'The Anti-Roads Protest Movement in Nineties Britain : a Sociological Interpretation'

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Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology to the Department of Sociology in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Glasgow

Submission Date : 30/09/99

ProQuest Number: 10395034

ProQuest 10395034

Acknowledgements

Abstract

During the 1990's a wave of protests against road and motorway building spread across the UK to develop into perhaps the most confrontational, and indeed successful, challenges to government policy since the protests against the poll tax in the late 1980's. Using analytical concepts developed within the field of social movements theory this thesis interprets research data gained from the application of quantitative and qualitative research methods in two case studies to explore the key sociological dimensions of the protests. The first case study focuses on Alarm UK, the national umbrella co-ordinating organisation for local grassroots action groups opposing road building which in the mid-1990's had over 250 such groups affiliated to it. The second case study focuses on the protests against the M77 extension in Glasgow which reached a dramatic climax in early 1995 when local opposition groups joined together with eco-activists based at the Pollok Free State, a fortified encampment set up in the path of the construction route, to employ direct action tactics against the building contractors. These two case studies bring into high relief the complex dynamics of the inter-relationships between protesters, organisations and social movements which are central to the sociological interpretation of the mobilisation against road-building presented in this thesis.

THE ANTI-ROADS PROTEST MOVEMENT IN NINETIES BRITAIN
A SOCIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION

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'Suddenly, Nicholas noticed something else; the unmistakable sound of human voices, shouting nearby, calling to one another, some of them singing. In the darkness there was no one to be seen. Then he looked upwards and saw an astonishing sight. There were scores of young people high up in the trees. Some were sitting on branches, others lying in hammocks slung across them, others looking out of makeshift tree-houses above his head. Others moved precariously along multiple thick branches that bridged the tree houses, like the medieval inhabitants of high-tower houses defending their aerial city. Young men and women dressed in slacks and sweaters who were full of good humor but also, it seemed agitated and even angry about something.

'Can you tell me what they are all doing ?' he asked the owl. 'They are occupying our branches,' said the owl rather crossly. 'On the other hand, they are trying to save our trees.' 'From whom ?' Nicholas asked. 'Listen !' said the owl. Nicholas strained his ears and heard a low rumbling roar in the distance. 'Bulldozers' said the owl. 'Property developers. Our home is to be "developed".' 'Can they help save it ?' Nicholas asked the owl, but the owl remained silent. So Leon had been wrong: protest still survived in Libertaria...'

('Lukes, S. (1996), The Curious Enlightenment of Professor Caritat')[1]

1.1 *Introduction*

At the end of Steven Lukes' 'tour de force' fictional satire on the history of western political philosophy our narrator and hero Nicholas Caritat, who in a late 20th century gloss on Voltaire's Dr Pangloss, has travelled far and wide 'in search of the best possible world', is in the process of hurriedly leaving the land of Libertaria when he comes across Hegel's 'Owl of Minerva' and the tree-dwelling protesters mentioned in the quoted excerpt above. Caritat is tempted to join them in resisting the developers in

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[1] Lukes, S. (1996), The Curious Enlightenment of Professor Caritat, (London : Verso), p. 255

a society where literally everything is commodified, but pleads his age as an excuse and continues on his way to the northern border, where before continuing on his uncertain journey he writes a letter to his three children in which he recounts what he has learned on his travels. His encounter with the protesters forms a central theme of the letter and he praises their actions stating that 'they are resisting fanaticism, not just by thinking for themselves but by acting. They are defending the trees.... but they are also defending a space for freedom against the private property fanatics.... they are defending themselves and their futures and the owl and its future.... they are acting together, resisting together in a state which discourages collective action.... I am sure that if you had been living here in Libertaria, you would have been up those trees. So would many, many more people of your generation, if only they understood how people's lives get narrowed and distorted by fanatics. YOU ARE OUR ONLY HOPE !'[2]

Upon reading the above passages one cannot help but feel that this is Lukes himself speaking directly to us about our own time - 'wearing his political heart on his sleeve' as it were. Libertaria is of course analogous to Britain in the post-Thatcher era and the protesters to the plethora of protests and campaigns using the tactics of collective non-violent direct action (NVDA) against environmentally and socially destructive development, and in particular road-building, which sprang up in the early to mid 1990's from seemingly nowhere, to shine a bright beacon of resistance in an otherwise bleak political landscape for the left and other progressive social forces. It is a mark of these 'eco-warrior' protesters' prominence in our media culture over the last few years that the analogy is immediately recognisable and that therefore the reader requires no further explanation. At Lukes' time of writing the Conservatives under John Major were in office for a fourth consecutive term, annual strike figures were at a post-war low and the Criminal Justice Act (1994) (CJA) had just been introduced in order to effectively criminalise and thereby regulate various forms of collective action and protest which had hitherto been considered legal; eg, trespassing on private property was made into a criminal as opposed to civil offence. Therefore it is hardly surprising that a leftist academic and sociologist like Lukes should turn for hope and inspiration to a 'new' form of opposition as embodied in the anti-roads protesters, that has a young and fresh anti-authoritarian image, employs highly

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[2] ibid, pp. 259-260

innovative and audacious tactics that are often in flagrant contravention of the state's draconian public order legislation, and is marked by a remarkable creativity, enthusiasm and idealism that many veterans of the sixties militancy had thought long gone.

The election of a Labour government in 1997 has done little to quell this tide of direct action dissent; if anything, as disillusionment with Tony Blair's 'new Labour' project has gradually set in, the protests have diversified to spawn a myriad of militant new campaigning organisations each with its own particular cause but intrinsically linked to one another through informal activist networks in what has often been referred to in both academic and media discourses as the alternative 'DIY culture'.[3] Vidal (1998), cataloguing the non-violent direct action protest campaigns of the summer of 1998 mentions traditional sources of such confrontation like nuclear weapons and animal welfare which have been rejuvenated in recent years, but significantly he also outlines many more sources of direct action opposition surrounding issues which have previously either not been political issues at all or have been hitherto confined to protest campaigns directed through the traditional methods of lobbying through institutional channels. In this vein Vidal produces a list (which is by no means comprehensive) of ongoing direct action protest campaigns including those against road, motorway, leisure, retail, housing and airport developments, mass trespasses in pursuit of the right to roam and for land rights, street parties and mass bike rides against traffic pollution, actions taken against genetically modified crops, waste incinerators, rubbish dumps, timber importation, open cast mining, quarrying, power lines and actions taken against the arms industry. Moreover, he intimates that 'this year has seen unprecedented actions by farmers, commuters and corporate shareholders all adopting the tactics of road protesters'. This is culturally notable because it points to the fact that the tactics and strategies associated with NVDA are no longer merely confined to marginal or dispossessed groups but have become increasingly accepted by significant elements of mainstream society. In short, Vidal summarises by stating that 'it (the NVDA tactics of anti-roads protesters) is spreading into almost every area of life and becoming the ultimate expression of political,

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[3] The *New Statesman's* guide to 'DIY Politics' gives the names, addresses and contact numbers for over 200 groups and organisations categorised under the following headings : animal rights, anti-racism, community and grassroots, democracy, education, environment, health, housing, international solidarity, land, lesbian and gay, peace and anti-nuclear, publications, roads/transport, work, women,

environmental, corporate or social disquiet'.[4] Clearly then, if Almond and Verba's (1965) notion of a deferential civic culture holding sway in the UK ever really did hold any validity over the last thirty years, it does so no longer.[5]

Numerous antecedents of this 'new protest' in Britain can be traced back historically through the last few hundred years; most notably the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament's (CND) activities in the 1950s and 1960s, the suffragettes of the early 20th century and the long tradition of British anarchism beginning with William Godwin's writings in the late 18th century. Further back, Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers of St Georges Hill in 1649 embody what was probably the first instance of such non-violent civil disobedience in this country. It should also be noted here though that non-violent direct action also has a long history internationally and that those actions taken in the UK have often been inspired by movements and campaigns employing a variety of NVDA tactics in other national contexts. For example the non-violent movement of resistance to British rule in India led by Ghandi in the 1930's and early 1940's has been a source of inspiration for many different campaigns and social movements which grew up across the world in the post-war period. In the contemporary British social and political arena a number of Greenpeace's and Friends of the Earth's (FoE) activities, certain actions taken in pursuit of the civil rights of minorities and in favour animal rights, and in particular CND's campaign against Cruise missiles, the women of Greenham Common and the campaign against the poll tax in the 1980's all stand out - these are the 'new protests'' most immediate and direct antecedents. The catalytic spark for the current new wave of protest however lies elsewhere; arguably it lies in social, political and cultural effects brought about by the activities, actions and ultimately successes, of the high profile mass non-violent direct action anti-roads protests which began in the early 1990s, reached a peak in the mid-1990s and which in the late 1990s continue but have diversified to take on a variety of other social and political issues such as those mentioned above.

The contemporary protests against road-building form the central focus of this thesis which will draw upon exploratory research findings gained from using both

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information/ resource centres. see, 'DIY Politics : A-Z Campaign Guide to the New Opposition', New Statesman and Society, 1997, undated.
[4] Vidal, J. (1998), A Glorious Summer for Discontent, The Guardian, 15/08/98, p. 11
[5] Almond, G. A. & Verba, S. (1963), The Civic Culture : Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations, (Princeton : Princeton University Press)

quantitative and qualitative research methodology in order to examine a variety of empirical questions related to the sociological, political and organisational dimensions of the whom, why and how of anti-roads activism in Britain during the 1990s, while also placing and interpreting those findings within the broad framework of social movements theory. To this end the thesis is structured as follows :

Chapter One : the remainder of this introductory chapter aims to do three things; firstly to historically contextualise the thesis subject matter by briefly examining the evolution of anti-roads protesting in the UK; secondly to review the academic literature that has so far been produced on this social phenomena in the 1990s; and finally to outline the general characteristics of the research methodology and the research process.

Chapter Two : this chapter also takes the form of an introductory chapter in that it critically reviews the highly contested field of social movement theory and research. At the end of this chapter key theoretical and empirical questions, and the thematic foci which help to guide the exploratory research and interpretive framework for this thesis are detailed.

Chapter Three : this chapter is built around a case study of the national umbrella anti-roads organisation Alarm UK which played a vital role in co-ordinating local grassroots anti-roads protest groups across Britain during the 1990s. This chapter aims to provide a socio-political profile of the aims, operation, internal structure and support base of this organisation.

Chapter Four : this is the first of two consecutive chapters which focus on different aspects of a case study of the campaign against the building of the M77 extension through the south-side of Glasgow (1971-1995). In this chapter the history and trajectory of the campaign are examined with particular emphasis upon its origins in local community opposition.

Chapter Five : in this chapter the focus turns to look specifically at the theory and practice of the deep Green 'eco-warriors' associated with the Earth First! network who played a key role in animating direct action against the building of the M77

extension during the last year of the oppositional campaign. A key feature of the eco-activists' contribution to was the creation of the Pollok Free State, a fortified autonomous zone run along eco-anarchist lines, in the path of the motorway construction route. Earth First ! activists have been at the forefront of similar direct action protests against road-building in Britain throughout the 1990s.

Chapter 6 : this concluding chapter takes the form of an analytical sociological overview of the phenomena of opposition to road building in Britain during the 1990s. This overview will draw upon both the theory presented in chapter 2 and the case study research presented in the following chapters. It will also offer an evaluation of the successes, failures and potentials of the anti-roads protests and speculate as to their future.

1.2 *The Evolution of Anti-Roads Activism in the UK*

Motorways were something that had been discussed at length by engineers, government and planners in Britain from the mid-1930s onwards but it was not until 1958 that the first one in the form of the Preston Bypass was built.[6] Britain in fact lagged far behind its European neighbours in this respect; for example, Italy had built its first autostrade in the mid-1920s and Germany had laid the keystones of its autobahn system by 1940. Motorways were however very much part of the modern 'zeitgeist' and it is therefore hardly surprising that successive post-war governments when faced with the task of reconstruction, steadily growing levels of car ownership and the need to recreate a competitive economy, embraced them wholeheartedly. In 1946 the Labour government's Ministry of Transport announced plans for an ambitious programme to construct 1000 miles of new trunk roads and motorways in order to link all major industrial conurbations and centres of commerce. Due however to financial constraints, construction work did not begin until the mid-1950s, although it was not until the 1960's that work began in earnest and the government began a process of progressively revising its programme upwards so that by 1971 a total of

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[6] Starkie, D. (1982), The Motorway Age, (Oxford : Pergamon Press), p. 1

3500 miles of new and upgraded trunk roads were projected, and 2000 miles of motorway.[7]

Painter (1981), identifies three distinct phases in the growth of opposition to road and motorway schemes in the UK up until 1979, each of which marked a new stage in the broadening out of the issue, the militancy of the opposition, and hence the threat to the viability of the government of the day's roads programme. In the first phase during the 1950s, opposition to road schemes was confined to individual property owners who objected on the grounds of loss of value to their properties, and farmers who objected on the grounds of a threat to their livelihood. This type of objection was however managed successfully by local authorities and the Ministry of Transport through a process of negotiation and compensation. The second phase involved local and national amenity societies during the 1960s, but in general their objections were safely channelled into areas of aesthetics, design and the question of routes 'fitting the landscape' which posed no real threat to the overall shape of the roads programme.[8]

In the 1970s however, anti-roads opposition entered a third and more militant phase with local protesters not only questioning the need for new roads in their localities but expressing skepticism and disapproval about the rationale for the roads programme as a whole.[9] Despite the Skeffington (1969) recommendations concerning participation and openness in the planning process little of his agenda was being implemented,[10] and local objectors during this period began to disrupt what were widely perceived to be 'loaded' and undemocratic public inquiries, while a newly radicalised environmental movement involving new pressure groups like Friends of the Earth began a concerted propaganda offensive against cars and motorways.[11] This

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[7] Painter, M. (1981), Policy-Making on Inter-urban Highways in Britain, 1945-79, in, Blowers, A. & Brook, C. & Dunleavy, P. & McDowell, L. (eds), (1981), Urban Change and Conflict, (London : Harper and Row), pp. 210-211

[8] For an excellent sociological account of amenity societies in action opposing a road development see, Keating, M. J. (1978), The Battle of the Western Approaches - a Study in Local Pressure Politics and Amenity in Glasgow, (Glasgow : Glasgow College of Technology Policy Analysis Research Unit)

[9] Painter, M. (1981), op cited, p. 214

[10] Skeffington, A. M. (1969), Report of the Committee on Public Participation in Planning, (London : HMSO) This government Report made the modest recommendation that 'authorities preparing plans voluntarily accept an obligation to give full publicity to their proposals as they are being drawn up and to give the public an opportunity to participate in the plan-making process.' (p.41) The main problem was of course the 'voluntary clause' but there was also a lack of concrete detail as to how to actually involve the public in planning.

[11] For an activist's critique of the public inquiry system as it relates to motorway planning during this period see, Tyme, J. (1978), Motorways Against Democracy, (London : MacMillan). Tyme was a leading figure in the National Motorways Action Committee which was set up in 1974.

was also the period when numerous tenants associations and grassroots citizens action groups began to spring up in inner city areas to fight for fair rents and improved housing conditions, and to oppose urban redevelopment and motorway schemes that would break-up long standing communities; eg, the 'Westway' in London.[12]

The grandiose road plans of the 1960s and early 70s were though never to be fully realised because by 1974/75 the deep economic crisis coupled with an increasingly vociferous anti-roads environmental lobby made a reduction in construction expenditure politically prudent. With the inter-urban network virtually complete, the financing of new road and motorway projects tailed off from the mid-70's as the government switched its policy emphasis towards the improvement of public transport.[13] Much to the chagrin of the BRF (British Roads Federation) a spending ceiling for new highway construction of £300m per year was fixed by the Labour government's 1977 Transport White Paper - a figure that was to last into the early 1980's.[14] Under the Thatcher government however, the creation of out of town retail, leisure and business parks was actively encouraged in line with its consumerist ethic and naturally with these developments came the need for more roads. Thatcher talked positively of what she called the 'great car economy' and the BRF finally got the breakthrough it had been waiting for in 1989 with the government's announcement of its £23bn 'Roads for Prosperity' road-building programme. It is this programme which ignited the current fourth and most militant phase of opposition to road building in Britain - something which has manifest itself in the growth of the mass NVDA anti-roads campaigns of the 1990s whose widespread impact, both in terms of the issue itself but also in a deeper cultural sense, has played such an important role in making the government pay particular attention to road building when under fiscal pressure to cut public spending.

1.2.1 *The 'Fourth Phase' of Opposition : Anti-Roads Activism in the 1990s*

On a national scale opposition to the government's 1989 road-building programme at first grew slowly and was conveyed in a piecemeal fashion through institutional

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[12]For a good example of this type of protest, see, Clark, G. (1972), The Lesson of Acklam Road, in, Butterworth, E. & Weir, D. (1972), Social Problems of Modern Britain, (London : Fontana/Collins), pp. 181-186

[13] McKay, D. H. & Cox, A. W. (1979), Politics of Urban Change, (London : Croom Helm), pp. 185-188

channels by established environmental organisations like Friends of the Earth (FoE) and the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), and through public transport lobby groups like Transport 2000 and Save our Railways. In London however, opposition grew and galvanised more quickly because of the effective campaigning framework that was already in place due to an earlier city wide campaign against the 'London Road Assessment Studies' that had erupted when the official reports were released in 1988. The Department of Transport (DoT) planned to spend between £12 and £20 billion on road widening, new bypasses and the construction of an inner-M25 in order to ease the capital's traffic congestion problems. In opposition to these proposals, a London wide alliance against road-building was forged calling itself Alarm, which by the end of 1989 was comprised of over 150 local groups including local branches of Transport 2000, local FoE and local residents action groups. Alarm adopted a highly decentralised organisational structure with each local group retaining autonomy of action and with only one simple but significant rule binding them together, ie, that 'each group had to oppose all roads in the Assessment, not just those in their backyard.'[15] Thus unlike their more established environmental/public transport campaign bedfellows there was a refusal on principle amongst the groups affiliated to Alarm to compromise with the planners whatsoever over routing; ie, alternative routes were not to be considered and therefore no route was acceptable.

After a campaign involving innovative publicity stunts, mass letter writing and circulation of well researched counter-information to local action groups and the media, Cecil Parkinson announced in 1990 that every single one of the road proposals included in Assessment Studies would be withdrawn. This victory was significant in that it was a victory for a new style of anti-roads campaigning that aimed to win before Public Inquiries took place and before even the statutory public consultation period. Alarm had effectively achieved what it set out to do; ie, 'to create its own framework for protest, dismissing the DoT's structures as merely techniques designed to get its plans through with the minimum of fuss. Alarm's approach deliberately set out to liberate people from meek adherence to the DoT, to empower them, to enable them to set their own agenda and to put the Department and its officials on the defensive. It set out to create such a mass protest movement that the Road Assessment

[14] Painter, M. (1981), op cited, p. 215
[15]Bray, J. & Must, E. & Stewart, J. (1995), Roadblock, (London : Jugatsu), p. 9

studies would become politically untenable.'[16] Perhaps even more importantly though, the campaign in London laid the foundations for a network of grassroots activists who in contrast to many of the established environmental groups preferred to work outside of the official environmental lobby system and had no faith in the official public inquiry system or in legal consultation processes. It is these activists, who in the 1990s played a central role in co-ordinating and sustaining the national campaign against the DoT's 1989 plans.

In 1990 Alarm UK was launched with the aim of reproducing the success of the London campaign on a nationwide basis and within two years another 100 local anti-roads groups from around the country had affiliated. There were some early successes at Birmingham, Preston, Yorkshire, Woodstock and Exeter in stopping road plans before construction began and then in 1992, at the M3 extension construction site on Twyford Down, events occurred which were to be pivotal in setting the tone for anti-roads protests during the remainder of the 1990s. Here for the first time after lengthy planning and legal processes had been exhausted, significant numbers of local objectors joined the young deep Green activists primarily associated with the newly formed British wing of the militant environmental 'disorganisation' Earth First![17] in mass collective NVDA protests involving tree-sitting, obstruction of machinery and mass trespasses which flouted the law and led to physical confrontation with the security guards and mass arrests from the police.[18] Naturally this also brought an intense media presence to the construction site and indeed this was the first of such protests to make headline news thus beginning a trend that has persisted throughout the 1990s.

Unlike FoE which officially withdrew from the protests due to legal intimidation, and which had in any case advocated a tunnel under the Down as an alternative, [19] Alarm UK lent its active support to the direct action protests through the local objectors groups and gave birth to a sister organisation in the form of Road Alert! which had a specific remit to concentrate on educating protesters in non-violent

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[16] ibid, p. 13

[17] Activists from the new radical social ecology group Reclaim the Streets also took part in these protests as did members of the militant green 'tribe' calling themselves the 'Dongas'.

[18] By early 1995 however, ten protesters had successfully sued the police for wrongful arrest at Twyford for a total of £50,000 while a further forty expected to win their cases and receive damages totalling £500,000. see, Rowell, A. (1996), The Road to Nowhere, Green Backlash, (London : Routeldge), p. 337

[19] see ibid, p.334, and, Editorial, (1993), Tunnel Vision : Lessons from Twyford Down, The Ecologist, Jan/Feb, pp.3-4

direct action skills. When interviewed about Alarm UK's position vis-a-vis direct action, one of the leading organisers said :

> 'I think that most of our people when they join don't think they are going to take direct action and most don't need to go that far - we obviously try to stop the road at the earliest possible stage - yet if it comes to it they are usually prepared to take direct action.... although we didn't start out as a direct action movement we have always taken the view - and this is where we differ with other organisations like FoE.... that we support direct action and we've never had a problem with breaking the law.'[20]

Although the battle against the motorway extension at Twyford was eventually lost, the protests nevertheless succeeded in adding a substantial figure to the final costs : it is estimated that Tarmac the construction firm ran up a bill of £267,000 with Brays its security contractors simply for surveillance of the protesters, while in 1993 the Department of Transport began legal processes to claim damages of £1.9 million (this figure eventually rose to £3.5 million) from those activists who had played a key role in delaying the motorway construction.[21] The protests also succeeded in bringing the issue of road building into the wider public arena in a very dramatic manner. Of more significance though in terms of the overall 'war' against the government's road construction plans the positive experience of the local groups, the Alarm national umbrella organisation and the radical environmental groups working together cemented a partnership which although at times has been tense due to philosophical and tactical differences, has nevertheless been sustained throughout the keynote protests of subsequent years.

Between 1992 and 1997, high profile anti-roads protests on the model of Twyford occurred in the Wanstead and Leyton areas of London (M11 link road, 1994), at Bath (A36 Batheaston bypass, 1994)[22], Glasgow (M77 extension, 1994-95), Newbury (A34 bypass, 1995-97) and Fairmile (A30 Honiton bypass, 1996-97), as well as numerous smaller protests of a similar nature at road construction sites across

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[20] Alarm UK Organiser, Interview, 7/07/95

[21] see, Rowell, A. (1996), op cited, pp. 336-337. The DoT's case was eventually dropped in 1995.

[22] At this protest Bel Mooney the wife of the respected televison journalist Jonathon Dimbleby involved herself in taking NVDA thus boosting the protest's profile in the media even further and adding to its 'respectability'.

the country.[23] A key feature of a number of these protests was the creation and habitation of fortified autonomous zones or 'free states' along the construction routes by the protesters and in particular by those of a deep green or anarchist ideological persuasion - the Pollok Free State in Glasgow (M77), and Leystonia and Wanstonia (M11) in London are major examples. Few of these protests were successful in their own right - Oxleas Wood (East-London River Crossing, A2 to A13, 1993) is probably the most significant victory and it was won by the threat of mass direct action before construction work began. However by 1997, the Tory government under political pressure due to a fast approaching General Election and under fiscal pressure to cut public spending, slashed its roads budget by more than two-thirds to £6 billion.[24] Under New Labour's 'Roads Review' which it announced upon taking office, this figure has been cut further so that only a handful of contentious road and motorway schemes remain.[25] Moreover the Road Traffic Reduction Bill which aims to cut traffic by 10% by 2010 finally became law in 1998, while Labour's deputy leader John Prescott has mooted plans to discourage car usage and has openly endorsed the notion of an 'integrated transport policy' which is something of a 'holy grail' for the environmental lobby. The substance of these proposals and measures remains however to be seen in practice and there is evidence to suggest that Prescott has been

[23] By the mid-1990s direct action protests against new roads and motorways on the 'British model' had also spread to the European continent. For example, the 30th March 1996 was designated the first ever pan-European day of action by anti-roads campaign groups who aimed to draw critical attention towards European Union governments' plans to construct a Trans-European Road Network – see Stewart J. et al (1995), Alarm Bells, No 14, October , p. 2 In the late 1990s Alarm UK also sent representatives to Poland and Hungary where environmentalists were looking for advice in their fight against road developments brought about by post-'communist' industrial 'modernisation'.

[24] After the November budget of 1996 only 150 road schemes remained out of the nearly 600 included in the original plan of 1989, of these 144 were to be publically funded and 33 to be privately funded DBFO's (Design, Build, Finance, Operate), see Editorial, The Budget Day Massacre, Alarm Bells, (Alarm UK : London), January 1997, No 19, p.1 Jonathon Porritt, who is probably the UK's best known green campaigner argues that the victory at Oxleas Wood was 'the first clear signal of the government's U-turn in its road building policy'. see, Porritt, J. (1996), Twyford Down – the Aftermath, in, Twyford Down : Roads, Campaigning and Environmental Law, Bryant, B. (ed), (1996), (London : E & F Spon), p. 299 This was not however an NVDA protest as such, rather thousands of signatures were collected pledging direct action if construction went ahead.

[25] Perhaps the most contentious road currently in its construction phase is the Birmingham Northern Relief Road which is being bitterly contested by a combination of local objectors and environmental activists taking NVDA along its planned route. Of those roads still at the planning stage the £250 million M74 Northern Extension which has been routed to cut a swathe through the south-side of Glasgow is probably the most controversial – this road is being resisted by a new umbrella organisation called JAM74 (Joint Action Against the M74) that was set up in August 1998 and which consists of local objectors, public transport pressure groups and environmental organisations who aim to stop it before it reaches the construction phase – but who, if unsuccessful in this will encourage NVDA against it.

put under pressure by the car and construction industries, and other senior members of the cabinet to water his proposals down.[26]

The reasons for this change of direction in government policy, beginning with the Tories in 1997 and continuing under 'new' Labour, are in a large part related to the impact of the high profile anti-roads protest campaigns mentioned above. By the mid-1990's construction costs were spiralling due to the protests,[27] and it was becoming increasingly apparent to the government that there was widespread public sympathy for the actions, including the 'direct actions', of the protesters involved, and that the protesters themselves were often so called 'respectable' citizens who therefore carried with them 'respectable' votes.[28] The change in tabloid press reporting of the issue is one highly visible indication of this shift. In the early 1990s the tabloids had reacted to the protests with their customary hostility to law breaking and collective action, taking the government line of branding the protesters 'eco-terrorists', anarchists or anti-progress drop-outs. However by the late 1990s it had changed its tack almost completely instead reporting the protests as principled stands against the wanton destruction of British countryside heritage and the environmental quality of life.

At the Fairmile protest in early 1997 five protesters in particular, 'Animal', 'Swampy', 'Muppet Dave', 'Welsh John' and Ian, became national celebrities after spending long periods of time underground in a tunnel complex designed to thwart the developers. Vidal (1997), puts it succinctly when he says that 'word had got out that Animal and Co were digging for Britain and (now) Britain was digging them. Even as they were being arrested they were being gathered to Middle England's bosom'. Soon these protesters were appearing on chat-shows, game shows, news programmes and being interviewed by radio, television, newspaper and magazine reporters of local, national and international origin. The 'Daily Mail' of all newspapers praised their ingenuity and strength of character while the 'Mirror' conducted an opinion poll which showed 80% support for the protesters campaign against what it termed

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[26] For example see, Unnamed Author. (1998), Row Over Car Group's £12m Drive Against Transport Policy, The Herald, 21/08/98, p. 6, and, Brown, C. (1998), Prescott puts the Brake on Anti-Car Plans, The Independent, 9/06/98, p.1

[27] By mid-1995, the National Audit Office predicted that it would cost £26 million to guard road construction sites before the government's programme was completed – at this point £575,000 per month was being spent on security at these sites. see Rowell, A. (1996) op cited, p. 352

[28] Between 1992 and 1997 there were more than 2,000 arrests of environmental protesters most of whom had never been arrested or been in trouble with the law before. see, Vidal, J. (1997), Gone to Ground, Weekend Section, The Guardian, 22/02/97, p.37

'outdated transport policies.' Animal and Swampy enjoyed the most media attention, the former being profiled in various women's 'glossy' magazines, and the latter taking part in a fashion shoot for the Express, being given a column in the same paper and even being offered a record deal by EMI. Vidal in his commentary on this phenomenon perceptively questions the longevity of this seemingly Pauline turnaround by what he terms 'a fickle press lauding idealistic youth'. However, he does nevertheless point out that whether this conversion of the press is real or not, there has been an undeniable 'sea change in public opinion.'[29]

This 'sea change' in public attitudes occurred in the last years of Major's government and applies to both the tactics used by the protesters and to the policy issues brought to the fore by their anti-roads campaigning. First of all, the numbers of 'ordinary' people participating in the protests conferred a certain respectability to the NVDA tactics used at the protest sites; something which as outlined earlier is evinced by the increasingly widespread usage of such tactics in other campaigns. This argument is also supported though by survey figures such as those produced by Gallup in 1995 which showed that 68% of the adult UK population would be willing to consider civil disobedience in favour of a cause that they believed in – this is up 14% from a similar poll carried out in 1984.[30] Equally it should also be noted here that the overall success of the campaign against road-building has also contributed significantly to the spread of such tactics.

Secondly, on the particular policy issues around which the protests have been centred has developed a wide ranging public debate centred on roads, motorways, traffic and pollution. New scientific evidence such as that produced by the government's own advisors in SACTRA (the Standing Advisory Committee on Trunk Road Assessment), concluded in 1995 that 'new roads induce more traffic',[31] thus adding weight to the protesters case. Moreover, Local Agenda 21 which commits local authorities to adopt the concept of environmental sustainability as a basis for planning and development, emerged from the Earth Summit in Rio in 1991-92, and has had a certain impact in stimulating environmental debates which centre around local issues. As Rawcliffe (1998), quoting John Stewart of Alarm UK notes, one of the effects of this debate has been to alter the language used to conduct it :

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[29] ibid, p.37
[30] Gallup Poll, June 1995, quoted in, Porritt, J. (1996), op cited, p.302

'Thirty years go, the Department could build a motorway, get a high flying minister to open it and call it "progress" : today it would be called "environmental improvement"'[32]

More importantly though this public debate has engendered a change in public attitudes to such issues as illustrated by the recent British Social Attitudes Survey (1998) which found that in terms of commonly perceived threats to the countryside, 'the greatest change in recent years – especially in just the last three years – has been the rapid increase in concern about roads and traffic'. By 1994 motorway and road–building had leapt into a close second place behind industrial pollution (46%) in terms of its perceived threat, going from just 21% regarding it as the greatest threat in 1985 (6th place) to 25% in 1990 (4th place), to 33% in 1993 (3rd place) and to 43% in 1994 (2nd place). The trend is steadily upwards and it will be interesting to see the figures for the years 1995-98 when they are eventually published, but it can be surmised that motorway and road building may very well now be in first place on this issue. Trends of concern about the related areas of traffic congestion and pollution are also significantly upwards in the mid-1990s, while as a solution to personal travel and mobility problems support for improving all areas of public transport outweighs 'building more roads' by more than a factor of two and a half.[33]

The government's change in policy on road and motorway building can therefore be explained by looking to the inter-related factors of a change in public opinion resulting in political pressure, the mounting costs of policing its construction sites and the fiscal desire to cut public spending. The former however is the most important of the three factors because firstly, the policing of contentious constructions such as nuclear facilities of both military and civilian usage has always been expensive but there has always been a political will to do so because they have been

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[31] see the website, Transport Retort, SACTRA, 18/2, March/April 1995, @ http://www.wyvern.co.uk/users/fq20/tr_sactra.html

[32] Stewart, J. quoted in, Rawcliffe, P. (1998), Environmental Pressure Groups in Transition, (Manchester : Manchester University Press), p. 141 Rawcliffe also notes that the environmental movement has had other notable successes in the area of legitimising the environmental agenda in transport policy. For example, traffic calming measures have increasingly been adopted by local councils across the UK and are now an accepted part of the national transport debate – this something which FoE has been instrumental in achieving through its lobbying and campaigning on this issue over many years. see ibid, pp. 144-45

[33] Jowell, R. & Curtice, R. & Park, A. & Brook, L. & Thomson, K. & Bryson, C. (1998), Green in Word..., British Social Attitudes – the 14th Report, (Aldershot : Ashgate Publishing Ltd), p 115 & pp. 115-127

opposed by only a small minority of the public; and secondly, the factor of the desire to cut public spending is something that has been a constant desire of successive governments for the last couple of decades and is therefore nothing new. The government's political will to drive ahead with its roads programme simply evaporated after it became increasingly clear that a steadily growing and significant proportion of public opinion was no longer on its side. This change is directly attributable to the actions of the anti-roads protesters, and especially those organisations like Alarm UK and Earth First! who by taking such a militant stand against this particular area of government policy did so much to publicise and raise the profile of the issues involved thus generating the conditions for a wide ranging public debate which has significantly altered social attitudes.

1.3 *Academic Literature on Contemporary Anti-Roads Activism*

Although, as will be illustrated in the next chapter, there is a large body of theoretical and empirical research literature on the different facets of social movements in both the UK and internationally, the academic/research literature produced so far that specifically addresses the British anti-roads protests of the 1990s is very scarce indeed, and if the scope of sources is narrowed to that which has been produced within sociology departments then the literature almost dries up. In the general field of social sciences this lack of research output on what is undoubtedly a significant social phenomena is probably due to its relative newness and perhaps also reflects the contemporary penchant for abstract postmodern theorising as opposed to concrete empirical research. In the case of sociology both the latter reasons apply but there is also the added reason of the current fashion for gender, ethnicity and sexuality studies and the relative unpopularity of the fields of social movements and political sociology – one only needs to look at the lists of papers given at recent British Sociological Association conferences to confirm this.

What little academic literature has so far been produced consists of one book on the Twyford Down protests that is very legally orientated, one chapter in a book on contemporary environmentalism, three chapters in an edited volume on British 'DIY Culture', a few scattered journal articles and a number of conference papers of which the lively 'Alternative Futures and Popular Protest' conference organised annually by Colin Barker and Mike Tyldesley since 1995 at Manchester Metropolitan University

is the key source. The special one day conference on 'Direct Action in British Environmentalism' held at Keele University in October 1997 also provided a number of useful papers on the new wave of direct action protests including three which specifically dealt with anti-roads protests.[34] The fact that this conference was so well attended perhaps reflects a belated interest in the growth of this type of collective action in UK social scientific academia -- however it is telling that this conference was not organised by sociologists but by Brian Doherty, Ben Seel and other members of the politics department and that not one paper included in the conference collection was given by a sociologist.[35]

Before starting this review it should be noted that various theoretical approaches to the study of social movements, and key oppositional organisations involved in the anti-roads protests will be mentioned. Detail on these areas will however be left to later chapters where social movements theory and research will be considered and case studies of the two main organisations involved in the anti-roads protests of the 1990s, Alarm UK and Earth First ! will be presented. To begin, the Alternative Futures conference papers will be outlined because there have been seven papers presented over the last few years which if taken together constitute the largest body of academic literature produced thus far which directly addresses the anti-roads protest phenomenon (see, Doherty (1996), Seel (1996) Auckland (1997), Plows (1995, 1997), McNeish (1997), Robinson (1998)). Each of the Manchester papers is useful in giving insights as to different aspects of the anti-roads protest phenomenon but the picture they present is very uneven and far from complete. This is because of the brevity and 'roughness' of this form of literature which by its very nature has a distinct tendency to lack the roundedness and depth which is to be found in academic books or even journal articles. This literature is nevertheless worth reviewing because it does give something of a flavour of the different methodologies and theoretical approaches that social scientists have taken to the study of the protests.

Brian Doherty's paper 'Paving the Way....' (1995) is probably the best overview of the anti-roads protests as a whole in that he provides a short but cogent analysis of the organisations involved, the discourses deployed and the tactics employed. In his

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[34] Only one of these papers was however wholly original as two of the authors had covered roughly the same ground in their Manchester presentations. The one paper that is original unfortunately cannot be cited as it was included in the conference collection in draft form and specifically forbids citation.

opening analysis of the protests during the early 1990s he makes the important point that this protest movement is characterised by an alliance of two distinct wings; ie, the local objectors action groups and the younger 'eco-warriors', each of which has very different lifestyles and philosophies of life. Doherty does not however expand upon this theme in any depth – for example he does not go into the reasons for this alliance or the potential strains and tensions which it might produce. Moreover, although he describes the protests and the organisations involved as constituting a 'movement' he does not define in precise terms what he means by this description. These points are not really criticisms as they are peripheral to the central argument running through his paper; ie, the way in which the protests have altered the face of British environmentalism in that they have engendered new militant organisations – Alarm UK, Road Alert ! and Earth First ! to challenge the hegemony of the environmental pressure group 'establishment'. FoE in particular was forced respond to this challenge by taking a more pro-active role at the Newbury protests in 1995 after being widely and heavily criticised by the new organisations for pulling out of the protests at Twyford after being intimidated by the threat of legal action, and for failing to mobilise its local groups at other protest sites.[36] On a more theoretical level Doherty uses the example of the contemporary anti-roads protests to criticise the political opportunity structure model of social movements analysis in that it cannot provide an adequate explanation for the mass mobilisation in the 1990s surrounding the roads issue.[37]

The rest of the Manchester papers take a case study approach in order to look at important features of the anti-roads protests in microcosm and thereby advance arguments pertaining to the wider social and political significance of the protests, and various theses in relation to social movements theory and contemporary environmentalism. Auckland (1997), writing from a radical feminist perspective uses

[35] A forthcoming volume edited by Doherty and Seel promises to contain a lot of new academic material on contemporary anti-roads protests : Doherty, B. & Seel, B. (eds), (2000), Direct Action in British Environmentalism, (London : UCL Press)

[36] As an aside it is worth noting here that Lamb (1996), in his otherwise informative and detailed insider's history of Friends of the Earth says relatively little on the twists and turns of FoE's stance on the roads issue in the 1990's or of its fraught relationship with the organisations engaged in anti-roads protests. Moreover, when he does discuss the issue most detail is centred on Newbury where FoE at last began to play a full and active part in the protests. see, Lamb, R. (1996), Promising the Earth, (London : Routledge), pp. 171-204

[37] Doherty, B. (1996), Paving the Way : the Rise of Direct Action Against Road-Building and the Changing Character of British Environmentalism, in, Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (1996), Alternative

oral testimony from women activists and a discourse analysis of both mainstream and alternative press reporting of the M11 Link Road protests which occurred in London in 1993-94, to advance the two key arguments. First of all she posits that even the so called alternative press has reproduced the sexist discourses of mainstream politics in its portrayal of the protests and secondly, that despite the image of equality that is often presented amongst grassroots anti-roads activists, at a deeper and more substantive level, sexism and the reproduction of traditional gender roles continues to prevail.[38] This researcher's own paper (McNeish (1997), was also built around a case study. Drawing upon quantitative data from research on Alarm UK it argued that this organisation is rooted in the public sector new middle class and that it therefore has a very similar social resource base to other 'new' social/protest movements which have emerged in advanced capitalist countries since the 1960s. Furthermore, supplemented by interviews with individual activists in both Alarm UK and other oppositional organisations, this paper argued in a Habermasian fashion that the emergence and sustained nature of the anti-roads protests in the 1990s in the UK signifies the ongoing legitimation crisis of late capitalism, and that the slowly emerging communicative dialogue between radical green anti-roads protesters and the more militant parts of the labour movement has the potential for revitalising class politics and hence for wider social and political transformation if each is willing to learn from the other's experiences.[39]

Plows' papers (1995, 1997), are particularly notable because they are written from the insider perspective of the activist academic and in doing so draw heavily upon her own experiences of protest and involvement in militant environmental organisations. Plows' first paper (1995), concerns her experience as a member of the direct action oriented Donga Tribe which emerged at the Twyford Down protests

Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 2, (Manchester : Manchester Metropolitan University), no pagination.

[38] Auckland, R. (1997), Women and Protest, in, Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (eds), (1997) Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 1,Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (eds), (Manchester : Manchester Metropolitan University Press), no pagination.

[39] McNeish, W. (1997), The Anti-Roads Protest Movement in the UK : a Sociological and Political Analysis, in, Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (eds), (1997), Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 1, (Manchester : Manchester Metropolitan University Press), no pagination. This dialogue was particularly in evidence in Liverpool where during the long running dispute (1995-97) surrounding the sacking of 500 dockers a number of direct action protests were mounted by veteran activists of the anti-roads scene in their support. Moreover during the tube strikes in London in 1996 activists from RTS and Earth First ! staged actions in support of the strikers. The Habermasian theme of the Manchester paper is developed in McNeish, W. (1999), Resisting Colonisation : the Politics of

against the M3 extension. The paper attempts to elaborate the philosophical, political and 'spiritual' dimensions of the Donga's deep ecological critique of anthropocentrism as put into practice in anti-motorway campaigning, and the importance of the Donga's theory and practice in contemporary environmental protest and philosophy.[40] Plows second paper (1997) is concerned to address the red/green debate and in particular the critical arguments on green theory and practice advanced by the Marxist theorist David Pepper.[41] Focusing on the role of Earth First ! (of which she is a member/supporter) in recent anti-roads protests and literature produced by Earth First! activists, Plows argues that this organisation transcends the reform/revolution dichotomy that has haunted the left throughout its history and that Pepper is wrong to set up such a stark dualism between anthropocentrism and bio-centrism. Whether or not Plows presents an altogether convincing argument in this paper is however very open to question.[42]

The protests against the M77 extension in Glasgow in 1995 form the research context of the last two Manchester papers to be outlined here. Seel (1996), using participant observation notes and interview data from a period of field research focuses in particular on the Pollok Free State, a fortified eco-activist encampment that was set up along the motorway route. Employing a Gramscian theoretical framework he argues convincingly that the participants in the Free State were engaged in a counter-hegemonic 'war of position' with the state and mainstream growth orientated consumer society. Centrally important to his thesis is the nature of the protesters relationship with the media and he therefore details the way in which the protesters used the media to further their cause but were also at the same time used by the media Importantly he makes the point that this 'trade off' was something which the protesters recognised and accepted as the price to be paid for publicising the issue and

Anti-Roads Protesting, in, Bagguley, P. & Hearn, J. (eds), (1999), Transforming Politics : Power and Resistance, (London : MacMillan), pp. 69-84

[40] Plows, A. (1995), Eco-Philosophy and Popular Protest : the Significance and Implications of the Ideology and Actions of the Donga Tribe, in, Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (eds), (1995), Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 1, (Manchester : Manchester Metropolitan University), loose paper, unpaginated

[41] Pepper, D. (1996), Modern Environmentalism – an Introduction, (London : Routledge)

[42] Plows, A. (1997), Roads Protest/Earth First ! and 'Multi Issue' New Social Movements : Beyond the Dualisms of the Red/Green Debate, in, Barker, C. & Tyldeslay, M. (eds), (1997), Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 2, (Manchester : Manchester Metropolitan University Press), no pagination. Plows' paper given at the Keele conference covers much the same ground except that she concentrates upon Earth First's tactics as opposed to engaging with green Marxists like Pepper; see Plows, A. (1997), 'EF ! Strategies – Reform and Revolution', Direct Action and British Environmentalism Conference Collection, Keele University, Unpublished.

their views. In conclusion, Seel assesses the impact of the protesters actions and argues that the Pollok protest in conjunction with the wider anti-roads protest movement 'is contributing towards transforming our wider political culture, value systems, conceptions of progress and the good life'.[43]

Robinson's paper (1998), revolves around the relationship between the militant environmentalists resistance to the motorway's construction and that of the working class community of Corkerhill who stood to be most adversely affected when the M77 extension was completed. Centred on Tarrow's (1994) notion of 'residues of reform' his paper is aimed at demonstrating that the interaction between the environmentalists and local people from Corkerhill had the effect of generating a greater environmental awareness and more militant political stance amongst the latter. To this end he uses evidence generated by both qualitative and quantitative research methodology to forward the argument that by the time the protests were effectively over, the locals had moved from an initial NIMBY (Not in my Backyard) position to one of NOPE (Not on Planet Earth) concerning the motorway. [44]

In relation to the Glasgow M77 protests two journal articles by the geographer Paul Routledge (1996, 1997) are also noteworthy. Routledge himself an activist with Earth First ! participated in the Pollok Free State and he has used his experiences and journal entries to paint a vivid (if somewhat quirky) picture of what life was like on the front-line of the protests at this eco-encampment. In the first article noted above, Routledge argues that the Pollok protests illustrate the hybrid nature of contemporary environmentalism and moreover demonstrate the way in which such notions as 'Scottishness', 'home' and 'locality' become disrupted and unfixed in such campaigns.[45] In the second article, he continues in this vein to argue that the Pollok Free State's resistance to the M77 extension's construction represents the cutting edge

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[43] Seel, B. (1996), Frontline Eco-Wars ! The Pollok Free State Road Protest Community : Counter-Hegemonic Intentions, Pluralist Effects, in, Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (eds), (1996), Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 2, no pagination. Seel has since updated this paper, renamed it 'Strategies of Resistance at the Pollok Free State' and given it again at the Direct Action and British Environmentalism Conference held at Keele University in October 1997. This paper also appears in a slightly altered form in the journal 'Environmental Politics' – see Seel, B. (1997), Strategies of Resistance at the Pollok Free State Road Protest Camp', Environmental Politics, Vol 6, No 4, Winter, pp. 108-139

[44] Robinson, A. (1998), From NIMBY to NOPE : Residues of Reform on Glasgow's Southside, in Barker, C. & Tyldesley, M. (eds), (1998), Alternative Futures and Popular Protest Conference Papers, Vol 2, (Manchester : Manchester Metropolitan University Press), no pagination.

[45] Routledge, P. (1996), Carhenge or Carmaggedon ? Environmental Protest and Notions of 'Home' in Glasgow, Scotlands, Vol 3, No 1, pp. 101-110

of the practice of postmodern politics.[46] Routledge's conclusions regarding the politics of anti-roads protesting are however arguably in a large part due to his sole focus on eco-activism, something which is more open to such a postmodern interpretation than what was in this case the activism of working class local objectors. The campaign against the M77 extension will be returned to in depth in chapters four and five of this thesis.

Bryant (1997), in his article on the two year (1992-94) successful working class campaign against the Barton Bypass (A40) in north Oxford, takes an altogether different stance as regards the politics of anti-roads protesting. He is concerned to redress what he argues is biased media coverage of the protests which stresses the participation of 'middle England' and the 'eco-warriors' in anti-roads activism to the exclusion of working class community organisation. For Bryant, a community development specialist, the protests in Oxford signify the fact that working class communities can be just as vocal in their opposition to environmental threats to their community's quality of life as middle class areas and that the roads issue does not simply revolve around middle class opposition. Furthermore he makes the telling point that the style of campaign led by BETRA (Barton Estate Tenants and Residents Association) against the road project is very similar to that of the ways in which working class communities organised to further their interests in the 1960s and 1970's. This mode of organising has however faded in recent years due to both the destructive social policies of recent governments and the unfashionability of the theory and practice of broad class based organisation amongst community workers.[47]

Like the last two commentators mentioned, North (1997), in his article for the journal 'Environmental Politics', takes a case study approach – in this instance the conflict surrounding the building a bypass on Solsbury Hill outside Bath in 1994, to make wider socio-theoretic points about the nature of contemporary anti-roads protests. While providing a detailed sociological and political 'anatomy' of the 'Save our Solsbury !' protest campaign, North's central concern in this article is the question of what this particular protest can inform the observer about the usefulness of the divergent strands of social movements theory for the analysis of the wider anti-roads protest movement. In North's analysis, which like Doherty (1996) (see above),

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[46] Routledge, P. (1997), The Imagineering of Resistance ; Pollok Free State and the Practice of Postmodern Politics, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Vol 22, No 3, pp. 359-376

emphasises the alliance between locals and 'eco-warriors', the former grouping is best suited to a conceptualisation which falls under the rubric of the resource mobilisation approach, while the latter grouping is more suited to theorisation which uses the new social movements paradigm as its model.[48] These important divisions between both the different groupings which compromise anti-roads protests/the anti-roads protest movement, and the different theoretical models which might be used to analyse them, will be returned to in detail in later chapters.

Andrew Rowell's book 'Green Backlash' (1996), includes a relatively lengthy chapter which contains a lot of useful factual and statistical detail on the battles surrounding road building in Britain in the early to mid 1990s. As the title of his book suggests, the central argument which he advances is that there is a global backlash against green ideas and environmental organisations currently being mounted by large corporations and other commercial interests which have begun to feel threatened in recent years by the increasing social and political popularity of green thinking. His chapter on the anti-roads protests is used to reinforce this argument by illustrating the way in which the British state has backed the interests of the road developers and other commercial interests by bringing the full force of the law in terms of policing and legal processes to bear upon the protesters, and has indeed even used changes the law such as the Criminal Justice Act and Public Order Act 1994 to make such protesting more difficult. Rowell also catalogues the 'dirty tricks' PR war which has been waged by the BRF and road developers, the use of covert surveillance, the physical intimidation of protesters by security guards and police, the interventions of Special Branch, and the way in which the right-wing press in the period he was writing thoroughly vilified the protesters and their activities.[49] Rowell's case in terms of the wider green movement is a convincing one; however, the fact remains that in the late 1990s the protesters have confounded their critics and opponents and have gone a long way towards winning the argument over road building – whether this is only a short term victory though remains to be seen.

The recently published anthology 'DIY Culture : Party and Protest in Nineties Britain' (1998), edited by George McKay, contains three chapters which focus

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[47] Bryant, R. (1997), Road to Nowhere : the Barton By-pass Campaign, Community Development Journal, Vol 32, No 1, Jan, pp. 77-86

[48] North, P. (1998), 'Save our Solsbury !' The Anatomy of an Anti-Roads Protest, Environmental Politics, Vol 7, No 3, pp. 1-25

[49] Rowell, A. (1996), The Road to Nowhere, op cited, pp. 320-355

directly on different aspects of anti-roads protests.[50] The first of these is a case study of the protests against the M11 Link Road (1993-94), written by a collective calling themselves Aufheben (an ambigious Hegelian term meaning 'to abolish' or 'to annul' but also 'to transcend' or 'to supersede'), who take an eclectic revolutionary political position that is influenced by the Marxism and anarchism of the Situationist International and the Italian autonomania movement. In their critical analysis of the practice of the anti-M11 campaign, Aufheben are concerned to delineate both the political potentials of this protest campaign and its political shortcomings in order to contribute to a renewal of class based revolutionary theory and practice.

For Aufheben, the M11 campaign engendered a more radical politicisation amongst its participants and onlookers than did the protests at Twyford Down. This is because this particular anti-motorway campaign was situated in an urban as opposed to rural setting which meant that social environmental as well as natural environmental issues were raised to the top of the campaign's agenda. Critical of labourist, Leninist and eco-reformist currents represented amongst the activists taking part in the campaign, and of their political interpretations of it, Aufheben argue in an anarchist manner that what made the M11 campaign subversive and indeed potentially revolutionary was the 'creation of a climate of autonomy, disobedience and resistance through such activities as squatting (houses were fortified in Claremont Road), pixieing (damage and theft of construction materials and machinery), living communally and reclaiming time and space. Extrapolating from the M11 campaign, Aufheben distinguish between two political tendencies within the wider anti-roads protest movement; one which grounds its analysis in the categories of the state, capital and class, and the other which romanticises trees and evokes mysticism. This however is perhaps though too simple a distinction because as this thesis will illustrate in its later chapters a very wide spectrum of political tendencies are represented in the wider anti-roads protest movement and individual activists often hold ideological beliefs which are far from clearly defined and may even be in contradiction to one another. Where though Aufheben's analysis is especially useful is in illustrating the key internal arguments and tensions between the different participants which the campaign engendered. Here the sections covering arguments surrounding the issue of non-violence are notable and the critique of 'fluffy' ideology (non-violence on

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[50] McKay, G. (1998), DIY Culture : Party and Protest in Nineties Britain, (London : Verso)

principle) is particularly pointed. Aufheben's critical analysis in its recognition of faults as well as potentials in the M11 campaign, is in many ways a useful antidote to the sometimes overly enthusiastic and uncritical political endorsement given to the anti-roads protests by their supporters and advocates.[51]

The next chapter in McKay's anthology is written by John Jordan a lecturer in 'live art', a practitioner of social art, and an activist with the urban based social ecology group Reclaim the Streets. Jordan's focus is upon the 'subversive imagination' and the aesthetics of DIY direct action protest as embodied in the practice of the No M11 Campaign and of Reclaim the Streets (RTS). RTS was relaunched in the wake of the M11 campaign by activists who had been inspired by their experiences and who wanted to move from defensive direct action resistance to proactive offensive direct action in order to develop a wider cultural critique. Throughout the 1990s RTS has organised illegal street parties in English cities whereby busy urban motorways and city centre streets are blocked off and taken over by activists, their sound systems and agitprop street theatre in defiance of public order legislation and in a challenge to social norms. Jordan argues that these RTS activities are festivals of resistance and carnivals of freedom which celebrate creative human autonomy, and juxtapose for however temporary a time 'what could be' with 'what is' while also exposing the controlling face of state power when the police and authorities inevitably move in to halt the proceedings. RTS's parties have been remarkably successful in attracting participants with their biggest party in September 1996 attracting upwards of 10,000 to the stretch of the M41 at Shepherds Bush in London. RTS's practice is inspired by social ecology and revolutionary situationism and is therefore not concerned with getting rid of cars or traffic as such; rather it is concerned to link the struggle for car free space to the fight against global capitalism – the car, and car culture are merely symbolic of the system they are trying to change. Jordan's analysis illustrates that RTS is probably the 'anti-roads' grouping that is most oriented towards the concerns of the traditional revolutionary left. This is borne out in the fact that RTS has engaged in various solidarity actions with workers engaged in industrial conflicts such as striking London tube workers, and perhaps most notably with the five hundred Liverpool dock workers who fought for more than

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[51] Aufheben, (1998), The Politics of Anti-Roads Struggle and the Struggles of Anti-Road Politics : the Case of the No M11 Link Road Campaign, in, McKay, G. (1998), op cited, pp. 100-128

two years (1995-1998) for their reinstatement after being sacked for refusing to cross a picket line.[52]

The final chapter from McKay's anthology that is pertinent here is written by the Earth First !/Donga activist Alexandra Plows whose papers at the Manchester Alternative Futures conferences were outlined previously. Plows' aim in this chapter is to identify the ethical/political perspective which informs Earth First's activities. While this chapter is less specifically on anti-roads protests as such than the previous two considered it is nevertheless noteworthy because firstly Earth First! is the organisation/network that more than any other has been at the forefront of the direct action protests against road-building in the UK throughout the 1990s; and secondly, because as Plows illustrates Earth First! in the UK was essentially born of these protests and grew almost symbiotically as a network of autonomous groups as the protests spread. For Plows Earth First! in the UK, although taking inspiration from its deep ecological American cousin differs markedly in its ethical/political perspective because in the UK Earth First! has a much more social environmental orientation (she cites Bookchin's social ecology as an major influence) and has a multi-faceted campaign strategy.

What though is most notable about Plows' chapter is that she attempts to answer the question which Earth First! in the UK recently asked itself in its journal 'Do or Die'. This question revolved around the issue of building a mass movement, and Plows answers affirmatively, arguing that Earth First's role should be one of promoting and mediating grassroots dialogue and solidarity between the disparate strands of the ever diversifying DIY protest movement while retaining its position at the cutting edge of radical direct action. Perhaps most controversially Plows argues that Earth First ! could 'do with a little more centralisation for fund-raising, resource gathering, concentrated outreach, access to expertise etc' and even suggests that FoE could at least in part be something of a role model. As will be illustrated in chapter five of this thesis such a position would be anathema to many Earth First ! activists who take the anarchist view that any form of centralisation or use of 'experts' will

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[52] Jordan, J. (1998), The Art of Necessity : the Subversive Imagination of Anti-Road Protest and Reclaim the Streets, in, Mckay, G. (1998), op cited, pp. 129-151

inevitably lead to hierarchy, and that FoE with its establishment links is part of 'the problem', not its solution.[53]

The last book worth mentioning in this brief review is a collection on the subject of the Twyford Down protests which is edited by Barbara Bryant and is entitled 'Twyford Down – Roads, Campaigning and Environmental Law' (1996). This book features contributions by the editor herself who was a leading local activist in the campaign (and an ex-Conservative Councillor); Graham Anderson the editor of 'Construction News' which is a key news source for the road construction industry; Peter Kunzik a Professor of European business law at Nottingham Law School, and Jonathon Porritt who is a former leader of the Green Party and is probably the UK's best known green campaigner. After an apologetic introduction by Anderson, the first part of this book is written by Bryant and essentially tells the story of the campaign to stop the M3 extension from being built from its inception in the early 1980s, through the legal battles and public inquiries of the mid-1980s to its transition in the late 1980s into a national environmental 'cause celebre' and finishing with the direct action protests of 1992. What comes across clearly is that each stage in the campaign marks a broadening out of the issue, increasing frustration on the part of the objectors and therefore an escalation in their militancy.[54]

The second part of the book is given over to a legal and environmental analysis of the campaign written by Kunzik and Porritt respectively. Kunzik argues that the decision to build the motorway was in breach of the government's own environmental guidelines on the construction of new roads, that it was in breach of European law on environmental impact assessments and that the public consultation and inquiry process was a fiasco from beginning to end.[55] Porritt's chapter is however the most pertinent for this literature review as he looks not only at the Twyford Campaign but also at its aftermath in terms of its effects in inspiring subsequent anti-roads campaigns of a similar ilk which he catalogues in some detail. For Porritt the destruction of Twyford Down by the motorway developers had a huge symbolic power that reached far beyond its immediate environs and galvanised 'a huge army of dissenters drawn from every walk of life' across the country in opposition to the

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[53] Plows, A. (1998), Earth First ! Defending Mother Earth – Direct Style, in, McKay, G. (1998), op cited, pp. 152-173 For a brief history of Earth First ! in the UK, and a cogent analysis of its interaction with the burgeoning 'protest milieu' described earlier in this chapter, see Seel, B. (1997), 'If Not You Then Who ?' Earth First ! in the UK, Environmental Politics, Vol 6, No 4, Winter, pp. 172-179

[54] Bryant, B. (ed), (1996), The Campaigner's Story, op cited, pp. 15-224

government's roads programme; he writes 'it was just so horrific, so visible, so palpable.... it screams out at you.... what's more, it has reinforced all the anger and incredulity many people have suppressed for years; it has legitimised a far more explicit avowal for passionate feelings for the British countryside in all its glory and vulnerability. Nothing has ever been the same since then'. And indeed in terms of opposition to roads and other environmentally destructive developments it certainly hasn't because as he goes on to argue the Twyford campaign marked the transition from conventional campaigning tactics to those of NVDA stating that this 'was clearly the right way for things to develop'. Porritt's endorsement of these tactics is another sure sign of their growing respectability because he is a high profile public figure whose environmental 'realism' is not that far from the political mainstream. By Porritt's time of writing the government was in the process of backtracking on its 'self-defeating' roads programme and he concludes by commenting that although the loss of Twyford was painful, it regrettably was a key part of the price to be paid for that progressive U-turn.[56]

Outwith the above papers, articles and books, anti-roads protests are mentioned in passing in a few contemporary books on social and political theory but nowhere are they looked at in anything like a systematic let alone sociological manner. If one really wants to know the inside story of the protests then aside from reading the above academic literature an acquaintance with the insightful journalism of commentators like John Vidal and George Monbiot or that produced in green left journals like the Hilary Wainwright edited 'Red Pepper' is essential.[57] Moreover one can also turn to the literature and campaign material produced by the activists themselves and there is an abundance of it both in printed form and on the internet. Of the printed form, back issues of 'The Ecologist' and Alarm UK's professionally produced newsletter 'Alarm Bells' are amongst the best sources for hard facts and information about the anti-roads campaigns in general. Moreover it is also always worth looking at campaign material produced at a local level by individual action groups and environmental groups opposing road schemes in order to get a closer feel of what is actually happening on the ground.

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[55] Kunzik, P. (1996), The Legal Battle 'an Astonishing Intervention', ibid, pp. 225-296

[56] Porritt, J. (1996), Twyford Down – the Aftermath, ibid, pp. 299, 297-310

[57] see also the 'Red Pepper' website @ http://www.redpepper.org.uk which contains an extensive links directory to a wide assortment of oppositional campaigning and environmental organisations, political parties and the alternative press.

