

POLITICAL ECOLOGY: A STUDY OF  
THE IRISH ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

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### ABSTRACT


This thesis approaches the nuclear power controversy from a social movement perspective rather than from the more frequently used pressure group/behavioural perspective. A sympathetic stance to opponents of nuclear power is taken and the thesis focuses on the ideas which inspire the anti-nuclear movement.


The first part reviews the development of nuclear power as an energy source, discusses the ideas of social movements, and summarises the more important features of the New Left and Environmental Movements which have influenced the international opposition to nuclear power.


The second part is a case study showing how these factors have influenced the Irish anti-nuclear movement. Using a combination of literature reviews, interviews and questionnaire results chapters deal with the historical development of the controversy, the opposition movement literature, the radical political ideas which influenced the form of the movement, rank and file attitudes and motivations, and the influence of the anti-nuclear movement on other environmental issues in Ireland.

The conclusions show that the anti-nuclear movement is a diverse amalgam of many social elements combining to oppose a technology perceived as dangerous and the political systems that promote it.

Examiners:

  
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## ACRONYMS

AEC	Atomic Energy Commission.
AGR	Advanced Gas Cooler Reactor. (UK)
ANM	Anti-Nuclear Movement.
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation.
BWR	Boiling Water Reactor.
CANDU	CANadian Deuterium Uranium Reactor.
CEA	Commissariat d'Energie Atomique. (France)
CONSERVE	Council for Nuclear Safety and Energy Resources Conservation. (Ireland)
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.
DARTAG	Dublin Anti-Radiation and Toxic Action Group.
DUC	Donegal Uranium Campaign.
ECCS	Emergency Core Cooling System.
EDF	Electricite de France.
EEC	European Economic Community.
ERDA	Energy Research and Development Administration.
ESB	Electricity Supply Board. (Ireland)
FBR	Fast Breeder Reactor.
FoE	Friends of the Earth.
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency.
ADA	Industrial Development Authority. (Ireland)
IIASA	International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis.
IIRS	Institute for Industrial Research and Standards. (Ireland)
IRA	Irish Republican Army.
ITGWU	Irish Transport and General Workers Union.
JCAE	Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. (US)
LWR	Light Water Reactor
MCA	Maximum Credible Accident.
MTOE	Million Tons of Oil Equivalent.
MW	Mega Watt.
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.
NEB	Nuclear Energy Board. (Ireland)
NIES	Northern Ireland Electricity Service.
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission. (US)
NSA	Nuclear Safety Association. (Ireland)
NSC	Nuclear Safety Committee. (Ireland)
PERG	Political Ecology Research Group. (Oxford)
PWR	Pressurised Water Reactor.
RS	Revolutionary Struggle. (Ireland)
RSS	Reactor Safety Study. (The "Rasmussen" Report)
RTE	Radio Telifis Eireann.
SCRAM	Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace.
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society.
SESI	Solar Energy Society of Ireland.
SGHWR	Steam Generating Heavy Water Reactor.
SLP	Socialist Labour Party.

TCD Trinity College Dublin.  
TD Member of Irish Dail.  
TUANC Trade Union Anti-Nuclear Campaign.  
UCC University College Cork.  
WISE World Information Service on Energy.

## GLOSSARY OF IRISH TERMS

Term	Approximate English Equivalent
An Bord Pleannala .....	Planning Appeals Board
An Foras Forbatha .....	Physical Planning Institute
An Foras Taluntais .....	The Agricultural Institute
Ard Fheis .....	Annual Convention
Dail .....	Lower House of Parliament
Muintire na Tíre .....	People of the land
Oireachtas .....	Parliament
Seanad .....	Senate
Tánaiste .....	Deputy Prime Minister
Taoiseach .....	Prime Minister
T.D. ....	Member of the Dail

Always, in epochs when the languages and dialects of a culture have become outstripped by development of a practical sort, these languages become repetitive, formalised--and ridiculous. Phrases, words, associations of sentences spin themselves out automatically, but have no effect: they have lost their power, their energy.

What happened very soon was what every government had forseen, been terrified of, had tried to prevent: the armies of the young began to throw up leaders, not those designated by authority. These young men and women were able to understand, because of the amount of information still available (though governments always tried to suppress it) the mechanisms of the organisations they were in, the methods used to control them: their subjection, in fact. And these they explained to the masses under them.

Very quickly, the masses of youth were conducting what amounted to self-education in their own situation. That they had been set to compete with each other, make formal enemies of each other, were not allowed or at least, not encouraged, to mix and mingle, had been taught to see uniforms and badges not their own as the mark of the alien, the feared; that their very existence made governments tremble; that the arrangement, organisation, every moment of their lives was a function of their redundancy, their uselessness in the processes of production of real wealth--their lack of worth to society--all this was taught to them by themselves.

Doris Lessing, Shikasta

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The task of the generation now in rebellion is to reassert the authority of morality over technology; the business of social scientists is to help them see both how necessary and how difficult that task is going to be.

Joan Robinson (1970:122)

The nuclear power debate is not a debate about nuclear power. Its a debate about desirable futures ... for in this case Ireland.

Geoffrey Beuret<sup>1</sup>

The Anti-Nuclear Movement is world wide and it crosses all divides, social, political, cultural and sexual, because it is realised that Nuclear Power is ANTI-LIFE.

The Contaminated Crow<sup>2</sup>

#### 1.1 IMAGES OF THE EMERALD ISLE

Conrad Arensberg starts his famous study of the remote rural communities on the west coast of Ireland by describing four Irish countrysides, or lands of the spirit (1968:31). First, there is the mystic land of Celtic saga and hero, remnants of the Celtic civilization. Second is the land of the merry and happy-go-lucky. Third is the Ireland of small agricultural towns and villages, a land of hard realities where farming people try to make a living in unforgiving conditions combined with a passionate politics overlying the daily struggle. Fourth, there is the Catholic Ireland, the land of Saints and Scholars, a land of religious fervour paradoxically combining an authoritarian religion with a politics of rebellion.

This thesis is about a fifth Ireland, a country in the midst of very rapid change, in a period of industrialization, a spin off of the post war global expansion of capitalism. The four traditions have

altered as Ireland became fully integrated into the international economic structure. Rapid industrialization and urbanization involved a transformation of the Irish landscape and new political ideas have intruded on the agenda of public affairs. Despite (or perhaps because of) the significant gains in prosperity for the middle class, harsh realities remain in the form of rural isolation (Brody, 1974), unemployment, deprivation and the dole queue. The Celtic tradition has suffered severely, language protection efforts notwithstanding, although the musical heritage has undergone a metamorphosis as it is reinterpreted in the electric idiom. The Catholic church has remained an omnipresent influence although increasingly its positions are being ignored or questioned by the growing educated middle class urbanites under the secularizing influence of foreign cultural incursions. The politics of rebellion focuses much of its attention on the northern six counties where the traditional enemy's troops are still on Irish soil. The industrialization of the south has created a widespread ideological consensus on the ideas of pluralism and a mixed economy increasingly integrated with Europe. The tradition of emigration, a regular feature of Irish life dating back to the early nineteenth century, ended in the 1960's and as the birthrate climbed with falling marriage age a large number of young people now live in Ireland, making the population pyramid looking more like a third world population in the early stages of a demographic transition, than a European nation in the late twentieth century.

Ireland was substantially bypassed by the late 1960's and early 1970's international wave of concern with the environment. Major industrial developments were still relatively few and far between and often favourably looked on as a source of employment. During the 1970's, however, increased industrial development and an increasingly aware urban middle class led to a number of controversies. The traditional concerns with protecting heritage sites and local Irish culture were supplemented with planning controversies and amenity and conservation issues directly related to the impacts of industrialization. The more prominent of these included the Gulf Oil Terminal and the hazards of oil spills in the Bantry area, a number of proposals to build an oil refinery in Dublin Bay, electric power cable routing in the

Wicklow mountains and a debate about the ownership of mineral rights and the operation of mines in Ireland. To date few writers or academics have attempted to analyse the emergence of environmentalism in modern Ireland and this thesis is, in part, an attempt to start this process.

With industrialization and urbanization came a large increase in the demand for energy to fuel economic development. Oil imports increased rapidly in volume in the 1960's and in price in the 1970's. Electricity use also increased and the national utility began planning to build a nuclear power plant to meet some of the forecasted growth in electricity consumption for the 1980's. Before their plans came to fruition, however, nuclear power became embroiled in controversy and protest.

In the late 1970's, this was one issue which caught the imagination of Ireland's youth as no other had done previously. This thesis attempts to analyse the protest against nuclear power focussing on the Irish anti-nuclear movement (ANM) and place it in the context of both environmentalism and of emancipatory and radical politics in the late twentieth century.

## 1.2 THINGS GEOGRAPHICAL

Smith (1979) writes of the emergence of a post-positivist tradition in Geography in the 1970's as the limitations of the positivist/quantitative/behavioral "revolution" in Geography and more widely in social studies (Bernstein, 1976), were realised. Broadly speaking, this thesis fits into the dialectical paradigm as conceived by Smith. It has long been the author's contention that the "quantitative/behavioral" perspective in Geographic research, especially in areas such as public participation in "environmental" disputes, has missed crucial aspects of the issues. Its focus on institutions, its acceptance of the political status quo as a given, and the often implicit assumption that to be relevant one had to be (government) policy orientated, squeezes out the radical political and social issues raised by the environmental movement. Similar critiques of other social sciences in relation to the New Left support this view (Brienes, 1979, 1980; Vickers, 1975). Insights from a number of these sources are used to rectify what the author perceives as an imbalance in the traditional treatment of

radical environmentalism.

Three areas of geographic thought have been particularly important in situating this study in "intellectual space" within Geography. First a reading of the Radical tradition in Antipode and elsewhere (Peet, ed., 1977, 1979; Breitbart, 1979; Galois, 1976; Stoddart, ed., 1981) introduced the author to radical geography and its attempts to develop a critique of capitalist society. The writings of the anarchist geographer Peter Kropotkin from the latter years of the last century and the early years of this one have also made their mark; the realisation that Fritz Schumacher had been preceded in the last century by a Russian geographer Prince turned anarchist remains a highlight of the author's intellectual development (see Ward, ed., 1974). The decentralisation of society central to the utopian and anarchist tradition remains a force in the environmental movement today although the implications remain largely unexamined by geographers. An exception is Hoare (1979) who points to the discussion on alternative energy and speculates on whether geographers will use these proposals as a starting point for studies on energy.

The rather sparse literature on energy is the second area of geographic thought that contributes to the author's ideas. Hoare is blunt in his assessment; "Geographical studies of energy have been anything but progressive" (1979:506). Barker discusses energy policy making in a Canadian context (Barker, 1981), noting the continued absence of a significant geographical contribution to energy studies despite Chapman's (1961) hopeful suggestions twenty years earlier and Manners' introductory text in the mid-1960's (Manners, 1964). In the 1970's, since the "oil crisis," apart from the apparently irrepressible Peter Odell (1979), Vaclav Smil (1974, 1976), and Earl Cook (1977), few geographers have devoted extended attention to energy issues. Sewell and Foster (1976) touch on some of the issues that this thesis covers in their discussion of energy conservation.

On Nuclear power issues the literature is even more scattered. Contributions include some work on Nuclear Power station site selection (Anderson 1971), and Chappell's (1977) adventures at a Seabrook demonstration. Others have worked on behavioural aspects of the decision to evacuate from the vicinity of the Three Mile Island nuclear station

following the accident there in 1979 (Zeigler, et al., 1981). Mathieson (1980) discusses the development of the nuclear power program in the USSR in some detail, but closer to the concerns of this thesis is the work of Kasperson and Kates on nuclear risks and public responses to them (Hohenemser, et al., 1977). Sharaf (1978) provides a direct precursor to this study with his analysis of opponents to nuclear power stations in New England.

The third geographical approach to this thesis is through the literature on public participation in policy decisions, a field in which geographers have taken a considerable interest. Geographers have concerned themselves with decision making in resources management and the need for public input in this process (Sadler, ed., 1978-79; Utton, Sewell and O'Riordan, 1977; Sewell and Coppock, ed., 1977; Burton and Wildgoose, 1977). The focii of interest have been on the techniques of public involvement, the philosophical grounds for participation, and on developing evaluative frameworks (Sewell and Phillips, 1979), while Kasperson and Breitbart (1974) deal with advocacy planning and public participation.

The last fifteen years have witnessed a growing demand by many groups and individuals to participate directly in major societal decisions (Sewell and O'Riordan, 1976; Bennello and Roussopolous, eds., 1971). The late 1960's were marked by student protest, the anti-Vietnam demonstrations, civil rights campaigns, the feminist resurgence and a demand for more public input into planning decisions. The New Left was on the radical fringe attempting to revise the conceptions of politics in capitalist countries (Garaudy, 1976; Gombin, 1975). At the same time there was a rise in concern over environmental questions among the more politically articulate middle class. Concern over large scale environmental impacts of resource development projects led to demands for consultation and the issue of public participation became a matter of considerable debate (Kasperson and Breitbart, 1974; Sewell and Coppock, eds., 1977; Sadler, ed., 1978-79). Classic democratic ideals stress the role of the individual in society and participation in political decision making is seen as the key to realising individual potential and social justice (Fagance, 1977). Ideas of representative democracy are fundamentally elitist assigning a passive 'depoliticised'

role to an individual in public affairs. The growth of the managerial state and the increasing scale of government intervention in many aspects of everyday life has led to a reaction to what Wolfe (1977) calls "depolitization." This suggests that an individual's effective input to politics has been removed, and the functioning of politics, in terms of organising social existence, reduced to the periodic election of a few officials to office. Elites govern independently of the mass of the population subject to getting a vote every few years from the part of the citizenry that bothers to vote.

Demands for increased public input run counter to the concurrent tendency in liberal society to reduce fundamentally political problems to technical programmes administered by "experts" (Harvey, 1978). This tendency is based on an ideology that suggests that the contradictions in modern capitalism are amenable to a purely rational technical solution rather than being political issues. Hooker and van Hulst (1977) summarise this paradigm with regard to energy planning based on what they see as four basic assumptions concerning future societal developments. The first factor is identified as the assumption that demand is fixed and objective, a given that is beyond question. Technologies are objectively determined, designed and deployed in a "neutral" way, outside and beyond social choice, third, reality is treated as uniform and consequently the future must be seen as a direct extrapolation of the past, and, finally economics and technology are treated as "objective" and "value free". The application of such philosophies has led to an increasing scale of energy projects, the most controversial being nuclear power. Calls for participation and consultation run counter to the tendencies toward expertocracy and question the rationale of managerial politics. When the demands go beyond what the authorities are prepared to concede it often leads to confrontation.

Kasperson and Breitbart (1974) identify two fundamental perspectives from which one can view the question of participation, contrasting the "organisational" perspective with that of the "social advocate" viewpoint. The social advocate viewpoint is summarised by Arnstein (1969:216) as,

The redistribution of power that enables the have not citizens presently excluded from the political and economic processes deliberately included in the future ... in short, it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society.

However this view does not escape the pluralist perspective and the long term development of the citizen is not considered. The opposite view is principally concerned with the meaning of participation for the organisation, or

How can the citizen best be managed to accomplish the objectives and meet the maintenance needs of the organisation ... the citizen is a resource for the organisation, an instrument for improving intelligence, a means for maximising "rationality" a catalyst for implementation.

(Kasperson and Breitbart, 1974:6)

Elsewhere Kasperson argues that the agency viewpoint dominates these concepts, with little consideration given to how effectively citizens achieve their ends in the process.

The existing paradigm defines the participation problem narrowly and self-interestedly. Participation is conceived as a necessary step in a larger mission, either "better" policy or alternatively, a growing and more successful government agency. Since the defined value of participation is primarily instrumental, the impact on the populace's long run propensity and ability to act in its own behalf is largely incidental and rarely evaluated.

(Kasperson, 1978:135)

Brienes (1980) argues that instrumental conceptions extend to other aspects of politics. Many techniques exist for formal agency organised participation but the opportunities to use them often do not exist. Institutionalised groups with a "respectable" image are often considered to be successful at gaining results in the policy process because they comply with the accepted norms and mores of behaviour (Pross, 1975; Hall, 1974). Alternatively, for many reasons a group or movement may decide to gain its ends by protest rather than participation. In situations where appropriate structures do not exist to participate people may be forced to participate "through objection" (O'Riordan, 1978). As Wilson (1973) notes, non-orthodox tactics are often used by groups who totally reject the status quo. This thesis will deal in detail with the radical elements in the ANM who have taken the road of

opposition outside the formal structures. Because of this, it has been necessary to consider the ANM as a social movement rather than just a pressure group in a participation framework. This study has attempted to put the ANM at the centre of the analysis and to focus on it as an entity in its own right rather than as an actor in the participation stage of public policy formation.

### 1.3 EPISTEMOLOGICAL MUSINGS

In no sense does the author claim to be a "neutral" or "dispassionate" observer of the ANM. He suggests that the nature of the issue and the implications of the global spread of nuclear technology are such that a position "outside" the controversy is nearly meaningless. This does not imply that one is reduced to only personal impressions and he has drawn widely on literature in the social sciences to aid in this attempt to understand the ANM. As Matson (1966:243) puts it,

... without the factor of interest, in the primary sense of concern or care, there can be no recognition of the subject matter in its distinctive human character--and hence no real awareness of its situation and no understanding of its behaviour.

I have attempted to combine the insights of social science with the personal experience of a participant. To quote Matson (1966:247) again, "The outlook of the observer requires to be balanced by the insight of the agent." Emphasis is on the ideas, motivations and meanings that the activists found in their participation in the movement because as Mannheim summarises it:

... a human situation is characterizable only when one has also taken into account those conceptions which the participants have of it, how they experience their tensions in this situation and how they react to the tensions so conceived.

(as quoted by Matson, 1966:242)

In this focus on the ideological preconceptions of the activists I attempt to go beyond the type of analysis provided by Sharaf (1978) in his research on the ANM in New England. His study deals mainly with "the local opposition", the focal points of the opposition when he was writing. In contrast, this study deals with the more radical ideas present in the European movement and those that surfaced more recently in the opposition to nuclear power in the United States.

Like many other authors who have struggled to come to terms with nuclear issues this writer has suffered from the psychological problems of "nuclear numbing", that feeling of fear and paralysis that strikes when the awesome implications of the nuclear industry and the reality of nuclear weapons percolate into one's consciousness.<sup>3</sup> For many the reality of nuclear warfare is repressed and the result is a refusal to deal with the issues on a conscious level (Lifton, 1976). In writing this thesis the author has been forced to live with the reality of nuclear technology, and this experience, if nothing else, helps one to a sympathetic understanding of the high level of emotional energy that the issue generates. For "feelings" in this case are "knowings" as "emotional" reactions to the nuclear threat are the only responses really possible in the last analysis. One cannot be "reasonable" and "objective" in the view of a detached behaviourist observing other peoples' behaviour when the issue is nothing less than the survival of sentience on the third planet.

The author was present, and, in a small way, was an active participant at many of the major demonstrations, rallies and meetings in the ANM in Ireland. He has debated, marched, handed out leaflets, sang, published a few letters in newspapers, laughed and talked endlessly with people concerned with nuclear power and weapons and the ANM both before and since he started work on this thesis. He will never forget the feeling of euphoria and solidarity at the first Carnsore Point rally in August 1978 in Ireland; the realisation that one was not alone in opposition to nuclear power was an important experience for many who were there, and did much to generate the energy that activists all over the country put into opposing nuclear power in the subsequent, and as it turned out crucial months which followed. These feelings, the emotion-laden committment to oppose a technology seen as a fundamental threat to survival are crucial to understanding subsequent events and the insight the author gained by being one of the participants in the rain-sodden crowds at the rally has been important in writing this work. I do not wish to engage in a lengthy discussion of research methodologies and the critique of positivist social science. Suffice to say that this thesis emphasises a historical/hermeneutic approach rather than an empirical/analytical

one and it operates without attempting to prove or disprove any formally stated hypotheses. The emphasis of this study is on meanings, intentions and ideological concerns, not the sort of material that easily lends itself to dissection by positivist social science. Further, the people concerned, in some cases, are opposed to the kind of reasoning and methodologies of behavioural social science rejecting both its political implications of behaviour prediction and manipulation and its intrinsic assumptions of a neutral social science beyond political and social conflict. To use a research methodology based on the very assumptions that some people under study question, is to situate oneself in a very shaky intellectual position. Further, given the fragmentary nature and the multiplicity of academic approaches to the phenomenon of social movements, few coherent theoretical generalisations can be drawn which would provide a theoretical framework within which to construct formal hypotheses.

#### 1.4 INSPIRATION

Apart from the geographical writings referred to above a number of studies and academic writings encouraged the author to write this thesis and to adopt the approach taken. In a negative vein Lowenthal's (1970) article criticising the early environmental crusaders as being unrealistic annoyed him, for although the ecological radicals of the late 1960's were far from a coherent bunch, he missed the longer term and deeper intellectual critique implicit in the ecological discourse. Otway and his various collaborators (1976, 1976, 1978) attempts to apply the worst kind of mechanistic behavioural analysis to the nuclear issue was rather startling when the author of this thesis first read it and its failure to get to grips with the crucial political and social issues made him determined to avoid such an approach. The later work is somewhat closer to reality as the results failed to confirm their initial preconceptions. The technical overkill of semantic differentials and factor analysis led me to believe that they had not read the literature of the ANM prior to their surveys, as even a cursory perusal of the literature would have revealed the associations between factors which Otway, et al. found "surprising" (1978:112).<sup>4</sup>

The literature on social movements and ideology which influenced

this thesis is summarised in the last section of chapter 3 but some work of importance must be mentioned here. On arriving back in Victoria in May 1981 having finished the research on the case study in Ireland, the author read Nelkin and Pollak's (1981) The Atom Besieged which had just been published. In this beautifully written account of the nuclear controversy in Germany and France, the author found all the conclusions from the Irish case study confirmed. In addition they had taken a very similar approach in researching the ANM by surveying the anti-nuclear literature and conducting interviews with officials and activists to elaborate on interesting points. The present author has drawn heavily on their book throughout the writing of this thesis and has quoted it frequently where they say so well what he is trying so poorly to articulate. The work of Gerlach and Hine (1970, 1973) is not quoted so often but their ideas of "segmented polycephalous networks" as an alternative method of coming to grips with the organisational dimensions of social protest have been very helpful.

#### 1.5 TERMINOLOGY, LANGUAGE AND MEANING

This thesis uses the word 'capital' in two senses. First in the conventional use of the word meaning money invested, and second in the Marxist sense of the industrial and political managers of the money invested when they act as a political agent to protect the investment and their profits. Context should reveal the meaning in each case in the following chapters.

Conventionally, 'organisation' conjures up ideas of a horizontal and vertical division of functions, activities, labour, roles and power. In the case of the ANM in Ireland this perspective is not helpful as 'organisation' of this type is often considered part of the tradition of society that is being challenged in the process of opposing nuclear power. Organisation in this case is closer to an amalgam of analysis, commitment and preparation for action. As one activist wrote,

We must be organised ... the more organised we are and the more imagination we use, the more flexible and decentralised we can afford to be.<sup>5</sup>

Concepts such as membership, that favourite of pressure group theorists,

are also of dubious use although hard to avoid. There never was a formal "membership" of the ANM. Participation rather than dues paying was the criterion. It is possible to argue that merely wearing a badge or "anti-nuke" button is qualification enough to be considered as a member.<sup>6</sup> Membership and organisation also imply the existence of an objective structure independent of the participation of people, a situation which is an anathema to many activists.

The term Anti-Nuclear Movement is also ambiguous. At times it is necessary to distinguish between the active mass movement and the more conventional institutionalised sectors that opposed nuclear power, while elsewhere the ANM includes all people opposed to nuclear power.

This thesis draws heavily on the language of the ANM and I have used quotations frequently in an attempt to convey the meaning of the movement to its participants. Language is constitutive of reality and the language of radical politics and social criticism is the reality of the ANM activists.<sup>7</sup> The author has been painfully aware of the damage and distortion done to the language of the movement in this attempt to encapsulate it in a thesis, a medium often far removed from the context and meaning of practical action. He has also become conscious of the communication difficulties within the movement and these have undoubtedly aggravated the mis-understandings in the movement based on different political assumptions. The detailed study of the relationships of language to politics is beyond my concerns in this thesis (see section 4.5) but the influence in the following material is considerable. The limited recognition that he has gained of this has led him to err on the side of caution, and, although a very partial solution, to use quotation frequently.

## 1.6 SOURCES AND METHODS

The field work for this thesis was done in Ireland in the autumn of 1980 and the spring of 1981. Where possible written accounts of events have been used. This has presented problems in that some journalistic accounts are less well informed than might be hoped for and commentators' impressions in the heat of the moment are not always accurate. The information gleaned from newspapers has, as far as possible, been cross checked with events as recorded in the various

movement publications and with sixty interviewees. In addition a mail questionnaire was conducted and this is described in detail in chapter 12. The interviewees were identified from the literature and by using an informal "snowball" procedure where each interviewee was asked to name other people who had information or who were involved in the nuclear controversy. For obvious reasons the interviewees must remain anonymous with a few exceptions. I have footnoted them as a source of information only where there is no written source. This should not suggest however that they were of minor importance: virtually all aspects of the thesis were discussed with the interviewees although each interview was tailored to the experiences and knowledge of the interviewee. An informal structure was used in all cases and the author attempted to follow a dialogical approach discussing the material and his ideas about the movement as they became relevant to the discussion. While this approach leaves one open to accusations of a biased response, in this case it did allow the researcher to penetrate to important aspects of the movement which might have been missed in a formal structured interview. In an attempt to avoid ignoring important aspects of the interviewees experience, most interviews included a section in which the respondent was asked to outline briefly the history of his or her involvement in the ANM, in addition to a section at the end of the interview where the interviewee was asked to expand on any point which had not been raised which he or she considered important. Some of the interviews were taped, others recorded in the form of notes. The final source of information was personal participant observation. This was a particularly rich source of insight in this research as the endless conversations with activists in meetings, or afterwards over the obligatory pint of stout, were often wide ranging and revealing.

Although this research falls far short of Touraine's (1979) "permanent sociology" with its ongoing dialogue between activists and participant/researchers, the author has attempted to emulate the approach of sympathetic committed activist and academic to develop an insider's understanding of this rather disparate and important movement.

## 1.7 STRUCTURE

This thesis is structured into 14 chapters. This introduction is followed by five chapters which set out to describe in detail the material and academic writings relevant to understanding the ANM as a global phenomenon. Chapter 2 outlines the evolution of the nuclear power industry from its early beginnings in atomic weapons development. The institutional and technical problems which have contributed to, if not completely caused, the opposition to nuclear power are outlined. Opposition to nuclear power is best described by seeing it as a social movement. Chapter 3 discusses the rather confused and contradictory literature on social movements and develops some ideas on the ideology of protest. The issues of social movement tactics and strategy, which are so important in the internal debates within the ANM are also covered here. The direct ideological precursors of the ANM are the New Left and the 1960s and 1970s environmental movements which are dealt with in Chapters 4 and 5, respectively. Chapter 6 describes in detail the emergence of the ANM on the international scene and traces its chequered history through the 1970s. While each country has a somewhat different history of anti-nuclear activities, common themes emerge. The principal concerns of the ANM are truly international. Events and ideas in one section of the movement are watched, interpreted and learned from by activists elsewhere. For this reason the extended description of the background, setting and ideology of the international ANM provides insight into the Irish movement.

Chapters 7 through 13 deal with the Irish controversy over nuclear power in the late 1970s. Chapter 7 sets the scene by describing the Irish political process, energy policy and the case for nuclear power, such as it was. Chapters 8 and 9 outline the history of the Irish controversy through its two distinct phases. Chapter 10 analyses the literature of the ANM focusing on the differing ideological perspectives which are contained in the movement. Chapter 11 shows how these ideological positions influenced the internal evolution of the movement, and considers questions of political legitimacy and the Irish state's response to the ANM challenge. Chapter 12 outlines the response of the rank and file to the mail questionnaire and attempts to place these concerns in the context of wider changes of public opinion

in Ireland on energy matters. Chapter 13 describes how the ANM has influenced related environmental and political concerns in Ireland in the last few years. Chapter 14 presents some generalised conclusions.

## NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

<sup>1</sup>As quoted in FoE (1980), p. 10.

<sup>2</sup>The Contaminated Crow, no. 1, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>The transition from nuclear power to nuclear weapons is made without comment here. Who can take seriously the pious platitudes of badly briefed bureaucrats who point to such white elephants as the non-proliferation treaty, international safeguards and other legalistic devices to argue that the two are separate? The current (April 1982) proposals by the Reagan administration in the U.S. to use spent "commercial" reactor fuel as a source of plutonium for its expansion of its nuclear weapons arsenal should finally give the lie to any further nonsense on this score. (See Wohlstetter et al., 1977; and Lovins and Lovins, 1981).

<sup>4</sup>As Coleman puts it, "Generally speaking, empiricists are inattentive to the theories which constitute the world of factual experience and, thereby, are cut off from significant portions of reality." (Coleman, 1977:6).

<sup>5</sup>Rebel, no. 1, p. 2.

<sup>6</sup>In which case the author's long suffering mother qualifies many times over!

<sup>7</sup>The relationship between language and politics is a theme of many debates in intellectual circles and is important in the thinking of many Critical Theorists. (Gouldner, 1976; Bernstein, 1976). See section 4.5.

## CHAPTER 2

SOCIETY, ENERGY AND THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF NUCLEAR POWER2.1 ENERGY AND SOCIETY

Energy is crudely described by physicists as "the ability to do work." It occurs in many forms; potential, chemical, kinetic, electric, thermal and nuclear. They are all harnessed by humans in the process of living. This chapter reviews the general significance of energy to society and the specific set of circumstances which resulted in the development of nuclear energy.

Every social formation that has reached the technical stage of using fire has a social organisation of energy linked to the productive forces present in it (Foley, 1976; Cook, 1977; Odum and Odum, 1976). Civilisations previous to ours used animal, mechanical and chemical energy to enhance the use of human labour in the forms of fire for cooking, warmth and protection, and animals, wind and water for motive power and transport. The coal burning steam engine was an integral part of the development of industrialism. Subsequent developments in industrial society have seen the substitution of petroleum products as the most widely used fuel. Post World War II society was marked by its large increase in the absolute magnitude of its energy consumption and consequently in the significance of its energy supply systems (Workshop on Alternative Energy Strategies, 1977). Many "western" countries import large amounts of petroleum and oil has become a major factor in world politics (Odell, 1979). In addition to changing the structure of international energy trade the growth of large oil multinational companies has been important (Tanzer, 1974; Engler, 1977). The so-called "energy crisis" of 1973-1974 had a measurable effect in perceptions of energy and its role in society (Farher, 1980), and precipitated a flurry of political action towards greater government

intervention (Klausner, 1979), reflecting the tendency of growing government involvement in managing capitalist economies.

While the overall global trend has been a rapid increase in energy usage, electricity accounted for an increasing percentage of delivered energy in the 1960s and 1970s due in part to its flexibility and, at least from its users point of view, its cleanness (Hill, 1977). This period was marked by a growth in the amount of thermally generated electricity. With the prospect of declining sources of fossil fuels, nuclear energy was looked to as the great hope of the future. Increasingly the industrial world has become enmeshed in a large interconnected global supply system, with large companies controlling significant amounts of the distribution and transport of fuels. Local energy self-sufficiency is a thing of the past in most industrial societies; mega-projects, supertankers and large scale facilities comprise the geography of energy today.

## 2.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF NUCLEAR POWER DEVELOPMENT

The idea of Nuclear Power has its origins in pre-World War II physics research. Power production is based on the phenomenon of nuclear fission, a process discovered in pre-war Europe. Fission is the splitting of the nucleus of an atom. During this process a small quantity of matter is converted into a large amount of energy according to Einstein's famous  $E=MC^2$  equation.<sup>1</sup> If this energy is released all at once from a body of atoms undergoing nearly simultaneous fission the effect is the well known atom bomb. The idea behind power production is to control the release of energy and use the energy in the form of heat to generate electricity.

The initial impetus for nuclear energy research came in the second world war as the U.S., with some help from the U.K. and Canada in addition to the expertise provided by emigré scientists from Europe, attempted to build an atomic bomb. The project, code named the "Manhattan Project," was backed by huge resources and top military priority. It remained a secret until 6th August 1945 when, despite objections by some of the scientists who had been involved in its production, a bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. This was followed three days later by the destruction of Nagasaki.

Following the War there were attempts by farseeing figures in the American establishment to convince the government to renounce the further use of nuclear weapons and place the technology under some form of international supervision (Pringle and Spigelman, 1981). These efforts failed and as the world entered the era of cold war politics, the first U.S. Atomic Energy Act (known widely as the "McMahon Act" was signed into law on 1st August 1946. This act stopped the flow of information to America's erstwhile allies, the U.K. and Canada, and, while putting the newly created U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) under civilian control, provided it with powers to call on the security services, and established a regime of secrecy which has pervaded the nuclear establishment ever since (Metzger, 1972).

The spread of nuclear weapons was assured by this refusal by the U.S. to share its knowledge even with its former allies. Britain, sulking from its rebuff, started its own highly secret bomb programme and successfully tested its first bomb off the coast of Australia in 1952. The Russians meanwhile exploded their first weapon in 1949.

In the late 1940s controversy gripped the U.S. nuclear establishment over whether to build a "super bomb" based on the fusion principle. Fusion is the joining together of small atoms, the opposite process to fission which is the splitting of large atoms, usually of Uranium or the artificial element Plutonium. So-called hydrogen bombs would dwarf the destructive power of the first generation fission weapons. Some argued that they had no feasible military use and consequently their development was pointless. The super-bomb advocates won the day and the hydrogen bomb was built.

In a climate of growing cold war fever and with many people in the nuclear programme having second thoughts about the wisdom of the bomb building enterprise the Eisenhower administration decided on a change of course. By this time the Atomic bomb programme had become the biggest industrial enterprise in the U.S. In 1953 the AEC owned three towns, employed 5% of the national construction labour force, and consumed 10% of the country's electricity (Shrader-Frechette, 1980, pp. 8-9). President Eisenhower delivered his landmark "Atoms for Peace" speech to the assembled United Nations in December 1953. This policy initiated a period of unbridled technical optimism for the development

of peaceful applications for nuclear energy (Pringle and Spigleman, 1981). The new (1954) Atomic Energy Act declassified some technical information and allowed private contractors to build reactors and possess fissile material under licence from the AEC. It was clear from the beginning that the AEC would provide cheap fuel to reactor users. To promote the use of nuclear technology the AEC established the Cooperative Power Reactor Development project. This was the start of a course of promoting the very technology that the AEC was supposed to be monitoring, and which led eventually to serious conflicts of interest between these two functions. The Atoms for Peace programme was also designed to ensure as far as possible that the U.S. maintained control of the international development of nuclear technology (Patterson, 1976). The U.S. offered help internationally to any country willing to agree to U.S. controls and regulations. The development of reactor technology was massively subsidised by the AEC and directly interconnected with the military applications.

In a Britain faced with fewer energy options than the U.S., and a military programme demanding increased supplies of plutonium, nuclear energy looked like a promising idea. By the late 1940s power reactor research was well under way (Patterson, 1976). The first power reactor was officially inaugurated by the Queen in 1956 at Calder Hall amid a blaze of publicity. However, the military applications of the reactor for the production of plutonium retained first priority use of the facility. This was the first of a series of "Magnox" reactors.<sup>2</sup>

Elsewhere other countries developed indigenous nuclear industries. Canada developed a series of experimental reactors from an initial research plant at Chalk River, Ontario, built as part of the wartime Manhattan project. The early NRX reactor on this site played host to the first major accident at a nuclear plant in 1952 (Fuller, 1975). Canada alone of the nuclear pioneers did not develop nuclear weapons. The French established their Commissariat d'Energie Atomique (CEA) after the war and its first reactor went critical in 1948. They developed a series of gas-cooled, graphite-moderated power and plutonium reactors, similar to the British designs and in 1956 they too put a reactor into production. The Soviets exploded their first hydrogen bomb in 1953 and developed power reactors in the 1950s, developing amongst their designs a water cooled, graphite moderated

series (Mathieson, 1980).

Having sketched the early development of nuclear power we can now consider in detail the technologies involved and the problems and hazards that they present.

### 2.3 THE TECHNOLOGY OF NUCLEAR POWER

The use of nuclear energy is different from other forms of energy because it deals with the fundamental composition of matter whereas all other energy forms merely use some physical, positional or chemical attribute of matter. The hazards are also different.

In the inter-war years physicists discovered that by bombarding certain atoms with neutrons they could change their composition by adding the neutrons to the nucleus. Experiments with the isotope of Uranium U235 led to the discovery that it split or "fissioned" when struck by neutrons. In the process it released energy, more neutrons, radiation, and various "fission fragments" such as isotopes of caesium and strontium. Many of the fragments were proved to be radioactive. Like Uranium 235 itself, they spontaneously change into other atoms by emitting radiation. This occurs in three major forms: alpha, a particle of two neutrons and two protons; beta, a fast moving electron; and gamma, electromagnetic radiation. Physics theory in the early 1940s suggested that if enough U235 could be brought to together (a "critical mass") in a concentrated space, then a chain reaction could conceivably occur where the neutrons released from fissioning U235 atoms could in their turn cause more U235 fissions to occur.

The early stages of the U.S. attempt to make an atomic bomb focused on collecting enough uranium to try out the theory in an experimental situation. The purified uranium was collected in a "pile" in, of all places, a deserted squash court at the University of Chicago. The first chain reaction was sustained late in 1942 when the pile attained "criticality". From then on the development focus shifted to the new research centres at Los Alamos, Oak Ridge and Hanford. To enable enough U235 to be brought together to cause an explosion it is necessary to separate out the U235 from the uranium oxide ore, which contains only 0.7% approximately of U235. The remainder is made up mainly of a non-fissile isotope, U238. The

separation process is known as "enrichment" as the percentage U235 in the material is increased. The U238 is of use indirectly. If it is bombarded with neutrons as happens in a reactor or a pile, it transmutes into Plutonium 239 which is fissile. Pu239 is extremely toxic (a microgram inhaled is regarded as ultimately fatal) and difficult to handle. The Manhattan project, despite the huge expense, developed both paths to a bomb.

A bomb basically involves bringing two or more subcritical masses of either Pu239 or U235 together quickly to initiate a chain reaction which generates millions of degrees of heat, light and radiation in a few micro seconds. The result is a huge flash, a fireball which results in the mushroom cloud, and a tremendous blast wave of enormous destructive power. In addition there is the added menace of radioactive fallout consisting of fission products and other transmuted material.

One suggested 'peaceful' application of nuclear energy is putting weapons to work for engineering purposes. Proposals have included the blasting of canals, powering spacecraft (Metzger, 1972) and making super subway tunnels (McPhee, 1974). Attempts to increase the flow from gas and oil fields by underground nuclear blasting have been less than successful (Lewis, 1972). Most of these schemes have been abandoned as unworkable.

Apart from the use of radioactive isotopes in medical and scientific research the principal 'peaceful' application of nuclear power is in power reactors. Unlike the uncontrolled reaction in a nuclear bomb, the reactor is designed to manage the reaction making it practical to use the heat for industrial or electricity generation purposes. In addition the radiation hazard must be contained and the fission products isolated from the environment. Because of the military origins of the technology many of the early reactors were designed with military functions in mind. Many opponents of nuclear power argue that the military connection remains and that ostensibly peaceful nuclear developments cannot be separated from military uses (Hayes, 1976). A reactor consists of a metal and concrete structure with a system for the inserting uranium or plutonium fuel rods. These are usually assembled in the form of pellets encased in a "cladding" within long rods. The rods are assembled in bundles (fuel assemblies) for

insertion into the core of the reactor. Coolant, either liquid or gas, is pumped through the core to remove the heat produced by the fission. The rate of the reaction is adjusted by control rods made of a neutron absorbant material which, when inserted into the core, reduces the available supply of neutrons (neutron flux) and hence the number of fissions. In most thermal reactors a moderator such as graphite or heavy water (deuterium oxide) is used to slow down the neutrons. This improves their chances of their causing fission. In "fast" reactors, often of the "breeder" type, because they are designed to transmute U238 to Pu239 and so "breed" fuel, the moderator is dispensed with. Most liquid cooled reactors are equipped with an emergency core cooling system (ECCS) designed to remove the decay heat from the fission fragments in the event of an interruption of the regular coolant flow and the emergency shut down of the reactor ("SCRAM").

The U.S. experimented with a number of reactor types in the 1950s. They developed a light water reactor (LWR) with two basic variations. The General Electric Company design team developed a boiling water reactor (BWR) (See Figure 2.2) while their colleagues in the Westinghouse Company worked on a pressure water reactor (PWR) (See Figure 2.1), a development from their early nuclear submarine power plant designs. Both these designs have high power densities in the core and have to be shut down once a year for re-fueling. Both of these features have major disadvantages. However, LWRs have virtually sown up the market for commercial reactors in the last decade. They have succeeded due to their cheapness and the vigorous "marketing" techniques used by the companies involved in their development. The LWRs have taken the brunt of the nuclear critics' wrath. They have a number of technical short-comings which make them particularly suspect in their opponents' eyes (Berger, 1977; Patterson, 1976).

The Canadians developed their reactor programme from their experience with the Chalk River research project (Peat, 1979; Knelman, 1976). This design, which became the CANDU (CANadian Deuterium Uranium) has a number of unique features including an on stream fuel loading technique with horizontal fuel assemblies in place of the normal vertical arrangement (See Figure 2.2). Heavy water (Deuterium Oxide) is used as a moderator and this allows unenriched (natural) uranium to be

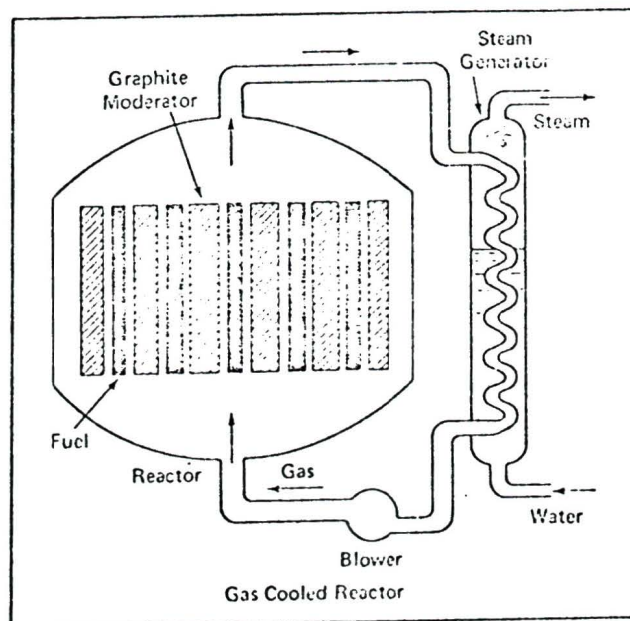
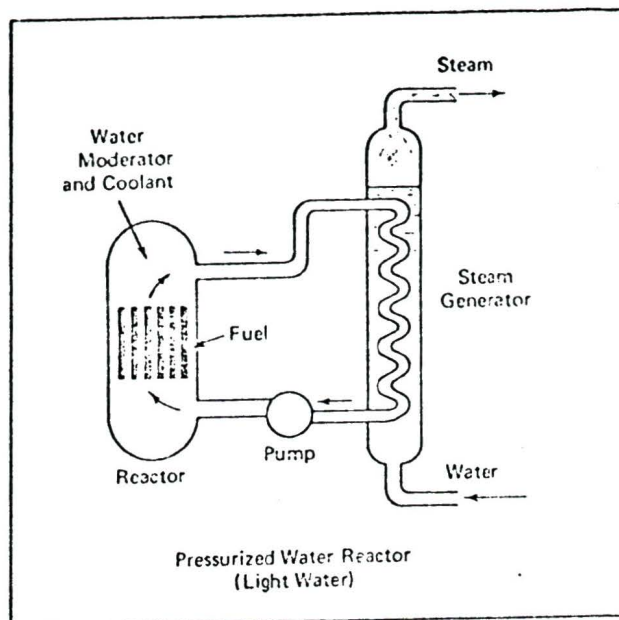


Figure 2.1 Schematic Diagram of a Pressurized Water and a Gas Cooled Reactor.

Source: Hill (1977) page 240.

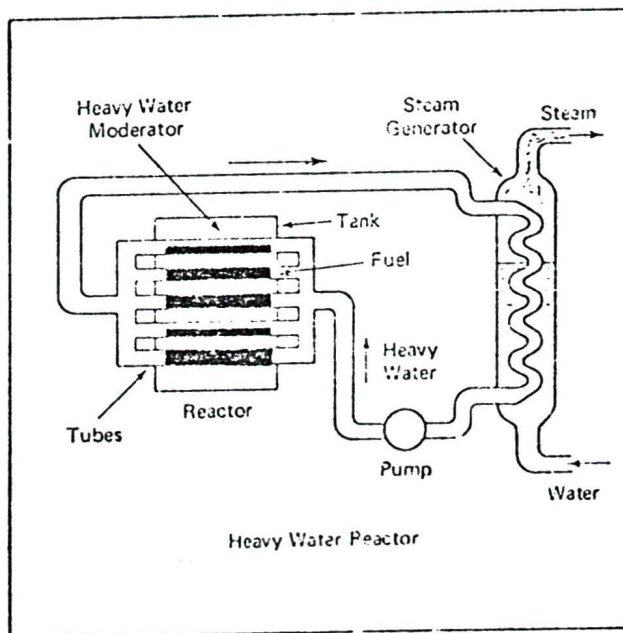
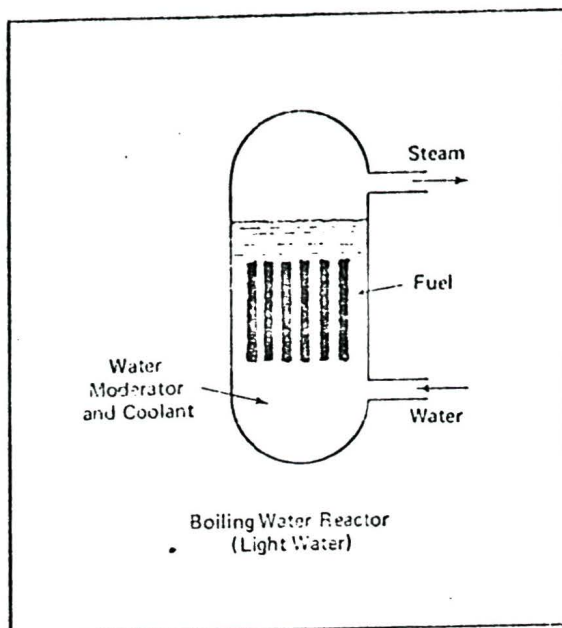


Figure 2.2 Schematic Diagram of a Boiling Water and a Heavy Water Reactor.

Source: Hill (1977) page 241.

used, a considerable advantage because it avoids the costly fuel enrichment required by most other designs.

The French and the British independently designed Graphite moderated gas cooled reactors in the 1950s and 1960s (See Figure 2.1). The French were subsequently to opt for the American LWR designs for their huge nuclear programme in the 1970s but the British developed their first generation Magnox reactors with some success. They attempted to follow this with a second generation of advanced gas-cooled reactors (AGR) a programme which has proved to be a financial disaster. The promising steam generating heavy water designs (SGHWR) seem unlikely to make a large contribution to the U.K. nuclear programme (Patterson, 1977); preference currently leans towards a LWR as the third generation technology for the British programme. Late in the 1960s, after much internal wrangling, the French decided to abandon their gas-graphite designs in favour of the LWR and since the 'oil crisis' have made this technology the cornerstone of their ambitious reactor construction programme (Pringle and Spigelman, 1981).

The Germans, late into the nuclear scene because of post war limitations placed on their industries by the victors in the second World War, went straight for the LWR. They worked in close contact with Westinghouse and General Electric.

Sweden and Switzerland also took advantage of low cost enriched uranium deals that the U.S. AEC offered them and they developed LWRs too. The Russians have pursued a moderate nuclear programme, the first generation being LWRs with graphite moderators (Mathieson, 1980). They have also experimented with Fast Breeder Reactors.

The Breeder Reactor operates without a moderator and is designed to use the fast neutrons to breed fuel by transmuting U238 into Pu239. In theory at least these reactors should produce more fuel than they consume, and allow for a 60 fold increase in the potential energy recoverable from uranium resources. Because of its incredible complexity, this technology has had numerous problems (Fuller, 1975) despite which development continues with large research budgets.

Reactors are only one part of the whole nuclear process somewhat misleadingly known as the nuclear fuel cycle. We now turn to consider the other stages of this cycle.

## 2.4 THE NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE

The fuel for the nuclear fuel cycle is the various forms of Uranium Oxides often found in old granitic rock formations. Uranium mining is carried out in Canada, the U.S., Australia, the U.S.S.R., and elsewhere. The ore is crushed and a leaching process used to extract the uranium oxides (yellowcake). This is slightly radioactive and toxic. A more serious hazard is presented by the decay products of radon associated with the ore. These isotopes present a serious health hazard to miners and to the general population (Bayda, 1978; Union of Concerned Scientists, 1975; Elliot, 1977). The yellowcake is then either enriched, or, in the case of natural uranium reactors, turned directly into fuel pellets in either a metallic or an oxide form (See Figure 2.3).

Enrichment is done by converting the uranium oxide into a uranium hexafluoride and then using a gaseous diffusion technique to separate the chemically identical U235 from U238. New centrifuge technologies and laser techniques are being developed to do the enrichment but the huge diffusion plants with their enormous demand for electric power remain an integral part of the nuclear fuel cycle. Reactor grade uranium is normally enriched to about 3% or 4% U235 from its original 0.7%, Weapons grade material is enriched to 80% or 90%.

Following enrichment, the fuel is fabricated into fuel pellets which are encased in fuel rods. In LWRs these are placed in the reactor core when it is closed down annually for the purpose of refuelling. CANDU reactors and some gas cooled reactors with lower power densities than LWRs are refuelled while the reactor is running. When the fuel is used (burned) it is removed from the core either at the time of refuelling or while the reactor is running. The spent fuel rods are stored in cooling ponds near the reactor to allow the fission products to decay and hence allow the fuel rods to be handled easier. This storage period may be a few years long to allow the heat and radioactivity to dissipate. Subsequently the waste is either stored indefinitely or it is reprocessed. In this procedure the reusable uranium and plutonium are separated from the fission fragments and other contaminated parts of the fuel rods. This waste in the form of acidic radioactive solutions is then stored while the uranium and plutonium are reassembled into fuel assemblies. Advocates of breeder

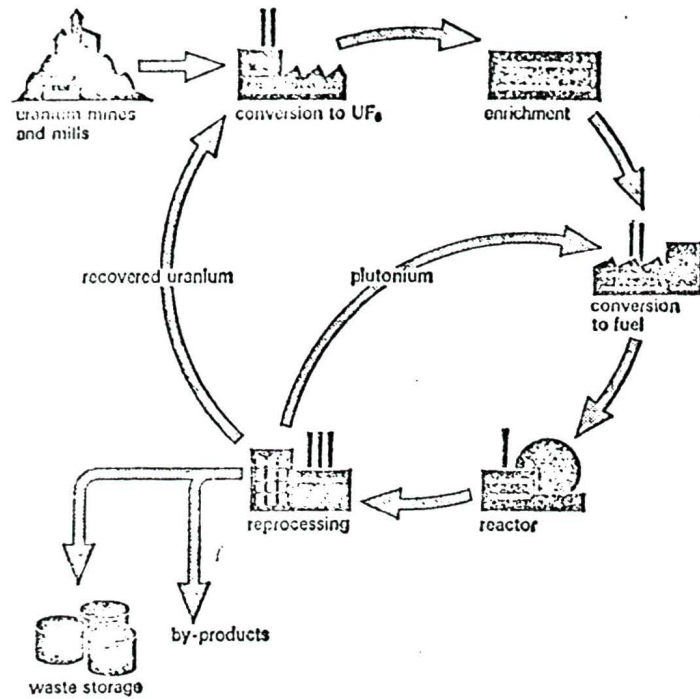


Figure 2.3 The Nuclear Fuel Cycle.

Source: Patterson (1976) page 88.

reactors argue that the reprocessing of fuel from spent breeder fuel could provide a large fuel supply. The reprocessing of spent fuel is among the most controversial aspects of the nuclear industry. None of the attempts to make a commercial plant in the U.S. work have succeeded, the French plant at Cap la Hague is far from safe and the British attempt to build a new plant at their Windscale site ran into serious opposition at the marathon Windscale public inquiry in 1977 (Nader and Abbotts, 1979; Jungk, 1979; Conroy, 1978; Pearce, et al., 1979). Recently the German plan to construct a reprocessing plant and waste depositry at Gorleben was cancelled.

The overriding problem remains the disposal of radioactive waste. Radioactive waste is often categorised into high and low level wastes, the high being the most radioactive and toxic and therefore the most dangerous. Low level waste includes contaminated laboratory materials, clothing and relatively harmless liquids. High level waste includes spent fuel rods, reactor cores, cooling water and reprocessing by-products. While vitrification is probably the most promising technology, the unknown geological parameters related to deep buiral of hot radioactive substances remain unknown. Low level waste is currently disposed of by burial at sea or in landfill sites and deserted mines, a far from satisfactory situation. Because of the incredible toxicity and longlived radioactive hazard it is essential to isolate high level wastes from the biosphere for many thousands of years, a feat so far unmatched in human history. This raises many serious ethical and moral issues (Shrader-Frechette, 1980; Routley and Routley, 1978).

## 2.5 THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND THE PROMOTION OF NUCLEAR POWER

The case for nuclear power has changed over the years. In the 1950s and into the 1960s nuclear advocates were arguing that it should be developed because it was a very cheap energy source. Promises of electricity too cheap to meter and inexpensive power stations proved to be the products of overactive imaginations and wishful thinking rather than seriously researched cost estimates (Pringle and Spigleman, 1981; Bupp, et al., 1975). Following the oil crisis and the realisation in the 1970s that cheap nuclear power was a myth, the promotional arguments tended to emphasise the need to develop all possible sources of

energy to meet optimistic projections of future energy demand. Nuclear power was portrayed as an essential part of any energy plan in an industrialised country.

The rationale underlying this reasoning is based on a series of value judgements which have fundamental importance for the debate on nuclear power. In discussing current radiation safety policy Shrader-Frechette (1980:28) summarises the value patterns and cultural norms underlying the conventional viewpoints;

... an ethic or economic progress/growth, rather than one of no-growth; a 'realistic' morality, rather than a romantic or utopian one; a utilitarian system of values, rather than an egalitarian one; a social ethic based primarily on industrialisation, rather than on environmental integrity as well; a political ethic guaranteeing the rights of a regulatory elite, rather than those of all citizens; or a morality based on maximising military and industrial strength rather than citizens' health and safety.

She goes on to argue that higher priority is given to technological development than to public health and safety in the nuclear establishment. Nelkin and Pollak (1981) term the scientific, administrative, industrial and governmental personnel involved with the development of nuclear power "Nucleocrats". They show how the nucleocrats formed a closed community of interest, developed an ideology of technical progress legitimized entirely on the assumed neutrality of technical expertise, and equated their promotion of nuclear energy so closely with the general interest that they were incapable of taking external criticism seriously. Pringle and Spigelman (1981) focus on the key role played by highly placed nuclear advocates in the promotion of nuclear technology. In many cases these men were highly placed civil servants who ensured policy stayed on course despite electoral disturbances. In the U.S. with the AEC firmly committed, even the congressional watchdog committee (the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy (JCAE)) became carried away with nuclear enthusiasm. In this climate criticism was rarely heard. Even the disarmament campaigns of the 1950s were often in favour of "peaceful" uses for nuclear energy. The enthusiasm behind the nuclear power promotional effort on the U.S., and to a lesser extent elsewhere in the 1950s and 1960s, tapped into the twin features of post-war liberal ideology: the faith in science and technology, and the belief that

economic growth, sustained by Keynesian management techniques, would provide the resources to tackle any remaining "social problems". Technological development premised on ideas of the domination, or mastery, of nature (Leiss, 1974), found its ultimate expression in the harnessing of the fundamental processes of the universe in the form of atomic power. In turn the projections of continuous economic growth required large inputs of energy, a purpose for which the apparently unlimited potential of atomic power seemed ideally suited.

The AEC organised the Cooperative Power Reactor Demonstration programme in the 1950s and provided government financing to encourage utilities to build reactors. Following the passage of the Price-Anderson Act in 1957, limiting liability in case of a nuclear accident to a maximum of \$560m. the road was clear for utilities to build reactors. There followed a period of collusion between the AEC, the JCAE, the utilities and the reactor vendors which was to cause the nuclear establishment serious credibility problems years later (Metzger, 1972; Bupp and Derian, 1978). This period also was an age of heavily subsidised nuclear energy prices. The AEC provided enriched fuel from its plants built as part of the bomb programme, generous research grants were dispensed, and the utilities were exempted from paying the costs of ultimately disposing of their nuclear wastes.

The CEA was the dominant agency in France until commercial development was well under way in the late 1960s when Electricité de France (EDF) became heavily involved in the construction of LWRs. These two agencies have continued to collude during the large scale nuclear programme of the 1970s to the exclusion of any meaningful input from Parliament or elsewhere (Papon, 1979). In the U.K. the nuclear institutions have been reorganised a number of times but a large government influence has been maintained since its initial secret military beginnings (Patterson, 1977). Likewise the German nuclear programme developed with close links between the industrial, scientific and political establishments in the 1960s (Jungk, 1979).

As a result of these close relationships the regulatory functions of government agencies took a very poor second place in the priorities of the nuclear establishments. In many cases the regulatory functions and promotional functions were combined in the same agency which caused

internal conflicts of interest. In the U.S. this led to the breakup of the JCAE and the splitting of the AEC into the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) charged with promoting nuclear technology. However, even these de jure separations are not all that they seem because a large percentage of NRC employees have at some time worked for industry and vice versa ensuring a common interest in the development of the technology (Bupp and Deriam, 1978). In addition the ERDA (subsequently to be incorporated in the Federal Department of Energy) and the large corporations provide virtually the only careers for persons trained in nuclear technology.

Apart from the close interconnection between industry and government the atomic industry has developed its own promotional institutions such as the Atomic Industrial Forum in the U.S. In conclusion it can be said that the nuclear establishment is a powerful lobby right at the centre of the "scientific industrial" establishment.

## 2.6 TECHNICAL CONCERNS AND THE CASE AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER

The case against nuclear power rests on more than purely technical problems, but these were of fundamental importance to the emergence of opposition and remain central to it. This section will outline briefly the principal issues involved.

### 2.6.1 The Weapons Connection

We have already seen how the nuclear industry grew out of the bomb programmes in a number of countries. In the years following World War II a number of attempts were made to place the weapons under international control. These failed and subsequently the British, French and later Chinese developed and tested nuclear weapons (Pringle and Spigleman, 1981; Patterson, 1976). The "Atoms for Peace" programme launched in the 1950s attempted to control the spread of fissile materials of possible use in bomb making. Concern over the effects of fallout from atmospheric weapons testing led to a partial test ban treaty being signed in the early 1960s moving tests underground. Neither France nor China signed this document. In the late 1960s a

nuclear non-proliferation treaty was drawn up to attempt to ensure that the export of nuclear technology to third world countries would not lead to their producing weapons. This treaty and the international inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) who are supposed to ensure that its terms are complied with are effectively powerless to prevent 'horizontal proliferation' (the spread of weapons to currently non-weapons states) (Lovins and Lovins, 1980) by the 'diversion' of fissile materials into covert weapons projects. Signatories of the treaty can withdraw from the agreement with only three months notice, many countries haven't signed the document and it is relatively easy to circumvent its provisions. The possession of nuclear technology for ostensibly peaceful purposes is an easy method of making weapons. The Indian bomb project used Canadian and U.S. technology while the Israelis used French technology and stole the uranium they needed in Europe (Davenport, et al., 1978). In an increasingly tense international context, weapons proliferation to third world countries is viewed with concern but national interests take priority and unlikely coalitions have developed.<sup>3</sup> From a Third World perspective the possession of ever increasing arsenals in the 'developed' world and the lack of any serious attempts to curb this 'vertical proliferation' suggests that the attempt to prevent them having weapons is merely another scheme to maintain western dominance. Allied to that is the widely perceived prestige that a national nuclear programme confers in international circles (Lovins and Lovins, 1980).

#### 2.6.2 Low Level Radiation

Apart from the obvious dangers in case of war fought with nuclear weapons, early opposition to weapons testing focused on the dangers of fallout from weapons. The anti-bomb protests of the late 1950s and 1960s led to the signing of the partial test ban treaty and concern over the dangers of fallout declined with the removal of the immediate danger. Professor Sternglass in Pittsburgh introduced epidemiological evidence in the late 1960s to suggest that up to 400,000 children had died as a result of bomb tests in the 1950s in Nevada (Sternglass, 1980). The resulting storm of controversy led to a review of the evidence by Doctors Tamplin and Gofman, then working for the AEC. They suggested

that while Sternglass had overestimated the casualties seriously, many children had indeed died as an indirect result of the fallout from the bomb tests (Gofman and Tamplin, 1970; Gofman, 1981; Mazur, 1973).

The debate over low level radiation continues to this day with conflicting interpretations over statistical significance and research methodologies. In addition to academic criticism a number of workers who have produced evidence suggesting that radiation is much more dangerous than commonly accepted by official regulatory bodies, have been subjected to harassment, intimidation, character assassination and summary dismissal from research positions. The research findings of Bertell, Mancuse, Morgan, Stewart and others have provided much ammunition for anti-nuclear campaigners (Mazur, 1973; Gyorgy, et al., 1979; Caldicott, 1978; Environmental Policy Institute, 1977). All stages of the nuclear fuel cycle involve releases of low level radiation into the environment. Because the effects of radiation may not show up for many years (in the form of cancers, leukemia, premature aging and reduced resistance to other diseases) or generations (in the form of genetic disturbances, birth defects and childhood disease) radiation is a particularly unpleasant hazard.<sup>4</sup> It is invisible, tasteless, odourless, etc., and can inflict permanent damage in otherwise untouched surroundings. Visions of clouds of invisible "killer dust" may prompt deep rooted fears of bodily integrity which are far from the irrational hysteria that nuclear proponents sometimes suggest (Lifton, 1976). Many nuclear advocates support a threshold theory of radiation damage arguing that humans have always been exposed to cosmic radiation and background radiation from the earth, and so a bit more will not do any harm. Hence regulatory bodies have set "acceptable doses" for segments of the population; workers in the industry are set standards much higher than those for the population in general. Nuclear critics argue for a linear relationship between dose received, and damage done. Further, they argue that blanket average doses set by the regulatory bodies fail to protect the most vulnerable sectors of the population; the elderly, pregnant women and children. They argue that there is no such thing as a safe dose of radiation and that all radiation is harmful.<sup>5</sup>

### 2.6.3 Reactor Safety

The likelihood and possible consequences of a major nuclear accident are central to the debates concerning nuclear power. An early (1957) assessment of the maximum credible accident (MCA) prepared by the Brookhaven Institute for the AEC (WASH 740) suggested that a MCA would involve up to 3,400 deaths, 43,000 injuries and \$7 billion property damage. A few months later a University of Michigan study concluded that if the Enrico Fermi 1 breeder reactor near Detroit had a major accident possible consequences would include 133,000 deaths, 180,000 immediate injuries and 245,000 long term and genetic injuries. No attempt was made to assess possible property damage (Fuller, 1975; Union of Concerned Scientists, 1977).

The worst accident normally considered in the case of liquid cooled reactors is a "melt down". This occurs when the core coolant supply fails, the heat rises rapidly in the reactor, the fuel melts and together with the reactor core slumps to the floor of the building. Major releases of radioactive materials are likely due to steam explosions, containment rupture and groundwater contamination.

The AEC attempted an update of the Brookhaven report in the mid-1960s but when the results looked even more pessimistic than the earlier study it was suppressed. Environmentalists obtained the working papers relating to the update later through the Freedom of Information Act (Nader and Abbotts, 1979). Meanwhile another major study was under way. The Reactor Safety Study (RSS) under the directorship of Dr. Norman Rasmussen involved a major fault tree/event tree analysis of two types of LWR and was completed in 1974 (U.S. NRC, 1975). It concluded that major reactor accidents were a remote possibility and that the consequences if one did occur would not be as serious as had previously been assumed. The findings were under attack on methodological and philosophical grounds even before it was published. An internal review criticised it, the American Physical Society was very critical and the Union of Concerned Scientists produced a book length rebuttal (Nader and Abbotts, 1979; Union of Concerned Scientists, 1977). There were a number of fundamental mathematical errors in the report and the executive summary, which had been widely circulated, was withdrawn because of its misleading statements.

