser University, 2007, 27.

⁴⁶⁹ George P. Schultz and Kenneth W. Dam, *Economic Policy Beyond the Headlines* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 182-183; William E. Simon, *A Time For Reflection: An Autobiography* (Washington, DC: Regnery Publishing), 76-77; François Bregha, *Bob Blair’s Pipeline: The Business and Politics of Northern Energy Development Projects* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1979), 22; Stephen J. Randall, *Foreign Oil Policy Since World War I: For Profits and Security*, 2nd ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005), 283.

⁴⁷⁰ U.S. Cabinet Task Force on Oil Import Controls, *The Oil Import Question: A Report on the Relationship of Oil Imports to the National Security* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1970), 94.

Mains.⁴⁷¹ Both Kelly and Mains came from a scientific background, a rarity among Pollution Probe's active membership. Kelly held a Bachelor of Science degree while Mains, who emigrated from England as a youth, was pursuing a PhD in biochemistry at the University of Toronto.⁴⁷² While issues pertaining to energy and resources did not appear to be of immediate concern to an organization renowned for battling pollution, on closer examination it became apparent that they were integral. Echoing the neo-Malthusian concerns raised by Paul Ehrlich in *The Population Bomb*, and foreshadowing the message of the Club of Rome's 1972 *Limits to Growth*, which used complex computer modeling to demonstrate the deleterious consequences of population growth and the strain upon finite natural resources,⁴⁷³ the Energy and Resources Project positioned the growth ethos at the centre of all environmental problems. As Kelly and Mains explained in Pollution Probe's October 1970 newsletter,

In striving for a quality environment, uncontrolled economic and population growth is the basic problem which we must all attack, for the growth ethos of our modern society is undoubtedly the major underlying cause of most environmental problems. We should all be devoting more time and effort towards attacking these root causes, for without progress on this front all other forms of anti-pollution work will be for naught.⁴⁷⁴

The Energy and Resources Project was openly critical of the consumer-driven lifestyle of North Americans. As was explained, “On a global level, if North America can demonstrate self-control and restraint in growth and consumption there is little reason

⁴⁷¹ Brian Kelly and Geoff Mains, “Environmentally Yours ...,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:5 (October 1970), 13-15, PPP.

⁴⁷² Mains later turned his attention to writing about the gay community, with a particular focus on leather culture. He died from complications associated with AIDS in 1989. Biographical information is derived from Mark Thompson, “Introduction to the 20th Anniversary Edition,” *Urban Aborigines: A Celebration of Leathersexuality* by Geoff Mains (Los Angeles: Daedalus Publishing Company, 2002), 11.

⁴⁷³ Donella H. Meadows, et al., *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind* (New York: Universe Books, 1972).

⁴⁷⁴ Kelly and Mains, “Environmentally Yours ...,” 13.

why other countries could not follow.”⁴⁷⁵ Given the United States' large population and international influence, it became the central focus of much of the project's activities. Home to just six percent of the global population, the United States consumed roughly one-half of the world's available resources.

Since a continental energy pact would serve to fuel American growth with Canadian energy and resources, Pollution Probe's Energy and Resources Project declared its opposition. Using the November 1970 negotiations as a launch pad for attacking the root problem of North American over-consumption, in October Kelly and Mains initiated what they characterized to be the first phase of “a massive long-term project.”⁴⁷⁶ A major problem, they reasoned, lay in the fact that the United States had a clear-cut aim of improving its access to Canadian energy and resources, but Canada failed to have a firm policy in place pertaining to its own energy and resources. They argued that Canada needed to formulate a policy, and that such a policy should feature using “its resources as a lever to force the United States into specific programs of population control, restraint in economic growth, and recycling.”⁴⁷⁷ Since the United States would naturally demand Canada adopt similar programs, this was viewed as a win-win situation. Consequently, in advance of the forthcoming November talks between the two countries, Kelly and Mains announced their intention to sell the following three points to the Canadian government:

1. that it should make no commitment towards a Continental Energy Pact or resource sales at the November meetings;
2. that it should make no agreements until a Canadian Energy and Resources Policy is formulated; and

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁶ Kelly and Mains, “Environmentally Yours ...,” 14.

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid., 13.

3. that it should seriously consider using Canadian resources as a lever against continued American growth and consumption.⁴⁷⁸

Kelly and Mains sought to rally popular support for their initiative. Letters were sent out to one hundred environmental groups across Canada, with a further 340 sent to prominent American groups and environmentalists. Recipients were encouraged to write letters in support of the three point agenda to J.J. Greene, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, and to their federal representative, with carbon copies sent to Pollution Probe for tracking purposes. However, the groundswell of support that they had hoped for failed to materialize: by 30 November Pollution Probe received just twenty-seven positive responses from the Canadians, forty-three from American groups, and just two from individuals.⁴⁷⁹ On 9 November Pollution Probe took the campaign public with a full-page advertisement in the Toronto *Telegram*. Under the heading “Now that we've nursed the hungry Monster through its gas pains, what will we feed it next?” the advertisement featured a giant wearing a Stars and Stripes-emblazoned top hat, sitting outside a castle flying the Canadian flag. As the giant indulges in a hookah pipe labeled “CANADIAN NATURAL GAS RESOURCES,” a group of people are seen carrying a water pipe across the castle's drawbridge. The accompanying text explained that the talks in November were designed to increase the United States' access to Canadian energy and resources, and that Canada's lack of an energy and resources policy rendered it ripe for exploitation by the Americans. The proposal to use Canadian energy and resources as a lever was highlighted and signature-ready coupons were provided expressing concern to the

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid., 14.

⁴⁷⁹ Brian Kelly, “Report on Energy and Resources Project: Phase I,” December 1970, 1-2, Energy + Resources Project 1970, F1057 MU7347, AO.

Honourable J.J. Greene.⁴⁸⁰ On 16 November Brian Kelly also took the message to CBC television's long-running *Viewpoint* program, delivering a five minute presentation that urged the general public to support its three point plan. Kelly also co-authored with Stanley Gershman of Zero Population Growth-Toronto a starkly-worded letter to the editor of the Toronto *Star*. Published in the 17 November edition, the letter described the United States as “an insatiable monster.” Furthermore, they argued that the

impending result of this glutinous [sic] consumption will shortly be depletion of resources vital to our civilized way of life, irreversible degradation of our environment, extreme and permanent deprivation of a decent standard of living for the majority of an exploding world population, and the certain continuance and spread of warfare as the deprived people of the world become increasingly dissatisfied and aggressive in their demands for a share of the world resource pie.

The only way to avoid this outcome, they agreed, would be by having Canada adopt Pollution Probe's three point plan.⁴⁸¹

The message was also delivered directly to Parliament. Mitchell Sharp, Secretary of State for External Affairs, was predictably defensive of the government's record, noting that despite recently approving an increase in authorized gas exports to the United States he wanted “to ensure that there were adequate proven reserves to meet Canadian needs over and above those committed to the export market.”⁴⁸² Sharp was also dismissive of the proposed lever approach, stating that “It is not clear to me ... that the approval of the export of a specified volume of natural gas to the United States represented an appropriate opportunity to deal with matters such as a population control

⁴⁸⁰ “Now that we've nursed the hungry Monster through its gas pains, what will we feed it next?” Toronto *Telegram*, 9 November 1970, p. 22.

⁴⁸¹ Brian Kelly and Stanley Gershman, “Canada needs new policy on resource flow to U.S.,” Toronto *Star*, 17 November 1970, 7.

⁴⁸² Mitchell Sharp to Peter Middleton, 16 October 1970, Energy + Resources Project 1970, F1057 MU7347, AO.

programme and an end to uncontrolled growth.”⁴⁸³ Undeterred, Pollution Probe sought and received a meeting in Ottawa to discuss its concerns and solution. A delegation featuring Dr. Donald Chant, Peter Middleton, Brian Kelly and Geoff Mains of Pollution Probe at the University of Toronto, alongside Phil Reilly of Pollution Probe’s Carleton University affiliate, met Sharp, Greene, and Minister of Fisheries Jack Davis. Pollution Probe’s nine page statement, “The Need For a Comprehensive Canadian Energy and Resource Policy,” was discussed. The Cabinet Ministers met these ideas with a variety of reactions, ranging from Davis’ apparent interest and Greene’s indifference to what Kelly characterizes as Sharp’s “very traditional, close-minded and petty” attitude.⁴⁸⁴ Kelly summarized the meeting by noting that “we had the opportunity to present our views and to discuss them but did not feel that we had received any commitments, or made any headway other than merely exposing them to our ideas.”⁴⁸⁵

Despite Pollution Probe’s campaign, the November talks between Canada and the United States resulted in an increase in the oil import quota for the latter. Furthermore, the two parties agreed to negotiate a free trade policy for oil in spring 1971. Nonetheless, Pollution Probe found reason for optimism in a 19 November 1970 news report that Jack Davis informed those at a New York seminar on bilateral relations that the Canadian government was considering using its energy resources to encourage the Americans to work harder at cleaning the Great Lakes, particularly in respect to the phosphate issue then being resolved north of the border.⁴⁸⁶ Viewing this as proof that the federal

⁴⁸³ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁴ Brian Kelly, “Report on Energy and Resources Project: Phase I,” 4.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁸⁶ Terrence Wills, “Pollution fight, resources sale linked, Davis tells U.S. seminar,” *Globe and Mail*, 19 November 1970, 10. For more on the phosphate issue, see chapter two.

government would come onside if it was sufficiently educated, the Energy and Resources Project urged the public to continue writing the government to voice their “dissatisfaction with the piecemeal approach which is leading us towards a Continental Energy Pact.”⁴⁸⁷

The Energy and Resources Project switched gears in 1971. Whereas it had previously aimed to develop a groundswell of support to limit energy exports, it now aimed to develop resource policy expertise utilizing Canada's academic and private spheres. In January 1971 it established an energy panel featuring among its members the ubiquitous Dr. Chant, University of British Columbia's renowned ecological economist C.S. Holling, and businessman Mel Hurtig. Hurtig, a founding member of the Committee for an Independent Canada, was one of the country's leading economic and cultural nationalists, which made him a vocal opponent of continental oil integration.⁴⁸⁸ The inclusion of Hurtig in a panel dominated by academics demonstrates Pollution Probe's willingness to ally itself with other forces in the pursuit of common ends. This panel met twice in the ensuing year. Although a water panel was also established, the panel program was soon thereafter halted as the cost of flying the far-flung members to Toronto quickly proved to be more than the perpetually cash-strapped Pollution Probe could afford.⁴⁸⁹

⁴⁸⁷ Kelly, “Report on Energy and Resources Project: Phase I,” 5.

⁴⁸⁸ He would later found the Council of Canadians and the National Party of Canada, as well as *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. For more on his life see Hurtig, *At Twilight in the Country: Memoirs of a Canadian Nationalist* (Toronto: Stoddart Books, 1996). For more on the “Canadianization” of the country's intellectual and cultural communities see Jeffrey Cormier, *The Canadianization Movement: Emergence, Survival, and Success* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

⁴⁸⁹ The other members of the energy panel were Dr. F.H. Knelman, a professor of physics and engineering at Sir George Williams University, Dr. S.E. Drugge from the University of Alberta's Department of Economics, Dr. William Fuller, Chairman of the University of Alberta's Department of Zoology, Dr. R.C. Plowright of the University of Toronto's Department of Zoology, Dr. S.J. Townsend from the Institute for Aerospace Studies at the University of Toronto, Ontario Hydro economist Larratt Higgins, and Dr. L. Trainor from the Department of Physics at the University of Toronto. Brian Kelly to J.J. Green, Minister of Energy, Mines, and Resources, 21 June 1971, Water Panel Correspondence 1971, F1058 MU7338, AO; Brian Kelly to members of the Water Resources Panel, 23 November 1971, Water Panel Correspondence 1971, F1058 MU7338, AO; Brian Kelly to members of Water Resources Panel, 19 May 1972, Water Panel

THE RECYCLING IMPERATIVE

Pollution Probe first mentioned recycling in October 1970 as part of the Energy and Resource Project's work.⁴⁹⁰ At this juncture it was portrayed as one way to help slow the exhaustion of the world's finite natural resources. Although the inherent benefits of recycling had been demonstrated during the First and Second World Wars, when salvage campaigns became a critical part of the war effort, the postwar years resulted in a mass abandonment of the practice.⁴⁹¹ While there were limited contemporary examples of recycling's potential – Madison, Wisconsin initiated the United States' first municipal curbside newspaper recycling program only in 1968, and recycling depots were just then beginning to gain prominence in American cities⁴⁹² – it became clear to those at Pollution Probe that in order to address skeptics' concerns they would need to undertake local demonstration projects to prove recycling's feasibility. As such, in early 1971 Pollution Probe began to focus its energies on Toronto's telephone directories.⁴⁹³ This was a logical choice: weighing in at over 4.5 pounds each, over one million phone books were put into circulation in the city annually. And, although waste paper maintained a relatively strong re-sale value, the outdated directories were regularly sent to city-operated incinerators or

Correspondence 1971, F1058 MU7338, AO; "History of Pollution Probe," unpublished document, April 1972, History – Pollution Probe, F1058 MU7338, AO.

⁴⁹⁰ Kelly and Mains, "Environmentally Yours ...," 14.

⁴⁹¹ During the Second World War Canadians salvaged 701,696,906 pounds of paper, steel, rubber, and other reusable materials. That was an average of fifty-three pounds per person. Jeffrey A. Keshen, *Saints, Sinners, and Soldiers: Canada's Second World War* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2004).

At the conclusion of the Second World War, the paper recycling rate in the United States was thirty-five percent. By 1969 this was down to 17.8 percent. Martin V. Melosi, *The Sanitary City: Urban Infrastructure in America from Colonial Times to the Present* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 275, 350.

⁴⁹² Martin V. Melosi, *Garbage in the Cities: Refuse, Reform, and the Environment* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2005), 221; Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 244.

⁴⁹³ "Probe's Recycling Program," *Probe Newsletter* 4:3 (1 May 1972), 2, PPP; Bryce, interview.

landfill.⁴⁹⁴ The project began in February – one month prior to the release of the updated directories. Gregory Bryce was hired to oversee the project, and by the end of March plans for a Metro-wide telephone book recycling drive were cemented. Under the organizational oversight of Pollution Probe, children from ninety area schools collected old telephone books which were loaded into a forty foot transport truck supplied by Smith Transport, as well as a number of smaller trucks provided by Bell Canada. The books were then dropped off at the recently-closed Don Incinerator on Gerrard Street, were baled by Metro Works Department employees, and ultimately sold for \$17.00 a ton to the Continental Can Company.⁴⁹⁵ Over the course of four school days in April, between 48,000 and 65,000 telephone books, weighing nearly 130 tons, were diverted from the city's waste system.⁴⁹⁶ Having corresponded with and coordinated 171 schools, companies, and other interested parties, Bryce's work garnered considerable media attention and provided thousands of school children with a hands-on opportunity to make a positive contribution to the environment.⁴⁹⁷ As he wrote in a 19 April 1971 note to the recycling drive's supporters, the “campaign has been eminently successful in developing public awareness of recycling.”⁴⁹⁸

It was increasingly evident to those at Pollution Probe that recycling would figure

⁴⁹⁴ As William Rathje and Cullen Murphy point out, paper accounts for forty percent of landfill. The chief culprits here are newspaper and telephone directories. William Rathje and Cullen Murphy, *Rubbish! The Archaeology of Garbage* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2001), 96.

⁴⁹⁵ “Phone Book Will Help Build Homes,” Toronto *Star*, 31 March 1971, p. 49; Gregory Bryce, letter to supporters, 19 April 1971, TRAC Recycling Project, F1058 MU7335, AO; Bryce, interview.

⁴⁹⁶ Ian McKerracher to Paul Tomlinson, 24 June 1971, Telephone Book Recycling Collection 1971, F1058 MU7336, AO. One student, eight year old Andrew Gibbs of Bellmere Public School in Scarborough, gathered 700 books with his father in just two days, earning him recognition as the top collector. “Top Collector, Atop 700 Books,” Toronto *Star*, 17 April 1971, 3.

⁴⁹⁷ “Phone Book Will Help Build Homes,” 49; “3,000 old telephone books added to Probe's total,” *Globe and Mail*, 12 April 1970, 5; “Top Collector, Atop 700 Books,” 3.

⁴⁹⁸ Gregory Bryce, letter to supporters, 19 April 1971, TRAC Recycling Project, Gregory Bryce, letter to supporters, 19 April 1971, F1058 MU7335, AO.

prominently in its activities. However, it also happened to be an area in which the organization lacked expertise. During the summer of 1971 funding was secured via the federal government's Opportunities For Youth program to hire Bryce, Clive Attwater, Sean Casey, and C. Dana Thomas to study the existing waste problem in Toronto and explore recycling technologies employed throughout North America and Europe. The project also contained a political element, as efforts were made to determine the stance of various government departments *vis-à-vis* recycling. Having discovered that governments were, at best, hesitant to throw their support behind recycling programs, Pollution Probe attempted to influence their policies via direct correspondence, as well as through newspaper, television, and radio appearances. Finally, the project embraced public education, as 50,000 copies of a recycling booklet produced by the summer employees were distributed to the general public.⁴⁹⁹ The project's 118 page final report was also made available to interested parties. Detailing the project's findings and activities, it concluded with eight pages of recommendations for federal, provincial, and municipal governments, industry, and citizen groups. These recommendations, which would serve as the basis of Pollution Probe's recycling policy in the ensuing years, were designed to establish the following goals:

- change in the predominant attitude towards garbage, particularly among municipal officials and the general public
- establishment of policy by all levels of government for the ultimate recycling of all materials now considered to be waste
- recycling should constitute one element in a national energy and resources policy which recognizes the limited availability of all resources for both domestic use and export

⁴⁹⁹ Clive Attwater, Gregory Bryce, Sean Casey, and C. Dana Thomas, "Recycling Project Summer 1971: Final Report," 18 October 1971, iii, Recycling Project 1971, F1058 MU7334, AO; Bryce, interview; Clive Attwater, interview with author, 3 October 2008, conducted by telephone.

-the inclusion of social costs in product prices.⁵⁰⁰

When the project came to a conclusion, Attwater, Casey and Thomas returned to their studies at the University of Toronto. Bryce, having already graduated, remained on staff and was anointed their new recycling co-ordinator.⁵⁰¹

Proponents of recycling found themselves in a catch-22: the City of Toronto had no interest in developing programs that might be unsuccessful, and so the viability of recycling programs remained unproven. In order to break the impasse, Bryce led an effort to institute a weekly multi-paper collection in his home neighborhood of Moore Park. The first project of its kind in Toronto, it was well-suited for Moore Park. The neighborhood boasted a strong sense of community, as evidenced by its active ratepayers association. Likewise, newspaper readership was high, providing a steady stream of material. And, while Moore Park residents had long had their garbage picked up from the side or back of their homes, the proposed recycling program would require them to bundle their papers separately and leave them at the curbside. As such, Moore Park would demonstrate whether the public was willing to endure slight inconveniences in their daily habits in order to support recycling initiatives.⁵⁰² The project received the conditional support of Streets Commissioner Harold Atyeo provided that Pollution Probe could secure a market and demonstrate that the local residents supported the plan.⁵⁰³ Pollution Probe lined up a paper dealer who would purchase the city's collected materials and re-sell it to a paper mill. Pollution Probe also secured a guaranteed market for the dealer

⁵⁰⁰ Quoted in Attwater, Bryce, Casey, and Thomas, "Recycling Project Summer 1971," 97

⁵⁰¹ Bryce, interview.

⁵⁰² Gregory Bryce, "Municipal Paper Collection," July 1974, 46, Municipal Paper Collection 1974, F1058 MU7336, AO.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid.*, 46-47; James MacKenzie, "City to collect papers," *Globe and Mail*, 20 July 1971, 5.

with the Continental Can Company.⁵⁰⁴ Next, the plan had to be sold to the local residents. After the plan received a hearty endorsement at the annual meeting of the Moore Park Ratepayers Association on 17 May 1971, Pollution Probe organized a thorough information blitz of the area.⁵⁰⁵ Under the leadership of Bryce, a group of volunteers went door-to-door distributing pamphlets and answering questions. Homes that did not respond to the canvassers received a follow-up visit the next day.⁵⁰⁶ Featuring the headline “RESIDENTS OF MOORE PARK, WE NEED YOUR HELP!” the pamphlets featured basic information about Toronto's garbage problem, the need to create less garbage and to recycle what continues to be produced, as well as details on the proposed plan. The pamphlet also demonstrated the city's support, including endorsements from local aldermen Paul Pickett and William Kilbourn and a statement from Atyeo that “this plan is feasible and necessary, and [I] offer my department's support in its implementation.” On the final page of the pamphlet was a questionnaire that examined the residents' interest in the project.⁵⁰⁷ As Pollution Probe explained, they saw the Moore Park project as a necessary step in their push for municipal-operated recycling pickups in Toronto:

We are trying to develop a newspaper recycling system that will continue on a long-term basis. We do not want to depend on the temporary enthusiasm of volunteers, nor on free labour. If a small scheme works, a larger system can be developed. Ultimately, of course, we would like to see all of the city's garbage recycled.

People in industry and government anticipate many obstacles to successful recycling systems. We have tried to tackle those obstacles. We will not solve the

⁵⁰⁴ Bryce, “Municipal Paper Collection,” 47.

⁵⁰⁵ “City Agrees To Collect Newspapers For Recycling,” 19 July 1971, Recycling Project, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵⁰⁶ If there was no response on the second visit, a pamphlet was left behind. “Moore Park Newspaper Recycling Project: Further information for volunteers,” 21 July 1971, Recycling Project, F1058 MU7334, AO; “Toronto to Collect Newspapers for Recycling; Separation Supported By 82%,” 30 August 1971, Recycling Project, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵⁰⁷ “RESIDENTS OF MOORE PARK, WE NEED YOUR HELP!,” 21 July 1971, Recycling Project, F1058 MU7334, AO.

problem by talking about them, but only by confronting them in action.⁵⁰⁸

Statements in the media from the City Streets Department verified that it would use the results of the Moore Park experiment to determine whether a city-wide collection was merited.⁵⁰⁹ On 24 July 1971 Pollution Probe's army of volunteers made their third visit to Moore Park, this time to collect the completed questionnaires. Almost eighty-three percent of respondents indicated they were "willing to co-operate fully" with the project, while another nine percent offered qualified support.⁵¹⁰

Weekly curbside pickup began on 15 September 1971.⁵¹¹ Just three weeks into the project Harold Atyeo presented a report to the City Works Committee, recommending that collection be turned over to a private contractor. While collections yielded eighteen tons in the first three weeks – a figure exceeding the initial estimate of five tons per week – Atyeo pointed out that they were losing eight dollars per ton.⁵¹² Because of these losses the program was handed over to a private contractor after the fourth week of collections. In the months that followed the pickup continued to generate respectable results. Between 13 October 1971 and 7 June 1972 the program averaged 3.9 tons of recyclable paper per collection.⁵¹³ In June 1972 the City of Toronto, inspired by the Moore Park program, began a municipality-wide paper pickup on a monthly basis.⁵¹⁴ The monthly program,

⁵⁰⁸ "Moore Park Newspaper Recycling Project: Further information for volunteers," 21 July 1971, Recycling Project, F1058 MU7334.

⁵⁰⁹ MacKenzie, "City to collect papers," 5.

⁵¹⁰ "Toronto to Collect Newspapers for Recycling; Separation Supported By 82%," 30 August 1971, Recycling Project, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵¹¹ A wide range of papers were collected, including newspapers, glossy magazines, corrugated cardboard, stationery, junk mail, brown wrapping paper, and grocery bags. Bryce, "Municipal Paper Collection," 48.

⁵¹² "City losing \$8 a ton recycling papers," Toronto *Star*, 8 October 1971, 12.

⁵¹³ Bryce, "Municipal Paper Collection," 50.

⁵¹⁴ While the Moore Park contractor initially attempted to continue his weekly collections, the better advertised Toronto-wide program cannibalized its returns, leading to its cancellation in December 1972. Ibid.; Gregory Bryce to H.F. Atyeo, 25 January 1973, F1057 MU7361, AO; Gregory Bryce, "Wednesday Paper Collections Cancelled," 12 December 1972, Recycling Team Probe, F1058 MU7334.

which ran from June 1972 until April 1973, averaged 175 tons per month.⁵¹⁵ While the city considered these figures to be underwhelming, given that it only accounted for ten percent of the city's newsprint, the newly-founded Toronto Recycling Action Committee [TRAC], a subcommittee of the Department of Public Works, came to the program's defense. Pollution Probe's representative on TRAC, Gregory Bryce, had long maintained that the program was needlessly complicated, to the detriment of the participation levels. For example, the monthly collection was held on a different date each month. Also, since the garbage and recycling collections were handled by different trucks, paper was often mistakenly sent to landfill sites. Bryce therefore advocated that special racks be attached to Toronto's garbage trucks to enable the collection of recyclable paper during the regular weekly pickup.⁵¹⁶ Merit was found in the program's critiques, additional markets were secured for the newspapers collected, and on 8 May 1973 the Committee on Public Works approved plans to establish a weekly, city-wide newspaper pickup, to be held every Wednesday.⁵¹⁷

Recycling, as a matter of waste control, was a municipal concern. However, in autumn 1971 Pollution Probe turned its attention to the federal government. Arguing that the federal government should be held responsible for "providing the impetus"⁵¹⁸ for recycling nation-wide, Pollution Probe decided to bring a truckload of recyclables to Parliament Hill, and to present the recyclables to the Honourable Jack Davis, Minister of the Environment. This idea, attributed to Tony Barrett, quickly evolved into the

⁵¹⁵ Ellen Moorehouse, "City recycling program: designed to fail," Toronto *Citizen*, 6-20 April 1973, 1; H.F. Atyeo to Committee on Public Works, 30 April 1973, F1057 MU7361, AO.

⁵¹⁶ Gregory Bryce, untitled brief, 29 January 1973, TRAC January 1973, F1057 MU7361, AO.

⁵¹⁷ Gordon T. Batchelor to Toronto Recycling Action Committee, 9 May 1973, F1057 MU7361, AO.

⁵¹⁸ Tony Barrett, quoted in "Pollution Probe Presents Recycling Grant to Federal Government," nd, Working Comm. On Recycling, F1058 MU7335, AO.

Resources Recycling Caravan, an event designed to achieve maximum media attention. With a forty-five foot tractor trailer at their disposal, and a driver paid for by Carling Brewery,⁵¹⁹ Pollution Probe scheduled an eight day trek through Ontario, beginning in Windsor on 7 October and wrapping up in Ottawa on 14 October. In conjunction with local environmental groups – many of which were Pollution Probe affiliates – the truck would stop at a series of recycling depots. Sorted recyclables would be loaded onto the truck at each location, with the intention of deeding the accumulated materials to Davis to fund research on recycling.

John Thatcher, the provincial deputy minister of the Environment, kicked things off in Toronto by helping load the Caravan with recyclables. Thatcher was quick to pin responsibility for recycling on the municipalities, but indicated that his department was considering funding those municipalities that adopted the practice.⁵²⁰ While the Caravan scheduled most of its stops in the more populous communities of southern Ontario such as Waterloo, where a ton of used computer cards were picked up from a local university,⁵²¹ and Windsor, where one ton of glass and a quarter ton of compost were picked up,⁵²² it also made stops in smaller communities such as Grimsby, where a ton of tin cans were collected, and Prescott, where the local Kiwanis Club donated 1,500 pounds of mixed paper.⁵²³ At every stop along its route Pollution Probe landed in the local news,

⁵¹⁹ Tony Barrett to Orville Carr, 21 October 1971, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334; Tony Barrett to M. Mortlock and Joe Warwick, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO; “Pollution Probe van visits Prescott,” *Prescott Journal*, 27 October 1971, np, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵²⁰ “Truckload of garbage to show province it isn't rubbish,” *Toronto Star*, 11 October 1971, 47.

⁵²¹ “Caravan on Campus,” *University of Waterloo Gazette*, np, nd, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵²² “Pollution Probe Caravan – Further Information,” 10 September 1971, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵²³ “Caravan to pick up tons of 'garbage,’” *Burlington Gazette*, 6 October 1971, np, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO; “Pollution Probe van visits Prescott,” *Prescott Journal*, 27 October 1971, np, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO.

promoting the idea that recycling waste was a worthwhile endeavor.

The Caravan ended its journey in Ottawa on 14 October. Departing Carleton University at noon, Pollution Probe's tractor trailer and five more trucks loaded with materials collected in Ottawa received a police escort to Parliament Hill.⁵²⁴ With the Minister of the Environment, Jack Davis, scheduled to sign the deed at 1:10 pm, Monte Hummel climbed atop a podium made of crushed soft drink cans and delivered a speech. Noting that “we've come to Ottawa today bearing gifts,” he outlined Pollution Probe's grander purpose.

.... [We] have not started recycling depots or brough[t] this van to Ottawa in an attempt to take over the wast[e] disposal system but as a gesture to our elected officials who should be managing this job properly, that we want it done in a new way What you can see in this van represents an abundance of accessible, cheap, already processed secondary material. Where else can you find resources so close to manufacturing centres in such conveniently large concentrations? How much environmental deterioration might be avoided by recycling processed materials instead of extracting new ones? And why do this for export without insisting that foreign consumers of Canadian resources also learn to practice the principals [*sic*] of recycling? How many new jobs might be created by an industry as labour intensive as recycling? And how much revenue might we recover through re-use instead of just spending it on disposal[?]⁵²⁵

When Davis took the podium, however, he burst Pollution Probe's balloon. Although he praised the environmentalists' recycling drive for achieving “something our industries ... haven't been able to accomplish,” he refused to sign the deed, explaining that there was no way he could guarantee that the money would be utilized in the manner requested.⁵²⁶ Davis' refusal to sign the deed was a matter of considerable frustration for Pollution Probe. As explained in their November newsletter:

⁵²⁴ “Garbage hauled up to Hill to spur government action,” *Ottawa Citizen*, 14 October 1971, 1; “Pollution Probe – Ottawa Participates in National Environmental Awareness Week – October 11-October 15, 1971,” 4 October 1971, Ottawa – Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵²⁵ Untitled speech, 14 October 1971, Ottawa-Caravan, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁵²⁶ “Pollution probe gives big grant to Ottawa,” *Globe and Mail*, 15 October 1971, 9.

For several weeks beforehand Mr. Davis' department was made aware of our intentions of coming to Ottawa with gifts and policy recommendations. In fact the most unique aspect of the project was that we were giving a grant to the government, certainly an unusual turnabout of normal circumstances, and a tangible gesture of support for the Federal Government to get moving on recycling. The signing of the document ... was the particular gesture around which the granting ceremony was to centre.

A week before our appearance in Ottawa, as [the] Caravan was crossing the province, Mr. Davis' office called to ask for a change in the document and wording which we agreed to. The ceremony was scheduled for 1:10 p.m. At 11:00 a.m. the minister's office called to say Mr. Davis would not sign. CRISIS! What to do. Well, we w[e]nt ahead with everything as planned except at the scheduled time in the ceremonies for the signatures, we signed and Davis did not.⁵²⁷

Pollution Probe openly speculated that Davis' about-face could be attributed to a fear of raising expectations of government action that it was not prepared to meet, pressure from primary resource industries, whose extraction business would be negatively affected, and fear on Davis' part that the signed deed may have been misconstrued as a legally-binding agreement to support a national recycling initiative.⁵²⁸ To add insult to injury, the final act of the Resources Recycling Caravan failed to garner the anticipated media attention. Despite orchestrating a memorable publicity stunt, it had the misfortune of occurring on the same day as a federal budget containing major cuts to the personal and corporate income tax rates.⁵²⁹

GROWING THE MOVEMENT AT HOME AND NATIONWIDE

As evidenced by Pollution Probe's encouragement of affiliate groups, it understood the necessity of growing the environmental community. The latter half of 1970 would see

⁵²⁷ "Resources Recycling Caravan," *Probe Newsletter* 3:5 (nd), 2, PPP.

⁵²⁸ Ibid.

⁵²⁹ The personal income tax rate was cut three percent while the corporate income tax cut was seven percent. David Crane, "Ottawa Cuts Income Tax 3%," *Toronto Star*, 15 October 1971, 1; Terrance Wills, "Income, Corporate Tax Cut," *Globe and Mail*, 15 October 1971, 1; "13 ½ ton junk gift presented to Ottawa," *Toronto Star*, 15 October 1971, 12; "Pollution probe gives big grant to Ottawa," 15 October 1971, 9.