Use of the world wide web as a medium for the dissemination of counter-hegemonic campaigning information has mushroomed in recent years and just as the oppositional social and political movements of the past used printing presses to disseminate their revolutionary messages so the activists of today use the latest information technologies. The new technology has many advantages over the old in that it is relatively inexpensive to use, is fast, efficient, mobile and can cross national boundaries at the press of a button - in short as Vidal (1999) has recently argued, 'e-mail and the Net are revolutionising the way, environment, human rights and social justice groups work'.[58] Of anti-roads campaigning literature located on the internet Road Alert's road protest archive is an invaluable resource while many individual anti-roads campaigns have created individual websites of their own outlining their campaigns, strategies, tactics and the views of individual protesters involved.[59] Earth First's regularly updated websites which include their 'Action Update', and the anarchist newsletter 'SchNEWS' are also both mines of information as to what is going on in terms of campaigning amongst radical deep greens and green anarchists respectively. The websites pertaining to both these organisations provide impressive archive resources while they also contain network links to numerous other similar campaigning organisations and access to discussion sites, polemical essays and a wide array of more philosophical and theoretical material.[60] Reclaim the Streets (RTS), the social ecology/anarchist group should also be mentioned here as it has created a particularly extensive and creative website that covers everything from their aims, objectives and philosophy to Andre Gorz's critique of 'car culture' and its place at the heart of contemporary capitalism. Thus while the academic literature is as yet small the resources do nevertheless exist that enable the building up of a general picture of what lies behind the anti-roads phenomena. It would be impossible to review this non-academic literature because of its sheer volume but where appropriate it will be used

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[58] Vidal, J. (1999), Modern Warfare, Society Supplement, The Guardian, 13/01/99, p. 4

[59] For Road Alert's road protest archive see the website @ http://alt.venus.co.uk/weed/roads/welcome.htm, also see their activists publication 'Road Raging – Top Tips for Wrecking Road Building' @ http://www.hZnet.co.uk/ef/rr/index.html, and for a good contemporary example of a road protest site that is currently in use see the campaign against the Birmingham Northern Relief Road @ http://www.geocities.com.Rainforest/3091/bnrr.com .

[60] Earth First has a number of websites both in the UK and internationally - amongst the best of these is to be found @ http://www.enviroweb.org/ef/and @ http://www.kZnet.co.uk/ef/. SchNews which is published by an anarchist collective in Brighton is located @ http://www.schnews.org.uk/ while RTS's website is @ http://www.gn.apc.org.rts. Each of these groups in fact provides links to the others illustrating that despite some philosophical differences there is mutual tolerance and respect as well as a willingness to work together over the issues which concern them.

as a source of reference in the course of the thesis. Reading about the protests is however no substitute for concrete field research – something which as will become clear below is central to this thesis.

1.4 *Research Strategy*

In social scientific academia the militant protests against road building which sprang up in Britain during the 1990s constitute a very under-researched social phenomenon with only a very small body of theoretical and research literature so far having been produced that pertains to it. What has been produced is mainly in the form of conference papers, a few journal articles and book chapters which take a case study approach to look at one or more aspects of a particular anti-roads campaign or organisations involved in anti-roads campaigning in the light of the theory and practice of social movements and environmentalism. In one sense then it is very difficult to identify gaps in the sociological literature because there simply isn't very much of it and therefore the scope for original research would appear to be almost wide open.

One aspect of the literature though that is notable is that almost all that has been produced focuses upon the direct action specialists linked to organisations like Earth First! and Reclaim the Streets. The anti-roads protest movement was however characterised by an alliance between direct action groups such as these and local residents and community groups rooted in the areas which would potentially suffer negative effects from the building of a new road or motorway (Doherty, 1995). In devising a research strategy for this thesis it was therefore decided from the outset of the project to contribute to redressing the balance by exploring a number of the key organisational, sociological and political dimensions of the mobilisation of local grassroots opposition as well that of the direct action groups. Such a strategy would allow a more comprehensive and rounded sociological and political overview of the protest movement as a whole to be built up as well as enabling an exploration of the dynamics of the interaction between the two wings that made the alliance possible.

The sites of anti-roads protest in the UK during the 1990s have been so numerous, and the organisations and groupings involved so diverse, that it would be impossible to examine and explore every case of protest and every organisation and grouping involved. Therefore in devising a research strategy it was recognised that the

focus of research would have to be limited while remaining comprehensive and representative enough to encompass the two wings of the protest movement. In line with these strictures it was decided to adopt a case study approach employing a multi-faceted research methodology which uses a variety of the different tools open to the sociological researcher as and when appropriate. After careful reading of the secondary academic literature encompassing the evolution of anti-roads protests in the UK, a review of the small body of academic literature produced thus far on contemporary anti-roads protesting, and a consideration of social movements theory and research (see the next chapter), two case studies were instigated. In the first case study Alarm UK was chosen as an object of research because as is illustrated in section 1.2.1 above, it constituted the umbrella organisation for local groups across the UK opposing the government's road building programme. The research aims of this case study were to :

1) Build up a sociological and political profile of Alarm UK's support base.
2) Investigate the dynamics of Alarm UK's mobilisation.
3) Examine the internal structure and organisation of Alarm UK.
4) Explore Alarm UK's relationships with other organisations campaigning against road building during the 1990s.

The methodology for this case study combined two surveys of Alarm UK's support base and semi-structured interviews with leading activists (see section 1.4.1 for details). As Lowe and Rudig (1986) have argued, this particular combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies is the best way to establish an accurate picture of a group's internal politics, and is indeed the best way to pursue an integrated environmental sociology. This is because each methodology helps to make up for the other's shortcomings.[61] In the case of surveys these shortcomings stem from a tendency towards bias, built-in assumptions and limitations in assessing a group's power and effectiveness. In the case of interviews, shortcomings arise from their tendency to be conducted only with a group's most articulate spokespersons, their intrusive nature and a reliance upon small samples due to the constraints of time and resources.

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[61] Lowe, P. D. & Rudig, W. (1986), Review Article : Political Ecology and the Social Sciences – the State of the Art, British Journal of Political Science, Vol 16, No 4, p. 527

In the second case study the campaign against the M77 extension was chosen as an object of research because in early 1995 it became a major flashpoint for direct action protests after the objectors had exhausted all legal remedies in a long running community campaign first initiated in the early 1970s. These direct action protests involved local community groups from the surrounding working class council estates and Earth First ! 'eco-warriors' based at the Pollok Free State fortified eco-encampment, working together to oppose the motorway's construction. These two key players in the oppositional campaign form the key focus of this case study whose aims were to :

1) Gain an understanding of the underlying reasons for the campaign mobilisation
2) Trace the twists and turns of the trajectory of the campaign's evolution from its origins in the local community to its culmination in direct action
3) Investigate the dynamics of the relationship between local community opposition and the militant environmentalists
4) Examine the operation and organisation of the Pollok Free State the ideology of its resident activists.

Another highly pertinent reason as to why this particular campaign was chosen as an object of research was because it occurred in Glasgow and this researcher, being based at the University of Glasgow and having lived in the City for many years had watched the anti-M77 campaign unfold in the local media, had himself attended and participated in a number of the demonstrations, actions and meetings against the motorway, and could identify a number of the key anti-motorway activists even before embarking upon the research project. Ease of access also played a part in choosing this particular case study because the Pollok Free State was only a short bus ride away from the University as were the community, environmental and left-wing groups, council chambers and archive resources which would each contribute information to furthering the research. Because of this easy access the methodology for this case study was qualitative in form and field work combined semi-structured interviews with participant observation (see section 1.4.2 for details).

Through the research undertaken for these two case studies each of the key facets of the anti-roads protest movement in nineties Britain have been subject to sociological investigation. These facets include :

1) The national umbrella organisation for local grassroots action groups (Alarm UK case study).

2) The support base for local grassroots action groups (Alarm UK case study).

3) Local community protest (M77 case study)

4) The interventions of the militant environmental grouping Earth First ! (M77 case study)

5) The creation of fortified eco-encampments (M77 case study)

6) Direct action protest (both case studies)

7) The alliances between the different groupings opposing road building (both case studies)

The overall aim of this research was to build up a sociological and political overview of anti-roads protests during the 1990s as a whole. The research methodology and research process for the two case studies is detailed below after which follows a short section dealing with some of the key methodological issues raised by this research. It should be noted however that only a general outline of the themes and questions which the research addresses is provided below. This is because in order to properly formulate and define these themes and questions it is necessary to first consider the field of social movements theory and research which has important insights to offer in guiding research in this particular area of sociology. Social movements theory is considered in the next chapter at the end of which further research questions of both a theoretical and empirical nature are detailed.

1.4.1 *Alarm UK Case Study : Methodology and the Research Process*

Initial contact was made with Alarm UK in November 1995 when registration as a member was undertaken and thereafter Alarm's newsletter 'Alarm Bells' began to be received regularly. In January 1996 it was announced in the newsletter than a national activists conference was going to be held in Nottingham in March — something which to this researcher it occurred, would provide an ideal opportunity for both qualitative and quantitative research. If permission was granted by the conference organisers, then qualitative research it was decided would take the form of participant observation with the aim of general familiarisation with the activists attending and the Alarm UK

organisation, gaining awareness of the arguments and debates ongoing within Alarm UK, and the identification of potential 'gatekeepers' who might 'open doors' and aid the development of future research. It was also decided if possible to conduct short informal interviews with key activists in attendance concerning three key areas : their motivations as activists, the organisational dimensions of Alarm UK and their perceptions of the role of Alarm UK within the wider protest movement against road building.

Quantitative research it was decided would take the form of the administration of a short questionnaire to those activists in attendance. This questionnaire would be designed to build up a basic sociological and political profile of Alarm's core activists while also giving an indication of the types of activism against roads, and indeed other forms of activism, which they were engaged in. Thus the questionnaire would contain three types of question : firstly standard questions relating to employment, income, gender, ethnicity, age and educational attainment; secondly, questions relating to political affiliations, voting and voting intentions; and thirdly, questions relating to types of anti-roads activism engaged in and activists involvement with other forms of oppositional activism. [62] A number of the key questions included in this survey were piloted amongst a group of ten social science undergraduates at the University of Glasgow.

On being approached with a request to both attend the conference as an observer/interviewer, and to distribute (subject to approval) a short anonymous 'social and political attitudes' questionnaire amongst the activists, John Stewart, the Chairperson of Alarm UK was enthusiastic and helpful. At the conference itself this researcher was made to feel welcome and a number of important contacts were made which resulted in three semi-structured qualitative interviews being conducted with leading activists based in Alarm's London office between July and December 1996. The contacts also resulted in an in depth interview with a leading London activist for Reclaim the Streets who had worked closely with Alarm UK in the campaign against the M11, and in an informal two hour meeting with a mixed group of four RTS and two Alarm UK activists who had been active in the same campaign. The interviews which were conducted lasted between one and a half and two and a half hours in duration, covered a wide range of topics relating to the politics and practice of anti-

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[62] See Appendix I for a copy of this questionnaire.

roads protesting, and were recorded using a tape recorder. This allowed for precise transcription, coding and analysis. In some of the interviews respondents did however express a wish to remain anonymous when being quoted and this stipulation is adhered to where it applies in the use of interview data in this thesis. Moreover at the Alarm UK conference a number of short informal interviews were conducted while more than half (55) of the 80 or so activists in attendance returned completed questionnaires to a box positioned near the door after they were distributed by hand at the lunch-time break.

The Alarm UK conference was however mainly attended by 'core activists' and the chairpersons of local anti-roads action groups and thus the findings of the questionnaire are representative of only one particular and narrow strata of Alarm UK's membership. In order to build up a more representative profile it was decided to ask for permission to distribute 500 longer questionnaires randomly by post amongst the coalition's wider membership and support base. This number was chosen because it was felt on the one hand that given the difficulties of gauging a response rate, a smaller number might gain an inadequate and unrepresentative sample. On the other hand it was felt that a larger number would be prohibitively expensive to create and distribute while also proving unmanageable in terms of coding and analysis on return. Permission to administer the questionnaire was duly granted by Alarm UK's London organisers with the proviso that the questionnaire be pre-approved and that the mailing/distribution would be undertaken from London by Alarm UK themselves in order to protect the anonymity of respondents and the confidentiality of the organisation's mailing list.

The postal questionnaire was designed to build up a sociological and political profile of Alarm UK members and supporters within its affiliated local groups; thus like the conference questionnaire (which essentially operated as a pilot study for the larger postal survey) it included standard questions relating to occupation, income, class, age, gender, ethnicity, education, housing etc; questions relating to political affiliations and voting intentions; and questions relating to types of anti-roads activism and other forms of oppositional activism. It also however included more complex questions that relate to environmental and political attitudes, values, ideology and motivations for activism. A number of these questions were designed to be as open as possible in the sense that respondents were not constrained to merely ticking a box but were given space to express their own opinions. Moreover the

questionnaire also included a revised version of Inglehart's test (1990) for post-materialism[63] and questions taken from British Social Attitudes surveys which are useful for the purposes of comparison. The questionnaire was eventually sent out in a single mailshot in September 1996 alongside a Freepost envelope for the purposes of return, and letter briefly explaining the purpose of the research and guaranteeing the respondents anonymity. [64]

According to the Alarm UK organisers half of the questionnaires were mailed directly to individual Alarm UK members, while the other half were sent out to the chairpersons of local anti-roads action groups for distribution to supporters at meetings. A single reminder letter was sent out at the beginning of October and by the end of November the last batch of questionnaires was returned. Out of 500 questionnaires, 236 were returned completed and 50 were returned blank by the chairpersons of local action groups who had either failed to, or declined to distribute them. The response rate of 47 % is indicative of the problems of distribution and of the fact that Alarm UK was a campaigning organisation whose membership and support was organised in a very loose, fluid and decentralised manner (see chapter three). The organisers were however aware of the importance of getting a representative sample and gave assurances that they tried to distribute the questionnaires in such a way as to achieve this aim. On being sent the results of both the conference and postal surveys (initially in a brief descriptive form and later again having employed SPSS (the Statistical Package for Social Sciences) as an analytical tool, in a more detailed form), the organisers of Alarm UK expressed their agreement with the research findings. This concurrence adds weight to the claim that the sample taken is representative and that the findings are valid and reliable. The survey findings are explored and analysed in detail in chapter three.

1.4.2 *M77 Case Study : Methodology and Research Process*

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[63] Inglehart, R. (1990), Culture Shift in Advanced Society, (Princeton : Princeton University Press), pp. 74-75 (see section 3.3.2 for the manner in which this test was modified).
[64] See Appendix 2 for a copy of the postal questionnaire, the covering letter and the reminder letter.

This case study began with extensive archive work in both the University of Glasgow Library and Glasgow's Mitchell Public Library researching old newspaper articles, highway plans, official documents and legal records in order to uncover the origins of the plans to build the M77 motorway, the planning controversies surrounding this motorway and the conduct of the two public inquiries held into its route. Having investigated the background to the controversy surrounding the M77 it was decided that the next stage of research would involve interviews with key representatives of all the groupings identified in the first stage as being centrally involved in the oppositional campaign. It was also decided to interview City councillors who had knowledge through their committee work of the M77 planning process in order to gain insights into the politics behind the planning authorities reasons for pressing ahead with the building of the motorway despite the widespread opposition. These interviews would also potentially offer an indication as to the impact of the oppositional campaign. In selecting activists and councillors to interview, what Miles and Huberman (1994) have called the 'snowball' sampling technique was employed whereby initial contact was made with respondents whom this researcher had learned were deeply involved from earlier participant observation in campaign activities and from library archive work.[65] In turn these respondents recommended other potential interview candidates who in turn recommended others and so on. Initial contact usually involved a letter requesting an interview which included the reasons for the interview and the guarantee of anonymity if the respondent so wished. All of the respondents did however give permission for their names to be used when quoted in the writing up of the research.

In total twenty-five in-depth semi-structured interviews lasting between forty-five minutes and one and a half hours were conducted with twenty-four different respondents over a two year period (1996-1998) using a tape recorder. Two of the key respondents were interviewed on more than one occasion and in two of the interview sessions it was possible to question two respondents at the same time. Each tape recording was transcribed and coded before being subject to analysis. The twenty-five interviews include ten with Earth First! residents of the Pollok Free State; four with leaders of Corkerhill Community Council who led the local community opposition to the motorway; three with City councillors (the Chairperson of the Roads and

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[65] Miles, M. & Huberman, A. (1994), Qualitative Data Analysis, (London : Sage), p. 28

Transportation Committee, an ordinary Roads and Transporation Committee member (both Labour) and the leader of Scottish Militant Labour (now the Scottish Socialist Party)); two with leading representatives of Glasgow for People which is a city-wide public transport/environmental pressure group; and one interview with the Glasgow representative of FoE, one with the Glasgow organiser for the Socialist Workers Party, one with a leading activist from the newly instigated campaign against the M74 extension (another controversial urban motorway planned for Glasgow), and three with non-affiliated activists from the council estates surrounding the M77 motorway extension who were active in the campaign against it.

Questions asked in the interviews varied according to the respondent but aside from the interviews with Labour councillors which mainly involved questions pertaining to the politics of the planning process and the impact of the oppositional campaign, the questions asked generally revolved around motivations for participation in the anti-motorway campaign, the politics and sociology of the campaign, and the dynamics of the inter-relationships between the different groupings and activists central to it. The aim in interviewing such a wide range of activists was to build up as balanced and comprehensive a picture of the activists and motivations involved in the campaign against the M77 as possible. Only two requests for interviews were turned down, one by a Labour councillor who said that he was simply too busy, and one by a leading Earth First ! activist who took the trouble to reply to the request by writing a diatribe against academics whom he argued distracted activists attention from the 'real issues' and wasted valuable time and energy that could be better employed campaigning. This point is in fact one to be taken seriously and the effect that social scientific researchers might have upon campaigns such as those against road building is considered in the next section where some of the methodological issues raised in the research for this thesis are briefly discussed.

During the research period which involved contacting potential respondents and setting up meetings for interviews, participant observation research at the Pollok Free State was also engaged in. After initial contact was made by letter for an interview with one of the leading activists in early 1996, this researcher became a regular visitor at the Free State where many enjoyable afternoons and evenings were spent drinking tea and chatting to the resident activists about politics, their activities and their hopes and dreams for the future. Through such research this researcher was able to gain a 'feel' of what daily life was like at the Free State, observe how its physical structure

altered and expanded over time and was ideally placed to meet protesters from other anti-roads campaigns across the country who were visiting the encampment for short periods. Such participant research also helped this researcher to establish something of a rapport with the residents which meant that researcher/respondent barriers were broken down to a certain extent when interviews were conducted. Thus a number of the interviews with Free State residents are much more free-flowing than is the case with a number of the other interviews carried out during the research for this thesis and are in essence simply extensions of conversations and discussions which had earlier developed naturally while sitting around the campfire. The case study of the campaign against the M77 extension form the core of chapters four and five in this thesis.

1.4.3 *Methodological Issues*

In recent years there has been widespread debate within the social sciences as to the different merits of qualitative and quantitative approaches to research with those who favour the qualitative approach taking a particularly militant stance. Delamont (1992) for example argues that 'if you want to get your MEd dissertation or whatever finished quickly and easily : do a straightforward questionnaire study. Qualitative research is only suitable for people who care about it, take it seriously, and are prepared for commitment'.[66] Such an argument would imply that quantitative researchers don't care about their research, don't take it seriously and are not prepared for commitment. This argument would also seem to imply that both approaches are mutually exclusive, a stance which would appear to be echoed by Sherman and Webb (1988) when they posit that 'qualitative research implies a direct concern with experience as it is "lived" or "felt" or "undergone". (In contrast "quantitative research... is indirect and abstracts and treats experiences as similar, adding or multiplying them together, or "quantifying" them)'.[67] While of course there are differences between the two approaches, particularly perhaps in relation to their philosophical foundational assumptions (ie, positivism v's interpretation, objectivism v's subjectivism etc), in practice however it is often the case that researchers combine

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[66] Delamont, S. (1992), Fieldwork in Educational Settings : Methods, Pitfalls and Perspectives, (London : Falmer Press, p.viii

both methods where for example surveys allow for open ended answers or interview transcriptions are coded and analysed in a categorical manner. Equally because each approach suffers from a number of inherent shortcomings; eg quantitative research's tendency to over generalisation, and qualitative research's tendency to non-generalisability, researchers often combine both approaches in order to offset these shortcomings.

In devising the research strategy for this thesis this researcher chose a multi-faceted methodology centred around two case studies which fit the exploratory nature of the research aims. In the Alarm UK case study quantitative methodology is employed in the form of two surveys and is thus open to the accusation of an uncritical and unthinking positivism. However survey research has a strength in that it allows for a large number of respondents to be contacted at a relatively low cost in terms of time and money, something which in this particular case study was essential if the aim of building up a sociological and political profile of Alarm UK's support base was to be achieved. Anonymous surveys also avoid the intrusiveness of qualitative research in that respondents are not put under any pressure to respond and are more likely to answer questions truthfully and thoughtfully as opposed to telling the researcher what he or she would like to hear, reacting to the moment or conforming to perceived expectations or stereotype. Equally questions asked can be designed to be as non-leading and as objective as possible and can either be of the closed variety when a definite answer is sought, or can be open questions which allow respondents space to choose their own language in expressing his or her opinions - the Alarm UK surveys combined both types of question.

The validity of the accusation of positivism depends however on the way in which survey results are interpreted; in this case they are recognised to only provide a rough 'snapshot' of Alarm UK's support base at a particular point in time. It is recognised that although there are probably certain continuities, the support base which existed in 1997 will inevitably differ from that which existed when the organisation was formed in 1990. The reliability of the Alarm UK survey results was tested by comparing results to those of similar surveys which have already been published, while their validity was tested by a process of piloting and refining the questions asked. As with all social surveys measurement error and bias cannot though

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[67] Sherman, R. & Webb, R. (eds), (1988), Qualitative Research in Education : Forms and Methods, (London : Falmer Press), p. 7

be ruled out; however the quantitative research on Alarm UK was supplemented by a number of qualitative interviews with leading activists which compliment and sustain the research findings. Equally those same activists have expressed their general agreement with the research findings. The qualitative data gained from interviews with Alarm UK activists also helps to offset the shortcomings in terms of detail which would be present if there was a sole reliance on quantitative data.

The qualitative research conducted for this thesis potentially suffers from a different set of problems to that of the quantitative research which are related to subjectivity, the process of interpretation and perhaps especially to the researcher/respondent relationship. Melucci (1996), makes three incisive points concerning the conduct of research on social movements which have an important bearing here. Firstly he argues that 'actors themselves can make sense out of what they are doing, autonomously of any evangelical or manipulative interventions of the researcher.' Secondly that 'we need to recognise that the researcher-actor relation is itself an object of observation, that is itself part of the sphere of action, and thus subject to explicit negotiation and to a contract between the parties.' And thirdly that 'we must recognise that every research practice which involves intervention in the field of action creates an artificial situation which must be explicitly acknowledged'.[68] In making these points Melucci is essentially calling for a research process which is sensitive, recognises its own limitations in pursuit of 'the truth', and which is imbued with a self-awareness and a self-reflection on the part of the engaged researcher whereby a capacity to temporarily stand apart from the research process is enabled which will allow for the possibility of subjecting the research relationship itself to scrutiny and analysis. For Melucci, 'only by taking this distance and at the same time being close to the action itself, one can observe that intense, plural and sometimes contradictory system of meanings that constitute the collective identity of a social movement'.[69]

In the close contact situations which were engendered by observing and interviewing a wide variety of anti-roads activists this researcher, with Melucci's stress on reflexivity in mind, became aware of a number of potential pitfalls for the qualitative research undertaken. One of these pitfalls which might occur is a loss of

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[68] Melucci, A. (1996), Challenging Codes : Collective Action in the Information Age, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press), p. 389
[69] ibid, p. 391

objectivity due to becoming too close to the research subject matter in the form of personal relationships formed between the researcher and activists being researched, or by becoming involved in the protests as an activist as opposed to a researcher. It was therefore necessary in conducting the research for this thesis to, as Melucci makes clear, negotiate the contract between researcher and researched from the outset in an explicit manner and to maintain the terms of the contract by this researcher keeping a certain critical distance and awareness of the artificiality of interview and observational situations. Another pitfall which might occur in the type of research undertaken is for the researcher to try to impose his or her own agenda upon the activists researched (either deliberately or inadvertedly) or for the researcher to try to interpret events and issues for the activists, thus stealing the activists narrative.

While this researcher would argue that judgement is ultimately necessary and unavoidable in the process of data interpretation, it was recognised that during the research process activists must be allowed to 'speak for themselves' as much as possible because as Melucci points out activists can make sense of their actions autonomously. This meant trying not to impose one's ideas in discussions, avoiding the asking of leading questions in interviews and being constantly aware of one's own biases in order to try to control them in the interview or participant observer situation. Moreover in the process of interpretation it was recognised that it was important to avoid simply fitting a theory to the data collected in a top down manner but rather to try to test theory against the data and therefore build theory inductively. The final pitfall which has a potential to arise in the type of research undertaken is that the researcher might inadvertedly represent the authority of the 'system'. Foucault's (1977) writings on the collusion between the social sciences and establishment power and control constitute the most powerful articulation of this problem and are grave warning to all social scientific researchers, but perhaps particularly those dealing with oppositional movements, protests and campaigns.[70] Three practical ways of attempting to avoid this problem were employed by this researcher; firstly, by guaranteeing anonymity and confidentiality to each of the activists interviewed if they so desired; secondly, by giving activists copies of their own interview transcriptions to read where possible; and thirdly by making available copies of written-up research to those activists who were interested.

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[70] For example see; Foucault, M. (1977), Discipline and Punish, (London : Allen Lane)

1.5 _Conclusion_

The transition phase to a new more militant style of protest against road-building in this country began with Alarm's London wide campaign against the London Assessment Studies in the late 1980s and was completed by the NVDA campaign involving locals and radical environmenalists against the M3 extension at Twyford Down in 1992 - after which as Porritt says 'nothing has ever quite been the same'. The sustained and widespread nature of the protests during the 1990s has brought the issue of road-building and other related environmental and transport issues into the public domain through extensive media coverage and has engendered a debate which has changed public attitudes to both the issues themselves and to the unconventional tactics used in the protests. The government, beginning with the Tories in the budget of November 1996 and continuing under Labour in the late 1990s has been forced to respond to this pressure from below by slashing its road building programmes and mooting the notion of an integrated transport policy that has less emphasis on car use. Although anti-roads protests still continue in the late 1990s the government's policy changes mean that they continue on a much more limited scale than during their peak in the mid-1990s. The protests have not however disappeared, rather they have spread and diversified to take on other issues surrounding development and the environment.

Despite their impact, the anti-roads protests of 1990s remain a very under-researched social phenomenon. The small amount of academic literature so far produced on the contemporary roads protests tends to focus on the direct action specialists associated with groupings like Earth First ! and Reclaim the Streets. This may make for 'sexy' and exciting research but it tends to paint an unbalanced and perhaps overly radical picture of the true nature of the protests which were characterised by an alliance between radical and militant environmentalists and local action groups made up of residents living in the area that would be negatively affected by the building of a new road or motorway. The research conducted for this thesis aims to contribute to redressing the balance by looking in the first case study at the Alarm UK coalition which between 1990 and 1998 formed the national umbrella organisation for local action groups opposing the government's roads programme. The second case study on the campaign against the M77 extension in Glasgow also focuses in part upon local opposition, in this instance, the working class opposition to the motorway from the surrounding council estates. Importantly both case studies also

seek to investigate the dynamics of the relationship between the direct action specialists and the local objectors thus contributing to the ultimate aim of the research for this thesis which is to provide a rounded sociological overview of the phenomena of anti-roads protesting in Britain during the 1990s.

The research for the two case studies was conducted using a multi-faceted methodology which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. In the Alarm UK case study surveys were used in conjunction with semi-structured interviews, while in the M77 case study semi-structured interviews were used in conjunction with participant observation. The aim in using a multi-faceted approach was to offset the shortcomings inherent in each approach with the strengths of the other methodological approaches used in a complimentary manner. Underlying the survey research was an understanding that the survey findings can only provide a rough indicative snapshot of what the surveys were designed to uncover, whereas underlying the interview and participant observation research was an understanding that the research process itself must be taken into account and reflected upon when in the process of researching, and in the process of analysing and interpreting the research data. Underpinning both case studies is therefore a consciousness of the limitations as well as the strengths of the methodologies employed in the research process. In the next chapter social movements theory and research is considered in order to clarify themes and questions which have helped to guide the research undertaken. This chapter will also however help to clarify the general sociological perspective from which the research data is interpreted. Such a clarification is important because in the view of this researcher it is important in the presentation of social scientific research to acknowledge not only that research's potential limitations but also that the interpretive process of writing up research is not value free but is inevitably subject to the socio-political assumptions of the researcher.

Chapter 2 : *Defining the Research on Anti-Roads Activism : Debates within Social
Movements Scholarship*

'*Social movements will continue to be of prime significance in stimulating the
sociological imagination.*... Organisations and social movements, it might be
argued, are the two ways in which reflexive appropriation of knowledge about
social life is mobilised in the modern world. In organisations, information is
systematically gathered, stored and drawn upon in the stabilising of conditions
of social reproduction. Social movements have more dynamism, and in some
ways more transformative potential, because they are specifically geared to the
achievement of novel projects, and because they set themselves against the
established order of things. If they are not always the harbingers of the future
states of affairs they announce, they are inevitably disturbing elements in the
present.... Social movements not only are sources of tension and change that
sociologists are called upon to analyse, they may identify previously
undiagnosed characteristics of, and possibilities within, a given institutional
order.'

(Giddens, A. (1987), 'Nine Theses on the Future of Sociology') [71]

2.1 *Introduction*

As Giddens intimates in the extract quoted above, social movements constitute the
most vigorous modes by which modern societies put accumulated social knowledge
about themselves into practice hence impacting upon and changing the social
reproductive and developmental trajectories of those same societies. Hence sociology
as the 'science of society' has a particular vocation to try to understand and explain
their motivations, values, modes of operation and social meaning. Indeed for some
sociologists working in the social action tradition developed primarily by Touraine,
sociology is the study of social movements as it is from the struggles of contending

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[71] Giddens, A. (1987), Nine Theses on the Future of Sociology, Social Theory and Modern Sociology,
(Oxford : Polity Press), p. 48

social movements that all social and cultural practices ultimately derive.[72] Traditionally, sociology and related disciplines within the social sciences focused mainly upon the labour movement and movements associated with various religious and political ideologies. Since the 1970s however, a large body of social research and sociological and political theory has grown up on the significance of what have come to be labelled the 'new' social movements, a generic term, which connotes the vast array of oppositional social, political and cultural groupings, currents and organisations that grew out of the flowering of New Left radicalism, student rebellion and 'counter-culture' in the late 1960s. Although the ardour of the sixties militancy was short lived, its impact on the advanced liberal democracies has been immense in that it both revitalised a variety of dormant 'participatory' ideologies like anarchism, libertarian socialism and communitarianism, as well as both signifying and contributing to the wider societal development of non-institutionalised modes of political action and the politicisation of cultural and moral issues which were hitherto considered apolitical.

For the 'new' movements which emerged from the sixties milieu – the most salient being the women's, peace, environmental, student and minority rights, struggles over identity, lifestyle, democratic participation, ecology and collective consumption have assumed more importance than the struggles over distribution and political/religious freedom which characterised the raison d'etre of the major social movements of previous generations. Thus Offe (1987), writing on the impact of social movements since the 1960s, contends that the traditional categories of socio-political analysis have become problematicised because the dichotomy between the state and civil society is under a process of steady erosion, while the delineation between 'private' and political spheres is becoming progressively blurred as political theory and practice turns ever more reflexive in a 'new paradigm of politics' that is concomitant to the onset of late capitalism.[73] The practical consequence of this is that in the contemporary era the traditional institutional channels of dialogue between state

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[72] Touraine (1987), has argued that sociology as a discipline is currently undergoing a 'crisis' that has been induced by a combination of self-inflicted structuralist stagnancy and the onslaught of post-structuralist anti-sociology. For Touraine, the only solution to this impasse is to reintroduce a reflexive historicity into sociology through its reconstruction as the action based study of social movements. For example see, Touraine, A. (1987), The Return of the Actor, (Mineapolis : University of Minnesota Press).

[73] Offe, C. (1987), Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics : Social Movements since the 1960's, in, Maier, C. S. (ed), (1987), Changing Boundaries of the Political, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press), pp. 63-64

and civil society are beginning to buckle under the weight of greater numbers of people using them to voice concerns and demands over a greater variety of issues than ever before. Moreover, the parties, institutions and traditional decision making processes of representative democracy are increasingly challenged as adequate vehicles of political dialogue and governance. The socio-cultural prominence of social movements such as the environmental movement; the myriad of 'single issue' campaigns described in the last chapter, and the recent creation of political parties like the Greens, are the most visible manifestations of this 'new politics'.

The historical periodisation of anti-roads protest in Britain outlined in the last chapter illustrated the way in which each of the four distinct phases of protest has progressively become more militant and concomitantly more difficult for state authorities to manage. This periodisation alongside the protests general affinity to environmental issues, questions of collective consumption and conflicts over the use of space, ties the contemporary anti-roads protests into the general representation of 'new' movement politics as described above. In order to further develop an understanding of that relationship this chapter will critically examine the contours of the key debates within the highly contested field of contemporary social movements theory and research. Here particular attention will be devoted to tracing the origins and development of the differences between the body of theoretical literature which is associated with the resource mobilisation approach and the body which is associated with the new social movements approach which until relatively recent moves towards rapprochement have constituted the dominant paradigms in the United States and Europe respectively. Aside from serving the useful purpose of reviewing the relevant literature, this task will help to clarify the broad theoretical postion from which this thesis as been written, while also facilitating the formulation of theoretically informed questions and themes which form the foci around which the exploratory empirical research presented in the following three chapters revolves; these questions and themes will be outlined in the conclusion to this chapter.

2.2 *The Atlantic Divide : Social Movements Theory in the United States and Europe*

Social movements are heterogeneous, fluid, dynamic, constantly evolving social collectivities that by their very nature make any attempt at systematic definition, categorisation or classification extremely difficult. The central question of what it is

that distinguishes a social movement from other forms of collective action, eg, interest groups, 'single issue' campaigns, protests, coalitions or political parties, is one that social movements scholars have spent almost as much time 'hairsplitting' about (in a manner similar to political philosophy), as they have studying and writing the social movements themselves. Much of this debate has been fuelled by the separate development of European and American sociological research traditions within this field. Indeed, since the 1970s the separation has become so acute that what can best be described as an 'Atlantic divide' has opened up, whereby the resource mobilisation perspective dominant in the United States, and the new social movements perspective dominant in Europe have become synonymous with their geographical locations. For the Americans, social movements are simply another expression of the 'normal' political processes which give rise to various competing social entities within an open pluralist democracy such as they consider their own to be – hence Cohen (1985), has described the American view of social movements as 'Clausewitzian'; ie, 'the continuation of orderly politics by other (disorderly) means'.[74] Europeans, on the other hand, view social movements as constituting historically specific modes of collective action that are discontinuous with the remit of 'normal' politics in that unconventional tactics and strategies are employed outside established political institutions with the goal of bringing about (radical) social change through the spheres of civil society and culture. Moreover, in their application, American theories operate on the micro and meso levels dealing with the 'how' of social movement mobilisation and organisation, whereas European theories address macro-structural questions of 'why' social movements should arise as collective actors at particular historical junctures (Melucci 1980).

In recent years various attempts at trans-Atlantic conceptual convergence have been made in order to try to address perceived lacunae in each of the broad sociological traditions (Canel 1992, Cohen 1985, Diani 1992, Eyerman & Jamison 1990, Klandermans & Tarrow 1988, Scott 1990, Tarrow 1991). Scott (1990), for example urges such convergence at the level of a new middle range theory because in his view American micro theories fail to address the socio-political context or ideological content of movement mobilisations while European macro theories

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[74] Cohen, J. L. (1985), Strategy or Identity : New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements, Social Research, Vol 52, No 4, Winter, p. 675

ultimately suffer from reductionism and objectivism.[75] Such a synthesis is though very difficult to achieve in practice because as Mayer (1995) argues, the two approaches begin from very different philosophical, political and methodological foundational assumptions.[76] Byrne (1997) does however go at least part of the way in achieving such a middle range synthesis with his theorisation of social movements as forming part of what he calls a 'continuum of political action'. In this theorisation centred on the study of social movements in Britain Byrne nevertheless retains what is basically a European framework. Byrne's work will be considered in the penultimate section of this chapter where it is used in conjunction with a critical evaluation of European theory.[77] For now though it is important to note that the cleavage which exists between the Americans and Europeans is no mere accident of geography, but rather stems from a variety of inter-related socio-political sources; ie, partly from the differences in the ideological and political nature of the social movements which rose to prominence on either side of the Atlantic in the 1960s and 1970s; partly from the differences which have developed historically between the two political cultures; but perhaps most significantly, partly from the different ideological and theoretical perspectives which have been salient in the respective sociological academias in the course of their uneven historical development.

2.3 *Classical American Perspectives : Theories of Collective Behaviour*

During the 1950s and 1960s sociological approaches to the study of social movements in the United States were dominated by variants of the social-psychology tradition of the Chicago School brought together under the rubric of the 'science of collective behaviour'. Key representations of this 'classical' approach are embodied in the Parsonian structural functionalism of Smelser (1962), the relative deprivation theories of Gurr (1970) and the theories of mass society as posited by Kornhauser (1959) and Arendt (1951).[78] Although each of these theoretical approaches have different

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[75] Scott, A. (1990), Ideology and the New Social Movements, (London ; Unwin Hyman), p. 129 & p. 80

[76] Mayer, M. (1995), Social Movement Research in the United States : a European Perspective, in, Lyman, S. M. (ed), (1995), Social Movements : Critiques, Concepts, Case Studies, (London : MacMillan), pp. 168-195

[77] Byrne, P. (1997), Social Movements in Britain, (London : Routledge)

[78] Smelser, N. (1962), The Theory of Collective Behaviour, (New York : Free Press); Gurr, T. (1970), Why Men Rebel, (Princeton : Princeton University Press); Kornhauser, W. (1959), The Politics of

emphases they share a common Durkhemian focus on the psychology of anomic social disconnectedness and malintegration produced by the structural strains and breakdowns of a rapidly modernising social system as being the primary motivating factor behind individual actors participation in modes of collective behaviour. For these approaches collective behaviour is therefore the expression of an irrational frustration and discontentment borne of social grievances crystallised in unconventional norm breaking forms of activity. Politics in this conception is solely of the institutionalised party political/lobby group variety and therefore activities involving collective behaviour which do not follow this pattern are held to fall outside the remit of what constitutes normal political processes. Thus social movements, protests, riots, rebellions are all analysed within the same typological framework because all unconventional modes of collective behaviour are held to emanate from the same source and to be equivalent to one another in form and content.

Following Le Bon's (1896) assumptions, collective behaviour approaches preceive the individual as being caught up in the 'hysteria' of the crowd which is understood to move in the manner of a contagious disease via crude rumour, innuendo and solidifying counter-norm ideologies (eg, fascism and communism) in a transitory life cycle from spontaneous collective rebellion to the constitution of unstable social entities which flourish for short periods until the system (if directed effectively) subsumes them to once again return to an integrated equilibrium.[79] Mayer (1995), in her critical commentary points to the two central underlying philosophical and political assumptions which underpin these theories; firstly, that because modernisation will in due course benefit all sections of society such resistance is doomed to failure if modernising elites properly defend existing institutions; and secondly, that such resistance is necessarily irrational and ultimately irrelevent to the developmental trajectory of modern society because the political system approximates the pluralist ideal of an open democratic polity. Thus as Mayer argues, for classical American theories of collective behaviour, 'extra-institutional forms of action can only be a matter of marginal, depriveliged groups who lack the cognitive or temporal

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Mass Society, (New York : Free Press); Arendt, H. (1951), The Origins of Totalitarianism, (New York : Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)
[79] Le Bon, G. (1896), The Crowd : a Study of the Popular Mind, (London : Fischer Unwin)

resources to use the access'.[80] The dominance of the classical theoretical paradigm in the 1950s and 1960s clearly illustrates the widespread acceptance and influence that Daniel Bell's (1960) 'end of ideology' thesis enjoyed at the time in social scientific academia and indeed also points to the conservative 'cold war' mentality of much of the American mainstream sociology of the period whose main concern it would appear was to defend the social and political status quo.

The social upheavals and conflicts of the 1960s were however to radically challenge and expose the frailties of American classical theory and to engender no less than a paradigmatic shift in sociological approaches to the study of social movements in the USA. With the advent of the black civil rights movement in the early 1960s, and more importantly with the rapid growth of the New left, students and anti-Vietnam war movements across the western world in the later 1960s, it became increasingly apparent to a new generation of American sociologists, many of whom were themselves movement activists, that classical approaches to understanding social movements were fundamentally flawed and should thus be rejected. There were three major reasons for this rejection; first of all, by the second half of the decade it had become obvious that many of the actors participating in social movement activities were hardly the anomic misfits and deviants portrayed by classical functionalist theory - rather they were often (although not always) the young, highly educated sons and daughters of the middle classes. Secondly, the notion of social grievance as the prime motivating factor was deemed inadequate because clearly grievances have existed in all societies across time and space. Therefore the question of the timing of the emergence of social movements, and in particular the movements of the 1960s at a time of historically unprecedented material affluence needed to be addressed – this was recognised to be a key question that classical theory simply did not have the tools to answer adequately. Thirdly, and related to the latter point was the fact that classical theory in deeming social movements irrational could not properly account for their organisational structure or their ultimate, often very rationally defined objectives.

With the dawn of the 1970s came the advent of yet more social movements in advanced western societies like the USA - the women's and environmental movements being the most prominent; and these merely served to compound the inadequacies of classical theory still further. In essence, as Jenkins (1983), argues, the

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[80] Mayer, M. (1995), op cited, p. 170

movements of the 1960s and their successors in the 1970s challenged the asumptions of classical theories 'by providing a rich array of experience and elisting the active sympathies of an enlarged pool of analysts', and in doing so 'stimulated a shift in theoretical assumptions and analytic emphases that eventually became formalised in the resource mobilisation theory of social movements'.[81]

2.4 *Contemporary American Perspectives : Resource Mobilisation Theory*

The inevitable reaction which began in the 1960s against the classical collective behaviour paradigm took the form of the development of what has come to be termed resource mobilisation theory (RMT), a body of theory which as its name implies focuses upon the dynamics of the organisation and mobilisation of social movement resources. Zald (1992), one of the chief exponents of this approach, summarises the core components of RMT as follows :

> 'First, behaviour entails costs, therefore grievances or deprivation do not automatically or easily translate into social movement activity, especially high risk social movement activity. The weighing of costs and benefits, no matter how primitive, implies choice and rationality at some level.... Second, mobilisation of resources may occur from within the aggrieved group but also from many other sources. Third, resources are mobilised and organised; thus organising activity is critical. Fourth, the costs of participating may be raised or lowered by state and societal supports or repression. And fifth.... there is no direct or one to one correspondence between amount of mobilisation and movement success.'[82]

Here there is a clear break with the classical approach's stress upon psycho-social processes, feelings of deprivation or grievance incurred by social strain, and the irrationality of collective behaviour. Instead grievances are held to be a common and constant feature of all societies and therefore acting upon them through social

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[81] Jenkins, C. (1983), Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements, Annual Review of Sociology Online, p. 528
@ http://www.jstor.ac.uk/fegi-bin/jstor...b3a005071e57&dpi=3&PAGE=0&displayChunk=10

movement activities is dependent upon strategic decision making that implies the rational consideration of possible negative costs and positive benefits of participation. Crucial to the process of social movement mobilisation is however the availability of unevenly distributed organisational resources which impact heavily upon the individual's decision of whether or not to participate.

RMT and the body of empirical research which it has inspired thus centres upon the effectiveness of the way in which social movement organisations accumulate, maintain, structure, employ and deploy their resources. Canel (1992), describes resources as taking both material and non-material forms and 'include money, organisational facilities, labour, means of communication.... legitimacy, loyalty, authority, moral commitment, solidarity'; while mobilisation, 'is the process by which a group assembles resources and places them under collective control and.... (are) employed for the purpose of pursuing group goals'.[83] In the conception of RMT, society is perceived a priori as consisting of a plurality of grievance defined aggregated groups that approximate latent social movements. Only though when these groups are stimulated by contact with organisational resources do they become active social movements. Hence RMT conceives of social movements in purely organisational terms because no matter how loose or rudimentary that organisation is, it is nevertheless the defining integral feature of social movement mobilisations without which they could not take place. From this perspective the social movements active in the period from the 1960s onwards came into being because new organisational resources became available to particular aggrieved groupings for the first time.

According to RMT, the individual comes into contact with organisational resources within what are termed in the literature as either 'micro-mobilisation contexts' (McCarthy et al 1988) or 'mobilising structures' (Tarrow 1994). These are settings or situations, where interactions take place with members or leaders of a given social movement organisation, eg, a trade union meeting in relation to the labour movement. Micro-mobilisation contexts can therefore be defined as both a key source of organisational resources; ie, movement activists and their related skills and

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[82] Zald, M. N. (1992), Looking Forward to Look Back – Reflections on the Past and Future of the Resource Mobilisation Research Program, in, Morris, A. D. & Mueller, C. M. (eds), (1992), Frontiers in Social Movement Theory, (New Haven & London : Yale University Press), pp. 330-331

[83] Canel, E. (1992), New Social Movement Theory and Resource Mobilisation Theory : The Need for Integration, in, Caroll, W. K. (ed), (1992), Organising Dissent, (Canada : Garamond Press), p. 40

material assets, and as constituting 'a communication network or infrastructure'. Indeed as McCarthy et al (1985) argue, it is 'the strength and breadth' of these micro-mobilisation contexts 'which largely determine the pattern, speed and extent of movement expansion'.[84] Leaders, or what McCarthy and Zald (1977) have called 'movement entrepeneurs' also hold an especially important place within RMT. This is because they possess the special qualities and experience required to utilise resources and hence make the most of opportunities which allow the formation of social movements from the ever present pool of social grievances. Leaders are usually established community figures prior to mobilisation, tend to be the founding members of social movement organisations and are the prime movers in driving a mobilisation towards its goals. In the contemporary era leaders are also often drawn from the new middle class because it is this class which possesses the resource skills most pertinent to operating within the media of communications and information technology.[85]

Movement goals are conceived by RMT as being expressly political in form because mobilisations necessarily involve a contest over the exercise of power with other mobilised groups. Moreover they are also political because such contests are primarily orientated towards gaining access to, or acceptance within, the polity and established social institutions where power over the distribution of resources is concentrated. Social movement mobilisations occur because certain social groupings with specific grievances have been blocked or excluded from making use of the usual channels of dialogue between state and civil society to seek redress. Instead they rationally make use of whatever organisational resources become available to make their demands heard, conversely if there are no such resources then a mobilisation will not take place. In RMT, because social movements are merely aiming for inclusion so as to participate more fully they do not however pose a challenge to the legitimacy of the liberal democratic political system, rather they are an integral safety valve which ensures its continued existence. The success of a social movement is therefore generally judged on the criteria of how professionally a social movement organisation is managed, the size of its resource base and how much influence it has with political elites in gaining desired policy changes and access to increased resources.

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[84] McAdam, D. & McCarthy, J. D. & Zald, M. D. (1988), Social Movements, in, Smelser, N. J. (1988), (ed), Handbook of Sociology, (Newbury Park : Sage), p. 718

[85] see, McCarthy, J. D. & Zald, M. N. (1977), Resource Mobilisation and Social Movements : a Partial Theory, American Journal of Sociology, No 82.

Over time a number of theoretical variants have developed within the resource mobilisation paradigm of which the historically orientated political process model associated with McAdam (1982, 1988), Tilly (1975, 1978) and Tarrow (1989, 1994) is the most significant. Unlike the original model (eg, McCarthy & Zald 1973),[86] which tends to emphasise the necessity of (and reliance upon) the appropriation of organisational and political resources which are largely under the external control of elite social groups for social movement mobilisation, the political process model argues that indigenous internal organisational resources and mobilising structures must also exist if a successful mobilisation is to occur. Such resources are held to take the form of prior existing institutions as in McAdam's (1982) arguments concerning the importance of indigenous black organisations, eg churches, colleges, pressure groups etc for the mobilisation of the black civil rights movement in the 1960's. Or they may also be constituted by the more mundane aspects of bureaucratic organisation like the creation of a formal constitution, authoritative office bearers/leaders and a membership list which Gamson's (1975) research on fifty-three 'challenger' organisations in US history between 1800 and 1945, found was a necessary prerequisite for groups to initiate themselves prior to mobilisation, if success is to be achieved.[87]

The other key innmovation of the political process model is in its stress upon the need for favourable 'political opportunity structures' to be in place if a mobilisation is to be successful. Tarrow (1994), defines these structures as the 'consistent − but not necessarly formal, permanent or national − dimensions of the political environment which either encourage or discourage people from using collective action'.[88] Shifting political biases within the state and within key administrative decision making institutions therefore have an important role to play in this encouraging and discouraging process because at certain historical junctures they may be more open or more closed to particular types of social movement demand than to others. Hence social movements go through historical 'cycles of protest' which may wax and wane depending upon the nature of the political opportunity structure.

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[86] see, McCarthy, J. D. & Zald, M. N. (1973), The Trend of Social Movements in America : Professionalisation and Resource Mobilisation, (Morristown, New Jersey : General Learning Press). This book constitutes what is probably the definitive statement of resource mobilisation theory.
[87] see, McAdam, D. (1982), Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970, (Chicago ; University of Chicago Press); Gamson, W. A. (1975), The Strategy of Social Protest, (Homewood : Dorsey Press)

Tilly (1986) has used a similar framework to show how historically the 'action repetoire' of collective actions and political protests have altered with modernisation, the growth of civil society and the concomitant shifting structures of political opportunity. Thus contemporary types of collective action, eg, strikes, demonstrations, electoral rallies, public meetings, etc differ markedly in form (but not their rational content) from the food riots, tax rebellions and appeals to paternal authority which defined the pre-democratic era.[89] Equally, Tarrow (1994) has illustrated how the most successful types of innovative collective action employed within a given 'cycle of protest' solidify over time into just such a repertoire of action that is used again and again by the social actors engaging in movement and protest activities. This is a logic Tarrow also extends to the way in which movements frame their ideologies and demands to justify their actions and mobilise activists.[90] The notion of political opportunity structures is the main aspect of current American social movements theory to find favour amongst European social movements theorists (eg, Kitschelt 1986, Rootes 1992). To give just one example, Rootes (1992) usefully applies the concept to account for the failure of a radical 'new politics' party to achieve electoral success in Britain – something which he argues stems largely from the closed first-past-the-post electoral system which maintains the political hegemony of the two traditional parties of left and right.[91]

Whatever the particular emphasis, a cost/benefit conception of rationality lies at heart of all theories operating within the parameters of the resource mobilisation paradigm. This conception is derived from Olson's (1965) original application of rational choice theory to the dynamics of 'the logic of collective action' as displayed in the dynamics of the economic interest groups he was researching at the time. Olson's starting point is a utilitarian model of rationality which assumes that the instrumental maximisation of individual's self-interest will always take priority in the process of decision making. Thus in relation to collective or group activities it will only be rational for an individual to participate if he or she will accrue benefits that outweigh the costs, and importantly, if those benefits can only be attained by participation. This type of benefit Olson termed 'selective' and stands in contrast to

[88] Tarrow, S. (1994), Power in Movement – Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics, (New York : Cambridge University Press), p. 18
[89] see, Tilly, C. (1986), The Contentious French, (Cambridge : Harvard University Press)
[90] Tarrow, S. (1994), op cited, pp. 156-157

'collective benefits' which are public goods that can be accrued as a result of group activities whether or not the individual concerned actually participates. The carrot of collective benefits is therefore not enough its own to persuade individuals to participate, rather selective benefits must be on offer if the individual is not to 'free-ride' and attempt to benefit without contributing.[92]

Olson's theory constituted an important cornerstone in the development of the resource mobilisation approach because it created a foundational basis on which to emphasise the rationality of participation in social movement activities. Moreover, as Zald (1991) points out, Olson alerted resource mobilisation theorists to the 'wide disparity between the distribution of beliefs in favour of a given collective condition, and the number of people who acted on those beliefs,' and he also stimulated thinking 'about interests, groups identification and value preferences'.[93] In short then, Olson provided much of the stimulus for the shift to the meso-level of organisational analysis that is so central to the resource mobilisation approach.

In general however Olson's approach has been applied critically and with reservations by resource mobilisation theorists and researchers for as Klandermans (1991) argues, 'Olson can indeed explain why individuals do not participate in collective action; but why they sometimes do participate, even in the absence of selective incentives, remained a vexing problem'.[94] Olson's narrow materialistic emphasis has tended to be viewed as the main source of this problem and therefore both the categories of costs and benefits have been subject to numerous redefinitions which attempt to incorporate expressive dimensions while retaining the essential structure of his analytical framework. Some theorists have thus argued that far from being costs, participation and commitment are benefits in themselves (Hirschman (1982)) while others have argued that psychological and social benefits must be included alongside the material in the understanding of selective benefits (Oberschall (1973)). Equally, empirical research on social movements has shown that for some activists the commitment to a collective benefit, eg, world peace, far outweighs the costs entailed or the probability of success (Klandermans and Oegama (1987)), and

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[91] Rootes, C. (1992), The New Politics and the New Social Movements – Accounting for British Exceptionalism, European Journal of Political Research, No 22, pp. 171-191
[92] see, Olson, M. (1965), The Logic of Collective Action, (Cambridge : Harvard University Press)
[93] Zald, M, N. (1991), The Continuing Vitality of Resource Mobilisation Theory : Response to Herbert Kitschelt's Critique, in, Rucht, D. (ed), (1991), Research on Social Movements : the State of the Art in Western Europe and the USA, (C Verlag : Westview Press), p. 350

that many activists recognise that if everyone took the position of unmitigated instrumental self-interest in decision making then the goal of the attainment of collective benefits would simply never make it onto the political agenda (Fireman & Gamson (1979)). All these redefinitions and redefinements achieve however is to displace the utilitarian logic of Olson to a non-material level because implictly they retain the notion that social movement organisations must be able to offer at least some selective benefits, whether they be expressive or material, if they are to mobilise their resources effectively.

The instrumental conception of rationality which lies at the heart of RMT means that as Scott (1990) points out it conceives of social movement organisations as operating under four specific restraints and imperatives : 1) The necessity of providing divisible private benefits as well as indivisible collective ones places high organisational costs upon collective bodies. 2) The search for resources such as external funding becomes a major organisational preoccupation. 3) The organisation is restricted in the demands and sacrifices it can realistically expect of its members. 4) Occasional low cost/low risk tactics ought to be preferable to frequent high cost/high risk activities.[95] These restraints and imperatives imply that all social movements must inevitably follow a trajectory of 'maturation' leading to eventual professionalisation, institutionalisation and ultimately to deradicalisation, if they are to aquire the resources to survive, let alone succeed in their aims. These imperatives also mean that social movements will tend to be homogenous centralising bodies which have a predilection to concentration upon single issues and the forging of alliances with mainstream political forces, as opposed to the more risky strategy of taking on a wider remit or seeking wholesale social transformation.. For RMT realism as opposed idealism, and reform as opposed to revolution, are therefore the watchwords of all social movement organisations because they must follow the same narrow logic of the maximisation of self interest as the individuals do who join them.

[94] Klandermans, B. (1991), New Social Movements and Resource Mobilisation : The European and American Approach Revisited, in, Rucht, D. (ed), (1991), ibid, p. 25
[95] Scott, A. (1990), op cited, p. 112

2.4.1 *A Critical Evaluation of the Resource Mobilisation Model*

RMT's contribution to understanding social movements has generally been rejected by European social movements theorists because although it importantly directs attention to the organisational and strategic difficulties which social movements face when mobilising, and indeed to the power of motivating factors involving self-interest, its methodological individualist assumptions causes it to have a very narrow and impoverished conception of human nature/human rationality and to simply ignore uncomfortable questions of ideology, values, identity, class, structure, agency, culture and history. The specific weaknesses of RMT have been well documented by commentators working from a variety of different theoretical positions (eg, Byrne (1997), Canel (1992), Cohen (1985), Cohen & Arato (1992), Kitschelt (1991), Piven & Cloward (1995), Mayer (1995), Scott (1990)). What follows is an elaborated amalgamation of these critiques (alternatives will be considered in the next section on European theories).

Firstly : RMT suffers from a restrictive and distorted view of human rationality. For RMT human nature is governed solely by the strategic calculation of self interest. This conception views society as being composed of atomised and isolated possessive individuals in competition with one another and therefore excludes the notion that collective action could be motivated by altruistic concerns or any sense of solidarity and commonality. Individuals are defined only by their self-interested actions as opposed to their interactions with others or the power relationships which are determined by macro-social structures. Such a limited viewpoint cannot adequately account for the solidaristic identity orientated processes by which the aggregated groups necessary for social movements to come into existence are formed. Nor indeed can it really account for even the elementary components of social life because its precepts preclude the existence of the other non-instrumental form of rationality (eg, communicative rationality – see Habermas (1984, 1987)) which makes society and community possible. In considering RMT one is reminded of Mrs Thatcher's famous statement that 'there is no such thing as society, only individuals and their families' – the resource mobilisation approach thus has a tendency to reproduce the logic of the market.

Secondly, RMT does not recognise any substantive role for ideology or values in movement mobilisations. This problem is related to the latter - principles, ideals,

beliefs and values are simply peripheral issues for RMT because pragmatic self-interest always wins out. Yet if ideology does not matter then social movement activities ultimately become meaningless and cannot be differentiated from one another or from other forms of collective action. As in classical theories of collective behaviour where all unconventional forms of collective action are reducible to one another because of their irrationality and reactivity, for RMT all forms of collective action must also be reducible to one another but in this case because they are simply instrumental expressions of self-interest. In fact there is even less differentiation in RMT than in the classical theories of collective behaviour because there appears to be no way of distinguishing the conventional from the unconventional. Thus there is no difference between social movements, interest groups, single issue campaigns or even riots. For example Piven and Cloward (1995) note that McCarthy et al's (1988) extensive typology of social movements includes forms of collective action ranging from from mass civil disobedience to burial societies and 'PTA's'.[96]

Thirdly, RMT in its most unreconstructed forms has an elitist view of politics which reproduces the internal logic of functionalism.[97] RMT stands in an almost diametrically opposed position to Marx's conception of 'self-emancipation'. Oppressed and excluded social groups if they are to mobilise successfully must seek outside aid in the form of resources from elite social groupings and government agencies. Organisers or leaders have a special position here as only they have the skills required to acquire and manipulate resources effectively. Social movements engage in a form of politics which is conceived of narrowly as the contention for power within the polity, and for influence with elites operating within policy making institutions. Thus they must accept the rules of the 'game' as handed down by the political elites, something which in turn means an acceptance of the realities of the political situation in which they find themselves and a limitation of goals accordingly. A wider conception of politics, for example, one which includes the less visible cultural realm, is simply not even considered. In RMT, social movements are aiming for inclusion and integration into the political system – they are not out to challenge it. In classical/functionalist theories of collective behaviour the system is aiming to

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[96] Piven, F. F. & Cloward, R. A. (1995), Collective Protest : a Critique of Resource Mobilisation Theory, in, Lyman, S. M. (ed), (1995), op cited, p, 140

[97] By 'unreconstructed forms' is meant the original McCarthy/Zald model and its variants – as opposed to the more sophisticated and progressive 'political process' model and its variants as principally developed by Tarrow, Tilly and McAdam.

assimilate social movements in order to restore equilibrium. Despite differences over the question of rationality both theories view integration as the ultimate goal.

Fourthly, RMT does not stand up to comparative empirical scrutiny. Kitschelt's (1991), brief review and bibliography illustrates that a number of in-depth research case studies of social movements have been conducted within the parameters of the resource mobilisation paradigm; he notes however that they tend to be limited in their scope and generalisability to the US context.[98] Mayer (1995) takes this form critique further arguing that in the US only particular types of movement fit the model which RMT sets out for the 'more submerged' activities of anti-nuclear, women's groups and ecological groups 'defy the typical pattern of the 'dominant' SMO'.[99] Equally Byrne (1997), in his commentary on social movements in the British context argues that there are a variety of social movement organisations and groupings working in the UK arena which simply do not 'fit the mould' of American theory. Good examples here are radical feminists, the radical direct action wing of the Green movement and even the more mainstream Green Party, none of which have compromised their values, moved away from participation in 'high risk' direct action campaigns or abandoned their loose networking style of organisation in order to gain access to, or acceptance within the political mainstream.[100] These groupings, according to the critique of RMT developed by the theorists mentioned above should have folded long ago because they have not followed the rational pattern demanded by the realist imperatives of collective action in a pluralist democratic society.

The last critique; ie, that RMT is vulnerable to comparison, is the most debatable of the four key forms of critique outlined above. For example, Foweraker (1995), has argued that to confine RMT to 'the confines of central capitalist society' is 'shortsighted'.[101] Rather he advocates the cautious use RMT, and in particular its more sophisticated political process/political opportunity structure variant to analyse the operation of social movements in Latin America, a context which could hardly be more different to that where the theory is usually applied. Foweraker posits that the political practice of social movements in Latin America is one which has illustrated a consistent 'disposition to negotiate with the state.... to get things done, or get

[98] Kitschelt, H. (1991), Resource Mobilisation Theory : a Critique, in, Rucht, D. (ed), (1991), op cited, p. 328

[99] Mayer, M. (1995), op cited, p. 179

[100] Byrne, P. (1997), op cited, pp. 169-165

[101] Foweraker, J. (1995), Theorizing Social Movements, (London : Pluto Press), p. 35

demands met'. Moreover, if a social movement has failed 'to get some kind of material response' this has 'nearly always led to demobilisation'. Moreover he makes the telling point that in Latin America the collective benefits gained by social movements, even at the cost of compromising with what are often authoritarian state regimes in terms of norms and values far outweigh the costs of not compromising at all.[102]

While the latter critique outlined above is particularly questionable, and critique number three is most applicable to the unreconstructed McCarthy & Zald form of RMT, what the different critiques outlined above do indicate is that RMT suffers from a variety of flaws in its approach to understanding social movements. What is surprising then is that it should have had such resonance in sociological academia in the United States over the last twenty to thirty years. One obvious reason is that social movements theorists and researchers working in this paradigm clearly wanted to disassociate themselves from the unsustainable conclusions of classical theories, but why they chose to go down the narrow road of rational choice theory as opposed to looking towards the broad European traditions which as will become clear are rooted in Marxism and Weberianism, is something that requires further explanation. Here the uneven historical development of different intellectual traditions on either side of the Atlantic has a significant role to play because while developments of Marx and Weber had secured footholds within European sociological academia prior to the sixties radicalisation, American academia was only just beginning to move out of an era where with a few notable exceptions (eg, C Wright Mills) the high point of Parsonian structural functionalism had been reached, and all other theoretical traditions had been smothered in its wake. RMT as has been argued above is at one and the same time a rejection of functionalism and a development of it.