While the RSS was in preparation, a marathon series of hearings on design criteria for the ECCSs in LWRs was held by the AEC. This was forced on the AEC by numerous interventions at local licencing hearings by citizen groups unsatisfied with the safety provisions in reactors coming on stream in the early 1970s (Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974; Patterson, 1976). These hearings revealed that simulated ECCS tests had repeatedly showed that the systems would not function as designed. Despite the many shortcomings of the reactor designs the engineers have maintained a remarkable faith in their problem solving abilities. There have been numerous incidents and near disasters with nuclear technology and in at least one case in the USSR hundreds have died (Medvedev, 1979; Burluson, 1980; Pollard, 1979). The safety debate has remained acrimonious and the demolishing of the Canadian Inhaber study of the relative risks of energy technologies has further undermined the attempts to 'prove' nuclear power is safe (Inhaber, 1978; Holdren, 1979). Despite the serious problems with the technology it has continued to be developed and given widespread support within the technical community, Three Mile Island notwithstanding.

#### 2.6.4 Other Issues of Concern

The problems of waste disposal have already been mentioned, and apart from the immediate concerns of environmental contamination the ethical questions of whether this generation has the right to leave a residue of nuclear waste for unborn generations has provided material for an ethical and moral critique of nuclear power (Routley and Routley, 1978; Sayre, 1981; Shrader-Frechette, 1980). As yet no final solution to the waste problem has been devised and meanwhile it continues to accumulate in temporary storage sites which are far from being leak free (Nader and Abbotts, 1979; Murphy, 1981).

Transportation of nuclear materials presents its own particular problems and a number of accidents have occurred involving trucks carrying yellowcake and other materials (Burluson, 1980). The possible diversion of nuclear materials and their use by terrorists and possibly third world regimes is another area of concern (Willrich and Taylor, 1974). As the nuclear industry expands, fissile materials will become increasingly available. The frequent shipment of plutonium required

within an economy relying on breeder reactors for a substantial part of its electricity supply has led to the appellation of "the Plutonium Society". It is believed that a black market in plutonium already exists.<sup>6</sup> The Israelis stole 200 tons of yellowcake in 1968 in Europe (Davenport, et al., 1978) and there are unanswered questions about possible thefts in the U.S. The internal political implications of the plutonium society are also of concern. Civil liberties are being eroded (Flood and Grove White, 1976) and workers subjected to surveillance while nuclear opponents are harassed (Jungk, 1979).

Further objections derive from the sheer scale of the nuclear enterprise and its concomitant inflexibility. A nuclear society demands stable institutions to provide the "nuclear priesthood" required to maintain the plants and look after the waste facilities for thousands of years (Weinburg, 1972). In addition the vast scale of the nuclear research effort starves alternative projects of capital (Lovins, 1977). An often overlooked aspect of the nuclear controversy is the health and environmental consequences of Uranium mining where many miners have died of cancer years after their jobs ended (Union of Concerned Scientists, 1975; Elliot, 1977; Bayda, 1978). The disposal of uranium tailings presents major problems too, the radon hazard remaining present long after mining operations have ceased (Howard, 1980). In addition to all the problems outlined above, nuclear power has also run into economic troubles at least as spectacular as its technical difficulties. The capital costs of nuclear power stations in the U.S. in particular have spiraled upwards leaving the utilities with financial headaches (Bupp, et al., 1975; Stobaugh and Yergin, 1979; Lovins, 1977). Despite all these problems the nuclear industry remains in existence, although operating at a level much below that forecasted in the hey day of the late 1960s and early 1970s. It appears likely to continue to operate on a reduced scale in the future despite the absence of any new reactor orders in the U.S. since 1976.<sup>7</sup>

## 2.7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Following the initial trials of reactors in the 1950s in the U.S. the age of commercialisation started with Westinghouse and General Electric offering below cost contracts to utilities to encourage the

adoption of the new technology. Together with The Price Anderson Act limiting liability, government guaranteed cheap uranium supplies and AEC promotion, utilities were convinced that they had a good buy and orders flowed in. Rapidly rising electricity consumption encouraged the utilities to embark on ambitious building programmes. Apart from some localised opposition to reactors in the U.S. in the late 1950s few serious challenges emerged until the early 1970s. Initial opposition focused on site specific issues (Nelkin, 1971) and emphasised environmental concerns. Rising concern over inadequate regulation and safety features combined with an emerging environmental awareness made public opinion more critical. In the 1970s a coalition of local protestors, critical scientists, political radicals and environmentalists emerged to harass the nuclear establishment. A series of referenda challenged nuclear power in the 1976 and 1980 elections with some success.

In Europe anti-nuclear activity has dominated Swedish politics in the 1970s. The German nuclear programme has suffered a serious setback (Nelkin and Pollak, 1981) and the Windscale Inquiry in the U.K. in 1977 brought the legitimacy of the British nuclear establishment seriously into question (Breach, 1978). The Austrian referendum in 1978 prevented the start up of its plant at Zwentendorf. In France EDF has continued its vast programme of nuclear expansion although the new socialist government has curbed its ambitions somewhat.

In addition to the technical concerns outlined above, the debate over nuclear power has raised the question of the lack of control over the technocratic decision making process. Many of the monolithic nuclear establishments have little facility to absorb public input at any but the site specific local planning hearings. Public participation exercises have been carried out by various utilities and agencies in an attempt to improve their legitimacy in the face of public hostility. Few attempts have however been made to get to grips with the wider policy issues of energy planning and societal development trajectories.

The nuclear debate that it described in this thesis is as much a questioning of political power as it is a controversy about technical innovation or environmental hazards. It involves major questions about desirable future societies and dreams of a more humane future. Before turning to discuss these issues we must first consider some theoretical

concerns about social movements and the politics of protest in the next chapter.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

<sup>1</sup> $E=MC^2$  E is the energy produced when a mass M is converted into energy. C is the velocity of light.

<sup>2</sup>The name, as is the case with most reactor types, is taken from some design feature, in this case the 'cladding' surrounding the fuel rods.

<sup>3</sup>See Cervenka and Roberts, (1978) for the sordid tale of German and South African secret collaboration.

<sup>4</sup>Newly created highly toxic synthetic chemicals such as dioxin have some similar properties. The debate over "safe levels" etc. in these cases have similarities with the debates over Low level radiation. Rising concerns with the dangers of toxic wastes are related with concern over nuclear waste (Brown, 1981).

<sup>5</sup>See Gofman (1981) for a recent comprehensive review of the subject.

<sup>6</sup>Hunter (1979) recounts an incident of an attempted sale of an ounce of Plutonium to Greenpeace at the time of the 1976 Habitat conference in Vancouver.

<sup>7</sup>See Lonroth and Walker (1979) for an excellent overview of the industry in the late 1970s and on its future prospects.

## CHAPTER 3

## SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, IDEOLOGY AND POLITICS

A social movement is never simply "about" the object of its passion; it is always "about" the deepest identities of the participants, the masses who compose it and the organisers and revolutionaries who, at different times in different ways, stoke it and shape it.<sup>1</sup>

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The campaign against nuclear power has taken many forms and involves people from all walks of life and political affiliations. As there is no encompassing formal organisation which speaks for all concerned it is appropriate to talk of a movement rather than a pressure group of voluntary association although the terms are not exclusive. The ANM includes in some cases pressure groups and associations in addition to unaffiliated individuals.

The terms "interest group" and "pressure group" interconnect with pluralist conceptions of politics which suggests that interest groups, established to protect shared sectional interests, are mediators between citizen and state. In this conception, conflict between interest groups produces overall societal consensus and social policy is implemented by a neutral government<sup>2</sup> (Castles, 1967:3). Social movements encompass a wider range of phenomena than this rather narrow interpretation of the political process allows.

3.2 CONCEPTS

Social movements are best seen as part of a dynamic society of clashing ideologies and interests where

Protest groups emerge as a result of structural changes in a society, and as a movement develops, its organization, ideologies, and tactics adapt to the environmental and political circumstances in which it evolves. In the course of broadening its constituency and developing its strategies a social movement also becomes a source of further structural change, though often in directions that may be neither anticipated nor intended.

(Nelkin and Pollak, 1981:6)

Wilson (1973) also argues that societies are not inert masses, occasionally disturbed by protest, but rather volatile wholes seething with discordant ideas, opposing interests and competing social groups and that a considerable proportion of the impetus for change comes from outside the institutionalized status quo. Social movements are one medium for the expression of new ideas, their members reaching beyond the conventional social order to "crusade against the evils of society" (1973:5).

A social movement is a conscious, collective, organized attempt to bring about or resist large scale change in social order by non institutionalized means.

(ibid., p. 8)

He distinguishes movements from interest groups because social movements do not necessarily limit themselves to achieving self-interested goals. Neither of these normally attempts directly to assume the power and administrative duties of government. An organized group whose aim is to achieve power is usually considered a political party although the distinction between a party and a movement is often unclear. For example, Fascism in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s can be considered to be a social movement, and political parties such as the British labour party undoubtedly contain a movement dimension (Wilkinson, 1971). This definition also suffers from limitations by excluding groups which for strategic or tactical reasons choose or are forced to use institutionalised or commonly accepted forms of political activity.

The inclusion of organisation suggests a hierarchical division of labour among movement members and easily leads to the problem of considering the movement as being synonymous with the organisation which often attempts to lead the movement from the top. Breines (1980) and Piven and Cloward (1977) point out that this can lead to a mistaken substitution of "movement organisations" (to use Zald and

Ash's (1969) terminology) and leadership for the grass root support which is the essence of a movement. These people, of fundamental importance, are often difficult to identify, and consequently research.

Wilkinson (1971) suggests a broader working conception which includes movements with little formal structure. Thus

A social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into "utopian" community.... A social movement must evince a minimal degree of organisation though this may range from a loose, informal or partial level of organisation to the highly institution-alized and bureaucratized movement and the corporate group.... A social movement's committment to change and the raison d'être of its organisation are founded upon the conscious volition, normative commitment to the movements aims or beliefs, and active participation on the part of the followers or members....

(Wilkinson, 1971:27)

This distinguishes social movements from broader historical trends by the first point, suggesting that historical trends may not be deliberate collective endeavours. The distinction from voluntary associations is seen in the normative commitment to change, not necessarily present in a voluntary association. This commitment does not necessarily suggest a progressive dimension. Social movements are at times politically reactionary with a normative commitment aiming to reestablish some past situation or to avoid change (Rush, 1979) and have norms and values derived from some idealised view of the past. For the purposes of this thesis Wilkinson's working concept of a social movement will be used.

### 3.3 ANALYSIS

An important contribution to the literature on social movements is Smelser's (1962) structural differentiation theory of collective behaviour. This conception interprets movements as attempts to reconstitute social structures on the basis of generalised beliefs. Movements are seen as collective behaviour in response to a 'strain' placed on societal development. Doubts about the theory follow from this assumption that strains are abnormal occurrences rather than the normal product of contradictions and clashing interests in the evolution of society.

Conceptual problems remain in attempting to distinguish between what is collective behaviour and how it differs from normal social behaviour (Marx, 1980). Problems also occur because social movements are easily dismissed as abnormal or deviant phenomena, and this approach can play into the hands of those who attempt to discredit movements (Rush, 1979). When coupled with a pluralist conception of politics, assuming access to the political bargaining process for all 'legitimate' or 'serious' interests, this type of approach all too easily leads to dismissive attitudes towards social movements. Wilkinson (1971) suggests that it is impossible to distinguish adequately between norms and values and that "In practice one movement's norm may be another movement's value" (1971:25). He further argues that by using Parson's hierarchy of "components of social action," Smelser is forced to make empirically unfounded assertions about moral, intellectual and cultural movements. Many of these types of movements see the basic expression of dissent as a worthwhile end in itself, without being in a position to redefine norms, reorganise the motivations of individuals, or to change the situational facilities as the hierarchy requires.

In contrast to Smelser's general theory, Rush (1979) approaches the study of social movements from a broadly 'Marxist' framework and develops a classification system based on two factors: the type of change sought and the type of action taken against the status quo. Rush divides the type of change sought in power relations into instituting new relations, reinstating old ones, modifying existing relations, and avoiding existing ones. He divides the type of action taken against the status quo into passive opposition, active opposition and overthrow. He suggests that rebellion and revolution are on the left, resistance and reaction are on the right, and reform and expressive movements are in the middle of the political spectrum. Groups on the left see problems in existing society as social and structural in origin and capable of solution through collective action and structural change. For groups on the right, problems are usually seen as moral and individual in form and capable of solution by force of individual determination. This key distinction is very important in understanding protest movement's ideologies.

Rush goes on to classify liberal reform movements as those that

seek limited modification in existing power relations to provide social solutions to perceived social problems. Expressive movements are often conservative and individualistic according to this conception, and their solutions to problems lie in modifying one's relation to society either subjectively and/or objectively. This formulation suggests that reform, rebellion and revolution "... by a common focus on social factors as the source of problems, and the need for a new, or at least modified, society as a solution ..." have a basic similarity (Rush, 1979:442). On the other side of the political divide, expressive, resistance and reactionary movements "... are linked to a certain extent by some common perception of the individual as, if not the source of the problems then at least the vehicle of social change ..." (ibid.).

Rush argues further that although all social movements are a threat to the dominant class, those who espouse an individualist perspective are likely to fare better than those who challenge the ideology of the dominant groups with collectivist ideas. Particularly religious groups which are predominantly expressive will often be ignored by the state. Reform movements with individualist ideologies are likewise much more receptive to cooptation and hence less dangerous. Although this attempt at a classification draws out important political aspects of movements, it has problems. Some fascist groups and right wing religious groups have structural interpretations of the ills of society and advocate broadly collectivist solutions.

A recent approach to the study of social movements is the so-called "Resource Mobilization" school (McCarthy and Zald, 1977). The resource mobilisation approach focuses on the dilemmas inherent in a social movement when allocating limited social movement resources. Movements face difficulties in appealing to four different constituencies: their own organisation and membership base, the news media, the public, and target groups or antagonists including the government. 'Radicals' may be in favour of violent action while 'moderates' argue for conventional approaches to gain public support and a favourable image with Government officials, the media and the public. Marx (1980) argues that this emphasis on organizations, resources, and rationality risks squeezing out the commitment, excitement, and fluidity inherent in social movements. The assumption of instrumental rationality and a managerial

type movement organization, at least partly divorced from the rank and file, is not a helpful perspective when attempting to come to terms with the internal dynamics of a value oriented movement such as the New Left. Many actions may occur within a movement of this amorphous nature independent of a leadership if one even exists at all (Gerlach, 1971; Gerlach and Hine, 1970).

Apart from the writings on the internal dynamics of movements, there have been many theories attempting to explain the formation of social movements, Smelser's (1962) being only one of many. Geschwender (1968) attempts to draw five of these theories together under a common framework of cognitive dissonance. In his review of the literature on social movements he summarises the causation theories into five categories. First, an increase in economic welfare followed by a rapid drop leads to protest activity. Second, rising socio-economic expectations lead to protest among those who do not have their expectations met quickly enough. Third, he considers theories of relative deprivation, and fourth, those of downward mobility. Finally he introduces one non-temporal hypothesis drawn from Lenski's (1954) theory of status crystallisation. This suggests that individuals who experience status inconsistency between, for example, education level and job or occupation (i.e. high educational standard but low status job) reduce the resulting dissonance either through changing their expectations or else shift to protest activity advocating a more egalitarian society.

In considering the ANM only this last theory is of real significance as the ANM is less a direct product of changing economic conditions than it is an articulation of concern for immediate danger and an articulation of values (Sharaf, 1978; Nelkin and Pollak, 1981). Parkin (1968) utilises Lenski's concepts to explain the educated middle class nature of the British CND. This is incorporated in his basic thesis that radicalism in the British middle class "... is directed mainly to social reforms which are basically moral in content ..." (1968:2) as opposed to working class radicalism which is geared more to economic and material reforms. Middle class radicalism is aimed at reforms that will benefit society in general or benefit an underprivileged group. He argues

... that the main payoff for middle class radicals is that of a psychological or emotional kind--in satisfactions derived from expressing personal values in action.

(Parkin, 1968:2)

Lucardie (1980) and Breines (1979) also argue that the New Left emphasised expressive aspects of politics. Sharaf (1978) points out the growing presence of ideologically motivated opponents to nuclear power and Nelkin and Pollak (1981), in discussing the European ANM, emphasise the role of educated youth seeking to translate the values expressed during the student movement of the 1960s into a political discourse. Parkin (1968) also argues that "alienation" theories of protest drawn from theories of mass society inadequately explain these protests. In the case of the CND he argues that the youth who took part were not totally estranged from the dominant societal values but rather partly alienated from particular values, such as the belief in the need for nuclear weapons. They were idealistic, with a commitment to improve the world and a belief in their own political capabilities.

Although Parkin's work is situated in a very different framework, it has some conclusions which fit with recent Marxist attempts to explain the changing class structure in post-war capitalism and to examine the resulting shape of political discourse. Wright (1978) developed the concept of contradictory class locations and Crompton and Gubbay (1977) refer to structurally ambiguous positions between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. This includes lower level management, technicians, experts, administrative personnel, etc., who have shifting class interests. Just because of their ambiguous position, ideological factors are increasingly important in their politics. Lucardie (1980) emphasises the ideological rather than directly material origins of the radical politics of the new left intellectuals, arguing that the New Left was the first tentative political expression of this emergent social formation.

Poulantzas (1975) develops a different theoretical approach arguing that this new social formation is actually a new social class--the new petty bourgeoisie. Their politics is marked by three themes. First, they have reformist illusions, aiming to readjust 'temporary' malfunctions in society. Second, while challenging the politics and ideology of capitalism they emphasise participation in existing

structural arrangements rather than attempting to undermine their legitimacy. Third, they regard the state as inherently neutral in an arbitrating function between classes, hence their classic political strategies involve institutional approaches and alerting public opinion. This discussion of motives and political strategies leads to a consideration of the ideology of protest movements.

### 3.4 IDEOLOGY

Debate continues on the nature and meaning of ideology, a word used in many ways (Larrain, 1979). Rather than engage in this academic and political debate, this section limits itself to the key points about the concept which are apposite for this thesis. The term is still used pejoratively to dismiss ideas with which one disagrees, however, the pejorative component is not intended to be implied in this work.

Much of the debate over ideology emerges from the Marxist tradition, although the term is also used in non-Marxist studies. Williams (1977) identifies three main uses of the word within the Marxist tradition:

- (i) a system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group;
- (ii) a system of illusory beliefs--false ideas or false consciousness--which can be contrasted with true or scientific knowledge;
- (iii) the general process of the production of meanings and ideas.

(Williams, 1977:55)

The use by Marx and Engels (1972, 1976) of the term ideology often referred to the ideas of the ruling class and ideology was seen as a method of class rule. This idea is related to conceptions of society polarised into two conflicting classes contending for power, a line of thinking further developed by Lukacs (1971) in his writings on ideology and false consciousness. The use of the term ideology as the system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group, occurs in Lenin (1973) where bourgeois and socialist ideology are contrasted, and is also important in Gramsci's (1971) work on hegemony. Ideology is used mainly in this sense in this thesis.

Rudé (1980) develops a concept of the "ideology of protest" in his book on protest movements. He attempts to provide a simple framework for analysing movement ideologies in their historical contexts.

This attempt involves considering both long term and short term factors and how they interrelate in a given historical context, because as Bernstein (1976:108) reminds us, ideologies are historical products, but not in the sense of a "... simple epiphenomenon of a material substructure ..." but rather are complex and dynamic parts of the historical process. Drawing on Gramsci's work on hegemony and non-fundamental classes<sup>3</sup> Rudé devises a scheme based on three components. First, there are "inherent beliefs" received through socialisation in childhood and the absorption of tradition. Second, people derive new ideas from the political, cultural and intellectual milieu to which they are exposed. These "derived" notions become grafted onto inherent ideas and beliefs and new ideas take shape as an amalgam of the two. Finally these systems of concepts and beliefs are subjected to "the sharp jostle of experience"<sup>4</sup> which acts on the two earlier levels.

This scheme provides for an historic evolution of political ideologies, derived ideas being absorbed into the inherent beliefs of subsequent generations. Thus, in understanding ideologies found in protest groups it is essential to consider the historical context, the topical intellectual climate and practical political experience. A further key point about ideologies is their provision of legitimacy for political action to the holders of the ideology. They

... think of it as "self evident" "what any rational man will hold," "realistic," "based on what human nature is," or--more recently--"what science tells us." In each case an ideology is being used to determine what counts as "realistic" action, and to define the limits of "rational" choice.

(Bernstein, 1976:108)

For moral or value orientated movements powerful imagery and symbols often give their ideology its power to maintain commitment (Parkin, 1968; Nelkin and Pollak, 1981). Although Smelser (1968) is approaching the topic from a very different standpoint than Rudé it is worth noting his somewhat exaggerated comments on the emotional nature of protest group ideologies. He suggests that ideologies in these cases have both negative and positive features.

On the negative side there is a sense of foreboding, of great anxiety about threats to social life, and the specification of agents in society who are responsible for these threats.... If the movement is of the reform variety

opposition tends to be directed toward "vested interests" in the society who resist reform; if the movement is revolutionary, protest tends to be directed against the ruling authorities themselves as the source of evil.

On the positive side those who adhere to protest movements often endow themselves and the envisioned reconstruction of society with enormous power, conceived as the ability to overcome that array of threats and obstacles which constitute the negative side of the adherent's world picture. The proposed or social change will render opponents helpless and be effective immediately. Because of this exaggerated potency, adherents often see unlimited happiness in the future if only the social changes are forthcoming.

(Smelser, 1968:116)

In the case of the ANM and the CND these comments are certainly appropriate, if somewhat exaggerated. The powerful negative symbols of the mushroom cloud and invisible radioactive fallout and the positive symbols of peace and ecological society within these movements help explain the strength of feeling and commitment within the movement.

In summary, ideology can be seen as the collective social and political beliefs of a group, resulting from a mixture of historically inherent ideas, intellectual context and practical experience, giving justification and legitimation to a group's political actions. This is closely analagous with Nelkin and Pollak's use of the term as "... a common scheme of reference as a pre-condition for intentional action ..." (1981:221).

### 3.5 POLITICS

The differences between reform and revolutionary movements alluded to earlier are considerable, and of great importance in discussing the politics of such movements as the New Left and the ANM. Many moral protest movements like the CND are plagued with internal debates over tactics and strategy between groups adhering to differing conceptions of politics. Miliband (1977) emphasises the distinction between the liberal and Marxist view of politics based on their differing conceptions of conflict.

In the liberal view of politics, conflict exists in terms of 'problems' which need to be 'solved'. The hidden assumption is that conflict does not or need not, run very deep; that it can be 'managed' by the exercise of reason and

goodwill and a readiness to compromise and agree. On this view, politics is not civil war conducted by other means but a constant process of bargaining and accomodation, on the basis of accepted procedures, and between parties who have decided as a preliminary that they could and wanted to live together more or less harmoniously.

(Miliband, 1977:17)

Conflict is functional in this conception because it resolves problems peacefully and it also produces new ideas thus ensuring progress. The Marxist conception is fundamentally different.

It is not a matter of 'problems' to be 'solved' but of a state of domination and subjection to be ended by a total transformation of the conditions which give rise to it. No doubt conflict may be attenuated, but only because the ruling class is able by one means or another--coercion, concessions, or persuasion--to prevent the subordinate classes from seeking emancipation. Ultimately, stability is not a matter of reason but of force. The antagonists are irreconcilable, and the notion of genuine harmony is a deception or a delusion, at least in relation to class societies.

For the protagonists are not individuals as such, but individuals as members of social aggregates--classes.

(ibid.)

In the Marxist conception, conflict is endemic in class society. Class struggle will be transcended by the overthrow of the capitalist system and the replacement of the bourgeois state by a communist society. Hence Marxist politics is a revolutionary politics of fundamental transformation and structural change.

Obviously tactics will vary depending on which of these conceptions a protest movement's members subscribe to. These two are polarities in a wide variety of political perspectives which often combine in moral protest movements. Wilkinson summarises the situation thus:

Beyond (these) commitments to generalised aims there is no common ideological consensus within the movements, either on the means by which such aims are to be realised, or upon a general program of social and political reforms.... It is easier to tell what they are against than what they are for. Moral crusades and protests tend therefore to be heterogenous issue coalitions, enabling many groups, frequently in bitter rivalry with each other on other issues and on general principles to combine temporarily under a specific campaign's umbrella.

(Wilkinson, 1971:119)

This political debate within protest movements is paralleled in academic discussions of social movement strategy and tactics. Barkan (1979) identifies a debate between those who argue that external support is important for protest groups to succeed (Lipsky, 1968; see also Turner, 1969) and those who argue that protest relies little on public and external support. Piven and Cloward (1977) suggest that public support is really useful for marginal groups in so far as it reduces the amount of repression state officials might otherwise use. They argue in their work on poor peoples' movements, that attempts to construct movement organisations and build links with other groups may undermine the insurgent goals of such movements, whose best chances of even marginal success lie in mass defiance and disruption. Gamson (1975) also argues that 'unruly' tactics are used by movement groups to gain support because access to the American political establishment is often severely constrained for movement groups. Barkan (1979) shows that this is the case with the American ANM (see also Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974) while Nelkin and Pollak (1981) show that protest actions were used in Germany and France to highlight issues and gain support and were not just irrational outbursts of frustration.

Groups whose structural position provides them with political skills, contacts and the potential to cause serious disruption in the economy, may not need large public support or protest activities to exert political pressure (Gamson, 1975). The more conventional pressure group approach to politics suggests that 'respectability', strength of membership and expertise are crucial factors in gaining concessions from governments. Legitimacy in the eyes of those in power is important (Eckstein, 1960; Pross, 1975). Cohesiveness, consistency, determination and prestige are also seen as important in gaining political demands. O'Riordan (1978) argues that groups without these resources or without access to government points of influence may be forced to opt for protest action to gain a hearing. It is, however, important to note that some groups, especially those who totally reject the status quo (Wilson, 1973), may choose to use non-orthodox tactics. To prevent cooptation they may steer clear of lobbying and dialogue with the political establishment altogether (Breines, 1979).

Lipsky (1968) offers a formalised analysis of social movement

influence arguing that relatively powerless groups are forced by their position to attempt to influence third parties who in turn will bring pressure to bear on the authorities. "Target groups" may react in a variety of ways including the dispensation of symbolic satisfactions or token satisfactions, preempting protest by internal reorganisation, appearing constrained in their abilities to react to protest group demands, and attempting to discredit protest groups, or finally, by postponing action by committing the issue to study. Lipsky ignores the possibility of outright suppression in this conceptualisation. His argument suggests that the propensity of the target groups to act in any one way is determined by their reference public's attitudes more than by the protesting group itself. In this view third parties are crucial, as is the media, in providing communication between the various publics. Hence 'image' and legitimacy are important.

Piven and Cloward (1977), however, argue that protest groups among poor people will probably be most successful when they take direct action themselves to force direct concessions. This assumes a limited lifetime of activity amongst people with few political resources. They further argue that to take the time to build up an organisation and influence third parties will doom a group with limited resources to failure.

### 3.6 SUMMARY

Definitional problems abound when discussing social movements and indeed there are few features of social movements on which all writers agree. Differing conceptions of society and its evolution underlie the very different approaches taken by writers in this field. The purpose of this chapter has been to introduce concepts and issues to lay the groundwork for consideration of the ANM on both the global scale and in the Irish context. The concept of ideology is introduced to argue that beliefs, and motivations are based on historically derived circumstances and provide legitimacy to peoples' action. Major differences in political positions also relate to underlying ideologies and consequently differing ideas of how to conduct political action emerge in social movements. Academic debates about the success and failure of movement tactics and strategies, and differing interpretation of

protest politics abound, with few clear conclusions emerging. In this thesis emphasis is placed on the ideological aspects of social movements, although the social base of the activists cannot be ignored.

A number of studies and ideas were important in developing the perspective taken in this thesis. Parkin's (1968) account of the British CND and his discussion of "middle class radicalism" is very important and has been heavily drawn on. Breines' (1980) study of the ideas of community and organization in the New Left, and Piven and Cloward's (1977) work on poor peoples' movements encouraged this attempt to write about the ANM from a sympathetic perspective, and to attempt to understand the movement "in its own terms." Vicker's (1975) study of the New Left points to a number of inherent weaknesses of explanation in conventional accounts of ideologically motivated movements. To focus solely on the social base of a movement or the socialization of its activists leads to deterministic statements concerning the movements. Breines also points to the bias in studies emphasizing purely instrumental analyses where only the results not the intentions are considered important. Both Breines and Vickers are at pains to develop approaches to the movement which emphasise its self activity, the internal dynamics consciously created by its activists. In relation to this approach the Marxist concept of praxis is important, that is, where activists' ideas and actions are interrelated in political activity. E.P. Thompson's (1968) theme of self activity, of people as the subjects of their history, is central to my ideas of social change. Hence the focus of much of this thesis is on the ideas expressed within the movement and the attempts to carry them out in practice. In this context Nelkin and Pollak (1981) broadly this perspective. They emphasise too the role of educated youth seeking to translate the values of the 1960s into a political discourse. The activism of the late 1960s laid the ground ideologically for the ecology movement of the 1970s "... with its concern about authority and its populist tinge" (1981:107). It is to this 1960s political activism and the environmental movement that we now turn in search of the roots of the international campaign against nuclear power.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

<sup>1</sup>Todd Gitlin, "The Dynamics of the New Left," Motive (October 1970): 55.

<sup>2</sup>This conception of politics, as Garson (1978) notes, has gradually moved from the centre stage of political studies in America to become a specialised area of study with a narrow approach analysing the impact of specific groups on government.

<sup>3</sup>For Gramsci, non-fundamental classes refer to classes other than the Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. The peasants in Italy were an important non-fundamental class in his writings.

<sup>4</sup>E.P. Thompson as quoted by Rudé (1980):35.

## CHAPTER 4

## RADICAL POLITICS AND THE NEW LEFT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The roots of the ANM are diverse, the reasons for opposition various, but a number of sources of ideological support are traceable to the New Left political movement which flowered in the 1960s. This explosion of political activity included the civil rights campaign in the U.S., the anti-Vietnam war campaign, student protest and women's liberation. Coming after the McCarthy era in the 1950s in the U.S. and a period of relative political stability in other Western countries, this was a new radical politics drawing support from disenchanted segments of the middle class. It was a period of idealist and radical politics when everything was up for examination and critical comment, and it has significantly influenced political developments, at least in capitalist countries ever since. It also provided a rich source of ideological and tactical themes for subsequent environmental and anti-nuclear campaigns, in Rudé's terms, it provides the intellectual milieu for later protest ideologies.

4.2 HISTORY

The rise of fascism in Europe in the 1930s and subsequently the World War II destroyed much of the ultra-left and extra-parliamentary opposition that had existed in the 1920s. Anarchism, as a large scale political force, essentially ceased to exist after the Spanish anarchists were defeated on the republican side in the Spanish Civil War (Woodcock, 1975; Breitbart, 1979). The "left" wing opposition, if it can be called such, coalesced around a number of Moscow orientated western European communist parties after World War II. Dissention within these parties, in addition to the emergence of avant garde artistic and philosophical circles after the war, led to a more varied left politics. The

Situationist International was founded in 1958 in France while concomitantly activists and intellectuals were beginning to desert the Moscow orientated parties following the 1956 Hungarian revolt and its repression by Russian military intervention. This incident prompted many communists to reject the authoritarian tendencies in the communist parties (See McInnes, 1975). As Oglesby puts it,

The New Left is properly so called because in order to exist it had to overcome the memories, the certitudes, and the promises of the Old Left. Russia-firstism had been made insupportable by Hungary and then unintelligible by the Sino-Soviet split, well before Czechoslovakia was to make it grotesque.

(Oglesby, 1969:13)

In Britain the CND and its more radical offshoot the Committee of 100 provided a focus for activism while publications such as the New Left Review began appearing (Young, 1977). In the U.S. in the 1950s the beatniks appeared and the post-war generation emerged heavily influenced by writers like Paul Goodman and Wright-Mills and the emerging rock and roll music milieu. Civil rights campaigns in the Deep South and concerns with poor people in the ghettos subsequently drew white middle class students to get involved in the registration of Black voters. A common concern for action against racism and for social justice developed amongst students. The 1964 Berkeley free speech movement got a shot in the arm from the civil rights movement (Young, 1977) and set the scene for large scale unrest to follow in the universities later in the 1960s (Searle, 1972). The Vietnam war became a cause which the New Left espoused wholeheartedly in the U.S. and to a lesser extent elsewhere. Support for Third World liberation movements also developed in the late 1960s and at times inspired action by the New Left in the West.

In Britain, university protest was less noticeable, but the CND had been the principal rallying point for the early New Left. The British CND declined in the 1960s after the immediate danger from fallout was removed by the Partial Test Ban Treaty. Activists became disillusioned with attempts to convert the Labour Party to a morally based unilateralist position (Parkin, 1968).

As the 1960s wore on, the New Left became increasingly politicised absorbing many of the old left ideas that it had initially set out to

avoid (Vickers, 1975). By 1965, Young (1977:56) argues, the core identity of the New Left revolved around five interconnected themes each of which was nearly a social movement in its own right: first, student protest mainly constrained to university reform at that stage, second, the grass roots radical black movement in the U.S., third, the community action projects, fourth, the beginnings of an international anti-Vietnam war movement, and finally, the underground or alternative society movement which has proven to be the New Left's most lasting project.

The apex of the New Left undoubtedly was the Paris spring of 1968. Students took over universities and millions of workers went on strike. Revolution was in the air for a few weeks and concepts of workers control and revolution to overcome alienation came to the fore. This revolt was crushed in part due to the French Communist Party (Young, 1977; Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, 1969). In the same year the Russians invaded Czechoslovakia to stop the reforms of the Dubcek regime, Martin Luther King was assassinated and there were major riots at the Democratic Party convention in Chicago. Following the 1969 strikes and political activities in Italy and the sporadic student protests which lasted into the 1970s, the New Left as an entity nearly disappeared. At the peak of its activity the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) splintered in the U.S. under the strain of its own internal ideological contradictions, removing any semblance of a focal point to the student movement (Breines, 1979), and the anti-war movement continued as a single issue affair (Vickers, 1975). The movement is not very visible now but its influence remains. The ideas, and in some cases the activists, continuing in other struggles, in the political discourse on the left, in the universities and in the countercultural movement that continues to exist. Although not as visible as in the 1960s the counterculture continues to produce a considerable literature promoting its ideas.

#### 4.3 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Despite the many differences between New Left groups there were a number of common political themes underlying the protests of the late 1960s. There were major differences between the movement in the U.S. and

the movement in Europe, the latter tending to be more influenced by the Marxist heritage in its history (Young, 1977; Wood, 1975). Lucardie (1980) summarises the common themes in the European New Left in two ways. First there are a number of key words which summarise the new left project:<sup>1</sup> democratisation, self-management, dual strategy, cultural revolution and self expression. Democratisation implies increasing control over all aspects of people's lives by the people themselves. Self-management is the concept of workers managing their working environment and citizens managing their neighbourhood or housing unit and the services that go with it (See Morris and Hess, 1975). Dual strategy refers to direct action and protest politics coupled to attempts to influence, reform or change the existing institutional structures. Cultural revolution was a term emphasising the need for a whole new culture rather than just the seizure of political power. The Chinese experience is related to this as Mao was attempting to carry on a cultural revolution at this time in China. Self-expression emphasises the desired situation of each individual overcoming their alienation by expressing themselves meaningfully in a non-alienating social environment.

Lucardie (1980) further suggests that six common ideas run through all European New Left groups' critique of society. First, science has had a large impact on production techniques by causing large scale mechanisation and rationalisation of production, and consequently changing the role of technician and scientist in the production process. The New Left was agreed on this only to the extent that it was important and that the "old left" had under-estimated the role of science and its practitioners. Second, most New Leftists were agreed that the working class had been integrated into the structure of capitalist society due to mass consumerism, affluence and the reformist and electoralist strategies of the old left working class parties. Third, the New Left criticised the economism and determinism of the old left which, they argued, placed too much emphasis on economic causes of political and cultural phenomena while ignoring the importance of, in Marxist terminology, superstructural elements. Self-determination and self-management were both goals and means to the New Left, a situation very different from the traditional perspectives of the

Marxist-Leninist parties who saw the state as the predominant agency of social change.

Fourth, following from this critique of economism comes theoretical arguments for considerable relative autonomy for the state from the dominant economic interests. All New Left groups criticised the instrumentalist notion of the state as the tool of capital and agent of decisive social change in revolutionary situations. They argued instead that the state was relatively independent of economic interests and they favoured a democratisation of the state. They also heavily criticised its oligarchic and bureaucratic forms. The New Left advocated grass roots democracy as an agent of social change rather than the old left ideas of seizing the state apparatus and using it to carry on a revolution from the top down. Fifth, they argued that ideology and culture were relatively autonomous and the anarchist and situationist streams argued that once the culture of the commodity and the "spectacle" had been undermined then capitalism would fall automatically. Finally, conceptions of nature, both in its external and in its related internal, human, forms differed from the old left and the dominant societal views. The New Left emphasised life in harmony with nature rather than as an attempt to dominate it. Free development of all, necessitated for the New Left, a liberation of humans'"inner nature." Hence "inner nature" was politicised by the New Left with many considering sexual repression a major obstacle on the way to socialism.

The New Left was diverse if nothing else, and far from unanimous on many issues but its character was marked by a libertarian streak which influenced much of what happened in its activities. Young lists a number of features with strong Anarchist tendencies which were prevalent in the mainstream New Left.

- An insistence on workers control.
- The organisation of the poor and the declasses, the marginal elements.
- Anti-intellectualism, irrationalism and anti-theory.
- The romantisation of spontaneous violence (but also a tradition of anti-militarism).
- Direct action; propaganda of the deed; extra-institutional, extraparliamentary, extra-legal activity.
- A stress on "community" and the decentralisation of society.
- Loose decentralised organisation; the rejection of permanent leaders.

-The belief that the revolutionary movement itself foreshadows the character of a new society; a stress on the means/ends continuum.

(Young, 1977:136)

This list refers more to the political practice of the movement than to the ideas involved, which are Lucardie's main concern. The New Left included a critique of technology and the drudgery of everyday life in capitalist society.

Central to the New Left's critique of advanced capitalism was a powerful imagery of machinery grinding lives and hopes into atomic fragments, technology fragmenting and atomising individuals until all human and moral values were impossible.

(Breines, 1979:221)

Symbolism is an important motivating factor in a relatively spontaneous movement like the New Left in which people become involved because they agree with the values expressed there rather than because they belong to an organisation. The initial CND movement emerged with a strong symbolism of annihilation and impressed the symbol of the mushroom cloud on a generation. This symbolism was to be subsequently redeveloped and used in the anti-nuclear movement which has developed its own symbolism of technological destruction and peaceful ecological alternatives (Nelkin and Pollak, 1981).

Two other conceptions of the New Left can be included here, both of relevance to an understanding of the scope of New Left thought. Oglesby (1969) argues that there are four basic positions in the politics of the New Left. First he identifies a group of left-wing liberals and radicals influenced by Wright-Mills who hope the system can produce worthwhile self reform. The New Left is "... understood as a generator of challenges, of critical energy and ideas which may bear some fruit within the evolving structures of enlightened capitalism." (Oglesby, 1969:17). The second position involves students attempting to develop a radical base among intellectuals and making whatever connections with the working class who are still seen as the essential driving force for revolution. Third, as Oglesby sees it, is an exclusively New Left viewpoint that the composition of the work force has changed so significantly that students and workers are one and the same. In this view students have become the new working class. The fourth position argues that students form the beginnings of a new

historical class. This conception argues that we are now in a post-scarcity society, and that contrary to the classical Marxist conception of capitalism as the last stage in human "pre-history," the new theory argues that each revolution merely changes classes. The proletariat's historic function was the creation of industrial society, not socialist society and that capitalism and "socialism" are both pursuing the same objective. Finally this new class makes uneasy alliances with the proletariat in analogous fashion to the proletariat's alliance with the bourgeoisie in the French Revolution in the struggle against French feudalism.

Apart from this categorisation of dominant themes in the New Left, Oglesby's selection of writings in his volume speaks for itself in describing the vast array of influences at work in the New Left. He includes theoreticians such as Wright Mills, André Gorz, Louis Althusser and Leszek Kolakowski, revolutionaries in the persons of Frantz Fanon and Fidel Castro, the German student leader Rudi Dutschke in addition to Malcolm X, and Huey Newton of Black Panther fame.

Wood (1975) traces the development of the U.S. New Left ideology from predominantly reformist in the early 1960s to a greater radical component later. An anti-ideological streak runs through most of its history in the sense that it rejected rigid programmatic politics of the sort practiced by the U.S. communist party. The Port Huron founding statement of the radical SDS is hesitant on sure formulas and the early civil rights movement and free speech movement in Berkeley avoided such ideas being predominantly reformist and not issuing a radical critique of society. Initially the SDS argued in terms of power elites and language drawn from Wright Mills rather than in class terms. Individual commitment was seen as crucial, as Roszak puts it;

For most of the New Left, there has ultimately been no more worth or cogency in any ideology than a person lends it by virtue of his own action, personal commitments, not abstract ideas, are the stuff of politics.

(Roszak, 1969:57)

Wood (1975) argues that student idealism led to radicalism when they did not see change coming as comprehensively or as quickly as they desired. It was not alienation, but ideology that led to protest.

In summary, the New Left was new in the sense of being a reaction

to outdated left wing politics. It contained numerous ideological leanings in various directions. It was very much a political movement with a strong moral tendency. It put the individual back into left wing politics and influenced the political life of much of the capitalist world.

#### 4.4 QUESTIONS OF POLITICAL ORGANISATION

The debate within the radical left concerning organising strategies has a long history stretching back before the first international where the Anarchists and Marxists debated and fought over the question. The libertarian streak in the New Left tended toward participatory democracy and 'free speech' and where possible consensus decision making; but, this has been the cause of much dissention in the New Left and subsequently in the ANM also.

The New Left attempted to develop an 'anti-political' politics which rejected the de-politization of advanced capitalist society and ... sought to discover organisational forms and instrumental mechanisms that could be both effective within the given political arena and consistent with the anti-political motifs of the movement.

(Breines, 1980:420)

Or as Vickers (1975:80) puts it, "... the New Left paradigm fostered an emphasis on spontaneity and will over and against organisation as the method of struggle." A fundamental tension existed within the New Left between the expressive ideals of participatory democracy and attempts to deal instrumentally with the centralised bureaucratic organisation of the state and large scale capitalist institutions. Boggs (1977/78) calls these attempts to establish alternative institutions along the desired lines of a future society "pre-figurative movements" because they 'pre-figure' a desired future state. These ideas reflect somewhat the earlier anarchist traditions although in a more eclectic manner broadening the syndicalist emphasis on the workplace to include other possibilities. Breines (1979) places the question of organisation at the centre of her analysis arguing that the anti-organisational utopian tendencies within the New Left were its most important contributions and that it chose the course it took deliberately rather than because it was either naive or ignorant. Another anarchist idea

of importance is that of activity as a changer or consciousness, the American New Left is well remembered for its slogan "DO IT."

Many writers have commented on the excitement of political action in revolutionary or protest situations (Arendt, 1973; Searle, 1972) and much of the New Left's political activity took place in direct action and protest situations. Segal (1979) summarises the issues and organising strategies in the U.K. in the late 1960s around four themes showing how means and ends were interrelated. First, the idea of autonomy, the taking of control of one's own life, and the belief that people could change the quality of their lives being more than the passive tools of history was important. There was deep suspicion of organisations that claimed they could do these things for people. Second, there was a focus on changing one's personal social relations to bring about personally the type of life that one desires and consequently rejecting a Leninist stance that nothing can be done to change society under capitalism apart from building an organisation to smash it. Living one's politics was seen as crucial. Third, organisation was based on one's own oppression, such as one's status as a woman, claimant, squatter, etc. Criticism of the nuclear family and the restrictive authoritarian family setups led to communal child care ideas among feminists. Finally, vanguards and hierarchies of struggle were rejected. All parts of life were considered important and the predominance given to the industrial working class by Trotskyist and Leninist groups was abandoned. More complex theories of the state's role in capitalist society were developed. Focus on the ideological functions of the state showed that much more than an economic struggle was involved in resisting capitalism and that a cultural resistance was more appropriate.

No one better criticizes the old left and the Moscow oriented communist parties than the Cohn-Bendits. Drawing heavily on a critical analysis of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia they argue that the Communist Party substitutes itself for the workers and strangles the revolution. For them the revolution is a spontaneous upsurge from below rather than an affair manipulated by a central committee's functionaries directing the masses according to its 'scientifically correct' party line. The criticism of centralized organization and the failure of the Leninists and Trotskyists to deal with the questions of means and

ends is eloquently phrased thus:

... what he (Lenin) and Trotsky said time and again was that Russia must learn from the advanced capitalist countries that there is only one way of developing production; the application of capitalist ideas on management and industrial rationalization. Trotsky, for example, believed that the actual organization of the army did not matter so long as it fought on the right side. Thus an army is not bourgeois because of its structure (eg. hierarchy and discipline) but only if it serves the bourgeoisie. Similarly an industrial system is not considered bourgeois because of its discipline, hierarchy, and incentives (bonuses, piece work, etc.,) are those used by the bourgeois system. All that matters apparently is whose power is enshrined in what Lenin so proudly referred to as his 'constitution'. The idea that the same means can not serve different ends, that neither the army nor a factory are simple 'instruments' but socialist structures embodying productive relationships and hence the real power--this idea, so obvious to Marxists was completely 'forgotten'.

(Cohn-Bendit and Cohn-Bendit, 1969:242-243)

#### 4.5 VIOLENCE AND NON-VIOLENCE

While non-violence was never a fundamental principle in the New Left the civil rights movement in the U.S. used non-violence very effectively on a number of occasions. Martin Luther King maintained his prominence although non-violence as a philosophy was on the decline from about 1965 (Young, 1977:223). Non-violent ideas were associated with the ideas of alternative institutions and utopian community ideas in the New Left. Non-violence encompasses a variety of tactics and philosophies which eschew the use of violence (Woodward, 1977; Woodcock, 1966; Shart, 1973). The practice includes Gandhi's Satyagraha which seeks to change an opponent through 'love without coercion', speaking truth to power, and self sacrifice. More directly militant tactics include occupying buildings or large marches which may have a threat of violence involved. Unorthodox tactics and attempts to undermine the legitimacy of coercive power is fundamental to gaining social change without the use of the gun or the ballot box. Entailing a commitment to change one's own life and avoiding the use of violence in confrontation situations non-violence is consistent with the moral nature of much of the politics of the New Left and its attempts to develop

non-coercive, non-authoritarian community orientated social relations. Means are considered important if not fundamental by non-violence advocates who argue that means, at least, partly determine ends and ought to be morally acceptable. Non-violence rejects the philosophy of ends justifying any means. Violence is seen as both direct, as in the case of police brutality, and structural as in the case of serious social inequality (Woodward, 1977). Non-violence in the form of direct actions and challenges to the legitimacy of the establishment provided a direct method for the morally motivated New Left activists to "live the future now" in acting out the values which pre-figure the future desired society. The Port Huron document stated

The brutalities of the twentieth century teach that means and ends are intimately related, that vague appeals to posterity cannot justify the mutilations of the present.

(As quoted by Young, 1977:231)

As the 1960s passed so did the high tide of non-violent action. Black radicals increasingly saw non-violence as reformist weakness. The late 1960s, as Breines (1979) notes marked the turning away by some of the early SDS radicals from student and community concerns, more rhetoric of violent revolutionary practice and an increasing interest in third world liberation movements. The German student movement also grew increasingly extreme and the legacy of terrorism remains. It is a moot point to consider how much of the violent terrorist activity is genuine and how much of it is due to police provocateurs, but it had provided an excuse for repressive legislation in a number of western countries, as a number of writers have recently documented (Marx, 1974; Cobler, 1978; Thompson, 1980).<sup>2</sup>

#### 4.6 THE SOCIAL BASE OF THE NEW LEFT AND THE NEW INTELLECTUALS

The eclecticism of the New Left was in part due to the diverse backgrounds from which the New Left drew its members. Apart from mass support on demonstrations and in the civil rights campaign the solid commitment was mainly drawn from students and the variously termed new middle class, new working class, new petty bourgeoisie; the salaried technical managerial and importantly, the service sectors of advanced capitalism. Lucardie argues that the New Left was predominantly a

product of the new petty bourgeoisie. As employees, civil servants and intellectuals they provide services such as advice, scientific information, entertainment, etc., in exchange for a salary or subsidy from the state. While they do not directly produce surplus value, their salary being somehow indirectly paid by the surplus generated by the working class, this sector has some autonomy in the workplace, some independence vis-a-vis the bourgeoisie, and does not compete in the market like the shopkeepers and artisans of the traditional petty bourgeoisie. As a result it maintains an ambiguous structural position. Its distance from direct production processes tended to lead to a lack of consideration of economic factors in its analysis. Lucardie goes on to coin the term "logocrat" for those who work predominantly with words, images and communication. The intellectuals, teachers, journalists, etc., of western society, socialised in the values of solidarity, self-development and creativity formed the inspirational group in the New Left. In the European New Left Lucardie argues that their emphasis on the subjective reflects increased secularisation where the boundaries between sacred and secular, public and private, social and natural, which underlay the basic values of personal development, work and production in capitalism were no longer unquestioningly taken for granted.

Other writers have commented on the role of 'logocrats' in the New Left and CND movements. Breines draws on a variety of sources to suggest that students were the most materially disinterested, morally motivated activists in the political spectrum; being,

Away from their families and traditional values, taught to seek the truth, open to the non-conformist atmosphere of the university, students are more responsive to political trends than other sectors of the population.

(Breines, 1979:260)

She continues that because of their relative isolation from immediate concern for everyday life and their interests in values, ideas, learning and the use of abstract language, the students of the 1960s "... were in a position to question the legitimacy of the status quo by conceiving of another more democratic and participatory society" (ibid.). Student politics is fundamentally a politics of morality. Drawing on the ideas of Bernstein, Gouldner, Habermas and in particular Mueller, she argues

that middle class students with their cognitive skills and language allows them to communicate in a relatively undistorted manner with the resulting ability to conceptualise alternatives and to perceive their social needs and problems. Further she argues, following Habermas and Wolfe, that depolitization of the public sphere is a fundamental facet of contemporary political life legitimated through acquiescence due to a "... persuasive inability to formulate meaningful alternatives to the existing order" (Breines, 1979:262). This is in turn due to the structure of distorted communication in capitalist society carrying with it the inability of many to express adequately their qualitative needs. Mueller (1973) suggests that the more well developed, analytic and abstract the language the better one is able to escape the immediate concrete social context and hence indulge in socio-political analysis, and also that only the humanities and the social sciences still allow students to conceptualise an overview of society. They are less constrained immediately by political and economic interests with their concomitant unidimensional instrumentally distorted, educational languages. From this Breines suggests that the radicalism of the student movement "... may have derived in part from its ability to formulate the possibility of community, participation and democracy" (Breines, 1979:263).

The Cohn-Bendits argue that sociologists and social psychologists were the most active radical students because they saw themselves as trainees for future roles as social manipulators in the pay of the capitalist system. Their education in the techniques of social manipulation failed completely to question the nature of the system and hence was inadequate. They were able to develop their own critique because their training and the roles that were planned for them clearly exposed the contradictions of their position.

Referring to the British CND movement Parkin (1968) suggests that occupational factors and educational background have had a considerable influence on the membership of the campaign. The CND was drawn mainly from the ranks of the educated middle classes with a considerable emphasis on creative pursuits such as journalism and academia. Parkin posits a relationship between values and occupations held by members arguing that the goals of the CND are compatible with the humanistic

values of their professions. Choices made by radicals not to work in situations which directly challenge their values is important in explaining the emphasis on non-business occupations among CND activists. Woodcock (1975) in a postscript to his study of anarchism provides supporting evidence for the claim that middle class radicalism was on the increase. In a 1962 survey of the readership of the British anarchist journal Freedom, 85% came from what he calls "white collar" occupations while only 15% came from the traditional readership of workers and peasants. The largest group was students and teachers. He comments that contemporary neo-anarchism "... has become, like so many modern protest movements, a trend of the young and especially of the middle class young" (Woodcock, 1975:462).

Rootes (1980) offers an interpretation of student radicalism incorporated within a conception of the legitimation problems in advanced capitalism arguing that the students in the 1960s had a strong moral streak to their politics directly challenging the instrumentalist ideology of establishment politics. Students' relative freedom from economic and family constraints give them a unique position "... to give full rein to the intellectuals' characteristic preoccupations with questions of value" (Rootes, 1980:478). He quotes evidence from studies in developmental psychology that student activists have developed much more moral reasoning than non-protesting students. Contact with alternative moral values was encouraged in some colleges, hence increasing those numbers of students who question the standards and conventions of the status quo. Rejection of the legitimating conventions and beliefs offers the young student a choice between withdrawal and protest.

Protest is however the most potent because it moves beyond mere disaffiliation both in presenting repeated explicit challenges to the contradictions of the established order and because it in part provisionally constitutes the establishment of an alternative social order founded on some closer approximation to the realisation of fundamental values.

(Rootes, 1980:485)

The New Left and the student radicals challenged the 'normal' conceptions of politics. Normal conceptions of politics are, according to Rootes, basically reductive to economic self interest in 'liberal' terms or

class economic interests in vulgar Marxist interpretations. This leads to a treatment of other motivations as speciousness and irrationality. But,

In the face of a political order founded on civil and familial-vocational privatism, a politics which is at once committed to the repolitisation of public and private life and orientated toward the articulation of moral protest and principled political action is not, on the surface "normal."

(ibid., p. 487)

#### 4.7 CONCLUSION

In many ways the New Left was a rediscovery and reinterpretation of radical traditions lost in the West in the period from the rise of fascism in the 1930s until the late 1950s. It was at best a nebulous phenomenon influenced by earlier anarchist and Marxist ideas. Avrich (1971) draws comparisons between the revolutionary ideas of Michael Bakunin and modern thinkers including Marcuse, Fanon and Debray. All of these to some extent advocate revolution by elements other than the industrial working classes, the favoured revolutionary vanguards for most Leninist and Trotskyist groups. The New Left advocated drastic changes in personal, sexual and cultural behaviour as an integral part of a revolutionary practice. The critique of everyday life was important, emphasising the politics of all aspects of living, not just the economic aspects.

The values expressed in this movement have undoubtedly worked their way into the political discourse of the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>3</sup> Rootes suggests that one of the obvious manifestations of the influence of the New Left on the consciousness of the new working class is the plethora of Marxist approaches that have emerged within academic disciplines recently, changing subtly the language and structure of advanced education enabling new generations to think politically much more than previous generations of students.

One of the more directly visible legacies is the countercultural back to the land movement, the alternative technologists and of course the more radical elements within the environmental movement. In the U.S. the ecology movement grew out of the New Left in the late 1960s.

In Europe the connections are not as clear but the influence of the New Left is considerable. The links between the New Left and environmentalism are often tenuous but the energy and critical spirit of the New Left undoubtedly influenced the explosion of environmental concern which occurred in the late 1960s and 1970s. The next chapter deals with the environmental movement.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

<sup>1</sup>"Project" in this sense means an attempt by a group to understand and change their situation politically.

<sup>2</sup>Marx (1974) summarises a number of cases of provocateur activity leading to violent action in New Left groups. On occasions the F.B.I. and other 'police' groups provided weapons to New Left activists. Cobler (1978) summarises the situation in Germany where terrorist activity has provided the excuse for a police state (see also publications by the German Student Christian Movement's Campaign against the Model West Germany). Similar concerns have been raised in Britain (Thompson, 1980). See also the journal State Research Bulletin.

<sup>3</sup>See in a British context Rowbotham's influential essay "Beyond the Fragments" (Rowbotham, et al., 1979).

## CHAPTER 5

## THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Resistance to nuclear fast-breeder reactors, to dangerous industrial developments, to impersonal environmental planning is not merely a matter of improving expertise and the scientific basis of decision-making. It is a matter of claiming the right for all to control what is produced and what is planned.

Francis Sandbach (1980:223)

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Concern with the environment, resource and pollution issues is not new. There was a major conservation movement in the U.S. in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, concerned with developing national parks, preserving soil and managing water resources (Thorpe, 1961). In Britain and Europe there were concerns with health issues resulting from rapid industrialisation and urbanisation. Radical writers like William Morris and Peter Kropotkin added environmental issues to radical politics. The second wave of concern coincided with the depression years in North America, the ravages of the dust bowl and the problems of mono-culture on the prairies showed the need for conservation practices and soil and water management. After World War II environmentalism in the U.S. was principally concerned with wilderness issues and local amenity protection campaigns (Hays, 1981). The start of the third wave of concern with the environment can be tentatively dated to the publication of Rachael Carson's famous book, Silent Spring, on the hazards of chemical pesticides in the early 1960s. This work alerted many to the hidden dangers of modern chemicals, a theme which remains prominent in environmental concerns to the present (Brown, 1981).

In the late 1960s environmentalism came to life with new energy drawn from a radicalised youth, the emerging discipline of ecology,

a critique of mechanistic science, concerns about resource shortages and pollution (Allaby, 1971). Public concern peaked in the early 1970s (Sandbach, 1980) and produced a plethora of legislative and administrative changes. Concern declined in the mid-1970s but has remained significant. The environmental movement, like the New Left from which its radical sectors drew their inspiration, remains eclectic ranging all the way from Greenpeace activists who sail under harpoon guns, to congressional lobbyists armed with imposing briefs. This chapter first considers a number of typologies of the movement and then explores more political and structural approaches to environmentalism. It concludes with a review of some pertinent literature relating to the ANM.

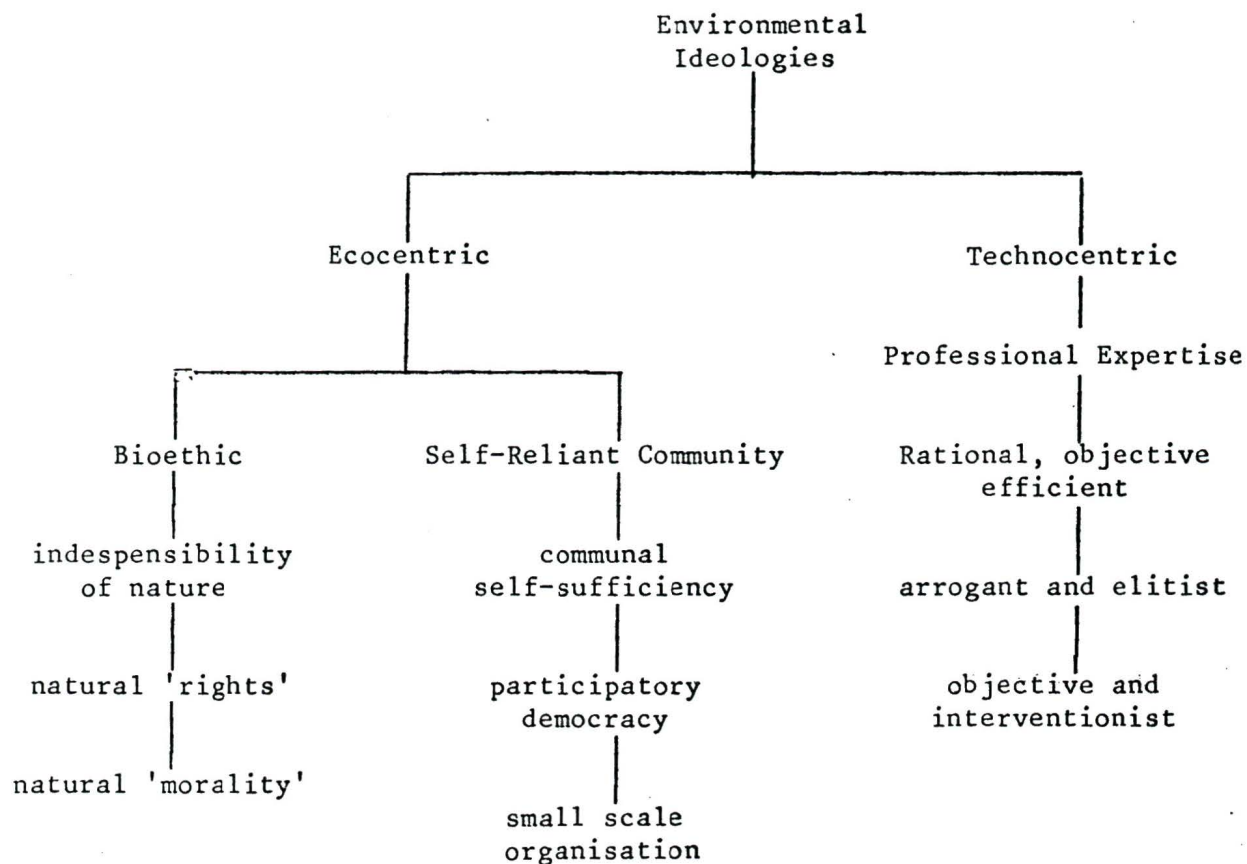
## 5.2 TYOLOGIES OF ENVIRONMENTALISM

A number of writers have attempted to classify the environmental movement. Despite a variety of approaches a common theme of reformists and radicals emerges from this literature.

O'Riordan (1976, 1977) suggests a twofold division of environmentalism, based on underlying ideology, into ecocentric and technocentric modes (See Figure 5.1). The "ecocentric" he classifies as that which is based on the U.S. nineteenth century transcendentalist philosophy with an emphasis on nature as the fundamental medium through which people understand their personalities. Contact with open spaces and "the wilderness experience" are regarded as essential for the achievement of human potential. The ecocentric mode is further divided into "bio-ethic" and "self-reliant community." The bio-ethic philosophy emphasises concepts such as the "indispensibility of nature", "natural rights" and a natural "morality", and in connection with wilderness preservation is often seen in the "all or nothing" values of the strong U.S. wilderness protection lobby. The "self-reliant community" strain of thought has its origins deep in western thought but the utopian ideas of the nineteenth century have influenced much of modern environmentalism. The anarchist geographer Peter Kropotkin gives an eloquent account of these ideas in Fields, Factories and Workshops (Ward, ed., 1974). Modern writers including Schumacher, Illich, Roszak, Goldsmith and Lovins have revitalised many of these ideas and provided many

FIGURE 5.1

## ENVIRONMENTAL IDEOLOGIES (After O'Riordan)



SOURCE: O'Riordan, 1977:4

environmentalists with inspiration. Many adherents to these ideas have "dropped out" and attempted to develop their own communities on utopian lines (Rivers, 1975; Jerome, 1974).

The 'technocentrist' mode of environmentalism, common in the early environmentalist movement in the U.S. at the turn of the century, O'Riordan sees as being associated with professional and managerial elitism, scientific rationality, and optimism with a strong utilitarian approach at its core. Proponents usually support economic growth and "progress" and are often seen as arrogant, elitist and interventionist. Because its philosophy is built around 'problems of management' rather than the principles of ecology it fits within the dominant modes of reasoning acceptable to large business concerns and high technology development. This approach deals with issues in terms of multiple use and cost benefit trade offs rather than a more fundamentalist ecocentric approach which is often unwilling to sacrifice "wilderness" or "nature" for any reason. The technocentrist approach has bred its own type of environmentalist--the professional specialist--and has led to the establishment of bureaucracies and regulatory agencies consistent with its "liberal" political outlook.

Bill Devall (1979, 1980) follows a somewhat similar classification dividing environmentalism into "deep ecology" and "reformist environmentalism."<sup>1</sup> The reformist stream is seen as,

... attempting to control some of the worst of the air and water pollution and inefficient land use practices in industrial nations and to save a few of the remaining pieces of wildlands as "designated wilderness areas."

(Devall, 1980:299)

The deep ecology stream of thought supports these objectives but goes much further, it is "revolutionary, seeking a new metaphysics, epistemology, cosmology and environmental ethics of person planet." (ibid). Deep ecology is distinguished from reformist environmentalism by its questioning of the "dominant social paradigm" defined as "the mental image of social reality that guides expectations in a society" (1980:300). This paradigm is encapsulated by the belief in economic growth, technological solutions to societal problems, the development of techniques for the control of natural processes, "newness" as a value in itself, and the satisfaction of infinite personal wants by a

commodity culture. Devall summarises his concepts of reformist environmentalism by listing the kinds of issues it concerns itself with: the establishment of parks, safety and environmental health issues, landuse and city beautiful movements, conservation and multiple resource uses, back to the land movements, population concerns, humane animal liberation and finally the limits to growth debate. Deep ecology in the U.S. goes much further than this influenced by its philosophical ideas. These are drawn from eastern traditions, native Indian culture, the minority traditions of western philosophy, in particular Spinoza, the scientific discipline of ecology with its subversive perspectives and finally from the portrayal of nature in art. The central theme is a search for unity rather than the philosophical dualisms of western thought. Deep ecology is premised on a gestalt of man in nature and seeks a transformation of values and social organisation. Consequently it questions the methodology of cost-benefit analysis and the conceptual systems based on price and ideas of economic man.