Pollution Probe foster the development of four environmental organizations. The first was the Canadian Association on the Human Environment [CAHE]. Launched at a national convention in September 1970, and headed by Pollution Probe's Peter Middleton, the CAHE was an umbrella group representing ENGOs from nine of the ten provinces.⁵³⁰ These organizations were a disparate lot, ranging from relatively large groups with paid staff, to small, volunteer-driven groups scattered across the country, and separatist-led groups in Quebec. The sole purpose of the CAHE was to create the infrastructure necessary to get the maximum funding available via federal student employment programs such as the Local Initiatives Program, the Company of Young Canadians, and the Opportunities for Youth program.⁵³¹ As Middleton notes wryly, "That was the glue that made for national unity, as it often has been in the history of the country."⁵³² While it received little attention – credit for projects went to the local groups rather than the national body – the CAHE was nonetheless quietly effective.⁵³³ In the summer of 1971, for example, it received funding for projects that employed almost 700

⁵³⁰ The only province not represented was Prince Edward Island. "Pollution Probe man launching new body," *Globe and Mail*, 5 August 1970, 5; "Pollution groups pick chairman from Toronto," *Toronto Star*, 5 August 1970, 30.

⁵³¹ For more on these programs see Frank Reid, "Unemployment and Inflation: An Assessment of Canadian Macroeconomic Policy," *Canadian Public Policy* 6:2 (Spring 1980): 283-299; Donald E. Blake, "LIP and Partisanship: An Analysis of the Local Initiatives Program," *Canadian Public Policy* 2:1 (Winter 1976): 17-32; Richard W. Phidd and G. Bruce Doern, *The Politics and Management of Canadian Economic Policy* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1978), 116, 402; Anthony Westell, *Paradox: Trudeau as Prime Minister* (Toronto: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1972), 162, 258; Stephen Clarkson and Christina McCall, *Trudeau and Our Times: The Heroic Delusions* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1994), 94.

⁵³² Middleton, interview.

⁵³³ The CAHE found itself responsible for assessing all Opportunities for Youth applications submitted in Canada relating to anti-pollution projects. As was noted in the *Globe and Mail*, "The association was not paid for this service, but nevertheless was in the unenviable position of passing judgement on applications made by its own member organizations." David Kendall, "Jobs-for-youth program under the looking glass," *Globe and Mail*, 13 September 1971, 7.

Canadian students, including forty-two in Toronto who worked for Pollution Probe.⁵³⁴

CAHE lasted for three years, dissolving when funding dried up.⁵³⁵

September 1970 also gave rise to the Council Organized to Protect the Environment [COPE]. The brainchild of Margaret Burstyn, COPE was designed to mobilize existing community, social, service, religious and financial groups, in a role complementary to Pollution Probe.⁵³⁶ Organized with the help of Pollution Probe's Rob Mills, its establishment was highlighted in a 10 October 1970 advertisement in *The Telegram*, which depicts a horse-bound cavalry charge underneath the heading "Hang in there Pollution Probe. C.O.P.E. is on the way."⁵³⁷ COPE's first project was a city-wide door-to-door survey that featured seven questions concerning the respondents' lifestyle choices, and utilized volunteers from Metro high schools.⁵³⁸ Pollution Probe viewed COPE as a valuable link to the broader community, and therefore established a liaison with the organization and invited it to send a representative to Pollution Probe's weekly co-ordinators' meetings.⁵³⁹ While COPE demonstrates the growing desire to support

⁵³⁴ "Summer Reports," *Probe Newsletter* 3:3 (nd), 1, PPP.

⁵³⁵ Middleton, interview.

⁵³⁶ At the time of its launch the member organizations were "the Anglican Church, the United Church, the Central Branch of the Unitarian Church, Toronto East Presbyterian Church and Toronto West Presbyterian Church, Council of Catholic Men, Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto Council of Jewish Brotherhood, Central and Scarborough Home and School Councils, Toronto B'nai Brith, Metro Y.W.C.A., National Council of Jewish Women, and the Junior League." Invitations were also extended "to other eligible organizations, especially Ethnic groups and High School and University students." "Citizens Organized to Protect the Environment," *Probe Newsletter* 2:5 (September 1970), 7, PPP. See also, "Council Organized to Protect the Environment," nd, Survival Week Oct. 1970 Robarts Library Time Capsule, F1058 MU7342, AO. Margaret Burstyn's daughter Varda was one of Pollution Probe's early members. Denise Gosnell, interview.

⁵³⁷ "Hang in there Pollution Probe. C.O.P.E. is on the way," *Toronto Telegram*, 10 October 1970, 62.

⁵³⁸ Rob Mills, "The C.O.P.E. Project," *Probe Newsletter* 2:7 (December 1970), 27-28, PPP; "Students will quiz citizens on pollution," *Toronto Star*, 18 November 1970, 93; W. Gunther Plaut, "Project for COPE," *Globe and Mail*, 20 November 1970, 25; Barry Came, "Thousands of students join COPE information drive," *Globe and Mail*, 23 November 1970, 5. Allegedly, two Roman Catholic high schools destroyed the questionnaires, as they contained questions referring to global overpopulation. Monte Hummel, "Pollution Probe Education Report," June 1971, 2, Education Report 1971, F1058 MU7342, AO.

⁵³⁹ Peter Middleton, "A Proposal," 28 May 1971, Whither Probe?, F1058 MU7329, AO; "Co-ordinator's Meeting," 1 June 1971, Minutes of Meetings, F1058 MU7328, AO.

Pollution Probe among established groups in Toronto, it proved to be superfluous when members of the public could more easily direct their support to the better known ENGO. With nothing new to offer the environmental community, COPE was doomed to a short lifespan, with no evidence of its existence beyond June 1971.

Much more successful was Pollution Probe's foray into law. It became apparent to those at Pollution Probe that the legal system remained a great untapped resource; subsequently, Barrett and Middleton began to recruit interested parties from Toronto's law schools. As Alan Levy, one of the law student recruits, explains, "The concept was to create a public interest law clinic that could provide support for environmental groups like Pollution Probe that needed expertise (there was very little at that time in the private bar) at little or no cost At the time, [Pollution] Probe was receiving numerous calls from people living in Ontario and beyond with environmental concerns and problems, and wanted a legal team mobilized to be able to assist them."⁵⁴⁰ This resulted in the birth of the Environmental Law Association, renamed the Canadian Environmental Law Association [CELA] in 1972, as well as the Canadian Environmental Law Research Foundation [CELRF], a sister organization established to conduct legal and policy research.⁵⁴¹

The practice of environmental law posed particular challenges. First of all, the concept was still in its infancy. The Environmental Defense Fund, an American group

⁵⁴⁰ Alan Levy, "Readers Digest of CELA's History," *Intervenor* 26:1 (January-March 2001), <http://www.cela.ca/article/readers-digest-celas-history>.

⁵⁴¹ The founding Board of Directors for CELRF demonstrates the close connection that existed with Pollution Probe, as both Donald Chant and Peter Middleton were included. The other members were Barry Stuart, an Osgoode Hall law professor, Clayton Hudson, a tax lawyer at Shibley Righton LLP, and Eddie Goodman, a prominent Tory insider and founding partner at Goodman & Goodman – now Goodman LLP. Untitled document, 18 July 1971, CELA and CELRF incorporation, 4.11, John Swaigen fonds, Wilfrid Laurier University Archives.

formed in 1967, used scientifically-backed litigation to push for a ban on DDT.⁵⁴² Barry Stuart was offering Canada's first environmental law course at the Osgoode Hall Law School beginning in September 1970, but there were no professional associations or firms associated with the practice. In fact, as reflected by law professor D. Paul Emond, one of Stuart's students in the initial offering of the course, there was no such thing as environmental law. Rather, "there was optimism that, with enough imagination, a good lawyer (or law student) could cobble together tort, property, and perhaps criminal law to stop, or at least severely curtail, any pollution problems. If that was not enough, then the hope was that strong advocacy would persuade governments to pass effective environmental protection legislation."⁵⁴³

In the early days, CELA's work was primarily handled by articling students from the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law. With no funds at their disposal, the volunteers would meet at their homes after class and divide up complaint reports collected by Pollution Probe's Pollution Complaint Service.⁵⁴⁴ In the summer of 1971 CELA was the recipient of a federal grant that provided five full-time employees with a base salary of seventy dollars per week to pursue their work. Office space was provided by a familiar source: Dr. Donald Chant and the Department of Zoology at the University of Toronto. While CELA had a number of short-term hires, funded by an assortment of government grants, in December 1971 it hired its first full-time general counsel, David Estrin. Formerly employed at a general practice law firm, Estrin's move to CELA saw his

⁵⁴² Thomas R. Dunlap, *DDT: Scientists, Citizens, and Public Policy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981), 143.

⁵⁴³ D. Paul Emond, "'Are We There Yet?'" Reflections on the Success of the Environmental Law Movement in Ontario," *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 46:2 (Summer 2008): 223.

⁵⁴⁴ Alan Levy interview with author, 19 March 2008, Toronto, ON; Levy, "Readers Digest of CELA's History"; "Announcing ... the new, improved pollution complaint service," *Probe Newsletter* 2:7 (December 1970), 3-4, PPP.

annual salary of \$10,000 halved. “Fortunately,” he recalls, “my wife at that time ... had a regular job so we were able to get by.”⁵⁴⁵ Given that the organization lacked stable funding, and continued to survive from grant to grant, there was no assurance that Estrin’s salary would be met. Financial difficulties would continue to hound CELA, and in 1975 several members of its Board of Directors signed personal guarantees in order to keep the organization afloat. Its long-term prognosis improved greatly the following year when it began to receive support from Legal Aid Ontario amounting to \$2,000 a month.⁵⁴⁶

CELA’s first high profile court case arose in 1972, in association with an ongoing imbroglio concerning excavations at the Sandbanks Provincial Park in Prince Edward County. As the name implies, the park, established in 1957, was noted for its sand dunes, some of which stood more than one hundred feet above the neighbouring shore.⁵⁴⁷ At the time the Ontario Department of Forestry began a tree planting project, in an effort to contain the sand dunes, which shift naturally as much as forty feet a year. Two years later it was discovered that thousands of trees had been planted on sixteen acres of neighbouring land belonging to the Lake Ontario Cement Company. While the cement company protested that the trees made it uneconomical to continue excavating sand from its property the provincial government was hesitant to remove the trees, for fear that this would leave nearby farmland unprotected from the migratory sand. In 1967, following a long-standing court case that solved little, Attorney General Kelso Roberts granted Lake

⁵⁴⁵ David Estrin, interview with author, 19 March 2008, Toronto, ON; “General Counsel: David Estrin,” *Environmental Law News* 1:1 (1 February 1972), 6. At the time that Estrin was hired he was accompanied by an office manager and four others funded with a Local Initiatives Program grant. “Environmental Law Advisory Office,” *Environmental Law News* 1:1 (1 February 1972), 7-8.

⁵⁴⁶ Levy, interview; Levy, “Readers Digest of CELA’s History.”

⁵⁴⁷ John Scott, “The toll of steady quarrying on the sandbanks,” *Globe and Mail*, 1 September 1971, 25.

Ontario Cement a Crown lease to sixteen acres of the provincial park. The deal, which cost a token dollar per year, was good for unlimited excavation for seventy-five years.⁵⁴⁸

In 1971 considerable public concern began to arise as to the extent of dunes being destroyed by Lake Ontario Cement. Such sentiments were dismissed by area MPP Norris Whitney, who scoffed at the “increasing numbers of urban people who have scant consideration for the interests of local citizens in those areas where they take their brief vacations.”⁵⁴⁹ As he noted in a series of letters to the *Globe and Mail*, Lake Ontario Cement provided well-paying jobs, something that was in short supply in the region.⁵⁵⁰ Harold Cantelon, a local parks supervisor for the Department of Lands and Forests, argued that the excavation deal would benefit tourism, as it would create sixteen additional acres of white sand beach at no expense to the public.⁵⁵¹ As pressure mounted rumours began to swirl that the provincial government was negotiating to buy the land back, while local Tory James Taylor, seeking election in the forthcoming October provincial election, openly discussed alternative sites for the quarry. Despite a flurry of discussion prior to the election, the issue died down in the ensuing months, prompting an editorial in the *Globe and Mail* to ask “didn’t Government officials claim two months ago that they were working feverishly to find the company a new site so the dunes could be saved?”⁵⁵²

The lack of progress was an irritant to the anti-extraction forces, as the sand dunes were being removed at the rate of 80,000 tons annually, meaning the entire sixteen acre

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ Norris Whitney, “Sandbanks Provincial Park,” *Globe and Mail*, 7 August 1971, 7.

⁵⁵⁰ Norris Whitney, “Sandbanks Provincial Park,” *Globe and Mail*, 27 July 1971, 5; *ibid.*

⁵⁵¹ John Scott, “The toll of steady quarrying on the sandbanks,” *Globe and Mail*, 1 September 1971, 25.

⁵⁵² “A good start, but ...” *Globe and Mail*, 2 December 1971, 6.

parcel would be flattened within fifteen years.⁵⁵³ CELA developed a plan to sue the Ontario government. With Pollution Probe's Larry Green acting as plaintiff, on 4 May 1972 CELA served Attorney General Dalton Bales a formal notice of claim stating that the province had breached the public trust by allowing Lake Ontario Cement to excavate a site protected under the Provincial Parks Act, which the association argued necessitated that the lands be maintained "for the benefit of future generations." The suit furthermore argued that Lake Ontario Cement's failure to obtain a license under the Beach Protection Act also rendered the company's actions illegal. CELA's notice, filed by David Estrin, gave the province sixty days to halt the excavations.⁵⁵⁴ Following the government's continued inaction, a formal suit was brought forward on 8 August 1972 by CELA on behalf of Green, charging the government with a breach of trust for failing to maintain the Sandbanks for "healthful enjoyment and education," as required under the Provincial Parks Act.⁵⁵⁵ Matters further escalated on 5 July when an estimated 150 locals and vacationers staged a ninety minute picket, preventing trucks loaded with sand from departing the provincial park. The protest was sparked by complaints that Lake Ontario Cement's noisy excavation process was awakening those in the tourist destination at 5:30 AM, which owners of the nearby Sandbanks Beach Resort claimed violated an earlier agreement that the company would halt excavations during the months of July and August.⁵⁵⁶ CELA also filed seven charges under Section 14 of the Environmental

⁵⁵³ These are figures provided by Lake Ontario Cement. John Scott, "The toll of steady quarrying on the sandbanks," *Globe and Mail*, 1 September 1971, 25.

⁵⁵⁴ "Ontario Government Sued For Breach of Trust Over Sandbanks Provincial Park," *Environmental Law News* 1:2 (10 May 1972), 7. See also, "Ontario to be sued over sand removal," *Globe and Mail*, 5 May 1972, 5.

⁵⁵⁵ Peter Whelan, "Breach of trust suit is filed against Ontario on Sandbanks," *Globe and Mail*, 9 August 1972, 5.

⁵⁵⁶ "Campers picket firm at Sandbanks," *Globe and Mail*, 6 July 1972, 41.

Protection Act on behalf of Agda Rayner, a Toronto secretary who had been staying at the Sandbanks Beach Resort. Described in the *Globe and Mail* as “an unprecedented application of the mischief section of the Criminal Code,” CELA’s application consisted of a single charge against each company and the on-site heavy equipment operator for “mischief involving willful interference with the enjoyment of private property” to go along with charges against Lake Ontario Cement and Triad Truckways Ltd. with impairing the environment at the Provincial Park and at the resort on 4 July and again on 7 July.⁵⁵⁷

But July also saw the release of a Department of Natural Resources report on the Sandbanks prepared by Dr. Walter M. Tovell, a geologist and associate director of the Royal Ontario Museum. Tovell rejected environmentalists’ concerns that the excavations were causing irreparable damage to the provincial park, noting that the dunes in question covered just one percent of the 1,802 acre park. Furthermore, he argued that even after a complete excavation of the site, sand dunes would return within fifteen years, due to their fluidity. Tovell did acknowledge the politically-sensitive nature of the issue, and recommended that Lake Ontario Cement should expedite the excavations in order to reduce tensions.⁵⁵⁸ Two months later CELRF and Pollution Probe released a report refuting Tovell’s findings. They argued that his claim that the sand dunes would naturally regenerate was baseless. Noting that the free-flow of sand had been halted by the government’s reforestation plan, Pollution Probe’s on-site research revealed a series of large depressions approximately eighteen feet deep, which had flooded and were filling

⁵⁵⁷ Peter Whelan, “Woman prosecutes cement firm and Sandbanks hauler,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 July 1972, 10.

⁵⁵⁸ John Slinger, “Sandbanks reports rejects dune peril, urges 3-year deal,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 July 1972, 1.

with algae, swamp grass, and marsh weeds. These depressions, it was argued, altered the site's fundamental landscape.⁵⁵⁹ Furthermore, it was alleged that Lake Ontario Cement purchased the property in question on 21 October 1958, after it had been reforested, and that the provincial government only agreed to the land swap in order to avoid a protracted lawsuit.⁵⁶⁰ This report also drew attention to potential links between the provincial government and Lake Ontario Cement, whose Board of Directors included former Cabinet Minister Michael Starr, while the company with a controlling interest in Lake Ontario Cement, Denison Mines, had a Board of Directors that featured a number of prominent Conservative supporters.⁵⁶¹

Both sets of charges were heard in October. Rayner's criminal charges were heard in Picton, with Aubrey E. Golden, Estrin's former employer, handling the prosecution on behalf of CELA. However, before any evidence could be entered, the case was thrown out of court on the grounds that the provincial Environmental Protection Act was invalid: air and noise pollution were determined to be matters of federal jurisdiction.⁵⁶² The civil case, brought before the Ontario Supreme Court, was similarly struck out on the grounds that "breach of public trust" was not an acknowledged cause of action.⁵⁶³

While those involved in CELA's action were understandably disappointed – particularly Green, who was found liable for both Lake Ontario Cement's and the

⁵⁵⁹ Ron Alexander and Larry Green, "A Future for the Sandbanks: A Report on the Sand Dunes of Prince Edward County," 18 September 1972, 16-17, Sandbanks 1972-74, F1058 MU7341, AO.

⁵⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 5-8.

⁵⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵⁶² "Sandbanks Provincial Park – All Is Quiet – Temporarily," *Environmental Law News* 1:4 (November 1972), 11-12; "Judge to rule on Sandbanks noise charge," *Toronto Star*, 28 October 1972, 103.

⁵⁶³ "Sandbanks Provincial Park – All Is Quiet – Temporarily," 11-12; "Ontario Supreme Court Rules That Provincial Parks Act Lacks Trust Provisions," *Environmental Law News* 2:1 (February 1973), 4-7.

government's court costs⁵⁶⁴ – it was not considered a complete loss. Rather, by raising the issue, CELA was able to focus public attention on the problem. Thus, while CELA lost the case, it ultimately forced the government's hand. In the aftermath of the charges being laid in the Rayner case, Lake Ontario Cement halted excavations at the Sandbanks Provincial Park, and on 21 March 1973 the provincial government announced that it was cancelling the lease.⁵⁶⁵ Estrin credits the Sandbanks case with inspiring a change in the way the Ontario Ministry of the Environment operated. The Ministry had been hesitant to enforce its regulations, for fear that it would end up on the losing end of a court trial. In the wake of this case, the Ministry of the Environment lost much of its reticence and, in time, developed an investigation and enforcement unit.⁵⁶⁶ In a strange twist of events, the Sandbanks criminal case, which saw the judge throw out the province's jurisdiction over environmental matters, eventually resulted in a collaboration between CELA and the provincial government. Estrin was working at his makeshift office at the Ramsay Wright Zoological Building when he received a telephone call from Minister of the Environment James Auld inviting him to lunch. Estrin accepted the invitation, and upon arriving at the upscale Bay Street restaurant, discovered Auld wanted to discuss the Sandbanks case. As Estrin recalls, "It began to dawn on me why they're so concerned. If the judge's ruling was not reversed, they would be without a job because there couldn't be a provincial minister of the environment, [and] there wouldn't be any jurisdiction. [*laughs*]" Estrin advised Auld to file an appeal via the Attorney General's office, and to put Morris

⁵⁶⁴ "Ontario Supreme Court Rules That Provincial Parks Act Lacks Trust Provisions," 7.

⁵⁶⁵ Vianney Carriere, "Province will expropriate lease on quarry near Sandbanks Park," *Globe and Mail*, 22 March 1973, 1. As Natural Resources Minister Leo Bernier explained, the case would go before the Land Compensation Board, which would determine a price for the land. See also, "Province to take dune land for park," *Toronto Star*, 22 March 1973, 13; "Province Expropriates Sandbanks Lease," *Environmental Law News* 2:2 (April 1973), 21-22.

⁵⁶⁶ Estrin, interview.

Manning on the case.⁵⁶⁷ The Ministry of the Environment agreed, and on 16 March 1973 Justice John O’Driscoll of the Ontario Supreme Court upheld the province’s jurisdiction over environmental protection, explaining that “pollution is, or should be, the concern of each person in Ontario and, indeed, throughout the world.”⁵⁶⁸ As this demonstrates, despite losing the Sandbanks case, CELA had accomplished its initial aims and established itself as a credible organization, particularly in the eyes of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

Pollution Probe’s success in the early 1970s did not go unnoticed by Canada’s other ENGOs. Its high media profile and fundraising prowess resulted in a steady stream of requests for advice. In response to these requests Pollution Probe dispatched its staff to hold workshops with ENGOs across the country, including the Halifax-based Ecology Action Centre [EAC], which Peter Middleton visited in February 1973, and British Columbia’s Scientific Pollution and Environmental Control Society, which Tony Barrett and Monte Hummel visited in October 1973. While these workshops tended to emphasize Pollution Probe’s approach to fundraising, its organizational structure and its relationship with the media were also commonly discussed. These meetings appear to have been particularly meaningful for the EAC, which began to approach government, private corporations and foundations for support also while adopting a project structure similar to that utilized by Pollution Probe.⁵⁶⁹

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid. Manning would gain national prominence in the 1980s as defense counsel to abortionist Henry Morgentaler.

⁵⁶⁸ “Environment provincial matter, court holds,” *Globe and Mail*, 17 March 1973, 5.

⁵⁶⁹ Brian Gifford [EAC] to Peter Middleton, 20 June 1973, Ecology Action Centre 1973, F1058 MU7342, AO; Brian Gifford to Tony Barrett, 25 August 1973, Ecology Action Centre 1973, F1058 MU7342, AO; Dale Berry [SPEC] to Peter Middleton, 16 July 1973, Vancouver SPEC 1973, F1058 MU7334, AO; Tony Barrett to Dale Berry, 24 August 1973, Vancouver SPEC 1973, F1058 MU7334, AO; Dale Berry to Tony Barrett, 25 September 1973, Vancouver SPEC 1973, F1058 MU7334, AO.

THE MATURATION OF POLLUTION PROBE

While Pollution Probe had expanded in terms of staff and the scope of its projects, its decision-making apparatus failed to keep pace. As a result, an internal discussion arose concerning the functionality of the group. As it stood, day to day operations were handled by the paid staff, while important issues were discussed at general meetings, where each member was given an equal say and great pains were made to reach a consensus before acting on an issue. While Pollution Probe managed to function without a designated leader in the early days, the increasing scale of the operation, in terms of staff and budget, as well as the range of activities undertaken, caused some to call for the creation of an executive director position. However, this position was subjected to a countervailing force, primarily among volunteers, who wanted to maintain the status quo. These members looked to the model of cooperatives, popular within the New Left throughout the 1960s and 1970s, as the ideal. As Joyce Rothschild and J. Allen Whitt explain in *The Cooperative Workplace: Potentials and Dilemmas of Organisational Democracy and Participation*, the cooperative model could be effective when utilized by a small group sharing a common approach and ends.⁵⁷⁰ However, Pollution Probe was already showing signs of segmentation. While all members ultimately desired a healthier environment, the immediate priorities of staff working on recycling differed from those working on energy and resource issues and those that were more interested in public education efforts. Without a designated leader in place, Pollution Probe's meetings often featured marathon debates over the allocation of resources as well as the general direction of the ENGO.

⁵⁷⁰ Rothschild and Whitt, *The Cooperative Workplace*.

These debates, often ending inconclusively, proved to be extremely frustrating for many members.⁵⁷¹ As Monte Hummel explains, “I can remember one meeting where a member put his fist through the wall saying ‘This is hopeless. We’re not going anywhere. We’ve got to make a goddamn decision here.’ ... It [the leaderless format] became counterproductive and dysfunctional.”⁵⁷² The resulting efforts to impose a hierarchy came to a head on 25 May 1971 when Paul Tomlinson, one of the initial four employees hired in 1969, announced his resignation. Noting that he could not “sit idly by and watch the demise of an organization which I have helped to build,” he argued the need to hire an executive director in order to prevent the group from becoming “bogged down by its internal dynamics.” As he explained, Pollution Probe “can no longer afford to function as an uncoordinated family compact. The ‘do-it’ philosophy still holds true, but the lack of a traditional hierarchy which has worked with a group of three or four, will not work now with fifteen and certainly will not work with 50.”⁵⁷³

The need for an executive director was a cause picked up by Peter Middleton who, as the co-ordinator in charge of internal Pollution Probe communications, as well as liaison with CELA and ENGOs from across the country, was already shouldering much of the burden associated with such a role. On 28 May 1971 Middleton offered an ultimatum: “The time has come to resolve once and for all my status at Pollution Probe and especially in light of Paul’s resignation and his reasons (which I for the most part agree with). The time has come for me to either exercise fully the responsibilities which people would sometimes willingly pass on to me or to remove myself completely from

⁵⁷¹ This frustration was discussed in a variety of interviews, including: Middleton, interview; Ann Love, interview with author, 4 April 2008, conducted by telephone; Kelly, interview; Hummel, interview.

⁵⁷² Hummel, interview.

⁵⁷³ Paul Tomlinson, “The Second Epistol [*sic*],” 25 May 1971, Whither Probe?, F1058 MU7329, AO.

the scene.”⁵⁷⁴ As he further explained, “It is unreasonable to expect every co-ordinator to spend time and effort trying to keep abreast of what everyone else is doing. [Pollution] Probe needs someone who will be in touch with everyone and ... will be able to bring the co-ordinators together when their activities suggest that this is necessary and plug the skills of various people into various projects at different times.”⁵⁷⁵ Middleton made the argument that providing the organization with a coherent direction and channeling its members’ energies would be a natural extension of his existing role with Pollution Probe. Furthermore, he shared Tomlinson’s fears that the ENGO was on the verge of growing dysfunctional.⁵⁷⁶ The idea of having one staff member elevated in status was controversial at the time; however, the argument in favour of its utility eventually won out, and in summer 1971 Peter Middleton assumed the position of executive director.⁵⁷⁷

Pollution Probe’s adoption of a hierarchical model coincided with its breakthrough at Queen’s Park. While the ENGO understood the necessity of accessing the corridors of power it had limited success with Premier John Robarts.⁵⁷⁸ However, it would have much more success when Bill Davis assumed the role of premier. A lawyer by profession, Davis was first elected to Queen’s Park in 1959 at the age of twenty-nine as the representative for Peel. He would serve as the Minister of Education from 1962 to

⁵⁷⁴ Peter Middleton, “A Proposal,” 28 May 1971, Whither Probe?, F1058 MU7329, AO.

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁶ Middleton, interview.

⁵⁷⁷ The earliest references to Peter Middleton as Pollution Probe’s executive director appear in August 1971. See “Davis offers more aid to Pollution Probe,” *Toronto Star*, 4 August 1971, 2.

⁵⁷⁸ While Pollution Probe submitted a number of briefs to Robarts there are no records of any personal meetings. The closest they got appears to be a meeting held in June 1970 when a group of environmentally conscious schoolchildren, accompanied by members of Pollution Probe, met with Robarts regarding non-returnable bottles. Monte Hummel, “Robarts and Bottles – The Non-Returnables,” *Probe Newsletter* 2:4 (June 1970), 3, PPP. For more on Robarts see Steve Paikin, *Public Triumph, Private Tragedy: The Double Life of John P. Robarts* (Toronto: Viking Press Canada, 2005).

1971.⁵⁷⁹ While Pollution Probe was openly skeptical of Davis' environmental pedigree, given his "disgraceful" fourth place finish in its February 1971 environmental survey of the Progressive Conservative leadership candidates,⁵⁸⁰ the two parties would forge a strong relationship. Although he eschewed the label "environmentalist" in an interview, Davis did add that "I considered myself one concerned about the environment, and one who listened to others and endeavoured to do something about it."⁵⁸¹ This concern, piqued by water issues in the Georgian Bay, where he kept his summer home, opened the door to consultation with Pollution Probe, which he considered credible due to its academic connections and especially its relationship with Donald Chant.⁵⁸² As he explains, "We developed a relationship with them that I think most of them would say was ... very cordial. We didn't agree with everything ... but I think the relationship was one that was fairly productive."⁵⁸³

Pollution Probe's relationship with Davis was no doubt aided by the fact that his chief policy advisor, Eddie Goodman, was on the CELRF Board of Directors.⁵⁸⁴ "Being very canny politicians," Middleton explains, "they could see our appeal and they could

⁵⁷⁹ See, for more biographical information, Claire Hoy, *Bill Davis: A Biography* (Toronto: Methuen, 1985).

⁵⁸⁰ Pat McNenly, "Davis triumphs on fourth ballot hints at election," *Toronto Star*, 13 February 1971, 1, 8; Ross H. Munro, "Davis New Ontario PC Leader," *Globe and Mail*, 13 February 1971, 1.

⁵⁸¹ Bill Davis, interview with author, 5 June 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁵⁸² Davis was a great admirer of Chant, and had him head the Ontario Waste Management Corporation. As Davis noted, "I'm not sure he ever received the degree of recognition that he should have. I tried, but there's some days I think we have not paid enough attention to what he did for these issues. I think he was probably ahead of a lot of people in terms of his views of environmental issues. Secondly, he was so sincere. He would not exaggerate things. He was a great communicator. He was able to explain to people what it was he felt, and so on. He was ... very conservative in how he addressed these issues with the general public. And he was just a very personable sort of guy. He wasn't a preacher of issues. He explained [his] points of views and so on. He was a first class individual and of course the environment was one of his main interests in life. Ibid.

⁵⁸³ Ibid.

⁵⁸⁴ Goodman released a political memoir in 1988, but it does not touch upon his interest in environmental issues. Eddie Goodman, *Life of the Party: The Memoirs of Eddie Goodman* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1988).

see we could deal with each other for mutual benefit.”⁵⁸⁵ This connection was in place by 3 August 1971, as the *Toronto Star* featured a second page story regarding a half-hour meeting between Pollution Probe representatives and Davis in the latter’s office, after which the young environmentalists “invited him out to the Queen’s Park north lawn for a lunch of sandwiches and milk.”⁵⁸⁶ As was noted in the article, Pollution Probe’s chief concerns were that its members were having difficulty accessing government information pertaining to the environment, and that government officials seemed hesitant to speak with the organization. “There has been a certain lack of confidence, to put it mildly,” Middleton informed the media.⁵⁸⁷ As the article intimates, Davis agreed to their requests for increased access to government information.

The creation of an executive director position at Pollution Probe, combined with the breakthrough with Premier Davis, highlight the ENGO’s transformation into a mature pressure group. While the group previously had multiple closely related objectives – that is, fighting air and water pollution – by the summer of 1971 its objectives were more wide-ranging, including work on federal energy and resources projects and the creation of additional environmental organizations. It also featured a more sophisticated organizational structure, advancing from an ENGO that maintained a small staff, as seen in fledgling groups, to one that built alliances with organizations, as demonstrated by its work with CAHE. While Pollution Probe was not above generating publicity through protests, a feature of issue-oriented groups, it also engaged in an ongoing image-building campaign utilizing the skills of Vickers and Benson. It had also moved beyond an

⁵⁸⁵ Middleton, interview.

⁵⁸⁶ “Davis offers more aid to Pollution Probe,” *Toronto Star*, 4 August 1971, 2.

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

antagonistic relationship with political figures, and instead enjoyed increasingly regular contact with government officials at all levels.⁵⁸⁸

THE TEAM APPROACH, 1972-1974

Pollution Probe underwent a major restructuring during the Christmas 1971 holiday. Having seen its number of paid staff increase to twenty, a number of areas of emphasis began to emerge. In order to streamline its operations Middleton instituted a team model, with a co-ordinator charged with leading each. The team leaders, together with the executive director, formed a management committee responsible for the decisions related to Pollution Probe's day-to-day operations.⁵⁸⁹

The most fundamental of Pollution Probe's new groupings was its Education Team. Headed by Monte Hummel, the team traced its roots to the ENGO's earliest days, when it sent speakers to schools and community groups in an effort to spread the message of environmental action.⁵⁹⁰ The value of this work was acknowledged in November 1970 when the Metro Toronto School Board granted Pollution Probe \$16,000 for past work.⁵⁹¹ Much of the money was utilized in the creation and distribution of teachers' kits, which contained lesson plans that incorporated environmental education, suggested reading lists, and advice on forming school-based environmental action groups. Supplied for free to each school in Metro Toronto, these kits sparked controversy as they included a birth control handbook to accompany information on global overpopulation and the resulting

⁵⁸⁸ Pross, *Group Politics and Public Policy*, 131-132.