The influence of Parsons was however not the only factor at work; Mayer (1995) argues that one of the key reasons for such a narrow focus was the research context in which RMT was developed. Resource mobilisation theorists viewed the social movements of the 1960's as being essentially orientated towards the extension of the basic concepts of liberal pragmatism which dominated American public life and therefore they downplayed the ideological content of movement mobilisations.[103] This argument however somewhat lets RMT of the hook because there were a number of

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[102] ibid, p. 76, 78 & pp. 88-89

[103] Mayer, M. (1995), op cited, p. 173

groupings operating within major social movements in the United States in the 1960's that plainly did not have an orientation towards liberal pragmatism, eg, the Black Power Movement and the Black Panthers, and the revolutionary elements which constituted the left wing of the student movement organisation the S.D.S. (Students for a Democratic Society). Therefore much hinges upon the social movements which researchers chose to base their theory upon, ie, the black civil rights movement, the ecology movement and the anti-Vietnam War protest movement. This is something which in itself reveals a certain ideological bias towards the more mainstream and less challenging type of movement (although of course each of these movements contained radical currents).

Mayer's other arguments which centre around American political culture are however more persuasive. The United States she argues, has always produced a steady stream of self-limiting single issue movements, interest groups and reform movements which have co-existed with social movement organisations in the pursuit of integration into the political mainstream or the furnishment of civil rights – on the other hand movements of a revolutionary or radical nature have always been more marginalised, especially in the post-war period. Moreover the hegemonic political rhetoric of American society is one which strongly encourages democratic expectations, something which feeds into the high degree of belief and activity surrounding self-reliance, communal self-regulation and civic voluntarism. Mayer notes of course that the other effect of this is to help to maintain sharp disparities of wealth and power in US society. Finally, she also points to the way in which an all-pervasive entrepeneurial ethos guides the practice of all collective bodies in their drive to attract members and to get their message across – here the manipulation of the media in one way or another plays a key role even for the most counter-cultural of social movements. Each of these factors Mayer argues, has fed into the construction of a utilitarian social movements theory in the United States which 'is extremely self-referential', and which indeed can afford to be because there is an ample academic market for this type of work and therefore there is no need to take on board the international dimension.[104]

The problematic nature of the resource mobilisation approach to understanding social movements which in particular stems from methodological individualist

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[104] ibid, pp. 186-89

assumptions about rationality, and its lack of consideration for the impact of values and ideology, makes it a problematic theoretical approach when conducting sociological research in this field. In this thesis RMT is therefore generally rejected in favour of European approaches which work with a different set of presuppositions and definitions. While however RMT is rejected as a general approach it is nevertheless accepted that if considered more as a set of analytical tools than as a theoretical model, then it does contain a number of useful concepts which might be fruitfully applied to the thesis subject matter of the anti-roads protests in contemporary Britain. Here the political process notions of political opportunity structures, repertoires of collective action and the framing of collective action, might prove fruitful areas of investigation. Moreover RMT poses important reminders to ask questions about the role of organisation and resources and the motivating factor of self-interest which also need to be answered in relation to the anti-roads protests. These aspects of RMT will be returned to in the conclusion to this chapter where the questions and thematic foci which inform the research for this thesis are framed.

2.5 *Contemporary European Approaches : Theories of the New Social Movements*

In European sociology Marxism had always been a significant but subordinate bedfellow to Durkheimian and Weberian influenced theory and research, but with the generalised sixties radicalisation which saw the flourishing of a variety of new oppositional movements, and in particular the revolutionary events of May 68 in France and the upturn in industrial conflict that occurred in its wake throughout Europe in the early 1970s, it went through a process of revitalisation that secured a strong position in sociological academia, the wider social scientific/cultural academic community and importantly within the contemporary social movements themselves. This renewal was aided by the exploration of new and exciting theoretical and critical avenues which stood in various degrees of opposition to the Stalinised formulaic dogma that had deformed and debilitated the development of Marxism's engagement with the vagaries of the capitalist world since the 1930s. Equally, it also often involved an unabashed engagement with, or indeed appropriation of, ideas from philosophical, scientific, psychological, anthropological and social theories which were ostensibly located within the realm of bourgeois thought and science. Most notable amongst these new avenues were those opened up by New left theorists like

Marcuse and other members of the Frankfurt School whose neo-Marxist inspired critical theory was 'rediscovered', Sartre's innovative if unhappy marriage of Marxism and existentialism, Althusser's development of 'scientific' structural Marxism, and in Britain, the eclectic and often ground-breaking socio-economic, cultural and political criticism of the leftist intellectual coterie surrounding the 'New Left Review' and 'Socialist Register' journals.

These theoretical developments naturally stimulated the field of sociological social movements scholarship which until the late 1960s had been limited to the concerns central to the classical schools of sociology. Marxists had therefore traditionally focused upon theorising the capital/labour dialectic and studies of different aspects of the labour movement, Weberians had undertaken comparative analyses of religious and nationalist movements, while Durkheimians in a similar vein to their American Parsonian counterparts concentrated on the problem of system integration. The new varients of Marxism and new left thinking thus became a guiding light in the genesis of a body of theory and research for which the social movements active in the contemporary period became a benchmark. European sociologists thus began to look at the new social conflicts within the context of the contradictions of capitalism. Focus was therefore directed to questions relating to changes in the structure of post-war capitalism and the relationship therein between those changes and the timing of the emergence of the 'new' movements of the sixties and seventies, and the re-emergence of the 'old' labour movement as a militant oppositional force.

By the late 1970s however, the revolutionary hopes of the previous decade had begun to fade as western capitalist states and their ruling classes first retrenched and then under the guidance of conservative governments went on the offensive with the introduction of neo-liberal economic policies and the cultivation of hedonistic consumerism in the 1980s. Concomitant to this 'carnival of reaction' came the fragmentation and deradicalisation of the social movements, both 'old' and 'new', in which so many activists, intellectuals and workers had placed their faith. Identity and difference replaced equality and solidarity as the movements buzzwords while the brief flowering of Marxism wilted (in particular its Althusserian incarnation) under the glare of the inter-related critiques developed by post-structuralist philosophy and postmodern social and cultural theory, which especially to large numbers of those

working in cultural and social scientific academia seemed to capture the contemporary mood of pessimism and cynicism more accurately.

In the late 1990s, the heterogeneous corpus of European social movements scholarship in all its contradictions and internal debates amply reflects the changes in cultural mood, political tempo and social theoretic fashion which have occurred since the 1960s. Today's theory and research is thus broadly divided between thinkers who are influenced to varying degrees by Marxism, Frankfurt critical theory, neo-Weberianism and post-modernism. While these divisions run deep and particularly in terms of arguments surrounding class, modernity and the basis on which to build an emancipatory politics, European approaches can nevertheless be bracketed together because of a shared disposition towards understanding the 'new' social movements as historical actors which have been brought into being by structural alterations in the nature of advanced capitalism.

For new social movements theorists late 20th century capitalism is qualitatively different from the industrial capitalism which existed in the first half of the century. Technological advancement combined with mass education and the creation of new regulatory state institutions in the form of welfare and local government bureaucracies, and the growing importance of knowledge production, information services and media communications has engendered new social classes, and new social actors in the form of the 'new' movements which present a much more fragmented picture of social reality than Marx's conception of 'a bi-polar world characterised by epochal struggle between two competing historical forces – wage labour and capital, proletariat and bourgeoisie, socialism and capitalism.'[105] In the literature this new stage in capitalist development is variously described as late, monopoly, multi-national, post-modern or post-industrial capitalism depending upon the particular emphasis of the individual theorist involved (Beck 1992, Castells 1977, 1978, 1997, Crook et al 1992, Frankel 1987, Gorz 1982, Habermas 1976, 1981, 1987, Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Offe 1984, 1985, 1987, Melucci 1989, 1996, Touraine 1974, 1981). Thus although their conclusions may differ, and may indeed differ significantly depending upon their ideological position, European theoreticians and researchers of social movements share a common starting point in their focus on macro-structural change.

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[105] Boggs, C. (1986), Social Movements and Political Power : Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West, (Philidelphia : Temple University Press), p. 57

2.5.1 *Marxist Theory : Castells and Urban Social Movements*

Marxism's engagement with the new social movements forms the centre piece around which much of subsequent European theorising and critical debate in this area of scholarship revolves whether it be in the reception, adaption, reconstruction or rejection of Marxist ideas. It is necessary therefore to give Marxist theory due consideration before moving on to look at the contributions of other rival perspectives. With the appearence of the 'new' social movements in the 1960's and 1970s, Marxism was posed the serious problem of how to reconcile class politics with new conflicts that did not fit the classic pattern or profile of working class struggle. As Eyerman (1984) notes, 'for historical materialism, the new social movements are really new, they appear outside the capital-labour dichotomy and, to be analysed and correctly understood, must be related to it'.[106] For some on the Marxist left the response was to dismiss the new movements as a mere petty bourgeois phenomenon which was ultimately irrelevant to the outcome of the class struggle. However, the alternative non-workerist response which was to find particular favour amongst Marxists working in social scientific academia was to view the appearence of the new movements as adding new dimensions to the class struggles over distribution and ownership which have animated capitalism since its inception (Castells 1975, 1977, 1978, 1979, Miliband 1989, 1990, 1994, Poulantzas 1980, Williams 1983, 1989).

Castells' research and theoretical work of the mid to late 1970s is probably the most systematic and best known of Marxist analyses to take an inclusive approach to understanding the nature of the new movements. Under the influence of Althusserian structuralism Castells' starting point is what he famously terms 'the urban question', whose theoretical object he defines as 'the organisation of the means of collective consumption at the basis of the daily life of all social groups : housing, education, health, culture, commerce, transport etc'.[107] For Castells, just as the factory lies at the heart of the process of capitalist production, the city lies at the heart of the process whereby the labour power central to the latter's profitable operation is reproduced. In the era of monopoly capitalism where the competition and concentration of capitals has reached new heights of intensity it is necessary for such reproduction to be achieved in an efficient manner and therefore basic human needs must be met at the

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[106] Eyerman, R. (1984), Social Movements and Social Theory, Sociology, Vol 18, No1, p.73

[107] Castells, M. (1978), City, Class and Power, (London : MacMillan), p. 3

material level. Private capital cannot however meet these needs on its own as they are largely unprofitable and so the state must intervene on a massive scale. Thus under monopoly capitalism the reproduction of labour power is accomplished through the state provision and administration of essential means of collective consumption within the boundaries of urban metropolitan centres where large populations are spatially concentrated. Aside from increased productive efficiency the 'urban situation' also allows the state to increasingly regulate the lives of workers outside the hours they are engaged in disciplines of production; ie, 'its role as investor in the economic sphere and as administrator in the technical and political spheres.... enable(s) the state to act as the real planner of the daily lives of the masses, and under the guise of 'organising space', it is really concerned with predetermining how everyone should spend their time'.[108] However, while the 'urban situation' solves certain problems for monopoly capitalism it also creates new ones in the form of specifically urban contradictions which give rise to urban social movements.

Castells argues that the key contradiction which lies at the heart of the urban situation arises out of the inbuilt tension between the allocation of resources to the needs of the productive and profitable industrial sector of the economy and to the needs of the non-productive and hence non-profitable sector of collective consumption. The state's main source of finance is taxation and lending but because both are subject to restraints and limits, fiscal crisis is endemic to the system. The state is thus forced to constantly cut public spending because although both sectors are vital to the system the productive sector must take priority due to its profitability and is therefore able to siphon off resources whenever economic needs dictate. Naturally this causes conflicts to arise in the urban environment where over time the needs of both sectors have intensified and where the local state's administration of collective needs has been increasingly subject to the battle for democratic accountability. Castells (1977), puts the argument like this : 'Public consumption.... becomes simultaneously an indispensable element for the functioning of the system, a permanent objective of workers demands and a deficit sector of the capitalist economy'.[109] A further contradiction arises from the individual's private pursuit of better standards of living and quality of life and the collective manner in which this

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[108] Castells, M. (1977), The Class Struggle and Urban Contradictions, in, Cowley, J. & Kaye, A. & Mayo, M. & Thompson, M. (eds), Community or Class Struggle ?, (London : Stage One), p. 44
[109] ibid, p. 43

process is actually administered. Thus because the means of collective consumption are managed by public authorities, the entire urban arena becomes politicised since the organisation of schools, hospitals, housing and transportation etc are fundamental determinants of everyday life.

It is important to note that for Castells the politicisation of urban contradictions does not necessarily result in forms of working class struggle – this depends entirely on the issue at stake and certain issues may even draw sections of the middle class into conflict with the state. Because urban social movements do not develop at the point of production they may therefore develop as broad alliances of anti-capitalist classes rather than through the working class on its own. Such 'collective consumption trade unionism' Castells argues can involve the great majority of people in the struggle to gain progressive reforms under capitalism. However in order to become truly revolutionary movements their interests must fuse must with those of workers struggling in the productive sector and therefore reorientate towards the socialist goal of changing the relations between classes. Conflicts which focus on issues of collective assumption alone can only constitute 'phases and skirmishes' within the 'general process of change' which may 'alter, in an unstable and partial way, the general logic or urban organisation'.[110] Here the influence of the Euro-communist strategy of the broad democratic alliance (itself a throwback to the popular frontism of the 1930s), which was adopted by many mainland European Communist Parties in the 1970s is clearly apparent. Also evident is Castells' employment of the Althusserian notion of 'relative autonomy' whereby conflicts in the political and cultural spheres can develop autonomously from conflicts in the economic sphere through their own internal logics. Despite their weaknesses stemming from a tendency to a narrow focus on consumption issues, urban social movements are nevertheless politically significant for Castells because they open up possibilities of both new fronts in the class struggle and new class alliances.

Castells' work of the 1970s is a powerful application of the scientific Marxist method to the field of urban sociology where its focus on collective consumption gave the discipline a clearly defined theoretical object which it was hitherto lacking. It also of course stimulated much debate and criticism from both sympathisers and opponents across the political and sociological spectrum. Marxists for example have criticised

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[110] ibid, p. 45

Castells for his failure to emphasise the way in which cities continue to be central to processes of capitalist production and accumulation. This is something which as been central to the work of the urban geographers Harvey (1973, 1985) and Massey (1984) who link these processes to class conflict around spatial practices in the built environment. Weberian sociologists on the other hand have used the concept of collective consumption critically in conjunction with the notion of private consumption as the basis of a form of urban class analysis, while others have dropped the stress on the collective completely and have instead developed a sociology of consumption which became fashionable during the 1980s (Dunleavy 1980, Saunders 1981).

In the field of social movements theory Castells' urban theory has also attracted heavy criticism that as been directed primarily at his perceived class reductionism which does not allow social movements to operate autonomously and generate their own meanings (ie, relative autonomy is not absolute autonomy and is therefore ultimately deterministic in Engels' famous formulation of 'the last instance'); while his structuralism has even been likened (somewhat disingenuously) to Smelser's functionalism (Scott 1992).[111] Castells' later work from 'The City and the Grassroots' (1983) onwards in fact though follows the trajectory of many of his Euro-communist counterparts in abandoning Althusser, and in the process, abandoning the automatic link between social movements and class politics. In something of a philosphical 'volte face' and political auto-critique Castells has adopted a much looser neo-Marxist position that is influenced by insights offered by Touraine's (1974, 1981) sociology of action (see section 2.5.4) and he now views urban social movements as primarily articulating conflicts over 'urban meaning' and identity (see eg, Castells, 1997).

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[111] see, Scott, A. (1990), op cited, pp. 37-53. Scott compares Castells structural Marxism to Smelser's functionalism arguing that Smelser's notion that the system will always act to stabilise itself is comparable to Castells position whereby 'ideological and state apparatuses' eg, the planning system, will always act to ensure that class relations are maintained and hence the struggles of urban social movements are ultimately futile. Such a comparison is however unfair because it misrepresents Castells' basic argument. As is pointed out above, Castells does accept the notion that partial reforms can be achieved through struggles in the consumption sphere. Moreover while urban social movements are always only going to be limited in what they can achieve on their own they are reacting to the new instances of class oppression engendered by monopoly capitalism. Therefore they contain the possibility of fusing their interests with workers struggling at the point of production and thereby challenging the capitalist socio-political system as a whole. The possibility that social movements contain this latent potential is not even remotely entertained by thinkers like Smelser.

2.5.2 *Neo-Weberianism, New Social Movements and the Impact of Values*

Research on 'new' social movements such as that carried out by Inglehart (1971, 1990) has been particularly influential in challenging orthodox Marxian notions of the structural/class determination of political processes such as those identified by Castells in his early work. Using cross-national comparisons of quantitative data, Inglehart has shown that new movement membership is primarily drawn from the new middle class in combination with such economically marginalised groups as students and welfare recipients. He argues in a Weberian manner that motivation for participation in the new politics is however not directly related to class position, but is rather a product of an orientation towards specific issues that arise in the public sphere from the congruence of dissatisfaction with the state's dysfunctions and the shift towards new post-materialist values in the post-war generation. This generation is unlike those which existed previously because due to increased material prosperity and welfare security it does not have to constantly strive to attain the material essentials of life and can therefore concentrate on aspects of personal development and the enjoyment of a new found freedom.[112] The new movements personify the new values of this generation in that they stress the importance of rights, identity, quality of life and political participation over the instrumental materialism which took precedence in the previous era. In a parallel with Bourdieu's (1984) notion of the formation of habitus,[113] Ingelhart argues that because these values are inculcated at early stages in life, they persist even when economic conditions deteriorate and affluence is threatened. For Inglehart the new movements cut across class, call into question the ideological division between left and right and it is values and not class that is the underlying determinant of participation.[114]

In Britain the research of Parkin (1968) on CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) in the 1960s, although much less wide ranging than Inglehart's, came to

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[112] At the heart of Inglehart's theory lies what he terms the 'scarcity hypothesis' whereby individuals are only able to actualise needs of a higher order (personal and intellectual development) when those of a lower order (material and physical) have been satisfied. see Inglehart, R. (1990), Culture Shift in Advanced Society, (Princeton : Princeton University Press), p. 56

[113] see Bourdieu, P. (1984), Distinction, (London : Routledge, Kegan and Paul). In Bourdieu's conception the habitus constitutes a structure of thinking and feeling that is formed primarily through socialisation in the early stages of life - habitus is the mode by which cultural capital is transmitted down through generations and is the key determinant of the individual's social attitudes, values and ideological outlook.

[114] see, Inglehart, R. (1990), op cited, particularly chapters 2 and 11

somewhat similar conclusions in its stress upon the way in which the holding of 'expressive' values has an important bearing upon participation in the anti-nuclear protest movement. According to Parkin's research findings, CND receives the largest proportion of its support from sections of the public sector middle class whose politics he describes as morally inspired and publicly or universally orientated (ie, post-material). This type of 'radical' politics he argues stands in contrast to the politics of the working class which is by necessity sectional, instrumental and primarily orientated towards material interests.[115] For Parkin, it is individuals' values derived from socio-cultural socialisation processes which leads them to seek employment in public sector professions where such values can be maintained and acted upon. Hence these values exist prior to taking up a particular occupation and are therefore not necessarily inculcated by experience of employment itself. Rootes (1995), in a recent contribution to the debate surrounding the new middle class and its involvement in social movements has suggested that 'education, and especially certain kinds of higher education' (medicine, law, the humanties and social sciences) is a key potential source of critical values. This he argues is because higher education '(still) has the function of upsetting old prejudices, imparting knowledge, broadening social experience, developing skills and critical analysis and enhancing the self-confidence of its beneficiaries so as to make them more tolerant of the diversity of others, to imagine alternative futures and, sometimes, to act to translate that imagination into reality.'[116]

In the late 1970s, the growing recognition within sociology of middle class involvement with movement politics sparked a wide ranging debate concerning the political nature of the middle classes. The American 'new class' thesis for example attempted to account for the middle class radicalism of the previous two decades through the theorisation of a newly formed highly educated professional-managerial class which contained potentially revolutionary currents (eg, Gouldner 1979). In Britain however Goldthorpe's (1982) Weberian development of the Austro-Marxist Renner's (1978) conception of a growing 'service class' of professionals and managers has proven to be the most influential contribution and it has acted as a catalyst for much of the subsequent theoretical discussion in which his concept is

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[115] Parkin, F. (1968), Middle Class Radicalism, (Manchester : Manchester University Press)
[116] Rootes, C. (1995), A New Class ? The Higher Educated and the New Politics, in, Maheu, L. (ed), (1995), Social Movements and Social Class, (London : Sage), p. 230

either defended, refined or rejected (Abercrombie & Urry 1983, Lash & Urry 1987, Crompton 1986, Savage et al 1992, Butler & Savage (eds) 1995).

For Goldthorpe, the service class contains 'segments which have the potential to be mobilised across a range of political ideology'. However he posits that ultimately 'it will be seen to constitute a primarily conservative force within modern society, so far as the prevailing structure of class inequality is concerned'.[117] As a growing and relatively young class, the service class will increasingly recognise and act in its own interests thereby taking rewards from the owners of capital for making sure that capital accumulation continues efficiently and that the subordinate classes are effectively policed and controlled. In doing this it will ensure the necessary stability and integration desired by capital and act 'like the growing middle class already envisaged by Marx, as a collectivity with a major interest in, and commitment to the status quo, and hence as a barrier to radical change that serves to 'increase the social security and power of the upper ten thousand.'[118]

Goldthorpe's arguments tie in well with social movement theorists who have challenged the view that new middle class involvement in social movements involves strictly altruistic motives, and who suggest intead like the RMT theorists discussed earlier, that varying degrees of self-interested instrumentalism are involved. These modes of self-interest range from participation aimed at securing a fair hearing in key decision making institutions and processes through to the attempt to attain hegemony within those same institutions and processes (Cotgrove and Duff 1980, Cotgrove 1982). In this critical vein Frankel (1987), argues that the influx of 'new class' members who are active in social movements to the traditional leftist political parties of OECD countries has led to their de-radicalisation and the replacement of socialist politics with a form of technocratic pragmatism (eg Blair's New Labour project) that favours the furtherence of their interests.[119] Conservative American 'new class' theorists like Bruce-Briggs (1981) extend this critique still further, suggesting that new middle class involvement in social movement activity signals the ascendancy of a new dominant class.[120] While there is undoubtedly an element of truth in these arguments there is however a danger here of succumbing to a methodological

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[117] Goldthorpe, J. & Llewellyn, C. & Payne, C. (1987), Social Mobility and Class Structure in Modern Britain, (Oxford : Clarendon Press), p. 341
[118] ibid, p. 340
[119] Frankel, B. (1987), The Post-Industrial Utopians, (Oxford : Polity Press), p. 238-239
[120] see Bruce-Briggs, B. (ed), (1981), The New Class ? (New York : McGraw-Hill)

individualist conception of collective action with all the problems that such a position entails. Indeed Goldthorpe's conception of class has been tellingly criticised on these grounds in more recent contributions to the debate surrounding the middle classes (Savage et al 1992).

2.5.3 *New Social Movements and Politics of Postmodernity*

While Weberians have critiqued the orthodox Marxist position by asserting the relative autonomy of values from class, post-modernist thinkers have taken this argument to its extreme in the development of a 'radical de-coupling' thesis whereby there is no longer any rationale for linking political and cultural phenomena to any fixed social base (Crook et al 1992, Pakulski 1995). Influenced by the anti-foundationalist epistemology espoused by post-structuralist philosophers like Derrida, Foucault and Baudrillard, post-modern social theorists argue that referent categories such as class, income, status or occupational group no longer have any meaning in a fragmented post-modern world that is heterogeneous, rhizomic and devoid of any discernible structure. Dalton et al (1990), express this view in relation to the 'new politics' when they propose that the 'new social movements signify a shift from group based political cleavages to value and issue based cleavages that identify only communities of like minded people. The lack of a firm and well defined social base also means that membership tends to be very fluid, with participants joining in and then disengaging as the political context and their personal circumstances change.'[121] For post-modernists present age is one of delegitimation and narrative crisis where as Lyotard (1984), famously argues, 'the grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or a narrative of emancipation'.[122] For Lyotard meta-narratives were responsible for Auschwitz and the GUlags and have brought the earth to the brink of ecological catastrophe; it is therefore necessary to wage war on totality and to prize instead the pluralistic politics, art and science of a post-modern, post-industrial society. In postmodern social theory, because power in society is held to be diffuse

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[121] Dalton, R. J. & Keuchler, M. & Burklin, W. (1990), The Challenge of the New Movements, in, Dalton, R. J. & Keuchler, M. (eds), (1990), Challenging the Political Order, (Cambridge : Polity Press), p. 12
[122] Lyotard, J. F. (1984), The Postmodern Condition, (Manchester : Manchester University Press), p. 3 (Check)

and indeterminate as opposed to being embodied in a class or group, then resistance to it must also be of a fractured nature, operating locally through such 'communities of like minded people' employimg oppositional practices that cannot easily be assimilated by what Foucault (1979) has termed 'the power network'.[123]

Aside from its use of 'outmoded categories', post-modern social theorists deem Marxian class theory an inadequte base upon which to build an emancipatory political movement because its concentration upon the sectional interests of the working class does not address the multiple forms of power/oppression which exist in contemporary society. Aronowitz (1992), summarises this critique when he argues that 'the historically exclusive focus of class based movements on a narrow definition of the issues of social justice has frequently excluded gender, race, and qualitative issues, questions of workers control over production, and similar problems. The almost exclusive emphasis on narrow quantitative issues... made all but inevitable the emergence of social movements, which often as not perceive class politics as inimical to their aims.'[124] Socialist class politics are thus perceived as an irretrievably mono-centric suppression of the radical 'difference' which is necessary for pluralism and real democracy to exist, and it therefore must be jettisoned in favour of the particularist concerns of the new social movements. Deleuze (1973) spells out what this means in practical political terms when he says 'the problem for revolutionaries today is to unite within the purpose of a particular struggle without falling into the despotic and bureaucratic organisation of the party or state machine. We seek a kind of war machine that will not recreate a state apparatus, a nomadic unit related to the outside that will not revive an internal despotic unity.'[125]

The ditching of class politics by certain sections of the 'intellectual' left has on a more theoretical level been complemented by the replacement of Marx by Nietzsche as the philosophical basis for the construction of an emancipatory politics centred on the new movements. This is a development which owes much to the work of Foucault, Deleuze and their followers who credit the latter with being the 'nomadic thinker' par excellence, a philosopher who instigated a new form of politics whose aim is to break all systems asunder, resist assimilation, and to defy the prevailing codes and norms of the day. If a similar project of liberation is to be pursued in the

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[123] Foucault, M. (1979), The History of Sexuality, Vol 1, (London : Penguin), p.120
[124] Aronowitz, S. (1992), The Politics of Class, Culture, Social Movements, (London : Routledge), p.67

present period then as Deleuze says we must ask ourselves 'who are our nomads today, who are our real Nietzscheans ?'[126] For thinkers influenced by post-structuralism the new social movements are practitioners of this type of resistance, whereby the struggle for particular goals takes place at a localised or regional level, outside of established political institutions and using unconventional means, but with no such dangerous utopian intention of capturing state power or altering socio-economic conditions in any fundamental manner. Foucault argues that the system must be engaged 'on all fronts – the university, the prisons, the domain of psychiatry – one after another, since our forces are not strong enough for a simulataneous attack'. Resistance must however avoid the use of any totalising theory, because 'the need for theory is still part of the system we reject'.[127]

Laclau and Mouffe's post-Marxism is a theory of the new social movements which employs Foucaultian discourse theory to critique orthodox Marxism's stress on the centrality of the capital/labour dialectic. Instead they suggest an alternative conception of society which is criss-crossed by numerous social conflicts, antagonisms and protests against subordination, none of which necessarily shares the same interests or the same opponent, is automatically linked to, or can assume any more importance than any other; eg, 'there are not necessary links between anti-sexism and anti-capitalism'.[128] Echoing Lyotard, Laclau and Mouffe argue that the era of universal discourses which attempt to explain society in terms of totality is over; instead only partial discourses which articulate individual relationships and individual antagonisms are possible/desirable. Suitably disabused of essentialist notions like class, ideology, and forces and relations of production, Laclau and Mouffe (1993) posit that unstable 'subject positions' are constructed in and through the play of various indeterminate discursive alignments, ie, 'unfixity has become the condition of every social identity'.[129] In many ways such a theorisation is the political equivalent of Derridean deconstruction where the category of '*differance*' implies that meaning in language is endlessly deferred in an infinite interplay of signifiers due to the impossibility of a transcendental signified which would ultimately fix meaning. In

[125] Deleuze, G. (1973), Nomad Thought, in, Allison, D. B. (ed), (1985), The New Nietzsche. (New York : M.I.T. Press), p. 149
[126] ibid
[127] Foucault, M. (1977), Language, Counter-Memory, Practice, (Ithaca : Cornell University Press), p. 231
[128] Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (1993), Hegemony and Socialist Strategy, (London : Verso), p. 178
[129] ibid, p. 85

fact there is not much difference between Derrida's famous dictum that 'there is nothing outside of the text'[130] and Laclau and Mouffe's assertion that 'every object is constituted as an object of discourse'.[131]

This discourse theory is used by Laclau and Mouffe in combination with the Gramscian concept of hegemony to argue that the radicalisation of democracy is a viable, non-utopian and non-oppressive alternative to the Marxian vision of socialism. Because there can be no material basis to such categories as class, sexuality, gender and race, then social identities must be purely self-constituted and relational to one another in a discursive chain. This recognition they argue brings about the possibility of counter-hegemonic articulatory practices which because of the new fluidity of identities and of the social which are concomitant with the conditions of post-modernity, allows constantly evolving and hitherto suppressed forms of subordination to be brought to light and redefined in an open ended democratic revolution which sustains pluralism and difference. The new social movements embody what they term the democratic ideal of 'autoconstituivity' and further the cause of the democratic revolution by defending their particular identities and 'struggling for a maximum automisation of spheres on the basis of the generalisation of equivalential-egalitarian logic'.[132] In the view of Laclau and Mouffe the new social movements have arisen in response to the 'new hegemonic formation' that gave rise to new forms of oppression within advanced societies in the post-war period and offer the best hope for the furtherance of democratic 'socialist' politics.

While perhaps useful as a corrective to some of the cruder Marxist theorisations, leftist post-modern theories of the new social movements as embodied in Laclau and Mouffe's post-Marxism suffer from a number of fundamental flaws and logical inconsistencies which are ultimately self-contradictory and that only serve to hinder rather than facilitate the democratic revolution they wish to see unfold. For post-modernists atomised identity politics is desirable because the formation of consensus on any other basis, ie, class, community or even democratic discusssion, implies the forcible exclusion of that other which does not agree; it closes off the radical difference that is essential to true pluralism. Any attempt therefore to create alliances between oppositional groupings which might be powerful enough to challenge

[130] Derrida, J. (1968), Of Grammatology, quoted in, Boyne, R. (1990), Foucault and Derrida – the Other Side of Reason, (London : Unwin Hyman), p. 89
[131] Laclau, E. & Mouffe, C. (1993), op cited, p. 107

prevailing power structures is fraught with the danger of establishing a mono-centric social movement which kills off diversity and thereby enforces a stifling unity. However, this argument suffers from the same problem that anarchism (in some ways its earlier and more radically political incarnation) has traditionally suffered from. What in Marxism is perceived to be a one sided totalising unity is replaced by an equally one sided particularity where only the fragmentation of consciousness is viewed as in any way progressive. This position is in fact politically dubious because it undermines the principles of democracy which requires the formation of consensus' to operate. It is one that can only end in the Hobbessian nightmare of fragmentation and a 'war of all against all' because its fear of any totalising theory is such that it rejects the only basis, (ie, democratic decision making) on which the pluralism and difference it puports to set free can be sustained. By its logic it also necessitates political impotence and reduces the politics of the new social movements which it champions to the level of mere gesture.

It is difficult to see in what way the post-Marxist/post-modern vision of a radicalised utopia differs in any way from a liberal utopia. If the best that can be hoped for is a meritocracy then as Geras (1988) says in his critical commentary 'this radicalism would scarcely embarrass the Rt Hon David Owen'.[133] In its failure to address the underlying impact of capitalist structures of power and domination upon the consitution of individuals, culture and all aspects of social life including social movements, it is idealist in the extreme. Post-Marxism/post-modernism is in fact in one sense an apology for the continued existence of capitalist relations of production and a recipe for a new and improved capitalism. Moreover the attack on all totalising and universalising theories as inevitably leading to the dictatorial suppression of difference displays more than a little of the 'original sin' of determinism that it so desperately seeks to avoid. Such arguments have a long history on the Right and can be seen in the Cold War rhetoric of western governments, the now discredited right-wing French nouveaux 'philosophes' of the late 1970s, and the supposedly radical post-modernists of today.

While post-modern and post-Marxist theories have enjoyed a lot of currency within contemporary European thinking about the new social movements, they have not gone unchallenged, with the neo-Marxist theories developed by Touraine and the

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[132] ibid, p. 167
[133] Geras, N. (1988), Post-Marxism – a Rejoinder, New Left Review, No 169, May/June, p. 54

Habermasian school school of critical theory being their most influential opponents. For these theorists, traditional Marxian notions of class do however have to be fundamentally rethought and reshaped with regard to the changed socio-economic structure and the new social actors operating within that structure. This reshaping process, in a similar manner to the post-Marxists and post-modernists involves the jettisoning of the notion of working class as being the primary agent of social change. Instead the new movements assume this role and in a radicalisation of Weber are conceived of as agents of resistance to systemic rationalisation and technocratic power.

2.5.4 *New Social Movements Against the Technocracy : Touraine's Sociology of Action*

Touraine's influential theory of the new social movements which was first developed in the early 1970's exemplifies the application of neo-Marxist theory to this field of sociology. According to Touraine (1974), late 20th century advanced capitalism is post-industrial in the manner that it is primarily characterised by the production of symbolic goods and knowledge in what he calls the programmed or informational society.[134] A technocratic class of experts has replaced the industrial bourgeoisie as the hegemonic force in contemporary society and in tandem with the state seeks to filter the flow of information and knowledge in order to control social norms, values and identities and so guide social development in its own image and interests.[135] The new social movements thus constitute vehicles for the socio-cultural struggles of various oppressed or dominated groups striving to defend civil society from the control of the state technocracy. These are struggles aimed at the self-actualisation of identity and the articulation of meaning in a society where social reflexivity, or what Touraine calls an awareness of historicity, has at last become possible and modernity has the chance to come of age. This Touraine (1977) argues, is what distinguishes the new social movements from the 'old' movements of industrial society, he writes : 'in post-industrial society, social movements form around what is called consumption in

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[134] see, Touraine, A. (1974), The Post-Industrial Society – Tomorrow's Social History : Classes, Conflicts and Culture in the Programmed Society, (London : Wildwood House).

[135] Touraine's conception of the technocracy is very similar to that developed by the economist Galbraith. see, Galbraith, J. K. (1979), The Affluent Society, (Harmondsworth : Penguin).

the name of personal or collective identity.... not in relation to the system of ownership'.[136]

Touraine's class analysis radically breaks with the notions of structural determination or objectivity that are commonplace within modern sociology. Touraine (1981) argues that 'there can be no class without class consciousness'.[137] His stance is therefore a subjectivist one whereby classes are only constituted when social groupings become conscious of common interests and act in unison upon those interests. As Scott (1992) notes, this position abolishes Marx's distinction between classes 'in' and classes 'for' themselves and substitutes social movements for class.[138] This distinction is however revived when Touraine's strict criteria of judgement concerning the nature of 'true' class movements is actually applied to the activities and practices of researched social movements. Touraine argues that the diverse movements of civil society only become class movements when they go on the political offensive and actively challenge the institutional and ideological power structures of the technocracy. In order for this to happen though a movement must become conscious enough to seek to move beyond the defence of particular or sectional interests to the pursuit of universal interests and thus play a unifying role for oppositional forces in much the same way as the labour movement did in the struggle to transform industrial capitalism.

Touraine's search for a 'true' class movement to replace the labour movement has however continually been frustrated for of all the movements he has researched in a long academic career only a small radical section of the French ecological movement has in his judgement shown the potential to become such a force :

> 'This combination of the movement to protect nature with the struggle to overthrow technocracy and fight to establish a different, more modern, type of development, provides the definition of that popular social movement which will come to dominate the whole stage in our programmed society, as we move more completely into the post-industrial era.'[139]

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[136] Touraine, A. (1977), The Self-Production of Society, (Chicago : University of Chicago Press), p. 323
[137] Touraine, A. (1981), The Voice and the Eye : An Analysis of Social Movements, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press), p. 68
[138] Scott, A. (1992), op cited, pp. 60-61
[139] Touraine, A. & Hegedus, Z. & Wieviorka, M. (1983), Anti-Nuclear Protest : the Opposition to Nuclear Energy in France, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press). p. 5 Although they use very

In some ways in fact Touraine echoes the workerist Marxist response to the new social movements, because he is quite dismissive of movements which engage in forms of activity which do not meet his criteria of class struggle – these he relegates to the category of mere 'struggles' which 'are situated at some other, less elevated, level of social life'.[140]

Touraine's controversial method of research involving what he calls 'sociological intervention' is supposed to further the process of the transition to true class movement within researched movements. Through the employment of facilitation skills the researcher should aim to encourage social movement activists to recognise their historicity, ie, to gain an awareness of the transformative power of themselves as historical actors in conflict with their class enemy the technocracy. This method of research is in one way highly attractive as it eliminates any need for the pretence of objectivity, value-freedom and disinterestedness that the dominant positivist trend in sociological research demands. It is also admirably politically committed because it is animated by the search for a class movement which will overthrow the capitalist technocracy. In another sense though it is extremely problematic because it resembles a form of elitist sociological vanguardism that implicitly views the role of sociology as being akin to that of the Leninist revolutionary party and the sociologist as revolutionary activist.[141]

different approaches, the parallels with Castells' arguments in his Marxist phase concerning the limitations of urban social movements are highly apparent. Gorz (1982) is another important neo-Marxist theorist of post-industrialism who is apposite to mention here because although his work is built around a more traditional conception of class it displays a number of the same themes and interests as those of Touraine. Like Touraine, Gorz (1982) is concerned to uncover the key contradiction of a society that is fast moving beyond the industrial phase of capitalism. This contradiction he argues lies between those classes who have an interest in maintaining the present unsustainable dynamic of unmitigated economic growth and unlimited consumerism, and those 'neo-proletarians', who do not have such a stake and therefore posses 'the radical chains' necessary to break through the 'accumulation ethic' of productivism and bring into being the post-industrial society. For Gorz, this 'non-class' 'encompasses all those who have been expelled from production by the abolition of work, or whose capacities are under-employed as a result of the industrialisation of intellectual work'. In other words the unemployed, the marginalised and those educated middle classes who have been affected by processes of deskilling, rationalisation and bureaucratisation. see Gorz, A. (1982), Farewell to the Working Class – an Essay on Post-Industrial Socialism, (London : Pluto Press), pp. 68 & 165

[140] ibid, p. 4

[141] see, Touraine, A. (1988), The Method of Action Sociology : Sociological Intervention, op cited, pp. 91-103. For a masterly review and critique of Touraine's theoretical and empirical work including his method see, Rucht, D, (1991), Sociological Theory as a Theory of Social Movements ? A Critique of Alain Touraine, in, Rucht, D. (ed), (1991), op cited, pp. 355– 384. See also Touraine's response in the same volume, Touraine, A. (1991) Commentary on Dieter Rucht's Critique, ibid, pp. 385-391

Although Touraine is something of a maverick and there is no Tourainean school of social movements theory per se, the impact of his work can for example be seen in the contemporary prominence of Melucci in the field of European social movements theory. Melucci was a student of Touraine's who despite coming to eschew Touraine's method, has taken a number of Touraine's insights into the nature of advanced capitalism and made them fashionable by stressing processes of identity formation and the semiotic and symbolic aspects of social movement activities – in short he as given Touraine's theory a post-modern spin for the 1990s. One particularly notable aspect of Melucci's work is his stress on the 'invisible' aspects of the way in which social movements operate through 'submerged networks' to change cultural norms and codes. This is something which relates to his arguments concerning the organisational form of new social movements – something which is largely ignored by most of his European contemporaries. According to Melucci, new social movements are characterised by networks of interaction which have a tendency towards informality, non-hierarchy, minimal bureaucracy and participative forms of democracy. Thus Melucci (1996) notes that 'the movements propose through their organisational forms a cultural pluralism based on the possibility of qualitative participation which respects individual differences and needs'. Such forms allow the movements a self-refective quality which stands in opposition to the dominant cultural codes of the day and helps to cultivate an alternative cultural space, an oppositional identity and a sense of belonging. Movements as informal networks do not have members as such but rather what might described as adherent supporters who retain a high degree of autonomy of action. Drawing on insights from resource mobilisation theory, Melucci does however argue that 'the networks must simultaneously be able to cope with instrumental needs directed both internally and externally if they are to avoid sectarian solutions or outright marginalisation'. [142]

2.5.5 *New Social Movements and the Defence of Modernity : Habermas's Reconstruction of Historical Materialism*

The thesis of a new post-industrial stage in capitalism is also central to the work of Habermas (1976,81,87a) who has reworked the Marxian theory of crisis in order to

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[142] Melucci, A. (1996), op cited, p. 331

explain the new struggles which characterise the present historical juncture. Habermas's crisis theory is premised upon the inbuilt that contradictions exist between the economic, administrative political and socio-cultural sub-systems of advanced capitalist societies. In the contemporary era the growing disparity between public expectations of these sub-systems and the state's ability to satisfy both these expectations and the acute demands of economic restructuring has created a crisis of legitimation which defines the new political paradigm of late as opposed to liberal capitalism.[143] The political and economic system requires a mass input of loyalty in order to sustain it but because of its inability to deliver ever multiplying demands individual motivations for participation are increasingly coming to be questioned. Habermas posits that in order to offset this crisis the state has attempted to extend its authority through the incremental extension of public policy into previously autonomous actions spheres - a process which he terms 'inner colonisation'.

This strategy has however had something of a paradoxical effect for although the state's regulatory functions have increased and thus its formal authority has been extended, at a deeper and more substantive level that authority has been subverted through its own striving for inclusiveness. As the scope of political authorty grows it politicises its own non-political underpinnings and in doing so negates the very source of its original legitimation. In essence then, the intervention of the state into spheres that were previously autonomous and associated with the private concerns of morality, the family and the community has turned them into public and hence political issues. Work is no longer the sole source of oppression in late capitalist society, rather the growth of state authority has created new forms of deprivation in the social and cultural spheres to which the new social movements are a defensive response. Thus Habermas (1987a), argues of the new movements, that they constitute modes of resistance to 'the System's colonisation of the lifeworld'.[144]

According to Habermas's theory, the new conflicts articulated by the new social movements 'are manifest in sub-institutional, or at least extra-parliamentary forms of

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[143] On new social movements see, Habermas, J. (1976), Legitimation Crisis, (London : Heineman); Habermas, J. (1981), New Social Movements, Telos, No 49, Fall, pp. 33-37; Habermas, J. (1987a), The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol 2, (Cambridge : Polity Press). See also the work of Offe which is heavily influenced by Habermas but is less abstract and more empirically grounded. see, Offe, C. (1984), Contradictions of the Welfare State, (London : Hutchinson : Co Ltd); Offe, C. (1985), Disorganised Capitalism : Contemporary Transformations of Work and Politics, (Cambridge : Polity Press); Offe, C. (1987), op cited, pp. 63-105

[144] Habermas, J. (1987a), op cited, p. 394

protest... ignited by questions having to do with the grammar of forms of life.'[145] The new movements thus for Habermas represent a shift away from the institutionalised parties and representative democracy that characterised the 'old politics', and are motivated instead by problems centering on the quality of life, individual self-realisation, norms, values and human rights.[146] The new movements respond to highly specific problem situations which arise when the organic foundations of the lifeworld are under attack and the quality of life is threatened. These conflict situations emanate from a variety of sources, firstly 'green problems', ie urban and environmental destruction, pollution, health hazards etc, secondly, problems of excessive complexity, ie risk and the fear of military potentials for destruction, nuclear waste and nuclear power etc and thirdly, an overburdening of the communicative infrastructure which results in a cultural impoverishment that in turn causes the growth of particularistic communities based upon gender, age, skin colour, neighbourhood, locality or religious affiliation.[147] What unites most of these diverse groups is that they all are critical in one way or another of unmitigated economic expansion and development.

Like Touraine, Habermas argues that economic development within late capitalism is managed by a technocratic elite of experts which makes strategic decisions in strictly instrumental terms while looking at the problems of growth in a purely economic manner. This elite's lack of democratic accountability and control of the means of public communication is leading he argues to the progressive 'scientisation of politics and public opinion.'[148] This leads to both a further erosion of the lifeworld's autonomy and a suppression of the communicative reason that is vital to the progress and health of modern societies. Indeed because of this process of erosion modern advanced capitalist societies are afflicted by both the decay of civil society and the growth of 'new social pathologies', ie extreme nationalism and

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[145] ibid, p. 392

[146] There is a distinct parallel here to Giddens' description of new movement activites as constituting 'life politics'. Giddens (1987), characterises the new movements orientation towards 'life politics' as a revival of the classical distinction in political philosophy between 'freedom from' and 'freedom to' (eg, see Isaiah Berlin's writings on positive and negative liberty). The 'old' movements, ie the labour, free speech and democratic movements, he argues work within the paradigm of emancipatory politics and struggle to attain freedom from inequality and oppression, whereas the newer movements, eg, ecological, peace, etc are in general orientated towards 'self-actualisation' ie the freedom to have a fulfilling and satisfying life for all. see, Giddens, A. (1987), The Consequences of Modernity, (Cambridge : Polity Press), p. 156.

[147] Habermas, J. (1987a), op cited, pp. 394 - 95

[148] see, Habermas, J. (1971), Toward a Rational Society, (London : Heineman), pp. 62-80

'terrorism'. Underlying Habermas's concern here though is his argument that the hegemony of the technocracy and their techno-decisionistic logic is detrimental to the pursuit of the 'enlightenment project' of the rational organisation of everyday life which has animated the development of the modern epoch since its beginnings in the 17th century – this is something which could ultimately result in developmental regression and the growth of a new totalitarian authoritarianism.

Habermas argues that the conflicts which the new social movements engage in and articulate 'arise at the seam between System and lifeworld'[149] by which he implies that there are islands of communicative action and reason that have not yet been completely overrun by the instrumental purposive rationality propagated by the System. Habermas nevertheless adopts a somewhat ambiguous stance towards the new social movements and his position is best described as one of critical support. Here again there is a parallel with Touraine. Habermas is critical because there is often a tendency within the new movements towards particularism - something which is ever open to the possibility of irrationalism and indeed such tendencies can be counter-productive to the release of communicative rationality because insularity prevents discussion and consensus formation in wider society. Particularism is regressive politically for Habermas because unless individual interests are universalised from a normative point of view then the grounds for a recovery of communicative rationality vis a vis the System cannot be revived.

While critical of the dangers of particularism Habermas takes a positive view of the latent emancipatory political potential that the new social movements possess. This potential he argues stems from their disposition to create alternative institutions and to employ practices that run counter to those that are organised according to the dictates of the 'steering media', ie state and capital. Moreover the new movements encourage experimental forms of participatory democracy which are vital for the revival of communicative reason in society while their alternative institutions and counter-practices defend the lifeworld from System intrusion. Finally, for Habermas the new social movements in carrying out these functions provide examples and prototype models for the possible birth of a new society that is predicated on equality, universal rights and radical democracy while bringing hitherto supressed issues and grievances into the public arena and opening them up to public debate. As Hewitt

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[149] Habermas, J. (1987a), op cited, p. 396

(1993), states in his commentary on Habermas 'a defence of specific identities and needs provides the grounds for raising more universalistic concerns.'[150]

Habermas's theory thus judges the potential of social movements as agents of social change by the criterion of univeralism – here again there are striking parallels with Touraine's theory. By this criterion social movements must attempt to align their particular interests and activities with those of other contemporary social movements in order to form a unitary project of human emancipation; ie, they must become offensive movements as opposed to merely movements of 'resistance and retreat'. Of all the new movements, Habermas argues that only the feminist movement's struggle against patriarchal oppression has taken the offensive impetus while the others are much more defensive in nature.[151] Overall then, Habermas's theory should be viewed as a supplement to historical materialsm that has borrowed from, and radicalised Weber's theory of rationalisation in order to engage advanced capitalism with a greater power of explanation and critique. It is interesting to note given the developing economic crisis of world capitalism of the late 1990s, that Habermas contends that the 'new politics' will only continue if the welfare state compromise is sustained within advanced capitalism and there is continuous economic expansion. If however there are economic crisis and 'the dynamics of growth are not maintained' then he argues that it is quite possible that 'we would see a return to some variant of traditional conflicts'.[152]

One of the main problems with Habermas's theory is that by presenting such a generalised account it is inevitable that he fails to properly distinguish between different types of movement and hence of their different political potentials. Kellner (1989), points to the fact that for example religious fundamentalism is included in Habermas's typology, a movement that more often than not, and certainly not in the case of the United States, is associated with the reactionary politics of the Right, is undemocratic and often attacks progressive forms of modernisation in the cultural sphere.[153] Following a similar line of criticism, Scott (1990), argues that Habermas's general typology fails to bring to light the differences in terms of ideology and values

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[150] Hewitt, M. (1993), Social Movements and Social Need : Problems with Postmodern Political Theory, Critical Social Policy, No 37, p. 63
[151] Habermas, J. (1987a), op cited, p. 393
[152] Habermas, J. (1981), The Dialectics of Rationalisation, (interview), Telos, No 49, Fall, p. 39
[153] Kellner, D. (1989), Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity, (Cambridge : Polity Press), p. 220

which exist within various social movements.[154] These criticisms of Habermas's macro-theory indicate that such theorising needs to be complemented at a micro-level by empirical research and the building of theories which consider the internal dynamics of social movement organisation itself without falling into the trap of methodological individualism which RMT suffers from. This however, is not Habermas's project, rather it is to locate the new social movements within the broad context of contemporary structural and cultural change.

2.5.6 *European Theories of the New Social Movements : a Critical Evaluation*

While there are significant divergencies between the different perspectives to which the label new social movements theory can be applied, each is nevertheless premised on the notion that the key social movements active in the contemporary period are marked by a radical discontinuity with both the social movements of a previous era and with the realm of 'normal' institutional politics. This discontinuity is expressed in terms of their understanding as new radical historical actors concomitant to a new era of late/post-industrial/monopoly/post-modern capitalism where the traditional class based cleavages of industrial capitalism have either broken down or have altered significantly in their form. The new movements operate at the extra-parliamentary and extra-institutional levels of culture and civil society to bring about progressive social change through the propagation of expressive values related to post-materialism and self-actualisation, and the raising of new issues, eg ecology, quality of life, civil rights etc in the public sphere which stand in radical opposition to the technocratic state and hegemonic capitalist culture. In the European conception social movements therefore seek to bring about fundamental change as opposed to the American conception whereby they are merely seeking inclusion within the polity to achieve reform. These radical aims are also reflected in the movements' organisational structure whereby they do not adhere to the formal structural and bureaucratic hierarchies associated with the 'old' politics and instead adopt decentralised participatory forms which are characterised by informal networks of interaction. The new movements thus propose through their form, ideological content and actions an alternative framework of development to the dominant ethic of unmitigated economic growth and narrow

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[154] Scott, A. (1990), op cited, pp. 81-107

instrumental materialism which impoverishes the realms of culture, politics and the environment. Eder (1993), puts this argument succinctly when he comments that social movements 'move society... by providing an alternative cultural model, and a moral order that contributes to institutionalising it'.[155]

The discontinuity thesis does however suffer from a number of problems, and particularly in relation to the proposed dichotomy between old and new movements. For example many of the social movements to which the adjective 'new' has been applied, eg, feminism and black civil rights, have their roots in traditions of struggle which reach back at least as far as the early 19th century (Scott 1990). Also as D'Anieri et al (1990) illustrate in their comparative historical research on the Chartists in 19th century England, the Oneida religious community in 19th century United States and West German Peace Movement in the post-war period, 'each of the supposedly "new" characteristsics of contemporary movements has historical predecessors.... past movements have also sought universal goals through actions not directed at the state.... nor have all "old" social movements been primarily class based or concerned about materialistic or economic issues'. Thus they conclude that 'the values that have motivated these past movements foreshadow the emphases on "life chances" concerns of contemporary movements.'[156] The adjective 'new' also carries with it the connotation that the movements to which it has been applied have somehow replaced the 'old' movements or that the old movements are no longer active. It is thus essentially a term which has often been used to critique the Marxist emphasis on the working class and the labour movement, something which as is illustrated above has been central to the development of much of new social movements theory. However while some of this critique is merited and especially so in terms of some of Marxism's more dogmatic workerist incarnations, new movements theorists have often failed to recognise that the development of the 'new' social movements in the late 1960s was very much accompanied by a concomitant upsurge in working class radicalism that was expressed in a new militancy within the labour movement. Equally by the 1980s when the labour movement had adopted the much more compliant policies associated with the so called 'new realism' (and even then in the UK there was the 'Great' miners strike of 1984-85 which in some parts of the country was akin to a civil war),

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[155] Eder, K. (1993), The New Politics of Class, (London : Sage), p. 114
[156] Anieri, P'D, Ernst, C. & Kier, E. (1990), New Social Movements in Historical Perspective, Comparative Politics, Vol 22, July, p. 454

many of the new movements had also adopted much less militant postures. What this would appear to imply is that even though society is indeed criss-crossed by diverse conflicts there is nevertheless a relationship between the radicalisation of different social sectors and social groupings. It also implies that the labour movement and traditional class conflict is far from dead, rather it like the 'new' movements goes through cycles of upturns and downturns in struggle.

Another problem with the new movement critique of Marxism is that although undeniable changes have taken place in the the structure and make-up of the working class in advanced capitalist societies, these changes have surrounded the type of work done, ie, the expansion of the service sector and white collar work, and changes in lifestyle, ie more consumerism etc, rather than progressive changes involving redistributions of wealth and power. Equally the working class if defined in classical Marxist terms still remains overwhelmingly the largest class in advanced societies and is one that is growing rapidly with industrialisation in the developing world. Kellner (1989), points to the fact that rather than diminishing, class contradictions are in fact growing within contemporary capitalism. He argues that 'the growth of an "underclass" (a highly contentious term which is not endorsed in this thesis), and the deterioration of the situation of both the industrial working class and the middle class raise questions concerning whether a new proletarianisation is taking place that may promote and make possible a new class politics.'[157] For Kellner writing within the tradition of Habermasian critical theory, this 'new class politics' must not ignore or dismiss the new social movements as orthodox Marxism has often done, but rather fuse with their interests in order to further the goal of human emancipation. Given the arguments concerning historical inaccuracy, and the arguments concerning the continuing validity of class/labour movement politics, the adjective 'contemporary' is probably a better descriptive term than 'new' when describing movements active in the current historical period.

Another line which can be taken in the criticism of European theory is that which stems from insights from the American perspective. From the point of view of RMT the European account of the origins of social movements does not properly address the instrumental or strategic aspects of collective action whereby the expressive dimension of movement politics is mediated by the organisational

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[157] Kellner, D. (1989), Critical Theory, Marxism and Modernity, (Cambridge : Polity Press), p 229

imperatives of mobilising resources and the mobilising imperative of self-interest. It also tends to ignore the political dimensions of social movement mobilisations; eg, the structure of political opportunities and the interplay between 'formal' institutionalised politics and the 'informal' politics of movement networks. Byrne (1997), however, writing from a European perspective goes some way towards a solution to both these American criticisms and those outlined above centering on the problem of discontinuity. Byrne's arguments are worth looking at in some detail because they are derived primarily from research in the British context and can also be seen to at least partially develop the middle range theory called upon by many social movements scholars working in the international field (see section 2.2). For Byrne, social movements should be conceptualised as forming part of what he calls a 'continuum of political action' which is reproduced in table form below :

Table 1 : Varieties of Collective Political Action[158]

	Ideology	**Organisation**	**Tactics**
Political Parties	reformist	formal	conventional
Protectional Interest Groups	reformist	formal	conventional, (excluding strikes)
Promotional Interest Groups	reformist	formal/informal	usually conventional
Social Movements	reformist and radical	some formal; mostly informal	conventional and unconventional, often with some emphasis on the personal
Riots	usually radical	informal/none	unconventional

Of course as Byrne himself acknowledges, this categorisation is a 'clumsy exercise', but it is nevertheless extremely useful because it illustrates the way in which 'there is not just one decisive break point between "conventional" and "unconventional" politics' while also pointing to some of the key differences between social movements

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[158] Byrne, P. (1997), op cited, p. 24

and more 'mainstream' forms of collective political activity. Social Movements he locates at the 'grey area' in the matrix 'where ideology, tactics and organisation may become rather different'.[159] Byrne goes on to argue that over the last thirty years or so there have been four major 'new' social movements active in advanced capitalist societies like the UK; ie, the students, womens, environmental and peace movements. Following a European definition he defines these movements as 'pure' social movements because in different ways they have offered a fundamental challenge to the hegemonic cultural, social, political and economic norms of advanced capitalist society. Byrne also notes however that there have been other groupings and organisations which have also challenged the prevailing social order in one way or another, and indeed sometimes quite radically, but although often referred to as social movements should not be conceptualised as such because their aims have been more limited in scope and they have been less durable in terms of longevity. Thus he argues that a distinction needs to be drawn between what he terms protest campaigns, protest movements and social movements.

Protest campaigns Byrne defines as protest that is directed to one particular area of government policy; eg, campaigns against discriminatory or unpopular legislation introduced by central government or against controversial construction projects allowed planning permission at a local government level. These campaigns he argues should not be considered to be social movements because although they may involve unconventional or even radical tactics they revolve around a single issue or a single area of government policy. They also tend to be short-lived campaigns in that once the issue is resolved these campaigns lose their raison d'etre and thus cease to exist. The anti-poll tax campaign of the late 1980s in Britain is a good example of a successful protest campaign which forced a retreat and change in government policy while the ongoing protest campaign against the Criminal Justice Act (1994) has been one of the most highly charged protest campaigns of the 1990s. While then there is a clear distinction between protest campaigns and social movements it is clear that the latter can contain the former. Indeed as Byrne notes this tends to be the norm, eg, protests against controversial construction projects can be single issue campaigns in their own right but they are also very much related to the environmental movement's demands for sustainable development. Equally protest campaigns might even broach more than

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[159] ibid, pp. 24-25

one social movement; eg, the women who protested at Greenham Common against the siting of nuclear missiles were also involved with both the wider peace movement and the women's movement.[160]

Byrne argues that what he categorises as protest movements can be distinguished from both protest campaigns and social movements. Like protest campaigns they involve organisations and groupings whose primary focus is centred on a single area of government policy and are often intimately related to, or are parts of, a wider social movement. However unlike protest campaigns they incorporate wider issues, aim to achieve changes in values and attitudes and are more durable over time. Protest movements differ from social movements in that they have more of a tendency towards a formalised structure and centralised decision making and have narrower aims which are focused on achieving changes to government policy as opposed to wholesale social transformation. Some protest movements therefore come close to the equivilent of the American conception of what a social movement is; ie, an organisation that is prepared to compromise and adapt in order to achieve integration in the polity; eg, the liberal and socialist wings of the US feminist movement who have come together in order to pursue the reformist cause of representation. Other protest movements however differ markedly from the American conception in that they are motivated by a moral outrage that is premised upon principles which are non-negotiable. Here Byrne cites CND as a prime example of a protest movement which has refused to follow the cost/benefit imperatives laid down by RMT.[161] Dalton's characterisation (1994) of FoE as a decentralised anti-hierarchical organisation which uses unconventional tactics in its multi-issue, uncompromising and deeply political challenge to the 'predominant social paradigm of Western industrial democracies',[162] would also seem to indicate that FoE represents a protest movement within the wider environmental social movement, which is not simply seeking inclusion in the polity. Such an interpretation of FoE has however been challenged by Jordan & Maloney (1997), who argue that Dalton's perspective would appear to be correct only in the American context, and that in the UK context FoE should be interpreted alternatively through the RMT model as a 'protest business' due to its lobbyist strategy, tactical concerns regarding the maintenance of

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[160] ibid, pp. 23-23
[161] ibid, pp. 167-173

charitable status and imperatives to cultivate the 'correct' media image to attract members.[163]

Byrne concludes his definition of protest movements by arguing that due to the closed opportunity structure of the British political arena (ie, a distortionary 'first-past-the post electoral system, a sovereign parliament, and an executive which is often unaccountable), protest movements are an enduring aspect of the political landscape. This is very different from the situation in the USA where the political system is more open to the use of conventional modes of collective political action and theorists therefore find it difficult to accommodate protest as opposed to integration. Europeans on the other hand have a tendency to be unable to see beyond structural contradictions and therefore do not properly conceive of the relationship between protest and social movements. In Britain however Byrne argues there 'is a special resonance to moral protest' because there is no Bill of Rights, (liberty is purely of what Isaiah Berlin would call the negative variety) and hence 'British citizens assume they have the "right to protest", particularly if the source of grievance is of a "higher order" than selfish pursuit of self interest'. The culture in which protest movements operates is thus one which 'sees such protest as legitimate, and is usually prepared to ascribe positive motives to those who engage in it'.[164]

Despite the problems associated with European 'new' social movements theory this thesis broadly endorses the European conception of what a social movement is. It does however disown the adjective 'new' in favour of 'contemporary' for those social movements active in the current historical period and takes note from RMT that instrumental action, organisation and resources must be taken into consideration alongside expressive values, class, ideology and identity as factors in the mobilisation of social movements. Moreover following Byrne it is recognised that it is necessary to take on board American criticisms/theorisations and understand social movements as forming part of a continuum of political action where the dichotomy between conventional and unconventional politics is often blurred. It is also important to recognise other forms of unconventional collective political action which also challenge the prevailing social order only in more limited ways, these protest

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[162] Dalton, R. J. (1994), The Green Rainbow : Environmental Groups in Western Europe, (Yale : Yale University Press), p. 29

[163] Jordan G. & Maloney, W. (1997), The Protest Business ? Mobilizing Campaign Groups, (Manchester : Manchester University Press), p. 68

[164] Byrne (1997), op cited, p. 174

campaigns and protest movements may stand alone from social movements but more often than not are intimately bound up with them and indeed constitute integral parts of social movement networks. Finally, while there are often distinct similarities internationally in terms of the form collective political actions take, it is also important to properly contextualise such activity within the context of the national political opportunity structure and political culture in which it is taking place, something which European and American theory have a tendency to overlook in their implicit (and sometimes explicit) claims to universality.