Cotgrove (1976) makes a distinction between the traditional amenity protection societies and conservation groups which are long established features of the British establishment and the new more radical and ideologically motivated environmental activists. Only the latter group are considered as constituting a social movement.<sup>2</sup> He focuses on this group who challenge the primacy of economic goals, the central driving force in Industrial society.

Sandbach (1980) suggests another categorisation similar to the others. His ecological or scientific brand of environmentalism,

... sees the importance of sustaining a viable physical and biological environment as the first priority, and any technological or economic changes are to be determined by this principle. It attempts to influence policy by presenting a valid, scientifically argued case based upon ecology and systems analysis.

(Sandbach, 1980:22)

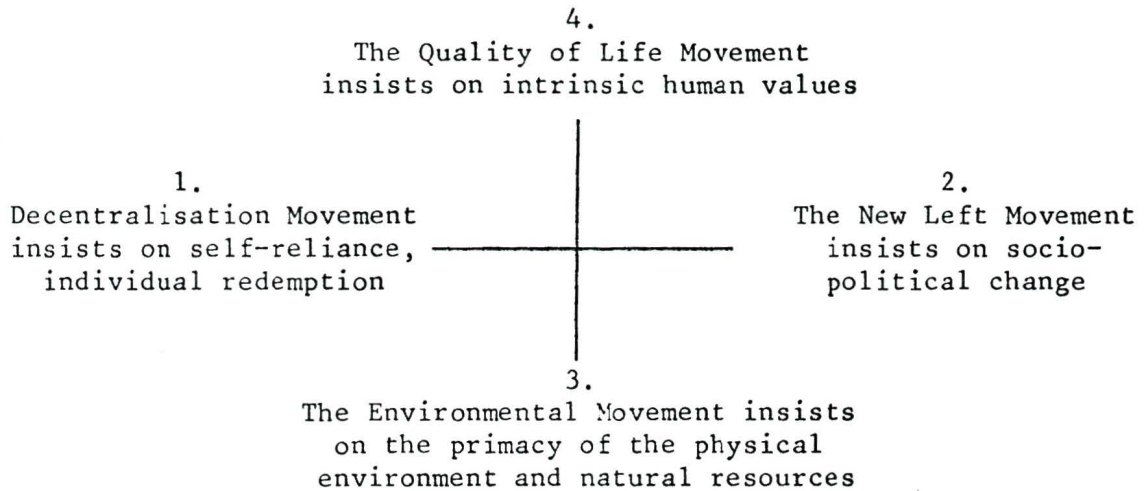
In contrast, anti-establishment environmentalism "... is less concerned with environmental systems, but more whether or not science and technology are compatible with humanistic principles." (ibid.). This less widespread form of environmentalism is more influenced by the New Left anarchism and the counter culture. Strains of the 1960s anti-science movement also appear within this categorisation.

Skolimowsky (1976, 1977) attempts another classification of the ecology movement (See Figure 5.2). First he divides the movement between the decentralisation movement which insists on simplicity, self-reliance and individual redemption and the New Left Movement which is more concerned with the political questions of how to change the "parasitic" socio-economic system. He adds a second division between the Quality of Life Movement which insists on intrinsic human values and the primacy of physical environment and natural resources. He comments on the eclectic nature of the movement and warns of the danger of entrenched ideological positions stifling activity within the movement.

The environmental movement is not necessarily on the left of the political spectrum despite the presence of New Left elements within it. Sandbach's scientific brand of environmentalism includes many political conservatives like the Ehrlichs and the editors of the Ecologist (1972). The "Blueprint for Survival" presents an analysis based on "natural laws" and physical factors with an emphasis on traditional political authority. In the early 1970s eclectic and grossly simplistic environmental studies produced literature that emphasised holistic approaches but often saw the problem in terms of a need to give far greater authority to ecologists. Lowe and Warboys (1978) point out that this approach to ecology ignores the importance of economic organisation and class relations in the societies in question. The alternative technology movement, an important part of the environmental debate is not always on the left either, many writers merely advocating a change in technology rather than a radical change in society (Bookchin, 1980; Martin, 1978). The terms appropriate technology and radical technology are sometimes used in the advocacy of a technology designed to minimise the possible social misuse of technology, to be non-polluting and use as much as possible renewable materials.

O'Riordan (1977:11) considers the political orientations of environmentalism by adding a conservative/liberal classification to his technocentrist/ecocentrist split resulting in a four fold split (See Figure 5.3). Conservative technocentrists in this conception are optimistic about economic growth and confident that technological solutions can be found to societal problems. This group includes the

FIGURE 5.2

SKOLOMOWSKI'S CLASSIFICATION OF  
THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

SOURCE: Skolomowski, 1977:320

FIGURE 5.3

CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL ENVIRONMENTALISM  
(After O'Riordan)

	Technocentrist	Ecocentrist
Conservative	The morality of growth technological optimists managerial optimists political optimists	The morality of limits lifeboat ethics the no-growth school the ecological planners amenity protectionists
Liberal	The cautious reformers social democrats the 'materials balance' economic school spaceship earth ideologues	Radical ecological activists environmental educators research arms of environmentalist lobbies environmental citizens

SOURCE: O'Riordan, 1977:11

corporate establishment and their scientific advisors. Conservative ecocentrists include amenity protectionists, 'no-growthers' and people supporting "lifeboat ethics" and an odd collection of those who for selfish or altruistic reasons seek to protect environments. Liberals in the technocentrist classification divide between the social-democrats who advocate the use of the price mechanism and such devices as depletion taxes to allocate "environmental resources." The radical ecocentric group approximates Devall's ideas of deep ecology. O'Riordan (1977:12) summarises liberal ecocentrists thus:

They seek fundamental changes in values, attitudes and behaviour of individuals and social institutions through example and enlightenment.

Personal action rather than structural change is seen as the key concern. This typology emphasises the eclectic nature of environmentalism and shows how a multitude of political perspectives are incorporated under the name of an environmental movement. It is to the politics of environmentalism we now turn.

### 5.3 ENVIRONMENTALISM AND POLITICS

Support for the new environmental movement came from a variety of sources and while the focus is often on the clash of ideologies there is an important economic dimension underlying the debate.

An often unspoken reality of environmental politics, in contrast, is a serious pragmatic struggle over property rights, which has tangible implications both for people and organisations and the structure of American Society. The fundamental issue of who shall receive the benefits and who shall suffer the costs, of America's use of its biophysical environment; the proximate issue is who shall control the processes by which that outcome will be decided.

(Andrews, 1980:221)

Andrews goes on to suggest, however, that environmental developments have not occurred entirely as a victory for elites or the leisure class as Tucker (1977) maintains, but rather that environmentalism has been a coalition crossing class boundaries. The U.S. environmental activist of the 1970s was young, affluent and educated, drawn from the large number of Americans in their late teens and twenties, impressionable and socially concerned, frustrated by the limited changes that the

civil rights and anti-Vietnam war movements caused, and easily mobilizable for the environmental cause. Or as Nelkin and Pollak (1981:107) put it

Socialised to question authority, they found themselves dependent on it. Unwilling to give up their values, some turned to alternative cultural styles, others to radicalism and criticism of political and economic trends. The activism of this period (the 1960s) was short lived but the pervasive social influence of this youth culture laid the ideological grounds for the ecology movement of the 1970s with its concern about authority and its populist tinge.

While this element forms an ideological vanguard it is far from the whole story. The radical element is not without its critics who charge that its tactics are "unruly" and its demands "unreasonable" (Lowenthal, 1970). On the other side are the Marxist critiques of the reformist tendencies of the environmental movement. Neuhaus (1971) shows how many of the movement's ideas were adopted by the corporate establishment, coopting and hence de-radicalising the movement. Castells (1978) and Enzensberger (1974) warn of the dangers that the environmental movement will be totally coopted and hence ineffective at tackling the sources of the problem--the large corporations and their power structure.

Buttell and Larson (1980) use a broadly structuralist approach to consider the political position of environmentalism arguing that

... the form that environmentalism takes--that is the organisational, social basis, ideology, and tactics of the environmental movement in relation to state structure--is extremely important and will substantially shape the impact of environmental reform on different sectors of society as a whole.

(Buttell and Larson, 1980:323)

Buttell and Larson's analysis divides environmentalism into three components:

- (i) The public component reflecting public preferences for clean water, healthy harmonious living, etc.
- (ii) Organised and voluntary environmentalism, defined in terms of the tactics, ideology and organisation of voluntary groups.
- (iii) Institutionally organised environmentalism, consisting of government agencies, research groups, etc.

They suggest that the ideology of contemporary environmentalism closely corresponds to the ideological predilections of the non-corporate, middle

classes, the major support base of organised environmentalism. The resultant predominantly liberal ideology leads to a strategy prompting the state to regulate private decision making more closely. Differing political circumstances lead to different emphases between the three components of environmentalism. They present a series of scenarios for the future development of environmentalism depending on the future alliances between the middle class and other sectors of the political spectrum. Class alliances are possible in a number of combinations with factions within the state structure. One possibility is an alliance between the middle classes and the radical factions of the working class connected by appropriate technology, workplace and social production concerns. (See Elliot, 1977; Cooley, 1980; Roberts, 1979).

Mitchell (1980) argues that the environmentalist movement is going in this direction with increasing concern devoted to alternative technologies and a sizeable left wing political element emerging. He goes on to argue that the ANM as part of the environmentalist movement has failed to have a really major impact in the U.S. Its success at mounting demonstrations is not matched by its ability to reach directly the union movement or the public at large and consequently it has been reform orientated rather than more radical in bringing about fundamental changes.

The political discourse within the ANM reflects these issues and the relationship of technology and politics. This thesis attempts to show how the ANM is a focal point for the debate between the political left and the environmental movement (see Elliot, 1978). Despite the problems attempts are being made to link the environmental movement both theoretically and practically with other radical groups. In France André Gorz has been attempting to inject ecological themes into left wing politics (Gorz, 1980). Ideas concerning self-management and workers control have surfaced in a number of places and in Australia the labour movement has instituted "Green Bans" on ecologically destructive projects (Roberts, 1979).

The actions taken by the environmentalist movement vary widely, from local amenity groups conducting local information campaigns to University research groups and from congressional lobbyists to Greenpeace activists sailing zodiacs under the harpoon guns of Russian whalers.

In the heyday of the late 1960s and early 1970s massive festivals like "Earth Day" appealed to vast numbers of people from many backgrounds. Neuhaus (1971) suggests that this populism really led to the seduction of radicalism in that suitable conciliatory moves were made by the establishment suggesting a commonality of interest which defused the possibilities of the ecological critique to challenge the status quo in a fundamental way.

In the U.S. much of the environmental action has been geared to the traditional political channels of the lobbyist and the large scale use of the court system. The package of legislation and regulations passed in the late 1960s provided environmentalists with numerous opportunities to challenge both government agencies and companies. These achievements remain, in Devall's conception, merely reformist. Many of the regulatory agencies merely tighten controls on activities without providing any forum or possibility of fundamentally questioning the rationale behind the activity (See Hooker and van Hulst, 1977). This factor has led to a politisation of many environmental questions and is important in understanding the nuclear issue (Leiss, ed., 1979).

Many environmental disputes concerned site specific issues with local groups fighting to prevent the location of a large facility in their area. In the U.K. the most famous controversy was the siting of the proposed third London airport (Pepper, 1980), but the endless wrangles over Motorway routes attracted a lot of political attention too (Tyme, 1978). Other disputes and actions focused on the attempt to stop whaling and ban the use of non-returnable bottles, both of which gained the English branch of Friends of the Earth considerable exposure. The notorious population "bomb" issue has faded as an issue and so has the idea of lifeboat ethics where the third world is allowed to sink in its own misery while the affluent western world continues on its merry course. Both of these streams of thought, not surprisingly, brought criticism from left wing commentators (Enzensberger, 1974) who saw this as a blatant form of Western imperialism masquerading as "science." The late 1970s witnessed the decline in environmental concerns and actions but a strong residue remains (Sandbach, 1980) rather as Downs (1972) predicted.

In Europe "green parties" have emerged somewhat tentatively to

follow electoral routes to environmental change. In Germany the Green Party gained 3.2% of the national vote in the European Parliamentary elections in 1979. The rise of the green party in Germany is related to the increase in the number of citizen initiatives in the 1970s and the success of alternative list candidates in many local elections. These populist political movements are in places providing a direct political challenge to the major political parties (Lens, 1982). In national elections the German and French green parties find themselves squeezed between the major political blocks, many sympathetic voters voting for the Socialists or the SPD at the last moment. Recently, the ecology movement and the green parties have added their voices to the revived campaigns against nuclear weapons in Europe.

While the political impacts of the environmental movement were considerable in the late 1960s and early 1970s in terms of getting legislation passed (Sandbach, 1980), real structural changes have so far not accrued to a significant extent in directions favoured by environmentalists. Despite this, the ecology movement is far from finished and it remains a potent source of ideas. Cotgrove and Duff (1980) point to its important role on the margins of established politics in the current climate of increasing loss of legitimacy within the political system.

Conflicts of power and interest deriving from the ownership and control of production persist. But such conflicts tend to be focused primarily around economic values. What the new politics brings to the surface and feeds into the political system are demands stemming from non-economic values.

(Cotgrove and Duff, 1980:344)

They argue that it is on the level of political legitimacy that the environmental movement presents its greatest challenge. The different paradigm/world view/value system underlying the environmental critique gives it considerable intellectual power to challenge the dominant ideology within industrial capitalism.

We now turn to review some of the key environmental writers within the environmental movement who have been influential in developing the critique underlying the anti-nuclear case.

#### 5.4 ENVIRONMENTALIST CRITIQUES

The most influential writers in the environmental debate have criticised the gross abuse of technology and oppose the misuse of technology, not technology per se.

One of the best known of the appropriate technologists is Fritz Schumacher whose book Small is Beautiful became a best seller. In this work and others, Schumacher makes an eloquent case against the vast scale of modern production processes and the lack of control over it by those directly involved. The British based Intermediate Technology Development Group has applied his ideas in a number of development projects in the Third World (See McRobie, 1981). Prominent themes in his work include the using of locally available labour, materials and skills, ecologically benign techniques, and reducing external dependence from western multinational technology. Implicit in this is a critique of western economics with its emphasis on internal economies of scale which often ignore numerous social impacts in its rationalisations. He criticises nuclear power for its failure to consider adequately the health and environmental damage inherent in the technology and the short run cost calculus on which it is based (Schumacher, 1973, 1979).

Articulate and outspoken is Barry Commoner author of The Closing Circle (1972) and The Poverty of Power (1976). Linking environmental, energy and economic crises together he provides a damning critique of industrial societies and the reasoning behind the pro-nuclear lobby. He criticises the inadequacies of the RSS (see chapter 2), the overriding faith in untried technology, the cost increases of nuclear power, the toxicity of the radioactive elements and the limitations of civil liberties implied by the plutonium economy. He analyses the short-sightedness of the American energy policy process and its failure to consider long term trends.

Many of the environmentalist orientated writers in the "Scientific" streams of environmentalist thought, advocate some updated form of J.S. Mills' stationary state economy. Herman Daly edited a crucial set of essays on this theme which he has recently updated (Daly, 1980). These critiques involve a questioning of the economics of growth and attempt to construct a society based on matching ends and means

and minimising rather than maximising the resource flows through the economy with stocks of wealth being of prime importance rather than the flow through the economy. Ethics and values enter here as fundamental factors rather than mere appendages to the cash/cost calculus of modern capitalism.

The most ardent and probably most brilliant advocate of a steady state energy economy is the Friends of the Earth's Amory Lovins who argues that nuclear power, oil sands and large scale coal development plans in the conventional wisdom of energy planners should be abandoned (Lovins, 1977). This "hard path" is environmentally destructive and economically infeasible. Instead Lovins advocates a "soft path" based on conservation and the use of renewable energy technologies. The introduction to his book Soft Energy Paths focuses around five basic questions drawn from Daly's writings. In contrast to the conventional view that energy demand is fixed and increasing and that large centralised capital intensive technologies are required to meet this demand, Lovins starts his analysis by asking the fundamental questions: who is going to require energy, how much energy, what kind of energy, for what purpose and for how long? Lovins concludes that conservation and small scale renewable and simple technologies are the answer to "the energy problem" and he details in depth the failure of nuclear power and other "high" technologies to perform efficiently. He argues that renewable energy strategies are the only affordable policies and links them to third world development issues and the environmental consequences of coal and nuclear power developments. His case has been further developed to include the problems of nuclear weapons proliferation (Lovins and Lovins, 1980). The analysis of energy consumption is based on end uses of energy rather than treating demand in aggregate. From there he then works backwards to find the most efficient source of energy for the purpose. His advocacy of soft energy paths has influenced many anti-nuclear activists and the tenacity with which he argues his case provides potent intellectual weapons for use against conventional energy planning ideas (see Nash, ed., 1979).

In Canada, the idea of a conserver society as opposed to a consumer society has been developed emphasising wise use of resources, conservation, decentralised decision-making, recycling materials, organic agriculture

and renewable energy supplies. This project has provided conceptual tools for analysing alternative futures with environmental consequences given consideration (Valakaskis, et al., 1979; Solomon, 1978; Science Council of Canada, 1977; Crow, et al., 1978).

Many of these ideas draw on differing political traditions and often lack a serious analysis of how to get to the desired future state from the current mess. Political solutions range from the anarchist vision of ecologists like Bookchin (1980) to much more authoritarian solutions (Ophuls, 1977) while Knelman (1979) offers a bizarre mixture of both. The critique of all of these formulations is that they often fail to see the widespread existence of social injustice and discrimination. The danger remains that the ideology of the common interest would be used again to ensure that real distributions of wealth and power do not occur in the new society (Enzensberger, 1974).

#### 5.5 ENVIRONMENTALISM AND NEW AGE CONSCIOUSNESS

(Or, "On Brown Rice and Sandals")

Morrison (1980) traces the development of environmentalist thought through three stages. Initial enthusiasm with a strong demand for increased public participation was the first stage in the late 1960s. The second stage he identifies as the tempering of this enthusiasm by a realisation of the limits of political action. The third stage is currently happening with energies being diverted into soft technology and solar energy projects as the "softening" stage is reached. Despite the overall decline in support enthusiasm has been maintained. In this conception small, appropriate, humane technology ideas are blended with ideas drawn from elsewhere in the environmental movement, from the counter-culture, feminism, poor peoples movements and the disillusionment with third world development. This softening of the movement is related to the emerging "New Age Movement" in the U.S. in particular.

The extent of the concerns of this movement is revealed in the series of "whole earth catalogues" produced in the 1970s listing information sources on everything from alternative child birth to solar panels.<sup>3</sup> Marilyn Ferguson's (1980) The Aquarian Conspiracy outlines the intellectual background to this movement focusing on the spiritual and psychological elements of an emerging post-material

value system.<sup>4</sup> Satin's rather incoherent polemic New Age Politics catches the mood "... a new way of seeing and a new politics is arising already in bits and pieces, here and there, across the continent" (1978:5). He lists a vast divergence of groups, including spiritual, environmental feminist, simple living, appropriate technology, humanistic-transformational educational movements and non-violent action groups which are coming together to provide a new consciousness. Satin's analysis starts with the conception of current culture as a six-sided prison consisting of: patriarchal attitudes, egocentricity, scientific single vision, the bureaucratic mentality, nationalism and the big city outlook. The aim of new age politics is to transcend this cultural complex and build a new society which will be holistic, humane and ecological. Inadequate though the analysis is, it does provide a glimpse at the intellectual backdrop against which many middle-class activists fight nuclear power. It is in many ways a utopian vision and the environmental movement includes powerful utopian elements. Morris and Hess (1976) develop a utopian vision of a possible urban future by extrapolating from their neighbourhood community development experiments in the 1960s. Peter Chapman's (1975) parable of the Island of Erg which introduces his penetrating critique of British energy policy is based on an idea of an energy currency. Aldous Huxley's (1976) earlier Island contains many ideas which emerged in the environmental movement. The best known environmental utopia is Callenbach's Ecotopia (1975) with its scenario of the transition of a few of the states in the U.S. into a decentralised ecological and feminist controlled society. This is contrasted with a hyper-technological future for the rest of the U.S.

There is utopia in the environmental movement.<sup>5</sup> There are visions of roof gardens, bicycles and non-polluting public transport, sewage recycling schemes and de-centralised popular politics under the shadow of benign solar panels and humming windmills. All this in sharp contrast to apocalyptic visions of mushroom clouds and irradiated people, to planetary "heat death" and carbon monoxide poisoning from an ever growing fleet of automobiles stuck in hopelessly congested and polluted urban sprawls, and to cancer-ridden hypertense people feeding on tranquilisers and fastfood. These utopian visions are a key

element in understanding the environmental movement and explaining the strength of the enthusiasm in the ANM. The realisation that there are alternatives and the desire to work towards building an alternative society inspires the value orientated activists of the "New Age."

## 5.6 CONCLUSIONS

While attempts to construct typologies of the constituent parts of the environmental movement are less than completely successful they do indicate the diversity entailed. O'Riordan comes closest to a workable typology but fails to deal adequately with the debate between the factions in the radical ecocentric sector. Sklimowsky does emphasise the differences between self-reliance and New Left streams which this thesis will follow up in later chapters. Devall's ideas only emphasise a single philosophical point, albeit an important one in an understanding of the New Age ideas. Sandbach's division into establishment and anti-establishment streams emphasises the political dimension but a division like Cotgrove's between social movement and conservative established groups must be kept in mind as scientific environmentalists often have anti-establishment ideas.

Of key significance in the environmental movement is the emergence of a serious intellectual critique of the assumptions underlying the political process in liberal democracies. The New Left provided a revival of radical politics in these countries and the ecologists have developed some of its ideas further and introduced new elements. This is not a politics of administration, "... the clash between groups and individuals pursuing their interests within the rules of a particular institutional system,..." (Pizzorno, 1971:10) but rather is the "... politics of total commitment as the effort to transform society...." (ibid.). While the lines of demarcation are rarely clear, this thesis will attempt to outline the clash of ideological positions within the ANM which can be seen as a focal point of the debate between the different ideas which have emerged on the margins of late capitalist politics.

The environmentalist movement of the late 1960s and 1970s was probably even more eclectic than the New Left and far from agreed on its political perspectives or approaches. The debate over nuclear

power draws on both environmentalist and New Left themes and it is not unreasonable to argue that the ANM is a key area of political action within which both streams met and occasionally fused.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

<sup>1</sup>The term "Deep Ecology" was earlier used by Arne Naess (1973) to describe the philosophical ecologists.

<sup>2</sup>Cotgrove uses Bank's (1972) definition of a social movement as "Those forms of collective behaviour which are relatively unstructured self-conscious attempts to introduce innovations into a social system" (Banks, 1972:17).

<sup>3</sup>Whole Earth Catalogue (1971), Whole Earth Epilogue (1975) and The Last Whole Earth Catalogue (1980), published by Penguin.

<sup>4</sup>See also Thompson (1973), Spangler (1976), and Roszak (1978).

<sup>5</sup>See the special edition of Built Environment 5 (3) (1980) for a British perspective on alternative thinkers and "doers."

## CHAPTER 6

## THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-NUCLEAR PROTEST MOVEMENT

The importance of the anti-nuclear movement lies less in its specific impact on public policy than in its ability to reveal that alternative evolutions may exist, to take such movements seriously is simply to maintain confidence in the human capacity to influence history and prevent disasters that often appear to be the immutable consequence of Iron laws.

Dorothy Nelkin and Michael Pollak (1981:7)

### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The 1970s was a watershed for the nuclear industry; from being the great hope of a technological future it became the pariah of a failed vision. Instrumental in this change of fortune was a diverse mixture of people who struggled to de-mythologise the atomic utopia. Starting with scattered groups of concerned citizens providing local opposition to nuclear projects, and a handful of scientists, determined to expose the malpractices and hidden dangers behind the bland official assurances, the opponents steadily swelled in numbers. By the late 1970s the nuclear industry was under attack in many parts of the world and cancellations outnumbered the orders for new nuclear plants by a sizeable margin. This chapter examines the sources and the evolution of this social movement which made the slogan "No Nukes" and the "smiling sun" badge international symbols. There have been many international contacts between groups, especially in Europe but a regional summary is included here as the most convenient approach. The movements have learned much from each other, and have studied each others' methods of operation. For this reason this review is important in understanding the Irish case study, and in turn the case study sheds light on aspects of the larger movement.

A crucial division within the ANM must be noted. First, there

are the local opposition groups, focusing on site specific issues. Second, there are non-site specific opponents, both "established" conservation groups and scientific research groups, and the more radical groups concerned with direct protest actions and political opposition. In addition to the local/non-local split there are numerous political divisions on tactical and strategic issues.

The first section of this chapter deals with national opposition movements, the second with the motivations of the opponents while the third part deals with the role of scientific expertise in the debate. This is followed by a discussion of the internal debates within the movement, a summary of material on the social base of opposition is included and the chapter concludes with a section on the debates over organisational questions in the movement.

## 6.2 THE HISTORY OF THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

It was only with considerable reluctance that Albert Einstein agreed to sign the letter drafted by other physicists to President Roosevelt in August 1939 warning of the dangers if the Axis powers developed a nuclear weapon. This letter indirectly started the later Manhattan project to build the bomb. Opposition to the use of the bomb within the physics community was forcefully expressed prior to the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Concerned physicists later established the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and the Pugwash project. In the late 1950s the dangers of fallout and fear of nuclear war combined in large public protests against weapons testing. The CND in Britain in the late 1950s and early 1960s was very active and world wide concern led to the partial test ban treaty signed by the U.S.S.R., the U.S. and the U.K. in 1963. At this time there was little opposition to the use of "peaceful" nuclear energy, the dangers of proliferation and radiological hazards not being widely known. Local opposition to a number of power plants did occur in the late 1950s and early 1960s in the U.S.

### 6.2.1 The ANM in the U.S.

In the late 1950s a number of unions objected to the building of the Enrico Fermi 1 reactor near Detroit. They forced the AEC to hold

a series of public hearings on various aspects of the plant from 1957 on, but failed to hinder seriously the construction of the plant which was already under way. A series of court interventions by the objectors who were concerned about safety aspects of the FBR was finally defeated by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling permitting the plant to be operated (Fuller, 1975). In the early 1960s objections were also raised to proposed reactors in California at Bodega Bay and Malibu and at Ravenswood in New York where the regulatory arm of the AEC was challenged. The awareness of the dangers of radiation already raised by the controversies over fallout probably influenced these objectors. Mazur (1975) also argues that larger issues on the national scene at the time are important in explaining the emergence of opposition. A number of liberal scientists were concerned about radiation at the time and were available to support objectors. This early phase of opposition faded in the mid-1960s but the ANM developed in the late 1960s spurred on by the rise in environmental concerns. Low level radiation and thermal pollution were the major concerns at that time.

In the U.S. in the late 1960s and early 1970s opposition arose based on local activities and site specific controversies. Interventions by objectors at the AEC licensing hearings became frequent and at times acrimonious as citizens and a few citizen advocate scientists attempted to halt the licensing of plants across the country on a number of grounds (Ebbin and Kasper, 1974). The courts were often used by intervenors, frustrated by the collusion between the AEC, the utilities and the construction companies. Liberalised rules of standing allowed the public to raise matters of public interest in which they did not have a direct economic stake. The licensing hearing format was organised so that the companies and the AEC had agreed on all major points of design and operation before the hearings were held. The AEC controlled the agenda and made decisions as to who could give evidence as an expert in addition to providing the hearing with the inspectors (Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974). Until 1971 environmental concerns regarding nuclear power plants were ignored by the AEC. In the famous "Calvert Cliffs" court decision the AEC was required to deal with this aspect of reactor development.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter the radiological and subsequently the safety aspects of reactors became the main points of

contention (Nelkin and Fallows, 1978). Under pressure the AEC tightened its standards on low level radiation exposure reducing concern on this topic somewhat.

Following endless acrimonious discussions at licensing hearings over the safety of reactors and in particular the design criteria for the ECCS in LWRs, the AEC set up a special hearing to deal with this issue (Patterson, 1976). The ECCS hearings dragged on all through 1972 and into 1973 with many interventions by groups like the Union of Concerned Scientists supported by the coalition of national intervenors consisting of over 60 local groups from all over the U.S. This marked the beginning of the national movement against nuclear power in the U.S. With the legal clout following the Calvert Cliffs decision and the huge quantities of technical testimony to support their contentions the ANM came of age and drew national attention to the failures of AEC policy (Bupp and Derian, 1978). The Freedom of Information Act opened the AEC files to critical examination in a number of crucial areas including the suppressed drafts of the AEC update of the Brookhaven study (WASH 740 update) (Union of Concerned Scientists, 1977).

The political pressure on the AEC and the exposure of the collusion between the JCAE and the AEC (see Metzger, 1972) led to the splitting of the AEC into the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) and the NRC under the Energy reorganisation Act of 1974. This was supposed to end the conflict of interests within the AEC between the promotional and the regulatory functions. However, it has not satisfied many critics who argue that the personnel and the institutions have remained substantially unchanged despite the formal split. In addition there is a continuing high rate of interchange of personnel between the agencies and private industry (Bupp and Derian, 1978). Subsequently the ERDA was to be incorporated in the Carter administration's federal Department of Energy.

Bupp and Derian (1978) date the next stage of the ANM--as a national movement--from the November 1974 "Critical Mass" conference. Many organisations including Friends of the Earth, the Union of Concerned Scientists, the Committee for Nuclear Responsibility and the Coalition of National Intervenors attended this national conference organised by Ralph Nader's Citizen Action Group. Its objective was

... to provide a national focus on the risks and consequences of nuclear fission and expand the citizen base-- to move toward a nuclear moratorium.

(Bupp and Derian, 1978:135)

The "Critical Mass" organisation was formed in 1975 as a national anti-nuclear organisation and it produces literature and newsletters. Although at this stage the ANM exhibited the features which have marked its progress, a loose coalition of variously funded and supported groups with widespread but diverse support, it had not yet developed the radical direct-action approach to a great extent.

In the mid-1970s many activists made connections with the peace movement and in 1976 the first of a long series of citizen initiatives began by putting a series of resolutions to state referenda. These proposed various activities relating to the nuclear fuel cycle be banned, limited or subject to moratoria. These initiatives met with some success. Despite these tactics and the use of the court system wherever possible, at best the groups only succeeded in slowing down the building of nuclear facilities. The more active members of ecological and local groups considered the limits of institutional action had been reached. In 1976 the Clamshell Alliance was founded in New Hampshire to oppose the construction of the nuclear plant at Seabrook. In 1977 this group organised a large scale civil disobedience action at the reactor site. They occupied the site after conducting non-violence training sessions for all participants and the National Guard subsequently arrested 1414 protestors. En masse the protestors refused bail and nearly paralysed the New Hampshire legal system (Wasserman, 1979; Crown, 1979).

Since then debates within the movement on non-violent action and a growing political radicalisation has occurred with increasing numbers of young and often well-educated student protestors taking part (Sharaf, 1978). Incidents and accidents have continued to dog the nuclear industry culminating in the famous Three Mile Island accident in March 1979. Concern over the disposal of nuclear waste has been mounting, leading to a number of initiatives in the November 1980 state elections to ban the dumping of Radioactive Waste. The ANM continues to struggle on, challenging the industry at every opportunity. The nuclear industry is plagued by major economic problems and is likely

to continue in existence although at a scale well below that forecasted in the early 1970s (Lonnroth and Walker, 1979).

### 6.2.2 The Anti-Nuclear Movement in Europe

Opposition to nuclear power has spread to most European countries during the 1970s. In some cases this was predated by opposition to nuclear weapons in the 1950s and 1960s. The American LWR technology has spread to nearly all European countries and taken the controversy over its technical inadequacies with it.

In 1970 and 1971 parliamentary resolutions in favour of constructing 11 reactors were unanimously endorsed by the Swedish parliament (Nelkin and Pollak, 1977). Three years later, widespread debate in party study groups around the country occurred and caused the 1975 energy policy to emphasise a slow down in demand growth as the first priority (Bupp and Derian, 1978). The defeat of the Social Democrats in the 1977 election was in part due to the debate over the role of nuclear energy. The Centre party which came to power as part of a coalition divided on what to do about nuclear development. Intense lobbying and demonstrations led eventually to a referendum which has finally decided to limit the size of the Swedish nuclear programme. The conflicts over values and political perspectives emerged clearly in this controversy showing that the nuclear debate is about the nature of desired future societies rather than just about single technology. It also pointed to the role of public participation processes which attempt to legitimise political decisions by arriving at some technical consensus and how these fail when a serious political debate underlies the issue.

Nelkin and Pollak (1981) use a comparison of the German and French experiences to show how political traditions and institutional factors have influenced the evolution of controversies in these countries. Far more so than in the case of Sweden, the ANM took an extra-parliamentary path due to the structure of the political system and the inability of the conventional political parties to deal with the issue. The development of the debate in these countries can be conceptualised in three stages.

The first small demonstrations took place in the summer of 1970. In December 1971 a meeting of anti-nuclear activists in Strasbourg

revealed an initial divergence of approach between radicals who advocated demonstrations and protest tactics and those who favoured a more conventional strategy to influence establishment figures and agency personnel. Media coverage of the issue became frequent in the early 1970s and by 1975 was focusing on the inability of the public to make itself heard through existing channels in France. Here it seemed that demonstrations and civil disobedience were the only options. In Germany, with its fragmented political and administrative system, activists were able to tackle the nuclear industry through the courts and local hearings, gaining some successes including the abandoning of the Breisach plant proposal in the southern Rhine area. The most famous controversy was probably that surrounding the Wyl reactor proposal. It lasted from 1973 until 1977. A local referendum, citizen initiatives on both sides, hearings, and a huge extended occupation on the site were ultimately successful in stopping construction.

The second phase was a period of large protest actions. Late in 1976 there were major demonstrations at the Brokdorf reactor site near Hamburg. This involved a major clash with police, 100 arrests and 500 injuries, and some hostile media coverage.<sup>2</sup> The debate over tactics developed with a rough split between the urban based radicals pushing for occupations and the more conservative local groups arguing for peaceful meetings and a lack of confrontation. The demonstration at the Creys Malville FBR site in France in July 1977 was the scene of serious rioting and one German school teacher was killed by a police grenade. In September 1977 the German police organised a comprehensive campaign of harrassment to upset the planned protest at the Kalkar FBR site.<sup>3</sup> This large protest effectively ended the second phase of the ANM activity. The debate over tactics focused often on the use of violence which many non-violent activists saw as alienating important sources of public sympathy, people living near the sites who resented their areas being turned into battlegrounds and also members of the scientific community whose technical expertise offered moral legitimation to the movement in some cases.

The third phase in the late 1970s had fewer large demonstrations but the German citizen initiatives and the ecology press proliferated. Electoral politics and court actions challenged the construction process.

New contacts and new forms of civil disobedience were developed. In the 1979 European elections the Green candidates polled 3.2% in Germany and a thriving alternative movement still exists. Meanwhile the ecologists zeroed in on the Kalkar FBR and the proposed reprocessing and waste disposal plant at Gorleben near the East German border. Hearings on the Gorleben proposal started on the day the Three Mile Island accident occurred in Pennsylvania. Following the presentation of critical evidence against the plant and the largest ever German anti-nuclear march in Hanover the proposal was put in cold storage. Recently huge demonstrations have again happened at the Brokdorf site on the Elbe. In France the focus of opposition in the late 1970s was the small Brittany town of Plogoff where EDF planned a massive complex. Numerous local protests became full scale battles with the riot police in the village as the requisite local hearings took place in a series of mobile caravans.<sup>4</sup> This plant has subsequently been shelved by the new socialist government in France (Boyle and Robinson, 1981). In Germany major checks have been placed on the development of the nuclear industry because the federal system allowed more access to activists. In France the nuclear programme has effectively run unchecked without as much as a serious debate in the National Assembly before the election of the socialists to power (Papon, 1979). It remains to be seen if the socialists will institute a major policy change in the near future.

In Britain opposition has been slow to develop partly because the industry was well established early on and partly because of its use of indigenous gas cooled reactors which have fewer safety problems than the LWR technology. The original CND movement was not opposed to the "peaceful" use of nuclear power. The major blemish on the U.K. nuclear industry's record was a fire at Windscale in 1957 (Burlison, 1980; Patterson, 1976). The predominant approach of opponents until after the Windscale Public Inquiry in 1977 was a conventional lobby group approach emphasising good information and access to establishment figures. A series of small demonstrations against the proposed expansion of the reprocessing plant at Windscale in Cumbria occurred prior to the announcement of a major inquiry in the spring of 1977. Many groups combined to form the Windscale appeal to present a coherent opposition stance at the inquiry (Scott and Taylor, 1979; Breach, 1978; Pearce, et

al., 1979). The inquiry heard evidence for 100 days and had numerous documents submitted to it. However the Inspector, Justice Parker, defined his brief very narrowly and effectively ignored much of the testimony. His report (Parker, 1978) suggested going ahead with the project and the House of Commons duly voted to approve it. This inquiry epitomised the problems that anti-nuclear activists have faced at state run inquiry proceedings. Much of the ANM case rests on questioning the type of society that is desirable for the future and criticising government economic and energy projections. Inspectors often listen patiently but ignore such subjects in their final reports and make recommendations on narrow technical criteria (Hirsch, 1978; Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974). Kemp (1980) argues that these planning procedures involve systematically distorted communication and "... rather than enabling public participation in the decision process, merely serve to legitimate state intervention ..." (1980:366). The objectors at the Windscale Inquiry were enraged and published a series of vehement criticisms of Parker (see Pearce, et al., 1979).

Since the Inquiry more groups have appeared to oppose nuclear developments and have taken the form of loose coalitions. The Scottish Coalition to Resist the Atomic Menace (SCRAM)<sup>5</sup> has been particularly active and has helped to organise a number of large demonstrations and site occupations at the Torness AGR site in Scotland, attempting to emulate the non-violent protest tactics used by the Clamshell alliance at Seabrook (Torness Alliance, 1979). Based in London the Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA) is attempting to build links between the environmental movement and the labour movement. The British ANM also contains a considerable alternative technology movement reflected in such magazines as Undercurrents. The movement has also received a shot in the arm from the Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution whose sixth report, under the chairmanship of Sir Brian Flowers dealt with the nuclear issue in a much more thoughtful and comprehensive way than other agencies or government publications.<sup>6</sup> Of particular concern to the Friends of the Earth group are the political and civil liberties issues raised by the "plutonium economy" and in particular the Special Constables Act in force in Britain (Flood and Grove-White, 1976).<sup>7</sup> The British ANM also reflects the diverse

backgrounds of its members and like other movements it is difficult to summarise although,

There is no doubt that strong anarcho-liberationist, conservationist, ecological and politically pink threads weave roughly together at a national level.

(Weightman, 1979:310)

In the Netherlands, with its strong New Left politics, the ANM has raised the same issues as elsewhere. Widespread attention was first drawn to nuclear power by a surtax levied on electricity bills to pay for the Netherlands' contribution to the Kalkar FBR project. This was started in 1973 and some protestors refused to pay the tax (Nelkin and Pollak, 1977). The subsequent "Stop Kalkar" campaign has been important, as has the international "World Information Service on Energy" (WISE) which acts as a clearing house on anti-nuclear information and alternative energy.

Austria has also had a long controversial nuclear debate (see Hirsch and Nowotny, 1977) involving demonstrations, extensive public debates, petitions and eventually a referendum which decided that the already built reactor at Zwentendorf would not operate (Patterson, 1979).

Italy and Spain also have active ANMs. In Spain the opposition is connected with the regional autonomy concerns in the Basque areas where a number of bombs have been used against nuclear plants and have resulted in fatalities (Gyorgy, et al., 1979).

The Danish ANM is one of the most active and is focused around the OOA (Organisation for Information on Atomic Power). It has had influence outside its national boundaries with its emphasis on information rather than conflict. It took full advantage of the fact that Denmark did not have any nuclear stations in the early 1970s and was in time to alert the Danish public before any were built (Christiansen, 1977). Emphasising the widest possible distribution of information and large public rallies the OOA was instrumental in preventing nuclear power development in Denmark.

Having reviewed the European experience the next section will cover opposition elsewhere prior to an attempt to summarise the impact of the movement internationally.

### 6.2.3 Opposition in Australia, Canada and Japan

In Australia uranium mining has been the main issue with the labour movement being noticeably more opposed to nuclear power than elsewhere. A large government inquiry (The Fox Commission) considered the mining issue in the context of the international proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as considering aboriginal land claim issues. The government duly ignored the findings which were not in favour of the immediate development of the mines (Elliot, ed., 1977). The Labour Party and the labour movement have considerable elements opposed to the mining of uranium and they have organised a series of large demonstrations opposing the Ranger mining developments. Malcolm Fraser's Conservative government has passed a series of bills, effectively turning Australia into a police state as far as opposition to nuclear developments are concerned and realising the worst fears of many activists concerning the political consequences of nuclear power (Gyorgy, et al., 1979; Jungk, 1979).

Local interventions by fishermen and farmers initiated much of the opposition to the LWRs which Japan started to develop in the late 1960s. The administrative system in Japan is so organised that local officials in many cases had to negotiate the siting details with the utilities and hence have had some say in developments. Memories of Nagasaki and Hiroshima alerted the Japanese to the risks of nuclear power. The illfated nuclear powered ship the "Mutsu" was blockaded for fifty one days by local fishermen preventing it from moving and no port in Japan will provide facilities for its operation. The whole incident, including the endless technical problems with the ship's reactor, seriously damaged the credibility of the Japanese AEC, caught with a similar conflict of interest between promotional and regulatory functions, as in the American case. The Government has attempted to increase the legitimacy of the nuclear industry by holding many hearings and sponsoring research into reactor safety. Controversy surrounds many siting decisions in this volcanic and seismically active area and court cases have at times dragged on for years. Following the Three Mile Island accident the nuclear developments have been curtailed (Murphy, 1981). The direct action tactics used at Narita Airport have yet to be used on a large scale to oppose nuclear developments but if

the government continues to press ahead with nuclear developments these tactics may yet be seen in action (see Wasserman, 1979; Gyorgy, et al., 1979).

Canada has its nuclear opposition groups too. The Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility (CCNR) was founded in 1975 and has been criticising the nuclear industry ever since. There is a vocal anti-uranium mining lobby in Saskatchewan and other environmental groups such as Greenpeace and the newly formed Friends of the Earth umbrella group are also struggling to stop further nuclear developments and sales abroad using a mixture of standard lobbying techniques and protest actions. The New Democratic Party has finally decided to take an opposition stance on nuclear developments but a national inquiry into nuclear policy, long sought by opponents, has apparently disappeared with the defeat of the Conservative Government in 1980. However, in Ontario, the centre of Canada's nuclear industry the recent Porter Commission on Electric Power Planning has made recommendations aimed at curbing the more optimistic building programmes of Ontario Hydro.

#### 6.2.4 The International Anti-Nuclear Movement in Perspective

The national experiences are varied and international comparisons are not easy to make. Lonroth and Walker's (1979) summary of the important features is a helpful guide to generalisations on the movement. For,

... it appears that the complexity of nuclear decision making--and the tendency for there to be local opposition if the opportunity is provided--makes nuclear power particularly vulnerable in countries where authority is fragmented, as in countries with federal structures and/or judicial systems with broad mandates.

(ibid., p. 42)

Nuclear power has proven very susceptible to local opposition and siting disputes and does not offer long term employment benefits to local communities to buy opponents off. In the short run the public is more concerned the more information it gets. In France and Britain opposition until recently has been slight in comparison to elsewhere and neither of these countries has exposed their nuclear industry to much public scrutiny. In the long run, however, secrecy probably works against the industry by undermining its credibility. In the U.S. much

of the information used by anti-nuclear groups has come from leaked official documents or materials obtained under the Freedom of Information Act (Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974; Union of Concerned Scientists, 1977). The existence of non-nuclear energy options in a country make the case for nuclear power less supportable. The speed of nuclear development is probably a contributing factor to the strength of opposition. Breakneck speed and huge expenditures may be unwise from the nuclear industry's point of view because the sheer scale of the enterprise may cause resistance.

There are exceptions to most of the above points but in general they hold true. An additional factor is timing. Countries late into the development of nuclear technology whose populations are already alerted to the issues by controversies elsewhere often have a much more difficult time getting nuclear power underway.<sup>8</sup> Third world countries and those with totalitarian governments, of course, do not face serious public opposition. In many third world countries a nuclear programme is seen as a symbol of national prestige if not as a route to nuclear weapons (Pringle and Spigelman, 1981).

Public opposition has undoubtedly raised the economic costs of nuclear power by forcing a tightening of design requirements and safety standards and extending the planning process. It has eroded the sovereignty of regulating authorities and particularly of utilities which are now under much tighter public control in many countries. In addition, each site has been turned into a source of local controversy and considerable electoral risks exist for candidates who promote the technology. The legitimacy of established expertise has been seriously damaged in many controversies and the political dimensions of "technical" decisions exposed. Further, the ANM has provided a focus for alternative political discussion to take place and provided the impetus for a widespread questioning of the dominant ideology in capitalist society.

### 6.3 THE MOTIVATIONS UNDERLYING OPPOSITION

No two writers on the subject are agreed on a classification of the motivations for opposition but a summary of a number of attempts will reveal the nature of the concerns. The diversity of the movement prevents easy summation.

It is not a simple phenomenon and seems to reflect deep-seated social trends--fragmentation of authority, distrust of centralised institutions, fear of certain advanced technologies, the advance of communications and education--as much as it reflects concerns over issues which are specifically nuclear.

(Lonroth and Walker, 1979:47)

Mazur (1975) has tabulated the concerns under five headings, arguing that danger of nuclear power, ignorance, an alienation from dominant societal norms, beliefs about other issues and social influences are the principal reasons for opposition to nuclear power. He argues that people are capable of judging the risks and often say "no" rather than take the chance. Public ignorance is a widely claimed reason for opposition. He sees alienation as leading to nuclear opposition as a blow against big government and big business, although he assumes that these opponents are of low political efficacy, powerless and unintegrated into society. Beliefs about larger issues are included because Mazur believes that anti-nuclear activists are concerned about other issues, in particular political and environmental concerns. Social influence comes about because face to face contacts and the encouragement of friends to become involved is a significant factor in motivating anti-nuclear activists and is not matched in effectiveness by the advertising campaigns of the nuclear industry.

Nelkin and Fallows (1978) trace the development of the controversy about nuclear power from initial opposition based on local environmental concerns and the assumption that better information would establish consensus. Opposition escalated and using the scientific issues activists asked a series of value questions

- What kind of society is implied by a nuclear economy?
- What are the possible future costs to future generations?
- What costs will society accept?
- How equitable is the distribution of the costs and risks?
- Can the government manage the long term risks?
- Who should make the decisions?

Essentially, then, the centre of conflict has shifted from technical uncertainties about environmental impacts, to a set of broad, political questions about the credibility of decision-making authority and the future of democratic values in a nuclear society.

(Nelkin and Fallows, 1978:227)

Otway, et al. (1978) were apparently caught by surprise by this shift as they note in their research into Austrian attitudes which produced three factors pertinent to opposition. First, a psychological risk factor emphasising the exposure of people to risks without their consent. Second, a socio-political factor based on concerns about transport and storage of nuclear materials and the concomitant rigorous security measures, and also concerns about the dependency of society on elite groups and large industrial enterprises. A third factor of opposition is an environmental and physical risk factor. The one factor in favour of nuclear power is based on a belief in the perceived technical and economic benefits to be derived from the use of nuclear power. They conclude, hardly surprisingly, that people do not simply structure beliefs on statistical data concerning physical safety of new technology. Part of the opposition goes beyond the nuclear issue to question the role of technical elites and state bureaucracies.

We believe that if there is a central issue in the nuclear controversy it is personal and political power and public participation in the control of that power.

(Otway, et al., 1978:117)

Hohenemser, et al. (1977) argue that the distrust of nuclear power is based on three factors: first, the social history of the technology, second, its unique combination of hazards, and, third, the special way it has been managed and regulated. Public distrust has been amplified in their view by the rancorous debate within the polarised expert community. Both the symbolic and the real links with the Bomb are significant reasons for opposition and other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle give cause for concern too. These include issues of waste disposal transportation and inadvertant releases of fission products as well as the toxicity and cancer connections. They too notice a shift from the earlier technical emphasis;

Most recently, nuclear power has become, in the view of the environmental movement, a symbol of high technology, unbridled growth, and centralisation--all trends that are being increasingly questioned by activists.

(Hohenemser, et al., 1977:27-28)

Pahner (1976) provides a psychological perspective on the controversy arguing that three factors are of importance: first, pre-existing associations related to anxiety about nuclear war, second, conscious

and unconscious fears of death related to nuclear energy, and third, conscious and unconscious fears of radiation. His work focuses on opposition as a displaced fear of war.

Lifton (1976) similarly argues that real fundamental fears of "bodily integrity" exist and are a strong motivating factor in opposition to nuclear power. He argues that this is an extension of the fear of atomic weapons.

Weinberg (1977) summarises four main reasons for opposition to nuclear power. First, the possibility of diversion of weapons materials. Second, the newness of the radiation hazard. Third, the persistence of the hazard is a unique factor related to the radiation hazard. Finally nuclear fuel cycles require a meticulous attention to detail. Earlier Weinberg (1972) coined the term "Faustian Bargain" to describe the commitment needed to look after the waste for many generations to come. This requires a stability of institutional structures stretching for many centuries, a possibility that many nuclear opponents find extremely distasteful.

Sharaf (1978) summarises the opponents of nuclear power into three categories. The "ideological opponents" are concerned mainly with questions of safety, alternative energy and environmental impacts. "Private" opponents are concerned with the direct economic impacts of a local nuclear plant on their interests while the "parochial" opponents are concerned with a more diverse array of local and community impacts. He argues that although the private and parochial concerns are important in understanding the opposition to nuclear power it is the "ideological" opponents who spearhead the movement.

Del Sesto (1979) likewise emphasises the ideological factor because, ... the essential conflict was now (in 1973) greatly expanded to include deep ideological differences over the direction and content of public policy concerning technical alternatives.... The opposition to nuclear energy was not a straight technical issue; it was over ideas and systems of norms and values which defined the meaning, use, and significance of nuclear energy in society.

(Del Sesto, 1979:182)

Nelkin and Pollak (1981) focus on ideology as the key to understanding the ANM. They argue that the European movement has focused on the social and political properties of nuclear power, on its effects on forms

of authority and power, on concepts of freedom and order, on the distribution of political and economic resources and on the very fabric of political life. The nuclear establishment has come to represent the social tensions and political contradictions of a technological age. In this analysis nuclear power symbolises the problems of advanced industrial society: the erosion of traditional value systems, the industrialisation of rural areas, the concentration of economic activity, the centralisation of decision-making power and the intrusion of governmental bureaucracy.

The passion underlying the debate, the ability to mobilise a broad array of different groups to oppose government nuclear programmes follows from the association of this advanced technology with such ubiquitous social and political concerns. Indeed, while much of the debate continues to dwell on technical issues of safety, the challenge to nuclear power has assumed the character of a moral crusade.

(Nelkin and Pollak, 1981:2)

The political dimension is crucial for many radicals.

They are fighting not only a dangerous technology but what they perceive to be a new ruling class. This socio-political orientation gives the anti-nuclear movement a potentially explosive character, especially in the light of the growing impotence of the traditional political institutions.

(ibid., p. 28)

#### 6.4 THE SCIENTIFIC CONTROVERSY AND THE POLITICS OF EXPERTISE

Central to the nuclear debate has been the continuing technical controversy which, as Hohenemser, et al. (1977) note, has often been rancorous. Mazur's (1973) analysis focuses on the public debates and the bases of the arguments where the political non-scientific context is often crucial in determining the outcomes of these events. Technical expertise is becoming increasingly important in making political decisions. It is in this context with the increasing use of expertise, consultants and technical criteria in decision making or the "scientisation of politics" (Habermas, 1971; Hirsch, 1974) that the nuclear dialogue unfolds.

One of the major political themes in the nuclear controversy is the close cooperation of scientists in academia, big business and

government agencies. In the U.S. personnel switch between the three regularly so that a closed community of experts with a common interest in the development of nuclear power exists (Bupp and Derian, 1978). Likewise, in Germany scientific expertise is closely connected to government and industry (Jungk, 1979). The German Atomic Commission established in 1956 consisted of scientists, government bureaucrats, industry representatives and token labour representation. Thus, the various factions have taken most of the important decisions by arriving at a consensus prior to publication of their ideas. In addition when members of these establishments run the licensing hearings, anti-nuclear activists are naturally sceptical of getting their point across. The hearing process appears to many activists as a process to legitimate previously taken decisions (Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974; Pearce, et al., 1979). The right to make the decisions is intimately bound up with the technical issues.

The French planners are socialised to deal with public problems as technical issues too (Pringle and Spigelman, 1981), based on the ideology of rationality assuming that the processes of social reproduction are harmonious in capitalist society. Harvey (1978:229) summarises the role of the planner in this situation.

The dissidents were encouraged to go through "channels," to adhere to "procedures laid down" and somewhere down that path the planner laid in wait with a seemingly sophisticated technology, an intricate understanding of the world, through which political questions could be translated into technical questions which the mass of the population found hard to understand.

In turn, counter expertise developed in the late 1960s with advocacy planners and "environmentally concerned scientists" participating in adversarial debates with agency and business personnel (Kasperson and Breitbart, 1974).

Mazur (1973) has analysed a number of technical disputes and shows how underlying tendencies aggravate conflict rather than lead to a scientific consensus. The use of rhetorical devices such as "there is no evidence to show that ..." or one of its variants, which often means that no one has researched the question, leads to claims and counter-claims rather than to agreement. Arguments often address different points and discussants often talk past each other failing to

confront each others' points. Ambiguities often lead to discrepant figures as in the case of low level radiation and cancer statistics. In this case the two camps are using different assumptions about doses and their relations to cancers and hence come to radically different conclusions. Discrepant data is often disregarded by one side or subject to very different interpretations by either side. Finally, Mazur sees problems because experts behave like anyone else in an argument often polarising debates and building coalitions of support to win a point. Oratorical skill and debating techniques often carry the day where logical argument is confused and hence technical controversies often cause more confusion than clarity, which in turn heightens the political conflict which is the surrogate issue.

The early public hearings held by the AEC in the U.S. concerned some details of licensing but refused intervenors and rights of challenging rules, regulations or AEC standards of health and safety. As Del Sesto puts it (1979:122),

Reactor licensing and regulation procedures by the early 1960s became ... predisposed to promoting the rapid spread of nuclear reactors and largely assumed a priori that the reactors were in fact safe.

Secrecy shrouded the AEC procedures and much time has been spent by environmental groups trying to get access to "privileged" information. While the real issues soon emerged as matters of public choice, acceptability and safety standards, intervenors continued to use technical and legal wrangles as a method of public education (Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974).

The pro-nuclear case was based on what Del Sesto calls the "Peaceful Applications Plank" which saw nuclear power as a way to increase growth and provide limitless energy. Deeply ingrained in this approach is a belief in "progress" and the role of science and technology in it. The nuclear advocates were convinced that they could solve any problems that arose and find a solution to the disposal of nuclear waste (See Pringle and Spigelman, 1981). Of the testimony that Del Sesto investigated in his research 80% in favour of nuclear power was of a technical nature while only 17% of the anti-nuclear case was technical. Sensational language abounded in the controversy with the pro lobby suggesting that overcoming the programme's ills was simply a

matter of providing the critics with the "correct information," so that "full public understanding" could be reached (Del Sesto, 1979).

Pollak and Nelkin (1978) point to the futuristic dreams of some "nucleocrats" advocating the longterm development of huge "nuclear parks" housing all facilities including reactors, reprocessing plants fuel fabrication and waste disposal sites remote from human settlements and run by Weinberg's "nuclear priesthood." This ideology is also informed by a belief in nationalism, that having one's own nuclear industry is a matter of prestige. Further this is seen as a way of ensuring a nation's energy independence, whereas in fact the nuclear fuel cycle is very much an international phenomenon. Pollak and Nelkin further suggest that the proponents have usually avoided discussing the controversial values embedded in the nuclear programme and merely assume that experts should make societal decisions according to their value system, convinced as they are that political decisions can be reduced to technical concerns. The establishment defends this status quo claiming legitimacy on the basis of "political neutrality" of the administrative arm and expert competence coming to a consensus prior to public input or discussion.

In crucial decisions the services responsible for promotion and regulation work together. The perception of bureaucracy as the neutral custodian of the general interest against the particular claims of individual citizens and interest groups masks the political bargaining process that is embodied in such techno-administrative decisions.

(Pollak and Nelkin, 1978:28)

This in turn leads to controversy.

Determination to implement preconceived decisions leads officials to ignore, debunk or simply be unaware of political opposition. But it leads critics to view participation procedures as rhetoric in a closed system where decisions, sheltered behind the image of a neutral administration continue to rest on collaboration between the bureaucracy and industry.

(ibid., p. 36)

Powerless to influence the nuclear establishment through the formal channels which exist for public hearings; protest, civil disobedience and direct action are seen as essential to oppose nuclear power. Others prefer to ignore the established power structure completely refusing to grant it legitimacy by talking to it. Hence the political conflicts are at times acrimonious.

## 6.5 THE MOVEMENT: IDEOLOGY, INTERNAL DEBATE AND STRATEGIC ISSUES

The ideological debate over nuclear power is far from a uniform or homogenous group of ideas challenging the received wisdom of the nuclear industry and government bureaucrats. Nuclear issues enter the political arena in each country somewhat differently reflecting or being symbolic of broader contemporary political conflicts in advanced industrial countries. Distrust of big business and central government in the U.S., regional tensions in Italy and Spain, concerns over the environmental costs of industrialisation in Sweden and fears of a police state in Germany have all influenced their movements in different ways (Lonroth and Walker, 1979). The national movements have diverse underpinnings but find a common thread in opposition to nuclear power. The issue

... takes place in the context of other extra-parliamentary and emancipatory movements--ecologists, feminists, regional autonomists--that have emerged simultaneously during the 1960s and early 1970s with their persistent challenges to the prevailing political and social order.

(Nelkin and Pollak, 1981:2)

Barkan's (1979) analysis of the U.S. anti-nuclear movement emphasises a series of contradictions which occur within the movement and influence its development. Using a "resource mobilisation" approach to social movements, he sees the ANM beset by difficulties in appealing to four constituencies simultaneously: their own membership and organisational base, the news media, the public, and their antagonists, in this case the nuclear industry and the government. Barkan identifies four major dilemmas in the movement.

First, the question of whether the movement should remain a single issue movement solely interested in stopping reactor construction or whether it should oppose large scale corporate capitalism as well is raised. Questions such as workplace issues and alternative energy were also raised in addition to concerns about nuclear weapons. Many groups were in favour of broadening the movement but in New Mexico it caused problems in areas where the bomb construction industry is a major employer.

The use of civil disobedience and non-violence in the campaign has also been focused on. Established environmental organisations

continue the court fights while activists have attempted occupations of sites. Non-violent action has often gained a favourable press and public reaction. Some activists adopt the idea of non-violent action on conscientious grounds while others use it as a pragmatic tactic. The use of non-violent actions are designed to present a favourable image to the press and the public. These tactics are designed to minimise violent confrontation and hence negative media comment as well as providing a symbolic moral contrast with a violent technology. Properly organised non-violent activities also deflect the actions of provocateurs. The maintenance of good relations with the police is an anathema to many radicals who see the police force as the enemy and part of the nuclear state. To date, non-violent actions in the U.S. have not had the extensive backing of local populations as happened at Wyl in Germany, nor the strength to occupy any sites on a semi-permanent basis. These actions have remained at best symbolic. Questions about what laws to break in what circumstances and how to relate to the police remain contentious issues in the movement.

The third dilemma concerns organisation and movement decision making structures. The Clamshell Alliance, learning from European experience and its feminist and Quaker background, developed a method of consensus decision-making rather than simple majority decisions. This method was aimed at reducing coercion and encouraging morale and solidarity (Crown, 1979). Working on a de-centralised system of affinity groups each with their own transport, food and support, and good discipline born of consensus, the 1977 occupation of the Seabrook site brought widespread media attention when 1414 people were arrested. The consensus system has yet to work well in situations where fast decisions need to be taken. Many activists not in favour of the non-violent approach have felt themselves marginalised by the consensus process with its subtle pressures to conform so as to allow a consensus to be reached (Bove, 1977).

Finally, Barkan analyses the problems facing the anti-nuclear activists in the courts. These are whether to plead guilty or not guilty and whether to use the courts as a forum to educate people on the issues. Tactical issues are also raised on the questions of using technical legal points as a defense or to offer a political defense. Some

defendants have used the court system as a forum for public education and succeeded, but it remains a risky approach (Wasserman, 1979).

Behind these tactical debates lie varied, but deeply rooted, ideologies which reflect the diversity of the movement from sober conservative concerned scientists to the "Autonomist" fringe.

Far more than simply a response to an immediate technological choice it expressed a deep fear of disaster and a profound sense of crisis concerning modern industrial society and the character of its political life. It reflects the eclectic character of contemporary culture.

(Nelkin and Pollak, 1981:140)

Despite this eclecticism and the inherent ambiguities,

... the discourse conveys powerful themes: an apocalyptic image of the destructive potential of nuclear power, a pessimistic vision of ecological, economic and cultural crisis, and a critical analysis of its socio-political roots. Opposition to nuclear power becomes a struggle for human survival and political justice.... Nuclear power is above all a symbol associated with death and war, and this is what drives the nuclear debate.

(ibid., p. 141)

The published posters, badges, stickers and other publicity materials produced by the movement are heavy with symbolism and caricature.<sup>9</sup> Secrecy and the dangers of unseen contamination are coupled with the imagery of nuclear war as the ultimate evil.

The ecological critique emphasises a contrast between what is "natural" and what is man-made or "technological." There is a criticism of centralisation, alienation and the anonymity of society reminiscent of the romantic critique of earlier industrialisation. The activists attempt to develop, like their predecessors in the New Left (Brienes, 1980), a prefigurative politics emphasising some consistency between ends and means and attempting to live the new society now. In parts of Europe conservative environmentalists have revived ideas from early twentieth century catholicism advocating a paternalistic "folk" society based on small self-governing units, a streak of cultural pessimism which often does not rest easily with radical urban based groups for whom liberation is the antithesis of traditional family models.

Both left wing and conservative ecologists construct utopian images of humanity in harmony with nature rather than dominating or exploiting nature. The focus is on "secondary" political issues outside

the workplace. Many conventional communist parties shun the issue, arguing that the real political issues are centred on production relations and dismiss the ANM as a petty bourgeois ideology. Other "Marxist" groups argue along a line of thought that says technical "progress" is to the ultimate benefit of the proletariat and workers control is needed to run nuclear stations properly.<sup>10</sup>

The radical ecologists are heavily influenced by the experiences of the 1960s and usually opt for as little formal organisation as possible. Again this is a complete departure from the traditional political organisation of Communist parties (McInnes, 1975). A common socio-economic analysis of the profit motive, greed and government complicity informs their critique, placing democracy in opposition to technocracy, or "Electrofascism" as the French call it (Gorz, 1980), they see themselves in a dramatic struggle for survival. At times the more conservative elements have claimed that the ecology movement offers a third way between Marxism and capitalism.

The ecologists and their fellow travellers bid fair in history to relegate Karl Marx to the status of a small time bungling amateur at the task of triggering world revolution. It is time that we learnt more about the ecology of ecologists and about the laws of ecological succession which their social impacts involve.

(Nicholson, 1976:463)

While the conservative ecologists are looking for a revival of Christian values in a Gemeinschaft-type society, the radical ecologists are looking for a new political identity, questioning social democratic reformism and the rigidity of the traditional communist approaches to the conquest of political power, favouring instead, decentralisation and the self regulation of biological process models (Bookchin, 1980).

This diverse collection of ideologies in the ANM makes traditional left or right political classifications at best dubious. The ANM approach, which is largely outside many of the conventional bargaining systems of the political process has injected uncertainty into the party political systems of many European countries. But, it is quite clear from the diverse ideologies that it has gained support from a wide range of socio-economic groups. The next section examines the basis of this support.

## 6.6 THE SOCIAL BASE

The ANM draws on a wide variety of people for support. A distinction can be drawn between the local defensive actions against a specific plant and the more generalised ideologically motivated campaign which is often more politically aware and urban based.

Mazur (1975) found that the leading activists in the National Intervenors<sup>11</sup> in the U.S. were middle aged (30% over 50, 17% under 30, with a median age of 41), 73% had at least a B.A. degree and 83% of them were previously active in local politics. He also found that, unlike the general public, leaders were impelled by concerns with larger national issues such as the environment although their motivations were not simple. Personal contacts were important in getting people involved and they came mainly from middle class backgrounds. A few joined in search of social activity, a few for employment, and some were convinced by the critical literature. Their career structures generally allowed time to become involved, some being housewives, others had some professional connections with the issue as writers, teachers and graduate students. One third of the intervenors were full time campaigners while two thirds were previously active environmentalists.