⁵⁸⁹ Middleton, interview; Kelly, interview; Spink, interview.

⁵⁹⁰ Hummel, for his part, later described this experience as "propagandizing and spreading values that we believed in." Mowat, *Rescue the Earth!*, 32. Hummel, interview; Ann Love, interview.

⁵⁹¹ "Civic meetings of interest to residents of Metro," *Globe and Mail*, 9 November 1970, 5; Monte Hummel, "Education," *Probe Newsletter* 2:7 (December 1970), 26, PPP.

strain on natural resources. While the School Board had noted at the time of the grant that it would consider providing Pollution Probe with a further \$24,000 for its work in 1971, some schools were threatening to block the grant application unless the Education Team removed the birth control handbooks. In an effort to maintain its independent status, the Education Team withdrew its application for the 1971 grant.⁵⁹² By 1973 the Education Team had shifted its focus from merely providing speakers to pushing “the educational system to implement a year-round programme of environmental studies for all grade levels in Ontario.”⁵⁹³ Individual teachers developing their own curriculums had complained of a sense of isolation from others doing similar work, as well as difficulty in keeping up-to-date on environmental issues. As such, the Education Team launched a bimonthly newsletter, *Environmental Education*, designed to provide a dialogue between educators, highlighting their successes and challenges, and environmentalists.⁵⁹⁴ By the end of the year this newsletter had 800 subscriptions from across the province.⁵⁹⁵ *Environmental Education* would continue publishing, with an increasingly erratic schedule, through 1976.

The Energy and Resources Team was a continuation of the Energy and Resources Project. Headed by Brian Kelly, the Team focused much of its efforts on provincial hearings concerning energy matters. On 11 February 1972 the Energy and Resources

⁵⁹² The Education Team also received the Greer Award from the Ontario Education Association for “the most outstanding group contribution to education in Ontario in 1970,” which was awarded in March 1971. Monte Hummel, “Pollution Probe Education Report,” June 1971, Education Report 1971, F1058 MU7342, AO.

⁵⁹³ Ruth Kelly and Larry Erickson, “The Education Team,” nd, 1, Education Program 1974, F1058 MU7343, AO.

⁵⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵⁹⁵ “Whether or Not to Hire A Person For The Education Project,” nd, Education Program 1974, F1058 MU7348, AO. Costs for this newsletter were subsidized by Caravan Trailer Rental Co. Ltd., Mack Trucks Canada Ltd., and the C.L. Gundy Foundation, and Wood Gundy Ltd.

Team delivered a nineteen page brief to Task Force Hydro which was commissioned by the provincial government to study all aspects of Ontario Hydro, including its “functions, structure, operation, financing and objectives with the aim of making recommendations which will assure the quality and quantity of its services to the public in the future.”⁵⁹⁶ The Energy and Resources Team’s brief was particularly critical of Ontario Hydro’s rate structure. As they noted, the unit price decreased as energy consumption increased. The Energy and Resources Team viewed this as a reward for inefficient energy use, and further pointed out that Ontario Hydro had been promoting the use of energy inefficient electric space and water heaters. The Team recommended that Ontario Hydro replace the existing pricing structure with a marginal cost pricing system, in which power users would be charged the full cost.⁵⁹⁷ It also recommended that Ontario Hydro adjust its research and development and advertising programmes to “reflect the theme of energy conservation and the most efficient use of natural resources.”⁵⁹⁸ The Energy and Resources Team’s brief also addressed the fact that Ontario Hydro failed to account for its external costs of operating, such as the cost of pollution on property values, wildlife habitats, and human health. Instead, their costs “are passed on in hidden ways to society (the ‘polluted-upon’) and to the environment which is treated as a waste disposal sink and a ‘free good.’”⁵⁹⁹ These costs, they argued, should be incorporated into Ontario Hydro’s

⁵⁹⁶ Task Force Hydro brochure, quoted in “Task Force Hydro Brief,” *Probe Newsletter* 4:2 (nd), 2, PPP. For more on Task Force Hydro and the Ontario government’s efforts to modernize Ontario Hydro see Neil B. Freeman, “Taming the Hydro-Electric Power Commission: The Age of Government Modernization, 1964-73,” chap. 6 in *The Politics of Power: Ontario Hydro and Its Government, 1906-1995* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

⁵⁹⁷ “Brief to Task Force Hydro,” 11 February 1972, 4, 6, 10-11, Ont. Hydro 1969-72, F1058 MU7338, AO.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

price structure, in order to ascertain the true cost of energy.⁶⁰⁰ Finally, the decision-making apparatus at Ontario Hydro came under critique. Describing Ontario Hydro as “a self-perpetuating, self-justifying, autonomous bureaucracy that is largely unaccountable to the public or the government,” the brief noted that there was little, if any, public consultation in matters concerning “power plant sites, transmission line locations, plant types and rate changes.”⁶⁰¹ As such, it was recommended that a regulatory board, featuring experts from medicine, ecology, engineering, law, sociology, and economics, as well as representatives of the locale directly affected, be established to “consider all proposed major actions of Ontario Hydro (and other energy-related industries) with authority to approve or reject the proposals” and to “review operating plants once every 5 years with authority to order modifications or complete close-down of such plants.”⁶⁰² After examining each proposal for its environmental impact, societal impact, and technical feasibility, this regulatory body would then open the proposal to public hearings.⁶⁰³

Pollution Probe’s expertise in energy matters was recognized when it was given a seat on the Advisory Committee on Energy [ACE], which had been appointed by the provincial government “to undertake a comprehensive review to ascertain Ontario’s future energy requirements and supplies and to recommend policies and means to ensure that these requirements are met.”⁶⁰⁴ Pollution Probe, represented on ACE by Dr. Henry Regier, a member of the ENGO’s initial Board of Advisors, submitted its brief on 18 July

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., 15.

⁶⁰¹ Ibid., 16.

⁶⁰² Ibid., 18.

⁶⁰³ Ibid., 18-19.

⁶⁰⁴ “Advisory Committee on Energy,” *Toronto Star*, 9 September 1971, 42.

1972. This brief focused on the need to base Ontario's energy policy on the basic principles of energy conservation and efficiency, recognition “that exponential growth in resource consumption cannot continue indefinitely in a finite world,” and the creation of an Energy Regulatory Board to oversee the energy industries.⁶⁰⁵ The proposed Board would enforce the aforementioned environmental policies, and it “would require a comprehensive environmental impact statement, a broad cost-benefit analysis and the fullest possible public involvement before making a decision on any major proposal by the energy industries.”⁶⁰⁶ Furthermore, the brief made specific recommendations for the province regarding transportation, including encouraging energy efficient modes of shipping, such as train and boat, that it make public transit free, and that it phase in a ban on car traffic in downtown areas throughout the province. Recommendations for consumer reform included the promotion of long-lasting and easily repairable products and a ban on any advertising that attempted “to induce an artificial demand for a product.”⁶⁰⁷ The brief also urged the province to promote home heating via natural gas, while at the same time discouraging use of electric heating.⁶⁰⁸

Pollution Probe's work on Task Force Hydro and ACE emphasized Ontario Hydro's need to promote energy conservation, the incorporation of real cost pricing in its rate structure, and the democratization of its planning process. However, the final reports of these government bodies failed to reflect Pollution Probe's ideas. The most dramatic change advocated in Task Force Hydro's five reports, released between 15 August 1972

⁶⁰⁵ Pollution Probe, “Brief to Ontario Advisory Committee on Energy,” July 1972, iii-iv, Energy + Resources Project 1972-, F1057 MU7348, AO.

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid, iv.

⁶⁰⁷ Pollution Probe, “IT'S TIME TO THINK OF THE FUTURE,” 18 July 1972, Can. Energy + Resources Policy 1970-, F1057 MU7349, AO.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid.

and 29 June 1973, was re-establishing Ontario Hydro as a Crown corporation operated by a Board of Directors.⁶⁰⁹ The third report, which focused on nuclear energy, was predicated on the understanding that demand would continue to grow in the province and that it would be Ontario Hydro's responsibility to increase generating capacity.⁶¹⁰ While it was suggested that Ontario Hydro should increase the transparency of its planning process and that electricity rates should reflect the cost of production, the Task Force Hydro recommendations did not go as far as Pollution Probe's.⁶¹¹ Although the ACE report contained some talk of conservation methods, it accepted the premise that Ontario's energy consumption would continue to grow unabated, and projected that it would require two and a half times the current energy requirements by 1990.⁶¹² Furthermore, it stated that the province must prepare for the number of cars in Toronto and Hamilton to double in the same period.⁶¹³ All of this was indicative of the prevailing notion that the Canadian economy could be built on the availability of an ever-increasing capacity of affordable energy. Pollution Probe representative Henry Regier wrote a one-page minority report, focusing upon the need to change the dominant approach from demand-orientation to supply-side, and stating that "Pollution Probe explicitly dissociates itself from all those parts of the report that follow the assumptions that high growth rates

⁶⁰⁹ Task Force Hydro, *Hydro in Ontario – A Future Role and Place* (Toronto: Ontario Legislative Assembly Committee on Government Productivity, 1973).

⁶¹⁰ Task Force Hydro, *Nuclear Power in Ontario* (Toronto: Ontario Legislative Assembly Committee on Government Productivity, 1973).

⁶¹¹ Task Force Hydro, *Hydro in Ontario – An Approach to Organization* (Toronto: Ontario Legislative Assembly Committee on Government Productivity, 1972); Task Force Hydro, *Hydro in Ontario – Financial Policy and Rates* (Toronto: Ontario Legislative Assembly Committee on Government Productivity, 1973).

⁶¹² Advisory Committee on Energy, *Energy in Ontario: The Outlook and Policy Implications, Volume 1* (Toronto: Ontario Legislative Assembly Committee on Government Productivity, 1973); David Crane, "Ontario facing energy shortage," *Toronto Star*, 15 January 1973, 1, 4. Volume two of the ACE report was released on 5 March 1973.

⁶¹³ "A problem but no policy," *Toronto Star*, 25 January 1973, 6.

in energy consumption will continue for several decades.”⁶¹⁴ While they were largely ignored at the time, Pollution Probe’s recommendations would seem prescient come autumn 1973.

The Energy and Resources Team also engaged itself in matters of national concern. The late 1960s saw considerable exploration of the Canadian Arctic’s energy potential. Spurred by generous tax incentives, ninety trillion cubic feet of natural gas and six billion barrels of oil were discovered in the Beaufort Sea.⁶¹⁵ In order to bring the energy to market a Mackenzie Valley Pipeline was proposed, which raised concern among environmentalists who feared the ecological implications, as well as among Canadian nationalists who loathed the prospect of American conglomerates extracting the oil from Canadian territory for use in the American market.⁶¹⁶

Pollution Probe played an early and vital role in organizing opposition to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. Early in 1972 the Energy and Resources Team held a series of meetings that brought interested parties together to share information about northern ecology and Canadian Arctic Gas, the consortium behind the project, as well as to brainstorm ways to derail the pipeline’s construction. “At this early stage,” historian-activist Robert Page writes, “[Pollution] Probe played an essential role as a clearinghouse

⁶¹⁴ “Letter from Henry A. Regier,” 19 December 1972, Appendix F, in Advisory Committee on Energy, *Energy in Ontario*, 38.

⁶¹⁵ William R. Morrison, *True North: The Yukon and Northwest Territories* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), 170.

⁶¹⁶ For more on the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline and the surrounding debate see Robert Page, *Northern Development: The Canadian Dilemma* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), 24-58, 97-98, 104-105; Thomas Berger, *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry* (Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 1988).

for ideas and analysis.”⁶¹⁷ In March 1972 the Energy and Resource Team issued its first policy statement on the issue, titled “Freeze the Arctic,” which challenged the advisability of northern development.⁶¹⁸ The accompanying report featured five key points. First, noting that little was known about the Arctic environment, the Team called for a two year moratorium on all new northern energy projects in order to allow time for the appropriate studies to be conducted.⁶¹⁹ Second, it was argued that any proposals concerning exploration or development in the Arctic should be vetted by the Aboriginal populations affected to ensure their continued ability to live off the land.⁶²⁰ Third, fault was found in the administration of Canada's northern territories, which centralized a vast array of powers in the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Pollution Probe sought to remedy this by transferring responsibility for pollution control to the Department of the Environment and dividing responsibility for northern development and native affairs into separate departments.⁶²¹ Fourth, it was pointed out that the federal government passed two acts in 1970 to control pollution in the Arctic but that neither, as it stood, was enforceable. It was therefore argued that these pieces of legislation, the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act and the Northern Inland Waters Act, should be amended immediately.⁶²² Finally, Pollution Probe alleged that Arctic development was occurring without the direction of any clear policy. Therefore, they argued that “more

⁶¹⁷ Page, then a History professor at Trent University, chaired the Committee for an Independent Canada's anti-pipeline efforts, and thus had a first-hand view of Pollution Probe's work. Page, *Northern Development*, 37.

⁶¹⁸ “Pollution Probe's Arctic Campaign,” 28 March 1972, Arctic Campaign – Northern Gas Pipeline 1972, F1057 MU7349, AO.

⁶¹⁹ “Background Statement on the Arctic,” 28 March 1972, 3, Energy and Resources Project, F1057 MU7348, AO.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁶²¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, 17.

information should be made available to the general public and an official long-range comprehensive northern policy must be established and implemented after full public hearings.”⁶²³ Pollution Probe’s efforts to secure public hearings for the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline resulted in a joint proposal created with the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, and the Canadian Nature Federation. Submitted to the federal government in June 1973, the proposal emphasized the need for broad-based hearings that considered the social and ecological impact of the development. However, as was pointed out, public interest groups lacked the financial resources necessary to mount credible cases, given the requirement for research, transcription, legal and witness fees, and accommodations. They therefore made the case for the provision of government funding for public interest groups to ensure that the hearings were as balanced as possible.⁶²⁴ Pollution Probe’s campaign, in conjunction with the opposition raised by its anti-pipeline allies, would play an important role in convincing the federal government to commission the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry, headed by Justice Thomas Berger in March 1974. While Pollution Probe continued to express concern for the proposed development, a lack of expertise in northern matters, coupled with a lack of available funding led the Ottawa-based Canadian Arctic Resources Committee to assume the role of chief critic before the commission.

The fiscal year ending 30 September 1973 saw roughly one-quarter of Pollution Probe’s budget dedicated to the Energy and Resources Team.⁶²⁵ World events occurring

⁶²³ Ibid., 20.

⁶²⁴ “Proposal and Recommendations,” 27 June 1983, Mackenzie Valley Gas Pipeline 1973, PPP.

⁶²⁵ The Energy and Resources Team’s expenditures amounted to \$38,214, out of a total expenditure of \$157,997. These numbers do not include the cost of the Caravan Team, which was designated a “special project of Pollution Probe” and thereby audited separately. Its costs, which were underwritten by project

shortly thereafter would ensure that its role would only increase. On 6 October 1973 Egyptian and Syrian forces invaded Israeli-held land in the Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula. In the aftermath of the ensuing short-lived war, which saw the attackers repelled prior to the imposition of a ceasefire on 25 October, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries [OAPEC] initiated an oil embargo against countries such as Canada that supported Israel. As a result of this embargo, coupled with a cutback in production, the price of oil increased by seventy percent that October, and a further 130 percent in December. This event, known as the energy crisis, resulted in much havoc for the Canadian and American economies, which had been built on the availability of cheap oil. Although the embargo was eventually lifted in March 1974, the experience of government-imposed rationing and price controls led to a dramatic rise in interest in alternative energy sources and conservation in Canada and much of the industrialized world.⁶²⁶ As the level of funding available in this area began to increase, Pollution Probe was ideally positioned to capitalize. It would have important ramifications for the ENGO's future structure and operations.

Like the Energy and Resources Team, the Recycling Team was decidedly policy-driven. Headed by Gregory Bryce, its major emphasis was conveying the importance of recycling within a province-based waste program. Concern for dwindling resources and a growing waste problem led Environment Minister James Auld to announce the formation

sponsors, were \$150,358, which would increase Pollution Probe's total expenditures for the fiscal year to \$308,355. "Probe Annual Report 1973," 5, Annual Reports, PPP.

⁶²⁶ For more information on the oil crisis and its impact see, Roy Licklider, "The Power of Oil: The Arab Oil Weapon and the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, and the United States," *International Studies Quarterly* 32:2 (June 1988): 205-206; Alan MacEachern, *The Institute of Man and Resources* (Charlottetown: Island Studies Press, 2003), 12-13; Andrew Jamison, *The Making of Green Knowledge: Environmental Politics and Cultural Transformation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 87-88.

of the Solid Waste Task Force in the autumn of 1972.⁶²⁷ The Task Force's terms were sufficiently broad, including “any aspects associated with the production, handling, and reclamation or disposal of refuse,” while the primary objective was “to ensure that deleterious effects on the environment are minimized, and that socio-economic factors are given consideration.”⁶²⁸ Pollution Probe, invited to provide a representative to the Task Force, announced in the November 1972 edition of its newsletter that it was “encouraged by the terms of reference,” although it was concerned that the twelve person body was dominated by industry groups.⁶²⁹

Given the full-time demands of serving on the Task Force, including its subsidiary Beverage Packaging and Milk Packaging working groups, the decision was made to hire a new staff member, Peter Love, to fill this role.⁶³⁰ In hiring Love, the organization turned to a familiar face. A volunteer at Pollution Probe from the time of its founding through his graduation in 1971, Love joined sister-in-law Ann as the first of many family members to work for the organization, while his father Gage was a longtime member of its Board of Advisors.⁶³¹ Peter Love’s familiarity with the organization's operations served him well, as he was hired mere weeks before the provincial Task Force's inaugural

⁶²⁷ The Task Force was initially chaired by A.S. Bray, the former Senior Assistant Deputy Minister and Special Consultant to the Minister of Industry and Tourism. Bray's untimely death led to the naming of his replacement, R.H. Woolvett of Brewers Warehousing Company Limited on 3 October 1973. Others named to the Task Force were K.M. Bethune of the Metal Container Manufacturers' Advisory Council, Mrs. W.A. Brechin, Consumers' Association of Canada, H.E. Dalton, Glass Container Council of Canada, L.G. Jamison, Packaging Association of Canada, Mrs. R.L. MacMillan, Conservation Council of Ontario, Ian McKerracher, Municipal Engineers' Association, H.D. Paavila, Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, E.G. Salmond, Society of the Plastics Industry of Canada, F.M. Woods of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario. *General Report of the Solid Waste Task Force to the Minister of the Environment, Part 1* (Toronto: Ministry of the Environment, 1974), 13-14, 21.

⁶²⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁶²⁹ “The Provincial Solid Waste Task Force,” *Probe Newsletter* 4:6 (November 1972), 2, PPP.

⁶³⁰ The Association of Municipalities of Ontario also switched a member, replacing Mr. M. Dunbar with F.M. Woods. *General Report of the Solid Waste Task Force to the Minister of the Environment, Part 1*, 21.

⁶³¹ Peter Love, interview.

meeting on 2 November 1972. In the meantime he composed Pollution Probe's preliminary submission, which advanced the lofty goal of seeing "Ontario advance along the path towards ZERO GARBAGE, obtained through the absolute minimizing of throughput combined with the recycling of all the rest of the waste."⁶³² Love's submission introduced one of Pollution Probe's most important contributions, the waste hierarchy, to the ongoing garbage discourse. According to this, the province's first priority should be to "reduce throughput," which could be accomplished by educating consumers, creating a Consumer Product Review Board that would eliminate over-packaging, and encouraging the "reuse of materials" by banning non-refillable containers, increasing deposits on returnables, and standardizing containers "to promote easier handling." The second priority was to promote "recycling as an alternative far superior to burning and/or burying," which could be accomplished by having the province institute a preferential purchasing policy for recycled materials, making recycling equipment tax-exempt, taxing non-recyclable items, and taxing items that were manufactured from virgin resources, while at the same time relinquishing benefits such as subsidized freight rates, depletion grants, and tax concessions enjoyed by resource extraction industries.⁶³³ As he explained, "there was a priority in what needed to be done. We should reduce as much as possible of this garbage. We should reuse as much [as possible] after that. And then third, and last, we should recycle. At the very end there would be so little waste that we wouldn't have to worry about it."⁶³⁴ By January 1973 Pollution Probe was promoting the waste hierarchy as "the 3Rs," which has since grown synonymous with the recycling

⁶³² Peter Love, "Preliminary Submission of Pollution Probe to the Ontario Task Force on Solid Waste," November 1972, 7, Recycling Team: Probe, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁶³³ Ibid., 4-7.

⁶³⁴ Peter Love, interview.

movement. Shortly thereafter the Recycling Team was rechristened the 3Rs Team.⁶³⁵

On 19 December 1974 the Solid Waste Task Force's report was tabled in the provincial legislature. The chief recommendations contained within were that the Ministry of the Environment "ACTIVELY PURSUE A COMPREHENSIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY AIMED AT REDUCING AND RECYCLING AS MUCH OF ONTARIO'S SOLID WASTE AS POSSIBLE," including incentives for "INDUSTRY TO RESEARCH AND DEVELOP WASTE MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE AND MARKETS,"⁶³⁶ and that it should create "A PERMANENT BODY, I. E., THE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT ADVISORY BOARD, TO INVESTIGATE AND ADVISE HIM [the Minister of the Environment] ON ALL ASPECTS OF WASTE MANAGEMENT POLICY."⁶³⁷ Drawing from the Task Force's own experience, the report suggested that this Advisory Board be an independent body drawn from interested parties outside the Ontario civil service and the industries immediately affected.⁶³⁸ Pollution Probe was clearly disappointed with the final report. Love argued that it "is filled with meaningful data not reflected in its recommendations."⁶³⁹ Conspicuously absent from the recommendations was a ban on non-refillable beverage containers, without which Pollution Probe argued the province could not begin to adequately address its solid waste problem. As Love pointed out, "As long as non-refillables exist they will eventually become garbage, and we will have done little to reduce the growing solid

⁶³⁵ Gregory Bryce to the Toronto Recycling Action Committee, 10 January 1973, F1057 MU7361. As this document reveals, the 3Rs originally referred to "Reject, Re-use, Recycle." The term "reject" was replaced by the more familiar "reduce" after it became apparent that many in the general community found the former term to be rather harsh. Bryce, interview; Peter Love, interview.

⁶³⁶ *General Report of the Solid Waste Task Force to the Minister of the Environment, Part 1*, 19.

⁶³⁷ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁶³⁹ "Probe Comments on the Report of the Solid Waste Task Force," 19 December 1974, Beverage Packaging Working Group – Milk Packaging 1973, F1058 MU7336, AO.

waste problem.”⁶⁴⁰ Pollution Probe nonetheless found reason for optimism in the Task Force's recommendation that a permanent Solid Waste Management Advisory Board be established to advise the Minister of the Environment. As Love wrote, “If we had an advisory board 15 years ago, non-refillables would not be the problem that they are today.”⁶⁴¹ Hedging his optimism, however, he noted that such a committee could only succeed if the government chose its members carefully.⁶⁴² In 1975, the Ministry of the Environment established the Ontario Waste Management Advisory Board, which “sought to foster and promote comprehensive government policies and programmes to conserve resources, reduce and recycle waste, and eliminate harmful waste effects.”⁶⁴³ However, the Board was staffed by government mandarins and was dismissed as ineffective by Pollution Probe upon the release of its first report in March 1976.⁶⁴⁴

As the 3Rs Team continued its research into existing recycling systems it became increasingly bullish on a technology offered by the Black-Clawson Company of Franklin, Ohio. While the standard recycling program required participants to sort their materials prior to collection, the Black-Clawson plant was a fully mechanized system. The hallmark of streamlined operations, unsorted recyclable materials were loaded on a conveyor belt at one end of the recycling plant, with metals passing through unshredded, while other materials were then broken into smaller pieces, filtered, and sorted by colour

⁶⁴⁰ Ibid. Pollution Probe's criticisms were echoed by *Globe and Mail* columnist Norman Webster. As he wrote: “Talk about solid waste. Eight pounds of it thudded onto MPPs' desks last month in the form of three hefty volumes from the province's Solid Waste Task Force. Just about the weight of a bouncing baby, although the gestation period in this case was about 25 months and the result much less appealing.” Norman Webster, “Report comforts litterbugs,” *Globe and Mail*, 8 January 1975, 7.

⁶⁴¹ “Probe Comments on the Report of the Solid Waste Task Force.”

⁶⁴² Ibid.

⁶⁴³ Quoted in Diane Humphries, *We Recycle: The Creators of the Blue Box Programme* (Toronto: Pollution Probe, 1997), 6, accessed 7 March 2008, <http://www.pollutionprobe.org/Reports/we%20recycle.pdf>.

⁶⁴⁴ Robert Duffy, “The throwaway habit isn't easy to kick,” *Toronto Star*, 25 March 1976, D1.

and texture. Pollution Probe backed this system for two reasons.⁶⁴⁵ First, it offered the most user-friendly approach to recycling for the general public. Rather than having to learn to separate their recyclable waste into various categories, the system limited the options available to garbage and recyclables. Second, Pollution Probe felt that by merely requiring citizens to divide their waste into two streams it would avoid the stigma of handling “garbage,” a perceived impediment to involvement for some.⁶⁴⁶ In March 1973 five members of Pollution Probe visited the Franklin plant, which handled fifty tons a day. Sufficiently impressed with what they saw, Gregory Bryce noted in an ensuing *Globe and Mail* piece that “We’re convinced that mechanical recycling plants are a solution in part to Toronto’s huge solid waste problem – right now.”⁶⁴⁷

Pollution Probe’s early efforts to cajole the Toronto and Ontario governments into funding a mechanized plant were roundly rejected. As Minister of the Environment James Auld wrote to Pollution Probe on 25 May 1972, he had no intent on spending public money on such a project “until markets for reclaimed products are made attractive.”⁶⁴⁸ While the market for reclaimed newspaper, long the cash cow of recycling, collapsed in 1974 as a result of the market’s failure to keep pace with growing demand,⁶⁴⁹ increased difficulties acquiring new landfill sites, combined with industries’ push to prevent additional packaging restrictions, led the provincial government to announce plans in

⁶⁴⁵ Gregory Bryce, “A first step,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 March 1973, 43.

⁶⁴⁶ Bryce, interview; Peter Love, interview; Middleton, interview.

⁶⁴⁷ The remaining component of the solution, of course, was a commitment to reducing throughput. As Bryce noted, “Technological solutions ... are only part of the answer. In Franklin we had occasion to reflect on the marketing practices and the values that cause garbage to increase much faster than population. It was depressing at the plant to see a large nearly-new toy truck being dumped at the receiving ramp.” Bryce, “A first step.”

⁶⁴⁸ James Auld to Gordon Burbidge [Pollution Probe], 25 May 1972, F1057 MU7361, AO.

⁶⁴⁹ For more on this see T. Burrell, R. McLeod, and A. Taylor, “Paper Recycling: A Socio-Economic Perspective,” 1975, Municipal Solid Waste Management Study, F1058 MU7337, AO.

October 1974 for a province-wide system of mechanized recycling plants. The first six plants, their \$17 million total cost to be shared with the municipalities, would be built in London, Sudbury, Kingston, and Metro Toronto, which would receive three. Environment Minister William Newman envisioned the expansion of this system into every major Ontario community, at the cost of \$500 million, over the ensuing fifteen years.⁶⁵⁰ The 3Rs Team, which had spent much of 1973 and 1974 working on reports demonstrating the feasibility of recycling, were encouraged by the government's announcement. Proclaiming in autumn 1975 that recycling was "close to being institutionalized," the 3Rs Team once again changed its name to the Garbage Team and shifted its focus to reducing throughput.⁶⁵¹

The Urban Team, led by Marilyn Cox, presented an approach to environmental problems unique within Pollution Probe.⁶⁵² As Cox explained in a letter to the Community Planning Association of Canada, the Team had been "created to deal with the very specialized problems of the city environment. The Team is devoted to a combination of study and action, relating to the environmental implications of development and transportation, and the process of which decisions affecting the people who live in cities are made."⁶⁵³ Inspired by the work of Saul Alinsky, a community organizer in the United States whose work with the urban poor is often cited as the foundation for the grassroots

⁶⁵⁰ Peter Whelan, "\$17 million program to recycle garbage planned in Ontario," *Globe and Mail*, 25 October 1974, 1; "Control of litter-producing items poses political problem in Ontario," *Globe and Mail*, 25 October 1974, 31; "Garbage Plan," *Globe and Mail*, 25 October 1974, B1; "A long-range plan to reclaim our waste," *Globe and Mail*, 29 October 1975, 6.

⁶⁵¹ "Garbage Team Activities and Expenses: October 1975-September 1976," 15, Garbage Team Report 1975-76, F1058 MU7336, AO. Pollution Probe's reports included a 176 page report funded by Pepsi that highlighted the success of municipal paper recycling programs outside of Toronto. Gregory Bryce, "Municipal Paper Collection," July 1974, Municipal Paper Collection 1974, F1058 MU7336, AO.

⁶⁵² Cox later changed her name to Lynn Spink.

⁶⁵³ Marilyn Cox to Ross Perry, 23 June 1972, Community Planning Assoc. 1972-73, F1058 MU7340, AO.

activism of the 1960s, the Urban Team aimed to empower those living in Toronto's downtown core with the skills and information necessary to combat their environmental problems.

One of the Urban Team's chief concerns was the form of development then prevalent in Toronto. Toronto's 1969 city plan set aside large sections of the downtown for high rise developments, in particular the area between Bloor and Queen, and west of Jarvis to Spadina. The city plan ushered in a new era of construction. As historical geographer James Lemon points out, "Before 1965 there were no apartments over twenty storeys. Within Metro in 1965 there were 8; by 1973, 142."⁶⁵⁴ While the Urban Team admitted these buildings did entail certain environmental benefits, in that they required less land and were more efficient to heat, they argued that these developments failed to address the need for family dwellings in the city, created an apparent link between the high rise lifestyle and mental and physical health issues, provided a visual "assault [on] our aesthetic sensibilities," and resulted in associated ecological problems such as the reduction of direct sunlight and wind tunnels.⁶⁵⁵ Furthermore, the Urban Team was particularly concerned with the fact that the developers often relied upon underhanded tactics such as blockbusting, which saw developers pressure residents to sell their homes by purchasing the surrounding buildings and then allowing them to become run-down. One area of particular concentration was St. James Town, where fifteen high rises, comprising close to 6,000 apartment units, were built. When city councillor John Sewell led a campaign to prevent an expansion of this project to the area immediately south of

⁶⁵⁴ James Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1985), 162.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

St. James Town, the Urban Team played a supporting role.⁶⁵⁶ In this capacity, one of the team's key roles was serving as an information clearinghouse and a coordinating body for concerned residents and community groups.⁶⁵⁷ This led the team to begin publishing the monthly newsletter *Whose City?* which was designed to keep community groups abreast of important meetings at City Hall as well as development-related news from throughout Toronto.

Another important activity of the Urban Team was that it kept track of real estate purchases of the city's major developers. As Spink explains,

At the time there were a large number of land assemblies going on secretly, by developers who wanted to redevelop areas of the city. McCaul Street, Quebec Gothic, Beverly Street, South of St. James Town. We discovered that there was an organization used by the real estate industry called Teela Marketing, which published regularly a record of real estate transactions We got a subscription to the Teela Marketing survey and mapped for residents' groups and with residents' groups all the sales that we could identify where land assemblies were going.⁶⁵⁸

Likening this to "a distant early warning system for residents,"⁶⁵⁹ it removed the element of surprise from land developers' arsenal, and thereby provided residents with extra time to prepare a strategy.

Despite an inclination to work behind the scenes, the Urban Team attracted considerable attention in June 1972 with the release of *Rules of the Game: A Handbook for Tenants and Homeowners*. This sixty page publication was described by Pollution Probe as being about "the deceptive tactics of developers, the carelessness of nearly all City politicians, the inaccessibility [*sic*] of information, [and] the decision-making

⁶⁵⁶ Sewell's battle against this development, well underway prior to the Urban Team's establishment, is detailed in chapter eight of John Sewell, *Up Against City Hall* (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, 1972). Spink went on to serve as one of Sewell's two executive assistants upon his election as Mayor in 1978.