2.6 *Conclusion : Framing the Research on Anti-Roads Activism*

Both American and European social movements theories despite their often problematic nature offer a variety of useful insights which can be applied to frame the thematic foci and inform empirical questions on the anti-roads protests which form the focus of the exploratory research conducted for this thesis. As the review and analysis developed above has illustrated the range and depth of argument and opinion surrounding the nature of social movements is extremely wide and indeed highly contested. Themes addressed and questions applied in the research for this thesis have therefore been selected carefully and it should be recognised that these will inevitably reflect the philosophical and political biases of this researcher. This thesis has broadly endorsed a European approach and thus the themes and questions to be addressed in the empirical research reflect this. They will also however reflect a number of insights which originate in American thinking and Byrne's important definitional distinctions between different types of 'unconventional' collective political action and the constituent parts of social movements which were outlined in the last section. These themes and questions are outlined in two sections below beginning with those informed theoretically by aspects of American theory and moving on to those informed by European theory and Byrne's distinctions. Many of these themes and questions are of course interrelated but for the purposes of clarity have been separated as follows :

Research Themes and Questions Informed by American Theory :

1) How much is self-interest a motivating factor for participants engaging in anti-roads protest activism ?

2) What is the role of organisation and resources in the anti-roads protests ?

3) How has the opposition to road building engaged with government institutions in order to achieve its aims ?

4) Can the anti-roads protests be viewed as responding to a favourable political opportunity structure in Britain during the 1990s ?

5) How has the opposition to road-building framed its discourse(s) of opposition ? For what reasons has this discourse been framed in the particular form it as taken ?

6) Has a distinctive tactical repertoire of collective action associated with anti-protesting been developed ? What forms has this repertoire taken ?

Research Themes and Questions Informed by European Theory :

1) Who are the anti-roads protesters in basic sociological terms ?

2) Is there a relationship between the protesters' class nature and their activism ?

3) What type of values do the anti-roads protesters hold ?

4) What ideologies do the anti-roads protesters hold ? In what ways does ideology motivate and structure their activism ?

5) What type(s) of identity have been engendered by participation in anti-roads protesting ? What social processes have caused those identities to come into being ?

6) What is the nature of the alliances between the different organisations and groupings working together to oppose road building ?

7) To what extent can the anti-roads protests be construed as being politically 'radical' ?

8) What is the relationship between the anti-roads protests and the interests of the 'old' labour movement ? What potential is there for alliances here ?

9) To what extent have the protests been brought into being by structural contradictions within contemporary capitalist socio-economic organisation ?

10) What are the protesters' orientations towards the realm of institutional politics ? How far can their politics be deemed 'cultural' ?

11) How should contemporary protests against roads building be categorised ? Do they constitute a social movement, protest movement or protest campaign ?

12) What is the relationship between the different organisations and individual protesters engaged in anti-roads activity to the environmental movement ?

The above themes and questions have been used to focus the quantitative and qualitative research for the case studies of Alarm UK and the anti-M77 extension campaign which is presented in the following three chapters. It should however be noted that in the research process these themes and questions were not treated in a systematic manner but rather used as loose steering mechanisms. This is equally the case in the presentation and interpretation of exploratory research data in the following three chapters. Once however the research data has been presented, the concluding chapter will be devoted to drawing together key aspects of the research from the case studies and the insights of the theory reviewed in this chapter in order to construct a sociological overview of contemporary opposition to road-building in Britain.

Chapter 3 : *Alarm UK : Organisation, Role, Members and Supporters*

'Come off it Mr Dent,' he said, 'you can't win you know. You can't lie in front of the bulldozer indefinitely.'.... 'I'm afraid you're going to have to accept it.... this bypass has got to be built and its going to be built!' 'First I've heard of it,' said Arthur, 'why's it got to be built ?' Mr Prosser shook his finger at him for a bit, then stopped and put it away again.'What do you mean, why's it got to be built ?' he said. 'It's a bypass. You've got to build bypasses.'

(Adams, D, (1979), 'The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy')[165]

'The local groups have become the engine room of Alarm UK. They own it. The central organisation exists to service, assist and inform groups of ordinary people around the country. Alarm UK would be nothing but an empty shell without its grassroots members.'

(Stewart, J. & Bray, J. & Must, E. (1995), Roadblock)[166]

3.1 *Introduction*

As was illustrated in chapter one, Alarm UK, as the national umbrella coalition for local groups opposing the government's 1989 road building plans, played a significant role facilitating the growth of local action groups which, like Arthur Dent in Adams' comic fantasy[167], forcefully challenged the decisional logic of developers like 'Mr Prosser' thus generating the pressure from below which forced the government to largely abandon those plans by the late 1990's. Having already outlined the origins of Alarm UK in chapter one, this chapter will begin by using qualitative interview data to examine the aims and organisational structure of Alarm UK before moving on to explore the role that Alarm UK played in the wider alliance of the different groupings opposing the government's road building programme. The chapter will then turn its

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[165] Adams, D. (1979), The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy, (London : Pan Books), p. 11
[166] Stewart, J. & Bray, J. & Must, E. (1995), op cited, p. 14

attention to analysing quantitative data gained in the main from a postal survey of Alarm UK's support base in local anti-roads action groups. The chapter will conclude with a brief summary of the research findings, and the construction of a sociological ideal-type of member and supporter for the Alarm UK coalition. In order to clarify statistics cited from the quantitative survey, figures from 'The General Household Survey' (1995), 'Social Trends' (1997) and various 'British Social Attitudes' reports will be used as points of reference and comparison. Moreover in order to properly contextualise the survey's findings, key statistics will be compared where appropriate to those from sociological and political studies undertaken on other organisations and campaigns of a broadly similar nature, eg CND. This chapter is largely descriptive in its content and therefore the research findings and the ideal type which they inform will be returned to in the concluding chapter where substantive issues relating to the moblisiation of Alarm UK and the local groups affiliated to it will be analysed within the context of a broad sociological overview of the British anti-roads protests of the 1990's.

3.2 *Alarm UK : Aims and Organisational Structure*

Throughout its short existence (1991-1998), Alarm UK was run entirely on a voluntary basis from an office in south London and relied soley on donations and subscriptions to its newsletter 'Alarm Bells' for funding. In 1995, Emma Must, a leading Alarm UK activist did however win the prestigious Goldman Foundation International Award for environmental activism due to her considerable work and personal self-sacrifice in the protests against the M3 extension at Twyford Down in 1992. Aside from carrying the same acclaim and recognition as Oscars do in the world of film, this award carried with it the monetary value of $50,000, a sum which was vital to sustaining the organisation financially in subsequent years. Alarm UK's main function was to provide a co-ordinating support network that supplied highly researched technical information and relevant tactical advice in order to increase the effectiveness of local anti-roads campaigns and aid the development of sustainable transport alternatives.

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[167] Not only was Artur Dent's house was bulldozed by developers but also his planet, which was demolished in order to make way for a new 'hyperspace bypass' !

On contacting the office in London, concerned local people would be sent a series of 'Briefing sheets' which covered two key areas : campaigning techniques and transport information. They would also be given access to a network of public speakers and local public transport/environmentalist experts in order to help establish a campaign group. Once up and running the local campaign group would receive regular advice, and on occasion financial help when needed from London. Perhaps most importantly though they would receive moral support through solidarity with other local groups which encouraged a belief that winning was possible. Once the campaign was won, activists and campaigners would be encouraged to contribute to the 'Briefing sheets' and to speak at other ongoing anti-road campaign meetings and events. In an interview, one of the leading activists described the organisation's mobilisation in terms which can perhaps be seen as taking advantage of what social movements theorists like Tarrow (1992) call an opening in the political opportunity structure :

> 'What Alarm UK set out to do was to change transport policy – it filled a certain niche which was badly needing filled – I mean there are groups like Transport 2000 who are very good, who produce good transport documents, and who think radically and are very good at high level lobbying and that's their role – that's the 'respectable side'.... but I think there was definitely – and out of our London experience we saw this – there was a niche for getting together a grassroots organisation – Stephen Joseph (director of Transport 2000) himself will say that when he goes to speak to senior civil servants they take more notice of his arguments now because there are all these groups... most of them Alarm groups, around the country saying "we want change". So we clearly set out to build this coalition to be a part of changing transport policy and I think that was fairly clear from the beginning'[168]

The Alarm UK coalition was built around a highly decentralised structure which allowed each local campaign group affiliated to it complete autonomy of action. The aim was to stop roads through the encouragement of local oppositional self-activity which bypassed the institutions and due process of law. In the area of transport policy

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[168] Alarm UK activist, Interview, 12/07/96

this constituted an entirely new and radical form of campaigning; as a leading activist said :

> 'we are there to assist our local groups oppose roads and that is fundamentally what we do – of course it is in a more radical way than they normally would so they don't have any belief in public inquiries or the courts doing them wonders – in many ways that is our biggest contribution to our local groups - so they don't have any faith in the structures'[169]

In terms of organisational structure a written constitution was eschewed in favour of a commitment to just five simple 'guiding principles' that were designed to focus the aims of affiliated groups in their campaigning :

1) Halt and ultimately reverse growth in car and lorry traffic.
2) Encourage people out of their cars and onto their feet, bicycles and public transport.
3) Switch freight from lorries to rail and water.
4) Oppose any more growth in road capacity.
5) Reduce the need to travel by locating life's essentials (healthcare, employment, shops, etc) near to where people live.[170]

Alarm UK did not conform to any of the other usual bureaucratic trappings associated with formal organisation. Thus there were no leaders as such, only 'organisers' or what might be termed facilitators, there were no AGMs and hence no votes, resolutions or centralised decision making mechanisms to grind out policy or fix a 'party line'. Once or twice yearly there were however roundtable meetings of a loose 'steering group' made of between fifteen and twenty prominent anti-roads and public transport activists from around the country and numerous meetings of a similar nature occurred more regularly on a regional basis. These groups met in order to learn from the experiences of others, to discuss transport policy and to co-ordinate future strategy. National conferences were also organised every couple of years or so (1993, 1995, 1996), which, aside from engendering further opportunities for the

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[169] Alarm UK activist, Interview, 12/07/96
[170] Stewart, J. et al (1995), Alarm Bells, No 13, June, p. 4

establishment of solidarity networks, provided workshops on campaigning techniques and wide ranging debate and discussion on relevant issues. When questioned in interviews about the lack of democracy in Alarm UK, activists did not deem this to be a problem because all key decisions regarding campaigns were taken at a local level where groups organised according to their own preferences in a variety of different ways. This organisation at the local level ranged from highly structured groups with formally elected office bearers through to the type of loosely structured informal activist network favoured by Alarm UK organisers themselves. Describing the organisational set-up within Alarm UK one leading spokesperson said :

'to be quite honest there has not been all that much democracy in Alarm – somebody called it 'virtual democracy'... it is a coalition, there is some sort of steering, the members are a sounding board but there is also a very small group of people who have given it direction'[171]

The lack of a formalised structure with no defined leadership or hierarchical chain of command was held to be a tactical advantage in pursuing the organisation's aims :

'what they (the government and media) is obsessed by is the question of who are the secret leaders, who is pulling the strings and they couldn't work out that the movement didn't have leaders – we'd often meet journalists with the same sort of mindset as MI5 and they would ask "who are the leaders ? are you the leader ?""hardly hardly" – "what are the various journals we should be looking at ?" – "none" – and they just couldn't understand this lack of structure – now it really did throw them – when the M11 was on they hired Grays (a private security agency) to take pictures of everyone involved and what they were partly trying to do I think was to build up cases so they could bring charges after the event – it was also though to pick out who the leaders were'[172]

One of the most significant aspects of Alarm UK's role in the mobilisation against road-building was that NIMBYism (Not in My Back Yard-ism) was strongly

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[171] Alarm UK Organiser, Interview, 12/07/96
[172] Alarm UK Organiser, Interview 13/12/96

discouraged by Alarm UK's organisers in favour of a NOPE (Not on Planet Earth) philosophy. The term NIMBY as commonly used in relation to planning issues connotes a narrow, particularist self-interest which although generally accepting the need for development; eg, in this case roads and motorways; seeks to shift the spatial location of that development to another community/area in order to avoid the potential costs that the development will engender. In the case of roads and motorways the locational burden might include quality of life costs like noise, pollution and loss of environmental amenity or more material costs like the loss of value of property. Robinson (1998), describes NIMBYism as 'the rational response of people concerned that the impact of an environmentally damaging development, which they support in principle, will be confined to their locality whilst benefiting other areas and in this sense NIMBY protests are essentially concerned with distributional issues'.[173] Alarm UK sought to combat NIMBYism by taking a stance against all road-building and encouraging networking and solidarity between the different local groups opposing roads. In an interview one of the leading Alarm UK activists indicated that although NIMBYism may be an initial factor in mobilising local groups, it was also extremely divisive and therefore ultimately detrimental to the campaign's overall aims :

'Our biggest problem in the early days when we started nationally and in London as well was NIMBYism.... to combat this Alarm in London had only one rule - the rule was that the groups, local residents etc had to say "no roads anywhere in London" and then they could join Alarm. With Alarm UK - although we try to encourage the same ethos we have never really said no to any group.... its the angle people were coming in from – there needs to be a little bit of self-interest, its not just altruism... now on the whole things have expanded tremendously since then and individuals grow with campaigns, but that (NIMBYism) was a driving force initially'.[174]

This extract also illustrates a recognition that values change over time through the experience of collective action,; ie, that what often starts out as a sectional interest develops into an engagement with more universalist concerns.

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[173] Robinson, A. (1998), op cited, p. 3
[174] Alarm UK activist, Interview, 12/07/96

A mark of the intensity of disquiet with the government's plans in potentially blighted areas of the country is that within the first year of its existence Alarm UK had attracted the affiliation of approximately 100 new local action groups, a figure which grew to almost 300 in the mid-1990's when opposition reached a peak. These groups were mostly concentrated in and around greater London and the south of England where the government's plans centred, although there was also a scattering of affiliated groups throughout all the other parts of the United Kingdom. Groups could have anything between ten and a thousand members and the Alarm UK organisers in London usually calculated membership on the basis of each group averaging one hundred members. Thus at its height it is possible that there were up to 30,000 members and supporters participating in one way or another in the local action groups affiliated to Alarm UK.

3.3 *Alarm UK : Bridging the Gap Between Militants and Moderates*

Alarm UK as the national umbrella organisation for the local action groups played a crucial role in maintaining the anti-roads alliance by supporting the NVDA tactics favoured by the eco-warriors from the outset, even if it meant breaking the law. At Twyford Down, Alarm UK lent its active support to the direct action protests through the local objectors groups and donated £7000 of its Goldman prize money towards the setting up of a sister organisation in the form of Road Alert ! which had a specific remit to concentrate on educating protesters in NVDA skills. Such a firm stance stood in direct opposition to established environmental groups like the CPRE (Council for the Protection of Rural England) who opposed the roads programme but opposed direct action even more, or Friends of the Earth who pulled out of Twyford due to legal intimidation and vacillated on the issue of direct action for the rest of the 1990's. Alarm UK's positive position vis-a-vis direct action is made clear in the following interview extract :

'we have no problem with breaking the law, no problem with direct action, in fact we actively support direct action - I think what we would say is that it is sensible to try to stop a road before it gets to direct action – most of our groups do not want some great political battle – they want to stop a road – but if the bulldozers are coming then we have absolutely no problem at all.... Some

groups, traditional groups like FoE and the CPRE have got into a hell of a mess as to whether they should break the law and support direct action – for us it was never an issue. Now in some ways we are therefore tarred by officialdom because what we are doing is seen to be so dramatic or what is seen as a big step in breaking the law – they can just about understand colourful protests but once you take the step of breaking the law you are suddenly beyond the pale.... you're MI5 fodder.... so we would get our phones tapped in the way that the CPRE would never get their tapped, but also we wouldn't be invited to – say there was some big roundtable discussion on transport – on the whole we wouldn't get an invite because we're tarred with breaking the law.'[175]

Data from the postal survey reveals that a significant minority in Alarm UK's local groups also had no problem with taking direct action in that a third (33 per cent) claimed to have taken part in non-violent direct action and almost three quarters (74 per cent) agreed that law breaking was legitimate in certain circumstances.

As the above interview extract also illustrates, this positive stance on direct action meant that Alarm UK paid certain penalties in terms of its relationships with established environmental organisations and with government officials. However, on the other hand, such a stance also enabled it to draw both a high degree of respect (which the established organisations had forfeited) and support from militant young groups such as Earth First ! Indeed survey data illustrates that Earth First ! made up a small but significant layer of Alarm UK's membership in the local action groups (20 per cent). Alarm UK in fact attracted a high degree of support from activists in a wide variety of other campaigns and organisations. It is notable that the highest proportions are from FoE (64 per cent of respondents) and Transport 2000 (44 per cent), something which clearly reflects the wish amongst the grassroots in these organisations to be more pro-active on the roads issue. Other well represented organisations and campaigns were Greenpeace (32 per cent), CND (24 %), the Campaign Against the Criminal Justice Act (24 per cent) and Animal Rights (18 per cent). What this illustrates is the way in which Alarm UK performed a vital bridging role for the wider anti-roads protest movement in bringing together, and in creating

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[175] Alarm UK, Organiser, 13/12/96

solidarity and dialogue, between a wide array of activists from different backgrounds, age groups and perspectives upon politics and the environment.

At times however the role which Alarm UK played was very much like that of a tightrope walker who has to maintain a very singular focus in order to get to the other side of a chasm. Alarm UK thus took a radical stance in opposition to road-building and in its advocacy of sustainable transport policies but in order to keep the coalition together it did not directly engage in overtly 'political' activities or widen its brief to take on other social and environmental issues. Leading activists certainly however saw their own activities as being highly political but deliberately set out to cultivate an apolitical image for Alarm UK so as to not alienate any of its supporters in the coalition. On this subject a leading organiser said :

> 'we're highly political but we don't give that image... the image that Alarm UK is giving is to be non-party political which is fairly standard amongst the pressure groups but I think that some of us who are centrally involved see it as much more political than some of our member groups would do.... we are there to assist our local groups oppose roads and that is fundamentally what we do – of course it is in a more radical way than they normally would so they don't have any belief in public inquiries or the courts doing them wonders – in many ways that is our biggest contribution to our local groups so they don't have any faith in the structures - but they don't all climb trees and they don't all need to climb trees'.[176]

Another leading activist argued how important it was to stay focused on the issues of roads and transport and how other campaign issues which she had clear sympathy with had to be excluded in order to maintain the coalition :

> 'it is this focused thing – otherwise we'll fall apart – even with leaflets and things its difficult – I've got this leaflet against the arms trade and we cannot put it in our Alarm Bells newsletter because its too confrontational and its not a transport issue – it offends me greatly but we've got to stick to our guns....'[177]

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[176] Alarm UK Organiser, Interview, 12/07/96
[177] Alarm UK activist, Interview, 12/07/96

Despite this will to 'stay focused' and to stick to its transport/roads remit Alarm UK did nevertheless begin to redefine its agenda in the mid-1990s. In 1996, Alarm UK joined the 'Real World Coalition' of 30 NGO'S, voluntary organisations, campaigning and pressure groups which aimed to put the issues of environmental sustainability and social justice onto the party political agenda.[178] Its acceptance by the 'Real World' was a growing sign of its growing respectability. In October 1997, Alarm UK also published a report entitled 'Poor Show' which criticised new Labour's transport policies for failing the poor and made a number of recommendations for the forthcoming Transport White Paper which linked the needs of social justice with sustainable transport alternatives.[179] A measure of the success of Alarm UK is that the organisers voluntarily folded the national coordinating organisation in April 1998 because they perceived that they achieved what they had set out to do in winning the argument with the government over road-building and transport policy, and in building a groundswell of opinion amongst the public for progressive change. Many of Alarm UK's local groups continue though to operate through regional networks campaigning on transport and development issues.

3.4 Quantitative Analysis of Alarm UK Survey Data – Basic Sociological Variables

Class :

The class nature of Alarm UK's local groups can be illustrated by reference to the breakdown of the postal survey figures which relate to the following primary variables : 'occupation', 'income', 'home ownership' and 'educational attainment'. The first table below illustrates that although there is indeed a great variety of different types of paid employment engaged in by the survey respondents, there is a heavy bias towards white collar professional, technical and creative occupations. The second table roughly categorises that employment in order to help clarify the respondents occupational profile :

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[178] Jacobs, M. (ed), (1996), The Politics of the Real World, (London : Earthscan)
[179] Stewart, J. & Miles, N. & Connolly, P. (1997), Poor Show, (London : Alarm UK)

Table 2 - Alarm UK Respondents : Numbers in Types of Paid Employment

Teacher (Primary and Secondary) (14)   Civil Servant and LGO (12)

Environmental Consultant/Campaigner (9) Lecturer (FE and HE) (8)

Computer Analyst/Programmer (8)   Researcher (scientific and academic) (7)

Manager (various) (6)   Community/Development Worker (5)

Freelance Writer (4)   Publisher (4)

Journalist (3)   Barrister/Soliciter (3)

Doctor (3)   Administrative Assistant (3)

Engineer (2)   Nurse (2)

Business Analyst (2)   Town Planner (2)

Managing Director (2)   Management Consultant (2)

Social Worker (2)   Postperson (2)

Secretary (2)

All of the following one (1) : Education Advisor, Master-Craftsman, Builder, Stonemason, Steel Worker, Chartered Surveyer, Smallholder, Primary Care-, Consultant, Design Engineer, Clerk in Holy Orders, Porter, Education Support Assistant, Actor, Architect, Metallurgist, Dancer, Physiotherapist, Radio Communications Designer, Shop-Worker, Energy Consultant, Clinical Psychologist, Veterinary Surgeon, Contracts Manager, Archivist, Engineering Consultant, Pollution Control Officer, Youth-Worker, Statistician, Shopkeeper, Stockbroker, Consultant Radiologist, Radio Producer, Public Transport Officer, Education Advisor

Others : Retired (30) Self-Employed (Unspecified) (18) Student (17)
Unemployed (28) (of these 8 are full-time carers) Unspecified or Missing (4)

Total = 236

Table 3 - Occupational Structure of Alarm UK :	
Occupation Category	Frequency
Higher Professional/Managerial	22 %
Lower Professional	22 %
Technical/Consultancy/Creative Services	10 %
Routine Non-Manual/Manual	5 %
Self-Employed/Small Business	10 %
Retired	12 %
Students	7 %
Unemployed	11 %

What is particularly notable about the statistics in both tables is the almost complete absence of both manual workers of all skill levels and routine white collar workers who together make up only 5% of respondents. If the public/private sectoral divide is calculated it becomes evident that Alarm UK membership and support is largely comprised of those working in professional jobs in the public sector (ie, 40% of the total). This occupational profile is broadly similar to that which Rudig, Bennie and Franklin found in their study of Green Party members (1991) where over half (58%) of respondents were in professional/managerial and technical forms of employment with the public sector forming by far the biggest share (44%) - only 11% worked in manual jobs.[180] Mattausch (1989) in his study of CND describes a similar occupational profile where in line with Parkin's classic study (1968), the 'state class' of welfare/creative and educational professionals predominates (48%).[181] Equally, Pepper (1991) makes remarkably similar findings in his study of the social composition of Green communes in Britain where residents are primarily of the 'middle class professional/intelligentsia rather than middle-class in the purely economic sense'. Residents of such communes he argues 'lean towards academia, the arts and the caring professions rather than business and commerce'. [182] If the same categorisation is applied to the Alarm UK survey then the figures can be broken down

[180] Rudig, W. & Bennie, L. & Franklin, M. N. (1991), Green Party Members : a Profile, (Glasgow : Delta Publications), p. 26
[181] Mattausch, J. (1989), A Committment to Campaign - A Sociological Study of CND, (Manchester : Manchester University Press), p 148, p. 174
[182] Pepper, D. (1991), Communes and the Green Vision - Counterculture, Lifestyle and the New Age, (London : Green Print), pp. 87 - 88

to show that this professional 'state class' is equally dominant with 36% of all respondents belonging to it and almost half (47%) if the retired and unemployed are excluded from the calculation. Those respondents who are either self-employed or working as professionals in the commercial/private sector make up only 15%, with students and other professionals (eg, LGO's, civil servants, engineers etc) both inside and outside the public sector comprising almost a fifth (19%) of the total.

Union membership is also a good secondary variable that further indicates the type of paid employment respondents are engaged in. While almost two-thirds of respondents (64%) were not or had never been members of a trade union, those with an affiliation either at the time of the questionnaire or in the past had that affiliation with a white collar or professional union. If looked at in more detail the statistics for the latter category reveal that the teaching unions (AUT, NUT etc) figure most prominently with almost a fifth of the total (19%), and are closely followed by various professional associations (16%), and the large general purpose white collar trade union, UNISON (14%). Statistics which pertain to the use of information technology also point to the white collar nature of the work done by respondents and ties in to their high levels of educational attainment. Only a fifth of respondents do not use a computer regularly (22%) and the vast majority of these respondents are elderly and/or retired. Of those who do regularly use computers almost half (47%) use them solely for the purposes of word processing although almost a third of respondents regularly use e-mail and the internet (30%).

A third of the Alarm UK respondents are employed on a full time basis (31%) with 10% self-employed and 15% in part-time work. Income levels of members and supporters generally reflect UK averages with the median household income band of £15,000 - £24,999 on a par with the British gross average of £19,812.[183] However although almost a quarter of respondents fall into this income band, 40% of respondents households have incomes in excess of £25,000, while a quarter (26%) have incomes in excess of £35,000 per annum. At the other end of the scale a significant minority of respondents live in low income households with a quarter (26%) receiving less than £10,000 per year. Mostly though these households are made up of students, the retired and the unemployed who would be expected to have incomes much lower than average. The vast majority of respondents in fact privately

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[183] see, Church, J. (ed), (1997), Social Trends, No 27, (London : HMSO), Figure 5.4, Gross Household Income 1994-95, p.91

own their houses (72%) with a fifth renting privately (20%) and only 3% renting from their local council. The latter figure is significantly lower than the British average of 18% and reflects the absence of working class members and supporters. Moreover in terms of private ownership and privately rented accommodation the Alarm UK respondents surpassed the national averages of 67% and 10% respectively.[184]

The statistics from the latter three variables suggest that the class nature of Alarm UK as an organisation is heavily skewed towards the state sector professional new middle class. This is a class which as Savage et al (1992) argue relies on the exploitative asset of cultural capital to maintain its privileged position in the class hierarchy.[185] The key variable which confirms and reinforces this view is 'educational attainment,' where more than two thirds of respondents possess a university degree (68%) and a quarter possess a higher degree or professional qualification (25%). These figures far surpass the national average of just 11% of the population holding a basic university/polytechnic degree[186], and only 1% holding a higher degree.[187] If respondents who are students studying for a degree are added (10%) then the educational attainment levels of Alarm UK members compared to the British average display an even greater disparity. While these statistics are remarkable in comparison to general levels of educational attainment they are not nearly so striking as they first seem if contrasted with the memberships of other environmental organisations; eg Rudig, Bennie and Franklin (1991) found that two thirds of Green Party members already had or expected to have a university degree in the near future.[188] Similarly West (1985), in a survey of 241 CND demonstrators found that just over half (52%) possessed a degree or professional qualification and that 10% were students.[189] Of those in the Alarm UK sample who stated that they were unemployed almost three-quarters (72%) held a university degree or higher degree and almost two-thirds (64%) were under the age of 40. How many of these individuals were unemployed by choice

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[184] Rowlands, O. & Singleton, N. & Maher, J. & Higgens, V. (eds), (1997), General Household Survey, (London : HMSO), Table 3.1, Figure 3A, Tenure: Great Britain, 1971 to 1995, p. 25
[185] Savage, M. & Barlow, J. & Dickens, P. & Fielding, T. (1992), Property, Bureaucracy and Culture - Middle Class Formation in Contemporary Britain, (London : Routledge). According to Savage et al's theorisation there are three competing middle classes, each built around a different exploitative asset : the petty bourgeoisie (property), managerial (organisation/bureaucracy), and professional (cultural capital).
[186] Rowlands et al, (1997), op cited, Table 6.1, Highest Qualification Level Attained by Sex, 1975 to 1995, p. 81
[187] Census 1991, (1994), Qualified Manpower in Britain, Vol 1, (London : HMSO), p. 19
[188] Rudig, W. & Bennie, L. & Franklin, M. N. (1991), op cited, pp. 20-21

is a question that is however unanswerable here given the limited nature of the survey data.

In terms of reasons for paid employment the respondents answers reveal that in general their motives are non-instrumental in character. Excluding the option of choosing a category for 'earning money to buy basic essentials' the respondents were asked to indicate their one other primary motive for undertaking paid employment by choosing from a list of six options including an open option for answers which respondents did not think were covered by the options available. The results illustrate that for the respondents paid employment is not simply for the instrumental purpose of following a career (only 4% chose this category), nor is it for the purpose earning money to buy luxuries (10%). Rather, for the respondents paid employment is 'primarily about fulfilment and enjoyment' (41% chose this category) or 'about interaction with other people' (11%) or it is simply 'the normal thing to do' (15%). A small proportion of respondents did however use the open category to indicate that paid employment means nothing more to them than 'earning money to live' (10%) or conversely that it has vocational significance (6%). If the figures for the categories of 'fulfillment and enjoyment', 'interaction' and 'vocation' are added together then a clear majority share a non-instrumental orientation to employment (58%). This is something that is perhaps peculiar to the particular section of the professional middle class to which the respondents belong in that many of the state orientated occupations held by them are not especially highly salaried and yet have been chosen over more lucrative occupations in the private sector.

The final indicator of the class position of respondents is 'preferred newspaper', a variable which is frequently used by market research companies in order to ascertain the lifestyles and consumption patterns of their respondents. Survey respondents clearly favour the quality broadsheets of a broadly liberal/leftist persuasion with almost a third taking the 'Guardian/Observer' regularly (32%), 5% taking 'The Independent' and 9% taking a combination of the latter. Only 6% of respondents take any of the tabloids regularly while perhaps most surprisingly 7% read only the local newspaper and 17% do not read any newspaper regularly. The latter two figures again perhaps indicate the impact of Green ideology with its 'non-political' localised orientation.

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[189] West, N. (1985), Research in Progress, Survey of People Travelling to the National CND demonstration, London, 26 October 1985, cited in, Mattausch (1989), op cited, p. 178

A key factor in determining Alarm UK's middle class support base was the geographical location of the government's road-building plans. These centred on the 'shires' of southern England which in an ongoing process of middle class colonisation are becoming increasingly gentrified.[190] In the survey findings this is reflected in the fact that protest activity amongst respondents to the postal survey is heavily skewed towards the south of England (58 %) and greater London (23%). Only a small proportion had been active elsewhere; the North of England (14%), the Midlands (13%), Wales (5%) and Scotland (3%). It also goes towards explaining the bias towards activism in rural areas (53% of respondents have been active against roads in a rural setting only, 16% urban only, 21% rural and urban). Research carried out by Newby (1985) has shown for example that is very often the middle class incomers more than any other class, who are the most protective of stereotyped images of countryside village life, ie, 'the village in the mind', and are therefore most likely to try and stop any development that disrupts their vision of rural idyll.[191]

Gender :

The gender breakdown of the survey statistics reveals that Alarm UK in terms of membership and support is dominated by men who comprise more than two thirds of survey respondents (69%). This is clearly disproportionate to women's share of the general population which stands at 51%.[192] When questioned in an interview about the survey results relating to gender, a leading activist said however that :

> 'in Alarm... once you get out to the (local) groups it is the women that are in positions of influence and power and the men tend to be sleeping members which is the reversal of most organisations - it is excellent and its all about our style of campaigning'[193]

Thus according to the quoted activist what the survey bias in favour of men reflects is the membership of Alarm UK at one particular level, ie the 'sleeping' members as

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[190] For a critical review of the literature within rural sociology on this process see, Philips, M. (1993), Rural Gentrification and the Processes of Class Colonisation, Urban Studies, Vol 9, No 2, pp. 123-140
[191] see, Newby, H. (1985), Green and Pleasent Land, (London : Hutchinson and Co)
[192] Rowlands, O. et al, (1995), op cited, Table 2.12, Sex by Age, p. 20
[193] Alarm UK activist, Interview, 13/12/96

opposed to the most active members who tend to be the chairpersons or 'office bearers' of local action groups. This answer was in fact confirmed by the earlier small scale pilot survey carried out at the Alarm UK national conference which showed that amongst core activists as opposed to less active members there is indeed greater gender parity with the split 55/45 in favour of men. These latter figures compare favourably with earlier studies which reveal that women are in general only slightly under-represented in environmental and anti-nuclear organisations. For example Rudig, Bennie and Franklin (1991) in their survey of British Green Party members found that women made up 47% of the Green Party as opposed to 53% men. Equally Sudman (1984) in his sample of 372 ecologists found the gender split to be 54% male and 46% women while respondents to Mattausch's survey of CND members split 52/48 in favour of men.[194] A pertinent factor which perhaps helps to account for the prominent role of women in environmental and environmentally related organisations is the 'special' relationship between Green political thought and feminism. As Dobson (1990) has argued, those who subscribe to an ecological world view (in the strong sense of the word) tend to view nature as female and have a propensity to 'map nature's beneficial characteristics on to the female personality'.[195] Moreover ecologism tends to view feminism as a guiding light in both theory and practice - indeed eco-feminism is the latest hybrid theoretical development to gain a significant foothold amongst 'academic' feminists.[196]

One reason that the Alarm UK postal survey sample is so heavily skewed in favour of men is because of technical and distribution restraints which meant that only one questionnaire was sent to each mailing address. This in turn meant that where there were joint memberships/supporters only one of the respondents filled out the questionnaire - it can be surmised that in the vast majority of cases the respondent was male. It can also be assumed that joint memberships are quite common amongst respondents because the figures relating to marital status reveal that more than half of both men and women are either married or cohabiting (married women 60%, married men 55%). One of the Alarm UK organisers also indicated that particularly in contrast

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[194] Rudig, W. & Bennie, L. & Franklin, M. N. (1991), op cited, p. 17, also see, Mattausch, J. (1989), op cited, CND National Membership Survey, Summer 1992, secondary analysis, p. 174

[195] Dobson, A. (1990), Green Political Thought, (London : Unwin Hyman), p. 28, see also pp. 171 - 204

[196] For example see, Plumwood, V. (1988), Women. Humanity and Nature, Radical Philosophy, Spring - or, Henderson, H. (1983), The Warp and the Cleft - the Coming Synthesis of Eco-philosophy and

to other transport pressure groups like Transport 2000 ('in their main office it is 80% women but not in the 'trainspotting' local areas'), Alarm UK had a much higher proportion of women as leading activists and that on the 'steering group' there was a rough parity between men and women. Equally as the smaller conference survey reveals, the gender split amongst more active members is indeed much more even.

Ethnicity :

The survey sample reveals Alarm UK to have a membership that is in terms of ethnic background almost exclusively white Caucasian (96%). As the following excerpt from an interview with two leading Alarm UK activists illustrates this is recognised as a genuine problem by the organisers :

Interviewer :

'do you have a black or ethnic minority presence in your organisation ?'

Respondent No 1 :

'...going back some time now the anti-roads thing just hasn't been seen as a black issue - black people tend to have fewer cars, fewer private vehicles and even the pro-public transport lobby is not seen as a black issue in the way that housing is or crime is or the police is and that is why I think that black people haven't got involved. When Alarm started in London about ten years ago there were major road programmes and there was some black involvement in places like Hackney but it was minimal so it is partly down to it not being seen as a black issue - indeed the whole environment is not seen as a black issue...'

Respondent No 2 :

'I also think that they are less likely to stand up in a confrontational situation which NVDA is, because they feel that being black they might be singled out....'

Interviewer :

'is that a problem for your organisation ? how will you address it or will it happen naturally ?'

Eco-feminism, in , Caldecott, L. & Leland, S. (1983), Reclaim the Earth, (London : Women's Press). In chapter five feminism is considered in relation to the theory and practice of Earth First !

Respondent No 1 :

'I think I see it as a fact of life - initially I got involved in pro-public transport
stuff before the roads and it was in south London with a big black population
and it did worry me as a problem then - but then I came to see it just as a fact
of life - I think that black people will get involved with environmental issues
but not yet - it may be because it is seen as a white issue and more than that
it is not seen as a black issue directly affecting black people's lives - naturally
they are concentrating on black issues - it might need another generation
really - I think it will happen but I don't think we can make it happen...'

Respondent No 2 :

'I also think that the poor buggers are using so much time just trying to feed
their families and keeping ends together that they just don't have the time -
I mean this seriously - its all very well for me as I'm not working so I can
spend time doing things but a lot of underfunded families just don't have
the privilege of having time to do a lot anyway - this goes for black or
white - the ethnic minorities always have the poorest paid jobs so they don't
have the time to involve themselves..'

Respondent No 1:

'I think that is right but I think that it is going to be a wider radical movement
that is going to have to take on board black issues....' [197]

The lack of direct support from ethnic minorities that is experienced by Alarm UK is
something that reflects the under-representation of the minorities generally in both
mainstream local and national British politics and in the 'alternative' political milieu
inhabited by pressure groups and protest/campaigning organisations. Sarah Barry, the
spokesperson for Friends of the Earth in Glasgow, when asked in an interview why
there was this lack of ethnic minority participation said :

'I wish I knew why but I don't - in fact this was a thing we discussed at a
board meeting so it is taken seriously - (in Glasgow) we have no coloured
people in our group - certainly active anyway ... sometimes it might be
because their own cultural groupings are very strong and they don't have the

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[197] Two Alarm UK Organisers, Interview, 12/07/96

time or the culture doesn't encourage them to be outward looking - that might be part of the answer but I don't think it is a fault of ours - I hope not and if it was we would address it if we knew how'[198]

Robert Fairley a Glasgow anti-motorway campaigner from the Alarm UK affiliated local group RAM74 (Residents Against the M74) also highlights the lack of involvement from the ethnic monority community when he said in an interview that :

'where I stay, and where this particular group is situated is in Govanhill on the south-side of Glasgow which has at least 30% ethnic minorities, mostly Asian - they have had very little input to the group although with the new road developments some of the local shop-keepers are starting to take an interest - there does though seem to be a gap perhaps because the original group members don't actually mix with the Asian community in their everyday lives. We have made efforts to involve them by for example translating our literature into appropriate languages but that still doesn't get them involved perhaps because they don't really feel that they belong to the area - probably though their lack of involvement reflects the deeper divisions in society'[199]

Even in terms of simple participation in elections the ethnic minorities are under-represented. Polls taken before British General Elections have consistently shown that ethnic minorities as a whole are less likely to be registered to vote than Whites and in terms of actual voting itself, participation surveys have shown that while Asian voters are only slightly less likely to exercise their votes than Whites, Afro-Caribbeans are significantly less likely to do so.[200] Equally in the UK, the Asian and Afro-Caribbean minorities are generally less likely than Whites to know who their locally elected representatives are and correspondingly are less likely to make use of them.[201] Comparative data on environmental organisations in the area of ethnicity is very difficult to acquire as even Rudig et al's exhaustive survey (1990) of Green Party membership did not ask respondents to state their ethnic background -

[198] Barry , S. Interview, 16/10/97

[199] Fairley, R. Interview, 25/07/96

[200] For example see, Henry-Layton, Z. (1990), Black Electoral Participation : an Analysis of Recent Trends, in, Goulbourne. H. (1990), Black Politics in Britain, (Aldershot : Avebury), pp. 48-62

this would appear to indicate that for the researchers is was simply assumed that the Green Party, like other political parties is an overwhelmingly white organisation. As demonstrated earlier, class, or more precisely professional 'middle classness' is also a factor in determining environmental activism; thus as the the ethnic minorities are disproportionately unrepresented in this class nationally it is not therefore too surprising that they do not have a larger presence in Alarm UK.

Figures published by the Countryside Commission (1992) suggest that people of ethnic minority origin tend to make up a disproportionately large percentage of the 35 % of the population who tend to be infrequent recreational users of the countryside. Agyemen and Spooner (1997) identify four key factors which discourage its use by the ethnic monorities : lack of friends and relatives that live in the countryside, lack of financial resources and lack of free time due to overrepresentation in low paid low status employment, and finally the type of rural racism which views the countryside as a 'white domain' and is intrinsically linked to notions of national imagery and identity.[202] The Black Environmental Network (BEN), formed in 1988 by black activists has however sought to challenge the white exclusivity of both countryside recreation and the wider environmental movement by promoting the issues of conservation and countryside access within the black community. BEN activists have pursued this aim by setting up city based regional forums (renamed 'local groups' in 1992/93) that have been designed to bring together local representatives of ethnic minorities and local representatives of environmental organisations for the purposes of dialogue and communication. Agyeman and Spooner note that ideologically and politically 'BEN was one of the first environmental groups to push the links between environmental equity and social justice issues. Many had done so on a global scale but few if any were doing so in the UK context.'[203] This approach has not however been entirely successful, for not only has the Commission for Racial Equality largely ignored BEN's existence, but by 1995 as an organisation it had a white chairperson and only one black management committee member. In essence then by 1995 BEN

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[201] Johnson, M.D. (1990), Table 6.7, in, Some Aspects of Black Electoral Participation and Representation in the West Midlands, ibid, p.86
[202] Agyeman, J. & Spooner, R. (1997), Ethnicity and the Rural Environment, in, Cloke, P. & Little, (eds), (1997), Contested Countryside Cultures, (London : Routledge), p. 205-208
[203] ibid, p.210

had largely been assimilated by the white dominated organisations which it originally sought to challenge.[204]

Age Distribution :

Survey findings suggest that the age structure of Alarm is somewhat younger than that of the population as a whole. Almost two thirds of respondents are between the ages of 20 and 44 (58%) whereas only 39% of the general population fall into the age category of 16-44.[205] Equally the survey's 45 to 65 age category outweighs the general population by 34% to 24%. Over 65's in the survey however made up only 8% of respondents compared to a figure of 15% for the wider population.[206] On closer inspection however the age distribution is perhaps not as heavily weighted towards the young as might be expected. The median age group was 40 to 44 and the high concentration between the ages of 30 and 55 (68%) suggests that the 'middle-aged' have a disproportionate influence. This was also reflected in figures pertaining to the aforementioned Alarm UK conference where the same age group made up 71% of respondents. Women respondents are on average slightly younger with a third (33%) being under 35 as opposed to a fifth of their male counterparts (21%). The figures pertaining to the other end of the age range confirm this finding with only 12% of women respondents over the age of 55 compared to 22% of male respondents.

These figures on age distribution again have a close affinity with statistics produced from empirical research carried out on other environmental organisations; eg, Rudig, Bennie and Franklin (1991) found that the average age of Green Party members was 41 and that people under 25 "are under-represented in the Party'. They do however note that it was the 25 to 49 age group which formed the core of the membership, a slightly younger grouping than that which forms the core for Alarm UK.[207] Perhaps one reason for this disparity is simply that environmental activists who became active during the post-Chernobyl 'Green upsurge' of the late 1980s have now aged. Rudig et al carried out their survey in 1990 while the Alarm UK survey

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[204] ibid, p .211

[205] Rowlands, O. & Singleton, N. & Maher, J. & Higgens. (1995), op cited, Table 2.11, Age by Sex : 1971 to 1995, p. 20

[206] ibid, p. 20

[207] Rudig, W. & Bennie, L. & Franklin, M.N. (1991), op cited, p. 17. See also Pepper, D. (1991), op cited, p. 84. In his study of Green communes, Pepper found that 47% of his interviewees were aged

was carried out in 1996; thus, providing that the Green Party has failed to attract large numbers of young people in the interim period, this difference in time would be just enough to push the age distribution of respondents who are members of both Alarm UK and the Green Party one category upwards. This is indeed confirmed by the survey results as the 19% of Alarm UK respondents who had been or still are members of the Green Party have an age profile that is more in line with that of Alarm UK's as a whole - almost three quarters of their members and ex-members fall between the ages of 35 and 54. A similar age profile of respondents who were also affiliated to CND (58% are between the ages of 35 and 54, 22% under 35) and Friends of the Earth (62 % are between 35 and 54, 23% under 35) further illustrates that the memberships of other similar protest/pressure groups are probably concentrated in the middle-aged brackets.

The pressure group with the oldest age profile that also had significant crossover in terms of members and supporters with Alarm UK was Transport 2000 - almost two thirds of respondents who were members of both organisations were aged over 40 (65%) while more than three quarters (81%) were over 35. In contrast to the overall middle-aged profile of Alarm UK and the older environmental and anti-nuclear pressure groups, respondents to the survey who are also members of the newer environmental protest organisations or who are involved with campaigns around issues that have been prominent in the contemporary era tend to have a younger age profile. For example Earth First! respondents who are also members and supporters of Alarm UK have an age profile which is concentrated in the late 20s and 30s (60% under 40, 82% under 45, 0% over 55), while respondents who are also campaigners against the Criminal Justice Act have a similar age profile (60% under 40, 78% under 45, 95% under 55).

3.4.1 *Political Attitudes*

In general, respondents to the Alarm UK postal survey can described as moderately left-wing in their political orientation with almost two thirds of the respondents placing themselves on the left side of a left-right scale (47% centre-left, 13% far-left, 60% of the total). A fifth of respondents (20%) place themselves at the centre while

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between 30 and 39, and that 32% were aged between 40 and 49 - those under 30 and over 50 formed only a small minority of residents in these 'green' communities.

only 8% place themselves on the right or far-right politically. Moreover in line with Green political thought a significant minority (12%) deny the validity of the questionnaire's left-right categorisation schema - if however these 'abstentionists' are looked at more closely they typically support issues (eg, anti-consumerism) which are usually described as having a left-wing bias. This description of the respondents as moderately left-wing is broadly supported by the figures which pertain to political self-description where the breakdown is as follows : Socialist/Green, Socialist/Anarchist, Socialist and Green Feminist 32%, Green 29%, Liberal or Green Liberal 12%, Conservative or Green Conservative 8% and Anarchist/Green Anarchist 4%. The most favoured self-description label is clearly 'Green' which is used either on its own or in conjunction with other more traditional political labels by almost two thirds (61%) of respondents. Mirroring the figures for the left-right scale there is again a significant minority (12%) who declare themselves to be non-political or disagree with all political labels. Perhaps unsurprisingly then the most important political issue for respondents is 'the environment' with almost two-thirds (64%) identifying it as one of the key issues facing British society in the mid-1990's. This latter figure is more than double that for any other issue with 'transport/roads' (30%), 'social justice' (30%), 'democracy' (28%) and 'morality/corruption' (28%) each being identified as key issues by just under a third of respondents and 'unemployment' by a fifth (21%). Much further down the list comes 'health' (14%), 'education' (12%) and 'crime' (9%).

In comparison to the general population membership of political parties is proportionately very high amongst respondents. Only 4% of Britons are currently members of political parties [208] whereas more than a third (35%) of respondents are currently party members while a further fifth (20%) have belonged to a political party in the past - only 45% have never been a member of a political party. The Green Party is the most popular party in terms of membership amongst the respondents with 14% of the total as current members. Closely following the Greens are Labour on 11% who in are turn followed by the Liberal Democrats in a poor third position on 6% and the Conservatives in fourth position on 4%. If past party memberships are included then a fifth of respondents (20%) have had experience in both Labour Party and the Green

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[208] Church, J. (ed), (1997), op cited, p. 227

Party although the latter party's decline in membership amongst respondents has been less sharp.

In terms of voter registration almost all the respondents (95%) were registered to vote at the 1997 General Election with almost a third (30%) signalling their intention to vote Labour who were followed by the Greens with 17% support, the Liberal Democrats with 16% and the Conservatives on 5%. At the time of the survey a large minority were still undecided (23%) but it can be surmised that in line with the actual election result the majority decided to vote either Labour or Liberal Democrat - only 7% said they were abstaining from the electoral process. Because of the high percentage of 'undecideds' the best guide to probable voting behaviour in 1997 are the respondents stated voting preferences at the 1992 General Election. These were as follows : Labour 35%, Liberal Democrats 23%, The Green Party 18%, Conservative Party 11%, and abstainers 12 %. These figures broadly tie in with the centre-left profile described above especially if it is acknowledged that the Liberal Democrats are now widely perceived (wrongly in this researchers view) as as a leftist Party as opposed to being a party of the centre. Indeed as the recent study of Liberal Democrat members by Bennie, Curtice, and Rudig (1996) has shown, most perceive of themselves as 'just to the left of centre' (over half placed themselves to the left of centre and less than a fifth to the right) [209] Asked which of the political parties had the best policies on the environment almost two-thirds of survey respondents favoured the Greens (61%) with the Liberal Democrats coming a poor second at just 17%. If compared to voting intentions or votes cast at previous general elections these statistics indicate that the majority of respondents in fact do not vote simply on the single issue of 'the environment' when it comes to the actual process of electing a government. Clearly then other issues are taken into account whether it be 'better public services', 'getting the Tories out' or other mainstream political concerns. Another reason for this disparity is that in the 1992 General Election the Green Party stood candidates in only 256 parliamentary constituencies [210], a figure which in line with shrinking membership declined to just 96 candidates nationally in 1997.[211] The fact that Green Party candidates do not stand in every constituency clearly prevents

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[209] Bennie, L. G. & Curtice, J. & Rudig, W. (1996), Party Members, included in, McIver, D. (ed), Liberal Democrats, (Hemel Hempstead : Harvester Wheatsheaf), pp. 143-144
[210] Rallings, C. & Thrasher, M. (1993), Britain Votes, (Aldershot : Dartmouth Publishing Company), p. 163
[211] see the Green Party's website @ http://www.gn.org/greenparty/elections/results97.html

many potential voters like the Alarm UK respondents from voting for their first choice Party.

Other indicators of the Alarm UK respondents' left wing political bias are figures pertaining to 'changes wanted to the political system', 'attitudes towards trade union power', and 'attitudes towards the market economy'. In an open question which asked respondents what changes they would like to see made to the political system almost two-thirds (62%) expressed a wish for the introduction of proportional representation. Moreover in terms of the constitution almost half (48%) expressed a desire for greater democratisation with regional devolution, the decentralisation of decision making to a local level, and an elected second chamber entailing the abolition of the House of Lords being the most frequent suggestions - a small minority (6%) declared themselves to be revolutionaries. The popularity of these measures for greater democratisation when combined with the high percentages for involvement with political parties and voter registration suggests that while the respondents are critical of the present system of representative democracy they nevertheless on the whole retain a faith that the system can be progressively reformed. Further evidence which backs up this assertion are the respondents responses in terms of 'agreement' and 'disagreement' with the statement 'all politicians are corrupt'. Only 16% in fact 'agree' (12%) or 'strongly agree' (4%) with the statement while more than half (58%), 'disagree' (42%) or 'disagree strongly' (17%) with it. It is though important to note here that a quarter of respondents (25%) took a neutral position on the question and that the vast majority of those who disagree do so in the weaker of the two categories for disagreement - this implies that in general the respondents faith in the political system as it stands is a weak as opposed to strong faith.

The issue of trade union power is always an emotive and often divisive one and responses to the question on whether or not the trade unions had 'too little', 'too much' or 'the right amount of power' drew a very mixed response. Respondents do however just come down on the side of 'too little power' with 46% ticking this box as opposed to 35% who think that they have the right amount of power (hence implicitly agreeing with Thatcher's reforms) and the minority (7%) who feel that they have too much power (hence implicitly endorsing more reform). If the 12% of 'undecideds' are allocated evenly between the three options then a small majority of all respondents agree that the unions have too little power thus adding weight once again to the thesis that Alarm UK members and supporters are generally left leaning in a political sense.

One reason perhaps though for the narrowness of this majority is the mutual animosity which has traditionally manifest itself between Greens and the labour movement. Williams (1982) describes the classic conflict scenario between these two groups when he says that 'what you will find in all too many environmental cases and planning enquiries in this country - on a new airport for example, or on some new industrial development in a previously non-industrial region - that there is a middle class environmental group protesting against the damage and there's a trade union group supporting the coming of the work'.[212] This conflict between two sections of society who in many ways should have a common enemy is again an issue which will be returned to in chapter six.

The left-wing bias of respondents is much more pronounced if the responses to the question of attitudes to the market economy are considered. When asked to agree or disagree with the statement 'there is no alternative to a market economy' three quarters (75%) of respondents disagree or disagree strongly with only 14% in favour (4% strongly agree). What is striking here is that if the figures are looked at more closely, the proportion which strongly disagrees (44%) heavily outweighs the proportion which disagrees mildly (31%). On issues relating to economics the survey respondents are then clearly very left wing - this does not mean however that respondents would like to see centralised socialist state planning of whatever variety, rather it once again reflects the impact of Green political thought with its emphasis on small scale localised production for need, bioregionalism and anti-consumerism.

The survey also included a modified version of Inglehart's test (1990) for post-materialism[213] whereby respondents were asked to prioritise the following ten categories in order of importance to them politically : 'fighting crime', 'protecting the environment', 'fighting inflation', 'creating a less impersonal society', 'maintaining order within the nation', 'the protection of civil liberties', 'creating more beautiful cities', 'maintaining economic growth', 'giving people more control over their own lives', and 'maintaining strong defence forces'. Respondents in fact consistently chose to prioritise those values which pertain to the 'quality of life' and hence post-materialism as opposed to those associated with what Inglehart describes as the old style materialism. For example this means that on the one hand 'protection of the environment' was made the top priority by half (50%) of the respondents while on the

[212] Williams, R. (1982), Socialism and Ecology, (London : SERA), p. 14
[213] Inglehart, R. (1990), op cited, pp. 74 - 75

other hand 'economic growth' was made the top priority by just 3%, 'fighting inflation' by 1%, 'defence' by 1%, 'maintaining order' by 4% and 'fighting crime' by 5%. Each of the latter five 'materialist' issues invariably did not make it into the top five priorities chosen - rather the other issues which are associated with post-materialism consistently did. Only 'fighting crime' came close to the 'top five' with 47% choosing it as their fifth option - what this reflects is the genuine but inflated fear that 'middle England' in particular has of crime. While there are numerous problems associated with Inglehart's conception of post-materialism - and indeed especially in relation to contemporary Britain[214], his conception is nevertheless useful if applied carefully as a rough indicator and a general measure of social and political attitudes and values. As used in the Alarm UK survey, what his test reveals is that the political values of a particular affluent and educated section of the middle class are at least partially orientated towards a politics which involves the pursuit of 'self-actualisation', identity and quality of life. What it does not prove though is that 'life politics' have superseded old style 'materialist politics' for this section of society. As the survey illustrates, the vast majority of respondents have a lot to gain from, tacitly approve of, and are still very much involved in the traditional political process.

The final variable from the questionnaire which is worth considering in relation to the political profile of respondents is that of attitudes towards 'human nature'. Respondents were asked to grade their agreement or disagreement with the statement 'human beings are inherently greedy'; their responses were as follows : 'strongly agree' 14%, 'agree' 27%, 'neutral' 20%, 'disagree' 27%, 'strongly disagree' 12%. If the two categories for agreement and disagreement are conflated, the split between those respondents who agree and those respondents who disagree is roughly equal. Given the generally leftist political bias of the respondents these figures are somewhat surprising because a leftist political philosophy usually implies a more positive perspective or the materialist view that human nature is at least malleable. One explanation might be that when socialist/labourist political philosophy is fused with Green political philosophy the materialist elements of the former begin to be quiestioned or indeed dropped altogether. This is a question which will be returned to

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[214] For example see, Furlong, A. & Cartmel, F. (1997), Young People and Social Change - Individualisation and Risk in Late Modernity, (Buckingham : Open University Press), pp. 105 -108. As Furlong and Cartmel point out, one of the key criticisms of Inglehart is that his conception of the shift from materialist values to post-materialist values does not properly take into account fluctuating economic circumstances within national economies.

in more depth in chapter five where the different strands of environmental philosophy are considered and discussed critically.

3.4.2 Environmental Attitudes and Environmental Activism

As is to be expected given the evidence cited in the last section, the Alarm UK respondents' attitudes towards the environment are decidedly green in character. Alongside destructive road-building the respondents are clearly concerned about a wide range of environmental issues. In response to a question which asked them to list the environmeantal issues over which they are most concerned the frequency rates are as follows : Pollution 45%, Destruction of Forests/Unspoiled Land 39%, Risk related issues, eg nuclear power, BSE, etc 37%, Consumerism 25%, Global Warming 21%, Extinction of Species 19%, Sustainability and Energy Use 15%, Population Growth 9% . The figures pertaining to these concerns are closely related to what Witherspoon and Martin (1992) have identified as the three main categories of environmental concern amongst the general population; ie, in descending order of concern : pollution, nuclear power and long term global issues. Witherspoon and Martin found that in general the wider population tends to prioritise those environmental issues which are open, obvious and most immediately affect everyday lives as opposed to the 'more gradual (and perhaps less soluble) environmental threats posed by current energy use and human interventions in the natural world'.[215] Using the figures quoted above, a surprisingly similar picture can be painted of the environmental concerns of Alarm UK respondents who despite their high levels of politicisation and education also tend to prioritise the 'obvious' and 'immediate' over longer term threats.

One of the most salient trends within even mainstream Green political thought is neo-Malthusianism (see chapter five). Halting population growth is clearly not though considered a primary environmental priority by the survey respondents because as mentioned above only 9 % listed it as an environmental issue over which they are most concerned. However as is illustrated in the following table, when directly asked to indicate their level of 'agreement' or 'disagreement' with a provocative statement on the population question the respondents are much more split :

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[215] Martin, J. & Witherspoon, S. (1992), What do we mean by Green ?, included in, Brook, L. & Jowell, R. & Prior, G. & Taylor, B. (eds), (1992), British Social Attitudes - the 9th Report, (Aldershot : Dartmouth Publishing Company) , p.7

Table 4 : Responses to the Statement 'For the sake of the environment, laws should be made in each country to restrict population growth'		
Agree or *Strongly Agree*	*Neutral*	*Disagree or Disagree Strongly*
Frequency : 36 %	Frequency : 25 %	Frequency : 39 %

From the table it can be seen that while well over a third of respondents 'disagree' or 'disagree strongly' with the statement an almost equal proportion 'agree' or 'strongly agree' with it - a quarter are neutral. Malthusianism with its authoritarian overtones thus co-exists rather uneasily with the overwhelming support given to the value of 'the protection of civil liberties' in the test for post-materialism mentioned earlier. In the test, 82% of respondents placed this issue in their top five political priorities out of a choice of ten and 52% in fact placed it within their top three priorities (13% in fact placed it as their number one priority). Only protection of the environment received a higher rating as a political value (86% placed protection of the environment in their top three priorities, 49% placed it as the number one priority).

A good test of 'greenness' is 'willingness to pay' for environmental protection : thus the following four questions from the 'British Social Attitudes Survey 9th Report' were repeated in the Alarm UK survey questionnaire in order to ascertain both the respondents attitudes in this area and in order to compare their answers to those of a sample of the wider population. Alongside the questions which are reproduced in the table below are the frequency percentages for both the survey respondents (Resp) and the 'British Social Attitudes' survey of the general population (BSA) in relation to each of the five answer categories :

Table 5 : Willingness to pay for the Environment Question :	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1) The government should do more to protect the environment, even if it leads to higher taxes ?	Resp : 69% BSA : 13%	Resp : 26% BSA : 47 %	Resp : 3 % BSA : 29 %	Resp : 1 % BSA : 9 %	Resp : 1% BSA : 2 %
2) Industry should do more to protect the environment, even if it leads to lower profits and fewer jobs ?	Resp : 51 % BSA : 13 %	Resp : 34 % BSA : 51 %	Resp : 13 % BSA : 24 %	Resp : 1 % BSA : 10 %	Resp : 1% BSA : 1 %
3) Ordinary People should do more to protect the environment, even if it means paying higher prices ?	Resp : 58 % BSA : 13 %	Resp : 34 % BSA : 55 %	Resp : 5 % BSA : 20 %	Resp : 3 % BSA : 11 %	Resp : 1 % BSA : 1 %
4) For the sake of the environment, car users should pay higher taxes ?	Resp : 43 % BSA : 4 %	Resp : 33 % BSA : 22 %	Resp : 14 % BSA : 26 %	Resp : 7 % BSA : 40 %	Resp : 3 % BSA : 7 %[216]

From the responses to the questions listed in the table it can clearly be seen that Alarm UK respondents are in general much more likely than the general population to be willing to pay for environmental protection. In response to the first three questions the Alarm UK respondents on the whole 'strongly agree' with the measures proposed averaging 59% for this category - the wider population for the same category have an average of just 13%. The wider population does though generally support the first three proposals although much more tentatively than the survey respondents. For the general population the 'agree' category is generally the category of choice and if the two agreement categories are combined then almost two-thirds of the population support the proposals (64%) while more then nine out of ten respondents support them (91%). It is though important to note here that because of their relatively privileged income status (see the section on class) most of the Alarm UK respondents can probably afford to pay as opposed to large sections of the British population who are in low paid occupations and who struggle to simply pay for everyday necessities, ie, there is a correlation between being 'willing' and being 'able' to pay.