Lewis (1972) also comments on the middle class nature of the local opponents to a plant in Pennsylvania. This group organised a classic "local opposition" campaign and offers a model for describing this aspect of the debate. A few civic minded and reasonably well educated members of the local community became concerned about the likely impacts on their area when the project was first announced. Literature was amassed by people in the town who had at least some of the communication and literary skills necessary to absorb the content, petitions were signed and initiatives in the state legislature questioned the right of companies to impose the technology on the citizenry without their consent. Contradictory scientific evidence led to a questioning of the nuclear establishment and the honesty and "neutrality" of scientists working for a company. The right of technocrats to "prescribe" "safe" doses of radiation was also questioned. Concerns were also raised about the military implications of the plant in time of war. The locals were further incensed by attempts made by the AEC to indoctrinate their

children in the local schools.

Nelkin (1971) emphasises the "establishment" opposition to the Cayuga Lake project in her account of this controversy. Local upper middle class opposition combined with a considerable amount of scientific support was important in stopping the proposed plant. In this case it was the thermal pollution aspect that was focused on. A number of academics found themselves in uncomfortable positions in the public controversy when it conflicted with their ideas of "neutral" science. There was also a strong element of local amenity protection involved in this case.

Sharaf (1978) also found that ANM leaders had a high level of socio-economic status as measured by income, occupation, a sense of political efficacy and active organisational involvement. He also points to professional backgrounds which provide the sense of efficacy and political orientation which inclines them to participate as well as providing them with the time and resources necessary. In his three-way division of opponents into "private," "parochial" and "ideological" he found that more women opposed nuclear power for ideological reasons than men while they got involved more frequently to protect their livelihood and economic interests. Women were consistently more concerned about the moral issues. He also argues that ignorance is not a motivating factor for the activists although they do tend to read selectively material that is favourable to their point of view. Ideological opponents are more informed, although not claiming to be experts, they suggest that the public ought to be able to judge when given the basic facts--the rationale behind referenda campaigns.

The escalation of the protests against the Seabrook plant in 1977 by the Clamshell Alliance fundamentally changed the nature of the opposition in New England. Analysing the records of the 1414 people arrested at Seabrook in May 1977 he found that only 15% of them came from New Hampshire and only 3% from Seabrook itself, 81% were under the age of 29 in comparison to the much older local opposition. 46% of those arrested came from Massachusetts with an emphasis on college town origins. The civil disobedience and direct action groups thus appear to be basically different from the local defensive opponents. These opponents are ideologically motivated and in many cases use the nuclear

controversy as a scapegoat for many anti-establishment feelings.

Nelkin and Pollak (1981) also draw a rough distinction between the younger urban based radicals and the often more conservative residents in the threatened areas. Different social groups react differently to the local issues. In some cases blue collar workers and shopkeepers favour a plant because of its perceived economic benefits. In other cases farmers welcomed the environmentalists while working class people stayed away from discussions with ecologists who came from another social class and cultural background.

Analysing these factors reveals a number of factors similar to Parkin's (1968) analysis of the U.K. CND. The middle class, morally motivated nature of the movement's ideologically orientated members and the sense of danger from the technology are both common factors. The urban radicals draw support from an educated youth culture seeking to put its values into practice. The small, but growing, numbers of unemployed professionals may have contributed to an increasing radicalisation of the New Petty Bourgeoisie. Continued industrialisation has made this class aware of ecological issues as environmental disruption intrudes on their rural recreation sites.

Nelkin and Pollak (1981) classify the European movement's social base into three sections: first, the peasantry who are directly concerned with the impacts of nuclear plants on their lives and farms, second, the traditional factions of the petty bourgeoisie who oscillate between a view of nuclear power as a threat to their livelihood from big industry, their traditional enemy, and seeing it as a preventer of economic crisis in which they are likely to suffer, third, what Nelkin and Pollak term the new middle class oppose nuclear power because of concerns about a better quality of life, conflicts with the establishment ideology of growth, and their scepticism about authority.

In conclusion, they argue that the ANM in Europe is gaining increased support from the young and educated. Business and professional people most favour nuclear development while workers in large and technically sophisticated sectors fear nuclear power less. Protestants and non-religious are more concerned than Catholics in Germany while French farmers subject to recent economic changes are most concerned about the risks. The German news media suggests that those at the

bottom of the social hierarchy are more worried about risks while those at the top who oppose nuclear power do so because of socio-political reasons.

With this insight into the social bases of the opposition we turn to consider questions about how the movement has organised its activities.

## 6.7 ORGANISATION

The ecologists use the word which probably best describes their organisation--network. The ANM is an amorphous collection of formal organisations, individuals, local groups, small research groups, lobbyists, newsletters, magazines, dissident scientists and counter cultural collectives. Imbued in some places with formal lobby group ideas, standing committees, respected presidents, sponsors and all the other paraphernalia of pressure group politics; and in others with the 1960s ideas of non-structured participatory democracy and mass meetings with an overt political dimension. Still other parts include ideas of affinity groups, non-violent action and concensual decision-making.

The work of Gerlach and Hine on social movement organisation is important to understand how these function. In a number of works in the 1970s (Gerlach and Hine, 1970, 1973; Gerlach, 1971; Hine, 1977) they discuss in detail what they call "segmented polycephalous networks" arguing that these phenomena function very effectively as opposition movements because, rather than in spite of, their structure. They criticise conventional views of organisation which consider the only worthwhile organisations as those with rigid hierarchial structures and formal rules. Gerlach and Hine argue that what may seem to the uninitiated as a chaotic situation may well function effectively. With built in redundancy due to overlaps and some duplication of effort, a very decentralised movement cannot be destroyed if a few parts are removed or its leaders coopted. Further, the rivalry between different factions over how the movement should operate, at times, actually spurs members on to greater efforts, and, in total, produces more activity than a bureaucratically streamlined operation where individual commitment is not able to have a real influence. Leadership is charismatic rather than bureaucratic (to use Weberian terminology) and it is transitory, different people coming to the fore in different situations as their

skills and abilities allow. In these movements there is no obvious centre, but ever changing roles and coalitions and the cross-fertilisation of activists moving from one group or cause to another build up a considerable network of informal contacts and connections.

In this context, it is always difficult to get a clear picture of quite what is going on in the movement and it is not easy to classify the movement's ideas.

Tentatively, one can draw a distinction between reformists and radicals on the basis of their views on the role of third party support. This parallels a debate in American academic sociology on the effectiveness of various protest strategies (see Chapter 3). Lipski (1968) argues that protest success is dependent on the mobilisation of support outside the protesting group where third parties help the protestors gain their objectives. Piven and Cloward (1977), writing about poor peoples' movements, argue that mass action is often the best method of getting results. They argue that scarce protest resources are best used in immediate action rather than in attempting to organise formal structures and gain support from other groups.

Although a considerable portion of the ANM activities are standard lobby group approaches, the direct action and demonstration aspects are also important. Some elements in the ANM regard direct and violent confrontation with the state forces as the only suitable response to the repressive state mechanism supporting nuclear power. This runs directly contrary to ideas of non-violence and has led to tensions in the movement in some countries.

Because of the network structure of the ANM a series of simultaneous actions have occurred on different fronts, often with only minimal coordination. The diverseness of the opposition has been maintained and the refusal by large segments to become institutionalised has ensured that the movement has maintained its flexibility and its ability to mount opposition frequently and in varied ways. The debates over violence and non-violence, political strategies and organisational formats remain central to the ANM in many countries and were a central theme in the ANM in Ireland, the case study to which we now turn our attention.

## 6.8 SUMMARY

The preceding chapters of this thesis summarised literature on nuclear technology, social movements, the New Left, environmentalism and the international ANM. Chapter 2 showed how the nuclear technology was developed and promoted uncritically as a technological panacea despite its major problems. Chapter 3 outlined features of social movements and focused on the importance of ideological motivations in analysing protest. The following chapters showed where the New Left activists and the environmentalists got their inspirations from, and how they attempted to influence events. This chapter summarises the history of the international ANM and investigates the inspirations, social base and ideology of the radicals in the movement. It returns to the themes in Chapter 3 showing how differing political conceptions cause tensions amongst opponents of nuclear power.

This lengthy account is essential to any understanding of the Irish ANM. The inherent problems of nuclear technology and the politics of its promotion are international concerns. The industry has spread to many countries and brought its technical and institutional problems with it. Equally the social movement that has emerged to oppose nuclear power is an international affair. Each national section of the movement has learned from the experiences in other countries and has attempted to emulate its successes where possible. This is particularly true in the Irish case.

In the first phase of the Irish controversy (see Chapter 8) the issues and approaches reflected to a considerable extent the technical concerns being dealt with at that stage overseas. In the second phase (see Chapters 9-12) activists, inspired by the large demonstrations and civil disobedience actions abroad, organised a broader campaign of opposition based in numerous autonomous groups around the country. The twin themes of the ANM abroad reemerged in the Irish context. The fear of a dangerous technology was coupled with the failure of the political process to adequately consult the public or to control the nuclear establishment.

In the Irish case political tensions similar to those outlined in this chapter emerged within the ANM. Despite these internal tensions the ANM in Ireland was a truly national movement reaching to nearly

all of the 32 counties in its second phase. In the first phase there were geographically identifiable focii of concern in the local area in Wexford and in Dublin. In the later phase, however, opposition was widely spread and the movement attempted to emphasise this by consciously trying to rotate the location of its "Mass Meetings." Hence a geographical analysis, in a spatial analytic sense, of the groups involved, is not very helpful in attempting to understand their functioning, history or activities.

The second half of this thesis explores in detail the history of the Irish ANM and focuses on the central theme of the ideological inspirations which spurred the activists into action, and how their ideas influenced the form of political protest that developed.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

<sup>1</sup>Calvert Cliffs' Coordinating Committee vs AEC 1971 (see O'Riordan 1976:287-288).

<sup>2</sup>See Agenor, no. 65 (1977); Taylor, 1977; and Campaign Against the Model West Germany, no. 5 (1978), and no. 7 (1979).

<sup>3</sup>Campaign Against the Model West Germany, no. 7 (1979) points out that the German police used this demonstration as a golden opportunity to register the hard core opponents of the system. Virtually all participants were identified and filed in the police computer system (see also Campaign Against the Model West Germany, no. 6 (1979); and Cobler, 1978). Following weeks of media publicity against the protest the police assumed that only hard core "subversives" would protest. Close to 70,000 people tried to make it to the Kalkar site.

<sup>4</sup>The mayor refused to allow the use of the town hall for the legally mandatory public display of the plans. Hence a series of mobile caravans were used and arrived each morning under heavy guard. The plans on display were nearly completely ignored by the local population (Agenor, no. 80 (1980)).

<sup>5</sup>A double pun on SCRAM as in go away! and the emergency shutdown of a reactor.

<sup>6</sup>Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution (1976) sixth report "Nuclear Power and the Environment." Chaired by Lord Brian Flowers this is commonly referred to as "the Flowers report." While not a completely negative document it does raise searching criticisms of the nuclear programme in Britain not usually found in government publications.

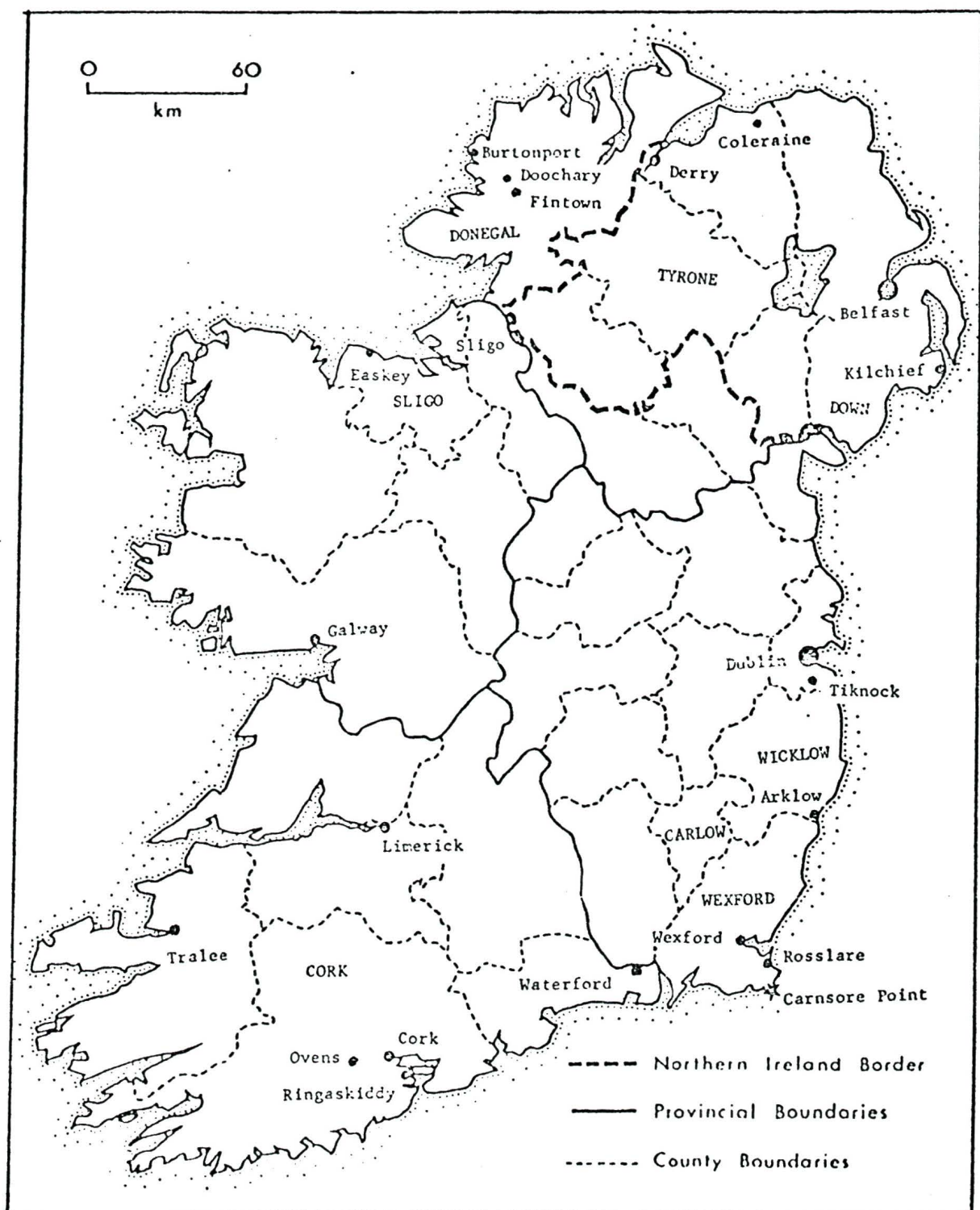
<sup>7</sup>See also footnote 2, Chapter 4. The special atomic police are an elite armed force of unknown size with permission to use firearms and effectively unanswerable to parliament.

<sup>8</sup>Austria and Denmark for example, and as will be shown later, Ireland.

<sup>9</sup>See Croall and Kainders, 1978. This fascinating book brilliantly summarises the symbolism of the ANM in its cartoons and illustration and remains in this author's opinion one of the best political statements so far produced by the movement.

<sup>10</sup>The French Communist party and the communist trade union CGT are not opposed to nuclear power.

<sup>11</sup>These people were involved in the early 1970s opposing the granting of operating licenses by the AEC at numerous sites, and also at the ECCS hearings.



Ireland: Places and Counties Mentioned in the Text.

## CHAPTER 7

## THE IRISH CONTEXT

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Ireland has undergone a profound transformation in the last quarter century. Gone are the days of xenophobic Catholic isolationism, foreigners and foreign ways are much more welcome now. The economic picture in the 1960s and 1970s was promising and Ireland joined the European community of nations. The international political radicalism of the late 1960s largely bypassed the South of Ireland, but in the North the civil rights campaign learned much from the U.S. experience. Feminism made its appearance too and its campaigns continue. In the late 1970s nuclear power emerged as an issue to catalyse the growing young educated population into protest. This chapter discusses the Irish political process and describes how the changing Irish energy use situation led ultimately to proposals for nuclear power.

7.2 ECONOMY, CULTURE AND RECENT HISTORY

Following the First World War 26 counties of Ireland gained political independence from the U.K.<sup>1</sup> There followed a bitter civil war between those in favour of the 1921 treaty with Britain and those opposed to the partition of the country into the 26 county free state and the 6 county statelet of Ulster which remains to this day part of the U.K. This conflict has marked the political landscape of Ireland ever since. The "pro-treaty" forces won the civil war and governed the country in the 1920s as the Cumann na Gael party (this later became the Fine Gael party). The Fianna Fail party under the leadership of Eamonn deValera drew support from the anti-treaty factions and first came to government in the early 1930s. Both parties supported the ideology of "free enterprise" although it was interpreted in a nationalistic framework close to economic autarky. The Cosgrave government of the

1920s established a number of semi-state bodies to help to develop the predominantly agricultural economy. These institutions are somewhat analogous to nationalised industries or crown corporations and are a permanent, and in many cases a very successful, part of the Irish economic picture. What industrial development had occurred in Ireland by the 1920s was mainly in Ulster, now separated from the South by the border.

Following independence the country went through a long period of isolationist policies and conservative nationalism which constrained cultural and economic development. The "northern question" remained high on the agenda of political rhetoric. The 1920s were a time of instability as the victorious side in the civil war attempted to consolidate its control over the countryside. Political turmoil ensured that many opponents remained behind bars, and "internment," special courts and detention without trial have been recurring features of Irish political life ever since, as both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail regimes attempted to neutralise political radicals. The policy of economic Autarky continued in the 1930s with an "economic war" with Britain, Ireland's principal trading partner. Ireland's isolation increased in the Second World War when it remained neutral.

The Roman Catholic church has had a major role in Irish life for centuries and its social ideas of corporatism, the unity of interests between labour and capital and its vocational voluntarism created a myriad of voluntary organisations throughout the country serving sectional interests in "non-political" matters (Brown, 1981).

A small post-war boom in the economy was followed by stagnation and a population decline as domestic capital failed to furnish economic development, often preferring speculation on the London Stock market to investment in the tariff protected domestic industrial sector. While post-war Europe experienced unprecedented prosperity the Irish economy languished and emigration escalated. It became obvious to some that a radical reformulation of economic policy was necessary. While some developments in the 1950s pointed the way to a reorientation of policy it was necessary to interpret the change away from protectionism and isolation in terms of national salvation before it could gain widespread acceptance (Wickham, 1980). In 1958 a senior civil servant,

T.K. Whitaker, produced a policy paper entitled "Economic Development" which set the scene for the gradual opening up of the economy to foreign capital, and for subsequent economic planning schemes with policies of industrial incentives, grants and tax holidays for international firms. The economy grew fairly rapidly in the 1960s (O'Hagan, 1975) (Figure 7.1) but not without problems and opposition from the labour movement to the restructuring of the economy. A rapprochement was worked out between the state, employers and the large unions and a series of "national pay agreements" have operated through the 1970s. The restructuring of the Irish economy was boosted by Ireland's accession to the European Economic Community in 1973 which accelerated the "rationalisation" of the agricultural sector and continued the trend from the land to the urban areas. However structural unemployment remained high in the 1960s and 1970s and new chemical, electronic and service industries have failed to provide enough jobs to eliminate it. The world wide recession of the mid 1970s demolished much of what remained of indigenous industry. In the 1970s Ireland accumulated a huge foreign debt in attempting to stave off the worst effects of the slump and to provide growth in the late 1970s (see Dowling and Durkhan, 1978).

Demographic changes since the late 1950s have also been dramatic with declining marriage age and an increasing young population (see Blackith, et al., 1973; the Economist, 1977). The rapid changes in economic structure have led to rapid cultural change. New contacts, the rapid expansion of higher education and the influx of American culture through the media have promoted a more cosmopolitan outlook at least in the urban areas (Brown, 1981). Rapid increases in wealth have failed to spread to all sectors of the population and poverty remains a significant factor in the large cities, remote rural areas and amongst the elderly. The rapid development of the welfare state has provided a safety net of sorts but the problem remains.

### 7.3 THE IRISH POLITICAL PROCESS

The new Southern Irish state inherited a functioning civil service from the British administration and has lent heavily on many aspects of the British governmental system to develop its own political institutions.

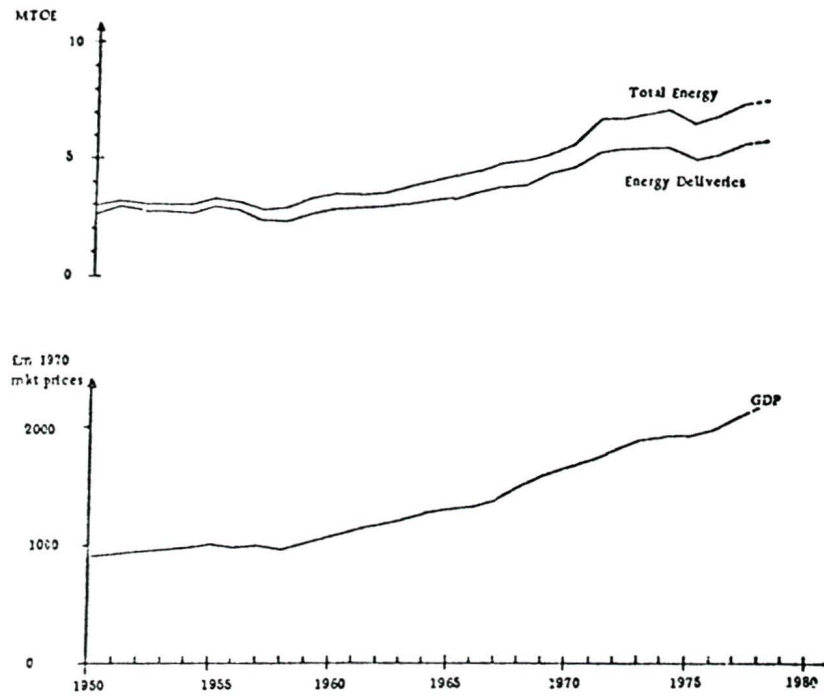


Figure 7.1 Irish Energy Growth and GDP  
1950-1978.

Source: Scott (1980) page 4.

The Oireachtas (houses of parliament) is split between an upper chamber (the Seanad) made up of political appointees and representatives elected by sectional interests rather than the peerage system in the U.K., and a lower house (the Dail) from which most of the cabinet and the prime minister (Taoiseach) are drawn. The government, however, exercises the real power and is answerable only in theory really to the Dail where often rigid party discipline ensures the government of the majority needed to pass its legislation (Ward, 1974).

The basic party political split remains between Fine Gael and Fianna Fail and the political cleavage is not directly or simply related to cleavages in the social structure. Partisan divisions rather than class politics dominate (Chubb, 1970; Garvin, 1974; Schmidt, 1970). The third political party, the Labour Party has a more ideological tinge to its politics (see Garvin, 1976) professing social democrat philosophies. Fianna Fail is more orientated towards the working class while Fine Gael gains more support from the middle classes. Populism, traditional loyalties and personal patronage systems determine a considerable amount of the political power struggle between the major parties. Minor parties have frequently attempted to gain access to the parliamentary system but have never had a major impact on the system, gaining some influence through a series of coalition arrangements. Traditionally the public has had easy access to their parliamentary representatives<sup>2</sup> although in fact the backbenchers have little real say over policy questions which are the preserve of the cabinet. T.D.s (members of the Dail) often do a large amount of constituency work to maintain popularity and operate in the role of "Bureaucrat bashers" getting constituents' concerns through administrative problems (Chubb, 1970). Policy formation often gets neglected in the emphasis on parochial politics.

A major influence on Irish life is the omnipresent Roman Catholic church to which approximately 95% of the population at least formally claim allegiance. It has considerable control over the education system combining religious instruction with a fairly authoritarian pedagogy. In addition the word of the "hierarchy" on "moral" issues continues to have considerable influence.

Concomitant with the recent rapid industrialisation and the

growth of a critically aware middle class, demand type pressure groups increasingly made themselves felt in the 1970s (Maguire, 1977). They use fairly standard pressure group tactics issuing public statements and meeting with government bureaucrats. The focus of these groups tends to gravitate towards Dublin where increasingly all significant decisions are made.

The local government structure consists of 26 counties and four city boroughs with county status. Increasingly, however, their autonomy over decision-making has been eroded by central government control of their finances. They do have an important function in physical planning under various legislation including the 1963 and 1976 planning acts. Local Authorities are responsible for planning infrastructure and land use issues and produce five yearly county plans to coordinate development.<sup>3</sup>

An added development since 1973 has been the fundamental importance of political decisions taken at a European level in the EEC. In particular, EEC agricultural, regional and social policies have influenced Ireland, although in the field of energy policy Ireland has done little more than pay lipservice to European policies. (Irish energy use is compared to the European situation in Figures 7.2 and 7.3). We now turn to consider questions of Irish energy policy.

#### 7.4 IRISH ENERGY USE AND POLICY

At independence in the early 1920s Ireland was essentially devoid of any large scale industry. Energy sources included the use of peat which was plentiful and easily accessible and imported coal. The Electricity Supply Act of 1927 established the Electricity Supply Board (ESB) as a semi-state body to coordinate the then existing electricity companies in the larger cities. Coakley (1969:10) summarises the objectives of the ESB:

To generate, transmit, distribute and sell a safe, reliable and economic supply of electricity for domestic, commercial and industrial uses.

Statutory obligations further require that the ESB do this without a profit or loss. At the time the scheme to establish a national electricity utility was somewhat daring (the Tennessee Valley Authority and

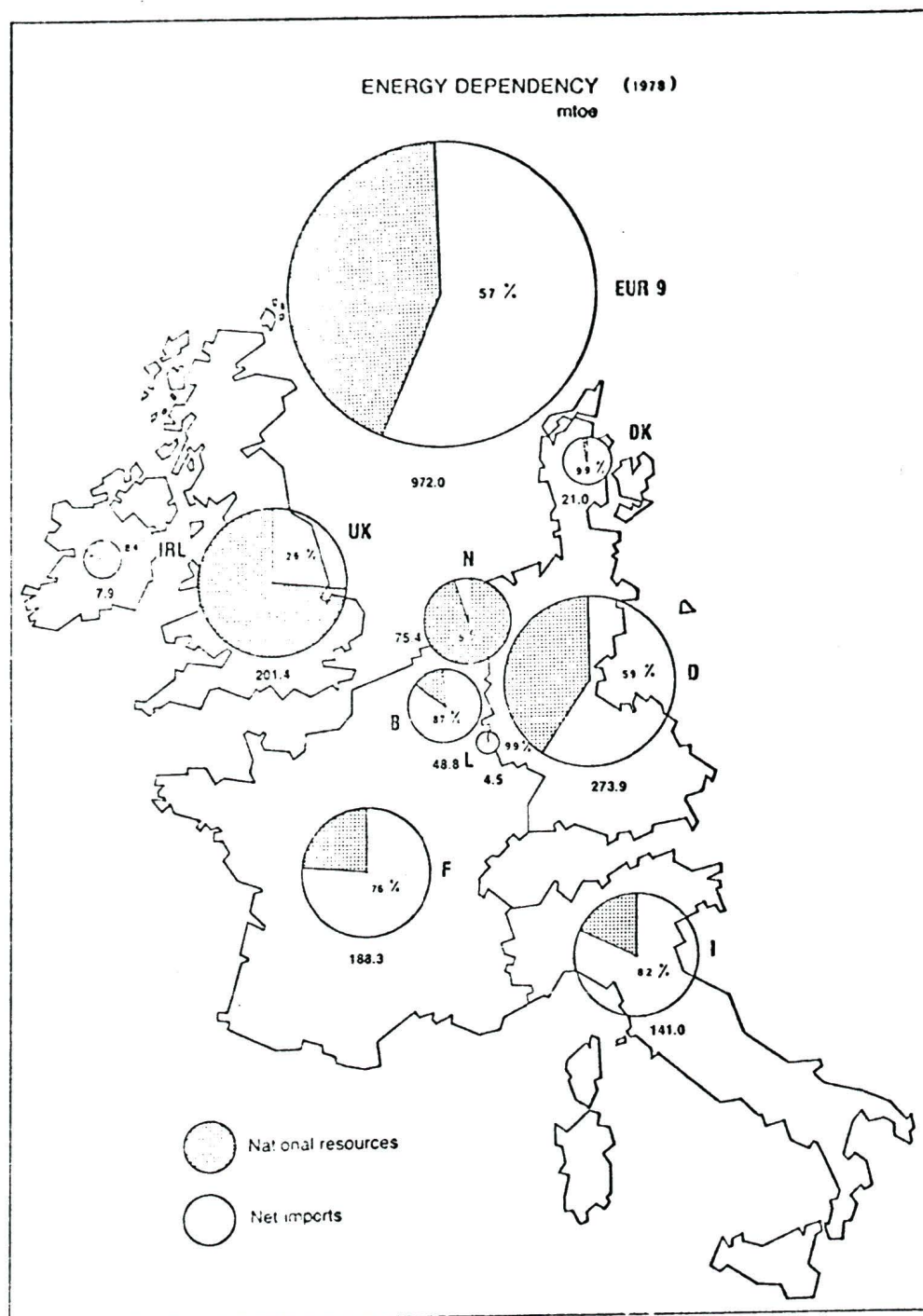


Figure 7.2 European Energy Dependency.

Source: The European Community and the Energy Problem.  
 Luxembourg. European Documentation, 1980. page 24.

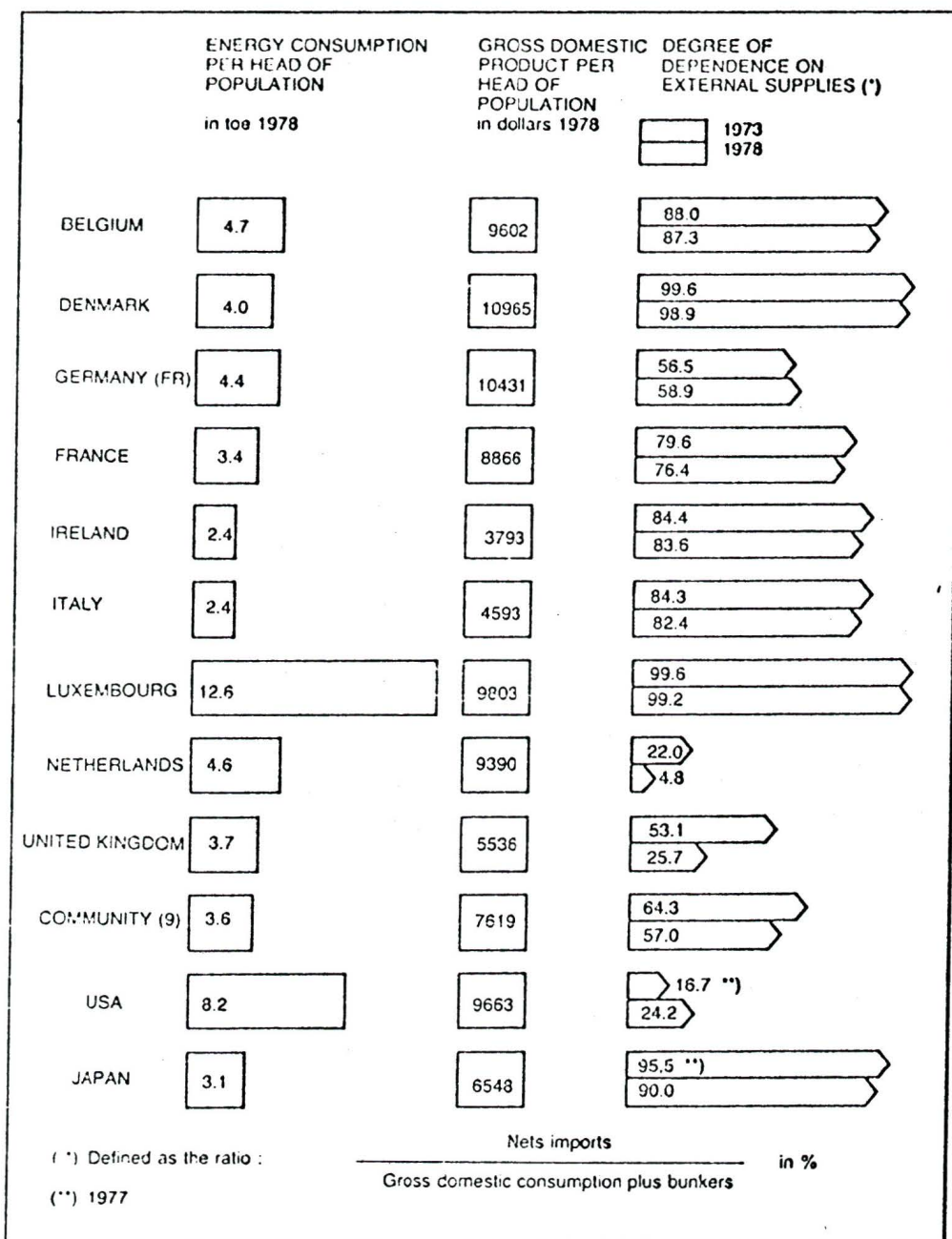


Figure 7.3 European Energy Consumption.

Source: The European Community and the Energy Problem.  
Luxembourg. European Documentation, 1980. page 16.

the British generating boards were still in the future) but a plan to develop a national grid and system of generating stations starting with a hydro station on the Shannon river got underway in the late 1920s (Lawlor, 1967). The ESB has subsequently been busy developing its system, marketing appliances and providing advice to the government on energy policy.

Coal imports have always been important to the Irish energy scene but in the 1960s with rapid economic change and dropping international oil prices, petroleum products made a dramatic penetration into the Irish economy (see Figure 7.4 and Table 7.1). Oil became the major energy source increasing from a 27% contribution in 1960 to 60% in 1970 and 74% in 1973 just prior to the "oil crisis." As Ireland has no oilfields in production, all this had to be imported. Electricity demand also increased, first in the 1950s when a large scale rural electrification programme to bring power to remote rural areas was being implemented and, second to cope with increasing industrial and consumer demands in the 1960s. In the 1950s the ESB built a series of large peat burning stations to provide for the increased demand and help in providing jobs in rural areas. These projects were more expensive than the alternatives of imported coal and oil but the social benefits were considered worthwhile. As the limits of peat and hydro schemes have been reached oil and coal stations have been built and more recently natural gas from the Kinsale field is being used (see Figures 7.5 and 7.6 and Table 7.2). Oil companies have developed road based distribution systems in Ireland although in contrast to other European countries Ireland imports large amounts of refined products rather than crude oil. The one existing refinery in the country is at Whitegate in Cork Harbour on the South coast. Owned by a consortium of multinationals, it produced products for about 40% of the late 1970s Irish market. Proposals to build another oil refinery in Dublin Bay were strongly opposed by amenity protection interests and they never came to fruition.

The 1973 oil crisis initiated interest in attempting to rely more fully on indigenous supplies. Despite further peat developments, however, there appears to be more rhetoric than substance to policies of self-reliance. Energy policy in Ireland in the late 1970s rested on a

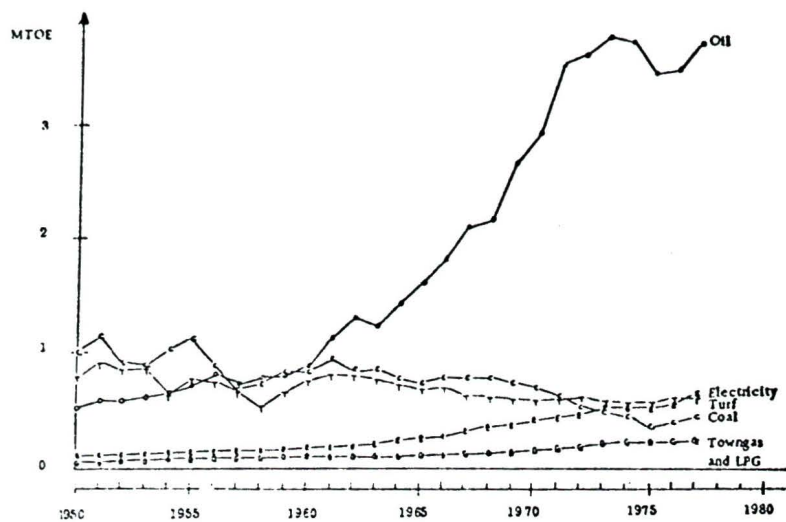


Figure 7.4 Irish Fuel Deliveries 1950-1978.

Source: Scott (1980) page 6.

TABLE 7.1

## PRIMARY ENERGY SOURCES IN IRELAND, 1950-77

Source	Percentage Shares				
	1950	1960	1970	1973	1977
Peat .....	27.9	39.9	20.3	15.4	16.5
Coal .....	47.1	33.1	16.0	8.1	7.2
Oil .....	19.1	27.1	60.0	74.0	73.6
Hydro .....	5.9	9.8	3.7	2.5	2.7
Total (MToE) ..	2.96	3.54	5.75	6.9	7.51

SOURCE: Walsh, 1979:20

TABLE 7.2

## FUEL SOURCES FOR IRISH ELECTRICITY GENERATION

Source	Percentage Shares					
	1955	1960	1965	1970	1973	1978
Oil/Coal .....	27	30	73	52	66	68
Peat .....	20	32	32	36	24	24
Hydro .....	53	38	25	12	10	8

SOURCE: Walsh, 1979:22

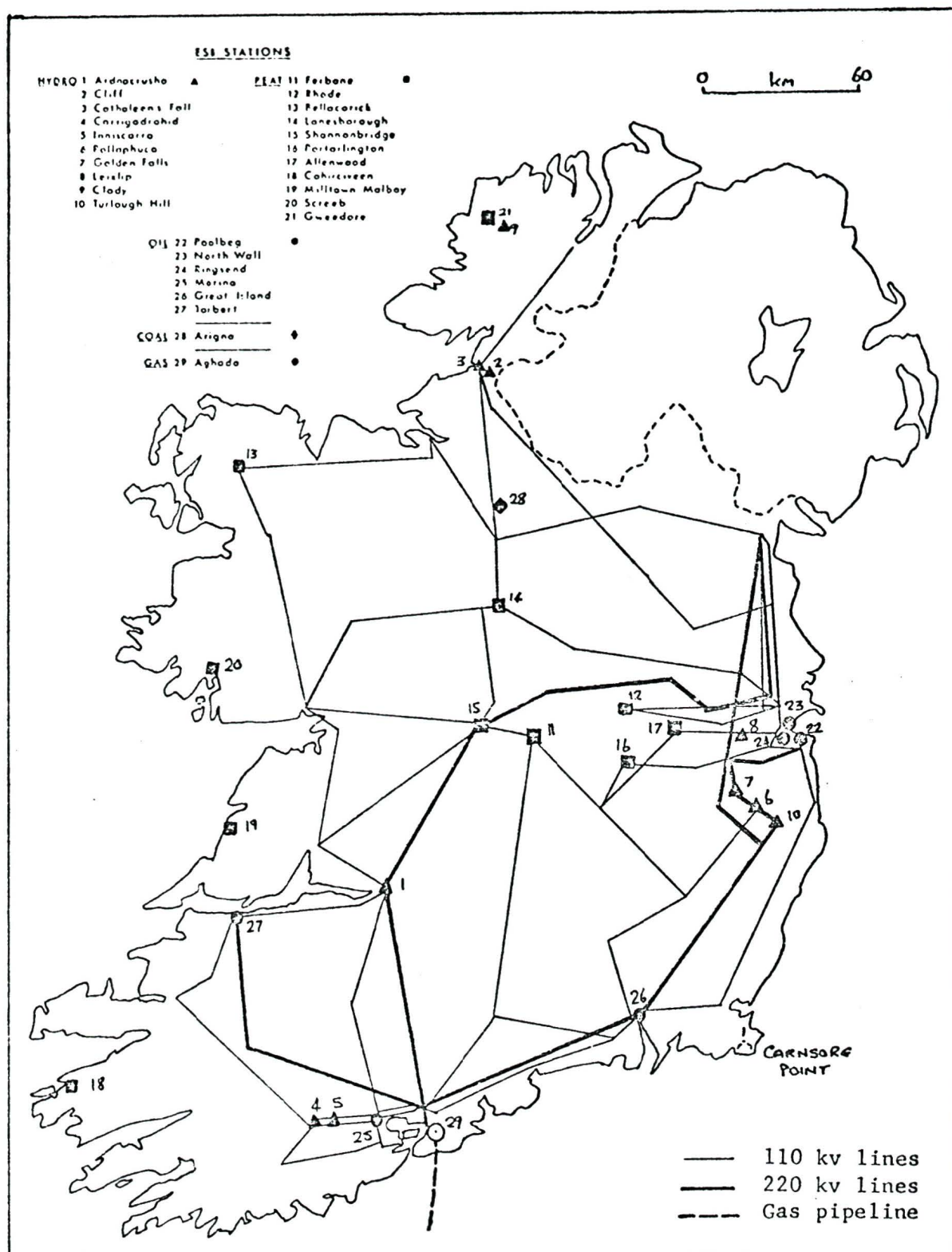


Figure 7.5 ESB Generating Stations and Principal Transmission Lines.

Source: Walsh (1979) page 21.

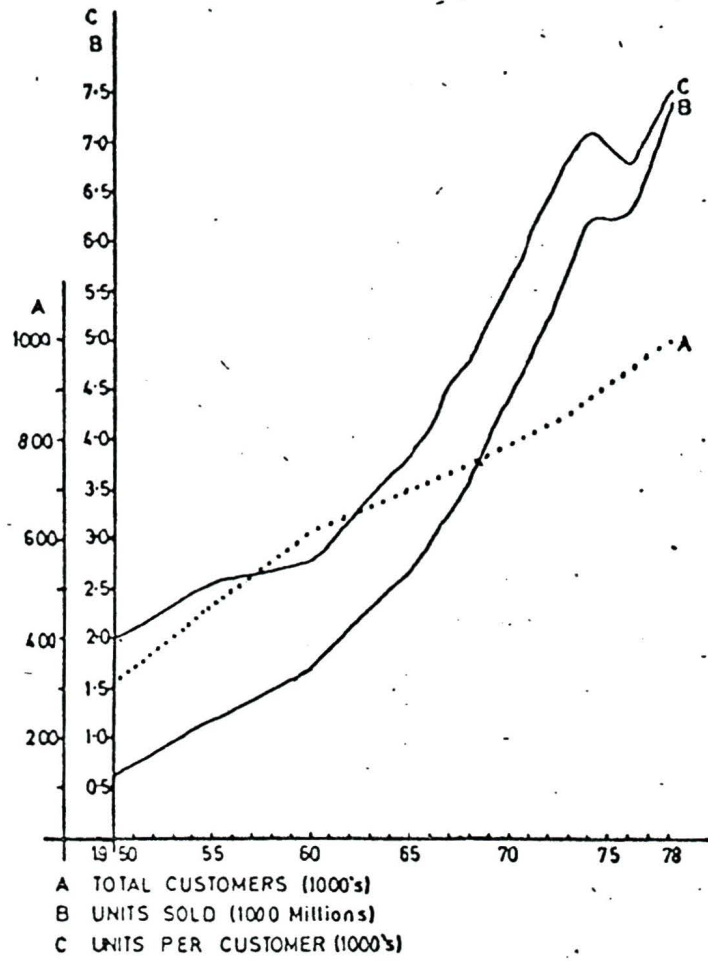


Figure 7.6 The Demand for Electricity in Ireland 1950-1978.

Source: Walsh (1979) page 22.

simple set of objectives outlined in the 1978 government Green Paper on energy.<sup>4</sup>

- (i) optimum development of indigenous resources.
- (ii) access to the cheapest markets for imported energy supplies.
- (iii) security of supply by diversification of sources.
- (iv) promotion of economy in the use of fuels.
- (v) stock-piling against emergencies.

More recent emphasis has also dealt with additional factors.

- (vi) protection of the environment.
- (vii) encouraging exploration for hydro-carbons and uranium.
- (viii) participation in research aimed at discovering and developing new energy sources.

The over reliance on imported sources of energy provides a rationale for attempting to diversify sources of supply and provide buffers to prevent disaster if a repeat of the OPEC embargo were to occur. Despite agreements to buy oil directly from abroad, Ireland remains vulnerable to the control of the large multi-national oil companies.

The EEC energy policy is also attempting to promote energy sources other than oil, much of which comes from OPEC sources. The promotion of nuclear power is part of this policy to reduce external dependency.<sup>5</sup> The pro-nuclear stance is not the unanimous position of all Euro-policy makers and some have developed ideas focusing on ideas of energy efficiency and conservation (Saint-Geours, 1979).

During the 1970s offshore exploration for oil and gas has led to periodic optimism about finding a major source of oil or gas to supply domestic demand. To date the only find of significance off the Irish coast is the Kinsale gas field which has recently come onstream. This gas is being used to supply the ESB gas powered stations in Cork and as a source of raw material in a large fertiliser plant. The expected lifetime of the field is about 20 years at an annual extraction rate of 1.1 MTOE.<sup>6</sup> Uncertainty over the possibilities of a major oil find have clouded the debate over nuclear energy which we will now examine.

## 7.5 THE NUCLEAR OPTION

The ESB maintains a watching brief on international developments in energy technology and monitored the development nuclear technology

in the 1960s. In November 1968 the ESB first announced that it was examining nuclear power as a possible method of diversifying electricity supply options (Coakley, 1969). In the late 1960s, contemplating a projected 9% per annum growth rate in electricity demand in the 1970s, and the imminent completion of an interconnection with the Northern Ireland Electricity Service (NIES) grid,<sup>7</sup> a 350 MW nuclear power station was thought to be possible by 1978 at the earliest. Coakley notes that at least a 10 year lead time is involved in bringing a nuclear station on stream due to planning and construction and training. Four people went to the U.K. in 1968 for training in nuclear technology, in accordance with the traditional ESB policy of training their own personnel to operate new technologies.

Since the initial announcement of the possibility of developing nuclear energy, plans have been changed and postponed a number of times. The initial ideas of the late 1960s were postponed in 1972 when the then minister of Transport and Power, Brian Lenihan, argued that it should be postponed until the implications of the newly discovered Kinsale natural gas field were worked out (Grogan, 1972). A new government was elected in 1973 and had to deal with the oil crisis and the subsequent oil price increases.<sup>8</sup> The new administration established a Nuclear Energy Board (NEB) to deal with regulatory matters under the Nuclear Energy Act of 1971. The government encouraged the ESB to push ahead with its plans for a nuclear station at Carnsore Point in the extreme South West of the country (Figure 7.7). The ESB duly filed for outline planning permission to the Wexford County Council in September 1974. The planning permission requested was for four 650MW units, only one of which was to be built immediately. Although at this time no technology was specified the preferred design was a PWR.<sup>9</sup> A number of objections were received by the County Council and under section 26 of the 1963 Planning Act the County Council requested more information, some of which was forthcoming.<sup>10</sup> The recession in the mid-1970s caused a decline in electricity demand and in 1975 the ESB reduced its generation construction programme by 45%. This cutback included a postponement of the nuclear plans (Walsh, 1979).

The economic upturn of 1976 led to a renewal of growth in electricity demand. Fianna Fail were reelected in 1977 and Desmond

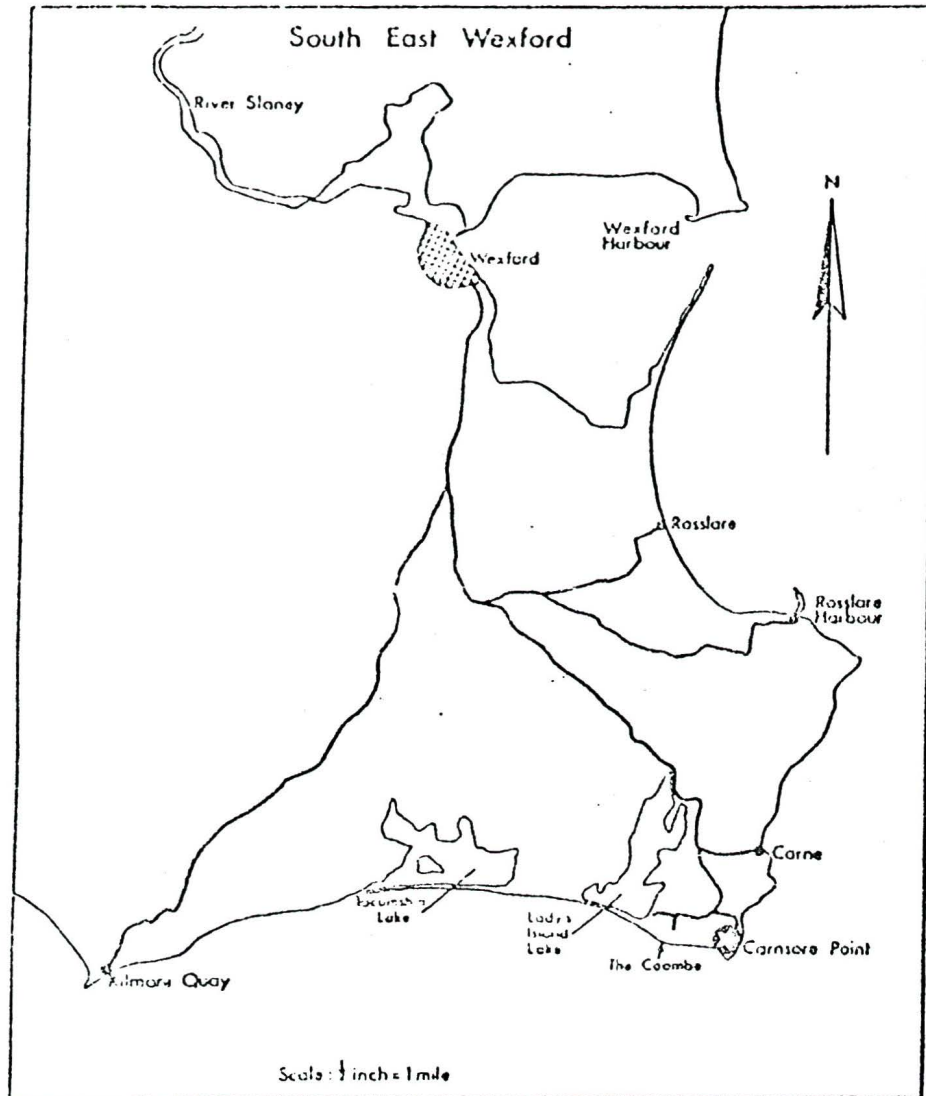


Figure 7.7 Sketch Map of the Carnsore Point Site Location.

Source: O'Sullivan ed. (1972).

O'Malley, an enthusiastic proponent of Nuclear technology became minister for Industry, Commerce and Energy, a new portfolio. In 1977 the plans for a station at Carnsore Point were once again put forward.

Nuclear Power has been claimed to be a surrogate form of nationalism (Pollak and Nelkin, 1978; Pringle and Spigelman, 1981). In the Irish case this interpretation is at least partly true too. In the growth mania of the early years of this Fianna Fail government, nuclear power seems to be seen as the consummation of the growing relationship with international capital and advanced technology which started in the late 1950s. It was seen as the symbol of national manhood. Ireland would have a shining new nuclear plant too. Controversy soon arose however, both in a Dáil debate and at the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis (annual party convention) and also in public forums over the winter of 1977-78 (see chapter 9). The national anti-nuclear movement dates from the spring of 1978 when the Friends of the Earth group was restarted in Dublin.

Subsequently the government published a discussion document on energy in July 1978 which outlined its case for nuclear power. The rationale outlined in this publication was quite simple and in keeping with the philosophy of government intervention to promote rapid economic growth. The Fianna Fail government elected in 1977 initially forecasted a 7% increase in GNP per annum for 1978, 1979 and 1980 with rapid industrial expansion hopefully providing the impetus within the economy to increase employment by 25,000 jobs per annum (Government of Ireland, 1978:22) (see Table 7.3).

A number of themes came together in the analysis of energy possibilities in the Green Paper. First, although not much emphasised in this document, are concerns with financial considerations, cheap energy is deemed essential to maintain the competitiveness of export orientated industry, the king pin of the government's growth strategy.

Our standard of living and continued well being are largely dependent upon the future availability of adequate supplies of energy at reasonable cost. In formulating energy policy we must be conscious of the fact that energy is an important cost factor in our industrial and agricultural production and that excessive energy costs will inevitably have adverse effects on our export business. For this reason we can never afford to let our energy costs be significantly higher than the energy costs of our competitors.

(Government of Ireland, 1978:9)

TABLE 7.3

## SECTORAL ECONOMIC GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Sector	Projected average annual economic growth rates	
	1978-1980	1981-1990
Industrial .....	11%	8%
Commercial.....	5%	3.5%
Domestic .....	2%	2%
Transport .....	5%	4-5%*

\*5% per annum 1981-1985; 4% per annum 1986-1990.

SOURCE: Government of Ireland, 1978:22

TABLE 7.4

## SECTORAL ENERGY DEMAND PROJECTIONS

Sector	Energy Demand (MTOE)		
	1977	1985	1990
Industry .....	2.49 (33%)	6.7 (51%)	10.4 (57%)
Domestic .....	2.45 (33%)	2.8 (21%)	3.0 (17%)
Commercial .....	0.91 (12%)	1.3 (10%)	1.6 (9%)
Transport .....	1.66 (22%)	2.4 (18%)	3.0 (17%)
Total .....	7.51	13.2	18.0

SOURCE: Government of Ireland, 1978:25

A second theme is the necessity to increase energy usage in the industrial sector, and the lions share of forecasted increased energy demand goes to this sector (Table 7.4). Flying in the face of stated EEC policies of decoupling economic growth from energy consumption increase the Green Paper boldly states:

In the past there has been a close relationship between economic growth and energy consumption, and there is every expectation that this pattern will repeat itself in the future. To opt for economic growth in the future as we have done is to opt also for significantly increased energy consumption. Industrial development is energy intensive and increases in GNP are usually accompanied by higher proportional increases in energy consumption.

(Government of Ireland, 1978:23)

The resultant forecasts (Table 7.4) suggested that by 1990 the industrial sector would be using 57% of the total energy demand. As Friends of the Earth (FoE) were quick to point out this is completely at odds with the experiences of other industrialised countries where the industrial sector rarely consumes more than 40% of total energy consumed.

The third theme in the Green Paper is a stated intention to move away from a dependence on imported oil which provided 75% of Ireland's total energy requirements in the late 1970s. This is in line with the EEC policy of reducing imported energy dependence to below 50% by 1985. In addition the effect of large energy imports on the balance of payments deficit is noted as an additional cause of concern. Having said this, however, the projections in fact advocate an increase in the use of imported oil.

The stated intention to reduce oil imports is carried over into the fourth theme; the rapid expansion of electrical power. Having forecast a large increase in industrial activity and a big increase in energy demand in the future, and compared these projections with the current situation, the authors remark;

What is expected to develop over the coming decade is a large energy gap which must be filled in one way or another.

(Government of Ireland, 1978:26)

The bulk of the Green Paper is spent outlining possibilities for filling this "gap." Suggesting that the electrical sector can more easily switch away from oil, the Green Paper forecasts an increasing swing towards electricity use. Few concrete suggestions emerge as to what

to do with the non-electric sector but two chapters deal specifically with the nuclear option. They argue not only that

The primary purpose of going ahead with the provision of a nuclear power station in Ireland would be to lessen our level of dependence on imported oil and to diversify our sources of energy supply.

(Government of Ireland, 1978:67)

but also that nuclear power is safe and is a financially competitive electricity source. As partial justification of this claim they quote recent U.K. figures on competitive generation costs showing nuclear costs to be significantly cheaper than those for coal or oil fired stations. The fact that these were historic costs and not projected cost estimates for new generation facilities was quietly ignored. A figure of £350m (1977 prices) is posited as a reasonable estimate for a 650MW station at Carnsore.

In summary it can be seen that the nuclear project was an integral part of the industrial development strategy being pursued by the government. That the reasoning was flawed, the long term economic picture all but ignored, inaccurate figures used to support projected energy use figures and many controversial statements made with no attempt to provide sources of information did not seem to matter. The euphoria of growth mania was infectious and optimism for an economic miracle rampant. But this document was in part to be the government's undoing as many critics demolished its arguments, exposed its errors and criticised its assumptions and projections.

The following month a large weekend rally was held at the site of the proposed nuclear plant attended by approximately 25,000 people. From this time until February 1979 when Mr. O'Malley finally announced that there would be a full scale public inquiry into the issue, a constant political campaign of opposition kept up. A government reshuffle in late 1979 following the resignation of Mr. Lynch as Taoiseach (Prime Minister) removed Mr. O'Malley from the energy department and his successor Mr. Colley, announced that there would yet again be a postponement. Ostensibly the reason was to await the results of the reports from the Three Mile Island accident but declining electricity demand growth rates had already weakened the case for the plant.

It is worth noting that the pro-nuclear perspective was not the

only one taken by government departments and agencies. The Department of Economic Planning and Development was more sympathetic to alternative energy strategies. The Irish National Science Council published a study on solar options (Lalor, 1975). The National Physical Planning Institute (An Foras Forbatha) published a detailed study on insulation (Minogue, 1976), Crutchfield criticised the nuclear option on safety and environmental grounds in a paper published by the Economic and Social Research Institute (1978) while the coalition government commissioned a study on conservation measures (Henry, 1976).

Demonstrations and protest actions against nuclear power have continued with other issues such as uranium mining, toxic industries, waste disposal and the dumping of nuclear waste off the Irish coast broadening the focus of the movement as the Carnsore proposal became less immediate.

In 1981 nuclear power had faded from the scene and the ESB announced that it no longer figured in its plans while the 1981 coalition government announced that it would not develop nuclear power as long as "environmental" problems remain.<sup>11</sup>

## 7.6 SUMMARY

The 1970s were a time of profound change in Irish life as the impact of industrial development, urbanisation and deep structural change struck the conservative traditions. A growing young population looking for jobs has focused successive government policies toward economic growth as the method of providing the needed opportunities. The influx of foreign capital has led to increasing problems of dependency and underdevelopment as the Irish economy has become exposed to international economic fluctuations (Regan and Walsh, 1975; Walsh, 1980). In particular Ireland has become vulnerable to foreign control of its energy supplies and nuclear power was one of the proposed solutions to this in the late 1970s. The proposals were not kindly received in many quarters and the next chapters outline the history of the opposition. The focus is on the opponents and their actions, rather than the institutional actions and actors in the controversy.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

- <sup>1</sup>The best single source on recent Irish history is Lyons, 1973.
- <sup>2</sup>The figures are approximately one representative per 20,000 voters. See Chubb, 1970.
- <sup>3</sup>See An Taisce 1:2 (April/May 1977) and 3:1 (February/April 1979) for summaries of how the planning system functions.
- <sup>4</sup>Government of Ireland, 1978, pp. 8-9.
- <sup>5</sup>See The European Community and the Energy Problem, 1978 and 1980 editions. European Documentation, 1978-1 and 2-1980, Luxembourg. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities.
- <sup>6</sup>Million Tons of Oil Equivalent. The total use of energy in Ireland in 1977 was 7.51 MTOE (Government of Ireland, 1978:17).
- <sup>7</sup>The link was completed in 1970 but blown up six times in the period of the next five years. It has not operated since 1975. See The Irish Times, 29 April 1981. Special supplement p. 2.
- <sup>8</sup>This was a Labour Party and Fine Gael coalition from 1973 to 1977.
- <sup>9</sup>The ESB originally advertised in the Irish Press on 23 August 1974 that they were about to apply for outline planning permission for a nuclear power plant at Carnsore Point. The formal letter of application and a brief general description of the proposed station was filed in September. This stated that a PWR was first priority followed by a BWR and a HWR. In practice this probably meant a Westinghouse, General Electric or CANDU in that order.
- <sup>10</sup>In a letter of 30 September 1974 the County Council requested further information on the details of the site layout. The ESB filed a site plan in October. In addition the County Council wanted information on land ownership, the impact on a local graveyard, the availability of fresh water on site and materials on the safety of the plant from the NEB and the Department of Transport and Power.
- <sup>11</sup>The ESB statement was made in an interview with the new chief executive of the ESB broadcast on RTE TV news 6 April 1981. The coalition policy statement as Quoted in The Irish Times, 1 July 1981.



## CHAPTER 8

THE EARLY OPPONENTS: OPPOSITION AND  
PRESSURE GROUPS 1974-19758.1 INTRODUCTION

The opposition to nuclear power occurred in two fairly distinct phases in Ireland. In the early 1970s the population in the Wexford area were generally in favour of a nuclear plant (O'Sullivan, 1972). In 1974 when the plans were pushed ahead a few people became concerned about the impacts of the proposed plant and the unresolved questions about nuclear safety and waste disposal. In Dublin two groups also became concerned, forming a branch of Friends of the Earth and a lobby group called CONSERVE which formulated ideas on alternative energy strategies and conservation. This chapter outlines this phase of the opposition. It focuses on the ideas that this pressure group expressed and its approach to the issue. This will be contrasted in subsequent chapters with the later national ANM whose roots lie in this first phase of opposition.

8.2 PATTERNS OF LOCAL OPPOSITION

"The local opposition" provides a starting place for a number of studies of the opponents of nuclear power (Lewis, 1972; Nelkin, 1971; Sharaf, 1978) (see also section 6.6). The local oppositions have a number of noticeable characteristics which appear to occur with minor variations in most cases. Close parallels can be found with opposition to other large technological projects (Nelkin, 1977, 1979).

The typical pattern of events is structured into a number of stages. Initial enthusiasm follows an announcement that the plant is going to be built. Local businesses (often with the notable exception of tourist and amenity-related concerns) respond favourably, seeing

the influx of jobs and business as an opportunity. Local dignitaries are favourably impressed by the new employment and business prospects and the prestige that go with a major development. Concern is often limited to a few outspoken critics and those whose economic and leisure interests will be disrupted. A group labeled "Parochial Opponents" by Sharaf may oppose the projected development because of fears of the impact on the social life of the local community. (Nuclear plants are often sited in rural areas with small and conservative settlements.) The opposition coalesces gradually around a group of concerned citizens who are unsatisfied by the assurances given by the utilities and government spokespeople. These people hold meetings, organise a committee and do their own research. A common method of getting information is to organise public debates on the issue. Polarisation rather than consensus is often the result of public debates (Hirsch and Nowotny, 1977; Mazur, 1973). Initially at least, the opponents are often the more experienced and educated people with a sense of political acumen who challenge the received wisdom of the conventional viewpoint.

Contact with other groups reveals others opposed to nuclear development and supplements the information gleaned from newspaper clippings and the local library. They also find a few scientists and experts who are critical of the development and this adds acrimony to the public debates and meetings. Participation in regulatory hearings in many cases occupies a lot of opposition groups' time and effort (see Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974) and they are often forced to use graduate students and less well known experts at hearings. They also run into problems getting legal representation. The limited opportunities for public input in the siting decisions and licensing hearings leads to a questioning of the political basis of the decision-making processes and reveals a duplicity of interests and a system heavily stacked in favour of the nuclear industry. These groups tend to cling to the view that enough information widely enough disseminated will vindicate their stand and ensure that the industry is controlled. Public petitioning and demonstrations often accompany the local opposition's attempts to gain leverage on the process through court and legislative action.

In the late 1970s in the U.S. and earlier in Europe the larger

movement against nuclear power became involved in local issues. These ideological opponents often used direct action tactics and site occupations in their campaigns, which are sometimes ambiguously supported by the local opposition who prefer non-confrontational and legal interventions to protest. In most cases, however, the local community contains considerable segments who are not opposed to the nuclear plans.

The local opposition in Wexford in Ireland has many of the above features although allowance must be made for the specific historical situation.

### 8.3 LOCAL CONCERNS AND THE FORMATION OF THE NUCLEAR SAFETY ASSOCIATION

In early 1971 it was learned in Wexford that Carnsore Point was one of the possible sites for the ESBs planned nuclear power plant. A group of people from the South Eastern Science Council, the local branch of An Taisce, the Junior Chamber of Commerce and local development associations formed a study group in July 1971 to investigate the effects that the plant might have on the area. This group included a doctor and a number of scientifically qualified people. They studied the literature on Nuclear Power, visited the Wylfa nuclear power station in Wales, studied the Carnsore Point site and its amenities, and had discussions with the ESBs nuclear project team. They published their findings in 1972 in a 55 page report (O'Sullivan, 1972) which concluded that a well planned nuclear power station should be supported by the community. They opined that stringent safeguards would ensure that there would be no danger to the public from radiation and that apart from a shortage of fresh water, the site is an excellent one. They argued that the provision of 800 construction jobs and 200 long term jobs in addition to the multiplier effect would provide a significant boost to the local economy. They went as far as to suggest that this new technology could provide a focal point for tourists! While the bibliography following the first chapter shows that the study group was aware that literature critical of nuclear power existed, they concluded that the inherent problems could be overcome by good design.

In a subsequent statement they reiterated this stand but emphasised the need for openness in the planning process and full availability of

information to the public.<sup>1</sup> The attitudes in this group parallel Otway, et al.'s (1978) findings in Austria that those in favour of nuclear development relate it to progress and economic benefits.