⁶⁵⁷ Spink, interview; Sewell, interview.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid.

process that depends more on money than the wishes of Toronto's citizens.⁶⁶⁰ Covering such basics as tax assessment and collection, the way City Hall plans its budget and decides which services to provide, and the way that areas are zoned, the handbook made some bold statements. Those living in the affluent neighbourhood of Rosedale, it was argued, received triple the quality of services as those living in the nearby working class Grange Park or Riverdale, despite paying an equal tax rate. It claimed that rich Torontonians, defined as those earning an annual salary of \$12,000 or more, lived in areas with a disproportionately high level of parkland. It also argued that commercial high rise buildings failed to pay the taxes necessary to cover the cost of services provided them by the municipality.⁶⁶¹ Such accusations drew criticism from alderman and long-time ally Tony O'Donohue, who claimed Pollution Probe's foray into development issues threatened to undermine its credibility.⁶⁶² Frank Summerhayes, President of the Urban Development Institute Ontario [UDIO], wrote a letter to the *Globe and Mail*, in which he characterized *Rules of the Game* as "a harangue against all profit-making organizations." Furthermore, he chastened Pollution Probe for preparing the report without first seeking the perspective of developers, noting that the organization was "clearly setting out to add to the present state of political polarization over growth and development, when what is urgently needed is responsible, constructive discussion in an effort to find rational

⁶⁶⁰ Untitled press release, 6 June 1972, Urban Team: Probe – Rules of the Game 1972, F1058 MU7340, AO.

⁶⁶¹ *Rules of the Game: A Handbook for Tenants and Homeowners* (Toronto: Pollution Probe Foundation, 1973), Urban Project – Misc. Materials, F1058 MU7340, AO.

⁶⁶² James McKenzie, "Pollution Probe picks on property politics," *Globe and Mail*, 16 June 1972, 41. As John Sewell points out, O'Donohue was a vocal opponent of pollution, but was equally supportive of the city's development agenda. Sewell, *Up Against City Hall*, 178. For her part, Spink dismisses O'Donohue's charges, pointing out that "Tony O'Donohue is not a progressive." Spink, interview.

solutions to our pressing urban problems.”⁶⁶³ This ignited a month-long exchange, played out in the *Globe and Mail*'s letters page, in which Cox argued that the UDIO had so far refused an open invitation to represent itself in a public meeting, while Summerhayes maintained the Urban Team rejected his offer to meet in private.⁶⁶⁴

While O'Donohue's critique of the Urban Team was largely informed by his support for the city's developers it did contain a measure of validity, as members of Pollution Probe often viewed this team with askance.⁶⁶⁵ As Gregory Bryce pointed out, the Urban Team had a sophisticated class-based analysis of events that seemed radical, even within a left-leaning ENGO. Furthermore, he notes that “A lot of what they got involved in, I think some of us had a bit of trouble seeing what the connection was [to environmental issues].”⁶⁶⁶ Peter Middleton recalls that “I had to convince Don Chant that this [creating the team] was okay, and I had to convince some donors or fundraisers that this was okay because it was in many ways the most radical thing we were doing.”⁶⁶⁷ Clashes were inevitable, primarily with the Energy and Resources Team. This tension, which was clearly evident during Pollution Probe's meetings, was rooted in an underlying difference in their leaders' approaches to problem solving. Spink's Urban Team believed in grassroots mobilization and placed a priority on consultation with the affected communities. The Kelly-led Energy and Resources Team, meanwhile, concentrated on getting its information, backed by scientific data, to the corridors of power, an approach

⁶⁶³ Frank Summerhayes, “Pollution Probe,” *Globe and Mail*, 30 June 1972, 6.

⁶⁶⁴ Marilyn Cox, “Urban development,” *Globe and Mail*, 5 July 1972, 6; Frank Summerhayes, “UDI and Probe,” *Globe and Mail*, 21 July 1972, 7; Marilyn Cox, “Probe on closed doors,” *Globe and Mail*, 24 July 1972, 6.

⁶⁶⁵ John Sewell wrote that O'Donohue “gained a liberal image because of his talk about pollution. Clearly part of the government/developer majority [in Toronto's 1970-1972 city council], although he is a follower rather than a leader.” Sewell, *Up Against City Hall*, 178.

⁶⁶⁶ Bryce, interview.

⁶⁶⁷ Middleton, interview.

in part informed by the preceding Energy and Resources Project's failure to gain traction with the public in its 1970 lever campaign. While the Urban Team was an odd fit within Pollution Probe, in many ways it was ahead of its time, foreshadowing the environmental justice movement that first gained prominence in the United States during the early 1980s.⁶⁶⁸

While Pollution Probe had cut its teeth organizing high profile events, such as the Funeral for the Don and the public inquiries into dead ducks and air pollution, by 1972 its work was increasingly taking place behind the scenes and was policy-driven. While this was indicative of a group in the process of institutionalization, executive director Peter Middleton believed that its ability to effectively orchestrate public action campaigns was central to its identity. As he reasoned, Pollution Probe's willingness to undertake these initiatives provided a degree of mystique to the ENGO, rendering its opponents off-balance and unable to predict its actions, while at the same time maintaining its media presence. This resulted in the creation of the Action Team.⁶⁶⁹ Led by Ann Rounthwaite, Pollution Probe's former communications co-ordinator, the Team was designed to identify egregious cases of environmental abuse and then, in cooperation with concerned locals, utilize Pollution Probe's media connections and organizational know-how to resolve the problem. Pollution Probe would resolve an environmental problem, create a new group of community allies, and add to its reputation as an effective operation.⁶⁷⁰

⁶⁶⁸ For more on the history of environmental justice see Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 307-346; Robert D. Bullard and Beverly H. Wright, "The Quest for Environmental Equity: Mobilizing the African-American Community for Social Change," in Riley E. Dunlap and Angela G. Mertig, *American Environmentalism: The U.S. Environmental Movement, 1970-1990* (Philadelphia, PA: Taylor & Francis, 1992), 39-49.

⁶⁶⁹ Middleton, interview; Pross, "Canadian Pressure Groups," in Richardson, *Pressure Groups*, 151-152.

⁶⁷⁰ Middleton, interview; Rounthwaite, interview.

A situation tailor-made for the Action Team soon came to Pollution Probe's attention. Residents living in the Borough of York had been complaining for over three decades that the Canadian Gypsum factory was seriously degrading their quality of life. The factory, which produced rock wool for housing insulation, was well-known to authorities for its sulphur dioxide emissions, which produced a noxious odour, as well as solid particulates ranging from dust to chunks three inches in diameter, which covered neighbouring properties.⁶⁷¹ The Action Team became acquainted with the surrounding community, and established a working relationship with the Upper Humber Clean Air Committee, an ad hoc organization of concerned locals. It then set about creating a report detailing the long history of complaints, a correspondence log highlighting the run-around the Action Team received when seeking information from Canadian Gypsum and the provincial government, and emissions data that showed the plant was exceeding permissible limits, which it calculated cost the surrounding community \$482,800 annually. This report also examined Canadian Gypsum's corporate composition, revealing the names and backgrounds of its Board of Directors, as well as identifying its lawyers, the Toronto-based McCarthy and McCarthy, and its bankers, the Toronto Dominion Bank – both of which had representatives on the Board.⁶⁷²

On 13 March 1972, after receiving an advance copy of Pollution Probe's damning report, York Council delegated Mayor Philip White and the Board of Control to meet with James Auld, the provincial Environment Minister, and request a review of the

⁶⁷¹ "Probe Special Report – No. 1: Canadian Gypsum Company," March 1972, 14, Probe – Canadian Gypsum 1972, F1058 MU7334, AO.

⁶⁷² Ibid.

complaints.⁶⁷³ The following week saw two high profile meetings on the matter. Mayor White, the York Borough Board of Health, the Department of the Environment's Air Management Branch, Pollution Probe, and the Upper Humber Clean Air Committee met with spokesmen from Canadian Gypsum. While the latter emphasized that the factory operated in compliance with regulations – despite the fact it received two fines totalling \$1,200 the previous year for violating the Air Pollution Control Act – those in attendance were not swayed, as the mayor demanded a clear timeframe for improvements to the factory's emission controls, while Larry Green of Pollution Probe's Action Team called for its closure.⁶⁷⁴ The following day the mayor held a meeting with Auld, presenting the minister with a box full of fibre emissions from the factory's smokestacks, as well as a petition signed by 2,000 locals demanding government action against Canadian Gypsum. While Auld acknowledged the complaints, he rejected calls to shut down the factory, explaining “that under EPA [Environmental Protection Act] a stop order can only be issued when there is immediate danger to human life, health, or property. I am advised by my legal officers that we probably don't have enough evidence to establish this is the fact.”⁶⁷⁵ Auld did note that his department had been pressing Canadian Gypsum on the issue, and that representatives from its parent company had scheduled a meeting with him the following week.⁶⁷⁶ The following month Canadian Gypsum announced it would spend \$645,000 in pollution abatement equipment, and that it would halt production should it exceed acceptable limits.⁶⁷⁷

⁶⁷³ Alden Baker, “York wants action on Gypsum,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 March 1972, 5.

⁶⁷⁴ Peter Whelan, “Cleanup schedule for Gypsum plant demanded by York Health Board,” *Globe and Mail*, 22 March 1972, 31.

⁶⁷⁵ “Gypsum pollution evidence lacking, Auld says,” *Globe and Mail*, 23 March 1972, 5.

⁶⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷⁷ “Firm holds to pledge, closes for pollution,” *Globe and Mail*, 22 April 1972, 2.

Proclaiming victory in the affair, the Action Team created a booklet detailing how it “‘persuaded’ the Canadian Gypsum Company to announce a thorough clean-up of its rock wool plant.”⁶⁷⁸ It was hoped that this booklet would demonstrate how to undertake similar campaigns, and the May 1972 *Probe Newsletter* noted that “the team is looking around for another major polluter to tackle.”⁶⁷⁹ However, according to Peter Middleton, it became increasingly difficult to identify, “outstanding single point pollution horrors” in Metro Toronto.⁶⁸⁰ The Action Team was therefore dissolved, with the understanding that the remaining teams would launch similar-styled campaigns when warranted.⁶⁸¹

But just as the Action Team disappeared, 1973 saw two new Teams created. The Land Use Team addressed an area of concern that Pollution Probe raised as far back as 1971.⁶⁸² The premise for the Team was that a clear relationship existed between land use policy and environmental problems. Rather than waiting to treat the environmental symptoms of poor planning, the Land Use Team aimed to anticipate problems relating to traffic congestion, waste treatment, and air pollution, and then prescribe solutions.⁶⁸³ Pollution Probe’s interest in land use was spurred by the provincial government’s 1970 announcement of the Toronto-Centred Region Plan, which aimed to shift the emphasis of development in the province from the western edge of Metro to the eastern edge, while also curtailing growth to the north. This provincial decision led the federal government to

⁶⁷⁸ “Pollution Probe Guide to Pollution Fighting: Any Group Can!” April 1972, 18, Probe – Canadian Gypsum 1972, F1058 MU7339, AO.

⁶⁷⁹ “Other Probe News,” *Probe Newsletter* 4:3 (1 May 1972), 7, PPP.

⁶⁸⁰ Peter Middleton to Ryan O’Connor, personal correspondence, 19 July 2010.

⁶⁸¹ Middleton, interview; Rounthwaite, interview.

⁶⁸² During a two day “policy and planning session” held in September 1971, land use policy in Ontario and Canada was designated an area of concern, citing the need “to provide sufficient recreation land and deal with the problem of the paving over of prime agricultural land.” Untitled document, September 1971, Minutes of Meetings, F1058 MU7328, AO.

⁶⁸³ “Proposal that Probe Should Become Involved in Regional and Land Use Planning,” nd, Land Use – Project TOE 73, F1058 MU7340, AO; David Wood, interview with author, 20 March 2008, conducted by telephone.

announce in March 1972 its purchase of land in Pickering Township for the creation of a new international airport; the province also acquired land for a planned community to the south of this site.⁶⁸⁴

In April 1974 the Land Use Team submitted a brief to the Pickering Airport Inquiry. While the Team highlighted concerns related to noise, air, and water pollution, as well as the destruction of agricultural and recreational land, the major focus was on the availability of Canadian oil. Given the recent occurrence of the energy crisis the Land Use Team argued oil may not be readily available within a matter of three years, may cost considerably more, and, as a result of these factors, may make air travel less popular, rendering the airport unnecessary. Rather than invest in energy-intensive travel systems, the Team maintained that the government should invest in high speed rail.⁶⁸⁵ The following month the team released *The Tail of the Elephant: A Guide to Regional Planning & Development in Southern Ontario*. This handbook, designed to spark interest in the subject among the general public, provided readers with an overview of regional planning and its impact, and challenged them to consider whether “the growth that the government plans for Ontario [is] in the best interests of all the people of the province.”⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸⁴ Frances Frisken, *The Public Metropolis: The Political Dynamics of Urban Expansion in the Toronto Region, 1924-2003* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, Inc., 2007), 127-130; Julie-Ann Coudreau, Roger Keil, and Douglas Young, *Changing Toronto: Governing Urban Neoliberalism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 115; Hugh Winsor, “Pickering airport to back Malton in regional plan,” *Globe and Mail*, 1 March 1972, 1.

⁶⁸⁵ “Brief to the Pickering Airport Inquiry Commission,” 8 April 1974, Pickering Airport 1974, F1058 MU7340, AO.

⁶⁸⁶ *The Tail of the Elephant: A Guide to Regional Planning & Development in Southern Ontario* (Toronto: Pollution Probe Foundation, 1974), 6, ‘The Tail of the Elephant’ Regional Planning 1974, F1058 MU7341, AO.

The Caravan Team, meanwhile, was created out of a desire to keep Pollution Probe in the forefront of the minds of Ontarians.⁶⁸⁷ Pollution Probe created a mobile multimedia show concerning environmental issues, which travelled across the province with a forty-five foot trailer. This project required extensive funding, costing \$214,000 for the initial eighteen month period.⁶⁸⁸ Beginning early in 1973 the Team travelled from town to town, giving presentations to school children, community groups, and government officials, as well as conducting interviews with local media. Described by Pollution Probe as “a clearinghouse dispensing information, advice and encouragement to people who wanted to do something about local environmental problems,”⁶⁸⁹ its staff of five, headed by Peter McAskile, gave 800 presentations over the course of 1973. According to Joe Warwick, Pollution Probe’s media coordinator from 1972 through 1973, the Caravan Team had little difficulty attracting attention from the local press, particularly the small town newspapers which gave the project prominent coverage.⁶⁹⁰ It was brought back for a second tour in 1974.⁶⁹¹

The financial boon that enabled Pollution Probe’s growth came to a halt in October 1973 when the energy crisis hit, leading to a recession. In the wake of this, government make-work initiatives such as Opportunities for Youth and the Local Initiatives Program were severely curtailed, leading to their outright cancellation in 1977,

⁶⁸⁷ The team operated under a number of names, including Probe ’73 and Probe ’74, as well as Project 73 and Project 73+1.

⁶⁸⁸ Of that amount, \$84,000 came from the provincial Ministry of the Environment, \$50,000 from the Richard Ivey Foundation, \$30,000 from Canada Packers Limited, and \$25,000 from each of Carling O’Keefe and the Imperial Tobacco-funded White Owl Conservation Awards. “Project 73 Final Report and Probe 74 Proposal,” 23 August 1973, 1, Project 73, PPP; “Project 73,” nd, Project 73, PPP; “Pollution Probe at the University of Toronto Annual Report 1973 and Five Year Review,” 1, Annual Report, PPP; Untitled press release, nd, Press Releases 1973, PPP.

⁶⁸⁹ “Pollution Probe Annual Report 1973,” 1, Annual Reports, PPP.

⁶⁹⁰ Joe Warwick, interview with author, 6 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁶⁹¹ “Project ’73 + 1: Summer Report 1974,” 3-4, Project 73 + 1 1973, PPP.

while corporations and foundations were also forced to adopt a new era of austerity.⁶⁹² While the recession did not immediately affect Pollution Probe's bottom line – during the fiscal year ending 30 September 1974 it raised \$329,097 – this revenue had been secured prior to the implementation of major budget cutbacks.⁶⁹³ However, it was apparent at the outset of 1974 that Pollution Probe could not sustain its present level of operations. This was a point made abundantly clear by Peter Middleton at a staff retreat held in January 1974, and re-emphasized in May.⁶⁹⁴ When cuts did come in autumn payroll was reduced from an October 1973 high of twenty-five to just thirteen. As was explained at the time, “In many ways it's a more manageable number, but it means fewer projects if we are to avoid spreading ourselves too thinly.”⁶⁹⁵ Forced to prioritize its initiatives, the organization cut its Urban and Land Use Teams, while renewing its emphasis on education, energy, and waste issues.⁶⁹⁶

THE BIRTH OF ENERGY PROBE

In January 1975 the Pollution Probe Foundation underwent its most substantial overhaul, scrapping the team format and replacing it with two semi-independent partner projects,

⁶⁹² Dennis Guest, *The Emergence of Social Security in Canada*, 3rd ed. (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), 181; Stephen Clarkson, “Citizen Participation in Canadian Social Sciences: A Challenge of Facts and a Challenge of Values,” in M.O. Dickerson, S. Drabek, and J.T. Woods, eds., *Problems of Change in Urban Government* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980), 41; Clément, *Canada's Rights Revolution*, 173.

⁶⁹³ “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1973,” 4-5, Financial Statements, PPP; “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1974,” 5-6, Financial Statements, PPP; “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1975,” 4-5, Financial Statements, PPP.

⁶⁹⁴ “Whither Probe,” 7 January 1974, Whither Probe? '74, F1058 MU7329, AO; “Report on Kilcoo 1974,” May 1974, Organizational Development, F1058 MU7329, AO.

⁶⁹⁵ Untitled article, *Probe Bulletin* 5 (1 October 1974), 1, PPP.

⁶⁹⁶ The decision to trim the Urban and Land Use Teams was discussed in “Urban Team,” *Probe Bulletin* 5 (October 1973), 2, PPP; “The Short Happy Life of the Land Use Project,” *Probe Bulletin* 5 (October 1974), 2, PPP.

Pollution Probe and Energy Probe. This transformation was a direct result of the OAPEC oil embargo and the heightened public and government interest in alternative energy and conservation. Given the Energy and Resources Team's established interest and expertise in this area, it was uniquely positioned to contribute to this discussion. However, the team felt confined by the Pollution Probe moniker. As Kelly explained in a December 1973 letter to Phil Lind of the Sierra Club, "For some time now ... we have felt the need to speak out on energy issues from a broader basis than our environmental perspective; to consider social and economic questions such as cost, control, development and other aspects affecting the public interest." In order to accomplish this he raised the idea of creating "a public interest group" named Energy Probe. The proposed group would have a measure of autonomy from Pollution Probe, yet would maintain its affiliation with the Pollution Probe Foundation in order to continue utilizing the resources enjoyed by the Energy and Resources Team.⁶⁹⁷

A separate identity was also central to the Energy and Resources Team's ability to fund its activities. More focused on national public policy matters than the other Pollution Probe teams, it also required more financial support. While there appeared to be more fundraising potential for the sort of activities the Energy and Resources Team was undertaking, the Pollution Probe name served as a barrier to some sponsors. As Osler recalls, "Some people were more interested in energy issues than pollution issues in terms of sponsors, because to some extent the spotlight changed in '74 [due to the energy crisis] from pollution issues to energy issues. We didn't want to go on our own fundraising-wise – we still wanted to be part of the Pollution Probe Foundation – but we felt the name

⁶⁹⁷ Brian Kelly to Phil Lind, 14 December 1973, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO.

change would appeal to certain sponsors.”⁶⁹⁸ Although Kelly and Osler were sold on the idea of a semi-autonomous Energy Probe, they sought the opinion of potential supporters, both moral and financial. The results, which came from the likes of Greenpeace co-founder and Sierra Club of British Columbia employee Jim Bohlen, Douglas H. Boyd of Pollution Probe's Winnipeg affiliate, and Mel Hurtig of the Committee for an Independent Canada were overwhelmingly positive.⁶⁹⁹

In January 1974 a Pollution Probe committee was established to study the proposed organizational change. Its ensuing report provided a series of wide ranging suggestions. The committee recommended “that greater freedom be given teams to spend money when and as they see fit” and “that teams be given increased autonomy in setting goals, defining issues and developing strategies.” The report also recommended “that the name of the Energy & Resources Team be changed to Energy Probe in an attempt to solve some of the problems outlined in the team brief concerning external relations.” Furthermore, it was announced,

an attempt will be made to approach sources of money to aid in the financing of Energy Probe that might be more receptive to an energy-oriented project than they would to other Probe projects. This, hopefully, would increase overall revenue and benefit all the teams. The money raised for Energy Probe would go to meet its operating expenses, and the team's access to general funds would remain equal to that of other teams, limited, as always, by necessities required and resources available.⁷⁰⁰

The report stopped short of suggesting the new group be given fully independent powers.

As was noted, “We all depend upon the tradition and public credibility of the Pollution

⁶⁹⁸ Sanford Osler, interview with author, 12 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁶⁹⁹ Jim Bohlen to Brian Kelly, 20 December 1973, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO; Douglas H. Boyd to Brian Kelly, 4 January 1974, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO; Mel Hurtig to Brian Kelly, 21 December 1973, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO.

⁷⁰⁰ Untitled document, 21 January 1974, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO.

Probe name for our legitimacy and our rights to solicit money and take action. We have a duty to manage the money given to us responsibly, and consequently, we could not accept the removal of final accountability to Pollution Probe for Energy Probe's action.”⁷⁰¹ As such, Energy Probe was elevated to a project of equal status with Pollution Probe within the institutional home of the Pollution Probe Foundation.

Energy Probe held its official launch on 16 January 1975. As Chairman of the Pollution Probe Foundation Dr. Chant announced in a prepared statement, “Today, we are launching ENERGY PROBE, a new public interest group to fight for needed changes in the energy policy field. Through it, we will strive to correct the errors and failures that dominate our current approach to energy problems. Our objective is to stabilize average per capita energy consumption in Ontario, and in Canada as a whole.”⁷⁰² The original plan was for Brian Kelly to lead Energy Probe as its founding co-ordinator. However, Kelly left the organization in late 1974. Married and intent on raising a family – a far-fetched notion on Pollution Probe’s minuscule salary – he accepted a position in Ottawa with the Office of Energy Conservation, a newly created branch of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. The reins were therefore handed to Sanford Osler, who had worked alongside Kelly on energy issues since the summer of 1971. In the summer of 1975 Energy Probe's leadership would change once again as Osler decided to return to school. This decision was prompted by the changing awareness of energy issues within Canadian society. The Energy and Resources Team had long focused its efforts on trying to convince the public that energy problems were both real and serious. In the aftermath

⁷⁰¹ Ibid.

⁷⁰² “Statement by Dr. Donald Chant,” 16 January 1975, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO.

of the 1973 energy crisis, Canadians became increasingly interested in potential solutions. As Osler recalls, he felt he was not adequately prepared to provide answers, particularly with respect to economic factors. This led him to pursue a Master's degree under natural resource economist Dr. John F. Helliwell at the University of British Columbia.⁷⁰³ In 1977, having completed his degree, Osler would return to Toronto where he worked to incorporate his ideas at Ontario Hydro.

In less than a year, Energy Probe had lost the two key figures that had guided it since its earliest days as the Energy and Resources Team. In their absence the group began to develop a new identity. Gone was the idea of utilizing Canada's resources in an effort to check American population growth and consumption. Instead, the group began to develop a strong anti-nuclear focus. Osler says of his and Kelly's approach, "I don't think we took a firm stand against nuclear. We were sort of nuclear watchdogs, but I don't think we were anti-nuclear."⁷⁰⁴ To this effect, the Energy and Resources Team limited their critiques of nuclear energy to the grounds that it detracted from the message of conservation and efficiency. In this respect, the Energy and Resources Team's attitude was quite typical of the Canadian environmental movement.⁷⁰⁵ While there had been an anti-nuclear movement in Canada dating back to the 1959 formation of the Canadian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament [CCND] and the Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament [CUCND], these groups focussed upon the military application,

⁷⁰³ Osler, interview.

⁷⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁰⁵ Greenpeace's earliest activities, while anti-nuclear, were designed to halt the testing of nuclear weapons at Amchitka (1971) and the Moruroa Atoll in French Polynesia (1972). Its opposition to the nuclear power industry came later.

and ensuing radioactive fallout, of nuclear weapons.⁷⁰⁶ Canadian activists did not turn their attention to the country's domestic nuclear power program until 1974 when India detonated a nuclear bomb utilizing plutonium manufactured in a reactor sold by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited [AECL].⁷⁰⁷ The change in attitude is best symbolized by the hiring of Barry Spinner in 1975. A graduate of the University of Toronto in 1969 with a degree in chemical engineering, he returned in 1973 to pursue a Master's in Engineering that focused upon nuclear chemistry and nuclear engineering. While working on his thesis he met Syed Naqvi, a political refugee who had been an Attaché at the Pakistani embassy in Paris. As Naqvi explained to a dumbfounded Spinner, Pakistan had been recently purchasing nuclear technology from France, which enabled them to create nuclear weapons. The revelation would have a profound impact on Spinner. As he recalls, "He told me all this and I had a serious crisis of, I'll say, technological faith."⁷⁰⁸ Feeling that his graduate work was merely preparing him to abet nuclear proliferation, he left his program and joined Energy Probe as its nuclear specialist. By raising awareness of nuclear issues among Canadians, Spinner hoped he could change public opinion, stop AECL from selling to Third World countries, and so turn the tide against global nuclear proliferation.⁷⁰⁹

Ontario Hydro, meanwhile, was in the midst of an ambitious nuclear expansion plan. Responsible for supplying the province's growing energy needs, which it estimated

⁷⁰⁶ Michael D. Mehta, *Risky Business: Nuclear Power and Public Protest in Canada* (Toronto: Lexington Books, 2005), 38-39; Michael Maurice Dufrense, "Let's Not Be Cremated Equal: The Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, 1959-1967," in *The Sixties in Canada*, Palaeologu, ed., 9-64.

⁷⁰⁷ Mehta, *Risky Business*, 39. For more on the effect of India's detonation on Canadian nuclear exports see Duane Bratt, *The Politics of CANDU Exports* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 119-128.

⁷⁰⁸ Barry Spinner, interview with author, 29 July 2009, conducted by telephone.

⁷⁰⁹ Ibid.

required a seven percent annual increase in capacity, Ontario Hydro opened its first nuclear power plant at Douglas Point in 1968. By that time a second plant, the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station, was already under construction. In 1974 Ontario Hydro announced plans to build an additional twenty nuclear plants over the next quarter century.⁷¹⁰ These plans ground to a halt in 1975 when, facing cost overruns, the public utility announced its intentions of instituting a twenty-seven percent rate hike.⁷¹¹ The province responded by appointing Dr. Arthur Porter to chair the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning, mandated to examine “the long-range electric power planning concepts of Ontario Hydro.”⁷¹² The Porter Commission, which supplied Energy Probe with funding to prepare its intervention, would become a focal point for the group, providing it with a ready-made forum to critique the nuclear industry. Energy Probe maintained a two-fold focus in its ensuing briefs. It argued that Ontario Hydro’s plan to maintain seven percent annual growth, which would require capital expenditures of \$80 billion by 1993, was both overblown and economically unviable. It was also argued that Ontario Hydro should abandon its focus on nuclear energy in favour of renewable energy and conservation.⁷¹³

Energy Probe also engaged in public outreach on nuclear power. In December 1975 it released the handbook *CANDU: An Analysis of the Canadian Nuclear Program*. Noting that continuing “down the path towards an expensive energy-intensive nuclear,

⁷¹⁰ Robert Macdonald, “Energy, ecology, and politics,” in *Ecology versus Politics in Canada*, ed. William Leiss (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 196.

⁷¹¹ Freeman, 163; Jamie Swift and Keith Stewart, *Hydro: The Decline and Fall of Ontario’s Electric Empire* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2004), 20.

⁷¹² Quoted in Walt Patterson, “Porter with nuclear reservations,” *New Scientist*, 2 November 1978, 362.

⁷¹³ These principles were outlined in “Energy Probe Program: October 1976-September 1977,” nd, 4, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO. See also, Bill Peden, “Submission to the Royal Commission on Electric Power Planning,” 14 November 1975, Porter Commission – Ont. Electric Planning 1975 –, F1057 MU7352, AO.

centralized, electric society” would prevent Canadians from pursuing “a lower energy, more decentralized, softer-technology society based upon conservation and renewable resources,”⁷¹⁴ the handbook highlighted a series of technical concerns with the CANDU program, particularly with respect to radioactive waste management, reprocessing technology-related-accident probabilities, occupational health hazards, and the security of the fuel cycle.⁷¹⁵

OPPOSING TRAJECTORIES WITHIN THE POLLUTION PROBE FOUNDATION

Energy Probe expanded quickly. In a little more than a year its staff grew from three to seven.⁷¹⁶ But this growth belied major problems that were developing within the Pollution Probe Foundation. While funding was available for work on energy-related issues, few donors were interested in the environmental work of Pollution Probe. Between the fiscal years ending 30 September 1974 and 1975 its revenue dropped from \$329,097 to \$119,128 and only bounced back slightly the following year.⁷¹⁷ In light of this the organization began to experience difficulty meeting payroll, which in turn began a downturn in the previously buoyant staff morale.

⁷¹⁴ *CANDU: An Analysis of the Canadian Nuclear Program* (Toronto: Pollution Probe Foundation, 1975), v, *Candu – Technical Handbook 1975-76*, F1057 MU7356, AO. It is interesting to note that \$1,000 provided by Environment Canada to fund the republication of this handbook in August 1976 was accompanied by a note asking that “the text should not include any mention of Environment Canada.” Jacqueline Cernat [Assistant Director General, Information Services Directorate, Environment Canada] to Barry Spinner, 25 August 1976, F1057 MU7356, AO.

⁷¹⁵ *CANDU*, 82.

⁷¹⁶ “Energy Probe Program: October 1976-September 1977,” 14-15; “Ecology House opens its doors,” *Probe Post* 3:3 (September-December 1980), 1.

⁷¹⁷ “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1974,” 5-6, Financial Statements, PPP; “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1975,” 4-5, Financial Statements, PPP; “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1976,” 4, Financial Statements, PPP.

Shrinking revenue coincided with the departure of the last of the organization's old guard. Executive director Peter Middleton opted to leave Pollution Probe in the spring of 1975. Having guided the ENGO through its rapid expansion, as well as the ensuing cutbacks, he began to feel "the edge is gone here and it's time for me to move on."⁷¹⁸ Pushing thirty – a ripe old age within the organization – he decided to parlay his experience and contacts and established a for-profit consulting firm, Peter Middleton and Associates. Specializing in energy issues, the firm quickly secured major contracts from the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, leading to the creation of the Office of Renewable Energy. Likewise, Middleton would play an important role in the creation of the Institute of Man and Resources on Prince Edward Island.⁷¹⁹ The first person Middleton hired was Peter Love, who had worked on waste issues for Pollution Probe since 1972. Shortly thereafter financial czar Tony Barrett left to pursue entrepreneurial opportunities in the field of environmental technology.⁷²⁰ In May 1976 Monte Hummel, who had succeeded Middleton as executive director, followed suit.⁷²¹ While the original intent had been to find a replacement for Hummel, the decision was eventually made to revert to a model where decisions were made by the collective whole of the Pollution Probe Foundation's staff. In retrospect, this decision appears to have been ill-conceived. In the midst of an economic downturn, the organization now lacked an identifiable leader who could serve as a mediator while at the same time be counted upon to make unpopular but necessary decisions regarding the Foundation's operations.

⁷¹⁸ Middleton, interview.

⁷¹⁹ MacEachern, *The Institute of Man and Resources*, 31-33; "Peter Middleton: The Entrepreneur of Renewables," *Saturday Night*, March 1977, 32-33.

⁷²⁰ "People," *Probe Bulletin* 7 (May 1975), 2, PPP.

⁷²¹ "Director Leaves," *Probe Bulletin* 11 (May 1976), 2, PPP.