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[216] ibid, p. 9 & pp. 310-11

The figures from the above answers that are perhaps the most striking are those which relate to the proposal for car users to pay higher taxes - both the Alarm UK respondents and the general population clearly view this as the least popular of the above proposals. Given the prominence of 'car ideology' in contemporary culture and society and the general lack of public transport alternatives this is to be expected from the wider population yet amongst Alarm UK respondents its unpopularity (ie less than half 'strongly agree') relative to the other proposals is rather unexpected given that Alarm UK is an anti-roads organisation which is also dedicated to the development of more sustainable forms of transport. Unlike the wider population however which opposes this measure by a ratio of approximately two to one (26% agree or strongly agree, 47% disagree or strongly disagree) there is a general agreement with this measure from Alarm UK respondents as if the agreement categories are combined then three-quarters are in favour (76%). This figure for agreement with higher taxes on car use amongst respondents is exactly the same as that given for 'agreement' or 'strong agreement' with a statement included in another section that 'car use should be severely restricted' - here only 10% of respondents 'disagreed' or 'disagreed strongly'. Higher taxation on car use would therefore appear to be one of the measures generally approved of by respondents to achieve this aim.

In relation to car ownership only just over half of respondents own a car (55%) although more than two-thirds claim to have reduced car use in response to environmental problems (67%) while 9% have moved closer to their place of work in order to reduce reliance on the car or to cut journey times. Car ownership has steadily grown in Britain over the last fifty years although it was particularly marked in the 1980's due to the increasing number of housholds acquiring more than one car. In 1995 only 29% of British households did not have a car or van owner compared to 48% in 1972, while households with more than one car increased from 8% to 22% over the same period (11% to 20% between 1980 and 1990)[217] The reduction in car use by the survey respondents and the moderate level of ownership for the relatively privileged social strata to which most respondents belong can be interpreted as again indicating the the impact of Green ideology. It also perhaps reflects the ideological biases of the public sector 'new' middle class which as sociologists like Parkin (1968) have argued, has a tendency towards expressive quality of life issues.

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[217] Rowlands, O. et al (1997), op cited , Table 3.18, Figure 3C, Households With Access to a Car or Van, 1972 to 1995, p. 26

Aside from support for greater government taxation in order to better protect the environment, Alarm UK respondents listed various changes in personal lifestyle which they have undertaken. The most popular alteration is reduction in car use with more than two-thirds (67%) listing this change. This is followed by half of the respondents (50%) engaging in the recycling of packaging and waste products and almost half claiming to have altered their patterns of consumption, eg buying organic fruit and vegetables (45%). In terms of lifestyle changes these three options are clearly the most popular measures undertaken as the next option most frequently listed is the buying of 'environmentally friendly' products which just over one in four respondents regularly engage in (27%). Other changes that are listed by the respondents include the conservation of energy (20%), and moving closer to one's place of work (9%). As with 'willingness to pay', many of the lifestyle changes listed above are related to the fact that alongside their keen awareness of green issues the respondents have a relatively privileged income status and can therefore afford to buy more expensive goods, products and services which have less impact upon the environment.

A final lifestyle change which respondents listed and is worth noting here is 'becoming a vegetarian' - almost one in ten respondents (9%) said that they had become a vegetarian in order to help protect the environment. Vegetarianism is something that in fact has a long history of being linked to environmental attitudes/activism and this is further reflected amongst respondents answers where almost half (45%) do not eat meat and a small minority of vegans (6%) do not eat meat or dairy products. Compared to the British population at large where after the food scares of recent years vegetarianism is a growing trend especially amongst the young (11% of 18 to 34 year olds); but where at as of yet only 7 % could properly be described as vegetarians, the proportion of vegetarianism amongst respondents is very high indeed.[218] Although animal rights activism is only a minority interest amongst Alarm UK respondents (19%), as is to be expected there is a distinct and direct correlation between animal rights activism and vegetarianism. More than two thirds (68%) of Alarm UK respondents who are also animal rights activists are vegetarians while for respondents not involved with animal rights the figure is only 40%.

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[218] Gallup Poll, Daily Telegraph, 1/04/96, cited on the Vegetarian Society Statistics Information Sheet @ http://www.eu.veg.org/Orgs/VegSocUK/Info/statveg.html

Respondents to the survey are of course members and supporters of the anti-roads/sustainable transport coalition embodied in Alarm UK, so aside from personal lifestyle changes they clearly recognise the need for grassroots campaigning and forms of collective action in order to put pressure on the government to alter its policies which affect the environment. This belief in the importance of collective action and 'pressure group' politics is, as was illustrated earlier (section 3.3) manifest in the respondents activism in a wide array of campaigns and organisations. Moreover in response to a question which asked respondents if they had been active working on a voluntary basis for charitable organisations, of the third (28%) that claim to do so regularly more than half work for Green or environmental charities (15% of all respondents, 54% of all those who work for charities) while the next largest grouping (5% of all respondents, 17% of all those who work for charities) work for those charities which aid the developing world.

In terms of types of activism specifically directed against road-building Alarm UK respondents actions have been many and varied. Letter writing to MP's, councillors, the press etc is the option most favoured by respondents with nearly nine out of ten (86%) engaging in this activity. More than half have however been more active than this, with 54% claiming to have petitioned against new road schemes and 51% claiming to have helped to organise public meetings and publicity events. A further 42% of respondents have engaged in 'other activities' including fund-raising and officially objecting at Public Inquiries. The least favoured type of action is non-violent direct action which usually involves breaking the law - nevertheless as intimated above (section 3.3.1) a significant minority comprising a third of all respondents (33%, with equal proportions by gender) claim to have engaged in NVDA to protest against road-building. Thus perhaps unsurprisingly there is a direct correlation between the 'directness' of protest activities and the numbers participating in those activities; ie, the numbers drop depending upon the potential for confrontation. As is to be expected age is a significant factor in determining whether or not an activist participates in NVDA - of the sample none of those over 65 have participated and only 15% of the 55 to 65 age group have done so - of those aged under 35, 46% have participated. In relation to activism, Earth First ! members who are also members and supporters of Alarm UK are clearly the most militant with more than three quarters (77%) having taken part in NVDA. On the other hand due to a combination of its age profile (see the section on age distribution) and its generally

quite conservative stance, Transport 2000 members who are also members of Alarm UK are the least likely to take part in NVDA (32%) while the proportion of FoE members who have taken part in this type of activity stands only slightly above the average at 34%.

Motivations for activism against roads and in defence of the environment are difficult to quantify in a precise manner so in an attempt to minimise this problem the respondents were asked in an open question to indicate what it is that primarily informs their activism. Respondents gave wide variety of answers - their responses can however be roughly categorised into the following three broad categories which are of course 'ideal types' and are therefore not mutually exclusive :

Religious/Spiritual :   eg,   'The earth is sacred and must be valued and respected'.

'Love of beauty in things both natural and man made informs my opinions at both a spiritual and emotional level'

'Read this extract from Chief Seattle - 'this Earth is precious' - his reply to the President of the day in 1854'

Political :   eg,   'I like to confront the state at every chance and voice my opposition'.

'A deeply held belief that sustainable development is the only realistic way forward and that this must involve a more inclusive and democratic form of political thinking'

'I believe that our present transport policy is unsustainable and that advanced western countries should lead by example in environmental issues'

<u>Moral/Ethical</u> :   eg,   'I want to be able to look the next generation in the eye and say I tried'.

'To oppose the needless destruction of the environment and the car culture'

'Desire to safeguard the Earth for my two sons and their future families'

If categorised according to the above schema, the 'moral/ethical' category with 42% of the total encompasses the largest number of respondents answers to the question of motivation to activism. This category is followed by 'political' on 28% and 'religious/ spiritual' on 21%; a small minority (8%) either specified other motivations, eg economic, or declined to answer the question. Given that on the whole the respondents represent a very politicised section of society perhaps one of the most surprising aspects of these figures is that less than a third of respondents answer the question of motivation in an expressly political manner, ie, in relation to the state, democracy, development etc and that instead the majority gave answers which fall into the moral/ethical category. Moral outrage at damage done to the environment, quality of life etc is therefore a key motivating factor for participation in Alarm UK's local groups. It should however be noted that NIMBYism (not in my backyard-ism) is probably also a very salient motivational factor because more than half (58%) of the respondents have in the past, or were at the time of replying to the questionnaire, involved in protests against roads which directly affect the areas in which they are living. Here the protection of interests bound up with property and lifestyle are key factors. As the earlier section 3.2 argues, the question of NIMBYism is however complicated by the expressive and generally left-leaning values of the respondents and the NOPE (not on planet earth) guiding philosophy of the Alarm UK organisation to which the local groups were affiliated.

Another possible determinant of motivation for activism which should be noted here in relation to ideology and values is the respondents' religious practice or lack of it. In the questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate what, if any, religion they practiced regularly. Perhaps surprisingly for such an educated social strata only a quarter (26%) claim to be atheists and a further quarter (26%) claim to be agnostics -

roughly half (48%) therefore claim one form of religious practice or another. The levels of atheism and agnosticism are though significantly higher than that of the UK's general population which stand at approximately 10% and 16 % respectively.[219] Christianity is the most popular religion with almost a third of respondents (30%) claiming to be practicing Christians. A significant minority (more if 'dabbling' agnostics are included) however, tend towards the 'alternative' belief systems offered by the eclectic mysticism associated with New Ageism (11%), Paganism (4%) and Buddhism (4%). Where these figures are revealing is if they are related to answers given in response to the question of motivation for activism. The majority of atheists give answers which fall into the categories of 'political' (51%) and 'personal/ethical' (29%) thus reflecting a rational, materialist and non-religious world view. Agnostics also reflect such a world-view but are less likely to view their motivations as being primarily 'political' as the frequency of answers which fall into that category are only just above a quarter (27%); rather the respondents who are agnostics gave answers which are largely 'personal/ethical' in nature (47%). Where the category of 'religious/spiritual' is strongest in terms of motivation for activism is amongst those who adhere to the 'alternative' belief systems listed above. Half (50%) of the respondents who claim to practice these beliefs gave answers to the question of primary motivation for activism which fall into this category.

Respondents who are practicing Christians do not however tend to cite religion as a primary motivation - only a third (31%) of their answers fall into the 'religious/spiritual' category; instead for these respondents answers of an 'personal/ethical' nature are the most frequent (50%). What these figures illustrate is the holistic and often very ecological approach to living taken by those respondents who adopt 'alternative' belief systems. Unlike many Christians who compartmentalise and separate off the 'spiritual' from all other areas of life, those respondents with 'alternative' beliefs tend to view those beliefs as being the guiding force in every action they undertake. It is also worth noting here that only a small minority (17%) of those respondents who profess to practicing one faith or another gave answers to the question of motivation for activism which can be described as 'political'.

The responses to the question asked on religious practice again reflect the impact of Green political thought upon the respondents as it is an ideology which has

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[219] see figures taken from BSA Survey Data 1991, Table 2.10, in, Bruce, S. (1995), Religion in Modern Britain, (Oxford : Oxford University Press), p. 49

a tendency to view itself as 'non-political' and which as Dobson (1990) argues almost always includes a 'spiritual' dimension.[220] Green ideology may therefore also be a factor in accounting for the low level of atheism amongst respondents. The embrace of 'alternative' religions and New Age belief systems by a sizeable minority of the respondents also once again reflects both the class nature of the respondents and their general geographical location. Bruce (1995) in his commentary on religion in modern Britain argues that 'the New Age is popular in the most affluent and cosmopolitian parts of the country' (ie, the South of England), that 'there are precious few working class New Agers' and that 'we can expect that the spiritual dynamics of the New Age will most appeal to the university-educated middle classes working in the expressive professions'. Indeed Bruce's occupational profile closely mirrors that of the Alarm UK respondents : 'social workers, counsellors, actors, writers, artists and others whose education and work cause them to have an articulate interest in human potential'.[221]

Although the Alarm UK respondents are highly motivated both politically and environmentally, there is nevertheless for many, a deep underlying pessimism about the future of modern society. Asked to grade their reactions in terms of agreement and disagreement with the statement 'the future of modern society is bleak' almost half (44%) of the respondents 'agree' or 'agree strongly', while only a third (33%) of respondents 'disagree' or 'disagree strongly' - a further fifth (22%) indicate their neutrality on the question. Reasons for this pessimism may stem from a variety of sources, eg, a Green fatalism borne of environmental and social degradation which accepts apocalyptic predictions about total ecological collapse, or alternatively a view of human nature as inherently acquisitive and possessive - a view borne perhaps of the rampant individualism and alienated consumerism that lies at the heart of contemporary capitalist society. One reason for this negativity is though perhaps revealed in the survey findings in relation to the attitudes of respondents towards technology. When asked to respond in terms of agreement or disagreement with the statement 'technology is out of control', almost two out of five agreed or agreed strongly (39%) compared to a third who disagreed or disagreed strongly (33%). If the figures are further broken down then specific occupational groups of respondents can be identified as being more wary of technology than others. Two thirds of the retired

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[220] Dobson, A. (1990), op cited, p. 18
[221] Bruce, S. (1995), op cited, p. 114

(66%) agree/agree strongly with the statement (age probably plays a role here), as does a similar percentage (65%) of welfare/caring public sector professionals. Groups with a more positive view of technology are students amongst whom half disagree/disagree strongly (50%) and other professionals both within and outside the public sector (45%). Aside from indicating one of the reasons for negativity about the future, these disagreements concerning the status of technology perhaps also reflect ideological conflicts within the wider Green movement (see chapters five and six).

3.5 *Conclusion : Summary of Research Findings*

Alarm UK was organised in a manner which does not conform to the tendency towards a centralised and formalised hierarchical structure that is identified by American resource mobilisation theorist in their characterisation of social movement organisations. Nor however did Alarm UK entirely conform to the type of informal network that lies at the heart of European theories of the new social movements. Rather it took a hybrid organisational form which although eschewing the trappings of formal bureaucracy and guaranteeing affiliated groups complete autonomy, nevertheless retains a measure of organisation in relation to its 'steering group', regional networks, guiding principles, focused will to stick to the roads/transport issue so as not to alienate potential supporters and the 'small group of people who have given it direction'. The evidence on the class nature of respondents found in the survey is however broadly in line with the theoretical literature on the class nature of new social movements which posits that adherents are in general relatively affluent, highly educated and rooted in the professional state sector new middle class (see, eg, Inglehart 1971, 1990, Habermas 1982, 1987a, Offe 1984, 85, Touraine 1988, Gorz 1982, Scott 1990, Melucci 1989, Eder 1993, Weisenthal 1993). The figures also display a consistency with empirical research carried out in the UK on the memberships of anti-nuclear and environmental organisations which reinforces the above thesis (see eg, Parkin 1968, Cotgrove & Duff 1981, Cotgrove 1982, Day & Robbins 1987, Porritt and Winner 1988, Mattausch 1989, Bennie & Rudig & Franklin 1991). The local groups' rural geographical location in the south of England has however a key role to play in determining their class nature as research in the field of rural sociology has shown that this area of the country is becoming increasingly

gentrified (Cloke & Little 1990, Newby 1985, Phillips 1993, Short et al 1986, Shucksmith 1990).

The age breakdown of the Alarm UK respondents and other empirical data that relates to the age profiles of other British social movements does though differ significantly from the assertion of European new social movements theorists like Habermas (1987a) who follow Inglehart's quantitative research to assert that activists are primarily young.[222] Inglehart (1990), citing Eurobarometer data from twelve countries, argues that 'age is the third strongest predictor of membership and potential membership in the ecology movement, (after values and 'cognitive mobilisation') and the second-strongest predictor of membership in the anti-war movement.'(after values) [223] For Inglehart the younger an adult is the more likely he or she is to participate in such movements. One possible reason for this argument not holding true in the UK is because in Britain and unlike many European countries material security is not achieved at an early stage in individual middle class career development and therefore the necessary time and space required to develop what Inglehart (1971, 90) calls 'post-materialist' values is not as available until later in life. Another reason for the older age profile is that in general young people in Britain simply do not tend to be members of any political parties, pressure groups or formal campaigning organisations, and in relation to environmental activism are more likely to be attracted to radical organisations like Earth First! or Reclaim the Streets if they are attracted to any group at all. In terms of gender there is also a significant disparity between the proportions of male and female respondents to the Alarm UK survey; this though was due to a combination of distribution problems with the questionnaire and the way in which Alarm UK was organised at a local level as opposed to it simply being a very male dominated organisation. Alarm UK was however an overwhelmingly white organisation with little or no input from ethnic minorities - this though is a problem which most pressure groups, campaigning organisations and political parties face in terms of recruitment and support.

As an organisation, Alarm UK had a membership which is broadly homogeneous and left-wing in its political orientation. Statistics from each of the variables cited above, ie, from the left-right scale through to 'attitudes to the market' and 'post-materialism', constitute evidence to support this thesis. It is interesting to

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[222] Habermas, J. (1987a), op cited, p. 393
[223] Inglehart, R. (1990), op cited, pp. 390-91

note however that despite this general left-wing orientation respondents did not define either themselves or their political concerns in a traditionally left-wing manner (ie, as socialists with socialist concerns) as the prominence of the self-description label 'Green', and priority of the environment as a political issue illustrates. Nevertheless for Alarm UK members, to be Green and to place the environment at the top of the political agenda is clearly something that is to be identified with the left. The evidence also points to the high degree of participation in mainstream political processes amongst Alarm UK members as almost all signalled their intentions to vote at the 1997 General election while many had been or are currently members of political parties. Despite these high participation rates, respondents should however be regarded as being quite critical towards the political system as the figures pertaining to suggested democratic reforms and belief in political corruption indicate.

One final piece of evidence which supports the political participation thesis is the breakdown of statistics relating to an extra question which asked respondents to grade their interest in politics. Here more than three-quarters indicated that their interest was 'a great deal' (45%) or 'quite a lot' (38%) as opposed to the 14% who indicated 'some interest' and the 3% who answered 'not much' or 'none'. The British Social Attitudes (1992) average for the first two categories combined is only 32% while the averages for the latter three low interest categories are much higher than those of the survey respondents; ie 35% (some), 25% (not much) and 8% (none) respectively.[224] Alarm UK respondents are clearly then much more 'political' than the wider population. The reason that this latter question was asked though was not simply to indicate levels of interest in politics but because if the answers given were largely positive they would support the thesis advanced by Witherspoon and Martin (1992) that political interest levels have a large and consistently positive impact on the main dimensions of environmental concern.[225] The evidence cited above supports this thesis because it reveals that Alarm UK respondents' attitudes towards the environment are indeed much 'greener' than those held by the general population. Respondents have a wide range of environmental concern above and beyond the destructive effects of road-building and have turned that concern into concrete action through various personal lifestyle changes. These changes on their own will of course

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[224] Park, A. (1995), Teenagers and Adult Interest in Politics, included in, Ahrendt, D. & Brook, L. & Curtice, J. & Jowell, R. & Park, A. (eds), (1992), British Social Attitudes - the 12th Report, (Aldershot : Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited), p. 49

only have minimal positive effects overall but respondents also indicate high levels of willingness to pay higher taxation in order to better protect the environment. Admittedly most of the respondents can afford to pay more - but nevertheless in indicating a willingness to do so they display a recognition that it is at the level of government and social organisation that major change needs to occur. Equally in order to put pressure on government to make positive changes the majority of respondents are involved with various forms of grassroots oppositional activism whether it be through established environmental pressure groups or more ad hoc organisations and campaigns.

Alarm UK members take part in a wide variety of activities in order to further the organisation's aims and objectives - for most respondents these activities are fairly passive, ie letter writing, petitioning etc - however for a notable minority these actions are not enough and they are prepared to take part in direct action - something which in fact the majority of respondents at least tacitly support. The 'non-political' 'greenness' of respondents is also illustrated by the prominence of the personal/ethical category in the breakdown of figures relating to primary motivation for activism and protest. This argument is also reinforced by the respondents prioritising of the environment in the test for post-materialism. It is important though to note here that underlying this 'greenness' the combined influences of political persuasion, religious belief, and class position play key determining roles in motivations for activism. As an organisation Alarm UK was originally set up in order to oppose road-building and to lobby for sustainable transport alternatives – however by the latter half of 1996 when the battle against the government's roads programme had largely been won there was significant disagreement amongst members and supporters as to what its future role should be. In answer to the question 'do you think that apart from roads, Alarm UK should concern itself with wider social and environmental issues ?' roughly two out of five respondents (41%) answered affirmatively while a little over half answered negatively (59%). There was clearly then an important minority who would have liked to see Alarm UK develop a broader social critique - the majority though did not want this to happen and would rather that Alarm UK stuck to its original transport/roads issue based remit. This evidence indicates that the Alarm UK's organisers exclusion of wider political issues from the organisation's

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[225] Martin, J. & Witherspoon, S. (1992), op cited, pp. 14-15

campaigning remit, based as it was upon the perceived need to maintain unity and avoid alienating the organisation's support base, was premised upon a keen perception of what that support base wanted from Alarm UK; ie, a radical anti-roads/pro-public transport organisation which aimes to change government policy and public attitudes in this area and nothing more.

To conclude, an ideal-typical Alarm UK member/supporter can be constructed from the qualitative and quantitative data cited above : the typical member/supporter is a white, male, middle aged, middle class, home owner who is highly educated and does relatively well paid professional white collar work in the public sector. This member/supporter is highly interested in religion, politics and current affairs, is likely to hold moderately leftist political views, votes Labour or Liberal Democrat, and is very environmentally aware and concerned - something that is reflected in his memberships of Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace or the Green Party. This member/supporter has tried to change to a greener lifestyle by cutting down on car use, recycling and using environmentally friendly products and has joined a local protest group located in a rural or semi-rural setting in order to stop destructive road building which may or may not affect his place of residence. In conjunction with the local anti-road protest group he has taken part in a wide variety of activities which are usually fairly passive; however he supports the more radical actions of others who have engaged in direct action to stop a road from being built. For this Alarm UK member/supporter these actions at a local level are perceived as contributing to the struggle against global environmental deterioration and the business and bureaucratic interests behind that deterioration.

Chapter 4 : _Class, Community and Environment : the Campaign Against the M77_
Extension

'_The mobilisation of local communities in defence of their space_, against intrusion of undesirable uses, constitutes the fastest-growing form of environmental action, and one that perhaps most directly links people's immediate concerns to broader issues of environmental deterioration.... While the movement is local, it is not necessarily localistic, since it often affirms residents rights to the quality of their life in opposition to business and bureaucratic interests. What is questioned by these movements is, on the one hand, the bias of location of undesirable materials or activities towards low income communities and minority inhabited areas; on the other hand the lack of transparency in decision making about the use of space.'

(Castells, M. (1997), The Power of Identity)[226]

4.1 _Introduction_

The twenty five year campaign to stop the £53 million M77 motorway extension from being built through the south-side of Glasgow reached its climax between January and March 1995 when local people from the surrounding council estates joined with green activists based at the Pollok Free State eco-encampment, in taking various forms of mass direct action to resist the motorway's construction. During those few cold months police and security guards fought running battles with the protesters, mass arrests were made and the Scottish media went into a feeding frenzy debating the issue, conducting opinion polls and making heroes and villains out of individuals in the pro and anti lobbies alike. This was Scotland's first taste of the militant eco-politics surrounding the government's roads programme which had sprung up in other parts of the UK in the wake of the protests at Twyford Down in 1992. The M77 motorway was undoubtedly the most controversial in Scotland's history in that quite apart from the vehement local hostility it engendered, it split Glasgow's ruling Labour Party down the middle while also becoming something of an international environmental 'cause celebre' due to its route which infringes upon the historically

[226] Castells, M. (1997), The Power of Identity – the Information Age, Economy, Society and Culture, Vol 2, (Oxford : Blackwell), p. 115

important and greenbelt designated Pollok Estate. Indeed from April 1994 opposition to the motorway crystallised in the STARR (Stop the Ayr Road Route) Alliance, an umbrella body totalling twenty different community councils, environmental organisations, amenity societies and public transport pressure groups. What had begun many years before as a small low key community campaign in the Corkerhill Council Estate challenging the loss of a right of way had mushroomed into a major social and environmental conflict which both encapsulates and resonates in a very dramatic manner the type of polarisations and issues which Castells pointedly articulates in the passage quoted above. This chapter will trace the historical trajectory of the No M77 Campaign through its various phases in order to explore the key social and political dynamics which were central to its mobilisation and development. Within this general framework particular attention will be directed to the institutional planning context, community and class factors, and the organisational alliances and oppositional discourses central to the campaign of resistance

4.2 *The Planning Context*

The planning decision to construct the M77 dates back to the publication of 'A Highway Plan for Glasgow' in 1965 which has formed the central reference point for most of Glasgow's road and motorway construction in subsequent years.[227] The Plan envisaged a comprehensive upgrading of Glasgow's highway system consisting of two concentric ring roads and a series of bisecting radials to be completed by 1980. In total it recommended that 48 miles of urban motorway be constructed in the City, 8 miles of new expressway and the upgrading of 20 miles of existing roads to expressway standard. The M77 motorway running approximately 9 miles from the City centre in a south-westerly direction between Corkerhill/Pollok and the Pollok Estate to join the A77 would constitute the major radial artery running out of Glasgow

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[227] Scott, Wilson, Kirkpatrick and Partners, (1965), A Highway Plan for Glasgow, (Glasgow : Corporation of the City of Glasgow). This Plan is essentially an elaboration on those drawn up in the mid-1940's which aimed to reconstruct Glasgow's transport infrastucture in the aftermath of the damage and neglect it had suffered during the Second World War. see Bruce, R. (1945, 1946), First and Second Planning Reports to the Highways and Planning Committee of the Corporation of the City of Glasgow, (Glasgow : Corporation of the City of Glasgow), and, Abercrombie, P. & Matthew, R. H. (1949), The Clyde Valley Regional Plan, (Edinburgh : HMSO) For an excellent commentary on Glasgow's transport policy in the first two decades following Word War 2 see, McKenzie, R. P. (1984), Transport Policy and Related Developments Within Clydeside : 1945-1971, (Oxford Transport Studies Unit : Oxford University Press)

towards Ayrshire (see map in appendix). The Plan was accepted by the Corporation in 1967 for two key reasons. Firstly, because the concept of 'redevelopment' had been adopted as the watchword of physical planning strategy and political philosophy within the City. A modern highways system with urban motorways at its heart it was argued, would aid both the economic and social regeneration of the City by providing fast and efficient transport conduits linking the newly designated 29 Comprehensive Development Areas to the City centre, the region and the country as a whole. And secondly, because the 'Greater Glasgow Transportation Study' (GGTS) that had been ongoing from 1964, made projections, that private vehicle ownership would grow by 296 % to 283,000 within the City, and by 345 % in the wider conurbation to 746,000 by 1990. Moreover it also predicted a population decline to 827,000 within the City itself but an increase of 52 % in the surrounding conurbation over the same period. In accordance with these projections the Study recommended that the total mileage of limited access roads (motorways and expressways) be increased even further within the general framework of the 1965 Plan to a total of 285 miles within the Greater Glasgow area; a proposal that was accepted in principle by the Corporation in 1969.[228]

The projections of the 'GGTS' on population and vehicle ownership have however as Keating (1988) argues, proven to be 'wildly exaggerated'. Population decrease has in fact been much sharper than the Study envisaged. For example the population of Glasgow stood at 765,000 in 1981 while it had also fallen rather than increased in the surrounding conurbation. Equally on vehicle ownership there were only 95,000 cars registered to owners in the City in 1981, the percentage of car ownership remaining well below the national average, something that the Study simply assumed that Glasgow would soon catch up with. The recommendations made for new roads and motorways were based on a faulty methodology that governed traffic flow predictions in the 'GGTS' and indeed in other similar 'scientific' traffic studies which were fashionable amongst city planners in the 1960's. Keating argues critically that these planning studies were narrowly instrumental in their approach in that they simply took existing traffic flows and projected them onto the future from which it was gaged what new roads would be needed to accommodate the predicted

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[228] Scott, Wilson, Kirkpatrick and Partners, (1968), Greater Glasgow Transportation Study - Forecast and Plan, (Glasgow : Corporation of the City of Glasgow) p. 20 & pp. 5- 6

increases in traffic.[229] Social factors, which in Glasgow's case would have to account for high levels of structural poverty, unemployment and industrial decline were simply ignored. The Corporation combined this methodology with the influential planning philosophy derived from the Buchanan Report, 'Traffic in Towns' (1963) which advocated separating pedestrian and vehicular traffic; eg, the Corporation began the pedestrianisation of Buchanan Street and parts of Argyle Street in the City centre during the late 60's. As Cable (1972), notes 'this planning philosophy harmonises neatly with that of the highway department, which wants to speed up traffic flow on main routes and to provide roads of adequate design capacity.' He goes on though to point out that 'one possible side effect of the preference for channelling scarce manpower into prestigious capital works, is the comparatively low standard of road maintenance and serious delays in traffic management schemes.'[230]

By the early 1970's a number of major construction projects that were central to the furtherance of the 1965 Plan had been completed, the most notable of these being the first north and west sections of the inner ring road (1970), the Clydeside Expressway (1973), the Clyde Tunnel (1963) and the Kingston Bridge (1970). It was however recognised by City planners that the original schedule for completion in 1980 was becoming unrealistic due to the sheer scale of the plans and perhaps more importantly due to a growing awareness of budget restraints; thus a revised schedule was drawn up in 1971[231] aiming at completion in the mid 1990's, and was accepted by the Corporation in 1973. In relation to the M77 a local planning inquiry was held in 1973 into the plans for the relatively uncontroversial short first phase (approximately one mile or 1.4 km) which runs from the M8 Renfrew motorway (then under development) near the Kingston Bridge to Dumbreck on the edge of the Pollok Estate. After a positive outcome it was approved by the Secretary of State for Scotland and eventually opened to traffic in 1981.

In 1975 responsibility for physical planning was handed over to the newly created Strathclyde Regional Council which in its first year of office carried out an

[229] Keating, M. (1988), The City that Refused to Die - Glasgow : the Politics of Urban Regeneration, (Aberdeen : Aberdeen University Press) pp. 102-103 Keating's argument is supported by the fact that the final two volumes of the 'GGTS' (1971, 1972) only a few years after its original forecasts, significantly revised and scaled down its traffic projections and thus its recommendations pertaining to new roads and motorways.
[230] Cable. J. (1972), Glasgow's Motorways - a Technocratic Blight, New Society, 5 September, p. 607
[231] see, Scott, Wilson, Kirkpatrick and Partners, (1971), Greater Glasgow Transportation Study - Planning for Action - Development of Recommendations, (Glasgow : Corporation of the City of Glasgow), Chapter 6, p. 1 & p. 33

extensive review of the highways programme for Glasgow. The result of this review was a sharp cutting back of the Corporation's plans including the dropping of the Great Western Road Expressway which had been strongly lobbied against by the middle class residents of the West End, and the Maryhill Motorway Link.[232] However, despite the general shrinkage of road and motorway plans the Springburn Motorway was finished in 1975 and a new prioritisation was given to the seventeen major schemes which the Regional Council retained in its first 'Transport Policies and Programmes' Report (1978) and incorporated in its first 'Structure Plan' (1979). Included in this Plan's recommendations alongside routes for the eastern and southern flanks of the inner ring road was an approximately seven mile (11 km) separated dual carriageway extension to the M77 to run from Dumbreck through the outer edges of the Pollok Estate, passing closely to Corkerhill, Pollok, Nitshill and bisecting Darnley and Arden to finish by joining the A77 at a point just south of the Malletsheugh Inn. Moreover, the end of the decade saw the completion of a Stirling Motorway Link (1980) and the City bi-sected by the M8 Monklands and Renfrew motorways (1980) making it possible to cross the City by motorway from east to west via the completed sections of the inner ring-road.

The 1979 'Structure Plan' was subject to a statutory Examination in Public in 1980, where objections were raised by a variety of amenity and environmental pressure groups. The Secretary of State for Scotland actually sustained the bulk of these objections and although approving the Structure Plan as a whole subsequently deleted a number of proposed routes in his 'Final Decision Letter' (1981). The M77 extension was not however amongst those schemes deleted and was given an enhanced priority status. From 1983 the detailed design of the motorway extension was undertaken but when submitted in 1987, Glasgow District Council refused planning permission for the section which fell within the City boundaries thus reversing its original position of endorsement. The reasons the District Council gave for this change of position reflect the growing impact that the oppositional campaign led by Corkerhill and other local communities bordering the route was having (see section 4.3). In its refusal the District also laid down something of a challenge to the Region when it posited that 'the proposal for an Ayr Road Route needs to be justified in present day terms and not on the historical background which dates back to

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[232] see Keating, M. (1978), The Battle of the Western Approaches - a Study in Local Pressure Politics and Amenity in Glasgow, (Glasgow : Glasgow College of Technology Discussion Papers)

1965'.[233] As a result of this challenge, the District Council's ruling went to Appeal at an eleven week Public Local Inquiry in 1988 which covered both the regional and trunk road sections of the route. At this Inquiry the Labour controlled District Council was amongst the principle objectors and the Labour controlled Strathclyde Regional Council took on the mantle of chief promoter (see sections 4.2.3 & 4.3.4). Ultimately, the Reporter overturned the District Council's ruling and the motorway was subsequently endorsed by the Secretary of State in 1989. After squabbles over the next few years between the Region and the Scottish Office over funding, preliminary work finally began on the outer edges of the Pollok Estate in 1992 and in November 1994, the £53 million building contract was awarded to Wimpey which subsequently began a highly disputed ninety-eight week construction task.

The M77 extension has not been the only major planning proposal to court controversy in Glasgow during the last decade. The 'Structure Plan Update' of 1988 proposed three inter-related large scale construction schemes which clearly indicate a revival of the desire to complete the motorway box (inner-ring road) at the heart of the 1965 Highway Plan. The first of these is two entirely new bridges to run alongside the existing Kingston Bridge.[234] This was justified by Regional planners on the basis that it would relieve congestion caused by the second large scale proposal; a £250 million northern extension to the M74 motorway planned to run from Fullarton Road through Carmyle, Rutherglen and Eglington before finally linking up to the M8 near the Kingston Bridge. Unlike the M77 extension this motorway has had its route altered significantly because the original plan would have taken it through the historic parklands of Glasgow Green. The M74 extension scheme was one of the few to successfully survive new Labour's 'Roads Review' which it undertook on coming to office in 1997. In 1999 the City Council (which replaced Strathclyde Regional Council and Glasgow District Council in the local government re-organisation of 1997) is currently seeking sources of finance for the motorway's construction (including money from the private sector) and is likely to be successful due to the support of powerful interest groups like the CBI Scotland, Glasgow Merchants House

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[233] City of Glasgow District Council (1988), Observations on Appeal for Glasgow District Council Regarding the Ayr Road Route, Official Document, p. 1

[234] Glasgow for People, a City-wide environmental and public transport pressure group (see section 4.3.2 below) challenged the legitimacy of this plan in court because there was no public consultation process carried out by the Region before it was sent for central government approval in 1989 - they lost the case, incurred uge debts and the procedure was held to be lawful. see, Glasgow for People v's the Secretary of State for Scotland, (1991).

and Glasgow Airport who are working hand in hand with the roads lobby.[235] The motorway is however being resisted by a new umbrella organisation called JAM74 (Joint Action Against the M74) that was set up in August 1998 consisting of local objectors, public transport pressure groups and environmental organisations who aim to stop it before it reaches the construction phase. If however unsuccessful in this many of the individuals and organisations affiliated have pledged to take direct action against it. The third controversial proposal included in the 1988 Update was for an elaborate Townhead to London Road link on the eastern flank; this plan was however dropped in the 18th "TTP" (1993-98) as a result of reduced resources and uncertainties caused by the change in treatment of ERDF (European Road Development Fund) grants.[236]

4.2.1 _Glasgow's Motorways Programme : an 'Intriguing Paradox ?'_

While Glasgow has developed an extensive urban rail and bus system over the last thirty years, (the former often touted as the best in the UK outside London) it is highly debatable whether or not public transport has really ever been an equal partner in the development of the City's transport system. In the 1970s cutbacks in road and motorway construction were indeed made and the planning emphasis shifted away from the sole concentration on roads and motorways which had characterised the previous decade. This was partly due to escalating construction costs, partly due to growing public environmental awareness but also partly a result of the fact that the Transport Act (1968) made central government funds available in order to improve public transport infrastuctures and to subsidise operating costs. However under the successive Tory governments from 1979 onwards direct subsidies to public transport were removed and rail and bus services opened up to processes of privatisation and deregulation - arguably in Glasgow it is the latter that has suffered the most from the concomitant wasteful competition and under-investment. Equally these services have also suffered from the City Administration's ongoing desire to continue building

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[235] For example the CBI has argued that the proposed M74 extension is a matter of urgency because 'congestion on the M8 inhibits the movement of goods, frustrates business travel and impedes access to Glasgow Airport and the rest of the conurbation.' CBI Scotland, (1991), Just in Time - Report, (Edinburgh : Tayburn Press) p. 2 The roads lobby is made up of the various freight and road hauliers associations, the road building companies themselves (eg, Wimpey and Tarmac) and their political associates in the Conservative Party to whom they have regularly donated large sums of money.

roads and motorways which can only serve to detract from their usage. Indeed by the early 1980s Glasgow had gained a reputation as the city outside London at the forefront of urban motorway construction in the UK,[237] and the City's Administration actually felt it necessary during this period to lobby the Conservative government for funds to complete its motorway construction programme - this was however resisted for most of the decade because of a desire to cut public spending. Central government funds were however more forthcoming for a few years after the announcement of Thatcher's 'Roads for Prosperity' road building programme in 1989 (hence the construction of the M77 extension) but under the New Labour government of the late 1990's which encourages private finance initiatives and private-public partnerships, it is likely that if Glasgow's roads programme is to progress (eg, the M74 Northern Extension) as the Labour administration wishes, then a large proportion of the funding will come from the private sector.

Glasgow's ruling Labour Party has continued to press ahead with motorway plans drawn up the mid-1960s even in the 1990' when a vociferous anti-roads protest movement has grown up nationally, alternative schemes for integrated transport systems have been constantly mooted by environmentalists, and all the latest scientific evidence points to the fact that new roads and motorways are only a short term solution to transport problems. Indeed Glasgow's Labour administration would appear to be at odds with their own national policy on this issue because 'In Trust for Tomorrow' (1994), a key report by the Labour Party Policy Commission on the Environment, argues that it is a Conservative response to congestion to build more roads, that new roads lead to environmental damage, generate more traffic and do not necessarly promate regional development or economic well being. This document also clearly states that 'by reducing the money spent on new roads, Britain could instead invest the funds saved in the development of a sane and sustainable transport policy at no extra expense to the taxpayer'.[238]

Writing back in 1972, Cable points out that Glasgow's seeming obsession with road and motorway building constitutes 'an intriguing paradox' because 'a socialist administration, in the city with the lowest car ownership rate in Britain, is pressing

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[236] see, Strathclyde Regional Council, (1993), Transport Policies and Programmes - 1993-1998, (Glasgow : Strathclyde Regional Council) pp. 1-3
[237] By 1981, 12 miles of urban motorway had been built in Glasgow, the highest mileage of any UK city outside London. see Starkie, D. (1982), The Motorway Age, (Oxford : Pergamon Press). p. 100

ahead with a major urban motorways programme and a transportation strategy which is apparently biased heavily against public transport and thus against low income groups.'[239] These words continue to ring true today for while there has been a growing minority of elected representatives who have questioned the redistributive effects of motorway construction (ie, they tend to benefit middle-class commuters) those in powerful positions (on the Regional Council and more lately the City Council) have remained firmly in favour.

Charles Gordon, currently the Deputy Chairperson of Glasgow City Council, and Chairperson of the Roads and Transportation Committee (also at time of the M77 controversy) has been one of the key promoters of motorway construction in Glasgow over the last decade. In an interview he was asked why Glasgow has developed such an extensive motorway system in comparison to other UK cities and why indeed it has a motorway in the form of the M8 which cuts the City in half. He answered in the following terms which although somewhat defensive are also noteworthy in that he goes at least part of the way to admitting that the planners of the past made mistakes :

'Well I think that the choice of route for the M8 back in the 1960s was in some ways regrettable – but they made decisions in their own historical context and they were people who believed they were making progress – back in the 1960s people felt that the car represented progress and why shouldn't working class people have cars ? At the same time a lot of the old slums were being cleared away and it may well have been the case that sensibly they saw the synergy of using the money built into big engineering projects to piggy back on the part of slum clearence – a lot of the properties that were cleared away for the M8 would have been demolished anyway but I'm the first to admit that there were a great many that were not slums.... Most successful transportation systems I've seen abroad have a ring-road around the fringes of a city rather than what we've got in an inner ring-road that sweeps right through our centre – but it is there – I canny de-invent it so we might as well make maximum use of it.... if the basic proposition is that some viable working class communities were severely disrupted, the Anderstons and the Kinning Parks yes I certainly

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[238] Labour Party Policy Commission on the Environment, (1994), In Trust for Tomorow, (London : Labour Party), pp. 17-23
[239] Cable, J. (1972), op cited, p. 606

accept that but you shouldn't judge the people of the sixties by the standards of today – if I was starting again today I would still build a motorway system for Glasgow but I would build it around the City and not through it'.[240]

In the interview Councillor Gordon went on to argue that most of the schemes included in the 1965 Highway Plan had in fact been cancelled by the Regional Council in the late 1970s and that therefore the Council could not be accused of 'being locked into a hidden agenda that originated thirty years ago'. Asked why then was he currently planning another major urban motorway in the form of the M74 Northern extension he argued that it was not an urban motorway but rather a national motorway that was integral to completing the northern end of the UK's motorway system, and that it would probably be the last big motorway project to go through Glasgow. Questioned about need for the M77 extension he argued that its construction although controversial was necessary in order to attract inward investment to the City, relieve congestion and improve road safety.

Irene Graham, a City Councillor who has taken a stand against motorways (the projected M74 extension will go through her Oatlands Ward) suggests the following reasons for the importance of road and motorway construction to her Labour colleagues both past and present :

'I think Labour politicians have been very persuaded by the economic arguments to complete the ring-roads to relieve the congestion.... say you accept the logic of the economic argument – that completing a motorway will enhance inward investment and bring jobs - then there has to be an expectation for us as Labour politicians that some of the people who will benefit will be those who are unemployed – so in that sense we believe that there will be a benefit to people living in poorer areas – that is the theory on paper.... I think that my colleagues genuinely don't accept the pollution arguments and don't accept that there will be no benefit – they genuinely believe that such roads will bring economic benefits to all – I don't think that they are simply caught in a time warp – I think they are genuinely convinced of it.'[241]

[240] Gordon, C. Councillor, Interview, 29/01/98
[241] Graham, I. Councillor, Interview, 16/10/97

The answers of the two councillors quoted above tie to the inter-related explanations that Cable (1972) gives for the road and motorway 'obsession' within Glasgow local government : a preoccupation with urban renewal, the need to be seen to be 'doing something' about unemployment and population loss, the availability of large capital grants for road and motorway construction (in the early 1970s only), the prestige city authorities attach to major civil engineering works, backing from the technocrats in the Scottish Office, and finally the minimal opposition from environmental groups within Glasgow. This last point is something that Cable views in class terms because he argues that this lack of opposition probably stems from the fact that new roads and motorways tend to go through poor working class areas rather than more affluent areas of private housing.[242] As will be illustrated in the case of the M77 extension this very reason can also however be a powerful motivation for poor working class areas to fight back, and especially where there is indigenous political organisation to provide leadership.

4.2.2 *The M77 and the Pollok Estate Controversy*

In 1939, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, founder of the National Trust for Scotland bequeathed the 1,118 acre Pollok Estate which had been in his family for 700 years, to the people of Glasgow. Under the terms of the bequeathment this Estate was to be held by the people of Glasgow 'in perpetuity' for the enhancement of their environment and its conservation was to be managed by the National Trust through the terms of what was Scotland's first conservation agreement.[243] The original conservation agreement stated that :

> 'The said lands should remain forever as open spaces of woodland for the enhancement of the beauty of the neighborhood and so far as possible for the benefit of the citizens of Glasgow'[244]

In 1966 the Maxwell family reaffirmed its committment to the conservation agreement with Mrs Anne Maxwell's further donation of the Pollok Mansion House

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[242] Cable, V. (1972), op cited, p. 606
[243] This Agreement is upheld in law by virtue of the terms of Section 7 in the National Trust for Scotland Order Confirmation Act (1938).

to the City and the removal of the somewhat ambigious 'so far as possible' clause in the original conservation contract. A copy of the new agreement was sent toJon Johnson the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and deposited at the soliciters Macaulay, Murray and Spens - it now read as follows :

> 'It has always been the wish of the family, as it was of the late Sir John Stirling Maxwell, that the lands surrounding Pollok House should remain *forever* (my emphasis) as open spaces or woodlands for the enhancement of the beauty of the neighberhood and for the benefit of the public and in particular the citizens of Glasgow.'[245]

A year later in 1967, the National Trust set aside 361 acres of the Estate to create Pollok Country Park for public utility and enjoyment.

Since 1983 the Park has housed the world famous Burrell collection of fine art and archaeological artefacts in a specially designed museum located at the centre of the parklands. This collection was donated to the City by the millionaire shipowner Sir William Burrell in 1943 and is today a major tourist draw to the area. Aside from the attractions of the Burrell collection and of Pollok House, both the Park and the wider Estate contain numerous woodland walks and is inhabited by an abundance of flora, fauna and wildlife - some of which is deemed by environmentalists to be quite rare. Outwith the boundaries of the Country Park but within the boundaries of the wider Estate two golf courses have also been developed; Pollok Golf Course to the south and Haggs Castle Golf Course to the north-west, while the south-west area of the Estate comprises commercially managed woodland and farmland which until they were sold off (see below) included the historic Corkerhill farm and the listed Corkerhill Farmhouse. According to Strathclyde Region's document 'A Landscape Strategy for Glasgow' (1987) Pollok Estate is designated as legally protected greenbelt land and forms the largest single area of greenbelt surrounding the City of Glasgow.[246]

[244] Pollok Estate Conservation Agreement (1939), quoted by Seel, B. (1996), op cited, p.1
[245] Pollok Estate Conservation Agreement (1966), quoted in Morrison, W. (1995), Pollok Estate : Glasgow's Lost Legacy ? Information Leaflet, (Glasgow : Corkerhill Community Council), p. 2
[246] A Landscape Strategy for Glasgow, cited in 'The Myth Makers', Glasgow for People, Newsletter, Late 1994, p.4

Glasgow Corporation first entered into negotiations with the National Trust for land to facilitate the M77 motorway's construction through farmland and woodland on the western edge of the Estate and along its northern perimeter in the early 1970's. The sale of land was eventually finalised in 1973 on the conditions that Corkerhill Farm be retained and eventually converted into an environmental and community education centre and that tree planting and landscaping proposals be carried through using indigenous plants and be as far as possible integrated into the already existing landscape. These conditions the Trust argued would be in keeping with the terms of the original 1939 Conservation Agreement.[247] This however was not the first time that parts of Pollok Estate had changed hands and therefore changed their type of land usage. Two years earlier, Nether Pollok Ltd who acted as agents for the Maxwell family had sold off a number of peripheral parts of the Estate to Glasgow Corporation's Roads Planning Department while Haggs Castle Golf Club which leases land from the Estate was allowed to extend its playing area substantially from that which was first plotted in 1965. In order to achieve this end the traditional public right of way from the adjacent Corkerhill council estate across the golf course to Pollok Park was closed in 1972. Throughout the 70s the Golf Club sought to expand even further and by the end of the 1980's had succeeded in trebling its original playing area. These actions by the National Trust for Scotland, by the agents of the Maxwell family and by Haggs Castle Golf Club have led to accusations of 'selling out' from environmentalists interested in preserving the integrity of the Conservation Agreement and Glasgow's greenbelt and to accusations from the residents of the working class Corkerhill council estate which is located adjacent to the Pollok Estate, of instituting a form of class apartheid (see section 4.3 below).

The deals and double deals which underly these sell offs and changing uses of land in the Pollok Estate are difficult to untangle but there is evidence to suggest that vested interests have been at work. A local community activist who has sifted and delved into the documentary evidence recounted in an interview that the construction and design engineers were of the opinion that the motorway route would have been quicker and cheaper had it gone straight across the Haggs Castle Golf Course as opposed to veering towards the housing estates of Corkerhill and Pollok. This community activist alleges that Corporation councillors sat on the Haggs Castle Golf

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[247] Glasgow District Council (1988), Observations on Appeal for City of Glasgow District Council Regarding Ayr Road Route, Official Document, p.7

Club Executive Committee in the early 1970s when the deals surrounding the Estate land for the road were being negotiated with the City Corporation. In the course of these negotiations it is further alleged that the Executive received promises that if they accepted the M77 they would receive public funding to expand and develop the course – this they were granted in the form of £85,000 in 1981-82. Hence a potentially powerful objector was 'bought off'. Accusations also surround the Maxwell family and the National Trust as being motivated more by economic necessity than by environmental concern or philanthropic goodwill in their dealings surrounding the management of the Estate and creation of Pollok Park. These allegations of corruption and complicity are difficult to prove but they are important to note here because they are representative of a general climate of suspicion and misinformation surrounding the planning process for the M77 extension and because they are linked to the widespread belief amongst the oppositional activists that business/government/financial interests always take precedence over the needs of ordinary people; as such they form a key aspect of the creation of local opposition to the road proposals.

4.2.3 The M77 and *Corkerhill – from Model Railway Village to Model of Urban Deprivation*

In the conduct of an interview with Councillor Charles Gordon he was asked to comment on his role in implementing the contentious choice of route for the M77 motorway, a key aspect of which was its routing close to the working class community of Corkerhill. He answered as follows :

> 'the M77 passes quite near Corkerhill – now that was an extremely controversial choice of route because it passed through part of Pollok Estate.... a piece of farmland on which there was no legal right of access but where by custom and practice the people of Corkerhill used to make incursions into the (Pollok) Park – but there was a big planning inquiry in 1988 and all the various views were rehearsed – the Reporter imposed a number of conditions about the impact on Corkerhill including that the Regional Council should fund the construction of a childrens play area at the cost of a third of a million pounds – now all these conditions were strictly adhered to – I accept that that

was obviously a controversial Reporter's decision but the decision was made and that exhausted the planning process – therefore my responsibility as Roads Chairman was to get the thing built.'[248]

The decision to route the M77 near to Corkerhill was not however only controversial because the community would lose a traditional right of way linking it to its only major amenity, ie Pollok Park (something which it had lost unofficially in 1972, see above) – it was also controversial because Corkerhill is officially designated as an area of severe urban deprivation which under the Region's own social strategy is supposed to get area priority treatment in relation to all aspects of social and economic regeneration including those relating to quality of life. [249] In his concluding summary to the official 'Report of the Public Local Inquiry' (1988), Mr Parnell, the Reporter notes however that Corkerhill would suffer from each of the five ways that a road can affect a community; ie, noise, air pollution, visual obstruction, visual intrusion and obstruction to movement. He recommends that various measures such as landscaping, mounding and the building of footbridges across the motorway be undertaken in order to ameliorate these negative impacts but concedes that the changes proposed 'would not restore to Corkerhill all the amenity which it would have lost'.[250] The motorway's construction would thus run contrary to the Region's social strategy because the negative social impacts of the motorway would only serve to exacerbate the community's privations and hence further rather than reverse its declining socio-economic status.

Originally built in 1897 as a model railway village, Corkerhill became part of the City of Glasgow in the late 1940s when Glasgow Corporation nationalised the railway line and began a process of building social housing which was needed to accommodate the City's burgeoning population. The housing that was built was however of poor quality design and constructed with sub-standard materials, and as

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[248] Gordon, C. Councillor, Interview, 29/01/98

[249] see, Gray, J. (1992), The Social Strategy : Reducing Disadvantage - Building Communities, (Glasgow : Strathclyde Regional Council) This document commits the Regional Council to 'improve the quality of life of those who are disadvantaged' and to 'empower individuals and communities to take action'. Equally the Regional Council is a signatory to the European Charter on Environment and Health which states that 'the health of individuals and communities should take clear precedence over considerations of economy and trade'. European Charter on Environment and Health, Official Document, undated.

[250] Strathclyde Regional Council (1988), M77 Ayr Road Motorway, Report of Public Local Inquiry, Volume 1, Official Document, pp. 114-116

Glasgow's traditional heavy industries gradually declined, unemployment grew and a creeping poverty set in which accelerated rapidly in the 1980s. In the course of its historical development the Corkerhill model railway village has become like so many other council estates in Britain, a model of urban deprivation which suffers from all the disadvantages associated with areas of poor housing and high unemployment. As Roberts et al (1995) document, in the mid-1990s Corkerhill accomodated an adult population of approximately one thousand adults and two hundred children. Unemployment was running at between a third and half of the adult population with those in employment on low incomes and a high proportion of pensioners surviving on the basic state or widow's pension (121 residents). Housing stock was deteriorating badly (48% of houses in Corkerhill contained one room or more that was unusable due to dampness and 71% of households with children had dampness problems) and there were general mobility problems brought about by low car ownership (only 42% had access to a car let alone owned one) and a declining public transport service. Moreover there were few shops (only one chip shop and one grocers) or communal facilities (a 'community' shop, a meeting room and a tenants hall). [251] The pollution brought by a dual carriage motorway passing in some instances less than 25 metres from houses would inevitably engender general health problems and in particular respiratory complaints such as asthma in children

One peculiar feature that does makes the Corkerhill estate slightly different from the norm is the fact that its boundaries are so clearly defined. Corkerhill is bounded to the north by the Glasgow to Paisley railway line, to the west by the busy Corkerhill road, to the south by the river Cart and until the M77 motorway extension was constructed it was bounded by Pollok Country Park and Haggs Castle Golf Course to the east (see leafet in appendix 3). The spatial 'segregation' brought about by these distinctive boundaries is an important component in creating a sense of identity that is related to locality and place and is clearly one of the factors that contributed to the galvanisation of the community in its opposition to the building of the M77 extension which would isolate the community still further. The depth of opposition to the motorway from the residents of Corkerhill was in fact quite

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[251]Roberts, H. & Smith, J. & Bryce, C. (1995), Children at Risk ? Safety as a Social Value, (Buckingham : Open University Press), pp. 23-24

remarkable - out of the approximately one thousand adult residents, 803 submitted written objections to the road proposal at the public inquiry held in 1988.[252]

4.3 *Corkerhill, Community and Class : the First Phase of Opposition 1972-1988*

In the early 1970s Walter Morrison, a resident of Corkerhill from 1965 and prominent community activist (later the secretary of Corkerhill Community Council) 'saw a letter somewhere where they were talking about extending Haggs Castle Golf Course and that this would abolish the right of way to the Park'; he did further investigations and 'discovered that they were going to build a motorway through the place'. Morrison says of this period, that the information about the motorway plans came to the community 'in a kind of hand knitted way' and that 'it was like picking bits oot of the air like a jigsaw puzzle'. Skeffington's recommendations made only a few years earlier concerning openness and participation in the planning process clearly hadn't as yet made an impact in Glasgow.[253] In response to the limited information that was leaking out from the then Glasgow Corporation, Morrison and a few other local activists decided that they needed an organisation to find out more, and if possible to counteract the plans for the motorway - this organisation was formed as the Corkerhill Association Steering Committee in 1972. Morrison says of his actions at the time that :

'as an old trade union officer I knew about organisations so what we done was to set up a group to simply look at what was happening with the right of way and the motorway... I went up to a meeting at one of the schools and listened to all the information that we were getting fed about this motorway and as a result of it we started to try to find out how best to object - so we started thinking that the only basis we could fight back on was because we as an area had slipped towards deprivation... we are an area where there's a lot of children, we're an area where there's a lot of illness - surely cutting us off from the breathing spaces of Pollok Park is a good place to start an argument ? it wis nothing to dae wi 'oh we don't want motorways' - that wasny what we were thinking aboot in the initial stages - we were thinking aboot the health of

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[252] Figures here are from an interview with Walter Morrison, 11/08/97
[253] Skeffington, A. M. (1969), op cited

oor community and that we were going to be badly affected in our area – we felt that if we could establish an argument that there was a right of way then they were gonny have some difficulty building a motorway across it - so that was the kind of legal line that we took up.... we were getting cut off from the Park and we put it down to a form of social apartheid'[254]

This argument which focuses upon class division, the social isolation engendered by the loss of right of way and the negative health impacts that the new motorway would bring became the central planks of Corkerhill's campaign against the M77 as it developed from the 1970s to the 1990s (see leaflets in appendix 4).

Morrison himself was also to become the pivotal animating figure behind the community campaign and his personal biography reveals just how appositely positioned in political and personal terms he was to lead it. Politically, his experience in 'organisations' in fact extends far beyond his role as a trade union official : in the 1930's he was involved with a grouping of socialist-syndicalists and wrote for a journal called 'Freedom', he also took part in organising unemployed workers demonstrations and marches during this period and was later involved with the movement for workers control seeing it in action for a time at the Rowan Engineering Company in Middlesex. Moreover during the late 1950s and 1960s Morrison was a key organiser and representative of CND in Scotland and actually held the post of Secretary for the Committee of One Hundred. Aside from the political there is also a strong personal dimension to Morrison's opposition to the M77 extension - in interviews he recounted early experiences which have naturally caused him to develop a deep sense of loyalty, affection and identification with area of Corkerhill and the neighbouring Pollok Park :

'well I was born in a pretty bad area called Kingston which is where the M8 is just now and this park, Pollok Park was like Tenerife to us - my mother used to take us here in the summers and my father used to come and eat his dinner in the park - so the whole place was part of my upbringing - that's the first thing - now we'll take a jump from there to around 1940 and the beginning of the war - I was only about 15 at the time and I joined what they called the

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[254] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97

local defence volunteers and the first place I came to was here and the farm you see up at the top of the hill in Corkerhill was one of the first posts that we had and the whole idea was to defend the country - it all sound a bit hammy now in 1996 but it was very real then - when I was involved I was ready to fight for my country, not necessarly King and country but for the place that I loved - so there's that kind of emotional connection right away - when I came up to Corkerhill in 1965 it was with my family again - Corkerhill is the nearest community to this road - we used to walk across the right of way there (indicates towards the motorway and the golf course), I used to take my wife, the pram and that - so there's that kind of connection as well'[255]

4.3.1 *Corkerhill Community Council*

In 1973 the <u>Local Government of Scotland Act</u> made provision for the establishment of locally elected community councils which would represent and publicise in a non-politically partisan manner the views and concerns of communities on issues which would directly affect people living in those communities. Corkerhill Community Council was amongst the first to be established in Scotland and from its inception it has also been amongst the most active and vocal in pursuit of community improvements and in defence of community interests. Corkerhill Community Council is clearly cherished by the community that it serves because since 1977 in the regular statutory elections for places on the council, it has consistantly had the highest election turnouts in Glasgow for this type of local election. Much of the respect that exists locally for Corkerhill Community Council has been generated by the dynamism, community activism and advocacy skills of the aforementioned Walter Morrison (MBE) who has held the post of Secretary since it was set up[256] and those dedicated members of the council like the current Chairperson Mrs Betty Campbell who as been a community activist for the past twenty years. Morrison is one of the leading proponents of community empowerment and local participative democracy in Scotland and sits on the Scottish Association of Community Councils to further these aims. In this vein he says of Corkerhill that :

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[255] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97

[256] Walter Morrison was made an MBE in the 1998 New Year Honours List in recognition of his services to the community of Corkerhill.

'we've got twenty elected individuals who sit on the community council and that is much more democratic in terms of proportion than the MP who represents X amount of people.... I take the view that real power is always in the hands of the individual in cahoots with his neighbour - what I mean is that system whereby individuals who are elected in the local community who then go to the District Council and from there to the Regional Council is far more democratic than the hand me down stuff we're used to'[257]

Campbell like Morrison views the role of community councils as providing a vehicle for deepening local democracy and giving 'ordinary people' a collective voice that they otherwise wouldn't have : 'I don't feel that ordinary people are paid very much attention to by those higher up the ladder unless they do shout - they'll maybe no like you for that but its got to be done..' In relation to the M77 motorway she said bitterly that :

'in a number of the meetings I've went to it just seems to be professional people that are telling you how it it is but they aren't living with it... we on the council are actually nearly on it and yet they are trying to tell you how good it is for you - that Charlie Gordon, that man actually said that although we didny realise it, it (the motorway) would really be good for our health !'[258]

During the 1970s and 1980s the community council achieved small successes in terms of community safety with the erection of safety fencing alongside the river Cart and the construction of a pelican crossing and pedestrian barriers on the Corkerhill Road.[259] Equally, throughout its short history the community council has participated in campaigns against the poll tax and for fair rents, housing improvements and better public transport provision. In relation to the construction of the M77 extension the community council viewed the motorway as a class attack upon its constituents quality of life and hence campaigned vigorously against it. Other community councils in the vicinity of the planned motorway also objected to its construction but it was

[257] Morrison, W. Interview, 23/08/96
[258] Campbell, B. Interview, 20/08/97
[259] Roberts et al, (1995), op cited, p. 27

Corkerhill Community Council which took the lead in local community opposition. Two reasons stand out for this leading role : firstly the fact that Corkerhill would be most directly and negatively affected by the motorways construction, and secondly because the indigenous leadership, especially in the form of Morrison was strong, respected and both politically aware and politically adept.