The study group lobbied public representatives to gain their support for the project in Carnsore. In March 1972 the Wexford People argued that nuclear power would provide much needed employment and warned that the alternative site in Easkey Co. Sligo was being supported by the then minister of Transport and Power, Brian Lenihan. They suggested that a major campaign should be organised in the area to ensure that the plant was built in Wexford. The paper quoted a local woman as saying;

It would show incoming industrialists that we were willing to have the place industrialised, and it would be a big help if we joined the EEC.<sup>2</sup>

In May 1973 the study group presented a copy of its report to the new minister of Transport and Power, Peter Barry who announced that the siting of a nuclear power plant would be a government decision.<sup>3</sup>

In August 1973 the study group was again promoting the plant, this time in reaction to the announcement that the Kinsale natural gas field finds might postpone the development of nuclear power:

The study group will continue to press local T.D.s, all of whom have pledged their support, to do all in their power to procure this major development in Carne.<sup>4</sup>

In April 1974 the ESB announced that Carnsore was their preferred site for the project, subject to: the successful completion of their studies on the site, to Government approval, licensing by the NEB and their receiving of planning permission from Wexford County Council.<sup>5</sup> The then current County development plan had already reserved the area for a nuclear power station so it is clear that the County council favoured its development.<sup>6</sup> In the subsequent months opposition began to be heard in the Wexford area. Doubts had existed before this time and a few informal meetings between people in the Rosslare area had occurred late in 1973.<sup>7</sup>

The initial focus of concern was based in the Rosslare Development Association who held a meeting soon after the ESBs announcement of Carnsore as its preferred site.<sup>8</sup> The Association contacted local organisations in the south of the County to organise a debate on the

whole issue. The Association insisted that the action was not a protest against the station but merely an attempt to hear the negative side of the debate which they thought had been glossed over. The chairperson argued that the 200 full time jobs would be for highly skilled technicians and hence would probably not employ local people.<sup>9</sup>

The planned meeting took place a few weeks later in the Gulf Hotel in Rosslare with an attendance of 100 people and was chaired by Harvey Boxwell. Dr. Austin O'Sullivan, the editor of the study group report summarised the findings of the study although he did say that more information would be needed before a final decision could be taken. Brian Hurley, a member of the newly formed Dublin Friends of the Earth group and a member of the staff of the University College Dublin, Community Studies Department also addressed the meeting explaining the different hazards involved with differing nuclear technologies. A local reporter commented on the youthful composition of the audience and noted that :

a considerable amount of the original enthusiasm for the plant has turned into questioning; and at the moment all the questions are negative. The safety guarantees are giving scant satisfaction to those who will have to wake up in the shade of the reactor.<sup>10</sup>

After this meeting Harvey Boxwell, a member of the Rosslare development association took the first steps to establish the Nuclear Safety Committee (NSC). This committee started researching safety and environmental concerns which they considered the original study group had dealt with inadequately. An influential debate was held in June 1974 between Sean Coakley of the ESB project department and Dr. McAuley of the physics department in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) in the Talbot Hotel. The speeches were followed by a series of questions from the floor which indicated a deep suspicion of the proposed plant. The NSC made a detailed record of the proceedings and the transcript which was widely circulated reveals many of the concerns that were being debated internationally were also of concern in Wexford.<sup>11</sup>

Mr. Coakley opened the debate by suggesting that nuclear power was the most economic source of future electricity generation given the expense of imported oil and the uncertainties about offshore hydro carbon deposits in Irish waters. He argued that nuclear technology was

widely accepted internationally and would provide half of the EECs electricity by the 1980s. The major problems with nuclear power were in the areas of radiation exposure and safety. The LWR technology is the most likely technology to be used by the ESB if it builds a reactor but it is subject to a number of conditions; no physical problems with the site, satisfactory negotiations with the landowners at the site, a general consensus of the population at large, satisfying the NEB and government standards, and natural gas not becoming available on a large scale. He then outlined a series of hazards possibly associated with a LWR and discussed briefly the possibility of a major accident which he argued was extremely small. Asserting that the ESB wasn't doing anything new, he assured the audience that the ESB wasn't interested in covering up any facts.

Dr. McAuley took a standpoint strongly opposed to the construction of the nuclear plant. Referring to the WASH 740 update which had recently been released in the U.S., he argued that however small the risk of an accident might be the consequences would be so large that the construction of a reactor would be inadvisable. He also outlined incidents of nuclear waste leakages from storage sites and concluded by arguing that Ireland should wait until fusion technology had been developed before becoming involved in nuclear technology. In reply Mr. Coakley suggested that Ireland could not opt out of the international economy and that it had to remain competitive. Because nuclear technology was a cheaper way of producing electricity than oil, he concluded it was needed.

An extended question period followed and raised many issues that were to remain at the centre of the debate in the coming years. One questioner wanted to know if Ireland would be dependent on the U.S. for uranium supplies. In reply Mr. Coakley assured the audience that sources were widely dispersed and secure supplies would be available until the end of the century. He stated that he was happier with a LWR than a Magnox design reactor but Dr. McAuley insisted that this was purely an economic decision and that the Magnox designs were safer. In answer to questions about the effects of radiation on plant and marine life Dr. McAuley expressed concern that the safe levels were constantly being changed by regulatory authorities and that any increase

in radiation was dangerous. As to the ESB keeping its promises, Mr. Coakley reminded the audience of the watchdog role of the NEB.

The lack of trust in government and utilities that features so strongly elsewhere raised its head in this forum too in a question from the floor.<sup>12</sup>

Is there any use in having this meeting? Has it all been already decided? Is the deal already done?

With the benefit of hindsight, Mr. Coakley's reply seems somewhat ironic.<sup>13</sup>

The building of the station is subject to a consensus of opinion. If the people of Ireland don't want a nuclear power station, they won't have it. The ESB just wants to make electricity. The public have the power to stop this.

Dr. McAuley argued that a great danger existed in political pressure, forcing the NEB into prematurely judging the issue while Mr. Coakley blandly asserted that the NEB could not be pressured. Under questioning he admitted that the government could compulsorily purchase the land.<sup>14</sup> Dr. McAuley pointed out that there had been major accidents in the past and that the compensation available was limited to the EEC figure of £2,000M (\$4,000M).

The morality of nuclear power was questioned and the reply is indicative of why the clash of ideologies in the controversy is so heated.

Question: Is it fair to hand down the poisonous waste to our grandchildren and future generations for thousands of years?

Mr. Coakley: That is a moral question and ethical question. Our job is to make electricity.<sup>15</sup>

And later, on the same theme;

Question: Where is it planned to store these waste products which remain dangerous for 24,000 years...?

Mr. Coakley: The nuclear waste will be exported.

Question: Have we in Ireland the right to keep our country free of this poisonous substance by exporting it to another country and expecting the people there to accept the risk? (applause).<sup>16</sup>

Mr. Coakley's response clearly indicates that the ESB considered its responsibilities to exclude such considerations as ethics and morality, a matter of considerable concern to opponents of nuclear power development. Coakley was to stick to this position in the coming controversy arguing that he was merely providing information. In a later report he states,

It is not the intention in this report to discuss the broad social and philosophical questions, such topics are in the realm of national debate. However, it is hoped that the factual information contained in this report may be useful in informing people about nuclear energy and in allaying the extreme fears generated by the more uninformed anti-nuclear power protagonists.

(Coakley, 1979:2)

Throughout the nuclear controversy there has remained a belief that if all the information is made available, then a rational decision will be reached. Both sides apparently believe that their position is the rational position, in the sense of an objectively "correct" stance.

In reply to further questions about the moral nature of the decision about nuclear power Mr. Coakley replied to the Wexford meeting that the people should make up their own minds and make their opinions clear to their public representatives. Other questions raised at the meeting included the possibility of hijacking the station and the possibility of earthquake damage.

The question of energy conservation was also raised:

Question: Elected representatives may be fully aware of moral questions but they may not make the right decisions. Economics appear to be the overriding consideration. Is an energy conservation programme a workable alternative?  
Chairman: I don't think that is a fair question. It is our business, each one of us, to face up to this moral question and make a decision.

Mr. Coakley: I agree, people must face this moral and ethical question and make their own decision. Getting people to make this decision could be very difficult. An energy conservation programme would not be a question of just not using any more energy. People want their domestic electricity and all that goes with it. It would be a question, though, not of increasing their use of power but actually giving up what they already have. But I stress there is danger already from Britain's power stations so why baulk at our own? Anyway, modern life is full of accidents, and dangers of all kinds.

Dr. McAuley: A nuclear accident is a danger on quite a new and different scale.<sup>17</sup>

Conservation is seen here as a question of personal choice, and, as was to be the case repeatedly, a question of doing without a comfortable lifestyle. This points to a fatalistic streak in the proponent's case where they see nuclear power as something inevitable and the alternatives as not being serious options. The opponents of nuclear power question

both the desirability and the inevitability of "progress" in the sense of continued large scale technological development of which nuclear power is the most obvious symbol.

In the later stages of the Wexford meeting, Brian Cleeve (a well known Irish writer) who was chairing the meeting asked for a show of hands revealing a strong rejection by the audience of the nuclear proposals. Some of those present protested that they hadn't had time to make up their minds and that the show of hands was premature.

In the summer of 1974 the NSC organised a number of other meetings in the south of the county and Harvey Boxwell, who was then the chairperson of the committee, contributed a stream of letters to the newspapers on the results of his research on technical aspects of nuclear reactors.<sup>18</sup> Local organisations took stands on the issue in public. The local branch of Muintir na Tire<sup>19</sup> expressed its concerns about the effects of radioactivity on fertility and the problems of nuclear safety.<sup>20</sup> The trades council supported the project as did the Wexford tenants council on the grounds that it would provide jobs for their members.<sup>21</sup> In preparation for a public meeting in Broadway village late in July the NSC drafted a statement which unambiguously stated their philosophy and outlined their reasons for concern. In combination with the record of the debate in Wexford this document outlines the issues that have concerned the committee ever since. The opening two paragraphs put things bluntly:<sup>22</sup>

We believe that all of us, who have the time and the capacity, have not only the right, but the duty, to form an opinion, singly and collectively, and that we should base our individual opinions on facts, and then express our opinions in the democratic way, through our elected representatives at county level, and later, if necessary, at national level.

Regarding the ESB's commitment to nuclear energy the statement continues;

... they say they have nothing to hide, we feel that we certainly cannot depend on them to give us the more unpalatable and embarrassing facts unless we insist on having them.... They seem to be basing their policy purely on economics and are now dedicated to selling this policy to the people of this country by minimising the dangers and dismissing the moral and ethical questions that arise.<sup>23</sup>

The statement points to omissions in the original study group document and outlined developments in the controversy abroad. It quoted at length

from the Irish Times editorial calling for a national seminar on the subject.<sup>24</sup> This statement set out four basic aims for the committee: to collect information, to disseminate it widely in particular to public representatives, to sound out the NEB and talk to them, and to extract three promises from the ESB, NEB and the Government. First, they wanted no commitment to be made to build a nuclear power station until the people and their representatives had had a chance to think out the implications; second that the ESB should not proceed with installation until detailed plans are laid before the people of Wexford and all their questions answered; and third they called for a postponement of the nuclear plant and for priority to be given to the development of other conventional sources of energy first.

In a later paper the NSC outlined its aims and the organisational format which converted the group into an association (The Nuclear Safety Association (NSA)) with regular meetings, an elected working committee membership dues etc.<sup>25</sup> Despite this formal setup the committee continued to operate on an ad hoc basis and the newsletters were infrequent. The NSC made a strong statement against the nuclear plans at a major seminar organised by the ESB in July, but the audience which included four T.D.s and many community leaders were apparently unimpressed, favouring the project because of perceived employment opportunities.<sup>26</sup> The two political parties in the coalition government, Labour and Fine Gael continued to support the Carnsore proposals.<sup>27</sup> The NSA had by now developed many of the attributes of a small pressure group with a lobbying and information dissemination function. The radical criticisms of the system which are part and parcel of the larger ANM had not yet emerged. The political dimensions were to emerge later. Despite some of the questions that were asked in their statements the NSA emphasises the legitimacy of the existing system by their approach to educating the public and the community leaders and representatives. There is no mention of a public inquiry or a referendum which were later important objectives. They operated on the tacit assumption that if enough information (their information) reached the public, and hence the public representatives, then reason would prevail and the plant would be at least postponed. Despite the presence of the NSA, a popular local councillor, Leo Carty, claimed that 95% of the population supported the

project in August and the Trades council reiterated their stance in favour of nuclear power.<sup>28</sup>

At the end of August the ESB took the formal step of applying for planning permission (see section 7.5). They published the required notice in The Irish Press on 23 August 1974 and the NSA called a special meeting a week later to discuss its response. At that meeting the secretary, Helen Scrine, argued that the 1963 Planning Act was inadequate to cover the moral and ethical objections to the nuclear technology. The NSA decided to object to the granting of outline planning permission on eight grounds.<sup>29</sup>

1. A nuclear plant conflicted with the high amenity nature of the area.
2. Cancer and leukemia risks to the local population.
3. The bird sanctuary at Lady's Island Lake would be disrupted.
4. Radioactive waste constituted a national security risk which the 1963 act was not capable of dealing with.
5. The added fresh water consumption would aggravate the already limited local supplies.
6. The build up of radiation in local ecosystems presented a long-term hazard.
7. Tourism would be severely disrupted.
8. No provision is made for the long term storage of radioactive waste if export proved impossible.

The inadequacy of local planning legislation to deal with the full impacts of major developments is a recurring theme in nuclear matters (Ebbin and Kaspar, 1974). The Windscale Inquiry in 1977 in Britain was "called in" under local planning laws and consequently failed to deal with larger scale policy issues and major off site impacts on which much of the opponents case was based (Pearce, et al., 1979; Pearce, 1979). This problem has reemerged in the later controversy over uranium mining in Donegal (see chapter 13).

The county council requested more information from the ESB some of which it subsequently supplied. Outline planning permission has not in fact been granted and seems unlikely to be in the near future as the plans are shelved.<sup>30</sup>

The debate continued through the winter of 1974-1975 with the

highlight for the NSA coming in February 1975 when two local students collected over 2,200 signatures against the nuclear plant in two weeks and presented them to the County secretary.<sup>31</sup> In October of 1975 the ESB announced that it was postponing the development of the plant due to the economic situation which had reduced the increase in demand for electricity. This marks the end of the first distinct phase of the controversy. The possibility of renewed debate when the economy recovered from the economic slump of the mid 1970s remained and the NSA remained intact and continued its watching brief on nuclear developments. Before turning to deal with the second phase of the controversy which was to prove to be very different we will examine the other foci of opposition which emerged in 1974.

#### 8.4 ENVIRONMENTALISTS AND ALTERNATIVE ENERGY ADVOCATES

While the NSA provided a focus for concern which gradually turned into opposition, two groups came together in Dublin voicing concerns about the hazards of nuclear power and advocating alternative energy strategies.

In Dublin a Friends of the Earth group was established in 1974 and produced a series of information leaflets on nuclear power late in that year (Friends of the Earth, Ireland, 1974). These dealt with the technical details, history and unreliability of nuclear technology, the effects of radioactivity, and questions of insurance and alternative energy strategies. Friends of the Earth (FoE) policy at this stage was to oppose the introduction of a LWR in Ireland until the technology was further evaluated and the ECCS and waste storage problem resolved. They advocated contacting local representatives and informing them of the issues as well as personal energy conserving lifestyles. Brian Hurley, the coordinator of the Energy policy group of FoE addressed a number of meetings in Wexford in 1974 and provided the NSC with expertise and information in the early stages. In their short leaflet on the alternatives to nuclear power, they raise the possibilities of using renewable energy sources and call for the use of industrial co-generation techniques to feed electricity into the grid. These approaches had been substantially neglected by the NSA as they focused on the safety aspects and local impacts.

In an attempt to expand the NSA into a larger and more effective lobby organisation, a group calling itself the Council for Nuclear Safety and Energy Resources Conservation (CONSERVE) was formed in Dublin in January 1975. This was a group of mainly technically qualified individuals and people with a professional interest in alternative energy strategies who they set themselves a somewhat different agenda. Their four objectives emphasised conservation of energy and changing institutional structures to promote a national energy policy. Marked by a call for increased state control of energy resources the objectives were;<sup>32</sup>

1. To campaign for a national energy policy which conserves fossil fuel resources whether native or imported, avoids hazardous technologies such as uranium fission and makes maximum economic use of waste heat.
2. To press for the over-riding in the national interest of commercial and institutional barriers to the conservation of energy as a resource.
3. To press for increasing participation by the state in the ownership and control of all fossil fuel resources.
4. To press for the establishment of a National Energy Authority, to co-ordinate the supply and distribution of electricity and low-grade heat, gas, bottled gas, oil, and other fuel in order to decrease the cost to the consumer.

The groups activities were

... directed to bringing about legislative changes through the influence of educated public opinion and reasoned arguments on the elected representatives at local and national level.<sup>33</sup>

Dr. Roy Johnson of Trinity College Dublin acted as convenor for a provisional committee of six people from Dublin and Wexford. A series of meetings were held in 1975 to produce a memorandum for circulation to public representatives. This document was completed in July (Johnson, 1975) and argued that nuclear power is dangerous and inefficient. It also outlined the institutional and legislative barriers that existed which limited the development and efficient use of primary energy sources. It suggested that practical measures must be taken rather than mere exhortation to conserve energy (at that time the Department of Transport and Power was running a series of television commercials on the theme of "use energy wisely"). It argued for the decentralisation

of electricity generation and the industrial cogeneration of heat and power. Combined heat and power stations were advocated while it warned against wasting high grade natural gas on electricity generation.

This document is noticeable because it introduces ideas of energy analysis and end-use considerations which underlie the ideas of alternative energy strategies. These ideas were to be used later by groups like FoE to criticise the case for nuclear power. It further advocates the creation of separate independent centres of energy expertise and major changes in electricity pricing policy. It also suggests that the NEB be made independent of the Department of Transport and Power. A number of people connected with this group were later to become involved in the formation of the Irish branch of the Solar Energy Society (SESI). The roots of alternative energy ideas were set in 1975 in Dublin. Another document foreshadowed future developments. The largest Irish trade union, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (ITGWU) published a document on energy policy in 1975 (ITGWU, 1975). This emphasised the problems with nuclear technology and advocated a consideration of social factors including manpower training. They argued that nuclear power might prove a useful source of power but that it would not help to develop the skills of the Irish workforce. As yet, the ITGWU was not committed to opposing nuclear power. Another point made was that despite the crucial importance of the energy question, there was no formal government policy document in existence, and that the ESB's obsession with nuclear power prevented their consideration of other aspects of energy policy. The Confederation of Irish Industry had produced a policy document in 1974 which had been aware of some conservation issues but had assumed that energy growth would continue as before the oil crisis.<sup>34</sup> The Institute of Engineers in Ireland had held a seminar on the subject in 1974 too and also argued for expansion of energy sources.<sup>35</sup>

## 8.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion it is evident that the pattern of events in the Wexford area closely parallels local controversies elsewhere. Initial local enthusiasm and support from establishment interests in the early stages is followed by growing suspicion among concerned and informed

local people. This suspicion hardened into trenchant criticism as the NSA started doing its own research and organising meetings and public debates. The trades and tenants organisations supported the project because of the expected employment opportunities. On the national scene, environmental and alternative energy issues were raised challenging the supply expansion approaches of the conventional energy planning wisdom. They introduced ideas of energy efficiency and conservation. They also advocated increased national control over energy resources in contrast to the increasing dependence on foreign sources and technology. The ITGWU introduced the social dimension to the energy policy debate.

There is no doubt that the proposed plant was postponed because of economic reasons rather than any actions of the NSA or other groups. However, they had alerted the public to the fact that all was not well with the nuclear plans. Their objections were noted by the county council when it requested further information from the ESB. Without the opposition the county council might have looked more favourably on the ESB application immediately.

When the plans were revived two years later by the new government the opposition took very different forms but the ground work for technical objections to nuclear power had already been laid by NSA, CONSERVE and FoE. The next chapter outlines the lead up to, and the history of this second phase of the controversy, aspects of which are examined in detail in subsequent chapters.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

- <sup>1</sup> Nuclear Power Study Group, undated, 2pp.
- <sup>2</sup> The Wexford People, 24 February 1972.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., 11 May 1973.
- <sup>4</sup> Toddy Power, chairman of the Study Group, as quoted by The Wexford People, 14 August 1973.
- <sup>5</sup> The other sites that received consideration were: Easkey, Co Sligo, Kilrush, Co. Clare, Salterstown, Co. Louth, and Whiting Bay, Co. Waterford (Government of Ireland, 1978:68).
- <sup>6</sup> The Wexford People, 26 April 1974.
- <sup>7</sup> Interview.
- <sup>8</sup> Late in April an ESB spokesperson told The Wexford People that if site investigations proved satisfactory, building would start late in 1975 or early in 1976 (The Wexford People, 3 May 1974, see also 10 May 1974).
- <sup>9</sup> The Wexford People, 10 May 1974.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., 31 May 1974.
- <sup>11</sup> Memorandum of a Public Debate held on 28 June 1974 at the Talbot Hotel, Wexford. Nuclear Safety Committee, Mimeo., 9 pp.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 6.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 7.
- <sup>14</sup> In fact the ESB was still negotiating to buy the land as late as 1977.
- <sup>15</sup> Memorandum of the Public Debate on 28 June 1974, p. 6.
- <sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 7.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 7-8.
- <sup>18</sup> The Wexford People, 28 June 1974; 12 July 1974; 26 July 1974.
- <sup>19</sup> Muintir na Tire (people of the land) is an educational and social organisation founded in the 1930s at the height of the corporatist and vocationalist influence in Ireland and has widespread membership in rural areas (see Brown, 1981).
- <sup>20</sup> The Wexford People, 12 July 1974.

- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., 26 July 1974; 2 August 1974.
- <sup>22</sup>NSC statement, 25 July 1974, p. 1.
- <sup>23</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup>The Irish Times, 27 July 1974.
- <sup>25</sup>NSA, "Basic Statement of Position and Aims," undated, mimeo.
- <sup>26</sup>The Irish Independent, 30 July 1974.
- <sup>27</sup>The Wexford People, 16 August 1974.
- <sup>28</sup>Ibid., 9 August 1974.
- <sup>29</sup>The grounds of objection outlined here are as reported by The Irish Independent, 30 August 1974.
- <sup>30</sup>Personal correspondence with the County Manager, May 1981.
- <sup>31</sup>The Wexford People, 28 February 1975.
- <sup>32</sup>Press statement, 16 January 1975. CONSERVE, mimeo., p. 1.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>34</sup>Confederation of Irish Industry, 1974.
- <sup>35</sup>Institute of Engineers in Ireland, 1974.



## CHAPTER 9

THE SECOND ROUND: THE NUCLEAR DEBATE AND THE  
NATIONAL OPPOSITION MOVEMENT9.1 INTRODUCTION

Internationally the spearhead of the ANM has taken an extra-parliamentary form mainly because it challenges the ideology of growth and the conventional assumptions underlying much of the institutionalised political discourse in the Western world. The ideological challenge at least initially in most cases, found its supporters outside the major political parties amongst disillusioned ecologists and various Marxist and New Left groups. Consequently, the established political groupings have found it difficult to get to grips with the debate and in some cases have failed to take the protest seriously until they were forced to. In the Irish case the debate on energy policy and in particular on the nuclear issue occurred in two places. First there was the debate between the political parties, the established institutions and pressure groups. This was supplemented by a more radical debate in the autonomous anti-nuclear movement. The two were interconnected at times, but the ANM often ignored, or had at least ambivalent reactions, to the "establishment" debate which often focussed simply on how to get more energy to use in the future, rather than on the deep political questions of how Ireland came to be in the situation of 'needing' the forecasted energy and what kind of a society would be desirable for the future.

This chapter outlines in detail both the "establishment" debate and the course of the mass movement which emerged in 1978 in opposition to nuclear power. Although the histories are different they are outlined in parallel here to show how they relate chronologically (Table 9.1 summarises the main events discussed here).

## 9.2 THE INTERVENING YEARS

The Irish economy recovered in 1976 and 1977 from the economic slump of 1974 and 1975 and concomitantly energy demand increased.<sup>1</sup> Fianna Fail, out of government since 1973, won the June 1977 general election and gained a large majority in the Dail. Armed with a very optimistic programme for economic expansion, heavily dependent on foreign borrowing, they foresaw a golden age of economic progress ahead. The plans inevitably called for an increase in energy consumption and before long the new energy minister, Desmond O'Malley, was keenly promoting nuclear power. The nuclear option had not been mentioned in any detail during the election and a wave of concern swept through opponents in the Autumn of 1977.

Before the election the NEB had moved to spacious new offices in Hatch Street in Dublin and its first chairman, Professor C.T.C. Dillon had moved on to become the ESB's chairman. The NEB's first secretary had also moved to the ESB while Dr. T. Murray moved in the opposite direction. Personnel changes like this one have been recurring events in other nuclear establishments around the globe (Bupp and Derian, 1978; Metzger, 1972) and have led critics to doubt seriously the impartiality of regulatory agencies. Irish Business commented acidly,<sup>22</sup>

Certainly the appointment of Professor Dillon from chairmanship of the Nuclear Energy Commission to chairman of the ESB is an indication that the government views both bodies as synonymous when in fact one is supposed to be the watchdog of the other's infant nuclear division.

This attitude was shared by all three of the major political parties, so that opposition, when it did occur, appeared outside the conventional party political system, much as it has done in many other countries (Nelkin and Pollak, 1981).

The nuclear debate did not entirely cease during 1976 and 1977 although with the postponement of the ESB plans the immediacy was removed. Articles continued to appear in the media on the topic both supporting and opposing nuclear power.<sup>3</sup> Dr. Robert Blackith of TCD, who played a major role later, emerged on the scene in 1975 and published his critical book on the subject of nuclear power promotion in Ireland the following year (Blackith, 1976). With academic interests in zoology and the mathematical modeling of biological systems and a concern for

social issues and conservation, he became probably the most articulate and determined public speaker against nuclear power in Ireland.<sup>4</sup> Alerted by what he considered a one-sided approach by the ESB and pro-nuclear spokespeople he was suspicious that "all was not well." Research into the questions of nuclear technology and the inability of the ESB representatives to answer his questions adequately confirmed his fears.<sup>5</sup> His first public statements on the subject came in a debate about the NIES proposal to build a SGHWR at Kilchief in Co. Antrim which was broadcast by BBC (Ulster) TV in December 1975. This debate was the culmination of a series of lectures organised by Professor Newbould of the New University of Ulster in Coleraine on the nuclear issue. The NIES proposals were scuttled by a British inquiry into the finances and demand projections of the NIES in 1976 before the plans were far advanced.<sup>6</sup>

Dr. Blackith introduced compelling evidence of corruption and gross mismanagement into the debate which shook many people's faith regarding the ESB assurances about the technology. Significantly also Dr. Blackith placed moral, social and political aspects of the controversy at the centre of the debate encouraging people to get involved and not to be scared off by experts discussing technical issues.

... the great issues involved are only partly technical, their more important content is social and moral, and within everyone's grasp.

(Blackith, 1976:v)

In 1977 the Windscale Public Inquiry into the British Nuclear Fuels Limited application for planning permission to build an additional reprocessing plant at their site in Cumbria was held. The Irish government did not make a case at the inquiry but the NEB sent an occasional observer to the hearing who collected the daily transcripts. The secretary of the Irish Cooperative Council, John O'Hallorhan, presented a brief to the inquiry arguing that it was not just for Britain to continue to pollute the Irish sea or build a large and potentially dangerous complex near another state. Dr. Blackith attended most of the 100 days of the inquiry and presented a scientific proof of evidence to the inquiry. Despite the proximity to Ireland few people took much interest in the proceedings.<sup>7</sup> However, as the proceedings drew to a close in Whitehaven, the controversy over the ESB's plans for Carnsore Point was about to begin again.

### 9.3 THE CONTROVERSY REKINDLED

In a special supplement to The Irish Times to mark the 50th anniversary of the ESB, Dick Grogan noted the changed political climate surrounding nuclear power with the political and socio-economic implications now much more clearly in focus internationally. He continued, arguing that decisions about nuclear power should not be made simply on energy forecasts of future demand.<sup>8</sup> The following month the same paper carried a story that the ESB was encouraging the government to give its approval for the Carnsore Point project because electricity growth rates were now back to pre-1973 levels.<sup>9</sup> Letters to the press on the topic increased in frequency in the autumn months and included criticisms of centralised decision-making and the lack of public input into the planning process.<sup>10</sup> Opposition began to crystallise outside Wexford where the NSA was still campaigning.<sup>11</sup> In December an EEC official told a Limerick audience that the EEC would advance up to 20% of the cost of a nuclear plant if Ireland decided to build one.<sup>12</sup> This kind of comment provided ammunition for groups like the Irish Sovereignty Movement who argued that the EEC was trying to force Ireland to build a nuclear plant.<sup>13</sup>

A notable change in the line up of experts for the "second round" was the change of allegiance of Dr. McAuley who had, in the intervening years, satisfied himself that vitrification techniques were the answer to nuclear waste disposal problems and that nuclear power was necessary and economically feasible in the Irish energy situation.<sup>14</sup> He further argued that the Rasmussen report had shown that accidents were infrequent and not as serious as had previously been thought, and that nuclear power

... is now beginning to appear as the only possible option which is open to Ireland as well as many other nations in the near future.<sup>15</sup>

In November The Irish Times published a letter by David Byres and Anne O'Connell, who were subsequently to become involved in reforming the Friends of the Earth, which succinctly summarised the political implications of the debate which until then had scarcely been commented on amid all the talk of melt downs, radiation damage and health effects.

The question of the Carnsore reactor is not merely a technical decision, to be left to the ESB's engineers, but a truly political one, which will determine whether we head towards a resource-wasteful, hierarchical society much as today, or a diverse, small scale, truly democratic system based on "soft" energy and a simpler life style.

A feature article by Dick Grogan in The Irish Times in January 1978 quoted a Solar Energy Society of Ireland (SESI) statement calling for a full scale examination of the nuclear implications and emphasising the need to use each available energy source to maximum effectiveness. The profound social implications of energy decisions were also noted in this statement and Dick Grogan goes on to caution against the abrupt dismissal of opponents. In this context he quotes Dr. Guido Brunner's infamous outburst against the anti-nuclear movement.

... those who rail against nuclear energy and at the same time plead for full employment should realise that there is a direct connection between the two.... These jackbooted nuclear objectors carry on their revolutionary trade in the guise of peaceful ecologists.... Some are against that form of society because they dream of a return to the simple life and a no-growth, sandal wearing society-- not a convincing model.<sup>17</sup>

These comments epitomise the ideology of nuclear proponents who argue that nuclear power is needed to provide cheap energy to power growth in the economy (see chapter 6.4). The ecologists are well aware of the links between growth, employment and nuclear power but they argue a reverse position: nuclear power is incredibly capital intensive and hence starves other sectors of the economy of capital which could be used to create jobs directly (see Lovins, 1977). Few would deny the presence of revolutionaries within the ANM but to argue that all ecologists are violent revolutionaries is grossly misleading. It does, however, serve a useful purpose for nuclear advocates in marginalising opponents and hence allowing them to pejoratively dismiss criticism without taking it seriously.<sup>18</sup> The Fianna Fail politicians were to take this position in the next two years and as will be seen it only helped to fuel the fires of opposition. Arrogantly dismissive of real fears they assumed that the opposition was "irrational," and in the process alienated many politically moderate opponents.

With concern about the nuclear issue growing, people began discussing how to organise to resist the government's plans. Late in

1977 a group of concerned people attended a meeting in TCD organised by the campus group of the Student Christian Movement. Dr. Blackith addressed the group on the dangers and problems of nuclear power and it was agreed that they should establish a group to oppose it. Subsequent meetings were held in TCD and later in a building owned by the Student Christian Movement which was run as a resource centre for minority groups and small political and pressure groups. The group adopted the name Friends of the Earth again and it was decided to focus the group on the campaign against nuclear power, although subsequent environmental campaigns on other topics were not ruled out. To set the campaign in motion they organised a seminar in TCD in February 1978 at which speakers included John Carroll of the ITGWU, Sean McBride, Dr. Blackith, Michael Flood of London FoE and Brian Hurley.<sup>19</sup> These presentations were edited and printed as a booklet which included the standard FoE statement on the Carnsore proposal criticising government energy policy and demanding a public inquiry into the issue (FoE, 1978a). This group held regular weekly meetings in the spring of 1978 and drew increasing attendances at their meetings. They started printing a monthly newsletter and enrolling formal membership and became for a few months the focus of opposition to nuclear power. The group appointed an ad hoc committee, which included two Ph.D. research students in biology who devoted much of their time to working on the issue, and favoured a classic pressure group/information/lobby campaign approach to the issue. Many activists with more overtly political backgrounds challenged this and left FoE to organise more militant political actions against the Carnsore project (see chapter 12).

#### 9.4 THE CONTROVERSY DEVELOPS

Once the issue came to public attention late in 1977 the controversy developed quickly. Members of the Wexford Co. Council, in addition to local trade unions, the ESB, the NEB, and David Nolan of the NSA attended the open hearings on nuclear power organised in January 1978 by the EEC in Brussels. A Wexford County councillor, Avril Doyle, publicly asked Guido Brunner, the EEC energy commissioner, not to bring undue pressure to bear on the Irish government to favour a nuclear plant.<sup>20</sup> Mr. O'Malley was quoted a few days later as giving an indication

that he would soon give approval for the Carnsore project.<sup>21</sup> The Irish Sovereignty movement and Fine Gael issued statements calling for a public inquiry,<sup>22</sup> while The Irish Independent reported on aspects of the European hearings including waste, moral and proliferation issues.<sup>23</sup> Later the Irish Farmers Association and Sean Loftus, an independent Dublin Co. councillor, expressed concern, and the Irish Medical Union unanimously called for an inquiry.<sup>25</sup> The Wexford County council requested a meeting with Mr. O'Malley to discuss the nuclear proposal but he refused to talk to them, replying that his approval of the ESB's nuclear plans didn't directly relate to the planning permission issues that the council had to face. The councillors felt that the minister was failing them in not providing help and guidance on a key issue of national policy.<sup>26</sup>

Mr. O'Malley also came under attack from within his own party at the annual Fianna Fail Ard Fheis (annual party convention). A composite motion from a number of local branches opposed nuclear power. In reply he stated that he favoured open debate on the subject and had instructed the ESB to release information to "responsible bodies." He also intimated that if people in Wexford remained in opposition to the nuclear plant then he would authorise its siting in Co. Sligo, where the local population would welcome the construction jobs.<sup>27</sup>

Barry Desmond, a labour party Dail member introduced a private members bill in the Dail on 21 February 1978 calling for the establishment of a select joint committee of the Dail and the Senate to review the nuclear plant proposals and hold public hearings on selected topics of energy policy.<sup>28</sup> This bill, however, still operated within the framework of the "energy gap" philosophy. This planning perspective remained the underlying argument in favour of nuclear power (see chapter 7.5) This perspective starts by projecting desired economic growth figures. These are then taken as policy, and energy forecasts, based on past correlations of increased economic growth and energy demand, are projected into the future. The total aggregate energy demand is broken into sectors to be supplied from different energy sources. The projections of future demand are larger than current supply systems so energy policy becomes the provision of energy sources to fill the forecasted gap between currently available energy sources and projected

demand. It sometimes includes a subtraction from the total demand because of conservation and efficiency improvements. As a planning tool this procedure has severe problems as it ignores the social, political and economic implications of the provision of the energy supplies. Price changes and other government policies often go unconsidered. (see Lovins, 1977; Patterson, 1977; Hooker and vanHulst, 1977; Nash, ed., 1979; FoE, 1978b; Crow, et al., 1978; Chapman, 1975). At least partly because the most centralised, regulated and planned energy system is usually the electrical sector, planners tend to focus predominantly on providing increased electricity supplies. Patterson summarises the position in a British context:

The future is electric. So, at least, say energy planners everywhere. The arguments advanced by official planners in Britain are much like those advanced in other countries:

Fossil fuels are going to run out; in any case they should be reserved for use as chemical feedstocks.

Dependence on imported petroleum makes a country dangerously vulnerable. Energy demand will continue to rise, and must be met.

The only way to prevent the opening of an "energy gap" between demand and supply is to proceed with the development of nuclear energy.

(Patterson, 1977:1)

Barry Desmond assumed in his bill that Ireland was facing an energy gap in the 1980s which would have to be filled by some combination of new energy sources. He argued that the proposed select committee could provide the forum for the "open debate" that Mr. O'Malley had called for in the Ard Fheis a few days earlier.<sup>29</sup> He pointed out that there were problems with waste and other aspects of the nuclear programme that should be investigated.

Mr. O'Malley in his reply moved an amendment to the motion which expressed complete confidence in the government to devise an appropriate energy policy.<sup>30</sup> He pointedly noted that the previous administration in which Mr. Desmond had served had taken a decision in principle in November 1973 to go ahead with nuclear power:

... without any consultation with anyone. There were no committees, joint, single or any other kind, no public debate, no consultation of anybody. The then minister of transport and power got a decision in principle from the Government to which deputy Desmond was the Assistant whip and which he supported through thick and thin.... He never queried their energy policy in any respect whatsoever. Now four-and-a-quarter years later, we are encouraging open debate of something which is no different to what was decided then.<sup>32</sup>

It was on the last point that Mr. O'Malley clearly misread the situation as subsequent events were to prove; the political climate for nuclear power had changed dramatically in the interval. By now the number of jobs promised for the construction phase had become inflated to between 1500 and 2000 with full time employment of between 400 and 500.<sup>32</sup> Mr. O'Malley argued that electricity demand growth rates were now 10% per annum and that the ESB had forecasted 8.5% growth rates for the 1980s. He argued that nuclear power was cheap if one considered long run costs. It also had, he claimed, the advantage of diversifying sources and reducing the ESB's dependence on imported oil.

The following day debate was resumed with Mr. Kelly of Fine Gael calling for an 18 month moratorium on the decision.<sup>33</sup> He further expressed deep concern at the failure of the government to admit that more than a normal local planning hearing was necessary to discuss the issues at a national level. Mr. Brendan Corish of the Labour Party, a T.D. from Wexford urged the minister to meet with the Wexford County Council to discuss the matter, but he was strongly in favour of the nuclear power plant and quoted at length from Dr. Brian Coulter's report on the agricultural implications of the proposal (Coulter, 1977). Mr. Corish said it was important to give the people of Wexford and elsewhere the fullest information available to allay fears and prevent conflict. The fact that fears might be genuine and based on information unavailable to the minister or himself apparently was not considered; the fact that an intellectual in the Agricultural Institute had written a "scientific" report on the subject, was enough to "prove" that nuclear power was "a good thing."

At only one time in the debate were serious questions raised as to why electricity demand was rising so quickly or its relationships with other social goals. The logic of energy intensive industrialisation and its appropriateness for Ireland was only seriously questioned by one Dail member who mentioned the work of the International Institute for Energy and Development in London on the British economy,<sup>34</sup> and questioned the efficiency of the Irish economy's energy use. Mr. Horgan also took the minister to task for his dismissive attitude towards the opposition whom he had termed the "Flat Earth Society" in his address to the Ard Fheis a few days previously.<sup>35</sup>

The point that emerges clearly from this debate is the widespread

agreement within the major parties on the "need" for large increases in energy used to fuel economic growth. At this stage Mr. O'Malley only really differed from the opposition in the degree of his enthusiasm for nuclear power and his optimism about economic growth rates. The conventional wisdom of industrial development and its consequences for energy planning and public policy were not challenged with the exception of Mr. Horgan's contribution. In addition, because this conventional wisdom was so widely accepted, the actual amount of understanding and knowledge shown by the members of the Dail was small; few members had apparently done much thinking or research on energy issues. Not until two years later after much public debate on the nuclear issue had occurred, did Fine Gael incorporate conservation and alternative energy ideas into their energy policies, and rethink some of the long taken for granted assumptions underlying the conventional wisdom as epitomised by the "energy gap" philosophy.

The minister's arguments on the economics of energy were heavily criticised in the media soon afterwards.<sup>36</sup> The government continued stonewalling on questions of a public inquiry in the spring of 1978, leading one exasperated journalist to write:

Is it too much even at this late stage that the minister should start putting forward logical arguments in favour of nuclear energy? Aggressive rhetoric is no substitute for reasoned debate.<sup>37</sup>

In mid-May the government position was still the same as the minister of state for Industry, Commerce and Energy, Mr. Burke told an ITGWU seminar on nuclear energy,

A public inquiry in relation to a technology which is already being successfully applied in many countries would hardly be a helpful exercise.<sup>38</sup>

This seminar was a major affair with trade unionists, medical and technical experts making a convincing case against the nuclear plans.<sup>39</sup> Unfortunately the ITGWU was to take eighteen months to publish the results (Carroll and Kelly, 1979) and also they, probably unwisely, included Professor Ernest Sternglass of Pittsburgh in their list of international speakers. His alarming conclusions on the infant mortality resulting from the 1957 Windscale accident were dismissed by the ESB as "unreliable" whereas the other scientific evidence against nuclear power was not discreditable.<sup>40</sup> Other organisations were also becoming concerned.

The National Cooperative Council questioned the nuclear plans in March,<sup>41</sup> in April the local branch of the Irish Farmers Association in South Wexford declared itself opposed to the nuclear plans<sup>42</sup> and in May Sinn Fein, the Workers' Party, published a pamphlet arguing that nuclear power would not produce cheap electricity which they regarded as being essential for industrial expansion. Instead they argued for coal-fired stations using coal resources that they claimed existed in Munster.<sup>43</sup> The Socialist Labour Party (SLP) also advocated using coal fired power stations at this time.<sup>44</sup> Mathew Hussey, a physicist working in the Kevin Street College of Technology in Dublin, was added to the opponents' camp with two feature articles on the hazards of nuclear power<sup>45</sup> and a number of speeches to public meetings which were being held with increasing frequency to discuss the questions of nuclear power. In April too the SESI, Institute for Industrial Research and Standards (IIRS) and the IDA jointly sponsored a conference on renewable energy systems which was much more optimistic on the practicality of alternative energy than the government.<sup>46</sup> While this debate was developing in the Dail, at conferences and in the pages of the newspapers, opposition of a more direct kind was organising.

#### 9.5 THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION TAKES SHAPE

In March and April 1978 the FoE weekly meetings drew increasing attendances and debates over the best way of opposing nuclear power developed. The positions polarised approximately into those who wanted to follow a route of militant protest action, with street theatre, agitational propaganda leaflets and demonstrations and those who preferred to maintain FoE as a lobby group with information and legal approaches through the planning process. The issue finally came to a vote on proposed constitutions and the lobby approach won this technicality. In the meantime some of the more radical activists, inspired by the massive demonstrations and attempted site occupations in Europe in previous years had made contact with NSA members and the emergent Wexford Town-based "Nuclear Opposition Wexford" (NOW) and proposed the idea of a large rally at the site on Carnsore Point. Other groups were established in Cork, Limerick and Galway, among other places, in the spring. Public meetings increased in frequency and speakers were in

great demand. The newspaper correspondence columns filled out with contributions on the energy question. A loose collective formed to organise the rally which was planned for August. Noticeable, was the involvement of many folk musicians who offered their services to raise money at benefit concerts and who worked and played hard at the rally itself. This cultural aspect was an integral part of the ANM and added tremendously to its appeal among people who could identify with this medium and with anti-nuclear protest songs, if not with the arcane technicalities of reactor design and epidemiological statistics.

The Dublin FoE group launched a national appeal for people to lodge objections with the Wexford County council which had still not come to a planning decision on the ESB's application for planning permission.<sup>47</sup> In June the Quaker Peace Committee lodged a formal objection with Wexford Co. council to the ESB's application. Concerned about nuclear waste, proliferation and decommissioning it says,

By the beginning of the next century we could find ourselves with a large dangerous, radioactive and heavily guarded complex which would be an eyesore, fill no useful purpose, threaten the lives of people in the area, and would require not only a permanent military guard, but the construction of adequate security measures and the necessary facilities for the people guarding such a 'white elephant'.<sup>48</sup>

The summer months brought the controversy to a head with the publication of the government Green Paper on Energy and the first large rally by the ANM at Carnsore Point.

#### 9.6 A HOT SUMMER

In July the government found support for its position on nuclear power in a statement from the Institution of Engineers in Ireland which argued that,

... the economic future of Ireland depends upon commitment to the generation of electricity from nuclear fission to the extent of at least 30% of its requirements by the end of this century.<sup>49</sup>

Also in July, the long awaited government Green Paper on Energy made its appearance (Government of Ireland, 1978). This document outlined the government's rationale for nuclear power but excluded from detailed consideration many other possible avenues for energy policies (see

chapter 7.5). The Green Paper contained many figures that had been presented earlier by Dr. Richard Kavanagh in a paper to a conference on energy options in a European context organised by the Irish Council of the European Movement held in Malahide in May.<sup>50</sup> These figures had been harshly criticised by many people at that meeting but they were retained in the Green Paper.<sup>51</sup> Unfortunately published in a light brown cover, one critic, writing in the music magazine, Hot Press, dismissed the Green Paper as more "the colour of diluted bullshit."<sup>52</sup> This article by the paper's Jack Lynch went on to comment,

Nuclear power is the most destructive expression of international technocratic capitalism. It also reveals perfectly the fatal contradiction of the same exploitative power which puts profits before people.<sup>53</sup>

With criticism of the Green Paper mounting and FoE finding a major flaw in its calculations<sup>54</sup> the ESB announced that it was commissioning a survey on the acceptability of nuclear power among the general public.<sup>55</sup> As plans for the weekend rally at Carnsore Point were hectically finalised, six local doctors issued a statement against the plant.<sup>56</sup>

Thousands of people converged on the rally site by car, bus and specially hired trains for the weekend of 18-20 August. Estimates vary widely as to how many people made it to the site but a figure of 25,000 is often mentioned. The media gave the protest wide coverage including photographs on the front pages of the national dailies and television coverage by both the BBC and RTE.

The free festival was organised in a completely ad hoc way with volunteers, of which there was no shortage, doing all the jobs that needed to be done, from patrolling the danger spots on the beach to manning the creche and supervising the carparks. The rally drew people in far greater numbers than the organising collective had believed possible.<sup>57</sup> Run as a free forum for the exchange of information it drew support from traditional musicians who provided sound equipment and entertainment. The local parish committee set up a successful food stall and raised money for parish activities. Many environmental and political groups set up stalls, sold badges, leaflets, magazines and books and exchanged information. Following a large open air meeting on Sunday (20 August) a procession of those attending the rally built a memorial cairn to all those who had suffered or been

killed by nuclear technology. The rally generated a festive but determined atmosphere among those present. A number of "sign up" sheets were posted near the information caravan and people signed names and addresses on a county basis to start local groups and to put people in contact with others in their areas who were concerned. The organising collective disbanded, its job done, and a plethora of local groups started campaigning in the following months including groups as far away as Derry and Belfast. FoE's campaign of filing objections to Wexford Co. Council received a boost and after the rally one member claimed that 7,500 letters had by that time been lodged with the council.<sup>58</sup>

At the Sunday afternoon meeting the idea of a mass movement with autonomous groups and no formal centralised structure, which had been strongly advocated by many groups, came to the fore in the open air meeting which had no formal chairperson but just a microphone at the stage which speakers used in turn to address the audience. Speakers included locals, people from various anti-nuclear groups, activists from abroad, and members of political groups. A large windmill was on site provided by Alternative Energy Limited of Galway.

The organisers maintained very cordial relations with the local police, some of whom were also opposed to the project, a very different situation from the continental experience and one that amazed European activists in subsequent years. On a number of occasions, in subsequent years, however, plainclothes "special branch" and drug squad police were "escorted" peacefully from the site, their presence not being appreciated by the more politically aware elements at the rallies.

The government reaction was noticeable by its absence until ten days later when Mr. O'Malley issued a small statement repeating that an inquiry was unnecessary and unjustified.<sup>59</sup> John Kelly of Fine Gael was more concerned and the rally had obviously worried him. He warned that if the government did not concede to a public inquiry, the protests might escalate:

To continue to refuse it, and to treat those who seek it like children, is the course which may eventually leave us with something like the new Tokyo Airport shambles on our hands at Carnsore.<sup>60</sup>

The national daily papers were also concerned and called again for an

inquiry.<sup>61</sup> Although maintaining his support for the nuclear proposal John Kelly expressed his fears again a few months later when he questioned the wisdom of not holding an inquiry to "allay the fears of the public,"

This is a peculiarly explosive issue, and the Minister is going the wrong way about it. There should be an inquiry to set people's minds at rest, and we should be careful not to allow subversive elements the excuse of joining the protest.<sup>62</sup>

Despite the massive opposition O'Malley remained apparently unmoved. In October he announced that he would be submitting his case in favour of nuclear power to the Cabinet within a few weeks. He added in typical style another dismissal of the need for an inquiry: "If there was anything to inquire into, I would have no objection. But I do not think there is."<sup>63</sup> And later,

I am open to be influenced by any real arguments. But I have not encountered any genuine rebuttal of the obvious advantages of getting 15% of our electricity needs from nuclear sources by the end of the 1980s.<sup>64</sup>

Showing either a remarkable ignorance, or a deliberate avoidance of the sophisticated case against nuclear technology,<sup>65</sup> and the glaring holes in the Green Paper, which FoE were busy documenting (FoE, 1978b) he continued,

I want to assure people as best I can that there can be no objective grounds for (that) fear. 'Nuclear' is associated with Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the atom bomb, But this is fundamentally wrong, for this is abuse of nuclear power. A nuclear station will in fact be safer even than a coal fired station and will be better in terms of cleanliness in human health and environment.<sup>66</sup>

In early November the Confederation of Irish Industry issued a statement in favour of using coal and nuclear power to provide the energy it claimed was essential for industrial development.<sup>67</sup> While O'Malley continued to be intransigent the ANM took to the streets and the political meeting places.

## 9.7 THE NATIONAL ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

Following the Carnsore anti-nuclear power show in August many local groups organised meetings, debates, self-education sessions, petitions and demonstrations in all parts of the country. A series

of county meetings were held to bring activists from scattered groups together. Large meetings in Cork and in Dublin included stormy exchanges on how to organise the movement. The meeting in the Mansion House in Dublin on 23 September produced a loud condemnation of the ESB who had bulldozed the memorial cairn on Carnsore Point a few days earlier on the grounds that it was a danger to children! The NSA was also furious at this insensitive act.<sup>68</sup> In November a group of actors and musicians including the Freddie White Band and Christy Moore organised a whistle stop "Roadshow" tour of the country playing music, anti-nuclear songs and performing a play which included not a little character assassination of government ministers. This provided a lead up to the second major anti-nuclear meeting held in the State theatre in Dublin in November. Prior to this an anti-nuclear newsletter was organised. The newsletter idea was to provide all groups with a forum to communicate with each other. Each group sent a gestetnered sheet to an agreed place and the group organising its production collated the submissions and circulated them to all groups. Although the scheme worked for a few issues to coincide with the three monthly national meetings it never functioned perfectly smoothly, and the content and production of the newsletters was less than originally intended.

The national "Monster Meeting" held in Dublin on 25 November 1978 was an all day affair with a loosely structured agenda for discussion, to be followed in the evening by the last performance of the anti-nuclear roadshow.<sup>69</sup> Many motions on questions of organisation were discussed and attempts to put issues to votes were not very successful (see chapter 11). To some participants the open unstructured nature of this meeting seemed like chaos; to others the very lack of formal rules was exciting and encouraged them to become involved.<sup>70</sup> The local groups remained operating autonomously, organising meetings, preparing leaflets, doing street theatre, etc. In Dublin in particular the autumn of 1978 was a time of intense activity between meetings, benefit concerts and discos, leafletting campaigns, demonstrations and street theatre.<sup>71</sup>

A third national anti-nuclear power mass meeting was held on a cold snowy Saturday in February 1979 in Wexford town. The Wexford organisers had arranged a formal format with an agenda and a chairperson.

They had requested that each group around the country send three voting delegates to make decisions. This arrangement was quickly dispensed with when the meeting started and a series of small discussion groups formed to discuss nuclear power and issues arising out of the previous few months experiences. The debate over structures and organisation remained an issue throughout the ANM in Ireland in subsequent months (see chapter 11).

#### 9.8 THE DEBATE CONTINUES AND O'MALLEY GIVES GROUND

Apart from the numerous local actions staged by the ANM, nationally opposition continued to mount. FoE published their critique of the government Green Paper in October, cheekily entitling it "Energy Ireland: A Commonsense View" (FoE, 1978b). In twenty four tightly packed pages they demolished many of the Green Paper's arguments and introduced well documented material to argue that a soft path approach was feasible and desirable. The SESI published their "Towards Energy Independence" in December (SESI, 1978) outlining the possibilities for an ambitious programme of renewable energy source development which would make nuclear power irrelevant. This document set out in detail a phased plan to develop native renewable energy resources. By using Ireland's traditional agricultural infrastructure and technology developed to process turf to build a large bio-mass programme, and by developing a large grid of wind powered electricity generation systems, they presented a plausible technical case for energy self-sufficiency early in the twenty first century, even if energy demand continued to rise. Also in the Autumn of 1978 Mathew Hussey and Carol Craig published a short book criticising the Green Paper. Illustrated with pointed cartoons by Martyn Turner, this book attempted to explain simply the anti-nuclear position (Hussey and Craig, 1978). The labour party produced a statement on nuclear power prepared by Barry Desmond, the Party's spokesperson on Energy, in which he deplored the failure of the government to concede to a public inquiry. This statement also said that the reduction of energy policy debates to a choice of either coal or nuclear powered plants was unacceptable.<sup>72</sup> In November and December RTE radio ran a number of programmes on nuclear power. This was followed in January 1979 by a special edition of the popular T.V.

show "The Late Late Show" devoted entirely to the issue. A stormy, controversial show resulted with a heavily anti-nuclear audience protesting strongly against the statements made by Dr. McAuley and Mr. Burke, the minister of state for Energy who were on the panel. Dr. Blackith, Dr. Petra Kelly and John Carroll amongst others opposed the nuclear plans and musical interludes included Christy Moore singing anti-nuclear songs. The proceedings were interrupted frequently by comments, heckling and booing from the plackard waving audience.

In January 1979 the U.S. NRC withdrew its endorsement of the Executive Summary of the Rasmussen Report and FoE were quick to demand the withdrawal of the ESB status report (Coakley, 1979) then being widely circulated, and the Government Green Paper both of which drew heavily on the RSS.<sup>73</sup> Pressure for a public inquiry continued to grow as the opposition in the Dail repeatedly demanded one<sup>74</sup> and other sectors of society including the medical union joined the chorus.<sup>75</sup> Pressure within the rank and file of Fianna Fail grew too and at the Ard Fheis in February 1979 Mr. O'Malley grudgingly bowed to the pressure and announced that there would be a public inquiry into nuclear power and energy policy. As one journalist later put it,<sup>76</sup>

Energy minister O'Malley hated every moment of announcing the establishment of a special tribunal to consider the ESB's nuclear plans. The official statement patronisingly allowed that there would be "freedom for all points of view--even the most irrational--to be expressed."

Anti-nuclear groups were quick to respond favourably but hoped for wide terms of reference which included social and economic questions. The FoE statement, issued hurriedly from their annual conference which was being held in TCD that weekend, said

We hope that the public inquiry will cover the full implications of energy policy in the areas of jobs, balance of payments and security of resource supply among others.<sup>78</sup>

The programme announced by Mr. O'Malley involved a number of stages.<sup>79</sup> First, the ESB was to complete its planning to the draft specification stage. Second, an interdepartmental committee would study energy policy financing, environmental factors, etc., and issue a report to lay the groundwork for the tribunal. Finally the inquiry tribunal would publish its report following which, presumably, the government would make a decision on the matter.

In late March the Three Mile Island accident in Pennsylvania happened, adding support to the anti-nuclear cause. In April Gerald Foley, the Sligo-born author of The Energy Question (Foley, 1976) wrote a feature article in The Irish Times arguing that the Harrisburg incident suggested that a major rethink was needed on the issue of nuclear safety and suggesting that Ireland should delay its decision on nuclear power.<sup>80</sup>

#### 9.9 THE CONTROVERSY CONTINUES

A fourth national mass meeting took place, in Belfast this time, in May where progress was reviewed and new actions planned. Of most immediate significance was the upcoming international day of anti-nuclear protest on 2 June and which the ANM was planning to mark by a large march and rally in Dublin. En route to this a group of Belfast activists did some ambitious street theatre in the towns on the way, staging a mock nuclear waste spill and clean up operation for the benefit of the people in the towns and passing motorists. The march in Dublin drew thousands of supporters.<sup>81</sup>

During the summer the ANM put its energies into organising another major festival at the Carnsore site. The second rally was a smaller affair than the previous year but there was greater political content and more organised workshops in which the connections between nuclear power, uranium mining, toxic waste and noxious industries were explored. The media reporting was less extensive this time but one Irish Times correspondent trivialised the whole affair with comments on sunbathers and balloons while a tabloid went looking for nude swimmers.<sup>82</sup> The Irish Times received a barrage of objections from outraged activists.<sup>83</sup> This problem recurred; in 1980 The Cork Examiner printed two thirds of a page of photographs of painted faces and small children without any explanation, implying that only clowns and kids were present.<sup>84</sup>

Meanwhile the government had further annoyed nuclear opponents<sup>85</sup> and further damaged its legitimacy with an announcement by the Taoiseach that two reactors would be needed if economic growth continued.<sup>86</sup> He subsequently denied that such comments preempted the findings of the Inquiry.<sup>87</sup> The NSA was furious and the secretary, Helen Scrine,

said that the announcement reduced the proposed inquiry to "an expensive and futile irrelevance" and argued that the EEC now ran Irish energy policy. The NSA reiterated its call for a referendum on the issue.<sup>88</sup> Mr. O'Malley continued to show his contempt for the opposition and the inquiry that he had conceded:

People talk of a nuclear option as if it existed.... But in fact we just do not have a choice if economic growth is to continue.<sup>89</sup>

The EEC stated publicly that the European Investment Bank would give loans covering half of the costs of a nuclear power plant in Ireland on the same day in June as An Taisce (The National Heritage Trust) published its major policy paper suggesting that any nuclear decision should be postponed (An Taisce, 1979).<sup>90</sup>

The barrage of newspaper articles continued against nuclear power, with Judy Dempsey writing a critical piece on the civil liberties implications of the British Special Constables Act,<sup>91</sup> and Keith Haight writing an article on waste storage and transport problems.<sup>92</sup> In July, Mr. Lynch, in answer to questions in the Dail, said that effectively Wexford Co. Council would be relieved of its planning obligations with regard to the Carnsore project and that new legislation would be drafted to deal with the situation.<sup>93</sup> A few days later the Church of Ireland broke the deafening silence of church people on the issue, and appealed to the churches to speak with some kind of unity on the moral issues involved.<sup>94</sup> At the Irish congress of trade unions a number of people spoke out strongly against nuclear power. John Carroll said the ITGWU would do all in its power to oppose the plant while a National Union of Journalists member called for a more coherent ANM rather than leaving opposition to ad hoc groups.<sup>95</sup> At the same time EEC commission sources were quoted widely as saying that Ireland would make economic sacrifices if it failed to develop nuclear power.<sup>96</sup> The Cork Examiner got carried away and printed a front page banner headline "EEC Issues Nuclear Command."<sup>97</sup>

Expressing concern about the special tribunal to be set up for the nuclear inquiry, the Irish Planning Institute called for the establishment of a national environmental commission to deal with large scale projects of national importance and a mechanism to ensure that the planning process did not remove local planning authority.

They further called for an environmental impact assessment procedure to be related to the planning legislation.<sup>98</sup> Late in July T.J. Maher, the newly-elected independent European Parliament member, spoke out against nuclear power, arguing that Ireland, being a food producing country, could not risk contamination from a nuclear accident.<sup>99</sup>

The sixth ANM mass meeting took place in Cork in October amid confusion over venues, University College Cork at the last minute refusing permission for the meeting to be held on its grounds. The debate over organisation developed a new twist as the Tralee Opposition Workshop, supported by Cork FoE, called for a delegate structure to operate parallel to the mass meeting organisation. This delegate structure was formed and operated for a few months early in 1980 (see chapter 11). The EEC heads of state summit meeting took place in Dublin in November 1979 and a small group of activists in Dublin occupied the EEC commission offices to mark the occasion and to make a dramatic protest against nuclear power and the EEC's role in its promotion.<sup>100</sup> This incident resulted in nine arrests as the Gardai forcefully removed the seven occupiers and two supporters outside who failed to "get out of the way quickly enough."<sup>101</sup> The EEC heads of government meeting also produced an anti-EEC and anti-nuclear march that evening in Dublin. The government in another small but significant step announced that the special legislation on the inquiry was now being delayed until the findings on the Three Mile Island accident became available.<sup>102</sup> With no information about the likely format of the inquiry forthcoming Cork Friends of the Earth took the initiative and organised a seminar on the topic which took place on 17 November in Cork.<sup>103</sup> The wide ranging discussion was edited and produced as a booklet in 1980 and remains the most detailed examination of the topic (FoE, 1980).

In December the president of the Cork Chamber of Commerce added his voice to those in favour of nuclear power and warned of a drastic drop in living standards if the plant were not built.<sup>104</sup> It was in December 1979 too that the end of O'Malley's reign in the energy ministry came. Jack Lynch resigned as Taoiseach and leader of Fianna Fail, Charles Haughey was elected in his place and his close rival, George Colley was given the Energy ministry. Mr. O'Malley continued

as Minister of Industry and Commerce. By this time as the economy faltered it was becoming increasingly clear that the optimistic predictions of energy and economic growth made two years earlier would not be fulfilled. The ITGWU finally published the proceedings of their May 1978 seminar on nuclear power in December (Carroll and Kelly, 1979) and issued another call for a broad trade union front against nuclear technology.<sup>105</sup>

#### 9.10 A NEW YEAR, A NEW MINISTER, A NEW POLICY

With increasing economic gloom appearing ahead and a downward revision of energy forecasts, Mr. Colley announced that he was postponing plans for a nuclear plant at Carnsore. He further announced that his energy policy would emphasise conservation and speeded up development of alternative forms of energy supply.<sup>106</sup> The ESB also seemed less enthusiastic and at least the ESB chairman Charles Dillon had come to realise more fully the political dimensions of the issue.