Pollution Probe assumed a decidedly lower profile in 1975 and 1976. In the spring of 1975 it joined the Metropolitan Toronto Airport Review Committee [MTARC], a coalition of sixteen environment-oriented groups that opposed the construction of the Pickering international airport, which had been given the green light by government in February.⁷²² Working in concert with the pre-existing People or Planes, an organization formed by residents directly affected by the proposed development, MTARC was designed to demonstrate that opposition to the airport was not merely a not-in-my-backyard issue.⁷²³ As was noted, their continued opposition to the development was based on a belief that transportation planning should emphasize high speed rail service, not the oil-intensive airplanes, and the fact that the airport was situated on Class I agricultural land, an increasingly rare commodity in Metro Toronto.⁷²⁴ While People or Planes worked to keep opposition to the airport in the media – for example, occupying a house within the construction zone that was scheduled for demolition – MTARC lobbied policy makers. This dual-pronged effort, coupled with the provincial government's abandonment of the Toronto-Centred Region Plan and a well-timed provincial election that saw the governing Conservatives' numbers drop to minority status, resulted in the airport's cancellation that autumn.⁷²⁵ Pollution Probe also served as the coordinating secretariat of the Garbage Coalition, a federation of sixty-one anti-waste groups located throughout Ontario. An alliance of recycling advocates and localized groups opposed to the

⁷²² Other groups included the Canadian Environmental Law Association and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

⁷²³ Wood, interview; Elliot J. Feldman and Jerome Milch, *The Politics of Canadian Airport Development: Lessons for Federalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1979), 104; Walter Stewart, *Paper Juggernaut: Big Government Gone Mad* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1979), 90, 144; Hector Massey and Charles Godfrey, *People or Planes* (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1972).

⁷²⁴ "Probe on Pickering: 'Take A Train!'" *Probe Bulletin* 8 (August 1975), 1, PPP.

⁷²⁵ Wood, interview; "Pickering Airport," *Probe Bulletin* 9 (November 1975), 2, PPP; Frisken, *The Public Metropolis*, 159.

placement of landfill sites in their communities, it played a central role in lobbying the provincial government to abandon plans to open dumps in Hope Township and Pickering.⁷²⁶

CONCLUSION

An analysis of Pollution Probe between 1970 and 1976 provides important insight into the development of the environmental movement in Canada. In one respect, it demonstrates the changing foci of the movement. Beginning with a specific interest in pollution issues, broadly defined, the organization would rapidly develop a more sophisticated analysis that led it to address the underlying problems such as unbridled energy and resource consumption and ill-conceived land use policy. A full analysis of Pollution Probe's contributions during this period, however, would also have to include its role in institution-building, as it would play an important role in building the environmental community, in Toronto and beyond.

This period also highlights funding's central role in the development of the environmental movement. Having identified available funding opportunities from government, corporations, and private foundations, Pollution Probe was able to grow throughout the early 1970s. It was this growth that enabled the organization to devote itself full-time to environmental issues and to address the diverse issues it did. The increased difficulty in accessing these funds in the wake of the economic recession that developed in the closing months of 1973 would have dire consequences for Pollution

⁷²⁶ Eric Hellman, interview with author, 12 January 2010, conducted by telephone; Stef Donev, "Metro garbage can't go to Hope," *Toronto Star*, 16 May 1975, A1; Michael Best, "Metro's garbage: Bad news and good," *Toronto Star*, 21 May 1975, D1; Brian Dexter, "Pickering garbage site approved by province," *Toronto Star*, 17 February 1976, B2.

Probe, forcing it to cut its workforce from twenty-five to thirteen, which in turn led the ENGO to narrow its focus.

Chapter Five: The Changing ENGO Landscape, 1977-1984

The environmental movement emerged during a time of economic prosperity. In the wake of the 1973 economic downturn, much of the government and public enthusiasm for environmental initiatives was redirected towards the economy. Whereas politicians once felt obliged to publicly align with the movement, by 1977 many politicians in Canada and the United States had grown, in the words of Robert Paehlke, “openly disdainful of environmental activism.”⁷²⁷

The environmental movement’s declining profile was exemplified in the 19 May 1977 Toronto *Star* article “Pollution Probe’s alive and fighting for environment.” Written in “Where are they now?” style, the article’s opening lines were telling of the one-time media darling’s declining public status. “Remember Pollution Probe, that group that operated out of the University of Toronto in the early 1970s, the group that wanted to change the world by making it cleaner? Probe is still around, and the name of the game is change, but they’re playing it differently now.” ““Sure, we’re still here, because the problem is still here,”” staff member JoAnn Opperman is quoted saying. ““We’re still trying to change things, but we’ve changed the way we play the game.””⁷²⁸ As Opperman intimated, Pollution Probe no longer engaged in the high profile action campaigns of its early days, having shifted its attention to behind the scenes policy work. Just four months later a similar feature ran in the University of Toronto’s *Varsity*. Opening with the question “Whatever happened to the public concern over pollution of a few years ago?,” it notes that the issue had been supplanted by economic concerns. As the author

⁷²⁷ Paehlke, “Eco-History,” 18.

⁷²⁸ Ross Howard, “Pollution Probe’s alive and fighting for environment,” Toronto *Star*, 19 May 1977, F7.

continued, “Although the attention of the public has shifted, Pollution Probe still lives, and despite the lower profile of this independent public interest group, it still remains concerned about pollution.”⁷²⁹ Pollution Probe lived on, but no one really noticed.

The years 1977 to 1984 would prove to be a transitional period for the Pollution Probe Foundation, and the environmental community more broadly. While Energy Probe continued to carve out its niche, Pollution Probe struggled to define its role within the broader movement. Continued financial difficulties, which placed considerable strain on its employees, ultimately led Energy Probe to abandon the Pollution Probe Foundation. Meanwhile, the environmental community continued to be refashioned as Greenpeace established a presence in Toronto, bringing with it its direct action tactics, as well as the business-minded Is Five Foundation, which would achieve major success in the realm of recycling. While the period saw Pollution Probe endure much turmoil, by the end it would see a reversal of the group’s fortunes, having identified two issues – toxic waste and the quality of the municipal drinking water supply – which resonated with the public.

COPING WITH A LOWER PROFILE

Pollution Probe was fully conscious of its lowered profile by the late 1970s. While the staff members quoted in the Toronto *Star* article suggested it was part and parcel of the ENGOs new approach, those involved were clearly not content, and attempted to increase its public profile throughout 1977 by orchestrating a series of “short term action

⁷²⁹ Michael Kanter, “Group continues pollution probe,” *The Varsity*, 28 September 1977, 12. A review of the *Globe and Mail* reveals that Pollution Probe was mentioned in eighty-four articles in 1970 and sixty-four in 1972; in 1977 they appeared three times, and twelve times in 1979.

campaigns.”⁷³⁰ In April 1977 it launched the Pop Posse, which encouraged Ontarians to report violations of the Environmental Protection Act, particularly with respect to a recent amendment that required retailers to display a stock of returnable soft drink containers equal to, or exceeding, that of the non-returnable containers.⁷³¹ This was followed in September by the Boomerang campaign which was designed to draw attention to the 975 pounds each person generated in packaging annually. This campaign encouraged consumers throughout the province to send excessive packaging “back to manufacturers to protest the waste of materials, energy and consumer dollars as well as disposal expenses.”⁷³² Pollution Probe also experimented with announcing awards, such as the Disposamaniac Award for companies found to be particularly wasteful in their packaging, and the Imagineering Award that recognized “the positive environmental achievements of industry, government and small business.”⁷³³ While these were described as “action campaigns” they bore little resemblance to Pollution Probe’s earlier efforts. Whereas the ENGO once strove to set an example by tackling major environmental problems head-on, now it placed the burden on concerned members of the public. Unfortunately for the ENGO, these efforts failed to make much of an impression on the media and the general public.

⁷³⁰ “Pollution Probe’s Action Campaign 1977,” nd, 3, Annual Report 1977, PPP.

⁷³¹ “Pop Posse kits to help you report soft drink sellers,” Toronto *Star*, 3 May 1977, C2; JoAnn Opperman to Ontario Garbage Coalition members, 30 April 1977, Garbage Coalition, PPP; JoAnn Opperman, interview with author, 3 February 2010, conducted by telephone. As of January 1978 this resulted in just one fine being levied, for \$400 against the Tamblyn Drugmart. “Pop Posse Pays Off,” *Environmental Newsletter*, 18 January 1978, 2, Factsheets/Brochures 1978, PPP.

⁷³² “Brite! Brite! Brite! Pollution Probe’s Boomerang Information Sheet,” nd, Factsheets/Brochures 1977, PPP.

⁷³³ “Probe Gives Pat on the Back for Environmental Effort,” 20 October 1977, Press Releases 1977, PPP; “Probe Pounces on Corporate Culprits,” 18 January 1978, Press Releases 1978, PPP.

The Pollution Probe Foundation also endeavoured to raise its profile with the creation of a bi-monthly news magazine, the *Probe Post*. Launched in 1978, the founding editor was Robert Gibson. While Gibson held a Master's degree in political science, he had no previous journalism experience, which necessitated a crash course on the art of editing with the *Globe and Mail*'s Ross Howard.⁷³⁴ Featuring material written by staff and volunteers with Pollution Probe and Energy Probe, the magazine highlighted projects underway at the Pollution Probe Foundation as well as issues of concern nationwide. The *Probe Post* proved to be a modest success, continuing publication until 1991.

The Pollution Probe Foundation's major undertaking during the late 1970s was the development of Ecology House. Initially a project of Energy Probe, the plan was to acquire an existing property, which would be renovated in order to highlight the manifold practical conservation technologies and alternative energy sources, such as solar, that middle class urbanites could adopt in their households. First announced in the Pollution Probe Foundation's 1975-76 annual report, the first year saw Energy Probe's Richard Fine, who originated the project, exploring the technological applications and funding avenues for what promised to be a costly endeavour.⁷³⁵ In 1977, Energy Probe acquired a three story Victorian building located at 12 Madison Avenue, in the heart of downtown Toronto, and began renovations. As Marilyn Aarons explains, the Foundation gained ownership of this property in a rather roundabout manner involving two levels of government: "That building was used by the construction crew when they were building

⁷³⁴ Gibson completed a PhD in 1982 and went on to edit *Alternatives* journal from 1984 to 2002. Robert Gibson, interview with author, 16 October 2009, conducted by telephone; "Robert B. Gibson," [CV] Faculty of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, last modified August 2009, accessed 18 November 2009, <http://www.environment.uwaterloo.ca/ers/faculty/documents/RBGcvshort2009.pdf>.

⁷³⁵ "Energy Probe Program: October 1976-September 1977," nd, 3, 14, Energy Probe – Establishment Energy + Resources Team, F1057 MU7347, AO; "Ecology House opens its doors," *Probe Post* 3:3 (September-December 1980), 1.

the subway along Bloor Street. When they were through with the building it was a mess We negotiated a deal that the city of Toronto that owned it would reduce the price considerably and the federal government would buy it, and we would have the use of it.”⁷³⁶ The deal saw the Pollution Probe Foundation lease the building for a dollar a year for five years.⁷³⁷

While housing designed to demonstrate energy efficiency and renewable sources already existed – such as the Ark and Conserver One, both of which were located on Prince Edward Island⁷³⁸ – Energy Probe's project was unique in two respects. Whereas other demonstration projects were typically located in rural settings, Ecology House was unmistakably urban. Likewise, other projects tended to be built utilizing the most advanced technologies, regardless of price. Whereas these futuristic projects aimed to highlight potential achievements, Energy Probe's was a retrofit project, designed to showcase practical ways to save energy and money. Nonetheless, Ecology House turned out to be a pricey undertaking and was made possible only through funding from over thirty corporations and foundations (including Shell Oil, Dow Chemicals, and the Bronfman Foundation), support from the municipal, provincial, and federal governments, and a phalanx of eighty volunteers who provided labour. The renovations, which began the last week of June 1979 under the supervision of Brian Marshall, included attaching solar panels, super-insulating the building, replacing the roof, upgrading the wiring and plumbing, setting up a grey water system, which recycled water used in daily activities

⁷³⁶ Marilyn Aarons, interview with author, 29 November 2009, conducted by telephone.

⁷³⁷ “Probe gets Ecohouse keys,” *Probe Post* 1:5 (January-February 1979), 4; “Federal Government Provides Assistance for Toronto 'Ecology House' Project,” 3 May 1978, Press Releases 1978, PPP.

⁷³⁸ See MacEachern, *The Institute of Man and Resources*.

for use in irrigation, and installing a composting toilet.⁷³⁹ Although renovations were completed in April 1980 – an event marked by an all-night party for the project's supporters – fine-tuning delayed the official opening until that October.⁷⁴⁰ Once opened, the building became a popular destination for school field trips as well as workshops on topics such as passive solar heating and the utilization of alternative energy in buildings.⁷⁴¹

LAWRENCE SOLOMON AND THE CONSERVER SOLUTION

In 1977 the Science Council of Canada issued its landmark report *Canada as a Conserver Society: An Agenda For Action*. The main concept, first raised by the Science Council in a 1973 report,⁷⁴² referred to a society that “promotes economy of design of all systems, ie, 'doing more with less'; favours re-use or recycling and, wherever possible, reduction at source; and questions the ever-growing per capita demand for consumer goods, artificially encouraged by modern marketing techniques.”⁷⁴³ Eschewing discussion of socio-political matters in favour of more practical, technological possibilities, the Science Council, according to John B. Robinson and D. Scott Slocombe, was able “to argue that

⁷³⁹ *Ecology House Newsletter*, 1 May 1980, Ecology House 1981, PPP; Linda Stone, “Old house points way to energy-saving future,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 November 1977, BL4; Ann Finlayson, “Open the house, close the door,” *Maclean's*, 24 November 1980, np.

⁷⁴⁰ “Ecology House opens its doors,” *Probe Post* 3:3 (September-December 1980), 1-2; Linda Stone, “Old house points way to energy-saving future,” *Globe and Mail*, 28 November 1980, BL4.

⁷⁴¹ See, for example, “Ecology House,” *Globe and Mail*, 4 April 1981, FA4. A hardly impartial Lawrence Solomon would proclaim in his *Globe and Mail* column “Speaking of Energy” that Ecology House was “one of the best indicators of what’s possible” in terms of retrofitting older homes. Lawrence Solomon, “Energy invested in old buildings,” *Globe and Mail*, 20 August 1981, T2. In 1984 Jim Savage, then-manager of Ecology House, began his own column in the *Globe and Mail*, titled “Energywise.” See, for example, Jim Savage, “Weatherstripping isn’t the whole story,” *Globe and Mail*, 1 September 1984, H3.

⁷⁴² The first reference to this concept stated that “Canadians as individuals, and their governments, institutions and industries [must] begin the transition from a consumer society preoccupied with resource exploitation to a conserver society engaged in more constructive endeavours.” *Natural Resource Policy Issues in Canada* (Ottawa: Science Council of Canada, 1973), 9.

⁷⁴³ *Canada as a Conserver Society: An Agenda For Action* (Ottawa: Science Council of Canada, 1978), 9.

significant improvements in emissions reduction, land-use and resource-development practices, environmental protection, and the efficiency of resource and materials use were all possible through improved technological development without significant reductions in material standards of living.”⁷⁴⁴

While the concept of the *Conservator Society* became a topic of considerable interest within certain academic and environmentally-inclined circles, the majority of Canadians had a limited understanding, if any, of its meaning. Lawrence Solomon, a Romanian-born journalist with a background in product promotion,⁷⁴⁵ read the report and saw an opportunity to write a popular account for the general public. As Solomon recalls, “I approached Energy Probe and Pollution Probe at the time to see if I could collaborate with them in producing that book. I thought that having them as a resource would help me in writing my book.”⁷⁴⁶ Solomon had already secured funding from the Canada Council for the Arts for the project, and the Pollution Probe Foundation decided to endorse the project. In 1978 Solomon’s *The Conservator Solution* was published. As the author laid out in the introduction:

Conservator principles only reconcile our environment with our economy; our ends with our means We have the capability today to begin phasing out all non-

⁷⁴⁴ John B. Robinson and D. Scott Slocombe, “Exploring a Sustainable Future for Canada,” in *Life in 2030: Exploring a Sustainable Future for Canada*, ed. John B. Robinson (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996), 5. However, as Dr. Ursula Franklin, chair of the Canada Science Council’s Committee on the Implications of a Conservator Society noted in a 31 May 1977 letter to the editor, “By necessity, the work of the Science Council addresses itself mainly in the technology-related facets of the problem. But the effective execution of the required changes regarding the careful and efficient use of energy and the development of renewable sources of energy require political decisions.” Ursula Franklin, untitled letter to the editor, *Globe and Mail*, 31 May 1977, 6.

⁷⁴⁵ Elaine Dewar provides a short biographical sketch of Solomon in *Cloak of Green*, noting that he was born in Bucharest, Romania in 1948 and came to Canada with his parents in the early 1950s. He attended McGill for a single year. Afterwards, he worked a variety of jobs and travelled overseas. In 1971 he began work at “Synergetic Communications Corporation to write and edit magazines about industries the company had been hired to promote.” Elaine Dewar, *Cloak of Green* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1995), 358-359.

⁷⁴⁶ Lawrence Solomon, interview with author, 14 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

renewable forms of energy, such as gas and oil, and uranium, and begin phasing in a 100% renewable energy base, one founded on energy sources that will never run out on us We can begin phasing out our near-total dependence on continually depleting natural resources and begin phasing in a 100% recyclable economy, where our used resources are diverted from the dump and recycled for society's use. And we can strive for ever-increasing efficiencies, for doing more with less, for starting in earnest to unleash the imponderable potentials in the human mind, to produce an environmentally safe and economically sound place we'll be proud to pass on to our children. But we have to start now, or our room to maneuver will soon close in on us.”⁷⁴⁷

Released by Doubleday in Canada and the United States, the book received lavish praise from the likes of Maurice Strong, the former executive director of the United Nations Environmental Program, who proclaimed that “This book demonstrates convincingly that a Conserver Society is not only feasible; it can be an attractive, dynamic and exciting alternative to the gloomy future which the doomsters predict for us.”⁷⁴⁸

While the Pollution Probe Foundation's support was featured prominently on *The Conserver Solution's* dust jacket and title page, the endorsement became a matter of contention after Solomon completed his initial draft. According to Chris Conway, an Energy Probe staff member, discussion arose regarding the appropriateness of endorsing the product. As he recalls, “It's creative, it's insightful, it's funny. It's a lot of really good things, but it didn't present the themes and the issues the way at the time a lot of people thought Pollution Probe wanted to present its public face. It's a little too much of a polemic, a little too casual with the facts.”⁷⁴⁹ The major contention with the book was that it exhibited a wholehearted faith in the ability of the free market to self-correct problems

⁷⁴⁷ Lawrence Solomon, *The Conserver Solution* (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1978), 4.

⁷⁴⁸ “What they're saying about The Conserver Solution” [promotional brochure], nd, Larry Solomon, F1057 MU7347, AO. Lydia Dotto, in her *Globe and Mail* review, was more measured in her comments. While she notes that it “is brightly written, clear and for the most part well-reasoned,” she also points out that “It all sounds very utopian and it's bound to invite scepticism from the other side.” Lydia Dotto, review of *The Conserver Solution*, by Lawrence Solomon, *Globe and Mail*, 2 December 1978, 44.

⁷⁴⁹ Chris Conway, interview with author, 14 July 2009, conducted by telephone.

related to the economy, the environment, and society. In some ways this did not stray far from the Foundation's earlier ideas. For example, in the seventh chapter, "Paying Our Way," Solomon called for an end to hidden subsidies, arguing that industry should be charged the cost of any pollution incurred, rather than having taxpayers foot the bill. This idea was wholly consistent with the ideas expressed in Pollution Probe's submission to Task Force Hydro, which argued that the cost of air pollution must be factored into Ontario Hydro rates, as well as the ENGO's earlier work on solid waste, which highlighted the fact that the true cost of recycling must incorporate the savings from diverting material from landfill sites. However, some of Solomon's ideas took on the appearance of being overly ideological, with little apparent relationship to the environment. For example, in chapter twenty, "Who Has To Do What," Solomon suggested a number of initiatives the government must pursue in order to achieve the desired outcome. While many of the ideas, such as "Adopt Total-Costing of Products," "Introduce Mandatory Life-Cycle Costing," "Remove Disincentives to Conserve" and "Promote Efficient and Durable Products," raised few objections, the suggestion to "Eliminate Red Tape by Simplifying Bureaucratic Requirements" raised a few eyebrows. Even more alarming to some was the recommendation to "Eliminate the Minimum Wage and Social Welfare Programs." As Solomon explained, "The pricing mechanism of the free market is greatly distorted by the myriad of social welfare plans, and the minimum wage, which prevent people from working for nothing – if they choose – and companies from obtaining cheap labour where they can. The minimum wage has had questionable social value in Canada, since it is so low it only perpetuates the worker in poverty."⁷⁵⁰ In

⁷⁵⁰ Solomon, *The Conserver Solution*, 184.

place of the minimum wage and social welfare programs, Solomon proposed that a negative income tax system, set at the poverty line, be established. Family incomes over the poverty line would be taxed at a flat rate of fifty percent, while families earning less than the threshold would receive a negative income tax bringing them up to the minimum. These ideas were particularly controversial within the Pollution Probe Foundation. As Chris Conway recalls, there was concern with the optics of endorsing a book that called for a pure free market, while both Pollution Probe and Energy Probe continued to call for government intervention in environmental matters. Furthermore, there was concern that Solomon never addressed the impracticalities in implementing his ideas. While perhaps only Norm Rubin, Energy Probe's recently hired nuclear specialist, was completely comfortable with *The Conserver Solution* in its totality, after a lengthy internal debate on the subject it was decided to release the book. This was rationalized by saying that the organization should be the conveyor of new ideas and approaches. "Plus, we were really, really tired of talking about the issue," states Conway.⁷⁵¹ Following the release of *The Conserver Solution*, Solomon returned to Energy Probe as a full-time volunteer, also writing a column for the *Probe Post*.

ENERGY PROBE'S OTTAWA OFFICE

Energy Probe had long considered the possibility of opening an Ottawa office. Given the federal government's jurisdiction over natural resources, there was a steady series of meetings held in the city dating back to the early days of the Energy and Resources Team. The office finally became a reality in 1977 when David Brooks joined the staff. Unlike

⁷⁵¹ Chris Conway to Ryan O'Connor, personal correspondence, 9 September 2010.

the majority of his colleagues at the Pollution Probe Foundation, Brooks was not a young idealist at the outset of his professional career. A native of Massachusetts, Brooks held an MS in Geology from the California Institute of Technology and a PhD in Economics from the University of Colorado. He had moved to Canada in 1970 to become Chief of the Mineral Economics Research Division of the federal Department of Energy, Mines and Resources [EMR], and in 1973 was named the founding Director of the EMR's Office of Energy Conservation [OEC]. A small operation – initially it consisted of Brooks and his first hire, ex-Pollution Prober Brian Kelly – the OEC was charged with the development of a national energy conservation policy.⁷⁵² After three and a half years, Brooks was ready to move on again. He and his wife took a prolonged vacation throughout Europe and contemplated their future. With their children grown, they were in a position to take financial risks. As such, he opted to pursue his research interests under the employ of Energy Probe, where the financial rewards were less certain, but the potential for personal fulfillment was greater. As Brooks explained in an interview:

I thought we'd had most of the fun times in the Office of Energy Conservation. It was inevitably going to be bureaucratized, which I don't say as a criticism. It's inevitable in government when you take a ginger group and then it begins to spin and eventually you've got to fold it back into the bureaucracy, and that was happening. But I also wanted to explore new areas We were just getting into the notions of soft energy paths and I really wanted to explore that more and see where we could go with a much more conservation[ist] program than the government would every countenance At the time I thought Energy Probe was by far the best group around. Very good work, very professional work, but I wasn't going to move to Toronto, so the Ottawa office was really not a choice of Energy Probe. It was the only way they and I could come to an agreement on where I would be.⁷⁵³

⁷⁵² David Brooks, interview with author, 13 July 2009, conducted by telephone; “David B. Brooks – PhD,” [CV] Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, last modified July 2004, accessed 15 May 2010, <http://www.cecmanitoba.ca/File/BrooksResume.pdf>; Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 349-350.

⁷⁵³ Brooks, interview.

Assigned the role of Energy Probe's Ottawa liaison, he also agreed to attend at least one staff meeting in Toronto per month.

Brooks' interest in soft energy paths – a move from capital-intensive, high technology energy solutions toward sustainable technology and conservation – led him to write *Zero Energy Growth For Canada*. Written over the course of a year, the project was made possible by a Rockefeller grant secured by Lawrence Solomon. The book, published by McClelland and Stewart in 1981, links the idea of zero energy growth to the conserver concept of Solomon's 1978 publication. Brooks wrote,

This book is about Canada, but its main theories and conclusions can be applied to any industrial country. It has been written as a contribution to the growing debate surrounding the idea of a conserver society – a society that depends less upon nonrenewable resources, material goods, and high technology and more upon renewable resources, human services, and appropriate technology. This definition is necessarily vague, but it is clear that energy policy provides one of the most proximate and effective levers for moving towards such a society. Indeed, it is impossible to conceive of a conserver society in the absence of zero energy growth (perhaps even slightly negative growth) combined with reliance on dispersed renewable sources of energy. The alternatives are all ultimately either infeasible or undesirable.⁷⁵⁴

Furthermore, the book called for a paradigm shift, from the “current focus on the efficiency of energy use toward what might be called the *ethics* of energy use, *away from what energy can do for us and toward what we ought to do with energy.*”⁷⁵⁵

GREENPEACE TORONTO, ENERGY PROBE, AND THE NUCLEAR CRITIQUE

In September 1971 Greenpeace revolutionized the role of environmental activists by bringing non-violent direct action to the movement. Whereas Pollution Probe earned its early reputation for its action campaigns, which saw it utilize the media to focus attention

⁷⁵⁴ David Brooks, *Zero Energy Growth For Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1981), viii.

⁷⁵⁵ Italics in original. *Ibid.*, x.

on environmental concerns, Greenpeace raised the bar by targeting objectionable activity with tactics such as occupations and sabotage. Greenpeace's daring adventures captured the attention of many would-be environmentalists, leading to a quick expansion of affiliate groups. Unlike Pollution Probe, whose activities and media coverage were confined to Canada, thereby inspiring a plethora of affiliates across the country, Greenpeace addressed matters of global concern, were covered by the international media, and inspired the creation of affiliate groups worldwide. As Rex Weyler explains, "The affiliations remained informal, generally based on some individual having stepped forward and taken an interest."⁷⁵⁶ Such was the case in Toronto, where John Bennett opened a Greenpeace office in autumn 1975. Employed by the University of Toronto Student Council as the Secretary to the Executive Council, he had been involved in left wing politics throughout his undergraduate studies. However, prior to attending an on-campus lecture delivered by Greenpeace co-founder Bob Hunter he had no experience with environmental issues. As Bennett explained, "It felt like my kind of organization."⁷⁵⁷ Therefore, when he heard Hunter comment that the group could use a foothold in the city, Bennett promptly offered up his office space. After leaving his campus job the Greenpeace operations were based out of his apartment. In January 1977, having received a Local Initiatives Program grant for the "Greenpeace Toronto Education Project," the office moved to a storefront on Gerrard Street. This was followed by a succession of offices in downtown United Churches when the grant ran out.⁷⁵⁸

⁷⁵⁶ Weyler, *Greenpeace*, 252.

⁷⁵⁷ John Bennett, interview with author, 8 July 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid.*; Dan McDermott, interview with author, 26 June 2008, conducted by telephone.

Dan McDermott, one of Greenpeace Toronto's first members, provides insight into the group's motivation. A native of Rochester, New York, McDermott had been living in Toronto with his Canadian wife. Having recently lost his job at a printing plant, and finding himself with a decent severance package, he decided to dedicate his time to an environmental cause. There was little debate over which group he would affiliate himself. As he recalls, "I was a veteran of the sixties, and by the mid-seventies was noticing that it all seemed to have dissipated. And then along comes this organization which got rubber boats in between a harpoon and a whale, and immediately the approach captivated me."⁷⁵⁹ While Pollution Probe remained the largest environmental group in Toronto, McDermott was wholly uninterested in joining it. In an indictment of its increased emphasis on behind the scenes work, McDermott described the city's oldest ENGO as "wimpy" and "ineffective." "I wanted something that was more active, more cutting edge," he recalls, adding that "There was a certain glamour to being with Greenpeace in those days."⁷⁶⁰ Strangely, just six years earlier McDermott's words would have explained his reasons for joining Pollution Probe.

The first year was a rather blasé affair by Greenpeace standards, mainly consisting of selling pins to raise money, which was then sent to the organization's Vancouver office.⁷⁶¹ In the Toronto chapter's first brush with direct action, members Dan McDermott and Michael Earle participated in Greenpeace's second anti-sealing expedition, held in March 1977. McDermott shared a tent with Paul Watson in what would turn out to be the latter's last activity as a member of the organization, and which saw the protesters

⁷⁵⁹ McDermott, interview.

⁷⁶⁰ According to McDermott the active core of Greenpeace Toronto in the early days were himself and his now ex-wife Patty, John Bennett, Joanne Szabo, Michael Earle, and Carol Bailey. Ibid.

⁷⁶¹ Bennett, interview.

stranded on ice floes by an ill-timed blizzard.⁷⁶² While McDermott was content to play a supporting role to the Vancouver headquarters, John Bennett had a different frame of mind. As Bennett recalls, “We were sitting in Toronto, and wanting to be involved in a direct action organization. The only action was being organized out of Vancouver It seemed to me we should be organizing our own things.”⁷⁶³

Doug Saunders was a relative newcomer to Greenpeace Toronto in the summer of 1977. Having recently taken a leave from his PhD studies in photochemistry at the University of Toronto, he had grown particularly frustrated with the Porter Commission hearings on Ontario Hydro’s long-term planning. As he explains, the commission “really implemented my understanding and recognition that our energy future was being decided by a small group of technical experts and a small group of political types who had decided that ... the future and viability of AECL [Atomic Energy of Canada Limited] was more important really than the health and well-being of Ontarians.”⁷⁶⁴ While Saunders consulted with Energy Probe during the Porter Commission, his own background in direct action – he had trained in New England in the conduct of non-violent opposition to nuclear station construction⁷⁶⁵ – led him to join the Toronto chapter of Greenpeace. As he explains,

I always appreciated and was drawn to some of the work Greenpeace had done because I felt it was important to capture people’s hearts as well as their minds in terms of environmental issues and I felt that Greenpeace in particular saw its role

⁷⁶² McDermott, interview.

⁷⁶³ Bennett, interview.

⁷⁶⁴ Douglas Saunders, interview with author, 9 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁷⁶⁵ As Robert Gottlieb points out, “The 1960s-style direct-action tactics within the antinuclear movement were first employed in February 1974, when Sam Lovejoy, a member of the Montague Farm rural commune in northwestern Massachusetts, used a crowbar to knock down a local utility’s tower in his protest against a proposed nuclear power plant. Lovejoy’s action found support among an eclectic constituency of rural commune members, former anti-Vietnam War activists, and other one-time counterculture participants in and around northern New England.” Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 237.

as kind of being out front and drawing attention to issues that other groups could then follow up and provide some of the more well developed arguments to support it.⁷⁶⁶

Concerned that opponents of nuclear energy were being given short shrift by the government, the members of Greenpeace Toronto were itching for action. At this juncture they were inspired by Tony McQuail, an outspoken nuclear opponent who lived near the Bruce Nuclear Generating Station, then under construction. McQuail, who was a Quaker farmer, had initially considered taking his team of horses to plough land on the construction site, but this idea was dashed because “it wasn’t good land, so I couldn’t make the argument that they were wasting good land.” Instead, he turned to the members of Greenpeace Toronto and suggested they attempt to breach security at the station in order to highlight its susceptibility to a terrorist strike.⁷⁶⁷

The plan was rather simple. As Saunders explains, “In Greenpeace-style the idea was to canoe in early in the morning and to plant a banner on the containment building of the reactor, and to leave before anybody caught on to it, and then do the media work around that.”⁷⁶⁸ The stunt, carried out on 11 July 1977, began well. At 4:00 AM Saunders, Bennett, and Rich Curry were dropped off by McQuail, and paddled their rented canoe across the bay to an area close to the nuclear facility. Observing the security from a safe cover, they noted that it consisted of a lone patrolman circling the site every forty-five minutes. Rushing in and testing the doors to various buildings onsite – according to Bennett the doors leading to the waste pool were unlocked – they approached the

⁷⁶⁶ Saunders, interview.