4.3.2 *New Alliances : 'Glasgow for People'*

The aim of the early community campaign emanating from Corkerhill was to raise public awareness of the key issues surrounding the planned motorway, to win over District and Regional councillors to their arguments and perhaps most importantly to lobby for a public inquiry; as Morrison says : 'what we were trying to do was to try to get as much information out to the world as we possibly could so that by the time the inquiry came we might have some public opinion on our side'.[260] To this end Morrison and his fellow community activists engaged in various forms of publicity seeking activity ranging from letter writing to newspapers, councillors and MP's, through to staging demonstrations on the Haggs Castle Golf Course to protest against the closing of the right of way (eg, even disrupting an international golf open), and distributing information leaflets describing Corkerhill's plight at the Edinburgh Arts Festival. As public interest grew during the 1970s it became apparent to the activists involved that a wider organisational alliance could prove fruitful :

> 'now in the early stages we werny what you could call informed or well organised, so what we done was to start looking round for like minded people and the organisation that we latched onto... and helped to form was what we call 'Glasgow for People'.... that was the first move towards coming part of a bigger organisation.... once we got oorselves involved with that organisation we gradually began to find that there were other organisations who were affiliating to GfP who were also interested - the Wildlife Trust, National Heritage, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth.... so from there it started to build as an organisation'[261]

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[260] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97
[261] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97

Glasgow for People (GfP) was set up in the mid-1970s by local environmental, amenity and transport activists as an organisation for concerned city dwellers who wished to combat what many considered to be Glasgow's excessive rate of modernisation and infrastructure development (much of it related to urban motorway construction) which was leading to the rapid destruction of both its natural and historical heritage and the creation of vast tracts of urban blight. These problems and especially those relating to transport issues were so large in Glasgow that no singular local organisation could deal with them on its own, hence this umbrella organisation was set up in order to co-ordinate the campaigns of different local interest groups. Prominent supporters of GfP from its beginning have included Glasgow Buildings Guardians Committee, the New Glasgow Society, Glasgow Tree Lovers Society and Friends of the Peoples Palace. FoE (Glasgow) in particular though has probably been the key driving force behind GfP, and although both are separate organisations there is a close working relationship whereby each is regularly sent the minutes of the others meetings. Over time Glasgow for People has become a thorn in the side of the City's various planning departments (and especially the roads department) through its strong orientation towards environmental and amenity protection, and its hard work in the promotion of sustainable public transport alternatives. In tactical terms Glasgow for People is a lobbying organisation that aims to influence Council policy and public opinion through measured criticism and the presentation of well argued and scientifically grounded alternatives to official plans. Asked to define the role of GfP, Ian Bogle the current chairperson, replied in the following terms :

> 'I think our main aim is to get rid of car culture... we believe there are alternatives to increased road-building - so we do a lot of lobbying and some people would consider us to be a pressure group, we write to and meet with councillors – its really about getting the information out – a lot of the information is quite technical so we decipher it and put it into layman's terms and say 'look this is what they really mean when (eg) they talk about twin bridges and these are the problems they haven't really given us any answers to' – when the press phone us up and we tell them things they know that they are getting the truth – over the years we've built up a reputation for getting our

facts right and even over the M77 Charlie Gordon said that we'd won the propaganda war'[262]

GfP is a registered charity and therefore survives financially through donations and subscriptions to its newsletter. At the time of the above interview in 1996, GfP's mailing list was made up of approximately 400 individuals and fifty organisations and it could draw upon the expertise of a variety of progressive professionals working in academia, environmentalism, transport and planning The fact that GfP is a charity prevents it from officially participating in activities that might be construed as overtly 'political' or confrontational – hence its name which is as inclusive, non-partisan and apolitical as possible. Glasgow for People was involved in Corkerhill's campaign against the M77 extension from its formation and Morrison actually spoke at its inaugural meeting. It has consistently been amongst the most prominent critics of both this and other motorway schemes planned for Glasgow.

For Morrison and his fellow community activists this participation in the GfP pressure group and the contacts which it brought gave their campaign for a public inquiry a wider focus and a keener cutting edge in terms of arguments which could be presented against the motorway. It was also clearly an educative process for as Morrison says :

> 'I would have to concede that in terms of what the roads were about and what the environment was all about that these people were more jigged up than we were as a community - we just seen it bluntly as 'wait a minute this is a poor area !' - then they started to feed their ideas in and slowly but surely we began to educate ourselves'[263]

Morrison does not however accept that a concern with the environment is a particularly new phenomenon; rather he argues that its definition in popular consciousness has changed :

> 'nobody away back then was maybe upfront about the environment the way it is talked about now but it was still there - in those days we were just as much

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[262] Bogle, I. Interview, 15/08/96
[263] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97

concerned about the environment as we are now but we just didny talk about it in the same way - you know eco-warriors and all that - but what we did talk about is ramblers rights - one of the great things in Glasgow was hiking and biking - we used to travel all roon aboot Glasgow - up the glens and all the rest of it - wee bothys, hooses and that - guys who were unemployed used to go up there and go fishing - they knew about the environment but they didny describe it in the same way as they do now - in they days the issues that were maer up front were health matters - naebody really related it to the environment as they do now but they were doing it all the time without expressing it - maybe the most significant changes are the advent of automobiles and roads in terms of what's destroying the environment - we can see it quicker and then we look at it in a different manner - at first it seems great getting from A to B quicker but then it starts using up the space we used to hike on, the space we used to bike on, the space we used to live on and play on - and then we say 'wait a minute they're starting to take that away frae us ?'[264]

While accepting the logic of the environmentalist's arguments Morrison and Corkerhill Community Council were however adamant throughout the campaign that the negative social impacts of the road not be forgotten or downplayed; as he said :

'I usually found that as regards the M77 that our case was better than anybody else's even those who were talking about the preservation of plant life, trees, even the ozone - I felt that our one in terms of the politics of it, you know a working class area and the argument about social apartheid - I felt that our argument was the strongest of the lot'[265]

4.3.3 *The 1988 Public Local Inquiry*

By the 1980s the campaign against the M77 extension had begun to attract the active support of other community councils including Park, Pollok and Templar whose areas of jurisdiction would also be negatively affected by the proposed motorway. A variety

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[264] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97
[265] Morrison, W. Interview, 11/08/97

of residents and tenants associations were also beginning to voice concern and councillors, particularly those on the District Council and the South Western Area Management Committee, at last began to be swayed. With the opening of the short first phase in 1981 (see section 3.1 above) and the detailed planning of the extension getting underway from 1983 onwards it is surmisable that this new impetus stems from the fact that the threat of the motorway was becoming increasingly apparent. Together with Corkerhill and GfP these councils, residents and tenants associations continued the process of lobbying for a public inquiry. Corkerhill Community Council continued however to be the main driving force behind the campaign and its main tactical emphasis during this period was upon the negative health and safety impacts the motorway would have. The Community Council produced a succession of documents detailing these risks to their community which they presented to the District and Regional Councils and to the Scottish Office (see leaflets in appendix).

In 1987 the oppositional campaign had its first major success in that the District Council refused planning permission for the stretch of motorway which was projected to fall within the boundaries of the City of Glasgow. The District Council argued that the motorway would be detrimental to the residential and visual amenity, and to the domestic enjoyment of communities within the vicinity of the route. Arden, Darnley and Corkerhill would be the most negatively affected and suffer increased noise and pollution, the loss of recreational facilities (eg, playing fields, easy access to Pollok Park) and further community isolation through the severing impact of the motorway. Moreover the motorway would be detrimental to pedestrian and vehicular safety, generate more traffic on local roads and the landscape proposals would harm the visual amenity of the parklands and woodlands of the Pollok Estate.[266] As a result of the District Council's refusal, the Regional Council launched an Appeal and the public inquiry which had for so long been the campaigners aim finally became a reality and was held for eleven weeks in early 1988.

The principal supporters of the road at the public inquiry were Strathclyde Regional Council, Transport Action Scotland (a freight hauliers pressure group), Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, the Countryside Commission, Eastwood District Council, Giffnock Ratepayers and Residents Association, Haggs Castle Golf Club, Newlands and Mearns Community Councils. Although not in attendence, the District

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[266] City of Glasgow District Council (1988), op cited, pp. 1-2, 13-15

Councils of Kilmarnock and Loudon, Cunninghame and Kyle and Carrick also registered their approval. The Region's Roads Department put the main case for the motorway and argued that it would provide a strategic route linking Glasgow to Ayrshire and south-west of Scotland which would aid economic development and help to attract inward investment.. This motorway would also cut journey times, increase the reliability of bus transport, and relieve congestion in Giffnock, Thornliebank and Newton Mearns thus enhancing environmental conditions and reducing traffic accidents.[267]

Principal objectors to the motorway were Glasgow District Council, the Scottish Green Party, Glasgow for People, the Railway Development Society, Friends of the Earth (Glasgow and Scotland), the Scottish Association for Public Transport, Corkerhill Community Council and the Pollok Estate. Environmentally objections were made on the grounds that the motorway would generate increased traffic by encouraging more commuting, air pollution would greatly be increased causing damage to the wildlife habitats in the western edge of the Pollok Estate while the Estate would also suffer from the cutting down of 1000 mature trees and inadequate landscaping proposals. Moreover if constructed the new motorway would facilitate further commercial developments on greenbelt land along its route and detract from the usage of rail services in its environs. The money spent on the motorways construction it was argued could therefore be better spent on upgrading existing public transport facilties and improving existing roads in the general vicinity. In social terms the road was objected to for largely the same reasons voiced by Glasgow District Council in its original refusal of planning permission, but one key argument was added. This was that the motorway route would penalise working class areas with low car ownerships in favour of middle class commuters and the relief of congestion in the middle class suburbs.[268] The view that affluent areas would benefit from the motorway's construction is supported by an estate agent quoted in the 'Evening Times' newspaper who said that : 'It (the M77) will definitely raise house values in the Ayr Road (A77) itself and the surrounding neighbourhood'[269].

Corkerhill Community Council was particularly forceful in making the argument that the M77 motorway would penalise working class areas like their own in

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[267] Strathclyde Regional Council (1988), op cited, pp. 10-17
[268] ibid, pp. 17-45
[269] Estate Agent, quoted, 'The Evening Times', 15/06/87, p. 7

favour of middle class residential areas. Morrison says that the community council's strategy at the Inquiry was to deliberately leave the environmental and alternative transport arguments to 'experts' like representatives from Glasgow for People and Friends of the Earth :

> 'we realised that the only way we could fight back because we didny have the money to go to anybody, was from a community point of view and not to be in the least bit 'clever' - we as a community didny have two pennies to rub together so we couldny sit there for nine or ten weeks and bandy words with QC's.. that would just be kidding ourselves - so what we did had to be very, very basic with nothing clever in it at all - political by all means, moral by all means and maybe trying to marry they two things thegether with the deprivation of the area... so we had to blank out all the arguments about the ozone layer, all the arguments that there were too many cars, all the arguments about the trees and just pinpoint what our objections were.'[270]

To make their case the Community Council innovatively used a short video presentation shot in a documentary style to highlight Corkerhill's poverty and the potentially negative health, safety, environmental and segregative effects of the motorway. This film clearly reveals the awareness that the community activists in Corkerhill had of the class implications surrounding the Regional Council's promotion of the motorway. A female protester who narrates the voice over makes the following points in conclusion :

> 'the irony is that the residents in the more prosperous areas on the other side of Pollok Estate may increase in value as the bypass takes traffic away from their vicinity and provides a direct commuter route to Ayrshire to the City – but Mrs Betty Campbell and her near neighbours dread the coming of the motorway – from her bedroom window the pleasent rural scene will be shattered by the roar of upwards of 53,000 vehicles per day thundering past the old farmhouse at the bottom of her back garden – what will it be like for Mrs Campbell ? (scenes of heavy traffic), what will it be like for Corkerhill ?

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[270] Morrison, W. Interview, 23/08/97

(scenes of heavy traffic). No doubt there will be those who will benefit from the road route but it won't be the wildlife whose habitat will be unceremoniously flattened in the name of progress and it will certainly not be the children of Corkerhill whose natural inquisitiveness about something forbidden might quite literally be a fatal attraction.... to the people of Corkerhill, Pollok Country Park is symbolically their one remaining healthy lung – to them even nature's most lowly creatures are infinitely more important than the strategy which lays the cold concrete which soon might replace them – progress would seem to mean different things to different people – perhaps its all depends on which side of the road you happen to live on ?'[271]

Alongside this video, Morrison made an impassioned deposition which illustrated the contradictions between the Labour Regional Council's social strategy and the motorway plans. The force with which Corkerhill Community Council made its case is reflected in the Official Report on the Inquiry where the Reporter's 'Findings of Fact', while not directly acknowledging the class discrimination aspects of the Community Council's arguments, nevertheless states that 'Corkerhill has a high unemployment rate, poor housing with associated illnesses, and few community facilities' and that Corkerhill's 'environment would be substantially worsened by the Ayr Road Route'.[272] Indeed as is noted above (see section 4.2.3 above), the Reporter also states that Corkerhill will be affected in each of the five ways in which a motorway can negatively impact upon a community and suggests various forms of landscaping and compensation in order to lessen these impacts.

After eleven weeks of evidence the Reporter ultimately made a decision in favour of the motorway's construction because in his opinion its overall benefits both economically and environmentally would outweigh the harm caused. In the eyes of Corkerhill Community Council, their residents had been sacrificed in order to satisfy the dictates of capital and enhance the quality of life of middle class suburban dwellers. Morrison says that this decision by 'a Labour Regional Council which we voted for' to 'sell out deprived communities in order to build a road for the benefit of

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[271] Closing except of Female Protester Voice Over to the Video Presentation made by Corkerhill Community Council at the Public Local Inquiry into the Ayr Road Route, 1988.
[272] Strathclyde Regional Council (1988), op cited, p.65

the better off and people who obviously don't vote for them' was 'the most disappointing thing that I've ever had to face up to in my life' because it shows 'a complete disregard for the principles of socialism and the principles of protecting or trying to help the less well off'.[273] Councillor Tommy Sheridan, who represented the Pollok Ward for Scottish Militant Labour (SML) throughout the 1990s (until elected a Scottish Socialist Party MSP in 1999), and who became an active opponent of the motorway in the oppositional campaign's second phase (see below), said in an interview of the 1988 Public Inquiry decision that :

> 'Quite clearly one community was being penalised in favour of another – the community that was being penalised was Corkerhill and Pollok, and the community that was benefitting was Newton Mearns - that's why I often refer to the M77 as the Newton Mearns bypass. The alternative programme which was being put forward at the time of public sector, public transport, investment, widening of existing roads, opening of new rail stations, subsidising rail and bus travel – all those altenatives which would have better utlised £53 million, would have created more long term jobs and would have delivered more safety for the communities – but the problem is that the communities which wanted that were working class and in my opinion they were penalised in favour of Stewart's (Allan Stewart : Conservative MP for Eastwood until 1997) middle class community of Newton Mearns.'[274]

4.4 *Environment and Class : The Second Phase of Opposition 1988 - 1995*

Following the Secretary of State's endorsement of the M77 Extension in 1989 the Regional Council and the Scottish Office entered a period of negotiation lasting four years over what proportion of the £53 million required to build the M77 extension would be centrally funded and what proportion would come from the former's budget. During this stop/go period the oppositional campaign began to recover after the hammer blow of the Reporter's decision with Corkerhill once again at the forefront pursuing its strategy of lobbying councillors and the Scottish Office in the hope of indefinitely postponing construction work, and FoE beginning to explore the

[273] Morrison, W. Interview, 23/08/96
[274] Sheridan, T. Councillor, Interview, 18/01/97

possibilities of having the Reporter's decision overturned in the European Courts because no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) had been carried out.[275] Meanwhile GfP took a different tack, they commissioned research for the production of a costed plan ('Instead of the Ayr Road Route' (1994)) [276] for an environmentally sustainable transport alternative for the Ayr-Glasgow corridor which could be used as a lobbying tool to persuade councillors that £53 million could be spent in much more effective ways than on a new motorway.

In 1992 the Regional Council graphically signified its intentions to press ahead with the M77 extension by felling trees on the western edges of the Pollok Estate and laying the motorway's preliminary foundations. It was during this process however that the oppositional campaign received a major boost through the actions of Colin McLeod, a local from Pollok, who staged a one-man protest against the motorway by spending ten days in a hammock perched 60 feet up in a tree in order to stop it from being felled. This protest gained extensive media coverage and did much to highlight the issues central to the campaign against the motorway - it also brought McLeod personal notoriety dubbed as he was the 'bird-man of Pollok' by the local press. McLeod had been inspired to carry out this action by his involvement in Liverpool with Earth First's actions against the importation of tropical timber :

'there was a big action doon in Merseyside against tropical timber import Indonesia - big teams of activists just poured into the dock, took over the dock, took over the cranes, stopped work and it was front page of the Liverpool Times or whatever it was - so we effectively exposed and highlighted this influx of tropical timber - you've got to inform people before you can dae anything - so I learned from that experience and said 'I'm going to climb a tree here for ten days or so and we're gonny try to get the media' - I threw doon this scrole frae the tree, with the relevent details of what was happening and what shouldny be happening from my point of view - that was the first time it really hit the headlines so people began to learn that something was going on, something aboot a motorway in the forest...'[277]

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[275] FoE's strategy was however to eventually prove fruitless because although a European Union directive circulated in 1989 requires all major construction projects to carry out EIA's as part of their planning processes no provision was made for this directive to be implemented retrospectively.
[276] Glasgow for People, (1994), Instead of the Ayr Road Route, (Glasgow : Glasgow for People)
[277] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/03/96

McLeod however made it clear that he did not wish to be associated with membership of a formal organisation - thus while he identified with Earth First ! he argued that 'it's no an organisation, it's a movement - Earth First ! is a concept - if you believe that the eco-system that supports life is more important than profits then you could probably say you fall within that thing'.[278]

Prior to his tree-top protest McLeod had consulted Corkerhill Community Council for their views on such a protest and they had not only approved but offered him their active support. This was the initial contact point for the alliance which was to grow up between between the working class residents of the surrounding estates and the militant environmentalists who came to the fore during the latter stages of the campaign. Moreover from this point onwards McLeod was to become an increasingly important figure in the oppositional campaign being influential in garnering the aid of fellow radical environmentalists and being instrumental in setting up the fortified Pollok Free State eco-encampment in 1994 in the path of the motorway's construction route. Like Morrison, McLeod has a personal biography that made his leading role in the campaign highly apposite :

'I left school and done the forestry thing because I didny want te work in an office and I ended up being a tree surgeon - but I started out planting mono-culture pines in Caithness - my motive was to go up and see the wildlife, the Grey-lagged Geese, the Greenbanks, all those kind of creatures - and I went up there and found that the job was just to plant all these mono-culture pines and I realised when I was up there that this was destroying this eco-system of the flow country - it was part of this forestry tax dodge thing - so from there I began to evolve my ideas about protecting land and sustainability to get away from the racket.... I did a bit of travelling through eastern Europe, went to Russia, Estonia, the Baltic States and I also got to America - I compared different types of conservation and began to see that there were similar problems, both capitalism and communism caused huge environmental damage - so eventually I came back to Pollok and I realised that in Pollok Estate we have the biggest greenbelt in Glasgow.... so when I found out about the road and the Conservation Agreement being broken, I decided to network -

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[278] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/03/96

I'd made a lot of contacts in my travels by helping to set up nature reserves and the like and I knew lot who would be interested - it captured a lot of environmentalists imaginations - we thought 'hell man we've got a big motorway coming through a beautiful park like Pollok Estate, what more reason do we need ?' - everything was there to fight for - it shows up the crazy policies going on in the City, the transport policy, more cars, more motorways, less buses, less trains - the poorer deprived areas of the city being sacrificed for the rich suburbs like Newton Mearns and for the sake of supposed economic growth in Ayrshire.. it all seemed to focus up here you know...'[279]

During the preliminary construction phase other protesters from Corkerhill and the surrounding area followed Mcleod's lead in trying to disrupt the felling of trees on the edge of Pollok Estate. Although these protests led to confrontations with the law, they remained relatively low key with only small-scale skirmishes taking place and only isolated arrests being made[280] – they were perhaps though a portent of the full scale 'war' that was to erupt only a couple of years later.

4.4.1 *The STARR (Stop the Ayr Road Route) Alliance*

In April 1994 the STARR Alliance was launched as a last ditch attempt to stop the construction of the M77 motorway extension. The main driving forces behind the Alliance were Corkerhill Community Council and GfP but it also drew support from a wide variety of other sources including community councils, environmental organisations, amenity societies and public transport pressure groups.[281] For the sake of unity the Alliance had no formal political affiliations but in practice it was officially and strongly supported by Scottish Militant Labour which has deep roots in a number of the working class areas affected by the motorway, and by the Green

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[279] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/03/96

[280] For example see, Man Arrested in M77 Protest, The Herald, 6/10/92, p. 3

[281] Organisations affiliated to the Stop the Ayr Road Route (STARR) Alliance were as follows : Corkerhill Community Council, Park Community Council, North Pollok Community Council, Templar Community Council, World-Wide Fund for Nature (Scotland), Scottish Wildlife Trust, Friends of the Earth (Glasgow and Scotland), Greenpeace, Architects and Engineers for Social Responsibility, Earth First ! (Glasgow), Transport 2000, Glasgow for People, Glasgow Cycling Campaign, Glasgow Buildings Guardians Committee, Glasgow Tree Lovers Society, Socialist and Environmental Resources Association, Railway Development Society (Scotland), Ramblers Association (Strathclyde), Friends of the Peoples Palace, Friends of Kelvingrove Park.

Party. It was also supported by three Glasgow Labour MP's whose constituencies would be amongst the 'losers' once the motorway was constructed; ie, Ian Davidson (Govan), Jimmy Dunnachie (Pollok) and Mike Watson (Glasgow Central). Conversely the most vocal amongst the MP's who opposed the Alliance's aims were those whose constituencies would benefit most from the motorway's construction; ie, the right-wing Tory Alan Stewart (Eastwood) and the Ayrshire Labour MP's George Foulkes, Willie McKelvey and Brian Wilson.

The operating ethos of the Alliance was one of openness, debate, non-hierarchy and pragmatic compromise whereby each organisation involved, whether they be socially or environmentally orientated was free to pursue its own particular line of argument and tactics against the motorway - this broad front strategy it was hoped would continue to attract public support while preserving the fragile unity of the growing alliance. Together the different organisational groupings of the Alliance employed a three pronged strategy in order to try to achieve its collective aims; ie, legal processes (eg, FoE's challenge to the planning decision in the European courts), lobbying of various kinds (eg, demonstrations, press releases, conferences and the circulation of counter-information – all designed to win over councillors and swing public opinion), and direct action of various types (eg, Earth First's activities aimed initially at disrupting council/planning meetings and later at hampering construction work), with each affiliated grouping laying a different stress upon each of these tactics.

Throughout this later stage of the campaign numerous open meetings were held that were aimed at providing space for the discussion of issues, tactics and strategy for all the key actors involved the Alliance and at attracting new supporters. While there was some initial opposition from activists associated with organisations from the Pollok Free State (see below) and the more radical wing of the environmental movement who argued against anything that had the potential to create a hierarchical power structure, the Alliance did nevertheless operate within a framework that included office bearers, office space (provided by Glasgow for People in the city centre), a bank account and a formal mission statement which contained the following aims and objectives :

1) To have the M77-Ayr Road Route through Glasgow cancelled and have the scheme deleted from the Structure Plan.

2) Redirect money saved into an alternative more sensible and environmentally friendly transport scheme.

3) Re-instate the land within Pollok Estate to its previous condition as open space and woodland, as enshrined in the historic Conservation Agreement of 1939, and in keeping with the rural nature which its owner, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, wished to preserve for the citizens of Glasgow for ever.

4) Restore all open spaces and buildings blighted by the M77-Ayr Road Route, and give priority to provision for pedestrian and cyclist safety, public transport and park-and-ride.[282]

These aims and objectives were designed to be as clearly stated and as unambigious as possible and any organisation or individual who shared them was free to join the Alliance. The pooled resources of the Alliance made a significant impact in its short one year existence generating a high media profile with its representatives being constantly called upon by the media for inteviews and debates, and attracting large numbers of people to its rallys and public meetings. One of its biggest achievements was the public demonstration which it built alongside the Defiance Alliance (anti-Criminal Justice Bill groups) for February 25th 1995. On the day over 2000 people took part in Scotland's first ever large scale anti-motorway demonstration which began with a rally in George Square in the City centre, and proceeded with a five mile march to the Pollok Free State which in the early months of 1995 had become the key battleground for the oppositional campaign (see next section & section 4.4.4) A mark of just how effective the STARR Alliance was in getting its alternative message across was that in March 1995 Councillor Charles Gordon admitted that the Regional Council had lost the propaganda war over the M77. In April 1995 this was confirmed by an 'Evening Times' telephone poll which showed that a slim majority of readers opposed (497 for, 504 against) the motorway.[283]

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[282] Stop the Ayr Road Route, STARR Alliance Leaflet, Undated

4.4.2 *The Pollok Free State*

The Pollok Free State eco-encampment was founded in June 1994 by Glasgow Earth First ! The camp was strategically placed in the path of the planned motorway in mature woods beside the busy Barrhead Road and opposite the grey concrete structure which houses the Pollok Shopping Centre. Beginning with a few tents surrounding a camp fire the Free State had within a few months mushroomed to become a small but colourful and innovative alternative community of around sixty inhabitants with benders, lean-to's, fortified treehouses and workshops dotted throughout the woods and linked by a network of suspended walkways and roughly marked-out paths bordered by a variety of striking sculptures, art-works and environmental slogans. Over time an impressive central tree house complex complete with fireplace, stove and comfortable sleeping space for upwards of six people was added along with drained toilets, vegetable, herb and flower gardens and a rain-proof covering for the meeting area surrounding the constantly tended fire at the centre of the encampment. The Free State also inspired four smaller fortified outposts in the path of the planned motorway (one located on the edge of the Corkerhill Estate) inhabited by a mixture of locals from the surrounding council estates and eco-activists who came from not only different parts of the UK but also from around the world. The Pollok Free State declared formal 'independence' from the British state on the 20th August 1994 issuing hundreds of passports containing a pledge to defend 'this new domain' from 'the threat (posed) to our environment and liberty by this road and legislation (which) is incompatible with sustainable environmental use and any notion of democracy' (see appendix).

McLeod says that he and his fellow eco-activists initial motivation was simply to 'have a camp as a focal point.. to keep the fire going and keep a presence in the woods... we also thought we'd do some carvings to attract folk and make it an interesting place to be, to make people ask questions rather than wasting out time with people who didny want to know'.[284] This is something that the Free State clearly achieved in that aside from attracting a number of people, many of whom had no previous experience of environmental protest, to live within its environs and embrace

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[283] On Councillor Gordon see, The Herald, 21/03/95, p. 18, on the opinion poll, see, Evening Times, 4/04/95, p. 3

[284] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/06/96

a radical green socio-political outlook, the encampment was constantly visited on a day to day basis by curious local people as well as by professionally interested journalists, academics and representatives of various environmental organisations. Moreover as the campaign evolved through 1994 and early 1995, the Free State increasingly became the key focal point for opposition to the motorway providing a useful meeting place for Alliance activists to discuss strategy and tactics, and a convenient base from which to strike out against against the processes of construction.

Corkerhill Community Council, Scottish Militant Labour activists, and many other locals from the surrounding area gave their whole hearted support to the eco-activists based in the Free State and its outposts, and regularly brought donations of food, clothing, building materials and other essentials for their inhabitants. On the support of Corkerhill Community Council Betty Campbell said that :

'we went up every day to the Pollok one and we also helped out at the one (camp) that they done in the woods here - we went doon, gave them tea, things to eat - a couple of girls that lived in the area also stayed there - they'd maybe come up for bottles of water, to use the telephone and so on... there was never any problem with any of them'[285]

and on the locals she says that :

'they were actually quite supportive - I mean some of the Free Staters didny live here but were prepared to come in and help and I think that's good... we made a lot of friends...'[286]

Jerry, a local from Corkerhill who was inspired to become a full-time activist and resident of the Free State supports this positive view especially in relation to the young people living in the vicinity :

'I don't think there was resentment - I think a lot of the older generation thought 'hippies' - but they're stuck in their own wee time zone - they've had eighty years of certain beliefs and you canny just change them overnight like

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[285] Campbell, B. Interview, 20/08/97
[286] Campbell, B. Interview, 20/08/97

that - a lot of the young crowd I think came because it was a rebellious thing to do - you know 'lets all go and be anti-road protesters, lets go and shout no more M77 and lets go and shout at the poliss' - I think that's originally that's what it was - but when they came in and sat down I don't even think they realised they were learning something' [287]

Morrison rejects the argument touched upon by Campbell above and put forward at the time by Regional Councillors, contractors and the police that the involvement of 'outsiders' in the Free State was negative and that they were simply there to 'hijack' a local campaign for their own political ends :

'well that was a central argument - in response to that I said 'if they bring in experts to build the road then we can bring them in to stop it - I mean you never hear of anybody complaining about those who go to places like India to save the environment there do you ?'[288]

4.4.4 *Tensions Within the STARR Alliance*

Inevitably within the broad front which constituted the STARR Alliance there were tensions and internal conflicts generated by personality clashes and differences of opinion over campaign priorities, organisation, strategy, tactics etc and by the underlying ideological and class biases of the principal actors involved. Three types of tension stand out which although not leading to actual splits nevertheless reduced the campaign's effectiveness and at times made coherent and united action difficult to co-ordinate. The first of these tensions manifest itself between those organisations like Corkerhill Community Council which on the one hand were characterised by mainly working class leaderships who employed the traditional 'red' rhetoric of community, class and social justice to attract support, and those on the other hand which had either middle class or non-class specific leaderships and who employed the diverse 'green' language of environmentalism and ecology to build their oppositional base. In interviews Morrison and Campbell recounted that the increasingly intense

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[287] Jerry, Interview, 28/08/96
[288] Morrison, W. Interview, 19/08/97

participation of environmental groups detracted attention from the social issues which they felt should have taken centre stage in the campaign's discourse :

'often when I heard them talking about the trees or Pollok Estate I thought 'for fucks sake !' - but how could I go and tell all these people not to bother about the Estate and the environment but to fight for a community that was going to go under ? .... all the anarchists could do was to bring the anarchy of climbing up trees but what did that mean to the ordinary punter ? I mean there they were saying 'come on and support me I'm trying to save this tree on the Pollok Estate ?' but as much as you might like trees do you honestly believe that people who had other problems would respond to that.... ? Our argument was a simple simple argument - we were dealing with a *Labour* Council and we are a deprived area and the best way to win the fight was to ram that point down their throats until it fucking well choked them ! the other issue running alongside that was social apartheid... they (SRC) said it themselves, they said that this road will segregate the community of Corkerhill.... with all these people coming in from all over we could have used that argument as another tactic so the picture built up through public opinion and not just locally could have been a powerful one - how could a Labour Council have stood up to that kind of criticism ? But we were never able to exploit that properly.... Swampy and the trees yes, Pollok Park yes, but the focus could have been on Corkerhill and saying 'here are the real victims of the M77 and it shows that it is nothing to do with anything else but class division !''[289]

Campbell also expresses this concern when she says that :

'the trees was a big thing for them (the environmentalists) and I don't think that we were as keen as them about trees - at the end of the day we were caring about our area getting made wee-er and trying to get the best out of it for everybody - I think that maybe it took away frae us a bit but we tried to go along with it to try and keep everybody, all the groups together.... [290]

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[289] Morrison, W. Interview, 19/08/97
[290] Campbell, B. Interview, 20/08/97

The Community Council did to a certain extent have to 'go along with it' in the latter stages of the campaign because although their strategy of 'shaming' the Regional Council had gained a lot of public sympathy and had succeeded in bringing the District Council on side it had essentially failed with the 1988 Public Inquiry. If a new focus on the environmental impacts of the motorway would bring in new organisations and more support for the anti-M77 campaign then the Community Council from a pragmatic point of view could not oppose it - rather they tried to work with it as best they could and attempt to link the environmental and the social.

The second of the key tensions internal to the Alliance revolves around the vexed question of organisation, something which is intrinsically linked to the third key tension, that centering on the question of tactics. David Spaven, a green transport consultant and well known environmental activist in the west of Scotland with GfP and currently Chairperson of Transform Scotland (a new public transport pressure group set up in 1998), talked in an interview about how at various points during the campaign the different strands of the Alliance would hinder each other or even work against each other because of a lack of central co-ordination and strategic planning. Spaven accepts that this problem is inevitable in multi-organisational campaigns because 'you could never hope to have some kind of grand umbrella organisation where roles are clearly defined - it just wouldn't work' but stresses that in order for progress to be made 'you have to communicate with one another and recognise that one group doing one thing may damage what another is doing somewhere else'. Problems associated with the lack of this type of communication were something that Free State activists were particularly prone to generating because of their rejection of formal organisation and the ad-hoc manner in which the eco-activist residents executed actions against the motorway. Throughout the interview Spaven was at pains to stress the relative unity of the campaign, however he did nevertheless indicate that there were 'fault lines' and that times these indeed caused problems. The division he identified was between 'the tactics sometimes of the direct action people (usually led by Free State residents of whom many were aligned with Earth First !) and the tactics of those who were orientated towards the councillors (the Community Councils, GfP, mainstream environmentalists).... I think that was where the main fault line was'. Spaven gives an illuminating example of one particular instance when a lack of communication between these two strands hindered the progress of the overall campaign :

'there were times when there was a real contrast in the two approaches which may have upset the campaign.... I mean I have not got a problem with any of the direct action that took place.... I'm just full of admiration for that. There is one example though when one day there was going to be a debate in the Regional Council Chambers surrounding the money for the road and the continuing doubts around it - there was lobbying outside and it was quite peaceful - we even had some musical instruments which added a light tone to it which was deliberate to take the aggression out of it .... anyway there were a number of people from the lobby groups going to be allowed in to state their case to the Council meeting and it was just after a time when the alternative strategy had been circulated and it was having an impact in perhaps changing some councillors minds - certainly those of a group in the middle - but what happened was that some direct action people who I think had not been at the previous meeting of STARR where tactics and the next step had been discussed hid themselves away in a toilet in the Chambers and then burst out into the Chambers and started shouting and bawling and causing absolute bloody chaos at a time when some people on the Council were maybe starting to swither and thinking that maybe there might be an alternative - I think that was a key moment in the campaign when the lack of a common outlook between the two sides really seemed to set things back.'

Spaven recalls apologising to sympathetic councillors and having to make plain that the direct action protesters were not associated with GfP whom he was representing at the meeting. He says that this 'caused a hell of a lot of bad feeling' but 'wouldn't want to overplay it' because overall 'it was basically a campaign where the different strands helped to sustain the campaign in the pursuit of its overall objective.' [291]

Following the award of the contract for the motorway to Wimpey in November 1994 the tensions related to the question of tactics within the Alliance became even more apparent. This was because after lobbying and legal remedies had failed only one tactic, that of (non-violent) direct action, remained as a viable vehicle of opposition. Direct action would inevitably involve breaking the law and many of the organisations in the Alliance could not officially commit themselves to such tactics

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[291] Spaven, D. Interview, 9/02/98

for ideological or constitutional reasons. In the end the only organisations within the Alliance who actually did officially commit themselves to such tactics were Corkerhill Community Council and Earth First ! while Scottish Militant Labour (essentially an unofficial member organisation) also pledged its commitment and support. The Alliance did not split however, rather many of its affiliated organisations while not officially participants in direct action played a supporting role, supplying material, financial and legal resources. Equally, individual members of many of these organisations, eg, GfP, took part in direct action against the motorway's construction but in an unofficial capacity.

4.4.5 *Confrontations with the State*

Throughout January 1995 rumours were rife amongst the protesters and press alike that construction work was about to begin and that the Free State and its outposts were about to be evicted. The protesters based in the camps and their supporters from the surrounding estates began to prepare for the final 'battle' by 'spiking' trees to inhibit chainsaws and creating barricades, elevated walkways and fortified treehouses. Moreover look-outs were posted along the route as an early warning system which would enable a rallying call to be sent out thereby marshalling protesters to counteract the contacters plans. Those with prior experience of NVDA also began to train others in its techniques; Morrison for example brought his experience with the Committee of One Hundred and CND :

> 'I've met Bertrand (Russell), I was involved with him so I know about civil disobedience and I've done quite a lot in my time - the philosophy there was a hundred people jailed another hundred take their place - that's where I learned about direct action - I'd also been in India as well so I knew about Ghandi - all that experience started to come into play.'[292]

Allan Laing writing critically of the protesters plans in the 'The Herald' reported that :

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[292] Morrison, W. Interview, 23/08/96

'The moment the construction crews move in the demonstrators' jungle drums will beat a muster call and within hours there will be as many as 200 on the scene. Spectacular direct action is predicted and the Glasgow based groups have been promised a helping hand from English activists who were involved in the Newbury protest. The anti-M77 action, even in its death throes, seems set to become the event of the 1995 campaign calendar. It will be the unseemly and unpleasent face of environmental protest'.[293]

It was not however until early February that the first serious clashes between the protesters and contracters occurred. Wimpey had engaged the security firm Securiguard to protect its project and on February 2nd twelve of its guards fought a running battle with protesters in an area of woodland known locally as 'Pollok Castle' near the Newton Mearns end of the extension. Here protesters chained themselves to treefellers equipment, vehicles and to the treefellers themselves in order to halt the work and Wimpey was forced to retreat. In this first serious confrontation police were not involved and the security presence was relatively small thus the protesters were victorious. Wimpey was however to learn from this 'mistake' and use both large numbers of police and security guards in the future. Two days later though the campaign scored another victory when Scottish Office Minister Allan Stewart, the Tory MP for Eastwood, confronted a group of protesters brandishing a pick-axe in a threatening manner. A complaint was made to the police about his behaviour and he was forced to resign his ministerial post on the 7th February. From this point onwards direct actions to hinder construction work intensified, arrests began and protesters began to make regular appearences in Glasgow Sheriff Court where they either agreed to bail conditions banning them from approaching, obstructing or interfering with Wimpey's workmen or refused them and were remanded in custody in Barlinnie prison until trial. Over time these actions by the state authorities proved highly effective in draining the direct action campaign of many of its leading activists.

On February 14th highly controversial incidents occurred at the Pollok Free State after columns of 200 police (backed by a helicopter), 150 yellow-jackets (security guards) and bulldozers moved in to attempt to clear the site. The protesters defending the Free State were caught off guard and as arrests began to be made it

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[293] Laing, A. Beginning of the Bitter End, The Herald, 07/01/95, p. 11

seemed as though they would be overwhelmed by the sheer weight of opposing forces. However just as all seemed lost over one hundred school-children from the nearby Bellarmine High School streamed from over a hill and surged forward to unfurl banners proclaiming 'NO M77 !' and obstruct the bulldozers. As a result the contracters were once again forced to retreat and twenty-six security guards deserted, one being quoted as saying 'Ah'm no here tae hit weans'. After these incidents a Wimpey spokesperson said 'As you can see, its becoming extremely difficult to progress. We just want to get on with the job but we now know we're going to have some difficulty'.[294] The Regional Council, various 'morally outraged' MPs and members of the public condemned the actions of the school children and demanded that they be dealt with appropriately by the school authorities. They also accused members of Scottish Militant Labour and in particular Councillors Bennett and Sheridan (who was dubbed the 'pied piper of Pollok') of encouraging a 'childrens crusade'. Sheridan while wholeheartedly supporting the children however denies any such encouragement by either himself or any other SML member and explains their actions as follows :

'the true story is that the local school Bellarmine Secondary for many years has won first prizes in environmental awards for environmental awareness, and there have been courses run in it in the school. So the school students have been given all sorts of plaudits for their excellent environmental work but of course when they try and involve themselves in saving the environment they are condemned. Most of them were senior students who heard what was happening at the camp and left of their own volition to assist the protest and I've got to say that if they hadny done that then the felling would have taken place because there wasny enough people there to stop it -- their intervention was crucial to delaying the felling and a continuation of the campaign. Now although it was hysterical nonsense that the media printed it got national news, opened it up and raised the arguments about the road once again. People asked me on the record 'do you condemn these school students ?' and I said 'why should I condemn them for trying to take part in shaping their lives ?' -- I mean we're all too quick to condemn them for pumping their veins full of shit,

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[294] Bell, G. The Real Battle of Pollok Free State Commences, The Herald, 15/02/95, p.11

slashing each other and vandalising – here they are trying to save the environment and they want to condemn that as well... it's just garbage'[295]

Bellarmine's actions inspired school students from other schools in the area (Lourdes and Crookston Castle) to follow suit staging strikes, demonstrations and walkouts in support of the campaign and they became a regular presence at the Free State's 'Free University of Pollok' (see next chapter) and at ongoing skirmishes along the route. Key events over the next few weeks included the creation of 'Carhenge' by protesters on the weekend of the 18th February which consisted of a number of upended old cars symbolically embedded in concrete in the motorway's route, and the well attended Alliance demonstration from George Square to the Free State on the 25th.

The beginning of the end for the direct action campaign began with the clearance of the Free State's outposts along the motorway route. Perhaps the most revealing in terms of just how far the contractors in conjunction with the forces of the state were prepared to go in pushing the motorway through was the 'dawn raid' eviction of the camp on the edge of Corkerhill. In the interview exchange reproduced below Campbell records her shock at the way in which the police and security guards treated the residents of Corkerhill who attempted to come to the aid of the eco-activists when their camp was under seige - indeed this interviewer was himself also shocked at some of the details which emerged about the tactics of the police - the exchange is quoted a length here because Campbell's words convey a very vivid, palpable and deep sense of injustice, anger and frustration :

'to come in at four in the morning into people's gardens it was like a war - my next door neighbour couldny believe what was happening - I mean if you hear somebody coming roond with one of these loud hailers at four in the morning the first thing you think is that there's something wrong - I just heard a whisper, whisper - it was like a low radio and then somebody talking - I went to my window and it was like a yellow carpet all the yellow caps and they had these big cages - I have never seen anything like it even on the television - I've no seen cages like they used here... they used them so that we wouldny get out - they put up high fencing from the top to bottom...'

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[295] Sheridan, T. Councillor, Interview, 18/01/97

Question : they fenced you in ? I never knew that...

'it was four in the morning and there were all these yellow caps and police - outside my garden they had it fenced off right doon - the idea was to stop us getting anywhere - people went up though to try and build a makeshift bridge but it was knocked doon and the fencing went up - I've never in my life never seen anything like that morning - there was six or seven of them at the camp - when I went doon you would think that the camp had exploded because everything was smashed up - the protesters couldny do anything because they were on the other side of the fence - it was police or security who just literally smashed it up - it was like the Berlin Wall - I think that was the only way they could do it though - when it got to aboot seven and eight in the morning there was loads of people outside and people were singing and the police were walloping people - police stopped my kids coming in my door and they filmed everybody who did come in - it is wrong that they can come in on people like that - and there was never any violence but the poliss were filming everything... they stopped the big riot van just at my stairs and I says 'where are you going - you are certainly not going though my back !' - so they tried a couple of houses up and they got the same - eventually one of my neighbours got shoved on her arse - she told them that they couldny come in but they just shoved her out of the road...'

Question : was your experience of that quite an eye opener for you - seeing the police act like that?

'Aye - I've never... I mean caging you in that's no civilised - the caging was eight feet high and right along to the weans play area - the security guards I couldny believe they were doing that for about a pound an hour - and see the abuse we got - it was later on - Walter filmed them - see when they took the caging down they left an amazing mess from one end of Corkerhill to the other - so we were standing and Walter was shouting "Pollard (head of construction security) - your men are fucking animals" and this big guy came across and just gave us a look - some of them actually went around saying things like

"I'm frae the Carlton and I drink in the such and such and I'll meet you there" - they were hard men...." [296]

The contracters new tactic of cordoning off areas of trees to be felled with steel fencing and police support proved to be highly productive. Over the next few weeks thousands of trees were cut down despite the increasingly desperate efforts of protesters. On the 22nd March the last major action of the campaign occurred when sixteen protesters, including Councillor Sheridan were arrested for public order offences during an operation involving 250 police officers near the Pollok Free State. This last battle was on the day that Wimpey announced that its tree-felling programme had been completed. Smaller isolated protests and actions against construction work continued to occur sporadically after this point but after the trees had been felled a palpable rationale no longer existed for continuing the direct action campaign. The main eco-camp of Free State remained however defiantly undefeated because the contractors had decided that a showdown with the protesters living there was not worth the time and effort. Instead a planned exit route for the motorway was moved. Pollok Free State continued to operate as a meeting place for environmental activists and as an environmental resource and education centre until November 1996. The M77 motorway was opened in December 1996.

The campaign to stop the M77 motorway extension from being built was finally defeated at the end of March 1995 by a combination of Regional Council intransigence and the heavy police and security presence which facilitated the felling of trees and the eviction of the small eco-encampments in the path of the planned route. In total there were 34 arrests reported in the press which took in a number of locals as well as 'outside' eco-activists and the total cost of policing the M77's construction to 31st March 1995 was £141,714.[297] Morrison with whom the campaign had started many years before says that his main disappointment is not so much the fact that the new motorway was eventually built but that once the route had been cleared and the road constructed the broad campaign did not continue. Morrison feels that many (but certainly not all) of the environmentalists have proven to be 'fair-weather friends' who deserted the campaign once the trees had been cut down and the media interest died down :

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[296] Campbell, B. Interview, 20/08/97
[297] Regional Council Police and Fire Committee, Internal Document, 27/04/95

'if I've got a disappointment and regret it is that the campaign did not continue - I tried but to no avail - I printed a leaflet 'Back to the M77' and tried to rally some of them back - it rallied a small section, particularly those who remained at the camp and a few others, maybe fortyish in numbers and we've had regular demonstrations and meetings - I took the view from the beginning that the message doesn't just end with the M77 - what this has shown to road promoters is that the protesters will shout and bawl for six months, they'll climb trees and they'll threaten this and they'll threaten that but after that they will go home - so its likely that the pattern will be the same with the M74 - what we're doing just now is fighting a rearguard action - keeping on sniping at them, pushing up their expenses - I want them when they come to the M74 to think that this is an endless process because we are still fighting on the M77. Our argument has its base in class discrimination and it wasn't just about the environment so I'm sad to say that many of the environmentalists have walked away and let the road promoters, the Maxwell family and the National Trust get on with carving up Pollok Estate in favour of the exploiters and not in favour of the people of Glasgow.[298]

4.5 *Conclusion*

The initial mobilistion against the M77 extension was motivated primarily by a deep sense of inequality engendered in the Corkerhill Estate by the fact that it would suffer all the negative effects the motorway would bring in order to benefit the interests of business capital and middle class suburban dwellers. This is clearly articulated in the discourses of the Community Council who made the question of the motorway into a class issue and whose leadership proved to be the central animating feature of the initial mobilisation. In time they were to ally with Glasgow for People a pressure group made up of experts drawn from liberal 'progressive' elements in academia, environmentalism, transport and planning. The Labour City Administration in the form of the Corporation and later the Regional Council took the view however that the motorway would actually be beneficial to the working class residents of the City because of a strongly held belief (held in the face of all new evidence) that it would

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[298] Morrison, W. Interview, 19/08/97

attract inward investment, engender regeneration and therefore create jobs. In essence then the M77 extension represents a 1960s technocratic solution to Glasgow's deep social problems. Although a public inquiry was eventually undertaken, it was done so reluctantly after a long campaign of putting political pressure upon councillors and even then the Reporter's decision sided with the Region's technocrat experts representing capital over the arguments of 'progressive' experts and the needs of working class communities. In fact the justifications used by the Regional Council for building the M77 are reminiscent of those used by disciplinarians to justify punitive forms of corporal punishment, ie, 'you may not know it but we're doing this for your own good'. The Reporter was at least honest when he clearly identified the losers as being working class areas like Corkerhill. The issue of the M77 thus illustrates the way in which technocratic solutions when married to Labourism, often end up serving the needs of capital in the name of socialism – an intriguing paradox indeed.

After the public inquiry, the campaign gradually began to become more and more 'environmental' as opposed to 'social' in its orientation. The environmental impact had always been a key issue in the campaign, especially once Glasgow for People had become a leading objector, but in the second phase's latter stages when the STARR Alliance had come into being it started to take precedence; this however was pragmatically accepted by the more class oriented actors like Corkerhill Community Council because an environmental orientation would it was hoped attract added opposition. Thus the primary discourse framing the campaign in its latter stages was one of environmentalism – something that was almost inevitable once the Pollok Free State was established because of the media draw that such a new phenomenon would generate. This is not to say however that many environmental activists, even those from Earth First! whose very name implies an anti-social, biocentric ideology were not motivated by social concerns but rather that the environmental came to encapsulate the social as opposed to the social encapsulating the environmental as in the discourses of the campaign's first phase. In many ways though the protest campaign in fact successfully linked the social and the environmental with a cross-fertilising dialogue growing up between those protesters with traditional leftist concerns and those motivated by green concerns. Sheridan for one clearly sees such protest campaigns as having the potential to break down the traditional barriers between the two schools of thought :

'For a long time the environment was seen as a sort of middle class minority concern... but things like BSE, things like the motorway building - all of these things began to make people realise it's about us, it's about our lives and the way we live and breath and therefore the environment has become much more of a political issue.. therefore we don't feel that it's separate to oppose capitalism and support the environment and that's good because it does two things - one is that it provides a bridge for existing socialists to get involved with environmental campaigns but it also gives a bridge for environmental campaigners to get involved with socialists - a lot of environmental campaigners might not consider themselves socialist - I came across quite a lot at the M77, but yet they would support nearly everything we were saying on our wider political programme'[299]

The furtherance of red/green alliances should be viewed as one of the successful aspects of the campaign, the others being that it created a real public debate in Glasgow for the first time about the City Administration's 'obsession' with motorway building, and that it politicised in a variety of different ways a layer of City residents who otherwise would probably not have been politicised. These successes are however of little comfort to the working class communities like Corkerhill who now have to live with the pollution, noise, visual intrusion and social segregaton that the motorway has brought. The last years of the campaign could ideally also be seen within the wider context of the anti-roads protest movement which was mushrooming across the UK in the 1990s; thus although this particular battle was lost the 'war' was essentially won by 1998. Curiously though Glasgow is excluded from this 'national' victory because it is faced with the prospect of yet another urban motorway in the form of the M74 Northern Extension. Many of the protesters involved in the M77 have now though turned their attentions to this motorway so bringing a wealth of campaign skills and experience. At the inaugural meeting of JAM 74 (Joint Action Against the M74) which has been set up to counteract the M74 extension, the successes and failures of the M77 campaign were discussed. The strengths were viewed to be the wide range of people involved and the innovative stunts which had been used to keep the campaign in the public eye. The weaknesses included too many

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[299] Sheridan, T. Councillor, Interview, 18/01/97

'loose cannons' and a lack of overall control and professionalism, breakdowns in communications, being 'too little, too late', media trivialisation, failure to consistently 'sing from the same song-sheet' with a consistent level of knowledge, and residents objections being reduced by prospects (as yet unrealised) of large compensation.[300] The JAM74 campaigners are planning a broad-ranging campaign which will incorporate a media campaign, direct action, political lobbying and legal action as a last resort (it is too costly as a first resort) while incorporating the lessons of the M77. The M77's campaign's lasting impact in Glasgow might then be that although it ultimately failed in its immediate objective it will have layed the groundwork for opposing and perhaps stopping a motorway which is five times its size and approximately four times as costly.

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[300] Minutes, JAM74, 8/07/98

Chapter 5 : <u>Earth First ! and the Theory and Practice of Eco-Activism at the Pollok</u>
<u>Free State</u>

'At this moment in time we believe the ecological holocaust facing our lands
and wider environment to be so great, that it is our right, our duty, to throw off
such forms of government that allow such evils to continue, and provide for
our future security. We take this step with great reluctance and it is our
intention to maintain peaceful relations with Her Majesty's government of the
United Kingdom and Strathclyde Regional Council. Nevertheless it is our
view that the undemocratic activities of these two institutions, through the
proposed Criminal Justice and Public Order Act and M77 motorway extension
are so unpopular, destructive and oppressive and their behavior so
unreasonable in the face of our appeals for mercy that we face no choice but to
separate and determine our own future.'[301]

('<u>Declaration of Independence from the People of Pollok Free State</u>', (1994))

5.1 *Introduction*

The Pollok Free State was Scotland's first instance of anti-roads protesters employing
the type of direct action tactics, involving the fortification of trees, camps and
buildings in the path of planned roads and motorways, which had been widely
incorporated into the tactical repetoire of protesters in England following the Twyford
Down protests of 1992.[302] The Free State was set up by Glasgow Earth First ! eco-
activists in association with local anti-motorway campaigners in the STARR Alliance
during June 1994 as a new focal point for the long-running campaign against the
building of the M77 extension which was fast approaching its dramatic climax. This
role it combined with one of highly visible defiance to the <u>Criminal Justice and Public</u>
<u>Order Act</u> (1994) which contained amongst its draconian clauses serious restrictions
on the right to party, protest, demonstrate and pursue unconventional lifestyles, as

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[301] Pollok Free State, (1994), <u>Declaration of Independence from the People of Pollok Free State</u>,
August 20th. See Appendix 5.
[302] See Tarrow on 'tactical repertoires': Tarrow, S. (1994), op cited, pp. 100 –117. Leytonstonia and
Wanstonia which were set up in the path of the M11 Link Road in London during 1993-94 are notable
early examples of this type of direct action against road and motorway construction.

well as the removal of the right to silence upon arrest. On August 20th, after a couple of months 'digging in', constructing defences and building living quarters, the activists at the Free State provocatively declared independence from the British state (see extract above), and began issuing passports to all who shared the 'beliefs, ideals and aspirations to come to the defence of this new domain'.[303]

During the next few months over one thousand passports were issued, and the Free State became a hive of creative oppositional activity where people from across Scotland, the UK, and even small numbers from Europe and other parts of the world, came to take part in training in NVDA and the practices of 'ecotage' in order to prepare for the final 'showdown' with the state and the building contractors over the motorway. In doing so they also inevitably joined in, and added to the simmering ferment of ideas generated by the ongoing political, ideological and environmental debate and discussion between a socially diverse range of activists from organisations affiliated to the STARR Alliance, radical left-wing political groupings (most prominently Scottish Militant Labour) and environmentalists of all shades of green (most prominently Earth First !), which became a regular feature of Free State life. This dialogue involved the clash of an eclectic pot-pourri of critical ideological stances with currents of anarchism and deep ecology, being articulated by the Free State's resident activists, and different variants of socialism being propagated by the working class local community activists and left-wing groupings.

In basic sociological terms, the Free State's resident activists were an extremely diverse grouping, where although all were unemployed, all had chosen to give up the chance of paid employment in order to pursue an alternative lifestyle of full-time environmental activism. The social mix brought together a wide range of people mostly in their twenties and thirties, from both working class and middle class backgrounds, with large variations in skills, educational attainment, types of previous employment or indeed prior experience in environmental or political activism. Men slightly outnumbered women and as is to be expected given the experience of the wider environmental movement, ethnic minorities were not really represented at all. Despite their often markedly different ideological perspectives and social backgrounds, the different political, community and environmental groupings and indeed many non-affiliated activists, whether living full-time as resident activists at

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[303] Pollok Free State, (1994), op cited

the encampment or merely visiting on a part-time basis, had each been drawn to support the direct mode of resistance offered by the Free State, and were united in their desire to stop the M77 extension and oppose the CJA. Laura McLean, an Earth First ! activist from the United States, and a veteran of Newbury said of the Free State that :

> 'people come from all walks of life - the only thing that we have in common is that we're fucked off - we're all fucked off with the system and we found ourselves powerless in the face of it and have chosen an alternative way of empowering ourselves and making our voices heard... it definitely crosses class lines and it's not an issue - it's great - it's the only place I've ever seen, especially in this country where it's just not an issue'[304]

As documented in the last chapter, when construction work finally began on the motorway in early 1995, the Free State was able to draw upon this support base to assume the role of what what was essentially the command centre for eco-activist led direct action operations against the motorway's construction. The Free State also constituted the anti-motorway campaigners last line of defence and was only saved from eviction on a number of occasions by the timely intervention of protesters, including school students, from the surrounding council estates.

In the last weeks of the anti-motorway campaign, a small core group of eco-activist residents had already made up their minds to continue living at the Free State and began to seek a new role for the encampment. This revolved around providing resources for various 'alternative' protest campaigns in the West of Scotland (eg, anti-nuclear, anti-blood sports, anti-CJA, land rights etc), the propagation of traditional arts, crafts and culture amongst Glasgow's unemployed, and the general promotion of environmental awareness in the local area. An early initiative which aimed at bringing these interests together was the proposal from activists in February 1995 to create 'The People's Free University of Pollok'. This would take the form of a community college which would offer open access to 'degrees in living', and a curriculum consisting of courses in political empowerment, social history, spirituality, living skills and creativity. These courses would be taught in a non-hierarchical setting

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[304] Laura, Interview, Pollok Free State, 06/09/96

where all students would comprise the board of studies, all students would be considered teachers, and the entry requirements would simply be a commitment to 'respect and service to ourselves, others and nature'. In the leaflet where this proposal is outlined (see appendix), the Free State activists state the aims of this project, and appeal for support as follows :

'The campaign against the M77 has inspired thousands of people and shown that people in Scotland will not take abuse of their environment lying down. It has also shown what can be done to construct an alternative. Pollok Free University aims to build on this strength to create a permanent asset to the community -- an educational resource which is innovative, practical and accessible to local people. We hope this can become a model for community empowerment and environmental education throughout urban Scotland – and are appealing to people involved in education, the arts, community projects and environmental work throughout Scotland for support'.[305]

This initiative although highly progressive did not however attract sufficient support or interest to 'get of the ground'. This was partly due to the fact that the Free State residents were tagged with the 'anarchist' or 'anti-roads protester' label by the authorities and the press, partly because the anti-motorway campaign was still ongoing, and partly because the proposal itself was simply too radical in an 'ultra-left' sense to attain either public or even charitable funding, or indeed to secure the services of the educationalists, community development workers, artists and environmentalists needed to make it work.

The wider anti-motorway campaign itself was effectively defeated by the end of March 1995; however the Free State's fortifications remained unbreached with a motorway slipway actually being diverted by the planning authorities in order to avoid a potentially costly confrontation (in both monetary and public relations terms) with resident activists. In the aftermath, the Free State activists who had chosen to continue living in the encampment began to add new structures, and over time it became increasingly elaborate and colourful in its physical form. Many of these structures were made by recycling materials discarded as 'rubbish' by mainstream

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[305] See Appendix 7 : The Peoples Free University of Pollok, Leaflet, Pollok Free State, 1995

society - hence in using them the Free State residents attempted to set an example in ecological living, something which was a key aspect of their overall resistance to the norms of mainstream society. This expansion was aided by a slow but steady influx of new residents to replace those who had decided to move on to pursue other interests and campaigns. These residents were attracted by the possibility of pursuing an alternative lifestyle, learning new skills and active campaigning around environmental issues. A new initiative begun by some of the Free State activists during the summer of 1995 was to set up a 'Land Redemption Fund' aimed at raising money to buy land on the West Coast for the creation of a self-sufficient ecologically sustainable community. This aim alongside the three outlined above, eventually crystallised in the formation of a new organisation based amongst Free State activists in early 1996 called the 'Gal-Gael' Society whose stated aims are to initiate projects for ecological and cultural renewal in Scotland.

The Gaelic word 'Gal-Gael' means 'strange or foreign Gaels' and was chosen as a name for the new Society for two key reasons; firstly, because 'it symbolises our willingness to accept into our society anyone with similar ideals, irrespective of their race, colour or creed', and secondly because 'it symbolises the growing estrangement many Scots feel towards the culture in which they are presently living'. The Gal-Gael's 'mission statement' argues that 'the culture of Scotland, so rich in Celtic, Pict and Norse traditions, has been reduced to tourist cliches, whilst mass unemployment, inner city urban decay and social alienation have produced a culture of dependency, drug addiction and violence'. In order to redress this decline, the Gal-Gael Society seeks to encourage projects of rural resettlement, reforestation and cultural regeneration in the hope that those taking part 'will rediscover a meaningful and worthwhile relationship with the land and culture in which they live and go on to serve as more positive role models for other members of the community'.[306] For its first project the Gal-Gael proposed the building of a traditional Celtic galley on the banks of the Clyde, something which its members hoped would generate positive publicity and further interest in the aims of the Society. The work would be carried out by young unemployed Glaswegians under the supervision of skilled craftsmen who would introduce them to traditional crafts and maritime history.

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[306] Gal-Gael : Ecological and Cultural Renewal in Scotland, Leaflet, The Gal-Gael Society, 1996. See Appendix 7

While never attaining 'respectability' in the eyes of the City of Glasgow authorities, and indeed being constantly faced with the threat of eviction, it is a measure of the Free State's acceptance in the surrounding communities in 1995-1996 that it became a regular destination for local school's environment classes, disability groups and educational organisations dealing with special needs. The Gal-Gael's flagship project also began to attract interest, receiving offers of building materials and sponsorship from environmental charities and public sector bodies, and the services of boat architects and carpenters. The Free State itself however came under increasing pressure throughout 1996 and finally folded in November 1996, just one month before the opening of the M77 extension which its activists had done so much to try and stop. The decision to return the encampment to nature was taken voluntarily by the residents of the Free State due to a combination of the pressures emanating from the escalating impact of social problems from the surrounding estates, the unviability of the camp's location for long term environmental and self-sustainability, and the onset of the grim reality of yet another harsh winter.