... nuclear power brings with it enormous problems ... the intrinsic safety of a whole series of nuclear related problems. Nuclear power has a much wider dimension than mere technical problems. It raises fundamental political, social economic and environmental questions.<sup>107</sup>

Mr. Colley was much less sanguine about nuclear energy than his predecessor who continued to promote it.<sup>108</sup> Mr. Colley's tone was completely different;

As far as I am concerned the evidence available in regard to the safety of nuclear stations is not thoroughly convincing.<sup>109</sup>

In the spring of 1980 the Department of Energy pushed ahead with four pilot windpower projects<sup>110</sup> and showed more interest in Biomass fuel production.<sup>111</sup> The result of the Swedish referendum in March 1980 offered little reprieve to the battered nuclear industry in that country and placed it under closer public scrutiny.<sup>112</sup> The resistance to French government plans to build a nuclear complex at Plogoff in Brittany was also in the news that spring.<sup>113</sup>

Despite the decision to postpone the plans for Carnsore Point, Fine Gael were still not happy and John Kelly demanded that the inquiry go ahead to investigate aspects other than safety issues so as to leave everyone better informed on the issue.<sup>114</sup> In April Mr. Colley

again stated that he wanted more information on nuclear safety<sup>115</sup> and in June he initiated a major energy conservation campaign.<sup>116</sup> In May it was hinted that the government was prepared to drop the nuclear plans altogether.<sup>117</sup> In May also those arrested for occupying the EEC offices came to trial and received a two year suspended sentence.<sup>118</sup>

In May 1980 Fine Gael published a major policy paper on energy which argued that nuclear power was unnecessary and undesirable. They argued in favour of using biomass, conservation and efficiency improvements presenting many arguments that the FoE and SESI, not to mention the earlier CONSERVE group had presented years before (Fine Gael, 1980).<sup>119</sup>

Despite Mr. Colley's reversal of the nuclear policy, two systems analysts in the National Board for Science and Technology had different ideas, and their 1980 report Energy Supply and Demand: The Next 30 Years still operated in the framework of rapidly increasing future demand requiring large projects to meet these forecasts (Kavanagh and Brady, 1980).<sup>120</sup> FoE in Dublin, who were slowly rebuilding a nucleus of people to pick up environmental causes again following a dispersal of key personnel early in 1979, did not let this pass and published a critical article in The Irish Times arguing that the basic reasoning of the model was faulty.<sup>121</sup> They pointed out its lack of consideration of government policies on controls, prices and incentives and the avoidance of the socio-economic dimensions of energy policy,<sup>121</sup> John Brady and Richard Kavanagh replied a week later arguing that low or soft technologies couldn't meet their forecasted demands and that their report was only a discussion document, not a policy paper.<sup>122</sup>

John Carroll and other trade unionists, including representatives of the ESB officers' association tried once more to pass an anti-nuclear resolution in the annual conference of the Trade Union Congress in July but the congress still insisted on keeping the option open.<sup>123</sup> The revival of the peace movement in Europe in 1980 was marked by a number of ceremonies around the country on Hiroshima Day in August 1980, organised by a reformed Irish CND, the NSA and other groups.<sup>124</sup>

The third annual rally at Carnsore point in August was a smaller affair than those in previous years and the workshops reflected the influence of new issues with uranium mining, nuclear weapons, and noxious

industry being important themes of discussion. The music content was played down this time following requests by a number of groups concerned about its perceived "pop festival" image. Non-violence seminars and workshops on trade union matters organised by the recently formed Trade Union Anti-Nuclear Campaign (TUANC) were well attended.<sup>125</sup>

The most noticeable silence in the whole nuclear controversy in Ireland was from the Roman Catholic church. Despite expressed concern by many about the moral issues raised by the nuclear fuel cycle, the church did not make a major statement on this issue in 1978 or 1979 when the public debate was most active. This reflects in part the changing role of the church in Ireland, its partial withdrawal from direct social intervention in addition to its traditional reluctance to become involved in issues identified as obviously "political." The "moral" concerns that the church deals with centre on issues of personal and sexual morality and education related to family structure and behaviour, the family unit being seen as the basic and most important unit in society. Apart from calls to take action against poverty and unemployment and statements on housing issues, especially in the Dublin area, the church has recently refrained from commenting at length on many detailed aspects of public policy (Whyte, 1980). In September the Churches finally emerged with a statement on the nuclear topic. Arguing that nuclear waste is a major problem they suggested that no nuclear project be undertaken until a safe way of disposing of nuclear waste was developed.<sup>126</sup>

Late in 1980 the issue of rebuilding the electricity grid interconnector with the NIES system was raised again. Also on the agenda of new proposals were schemes to develop a pipeline gas grid connecting North and South.<sup>127</sup> Running against the tide of current opinion in 1981 in Ireland, the European Centre for Public Enterprise, which includes representatives of a number of large Irish semi-state bodies, issued a report in April advocating nuclear power in Ireland.<sup>128</sup> George Colley went to Denmark early in 1981 and was given a tour of their alternative energy systems including several huge windmills.<sup>129</sup> In April Ray Burke, Minister of Environment in the new cabinet, announced that the 1976 draft building regulations, which included insulation guidelines, would be operationalised from early 1982,<sup>130</sup> and the ESB

announced that it was seriously thinking of district heating schemes in Dublin and conversion of some plants to combined heat and power stations.<sup>131</sup> In the previous month the ESB had announced that RISØ, the Danish national research agency, had presented them with a report on health, safety and environmental factors concerning the proposed Carnsore Plant. They also admitted that the demand for electricity in Ireland had declined 1.8% in the previous year because of the economic recession which was by now once again gripping the Irish economy and also because of increased consumer opposition to rate increases on electricity bills.<sup>132</sup> Despite the on-going research work on the site and the continuing debate about energy policy, for the foreseeable future there will be no nuclear plant in Co. Wexford.

The ANM continued to function into 1981, but a "mass" meeting held in Cork in March could muster barely 50 people. Nevertheless a smaller Carnsore festival was held in August 1981 as much to maintain tradition as to oppose a plant on the site.

#### 9.11 CONCLUSION

The second phase of the controversy was markedly different from the first. Local opposition was supplemented by a movement which became widespread and diffuse. The debate spread to many sections of society and the legitimacy of the governmental apparatus was severely questioned. The government was forced to concede a public inquiry into the issue as its credibility was seriously challenged. The polarisation of the debate also became much clearer with big business, engineers and large state organisations supporting nuclear development and a plethora of other groups opposing its development, both on ideological, safety and other grounds. The widespread dissemination of information contrary to the government's position and continued active opposition on the streets and the rally site in Carnsore forced the public and the political establishment to take notice. The concession of the public inquiry is undoubtedly significant as it has no direct precedent in Irish Government procedure. It also prevented a quick decision and the possible letting of contracts for the nuclear plant. It was obvious to all that an inquiry was essential to maintain the legitimacy of the government in many sectors of society.

This chapter has focused rather heavily on the history of the nuclear controversy as portrayed by the media. Apart from covering events such as rallies, demonstrations and some public meetings this account neglects seriously the ANM proper and its ideology and politics which are crucial to an understanding of these events. We turn now to consider these factors in depth. First we review the literature produced by the movement.

TABLE 9.1

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE CONTROVERSY

1977.	June,	Fianna Fail Elected.
	Summer/Autumn,	Windscale Public Inquiry, Cumbria.
	Autumn,	Nuclear Plans for Carnsore Point Revived.
	December,	Nucleus of FoE formed in Dublin.
1978.	January,	EEC hearings on Nuclear Power in Brussels.
	February,	FoE seminar in TCD.
		Dail Debate on Energy.
	April,	IDA/IIRS/SESI seminar on renewable energy.
	May,	ITGWU seminar on nuclear power.
	July,	Government Green Paper on energy published.
	August,	First Carnsore Rally.
	September,	ESB bulldoze memorial Cairn at Carnsore point.
		Dublin anti-nuclear power meeting in the Mansion House.
	October,	FoE publish critique of Energy Ireland.
	November,	Mass Meeting in Dublin.
	December,	SESI publishes "Towards Energy Independence."
1979.	January,	Late Late Show special on Nuclear Power screened by RTI
	February,	Fianna Fail Ard Fheis, O'Malley concedes an Inquiry.
		Mass meeting in Wexford.
	March,	Three Mile Island Accident near Harrisburgh.
	May,	Belfast Mass Meeting.
	June,	Dublin Anti-Nuclear protest march.
	August,	Carnsore Rally.
	October,	Mass Meeting in Cork. Start of the "Delegate Structur
	November,	EEC offices occupied in Dublin, Anti EEC March.
		Cork FoE seminar on Public Inquiry.
	December,	Colley replaces O'Malley as energy minister.

1980. Spring, Colley announces postponement of nuclear plans  
and supports alternative energy projects.  
Uranium controversy in Donegal.

May, Fine Gael energy policy document published.

August, Third anti-nuclear rally at Carnsore point.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

<sup>1</sup>Electricity demand increased 10% in the year ended 31st March 1977 (ESB annual report as quoted in The Irish Times, 13 September 1977 by Dick Grogan in a feature article marking the 50th anniversary of the ESB.

<sup>2</sup>Irish Business, February 1976, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup>See Dick Grogan, "The Nuclear Alternative," The Irish Times, 25 March 1977; I.R. McAuley 16, 17 December 1976; Val Healy, 19 March 1976 on nuclear hazards.

<sup>4</sup>Between February 1978 and March 1981 he addressed 138 public meetings.

<sup>5</sup>See the introduction to Blackith, 1976.

<sup>6</sup>See Dawn, no. 17 (January 1976), pp. 5, 6, 17; and Dawn, no. 19 (March 1976), pp. 3, 9. The proposal to build a reactor at Kilchief did attract some local opposition on a small scale but it is not considered in this thesis. See also Report on the Present and Projected Financial Position of the Northern Ireland Electricity Service, Belfast, HMSO, 1977, 19 pp.

<sup>7</sup>See The Irish Times, 15 June 1977 and 26 October 1977 for details of the intervention by the Cooperative Council. The Irish Independent, 26 July 1977 commented on the lack of Irish intervention. See Magill (December 1977), pp. 22-23 on the problems of radioactive pollution in the Irish Sea.

<sup>8</sup>Dick Grogan, "Watchword is Caution," The Irish Times, special supplement, p. 2, 13 September 1977.

<sup>9</sup>The Irish Times, 10 October 1977.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 17 September 1977.

<sup>11</sup>The Sunday Press, 18 December 1977; The Irish Times, 28 October 1977; 17 November 1977, 16 January 1978.

<sup>12</sup>The Irish Times, 6 December 1977.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 31 January 1978.

<sup>14</sup>Interview, March 1981.

<sup>15</sup>The Irish Times, special supplement on energy, 7 March 1978, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 2 November 1977.

<sup>17</sup>The Irish Times, 13 January 1978. Dr. Guido Brunner was EEC commissioner for Energy. His statement is from European Community, no. 10, (1977), p. 5.

- <sup>18</sup>See Hoyle, 1978. Stockton and Janke (1978) come close to this position too arguing that sincere opponents are being manipulated by extreme left wing groups some of which are being financed by Moscow.
- <sup>19</sup>The Irish Press, 20 February 1978; The Irish Times, 20 February 1978.
- <sup>20</sup>The Irish Times, 26 January 1978.
- <sup>21</sup>Ibid., 30 January 1978.
- <sup>22</sup>Ibid., 31 January 1978, 1 February 1978.
- <sup>23</sup>The Irish Independent, 3 February 1978.
- <sup>24</sup>The Irish Times, 21 February 1978.
- <sup>25</sup>The Irish Press, editorial, 16 February 1978.
- <sup>26</sup>The Wexford People, 17 February 1978.
- <sup>27</sup>FoE Newsletter, no. 1, p. 6.
- <sup>28</sup>Dail Eireann Parliamentary Debates Official Report, volume 303, no. 10, 21 February 1978.
- <sup>29</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>30</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid., column 1723.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid., column 1730.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., volume 304, no. 1, 22 February 1978.
- <sup>34</sup>This was Deputy John Horgan, *ibid.*, column 202. See Leach, et al., 1979 for the work of the IIED.
- <sup>35</sup>Ibid., column 200.
- <sup>36</sup>The Irish Times, 1, 2 March 1978.
- <sup>37</sup>The Irish Independent, 15 April 1978.
- <sup>38</sup>As quoted in The Irish Times, 13 May 1978.
- <sup>39</sup>The Irish Times, 15 May 1978.
- <sup>40</sup>The Irish Press, 15 May 1978, p. 3.
- <sup>41</sup>The Irish Times, 27 March 1978.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., 26 April 1978.

- <sup>43</sup> Ibid., 13 May 1978.
- <sup>44</sup> Ibid., 15 May 1978.
- <sup>45</sup> Ibid., 13, 14 April 1978.
- <sup>46</sup> Wind, Wave, Water, proceedings of a joint SESI, IIRS, IDA conference, 26 April 1978, Dublin.
- <sup>47</sup> The Irish Times, 18 May 1978.
- <sup>48</sup> Ibid., 6 June 1978.
- <sup>49</sup> As quoted in *ibid.*, 19 July 1978.
- <sup>50</sup> Ibid., 6 May 1978.
- <sup>51</sup> See FoE 1978b, pp. 6-7.
- <sup>52</sup> Hot Press 2:6 (August 17-September 7 1978); 8
- <sup>53</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>54</sup> The Irish Times, 15 August 1978.
- <sup>55</sup> Ibid., 16 August 1978.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., 18 August 1978.
- <sup>57</sup> Interviews with members of the organising collective confirm that they were thinking more in terms of 5,000 rather than 25,000.
- <sup>58</sup> The Irish Independent, 23 August 1978. The final figure was closer to 10,000 letters and mimeographed objection slips. (Personal correspondence with the County Council, May 1981).
- <sup>59</sup> The Cork Examiner, 29 August 1978, p. 7.
- <sup>60</sup> Transcript of a speech to a Fine Gael meeting Dublin, 21 August 1978.
- <sup>61</sup> The Irish Press, 22 August 1978, p. 8; The Irish Independent, 22 August 1978, p. 8.
- <sup>62</sup> The Irish Times, 16 October 1978. Fine Gael are the most conservative of the political parties and concerned with "law and order." When in government they introduced a considerable amount of repressive legislation to "deal" with "subversive" groups. Fianna Fail who have closer connections with the radical populist republican tradition are normally less worried about these matters.
- <sup>63</sup> The Sunday Press, 15 October 1978, p. 1.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>65</sup> A recurring feature of the nuclear debate is the failure of the proponents of nuclear power to understand that the opponents have a serious case. Pringle and Spigelman (1981) show how some French administrators could not understand how anyone could oppose their "rationality" because they failed to see the hidden assumptions in their own thinking. Schmidt and Bodansky (1976) fail to come to serious grips with the opposition quoting studies to "prove" that nuclear power is safe, they fail to realise that what worries anti-nuclear scientists is the gross inadequacies of those very studies. See also Hoyle (1978) who does the same thing and Nash, ed. (1979) for similar problems in the debate about soft energy paths and solar energy. Ralph Lapp is an exception among nuclear proponents as he has at times tried to grapple directly with opponents (Lapp, 1975).

<sup>66</sup> The Sunday Press, 15 October 1978, p. 7.

<sup>67</sup> The Irish Times, 3 November 1978.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 25 September 1978.

<sup>69</sup> National ANM Newsletter, November 1978.

<sup>70</sup> Interviews, see also The Sunday Press, 26 November 1978; The Irish Times, 27 November 1978.

<sup>71</sup> One interviewee commented that something connected with the ANM happened virtually every night prior to Christmas 1978.

<sup>72</sup> The Irish Times, 25 November 1978.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 22 January 1979.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 24 November 1978.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 October 1978.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 26 February 1979, p. 1.

<sup>77</sup> Brian Trench in Magill (September 1979): 12.

<sup>78</sup> The Irish Times, 26 February 1979, p. 8.

<sup>79</sup> As summarised by the 1980 standard government statement on the nuclear question.

<sup>80</sup> The Irish Times, 18 April 1979. See Martin, 1980 on Three Mile Island.

<sup>81</sup> The Irish Independent, 3 June 1979.

<sup>82</sup> The Irish Times, 20 August 1979; The Sunday World, 19 August 1979.

<sup>83</sup> The Irish Times, 28 August 1979, letters section.

- <sup>84</sup>The Cork Examiner, 21 August 1980. The painted faces were of members of a theatre group performing on site.
- <sup>85</sup>The Cork Examiner, letters section, 28 June 1979.
- <sup>86</sup>The Irish Times, 16 June 1979.
- <sup>87</sup>Ibid., 24 June 1979.
- <sup>88</sup>Ibid., 2 July 1979.
- <sup>89</sup>The Irish Press, 19 June 1979.
- <sup>90</sup>The Irish Times, 20 June 1979.
- <sup>91</sup>Ibid., 26 June, 1979.
- <sup>92</sup>Ibid., 8 August 1979, p. 10.
- <sup>93</sup>Ibid., 4 July 1979.
- <sup>94</sup>The Cork Examiner, 6 July 1979, p. 20.
- <sup>95</sup>The Irish Times, 7 July 1979.
- <sup>96</sup>Ibid., 7 July 1979.
- <sup>97</sup>The Cork Examiner, 7 July 1979, p. 1.
- <sup>98</sup>The Irish Times, 9 July 1979, p. 12. See also Gough, 1979 and The Irish Times, 9 November 1979, p. 13 on the later Irish Planning Institute conference which covers these themes in more detail.
- <sup>99</sup>The Cork Examiner, 24 July 1979, p. 3.
- <sup>100</sup>The Irish Times, 29 November 1979, pp. 1, 13.
- <sup>101</sup>Ibid., p. 13.
- <sup>102</sup>Ibid., 9 November 1979, p. 9.
- <sup>103</sup>The Cork Examiner, 19 November 1979, p. 9; The Irish Times, 19 November 1979, p. 6.
- <sup>104</sup>The Cork Examiner, 10 December 1979, p. 20.
- <sup>105</sup>The Irish Times, 18 December 1979, p. 6.
- <sup>106</sup>The Cork Examiner, 27 February 1980.
- <sup>107</sup>As quoted in The Irish Times, 25 March 1980, by Niall Fallom, special supplement on energy, p. 1.
- <sup>108</sup>The Irish Times, 5 February 1980.

<sup>109</sup>Speech opening an educational seminar on nuclear energy organised by the IEI, 23 April 1980.

<sup>110</sup>The Irish Times, 28 March 1980, p. 1.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., 28 April 1980, p. 9.

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., 25 March 1980, p. 17.

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., 5 March 1980, p. 6, and 24 May 1980, p. 9.

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., 25 April 1980, p. 4.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., 24 April 1980, p. 6.

<sup>116</sup>Ibid., 5 June 1980, p. 6, 10 June 1980, p. 13 and 14 June 1980, p. 7.

<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 13 May 1980, p. 1.

<sup>118</sup>Ibid., 20 May 1980, p. 13. They pleaded guilty to forcible entry and the state dropped charges of malicious damage. The fact that most of the damage was done by the police who did not attempt to talk the occupiers out of the rooms that they were in is beside the point. The laws against squatters place all damages on the occupiers.

<sup>119</sup>Ibid., 23 May 1980, p. 7.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., 2 July 1980, p. 1.

<sup>121</sup>David Walsh and Denis Deasy, "Built in Bias for High Technology," *ibid.*, 9 October 1980, p. 12.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid., 20 October 1980, p. 10.

<sup>123</sup>Ibid., 4 July 1980, p. 6.

<sup>124</sup>Ibid., 7 August 1980, p. 7.

<sup>125</sup>This time The Irish Times gave the rally good if somewhat curtailed coverage! (18 August 1980, p. 11).

<sup>126</sup>Ibid., 26 September 1980, p. 15.

<sup>127</sup>Ibid., 23 November 1980, p. 1.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid., 24 April 1981, p. 4.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid., feature articles 7, 8, 9, April 1981.

<sup>130</sup>Ibid., 15 April 1981, p. 7.

<sup>131</sup>Ibid., 6 April 1981, p. 6.

<sup>132</sup>Ibid., 31 March 1981, p. 11.

## CHAPTER 10

## THE LITERATURE OF THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

10.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews the literature produced by the ANM in Ireland in the second phase of the controversy. This review emphasises the documents produced by organisations and groups involved in the protest actions and overt lobbying that occurred, while a few other documents of significance are included. The emphasis in this chapter is on the underlying concerns which motivated opposition. A complete coverage of all publications produced in the ANM is not practical as many small leaflets were produced by numerous groups on many occasions and not all of these are currently available. The ad hoc nature of the organisation of the movement meant that only a few groups kept comprehensive records of publications, statements and correspondence.

It is possible to draw a distinction between the pressure group and environmentalist critiques of nuclear power and the more overtly political critiques produced by left wing groups in Ireland. The former emphasise the hazards of nuclear technology, the environmental impacts, the economics of energy production and the possibilities of developing alternative technologies. These ideas are sometimes connected to philosophical positions on non-violence. The latter focus more directly on a political analysis of the conflict arguing that nuclear power is the ultimate absurdity of industrial capitalist society, and should be opposed on those grounds. This chapter reviews the literature from both tendencies, the political consequences of these differing forms of analysis are analysed in chapter 11.

Until the production of the Government's Green Paper on energy in July 1978 there was no formal compilation of government policy on the issue. The opposition pieced together the policy from political statements and speeches and a variety of official publications. In the

autumn of 1977 the ESB presented Mr. O'Malley with a document outlining the role of nuclear energy as they saw it but this submission was never made public. The core of the opposition early in 1978 was the FoE group in Dublin, hence this review starts with FoE literature.

## 10.2 FRIENDS OF THE EARTH LITERATURE 1978-79

To start their education and promote awareness of the nuclear issue the FoE group in Dublin held a seminar in TCD in February 1978, and subsequently published the proceedings as a booklet entitled Nuclear Power: The Case Against (FoE, 1978a). The seminar covered topics which included people's rights and jobs, the development of indigenous national resources and alternative energy technologies, the political and economic implications of nuclear power and the health and safety risks. Discussion also covered the type of energy consumption in the Irish economy and possible alternatives to a nuclear plant and the dangers of nuclear proliferation. The speakers included John Carroll, of the ITGWU, Sean McBride, Paul O'Boyle, Robert Blackith, Brian Hurley and Mike Flood from the London branch of Friends of the Earth. The contents of the seminar influenced FoE policy over the next year. Soon after the seminar, FoE produced a widely distributed statement on nuclear power, calling for a public inquiry. This statement emphasised the tremendous waste of energy within the Irish economy, described in detail by Henry and Scott (1977). Drawing on Lovins' (1977) work on soft energy paths they argued for an energy strategy geared to renewable resources and conservation. This statement was printed as the introduction to the booklet of the seminar proceedings. The inquiry which it advocated,

... would take submissions from all interested parties and involve the "man in the street" in the formulation of an overall national energy policy.... A full examination of the economic, social and environmental hazards associated with nuclear power is necessary, in the interests of democracy and sound energy policy.

(FoE, 1978a:3-4)

As information became available either from abroad or through detailed research done by members of FoE, a number of whom were scientists, the group reprinted sections from government reports summarising the

criticisms of nuclear power that were being made abroad.<sup>1</sup> A series of gestetnered information sheets were also produced in addition to newsletters which were mailed to the growing membership.<sup>2</sup> Information came from the U.S., the U.K. and Europe.

While FoE did have some access to a print shop, many of their leaflets were duplicated typescripts run off on gestetner machines. This method was used by the vast majority of groups during the campaign against the nuclear plant and while it proved to be a quick and easy way of producing leaflets, the quality varies down to bear legibility.

FoE produced a more elaborate document in the autumn of 1978 in response to the government's Green Paper on energy (FoE, 1978b). The critique of the Green Paper remained a standard critique of Irish energy policy and has been widely quoted since it was released in October 1978. It starts by criticising the Green Paper for excluding from serious consideration the non-electric sector and its style which seems to ignore the fact that the energy crisis had occurred in 1973. It effectively ignores the impact that future energy price rises might have on the economy. It also assumes that the optimistic forecasts for economic growth made by the government would require a large increase in energy usage: this, despite alleged Irish adherence to the EEC objectives of reducing the ratio between economic and energy growth to 0.8. In fact, the Green Paper plans on the basis of a 1.15 ratio. The FoE critique also pointed out that the industrial usage of energy forecasted as a fraction of total energy demand in the future was much higher than international comparisons suggested was likely or desirable. This was a policy that relied entirely on physical aspects in its projections with little concern for its social ramifications. This type of energy planning has been harshly criticised by many authors (Lovins, 1977; Nash, ed., 1979; Chapman, 1975; Crow, et al., 1978) but the writers of the Green Paper appeared to FoE to be blissfully unaware of the international debate on energy planning methods. Despite a professed policy goal of reducing dependence on foreign energy sources, the paper projects that the 1977 level of 80% dependence will increase to 87% by 1990. Drawing on the soft energy path approach and quoting material from the U.S. and Europe FoE provide evidence to suggest that renewable energy technologies could make a very significant contribution

to future energy needs. This theme was enlarged on by the Solar Energy Society a few months later (SESI, 1978).

FoE also emphasised the need to use energy wisely and appropriately, arguing that switching from an increasing emphasis on centralised electricity production to smaller scale co-generation, and increased efficiency would yield a more manageable situation financially and a more labour-intensive system to help solve the unemployment problem. They repeated their earlier criticism of the use of figures on energy conservation<sup>3</sup> and also pointed to problems with the cost estimates projected for nuclear power. They point to the hidden costs of nuclear power which include decommissioning the reactor and cleaning out the "crud" which clogs reactors after they have been in service for a period. Neither are questions of fuel availability, reactor reliability or waste disposal dealt with adequately. They also attack the Green Paper's glib assurances on health and safety as well as pointing to the civil liberties and security problems that would result from the nuclear plant. They conclude by quoting Hannes Alfvén, "no acts of God can be permitted."

FoE also produced a smaller document on reactor safety early in 1979 but it was rendered largely redundant by three events: the withdrawal of the U.S. NRC approval of the Rasmussen study, the announcement of the public inquiry, and the Three Mile Island accident. This effectively terminated the research work of this group as the key people involved all departed for personal reasons unrelated to the nuclear issue. During the year from early 1978 to early 1979 FoE provided an important information service and focus for activists trying to educate themselves in the early stages of the controversy. They responded to over one thousand mail requests for information, many from highschool students working on energy issues as school projects. They also provided key politicians, bureaucrats and planners with alternative information and sent copies of their literature and statements to Wexford County councillors. In addition they had kept the newspaper correspondence columns busy with detailed information on their research findings and criticisms of the conventional views on energy. This group was a key element in forcing the political establishment to take the case against nuclear energy seriously.

### 10.3 RADICAL POLITICS AND THE NUCLEAR QUESTION

In stark contrast to the FoE arguments are a number of documents from political groups on the extreme left of Irish politics. The FoE critique of energy policy did raise a number of political issues including a criticism of the entrenched construction industry interests who had delayed for years the introduction of building regulations which included insulation standards. They also commented in some detail on civil liberties and security factors as well as the increased centralised control implied by a nuclear society. What they did not supply was a detailed political perspective and analysis of the course of development of the Irish state in the context of international capitalism. In line with their preferred role as a respectable lobby group they attacked the government energy policy on its own ground and within a debate on energy issues. The central group were aware of the political dimensions of the nuclear question to a certain extent but chose not to deal with them directly. As with many single issue campaigns with considerable middle class involvement there was a tendency to promote a "non-political" line. It is often interpreted as a moral question or one that is somehow outside politics and an issue around which all political persuasions can unite. It was felt by many in FoE that to introduce an overtly political dimension into the debate would alienate much potential support.<sup>4</sup>

On the radical fringes of Irish politics a variety of socialist, communist and anarchist groups have had a chequered history of agitation and political action without very much apparent success. The noticeable exception is, of course, the IRA. The provisional wing of this group has forced the pace of many developments on the Northern issue in the last ten years. The official wing has undergone a metamorphosis into a working class party which calls itself Marxist (Sinn Fein, The Workers' Party) but espouses a parliamentary route to power. They gained a few seats in the 1982 general election. In the 1960s the left in Ireland splintered and numerous small groups now exist pushing a variety of political perspectives through periodical newspapers and leaflets.<sup>5</sup>

The different groups on the left have taken a variety of stances on the nuclear issue. Some argue that the forces of production in society must be developed if the working class revolution is to take

place as the inevitable consequence of capitalist contradictions. Sinn Fein, The Workers' Party (the outgrowth of the official IRA) follows a line arguing in favour of rapid industrialisation, and supports efforts to provide cheap power for this purpose. In this context they do not find themselves opposed to nuclear power in principle although their major document on the subject is one of the least informed pieces on the subject.<sup>6</sup> A smaller leaflet on the subject makes a case against nuclear power arguing that uranium supplies are costly and insecure but that low grade coal reserves in the south of the country could provide the fuel needed for a major power station at Carnsore Point.<sup>7</sup> The Irish Workers' Group also took a position against the "anti-jobs lobby" in a polemic against what they see as utopian and moralistic concerns within the left and the ANM.<sup>8</sup>

For, it can only be in a workers' state, with science and technology fully democratised that a true and final assessment can be made by workers themselves whether the risks are too great or that it can indeed answer efficiently and safely the energy needs of socialist mankind. Any other perspective is a utopian diversion into moralism and reformist illusions about capitalism....

A very different argument comes from the Revolutionary Struggle Group (RS). This basically New Left influenced group emerged from the Peoples' Democracy organisation in the mid-1970s. They are associated with the theoretical journal Ripening of Time. They place nuclear power at the centre of their critique of international capitalism and its role in Ireland. In the spring of 1978 they wrote their basic position paper on the subject which reflects a very different mode of analysis and consequently leads them to a very different political programme for action against the proposed nuclear plant (Revolutionary Struggle, 1978).

Arguing that some rural areas don't even have running water, and that the workers have troubles paying their electricity bills as it is, without paying for new expensive power stations they comment, "But the state, the papers, the ESB, the big bosses tell us WE NEED more energy."<sup>9</sup> They point out that nuclear power is economically unsound and physically unsafe. Conflicts over the preceding years have introduced a<sup>10</sup>

... heightened awareness of a new need: to live in a safe and clean environment--the kind of surroundings capital cannot any longer provide.

The rapid industrialisation of Ireland has often gone along with a cry for jobs at any price to alleviate the unemployment in the country. But,<sup>11</sup>

Safety and Humanity of employment, as much as pay, have become explosive political issues. Capital without humanity has destroyed humanity and among the people of no property-- or, at least, has made them rare dreams. The fight to reappropriate that humanity and care is part of the anti-nuclear struggle.

They reject the argument that science is neutral but rather assert that it is used to control production for profit rather than to develop "neutral" ideas.<sup>12</sup>

The fight for a safe, healthy, clean, plentiful world is not a dream and a utopia. It's an achievable objective-- within our reach ... no nightmares there ... no blueprints, no mother or fatherlands ... just a long, arduous, protracted class war for a society without classes run by its people for the needs of the people.

Developing their critique along very different lines from those of FoE and the conventional energy policy discussions, they emphasise heavily the question of who controls energy supplies world wide showing how the oil companies manipulate prices and how they are heavily involved in the control of uranium. The promotional role of the EEC is also emphasised as are questions of military involvement;<sup>13</sup>

If we examine the question 'who needs nuclear power?'-- the answers we get are international capital, the multi-nationals, U.S. capital, the EEC and NATO.

They argue that nuclear power is not cheap as the energy minister Dessie O'Malley repeatedly stated, and point out that export orientated industry is the real source of the alleged huge future energy needs. They raise the question of alternative technology, arguing that capitalist industry is not interested in labour intensive developments.

One thing is clear. The energy crisis is produced by the capitalist system. There are a multitude of possibilities for producing energy. No hysteria or oil shortages and the predictions for the year 2000 can change that fact.... it is the bourgeoisie which has created houses which won't heat, electricity which is wildly expensive....<sup>14</sup>

On the question of alternatives RS differ widely from the FoE position,

Our objective is not to direct capital along a new 'alternative' course than its present one. Rather what we intend to examine is the patterns of energy use determined by the capitalist relations of production.<sup>15</sup>

Quoting examples widely from Europe the RS group argue that what is needed to stop nuclear power is a mass movement "... based on those who have nothing to gain from nuclear power, on those whose interests it is to oppose it."<sup>16</sup> This document elaborates on RS's proposals for widespread agitation and its concepts of national mass meetings every three months. Direct democracy, not "bureaucratic little committees" is the model proposed here. Neither do they see the ANM as part of an alternative energy lobby.

The Anti-Nuclear Movement should stand on its own feet, big powerful, autonomous from capital and state and all other forms of bureaucratized organisation. It should be a movement of the people--no more no less.

This reflects the politicisation of the environmental movement. The strong New Left emphasis on mass democracy as the method of getting people mobilised to take responsibility for their actions is clear. The comparison of these two approaches, the respectable lobby group and the militant radical, illustrates the diversity of perspectives within the ANM. Differences in presentation and style are obvious. The FoE publications reveal the hand of the academic in the background. RS literature has the style of the radical publicist, interspersing the text with the words of anti-nuclear songs and cartoons. The front cover of the FoE document portrays a line drawing of a pastoral scene complete with obligatory windmill while the RS document superimposes a gasmasked head over a demonstration complete with its banners.

Other left wing groups added their voices. The Peoples Democracy produced their Nuclear Danger arguing that there was no real energy shortage, just problems created by the logic of the energy multinationals. On the topic of nuclear power they argue against its introduction into Ireland on grounds of safety, cost, the inefficiency and waste in energy terms of a nuclear programme, uranium shortages and security risks. Again the questions of multinational capital and EEC domination of the Irish energy scene figure prominently.<sup>18</sup>

The Communist Party of Ireland also produced a statement in 1979, in which they strongly opposed nuclear power. This document emphasises the conventional energy critique approach to the subject drawing heavily on Friends of the Earth literature. They argue for Irish control over energy decisions, freedom of information, research into alternative energy sources, the use of coal fired power stations and

a conservati<sup>o</sup>n programme.

The Carnsore Point project, the introduction of nuclear power into Ireland is not in the interests of workers. It would involve a threat to jobs and to trade union rights and freedoms, a contradiction of democracy rather than expansion, a threat to the health and security of workers employed in the plant and living nearby, a threat to the freedom of information required for collective bargaining. It would involve the introduction of political vetting processes and political selection for jobs and extra taxation burdens to pay for the massive capital costs. It would involve weakening of our sovereignty and a potential chipping away of our neutrality. It would involve the danger of giving multinationals a veto over our energy policy in a far more frightening and complete way than the oil companies can exercise at the moment.

(Communist Party of Ireland, 1979:21-22)

With the exception of a number of Anarchist leaflets (reviewed later) no other leaflets or statements took as radical a stance as the RS group, neither did any other group work so hard in the ANM to ensure its success. The Peoples' Democracy and the Communist Party both took softer political lines and were not opposed to "bureaucratic little committees" as a method of organisation. The questions of political organisation are dealt with in more detail in the next chapter.

#### 10.4 OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CRITIQUE

Dr. Mathew Hussey, who had spoken frequently at debates early in 1978 and written articles for the national press, teamed up with an American journalist in the autumn of 1978 to write a critique of the Government Green Paper and to provide a short readable book outlining the case against nuclear power. They attempted to explain the technological and social issues and describe the alternatives available in formulating a realistic energy policy (Hussey and Craig, 1978). They argue that nuclear power represents a path of energy development and therefore of economic development which requires large capital investment, centralisation, and careful government regulation. The alternatives--conservation and the use of renewable resources (biomass, solar, waves, wind)--would employ people rather than vast amounts of capital, tend towards decentralisation, and require little government intervention.

The question, then, of whether or not Ireland is to 'go nuclear' is not just a technological one, but has a moral and economic base, about which it is the right of every citizen to decide.

(Hussey and Craig, 1978:6)

Interspersed in the text are a series of cartoons by Martyn Turner which make obvious political points. The standard technical arguments against nuclear power are again rehearsed in this 60 page book including the critique of the Rasmussen report and the controversy over low level radiation and the links with cancer. Alternative energy is strongly promoted and the book ends with a plea for structures to be established to make a full and open discussion of the whole issue.

In December the Solar Energy Society in Ireland published Toward Energy Independence (SESI, 1978). This report outlined an ambitious programme for the development of alternative energy sources. They did not directly tackle the nuclear question but advocated its postponement so that it would not starve the alternatives of the capital necessary for their development. If the alternatives were developed as extensively as they optimistically suggest they should be, nuclear power would become irrelevant. They argue that biomass is a very feasible source of energy for use in Ireland and advocate the formation of a national energy development agency to oversee its development. Their position was also promoted in a series of feature articles in The Irish Times in March 1979 just as the Three Mile Island accident was happening in the U.S.<sup>19</sup>

In May 1979 the ESB Officers' Association, which represents white collar workers in the ESB, published a report on nuclear power which was critical of the proposal to build a station at Carnsore.<sup>20</sup> They drew heavily from FoE sources and the writings of Amery Lovins and Walter Patterson. They argued that the project was not worth the risks inherent in it. Subsequently they were to support attempts at the annual conferences of the Trade Union Congress to oppose nuclear power.

An Taisce, the national heritage protection society also published its reactions to the Green Paper but hedged its bets by calling for a five year delay in making any decision.<sup>21</sup> Its study group included people from a variety of backgrounds including Sean Tinney of the ESB. The resulting compromise document shows the strains of the differing

views and the conclusion that a delay to await clarification of the issues involved was the result. Conservation is played up but the chapter on nuclear power is conservative and at times dismissive of the critics of nuclear power. They do, however, note the uncertainty of economic forecasts, the problems of waste disposal and decommissioning as well as possible long range biological hazards and terrorism.

In December 1979 the ITGWU, after troubles with printers, finally produced the proceedings of the May 1978 conference on nuclear power.<sup>22</sup> In a book of 270 pages they include the contributions of the 14 participants at the conference who included Drs. Bertell, Caldicott and Sternglass from the U.S. as well as environmentalists and trade unionists from Europe. They add 10 appendices in an attempt to update their material. The book includes chapters on the opposition to nuclear power internationally, the EEC's role in the question, and the ethical, moral and social implications of nuclear power in addition to the medical and safety aspects of the controversy. This is the most extensive single collection of material on the nuclear question to be produced in Ireland but it appeared so late that it had little real impact on the controversy.

Apart from the Hussey and Craig book none of the above publications received very widespread circulation. The ESB officers association report probably did not reach a widespread audience outside their own organisation, the SESI initially only produced a few hundred copies of their report. The widespread dissemination of anti-nuclear information came through leaflets, newsletters and media. The next section reviews these.

### 10.5 LEAFLETS

The plethora of leaflets and miscellaneous literature produced by the ANM reflects the themes outlined above. In the early stages in 1978 many groups around the country produced single sheet gestetnered statements. Many of these were general statements of opposition to the Carnsore proposals. As the campaign progressed many leaflets were produced on specific topics and some groups produced series of them covering economics, employment, safety, alternatives, conservation, health, politics, the inquiry, etc. Beyond the simple, single sheet

gestetnered leaflets, a variety of pamphlets and often crudely reproduced articles were produced. Various pressure groups connected the nuclear issue with their concerns; the anti-apartheid organisation pointed out the connection between the South African regimes occupation of Namibia and the presence of the Rossing uranium mine, while the Phillipine support group campaigned against the consultative role that the ESB were occupying for the Marcos regime there. A few groups reproduced articles from magazines such as Not Man Apart and Mother Jones. A number of small comic strips were printed; in one, Dessie O'Malley became the arch villian Dizzy O'Malady against whom the people struggled! As the groups became organised a profusion of anti-nuclear badges, stickers and car stickers appeared all over the country.

Despite some errors of fact, most of the leaflets made the basic points about nuclear power being unsafe, unhealthy, polluting, expensive, politically undesirable, and leaving a long term legacy of nuclear waste. The style varied from sober academic treatments complete with footnotes and sources to the "shock/horror" dramatic leaflets designed to catch the attention of the uninformed and make them listen to the anti-nuclear case. The symbolism is often of peaceful harmony and ecological lifestyles compared to harsh militarised conditions and a poisoned environment. Often leaflets included details of how to become active in opposing nuclear power. Many of the early leaflets included a demand for a public inquiry, often seeing this as the way to expose the wrongs of nuclear planning and reflecting a belief that a neutral inquiry would somehow be above or outside politics and hence not subject to the intrigue and perceived tainted nature of the political system. There was also a widespread feeling that the government was covering up facts or at least not telling the whole truth. Reprints of newspaper articles critical of nuclear power and articles covering protests against nuclear power were also circulated as leaflets and in pamphlets, but were more frequently used as parts of portable exhibitions, widely used by many groups on the streets and in meetings on the nuclear topic.

An overall estimate of the number of leaflets produced in the course of the debate is plainly impossible but it runs to many hundreds of thousands. In addition newsletters and a few magazines provided

information to activists and kept up a running commentary on the development of the movement and the debate on tactics. The next section offers a brief summary of this material.

#### 10.6 NEWSLETTERS AND MAGAZINES

Four periodical publications are important: the FoE newsletters, Dawn, the Irish journal of nonviolence, Rebel, the paper of Revolutionary Struggle and the Contaminated Crow, an occasional publication of the ANM. With the exception of the FoE newsletters and Dawn prior to the growth of a mass movement, the publications are more concerned with discussing the movement and opposition to nuclear power, than with providing information on nuclear power itself. The tacit assumption was that readers were already aware of the debate and opposed to the Carnsore proposals.

The first newsletter of the revived FoE was produced in March 1978. It summarised the weekend seminar held the previous month and also provided information on the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis and the Dail debate on energy. The differences between the Departments of Energy and Department of Economic Planning on energy forecasts were also pointed out. The latter seemed much more interested in short rotation forestry as a viable energy source. This newsletter also included an outline of what the authors thought the FoE organisation should be: a decentralised collection of groups, comprising,

... an active network of individuals, and local groups who will lobby T.D.s, write letters to the papers, do research, write articles, inform friends and speak to local societies and associations.<sup>23</sup>

The second issue in April reprinted a letter from Petra Kelly, the German ecologist and feminist and editor with John Carroll of the later ITGWU book on the nuclear question (Carroll and Kelly, eds., 1979). It also carried material on the seminar and a commentary on a recent French parliamentary report on nuclear power costs. The third newsletter covered the "Wind, Wave, Water" conference organised by the SESI, the IDA, and the IIRS which heard international experts give optimistic estimates of the renewable energy possibilities in Ireland. This edition also covered the meeting of the Irish Council of the European Movement where Dr. Kavanagh of the Department of the Public Service

presented the figures that were to emerge later in the Green Paper, the hour and a half long debate on nuclear power at the Fine Gael Ard Fheis in May, and the launching of the campaign of written objections to planning permission submitted to the Wexford County council. The chairman, David Byers, also asked all members to write to Jack Lynch, the Taoiseach about the inadequacy of energy conservation, the potential for renewable energy development and the provision of insurance cover for nuclear accidents.

The fourth newsletter appeared in September 1978 and covered the Carnsore rally, subsequent meetings in Dublin and provided some preliminary criticisms of the Green Paper. Issues 5 and 6 appeared before Christmas calling for a redoubling of the petitioning efforts demanding a public inquiry. Issues including the use of aerosols, the extinction of the Cheetah and other environmental issues separate from the nuclear debate found their way into the newsletter, reflecting the wider concerns of FoE's members. Issue 7 included information on district heating and some suggestions on items that could be used in evidence at a planning hearing. The eighth issue, in February 1979, was the first in which nuclear power took a back seat.

From then on the newsletters were infrequent. A postal strike (Ireland has them too!), and a change of personnel in the core group of FoE in the spring of 1979, interrupted activities.

Dawn was published fairly regularly on a monthly basis during the 1970s, growing from humble beginnings as a few gestetnered sheets stapled together into a small magazine with a regular readership. Its coverage of the nuclear question started in January 1976 with a series of articles on the NIES proposal to build a SGHWR at Kilchief in County Down. The first article by Norman Lockhart outlined the problems with plutonium, waste, transport and accidents.

All of these must be totally assured of protection from accident, incompetence, negligence and sabotage. Humanity has never before shown such infallibility.<sup>25</sup>

Two months later he returned to these questions adding the theme of special police forces and the civil liberties consequences of nuclear programmes:

In fact the situation may arise where our civilian nuclear industry succeeds in destroying just those freedoms that our military nuclear industry is supposed to be safeguarding.... It is clear that both the NIES and the ESB are asking the wrong questions. They should not ask, "Do you want less expensive electricity?", but "is the possible occasional devastation of a city an acceptable price for lower electricity bills? Are permanently-armed private paramilitary bodies acceptable? Or increased personal surveillance?"

In August he commented on the increasing problems of nuclear waste disposal and the fact that drums of radioactive waste being dumped in the Atlantic were leaking. In October the U.K. Atomic Constables Act and the Flowers report were discussed. This issue also carried a reprinted article from Peace News on the Half Life pressure group that was forming in North West England to oppose nuclear power. In November the hazards of waste and decontamination problems with jettisoned American nuclear bombs were discussed. In February 1977 Norman Lockhart again discussed the problems of civil liberties in a review of Michael Flood and Robin Grove-White's "Nuclear Prospects."<sup>27</sup> The contradiction between nuclear power and democracy is clearly revealed in this article. This was followed by a review in April of Robert Blackith's book The Power that Corrupts.<sup>28</sup> In November 1977 Robert Blackith outlined the issues in the Windscale Inquiry. He discussed six interconnected questions: Whether there is a need for nuclear energy to supply Britain's energy need, whether reprocessing is desirable, whether reprocessing costs more than the recovered metals are worth, whether nuclear waste can be safely disposed of, whether the cancer risks to the public and the workers in the industry are acceptable, and finally, whether the nuclear lobby can be trusted.

In February 1978 Simon O'Donohoe reported on attempts to reform FoE following the earlier Student Christian Movement meeting on nuclear power. He commented on the difference in emphasis between those who argued for working within the labour movement and those who favoured lobbying the established political leaders. The following month a summary of FoE's seminar appeared and from here on the emphasis is on coverage and discussion of the movement itself rather than the reasons for opposing nuclear power. There were a few exceptions to this. In August 1979 Eoin Dinan commented on the EEC and its promotional efforts

in Ireland in connection with nuclear power. Juxtaposing press statements made in Ireland and in Europe by O'Malley and Jack Lynch he shows how they appear much more in favour of nuclear power when talking to the European press than when they are addressing a solely Irish audience. Pat Comerford brought some of the detailed reasons for opposing nuclear power back into focus in an article in the March 1980 issue. He outlined the connections between the German nuclear industry and the illegal Rossing mine in Namibia as well as their role in proliferation.

Any Irish decision in favour of the West German PWR could only encourage the oppression of the people of Namibia and proliferation of nuclear weapons throughout the world, and give West Germany added encouragement to become a nuclear weapons power.<sup>29</sup>

It is clear from the coverage in Dawn that its readers would have been at least partly aware of the implications of a nuclear plant when the plans were revived in the autumn of 1977. Equally the magazine assumed that the case against nuclear power was being adequately publicised elsewhere as it concentrated its coverage on the internal debate in the movement.

The Contaminated Crow, published by anti-nuclear activists in Dublin and Belfast, appeared three times as a small magazine in the summer and autumn of 1979 and the spring of 1980. It concentrated mainly on the discussions within the movement on organisation and politics, but it did include some information on international aspects of the nuclear industry. An article in the second issue pointed to the political unreliability of uranium supplies and waste disposal sites which explains why Ireland, within the EEC, becomes so important as a source of uranium and possibly a waste burial site. The attempts by Austria, Germany and France to negotiate waste disposal sites in Egypt, Brazil and Argentina respectively are pointed to as well as the problems for workers of the removal of the right to strike.

Another article argues for the unborn generations.<sup>30</sup>

... centralised industrial monomania, will eventually leave us stranded by the Karma of our own hurried success. By us I mean them; they're yet to be born. Who holds their proxy?

The third issue carried material about the operations of uranium mining companies in Australia, the attempts by the unions to oppose the

companies and the widespread opposition among the public. This was followed by a detailed review of the uranium explorations in Ireland and the interconnections between the companies in Ireland and their multinational parent companies. The fact that one of the Irish companies had Energy Minister Dessie O'Malley's brother in law as one of its directors wasn't missed either. This issue also carried a piece on international nuclear accidents. This publication was put together by anti-nuclear activists in Belfast and Dublin and was connected loosely with anarchist groups in Dublin. It was the closest that the anti-nuclear movement came to having a magazine solely devoted to the ANM cause.

Finally we turn to review Rebel, the fortnightly (nearly) paper of the Revolutionary Struggle group. It first started publication in the autumn of 1978 and has appeared regularly ever since. The basic statement of the RS position Nuclear: The Impossible Gamble is reviewed earlier in this chapter (section 10.3). Rebel repeated its position frequently on organisational questions (see chapter 11) and reiterated in a number of issues the reasons why the RS group opposed nuclear power.

For this group and many other activists the struggle against nuclear power is just one aspect of the struggle against capital and the state. In the first issue of Rebel they argue that the anti-nuclear struggle "... has unified in militant opposition many kinds of views and class backgrounds ..." <sup>31</sup> as people came to realise the anti-people and anti-life nature of capital. Progress and development sound hollow. In capital's terms these mean poverty, unemployment and the destruction of nature and labour itself. People, they argue, are questioning the state's arrogance and the "jobs at any price philosophy".

We are fighting against nuclear power because nuclear is the highest point of centralised capitalist development and control.... We are not for workers control of nuclear power--this is a dangerous illusion. We do not think that nuclear in the USSR, China or anywhere else is good. <sup>32</sup>

Some time later they added: "We believe that nuclear power is the prime example of the capitalist logic of exploitation and repression." <sup>33</sup>

They further argued for drawing many different classes into the struggle for a healthy environment:

It is in this setting that the struggle against the ill health and hazard of toxic industries, the struggle to protect our health and our environment, becomes not only connected to the struggle against nuclear but part of it.... If the nuclear state is the logic of growth, the toxic state is the growth of the end of the logic.<sup>34</sup>

The emphasis and ideological underpinnings of this approach differ considerably from the language of the respectable lobbyists of FoE and political wranglings were inevitable as the implications for action are different depending on the type of approach taken.

#### 10.7 CONCLUSIONS

The variety of perspectives represented in the movement is clear from this review of ANM literature. However, there are enough common grounds to ensure a thriving movement. A distrust of the government position and deep fear of the consequences of a nuclear plant are recurring themes. The conventional media published many articles, letters and editorials questioning the advisability of government policy, although not in the language of the radicals in the movement. Both the national T.V. and radio carried programmes and commentary on the case against the nuclear plans although again the radical perspectives were absent. The pirate radio stations which flourished in Ireland in the late 1970s carried many items sympathetic to the ANM and were probably of some importance in alerting young people to the issue.<sup>35</sup>

The extent of the influence of the propaganda leaflets and the periodical literature is difficult to gauge, although evidence from the questionnaire (see chapter 12) suggests that it was not particularly effective. The periodical literature served a function of keeping the activists in touch with each other and was more important as a forum for political debate in the movement than as a source of information. The next chapter deals in detail with this political debate.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 10

<sup>1</sup>These included a summary of the U.K. Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, 6th Report (the Flowers report).

<sup>2</sup>By late in 1978 it had risen to over 400.

<sup>3</sup>The Irish Times, 15 August 1978.

<sup>4</sup>It is this acceptance of the political "neutrality" of pressure group tactics and debate and the criticism of the government energy policies on its own terms that led the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science to call the nuclear controversy "The Rigged Debate" because it obscures the class interests which underlie the issue (BSSRS, 1980).

<sup>5</sup>An incomplete list of these groups published in October 1977 prior to the amalgamation of some of them into the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) lists 22 left wing parties, groups or tendencies. For a history of the communist party of Ireland see Marxism Today (June 1973), special issue on Ireland.

<sup>6</sup>Nuclear Power in Ireland, undated, Sinn Fein The Workers' Party, Dublin.

<sup>7</sup>A Nuclear Power Station for Ireland?, undated, Sinn Fein The Workers' Party, Dublin.

<sup>8</sup>Class Struggle, no. 6 (1979), p. 43.

<sup>9</sup>Revolutionary Struggle (1978), p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 18

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 23

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>18</sup>People's Democracy 1979, Nuclear Danger: For a United Fightback, Dublin.

<sup>19</sup>The Irish Times, 26-29 March 1979.

<sup>20</sup>"ESB Officers Report to the National Executive Committee on Energy," May 1979, Dublin.

<sup>21</sup>An Taisce, 1979.

<sup>22</sup>The Irish Times, 18 December 1979; Carroll and Kelly, eds., 1979.

<sup>23</sup>FoE Newsletter, no. 1, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup>"Wind, Wave, Water," conference in the Irish Management Institute, 26 April 1978, Organised by SESI, the IDA and the IIRS.

<sup>25</sup>Dawn, no. 17 (January 1976), p. 6.

<sup>26</sup>Dawn, no. 19 (March 1976), p. 9.

<sup>27</sup>Flood and Grove White, 1976.

<sup>28</sup>Blackith, 1976.

<sup>29</sup>Dawn, no. 55 (March 1980), p. 6.

<sup>30</sup>The Contaminated Crow, no. 2, p. 14.

<sup>31</sup>Rebel, no. 1, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., no. 11, (May 1979), p. 10.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., no. 14 (August 1979), p. 2.

<sup>35</sup>These were small operations in the larger cities playing mostly rock and roll music. The national broadcasting service (RTE) holds a monopoly on broadcasting rights. The pirate stations were effectively silenced when RTE introduced a new pop radio service drawing personnel, advertisers and audience away from the pirates.

## CHAPTER 11

## THE RADICALS AND THE MASS MOVEMENT

Patriarchial society is fundamentally aggressive, competitive and hierarchial. Contemporary high technology can be seen as its apogee, concentrating, as it does the power and profit in the hands of a small elite of technocrats; their attitude to the earth is one of exploitation, of domination as opposed to dwelling in and with it. Trained in the methods of so-called scientific "detachment" they detach themselves utterly from the implications of their technological toys. Longterm risks (even short term), damage to the environment, dangers to human health, are all dismissed in favour of immediate "effectiveness" or to put it more bluntly, the quickest profit.<sup>1</sup>

....the anti-nuclear movement is not a defensive reaction, against something which would cause enormous damage in the event of an accident. The movement is rather against the hierarchial, computerised, authoritarian state which takes decisions by reference to its own peculiar values. Thus the movement is a political and social movement.... It is not a pressure group, it is a movement of cultural revolution and social struggle.<sup>2</sup>

The structure of the movement itself, its organisation and type of leadership is consistent with the style of politics chosen by much of the movement. The attempt to create organisational structures where people could actively participate without an authoritarian hierarchy arising around and above them has been a cornerstone of the movement.

(Vogel, 1980:130)

### 11.1 INTRODUCTION

The second phase of the Irish ANM was a much broader campaign than the first phase. Widespread public support was gained, numerous established groups made statements in favour of a public inquiry and at the spearhead of resistance was an active and vocal mass movement which established itself at the first anti-nuclear rally at Carnsore Point in August 1978.

This chapter deals with the political debate within the movement

and shows how the ideas of mass democracy and a rejection of the established political process permeates the ANM. Barkan's analysis (1979) of the U.S. ANM is a useful starting place. He divided the internal tactical and political debates into four headings:

- (i) consensus decision-making and political organisation,
- (ii) non-violence and civil disobedience,
- (iii) multiple issues versus single issues,
- (iv) the use of the court system by activists.

This chapter deals with the first two of these factors and also considers briefly the approach of activists to the government public inquiry. Chapter 13 deals with the question of multiple issues. Only 10 activists came to trial for activities relating to the ANM in Ireland and the questions that Barkan raises are not of importance.

Organisational questions were central foci of concern in the Irish ANM, and while questions of violence and civil disobedience were never seriously faced in tactical situations on a large scale, they were central to discussions of strategy in many groups. Mass democracy and participatory political activity were considered essential by many activists in the building of a movement to oppose nuclear power and the technocratic state. Before discussing these issues it is worth noting some of the key groups. In the early stages the Dublin FoE group was a focus of activity. The RS group through their activists scattered throughout the country and through their periodical Rebel were ardent proponents of mass democracy. At the height of the activity, late in 1978 there were as many as fifty local groups around the country opposing nuclear power. These constitute the "mass movement," the key component in the campaign against nuclear power. Cork FoE and the Tralee Nuclear Opposition Workshop were important in the 1979 attempts to establish a delegate structure to coordinate the local groups. The Wexford NSA was still campaigning in the local area throughout this period.

## 11.2 MASS MOVEMENT OR LOBBY GROUP; THE EARLY DEBATE

Early in 1978 the embryo ANM organised in Dublin under the umbrella of the reformed FoE group. A major debate developed over how best to enlarge the opposition to nuclear power. The debate polarised between those who wanted to build a lobby organisation and those who wished to

take a more militant approach. In making a distinction between the "lobbyists" and the mass movement advocates, it would be a mistake to see it as a split between conservative committee types and the rest. It was widely agreed in the early FoE group that the organisation should be as decentralised and as non-bureaucratic as possible.<sup>3</sup> A special meeting was organised on 6 April 1978 to thrash out questions of organisation, tactics, political philosophy, non-violence and other issues. For this meeting three discussion papers were prepared; one by two members of the self-appointed ad hoc committee of FoE, one identified with the RS group and some other activists, and a third by some unaffiliated anarchist activists.<sup>4</sup>

Taking these in reverse order; the anarchist document suggested that a separate anti-nuclear movement should be established so that it would not be diluted by FoE's other environmentalist interests. It also argued for direct action and suggested that it should not limit itself to only legal approaches. On the question of organisation it advocated a recallable rotating facilitating committee.

The document identified with the RS group set its perspectives on political ecology clearly in the first paragraphs:

Friends of the Earth is an organisation concerned primarily with ecology--for us that implies that the organisation sees, and intends to fight against, the misuse and destruction of nature and its resources--for that misuse and destruction are against the interests of the working people.<sup>5</sup>

and later,

Members of Friends of the Earth, whether democratic, progressive, socialist or communist, or perhaps considering themselves a-political, agree though on one thing: that the economic and technological so-called development effectively underdevelops people, all over the world, through illiteracy, disease, poverty, unemployment, war, plunder, and the destruction of finite resources.

Further, that such underdevelopment while serving primarily the short term interests of rulers acts against the long-term interests of humanity. And if that is to change, it would be necessary to build a new way of life based on human concepts of growth, control of technology, understanding and respect for nature--for the interests of the majority of the people.<sup>6</sup>

On the question of organisation they argued that few, except those involved with capital intensive industry in Ireland, stood to gain from nuclear power but that confrontation with them was inevitable. Hence,

they argued; "... our strength will depend and rest on the depth and broadness of mass support for our projects."<sup>7</sup>

From this perspective they derived their policy aims for the organisation:

Friends of the Earth will oppose the building of a nuclear power plant in Ireland by any means necessary. In other words, we resolve that we are a serious organisation which is going to stand up and be counted and not going to disappear or back down at the first sign of confrontation with the State.<sup>8</sup>

They at this stage went on to advocate a movement of local autonomous groups deciding aims, etc., at a general assembly of all members. For day to day tasks of coordination they suggested a small secretariat to be supplemented by special committees to organise such things as finance, publications, security fund raising, etc. Tactics were to be decided at the local level.

The third document was prepared by two members of the central FoE committee. This placed FoE in the context of the developing "embryonic political movement" around ecological principles, drawing together a number of different threads including;

... the need for greater harmony between man and the life supporting ecosystems on which he depends, political and economic decentralisation, non-violence, sustainable self-sufficient communities, small human scale industry and business, alternative technology, etc.<sup>9</sup>

The outlined objectives included generating a sense of personal responsibility for the environment, making environmental issues the subject of widespread debate. On the question of legality:

We intend to campaign against specific projects which damage the environment, or squander our resources, and fight for their correction by every legal means at our disposal.<sup>10</sup>

In conclusion, the FoE committee emphasised that the most important aim was the campaign for the universal adoption of sustainable and equitable life styles. The methods to be used to achieve these goals were fairly standard lobby tactics. These were building a powerful unaligned environmental lobby, lobbying to change laws and using existing laws to defend the environment, making people aware of their rights and taking direct action "to conserve and promote considerate use of the Earth's natural resources." In addition, they wished to set up channels to focus energies into these projects and provide logistical

support for them. They left the precise questions of committees open, saying that a loose federation of autonomous groups could work out the precise details of this at some unspecified future date.

A call for a vote on the documents at the meeting was stalled by the insistence by some that only those who had paid their membership dues should be allowed to vote and that the vote should be a postal one.

The anarchist discussion document was not included in the subsequent mailing. The RS document was slightly changed, the section on confrontation and "by any means necessary" was changed to the less militant form of;

FoE will oppose the building of a nuclear power plant in Ireland by any means deemed necessary by the members of the organisation after due consideration of the prevailing conditions and fully democratic debate and decision making.<sup>11</sup>

The document prepared by the FoE committee was more drastically changed prior to circulation. An introduction was added saying that there was a disagreement over organisational questions.

These differences crystallised around the issue of non-violent means 'vs' "by any means possible" in achieving the objectives of Friends of the Earth.... We feel this issue is crucial to the credibility and success of Friends of the Earth Ireland as an environmental lobby group.<sup>12</sup>

Here then is the nub of the political issue summarised in the appeal for support mailed to the membership. They added a formal constitution to the ballot which summarised their ideas of a non-aligned environmental lobby group with a formal national coordinating committee and annual gathering. The postal vote subsequently favoured this constitution but events had overtaken this debate in Dublin by the time it was formally decided by ballot. Those more in favour of a militant approach gradually drifted away from FoE meetings and connected with the loose collective which was exploring the possibilities of a major anti-nuclear rally in Wexford. The debate was to continue and acrimonious exchanges were still to come. A few months later a member of the FoE committee hid hundreds of publicity leaflets for the Carnsore festival in a cupboard while nobody was looking. At issue was the slogan "Working people stand up and Fight" printed on the leaflet in addition to the attribution of the leaflet to Friends of the Earth Ireland. Concerned with the question of the image of the group the committee member decided to prevent its circulation.

Many of the FoE personnel thought that the Rally was an impossible project which was doomed to failure. While not opposed to the idea, they took no part in the organisation and planning of the event which was done by a loose collective with members drawn mainly from Wexford and Dublin.

### 11.3 THE CARNSORE RALLY

The Carnsore rally was the first and arguably the most successful attempt to put the libertarian ideal of mass organisation into practice in the Irish ANM. Despite or perhaps, because of, the lack of a formal organisation structure, it was a real success and there was no shortage of volunteers to do the logistical work and musicians to provide entertainment. The festival generated a spirit of hope and purpose amongst those present and some were to unabashedly claim that the weekend was the greatest "high" of their lives.<sup>13</sup> The whole event was a new departure in Irish politics. One journalist wrote:

No radical political protest of the past ten years so caught the public imagination or so successfully spanned the chasms between 'alternative society' advocates, flower power hang overs, constitutional liberals and revolutionary marxists. They were united against the nuclear power station proposed for the wind blasted and beautiful Carnsore Point.<sup>14</sup>

The tent city was the subject of extensive pictorial coverage in the national media and on BBC Television news. Groups around the country hired trains and buses to bring thousands of supporters to the site. A perpetual traffic jam resulted, especially on the Sunday afternoon, as many day trippers arrived to swell the crowds and join the march to build the ceremonial cairn on the ESB site.

The format of the festival is indicative of the philosophy underlying its inception. There was no central organising focus. A rather irregularly manned information caravan and a small stage in one of the large marquees served as focal points for most people while a workers' tent provided a focal point for the volunteers who arrived early to prepare the site. No press facilities were provided as no one had any intent of turning the event into one staged for the media. Reporters were forced to contact individuals from the various groups and conduct informal interviews to elicit statements. Also no press passes were issued. The press were forced to park with everyone else

and walk onto the site. Food was laid on by a number of groups including a local parish organisation, raising money for parish activities. Volunteers manned the carparks, creche, and beach patrols and picked up garbage at regular intervals.

Not everyone was completely happy. A number of feminists were disappointed at the lack of awareness of those present of the women's issue and the overtly sexist attitudes which some men showed.<sup>15</sup> The national ANM started at the rally, the large meeting on the Sunday afternoon is considered as the first mass meeting of the movement. These were organised on approximately a three monthly basis and rotated around the country to different geographical locations. A national sign up list was also posted and many interested people from most counties signed their names and addresses to start opposition groups around the country. These lists were duly typed up and sent to county coordinators who were hopefully to take the next steps and organise county meetings. The lack of formal organisation and a central office reflected the ideology of the activists, strongly emphasising personal responsibility and initiative in organisation.

Debates over tactics and politics continued in the movement and in the autumn of 1978 the Cork group split to form two groups with one faction going for a more militant approach organising demonstrations in housing estates and benefit concerts while the other faction emphasised the more traditional lobby approaches.<sup>16</sup> In Dublin in September there was a major meeting to discuss the organisation of the ANM which came to a rather inconclusive ending. The next major focus of the movement was at the second national mass meeting in Dublin in November 1978.

#### 11.4 MONSTER MEETINGS AND MOTION SICKNESS

The second mass (or "Monster Meeting" as they were sometimes advertised) meeting of the ANM took place in the State cinema in Dublin late in November (see Table 11.1 for a list of mass meetings). This meeting followed the pattern of earlier events and was organised by a loose collective of activists from various political perspectives. The meeting was structured with a very loose chair and a microphone available for anyone who wished to speak. A long and unedited list of

TABLE 11.1

## TIMINGS AND LOCATIONS OF MASS MEETINGS

1.	Carnsore Point	August	1978
2.	Dublin (State Theatre)	November	1978
3.	Wexford (Dun Mhuire)	February	1979
4.	Belfast	May	1979
5.	Carnsore Point	August	1979
6.	Cork	October	1979
7.	Limerick	February	1980
8.	Galway	May	1980
9.	Carnsore Point	August	1980
10.	Dublin	December	1980
11.	Cork	March	1981

motions was presented to the meeting and subsequently an attempt was made to vote on them. A newsletter was also prepared from submissions sent in by groups all over the country detailing what the groups had done in the previous few months and giving an indication of what they hoped to achieve at the meeting and afterwards.

The organising collective proposed a format to the meeting where the discussion was to be broken into four sections each of one hour's duration.<sup>17</sup> The four topics were:

- the aims of the national ANM.
- the form and structures of the movement.
- strategy and tactics of the movement.
- the coordination of the movement.

The general tendencies of the motions were towards a decentralised approach and a recallable secretariat. In some suggestions the duration of office holding was limited to three months. The motions from rural areas tended to be more in favour of central coordination, Longford calling for a central address while Sligo wanted a central organising body made up of delegates from each anti-nuclear group.<sup>18</sup> The Dublin group based in Dundrum emphasised the need for as little centralisation as possible while Dublin South West argued for a mass democratic movement based on autonomous local groups. The ideas of rotating mass assemblies to make decisions was proposed on a number of occasions. A number of motions also argued for keeping the ANM separate from any political grouping.