⁷⁶⁷ A war resister originally from the United States, McQuail had come into contact with the members of Greenpeace Toronto during the Porter Commission. McQuail belonged to a Goderich-based group called CANTDU, which prepared a submission opposing nuclear energy. Tony McQuail, interview with author, 19 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁷⁶⁸ Saunders, interview.

containment building and unfurled their Greenpeace banner. As Saunders recalls with a laugh, “We probably needed to have a banner that was five times larger than what we had.”⁷⁶⁹ At a mere six by three feet, it was hardly the photogenic prop they desired. Efforts to capture the moment on camera were spoiled when Curry forgot to use the flash on his Kodak Instamatic, while Saunders, accustomed to laboratory work, attempted to preserve the scene using photographic slides. Before they could make their escape the trio were apprehended by security. Under questioning they revealed their Greenpeace affiliation and, much to their relief, were summarily released. While Bennett and Curry remained to handle local media requests, Saunders was flown to the CBC studios in Toronto to provide his account of the event.⁷⁷⁰ The event was the lead story on the CBC television news and second on CTV; Bennett suggests that it only made it onto the fourth page of the *Globe and Mail* because Ontario Hydro had time to initiate a defensive media campaign before the next edition was released.⁷⁷¹

On 18 July 1977, the provincial government gave the go-ahead for Ontario Hydro to proceed with construction of its third nuclear power station, to be located at Darlington. This was particularly galling for anti-nuclear activists because the government granted the project an exemption from the Environmental Assessment Act [EAA].⁷⁷² While Energy Minister James Taylor insisted that plans for the nuclear station were too far advanced at the time of the EAA’s passage in 1975, and that any delays

⁷⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁷⁰ “Greenpeace sneaks into N-plant,” *Globe and Mail*, 12 July 1977, 4; Weyler, *Greenpeace*, 510-511; Bennett, interview; Saunders, interview; McQuail, interview.

⁷⁷¹ Bennett, interview. Energy Minister James Taylor was rather lighthearted about the event. As he stated later that day in the legislature, “As a matter of fact, we encourage visitors. May I add, preferably not by canoe.” He also referred to the Greenpeace members as “a few environmental streakers ... interested in a little publicity.” “Greenpeace sneaks into N-plant,” 4.

⁷⁷² “Ontario okays nuclear plant near Oshawa,” *Toronto Star*, 19 July 1977, A2; Freeman, *The Politics of Power*, 164.

would prove costly, the Opposition was incensed, noting that Ontario Hydro's request for an exemption had been filed one year prior, providing plenty of time for a proper hearing.⁷⁷³ Greenpeace joined the chorus, stating in a press release that the government was "ignoring the potential danger to the environment and to public safety." Consequently, they announced they would utilize non-violent action to halt construction in Darlington.⁷⁷⁴

Greenpeace made good on its threat on 1 October 1977. Together with approximately sixty members of Save the Environment from Atomic Pollution [SEAP], a Bowmanville-based anti-nuclear group, twelve members of Greenpeace Toronto marched from the local zoo to the site of Darlington Nuclear Generating Station, which had just recently begun construction. While the inclement weather led the members of SEAP to return home shortly after arrival at the construction site, the Greenpeace members pitched two tents, intent on forcing a confrontation. As an unidentified member informed a CBC reporter, "We'll stay here and impede construction as long as we can."⁷⁷⁵ After refusing Ontario Hydro and police officials' requests to leave, the twelve were arrested and forcibly removed from the site. Charged with trespassing, they were released upon

⁷⁷³ As MPP Donald MacDonald stated, there were "no insurmountable reasons why the environment studies could not have been launched a year or more ago. Instead the Government sat idly by while Ontario Hydro conducted its own in-house studies, and has apparently accepted them as adequate." Provincial NDP leader Stephen Lewis vowed to make the government pay, claiming that "The policies of Ontario Hydro are sure to become a cause celebre in the Legislature in the next few months and into 1976." Quoted in Arthur Johnson, "Impact testing issue seized by opposition," *Globe and Mail*, 24 August 1977, 5.

⁷⁷⁴ "Ontario okays nuclear plant near Oshawa," *Toronto Star*, 19 July 1977, A2.

⁷⁷⁵ "Greenpeace protests at Darlington site," CBC Digital Archives, 1 October 1977, accessed 22 August 2010, http://archives.cbc.ca/science_technology/energy_production/clips/915/.

promising to appear in court the following month, and to keep away from all Ontario Hydro properties.⁷⁷⁶

Having languished in the background, the Toronto chapter of Greenpeace had in a short time risen to national prominence. As Dan McDermott recalls with pride, “Within a matter of a very few months we were kind of conspicuous in the media.”⁷⁷⁷ Nonetheless, this newfound recognition came with a price. Despite its ability to attract attention, Greenpeace Toronto lacked expertise in fundraising, which meant the bill for the summer campaign was largely footed by its core members. Saunders estimates he invested \$5,000 of his own money into the various activities.⁷⁷⁸

For its part, Energy Probe responded to Darlington’s EAA exemption by holding a mock environmental assessment hearing on the front steps of Queen’s Park on 2 November 1977. Timed to coincide with long-time nuclear critic Donald MacDonald’s introduction of a resolution to revoke the exemption,⁷⁷⁹ this event demonstrates the changing character of Energy Probe. Dating back to its origins as the Energy and Resources Project, it had always been the most thoroughly academic and policy-oriented component of the Pollution Probe Foundation. Now, as Pollution Probe emphasized its role behind the scenes, Energy Probe aimed to grab headlines with publicity stunts. Furthermore, not only did it place a growing emphasis on the nuclear industry, it also found itself increasingly moving beyond reasoned debate and appealing to emotions. Further evidence of this can be seen with the publication in 1978 of *Everything You*

⁷⁷⁶ James Jefferson, “12 arrested in anti-nuclear march,” *Globe and Mail*, 3 October 1977, 9; Weyler, *Greenpeace*, 511.

⁷⁷⁷ McDermott, interview.

⁷⁷⁸ Shortly thereafter he got a job as the provincial coordinator for the Ontario Public Interest Research Group. Saunders, interview.

⁷⁷⁹ “Probe Stages Environmental Assessment Hearing On Darling Nuclear Station,” *Probe Environment Newsletter* 17 (November 1977), 5, Projects/Reports/Submissions 1977, PPP.

Wanted To Know About Nuclear Power (but were afraid to find out!). Written by Jan Marmorek, and co-financed by a variety of sources, including the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, Maurice Strong, and the United Church of Canada, it featured deliberately sensational section headings such as “Safety? What Safety?,” “Nuclear Encounters of the Worst Kind,” and “Psst ... Wanna Buy Some Plutonium?,” as well as true-life horror stories such as the United States shipping clerk who handled a package of liquid plutonium, leading to a gruesome series of amputations prior to his death from cancer five years later.⁷⁸⁰

By 1978 it appeared as if the tide was turning against nuclear energy in Ontario. Ontario Hydro had been battered by increasing criticism of its expansion plans, and the provincial government had stopped defending the public corporation. In April, Ontario Hydro formally approached Reuben Baetz, the recently appointed Minister of Energy, for policy direction. His response, that the agency should abandon nuclear power in favour of hydro, marked a significant policy reversal.⁷⁸¹ This was compounded in September 1978 by the release of the Porter Commission’s interim report, which argued that electricity demand in Ontario would grow at four percent per annum, not the seven percent on which Ontario Hydro had been basing its expansion plans. As such, Porter’s interim report recommended that Ontario Hydro diversify its power generation infrastructure.⁷⁸² Energy Probe nonetheless criticized Porter’s interim report, arguing that although “we are encouraged that Ontario Hydro’s plans are to be modified downward, we are not at all

⁷⁸⁰ Marmorek later reverted to her maiden name, Jan McQuay. Others funding the project included Halifax’s Ecology Action Centre, Pollution Probe Ottawa, the Prairie Defence League, the Public Interest Coalition for Energy Planning, STOP Edmonton, and STOP Montreal. Jan Marmorek, *Everything You Wanted To Know About Nuclear Power (but were afraid to find out!)* (Toronto: Pollution Probe Foundation, 1978), 2, 6, 8-9, Projects/Reports/Submissions 1978, PPP.

⁷⁸¹ Freeman, *The Politics of Power*, 164.

⁷⁸² *Ibid.*, 164-165.

satisfied that The Commission has gone far enough either in the conservation and renewable energy estimates or in its criticism of nuclear technology.”⁷⁸³

Mounting criticism of Ontario Hydro’s business plans were compounded by heightened critiques of the safety of nuclear power in the aftermath of the 28 March 1978 partial core meltdown of the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station in Pennsylvania. A central event in the erosion of public confidence in the safety of nuclear energy, the event’s timing was particularly eerie given the release twelve days earlier of *The China Syndrome*, a Hollywood blockbuster that highlighted a series of safety cover-ups at a fictional nuclear reactor.⁷⁸⁴ This event offered a unique promotional opportunity for Energy Probe. As Lawrence Solomon explains,

I had just come back from Europe and spent time with Danish environmental groups. They had a successful campaign to stop a nuclear plant in Denmark and they had a newsletter ... they distributed outside theatres or coffee shops or places where they thought they would find supportive people, and then their newsletter would get people to make quarterly pledges to support the cause. I came back from Denmark and planned to have the same kind of fundraising campaign for Energy Probe, and I had actually produced a little newsletter modeled on the Danish example and the day that it was finished, or almost finished, Three Mile Island occurred early in the morning. So I quickly put a new headline on it and ... we produced a bunch of these newsletters on our Gestetner machine. That afternoon we were distributing those newsletters as people were leaving *The China Syndrome* and it said 'Its not just a movie - this actually happened.' People leaving the movie were surprised The movie seemed prescient, so it was very confusing to people coming out of the movie being told ... something similar to that had just occurred that day The film had a big impact on theatre-goers so they were concerned about nuclear power as they left the theatre, and then they had the opportunity to sign up [for more information].⁷⁸⁵

⁷⁸³ “Energy Probe Responds To Commission’s Nuclear Report,” 28 September 1978, Porter Commission – Ont. Electric Planning 1975-, F1057 MU7352, AO.

⁷⁸⁴ For more on Three Mile Island see, J. Samuel Walker, *Three Mile Island: A Nuclear Crisis in Historical Perspective* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004); Hays, *Beauty, Health, and Permanence*, 179, 182; Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 239-240. At one point in *The China Syndrome*, a physicist warns that a meltdown would affect “an area the size of Pennsylvania,” rendering it permanently uninhabitable.” *The China Syndrome*, directed by James Bridges (1979; Los Angeles: Columbia Pictures, 1999), DVD.

⁷⁸⁵ Solomon, interview.

In short order volunteers were distributing the newsletters at theatres throughout the city. The near-disaster at Three Mile Island, coupled with the work of anti-nuclear activists such as those at Energy Probe, resulted in a marked transformation in the public's attitude towards the technology. Public opinion polls conducted by Gallup indicate that in September 1976 forty-one percent of Canadians supported increasing the amount of nuclear power generated in the country, twenty percent wanted to maintain the current amount, fourteen percent wanted to stop the generation of nuclear power altogether, and twenty-five percent were undecided. By May 1979 only twenty-three percent wanted to increase nuclear power generation in the country, thirty-four percent wanted to maintain the current level, twenty-nine percent wanted to stop the generation of nuclear power, and just fourteen percent were undecided.⁷⁸⁶

Three Mile Island also inspired the organization of what would become the largest anti-nuclear protest in Canadian history. In the early morning of 1 June 1979, three protesters acting independently of Toronto's ENGOs scaled the seven foot barbed wire perimeter fence at the Darlington construction site. Once inside the perimeter they scaled a 200 foot transmission tower. Ignoring security's requests to come down the three climbers, stocked with food and water, announced that they would descend from the tower only if Premier Davis halted construction and held public safety hearings on the development.⁷⁸⁷ While security opted to allow the protesters to "cool off" overnight, the following day saw a massive escalation of tactics. An estimated crowd of 1,000,

⁷⁸⁶ These numbers would hold steady through 1983. Ronald Babin, *The Nuclear Power Game* (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1985), 219.

⁷⁸⁷ John Munch, "Nuclear protesters in tower sit-in," *Toronto Star*, 1 June 1979, A1. According to Jamie Swift and Keith Stewart, "The tower action had all the earmarks of a classic Greenpeace publicity affair, except that Greenpeace had nothing to do with it." Swift and Stewart, *Hydro*, 11. The press, meanwhile, failed to differentiate the actions of these three from those of the grander Greenpeace action that coincided.

organized by Greenpeace and local community groups, marched the two mile stretch from Bowmanville to the nuclear site in Darlington, carrying signs with slogans such as “Better active today than radio-active tomorrow” and “Hell No We Won’t Glow.” Described by Toronto *Star* reporters Ross Howard and John Munch as “an anti-nuclear Woodstock, dominated by young adults in halter tops and cut-offs, blue jeans and T-shirts, carrying placards, throwing Frisbees, and feeding babies,” protesters were greeted with speeches by actors Barry Morse and Donald Sutherland, a collection of scientists opposed to nuclear energy, and a supportive letter from John Sewell, the mayor of Toronto. The six hour demonstration was punctuated by ten Greenpeace parachutists, five of whom landed inside the construction site, followed moments later by fifty-eight more protesters scaling the perimeter fence. Eventually sixty-six of the protesters were arrested for trespassing.⁷⁸⁸ As event organizer John Bennett of Greenpeace Toronto explained to the press, “It was a peaceful but unprecedented statement. A lot of people will read or learn that a lot of people already fear nuclear power.”⁷⁸⁹ This anti-nuclear action would even earn support from an unexpected place. William Peden, vice-chairman of Toronto Hydro-Electric and a former staff member at Energy Probe, stated that the protesters merely wanted information and had “exhausted legal routes in trying to present their case and get answers to their questions.” Noting that they were merely looking out for the public’s interest, Peden added that “Their views should be heard and I don’t understand why the information is being withheld.”⁷⁹⁰

⁷⁸⁸ Ross Howard and John Munch, “66 arrests at peaceful anti-nuke protest,” Toronto *Star*, 3 June 1979, A1, A4; Weyler, *Greenpeace*, 545.

⁷⁸⁹ Quoted in Howard and Munch, “66 arrests at peaceful anti-nuke protest,” A4.

⁷⁹⁰ Quoted in Joyce Rowlands, “Nuclear protest in public ‘interest,’” Toronto *Star*, 6 June 1979, C8.

In February 1980 the Porter Commission released its final report. In it, Porter called for a paradigm shift. His major conclusion was that Ontario Hydro abandon its goal of increasing electrical output and the concomitant obsession with increasing the number of nuclear generating stations in the province, and instead focus on demand management – that is, focus on conservation and efficiency, and smaller-scale, low-impact energy generation projects.⁷⁹¹ These recommendations echoed those long forwarded by Energy Probe. Ontario Hydro initially chose to ignore the Porter Commission’s recommendations, justifying its expansion by selling excess capacity. However, after its contract ended with the United States-based General Public Utilities in June 1981, Ontario Hydro ordered a slowdown of construction at Darlington and shelved the long-held plans for additional nuclear facilities.⁷⁹²

ENERGY PROBE LEAVES THE POLLUTION PROBE FOUNDATION

As the 1970s came to a close, the Pollution Probe Foundation’s economic troubles continued. Between the 1977 and 1979 fiscal years, the Pollution Probe Foundation raised \$307,326, or an average of just \$102,442 per year.⁷⁹³ Difficulty raising funds resulted in a cut in the monthly wages from \$750 in 1976 to \$600 in 1980, which was roughly the same salary staff had been paid ten years earlier.⁷⁹⁴ Even this uncompetitive

⁷⁹¹ Freeman, *The Politics of Power*, 165-166.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, 166.

⁷⁹³ “The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements September 30, 1978,” Financial Statements, PPP; “The Pollution Probe at the University of Toronto Financial Statements September 30, 1979,” Financial Statements, PPP.

⁷⁹⁴ “How Probe Works,” *Probe Bulletins* 10 (February 1976), 2, PPP; Marilyn Aarons, “Energy Probe’s Board Update #2,” 16 May 1980, 2, Board of Directors, Advisors, F1057 MU7347, AO.

wage was not guaranteed, however, as the Foundation had increasing difficulty meeting payroll.⁷⁹⁵

Since Monte Hummel's brief tenure as executive director ended in May 1976 the organization had reverted to a flat, non-hierarchical structure. While Pollution Probe and Energy Probe maintained a degree of operational autonomy underneath the Pollution Probe Foundation umbrella, members of both projects were expected to attend weekly meetings together. As happened during Pollution Probe's earlier experiment with collective operations, meetings were often sidetracked and became bogged down. Now, however, there was the added problem of the Pollution Probe Foundation's financial difficulties. The sum result was an extremely trying workplace environment. As Pollution Probe employee David Coon recalls,

The atmosphere at the organization at the time was horrendous We had weekly staff meetings ... at the old U of T office, and they were horrendous Usually you'd have ... all the teams gathered there and it was not unusual for people to leave the room crying. It was just a very unpleasant working situation, kind of like a marriage that had gone very wrong. I remember one staff person bringing in knitting to try and stay calm – she knitted away through those meetings. Lots of passion and anger would break out regularly. It was not a good time.⁷⁹⁶

⁷⁹⁵ At \$600 a month, the annual salary of Pollution Probe Foundation employees in 1980 was \$7,200, before taxes. At that time Statistics Canada declared the Low Income Cutoff, its equivalent to the poverty line, for a single adult living in Toronto to be \$7,008 after taxes. Looked at another way, \$7,200 in 1980, after accounting for inflation, is the equivalent \$18,684.12 in 2010. "Low income measures, low income after tax cut-offs and low income after tax measures," Statistics Canada, 7 April 2004, accessed 8 September 2010, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/13f0019x/13f0019x1997000-eng.pdf>; "Inflation Calculator," Bank of Canada, accessed 8 September 2010, http://www.bankofcanada.ca/en/rates/inflation_calc.html.

⁷⁹⁶ David Coon had previously worked for Greenpeace while living in Montreal. As he notes, "One of the reasons I got in touch with Probe when I first landed in Toronto, rather than going to Greenpeace, was I'd been fed up with the turmoil that developed within Greenpeace internally as control was beginning to be exerted by Vancouver." Unfortunately for him, his time with the Pollution Probe Foundation was among the most tumultuous in its history. David Coon, interview with author, 18 August 2008, conducted by telephone.

Despite the Pollution Probe Foundation's general financial disarray, Energy Probe was faring considerably better than its peers, finding itself debt-free.⁷⁹⁷ This led Energy Probe volunteer Lawrence Solomon to advocate breaking off from the Foundation. As he explains now, "The funding was terrible at the time. Salaries weren't being met. No one was really happy with the status quo."⁷⁹⁸ Solomon also credits a differing approach to nuclear energy as a reason the groups should split:

Pollution Probe received almost all of its funding from government and industry, and virtually nothing from the general public. Energy Probe received no money from government or industry, primarily because of Energy Probe's anti-nuclear position, which was very unpopular at the time. At the time, public opinion was loudly in favour of nuclear power ... and Energy Probe was an embarrassment to Pollution Probe. In fact, it [the Pollution Probe Foundation] didn't even let Energy Probe call itself 'anti-nuclear' – it had to be 'non-nuclear.' ... There wasn't much reason to stay together, really.⁷⁹⁹

Other former staff members reject Solomon's assertion that nuclear energy was a wedge issue within the Foundation; likewise, data collected by Gallup demonstrates that in May 1979 sixty-three percent of Canadians opposed the expansion of the country's nuclear generating capacity.⁸⁰⁰ However, there is agreement that Energy Probe's approach to fundraising did present problems. As Coon explains, "Much of the friction was over fundraising time. The way we functioned at the time was we had three fundraisers on staff ... and I think there was a sense that, on the part of some people in Energy Probe, that they were devoting far more time to fundraising for Pollution Probe projects and activities than for Energy Probe. It appeared to me at the time that that was really the root

⁷⁹⁷ Quoted in Marilyn Aarons, "Board Update #3," 12 August 1980, 1, Board of Directors, Advisors, F1057 MU7347, AO. It was also noted that "Energy Probe has been raising enough on its own over the past few years to support itself at present salary levels" in Marilyn Aarons, "Energy Probe's Board Update #2," 16 May 1980, 2, Board of Directors, Advisors, F1057 MU7347, AO.

⁷⁹⁸ Solomon, interview.

⁷⁹⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰⁰ Jan McQuay, interview with author, 23 October 2009, conducted by telephone; Aarons, interview; Coon, interview; Babin, *The Nuclear Power Game*, 219.

of the internal conflict.” According to McQuay and Solomon, the staff at Energy Probe were particularly frustrated with the arrangement because they were prevented from pursuing a direct mail fundraising campaign, a then-innovative practice, because it was determined to be unproven and too expensive.⁸⁰¹

Initially there were efforts to assuage the tensions by granting each of the projects greater autonomy. Staff for Pollution Probe and the *Probe Post* moved into the as-yet unopened Ecology House, while Energy Probe remained at the office at 43 Queen's Park Crescent. Aside from providing respite from the previously cramped quarters, Energy Probe was granted permission to pursue its desired fundraising efforts.⁸⁰² As Marilyn Aarons wrote to the Pollution Probe Foundation Board of Directors on 12 August 1980, “We are most pleased with the improvement of both morale and working conditions which has come about since we acquired some autonomy and cannot imagine it being in the foundation's interest to consider going back to the old arrangement.”⁸⁰³

It soon became apparent that Energy Probe could not be placated. On 24 September 1980 a meeting was held to discuss a permanent solution to the Pollution Probe-Energy Probe structural issue. With the majority of both staffs present, as well as the Board of Directors, two solutions were brought forth. Option A was the status quo within the Pollution Probe Foundation, but with the two projects given fundraising and budgetary autonomy. Option B would see Energy Probe break away from the Pollution Probe Foundation, and either join another established foundation or create its own. It was

⁸⁰¹ McQuay, interview; Solomon, interview.

⁸⁰² Marilyn Aarons, “Energy Probe's Board Update #2,” 16 May 1980, 2, Board of Directors, Advisors, F1057 MU7347, AO.

⁸⁰³ Marilyn Aarons, “Board Update #3,” 12 August 1980, 1, Board of Directors, Advisors, F1057 MU7347, AO. The Board of Advisors was renamed the Board of Directors sometime prior to autumn 1976. “Pollution Probe Foundation Annual Report 1976-76,” Annual Reports, PPP.

revealed that in advance of this meeting, Energy Probe had met with legal counsel and began the process of incorporating as the Energy Probe Foundation. Likewise, it had already started to assemble its own board and to divide assets. As Board member Janet Wright wrote in the minutes,

When these conclusions were announced, there was considerable dismay on the part of some board members. It was felt that the board had not been sufficiently consulted, and that it was now being presented with a *fait accompli* and being asked to give rubber-stamp approval to a decision that had already been taken. On the other hand, a number of staff members asserted that if some action had not been taken immediately, the work of both PP and EP would have ground to a halt. The working relations between the two groups had deteriorated to such an extent that the work of all staff members was adversely affected.⁸⁰⁴

Following a lengthy discussion, which Wright notes were “remarkably similar to a marriage counselling or divorce court session,”⁸⁰⁵ a vote was held on Energy Probe’s separation from the Pollution Probe Foundation. Nine staffers voted in favour, with four abstentions, while six Board members voted in favour, with one abstention. None in attendance voted against the proposal. Subsequent discussion centred on the status of the *Probe Post* – which was to remain a publication of Pollution Probe – and the division of assets. The newly independent Energy Probe filed paperwork for the incorporation of the Energy Probe Research Foundation, which received charitable status in June 1981. As Solomon notes,

There was a discussion at the time whether we should keep the Energy Probe name, and the argument for keeping the Energy Probe name was that [it was] a brand people recognized, or whether we should adopt a more generic name that wouldn't limit us to energy issues, and we decided the thing to do was to stay with

⁸⁰⁴ Janet Wright, “Pollution Probe Foundation Minutes of Meetings,” 24 September 1980, 3, Pollution Probe/Energy Probe Split 1980, PPP.

⁸⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

the Energy Probe name. We liked the name, for one thing, and we also feared having to re-introduce ourselves with a brand new name.⁸⁰⁶

Morale rebounded in both organizations following the separation. It also led to significant changes. Pollution Probe's relocation to Ecology House resulted in the end of its affiliation with the University of Toronto, which dated back to its founding in 1969. More importantly, the split revealed Pollution Probe's underlying fiscal problems. David Coon recalls this matter coming to a head at a Board meeting shortly before the 17 October 1980 official opening of Ecology House. As he explains,

The Board was looking at the books and they said, 'Well, there's \$40,000 in 'receivables' here. Where's the money coming from?' And I remember saying, 'Well, we've got an agreement with the federal government under the Conservation Renewable Energy Demonstration Program to provide funds to finish off all the educational displays and so on at Ecology House.' And they said 'Where's the contract?' I said, 'Well, we haven't gotten one yet.' Then they said, 'Okay, fine. The staff can leave right now, we're going to have a discussion.'⁸⁰⁷

The financial naïveté of budgeting \$40,000 – or roughly one-third of its total 1980 revenue⁸⁰⁸ – without first securing a contract led the Board of Directors to decide that the ENGO required the regular oversight of an executive director. This idea was wildly unpopular among the staff at Pollution Probe, which had operated without an executive director since Monte Hummel's resignation in May 1976.⁸⁰⁹ Faced with the alternate prospect of having their affairs micromanaged by the Board, however, they begrudgingly

⁸⁰⁶ Solomon, interview. See also, B.D. Katchen [lawyer at Shibley, Righton & McCutcheon] to Norm Rubin, 30 October 1980, E.P. Research Foundation 1980-, F1057 MU7347, AO; "Pollution Probe Foundation Annual Report 1980-1981," 1, Annual Reports, PPP. The similarity of the names, quite naturally, would lead to some confusion, even among relatively savvy journalists. Elaine Dewar notes in the opening to *Cloak of Green* that upon seeing an event advertised in November 1988, co-sponsored by Probe International, she telephoned Pollution Probe for more information. Probe International, however, was a branch of the Energy Probe Research Foundation. Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 1.

⁸⁰⁷ Coon, interview.

⁸⁰⁸ "The Pollution Probe Foundation Financial Statements: September 30, 1980," 4, Financial Statements, PPP.

⁸⁰⁹ "Director Leaves," *Probe Bulletin* 11 (May 1976), 2, Probe Bulletins, PPP.

relented. The job search, launched in December 1980, resulted in the eventual hiring in 1982 of Colin Isaacs, a former university administrator fresh off a stint as the NDP's environment critic in Queen's Park. While initial plans had been for Isaacs to serve the role of Pollution Probe's executive director as a part-time job, and thus keep his employment at an education-oriented consulting firm, the ENGO's deep-rooted financial problems soon led him to join on a full-time basis.⁸¹⁰

Staff at the Energy Probe Research Foundation were enjoying a newfound sense of financial security that coincided with their independence. "One thing about Larry [Solomon] – he was very good at getting funds," recalls David Brooks. "He really made life a lot better for us because we were operating on pretty marginal salaries at the time."⁸¹¹ In part this funding came from the execution of the long-desired direct mail fundraising plan that had caused tensions within the Pollution Probe Foundation. Solomon, who claims theirs was the first organization in Canada to adopt this fundraising method, explains that it was made possible by a member of Energy Probe's Board of Directors who headed Noma Industries' computer division and granted them access to the machines during evenings and weekends.⁸¹² Solomon also became increasingly adept at securing funds from more controversial sources such as the heavily polluting oil industry, which supported Energy Probe's anti-nuclear work. In so doing, Energy Probe crossed an important line. It is true that much of Pollution Probe's success was attributable to its ability to procure support from industry; however, it also refused to exchange impunity

⁸¹⁰ Colin Isaacs, interview with author, 18 August 2008, conducted by telephone. Pollution Probe would fail to meet its payroll as late as November 1982. Angela Barnes, "Pollution Probe hopeful despite declining donations," *Globe and Mail*, 29 December 1982, B12.

⁸¹¹ Brooks, interview.

⁸¹² Solomon, interview.

from its critiques for funding. Energy Probe, on the other hand, became a vociferous supporter of the oil industry, launching a campaign in 1983 “to educate Canadians to the social, environmental and economic benefits of less regulation in the petroleum field.”⁸¹³ Boasting an endorsement from the Canadian Petroleum Association, Energy Probe would soon thereafter add hydro to the list of energy forms it opposed, leaving little doubt that the organization had compromised its credibility.⁸¹⁴ Nonetheless, Solomon’s ability to secure funding led to increased influence within the organization, which led Brooks to resign in 1982. As he recalls, he tendered his resignation out of frustration after Solomon insisted that an employee working in Energy Probe’s Ottawa office be fired.⁸¹⁵

When Energy Probe left the Pollution Probe Foundation its core staff consisted of Marilyn Aarons, David Brooks, Chris Conway, Jan Marmorek, Norm Rubin, and Lawrence Solomon. By 1983 just Aarons, Rubin, and Solomon remained. While Marmorek’s departure was hardly acrimonious – she separated from her husband and required more income than was afforded in the low paying world of Canadian ENGOs – Conway had grown weary of Energy Probe’s new direction. As he explained, he disagreed with the “fear mongering” tone it had adopted on nuclear issues, as well as the increasingly focus on free market solutions.⁸¹⁶ These staffers were replaced by ones who accepted Solomon and Rubin’s belief in free markets and deregulation as the solution to society’s problems. Energy Probe, whose staff had long articulated a *mélange* of

⁸¹³ This quote from Energy Probe’s 1983 annual report was found in Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 361.

⁸¹⁴ Energy Probe considers hydro to be too harmful to the environment to endorse. Instead, it supports oil, gas, and coal as energy sources. Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 358. As David Brooks explained, “They [the oil industry] thought they had found their environmentalist.” Brooks, interview.

⁸¹⁵ Upon resigning from Energy Probe, Brooks entered the world of environmental consulting, first with Peter Middleton and Associates, and later as a principal with Marbek Resource Consultants. Brooks, interview.

⁸¹⁶ Conway, interview.

ideological positions, evolved into a libertarian stronghold.⁸¹⁷ This position is clearly illustrated in Solomon's 1984 publication, *Breaking Up Ontario Hydro's Monopoly*, in which he argued the case for privatizing the province's publicly-owned utilities provider.⁸¹⁸ Energy Probe's overtly-ideological positioning within the environmental movement was troubling for many of their peers who felt more government intervention was favourable, and that reducing regulations would result in free rein for polluters. Thus, while Energy Probe's suspicion of government planners was in line with the political philosophies then driving Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan to office, it also caused the organization to be viewed with suspicion by the broader environmental community.

The Energy Probe Research Foundation also expanded its focus beyond that of the Canadian energy sector. It became a fierce critic of Canadian foreign development policy, arguing that "foreign energy affairs [are] inseparable from domestic energy considerations."⁸¹⁹ Energy Probe's first target was the use of Canadian International Development Agency funding to create hydro dams in Haiti. While Energy Probe was quick to point out that the dams would cause the relocation of thousands of poor Haitian farmers, their opposition was purely ideological, as it viewed the utilization of Canadian taxpayers' dollars for foreign aid to be antithetical to free market principles.⁸²⁰ Finding many of Energy Probe's supporters were confused by its interest overseas, in 1986 it

⁸¹⁷ As Solomon explains, "The pro-market, the anti-government ownership - that came with me, and also Norm Rubin. Prior to my joining, Energy Probe was making submissions to the Porter Royal Commission, arguing for very heavy-handed regulation. And I became a critic of that, and that led to a change within Energy Probe. People promoting that kind of heavy-handed regulation, which would lead to criminalizing people who didn't conserve energy, for example, that led to disagreement and then those people ended up leaving Energy Probe." Solomon, interview.

⁸¹⁸ Lawrence Solomon, *Breaking Up Ontario Hydro's Monopoly* (Toronto: Energy Probe Research Foundation, 1984).

⁸¹⁹ Energy Probe Research Foundation 1983 annual report, quoted in Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 454.

⁸²⁰ Their opposition to foreign aid was the subject of Patricia Adams and Lawrence Solomon, *In the Name of Progress: The Underside of Foreign Aid* (Toronto: Energy Probe Research Foundation, 1985).

created a separate Probe International project under the Energy Probe Research Foundation umbrella. This slight reorganization resulted in a minor boon for, as Solomon explains, “we found out everyone who was sending us a \$25 cheque for Energy Probe would send us a \$25 cheque for Energy Probe and Probe International. So our revenue pretty much doubled just by ... rebranding our international work.”⁸²¹

RECYCLING

Pollution Probe had long been a leading force in the push to popularize recycling in Toronto and throughout the province of Ontario. It had organized pilot projects, served on government committees, and held public demonstrations in an effort to further their cause. It had also created the concept of the 3Rs waste hierarchy, which would become synonymous with the practice of recycling. In August 1978 the ENGO released “Probe’s Last Word On ‘Recycling,’” a nine page overview of the subject, arguing that “it’s time we spent our effort on the many other issues that need attention.”⁸²² According to Pollution Probe, retiring the issue was acceptable “now that action is underway,” a reference to the opening that month of the mechanized Centre for Resource Recovery in Downsview, the first of the six plants announced by the provincial government in 1974.⁸²³ What was not mentioned in the document was the fact that the decision was largely inspired by the ENGO’s sparse coffers, which forced them to streamline their areas of interest. Still, the decision to abandon recycling prior to the introduction of a

⁸²¹ The Energy Probe Research Foundation would continue to spin off new projects, taking advantage of its supporters’ incremental generosity. It now features, in addition to the aforementioned Energy Probe and Probe International, Environment Probe and the Urban Renaissance Institute. “[We] always intended to become an all-purpose environmental organization,” explains Solomon. Solomon, interview. See also Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 359-360.