In this chapter the central aspects of the theory and practice of the Pollok Free State as conceived of, and indeed lived by, its resident activists will be examined and explored with particular reference to the philosophy and politics of Earth First ! Although not entirely synonymous with the Free State, Earth First ! activists were instrumental in originally setting up the encampment, the leading resident activists identified themselves as Earth Firsters, and the resident activists who did not identify themselves as such nevertheless incorporated large elements of Earth First's ideological thinking into their own world-views. Thus the structuring of everyday life at the Free State, its organisation and the tactics adopted by the resident activists owed much to the influence of Earth First! It should also be noted that as illustrated previously in this thesis, Earth First! was the leading environmental campaign grouping to participate in the other direct action protests against road building which were ongoing across the UK during the 1990s. The phrase 'resident activists' as used in this chapter refers to those activists who inhabited the Free State on a semi-permanent basis, who intimately involved themselves in the day to day running of the encampment, and who took part in its decision making processes.

5.2 *From Earth First ! (US) to Earth First ! (UK)*

The Earth First (EF!) movement, (which it prefers to be called as opposed to an 'organisation'), began in the Pacific North-West Region of the United States in 1980. It emerged from a small group of ex-reformist environmentalists who had become disillusioned by the lack of progress made by mainstream environmentalism's pragmatic 'realist' approach, in gaining protection for the region's huge tracts of mature forest and natural wilderness, whose existence was increasingly being threatened by the actions of the logging industry, road-builders and property developers. The name Earth First ! was chosen to signify the deep ecological bio-centric guiding philosophy of the movement and is reflected in its defining slogan 'No Compromise in Defence of Mother Earth !'. As Foreman (1991), a leading founding member of EF! explains :

> 'Our movement is called "Earth First !" not "People First !".... Human beings must adjust to the planet; it is supreme arrogance to expect the planet and all it contains to adjust to the demands of humans. In everything human society does, the primary consideration should be the long term health and biological diversity of Earth. After that, we can consider the welfare of humans. We should be kind, compassionate, and caring with other people, but Earth comes first'.[307]

This perspective which elevates perceived environmental need above human need is for many EF! activists informed by pagan/pantheistic spiritual beliefs which venerate the 'earth' as a living deity, hence the 'Mother Earth' of the aforementioned slogan.

Influenced by Edward Abbey's seminal environmental novel 'The Monkey-Wrench Gang' (1973), EF ! adopted the direct action tactics of ecotage involving tree-spiking, tampering with machinery, destruction of property, and physical, usually non-violent confrontations with loggers and other agents of degradation to the natural environment. Taylor (1991), in his commentary on the religion and politics of American EF ! illustrates that these practices of ecotage are not only important aspects of EF!'s political activism but also take on a certain religious significance in

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[307] Foreman, D. (1991), <u>Confessions of an Eco-Warrior</u>, (New York : Harmony Books), p. 26

that they often conceived of by activists as a sacrament to the earth.[308] In one famous incident in 1981, EF! activists, mimicking the protagonists in Abbey's novel whose ultimate aim was to blow-up the Glen Canyon Dam, unfurled a banner from the top of it illustrating a huge crack. Audacious actions such as these throughout the 1980s gained EF! widespread notoriety, and while its activists were often labelled 'eco-terrorists' by opponents they also won the respect of many environmentalist fellow travellers. By 1990, EF! had established itself as a major force on the environmental scene in the US north-west and south-west regions, and in western Canada. Although estimates of activist numbers vary, Rucht (1995), cites studies which suggest that it could rely on between 500 and 1000 core activists organised in small autonomous groups of between fifteen and twenty members, linked through a network of telephone chains and newsletters to between 15,000 and 50,000 less active supporters.[309]

Notoriety, or what is better termed infamy, was also however attained by EF! during the 1980's from another, altogether much less perspicacious angle than its dramatic actions and protests. This was accrued because a number of extremely racist and anti-humanist arguments, which indeed would not be out of place at a fascist British National Party meeting, were made in the regular EF ! Newsletter and Journal by leading activists, sometimes writing under pseudonyms, eg 'Miss-Ann-Thropy'. Three examples particularly stand out : firstly, the claim that the advent of AIDS is a positive development because it is a reaction of nature seeking balance when faced with increasing over-population, secondly that the Ethiopian famine, which led to mass starvation in 1984-85, was to be welcomed on the same grounds, and thirdly, that US culture is endangered by a 'Latinisation' which has no conception of environmental protection, and which will push the US population to new levels of unsustainability and hence impact negatively upon the natural environment. These arguments were echoed by frequent references to the 'human cancer' or the 'human disease' in EF! literature.[310] While the racism and misanthropy in these arguments is overt, the EF ! activists who made them are in fact reflecting, albeit in a very acute manner, the widespread neo-Malthusian assumptions which pervade much of the international Green Movement. For example, the Sierra Club which is the leading

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[308] Taylor, B. (1991), The Religion and Politics of Earth First !, The Ecologist, Vol 21, No 6, p. 260
[309] Rucht, D. (1995), Ecological Protest as Calculated Law-breaking : Greenpeace and Earth First ! in Comparative Perspective, in, Rudig, W. (ed), (1995), Green Politics Three, (Edinburgh : Edinburgh University Press), p. 75
[310] Elkins, S. (1989), The Politics of Mystical Ecology, Telos, No 82, Winter, pp. 68-69

mainstream environmental organisation in the United States, was split down the middle during the mid-1990's over the issue of immigration controls; while even in the UK leading moderate Green activists like Parkin (1991), have written warning about limits to the world's 'carrying capacity' and the need to reduce population growth.[311] While this pervasive neo-Malthusianism goes some way to accounting for the logic behind the statements on population made by leading American EF! activists during the 1980's, it does not however account for their sheer extremity. In order to understand that extremity it is necessary instead to look to the holistic eco-philosophy, first defined as 'deep ecology' (see section 5.3) by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess in 1973, which has formed the ideological framework driving the North American EF! movement.[312]

After ten years of continuous expansion and growth the North American EF! movement finally split in 1990, when Foreman led his 'wilderness' faction out of the organisation to found a new campaign network around the journal 'Wild Earth'. This faction largely consisted of the 'old guard' who objected to the younger activists increasing incorporation of social justice issues into EF's environmental campaign platform. While ostensibly an organisation committed to biocentric deep ecology, ideas related to the humanist orientated 'social ecology' (see section 5.4), had been making steady ground amongst younger adherents in the late 1980's with theoretical debates between the 'naturals' and 'socials' animating the EF! journal during this period.[313] Foreman's statement as to why he left EF! is indicative of the general shift which was taking place within the organisation :

'The problem, however is when excessive internal debate about style, strategy, and substance leads to infighting that keeps all of us from the real job – fighting the vandals looting the riches of the Earth. I.... find it difficult to advocate ecological wilderness restoration within a movement now dominated by anti-capitalist rhetoric and an overwhelming emphasis on direct action to the exclusion of other Earth First ! traditional methods. I am not an anarchist or Yippie. I am a conservationist. I believe that human overpopulation is the

[311] Parkin, S. (1991), Green Futures, (London : Harper Collins), pp. 77-78
[312] Naess, A. (1973), The Shallow and the Deep, Long Range Ecology Movement – a Summary, Inquiry, No 16, pp.128-131
[313] see, Predelli, L.N. (1995), Ideological Conflict in the Radical Environmental Group Earth First !, Environmental Politics, Vol 4, No 2, pp.126-129

fundamental problem on Earth today.... it is time for me to build a campfire elsewhere.'[314]

Aside from the internal faction fighting, EF's growth meant that it had also begun to suffer from the outside pressure of serious attention from government security agencies who in fact had infiltrated the organisation in 1988. A year later Foreman and four other activists were arrested and charged with conspiracy to sabotage nuclear power lines, charges that were later reduced to conspiracy to damage property, while in 1990, Judi Bari and Daryl Cherney, leading activists of the younger generation, were blown up by a pipe bomb while driving in the latter's station wagon. Both were seriously injured and the FBI immediately made a public announcement that they had been blown up by their own bomb – when however eventually the case came to court it collapsed but the negative publicity had already achieved its aim of discrediting EF![315] Despite internal splits and mounting pressure from the authorities, American EF! continued to campaign throughout the 1990s being most prominent in its protests against the logging of ancient forests in the Pacific north-west, a 'natural world' emphasis which would support Predelli's (1995) argument, that it is very much 'still a matter of dispute whether or not the 'socials' have abandoned an ecocentric or deep ecological worldview'.[316] Equally Foster's (1993), class analysis of the north west forest conflicts indicates that even if the 'socials' were in the ascendancy they made no attempt to try and build understanding between themselves and the thousands of workers employed in the logging and sawmill industries. These workers during the late 1980s and early 1990s were engaged in a series of vicious strikes and disputes with their employers, over demands for increased productivity, and the introduction of automation which was steadily making them unemployed. Instead of using these strikes and disputes as an opportunity to build solidarity and dialogue, EF! activists responded to the workers concerns by either ignoring them or greeting them with open hostility.[317]

EF! crossed the Atlantic to the UK in 1991, when several leading American EF! activists toured the country with a roadshow taking in a variety of university and local

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[314] Foreman, D. (1991), op cited, p. 218-219
[315] Taylor, B. (1991), The Religion and Politics of Earth First !,The Ecologist, Vol 21, No 8, Nov/Dec, p. 251
[316] Predelli, L. N. (1995), op cited, p. 129

green action groups. In its wake small groups of activists dedicated to militant direct action environmentalism were established in London, Oxford, Brighton and Reading. It was particularly opportune timing because the June 1992 Earth Summit in Rio had raised the profile of environmental issues in the media and opposition to the government's 1989 road building programme was growing. In late 1992, EF! activists intervened alongside local protesters in their direct action campaign against the M3 at Twyford Down, thus gaining the organisation a high degree of public exposure from the massive media presence. In the wake of these high profile protests EF! groups began to spring up across the county growing symbiotically on the back of the numerous local anti-roads campaigns which had formed their own network in the form of Alarm UK. Plows (1998), an academic and leading EF! activist writes, 'Twyford was the catalyst for raising our profile (and hence numbers). Being attacked we lost the eco-terrorist label and gained the moral high ground; and the real terrorists - the state - let their mask slip.' As a result 'EF! and direct action roads protest mushroomed'.[318] From its initial base of a few small scattered groups EF! had by 1997 expanded to a network of sixty three autonomous action groups.[319] Opposition to the roads programme thus provided the vital spark which EF! needed to 'catch fire' in the UK.

Looked at more closely, the rapid incursion of EF! or a militant group like EF! into the British environmental movement was almost inevitable at some point in the 1990's. If opposition to the roads programme provided the spark, the fire had been stoked by the conservative malaise that British environmentalism had become mired in during the late 1980s and to which an explosive reaction was inevitable. Rudig (1995) describes the dominant trend in green thought and practice during this period as the 'new environmentalism' which is in some ways akin to the so called 'new realism' that has been adopted by the vast majority of trade union leaders since the onset of Thatcherism. The new environmentalism was primarily concerned with global as opposed to local environmental issues, eschewed direct action in favour of high level lobbying, and preferred the recruitment of passive members to grassroots activism. Civil disobedience appeared to be a thing of the past with even

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[317] Foster, J. B. (1993), The Limits of Environmentalism Without Class : Lessons from the Ancient Forest Struggle of the Pacific Northwest, Capitalism, Nature and Socialism, Vol 4, No 1, pp. 11-41
[318] Plows, A. (1998), Earth First ! Defending Mother Earth, Direct Style, in, Mackay, G. (ed), (1998), DIY Culture, Party and Protest in Nineties Britain, (London : Verso), p. 155

Greenpeace's professional eco-activists engaging in media stunts on a much less frequent basis than in the past. Thus as Rudig argues, 'with this respectable orientation of established groups, a revival of direct action radicalism could only be expected from grassroots resistance to particular projects'.[320]

UK EF! activists tend to stress the fact that their movement is independent from and indeed differs in a number of important respects from its American cousin. The UK is a heavily urbanised country with little left in the way of untouched wilderness, therefore its protection, which has been so central to US EF's activities, is not such a primary concern. Rather EF! UK is motivated by the fight against all aspects of environmental destruction whether it is perpetrated through government policy or the actions of retail, business and corporate enterprises. Although differences exist between individual activists, UK EF! also tends to distance itself from the extreme biocentrism that has often been the norm in US EF!, something that is perhaps related to being all too aware of the latter's misanthropic reputation on the population question. Thus while activists in EF! UK accept many of the core assumptions of deep ecology, eg, its spiritualism, these assumptions are connected to a material concern for social issues which owes much to the influence of anarchist social ecology. The dominant tendency in EF! UK is to recognise that the breaking down of social hierarchies, the decentralisation of power, and the development of small scale sustainable food and energy production, etc must go hand in hand with campaigns against environmental destruction if the human/nature relationship is to be re-shaped. As Plows (1998) argues :

> 'EF! is a multi-isue social movement.... (which) has defined itself as a convenient banner for people who share similar philosophies to work under. This 'similar philosophy' is an appreciation of a shared ethical/political agenda with a fundamental target : while groups tackle, for example, intensive farming, the arms trade, road-building, these are the effects of a more insidious cause – 'progress

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[319] An Introduction to Earth First! in the UK @
http://www.K2net.co.uk/savage/ef/efhtmls/introduction.html
[320] Rudig, W. (1995), Between Modernisation and Marginalisation : Environmental Radicalism in Britain, in, Taylor, B. (ed), (1995), Ecological Resistance Movements, (New York : State University of New York), p. 231

culture'. Capitalism, modernity, call it what you will, EF! challenges this dominant paradigm.'[321]

This multi-issue orientation is linked as Seel (1997) notes, to a concern with 'achieving more widespread education about the global political economy'. Hence in the UK, EF! groups have tended to opt for the tactic of 'public NVDA' in order to attract media atttention to the environmental issues involved, as opposed to the more covert 'monkey-wrenching' tactics of American EF! groups which are more directed towards achieving escalations in the costs of environmentally destructive projects.[322] UK EF!'s 'multi-issue orientation' and its tendency to adopt a public form of direct action intervention suggests perhaps that the key differences between US EF! and UK EF! stems from their different answers to the question of method; ie, the question of how exactly the Earth is to be put first ?

At EF! UK's first Gathering which was held in Brighton in February 1992 an 'Anti-Constitution' consisting of aims, methods and principles was agreed by consensus. The Aims of EF! as set out are to : defend the environment; to confront and expose those destroying the environment; and to realise a human lifestyle that exists in balance and harmony with the natural environment and that has respect for all life. To achieve these Aims EF! will adopt the Methods of : empowering individuals and groups to take direct action and focused action against all those destroying the environment; networking information and contacts between action groups to facilitate the growth of a movement and encourage group autonomy; and raising funds for direct action campaigns and networking costs. A set of four agreed Principles were set out as follows :

1) We aim to build a decentralised network of local groups which should be empowered and supported to organise and network their own campaigns and actions. Local groups organising an action can lay down ground rules for that action. Other groups involved should be informed of, respect, and comply with these rules.

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[321] Plows, A. (1998), op cited, 159
[322] Seel, B. (1997), 'If Not You, Then Who ?' Earth First! in the UK, op cited, p. 173

2) We agree that violence to living things is not a legitimate tactic in environmental campaigns. Therefore we will follow strict principles of non-violence when confronting the destruction of the environment.

3) We recognise that some people may feel moved to damage the property of those involved in destroying the environment. We neither condemn nor condone such actions. Such actions are the sole responsibility of the individuals involved and do not reflect in any way on other groups in the network.

4) We recognise the diversity of opinion within the environment movement and support the genuine efforts of other environmentalists in defending the Earth.[323]

From the aims, methods and principles of its Anti-Constitution it can be seen that EF! UK defines itself as a very loosely organised 'movement' which because of its network based, decentralised, non-hierarchical structure allows for a wide variation in oppositional interests, philosophies and currents to be represented, and a diverse range of types of campaign action to be engaged in. It is however as its name suggests fundamentally motivated by the fight against environmental destruction, for although as Plows stresses it is a multi-issue movement that challenges all aspects of 'progress culture', the issues it takes on board are all in one way or another linked in its thinking to environmental ecology. No mention for example is made of the social dimension in its early Anti-Constitution so while a genuine concern with social issues does appear to be a key tendency amongst EF! UK! activists – certainly much more so than in EF! US, this concern is subsumed under the general rubric of the environmental. In order to understand this subsumption it is necessary to look briefly at both deep ecology and anarchist social ecology, each of which, to varying degrees have fed into the thinking of EF! UK activists. This will also help to clarify the differences with American EF!'s stance because although biocentric deep ecology is a strong trend of thought within EF! UK, the tempering effect of anarchist social ecology has been much more of an influence amongst UK activists than it has been in the US. The UK EF! movement began in the same period as splits were occurring in US EF! and EF UK! should be seen as an outgrowth of the 'social' faction associated with the younger generation as

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[323] EF! British Anti-Constitution @ http://www.K2net/co.uk/campaigns/ef/efhtmls/constitution.html

opposed to the 'naturals' of the old guard. UK EF!'s philosophy could therefore perhaps be described as 'social deep ecology'.

5.3 *Deep Ecology*

Although deep ecologists differ on the content and emphasis of their approach amongst themselves it is possible to identify the key strands of thinking on which there is common ground in order to describe a general ideological framework.[324] Deep ecology is essentially a collection of biocentric discourses which attempt to offer a fundamental critique of the dominant strand of western rationality that has informed liberalism, socialism and conservatism, the key ideologies of the modern era. For deep ecology this rationality, stemming in the main from Judao-Christian theology, but subjected to processes of secularisation and scientisation during the Enlightenment by thinkers like Descartes and Bacon, anthropocentrically situates human beings in a position of dominant separateness from nature. The working out of this dualistic Promeathean logic in technological, scientific and economic historical 'progress' has led to not only severe ecological problems which threaten the future of all life on Earth, but also to a 'nightmare condition of self-domination' whereby in tandem with the subjugation of the natural world, a concomitant and corresponding subjugation of human beings inner-natures (and especially their 'spiritual' natures) has taken place. According to deep ecology this triumph of 'mechanical materialism' has left the totality of nature bereft of intrinsic value and shattered into pieces which are classified hierarchically according to their use value in satisfying human needs and desires. Shallow ecology, which deep ecologists associate with much of mainstream 'light green' environmentalism, is complicit in these processes of destruction, degradation and subjugation, because although it is animated by a belief in stopping pollution and the depletion of natural resources, it does so from the perspective of enhancing human quality of life, hence accepting the anthropocentric logic of western rationality. Shallow ecology underlies much of modern conservation

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[324] see for example, Naess, A. (1989), Ecology, Community and Lifestyle : Outline of an Ecosophy, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press). See also, Capra, F. (1982), The Turning Point, (London : Wildwood House); Devall, W. & Sessions, G. (1985), Deep Ecology : Living as if Life Mattered, (Salt Lake City : G. M. Smith); Goldsmith, E, (1988), The Great U-Turn, (Bideford : Green Books); Fox, W. (1984), Deep Ecology : a New Philosophy of our Time ? The Ecologist, Vol 14, No5/6, pp. 194-200; Fox, W. (1990), Towards a Transpersonal Ecology, (London : Shambhala)

which for deep ecologists represents little more than self-interested resource management.

Naess (1988), has advanced a what he calls a 'platform of the Deep Ecology Movement' which is made up of the following eight principles :

1) The flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth has inherent value. The value of non-human life forms is independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.

2) The richness and diversity of life forms are also values in themselves and contribute to the flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth.

3) Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

4) The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial *decrease* (authors emphasis) of the human population. The flourishing of non-human life requires such a decrease.

5) Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

6) Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs would be deeply different from the present and would make possible a more joyful experience of the connectedness of all things.

7) The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be profound awareness of the difference between 'big' and 'great'.

8) Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation, directly and indirectly, to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary change.[325]

This platform, Naess (1984), argues is derived 'intuitively' (ie, not rationally), from conclusions drawn from a variety of religions -- most notably Buddhism, Taoism and non-traditional Christianity, and from philosophies sharing the same broad anti-rationalist perspective as the work of Spinoza, Whitehead and Heidegger.[326]

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[325] Naess, A. (1988), Deep Ecology and Ultimate Premises, The Ecologist, Vol 18, No 4/5, p. 130

[326] Naess, A. (1984), Intuition, Intrinsic Value and Deep Ecology, The Ecologist, Vol 14, No 5/6, p.201

Naess's principles would be accepted by most deep ecologists as a reflection of their common core beliefs. These principles articulate an ideological position which recognises the intrinsic value and inter-connectedness of all life on earth and an ethical position whereby human beings have a duty to work in harmony with nature rather against it in a manner which replicates its perceived natural balance. In practical terms this means respecting life in all its diversity (there is a connection here to animal rights), living simply or as 'lightly' as possible, and more concretely working to 'raise environmental awareness' and hence change policies in order to create a sustainable world society whose institutional structures and economic base are in a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship with nature. For many deep ecologists this harmonic relationship that preserves natural diversity is only possible through the creation of small bio-regional communities of species including humans, living together in self-sustaining eco-systems closed off to outside interference. In sociological terms this vision approximates a return to that of Tonnies' *Gemeinschaft*, the traditional community oriented society that has been replaced by the mass liberal and atomised *Gesellshaft* society that characterises modernity. 'Small', for deep ecologists, as Schumacher (1973), has famously argued, 'is beautiful', not only in terms of the variation within nature, but also in terms of human organisation and the living of everyday life -- hence Naess's distinction between the 'big' and the 'great'.[327]

The rejection of anthropocentrism and the assertion of a positive biocentrism which takes nature and natural diversity as the absolute standard, and ecology as the meta-theory by which all human behaviour should be measured, lies at the heart of deep ecology and is what fundamentally distinguishes it from all other ideologies. It is possible now to see where the 'inspiration' behind the extreme statements on population made by leading American EF! activists emanates from, for if nature is taken to be the absolute standard or the absolute 'good' then human societies should conform to the laws of nature. In the logic of this biocentric position, human populations should conform to the laws of ecological sustainability, rather than be artificially sustained by the importation of food to alleviate famine, or by the administration of synthetic drugs to treat 'natural' diseases. Moreover human migration from one bio-regional eco-system to another should be discouraged because

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[327] Schumacher, E. F. (1973), Small is Beautiful : Economics as if People Mattered, (New York : Doubleday Anchor)

of the increased pressure on natural sustainability that such movement would bring. There would also appear to be a form of biocentric utilitarianism at work in the deep ecological arguments regarding population; ie if the future of all life on Earth is threatened by the over-population of human beings then the sacrifice of the few for the many (eg, a few million or even a few hundred million people) is justified to create a sustainable world environment.

The view of nature as an absolute standard is intrinsically related to the 'spiritual' dimension of deep ecological thought which is considered by deep ecologists to be at least as equally important (if not more) as social and economic reform. Indeed deep ecologists argue that without a generalised 'spiritual enlightenment' such reforms will ultimately fail because human alienation from nature will not be transcended and the 'true human self' who is 'in tune' with nature at last awakened. The raising of human consciousness as to the holism of life is therefore essential and this can only be achieved by a reactivation of the intuitive sense which has been deadened by scientific materialism. In deep ecology strands of animism and paganism (eg, the belief that 'god' is in all natural or living things) fuse with Taoism (eg, the belief that harmony with nature develops human creative potential), and Buddhism (eg, the concept of 'esho funi' or mutual dependence), in a New Age 'pick and mix' mysticism whose eclecticism respects no boundaries. Perhaps this spiritual dimension reaches its apex in Lovelock's (1989) Gaia hypothesis named after the Greek goddess of the earth, which proposes that planet Earth is literally alive, a living 'supra-organism' with its own internal checks and balances designed to maintain a healthy metabolism. Lovelock argues that despite the spiritual overtones, this is a scientific thesis because the conditions (eg, oxygen levels and temperature) required to sustain life on earth have remained relatively constant for millions of years despite changing solar conditions.[328] Again this hypothesis is a belief which feeds into the extreme position of deep ecologists on the question of population. Science it should be noted is a subject on which there is a great deal of argument and debate on in deep ecology with most adherents rejecting western science (and its technology) altogether. Science is viewed as the key manifestation of materialist ideology and is therefore rejected in favour of knowledge perceived to be gained instead through experience, emotion and intuition.

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[328] Lovelock. J. (1989), The Age of Gaia : a Biography of our Living Earth, (Oxford : Oxford University Press)

Closely related to the 'spiritual' aspects of deep ecological thought and practice is a romantic, idealised view of indigenous peoples whose traditional modes of living are under threat from processes of economic modernisation, environmental destruction and western cultural imperialism. Indigenous peoples are perceived to be closer to nature because they subsist by either hunter-gathering or by using traditional methods of farming which eschew modern intensive methods. Their closeness to nature is also believed to be reflected in their animistic/pantheistic belief systems, their reliance upon intuition and tradition as opposed to rational scientific explanation, and their modes of social organisation in small self-sustaining communities which are held to impact only lightly upon the environment. Pepper (1995) argues that this idealisation is linked to the persistence in deep ecology of 'the romantic and anarchist idea that 'traditional' or 'primitive' cultures were or are more ecologically benign than (corrupt) Western industrialised nations – they were 'noble savages' as Rousseau had it.'[329] Western deep ecologists such as those in EF! often view indigenous peoples as role models, identify themselves with 'tribalist' or 'primitivist' ways of life and attempt to revive or restore traditional cultural and religious practices that have been suppressed or extinguished by modern culture. They also engage in solidarity campaigns with indigenous peoples who are fighting back in different ways against the onslaught of 'civilisation'.[330]

Eco-feminism is another key trend that feeds into deep ecology, also intermingling in particular with its 'spiritual' dimension.[331] In Gaian terms eco-feminism views the earth as a female deity that has been violated by males seeking domination and power. Environmental destruction is viewed both literally as rape of the 'Mother Goddess' and as symbolic of patriarchal social relations, hence processes aimed at the 'healing of the Earth' must go hand in hand with the struggle to end female oppression. Women are held to have a particularly important role in the practice of deep ecology because their perceived innate feminine spirituality and

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[329] Pepper, D. (1996), Modern Environmentalism : an Introduction, (London : Routledge), p. 24

[330] For example, Taylor (1995), differentiates three different types of international solidarity engaged in by EF! : 1) People believed to live sustainably (forest dwellers and indigenous peoples); 2) Those animated by nature spiritualities deemed similar to deep ecology; 3) Those who have become especially militant, employing civil disobedience, ecotage, and (rarely) violence against the agents of destruction. Taylor, B. (1995), Earth First ! and Global Narratives of Popular Ecological Resistance, in, Taylor, B. (ed), (1995), Ecological Resistance Movements, (New York : State University of New York Press) p. 19

intuition, and their biological capacity for nurturing and motherhood, naturally allows them to communicate with and understand 'Mother' nature on a deeper emotional level than men. These 'innate' characteristics of women are also held by radical eco-feminists to be evidence of female superiority and are viewed to support their case for separation from males who are characterised by innate masculine traits of reason, calculation, acquisitiveness and aggression. Thus unlike materialist or socialist feminism which views gender to be a social construct which can therefore be deconstructed, for eco-feminism gender difference is essential and biologically determined.[332]

Deep ecology in its eclectic combination of different strands of experiential intuitionism, anti-rationalism, mysticism, idealism, eco-feminism and eastern/pagan spirituality is clearly a philosophy that defies any attempt at systematisation. It is also deeply antagonistic to Enlightenment thinking for even though its critique in some ways echoes the critique of instrumental rationality that has been a traditional concern of critical dialectical social theory,[333] its critical premise begins from the perspective of idealism as opposed to materialism, and its aim is not to critique modernity so as to further Enlightenment principles and thereby liberate humankind from the dictates of history, tradition or class oppression, but rather to dispense with Enlightenment rationalism altogether and assert a kind of 'back to the future' primitivism which will resacralise the world from its present modern condition of disenchantment. Heidegger's ontological concerns are clearly visible here because the raison d'etre of deep ecology is a redefinition humankind's 'being in the world' so that human beings are reconciled in a oneness with nature.

The clear influence of Heidegger and deep ecology's boundary defying anti-modern stance makes it unsurprising that some postmodern theorists have noted

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[331] see, Plumwood, V. (1988) op cited; Henderson, H. (1983), op cited; Daly, M. (1987) Gyn/Ecology, (London : Women's Press). See also Pepper's discussion of eco-feminism and the problem of essentialism : Pepper, D. (1996), op cited, pp. 106-112

[332] Taylor (1991), in describing the importance of eco-feminism to the deep ecology of EF! notes that its core ideas 'have been incorporated into EF! liturgy : many songs-hymns sung at EF! gatherings satirise macho-hubris and male domination of nature and women, decry male massacres of witches and praise various Earth Goddesses'. see, Taylor, B. (1991), op cited, p. 260

[333] For example, Horkheimer and Adorno castigate the notion of human progress when it is marked by the 'absurdity of a state of affairs in which the enforced power of the system over man grows with every step that it takes out of the power of nature and denounces the rationality of rational society as obsolete'. see, Horkheimer, M. & Adorno, T. W. (1973), Dialectic of Enlightenment, (London : Verso), p. 38

affinities with their own anti-rationalist perspective.[334] Frodeman (1992) for example argues that despite certain key differences in outlook, 'at their best', 'the deep ecological movement and the postmodern 'movement' compliment each other, even going so far as to state that 'the goal of radical environmentalism – which can be described as the creation of a post-Lockean conception of good · can be seen as the fulfillment of postmodernism'.[335] Oelschlaeger (1994) goes even further in his advocacy of postmodern environmentalism as the mode to bring a future ecologically sustainable society into being.[336] Critical commentators like Pepper (1995), have also noticed an affinity between deep ecology and postmodernism arguing that although it may seem paradoxical that the former has an absolute standard in nature, it shares with the latter a rejection of universals (except the 'laws' of ecology) and 'grand morality', in favour of a politics of hedonism, aestheticism and cultural relativism.[337] Where a key difference does however become apparent is in the fact that deep ecology can be used in a much more political way than postmodernism – this again stems from having nature as an absolute standard. Deep ecology is clearly the guiding philosophy of US EF! and also informs much of EF! UK's thinking, while it also impacts, although in a lesser way, upon the thinking of the wider Green movement. Postmodernism on the other hand is merely a deconstructive theory that tends to be confined to academics and cultural commentators; and is a theory, which by its relativist nature must engender political impotence – ie. there has yet to be a social movement as such demanding 'postmodern change'.

5.3.1 *Critical Reflections on Deep Ecology*

While deep ecology genuinely expresses an acute dissatisfaction with the social, political and economic formations of contemporary society and clearly recognises that 'something is wrong', its critical vision is seriously flawed, if not downright

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[334] Naess (1988) has argued that 'deep ecologists do not have a discrete philosophy or religion in common – a definite credo, a set of ultimate 'norms and hypotheses' – and why should they ?.... Why monolithic ideologies ? We have had enough of those in both European and world history'. Naess, A. (1988), op cited, p.128. Here Naess clearly echoes Lyotard's (1984), postmodern critique of meta-narratives.

[335] Frodeman, R. (1992), Radical Environmentalism and the Political Roots of Postmodernism : Differences that make a Difference, Environmental Ethics, Vol 14, Winter, p. 318

[336] Oelschlaeger, M. (1994), Caring for Creation : an Ecumenical Approach to the Environmental Crisis, (New Haven : Yale University Press)

[337] Pepper, D. (1995), Eco-Socialism – From Deep Ecology to Social Justice, (London : Routledge), pp. 55-58.

dangerous. Without criticising almost every aspect of deep ecology as a number of commentators have done more than adequately in the past (eg, Bookchin (1988, 1993, 1995), Biehl (1995), Dobson (1993) Pepper (1991) (1995) and perhaps most polemically, Stark 1995), three key problem areas relating to its philosophical, ethical and political assumptions will be highlighted which will illustrate why deep ecology should be rejected as a viable expression of radical environmentalism. Firstly there is the philosophical/ontological problem of the notion of 'intrinsic value' which forms the core building block of deep ecology. Here Grundmann (1991) is helpful, pointing out that the fatal flaw in all biocentric worldviews is that they assume that it is possible to define ecological problems from the 'objective' standpoint of nature. However as Grundmann argues this is impossible because human standards of one kind or another are always necessarily projected onto nature - 'nature' is in essence a social construct. Grundmann tellingly asks 'Why should nature work in a balanced manner ? Why should it always be beautiful ? Is it not humankind that introduces the idea of beauty into nature ?'.[338] A follow up question to Grundmann's must also be asked here of deep ecology – if science is to be replaced by intuition how is it possible to actually know nature anyway ? Nothing can be verifiable because one person's intuition must be as good as another's ?

Deep ecology's philosophical and epistemological fallacies lead on to its second key problem area; ie, the impossibility of grounding moral or ethical judgements in nature. While on one level nature takes on the role of an absolute standard for deep ecology, on the other hand, because nature can ultimately only be known by intuition and individual experience, a morality or ethics based upon nature becomes impossible. Moreover, rational reflection, rational communication and rational debate is required for an ethical or moral system to come into being, yet deep ecology denies existence of the very rationality required for this to take place. Stark (1995), says of deep ecology that 'this approach rejects not only the Enlightenment ethical tradition of personal responsibility, morality and rights, it also rejects the possibility of ethical reasoning itself.'[339] Even in the type of small scale, decentralised, ecologically sustainable society that deep ecologists wish to bring into being, problems pertaining to social organisation, distribution, education, religion, law, rights and duties would

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[338] Grundmann, R. (1991), Ecology and Marxism, New Left Review, No 187, May/June, p. 112
[339] Stark, J.A. (1995), Postmodern Environmentalism : a Critique of Deep Ecology, in, Taylor, B. (ed), (1995), op cited, p. 270

all have to be addressed and yet deep ecology offers no viable answers except an appeal to non rational 'intuition'. Such a stance is one that can end only in either the Hobbesian nightmare of the 'war of all against all' because it rejects even a weak consensus theory of truth and justice; or, in a priestly dictatorship ruled by those whose intuition is deemed to be most in tune with nature – a system that has much in common with Rousseau's elitist notion of 'legislators' who are deemed able to divine the 'general will'.

Finally there is the problem of deep ecology's political thinking which offers no concrete or coherent guide to political practice, and whose vision is romantically regressive in the best scenario and potentially fascistic in the worst scenario. While deep ecology wants to change the world it doesn't have a viable mechanism for doing so because on the one hand its commitment to civil disobedience is vague, unfocused, and ungrounded, and on the other, its 'spiritual' practices are held to be political practices in themselves. In the case of the former this leads to individual acts of ecotage or various campaigns against particular aspects of environmental destruction which are isolated from one another, and do not address the root structural causes. In the case of the latter this can lead to withdrawal altogether from real engagement with political/environmental campaigning and a concentration instead on individual lifestyle changes and 'personal growth'. Elkins (1989) in his critique of what he calls deep ecology's 'spiritual mystification', points out that 'since social and ecological problems are ultimately seen to be the consequence of misconceived values and ideas, social change is contingent upon the ability to communicate the insights of the new paradigm.'[340] Raising awareness of deep ecological ideas is thus central to deep ecological practice but as Elkins goes on to cuttingly point out 'why should Capra's (deep ecological) message be particularly attractive to, eg; an unemployed single mother of three living in the slums of the South Bronx ?'[341]. To this should also be added the equally valid question : 'why should the deep ecological message be attractive to the managing director of a large multi-national corporation with vested interests in avoiding pollution contols to keep profits intact ?'.[342]

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[340] Elkins, S. (1989), The Politics of Mystical Ecology, Telos, No 82, Winter, p. 62

[341] ibid. Fritjov Capra is a leading theorist of deep ecological spirituality.

[342] This idealist failure to engage with underlying structure also feeds into deep ecology's arguments on the population question because although it is evident that there cannot be infinite growth in a finite system, the limits to growth, (if indeed there are any) are a long way off and in a properly humanised world could be extended still further through democratically controlled agricultural research and the development of positive technology. In today's world where the vagaries of the market system are such

Aside from the sheer romantic absurdity of envisioning a return to a spurious pre-Christian or even pre-civilisational 'golden age', deep ecology's political vision, based as it is upon a naturalistic standard for the legitimacy of social organisation removes the ability to make political value judgements between conflicting ideological claims using the normative criteria of modernity. This is its most dangerous aspect for as Elkins (1989), argues :

'the way is open for any ideology sharing an "ecological framework" to climb on the bandwagon. Current developments in parts of the European Right are a case in point. In their attempts to modernise conservative ideology, authoritarian political concepts are supported by systems theoretic, naturalistic, and sometimes spiritually transfigured arguments'.[343]

Indeed in the UK in recent years there is evidence of a growth in 'eco-fascism' with fascist groups adopting deep ecological ideas as part of their poisonous agenda's, setting up 'environmental' front organisations and publications, and attempting to recruit members from the ranks of the young eco-warriors involved in the UK's thriving alternative environmental protest scene.[344] Marangudakis (1998), has shown that from its inception up until the Second World War, ecology was largely bound up with the fascist far right. Indeed its key early figures (all feted by contemporary deep ecologists) – the authors Knut Hamsun and Henry Williamson, the philosopher Martin Heidegger and the biologist Ernst Haeckel all became heavily involved in Nazi politics.[345] It was only in the post-war period, and especially with the development of social ecology in the 1960s, that ecology came to be largely associated with the Left. Contemporary deep ecology does in fact share much in common with fascism,

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that 44% of arable land is not used, enough food is produced to feed the world three times over, while at least 950 million people are malnourished. Deep ecological or indeed light green arguments that the world has surpassed its carrying capacity simply do not stand up – clearly it is distribution and the socio-economic structure that is the problem. See Treece, D. (1992), Why the Earth Summit Failed, International Socialism, No 56, Autumn, p. 72

The eco-feminism which feeds into deep ecology also fails to deal with structure in that it ignores the relationship between patriarchy and capitalism and asserts a biological essentialist view of sex and gender in a bizarre reversion to early modern and pre-modern definitions of 'womanhood'. Rather than liberating women, eco-feminism in fact reinforces historical male discourses and practices of oppression surrounding women's role as childbearers and reanimates backward stereotypical conceptions of femininity as emotional, caring, nurturing and irrational.

[343] Elkins, S. (1989), op cited, p. 67
[344] Unnamed Author, (1997), Fascist Environmentalism, Searchlight, No 262, April, pp. 14-15

including an idealisation of pre-modern and traditional cultures, a veneration for the soil or the earth, anti-rationalism, mystical pagan and pantheistic belief systems, and a distrust of technology. Moreover, although very much a minority tendency, some in the contemporary deep ecology movement subscribe to ideas which come close to the authoritarian sociobiology and social Darwinism which has often formed a core component of Nazi ideology.[346]

The linkage between deep ecology and fascism is of course not automatic and there is not a simple correspondence between the two ideological positions. Most contemporary deep ecologists, despite their misanthropy, would seek to distance themselves from overtly fascist ideas or indeed from anything that is remotely related to authoritarianism. EF! for example, in both its US and UK variants operates in a decentralised, anarchistic manner which defies any attempt to impose order – indeed formal organisation is deliberately avoided by EF! activists because of its tendency to hierarchy and concentration of power. However the underlying ideological links between deep ecology and fascism are undeniable and it does not take too many theoretical cartwheels to bring them both together. By abandoning Enlightenment reason, and by rejecting serious engagement with underlying social and economic structures, deep ecology leaves itself open to easy appropriation by much darker and politically astute forces whose agenda reaches far beyond the environmental into the dangerous areas of nation, 'volk' and race.

5.4 *Social Ecology*

Social ecology emerged in the United States during the 1960s as one of the many New Left strands and currents which reacted against the traditional left's capitulation to authoritarian Stalinist dogma and reformist labourism. It seeks to fuse the theoretical

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[345] Marangudakis, M. (1998) Ecology as a Pseudo-Religion ?, Telos, No 112, Summer, pp. 107-124

[346] For example, Goldsmith (1988), who is editor of the influential British environmental journal 'The Ecologist', has argued that nature is structured in a hierarchical competitive manner and that human societies if they are to conform to the natural paradigm should also be structured hierarchically. Goldsmith posits that eco-systems, including human eco-systems, go through two key stages of development. In the initial 'pioneer stage', randomness, individualism, crude external controls and instability are the norms but as they gradually mature towards a 'climax eco-system', order, wholeness, teleology, co-operation and internalised control become the norms. Thus 'order' is forged out of chaos, and in human social evolution this order is the defining feature of a what he terms a 'climax society', ' a society designed to flourish as part of a climax eco-system'. For Goldsmith this climax society is the ecological ideal, and he has at various times associated it with the Indian caste system or with various

insights of the critical Western Marxist tradition with those of the classical anarchists to forge a new ecological grounding for radical political praxis that is progressive, libertarian, non-sectarian and deeply rooted in Enlightenment thought. The prolific writings of Murray Bookchin have been particularly important in the development of the social ecology project because he has rigorously fashioned an influential and powerful anarcho-communist theoretical position which is clearly delineated from both the mystical obfuscation of deep ecology and the eco-socialism to which an increasing number of Marxists and neo-Marxists now subscribe.[347] Since 1974, Bookchin has been the Emeritus Professor and Director of the Institute for Social Ecology in Plainfield Vermont, which in 1981 achieved official recognition as an independent institution of higher education. It currently caters for over 3000 students taking a variety of courses, degrees and post-graduate studies related to the theory and practice of social ecology. Despite his academic position, Bookchin has, unlike many of his sixties contemporaries lost none of his critical fire, arguing that it is imperative that social ecology strive to retain its radical edge in an age where capitalism's ability to co-opt opponents has reached new heights :

> 'More than at any other time in the past, social ecologists should abandon the illusion that a shared use of the word "social" renders us all into socialists; or "anarchy" into anarchists; or "ecology" into radical ecologists. The measure of social ecology's relevance and theoretical integrity consists of its ability to be rational, ethical, coherent, and true to the ideal of the Enlightenment and the revolutionary tradition – not the ability to earn plaudits from the Prince of Wales, Al Gore, or Gary Snyder, still less from academics, spiritualists and mystics. In this darkening age when capitalism – the mystified social order par excellence – threatens to globalise the world with capital, commodities, and a facile spirit of "negotiation" and "compromise," it is necessary to keep alive the spirit of uncompromising critique'.[348]

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indigenous tribal societies which are organised on authoritarian grounds. Goldsmith E. (1988), Gaia : Some Implications for Theoretical Ecology, The Ecologist, Vol 18, No2, pp. 69-70

[347] see for example; Bookchin, M. (1974), Post-Scarcity Anarchism, (London : Wildwood House); Bookchin, M. (1980), Toward an Ecological Society, (Montreal : Black Rose Books); Bookchin, M (1982), The Ecology of Freedom : the Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy, (Palo Alto, Carlifornia : Cheshire Books); Bookchin, M. (1990), The Philosophy of Social Ecology, (Montreal : Black Rose Books); Bookchin, M. (1997), From Urbanisation to Cities, (New York : Cassell)

[348] Bookchin, M. (1995), Theses on Deep Ecology in a Period of Reaction, Left Green Perspectives, No 33, October, Online Version @ http://ise.rollmedia.org/lgp/issues/lgp33.shtml p.6

Social ecology starts from the basic premise that ecological problems stem from the social problems engendered by the social and economic structures around which human societies are organised. For social ecology there is indeed a growing environmental crisis, but this crisis is symptomatic of a deeper crisis of human relations which is rooted in the dehumanising processes of capitalist commodification, the drive for profits in a 'grow or die' marketplace, and the hierarchical, domineering, exploitative and class riven relationships which permeate contemporary society. Therefore unless the question of underlying social and economic structure is addressed no tangible progress can be made in tackling the very real problems of environmental degradation and unsustainability. Social ecologists are thus amongst the most hostile critics of deep ecological trends in environmental thinking which reduce environmental problems to the question of competing worldviews or population, and which stress the notion of spiritual revival and wilderness protection above concrete social critique and collective political engagement. Social ecology is also opposed to what it derogatively terms 'lifestyle anarchism' which prefers individualist personal change in living habits to collective action, and to liberal environmentalism which places faith in greening of capitalism through market mechanisms, eg, green consumerism. As Bookchin (1993) has argued, trends within environmental movements and ideologies which 'merely moralise about the "wickedness" of our anti-ecological society, and emphasise change in personal life and attitudes.... obscure the need for social action.' Moreover such moralising is essentially meaningless because 'modern capitalism is structurally amoral and hence impervious to any moral appeal'.[349]

For social ecologists, capitalism's amorality means that it is unamenable to meaningful reform and it must therefore be overthrown. In anarchist fashion this overthrow is to be achieved by the struggles of the wide range of new social movements which articulate struggles against the various forms of oppression engendered by social hierarchies, and by 'dual power' direct action strategies of pre-figurement which expand the human ability 'to manage every aspect of our lives'.

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[349] Bookchin, M. (1993), What is Social Ecology, in, Zimmerman, M. E. (ed), (1993), Environmental Philosophy : From Animal Rights to Radical Ecology, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey : Prentice Hall) Online Version @ http://calvin.pitzer.edu/~dward/Anarchist_Archives/bookcin/socecol/html. p.13

[350]Self-empowering transformation is viewed as a necessary pre-requisite for fundamental change to take place because without it hierarchy is inevitable, and it will not be possible to develop the common experience and shared values that is necessary for true human community to thrive. In contemporary capitalist society, community organisations, tenants associations, co-operatives and grassroots self-help groups are therefore viewed as both rudimentary forms of self-management and as key vehicles for learning collective autonomous behaviour. The political agenda of social ecology has recently been elaborated by Bookchin (1995), and Biehl (1997), as what they term libertarian confederal municipalism.[351] This agenda seeks as its ultimate goal to establish a decentralised association of local municipalities in a fully socialised ecologically sustainable society predicated upon an ethic of environmental stewardship and equality of citizenship which is contolled directly through a participatory system based upon the integrative Athenian model of face to face democracy. In the short term however as Bookchin argues, the :

'immediate goal is to reopen a public sphere in opposition to statism, one that allows for maximum democracy in the literal sense of the term, and to create in embryonic form the institutions that can give power to people generally. If this perspective can be initially achieved only by morally empowered assemblies on a limited scale, at least it will be a form of popular power that can, in time, expand locally and grow over wider regions'.[352]

Social ecology's political theory and its vision of the ideal society are defended as being neither anthropocentric or biocentric by its exponents. Rather they are naturalistic, justified as such in Hegelian dialectical terms through a theorisation of historical natural evolutionary processes. According to social ecology the defining feature of nature is that it is a developmental process involving symbiosis, mutualism and evolution, towards ever increasing complexity, rationality and subjectivity. Human beings are intimately connected to the natural world through their biological evolutionary history which is defined as 'first nature'. This has however been progressively sublated (in a dialectical sense) by the characteristically human and

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[350] Bookchin, M. (1980), op cited, p.53
[351] see Bookchin (1995), op cited, & Biehl, J. (1997), The Politics of Social Ecology : Libertarian Municipalism', (Montreal : Black Rose Books)

cultural 'second nature' which is still in an ongoing process of dialectical evolution. In humans little is left of 'first nature' because 'the development and emergence of human society is a shedding of instinctive behavioral traits, a continuing process of clearing a new terrain for potentially rational beaviour'.[353] Human beings are at the apex of natural evolution, however their evolutionary potential for full self-consciousness, to become as Biehl (1995) puts it (in very Hegelian language), 'nature rendered self-conscious', is being blocked by the alienation from nature, that is produced by a hierarchical, class divided and commodified society. Biehl argues that 'clearly it is part of their (human) evolutionary make-up to intervene in the natural world; what is not determined is whether that intervention will be ecologically benign or malign, a problem that is resolved by what kind of society they create'.[354] From the ever unfolding dialectical interpenetration of human beings and nature, social ecologists discern a de-centred naturalistic bio-ethic which is rooted in the basic 'oneness' of human beings and nature. This ethic informs a principle of environmental stewardship and the basis for a politics that seeks to set free natural human potentialities for rational developmental progress.

Social ecology's philosophical and critical stance clearly shares much in common with the eco-socialism developed by green Marxists like Pepper (1993, 1995) and Grundmann (1991), and neo-Marxists like O'Connor, (1988), Harvey (1993, 1996) and Benton (1993, 1995).[355] Indeed social ecology's Hegelian notion of the dialectical evolutionary process was arguably shared by Marx himself. However, green Marxists draw different conclusions to social ecology from their interpretation of the dialectic, while at a fundamental analytical and political level old differences between Marxism and anarchism are reproduced in the disagreements between social

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[352] Bookchin, M. (1995), op cited, p. 231

[353] Bookchin, M. (1993), op cited, p. 4

[354] Biehl, J. (1995), Theses on Social Ecology and Deep Ecology, Left Perspectives, op cited, p. 9

[355] see Pepper, D. (1993), op cited; Pepper, D. (1996), op cited; Grundmann, R. (1991), Marxism and Ecology, (Oxford : Clarendon Press); Harvey, D, (1993), The Nature of Environment : the Dialectics of Social and Environmental Change, Socialist Register, (London : Merlin Press); Harvey, D. (1996), Justice, Nature and the Geography of Difference, (Oxford : Basil Blackwell); Benton, T. (1993), Ecology, Animal Rights and Social Justice, (London : Verso); Benton, T. (1995), The Greening of Marxism, (New York : Guildford Press). Perhaps one of the most important developments in Marxist theory that has been made in recent years is O'Connor's (1988), theorisation of a second contradiction of capitalism, which involves the contradiction between the forces, relations and *conditions* of production. O'Connor argues that 'an ecological Marxist account of capitalism as a crisis-ridden system focuses on the way that the combined power of capitalist relations and productive forces self-destruct by impairing or destroying rather than reproducing their own conditions'. O'Connor, J.(1988), Capitalism, Nature, Socialism : a Theoretical Introduction, Capitalism, Nature, Socialism, Vol 1, No 1, p. 25

ecology and green Marxism as to both the diagnosis of environmental and social problems, and their solutions. First of all, and leaving aside the professed anti-humanism of Althusserianism, Marxism is, even in its greenest incarnations resolutely anthropocentric and indeed anthropocentrism is viewed by Marxists to be a virtue and not a vice. While Marxists accept that nature and human beings are constantly interacting, they do not accept that it necessarily follows that human beings should abandon all collective self-interest, or indeed instrumental uses of nature, should these uses genuinely advance the progress of human society. Neither would they accept the social ecology notion that anthropocentrism must necessarily end in wanton destruction – this is merely the result of the pursuit of profit which characterises capitalism. As Pepper (1993), has argued 'eco-socialist anthropocentrism is a long-term collective anthropocentrism, not the short term individualist anthropocentrism of classical economics.'[356] For social ecologists however, anthropocentrism is central to the destructive Promeathean 'productivism' which Marxism is premised on, and must therefore must mar any Marxist claim to being a theory of ecological sustainability.

Secondly there is disagreement on the question of the root causes of human oppression and environmental degradation. Social ecologists in opposition to Marxism downplay the impact of class structures and instead view hierarchical power relations as the primary problem. Hierarchies are held to operate independently of class, and are more deeply sedimented than classes having preceded the development of class societies. Bookchin (1995), for example argues that 'the abolition of class rule and economic exploitation offers no guarantee that elaborate hierarchies and systems of domination will disappear.'[357] This perspective feeds into the third key difference; ie, that of revolutionary strategy. For social ecology the state is to be bypassed in a long evolutionary struggle involving social movements and pre-figurative self-management strategies. The Marxist 'privileging' of the proletariat as the key agent of social change, the use of revolutionary violence, and the Marxist engagement with the state in order to capture it, are viewed by social ecologists as strategies that can only end in the replacement of one hierarchy by another. For the same reasons all forms of Marxist 'vanguardism' and centralism are rejected with the Soviet experience often being held up as the inevitable outcome of such organisation. Finally there is the difference that revolves around the organisation of an ideal future

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[356] Pepper, D. (1993, op cited, p. 222
[357] Bookchin, M. (1993), op cited, p. 10

communist/ecological society. In the social ecologist vision such a society must both economically and politically, be organised in a small scale, localised form. Although there is no general agreement amongst Marxists, most would however take the view that while local economic and political organisation is desirable, there must also be democratic bodies set-up to co-ordinate planning and distribution at regional, and world levels.

5.4.1 *Critical Reflections on Social Ecology*

Social ecology avoids the irrational and regressive mysticism of deep ecology, and the managerialism of mainstream environmentalism, while articulating a powerful and trenchant critique of contemporary capitalist society and an alternative ecological vision, which can legitimately lay claim to being a truly radical expression of political ecology. Social ecology does however suffer from a number of serious flaws which potentially undermine its political practice and hence the realisation of its vision. First of all there is the problem which Marangudakis (1998) points to : that social ecology contains within itself an implicit logic towards stasis as opposed to the ideal of autonomous self-determinated action which it seeks to bring into being.[358] A logic of stagnation arises because social ecology considers that human progress towards self-determination is bound up with increasing self-consciousness and that both are derived in and from the continued dialectical interpenetration of natural and social evolution. This evolutionary process in turn informs a naturalistic bioethic by which self-conscious individuals can judge their actions and the actions of others. However a contradiction between self-determination and self-consciousness becomes apparent because self-conscious individuals will unremittingly have to weigh up the social and ecological consequences of every possible action thus creating impossible dilemmas and unresolvable paradoxes, leading ultimately to paralysis.

This problem of individual paralysis would be reproduced on a large social scale in social ecology's ideal ecological community because any intervention into nature, even those of a benign or 'ecological' variety, would potentially violate the bioethic. The problem is further compounded because social ecology is committed to an ideal of absolute self-determination and therefore eschews the notion of all central authority

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[358] Marangudakis, M. (1998), op cited, pp. 120-122

which could arbitrate in debates surrounding the validity of such interventions. This problem would to be appear to be the old political problem of anarchism's fetishisation of self-determination revived in a new ecological guise. In order for a society to function rationally, in a truly self-determined manner it is necessary to take a humanist anthropocentric position of the collective, long-term type described by eco-socialists – social ecology's half-way house naturalism is simply not viable in practice. It is also necessary to abandon the ideal of absolute self-determination in favour of an ideal which stresses the 'maximisation' of self-determination if a truly democratic politics is to come into being.

The non-practicability of social ecology's naturalistic ethic is related to its other major problem, that of its political utopianism. Social ecology's mechanism of bringing about radical social and ecological change does not deal adequately the with epi-centres of contemporary class oppression and hierarchical domination in contemporary society, ie, the state and capital. By refusing to recognise a leading role for working class organisation in its revolutionary strategy, social ecology consigns the major force for social change over the last two hundred years to the dustbin of history. This is the very force which works at the heart of the polluting industries in the core of the system which it wants to overthrow. Moreover this is the force that lives in the most polluted geographical areas of the system which it wants to overthrow. The new social movements and community self-management groupings can challenge certain aspects of hierarchy and oppression but they do not have the numbers, latent strength and potential cohesiveness to take on the state and capital, that the organised working class possesses. In some ways social ecologists like Bookchin, despite their calls for active oppositional politics, bear resemblance to the utopian socialists of the 19th century like Fourier and Owen, whom Marx and Engels criticised so resolutely, not so much for their vision, but because they lacked a concrete mechanism to bring that vision into being :

> 'they reject all political, and especially revolutionary action, they wish to attain their ends by peaceful means, and endeavour by small experiments, necessarily doomed to failure, and by the force of example, to pave the way for the new social Gospel'[359]

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[359] Marx, K. & Engels, F. (1990), Manifesto of the Communist Party, (Peking : Foreign Languages Press), p. 73

Social ecologists like the utopians, reject class politics in favour of populist universality, transclass alliances and the anarchist strategy of the 'propaganda of the deed'. What they wish to bring into being is a democratic revolution through an extension of civic culture in the public sphere – this extension of democracy it is hoped will eventually build its own momentum as people become empowered through increasing self-management. Bookchin has said that the way in which this process 'will develop is an open issue but it will surely be a political adventure'.[360] Unless however the state and capital are properly engaged this 'political adventure' can only end in failure because as Bookchin himself acknowledges, capitalism is an 'amoral system' and is therefore structurally unamenable and indeed highly resistant – both economically and politically, to the type of reformist democratisation social ecology proposes.

While social ecology is ultimately doomed to failure if it relies on its new social movements and community empowerment strategies alone, if however it were to look to anarchist history, and in particular to the insights of the anarcho-syndicalist tradition as Pepper (1993) suggests[361], then it could become a much more potent revolutionary force. Equally, because there are differences of opinion with Marxism, does not mean that social ecologists and green Marxists cannot work together in order to open up a variety of fronts, including that of the labour movement, for progressive social and ecological change. The following passage from the 'Social Ecology Project' (1995), illustrates why social ecology and Marxism, despite their marked differences, are natural allies :

> 'The great tradition, born from past revolutions both of society and of the mind, must be preserved if we are to retain our own humanity and a sense of hope. We hold the conviction that a truly communistic society is not only possible but necessary as the outcome of humanity's potential for freedom and self-consciousness; that reason can guide human affairs within society as well as our dealings with the natural world; that the hovering shadows of a dismal, fearful, and anti-rational past, with its mystical appeals to and denigration of

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[360] Bookchin, M. (1995), op cited, p. 231
[361] Pepper, D. (1993), op cited, p. 163

the human spirit, can be effaced by enlightenment, secularity, and a commitment to progress.'[362]

5.5 *Glasgow Earth First ! and the Pollok Free State*

Glasgow Earth First ! was formed in March 1994 from militant factions within the Glasgow Green Network and the Glasgow University Green Group.[363] These factions had been inspired by EF!'s protests in England surrounding the governments roads programme and wanted to do something more proactive in the campaign against the M77 extension and in opposition to the CJA. Activists from these factions were joined by a few disaffected but experienced members of Greenpeace who had become disillusioned with its bureaucratic hierarchical structure and professionalisation of protest, and who shared the same basic ecological aims and values. After a short period of discussion and planning with fellow anti-motorway activists in the STARR Alliance, Glasgow EF! set up the Pollok Free State (June 1994), in the path of the M77 extension's construction route. Over the next year EF! activists played a central role in maintaining and extending the Free State, as well as participating fully in the wider anti-motorway campaign's oppositional activities including fundraising, organising public meetings, taking part in publicity stunts and leafleting the surrounding estates. As the campaign approached its dramatic climax in early 1995, EF! activists took the lead in organising direct action against the building process, while as mentioned previously, the Free State itself became an increasingly important focal point where STARR Alliance meetings were held, actions against the motorway were planned, and where the last line of defence was constructed. Glasgow EF!'s emergence around anti-motorway protests thus closely mirrors the pattern of EF!'s growth as a militant force on the environmental scene across the UK from 1992 onwards.

Routledge (1997), suggests in his commentary, that although Glasgow EF! activists took a leading role in the running of the Free State and in its protest activities, certain ambiguities arose concerning EF!'s relationship to the Free State during the course of the anti-motorway campaign. These ambiguities manifest

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[362] Social Ecology Project, (1995), When 'Realism' Becomes Capitulation, Left Green Perspectives, No 33, October, p. 2 Online version @ http://www.ise.rootmedia.org/lgp/issues/lgp33.shtml
[363] The US EF! roadshow had been hosted by Glasgow University Green Group in 1991

themselves in a number of internal differences, sometimes vehemently expressed at EF! meetings, which were frequently held to discuss tactics and campaign strategy. These differences included arguments over organisational style (one of the leading EF! activists was widely perceived to be particularly authoritarian and intolerant in his general manner) and over the level of commitment of the activists from the fashionable West End of Glasgow where EF! has a base amongst the student and professional population. These 'West-enders' visited and supported the Free State but did not live there while they also tended to avoid confrontational protest situations where arrests might be made. The West End 'part-timers' were therefore resented to a certain extent by some of Free State's resident activists who had to endure the harsh living conditions of camp life on a daily basis and who lived with the constant threat of legal sanctions being enacted against them by the forces of the law. Another point of difference arose between EF! activists who had been at the Free State since its inception and 'new' activists who had arrived at the Free State from road protest sites in England in order to offer their skills and expertise – it was felt by some of the original EF! Free State residents that these new activists were trying to take over the direction of the campaign.[364] While these conflicts may have caused problems internally for EF! they did not markedly disrupt the running of their oppositional campaign, indeed as Richard Solloway, a co-founder of EF! in Glasgow remarks 'the name Earth First! had developed enough cache to be an identifier. It worked, and the subsequent large-scale direct action against the M77 was the result'. [365]

It would be misleading to suggest that the Free State's resident activists were all EF! 'members' or supporters, or indeed that these activists (including the Earth Firsters) all shared the same ideological outlook or motivations. Nevertheless as EF! was the key initiator of the Free State, and was the main supplier of experienced eco-activist residents, it is inevitable that EF!'s eclectic ideology would be highly influential in informing and structuring the general climate of political and philosophical thinking at the encampment and the way in which that thinking was translated into action. This influence is explored in the following three sections alongside a more general look at the theory and practice of the Free State's resident activists. In the first section the theory of the resident activists is investigated by

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[364] Routledge, P. (1997), op cited, p.367

analysing the Free State's 'Declaration of Independence'. In the second section it is investigated through an exploration of the activist's politics and ideological worldviews. In the third section, attention turns to the practice of the Free State which will be examined through a consideration of organisation, modes of decision making, and the tactics adopted by the resident activists.