The ensuing debate was acrimonious at some stages with one member of the SLP making accusations that RS was attempting to manipulate the movement into accepting a mass meeting structure which it could then direct because of its tightly organised coordination. This theme was to occur frequently in the coming months. The voting, when it eventually did get underway, was a shambles both because of the contradictory claims as to how many people actually voted, and because contradictory motions were passed. The voting was complicated by the presence of many people (some estimate as high as 40% of those present) who were waiting for the concert due to follow the meeting and provide the culmination of roadshow project that evening. Many who worked hard in the movement were frustrated that these people were voting and yet had done little

if anything for the movement. This question of who should vote and who should make the decisions was never finally decided in the movement. The advocates of mass democracy stuck to the basic principle that anyone who was present at a meeting had the right to take part in all the proceedings. Although this led to the recurring problems of newcomers being allowed the same say as those familiar with the issues, the movement was so concerned with participation for all that no attempt to organise formal membership votes were carried out, with the noticeable exception of the FoE postal ballot described above. It did however lead to frustration at the meeting. Further, no one was empowered to carry out the motions that were carried on the agenda. Consequently, the movement continued in its ad hoc method of operation with the 40 or 50 local groups continuing to organise events in their local areas. The newsletters prepared for the mass meetings show the diversity of this activity and the vitality of the protest actions around the country which included pickets of meetings involving government ministers, pickets of ESB offices around the country, leafletting, anti-nuclear theatre, concerts and film shows and even a puppet show on a few occasions. Many groups around the country set up stalls and portable exhibitions in shopping malls and city streets distributing leaflets, selling books, and, as they became available, badges and stickers by the tens of thousands.

#### 11.5 IN WEXFORD AGAIN

The third mass meeting took place in mid-February 1979 in the "Dun Mhuire" hall in Wexford town on a cold and snowy weekend that discouraged attendance. The meeting had been organised by Nuclear Opposition Wexford and NSA people who installed someone they thought would be an acceptable chairperson and suggested that each group send three voting delegates to make decisions. This was unpopular with mass democracy advocates who arrived by the busload in Wexford determined to put an end to ideas of delegates. They quickly voted the chairman out of a job and divided the meeting into a number of small discussion groups which discussed aspects of the nuclear problem and tactics to be used against the Carnsore proposal. Some present were upset by the change of format but the radicals who enjoyed wide support

were determined to stop attempts to structure and bureaucratise the movement. This question of delegates came to be a recurring theme repeated often by those who were unhappy with the organisation of the ANM. The case against delegation was summarised in Rebel as follows;

The question of delegates which seems to be at the centre of the debate is not simply a technical one. If we are serious in our struggle, if we truly want to control our own lives, then having others debate, fight and decide on our behalf is a step backwards.... We put forward as an alternative MASS ASSEMBLIES, which recognise the autonomy of local groups and initiatives, while retaining a national coherence and perspectives.<sup>19</sup>

In the view of many, the whole point of having delegate meetings was that the mass assemblies were failing to provide this coherence, many participants seeing the whole operation as chaotic. Subsequently Rebel returned to this theme, arguing that the Wexford proposals were dangerously divisive. "There is a healthy aversion to bourgeois forms of organisation inside the movement."<sup>20</sup> was a somewhat premature claim when a proposal from a Kilkenny group to the Wexford meeting advocated the use of public relations consultants to promote the anti-nuclear cause.<sup>21</sup> This was too much for RS and they responded:

... to argue for the movement to employ advertising agencies and professional agencies and professional sellers to sell the anti-nuclear movement is to put bourgeois relations so deep into the movement as to drown it completely.<sup>22</sup>

Later in an editorial on the question of organisation the RS position is clarified thus:

An organisation fighting for a (participatory) society is based on the direct participation of everybody. It cannot have delegates. There is nothing in all of this that could be delegated.... Direct action and direct democracy are the tools of such an organisation. It leaves delegate (representative) democracy to the historians.<sup>23</sup>

Indicative of this type of approach was a motion accepted by the meeting "that a public inquiry is already in the 32 counties where people discuss and debate the pros and cons of nuclear power" indicating that the movement saw itself as separate from the state structure of political decision making and implying that the people intended to make the decision. This view on the inquiry was repeated many times.<sup>24</sup>

The question of the movement's image was to recur frequently too;

... we disagree strongly with those who want to legitimise the movement. Giving the movement the veneer of respectability means sacrificing its vitality and stifling its energy and imagination. It will mean rigidity for local groups and a straight jacket on the movement.<sup>25</sup>

Many of these issues remained unresolved but the meetings continued, leaflets were written and protests mounted.

#### 11.6 TO BELFAST AND BACK TO CARNSORE

The fourth mass meeting occurred in Belfast in May 1979 and was marred again by more accusations of manipulation this time by an unidentified SLP member attempting to ensure that an SLP member spoke at the forthcoming June 2nd protest march in Dublin. Despite the internal debates a second rally was organised and held in Carnsore in August 1979 with the slogan this time being "BACK TO THE POINT." This was a somewhat smaller affair than the previous year but the number of groups present and the diversity of political and environmental statements had increased.

A common criticism of the movement at this time was the narrow social base that was active in the movement<sup>26</sup> and what some saw as the rather limited appeal of its activities. Remarking on this aspect of the Carnsore rally one commentator returned to the theme of image, arguing that:

It is the image the event projects which will determine the nature of a large proportion of its audience, and the image presented by Carnsore is of appeal to a limited audience viz. it involves en masse camping and a fairly specialised brand of entertainment. It thus attracts 'young trendies' and passes up the opportunity to influence the greater portion of public opinion.<sup>27</sup>

Another related it more directly to the political structure of the movement, asking why the ANM was becoming a clique "only allowing people with similar political beliefs to work with us?"<sup>28</sup>

The debate over structures and alleged manipulation heated up again in the autumn of 1979 with a meeting near Dublin at Tiknock held to discuss the Carnsore festival turning into a "RS bashing" session. A number of people in Cork were also very unhappy with what they perceived as RS attempts to control and manipulate meetings. The issue came to the surface again at the sixth mass meeting in Cork in

October. At this meeting a group from Tralee put forward a number of proposals for a delegate structure to operate in parallel with the mass movement structure. Polarisation became acute and suspicion reigned at this meeting which was marred from the beginning by confusion over the venue caused by the last minute cancellation by the University of permission to hold the event in its grounds.<sup>29</sup> The questions of manipulation and control are crucial in attempting to understand the movement.

#### 11.7 LEADERSHIP, POWER AND CONTROL IN THE MOVEMENT

A number of dilemmas are present in the debate over the political control of the movement. Few activists deny that the ANM would never have been so large and successful if the RS activists had not worked so hard organising the events. There is little doubt that groups like the SLP did want more power in the movement than they got, although many of their activists considered themselves as just individuals in the movement leaving their party affiliations at the entrances to meetings. The FoE groups were unhappy that their approach did not have greater impact. As the polarisation increased, people on both sides tended to develop conspiracy theories and viewed people with different viewpoints as either agents or dupes of the other side. RS maintain in their publications and in interviews that they did not attempt to control the movement but proudly admit to pushing their point of view within it. They were at a considerable advantage within the movement, being an organised group and at least by Irish political standards, having a sophisticated theoretical analysis of Irish society available to interpret the controversy and guide their political actions. It was this articulated line and enthusiasm that led many to support their arguments on organisational and tactical questions.<sup>30</sup> For newcomers to political organisation who preferred more conventional approaches however, the presence of an organised group who were very articulate and used radical rhetoric, the experience was unsettling. The concepts of mass democracy assume mutual trust by all participants and at least some parity of experience, political and verbal skills. In addition to having these skills RS thought out what they were going to say prior to meetings. Many unattached activists felt that the meetings ought to

be the forum for discussing ideas and were upset to find that certain groups were in positions where they discussed anti-nuclear strategy beforehand.<sup>31</sup> Inevitably RS was seen as manipulative by some of those who did not have another political affiliation inside the movement. However, many others appreciated the guidance that RS could offer to local groups and RS members provided skills and contacts.

It appears that many activists did not understand what the direct democracy approach meant, and old behaviour patterns of waiting until a central office or a big meeting told them what to do reasserted themselves. Equally it appears that rural groups who were already more conservative to begin with, felt particularly isolated and failed to initiate enough contacts to overcome their relative geographic disadvantage. Instead of initiating actions many groups after an initial burst of activity ceased to function because of a lack of external inspiration. The problem was aggravated in part by the failure of urban based radicals to realise that this was happening and their consequent failure to take rural calls for a central office seriously. In an unstructured movement the leadership, and what power exists, gradually moves towards those who put in the most effort, develop the most contacts and become most knowledgeable on the issue in question. As Vogel (1980:130) puts it:

In reality, leadership is exercised by initiative and attrition. With no elected leadership, whoever stays the longest, puts in the most hours and is most persuasive, effectively becomes leadership.

In the Irish movement in a number of groups this informal leadership came from activists who advocated mass democratic ideas. When these people also appeared to support ideas identified with RS, suspicions mounted. RS are also charged with changing wording on leaflets, failing to do things as they promised and identifying their line too closely with that of the whole anti-nuclear movement, but their real problems probably occurred because of their perceived reluctance to address criticism openly. One exasperated activist wrote,

The touchiness of RS members and the tendency of people to grumble among themselves about RS and not attempt to articulate the critique both contribute to this lack of discussion. The 'Rebel' report of the Ticknock meeting where the above criticisms of RS were voiced was not encouraging. The report hopes that they can now work

together, now that people have got the criticisms off their chests, with never a thought given to whether there was any basis to the allegations. It is hard to interpret this refusal of self examination as anything but arrogance and elitism, basically authoritarian and showing a staggering contempt for fellow activists.<sup>32</sup>

Undoubtedly RS were less open and flexible than would have been desirable on many occasions, but the charges of deliberate manipulation on a large scale are unfounded. RS have reaped little direct political advancement from their involvement in the ANM apart, probably, from a considerable amount of experience and some recruits who were politicised in the ANM. The inexperience of many of the activists, including RS people, was partly to blame for the problems that resulted. The suspicion and secrecy to which radical groups are always susceptible is also important. in understanding the tensions within the movement; the Irish "special branch" has taken a more than passing interest in the ANM. A final factor of importance in understanding the problems in the movement is the failure of young and mobile activists who have a political network within which to work, to realise that those who had not developed these supports were lost in the large mass meeting method of organisation. Many groups argued for a delegate structure in the hopes that they would get information and some indications of what was going on in the movement. These mass meetings lacked a clarity of purpose and steadily the numbers attending them declined. The Contaminated Crow commented that:

Certain groups came wishing to make 'decisions', certain groups wished to examine what had been done over the past three months and examine possible areas of activity in the future. Certain comrades wished to exchange experience about organising at the local level, learn from each other, examine their difficulties and problems and return to put these lessons to use. Others wished to make policy decisions nationally. Some wished for activity, some for statements.<sup>33</sup>

The political wrangles within the movement probably had an unfortunate effect in scaring away newcomers to ANM meetings. Potential supporters in search of information were scared away by the apparently endless political discussions.

The political discussions have never been resolved, if indeed that is possible, but in the fall of 1979 they reached a peak of intensity as a Tralee group attempted to set up a parallel delegate

structure in the movement. The contradictions in the movement were brought into focus and the polemics reached a new pitch of intensity.

#### 11.8 THE DELEGATE (DELICATE?) STRUCTURE

Following the debates at the Cork mass meeting in October 1979 the Tralee Opposition Workshop set up a meeting for all those interested in starting a delegate structure. The groups involved met a number of times early in 1980 and these meetings were reasonably constructive as far as some of the participating groups were concerned, improving communications and coordinating the production of leaflets. At no time did the delegate structure claim to speak for more than its participating groups. In its enthusiasm to prevent undemocratic procedures and manipulation, it effectively hamstrung itself by insisting that all decisions be ratified by members of the participating groups before any action was taken. Essentially the delegate structure acted as a social and communication focus for groups unhappy with the mass movement structure. In contrast to the proposals from the Wexford meeting the previous February, this organisation did not try to force their structure on groups that did not wish to take part. Despite this, the reaction to the proposals was sustained and severe on the part of the mass movement advocates. The proposals put forward by the Tralee Nuclear Opposition Workshop to the October 20-21, 1979 Cork mass meeting summarised the views of a number of groups who found themselves isolated:

There is a crippling lack of communication, cooperation and coordination in the movement.... While we are in total agreement with local autonomous groups carrying on in their own way we feel that there is a need for those groups to come together every now and then to exchange ideas, literature and experiences.... Gatherings such as Carnsore should of course continue, but their function should be merely as a show of strength--the main "business" should be carried on away from distraction such as music which although it has its place does a lot of damage to the movement by taking away prospective "older" anti-nukes. <sup>34</sup>

And later, to try and still the anticipated fears and objections to structure and hierarchy, the Tralee group continued:

What we envision is not a tight hierarchial structure. Some seem to think that we have only 2 courses open to us, a tight restricting slow moving organisation and on the other <sup>35</sup> hand a totally unstructured situation such as we have now.

Out of the accusations and counter-accusations at the Cork meeting, the Tralee proposals were circulated to many groups and correspondence flowed. It is worth noting that not all Tralee activists supported this initiative. A few were furious that the group was too busy organising the delegate structure to mount a protest in support of the activists who were arrested in the EEC offices in Dublin.<sup>36</sup>

The first delegate meeting was held in Tralee on 1 December 1979. People representing twelve groups arrived as delegates, or at least ended up as delegates, a few only decided to be delegates once they had arrived.<sup>37</sup> Some groups came to observe what was happening without a firm commitment to participate. A number of letters were read to the meeting before discussions commenced. The Belfast anti-nuclear group opposed delegates because they argued it would lead to centralisation. A Dublin activist argued that the delegate idea would divert the movement from issues such as the arrest of the EEC-9. The Limerick anti-nuclear group produced a four page statement on the delegate structure condemning it roundly and arguing for a continuation of the mass movement and that the case for a duplication of structures was unclear. In response to the Tralee proposals to improve the image of the movement Limerick retorted,

The relationship between image and support is not simply 'better' image 'more' support. We see that support is hard earned by active anti-nukes who go out and canvass in numerous ways--for the support of all the people who have nothing to gain from nuclear power. Unifying and improving our image may make the movement more acceptable to some people... but if that is their condition for becoming identified with the movement we would like to know what their relationship is with those for whom image is of little concern. The phrase 'less alien to the rest of the country' can only imply that somehow the hippies, freaks, communists, anarchists, etc., etc., are damaging the movement. If this is what FoE believes then why not say it?<sup>38</sup>

They go on to point to the crucial issues of personal responsibility for political action:

Mass structures, on the other hand, only allows people who are willing to put the necessary work into anti-nuclear activity to gain influence inside the movement ...<sup>39</sup>

and later;

Direct democracy is first and foremost a gesture of faith in the integrity of other people and their inalienable right to learn, decide and determine the direction of their actions.<sup>40</sup>

This debate reflects in detail the themes that were dealt with in Chapter 3. Two fundamentally different concepts of politics and approaches to social change are present here. Piven and Cloward (1977) argue that mobilisation and protest by people outside the political bargaining system are crucial to gaining a hearing and getting results. On the other hand, those that accept the basic liberal conceptions of politics and pressure group lobbying tactics, attempt to appear respectable and are concerned with image and credibility. The radicals, those convinced that major structural changes are essential, and that capitalist society is basically antagonistic, are interested in further developing opposition, and causing as many disturbances and problems as possible for the ruling class, to make nuclear power a politically untenable option. This fundamental difference in political ideology is the key to these internal debates, both within the Irish ANM and the international movement described in Chapter 6. The conflict was quite insightfully rationalised by some members of the Cork FoE group as being a question of priorities. They argued that they wished to stop nuclear power first and then change the world. The pressure group/lobby approach was thought to be best for this purpose. They also suggested that RS wished to change the world and then stop nuclear power. It is more accurate to argue that the radicals wished to stop nuclear power as part of their project to fundamentally change society.

The internal wrangles within the movement came to a head and the lines between forceful argument and personal intimidation were crossed several times. The irony of the situation remains because the anti-bureaucratic tendencies remained strong especially within the Cork FoE group who were pushing the delegate idea very hard.<sup>41</sup> They refused to allow a central organisation to be set up and the few delegate structure meetings that did occur rotated on a monthly basis between different groups. The first meeting was held in Tralee in December and it was the scene of angry verbal arguments where non-delegates argued that they should be allowed to speak. The delegates voted that only they could speak and most of the other people present left in disgust,<sup>42</sup> this being the first occasion in the anti-nuclear movement when people had been silenced. This meeting came to a number of conclusions: that a referendum was inopportune because of the lack of public

information, that a statement on the issue of the public inquiry should be made and condemned the failure of the government to provide financial backing for a proposed windmill project on a small island off the west coast. The ironies of the occasion came close to farce when the topic of uranium mining was raised. It happened that the only person present who had up to date information on the subject was one of the non-delegates who had previously been forbidden to speak!

Dawn magazine advertised the meeting and outlined the ideas of no-power delegates that had been discussed at the Cork meeting.<sup>43</sup>

Rebel published a stream of criticism of the delegate idea arguing that it was a bourgeois reaction to the developing political content of the movement. Returning to an age old controversy in political theory between participatory and representative politics they argue that:

Its objective is to create a bourgeois form of organisation, heavily distorted forms of representation, easy for the press to handle and the government to negotiate with, but inaccessible to the mass of working people.<sup>44</sup>

Regarding the point about autonomous groups continuing to function they continued:

We are saying AUTONOMY is NOT about everyone doing their own thing. It is about AUTONOMY FROM THE STATE, CAPITAL and BUREAUCRATIC FORMS OF ORGANISATION. Autonomy means refusing to internalise the needs of the state and Capital inside the movement.<sup>45</sup>

This article, one of Rebel's most vicious polemics, also castigated the group at the Ticknock meeting dismissing their concern as "... individual self expression and spontaneity, stemming from a petty bourgeois desire to deny class forces inside (and often outside) the movement...."<sup>46</sup> A later edition carried a letter appealing against the delegate structure; "the briefcase, and caucus type, the wheelers and dealers, the self-advancing."<sup>47</sup>

The delegates met a few times in the spring of 1980, wrote several leaflets, a letter to the new Taoiseach, Mr. Haughey and improved their own morale somewhat. The delegate idea, clearly an anathema to many activists, reveals the radical leanings within the movement. The mass meeting approach would never have considered letter writing to the Taoiseach who was considered part of the system that was being opposed. The delegate structure, like the rest of the movement, suffered from

decreasing interest as 1980 passed. The third Carnsore rally in 1980 was smaller than previous years and by this time attention was focused on the other issues of noxious industries, toxic waste and uranium prospecting. These topics will be covered in some detail in Chapter 13.

Related to the questions of organisation and politics was the issue of nonviolence which we now briefly discuss.

### 11.9 NON-VIOLENCE

The question of non-violence has at times been a surrogate political issue for the debate between the radicals who espouse any means that is available and reformists who don't wish to violently challenge the status quo. To many in the civil rights movements and in the New Left, non-violence provided tactics that were compatible with moral and ethical principles. To many in the ANM, nuclear power is a symbol of violence and the idea of using violence against violence strikes many as being self-defeating. The non-violence ideas in the U.S. ANM have had considerable input from the Quaker movement and in particular from the Movement for Survival group. The literature on non-violent protest philosophy is extensive (See Swomley, 1972; Lakey, 1973; Sharp, 1973; Coover, et al., 1977).

The proponents of non-violence in the Irish ANM were the Dawn group and Cork FoE in particular, who studied non-violence and organised study and training sessions. Cork FoE produced a leaflet in 1978 on the history of non-violence and later collaborated with Dawn to produce a longer document which connected non-violence to the nuclear issue in Ireland.<sup>48</sup> The document outlines the basis for non-violence as a philosophy and political strategy. Non-violence, it argues:

... springs from a positive philosophy which emphasises action rather than words, possible solutions rather than escalating problems. It is an interventionist philosophy; something is wrong, if there is an injustice, then we are morally bound to, and will joyfully intervene. It does not condemn those who feel driven to violence but emphasises that there are many non-violent actions possible which may not have been tried.<sup>49</sup>

The training sessions were organised along the lines suggested by Coover, et al. (1977) and involved role-playing games, brainstorming sessions and a number of games working on group dynamic principles. The aims of

these sessions were to improve interaction within groups and to develop trust as preparation for direct action situations. These were subject to criticism both within the FoE group and from outsiders, some of whom argued that the exercises were too artificial and that the group dynamic techniques had cultural biases underlying them that were an anathema especially to working class Irish youth.

The application of these non-violence ideas in U.S. demonstrations have also been criticised. Commenting on the Clamshell Alliance operations Bove (1977:26) argues that,

... through a complex process, they also forced (consciously or unconsciously) their positions on the group, creating a stultifying "solidarity".... The Quakers are primarily concerned with diffusing anger to prevent chaos from breaking out. But these tactics were also a good political move by them because they isolated the dissidents and made them look like "disrupters."

Apart from the tactical considerations a major critique of non-violence is that its perspective limits historical analysis of conflict in society. While emphasising common ground and consensus it obscures political and class conflict. As Gutierrez put it in a different context:

We Christians however, are not used to thinking in conflictual and historical terms. We prefer peaceful reconciliation to antagonism and an evasive eternity to provisional arrangement. We must learn to live and think of peace in conflict and what is definitive in what is historical.

(Gutierrez, 1973:137)

The radical potential of the non-violent ideas has not really been developed as yet in the anti-nuclear movement and the interest in it was limited to a few groups in Ireland. Non-violence is often confused with pacifism and weakness although one feminist in the Irish ANM writing in Wicca, made an articulate critique of the radicals who see police provocation as a radical act:

If there is an occupation/march/demonstration against a nuclear plant, what will be the response to state violence? Sometimes male politicians seem to me to use the tactics of confrontation, of provoking a heavy reaction from police or troops in order to make a point about state violence. But often this seems to deteriorate to male ego tripping, a conflict of two groups of machos trying to outdo each other.<sup>50</sup>

The left wing activists in the ANM in Ireland tended to be critical of limiting the movement to non-violent actions. A group of Belfast

anarchists took part in the rather confused attempt by the Torness Alliance to organise a non-violent occupation of the Torness site in Scotland in May 1979.<sup>51</sup> There were basic disagreements over issues of philosophy and the justification for doing damage to property on the site. The Belfast position was summarised in The Contaminated Crow:

... we had assumed that 'damage to property', while a grand philosophical issue to some, was ultimately just something you did or did not do depending on yourself. But some people damaging fences and machinery did annoy people, who wanted it stopped. In trying to force their views on all of us, the earlier spontaneity and enjoyment of the day was lost. Much better that everyone do what they want than have everyone tied down to the whims of how the straight press might interpret our actions.<sup>52</sup>

Predictably enough RS were not to let the issue go by without comment. They broached the question early in 1979, arguing that violence as an option for the movement must be left open in case the other side started using it, although later they took a more aggressive stand on the issue when some people in favour of non-violent and strictly legal approaches argued that the second Carnsore rally should not be held on ESB land.

On that occasion they replied:

Let those 'non-political' ideologues who want to package the movement into a sophisticated wrapping of passivity and respect of State imposed legality take heed. Cancer cannot be fought with goodwill and 'we shall overcome'. Radiation does not listen to Ghandi and Martin Luther King. Nuclear power is violent, a nuclear society is bestial and the nuclear state would commit genocide if it were forced.<sup>53</sup>

The issue of violence only really seriously emerged on one occasion in a confrontation during the anti-EEC march in November 1979, when a scuffle between police and anti-nuclear power demonstrators occurred. The history of the event is extremely confused and no attempt will be made to comment on it.

As can be seen from the preceding sections the legitimacy of the state was nearly non-existent in large parts of the ANM. Public participation in the controversy was by protest, not consultation. However, the government did eventually concede to a public inquiry after repeated demands from many segments in Irish society. The final section of this chapter deals with the issue of state legitimacy and the proposed public inquiry.

### 11.10 LEGITIMACY AND THE PUBLIC INQUIRY

From early in the second phase of the opposition to nuclear power repeated calls for a public inquiry were made. However no such inquiry had ever been held in Ireland on a planning proposal, with the partial exception of hearings in Dublin surrounding the oil refinery proposal for Dublin Bay.

Few people who made the call for a public inquiry were really clear as to what they thought an inquiry would involve or how they could organise to use it to put the case against nuclear power. What is clear is that many people did not trust the existing policy process or the ESB to make the decision. Reading the numerous statements on the subject it appears that the public inquiry was seen as a "neutral" forum above and beyond "politics" and capable of finding the "truth" in an "unbiased" way. The implications of the inquiry for planning legislation, and its legal relationship with the rest of the policy process were not widely questioned in the clamour to have an inquiry.

The nuclear issue has raised major legitimacy problems for governments in many western countries:

Essentially, the challenge facing policy makers is how to devise acceptable and practical methods of reaching collective decisions for a technology that involves risks that some people find unacceptable, dissenting minorities who oppose the siting of nuclear plants in their locality, poor understanding of the technical issues among the public and disagreement among technical experts. Clearly, there are no panaceas, for it is a uniquely difficult problem to adapt decisionmaking procedures to accommodate a wide range of viewpoints on the technical, environmental and political aspects of nuclear power.

(Surrey and Huggett, 1976:306)

Hirsch draws a distinction between types of public participation process, on the basis of the philosophy underlying them. He distinguishes between the positivist and the dialectical approaches. The former are premised on the approach taken by the

... promoters of scientific and economic progress as we have known it in the last decades--exemplified by nuclear energy--(who)--claim that a neat separation between facts and values, the existing and the desirable, data and decisions is not only possible but highly desirable.

(Hirsch, 1978:1)

The dialectical conception encompasses

... those who feel that a less schematic view of reality is to be adopted taking into account that implicit or explicit value--judgements, desires and prejudices will in any case influence those who set out to find facts ...

(ibid.)

The positivistic approach has been used in many European countries but the scope is limited because the government usually sets strict rules beforehand, "defining the terms of reference and admissible procedures a priori" (Hirsch, 1978:2). It ignores the vested interests of economic interest groups, entrenched bureaucracies and the politicians themselves with their prejudices and loyalties. Outlining the experience of the Austrian "Nuclear Energy Information Campaign" and the German "Citizen Dialogue" he shows how the nuclear issue could not be broken down into neat compartments for "rational discussion" by "experts."

(O)pinions in the nuclear debate do not simply arise from the possibility of different values for certain parameters, but reflect basic philosophies and political attitudes.

(ibid., p. 4)

Neither did the public accept the role of passive receivers of the information or the thematic frameworks that the organisers set out. The public remained concerned about the nature of the participation process which in both cases started long after construction of nuclear facilities had begun and failed to halt the construction while the process of consultation was underway. The Austrian opponents were not content to remain within the narrow framework of the state-organised debates and they took the initiative, circulated their own information, and eventually forced the reluctant socialist government to hold a referendum.

The German dialogue concentrated on opinion forming and not on critical discussion of the issues. Hirsch argues that the public information exercises are "programmed to fail" because of the tendencies of large government bureaucracies to resent any attempt at control over them and the enormously strong economic interests pushing nuclear power.

The more active elements of the Irish ANM were well aware of the possibilities of the same thing happening in Ireland when the public inquiry eventually came to be held. One writer in The Contaminated Crow argued that the function of the inquiry was to:

... show that the state is prepared to listen to peoples' objections as long as they are 'reasonable' and peaceful, of course--and they are an attempt to throw the mantel of democracy over decisions the state has already taken. They are also very useful ways to divert opposition.<sup>54</sup>

Many other groups were ambivalent about the whole affair once the inquiry had been granted. RS adopted a "wait and see" approach but did not preclude disruption and participation. The deep suspicion of the inquiry reflects the opposition to the whole state structure and "the system of social and economic developments imposed on us to serve the interests of capital and profit."<sup>55</sup>

The mass movement meetings were not very consistent on the issue. In Wexford just prior to Mr. O'Malley's announcement of the formal public inquiry, the meeting stated that it was not interested in a government inquiry. In a later leaflet the public inquiry was hailed as a victory for the movement while the Belfast meeting in May decided to take no action at all on it.

The Cork FoE group, however, took up the issue and organised a seminar on the topic late in 1979. What emerged was close to Hirsch's ideas of a dialectical approach as being a desirable format. Drawing on some proposals from the Oxford based Political Ecology Research Group (PERG), (1978) which Hirsch also uses, FoE suggested that the inquiry should be a two stage process (FoE, 1980). The first stage would identify issues and discuss the submitted material in a discursive manner with a tribunal committee from various backgrounds. A second later stage involves cross examination of the material under oath. FoE further argued that the burden of proof should lie with the proponents of the new technologies rather than the objectors, government bureaucrats should be protected if they gave dissenting opinions, and intervenors should receive financial assistance.

At the seminar on the public inquiry David Nolan of the NSA suggested that an alternative inquiry might be set up to give the anti-nuclear groups an alternative forum to present their arguments. He reiterated his call for a referendum on the nuclear issue and showed little confidence that the government inquiry would be fair, or that the establishment would listen to its recommendations if it did find against nuclear power. He also argued that the NSA had been running

an inquiry ever since it had been established.

Fine Gael and the Labour Party had repeatedly called for an inquiry which they saw as a way of defusing opposition by providing a forum without which (as The Irish Independent put it) they would "make their own platforms on the streets and so provoke a lot of what might have been avoidable trouble."<sup>56</sup> The ANM did create its own forums and carried on the debate on the streets, and inevitably in Ireland, in the pubs. The movement considered itself to be carrying out an inquiry and making the decision which they considered it to be their right to make.

The government, ESB and the NEB all took a line similar to what Hirsch calls the positivist approach. The limited information leaflets available from the NEB attempted to explain the issue in very boring simplified technical manner. The ESB circulated widely Sean Coakley's Status Report (1979) which took a very conventional engineering approach and did not address the fundamental political and social issues. The government line and that of organisations such as the Agricultural Institute was to deal only with technical issues of nuclear technology. Brian Coulter argued that:

The energy debate has many facets. Some of them, for example the need for energy conservation, the concept of renewable energy sources and a low energy society are not specific to the nuclear question, and are not, therefore, at the heart of public concern on nuclear power.<sup>57</sup>

It was precisely the attempts to narrow the issue down to merely technical concerns which aroused the anger of many opponents who saw in this manouever an attempt to avoid the issues and remove them from the terrain of political debate. The "experts" were seen, not surprisingly, as manipulative agents trying to defraud the public and cover up information that was critical of the nuclear industry. The repeated calls from the public and numerous bodies for an inquiry was an attempt to bring the debate out into the open and it reveals a deep distrust of the process of policy formation and the limited base on which technological decisions are taken by "experts" as well as a feeling of helplessness to influence a decision of major and long lasting societal impact.

As John Carroll put it:

It is a decision which would bear not alone on the present population, but on future generations who may well have to bear and suffer the genetic and other possible adverse consequences of a behind closed doors, vested interest influenced decisions by those who claim to themselves to have the almost divine right to determine for us, without consulting us or seeking our approval our way and quality of life for generations to come.<sup>58</sup>

In some cases this was due to ignorance of how to go about having one's opinion heard, in other cases it reflected a deep cynicism about getting listened to at all. The policy decisions, made as they are by the inner cabinet in the Irish government, offer little opportunity for public input through the parliamentary process at the best of times, and in the nuclear issue it appeared that the government had made its mind up on a little advice from nuclear proponents.

Protest was seen as the only way to force politicians to reconsider. The public inquiry was seen as a method of making the arguments against nuclear power seriously, while simultaneously educating the public. The radicals were not convinced of the effectiveness of a public inquiry because of their analysis of the power relations in Irish society.

#### 11.11 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter reveals the deep rejection of established methods of political organisation and behaviour that operate in liberal democracies. The attempt to articulate the political philosophy of mass democracy was fraught with problems due to a lack of understanding of the political ideas of the radicals. Problems also occurred in converting theory into a practice that made sense to those unfamiliar with the theory and its political ramifications. It is here that the roots of the internal debates lie and why they became so acrimonious. The problems of mass democracy can be interpreted as a pedagogic problem as much as a political problem in this case. Rarely were the ideas of mass democracy clearly explained in jargon free language to new or potential activists. Some nearly immediately or intuitively understood what mass democracy required. Many of the politically uneducated and conservative people failed to understand that mass democracy requires active participation by all rather than the traditional passive support in representative systems if it is to function.<sup>59</sup> Charges of manipulation were inevitable

when many stood back and waited to be consulted about what to do rather than getting involved and making themselves heard.<sup>60</sup>

In an attempt to build an opposition movement, large efforts were successfully made to prevent articulation with and hence the danger of cooptation by, the established political process. It can be argued that it was the diverse protest activities of the small groups around the country which fueled the fires of the establishment political debate on the issue which took place at least partly separate from the mass movement. Equally their "failure" to become institutionalised ensured that the state could not "negotiate" with these opponents and the Special Branch of the Irish police evidently failed to come to terms with the Movement, as their sporadic harassment and random questioning of activists shows.

As Gerlach and Hine point out (1970; Gerlach, 1970; Hine, 1977) protest movements often thrive because of the diversity and the decentralised nature of their organisation and structure. To the outsider, and in this case to some insiders, these movements often appear to be chaotic, leaderless and conspiracy theories are often invoked to explain their continued functioning in the absence of the traditional institutionalised structure. The ANM initially looks chaotic to the outsider but this chapter has tried to show that the Movement consciously tried to develop a multiplicity of approaches to spread activity as widely as possible in the society. The activists consciously took this path in an attempt to create a movement outside the status quo which could explore political alternatives, provide a forum for political debate and, however sporadically, prefigure desirable social arrangements for the future. The New Left tendencies and influences are clear as are more conservative environmental ideas and their coexistence inside the movement was at times uneasy. For the more radical, nuclear power is just one of the worst manifestations of a technocratic capitalist system. For others nuclear power was identified more as a single issue with its own peculiar dangers and its own corrupt political and economic lobby which had to be opposed. Nevertheless, the common themes of fear of the health and environmental impacts of nuclear power and the dissatisfactions with the political mechanisms that make decisions about nuclear issues provide enough common ground for the Movement to

flourish despite its internal debates.

Having discussed the history of the Irish movement, the literature it produced and the political debates between the different political ideas in the movement, the next question is inevitably "what about the rank and file of the movement?" Why they joined, how they participated, what they read, and what their views on the movement and on nuclear power were, are the subjects of the next chapter.

TABLE 11.2

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT GROUPS MENTIONED  
AND THEIR FOCI OF ACTIVITY

Group	Focus (In order of priority)
ANM (Comprising up to 50 local groups)	mainly public
Cork FoE	public, government
CONSERVE	government, academic
CND	public, government
DARTAG	public
Dawn	public
DUC	public, co. council, government
FoE (Dublin)	public, government, academics
NIAG	workers, public
NSA	public, co. council, government
RS	public
SESI	academic, government, public

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 11

- <sup>1</sup>Mary McNamara, Wicca, no. 8 (undated), p. 4.
- <sup>2</sup>Douglas Johnson, "More than a Protest," review of Tourane, et al. 1980, New Statesman, 7 August 1980, p. 278.
- <sup>3</sup>FoE meeting report, 22 January 1978, mimeo.
- <sup>4</sup>These three discussion documents were untitled. They were circulated to those present at the meeting.
- <sup>5</sup>RS discussion document, p. 1.
- <sup>6</sup>Ibid., original emphasis.
- <sup>7</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>9</sup>FoE discussion document, p. 1.
- <sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>11</sup>RS discussion document, second draft, p. 2.
- <sup>12</sup>FoE discussion document, second draft, p. 1.
- <sup>13</sup>Interviews.
- <sup>14</sup>Brian Trench, Hibernia, 24 August 1978.
- <sup>15</sup>Interviews, see Wicca, no. 4, pp. 4-5; Wicca, no. 8, p. 6; The Contaminated Crow, no. 2, p. 15. As a result a number of women printed a 16 page pamphlet on Women and Nukes and planned a women's tent for discussion and as a refuge at the second Carnsore rally.
- <sup>16</sup>See Dawn, nos. 52-53 (December 1979/January 1980), p. 19 for a summary of the Cork groups and their evolution, as seen by a FoE member.
- <sup>17</sup>This account of the meeting is based on the newsletter and agenda, interviews and personal observation.
- <sup>18</sup>Leni Hurley, Northwest Newsletter, no. 10 (Spring 1979), p. 10.
- <sup>19</sup>Rebel, no. 5, p. 6.
- <sup>20</sup>Rebel, no. 7, p. 7.
- <sup>21</sup>ANM newsletter prepared for Wexford mass meeting February 1979.
- <sup>22</sup>Rebel, no. 6, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>24</sup>This was a common theme in meetings, leaflets, etc. See also Dawn, no. 50, p. 8. An untitled article by the BSSRS on a contribution made to the Buncrara music festival Autumn 1979. David Nolan of the NSA made similar points about the NSA (FoE, 1980).

<sup>25</sup>The Contaminated Crow, no. 1, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup>Rebel, no. 14, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup>Dawn, no. 51 (November 1979), p. 8.

<sup>28</sup>The Contaminated Crow, no. 1, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup>This was related to internal campus politics.

<sup>30</sup>Interviews (RS is connected with the theoretical political journal The Ripening of Time).

<sup>31</sup>Interviews.

<sup>32</sup>The Contaminated Crow, no. 2, p. 16.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Proposals for the Cork mass meeting, October 1979 by Nuclear Opposition Workshop, Tralee, p. 1, mimeo.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., pp. 1-2.

<sup>36</sup>Interviews.

<sup>37</sup>Interviews.

<sup>38</sup>Statement from the Limerick Anti-Nuclear group on the proposed Delegate Structure, December 1979, p. 1. (FoE Cork were strongly supporting the Tralee proposals).

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>41</sup>For a long time a standing joke in the Cork FoE group about their lack of a formal structure referred to the Anarcho-Syndicalist Commune sketch in Monty Python's "Holy Grail" movie.

<sup>42</sup>Interviews, Minutes of the first delegate meeting, Tralee, 1 December 1979.

<sup>43</sup>Dawn, nos. 52-53, p. 4.

<sup>44</sup>Rebel, no. 18, p. 8.

- <sup>45</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>47</sup> Rebel, no. 19, p. 8.
- <sup>48</sup> Nonviolence against Nuclear Power, Dawn/Cork, FoE publication, July 1980.
- <sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 2.
- <sup>50</sup> Wicca, no. 4, pp. 4-5.
- <sup>51</sup> See Occupier's Handbook, Torness Alliance 1979.
- <sup>52</sup> The Contaminated Crow, no. 1, p. 4.
- <sup>53</sup> Rebel, no. 14, p. 3.
- <sup>54</sup> The Contaminated Crow, no. 1, p. 5.
- <sup>55</sup> Rebel, no. 11, p. 10.
- <sup>56</sup> Irish Independent, 14 February 1979.
- <sup>57</sup> Brian Coulter in The Irish Times, 28 August 1978, as quoted by Daultrey, 1980:108.
- <sup>58</sup> John Carroll, in FoE, 1978a:6.
- <sup>59</sup> One is reminded of Marx (Tucker, ed., 1972:437) writing in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte, "The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seemed engaged in revolutionising themselves and things, in creating something entirely new, precisely in such epochs of revolutionary crisis they anxiously conjure up the spirits of the past to their service and borrow from them names, battle slogans and costumes in order to present the new scene of world history in this time-honoured disguise and this borrowed language."
- <sup>60</sup> See Dawn, interview with Christy Moore, no. 46-47 (February/March 1979), p. 8.

## CHAPTER 12

## THE RANK AND FILE MOTIVATIONS

We are not observing Reality with a capital R, hard and fixed, but we are observing that reality which is revealed by the act and quality of our observation.

(Spangler, 1976:28)

But like all anti-nukes I am disinclined to go along with the prevailing system merely because it exists--and that surely is the flaw in the pro-nukes makeup. Because a system has been established by Someone up there, they feel it has to be supported; otherwise exports may fall, inflation may get worse, oil may run out, unemployment may increase--ultimately anarchy will prevail. Pro-nukes then, are essentially timid, Aztec-types who have been sold the idea that Nuke idols are necessary to hold together what now passes for civilisation in the West.

They are not necessarily less sensitive, or thoughtful, or concerned about others than anti-nukes. But they are less intellectually and spiritually independent and therefore less willing, or less able, to accept the fact that radical changes in the way we live must come about within the next century, if civilisation in any true sense is to survive changes of which the abandonment of our nuke idols are but a part.<sup>1</sup>

### 12.1 INTRODUCTION

In an attempt to get to grips with the amorphous mass of people who made up the active part of the ANM this study included a mailed questionnaire. The ANM never had a central office, much less a formal list of members so it was impossible to replicate Parkin's questionnaire of the British CND.<sup>2</sup> He at least could get a nearly complete list of members. The only substantial listing of people active in the ANM was the list drawn from the initial 'sign up' sheets at the first Carnsore Rally. These lists were later added to in the autumn of 1978 as people who were not active at the Carnsore event contacted the activists in Dublin who were compiling the lists.

A mail questionnaire was sent to 220 of the addresses on these lists. This was approximately a one in six sample of the total.<sup>3</sup> The mailing list dating from the autumn of 1978 was obviously fairly outdated by the time the questionnaires were sent out in February 1981 and some were not filled out by the original addressees.<sup>4</sup> In total 82 useable questionnaires were returned to the Geography Department in TCD which was used as a mailing address. All questionnaires were sent out with stamped addressed return envelopes and a reminder was sent to all of the sample addresses at the end of February.

Problems of response bias remain and the following data must be treated with caution and its conclusions as tentative. The author was, hardly surprisingly, given the subject matter concerned, met with suspicion at various points in the research. It is reasonable to assume that the response under-represents the more politically active radicals in the movement, a number of whom, in interviews, expressed reservations concerning the use of questionnaires in this type of research and were obviously concerned that the material collected would be used by agencies such as the CIA in public opinion manipulation and movement infiltration operations.<sup>5</sup>

The analysis of the questionnaires that follows remains descriptive. It is suggested that the results will broadly confirm that the Irish ANM has many features broadly similar to the movement elsewhere (see appendix 1 for a copy of the Questionnaire). In many cases the responses were so varied and the number of responses in a single category so small that the use of statistical analysis is meaningless.

The Questionnaire was drafted in November and December, 1980 and pretested on a small group of activists from various backgrounds in Cork. As a result of the pretest it was further modified and mailed together with a standard format covering letter early in February 1981. A number of problems unfortunately remained in the questionnaire and these will be dealt with in the following sections as they arise.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into sections on respondents' opinions on the ANM, the sociology of the respondents, other studies of public opinion and attitudes to the nuclear issue, and a conclusion which draws together the findings.

## 12.2 RESPONDENTS' REPLIES ON THE ANM

Of the 82 responses, 31 of the replies were posted in Co. Dublin, 20 in Co. Wexford, 10 had undecipherable postmarks and the remainder were from locations widely scattered around the country. This reflects broadly the concern in the local area, the radical and environmentally aware from Dublin and more diffuse support elsewhere.

### 12.2.1 Awareness and Activity

Sharaf (1978) notes that the opponents that he designated as 'ideological' were often the first to alert people to the dangers of nuclear power and that these opponents were the best informed on the technical details. This questionnaire asked two questions on information. Question 1 asked which source of information had first brought the issue to their attention (Table 12.1). Unfortunately there was considerable variation in how this question was answered; many respondents ticked more than one source. Undoubtedly newspapers were the source of information that first alerted most respondents. Friends and public meetings were also important. Television, leaflets, books and radio, in that order, were of secondary importance, while personal contacts through family and workplace were of little importance. The initial awareness of these activists obviously was raised by the media but personal contacts and public meetings helped spread awareness.

Following this, Question 2 investigated how long activists were involved in opposing nuclear power. Twenty-nine respondents claimed to have been working against nuclear power prior to the first Carnsore rally and 35 claimed to have started in August 1978, the month of the rally. Ten said that they had become involved since the rally. This reflects the addition of names to the lists after the rally, the fact that some questionnaires were filled out by people other than those who received them, and some people placed names of friends who were not at the rally but who were interested on the original lists. Six activists said that they became active in 1978 without specifying the month. Thirty said that they were still involved in ANM activities and of the 48 who had ceased activity, 8 stopped in 1978, 13 in 1979, 14 in 1980 and 1 in 1981.

TABLE 12.1

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE:

INITIAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION (QUESTION 1)

Television .....	23
Newspapers .....	49
Books .....	16
Radio .....	15
Leaflets .....	19
Family .....	3
Friends .....	30
Work mates .....	7
Public meetings .....	29
Other .....	6

TABLE 12.2

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE:

REASONS FOR CEASING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION  
IN THE MOVEMENT (QUESTION 3)

Other issues .....	8
Family .....	4
Health .....	0
Career .....	7
Cost interest .....	10
Dissillusioned with organisation .....	14
Public inquiry granted .....	8
Govt. postponed decision .....	21
Others .....	19

The reasons given for stopping active participation suggest that the government postponement of a decision on the nuclear project was the most important factor (Table 12.2). In contrast, only 8 people stopped their activity because the government conceded a public inquiry suggesting that most opponents wanted more than just an inquiry. Nineteen replies were in the 'other' category and of these 4 thought that the removal of the immediate threat of a power station justified their stopping activity, 3 changed residence and so lost contact while two left because they thought the movement was dominated by radical groups, one respondent left because the government started developing alternative sources of energy and another thought that an earth tremor in the Wexford area had made cancellation of the plant probable. Fourteen people left the movement because of organisational problems in it.

All but one respondent are still opposed to nuclear power; the one dissenter who replied said that he was not opposed to nuclear power in the first place and that the Carnsore point rally had not convinced him to oppose nuclear power.

#### 12.2.2 Motivation

Attempting to classify the reasons that influenced people to oppose nuclear power presented problems. As was pointed out earlier (Chapter 6.3) little agreement exists between researchers as to how to categorise opposition motivations. This study amalgamated the ideas into a classification under a dozen headings as shown in table 12.3. This included two headings to investigate the expressive functions of the movement--i.e. 'friends encouraged you to join' and 'you were looking for a good time, etc.' which received very low responses. The results show (Table 12.3) that the most important single concern was the health and safety issue closely followed with the moral considerations of nuclear waste and nuclear weapons and fourthly the lack of public consultation on the issue. At the bottom of the list were the expressive factors and a desire to bring about political changes. This is slightly surprising as many activists were concerned with the lack of consultation and although the lack of consultation would seem to suggest the necessity for political changes to include people in such decisions this is not the interpretation favoured by this sample. The ideological

factors seem to be much less important in this sample than in the radical literature of the movement. An alternative and more revealing explanation suggests that the activists saw nuclear power as an issue outside their conventional views of what politics includes. The 'moral' dimension of the movement is clearly visible from these responses (Table 12.3). Twenty-one comments were added to supplement the classification provided. These included mentions of the issue of neutrality and the NATO connection, lack of waste disposal arrangements, the hazards of uranium mining, the availability of alternative energy, a disgust at Ireland's imitation of other countries and the lack of experience with nuclear power. Others were concerned with civil liberties ideas, sabotage, dangers, the lack of research into alternatives, the impossibility of evacuating the area in the event of an accident, the use of imported technology and the lack of permanent local employment. One simply distrusted a government influenced enterprise.

### 12.2.3 Single and Multiple Issues

The question of whether to limit the ANM specifically to opposing the Carnsore project or whether to include other political and related environmental issues remained a thorny one, as it has elsewhere in the international ANM (Barkan, 1979). In answer to question 6 on single or multiple issues, only 8 respondents unambiguously thought that the campaign should limit itself to this specific issue. The arguments used to support this stand are, predictably enough, the need to concentrate all the energy of the movement on a single issue to maximise its chances of success. Further, public education was seen as an essential prerequisite to any broadening of the movement by one respondent.

Those who wished to see other issues included within the movement were important and related to nuclear power. This question attempted to find out which issues the respondents thought were important and which were related to the nuclear question; hence the rather cumbersome use of the four column format of the question. These issues inevitably are interconnected with the previous question of motivation but it is not feasible to separate them (See Table 12.4). Clearly, the nuclear waste dumping in the Irish Sea,<sup>6</sup> waste dumps in Ireland, uranium mining and nuclear disarmament are the most important issues related to the

TABLE 12.3

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE:

## REASONS FOR JOINING THE ANM (QUESTION 5)

	Unimportant	Important	Very Important	Combined Weighted Important (1) and Very Important (2)
Accidents/Genetics .....	0 (12)*	11 (8)	64 (1)	139 (1)
Corruption .....	15 (7)	31 (3)	34 (6)	95 (6)
Economic nonsense .....	22 (5)	30 (4)	24 (8)	78 (8)
Friends encouragement .....	63 (3)	8 (9)	2 (10)	12 (10)
Local effects .....	10 (8)	29 (5)	37 (5)	103 (5)
Moral/waste .....	3 (10)	12 (10)	63 (2)	138 (2)
Freinds/good time.....:.....	67 (1)	6 (11)	0 (12)	6 (12)
Moral/bombs .....	10 (8)	16 (7)	53 (3)	124 (3)
Lack consultation .....	2 (11)	33 (1)	45 (4)	123 (4)
Political changes .....	66 (2)	6 (11)	2 (10)	10 (11)
Monopoly capitalism .....	23 (4)	33 (1)	20 (9)	73 (9)
Decentralised/ecological...	18 (6)	27 (6)	28 (7)	83 (7)
Total .....	299	242	372	

\*Rank ( )

TABLE 12.4

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE:

## MULTIPLE ISSUES (QUESTION 6)

	Related Important	Related Unimportant	Unrelated Important	Unrelated Unimportant
Uranium mining .....	61	2	2	1
Nuke Disarmament .....	58	0	12	0
Noxious Industry .....	39	1	25	0
Civil Liberties .....	23	5	28	10
Medical Research .....	35	14	10	2
Waste Dumps .....	62	1	6	0
Pollution .....	31	0	36	1
Nuke Dumping in Irish Sea ....	65	0	2	0
Energy Conservation .....	40	5	14	2
EEC/Govt. Influence .....	35	2	23	5
Renewable Energy .....	44	1	16	1

nuclear power concerns. With the possible exceptions of medical research and the issue of civil liberties there is a wide consensus that all the issues listed are important, although there is some difference of opinion as to whether they are related to the nuclear power issue or not. Clearly the links between nuclear power and waste dumping in the Irish Sea is seen as directly related to the Carnsore proposal, although this probably refers partly to future possible pollution from a plant at Carnsore and also to current problems from the Windscale plant and Atlantic dumping by Euratom and other agencies. In addition, the links with uranium mining and waste disposal are fairly widely perceived. Less so are questions of using radioactive materials in medical research, nuclear disarmament, the search for renewable energy sources and energy conservation. Government influence and control over many aspects of life are seen as less related and other noxious industries, civil liberties and pollution issues are seen as more separate still. This suggests that there is far from an equation of 'progressive' political standpoints and widespread environmental concern in the respondents positions.

#### 12.2.4 Organisation and the ANM

Two questions were asked on the issue of organisation to oppose nuclear power. Question 7 asked whether respondents thought that nuclear power could be most effectively opposed through existing political organisations, environmental protection groups, an ANM or by some other means. Eleven argued for existing political channels, 12 opted for the use of environmental protection groups while 40 opted for an ANM organisation. Eighteen selected the other category. Of these, six suggested a combination of existing political channels, environmental groups and an ANM, five suggested a public education campaign but did not elaborate on how this might be done, two argued for trade union action and one ambitious suggestion for a U.N. scientific study of the whole issue and to review the international nuclear industry was put forward. These comments reflect the feeling of a lack of reliable information that has pervaded the nuclear debate and also the need for a 'neutral' study which some activists felt would clarify matters finally.

Question 8 was aimed directly and rather pointedly at the internal debate on the structure of the ANM. Sixty two respondents ranked the three options of a mass movement, a delegate structure or a centralised organisation. The second option proved the most popular. By summing the rankings, one for the first preference, two for the second, etc., the delegate structure scores 83, the centralised option got 130, while the mass movement option got 159. In addition sixteen respondents merely ticked one option and of these eleven opted for a delegate structure, four for a centralised organisation and one for a mass movement. Judging from the numerous comments on the question, the statistics should be treated with circumspection. Remembering the possible political bias underlying the respondents of the questionnaire it undoubtedly seems that the respondents favour some form of decentralised organisation involving groups delegating decision making power to a representative meeting.

The question of structure in the movement has been contentious since early 1978. The respondents replied at length to a question asking for their opinions on the subject. Underlying the debate remains the strategic decision of whether to build a movement regardless of public opinion or to use a more cautious approach gaining 'respectability' and hence articulating with the established political and media system. The comments received reflected a large diversity of positions. Of those who opted in favour of a mass movement one stated, "We are just a bunch of anarchists and unprepared to join in and discuss seriously the issues." Another said that centralised committees can lead to corruption and instigating actions not approved by the mass of the movement for political reasons causing problems, while another was resigned to the fact that "Squabbling is endemic to this kind of soft centred leftist enterprise and will never be ended." One reply did not address the question of how best to organise the movement but volunteered

The Anti Nuclear Movement in Ireland I think has been treated as a "hippy" thing for example I think that a lot went to Carnsore for a good time, there was not enough responsible older citizens there. They possibly would have been there except for the "hippy" element and the bad name the movement has.

The rest of the comments are often contradictory but illustrate the different perspectives held within the movement. Both RS and FoE were

to come under criticism for their roles within the ANM. The efforts expended within the movement discussing the organisational questions are also raised. One respondent commented that:

Many people I have met at mass meetings seem more concerned with internal nuclear power politics and extremely complex social issues which, whilst they may or may not be perfectly valid, they cloud the nuclear power issue and alienate many moderate or conservative people who often think we are wild eyed anarchists.

And another opined;

There are so many earnest young students out to revolutionize the country that they couldn't see the wood for the trees. They became obsessed with petty arguments at the expense of the main objectives.

One SLP member was unambiguous in expressing a political outlook;

The adventurist tactics of the neo-anarchist Revolutionary Struggle group alienated many enthusiasts. Right-wing social democratic elements engaged in 'red scare' witch hunts against R.S. thereby increasing dissension.

and went on to advocate the use of recallable delegates and a central committee. Another respondent was blunt in saying that "A properly organised structure with a committee that anyone can relate to for information" was needed.

The majority of comments came from those who had opted for a delegate structure. A common theme was,

Organisation was so difficult because of the diversity of elements opposing nuclear power--mass movement is ideal but unaffactive in terms of organisation and direction.

Another theme is a desire to exclude from the ANM all but nuclear issues and reduce political input because it alienates "ordinary people who are politically apathetic who only know they want nothing to do with nuclear power" although few had any idea as to how this could be done. Yet another respondent was critical of the "tendency towards rabble rousing emotionalism and hysteria" and made the rather unusual suggestion of two movements, "one using 'emotionalism' and the other using 'rationalism' as a means of changing attitudes. Neither should be seen as being allied with any political party." And yet again the question of image raises its head. As one respondent put it:

Organisation is important. The press paint a picture of a leftist anarchist young radical controlled movement. This is to be avoided.

A recurring theme is also sympathy with the ideas of a mass movement but criticism of its functioning. Regarding RS again and their ideas of mass movements another wrote "Their objectives are admirable but they haven't a clue about politics." And in more detail on the question of organisation:

There have been three parties to this confusion: orthodox left wing activists who aroused suspicion because of their experience at handling meetings and forming committees, etc. RS people who argued against any formal structures in the absence of which they themselves tend to function as unelected leaders, and the rest majority of sincere, politically inexperienced people who supported one view and/or the other, many of whom felt confused and discouraged by the ideological undercurrents of the debates. My own feeling is that the left wingers need to be more open and flexible in order to make a fruitful contribution to the anti-nuclear movement. They have a great deal to contribute.

After levelling yet another criticism at RS for their apparent secrecy which served to spread rumours of manipulation this contribution turns to the key problem of mass democracy;

The problem is that even a mass meeting needs organising and in the absence of an elected co-ordinating body, informal bodies will arise which are unelected and therefore unaccountable.

Another commented on the liberating potential of a mass movement but "as a means of achieving decisions and action was not effective as societal conditioning, socialisation, etc., has not taught people to operate it." Still others made comments like: "there were too many diverse interests involved (i.e. Friends of the Earth) who did not wish to lose their particular identity in a mass movement and also too many varying ideologies."

In general, there is considerable sympathy for the ideas of a mass movement but it appears that many argued for a delegate structure because the mass movement was failing to provide the guidance, coordination and solidarity that was thought to be necessary for the movement to be effective.

#### 12.2.5 Activity and Participation

Despite attempts to word question 9 clearly, it created problems for respondents. It was intended to leave it as a general and open

question to determine how respondents perceived their activities. The first section; on methods the respondents used to oppose nuclear power, produced a large response. Thirty nine replied that they had attended a Carnsore rally, 33 had talked to other people and tried to convince them, 24 had attended public meetings, 18 had participated in marches and demonstrations, 12 had made or distributed leaflets while 10 had put effort into organising festivals and meetings. In stark contrast to this only six had written letters to newspapers and five lobbied politicians. The clear indication is of action orientated activities rather than conventional lobbying activities. If the responses are divided between activities, meetings, demonstrations, etc., and publicity and information dissemination functions, then 113 replies include activity and 81 information. There is obviously considerable overlap as many meetings provided information but the profile of the movement as activity-orientated remains.

The subsequent three subsections of this question received steadily less coherent and substantial replies; the distinctions apparently were confusing or not considered relevant. The purpose of these questions was to get an indication of how respondents felt on the issues of illegality, and the use of violent protest, issues which often surfaced in the ANM. These have been major issues for the movement in the U.S. and in Europe (see Chapter 6.5). They emerged quite clearly in the replies to this question. Section 9 (b) asked what types of activity the respondents would use in the future to oppose nuclear power. In contrast to the previous section only 3 specified taking part in festivals or mass meetings while education/discussion got 11 replies. Lobbying and using the existing political establishment jumped to 16 responses, 6 would attend marches or rallies. Fourteen specified that they would use peaceful tactics. Six were prepared to use any means necessary, 2 interference with construction while 7 suggested sit-ins at the site. Four were interested in researching and using alternative forms of energy, 3 specified civil disobedience and 4 non-violent direct action. Clearly information is considered somewhat more important although whether this is because respondents are disillusioned with actions and protest is not clear.

The third section received less response. Seventeen respondents

said that there were no methods that they would approve of others using that they would not use personally. Six mentioned sit-ins and occupations, 4 sabotage, 3 pickets and 4 non-violent action. The final part brought 32 responses opposed to violent means, 12 specifying interpersonal violence as being undesirable. Three of these mentioned a recent killing of an Irish person in a bomb attack on a nuclear plant in Spain. Three were opposed to subversion and terrorism. Additional comments from two respondents criticised the EEC office occupiers because they argued that it put the movement under scrutiny and alienated public opinion. Two were opposed to illegal actions and occupations. In general however it is violent action rather than illegality that a considerable number of opponents of nuclear power object to.

#### 12.2.6 Information

Sharaf (1978) found that many of the opponents of nuclear power that he interviewed in New England had a good basic knowledge of the technical issues and kept abreast of developments in the literature by reading material such as the journal Science. The Irish respondents to the questionnaire also apparently read on the subject. Question 10 asks respondents to the questionnaire to tick the four most important sources from which they had received information. Books, national and local newspapers, discussions with friends and speeches at public meetings were the four most important sources (see Table 12.5). Noticeable by its low response were the 5 people who considered government reports to have been important.

Question 11 revealed a tremendous diversity of sources of information. Books received 23 mentions and included Irish, British and American publications.<sup>7</sup> Of the people considered influential, Dr. Blackith receives 5 of the 16 mentions. Six people claimed to have received information from British ecology/alternative magazines. A number of reports from Irish and European sources had been consulted including two who had read the government Green Paper and two others read SESI publications. Newspaper coverage was only mentioned by ten people as a source, five of these read The Irish Times. Ten mentions of radio and television included two references to the Late Late Show's special programme on nuclear power. Two respondents mentioned meetings at which ESB spokespeople were not adequately informed of the facts, to be important. —

TABLE 12.5

## QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE:

## IMPORTANT SOURCES OF INFORMATION (QUESTION 10)

Books .....	44
National/Local papers .....	41
Leaflets .....	26
Weekly or monthly magazines .....	16
Speeches at public meetings .....	37
Discussions at ANM meetings .....	32
Television .....	29
ANM Newsletters .....	11
Technical journals .....	13
Alternative/Radical magazines .....	19
Radio .....	12
Government reports .....	5
Discussion with friends .....	40
Others .....	1

Three respondents mentioned the Three Mile Island accident as being important in their awareness of the nuclear issue while two referred to the Windscale plant and two had taken an interest in the nuclear issue on hearing the story of Karen Silkwood's death.<sup>8</sup> In many cases activists are not very familiar with the technical intricacies of the debate, seeing no real point in spending much time investigating it. Decisions are often made on political grounds or on the basis of moral considerations which do not require large amounts of technical information to legitimize their points of view. Nevertheless, there is a widespread although often thinly spread technical knowledge.

#### 12.2.7 The Public Inquiry

A crucial dimension in the ANM is the implicit questioning of the legitimacy of the technological/rational/scientific ideology of the advanced capitalist state and its decision making institutions. The doubts about the inquiry are clear in the previous chapters where the various standpoints have been outlined. The questionnaire attempted to find out how far this questioning of the legitimacy of the state in this field had penetrated the movement. Question 12 investigated attitudes to ANM involvement in the inquiry. Twenty-five respondents were prepared to accept unconditionally ANM people participating in the government public inquiry. Forty-one were prepared to take part providing the conditions were acceptable. Only six were completely opposed to participating. Reasons given included comments which show a variety of assumptions concerning the structure and the role of the inquiry. One suggested that the inquiry would be narrowminded, bigoted and misleading. Two suggested that the inquiry would be rigged, one adding a cryptic comment that it would not be a fair gauge of public opinion. Another said that an inquiry was superfluous "as we know nuclear power is a technological failure," and the last respondent argued that the whole lifestyle is in need of change, and that the government would most likely call an inquiry at a time of economic crisis.

One undecided respondent summarised the dilemma of participation;

The public inquiry would be a sham. Having participated the movement's views could after the inquiry be discarded. BUT if we do not participate the government will say it was our own choice: What do you do?

Question 13 tackled the issue of the public inquiry from another angle. In asking whether the inquiry will be fair, the question avoids the deeper issues of whether the issue can be resolved in a rational discussion. It avoids the question of who ultimately controls the decisions in society.<sup>9</sup> The question of fairness has been raised numerous times in the movement and so it was investigated in the questionnaire. Eight thought the inquiry would be fair, 42 said that they did not know and 28 did not think that it would be fair.

On the subject of conditions necessary for fairness, six themes emerge from the comments. First, there is a concern that opponents of the nuclear plant would not receive adequate financing. Second, people were concerned that an inquiry should really have political clout rather than happening after a decision had already been taken elsewhere. The third theme referred to the need for an impartial inspector or panel to arbitrate at the hearings; some suggested that a selection of people from diverse backgrounds was necessary for a fair hearing. Fourth, people were concerned that both sides should have equal access to information and expertise. The fifth theme was the importance of making the collected information widely available to the public. Sixth, was the necessity of making the terms of reference broad enough to enable anti-nuclear arguments to stick.

In general these comments show a distrust of the governmental process and one sceptical respondent concluded that the only way of ensuring impartiality was through divine intervention! Only nine people said that they would accept inquiry findings that were in favour of a nuclear plant. Sixty two would not accept such findings indicating that the majority of respondents were not merely looking for information to make a decision but had come to a definite decision against nuclear power. It appears that the government decision to concede an inquiry had little impact on the committed opponents of nuclear and while it may have served to make the government appear more reasonable, it failed to have any significant impact on the rank and file opponents.

In reply to question 15 on the subject of a referendum only seven respondents were opposed to having a referendum on the issue. Seven comments were added on the subject all of which expressed the fear that an uneducated public could be persuaded to vote in favour of a plant.

### 12.2.8 Summary of the Rank and File Positions

The last question on the questionnaire asked for any additional comments on the nuclear issue and the ANM in Ireland. A number of lengthy replies were received and a number of respondents were happy to expand on themes raised earlier in the questionnaire. One offered an encapsulation of the reasons for opposing nuclear power:

I feel that my opposition to nuclear power is much more than saying "no" to a particular method of generating electricity, but represents a refusal to accept a technocrat-based society and all that it implies.

Another ran distinctly against the grain saying;

Any anti-nuclear movement needs to base its activities on more facts and less bullshit. Most of the consequences of nuclear power are scientific, technical and economic. Any movement should be capable of coping with these. The anti-nuclear movement in Ireland has failed because of internal power struggles, poor organisation and grossly inaccurate and spurious statements. The movement should employ good technical and public relations consultants and organisations. Movements with a strong political emphasis tend to be ignored and treated as trouble makers. Closer association with organisations such as Foras Forbathe, SESI, etc., would help.

Another yet again raised the question of image and expressed concern about the selfishness and narrowmindedness of those who are not "interested in making the movement popular. Insular Dublin centred macrobiotic image isn't encouraging for would be middle age supporters." And again on the theme of the make up of the movement;

It was made up of the "fast" little college kids at the top and that type of thing just doesn't cut any ice on an issue like this. Against politicians only honest facts can be successful.