⁸²² “Probe’s Last Word on ‘Recycling,’” August 1978, Projects/Reports/Submissions 1978, PPP.

⁸²³ Whelan, “\$17 million program to recycle garbage planned in Ontario,” 25.

demonstrable solution was a risky decision. On the one hand the Centre for Resource Recovery, which was designed, in the words of Harold Crooks, “to shred, air-separate, cyclone, separate and load 900 tons of refuse for transportation to waiting markets – all in two eight-hour shifts,”⁸²⁴ could turn out to be a great success. On the other hand, Pollution Probe freely admitted that the technology involved had not yet been perfected.⁸²⁵ Should the experiment fail, Pollution Probe, which was renowned for its expertise in recycling, had already capitulated the issue. As it turns out, the Centre for Resource Recovery was an unmitigated failure and the plant, as well as plans for additional recycling facilities in the province, was abandoned.⁸²⁶

While Pollution Probe had already moved away from the recycling issue, declaring it won, the push for recycling was picked up by the Is Five Foundation. Launched in October 1974, its founder, Jack McGinnis, held a degree in communications and had subsequently pursued a career in photojournalism.⁸²⁷ While he was concerned with waste, inefficiency, and disrespect for people and the environment McGinnis did not actually set out to develop an environmental organization. As he explains,

I had realized years before that I wasn't really cut out to work for anybody else. That wasn't my lot in life, not what I enjoyed. And so I started something in the early seventies, just a small business, and was really successful, in those terms anyway, but then had a huge shock which was the realization [that] as much as I didn't like working for somebody, I also didn't like the idea of somebody working

⁸²⁴ Harold Crooks, *Giants of Garbage: The Rise of the Global Waste Industry and the Politics of Pollution Control* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1993), 24.

⁸²⁵ “Probe’s Last Word on ‘Recycling,’” August 1978, 1, Projects/Reports/Submissions 1978, PPP.

⁸²⁶ The shell of the facility ended up being used by the City of Toronto’s Solid Waste Management Services for storage. George South [Director of Transfer and Disposal Operations, City of Toronto] to Ryan O’Connor, personal correspondence, 23 February 2010.

⁸²⁷ October 1974 is the date provided in Is Five Foundation, *East York Waste Reclamation 1979 to 1982: Submission to the Economic Growth Component of Canada Works* (Toronto: Is Five Foundation, 1982), 1. While the majority of sources refer to 1974 as the year Is Five was founded, it should be noted that it did not initiate its first program until 1975. “A Somewhat Biased History of Environment Week in Toronto,” *Another Newsletter* 2:2 (November 1977), 1; Resource Integration Systems, *Submission to the Ontario Paper Company: Waste Newspaper Supply Development* (Toronto: Resource Integration, 1980), 2, 4.

for me, which was more of a surprise than the first one was. So what came out of that was a strong desire to find a way to work with people, and I didn't really know what it exactly was at that point, I just knew it was looking for a way to take on something with other people in a teamwork relationship, not in a traditional business way. That was the stronger thing for me: I hadn't really set out to be an environmentalist or to be a recycler or anything else. I set out to be a worker cooperative person.⁸²⁸

The Is Five Foundation's unusual name was deliberate, as McGinnis felt it would create a natural opportunity to explain the organization's purpose. The name was derived from two sources: Buckminster Fuller's concept of synergy, and a book of poetry, *is 5*, by E.E. Cummings. According to McGinnis, "The idea was to find a way for people to work together so that it was exciting and inspiring, and so ultimately the whole would be greater than the sum of the parts, and what we did together would be more than if we worked on our own."⁸²⁹ In essence, the aim was to empower people through cooperation. "We wanted to tell people there was a problem," explains McGinnis, "but the solution was them in their own home and their own lifestyle. So it was very much people working together within the group, and trying to find practical ways to ask people in their own home and eventually in their workplace to do things differently."⁸³⁰

The IFF established as a non-profit, registered charity and began operation as a collective, with its seven initial members all participating in the decision-making process. Its first effort, a roadside, multi-material pickup that operated weekly in the east-end Beaches district – known as Project One Recycling – was launched in January 1975. Members traveled door-to-door publicizing the program while McGinnis drove the

⁸²⁸ Jack McGinnis, interview with author, 8 July 2008, conducted by telephone.

⁸²⁹ Regarding the name choice, he explained that "[We] purposefully chose a weird name because it would create both a need and an opportunity to explain something about why I formed the group." McGinnis, interview. The name is also described in "Is Five Foundation Research and Public Education," insert in *Another Newsletter* 2:1 (September 1977); John Marshall, "Metro alchemists turn garbage into gold," *Globe and Mail*, 1 March 1978, 5.

⁸³⁰ McGinnis, interview.

organization's lone vehicle – a pickup truck. According to the IFF, Project One Recycling was a matter of practical research. As they explained, “It is designed to evaluate the feasibility of source-separated collection for recycling This project has provided assistance to the advancement of environmentally sound recycling methods. This project continues as a service to the community and for its research potential.”⁸³¹ While the numbers were not particularly impressive – by 1977 an estimated 4,000 residents were participating – McGinnis was generally pleased with the results. As he notes, “We didn't have professional equipment. We didn't have blue boxes. Everybody had to use cardboard boxes or whatever. So there were definitely limits. What went well was the community involvement and the fact that people would listen to reason. People were proving what we believed in: people were naturally good, you just needed to give them the tools.”⁸³² The IFF would later find out that this was the first roadside, multi-material pickup to operate in Canada.⁸³³

The IFF's approach to recycling represented a philosophical break from that of Pollution Probe. Whereas Pollution Probe trumpeted mechanical separation plants as the only realistic way to address recycling in the city, Is Five believed separation-at-source was essential, as it would force the participants to consider their consumer habits. Derek Stephenson, the organization's research coordinator, described the necessity of active participation to *Globe and Mail* reporter John Marshall, stating that “Individuals just can't see how they can clean up the Great Lakes, save the seals, stop rip-offs. But they can peel

⁸³¹ “Is Five Foundation Research and Public Education,” insert in *Another Newsletter* 2:1 (September 1977).

⁸³² McGinnis, interview.

⁸³³ McGinnis, interview; Humphries, *We Recycle*, 4.

labels off cans. It's a start towards an acceptance of the environmental ethics of a conserver society.”⁸³⁴

McGinnis' astute business sense enabled IFF to expand dramatically in its second year. Seeking support from the Local Initiatives Program [LIP], he recognized that there would be major competition for funding, which was capped at \$100,000.

We knew we were up against a lot of competition after our first year because other people had heard about the program and even though we'd done fairly well and they seemed to like what we'd done in year one we knew we'd have to be clever. And we wanted to get bigger and figured out they gave out the money riding by riding. So there was competition between a federal riding, but often there was a bit of money left over once they got done deciding who was going to get the priority. So we figured out how to come up with the smallest grant we could apply for – the least amount of people for the shortest amount of time. I did twenty-one applications, photocopied exactly the same with every federal riding in Toronto, except the one in the Beaches where we had our original grant. So with the Beaches we got another round of seven people as the head office, and out of the twenty-one [applications] we submitted they approved eleven of them, without knowing it. When they had their first get-togethers for the project officers to meet their new grantees, it was only then that they figured out how much money they'd give [*laughs*], which was well over \$100,000.⁸³⁵

McGinnis' canny maneuvering led to a revamped application process the following year, as the LIP applications were required to identify whether they were applying for funding in any other federal ridings.

The LIP funds enabled Is Five to undertake a variety of projects, including a study of “traffic calming patterns” in Christie Pits. While the organization momentarily found itself to be Canada's largest environmental organization with twenty-nine full-time employees, its finances remained unstable. When the LIP grants dried up in the summer of 1976 staff were forced to fund their work with personal savings and income drawn

⁸³⁴ Marshall, “Metro alchemists turn garbage into gold,” 5.

⁸³⁵ McGinnis, interview. The actual amount, according to a contemporary newspaper report, was just over \$129,000. Jacques Bendavid, “Environmental group awaits new funding,” *Toronto Star*, 1 September 1976, F3.

from working as taxi drivers while they awaited results of funding applications.⁸³⁶ The ongoing necessity to find some semblance of financial stability in order to pursue its work led IFF members to explore a plethora of money-making ventures, including woodworking, graphic design, and the operation of a printing press.⁸³⁷

But the solution to the IFF's financial woes soon appeared. As Stephenson explains, "We were starting to get lots of consultants, people in really nice suits, coming by our operation to learn how we were doing things. We would tell everybody everything. And it dawned on me sometime that we were providing information that consultants were then selling to clients for a lot of money. I thought, 'Wait a minute here, why don't we do the consulting?'"⁸³⁸ In March 1977 Resource Integration Systems Ltd. [RIS] was launched to provide "consulting service in the field of conservation, with a particular emphasis on waste management and recovery systems."⁸³⁹ With Stephenson serving as president, RIS funded the IFF's activities by charging consultants' rates for its expertise.

Not all of the IFF's efforts were successful. Even with careful planning, the recycling industry was notoriously turbulent. In 1978 the IFF initiated a weekly newspaper pickup program in North York. Focusing on the area between Victoria Park Avenue and Bayview Avenue, and from Highway 401 to the borough's southern limit, the project went belly-up shortly after it began, as the IFF's paper broker, Attic Insulation, went bankrupt.⁸⁴⁰ However, this failure was offset by resounding success elsewhere. On 8

⁸³⁶ Bendavid, "Environmental group awaits new funding," F3.

⁸³⁷ Marshall, "Metro alchemists turn garbage into gold," 5.

⁸³⁸ Derek Stephenson, interview with author, 11 December 2009, conducted by telephone.

⁸³⁹ Resource Integration Systems, *Submission to the Ontario Paper Company*, 2.

⁸⁴⁰ Harold Hilliard, "North York okays newspaper pick-up for 3-month trial," *Toronto Star*, 5 September 1979, A22.

December 1977 the IFF submitted a proposal to the East York Works Committee to operate a weekly newspaper pickup throughout the borough, with IFF assuming all costs. Approved by the Works Committee four days later, the plant received the go-ahead from East York Council on 19 December 1977.⁸⁴¹ Operating under the auspices of the East York Conservation Centre [EYCC] pickup began in February 1978, utilizing two trucks. Six months later the program achieved thirty-three percent participation, averaging twenty-five to thirty tons of newspaper per week. By June 1979 this had increased to a forty-five percent participation rate and thirty-five tons per week.⁸⁴² By this point “Canada's largest non-municipal source separate waste reclamation program,”⁸⁴³ the EYCC had moved from collecting simply newspaper to cardboard, glass, and metals.⁸⁴⁴

As explained in a November 1979 report, the “East York recycling project was initiated to provide a demonstration of the viability of local at-source recovery programs.”⁸⁴⁵ Documenting their extensive planning in a series of reports, the IFF also used the opportunity to study the functionality of various technologies and approaches to recycling. As had been identified early on, a “major barrier to the successful implementation of at-source recovery on a broad scale was identified as a lack of suitable collection equipment designed for multimaterial curbside collection of recyclable materials.”⁸⁴⁶ Having started with a pickup truck in the Beaches in 1975, by the time the

⁸⁴¹ “Environment/Jobs – Conflict or Harmony,” *Another Newsletter* 2:4 (December 1977), 2.

⁸⁴² *Investigation of the Feasibility of Increasing Corrugate Cardboard Recovery Through Industrial and Commercial Source Separation in Ontario* (Toronto: Is Five Foundation/Resource Integration Services, 1979), 1.

⁸⁴³ *Ibid.*, i.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸⁴⁵ *Description and Evaluation of the East York Recycling Model* (Toronto: Resources Integration Systems, 1979), 7.

⁸⁴⁶ Is Five Foundation, *Development and Demonstration of a Customized Truck For Collection of Glass, Metal and Paper Refuse* (Ottawa: Technical Services Branch, Environment Canada, 1983), 1.

East York pickup began the IFF had purchased a GMC MagnaVan that had a 2.5 ton carrying capacity and a similarly equipped rental. Having received funding through Environment Canada's Development and Demonstration of Resource and Energy Conservation Technology Program, the IFF collaborated with the Toronto-based DEL Equipment Ltd in the creation of a vehicle specially designed for recycling programs. The resulting prototype cut down on the physical labour involved in collection, enabled a two person crew to collect multiple waste streams, was capable of automatic unloading, and was competitively priced with existing collection vehicles.

In 1978 Jack McGinnis secured a grant to spend three months meeting with recycling advocates and practitioners throughout Ontario in order to determine the need for a province-wide recycling organization. He also paid a visit to the West Coast in order to examine the model of the British Columbia Recycling Council, formed in 1973. As McGinnis later recalled, the trip left him with an unequivocal reaction: "For the first half of the tour ... I'd tell people that we were thinking of forming a province-wide group. Halfway through, I was saying, 'We've formed a group.'"⁸⁴⁷ For two days in June 1978 over one hundred interested parties gathered at the Holy Trinity Church in downtown Toronto to launch the Recycling Council of Ontario [RCO].⁸⁴⁸

Beginning its life in the Is Five Foundation offices at 477 Dupont Street, the RCO's first focus was to secure funding. In October 1978 it received \$15,000 from the Ministry of the Environment and Eric Hellman, a staffer at Resource Integration Services

⁸⁴⁷ Quoted in Katharine Partridge, "RCO Celebrates 20 Years!" *RCO Update*, October 1998, 2.

⁸⁴⁸ "Government policies thwarting recycling, conference to be told," *Globe and Mail*, 1 June 1978, 3; *Ibid.*, 1-2; McGinnis, interview.

[RIS], was hired as its executive director.⁸⁴⁹ The RCO had a two-fold agenda: to serve as a network for the province's non-profit recycling groups, and to develop cooperative marketing for its members. It had an early brush with success when the Ontario Paper Company announced its decision to build a de-inking plant in Thorold. The RCO had offered to provide sixty-four percent of the plant's needs within three years; however, an unstable market and pressure from the province's traditional paper companies that now viewed the organization as a threat led the RCO to abandon its cooperative marketing directive. Despite this, the RCO would flourish as an information provider. In March 1981 it established the Ontario Recycling Information Service [ORIS], which created a toll-free telephone line to answer the public's queries about recycling and available programs. Modeled after a service operating in Portland, Oregon, by 1990 ORIS was fielding 20,500 questions per year.⁸⁵⁰

The IFF made further progress with its consulting arm, RIS.⁸⁵¹ In July 1977 it received a subcontract to design and implement a multi-material recycling program for Canadian Forces Base [CFB] Borden. This project was the brainchild of Rick Findlay, Senior Project Engineer at Environment Canada's Environmental Protection Service, and had been inspired by a visit to the still-under construction Centre for Resource Recovery in Downsview. Noting that separation at source would prove much more efficient than the unproven mechanical separation system in which the province had invested \$20

⁸⁴⁹ Partridge, "RCO Celebrates 20 Years!," 2-3; Hellman, interview; Humphries, *We Recycle*, 6.

⁸⁵⁰ The toll-free service, renamed the Waste Reduction Information Service in 1993, with a coinciding switch in emphasis to the 3Rs principles, was discontinued in 1996 as a result of government cutbacks. However, as of 1998 a walk-in service continued to operate. Partridge, "RCO Celebrates 20 Years!," 3, 5-7; Hellman, interview.

⁸⁵¹ As Jack McGinnis points out, the original plan was for RIS to fund the IFF's work. However, they eventually discovered that a charity such as the IFF could not legally own more than ten percent of a private company. McGinnis, interview.

million, he chose CFB Borden because of its proximity to markets for recovered materials, the detailed knowledge of its past waste generation and management practices, as well as the willingness of the DND to consent to the project.⁸⁵² As Derek Stephenson recalls, “We were essentially given this place to experiment with recycling. Had a good budget, but we were subcontractors to consultants who were theoretical, MBA-types, while we were operational types. And from that experience we both got to play around with other people's money and perfected a lot of techniques.”⁸⁵³ The project resulted in the collection of corrugated boxes from base shopping centres, glass and bottles from its drinking establishments, paper and newsprint from its offices, and cans, newspaper, and glass from its residences. When it ended in March 1979, the project was considered a success, with 45.9 percent participation in the curbside collection of newspaper and 21.4 percent for glass.⁸⁵⁴ It was subsequently determined that this program, if continued, could provide upwards of \$15,000 in net profit annually.⁸⁵⁵

A key event in the development of Ontario's waste history occurred in autumn 1977 when the Pollution Probe affiliate in Kitchener-Waterloo held a day-long event called Garbage Fest 77.⁸⁵⁶ Aside from bringing together many of the province's foremost environmentalists, including the staff of the IFF, it featured a speech from Nyle Ludolph,

⁸⁵² Humphries, *We Recycle*, 5; Resource Integration Systems, *At-Source Recovery of Waste Materials From CFB Borden: The Viability of At-Source Recovery in Small Communities, Executive Summary* (Toronto: Resource Integration Systems, 1979), 1.

⁸⁵³ Stephenson, interview. CFB Borden consisted of 1,276 residences and nine commercial operations. The weekly average was 4,515 lbs of newspaper and 907 lbs of glass from the residences, alongside 2,000 lbs of corrugated boxes, 440 lbs of glass, 1,000 lbs of computer paper, and 958 lbs of ledger grade paper from the commercial operations and offices. Resource Integration Systems, *At-Source Recovery of Waste Materials From CFB Borden*, 33-34.

⁸⁵⁴ Resource Integration Systems. *At-Source Recovery of Waste Materials From CFB Borden*, 33.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁸⁵⁶ This event was the idea of Eric Hellman, then with Kitchener-Waterloo Probe. It led to his joining the IFF, and his eventual hiring as the first executive director of the RCO. “Garbage Fest 77,” *Another Newsletter* 2:2 (October 1977), 6; Hellman, interview.

the director of special projects at Superior Sanitation. Prior to this event Ludolph cared little for recycling. However, the day spent in the company of recycling advocates had a transformative effect upon him. As he recalls, “My conscience got a hold of me and I said ‘I’m going to try this.’ I went home that day and dug up a hole in the backyard for compost, and I put boxes at the side door in the garage and I said to the family ‘We’re going to test this recycling thing.’ Consequently, we ... only generated 102 lbs of garbage for the entire year.”⁸⁵⁷ This amazed Ludolph, who notes that the average family of three would normally generate a ton of garbage annually. At a time when acquiring land for landfills was increasingly difficult, he saw a way to help the company while at the same time earning the public’s support. His boss, Ron Murray, President of Laidlaw Waste Systems Ltd., was also intrigued with the potential. However, Murray was also concerned about the potential business implications. As Ludolph recalls, “He said, ‘Look, if we do that we may as well park the garbage trucks.’ And I said, ‘No, no. For every garbage truck we take off we put on a recycling truck. What’s the difference?’ He kind of agreed with that concept. We weren’t going to hurt our business any – it would complement our business.”⁸⁵⁸

Following RIS’s success at Camp Borden, Ludolph approached Eric Hellman about bringing recycling to Kitchener. According to Hellman,

He said to me 'Wouldn't it be amazing if we could do this city-wide? If everybody would do this?' And I'm looking at this guy who was head of garbage collection for this company going 'Do I hear what I'm hearing? Does he actually want to do recycling?' I said, 'Now, if you're serious I'll give you a proposal.' So I went back to the office in Toronto that day and put together a proposal for the test program,

⁸⁵⁷ Nyle Ludolph, interview with author, 16 January 2010, conducted by telephone.

⁸⁵⁸ Ibid. See also Humphries, *We Recycle*, 5-6.

which was approved by Superior [Sanitation] and became the foundation for the blue box.⁸⁵⁹

Hellman recalls Murray's response to the proposal,

In the conversation about the proposal we had made to them he [Murray] said something very frank. 'We make our money off of garbage. We make a good living. But something in me says this can't last forever, that it doesn't make sense, business-wise or social-wise, to be paying somebody to keep picking up garbage. At some point this has to turn into something like recycling, where there's some good being made out of this material.'⁸⁶⁰

Hellman's proposal to examine the efficiency of a variety of collection methods from a sampling of 1,000 homes in Kitchener received \$72,000 in funding from Laidlaw.⁸⁶¹ RIS was given the opportunity to design the project, which would be carried out by Total Recycling, a new division of Laidlaw headed by Ludolph. The project was an astounding success. Originally scheduled for six months, beginning in September 1981, it continued uninterrupted until 1983, when the recycling program went city-wide. Particularly positive results emerged from the one-quarter of homes given a blue box in which to place their recyclables. This hardly surprised Ludolph, who had examined recycling programs in California while preparing for the test in Kitchener. In California each household used three bins, which were designed to separate the materials. However, recyclers still had to sort materials from these boxes. He states, "I realized one bin was the way to go."⁸⁶² And why did the boxes end up being blue? As Derek Stephenson recalls,

⁸⁵⁹ Hellman, interview.

⁸⁶⁰ Ibid. As Ludolph recalls of the meeting, "Eric had said 'You're a waste management company but you don't manage waste. You just pick it up and bury it. [*laughs*] My president, Ron Murray, was impressed with the honesty of Eric Hellman. He was very impressed, so he gave him an ear, and he agreed to give him \$70,000 in an experimental program in recycling.'" Ludolph, interview.

⁸⁶¹ Humphries, *We Recycle*, 7.

⁸⁶² Ludolph, interview.

When we had the Kitchener program we were able to experiment with a hand-assembled one, what we used to call chloroplastics, and we assembled about 150 of these boxes. We hand stenciled them with 'We Recycle.' They happened to be blue ... [because] with plastics the darker it is the less likely it will break down with ultraviolet light, at least in those days. We thought black was good for that, and black would stand out in the snow, but it wasn't very attractive. We didn't want to go the conventional green, and so we picked a spectrum in there that was our best guess for what the right color was. We picked blue.⁸⁶³

In 1983 Laidlaw's blue box program went citywide in Kitchener. Almost immediately, participation levels hit eighty-five percent.⁸⁶⁴ As Ludolph recalls, implementation of the program, which was strictly voluntary, was very easy. Bins, containing education information, were left at the entrance of each home in the city. "When we distributed the 35,000 [blue boxes] I only had four people that said 'Come take this thing away, we're not going to do this.' I must tell you that within a week three of these people called back and said they had changed their mind."⁸⁶⁵ Despite the popularity of the expanded program, in which Laidlaw had \$500,000 invested, it was nearly abandoned the following year when the company's contract with the city expired. While the company attempted to recoup some of its costs in its follow-up bid, it was revealed that Browning-Ferris Industries, a garbage contractor without a recycling plan, submitted a bid \$400,000 lower than Laidlaw. However, at the ensuing General Council Meeting, public support for the blue box program, coupled with supportive presentations from Ludolph, Paul Taylor of the RCO, Pollution Probe's executive director Colin Isaacs, and a group of schoolchildren who recited a poem on the merits of recycling, persuaded

⁸⁶³ Stephenson, interview. Eric Hellman tells a slightly different story. As he notes, "Jack [McGinnis] was the one who went to the plastics manufacturer and was looking at what kind of boxes we could get, found one that was reasonably economical and that was blue. It was a plastic corrugated container and that became the reason why it was blue." Hellman, interview.

⁸⁶⁴ Humphries, *We Recycle*, 8.

⁸⁶⁵ Ludolph, interview.

Council to accept the higher bid.⁸⁶⁶ Jack McGinnis received a telephone call the following day from an elated Ron Murray who informed him, “I now know what recycling is worth – \$400,000!”⁸⁶⁷

The blue box program continued to expand. In 1985 Laidlaw brought it to Mississauga. That same year, the Ontario Soft Drink Association [OSDA] made a deal with the provincial government that the Environmental Protection Act would be amended to allow the introduction of non-refillable, but recyclable aluminum and plastic containers. In return, the OSDA promised it would recycle fifty percent of its containers by December 1988. In order to hold up its end of the bargain the OSDA established the Ontario Multi-Materials Recycling Incorporated [OMMRI] in 1986, which made an initial pledge of \$1.5 million to expand the blue box program province-wide. Within the year, OMMRI increased its pledge to \$20 million.⁸⁶⁸

The spread of the blue box program highlights environmentalists’ success in selling the concept of recycling to the public and the business community. While this was an important victory, it belies the fact that recycling was only one part of the solution to the waste problem. The complete solution, as outlined in Pollution Probe’s 3Rs waste hierarchy, began with a reduction of the throughput, and continued with an emphasis on purchasing reusable goods. Whereas these actions demanded significant changes in the lifestyles of consumers, as well as major changes in the way producers operated,

⁸⁶⁶ Ibid.; Stephenson, interview; Humphries, *We Recycle*, 8.

⁸⁶⁷ Quoted in Humphries, *We Recycle*, 9.

⁸⁶⁸ Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, “A Brief History of Waste Diversion in Ontario,” 2; David McRobert, “Ontario’s Blue Box System: A Case Study of Government’s Role in the Technological Change Process, 1970-1991,” unpublished LLM thesis, Osgoode Hall Law School, 1994, 40. While the blue box system would continue to expand across the province, dramatically increasing the recycling participation rate, the share of refillable soft drink containers would drop from a market share of forty percent in 1986 to just three percent in 1993. Derek Ferguson, “NDP record on refillables criticized,” *Toronto Star*, 24 November 1993, A10.

recycling was a relatively easy fix that enabled the public to feel good about themselves without addressing the unsustainability of the modern consumer lifestyle.

POLLUTION PROBE'S REVIVAL

The early 1980s saw a resurgence in Pollution Probe's public standing. This came as a result of a newfound focus on hazardous waste and public health. These interconnected issues came to the forefront in the aftermath of the Love Canal issue, in which residents of Niagara Falls, New York discovered they were living on sites contaminated by wastes disposed of by the Hooker Chemical Company.⁸⁶⁹ This had a direct bearing on Canadian interests, as it was soon discovered that Hooker had four hazardous waste sites that were leaking into the Niagara River and, ultimately, Lake Ontario – the source of drinking water for an estimated four million Canadians.⁸⁷⁰ Despite the transnational nature of this environmental issue, historians have ignored the contributions made by Canadian ENGOS in its resolution. The idea that these hazardous waste cases were strictly American affairs highlights their impact as a human interest story. Seen in this light, it was the story of middle class Americans whose life savings were jeopardized when they unknowingly purchased homes on contaminated land. The prospect of buying a home, a key component of the American dream, only to discover it may have lethal consequences, provoked strong emotions from the public. This subsequently overshadowed the more

⁸⁶⁹ For more see Elizabeth D. Blum, *Love Canal Revisited: Race, Class, and Gender in Environmental Activism* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*, 246-248.

⁸⁷⁰ Lee Botts and Paul Muldoon, *Evolution of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 2002), 58; "U.S. sources key to pollution woes," *Globe and Mail*, 8 June 1983, 4.

abstract aspect of the story that showed its environmental consequences crossed international boundaries.⁸⁷¹

Pollution Probe waded into the issue in May 1981 when it was revealed that an out of court settlement had been reached between the United States and New York governments and Hooker concerning the latter's waste dump at Hyde Park Boulevard. According to the terms of the deal, Hooker would spend \$15.5 million capping the site, collecting any chemicals that escaped in drainage pipes surrounding the site, and cleaning the nearby Bloody Run Creek and Niagara Gorge.⁸⁷² This treatment of the waste site, which contained 80,000 tons of chemicals, including 900 kilograms of the highly-toxic dioxin, was deemed wholly inadequate by Pollution Probe and Operation Clean-Niagara, a Niagara-on-the-Lake-based citizens group. As such, they filed a request to intervene in a judicial overview of the proposed settlement.⁸⁷³ This request, filed by Toby Vigod of the Canadian Environmental Law Association, argued that her clients requested *amicus curiae* status – that is, advisor's status – because they “feel that the settlement agreement must contain conditions stringent enough to ensure that international waters are not contaminated.”⁸⁷⁴ This request was accepted, granting Pollution Probe and Operation Clean-Niagara an opportunity to review the terms and to submit their comments to the

⁸⁷¹ Elizabeth D. Blum's *Love Canal Revisited* makes just one reference – in its endnotes – to Canadian groups and their involvement in the New York hazardous waste cases. Blum, *Love Canal Revisited*, 170n96.

⁸⁷² Rae Tyson and Michael Keating, “Citizens' groups delay plan to clean U.S. dump,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 February 1982, 4.

⁸⁷³ “Citizen's Groups Challenge Hooker Chemicals Over Hyde Park Agreement,” 11 May 1981, Press Releases, 1981, PPP.

⁸⁷⁴ Toby Vigod to John T. Curtin, US District Court,” 7 May 1981, Hyde Park 1981, PPP. In 1980 CELA's economic woes were a thing of the past due to stable funding provided by the Ontario Legal Aid Plan, which provided for a budget of \$200,000 and three full-time lawyers. Rudy Platiel, “New environmental battles being mapped out for the 1980s,” *Globe and Mail*, 18 January 1980, 9.

court.⁸⁷⁵ The ensuing submission, signed by Vigod on behalf of her clients and Barbara Morrison, an American attorney representing the New York-based Ecumenical Task Force, argued that the current agreement would leave the site contaminated, which would have profound implications on millions of Canadians and Americans whose drinking water source would be rendered “extremely toxic.” They argued, therefore, that the best solution would be to excavate and destroy the waste, with re-entombing it in a secure vault a distant second choice.⁸⁷⁶ This carefully prepared brief led Judge John Curtin to hold hearings, featuring expert witnesses, including Grant Anderson, a Canadian hydrologist, and Douglas Hallett, of the Canadian Wildlife Service, both of whom supported the conclusions reached in the Vigod-Morrison brief.⁸⁷⁷ When Curtin finally approved the settlement in April 1982, it did not include the environmentalists’ calls for a wholesale change in plan. Nonetheless, historian Elizabeth Blum argues that it did include some important provisions, including remedial work on the site, and a requirement that the Occidental Chemical Corporation, the parent company of Hooker Chemical, to “identify the extent of contamination” within the community.⁸⁷⁸

Pollution Probe received important support from the Ontario government during its intervention in the Hyde Park Boulevard settlement. While John Roberts, the Ontario Environment Minister, opted to avoid direct involvement, he did write a letter of support for Pollution Probe’s *amicus curiae* bid. Likewise, his successor, Keith Norton, met to

⁸⁷⁵ Rae Tyson, “Canadians to review waste case, 30 May 1981, 4; Blum, *Love Canal Revisited*, 113, 170n96.

⁸⁷⁶ Toby Vigod and Barbara Morrison, “Brief,” 30 June 1981, Pollution Probe et. al. vs Hooker Chemical (Testimony) 1981, PPP. See also, Rae Tyson, “Dump cleanup not sufficient, brief contends,” *Globe and Mail*, 2 July 1981, 15.

⁸⁷⁷ Rae Tyson, “Dump polluting Lake Ontario, soil and water samples confirm,” *Globe and Mail*, 7 October 1981, 4.

⁸⁷⁸ Blum, *Love Canal Revisited*, 113.

offer advice for the group's proceedings.⁸⁷⁹ When attention next turned to the so-called "S-area" waste dump, Pollution Probe requested that it and Operation Clean-Niagara receive intervener status, which would grant them the ability to introduce evidence and question witnesses on a level playing field with the Occidental Chemical Company and the various levels of government involved. This would be a clear step up from *amicus curiae*, which only grants permission to supply information to the proceedings if so requested by an intervening party. However, in October 1982 Keith Norton announced the provincial government's intention to intervene. While Norton stated that the government's decision was rooted in its desire "to have the maximum influence in any decision made," it appears that it was a reaction to the public interest that had been spurred by the Ontario-based ENGOS' involvement. Pollution Probe, which had already secured \$35,000 in research funds from Environment Canada for the case, publicly requested that the Ontario government back out in order to avoid contradictory evidence.⁸⁸⁰ Nonetheless, when it came time for the courts to review the proposed settlement, the government of Ontario received intervener status while Pollution Probe and Operation Clean-Niagara were relegated to *amicus curiae*. A clearly nonplussed Colin Isaacs told the media that he did not trust the province "to protect the health and safety of the people of the Niagara frontier or to protect the waters of Lake Ontario from

⁸⁷⁹ Stan Oziewicz, "No appeal by Ontario on dumping," *Globe and Mail*, 18 January 1980, 9; Anne Wordsworth and Brian Marshall, Pollution Probe, to Keith Norton, 10 December 1981, Hyde Park 1981, PPP. Pollution Probe also used research in its briefs that was funded by Environment Canada. And, while Environment Canada employee Douglas Hallett would participate in the hearings, he was refused permission to do so as a federal employee. See, "Ottawa paid for research to fight Hooker agreement," *Globe and Mail*, 13 February 1982, 4.

⁸⁸⁰ "Norton refuses to shun U.S. case," *Globe and Mail*, 14 October 1982, 4.

a landfill that spews toxic chemicals into the Niagara River.”⁸⁸¹ When the court hearings began in May 1984, Pollution Probe was highly critical of the government’s handling of the case, which featured just two witnesses and was handled by a Washington-based lawyer, Philip Sunderland, whose ill-prepared case was described as both “contradictory” and “silly” by the presiding judge.⁸⁸² Isaacs claimed the Ontario Ministry of the Environment “were made a laughingstock and it is terribly damaging to the ministry’s credibility.” Pollution Probe’s critique worked its way back to the provincial legislature, where Environment Minister Andrew Brandt was forced to defend the government’s performance in the case.⁸⁸³

While Pollution Probe played a vital role in ensuring Canadians’ voices were heard in the Hooker Chemical settlements, its greatest impact came as a result of its involvement with SCA Chemical Waste Services, a company that assisted industry in the disposal of chemical wastes. In January 1980 SCA was granted permission by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to build a five and a half mile pipeline to dump treated chemical waste into the Niagara River. While then-Environment Minister Harry Parrott indicated his government was not concerned with the decision, members of Pollution Probe, Operation Clean-Niagara, and the Niagara Falls, New York-based Operation Clean announced their objections and an intention to seek an appeal.⁸⁸⁴ In

⁸⁸¹ Pollution Probe and Operation Clean-Niagara’s request for intervener status was rejected because Judge John Curtin ruled their interests were already represented by the government of Ontario. Jock Ferguson, “U.S. ruling irks environmental groups,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 March 1983, M3.

⁸⁸² Both witnesses, under cross-examination, admitted they had not read the proposed settlement. Testimony by a third witness was cancelled at the last moment because he was caught off-guard by the introduction of new evidence. Michael Keating, “Pollution Probe assails Ontario’s dump case as hearings adjourned,” *Globe and Mail*, 5 May 1984, 21.

⁸⁸³ Michael Keating, “Brandt denies Ontario failed at Niagara dump hearings,” *Globe and Mail*, 4 May 1984, M3; “Brandt defends role of S-dump delegates,” *Globe and Mail*, 8 May 1984, M3.

⁸⁸⁴ Stan Oziewicz, “No appeal by Ontario on dumping,” *Globe and Mail*, 18 January 1980, 9.

April 1982 SCA, Pollution Probe, Operation Clean-Niagara, and Operation Clean announced an agreement had been reached that would see an increased level of monitoring, including a study that would chart the path of the wastes as they diluted, in exchange for an end to the environmentalists' opposition. Anne Wordsworth of Pollution Probe noted that her organization continued to oppose the dumping of wastes but supported the agreement given that it imposed a rigorous set of controls while at the same time reserving the rights of Pollution Probe, Operation Clean-Niagara, and Operation Clean to reopen hearings if they became unsatisfied with SCA's performance.⁸⁸⁵

This agreement would have profound implications. At the time, SCA's 5.6 acre landfill was coming close to its capacity, so the company proposed the creation of a new twenty-five acre landfill site, capable of holding more than one million tons of industrial waste. Under the terms of the April 1982 agreement, this proposal had to be cleared by the Citizens' Review Board, which contained representatives from SCA, the three environmental groups, and the New York state communities of Porter and Lewiston. As lawyer Barbara Morrison explained in a letter to Judge Francis Serbent,

the contaminants from the landfill will discharge into Six Mile Swale/Four Mile Creek, and potentially into Twelve Mile Creek – these three streams flow into Lake Ontario; hydrogeologic considerations, monitoring plans and air emission calculations are inadequate; and there are potential environmental impacts to the Niagara River and Lake Ontario which may result from construction and operation of the proposed landfill and may continue as a major problem after closure of the landfill facility.⁸⁸⁶

⁸⁸⁵ "Waste firm, critics agree," *Globe and Mail*, 15 April 1982, 3; Pollution Probe Foundation, "The Involvement of Environmental Interest Groups in the Development of the New York State Phased Ban on the Landfilling of Toxic Industrial Wastes: A Report," 2, Phased Ban on Landfilling Toxic Wastes 1984, PPP.

⁸⁸⁶ Quoted in Pollution Probe Foundation, "The Involvement of Environmental Interest Groups in the Development of the New York State Phased Ban on the Landfilling of Toxic Industrial Wastes," 3.

While Serbent ruled that SCA could proceed without hearings, this decision was overruled in an appeal to the Department of Environmental Conservation [DEC] whose commissioner found the issues of monitoring, leachate compatibility, and air emissions required further examination.⁸⁸⁷ Prior to the launch of public hearings, representatives from Pollution Probe and SCA met to discuss possible solutions; these discussions soon expanded to include the DEC. This resulted in an agreement, first announced on 6 February 1984, that would phase out landfilling the most hazardous wastes.⁸⁸⁸ As Pollution Probe later boasted, “It is believed that it ... marks the first time in North America that citizen group opposition to a landfill has led, through multi-part discussions, to implementation of an environmentally preferred solution not only in the location of initial concern but also throughout a legislative jurisdiction.”⁸⁸⁹ In turn, Pollution Probe would pressure the Ontario government to follow New York’s lead, arguing that similar legislation in the province would divert thirteen million litres of hazardous waste from public dumps, eighteen million litres from private landfills, and another 13.5 million litres that it alleged were poured into municipal sewers.⁸⁹⁰

While Pollution Probe was working on the toxic waste issue, it also turned its attention to the safety of the Toronto water supply. This first made headlines in November 1981 when Anne Wordsworth presented a report to the Toronto Board of

⁸⁸⁷ Geoffrey York, “New York to hold hearings on expansion of dump site,” *Globe and Mail*, 4 November 1983, 17.

⁸⁸⁸ Pollution Probe Foundation, “The Involvement of Environmental Interest Groups in the Development of the New York State Phased Ban on the Landfilling of Toxic Industrial Wastes,” 4.

⁸⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁸⁹⁰ As Colin Isaacs stated, “Pouring it into the ground or pouring it into sewers is absolutely the worst thing that we can do with waste.” Ontario Environment Minister Andrew Brandt countered that the industrial waste that ended up in the province’s landfill sites was “in that marginal category of contaminants (and) that there is still a lot of dialogue about whether or not they are as unsafe as some people are saying.” The chemical wastes recently banned in New York, he added, “have been banned and will continue to be banned” in Ontario. Michael Keating, “Wastes policy termed threat to water,” *Globe and Mail*, 14 February 1984, 3.

Health that questioned the long-term effect of the low level toxics detected but permitted under Environment Canada guidelines. This led an employee of the Toronto Department of Health to warn pregnant women to avoid drinking tap water – a comment that was immediately rebuffed by Alexander Macpherson, the city’s medical officer of health, and Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey, who accused Pollution Probe of fear mongering.⁸⁹¹ A follow-up report released in February 1982, in which Pollution Probe urged further research into the long-term effects of the low levels of benzene detected in the Metro water supply, led Godfrey not only to dismiss the findings but also to encourage the public to stop supporting the ENGO in response to this “sure sign of irresponsibility.”⁸⁹² Pollution Probe once again critiqued the city’s water system in March 1983, with the release of *Drinking Water: Make It Safe*. This research paper, which alleged that fifty-three contaminants were found in the water supply – including sixteen known carcinogens – also alleged that between seventy-two and 156 Metro residents would develop cancer in their lifetime as a result of the polluted water supply. This could be rectified, they argued, by the addition of carbon-based water purification systems, at the added cost of \$8 to \$16 per Metro resident, per year. The peculiar exactitude of Pollution Probe’s claims opened the study to intense scrutiny. Although Pollution Probe was quick to defend itself, noting that its work was based on published data, George Becking, chief of environmental toxicology at the Canadian Health Department, alleged that Pollution Probe based its cancer estimates on disputed research. Nonetheless, Becking delivered a mixed message on the matter, noting that “there’s no reason to consider that there is a long-term excessive risk from drinking Toronto water” while simultaneously refusing to

⁸⁹¹ Alden Baker, “Warning on tap water was wrong, MOH says,” *Globe and Mail*, 11 November 1981, 5.

⁸⁹² “Official discounts warning by group over water quality,” *Globe and Mail*, 17 February 1982, 5.

call it “safe,” given the lack of long-term research on the subject. Godfrey responded by sipping a glass of water for photographers, adding that “I would ... let my kids drink it by the barrelful.”⁸⁹³ Frustrated that residents were switching to bottled water while the municipal supply was “getting a black eye,” Metro Works Commissioner Frank Horgan announced the following month that his department would begin to subject bottled water to the same chemical analyses applied to the city’s.⁸⁹⁴ While Metro remained resolute in its position that the water supply was safe, the provincial Ministry of the Environment announced in June 1983 the creation of an internal panel of experts on water toxins, with a focus on dioxin, and a carbon filtration plant to test the technology in Niagara Falls.⁸⁹⁵

Pollution Probe’s focus on toxic waste and the safety of the water supply was central to its revival from the doldrums of the late 1970s.⁸⁹⁶ Not only did these issues lead to a revival in the organization’s public profile, they also served as the focus of new fundraising efforts. Upon arrival at Pollution Probe, executive director Colin Isaacs had focused his energies on securing additional funds from government, foundations, and corporations. As he explains, he “quickly found that we were pretty much at the limit there of what we could raise.”⁸⁹⁷ The inability to coax additional money from these sources is understandable, given the fact that the early 1980s were a time of severe

⁸⁹³ Michael Keating, “Tap water quality criticized,” *Globe and Mail*, 3 March 1983, 5. For further discussion of this controversy see, Norman Snider, “Visiting Toronto, you say? Don’t go near the water,” *Globe and Mail*, 9 April 1983, E19; J.R. Vallentyne, “Is society’s view safe for drinkers of water?” *Globe and Mail*, 28 April 1983, 7.

⁸⁹⁴ “Bottled water to be tested,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 April 1983, 5. The ensuing tests revealed that there were more contaminants in the bottled water supply than in the municipal tap water. This led Wayne Smart, president of the Crystal Spring Water Supply company, one of fourteen bottlers examined, to threaten a lawsuit if their sales were hurt. Alden Baker, “Bottled water second best in Metro test,” *Globe and Mail*, 26 October 1983, 1.

⁸⁹⁵ Michael Keating, “Ontario to build test plant to take poisons from water,” 10 June 1983, 5; Michael Keating, “Advisers on chemicals named,” *Globe and Mail*, 29 June 1983, 18; Michael Keating, “Brandt awards Niagara Falls pilot project for filtration,” *Globe and Mail*, 3 April 1984, M3.

⁸⁹⁶ This fact is highlighted in David Lees, “Cleaning up our Act,” *Globe and Mail*, 13 August 1983, FA3.

⁸⁹⁷ Isaacs, interview.

economic recession in Canada.⁸⁹⁸ However, the fact that this ENGO, more than a decade after its founding was still reliant upon the same three sources of funding is a clear indictment of the leadership vacuum in recent years. As such, Isaacs turned his attention towards the general public, a source of revenue long ignored by the ENGO. This led Pollution Probe to the world of professional fundraising, with an emphasis on direct mail campaigns and door-to-door canvassing.⁸⁹⁹ While this was not an ideal solution, given its high cost, it did lead to a significant increase in the Pollution Probe Foundation's revenues, from a low of \$86,022 in 1978 to an average of about \$300,000 between 1981 and 1984, which in turn resulted in an end to missed paydays.⁹⁰⁰ The addition of paid fundraisers had other implications for Pollution Probe. Decisions concerning operations were still largely made as a collective during weekly meetings. "That was okay when the staff was eight or nine or ten [staffers]," explains Isaacs. The influx of fundraisers, however, pushed the staff numbers towards fifty. "It became totally unmanageable so I moved towards a system where individual teams would make the decisions for their teams and I would act as a mediator when there was conflict between teams."⁹⁰¹ While

⁸⁹⁸ The recession is discussed in John English, *Just Watch Me: The Life of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1968-2000* (Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf Canada, 2009), 538-542; Desmond Morton, *A Short History of Canada*, 5th ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2001), 333-335.

⁸⁹⁹ Whether the change in fundraising tactics was inspired by Energy Probe's success with direct mail fundraising or was simply the result of new leadership at Pollution Probe – or both – remains unclear. "Probe Annual Report 1984," 4, Annual Reports, PPP. For discussion of the neighbourhood canvassing see, George B. Crawford, "Feeling' isn't enough," *Globe and Mail*, 29 October 1984, 7; Kai Millyard, "Pollution Probe," *Globe and Mail*, 8 November 1984, 6.

⁹⁰⁰ Pollution Probe Foundation, "The Pollution Probe Foundation Annual Report 1978," 4, Annual Reports, PPP; Pollution Probe Foundation, "The Pollution Probe Foundation Annual Report 1981-1982," 9, Annual Reports, PPP; Pollution Probe Foundation, "The Pollution Probe Foundation Annual Report 1983," 10, Annual Reports, PPP; Judy Steel, "Opening eyes to pollution," *Globe and Mail*, 3 September 1988, D5.

⁹⁰¹ Isaacs, interview.

the Board of Directors approved this change in management it was a contentious decision among the staff, who felt it gave Isaacs too much power over the organization.⁹⁰²

CONCLUSION

The late 1970s was a time of great turmoil for the Pollution Probe Foundation. On the one hand, it was beset by financial difficulties. On the other, its long-time anchor, Pollution Probe, struggled to assert its relevancy at a time when interest in environmental issues was at its nadir. These difficulties would inspire the more successful Energy Probe to depart the Pollution Probe Foundation in 1980.

The late 1970s also saw the Toronto environmental community undergo a transformation. Once dominated by Pollution Probe and its institutional offspring, it was now populated by unrelated groups that thrived in specific niches. Greenpeace Toronto established itself as the city's pre-eminent action-oriented ENGO, a clear contrast from Pollution Probe's focus on policy work. The Is Five Foundation, meanwhile, applied a hands-on approach to the recycling issue, to great effect. Combined with the emergence of the independent, free market-oriented Energy Probe, this marked the end of Pollution Probe's leadership over the local environmental community.

Forced to address its internal problems in the wake of Energy Probe's departure, Pollution Probe staged a minor renaissance in the early 1980s. Under the leadership of Colin Isaacs the organization developed a new approach to fundraising that incorporated the general public. The ENGO also developed a new focus on toxic waste and the safety

⁹⁰² Ibid.; Coon, interview.

of the Toronto water supply. By improving the organization's cash flow and identifying two hot button issues, Pollution Probe's solvency was ensured, at least temporarily.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

That Pollution Probe survived to celebrate its fifteenth anniversary was a significant accomplishment. Between 1969 and 1971 ENGOs emerged in every major – and most minor – Canadian cities. Very few would survive to see the mid-1980s due in large part to the economic doldrums of the period. Pollution Probe’s survival was in many ways connected to its ability to keep a low overhead, thanks to rent-free office space at the University of Toronto through 1980, and dollar-a-year rent thereafter at Ecology House. And despite a reduction in money available for much of this period, it nonetheless remained effective at securing the funds to continue operations. The same cannot be said of its namesake affiliates. Whereas fifty existed in the province of Ontario in 1971, just one, in Ottawa, continued to operate into the 1980s, at which time it was “bought out” by Pollution Probe in Toronto.⁹⁰³

The mid-1980s would see a new wave of public and governmental interest in the environment. However, this period would differ greatly from the environmental boom of the 1970s. Increasingly sophisticated analysis, spawned by the rise of environmental studies departments at universities and the creation of an environmental bureaucracy within the government – two important legacies of the environmental movement’s work in the 1960s and 1970s – resulted in a new emphasis on transnational concerns such as acid rain, the depletion of the ozone layer, and the rapid decline of the planet’s

⁹⁰³ Isaacs, interview.

biodiversity.⁹⁰⁴ With this came a new generation of pan-Canadian ENGOs that carved out their own specific niches for support from public, government, foundations, and corporate sources. The World Wildlife Fund of Canada [WWFC], an offshoot of the Switzerland-based World Wildlife Fund, had been founded in 1967 by Senator Alan A. Macnaughton in 1967. However, it was largely dormant until the organization incorporated as a legal foundation in 1982 with former Pollution Probe executive director Monte Hummel as its head. The WWFC's efforts to preserve wilderness areas and their natural inhabitants, at home and abroad, was aided by an annual budget of \$4 million in 1988, a figure buoyed by the support of two trust funds and broad-based public support.⁹⁰⁵ The Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain [CCAR] was formed in 1981 by twelve member groups concerned with the looming effects of acid rain on the Canadian environment and economy. In order to address the root cause, sulphur emissions from Canadian and American factories, the CCAR established educational campaigns as well as political lobbies in Ottawa and Washington, DC. Having expanded to encompass a support base of fifty-eight organizations, eventually representing more than two million Canadians, the CCAR disbanded in 1991 after convincing the Mulroney and Bush administrations to pass the necessary clean air legislation.⁹⁰⁶ Greenpeace, which continued to appeal to those in favour of direct action tactics, unified its Canadian operations under the Greenpeace Canada banner. A subsidiary of Greenpeace

⁹⁰⁴ Doern and Conway, *The Greening of Canada*, 103; Robert Paehlke, "Canada," in Helmut Weidner and Martin Jänicke, eds., *Capacity Building in National Environmental Policy: A Comparative Study of 17 Countries* (New York: Springer, 2002), 128, 136-137.

⁹⁰⁵ Hummel, interview; Mowat, *Rescue the Earth!*, 34-46; Dewar, *Cloak of Green*, 333-335.

⁹⁰⁶ Canadian Coalition on Acid Rain fonds, University of Waterloo Special Collections, accessed 28 September 2010, <http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/discipline/SpecColl/acid/>.

International, it opened its national headquarters in Toronto in 1987.⁹⁰⁷ In 1989 the Sierra Club Canada [SCC] was established as a grassroots collection of volunteer-driven provincial chapters. An independent outgrowth of the venerable United States organization, the national body replaced previously unaffiliated provincial chapters in an effort to more effectively address its concerns. Headed by activist-turned-environmental lawyer Elizabeth May, the Sierra Club Canada quickly developed into the country's largest direct-membership ENGO.⁹⁰⁸ Pollution Probe may have been an important player within the early Canadian environmental movement, but by the mid-1980s it lacked the national profile to compete for support head-on with these groups. As a result it turned inwards and remained, first and foremost, an ENGO concerned with local issues.

Despite the rise of national organizations and international concerns, the Toronto environmental community that Pollution Probe had fostered continued to thrive. CELA, emboldened by the stable funding granted by Legal Aid Ontario, positioned itself to ward off the deregulation impulse of the Mulroney government.⁹⁰⁹ Its partner organization, CELRF, ventured off on its own and changed its name to the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law Policy in 1988.⁹¹⁰ Energy Probe, meanwhile, continued to advocate the benefit of the free market as an environmental regulator. As if to highlight its ideological stance, in 1988 it launched its own mutual fund under the watchful eye of Lawrence Solomon.⁹¹¹

⁹⁰⁷ Rex Weyler to Ryan O'Connor, personal correspondence, 10 August 2010; McDermott, interview.

⁹⁰⁸ "History," Sierra Club Canada, accessed 28 September 2010, <http://www.sierraclub.ca/national/aboutus/history.html>.

⁹⁰⁹ Judy Steed, "Opening eyes to pollution," *Globe and Mail*, 3 September 1988, D5.

⁹¹⁰ "About CIELAP: History," Canadian Institute For Environmental Law and Policy, accessed 28 September 2010, www.cielap.org/history.php.

⁹¹¹ As Solomon noted, "We want to stay away from the bad guys – polluters, military industrialists and Third World exploiters." Ellen Roseman, "It's not easy being green for ethical funds," *Globe and Mail*, 13

While Pollution Probe failed to attract the level of support enjoyed by the pan-Canadian ENGOs, it continued to benefit from the entrepreneurial leadership of Colin Isaacs. In 1988, just as the Toronto real estate market began to take off, he convinced the federal government to sell Pollution Probe's long-time home, Ecology House, to the ENGO for \$175,000 – a bargain price for a building valued at over \$600,000.⁹¹² While Isaacs saw this as a simple way to increase Pollution Probe's assets, others on staff chafed at the one condition: that a letter praising the federal government for the deal and its environmental record be forwarded to everyone on their 17,000-name mailing list. While Isaacs noted that "If the minister hadn't asked, we wouldn't have suggested it," he also explained that "I'm sure our members and supporters have the resources to interpret it."⁹¹³

In the continued effort to shore up its finances, Isaacs agreed to lend Pollution Probe's name to the Loblaw supermarket chain's "Green Line." Part of the newly emergent trend of green merchandising, which saw companies market products as environmentally conscious options,⁹¹⁴ the deal entitled Pollution Probe to a one percent royalty for each item it endorsed. Free to pick and choose which of the roughly one hundred items the ENGO would support, Isaacs landed in hot water for the measured approval he gave the company's "environmentally friendly" disposable diapers. In a televised commercial, Isaacs took the stance that those truly concerned with the state of the environment would use cloth diapers; however, given the reluctance of many

April 1991, B4. This mutual fund was eventually sold to Investors Group Inc. Thomas Walkom, "Hydro thorn Energy Probe rooted on the right," *Toronto Star*, 23 August 1997, E5.

⁹¹² "Ottawa selling Ecology House," *Globe and Mail*, 26 May 1988, A17; John Temple, "Pollution Probe works a deal with Masse," *Toronto Star*, 8 June 1988, A1.

⁹¹³ Temple, "Pollution Probe works a deal with Masse," A1.

⁹¹⁴ Benjamin Kline, *First Along the River: A Brief History of the U.S. Environmental Movement*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Acada Books, 2000), 109; Paehlke, "Canada," 138-139; Sale, *The Green Revolution*, 105.

consumers to pursue this option, the fact that the diapers in question were biodegradable, used fewer trees, and were chlorine-free made them the preferred second option.⁹¹⁵ Despite the qualified reluctance of the endorsement, two members of Pollution Probe's staff promptly resigned, citing discomfort with the decision to endorse disposable diapers in particular, and the concept of product endorsements in general, while another three threatened to follow suit.⁹¹⁶ Isaacs responded by tendering his resignation, Pollution Probe withdrew from the Green Line program, and whispers of a mass revolt from within the ENGO were stayed.⁹¹⁷ Nonetheless, Loblaws continued the Green Line despite the unwillingness of any other ENGOs to lend their name to it, proving that retailers were willing to market ecologically friendly products but many within the target audience remained skeptical of their intentions.

The Green Line fiasco launched a public debate about the propriety of ENGO-corporate relations. For some it inspired an automatic, vehement denunciation. Others were more measured in their critique. As Clifford Maynes wrote in a letter to the *Globe and Mail*,

There is nothing wrong in the environmental movement 'working with business' by publishing criteria for environmentally acceptable products, rating available products according to these criteria and advising business how to make improvements However, individual product endorsements are another matter. They imply that a particular product is the best choice or the only acceptable choice in the interests of the environment, when it may be neither.⁹¹⁸

⁹¹⁵ Craig McInnes, "'Green' products may offer more for conscience than environment," *Globe and Mail*, 5 June 1989, A13.

⁹¹⁶ Lorne Slotnick, "Environmental groups in turmoil over their product endorsements," *Globe and Mail*, 27 June 1989, A5.

⁹¹⁷ Lynda Hurst, "The diapers did him in," *Toronto Star*, 8 July 1989, D4.

⁹¹⁸ Clifford Maynes, "On sports star level," *Globe and Mail*, 2 August 1989, A6. Maynes was speaking for himself, as an interested, environmentally-inclined citizen. Today he is executive director of Green Communities Canada. Clifford Maynes to Ryan O'Connor, personal correspondence, 18 August 2010.

But Isaacs reminded people that Pollution Probe had an established history of collaborating with the business community. As he wrote in the pages of the *Globe and Mail*, “For 20 years, Pollution Probe has sought access to the boardrooms of the nation, first to implement policy and second to raise money. The fact that we have solicited and accepted corporate donations seems to have taken people by surprise, even though it is published regularly in our annual report.”⁹¹⁹ Isaacs might even have pointed out that there had been a previous collaboration with the grocery chain, which resulted in the sale of packaging-free products.⁹²⁰

Two things strike the historian as odd concerning this event. To begin with, it attracted more attention than any of Pollution Probe’s environmental campaigns during the 1980s – a considerable feat when one considers that the ENGO engaged in the toxic waste issue in New York state and questioned the safety of Toronto’s municipal water supply. Furthermore, this marked the first time that the source of Pollution Probe’s funding came under public scrutiny. From the time of its inception, the ENGO relied on funding from government, corporations, and foundations to pursue its various activities. Nonetheless, these sources, and their potential influence over Pollution Probe’s actions, went unquestioned for twenty years. In large part this is because the ENGO had never before involved itself in a self-serving endorsement of a product with such dubious environmental credentials. While Pollution Probe had come out in favour of certain items in the past, most notably when it encouraged the public to purchase detergents with low phosphate contents in 1970, it did not receive royalties for its work. Pollution Probe’s

⁹¹⁹ Colin Isaacs, “Harnessing the profit motive to clean up world pollution – it’s faster than government,” *Globe and Mail*, 10 July 1989, A7.

⁹²⁰ Ellen Roseman, “Wrapping just waste,” *Globe and Mail*, 25 December 1978, 16; untitled document, nd, Consumer Packaging Survey, F1058 MU7337, AO.

sponsors were always listed in its annual reports and mentioned in the appropriate press releases, but because it did not compromise its willingness to critique corporations and the government its integrity never came into question.

This dissertation provides new insight into the history of the environmental movement in Canada. As was demonstrated, the early Canadian ENGOS emerged in a manner significantly different than their United States counterparts. Whereas ENGOS south of the border evolved out of existing conservation organizations and were frequently national in scope, Canadian ENGOS were unaffiliated and maintained a regional focus due to the lack of organizational infrastructure and the burdensome costs of overcoming the country's massive but disparately populated geography. It also demonstrates that Pollution Probe emerged as an early leader within the Canadian environmental community due to a variety of factors, including its support from the University of Toronto, which provided rent-free offices and a boost to its reputation, its numerous volunteers, the leadership provided by well-connected members of elite society, and its ability to tap government and corporate funding to enable its activities.

The environmental movement is not static. At the outset Pollution Probe focused on end-of-the-pipe pollution issues. Shortly thereafter it expanded to incorporate a critique of the growth ethos that guided the economy, with a particular focus on recycling and energy issues. While Pollution Probe struggled to identify issues of popular concern in the late 1970s, by 1980 it switched its emphasis to hazardous waste and public health. As such, the story of Pollution Probe provides insight into the ever-changing priorities of environmental activists in Canada.

As was noted, the Group Action to Stop Pollution [GASP] predated Pollution Probe as Toronto's first ENGO. Whereas Pollution Probe began as a student-run organization, GASP benefited from the initial support of many of the city's professional class. In order to explain Pollution Probe's ascension and GASP's fade into obscurity this dissertation utilizes organization theory, which examines the development and sophistication of lobby groups, and resource mobilization theory, which highlights the competition for funding between social movement organizations. These dual theories can be of much assistance to future studies of social movement organizations, particularly those in the flourishing subject of the 1960s in Canada, providing insight into the sustainability of movements and their constituent organizations.

While secondary sources on the history of the Canadian environmental movement are scarce, this should not be a hindrance to future researchers. There is an abundance of primary sources, particularly for high profile ENGOs such as Pollution Probe. Reports and newsletters are available in libraries and archives, while coverage in the contemporary media is also of significant use. Furthermore, given the relatively recent development of the environmental movement in Canada, many of its pioneers are still available to provide oral interviews.

Pollution Probe made the decision early in 2000 to sell Ecology House, which required some costly renovations. Netting a tidy profit off the \$525,000 sale, the staff packed up their belongings and relocated to a non-descript brick office building at 625 Church Street that had previously housed provincial bureaucrats.⁹²¹ In May 2007 I visited the new

⁹²¹ Brian McAndrew, "Closing the doors on Ecology House," *Toronto Star*, 29 March 2000, B2.

headquarters to conduct research using Pollution Probe's papers. Located just around the corner from the trendy Yorkville district, the ENGO occupies a spacious fourth floor suite. Inside, the staff, clean cut and dressed in business casual, were working on a variety of collaborative projects, most conspicuously the annual Clean Air Commute campaign. While tributes to Pollution Probe's colourful past adorn the walls of its foyer and boardroom, the most striking thing about the office was that it was so ordinary. Full of personal computers, cubicles, a photocopier room, and a small but tidy kitchenette, it was indistinguishable from most small corporate or government offices. I had the same revelation upon visiting the headquarters of the WWFC and CELA.⁹²² The environmental movement in Canada has come a long way since the days when Pollution Probe, CELA, and ZPGT operated out of campus laboratories.

The prevailing image of an early environmentalist is that of a wild-haired radical. However, this never matched the reality of Pollution Probe. True, there were members of Pollution Probe who had long hair, just as there were those that self-identified as radicals. But, as this dissertation has demonstrated, Pollution Probe has always emphasized the idea that change necessitated working within the system, not outside it. This approach, attributable to the early leadership by members with impeccable establishment pedigrees, resulted in an effort to bridge the divide between government, corporations, foundations, and ENGOs. That after forty years Pollution Probe's headquarters resembles those of its funders should be of no surprise.

⁹²² The fact that the WWFC headquarters resembled a business office was a matter of great pride for Hummel in a 1990 interview. As he explained, "Now when you walk into my current offices ... you might as well be walking into the head office of IBM. Absolutely everybody has a computer at his or her station. At the WWF[C] we take a business-like approach in what I think is the good sense of business, which is channelling your energy efficiently and accountably and getting results." Mowat, *Rescue the Earth!*, 34.

APPENDIX I

Office of Research Ethics: Use of Human Subjects – Ethics Approval

**Office of Research Ethics**

The University of Western Ontario
 Room 00045 Dental Sciences Building, London, ON, Canada N6A 5C1
 Telephone: (519) 661-3036 Fax: (519) 850-2466 Email: ethics@uwo.ca
 Website: www.uwo.ca/research/ethics

Use of Human Subjects - Ethics Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. A. MacEachern

Review Number: 13845S

Review Level: Full Board

Review Date: December 14, 2007

Protocol Title: Toronto the Green: The Emergence of the Canadian Environmental Movement

Department and Institution: History, University of Western Ontario

Sponsor:

Ethics Approval Date: January 16, 2008

Expiry Date: April 30, 2010

Documents Reviewed and Approved: UWO Protocol, Letter of Information and consent.

Documents Received for Information:

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above named research study on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information. If you require an updated approval notice prior to that time you must request it using the UWO Updated Approval Request Form.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the study or consent form may be initiated without prior written approval from the NMREB except when necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the subject or when the change(s) involve only logistical or administrative aspects of the study (e.g. change of monitor, telephone number). Expedited review of minor change(s) in ongoing studies will be considered. Subjects must receive a copy of the signed information/consent documentation.

Investigators must promptly also report to the NMREB:

- a) changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
- b) all adverse and unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected;
- c) new information that may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study.

If these changes/adverse events require a change to the information/consent documentation, and/or recruitment advertisement, the newly revised information/consent documentation, and/or advertisement, must be submitted to this office for approval.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussion related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

Chair of NMREB: Dr. Jerry Paquette

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information

Grace Kelly
 (grace.kelly@uwo.ca)

Janice Sutherland
 (jsutherl@uwo.ca)

Jennifer McEwen
 (jmcewen4@uwo.ca)

Denise Grafton
 (dgrafton@uwo.ca)

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cc: ORE File

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Name	Ryan Ernest O'Connor
Post-secondary Education and Degrees	<p>The University of Western Ontario London, Ontario, Canada 2005-2010 Ph.D. (History)</p> <p>Queen's University Kingston, Ontario, Canada 2002-2004 M.A. (History)</p> <p>University of Prince Edward Island Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada 1998-2002 B.A. (History Honours)</p>
Major Awards And Honours	<p>Ontario Graduate Scholarship 2009-2010, 2008-2009 (declined), 2006-2008</p> <p>Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) Doctoral Fellowship 2008-2009</p>
Related Work Experience	<p>Graduate Teaching Assistant The University of Western Ontario 2005-2009</p> <p>Sessional Lecturer University of Prince Edward Island 2005, 2008</p> <p>Graduate Teaching Assistant Queen's University 2002-2004</p>
Select Publications	<p>"Agrarian Protest and Provincial Politics: Prince Edward Island and the 1971 National Farmers Union Highway Demonstration." <i>Acadiensis</i> 37:1 (Winter/Spring 2008): 31-55.</p> <p>"...you can beat us in the House of Assembly, but you can't beat us in the street": The Symbolic Value of Charlottetown's Orange Lodge Riot, 1877." <i>Historical Studies</i> 72 (2006): 71-94.</p>