Another identifying himself as a civil servant complained of harrassment at work and name calling such as a "pagan" and "commie" for his stance on the issue and complained about mail being opened apparently by the special branch. A more standard line was taken by another reply:

Nuclear power is just one (very important) aspect of the dehumanisation process in capitalist societies. The only way to eliminate the many contradictions in such a society is to overthrow the class which creates and controls that society for profit and greed, ie. the overthrow of the capitalist class. Opposition to capitalism must focus on every area that it imposes its will--nuclear power is one such key area.

Others emphasised the ignorance of a large portion of the population and the necessity of using all forms of public education:

What bothered me was the fact that although to my mind we were on the brink of a horrible threat to our safety and more important our childrens' safety so many people were trusting the government without question and not even bothering to become interested in the Carnsore question. Most people I tried to stimulate would not take time to listen, read or even become frightened by the nuclear question!

In summary, one can argue that the responses show a deep concern for many of the themes examined in the previous chapters although the more radical interpretations are not as evident. The lack of faith in the political system is present to a considerable degree, and while many activists appreciate the ideals of the mass democracy method of organisation, there is considerable doubt about its effectiveness as a strategy for opposing nuclear power. The moral nature of the protest is clear from the replies on the questions of motivation, where questions of waste and weapons figure prominently. The people surveyed hold widely differing viewpoints but have a common interest in preventing the perceived danger of a nuclear power station and also a distrust of the directions in which society is moving.

### 12.3 THE SOCIOLOGY OF THE OPPOSITION

Questions 16 to 38 were designed to provide information to construct a rough sociological profile of the opposition. Sixty one (75%) of the respondents were born in the period from 1948 to 1964, which means that three quarters of the respondents were between the ages of 14 and 30 at the time of the Carnsore rally in 1978. Eight of the respondents were not born in Ireland, five were born in Britain, two in West Germany and one in the U.S. Fifty-six claimed to be from an urban background while 23 came from rural backgrounds. Males predominate, 57 males and 25 females answered the questionnaire and 33 were married. The question on occupations revealed a very wide variety of occupations and included 16 students, 7 teachers, 6 housewives and 3 unemployed. The small number of students in the sample prevented any conclusions on the influence of parental attitudes on political activity which a number of researchers of the New Left and the CND have investigated. (Vickers, 1975; Parkin, 1968). The subjects being studied were also

diverse and only two students hoped to find jobs in fields connected with environmental or conservation concerns. Eleven respondents had parents active in political issues and somewhat ironically five of these were in Fianna Fail. Respondents' parental occupations were also not limited in any apparent way although 53 mothers were classified as such. On the fathers' side, 5 were shop owners, 5 farmers, 5 civil servants, 4 salesmen and 4 businessmen. A crude division into white-collar and blue collar occupations divides the sample fairly evenly in half, further indicating a wide variety of backgrounds.

On the question of educational levels the data indicates that all but eleven finished high school to the leaving certificate level, 21 had taken technical training or an apprenticeship. Twenty-three had taken third level education and no less than eight had taken some philosophy courses. The overall leanings are towards the humanities rather than the sciences offering some rather tentative support to the suggestions of Parkin (1968), Lucardie (1980) and Rootes (1980) concerning the presence of students trained in disciplines which ask value questions being in the forefront of student politics and 'moral' protest movements. Religious background was questioned following Lucardie's (1980) suggestions that increasing secularisation is related in Europe to the emergence of the New Left where critical viewpoints on social issues gained space for expression. Three respondents claimed that they had never been practicing members of a church while 43 said that they had been a member of a church in the past. Only 30 of the respondents claimed to be practicing members of a church and, despite some rather inconsistent replies to these questions, it seems clear that a large number of people had left their religions. This reflects the growing secularisation that has occurred in the urban areas, at least, of Ireland in the last twenty years but also suggests that the respondents include a number of critical people who criticize societal norms other than just on the nuclear question.

Only seven respondents were members of political parties at the time of the first Carnsore rally, three of these in the SLP. Thirty-three were trade union members, 10 of these claimed that their union had an anti-nuclear policy and a rather surprising 17 didn't know. Forty one respondents were members of sports clubs, civic associations,

community associations, etc., while 36 were office holders in some group, suggesting a familiarity with public activities and some of the personal efficacy and public experience that Sharaf notes anti-nuclear activists in his study show. Question 38 on other questions that were considered important in Irish society brought a vast variety of responses mainly in a progressive/liberal perspective with only a few replies including some "union bashing" statements which could be considered as conservative politically. Questions of social justice and equality, the Northern issue, unemployment, education, church interference in political issues and contraception topped the list.

In summary the sociology of the activists suggests a young relatively well-educated, critical group concerned with social issues and with some experience in public affairs.

#### 12.4 PUBLIC OPINION AND THE NUCLEAR ISSUE IN IRELAND

Having reviewed the positions of the anti-nuclear activists, this section will briefly cover other public surveys of attitudes to the nuclear issue.

In the spring of 1978 the RTE TV show 'The Politics Programme' polled 520 adults, of whom 60% thought that nuclear power was necessary. Only 50% of Dublin residents thought that it was necessary to have a nuclear power station in Ireland but 90% of those asked thought that a public inquiry should be held into the Carnsore proposal.<sup>10</sup>

In October a number of questions on nuclear power were included in a survey of attitudes on science and technology.<sup>11</sup> Forty-five per cent indicated a general approval of nuclear power stations while 35% said that the risks were unacceptable, 10% were not interested and 10% said that they did not know.

Eighteen months later, Research Surveys of Ireland Ltd. released the findings of a poll conducted in February 1980 which found that 58% of those interviewed were opposed to nuclear power.<sup>12</sup> Thirty-four per cent were in favour and 8% undecided. This poll also found that 62% of women but only 52% of men were opposed. The 25-34 years age group was more opposed than older age groups. This does suggest a significant shift of public opinion in the intervening time period. The questions are however, not directly comparable and wording variations

may account for some of the apparent differences. It is impossible to know how much of an influence the ANM had on this shift but it is reasonable to speculate that it was a contributing factor.

During September 1978 Irish Marketing Surveys Ltd. conducted a study of "the principal factors affecting public disposition towards the prospect of a nuclear development in this country" for the ESB.<sup>13</sup> The study only reached a preliminary qualitative stage in attempting to develop a questionnaire for a projected larger scale operation. It investigated attitudes to economic growth, perceptions of the energy crisis, knowledge of established and alternative energy sources, particular reactions to nuclear power, the level of education available to the public and finally "specific resistances against nuclear power and likely avenues of expression for these." The study consisted of a series of group discussions with males of both higher and lower socio-economic status groups in Dublin, students in Dublin, higher socio-economic status women in rural areas, upper socio-economic males in Cork farmers in Co. Cork, farmers and craft workers in Enniscorthy in Co. Wexford.

The main findings include a "warm endorsement" of economic growth and a vague awareness of an energy crisis which ought to be planned against. Nuclear power was viewed often as the only practical substitute for traditional energy sources. The rural "ladies" were completely ignorant of nuclear technology. This study also found evidence of an association between nuclear power and military applications, which "constitutes the origin of the many profound misgivings, particularly for female respondents."<sup>14</sup> The groups expressed resentment towards the government and agencies promoting nuclear power because of a feeling of threat. The question of legitimacy is revealed;

The government--and the Minister (O'Malley) especially--is widely seen to be responsible for perceived reticence and intransigence on the nuclear issue. The ESB's image has escaped relatively lightly in this respect. It is considered a more suitable agent to oversee any nuclear development. Politicians are considered incompetent to do so. Furthermore, they are not trusted to handle an issue which is seen to transcend party political allegiances.<sup>15</sup>

Anti-nuclear literature has made people aware of the negative aspects of the technology. Hence people felt personally threatened and were

"acutely sensitive to the perceived possibility of having a nuclear station "inflicted" on them. They were resolved to avoid this."<sup>16</sup> In addition

Female respondents were bluntly opposed to any nuclear development, which they associate with abortions, genetic anomalies and all sorts of vaguely technological disasters.<sup>17</sup>

Enniscorthy respondents were sceptically disposed to nuclear power because no-one had attempted to inform them about it.

The findings broadly confirm trends elsewhere with concerns about safety, health effects, nuclear war and a loss of faith in the political system to deal adequately with the situation.<sup>18</sup> In this case the ESB has probably been fortunate in the high profile that Mr. O'Malley maintained in 1978 in connection with the nuclear issue. The ESB hence was not so noticeable in its promotion of nuclear power at least as far as media coverage was concerned.

## 12.5 CONCLUSIONS

The results of this survey are at best tentative, due to representation problems outlined earlier, and it is not suggested that they be given any sophisticated statistical significance. They do reveal that the parts of the mass movement who replied were concerned with similar issues to those expressed in the literature reviewed in earlier chapters. The Movement also reflected the concerns found by the researchers on public attitudes to nuclear power and it is reasonable to suggest that the people who signed the lists at Carnsore merely held widely shared views more strongly than the public at large. The Movement is very diverse in its origins and the backgrounds of its activists clearly shows that there is no simple sectional interest in society opposed to nuclear power; rather, a widely felt threat and lack of faith in the parliamentary system seem to combine to provide a focus for protest and a statement of opposition to the status quo. The Movement was shaped and inspired by many hardworking activists and its influence has not been limited to solely the nuclear issue. The next chapter outlines the relationship of the nuclear controversy to a number of related issues in Ireland.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 12

<sup>1</sup>Dervla Murphy, "Nukes, Freaks, and Anti-Nukes," The Irish Times 1 March 1980, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup>See Parkin (1968).

<sup>3</sup>The total number came to over 1,300 names but there were a number of duplications in the lists. A careful check was made to ensure that no one received two questionnaires. Random number tables were used to generate the sample from the lists. Production problems with the questionnaire limited the useable number to 220 rather than the planned 250.

<sup>4</sup>Interviews revealed a number of cases of this.

<sup>5</sup>Given the use of the Battelle Institute by the federal German government to devise public relations materials to reduce support for the anti-nuclear cause (Taylor, 1977), the research done by the IAEA and IIASA on attitudes and public opinion in Europe (Otway, et al., 1978; Jungk, 1979) and the traditional use of the "behavioural sciences" to provide information for attitude manipulation (Matson, 1966), this was an expected response. The ESB in Ireland commissioned a marketing agency to examine attitudes to nuclear power in Ireland and to develop ideas about how to "educate" the public about nuclear power (see section 12.4). Equally the widespread use of provocateurs and infiltration of extraparliamentary opposition groups by "security" agencies is of concern to activists (see Marx, 1974; Campaign Against the Model West Germany, 1979).

<sup>6</sup>See Magill (December 1977), pp. 22-23 on the Windscale reprocessing plant and nuclear pollution in the Irish Sea. The Irish Fishermen's Organisation expressed concern over leakages from Windscale in July 1979 (The Irish Times, 27 July 1979, p. 6). Later that year a group of conservationists named ECOS set off in a fishing boat to sail to Cumbria and deliver a protest letter at the Windscale plant (The Irish Times, 27 November 1979, p. 11). The prospect of Ireland becoming an EEC nuclear dumping site has also been raised with stable granitic formations in Ireland a possible option as a deep burial site (The Irish Times, 28 December 1978). In addition various agencies in Europe have been dumping low level wastes in the Atlantic south of the Irish coastline.

<sup>7</sup>These include Cooley, 1980; Elliot, et al., 1978; Lovins, 1977; Breach, 1978; Roberts and Medvedev, 1977; FoE, 1978b; Carroll and Kelly, 1979; Blackith, 1976; Patterson, 1976; McPhee, 1974; Croall and Sempler, 1978. In addition publications of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute were mentioned and one person was inspired by Thoreau.

<sup>8</sup>Karen Silkwood worked for Kerr-McGee, an American multinational involved in processing nuclear fuel. She was found dead in her crashed car, having failed to keep an appointment with a journalist and a union representative for whom she had been collecting information on company safety breaches. The information she had collected "disappeared." (See Rashke, 1981).

<sup>9</sup>In this context see BSSRS, 1980.

<sup>10</sup>The Irish Times, 16 August 1978. In the spring of 1978 TCD students union conducted a poll in conjunction with the annual student elections. Sixty nine per cent of the students thought they knew enough about the issue to oppose nuclear power while 91% favoured a public inquiry. However 29% of the students believed that the development of nuclear power is the most appropriate way to meet Ireland's energy needs (TCD Liason, 4 May 1978).

<sup>11</sup>Results as summarised in Technology Ireland (November 1979), pp. 22-23.

<sup>12</sup>The Irish Times, 16 April 1980, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup>Irish Marketing Surveys Limited, 1978, Public Attitudes to Aspects of Energy Provision: A Qualitative Study, presented to the ESB.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. iv.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. v.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 23

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. v.

<sup>18</sup>See Nelkin and Pollak, 1981; Farher, et al., 1980; Groth and Schultz, 1976; Melber, et al., 1977.

## CHAPTER 13

MULTIPLE ISSUES: THE LEGACY OF THE  
ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT13.1 INTRODUCTION

The concerns of the ANM reached beyond opposition to the proposed nuclear plant at Carnsore point and activists contributed their energy, insight and experience to other issues. In Donegal a county-wide controversy developed around the issue of prospecting for uranium and this issue interacted with the national ANM in a number of cases. In Cork the students union and a local Anti-Nuclear group had exchanges with the university authorities and the NEB over safety and regulations connected with the use of a "sub critical assembly" in the Physics department at University College, Cork (UCC). In Cork and Dublin in particular problems with the dumping of toxic wastes continued and in 1980 there was a revival of the Irish CND.

Barkan's (1979) analysis of the U.S. ANM deals with a number of debates within the ANM which deal with questions of the boundaries of anti-nuclear protests. In the U.S. these have included questions as to whether a critique of corporate capitalism should be included in the ANM in addition to the critique of nuclear power. Workplace issues connected with nuclear energy remain a problem. The links with weapons production has also been a point of tension. In the Irish movement these tensions did not arise with issues where the nuclear fuel cycle was obviously involved or where an obvious environmental link existed as in the case of toxic dumps.

The presence of more overtly political issues such as the National H-Blocks campaign, supporting prisoner protests in Northern Ireland, and a stall providing information on a strike by McDonald's employees<sup>1</sup> as well as traditionally contentious issues, like the contraception action campaign did cause objections within the movement and concern

among the local population in Wexford when they were present at one of the rallies: the criteria for widespread acceptance being the perception of an issue as "non-political" because it was an "environmental question" and hence apparently above the sectional squabbles of "politics."<sup>2</sup> There was some local concern about the disruptions caused by the rallies in a remote and conservative parish<sup>3</sup> and local reactions were often contradictory.<sup>4</sup>

### 13.2 THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST URANIUM PROSPECTING

Uranium prospecting in Ireland started in 1976 with reconnaissance and preliminary work done by the Geological Survey of Ireland and a number of companies supported by financial grants from the EEC.<sup>5</sup> The EEC has continued to support exploration work giving grants for IR 1½m. in the 1980/81 period.<sup>6</sup> Opposition was most determined in Donegal where prospecting activity had the highest profile. Elsewhere opposition existed in small groups of people in the areas that were affected by prospecting activity and among concerned members of the ANM who researched the issue.<sup>7</sup> Early in 1978 it was announced that there were significant uranium deposits in Wicklow and Carlow while in June one company started exploration in Co. Tyrone.<sup>8</sup> This account will focus on Donegal where the controversy became a significant county wide issue.

The first group to attempt to raise consciousness in Donegal on the issue was a primal therapy commune in Burtonport, Co. Donegal which circulated their area with leaflets and in September 1979 organised a meeting which brought activists in the ANM to Donegal to discuss the issue. Unhappy with the way the commune had structured events, these activists split up and organised a few meetings in towns in the West of the County. At that time a reporter from the Donegal People's Press found no evidence of opposition to uranium prospecting in the area around Doochary and Fintown where the most active prospecting has taken place.<sup>9</sup> This was to change in the coming months. The Belfast anti-nuclear group produced a pamphlet entitled Uranium Mining in Donegal: The Dangers and Deceits which outlined the health and environmental hazards of uranium mining and its connections with the international fuel cycle, the EEC and multinational mining companies. Thousands of copies of this twenty page pamphlet were distributed free in Donegal.

A spur to opposition was an article in The Irish Times on the hazards of uranium mining published in November.<sup>10</sup> By December a series of public meetings were hearing many concerns raised and a meeting was called in Fintown just before Christmas to elect a group to ensure that the health of the people and the quality of their environment did not suffer as a result of uranium mining and related activities.<sup>11</sup> The Donegal Uranium Committee (DUC), as this group called itself, quickly issued an appeal for funds to organise a campaign and do research into the issue so as to inform the people of Donegal about it. Uranium prospecting soon came on the County Council agenda, but despite expressions of concern they refused to provide the £30,000 needed for a preliminary environmental monitoring study by An Foras Forbatha<sup>12</sup> (The National Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research). Various councillors argued that the government in Dublin or the EEC or even the companies should pay for it.

While the DUC gathered information and the councillors debated, the companies, in this case Munster Base Metals, ran into direct opposition. In February they planned to start drilling near a well used by a few local families as a water supply. When the company refused to provide an alternative source of water the people involved went to the site and a heated confrontation developed. The company backed down and stopped their attempts to drill in that area.<sup>13</sup> The NEB stepped in in March to oversee uranium prospecting operations and its spokesperson, Dr. Noel Nowlan, admitted that the public was not getting adequate information but suggested that the alarm was probably unwarranted.<sup>14</sup> A large protest march that month culminated in a public meeting addressed by Brian Flannery, the DUC chairperson, and also by a local doctor, who outlined the health risks from radon gas and mining tailings. That night a cottage used as a store for uranium samples was set on fire and a number of excavators used by the mining companies were seriously damaged. Although the Gardai searched for culprits no one was ever charged. The DUC was quick to disassociate itself from the action.<sup>15</sup>

The DUC took part in the third Carnsore rally in August 1980 with a large exhibition. This rally addressed the issue of uranium mining more fully than the ANM had done previously.

As early as April 1980 the DUC realised that the companies had

converted a number of buildings and erected a store without applying for the requisite planning permissions from the county council. The DUC pointed this out and subsequently appealed against the retrospective planning permissions being granted. The appeal was supported by ten local anti-uranium groups in Donegal and by the ubiquitous Dr. Blackith who presented technical evidence on Low Level Radiation which suggested that the NEB safety standards and information sources were unreliable. The final hearing before An Bord Pleannala took place on 1 April 1981. By using these tactics the DUC effectively stopped the operations of the more active companies. The focus of this hearing was on narrow planning technicalities and it brings into focus once more the lack of any forum to adequately debate the larger policy issues that are involved in the nuclear fuel cycle. The prospecting licenses are issued in Dublin by the Ministry of Industry Commerce and Energy. The only legal recourse available to the DUC was to the County Council on a question of planning regulations. The facts that the companies failed to apply for permission and operated badly-sited and designed premises helped the DUC to build a case, but they never had recourse to a forum to make many of their other objections heard apart from public meetings and demonstrations.

The DUC succeeded in gaining widespread support, and eventually sympathy from the County Council but the initial response was not universally favourable. It appears that the companies involved in prospecting promoted their shares in Donegal in the early stages of their activities and local people, expecting significant mineral finds, invested in the ventures. This led to resentment when opposition appeared.<sup>16</sup> The DUC also ran into opposition in the county vocational education committee when they organised a seminar on uranium mining. Initially the DUC was invited to participate in the event and to provide speakers. The DUC heard nothing further until a week prior to the scheduled date for the seminar when the line up of speakers was leaked to them. None of their suggested speakers was on the list. The DUC threatened to boycott the seminar and demanded that critical points of view be heard at the seminar. In the event, only Dr. Blackith was available at short notice but his presentation apparently went across well. Despite six speakers in favour of the prospecting, few of the audience were apparently convinced, and at the Plenary session at the

end of the seminar Brian Flannery received a standing ovation. The explanation for these events is apparently that the education committee turned to the extra-mural department of University College Galway for help in locating speakers. They in turn consulted the ardently pro-nuclear professor of Chemistry, Sean O'Cinneide, on campus who suggested the speakers. The DUC was also victim of a smear campaign and a bizarre scheme to link it with the British army in the North of Ireland which The Donegal Democrat newspaper soon exposed.<sup>17</sup>

Attempts by the companies to improve their image by giving donations to candidates in a by-election backfired when one party returned its donation amid considerable publicity.<sup>17</sup> Other attempts by hired public relations consultants fared no better.

The DUC was undoubtedly effective in its campaign. They talked the County council into helping to finance a study of the likely impacts of uranium mining being prepared by PERG. Their interventions in the planning appeals and their cool presentation of the factual case against uranium mining helped. But it is doubtful whether they would have been as successful, were it not for the direct action of the people in the prospecting areas who refused to allow the companies to drill, the many farmers who refused the companies permission to work on their land, and the unknown people who set fire to the storage shed and excavators. Undoubtedly the direct opposition got the message through to the companies that they were not appreciated. On the other hand the DUC provided a "legitimate" opposition that the County council could take seriously. At no time was the DUC in a position to challenge through formal channels the central government policy of granting prospecting permits. Given the situation where the Minister responsible for granting prospecting licenses was Mr. O'Malley, and his brother-in-law was heavily involved in Anglo United, one of the prospecting companies, public credibility in the central government's handling of the issue was strained. Further, the long distance perceived between the Dublin based experts in the NEB who assured the population that they were not at risk, and the respected local doctors who spoke out about the health hazards of uranium, called the legitimacy of the established authority into question.

The links between the DUC and the rest of the ANM were tenuous,

the Belfast anti-nuclear group's pamphlet was helpful in raising awareness, but the more formal lobbying approach was an anathema to the more direct action oriented approach of many of the ANM activists who preferred demonstrations and grass roots action. The Donegal controversy does however again bring the issues of legitimacy and lack of consultation to the fore.

These issues also were of importance in another controversy at the other end of the Island also related to the nuclear industry.

### 13.3 THE UCC STUDENT TRAINING REACTOR

The training reactor in question was donated to University College, Cork in the 1950s as part of the "Atoms for Peace" by the U.S. but the uranium fuel was not installed until the mid-1970s.<sup>18</sup> The campaign against the device started with an article in the University student newspaper Ire which disclosed the presence of the reactor in January 1980. The American Westinghouse Corporation's recruitment campaigns on campus were also involved. The initial revelations made headlines in The Cork Examiner and caused a flurry of correspondence between the College authorities, the Students' Union and the NEB. This gradually revealed that the NEB and the college were doing an inadequate job. Details of the monitoring results on the reactor and its surrounding area were either non-existent or remained unpublished.

The Student Union approached the issue entirely on the grounds of student health and safety. Professor Fahy of the Physics Department in a letter assured the students' union that there was no waste although later there was a discussion of building a waste storage area near the reactor.<sup>20</sup> The NEB refused to meet with the Cork Anti-Nuclear Group to discuss the nuclear materials and their handling. The license for the device was finally displayed much later after requests that it be placed so that it could be seen by the students.

The nuclear opposition group on campus attacked the device on political grounds as well as on issues of safety practices. The questions of nuclear proliferation are raised and the "neutrality" of research commented on. In a statement on the training reactor they asserted;

... this device is indirectly helping to promote the growth and spread of nuclear power. Science and technology are not neutral when they have reached the scale that nuclear has reached. Engineers and Scientists must question the social, political and moral consequences of technology on society.<sup>21</sup>

Arguing that the technology of nuclear power has added to the spread of nuclear weapons around the world, the origin of the 2½ tons of uranium in the reactor was also raised. The group asked:

Was it mined on Navaho Land in the U.S. where many Indians are now dying as a result of uranium mining or perhaps at the little border village of Cane Valley (near the Utah-Arizona border) where the community has been destroyed by radiation! Do questions such as these matter when it is all for research?<sup>22</sup>

Arguing that the college should declare its links with the U.S. military and multinational establishments, they asserted;

As the world comes closer to the ultimate nuclear disaster people cannot any longer deny their moral responsibility in acting to prevent the possible extinction of life on this planet by one of the power blocks. The buck has started passing at UCC.<sup>23</sup>

They went on to demand full access to the appropriate information from the college and the NEB and the establishment of a college safety committee involving worker and student representation.

The impression given to concerned student union personnel was that the college establishment and the NEB closed ranks and hoped that the storm of controversy would be dissipated by denials that there was any danger and that procedures were inadequate. In part they were successful as the initial statements in the press were quickly rebutted. Requests for information by the student union were sometimes processed slowly which further raised suspicions. The furore did result in changes in college practices as radiation badges were introduced in the physics department.<sup>24</sup>

There was also some debate in the ANM in Cork about the best way of approaching the issue. Elsewhere others thought that it was a time-consuming diversion from the main point of opposition to the Carnsore Point project. The Cork Anti-Nuclear Group mounted a picket on UCC on a number of occasions and demanded the removal of the reactor without much apparent interest being taken. The links with Westinghouse were also made. For some years they have been recruiting UCC graduates

trained on the nuclear device in the physics department. The fact that this company was a likely supplier of a reactor for the Carnsore site was not forgotten.

Other training facilities in Ireland with radioactive components include a training reactor in University College Dublin which has so far not provoked opposition. However, the physics department in Kevin Street Institute for Technology in Dublin made the pages of the national press with charges of inadequate safety practices in 1980.<sup>25</sup>

The UCC controversy raises the same issues that have made the nuclear debate so acrimonious. The connections with other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle, the multinational connections and controversy over safety levels and practices have raised political issues. The perceived reluctance of the NEB, the college authorities and the physics department to publish information enhanced suspicions and led opponents to demand the publication of large amounts of information related to the issue.<sup>26</sup>

#### 13.4 NOXIOUS INDUSTRIES AND TOXIC WASTE DUMPING

As part of the rapid industrialisation in Ireland in the 1960s and 1970s the IDA brought a number of chemical plants into the country. With them came chemical wastes, the disposal of which has caused a number of controversies. The unsafe working conditions in the "noxious" industries have also been of concern to activists who became aware of the problem in the nuclear controversy.

Probably the most controversial plant was the Raybestos Manhattan plant at Ovens, Co. Cork. From 1973 on, residents were concerned with pollution problems from the proposed asbestos plant. The question of dumping waste remained unclarified and a proposed dump in Cork Harbour at Ringaskiddy was so unacceptable to local residents that they blocked the roads to the site in May 1978.<sup>27</sup> A local biologist has carried on a series of court cases challenging the company and the authorities. The company broke the planning permission regulations and in the end was taken to court by Cork County Council to restrain its dumping operations.<sup>28</sup> Part of the opposition to the plant in the later stages of its operation came from a "Noxious Industry Action Group" which was an offshoot of the Cork Anti-Nuclear Group. This group circulated

leaflets to the workers in the plant pointing out the hazards of working with asbestos, and the failure of the ITGWU bureaucrats to organise effectively for workers' safety. They included details of workers' court cases abroad against asbestos companies. They argued that the union and safety inspectors were a fraud and not in the real interests of workers.<sup>29</sup> For their trouble they gained the attention of the Special Branch. The Cork group also leafleted other plants, including one producing dioxin containing herbicide, and they also produced a leaflet protesting against the transport of large quantities of ammonia by train from a fertiliser plant in Cork through the major population centres in the Republic to Arklow on the east coast. They called this train "the ammonia bomb" and were concerned to point out the potential for a major disaster if the train were to crash in a built up area. An attempt to sabotage the train was made in August 1980 in Dublin. The saboteurs failed to open the valves on the train, if indeed they had seriously intended to do so, no ammonia leaked, but the point had been made.<sup>30</sup>

Other local communities have prevented the location of toxic industries in their areas. In Clare in 1978 Beechams finally abandoned plans for a £18m. plant when locals demanded absolute guarantees of pollution control which the IDA and the county council would not provide.<sup>31</sup>

Further environmental hazards of the chemical industry came to light in the summer of 1980 when a large fish kill occurred in Co. Cork due to the unauthorised dumping of chemical wastes. As the chemical company plants brought into the country in the last decade came on stream there had been a noticeable failure to provide a system of disposing of waste products. In the Cork area where many of the chemical industries were located, resistance to a proposed toxic dump was centred on a small village south of the city where farmers objected to preliminary tests being done on their land to investigate its suitability as a toxic dump. The toxic dump issue made headlines in the national media in the summer of 1980.<sup>32</sup>

In Dublin the links between the proposed TCD nuclear waste incinerator and a proposed toxic dump in North Dublin brought residents together to form a group called "Dublin Anti-Radiation and Toxic Action

Group" (DARTAG) in November 1980 to oppose both projects. The TCD proposal was subsequently dropped but the dump proposal remained despite angry debate in Dublin County council and a sustained opposition by DARTAG and community groups. DARTAG produced a number of leaflets and two pamphlets entitled "Toxic Times" and "Radioactive Times" which were hard hitting documents with information on the haphazard practices of dumping companies and the failure to regulate their operations. All through this period there were no designated toxic waste reception facilities. The link between toxic waste and the nuclear issue was made clear frequently.<sup>33</sup> The connections between toxic wastes and the attempts by multinational corporations to export their dirty industries to peripheral areas without alerting publics and stringent regulations were also drawn.<sup>34</sup> The talk of a scientifically monitored dump and assurances that such a dump would not present a safety hazard is also criticised by DARTAG:

A Toxic dump will not control toxic wastes. Rather it opens up the country to an even greater influx of lethal industries.... We believe that Ireland is a dumping ground for toxic industries and we are now being asked to legalise the dumping of toxic wastes in working class and rural areas around the country.<sup>35</sup>

And later regarding the function of the IIRS;

Their function is to act as State evidence concerning the safety standards within factories and dumps. Time and again, they provide a scientific and technical veneer to state projects designed to diffuse anger and fear.<sup>36</sup>

The ideas of scientifically monitored dumps to control the problem is rejected by the DARTAG authors;

The unifying theme across these State agencies is the need for a CENTRALISED system under THEIR CONTROL. They want to select a small number of dumping sites close to the major industrial concentrations. Under the guise of 'monitoring' we will be told that a long term strategy is being developed--that the current dumps are only temporary. This is a repeat of the type of situation which has caused havoc in America, Holland and other countries.<sup>37</sup>

It is clear that the ANM has consciously attempted to diversify its concerns to include issues that are similar to the nuclear issue, incorporating technological hazards and cooperation of the multinationals with state agencies. The noxious industry group and DARTAG all had personnel from the ANM in their ranks and in many cases they did not

consider the issues to be separate. These groups reflect a growing awareness of the environmental price to be paid in following the multinational road to "development."

### 13.5 THE CND REVIVAL

Ireland has not missed out on the revival of campaign against nuclear weapons in Europe. The worldwide revival of the peace movement dates approximately to 1979 with the failure of the U.S. to ratify the SALT 2 treaty, the Carter regime's rethinking of nuclear strategy, the NATO decision to deploy intermediate range nuclear missiles in Europe again and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan.

The original Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was founded in 1958 but by the mid-1970s it was totally inactive. It was relaunched in October 1979 and developed quickly with membership rapidly increasing and many other organisations hurrying to affiliate with it.<sup>38</sup> A branch has been formed in the North of Ireland and attracted some support.<sup>39</sup> Dervla Murphy, the well known Irish travel writer also entered the fray reviewing books and writing articles while working on her book on things nuclear (Murphy, 1981).<sup>40</sup> The CND effectively lobbied the foreign minister in May 1980 on recommendations for a presentation to the review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in August 1980, many of which were included in the address which he subsequently gave.<sup>41</sup> On Hiroshima Day ceremonies were held around the country and included a few tree plantings to mark the occasion. Meetings were organised and a number of film shows of "The War Game" organised around the country.<sup>42</sup>

The differences between the CND and the ANM were considerable, both in terms of the more formal structure of the CND and its inclusion of more religious inputs. The political situation was also very different, Ireland is not a member of NATO and has taken some initiatives on the disarmament issue in the past as well as providing troops for UN peacekeeping forces. This tradition allows for more sympathy in government circles for peace groups in stark contrast to the response to the ANM. The link between Ireland advocating nuclear power while opposing weapons has apparently not been made in government circles. In January 1981 the CND organised a seminar on the anniversary

of the assassination of Gandhi which brought 40 people together to discuss the implications of neutrality in the Irish context and to discuss the revival of the European Peace movement. The implications of nuclear war and the slow erosion of Irish neutrality are of considerable concern in Ireland as talk of Ireland joining NATO has been growing since accession to the EEC.<sup>43</sup> This seminar also spelled out the international linkages of the nuclear industry and called for the banning of uranium mining as the materials might be used in weapons manufacture. It was on these questions that the CND challenged the Irish government policies.

### 13.6 SUMMARY

The ANM cannot take sole responsibility for these subsequent events but without doubt its influence has been felt. The Belfast anti-nuclear group initially circulated an influential leaflet in Donegal on uranium mining and the awareness of the weapons connection with nuclear power provided some impetus to the revival of CND late in 1979. The connections between toxic waste and noxious industries drawn in the ANM helped spur the formation of groups opposed to industries and dumping. DARTAG received inspiration from the ANM and some of its people were involved in the Trade Union Anti-Nuclear Campaign and the CND.

The IDA has recently apparently switched its industrialization drive efforts towards electronics industries and away from chemical industries and pharmaceuticals but the struggle over waste dumping is likely to continue. The opposition in Donegal to uranium mining may well have finally discouraged the companies there. The issues of nuclear weapons and NATO are connected to questions of neutrality and independence. These relate in turn to the changing ideological orientations of the Irish bourgeoisie, increasingly moving toward accommodation with the EEC and inevitably with the British. There remains the possibility in some peoples' minds of a deal on the Northern question in exchange for Irish membership of NATO. What the role of the CND would then be is a matter for speculation.

The influence of the ANM ideas of mass participation directly influenced the groups opposing noxious industries that grew out of the

ANM as these remained unstructured. The DUC did develop a more formal structure, but it in fact operated in an ad hoc informal way too. The CND has the formal structure of a committee and honorary presidents and vice-presidents including people like Sean McBride and John Carroll.

None of these other issues raised the same amount of public concern as the ANM. Many activists in the ANM were not present in these related issues although enough of them became involved to influence the directions they took.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 13

<sup>1</sup>Ireland too is subject to the dubious dietary delights of the multinational 'Big Mac'.

<sup>2</sup>This was clarified in many interviews. Crick (1964) writing in In Defence of Politics, criticised the failure of "non-political" conservatives and "a-political" liberals to comprehend the nature of the political process, leading them to dismiss its importance and to develop a faith in 'neutral' administration.

<sup>3</sup>See for instance The Sunday Independent, 5 April 1978, p. 8. The local parish priest expressed concern on a number of occasions.

<sup>4</sup>Interviews. Prior to the second ANM rally there were some objections by a few locals to the holding of the rally although indifference and some curiosity was the prominent reaction.

<sup>5</sup>For a summary of the companies, their interests, interconnections, and activities, see Technology Ireland (October 1980), pp. 12-16.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>See also, Uranium: The Threat to Leinster, published by The Contaminated Crow group, undated, 24 pp.; The Uranium Grabbers by Cork Anti-Nuclear Group, undated, 29 pp. and Fintan O'Toole, "The Hills are Alive," In Dublin, no. 122 (5 March 1981), pp. 14-17.

<sup>8</sup>The Irish Times, 19 April 1978, 24 May 1978.

<sup>9</sup>Donegal Peoples' Press, 21 September 1979.

<sup>10</sup>The Irish Times, 26 November 1979, p. 10 (Article by Keith Haight).

<sup>11</sup>Donegal Peoples' Press, 1 February 1980.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., See also Bill Carr, "Talking About Uranium," North West Newsletter, no. 16 (May/June 1980), p. 11.

<sup>13</sup>Donegal Democrat, 29 February 1980.

<sup>14</sup>The Irish Times, 17 March 1980; Donegal Peoples' Press, 21 March 1980.

<sup>15</sup>The Irish Times, 1 April 1980; Donegal Peoples' Press, 4 April 1980.

<sup>16</sup>The whole question of the share dealings was beyond the scope of this research but it is a factor that must be remembered.

<sup>17</sup>The Irish Times, 1 November 1980, pp. 1, 5.

- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., 26 January 1980, p. 1.
- <sup>19</sup> Ire 2:2; The Cork Examiner, 23, 24 January 1980.
- <sup>20</sup> Professor Fahy's letter is dated 23 January 1980.
- <sup>21</sup> Statement from the Nuclear Opposition Group in University College Cork, May 1980, p. 2.
- <sup>22</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>23</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>24</sup> Interview.
- <sup>25</sup> Hibernia, 12 June 1980.
- <sup>26</sup> These demands were published by The Cork Examiner, 7 March 1980.
- <sup>27</sup> The Irish Times, 23 October 1978; see also BSSRS, 1980b.
- <sup>28</sup> Interviews.
- <sup>29</sup> They produced a series of four leaflets, each leaflet after the first one incorporated feed-back from discussions with the workers. Raybestos has closed down its Cork operation since.
- <sup>30</sup> In Dublin, no. 110, (5-18 September 1980).
- <sup>31</sup> The Irish Times, 4 October 1981.
- <sup>32</sup> Hibernia, 28 August 1980; The Irish Times, 11 June 1980, p. 10, 16 September 1980, p. 10 and 16 October 1980, p. 10.
- <sup>33</sup> The Contaminated Crow group published a map of toxic facilities in 1980.
- <sup>34</sup> See Toxic Times and Radioactive Times, various editions of Rebel and Mother Jones reprints circulated by various groups in Ireland.
- <sup>35</sup> Toxic Times, p. 8.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 9.
- <sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 10.
- <sup>38</sup> Chairperson's report, CND Annual General Meeting, 24 October 1980.
- <sup>39</sup> The Irish Times, 10 December 1980, p. 6.
- <sup>40</sup> Ibid., 9 January 1980, 10 January 1980, 1 March 1980.

<sup>41</sup>Disarmament Quarterly, no. 1 (Irish CND newsletter); see also Ireland Today, no. 970 (October 1980) (Bulletin of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs).

<sup>42</sup>This is the 1960s BBC documentary on nuclear war made by Peter Watkins which the BBC has refused to screen.

<sup>43</sup>See The Sunday Tribune, 22 February 1981; p. 1.

## CHAPTER 14

## CONCLUSIONS

We do not inherit the future from our fathers, we borrow it from our children.<sup>1</sup>

... but then, there is this consideration: that if the abuse be enormous, nature will rise up, and claiming her original rights, overturn a corrupted political system.<sup>2</sup>

14.1 INTRODUCTION

In the introduction this thesis is placed within three traditions in Geography. It relates to radical geography with its concerns about political ideas and shows how those on the radical fringe of environmental politics worked out a political practice drawn heavily from the New Left and earlier environmental ideas. In addition it has investigated a field normally beyond the considerations of geographers writing on public participation in planning and resources management issues. It charts the murky waters of extra-institutional political ecology and shows how its political strategies interrelate with its other ideas. Third, this thesis relates to geographical writings about energy. The alternative technology/soft energy path ideas in the ANM carry with them implications for future land use and spatial patterns of energy production and consumption dramatically different from those implied by the conventional wisdom. The future geography of energy is being decided in the conflicts over nuclear power stations and insulation regulations no less than in the board rooms of the multinational oil companies.

The Irish ANM follows a pattern closely akin to those elsewhere but with its own dynamic due to the specific historic circumstances of its existence. It was an uneasy coalition of local conservative pressure groups, a variety of left-wing activists and sympathetic establishment intellectuals combining their diverse backgrounds and skills to challenge

a single proposal of enormous magnitude for Irish society. Concerns about safety and health together with a desire for a more effective say in major decision-making issues ran together with far more radical critiques of global and Irish capitalist society. Diverse but inspired, its influence reached many segments of Irish society, the Smiling Sun button becoming a widely sported statement of concern and opposition.

This study shows how ideologically inspired activists attempted to take matters into their own hands and to assert their rights to make decisions, as active agents in the political process, rather than passive spectators to an expertocracy. The ideas of protest and opposition present in the mass democracy concept attempt to pre-figure desired social relationships in a participatory society. The environmental dimension is conscious of the ecological deprivations of industrial technology and struggles for a sane energy use system. These twin features, the concepts of a participatory society, and a sane technology in symbiotic relationship with society and nature, are the utopia within the ANM, the alternative vision which inspires action.

The ANM again reveals the features of environmentalism that O'Riordan (1976) offers as a summary of his work. It challenges many aspects of Western capitalism, it points out paradoxes rather than clear solutions, it involves a conviction that better societal modes are possible, and it combines politicization based on the need for action with a lack of faith in Western democratic systems.

By way of a conclusion this chapter offers some generalisations about the ANM and its relationship to radical politics and makes tentative suggestions about the future of radical politics.

## 14.2 IRISH POLITICS

The impact of the broader environmental movement and the New Left in its various forms are obvious from the foregoing material. The questions of political ecology raised not only by the ANM but by the toxic waste, noxious industry and anti-uranium protests clearly reveal the basis for deeply penetrating critiques of the road to "development" being followed in Ireland. The ANM was far from a coherent group with an agreed philosophy. Tensions between different perspectives constantly emerged and often polarised without many of the groups really understanding

why. Nevertheless a forum for political discussion and action existed and the ideas in the movement provide bases for profound criticism.

The full scale of environmental despoilation in Ireland remains to be assessed and accounted for and the sheer scale of the issues and the difficulty of developing a comprehensive critique of industrialisation in Ireland led to problems in the ANM and subsequently too in the Cork Noxious Industry Action Group. Attempts to develop an alternative philosophy and perspective on these matters led to the collapse of this group when the full magnitude of what was needed was realised. Nonetheless the issues have been raised and a generation of young activists alerted.

The immediate future in Ireland looks bleak for radical if not for reformist political action. In the early 1970s the economy went into a recession. A number of general elections have failed to produce a government with any apparently different ideas on how to overcome the economic and social problems looming in the immediate future. The political debate remains locked in the logic and language of the international capitalist system, and the arguments remain largely in the framework of the division of national wealth or, of the "national cake" rather than questioning the ingredients and recipe of that rather strange culinary metaphor. The radical critiques tentatively surfacing in the ANM are unlikely to have major short term repercussions. In an era of economic recession and massive foreign debt what industries the IDA manages to set up are likely to be welcomed because of employment possibilities, although local opposition to dumps, toxic waste and environmentally destructive plants will probably continue.

What left wing incursions have been made into the parliamentary process have been by people and parties making conventional economic demands. It remains doubtful that the endless contradictions and the failure of the political establishment to cope will lead to a widespread questioning of capitalist development in Ireland from a radical perspective in the immediate future. The ideology of progress and "economic growth" is too deeply ingrained, and fears of "subversives" and "godless communists" run deep in the middle classes and in the Catholic church. It also remains to be seen if future political issues will enlarge the political space created by the ANM. The CND issue has politically

explosive topics including neutrality and nationalism waiting in the wings should an Irish government move towards joining NATO. The controversy over toxic waste is unlikely to go away, because the waste will not go away--that is just the problem. In the current political and economic climate a comprehensive waste management and treatment programme is unlikely to see the light of day. The political implications of international "dumping" of dirty industries has been raised, the health implications of asbestos were important in the controversy over the Raybestos plant, and chemical companies are likely to come under closer scrutiny in the future.

The first Carnsore Point anti-nuclear festival was a unique event in Irish politics and pulled many disparate elements together. The future Irish political scene is speculative and the changing patterns of international capital accumulation, EEC policies, and the perennial conflict in Northern Ireland to a considerable extent determine the political agenda outside the dealings with the domestic economic situation. The demographic transition working itself out in Ireland will also influence the coming political situation. Youth unemployment and dissent among the young, educated sectors of the population denied their middle class expectations may become an increasingly destabilising factor. It is perhaps ambitious to suggest that the ANM was the first time these marginal elements attempted to express themselves politically and picked the medium of a cultural festival to do it. Music festivals have become increasingly popular in recent years with Irish youth, offering a distraction from the boredom and pointlessness of urban life on the dole. The tentative attempt to connect the political issue of nuclear power with this institution of cultural opposition remains one of the most intriguing features of the Irish ANM and the feature which made it unique in Irish politics. These connections between the logocrats and, in the Dutch phrase, the "provotariat" has similarities with the New Left elsewhere in Europe (Lucardie, 1981). It contains within it an attempt to oppose the apathy and bureaucratic stultification of the commodity culture and to develop a new critical politics in a country moving towards a major period of social and political crisis.

### 14.3 NEW LEFT INFLUENCES: SOCIOLOGY AND OPPOSITION

The influence of both the New Left and the Environmental discourse is obvious in the ANM in the Irish case. The new ideas of organisation and politics met with a sympathetic response although many became disillusioned with the practical problems of the mass movement. In rural areas in particular, many of the leaders and initiators in the anti-nuclear groups were either local educated people, aware of national and international issues or immigrants aware because of experiences abroad of the implications of nuclear power. These people had sympathy for the populist ideals of the movement, and had the sense of hope and personal efficacy necessary to initiate action which is so often missing in the declining rural areas of Ireland (Brody, 1974). The ANM took the form of a political and cultural movement in a populist way, invoking both new ideas and tradition to both change the participants and organise political protest directly against an alien intrusion supported by central government. The description by Gerlach and Hine of Segmented Polycephalous Networks comes close to describing the Irish ANM. There were numerous groups, each of which provided some partial leadership and operated semi-autonomously on the basis of some broadly shared ideas.

The international ANM was led mainly by new middle class activists, anxious to develop a critique of society and put their values and skills to use in a politically progressive way. Evidence from the interviews done for this thesis shows a similar trend in the Irish case. The inevitable problems resulted at times, as one questionnaire respondent put it "fast little college kids" set the pace, and undoubtedly did leave others uncomfortable. As Repo (1977) notes those without this socialisation and its verbal skills are often at a disadvantage and consequently discouraged from active participation.<sup>3</sup> The conscious attempt to organise on a mass basis encouraged many to become involved but the problem of the leadership of the most articulate remained as it has in many other protest movements.

Four elements of Lucardie's summary of the New Left were present in the Irish ANM by design. Self-management and ideas of autonomy were central, self expression was cultivated in the diversity of political approaches used, cultural revolution was present in attempts to prefigure

desired social relations and the political dimensions of music and leaflets; and democratisation was demanded through calls for consultation public inquiries, referenda and the assertion that ultimately the people not the bureaucrats would make the decision on nuclear power. The fifth idea which Lucardie considers central to the New Left political project, dual strategy, the combination of direct action protests and parliamentary action was present although more by accident than design. In this sense the ANM could claim to have been instrumentally successful despite itself. The mass movement often scorned direct lobby approaches and an approach which gave legitimacy to the "experts" and politicians. The Dublin FoE group in 1978 thought that the Carnsore rally was a foolish idea and impractical, although they were glad to be proved wrong! The mass rally at Carnsore Point put the nuclear issue on the political map in no uncertain terms. Groups like FoE and SESI however provided hard information and a damning critique in language and terms which allowed "establishment" politicians to take the ANM seriously. The deeply flawed government Green Paper could be legitimately criticised, and political points scored in the Dail and elsewhere, because of the information which critics like FoE provided to politicians and bureaucrats. Thus the ANM combined the strategies of direct action and political protest with a small but not insignificant attempt to force change through existing political channels and parties.

#### 14.4 EXPERTISE, TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE AND POLITICS

Despite the assertions by nuclear proponents, widespread dissemination of information about nuclear power has not succeeded in reducing opposition. The process is much more complex than merely a question of giving the public information. The role of the expert has been touched on in this thesis. For many, the existence of experts opposed to developments such as nuclear power provided the opposition with legitimacy--the faith in facts and scientific judgement is not totally withdrawn merely attenuated and transferred to "our" experts who are right, and withdrawn from "their" experts who are treated as devious, corrupt, malign, sinister or just plain wrong. The nature of the material being discussed and the politics of the debaters in public forums are crucial. Taylor's summary in the context of the German public information campaign is

worth quoting at length.

Schools, Universities, church centres and village halls were the scenes of intense debate, debate that was for the most part technical, blinding the onlooker with the science of rems and critical masses. The active participants were few and the major ethical issues were seldom satisfactorily dealt with, instead there were the charges and counter charges of one expert against the other. But it was enough just to watch. The pattern was quick to emerge: experts who held that all problems could be solved and who embraced nuclear power without any doubts were inevitably dependent on it for a livelihood; experts who disagreed were usually working independently of the Government or industry. The spectacle of a professor of nuclear physics locked in debate with an expert from industry about whether atomic explosions could occur in reprocessing plants was enough for most lay people to call halt.

(Taylor, 1977:220, emphasis added)

The mere possibility of a serious accident and widespread contamination is enough for many people to oppose the technology. No nice platitudes from engineers turned public relations men about the chances of a nuclear power plant accident being as remote as being hit by a meteor are likely to change this. The sophisticated language of risk estimation and its perversion by the nuclear industry notwithstanding, the fact that it is possible at all, is taken as enough to make a decision to oppose nuclear technology. The issue is so enormous, the hazards so unimaginable, the controversy so acrimonious, the premises so unfathomable to the uninitiated, that to err on the side of caution is the rational approach for many, and hence the opposition demand for a delay and a public inquiry and the perennial suspicions of "experts" who do not share this basic approach to the problem. This is aggravated by the "positivist" formulations of the pro-nuclear "experts" whose narrow technical approach leads to suspicion when they avoid the very points that critics wish to debate.

#### 14.5 THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT

The ANM reflects a deep and long term debate going on at the fringes of Western capitalism. The critique of capitalism and equally of the Russian technocratic social formation has developed over the last few decades in many ways. In Europe the New Left has developed in numerous left wing groups and its ideas have inspired many emancipatory

political movements. The ideas of workers' management and "Autogestion" have penetrated into the political arena particularly in France. In the U.S. the emerging "logocrats" have turned to "New Age" concerns and reinterpreted politics in a more personal way reflecting the cultural traditions in North America. The "Marxist" and "New Age" discourses are far from compatible in many ways, the philosophical and political perspectives are often at odds, the Marxist tradition dismissing the new age philosophy as hopelessly politically naive while the new age activists often see Marxism as part of the problem. Both streams are important in the ANM and more recently in the revival of the campaign against nuclear weapons. As Magri (1982) suggests, nuclear weapons provide an issue that is an essential part of many of the post 1960s critiques, the concern for Third World issues and political power in Western countries, and hence a unifying focus for many groups in both Europe and North America. The Peace Movement is also spontaneous and decentralised, drawing support from many sources and influenced by the earlier peace movements of the 1960s as well as the ANM.

The international ANM contains within its various groups a critique of the underlying values and institutions of the capitalist state. It attempts to criticise many aspects of society, but as Touraine puts it;

The anti-nuclear movement seems constantly to be reaching ahead of the actual possibilities open to it. The things it calls into question are more crucial than the things it can effectively change.

(Touraine, 1979:307)

It anticipates the future and a new conception of the political which New Left movements and libertarian Marxist groups have struggled to create in Europe (Rowbotham, et al., 1979). The awareness of environmental problems has grown, if not the active participation in the issues, and as Cotgrove and Duff (1980:333) argue, it has developed a new political dimension. They suggest that:

The significance of the environment has shifted from a preoccupation with the preservation of the countryside, historic buildings and local amenities, to become the focus of radical protest. Above all, environmentalists have challenged the central values and ideology of industrial society.

This political dimension is often outside the conventional political bargaining process of liberal democracy and hence it represents a challenge to the legitimacy of the state. The major exception to this is the attempt by some environmental groups to form "green parties." These have been marginal on the national scene in Europe (the citizens' party and Barry Commoner did little better in the 1980 U.S. election) but at local and state level their impact has been greater. The contradictions between the left leaning "politicos" and the conservative "nature lovers" remain.

The environmentalists challenge the economic calculations and vested interests of the nuclear establishments, so closely interconnected with big government and big business that they are in effect part of the same institution. Hence the assurances by government agencies that nuclear power is indeed "safe" and "cheap" are not taken seriously. In Ireland the NEB, when it was even mentioned, was identified as part of the problem, certainly not as a "neutral" body which could be relied on to protect the public from nuclear dangers. The state is widely construed as a large bureaucratic monster, divorced from public control, input or responsibility, and possessed of its own internal and ultimately malevolent logic. To dismiss this critique as idealistic but impractical is to miss the point. The point of the ANM, and the wider political ecology movement, is a challenge to political power at the level of ideas and legitimacy and, however incoherently, the movement is striving to create alternatives for the future. If at the moment these appear as utopian fantasies, they are nonetheless crucial to an understanding of the current extraparliamentary protest movement. For as long as the belief in the possibility of an alternative future, free of nuclear perils, remains, the activists will continue to struggle for a better world.

## NOTES TO CHAPTER 14

<sup>1</sup>Environmentalist slogan of unknown origin.

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Johnson as quoted by C.P. Fitzgerald, in The Birth of Communist China (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1964), p. 6.

<sup>3</sup>George Orwell put it thus in The Road to Wigan Pier (1981:44) "... in times of stress 'educated' people tend to come to the front; they are no more gifted than the others and their 'education' is generally quite useless in itself, but they are accustomed to a certain amount of deference and consequently have the cheek necessary to be a commander. That they will come to the front seems to be taken for granted, always and everywhere."

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## APPENDIX A

## QUESTIONNAIRE OF IRISH ANTI-NUCLEAR ACTIVISTS

1. Which of the following sources brought the nuclear issue in Ireland to your attention?

Television  Newspapers  Books  Radio   
 Leaflets  Family  Friends  Workmates   
 Public meeting  Other

2. When did you first become active in opposing nuclear power? ( By active I mean the first time you went to a public meeting or wrote a letter to a newspaper or a politician or did something more than merely talk about the issue )

Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

3. Are you still active? Yes  No

If not when did you stop? Month \_\_\_\_\_ Year \_\_\_\_\_

And if not, why did you stop? Please tick the appropriate box or boxes below.

Other issues became more important to you so you gave your time to them

Family reasons  Health  Career reasons

Just lost interest  Became disillusioned with the organisation of

the anti-nuclear movement  Because the government granted a public

inquiry  Because the government postponed the final decision on

nuclear power  Other(s)  Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

4. Are you still opposed to the plans for a nuclear power station at Carnsore Point? Yes  No

If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

2.

5. People have joined the anti-nuclear movement for many different reasons. Please indicate whether each of the following reasons for getting involved was unimportant, important or very important in causing you to get involved by putting a tick opposite each of the reasons listed here.

	UNIMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT
Fear of accidents and genetic effects of nuclear power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of corruption and abuse of political power	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nuclear power doesn't make economic sense	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends encouraged you to join the movement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concern over the local effects at Carnsore Point	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moral objections to nuclear power because of the waste it leaves to future generations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You were looking for friends or for a good time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moral objections to nuclear power because of its connections with nuclear weapons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concern that the public wasn't being consulted on the issue	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You wished to use the anti-nuclear campaign as a means to bring about political changes in Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Opposition to the expansion of monopoly capitalism	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A desire to see society progress towards a decentralised ecological way of life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Were there any reasons not on this list that influenced you? If so, what were they? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3.

6. Do you think that the campaign against nuclear power should limit itself solely to opposing the proposed nuclear power station at Carnsore Point?

Yes

If so, why? \_\_\_\_\_

No

If not, please rate the following items as falling into one of the four categories listed below and put a tick in the appropriate box for each item.

	RELATED TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE AND IMPORTANT	RELATED TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE BUT UNIMPORTANT	NOT RELATED TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE BUT IMPORTANT	NOT RELATED TO THE NUCLEAR ISSUE AND UNIMPORTANT
Uranium mining	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nuclear disarmament	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noxious industries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civil liberties and trade union rights	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical and research uses of radio active substances	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Toxic and radioactive waste dumps in Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pollution in general in Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nuclear waste dumping in the Atlantic and the Irish Sea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy conservation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing EEC and government control over your life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Promoting renewable sources of energy in Ireland	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any other issues that are connected to the nuclear power issue which you consider to be important? If so, what are they? Please say briefly here why they are important. \_\_\_\_\_

4.

7. How do you think opposition to nuclear power in Ireland can be most effectively organised? Please tick one of a,b,c, or if you think some other way is best tick d and say what it is.

- ( a )  through existing political organisations  
 ( b )  through environmental protection groups  
 ( c )  through an anti-nuclear movement set up to do the job  
 ( d )  other, Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

8. Even if you do not think that an anti-nuclear movement specially set up to oppose nuclear power is the best way of stopping nuclear power, a movement of sorts has existed over the last few years. The question of how to organise it has caused a lot of controversy. Please rank the following ways of organising it by putting a '1' opposite the way that you think is best, a '2' opposite the second best and a '3' opposite the worst.

- A mass movement with no organisation such as committees but which decides things by regular mass meetings.
- A mass movement with delegates from local groups meeting on a regular basis to coordinate activities.
- A movement with a formalised central committee or executive with the the power to take decisions and make statements for the whole movement.

Have you any comments on why this question of organisation caused so much trouble? How might the squabbling be ended? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## 5.

9. Opposition to nuclear power has occurred in many countries and has taken many forms, and used tactics ranging from detailed scientific research to people encouraging their friends to oppose it, and from bomb attacks to peaceful marches.

(a) In what ways have you personally opposed nuclear power in Ireland?

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(b) In what ways might you be prepared to oppose nuclear power in the future in Ireland?

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(c) What other ways, would you agree to others using to oppose nuclear power in Ireland, which you personally would not use?

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(d) What ( if any ) ways of opposing nuclear power that have been or might be used, do you, or would you find unacceptable?

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10. What sources of information did you find helpful in gaining an understanding of the nuclear issue? Please tick the four most important sources from the list here.

Books  National or local newspapers  Leaflets   
 Weekly or monthly magazines  Speeches at public meetings   
 Discussions at anti-nuclear group meetings  Television   
 Anti-nuclear group newsletters  Technical journals   
 'Alternative' or 'Radical' newspapers and magazines  Radio   
 Government reports  Discussions with friends

11. If any particular people, books, programmes, reports or magazines were especially important please note them down. ( It doesn't matter if you can't remember the exact title )

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12. Would you approve of opponents of nuclear power in Ireland participating in the government's public inquiry?

Unconditionally yes

Yes, if the conditions were right

No  If not, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

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13. Do you think the public inquiry ( when it happens ) will be 'fair' ?

Yes  Don't know  No

What conditions would have to be met for it to be made fair?

---



---

7.

14. Would you accept the findings of the public inquiry into nuclear power even if they were in favour of nuclear power?  
 Yes  No
15. Do you think a referendum should be held on the issue before a final decision is taken?  
 Yes  No
16. What year were you born in? \_\_\_\_\_
17. In which County were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
18. Do you live in a town or city  , or in the countryside  ?
19. Are you male  , or female  ?
20. Are you married  , or single  ?
21. What was your occupation in August 1978 ? \_\_\_\_\_
- If you were a student at that time, please answer all the following questions.  
 If you were not a student please skip to question 26.
22. What subjects were you studying? \_\_\_\_\_
23. What type of job were you hoping to get when you finished your studies?  
 \_\_\_\_\_
24. What was your parent's attitude to the anti-nuclear movement at that time?  
 Approval  Neutral  Dissapproval

8.

5. What was your parents attitude to politics in general at this time?

Approval  Neutral  Dissapproval

6. Are/were your parents active in political groups and organisations?

Yes  If so, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

No

7. What is/are/were your parents occupation(s)?

Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_

8. What approximately was your pre-tax income in August 1978 ?

Per week \_\_\_\_\_ or per month \_\_\_\_\_

9. At what age did you finish your formal schooling? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please tick the types of formal education listed below which you have received.

Secondary schooling to Group Certificate

Secondary schooling to Intermediate Certificate

Secondary schooling to Leaving Certificate

AnCo / Apprenticeship / technical college

University undergraduate

Which subjects? \_\_\_\_\_

University postgraduate

Which subjects? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Was your schooling in a school run by ( tick as appropriate )

The Christian Brothers  , Other religious  Comprehensive  
school  , or other  ?

9.

32. Are you a practicing member of a church? Yes  No   
 If not have you been in the past? Yes  No   
 If you do/did belong to a church, which of the following is/was it?  
 Church of Ireland  Roman Catholic  Other
33. Were you a member of any political group/party/organisation in August 1978 ?  
 Yes  If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_  
 No
34. Have you joined any political group/party/organisation since ?  
 Yes  If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_
35. Are you a member of a trade union?  
 Yes  If so, does it have a policy opposing nuclear power?  
 Yes  No  Don't know   
 No
36. Are you a member of any sports clubs, civic societies, community associations  
 or other voluntary association? Yes  No
37. If you answered 'yes' to any of questions 33 to 36, have you held any offices  
 or positions in any of these organisations? Yes  No
38. Apart from the issue of nuclear power, what other issues do you consider of  
 fundamental importance in Irish society today? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

10.

39. If I have missed anything that you think is important on the question of nuclear power, please tell me! Any additional comments you would like to add here would be most welcome. If you still have any enthusiasm left having got this far and would like to add any details about your opinions on the nuclear issue, on your experiences in opposing nuclear power I would love to read them. As I said in the introductory letter, the results of this survey will be compiled in such a way that it will be impossible to trace who holds what opinion so please don't feel inhibited in putting down what you really think!

Thank you very much for answering  
this questionnaire.

## APPENDIX B

## TIME PATH DIAGRAM

- 1952 David Brower made first full time Sierra Club coordinator.
- 1953 First U.S. h-Bomb test in the Pacific.
- 1954 Atoms for Peace programme starts.
- 1955 First civil rights bus boycott, Montgomery, Alabama.
- 1956 Calder Hall opened, U.K.  
Suez and Hungary crises.  
Many important New Left publications appear.
- 1957 U.S. AEC hearings on the Enrico Fermi 1 plant near Detroit begin.  
Brookhaven (WASH 740) reactor safety report published.  
Windscale accident in the U.K.
- 1958 February; U.K. CND founded, May; mass lobby on parliament, first Aldermaston march.
- 1959 Cuban revolution
- 1960 New Left Review starts publication in U.K.  
Sharpeville massacre in South Africa.
- 1961 Growing anti-weapons campaign.
- 1962 Port Huron Statement (U.S. SDS).  
Rachael Carson publishes Silent Spring.  
October; Cuban Missile Crisis.
- 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty signed.  
Bob Dylan and the Beatles emerge.
- 1964 Marcuse publishes One Dimensional Man and Fanon publishes The Wretched of the Earth.
- 1965 Vietnam War escalates and opposition increases in the U.S.
- 1966 Black Panthers founded  
Boulding publishes Spaceship Earth
- 1967 May Day Manifesto in the U.K.  
Che Guevera killed in Bolivia.  
Non-Proliferation Treaty finally drafted.  
Environmental Defence Fund founded.  
Torrey Canyon oil spill.

- 1968 April; Martin Luther King assassinated.  
 Student demonstrations in Germany  
 The "Paris Spring"  
 June, Bobby Kennedy assassinated.  
 August, Invasion of Czechslovakia.  
 Democratic convention riots in Chicago.  
 Tet offensive in Vietnam.  
 Rapid growth of Women's Liberation movement in the U.S.  
 Ehrlich publishes The Population Bomb.  
 Nixon elected.  
 Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association becomes active.
- 1969 National Environmental Protection act passes in U.S.  
 Armstrong and Aldrin walk on the moon.  
 Earth Day and Woodstock festival in the U.S.  
 Major rioting in Northern Ireland culminating in British troop  
 intervention.
- 1970 U.K. Friends of the Earth founded.  
 Reich publishes The Greening of America.  
 First small anti-nuclear power protests in France and Germany.  
 The Provisional IRA start their bombing campaign in Northern Ireland.
- 1972 U.N. global conference on the environment in Stokholm.  
Limits to Growth, Blueprint for Survival and Only One Earth published.  
 U.S. AEC ECCS hearings.  
 Greenpeace voyage into the French nuclear testing area in the  
 South Pacific.
- 1973 U.S.-Vietnam cease-fire.  
 The Oil Crisis.  
 Dutch residents boycott a utility surtax to finance the Kalkar FBR.
- 1974 Critical Mass conference in U.S.  
 Swedish party groups debate the nuclear issue.  
 Whyl occupation in Germany.  
 AEC split into the NRC and ERDA in the U.S.
- 1975 The OOA in Denmark organises a major campaign against nuclear power.  
 CCNR founded in Canada.

- 1976 Clamshell Alliance founded.  
Major confrontation with police at Brokdorf reactor site in Germany.  
Amory Lovins publishes "Soft Energy Paths" essay in Foreign Affairs.
- 1977 Clamshell Alliance direct action at Seabrooke.  
Social Democrats defeated on the Nuclear Issue in Sweden.  
Major riot at French Creys-Malville site. Vital Michalon killed.  
Protests at Kalkar.
- 1978 First major Irish anti-nuke rally at Carnsore Point.  
Austrian referendum on nuclear power.
- 1979 Three Mile Island Accident  
Gorleben Review effectively stops waste disposal in Germany.  
Plogoff Resistance develops.
- 1980-81 Major revival of the European Peace Movement and later increasing concern elsewhere about nuclear war.

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Title of Thesis

POLITICAL ECOLOGY: A STUDY OF THE IRISH ANTI-NUCLEAR MOVEMENT

Author



Simon Dalby

9 August 1982