5.5.1 *The Declaration of Independence from the People of the Pollok Free State*

The Pollok Free State's 'Declaration of Independence', which lies at the heart of each Free State passport (see appendix), is in many ways a remarkable political document, because not only does it clearly articulate the reasons for the Free State's existence, but does so by linking the campaign against the M77 extension and the *Criminal Justice Act* with a synthesis of deep ecology and anarchist social ecology, in a cogent and fluid essay which combines wit and irony to produce a trenchant critique of contemporary social relations and bourgeois representative democracy. The Declaration of Independence was the first major statement issued by the Free State residents and constituted a clear signal of intent and philosophical outlook, and a very public challenge to the authorities. At the same time however, it also constituted a vehicle of dialogue aimed at building bridges and understanding between the Free State residents and the various STARR Alliance groups and left-wing organisations with whom they were working to oppose the M77 extension and the CJA. In particular socialist and Marxist inspired activists from the community groups and left-wing organisations involved in the campaigns against the motorway and CJA, would have found the Declaration a source of much common ground, because although they might have balked at some of the more extreme ecological statements included, and might indeed also have questioned its lack of a clear class perspective, they would no doubt agree on close reading, that despite its faults, the Declaration is a genuinely radical document whose ethos of justified moral outrage attempts to link the struggle against environmental destruction to that of the struggle against social inequality.

The opening paragraph of the Free State's Declaration reads as follows :

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[365] Solloway, R. 29.05/98, A Brief History of Glasgow Earth First!, posted on the Green Student Network List : gsn@lists.ed.ac.uk Permission from the author was received to quote from this message.

'When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, a decent respect to the opinions of humankind requires that they should declare the cause which impel them to separation. We hold these truths to be self evident, that all species are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the chance to fulfill their evolutionary potential. That to secure these rights the natural laws of Ecology bring equilibrium and fairness to all, these laws alone are pre-eminent.'[366]

Here, in a clever parody of the American Declaration of Independence, a distinctive biocentric spin replaces the original's anthropocentric bias with a stress upon the 'inalienable rights' and equality of *all species* under the *pre-eminent* 'natural laws of Ecology'. EF!'s characteristic deep ecology thus sets the initial tone of the document, which in the next paragraph argues that separation has been forced upon the Free State's residents because, (see opening quotation), the British government and Strathclyde Regional Council in their plans to build the M77 and to introduce the CJA, violate not only 'pre-eminent' natural laws but also the fundamental laws of democratic governance. The introduction here of criticism of the CJA displays a very anthropocentric concern with human freedom, something which can be linked to the anarchism that formed the other key strand of political thought amongst the Free State's EF! residents. This anarchist influence is something which becomes much stronger and hence much clearer as the text unfolds, and is again attributable to the influence of Earth First ! which as illustrated previously, in its UK incarnation, combines deep ecology with elements of the theory and practice of anarchist social ecology.

Having briefly stated the reasons for separation, the Declaration moves on to develop a more detailed case which revolves around a radical environmental and social critique of the institution of private property, arguing that historically the process of land enclosure has led to both the destruction of the earth 'in the name of agricultural improvement', and the 'privatisation of a people's ultimate resource' through a process of forced eviction from land 'which was rightfully theirs'. Here

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[366] Pollok Free State, (1994), op cited

mention is made of the devastating effects of enclosure upon the 'people of Scotland' which led to the displacement of 500,000, who were either deported to the colonies or driven to the cities to become part of the "working class". This specific reference to the 'Scottish people' although not evidence in itself of Scottish Nationalism, and indeed natural enough given the setting of the Free State in Glasgow, does nevertheless give a token indication that a current of romantic cultural nationalism, revolving around Scotland's past was present amongst the Free State's resident activists. This is more visible in for example the Gla-Gael Society's literature quoted in the Introduction to this chapter and is something which is complementary to deep ecology's idealisation of the pre-capitalist past. Celtic symbolism was in fact central to much of the the imagery represented in the various artworks which adorned the physical fabric of the Free State, and also decorated the front of the Free State passport. Also notable in this passage of the Declaration is the fact that term 'working class' when used in the text is highlighted in double parenthesis. This would appear to connote a deliberate questioning of, or ambiguity as to the meaning of the term. In relation to the M77 extension, this passage of the Declaration continues its critique of private property arguing that 'the process of enclosure continues as this land, our land (referring to the Pollok Estate), is threatened with destruction on the name of 'infrastructure improvement' for the benefit of a 'car owning elite'. This issue of private ownership of land is then linked to the CJA :

> 'Not content with 'owning' the land, private interests seek to stymie our protests and ban our access to our ancestral lands. It is proposed that those who wish to touch the earth will be criminalised for wishing to see what is morally, but no longer legally theirs. The same proposed legislation seeks to restrict even our mental and verbal freedom. We will be presumed guilty unless we speak in our own defence. When we do speak out against injustice we will also then be criminalised'.[367]

The Declaration next turns its attention to a critique of the practice of representative democracy and the public inquiry system, positing that the private interests which 'threaten the existence of all life' by wishing to take not only 'our land

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[367] ibid

but our air and water too' (the ecological principle of interconnectedness), impose their decisions without reasonable processes of consultation and therefore over-ride any notion of democracy or 'the will of the people'. Both representative democracy and public inquiries it argues are 'weighted' processes in which :

> 'local and national government, with unlimited access to taxpayers money, with unlimited powers to select judge and jury and unlimited authority to determine the terms of reference, bears no resemblance to what we consider democracy.... We are ruled by faceless people far from where we live.'[368]

Here again is a justification for the Free State's separation and indeed of the direct action tactics espoused by its residents; ie, faced with such inequity there is no alternative. There is also though an implicit indication in the last line quoted of what the resident's ideal system of governance would be. In anarchist fashion this would involve localised decision making, and although not explicitly stated, it can be surmised that these decisions would involve a system of direct participative democracy. The Declaration's penultimate paragraph reiterates the residents' environmental and democratic objections to the M77 motorway and the CJA, adding the argument backed up by scientific traffic studies, that the motorway will generate more traffic than it will alleviate, and the moral argument that the CJA will 'create far more injustice and disorder than it will solve'. The final paragraph takes the form of a declaration absolving the inhabitants and citizens (ie, all other passport holders) of the Pollok Free State from adherence to the rule of the British Crown, and then with explicit anarchist overtones, a pledge of territorial allegiance to being part of the 'Confederation of Independent Free Areas' — a reference to the other liberated spaces, or to use Bey's (1996) terminology 'temporary autonomous zones',[369] which had been created at other sites of anti-roads protest across the country during the mid-1990s. The Declaration concludes with the famous words 'we fight not for glory, nor riches, nor honours but for freedom alone'.[370]

The Pollok Free State's Declaration of Independence is a document which is clearly inspired by the deep ecology and anarchist social ecology associated with EF!

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[368] ibid
[369] Bey, H. (1996), TAZ : The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism, (Camberley : Green Anarchist Books)

UK. As has been illustrated above, its critical discourse links the particular forms of environmental destruction and attacks upon human freedom which will be brought about by the M77 motorway and the CJA, with wider processes of universal environmental destruction and attacks upon human freedom wrought by the effects of the private ownership of land and the weighted system of representative democracy. Hence there is a clear linking of critical social and critical environmental discourses. What however is excluded from these critical discourses indicates as much about the nature of the philosophy of the Free State residents as what is included. Importantly no mention is made of the social issues which were central to the wider campaign against the M77 motorway, and of particular importance to the community groups involved. As illustrated in the last chapter these primarily revolve around the negative health and safety effects that the motorway would generate amongst the working class residents of the surrounding council estates; the segregational effect that it would have upon their access to the 'breathing space' of Pollok Park; and the class bias inherent in the very decision to build the motorway in the first place. What is essentially missing then, is a discourse of class oppression, and this accounts for the curiously neutral language employed throughout the Declaration. For example no mention whatsoever is made of class division, of an exploiting capitalist class driving environmental destruction for profit, or of the relationship between class, ownership and power which feeds the contradictions of capitalist democracy. Nor indeed is capitalism even named as the socio-economic system or mode of production which has historically led to the present 'ecological holocaust' and the restrictions on human freedom which the resident activists of the Free State seek to combat. Intead vague terms like 'private interests', 'car owning elite', 'faceless people' or 'HM government' are used to denote the various guises of contemporary power and domination.

On one hand this vagueness of terminology that is present throughout the Declaration is perhaps surprising given its genuinely radical attempt to link the social and the environmental, and the high level of political/philosophical awareness displayed within it. Yet on the other hand it is perhaps not so surprising when it is considered that the Declaration is so clearly a deliberate product of EF!'s fusion of deep ecology and anarchist social ecology. This peculiar fusion is revealed elsewhere on the Free State's passport (see appendix) in that two stanza's from Robert Burns'

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[370] Pollok Free State, (1994), op cited

famous revolutionary poem, 'The Tree of Liberty', is quoted alongside a parody of the UK passport which requests and requires 'in the name of our mother the earth' that the bearer be allowed to 'pass freely without let or hindrance.' It is also perhaps surprising that the eco-anarchist activists chose to name their autonomous zone a 'State' with all the connotations of power, contol and domination that are associated with the term. However as Colin, one of the Free State founders explained, 'the Free State is not a fixed place but a state of mind – wherever you are man, if you're thinking freely, you're in the free state'.[371]

5.5.2 *Politics and Worldviews of Free State Resident Activists*

On a formal level the Pollok Free State was ostensibly set up by eco-activists as part of the campaign to oppose the construction of the M77 motorway and to oppose the CJA. However at a more substantive level, the Free State reflected much deeper motivations. Even by the very act of choosing to take up residence at the Free State, the activists living there were in essence rejecting mainstream or 'straight' society, its dominant norms of employment or striving to attain or maintain employment, its set routines of work and leisure, its material comforts and material values, and its measures of success and failure. In declaring independence the activists also signalled their rejection of mainstream society's laws, legal institutions and political system. The reasons for this rejection are cogently expressed in Pollok Free State's Declaration of Independence but have a much more visceral and palpable quality in the spoken words of individual activists themselves :

> 'I've decided to no longer work within the system because the system is controlled by multi-national corporations that are just about money and greed and the populace is being mind-washed, brainwashed into believing the old lie that 'your country knows what is best for you' - well your country is being controlled by multi-nationals so why would it give a fuck about you ? it doesn't because your government has got nothing to do with you anymore - it's to do with the money machines - and it's time we turned around and took the power back if you will - if we can take the power back in our present

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[371] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96

system - I mean democracy - it's great brilliant, great I don't have a problem with democracy if it works, if it's true, if it's real - what I see just now is that it's not and that's why I'm here'[372] (Laura McLean)

'See I was deeply unhappy because justice, what's happening at the other side of this fence (ie, the building of the M77) is a disgrace - so are the jobs you get in this system - the jobs you get in this system are a disgrace - they are jobs designed to keep that system going and really to me a lot of those jobs are unworthy of a human being... so for years I didn't know what was bothering me but now I know - everything's all wrong, everything has been turned upside down from what it should be..'[373] (Andy Connel)

'People are sick - people are sick of the shite, sick of being told what to do and how to do it - everybody's got their own beliefs like the protesters at Newbury but the CJA was brought in just to stop it all - it's no worked and it won't work - they say this is a democratic society but they're wanting to give us ID cards - Jesus shit ! - do you no think the way things are looking we're beginning tae turn intae a communist run state where you've got all the hierarchy and they will keep tabs on every single person - they want to know who you are, what you're doing, where you're shitting and what you're wiping your arse with - that's no fair that I've got to have an ID card - I don't want to have an ID card - and definitely not one with a big fucking union jack on it !'[374] (Jerry)

Although inevitably, points of disagreement existed on detail and emphasis amongst individual residents, these quotations, which clearly express a deep anger and disillusionment with different facets of contemporary society, are representative of the critical political views expressed by the Free State's resident activists generally. It is not surprising to note then that for the Free State activists the system of representative democracy was anathema because voting would make no difference as both the Tories and the Labour Party were deemed to be two sides of the same coin, one which was

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[372] McLean, L. Interview, 06/09/96

[373] Connel, A. Interview, 06/09/96

[374] Jerry. Interview, 28/08/96

nestled firmly in the pocket of profit hungry multi-nationals. A number of the activists said that if they had to vote they would vote SNP, but were not going to do so because voting, aside from being pointless, was disempowering to the individual. This nationalist sympathy comes across in the following interview extract which illustrates the way in which such nationalism blends easily with the politics of EF! :

> 'We associate with oppressed minorities and native cultures throughout the world - what we would like to get across to our fellow Scots is that we are one of those cultures - most people forget that we were equally close to the Earth but just further back in time and that we require to be saved just as much as them - don't get me wrong we're not about narrow nationalism here - we think that a part of what a man or a woman is the race that he or she comes from but that doesn't mean we're chauvinists - we enjoy ethnic music from all cultures and we take joy in the similarities between ourselves and other cultures - and in the differences, so it's not a superiority thing at all - we just don't want a Macdonalds/Coca-Cola kind of culture invading us and filling people's heads full of crap'[375] (Andy Connel)

The Free State was in fact visited in 1995 by a group of native Americans who had been invited in order to promote dialogue and understanding surrounding the struggles which both they and the residents were engaged in. To the Free State activists, their politics, in stark contrast to that of the mainstream, was a politics of action, praxis, and immediacy :

> 'I don't vote, and I've never voted and I never will vote either because of one simple reason - it disny matter who gets into power they're still out for themselves - every time I protest that's my vote - I vote through protesting although it doesny count on any electoral role - I get more chances to vote than anybody else because my vote is a protest...'[376] (Alec)

It was a politics that aimed to engender empowerment and local responsibility :

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[375] Connel, A. Interview, 6/09/96
[376] Alec, Interview, 23/08/96

'we're no political in the conventional kind of way - we're just trying to influence local people to take an interest in their local environment that's aboot as far as it goes - we're tryin to get people to take a responsible stance in their local neighbourhoods and to get involved in the debates that they should be involved in - and they should because it involves their health, their future, their work and all the rest of it - so they should take a healthy interest in it - that's all we're here to do....'[377] (Colin McLeod)

And it was a form of politics which for many of the activists was explicitly associated with anarchism:

'I think that politics is just about how people relate to one another and a lot of people think that politics is party politics but its not - I think politics is personal and that its about taking personal responsibility and all that stuff. The political ideas that I most identify with are associated with anarchism... when people in this system vote, whether they are conscious or not of it they are mentally passing on their responsibility to another person which is wrong... so therefore when your local canal gets blocked it is your local councillor's responsibility rather than you just going down with a couple of people that feel the same way and unblocking it. I also think that when you start to structure things on too large a scale it doesn't work – I think that things need to be dealt with on a local level where people who are making the decisions know the locality and the people involved.'[378] (Gehan McLeod)

'Well I guess I'd have to say that I'm an anarchist because I believe that every time you create a hierarchy of control and power you've created a vacuum where you are going to get people who are greedy for power moving up the ladder to fill it - but I've seen anarchy work - people usually equate anarchy with violence and random chaos and that's just not the case - a lot of tribal living was anarchy and it works because you have to count on the better part of human nature to sort things out in a positive way.'[379] (Laura McLean)

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[377] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96
[378] McLeod, G. Interview, 17/09/96
[379] McLean, L. Interview, 06/09/96

This anarchism revolved around the ideal of personal empowerment and personal responsibility – in essence of 'doing it yourself' instead of waiting for, or delegating to, others to do it for you. In itself the Free State encampment was a symbolic testament to this anarchist 'DIY' ethic in action.

Given EF!'s strong influence at the Free State, the residents also tended to take a deep ecological and biocentric worldview to compliment their anarchism. Some residents were however more extreme than others in the way in which this biocentrism was expressed :

> 'no I don't really think that human life is the most important thing - at the same time though I don't like to think of a world without any human beings on it - being human you know I have a kind of bias ! I think though that we run into trouble with the belief that human life is the most important and as a species that has been the dominant feeling for too long - I think that if we saw our proper place on the planet then we wouldn't be in so much trouble..'[380]

> (Gehan McLeod)

> 'I would be quite happy if human beings were made extinct and just left the rest of the planet to get on with it - we are the only creature on the surface of the planet that doesn't live in harmony with it..'[381] (Lee 'the Tree')

The deep ecological influence also meant that although some residents were atheists, there was often a strong spiritual dimension to the resident activists worldviews :

> 'I'd say that I was a spiritual person... I believe that there are certain truths and that there is more to life than what exists in the everyday - I think that science is a religion and that just because science can't explain something that doesn't mean that it doesn't exist'[382] (Gehan McLeod)

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[380] McLeod, G. Interview, 17/09/96
[381] Lee 'the Tree', Interview, 25/10/96
[382] McLeod, G. Interview, 17/09/96

> 'I believe in the Divine - there's a divine energy to everything that lives - so yeah I have a faith - the planet looks after people who try to look after it - I know a lot of spiritual people from different belief systems and we all have that in common - we're entering a stage where we can pick and mix our spiritual beliefs according to our own preferences and our own Gods.'[383]

> (Lee 'the Tree)

George Mackay (1996), has described this type of spirituality as 'political paganism' because in recognising the earth, nature and life as interconnected and sacred, the believers response to violation of that sacredness is political action. [384] It is a particularly apt description of the politics of Earth First !

Through the experience of joint actions against the M77 motorway, the Free State's resident activists had built up a good relationship with a number of local community activists in the STARR Alliance, and as was illustrated in the last chapter, especially with Walter Morrison and Corkerhill Community Council. They also however built up a good relationship with the various left-wing groupings who came regularly to the encampment to offer their solidarity and support, and to engage in debate and discussion. Of these groupings Scottish Militant Labour was particularly supportive of the Free State as they had deep roots in the surrounding council estates and although the eco-activists disagreed with their class based politics, they nevertheless often expressed respect for Militant's political efforts. Militant's prominent role in the anti-poll tax campaign of the 1980's was often commented upon favourably by the eco-activists because it, like their own role in opposing roads and motorways, was based upon direct action :

> 'The thing is man that they are the only people who are actually standing up for people who are facing the poll tax - Tommy Sheridan is a leader - he is a genuine guy - I don't really give a fuck for international socialism - as an idea I don't think it's really gonny happen - that's no what I appreciate aboot him'[385] (Jerry)

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[383] Lee 'the Tree', Interview, 25/10/96
[384] Mackay, G. (1996), Senseless Acts of Beauty : Cultures of Resistance Since the Sixties, (London : Verso)

'See they've imposed a certain code on the streets and if there's no code on the streets its bad news - any code is better than no code - its no that Militant have got the answer, it's just that they are the only people who are like fucking doing the business. I've got a lot of respect for Tommy - at first I started oot and I thought politicians they're all the same man but I think the guy is alright. See the thing is that they had the fuckin sense te transcend their political beliefs to get involved in the campaign doon here withoot tryin te hijack it - they just added their force te it - and they had an organisation te dae it in the best way they could.'[386] (Colin McLeod)

While recognising a certain solidarity with the Left, the Free State residents clearly distinguished themselves from it because of its classisism, its centralised modes of organising and its anthropocentrism. The Left was also perceived to be dogged by inveterate factionalism :

'I think people are just so disillusioned - and what it is, is that we've found an identity that is not easily torn down - what I mean is that it's difficult to form an organised sense of community out of say the Socialist Workers Party or Militant, all these fragmented groups - because they all seem to be divided and fighting - whereas a common concern aboot fresh air, your children's future, the survival of the earth and all these things - they kinda transcend all that and that allows people to be united enough to organise - and there is a young more sophisticated, more informed population - and when these people are hitting the big questions they are beginning to look for answers and it seems to me that the environmental movement has become a focal point for that - because it's no got the narrow dividing thing'[387] (Colin McLeod)

The identity that McLeod is referring to in the above interview extract is an identity based around a rejection of the formal political system and an embrace of community, localism, personal autonomy which is rooted in environmental concern. While only a very small minority of people put these ideas into practice or express

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[385] Jerry, Interview, 23/08/96
[386] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96
[387] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96

them in the very direct way in which the Free State eco-activists did, they are ideas which as Colin indicates, appear to be becoming increasingly attractive to the younger generation in contemporary Britain. According to the 1995 'The Kids are Alright ?' survey of young people's political attitudes conducted by London Youth Matters, only 40% of the 18-24 age band intended to vote in the 1997 general election. On specific issues though young people felt strongly, eg the NHS (66%), helping the homeless (73 %), supporting single parents (56 %) etc. Importantly though the survey also found was that young people overwhelmingly defined politics as 'a thing that directly affects my life' (average of 54 % across the 15-35 age group) as opposed to 'what goes on in parliament', (average of 24 % for same age group).[388] If looked at in tandem with the growth of direct action protest movements like those over roads, animal rights, the CJA and a wide variety of environmental issues, this survey supports the view that young people in particular have become alienated from the traditional parties and decision making processes of British representative democracy but that nevertheless they are far from the picture of apolitical youth that is often painted by those that lament the sixties. If this trend continues then it is likely that the type of green anarchist politics advocated by the Free State residents, and currently being taken forward by EF! UK, will prove increasingly attractive to the growing numbers of the younger generation who are looking for radical political alternatives.

5.5.3 *Organisation at the Pollok Free State : Putting Principles into Action*

From the Declaration of Independence, and from the research interviews quoted above it is clear that EF! UK's green anarchism was the key structuring influence upon the thinking of the Pollok Free State's resident activists. Naturally then green anarchism also provided the main inspiration behind the day to day operational ethos of the encampment, its decision making processes, as well as providing the main underlying philosophical rationale for the direct action protest tactics of the eco-activist residents. In line with the anarchist principles of freedom and non-hierarchy the Free State operated an 'open door' policy as for example stated on its passport, whereby anyone in sympathy with the ideals of the residents was free to visit the encampment, take part in its activities or indeed to stay there on a more permanent

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[388] see, Garner, C. (1997), The Gospel Acording to Swampy, The Independent, Feb 6, p.6

basis. As Graham, a long term resident said in an interview the 'general spirit of the camp is 'oh come all ye – a big ceilidh' – thus the Free State, as its name suggests attempted to be as inclusionary as possible. Inclusion did not however mean that 'anything went' or that all forms of behaviour were acceptable. Individual freedom at the Free State was very strongly coupled with the notion of duty towards the well being of the collective. Colin McLeod explains what this meant in practical terms :

> 'we call it the big A and the big R - Accountability and Responsibility are the key words doon here - some people come here and they just think this is a drop out zone for drinking and drugs and so on - its nothing like that - personal accountability means that when they come in they are well rehearsed in all the things we don't like but that's no enough because we've got to show what we're about - not just what we're against but what we're for - we've got to be actively doing something that suggests that we have more of a clue than the outside or that at least our intentions are better than theirs - if people come in, anarchist types or whatever and its just a pure fashion trip what we say is 'look the way society is the way it is, is because people are not behaving in a responsible manner - that might be as a result of the education system but at the end of the day what are you going to do about it ?' - the buck stops at us – we have to ask questions aboot oorselves and then we have to act - if we canny find the resourcefulness to communicate an idea in a concerned way and to organise to try to change things - if we don't have that will-power then what the hell are we doing ?'[389]

For the Free State eco-activists these principles were important because they provided ethical standards against which words and deeds could be measured by, while as McLeod indicates below, they also acted as bulwarks against the encroachments of the 'outside world' :

> 'the reason why everybody is so paranoid oot there and won't come oot their doors is because it's the bullies, the alchoholics, the drug addicts and the idiots who run the place - but in here its different - if you canny justify your actions

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[389] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96

with a bit of half decent sense then you're gonny be challenged - if it doesny live up to a certain amount of sense then it's just not going to be entertained because its an eternal battle just to keep the scheme mentality oot of here...'[390]

Thus while the Free State on the one hand attempted to be as inclusionary as possible, on the other hand limits to that inclusiveness had to be set in order to preserve the grounds of the Free State's very existence as a functioning entity. Indeed at times if people staying at the Free State did not live up to their responsibilities it became necessary to exclude them. As Graham explains :

'there is another culture that has evolved here where we share not just our thoughts but its a kind of brotherhood and sisterhood - we tune in and if we fall out we have to discuss it - a consensus develops for the parties to come together and for the aggrieved party to get a bit of restitution spiritually wise - we have to talk things through and if people don't accept that then they have to move on - another reason for people being asked to move on is if they are on a 'lunchout' - sometimes a certain amount of callousness creeps in amongst the people who are only here for a short time and they are liable to lunch out'[391]

When the daily struggle of life on the breadline and the constant battle against the elements is considered in combination with the ever present threat of eviction by the authorities and regular harrassment by the police, then it is hardly surprising that a code of conduct, albeit of an unwritten nature, evolved amongst Free State residents. This meant that in practice there were no 'free lunches' for those residing at the Free State - thus each resident had to contribute in one way or another to the camp's upkeep and running so displaying a recognition of individual responsibility for the collective well-being of the whole. Here the anarchism professed by Free State residents comes close to a form of communitarianism because if residents did not do 'their duty' then the panoptical nature of camp life made the sanctions of marginalisation and ultimately exclusion from the camp almost unavoidable. The Free State's culture of responsibility and accountability stands in opposition to the perceived selfishness, individualism and acquisitiveness that eco-activists like Colin

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[390] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96
[391] Graham, Interview, 25/08/96

McLeod and Graham associate with the world outside the confines of the protest camp. For the eco-activists these hegemonic values are crystallised in the alienated 'scheme mentality' that is embodied in the satisfaction of immediate desires and the selfish ego-centric ethic of 'every man for himself or every woman for herself'. The subculture which evolved at the Free State was thus one which consciously developed its own norms and values in opposition to the dominant culture and over time these alternative norms and values came to be embodied in a loose, somewhat ambiguous but nevertheless overarching code of conduct that shaped the everyday lives of its residents.

5.5.3.1 *Decision Making, 'Leadership' and Non-Hierarchy*

William Connolly, a local activist from Pollok and a regular visitor at the Free State throughout its anti-motorway resistance phase points to other important aspects of the anarchistic organisation in the encampment in the following interview extract :

> 'decisions were made collectively as far as they could be collective... they did try to work in a lot of anarchist principles, everyone working individually for the good of the collective - it was somewhat communistic in style - there was a lot of argument towards having no figurehead, no leaders etc but leaders stood out...'[392]

The first of these aspects of organisation that Connolly highlights is that of collective decision making. This decision making in anarchist style was generally informal, non-centralised and did not involve structured voting or the use of traditional democratic mechanisms. Instead, after debate and discussion a consenus would emerge around the particular issue under consideration. Decisions about everything from the everyday running of the camp right through to tactical decisions regarding activities to oppose the motorway emerged in the same informal way. Occasionally there were large organised camp meetings when issues of major importance to the camp's future were discussed and votes taken in the last instance if necessary (eg, when it was decided to maintain the camp and change its function after the main phase of

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[392] Connolly, W. Interview, 18/06/96

resistance to the motorway had ended), but in general decisions were made on an small scale ad-hoc basis through discussion and consensual agreement between the actors involved. As Andy Connel, who had been at the encampment throughout its existence, argues in the extract below, decisions were made in as inclusive and non-hierarchical a manner as possible :

> 'we don't usually have votes but we do discuss things and at the end of the day things get discussed until everybody agrees really - we try to see it right through instead of leaving people at a loose end because they feel the wrong thing is being done - we basically draw everyone in and argue it out'[393]

The second important aspect of the Free State's organisation that Connolly highlights above is that there was no formal leadership, something that is again consistent with anarchist principles. Aside from the potential abuses of power that come with the establishment of a hierarchical leadership structure, Lee 'the Tree', a veteran of the protests at Twyford Down and Newbury, outlines the practical and tactical reasons as to why formal leadership was eschewed by the eco-activists of the Free State :

> 'we are a network of people who make their own decisions, network those decisions and take empowerment from the group - there is more scope for the individual to effect change within a group and the fact that we don't have a pyramid structure is one of our strengths because there's nothing to break - they (the state authorities) are constantly looking for leaders within a movement that doesn't have any...'[394]

As Connolly however points out above, while no leadership might be an anarchist ideal, in the substantive practice of the Free State leaders did nevertheless emerge - the most prominent being Colin McLeod. McLeod's leadership was something that was not recognised through any formal title or through his special role in the employment of a formal or procedural decision making mechanism but came to him

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[393] Connel, A. Interview, 06/09/96
[394] Lee 'the Tree', Interview, 25/10/96

through a respect for his actions that was generally acknowledged by Free State residents. Connel, expands upon this theme in the following manner:

> 'well there's not really a hierarchy in terms of boss 1, boss 2, boss 3 and so on - there's only one boss as far as I'm concerned although I'll listen to anybody providing a reasonable argument but I especially want to know what he's (McLeod) going to say because he's the one who has got the most responsibility, he is responsible for most of the carvings, for building the lodge, for building the hut over there, he is the one who is here nearly all the time and who ensures there is peace and harmony in the camp - therefore to me his voice is the loudest and that is as it should be..'[395]

McLeod gained his position of informal leadership through consistent actions that expressed his commitment to the well-being of the Free State encampment - leadership at the Free State was therefore something gained by merit. Gehan McLeod when questioned about leaders gave an answer which reinforces this point while also stressing her view that this type of leadership is 'natural' as opposed to something that is imposed or artificial :

> 'well we do have natural leaders and I think that it partly depends upon how much time and energy those people have put into the camp - the only way you get away with it is if you have earned that respect - again that is a natural thing'[396]

McLeod however, when asked if he should be considered the leader of the Free State gave a response in which he acknowledges his influence and gives important reasons as to why a certain amount of authority was required at the encampment :

> 'well I do have a certain amount of influence but I'm no a leader in that sense - I'm more a caretaker or security guard because in Pollok man if its no concreted to the grund it will disappear - you have to be strong here because if you're not strong they'll just take the piss and you'll become just another

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[395] Connel, A. Interview, 06/09/96
[396] McLeod, G. Interview, 17/09/96

victim - in order for this to be a functioning place of protest and a waterhole for decent people it must be protected'[397]

The principle of non-hierarchy was an aspect of Free State philosophy that extended beyond the boundaries of the leadership question to all areas of camp life. Although it was generally recognised as being imperfect in practice, the goal of an equal division of labour between the sexes at the camp was certainly something that was generally aimed at. Men for example would regularly cook, clean and look after children while women would forage for and cut firewood, organise protest activities or erect camp structures thus subverting traditional gender roles. In the first of the interview extracts reproduced below Andy Connel gives a male perspective on the relationship between the sexes at the Free State while in the second Laura McLean gives a female perspective :

'well there has to be an equal relationship in this camp because there are feminists in this camp and even the ones who don't call themselves feminists are - so it has to be like that otherwise there would be trouble - and anyway I approve - I think we should all learn to do the dishes, go for firewood and all the rest of it. In the event I go for the firewood quite often and I don't do the dishes that often but I do do them sometimes - you turn your hand towards whatever is required regardless of whether you're a man or a woman - there will be some tasks that are more suited to men and others that are more suited to women - but some women would even disagree with that - however by in large we tend to respect each other..'[398]

'Divisions are completely broken down - the women get wood and water, the men cook and everybody goes out on actions - everybody does everything on site, there is no women's work or men's work and the women are equally listened to'[399]

[397] McLeod, C. Interview, 23/08/96
[398] Connel, A. Interview, 06/09/96
[399] McLean, L. Interview, 06/09/96

However not all the women at the Free State shared McLean's highly positive view; Gehan McLeod for example offers a more critical and circumspect perspective which perhaps betrays something of a class bias :

> 'I think that its getting there but I don't think that equality is something that naturally occurs because of the society we've come from - there is a definite tendency for the patterns from the rest of the world to repeat themselves down here and in other protest sites - I think that down here there is an uneasy equality but in other places (protest sites) there has been more of an equality - I think to be honest it is the Pollok kind of thing that makes equality uneasy here'[400]

Other aspects of inclusion and non-hierarchy displayed at the Free State were the fact that age was no barrier to participation with residents spanning all age groups up to the age of around fifty. Older people like Morrison and Campbell from Corkerhill Community Council were regular visitors and took part in many Free State activities but the harsh physical conditions of Free State living would have acted as a deterrent to those of an older generation taking up residence. Equally, as mentioned in the Introduction, the social backgrounds of camp residents were very mixed in class terms - the majority of Glaswegians at the camp were of working class origin and mostly drawn from the surrounding housing estates while many of the eco-activists who had come to Glasgow specifically to join the protest were young middle class people who had deliberately opted out of education or employment to pursue the eco-activist lifestyle for a period of time. All participants at the Free State that were either observed or interviewed in the course of this research were however white. In the context of answering a question about male/female relationships at the camp Rab Fulton who was a regular participant in the Free State's protest against the M77 motorway, offers an interesting and insightful explanation as to why informal decision making has been adopted by many militant environmentalists :

> 'there are a lot of women involved very prominently in campaigns - measured against established politics which is so male dominated it looks good but if

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[400] McLeod, G. Interview, 17/09/96

you look at our type of politics you have to ask yourself has equal women's involvement gone right to the core ? Is patriarchy really getting dealt with.. One of the reasons that it is not so bad is that loads of women have been involved in setting environmental organisations up - things like Greenham Common - another defining moment - a lot of the debates which they raised there are still going on - a lot of environmentalism has been started by women who have questioned this whole white patriarchal thing... I think that has to be respected - a lot of the stuff we're doing now was created by things that we don't recognise as men - the 1970's was immensely important and a lot of men just don't understand that - even the way a meeting's organised - the idea of consensus as opposed to structured votes is something that was pioneered by women in the 70's.'[401]

5.5.3.2 *A Protester's Account of Anarchic 'Dis-Organisation' in Practice*

Everyday life at the Pollok Free State eco-encampment was structured in what can be described as a 'disorganised organised' manner. In the interview extract below, Laura McLean offers a vivid and valuable insight as to how this type of 'disorganised organisation' worked in the Free State encampment on a day to day basis :

> 'there's a lot of communication at the camp but there's not a lot of debate - we live together therefore there's a lot of communication - you get up in the morning and you have a cup of tea with the people that you are living with and working with and little things they just flow - it's not like you show up for an hour to discuss something - it's like things are just going on constantly - it just flows, it flows....when we do decide to do something - and this is why we're such a frustration to them - one persons says 'oh I think I'll do that' and then another says 'I like that idea' and it goes on from there - then half way down the road they'll meet someone else and get talking about something else and then go off and do something completely different that has nothing to do with what they originally set out to do - and it's probably far better - but that's the way it works - it's really organic...'[402]

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[401] Fulton, R. Interview 9/7/97
[402] McLean, L. Interview, 06/09/96

McLean went on to stress that rather than being something negative this lack of formal organisation in fact enhanced both camp life and protest actions against the motorway :

> 'but that is what I'm saying - it is the positive aspect of chaos and disorganisation - we say people are afraid of chaos but what chaos allows is improvement - one person has an idea and it's an okay idea so someone else comes in and says 'oh I like that plan I'll come along but how about if we do this ?' and then they maybe run into somebody else who has some other materials and because it's chaos the mind remains open to changes of plan as more information comes in - therefore you're able to do the most positive thing in the situation you're not locked into a situation where 'oh but the group agreed by a vote that we were going to do this but now everything's changed!' - and it works in every way - at about five o'clock in the evening someone will start chopping up onions, someone else will come along and chop some tatties and lo and behold by seven o'clock there's a really nice tea on and no-one ever knew what it was going to be at four cause someone at six turned up at six with some broccoli ! you know what I mean ?'[403]

In the demanding material conditions of camp life and the ever changing context of oppositional protest activities this type of decentralised (dis)organisation was judged by the eco-activists of the Free State to be superior to formal democratic methods because it enabled an ability to react and adapt quickly to events as they happen - this stands in opposition to the bounded inflexibility of decisions taken in accordance with democratic procedures or formally agreed lines of action and response.

5.5.3.3 *The Tactics of Direct Action*

For the eco-activist residents of the Free State, direct action tactics were not simply a last resort in the way in which such tactics were for many local people and the various STARR Alliance groups opposing the construction of the M77 motorway. Direct action against the Wimpy construction company, the tree fellers working to clear a

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[403] McLean, L. Interview, 06/09/96

path for the motorway, and the Regional Council, was for the eco-activists a preferred mode of protest because it was form of oppositional action that was personally empowering, attracted attention to the issues and built solidarity amongst the participants. By breaking the law in various non-violent ways the eco-activists symbolised a very forceful rejection of what they perceived to be the alienated and corrupt processes of the formal political, legal and planning systems. Direct action tactics of the type used at the Pollok Free State, ie, the fortification of trees, bulldozer and tree-sitting, illegal protest marches, locking-on, tampering with machinery, tree-spiking etc became central to the anarchist inspired eco-activism of anti-roads protesters in the 1990s as the experiences of Twyford Down, Newbury and many other conflicts over road building in England have shown. Many of these tactics, central to what has come to be termed 'ecotage', eg tree-spiking, originated with American EF ! who as illustrated previously in this chapter have used them successfully for many years against logging in the United States.

Reclaim the Streets (RTS), a London based anarchist/social ecology group which gained notoriety in the mid to late 1990s for throwing large scale street parties in the congested centres of major English cities and on orbital motorways surrounding those cities, have produced literature which exhorts the taking of direct action for five reasons :

1) Direct Action : enables people to develop a new sense of self-confidence and an awareness of their individual and collective power.

2) Direct Action : is founded on the idea that people can develop the ability for self-rule only through practice, and proposes that all persons directly decide the important issues facing them.

3) Direct Action : is not just a tactic, it is individuals asserting their ability to control their own lives and to participate in social life.

4) Direct Action : encompasses a whole range of activities, from organising co-ops to engaging in resistance to authority.

5) Direct Action : places moral commitment above positive law.[404]

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[404] Reclaim the Streets, (1996), pamphlet, The Ideology of the Car, (London : Reclaim the Streets)

RTS, although tending to be more urban and social in their political orientation, has strong links with EF! (eg, they have offices in the same building in London), and also had a small presence at the Pollok Free State from time to time. RTS's five reasons show that direct action is conceived of as a form of praxis in much the same way as participation in class conflict represents praxis for socialists. The reasons given by RTS for taking direct action are mirrored in the reasons given by the eco-activist Free State residents in interviews. For example Gehan McLeod said that :

> 'A lot of people here would agree that the law in this country is political and that by breaking a law you are not necessarily doing a bad thing. A lot of the time people don't use direct action until the traditional democratic processes have been exhausted anyway - it is a last resort when the democratic process isn't working for you but more and more people are starting to use direct action earlier on in the day because they don't have any faith in the democratic process to represent them fairly... and I think that direct action is actually one of the rawest purest forms of democracy because you are taking things into your own hands....I think that direct action has quite a positive history - a lot of changes have come through direct action.... it has a semi-respectable historical background - sometimes you just need fringe groups to push things one way or another and the more mainstream groups have said that the more radical factions have helped them because when they are negotiating it has made them look very moderate and very reasonable... so it has kind of helped them because we're pushing things a wee bit '[405]

While direct action and law-breaking was endorsed by all interview respondents at the Free State there was also though a strong stress that came through the interviews upon non-violence in relation to direct action protests - the following extract is generally representative of the Free State resident activists views on this issue:

> 'I think that protesting should be non-violent and especially not against people and to me the most important thing with direct action is to empower as many

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[405] McLeod, G. Interview, 17/09/96

people as possible and I don't think that you can do that if there's an element there that is violent because it alienates people who would potentially get involved and also I think it detracts from the real issue, ie the issue becomes should you be violent or not rather than what you are protesting against... I think a lot of people feel disempowered and that's probably why a lot of people don't vote because they don't feel any control over the political system anymore whereas I think that direct action is a way of taking back that power.'
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When Free State residents were probed more deeply about the reasons for non-violence in their direct action activities, a certain ambiguity however emerged as to whether non-violence was simply something that was tactical or or whether it was rooted in deeply held moral principle. Moreover, while violence against the person was generally disapproved of, violence against property as illustrated in the following interview extracts was something that was generally accepted or even approved amongst eco-activists at the Free State :

'Well from a practical point of view we should be non-violent because if it becomes violent we'll all get thrown into jail and there will be fewer protesters left to protest in the future, also our enemies are better at fighting than we are - they've been trained for it and there are more of them - but it's not just that. I would have to say that I don't mind self-defence if you are personally attacked - but you don't go out and attack anyone because the Father who is looking on wouldn't like it and ultimately he's the one we're responsible to.... if it's damage against property I can approve .. I'm not a great lover of property you know'[407] (Andy Connel)

'The spiking of trees is one way of NVDA because a warning is always given on the tree - there's an S on that tree over there and that means its spiked - all these trees are spiked - the S's on the trees on the other side of the fence were ignored but I don't know if the chain-saws got damaged but who the fuck cares about a chainsaw ? - its the people that are handling the chain saw that

[406] Mclean, L. Interview, 06/09/96
[407] Connel, A. Interview, 06/09/96

I'm worried about - but if they get hurt and they have already seen that its spiked then who is to blame ? - they have been warned and its up to themselves to act'[408] (Graham)

The Free State residents endorsement of breaking the law through the use of direct action tactics is symbolic of their rejection of formal political processes and constitutes anarchist praxis in what is perhaps its rawest form. The Free State's resident's endorsement of non-violence is something though that is ambiguous both in terms of the principles behind this stance and indeed in terms of how non-violence is actually defined. For the Free State residents, direct action was the political tactic of choice, whether this be direct action in actually living a pre-figurative ecological alternative as at the Free State, or in taking NVDA against specific instances of environmental destruction, eg, the motorway construction, or against unjust laws such as the CJA. It is important to note however that direct action tactics were not however recognised as modes of large scale social change in themselves but as modes of raising the necessary awareness and personal empowerment that will bring eventual large scale change :

'I believe that most people are good and the reason why the world is so fucked up is due to lack of awareness - I see what we're doing is primarily making people aware – by taking direct action we're calling attention to a problem so that people are starting to question... it's by us screaming fire that people are changing.'[409] (Laura McLean)

5.5.3.4 *Dissenting Voices*

While the 'anarchy' of camp (dis)organisation, decision making and activity was seen by the majority of Free State eco-activists as being a liberating experience on both personal and political levels, dissenting views were nevertheless not difficult to come by in the course of conducting research interviews. Critical voices were expressed particularly by those from the 'outside' who had either stayed at the Free State for short periods or who worked with Free State activists at various points during the

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[408] Graham, Interview, 25/10/96
[409] McLean L. Interview, 06/09/96

campaign against the M77. Connolly, for instance makes the critical observation and judgement that :

> 'In the Pollok Free State, the so called anarchist camp - there were more laws inside that wee camp than there were outside it'[410]

These unwritten 'laws', although serving to protect the smooth running of the encampment, at times led to the exclusion of individuals and to tensions amongst the Free State residents. Aside from those 'laws' centering on the principles of responsibility and accountability, one of these 'laws' which would inevitably lead to tensions, was a ban on alcohol except on special occasions – something that was very difficult to enforce in practice. Another 'unwritten law' was that residents or indeed those visiting the Free State should do nothing to bring the encampment into disrepute. This self-consciousness of the type of image projected by the Free State's residents was especially important during the motorway resistance phase when the encampment was visited daily by journalists and hence had a high media profile. There would also appear to have been a strong disapproval at the Free State of those who voiced arguments which were perceived to have the potential to break the unity of the anti-motorway campaign. Andrew Brammer, the Glasgow organiser for the Socialist Workers Party at the time of the Free State's existence recalls some of the arguments and problems that his organisation encountered at the Free State and also indicates that the Free State was perhaps not so free as its name suggests :

> 'I remember at Pollok the criticism that was levelled at the SWP was that we were not spending enough time at the camp and that we should have been following the lead of the environmentalists - I would reply that our effectiveness is in terms of the contacts we have outside of Pollok and also that it wasn't the only struggle that was taking place at the time. I'm reluctant to get into the criticism of the anarchists as we often see that in the popular press but there were surprising arguments about selling 'Socialist Worker' at Pollok - that was an argument that people got into... and selling the paper created tensions certainly - some people didn't want us to sell it because of

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[410] Connolly, W. Interview, 18/06/96

their political beliefs or that it breaks the 'unity' - you know the type of people who say we're not here to discuss politics but we're here to concentrate on the issue of the motorway - ie, if the selling of a socialist newspaper was seen on TV it looks as if we've been infiltrated by Communists, Trotskyists and what not - but for us selling the paper is important in whatever struggle we're involved in because we want people to generalise from that particular struggle to the other struggles that are taking place' [411]

It should be stressed that Brammer went to great lengths later in the interview to stress the positive democratic and empowering aspects of Free State life as well as the negative ones and the fact that despite tensions the SWP was generally made to feel welcome and was freely allowed to put its case. Alongside tensions engendered by the unwritten code of conduct which governed behaviour within the Free State itself, another source of tension within the wider campaign arose directly from the anarchic ad-hoc manner in which actions against the motorway were 'planned' and executed by the eco-activists. As illustrated in the last chapter (section 4.4.4) this sometimes led to the different strands of the anti-M77 campaign working against each other as opposed to working together. Finally, as is also illustrated in the last chapter the Free State's primary environmental orientation had a tendency to alienate the more socially orientated community activists who had been driving the anti-motorway campaign since its inception.

5.6 *Conclusion*

The green anarchism espoused by EF! UK which combines deep ecology and social ecology (ie, social deep ecology) provided the main philosophical and political rationale for the existence of the Pollok Free State. This influence comes across strongly in the Declaration of Independence, in the attitudes articulated by individual resident activists, and in the way in which life at the encampment was organised. It can be surmised that deep ecology is however the dominant philosophical current within EF! UK and therefore was so at the Free State because as a philosophy it is by its very nature anti-systematic, eclectic and boundary breaking, whereas social

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[411] Brammer, A. Interview, 2/10/97

ecology is a systematic, rational and relatively self-enclosed paradigm of thought which stands in opposition to almost every aspect of deep ecology. Only by working from deep ecological premises could a merger of deep and social ecology take place; ie, it could not happen the other way round without destroying social ecology's basic foundational assumptions. EF! UK's environmental radicalism (as opposed to the environmental militancy of its US counterpart) stems from its partial embrace of social ecology which lends it a distinctive anti-capitalist edge. At the Pollok Free State, Glasgow EF! activists would not have achieved the level of support from local community activists and left-wing groupings which they did achieve, had they not had a significant social element to their ecology.

EF!'s eclectic green anarchism provided the basic norms and values around which the subculture of everyday camp life at the Free State was organised. At the level of human relationships this anarchism stresses the ideals of non-hierarchy and personal responsibility for the well being of the collective. Hence there were no formal leaders at the Free State, traditional social distinctions and gender roles were challenged, and each individual resident was expected to 'pull his or her weight' in the daily struggle to maintain and sustain the encampment as a functioning entity. Equally this type of anarchism also fed into the process of decision making at the Free State whereby the formation of open fluid inclusive consensus was deemed to be superior on both democratic and tactical grounds to the rigid machinations of formal democratic decision making through voting procedures or the development of a closed 'party line'. This mode of 'disorganised' organisation and the norms and values which underpin it were perceived by the Free State's residents as standing directly in opposition to those of the dominant culture and as providing a defensive bulwark against the 'outside world's' intrusions.

The research interviews quoted in this chapter illustrate just how difficult such ideals are to put into practice and how despite the best efforts of the individuals concerned the 'world outside' and the dominant culture impacted upon these anarchist ideals to compromise and alter them in the substantive practice of camp life. Thus although there were no formal leaders, leaders nevertheless emerged in a liberal meritocratic 'natural' or organic manner through the conveyance of respect for an individuals actions and the authority of such leaders was deemed necessary for the continued well being of the camp. Equally traditional roles for men and women would appear to have not been entirely eradicated. Moreover, although the Free State

residents aimed in all spheres to be as inclusive as possible it was necessary at times to exclude certain individuals who had a disruptive impact and to outlaw particular practices which might cause disharmony within the environs of the camp. The organisation of life at the Free State illustrates then that although anarchist ideals may provide an overarching system of values for members of such alternative protest communities and subcultures to aspire to, in practice it is necessary to compromise such ideals in the service of the collective well being of the whole. In essence this means that the anarchist ideal of absolute personal freedom must be compromised and limits put upon that personal autonomy. Hence in practice the ideal of personal freedom is transformed into one that stresses the maximisation of autonomy as opposed to an autonomy without limits - this is a change that is required for democratic reasons as well as for the preservation of the good of the collective whole and is something that more closely resembles communitarianism than anarchism. Even under ideal conditions as the political philosopher Kenneth Graham (1982) has shown in his critique of Robert Paul Wolf's (1970) defence of philosophical anarchism, this compromise must be made if anarchism is to claim to be a truly democratic political philosophy.[412]

Seel (1996), in his commentary, helpfully likens the Pollok Free State to Bey's (1996) conception of the Temporary Autonomous Zone (TAZ) defined as 'guerilla operation which liberates an area (of land, of time, of imagination) and then dissolves itself to reform elsewhere/else-when'.[413] The Pollok Free State TAZ, Seel argues, played a dual role; its primary role was to facilitate active oppositional resistance to the construction of the M77 extension, to the CJA, and towards hegemonic political, economic and cultural formations, while its secondary role was to offer positive

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[412] see, Graham, K. (1982), Democracy and the Autonomous Moral Agent, in, Graham, K. (ed), (1982), Contemporary Political Philosophy, (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press); and, Wolf, R. P. (1970), In Defence of Anarchism, (New York : Harper and Row). Graham argues that the anarchist ideal of absolute individual autonomy is unsustainable even in an ideal participative direct democracy. This is because a democratic society is necessarily constituted in a pluralistic manner comprising competing autonomous subjects whose interests inevitably must come into conflict with one another - these conflicts he argues can only be settled by reference to the principle of the maximisation of autonomy as opposed to absolute autonomy. Thus Graham argues that 'the more decisions there are in favour of a given state of affairs obtaining, the more autonomy will be thwarted in that state of affairs is not brought about.... or put more simply, if you want to maximise autonomy where people disagree, accept majority votes' , p. 132.
[413] Bey, H. (1996), TAZ : The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism, (Camberley : Green Anarchist Books), p. 101

cultural and lifestyle alternatives to those formations.[414] In the aftermath of the anti-motorway campaign, it is arguable however that the function of providing cultural and lifestyle alternatives came to assume at least an equal position in terms of way in which the activists at the Free State defined its function. This ties in with the experience of a number of TAZs on the European mainland where as a recognisable aspect of the anarchist tradition, autonomous zones which began as temporary sites of squatters' resistance to private property in the 1960s, have actually become semi-permanent enclaves of alternative or experimental forms community, lifestyle and culture in cities like Copenhagen, Amsterdam and Berlin.[415] The Pollok Free State shares an affinity with this European tradition but also with British examples of TAZs built around anti-roads protests such as at Leytonstonia and Wanstonia in London which were set-up to oppose the M11 Link Road, and with anti-nuclear protest as at Greenham Common and the Faslane nuclear base on the Clyde, each of which have combined active physical resistance with counter-hegemonic practices and the promotion of cultural and lifestyle alternatives.

One important aspect that distinguishes the Pollok Free State from its English counterparts is that amongst its residents there was a distinctive current of romantic cultural Scottish nationalism which existed alongside and complemented the deep ecology of the eco-activists living there. This was premised on the notion that traditional Scottish culture has been suppressed by a dominant and alien English culture. In turn this was held by the eco-activists to be grounds for solidarity with oppressed indigenous minorities fighting to preserve their cultures and traditional ways of life from the encroachments of hegemonic western Anglo-American culture. Celtic imagery and the promotion of traditional Scottish arts, crafts, culture and pre-modern ways of life were therefore especially important to the Free State activists.

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[414] Seel, B. (1997), Strategies of Resistance at the Pollok Free State Road Protest Camp, Unpublished Paper, Direct Action in British Environmentalism Conference, Keele University, November 1997

[415] Katsiaficas (1997), recounts the impact of what is perhaps the most dramatic incidence of a large scale TAZ aimed at specifically confronting state power. This TAZ was brought into existence at Goreleben in Germany in 1980 when over 5,000 anti-nuclear activists set up the Free Republic of Wendland on the construction site of a nuclear waste processing plant and sustained a community there from May 3rd to June 6th. When the police violently attacked the activists on June the 3rd and began to clear the site a wave of public sympathy was provoked throughout Germany with mass demonstrations and occupations taking place in twenty-five German cities. Katsiaficas argues that the incidents which occurred at the Goreleben site had a positive radicalising effect upon the wider anti-nuclear movement in Germany which by 1981 had attracted sufficient support that it was able to hold a demonstration numbering 300,000 in Bonn, demonstrations of 400,000 and 500,000 in 1982 and one of 650,000 in 1983. see, Katsiaficas, G. (1997), The Subversion of Politics and the Decolonisation of Everyday Life, (New Jersey : Humanities Press International Inc), pp. 82 - 85

This assertion of what is perceived to be traditional Scottishness culminated in the Gal-Gael Society which was set up in early 1996. Hill et al (1995), pointedly link the growth of radical environmentalism in Scotland with the growth of nationalism, and especially cultural nationalism, arguing that 'the murmurs of direct eco-militancy in Scotland appear to increase hand in hand with the attempts at reasserting this indigenous voice'.[416] Their argument illustrates that in order to understand environmental movements, alongside analysing the philosophical and political currents which feed into them, it is necessary to situate those movements within not only local contexts but also within the context of national political and cultural circumstances.

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[416] Hill, B. & Freeman, R. & Blamires, S. & McIntosh, A. (1995), Popular Resistance and the Emergence of Rdaical Environmentalism in Scotland, in, Taylor, B. (1995), op cited, p.244

Chapter 6 : *The Anti-Roads Protest Movement, Social Movements and Politics*

> 'Protest and social movements.... have done two things – they have put issues on the political agenda, and they have changed the way in which we think about politics. Whatever one may think about their impact, there can be no dispute that they have managed to alter the terms of debate over the last thirty years.... What evidence we have suggests that young people in Britain today are not greatly enamoured of the 'classical' movements of the seventies and eighties – but when they come together to protest for animal rights or civil liberties, or against road building or marine pollution, they are drawing on thirty years of such protest, whether they realise it or not. In tangible terms, our protest and social movements have seen many of their aims and desires frustrated, but in less tangible terms – in people's attitudes, and the way in which they assess what is 'acceptable' and 'unacceptable' in politics – protest and social movements have much more to celebrate. We have not moved from 'old' politics to 'new' politics – but, thanks to protest and social movements we have a *different* politics in Britain today.'

(Byrne, P. (1997), Social Movements in Britain)[417]

6.1 *Introduction*

The research conducted for this thesis set out to examine and explore the key sociological dimensions of the widespread protests against the government's road building programme which took place during the 1990s in Britain. In the introductory chapter the historical background, evolution and impact of the protests was explored alongside a brief review of pertinent academic literature, and a methodology section outlining the research aims, detailing the research strategy and tracing the progress of the research process which revolved around two exploratory sociological case studies. The first case study focused on Alarm UK – the national umbrella organisation for local groups opposing road schemes, and employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The second case study focused upon the campaign against the

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[417] Byrne, P. (1997), Social Movements in Britain, (London : Routledge), pp. 179-180

M77 extension in Glasgow and employed qualitative approaches. Chapter two also took the form of an introductory chapter in that it critically examined the highly contested field of social movements theory and research in order to define themes and questions which would help to guide both the research and interpretive processes involved in conducting the two case studies. In chapter three research data pertaining to the Alarm UK case study was woven together and analysed in order to build up an understanding of Alarm UK's aims, organisational structure, role in the wider mobilisation against road building, and a socio-political profile of its support base. Chapter four used research data from the M77 case study to trace the trajectory of the oppositional campaign from its community origins in the early 1970s through its various twists and turns to its culmination in the direct action protest campaign of the mid-1990s. Chapter five also used research data from the M77 case study but in this instance to focus upon the theory and practice of the Earth First ! residents of the Pollok Free State, a fortified eco-encampment set up in the path of the motorway construction route.

As evinced in chapters three, four and five, and in line with the general aims of the research as outlined in chapter one, each of the key facets of the anti-roads protests of the 1990's have been subject to sociological investigation :

1) The national umbrella organisation for grassroots local action groups (Alarm UK case study).
2) The support base for local grassroots action groups (Alarm UK case study).
3) Local community protest (M77 case study)
4) The intervention of the militant environmental grouping Earth First ! (M77 case study)
5) The creation of fortified eco-encampments (M77 case study)
6) Direct action protest (both case studies)
7) The alliances between the different groupings opposing road building (both case studies)

In this final chapter, a sociological overview of the contemporary protests against road and motorway building will be constructed using a combination of the thematic foci and questions outlined in chapter two and the empirical research cited throughout this thesis as key reference points. For the sake of clarity the overview is broken up into

five distinct but nevertheless inter-related sections. The first section will focus upon the question of how the protests should be conceptualised and defined in relation to social movements theory. In the second section the question of the factors behind the mobilisation of the protesters and their organisations will be addressed. The third section will examine the dynamics of the alliances between the different groupings which came together to oppose road building, the reasons for those alliances and the possible tensions and contradictions contained within them. The fourth section will evaluate the political potentials of the protests to contribute to the development of a wider emancipatory politics; while the concluding section will briefly sketch a few suggestions for future research in this area

6.2 *Conceptualising and Defining the Contemporary Protests Against Road Building*

Chapter two took the form of a critical review of social movements theory which brought out the differences between resource mobilisation theory (RMT) which has historically been the dominant theoretical paradigm in the USA, and new social movements theory which has historically been dominant in Europe. It was argued that each of these bodies of theory is underpinned by very different philosophical, political and methodological foundational assumptions which means that they diverge from one another even at the basic level of conceptualising and defining what a social movement actually is. The gulf between these theories is so deep in fact that each has become synonymous with the geographical locations where they developed in reaction to the inadequacies of 'classical' theories which were exposed by the social upheavals of the 1960's.

For RMT, a social movement is primarily a vehicle used by aggrieved social groupings with no other means of access to the polity, to exert pressure for political reforms and vie with other mobilised groups over access to resources and the exercise of power. As such, social movements are conceived of as a 'normal' and indeed integral aspect of the pluralist liberal democratic political system to which above all they are seeking inclusion. In this perspective both a social movement's mobilisation and its ultimate success is dependent on the availability of resources and the way in which those resources are deployed by social movement organisations (SMOs). Organisation is essential because without it the resources which will determine a mobilisation's success cannot be accumulated or put to work either in attracting

members to the movement's banner or in pursuing the movement's aims. Underlying RMT's conceptualisation of social movements is a utilitarian/instrumental conception of rationality derived from rational choice theory and premised on the maximisation of self-interest. In this conception an individual will only participate in social movement activities if he or she is likely to attain benefits which outweigh the costs of participation, and importantly, if at least some of those benefits are limited to those who participate. Social movements themselves follow the same utilitarian logic in the way in which they operate because in order to be successful they must provide supporters with requisite selective benefits as well as constantly accumulating resources in order to ensure their own perpetuation. Driving social movements are therefore 'realist' political imperatives which involve the adoption of low cost/low risk strategies which limit the demands placed upon members and limit political demands to those which are perceived to maximise public support (often single issues) hence opening up the possibility of alliances with mainstream established political forces. Under these strictures social movements will also tend to evolve organisationally towards the centralisation of decision making, the professionalisation of activism and eventual institutionalisation. Hence according to RMT, the 'realist' imperative to maximise self-interest constrains what social movements can and cannot achieve and therefore as a social movement matures a concomitant process of deradicalisation must take place.

Although in chapter two it was recognised that certain core concepts used by resource mobilisation theorists might prove useful as analytical tools in the conduct and interpretation of research for this thesis, RMT as a general theoretical approach was rejected as a viable framework on which to frame and interpret the research for this thesis. Four key areas of critique were cited for this rejection; the first two of which were deemed to be most valid in terms of criticism of this body of theory as a whole : firstly, because RMT suffers from a restrictive and distorted view of human rationality; secondly, because RMT does nor recognise a substantive role for ideology or values in movement mobilisations hence allowing no grounds for differentiation between different types of collective action; thirdly, because RMT has an elitist view of politics which reproduces the internal logic of functionalism; and fourthly, because the research carried out under the auspices of RMT does not stand up to comparative empirical scrutiny.

The research on anti-roads protests presented in the course of this thesis generally sustains chapter two's initial rejection because it illustrates that neither Alarm UK or Earth First ! (EF!), the two principle organisations which animated the protests, behaved in a manner which entirely conforms to the core assumptions of RMT. Although during its short existence Alarm UK was careful not to alienate its support base by widening its transport/roads campaigning remit and can be interpreted as seeking mainstream acceptance by joining the Real World Coalition, it remained throughout its existence committed to a radical position of no compromise on the issue of road-building, encouraged its support base to place no faith in legal processes, consistently endorsed the use of law breaking direct action tactics of both its own supporters and those in other organisations, maintained a decentralised non-hierarchical structure, and co-ordinated a network of local groups built on universalist NOPE (Not On Planet Earth) principles as opposed to self-interested NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) principles. To be sure self-interest played a part in initially mobilising the local groups affiliated to Alarm UK while the ability to organise resources was important to ensuring the overall success of the protests. However, as the next section will illustrate, non-instrumental values and critical ideology also played an important mediating role in the mobilisation of the protests. This is equally true of the local community opposition to the M77 extension which chapter four concentrates upon – in this instance class solidarity was a key driving force behind the oppositional campaign.

Earth First ! conforms even less to the model of the self-seeking SMO advanced by RMT although certain internal debates referred to in chapters one and five do reflect a concern with strategy, future direction and media image. As chapter five illustrates EF! has gone from strength to strength in the UK doing many things which are precisely the opposite of what RMT predicts it should. For example EF! is uncompromising in it stance on protecting the environment, it constantly pursues high cost/high risk strategies involving law breaking and confrontations with state authorities, structurally it can be described as a 'disorganisation', it offers little hope of ultimate success to its supporters, and it makes no attempt to seek mainstream political acceptance.

In chapter two European 'new' social movements theory was critically endorsed as a more appropriate approach to underpin, frame and interpret the research for this thesis. Chapter two argued that although European new social movements scholarship

is riven with contradictions, internal debates and often deep political divisions between individual theorists and different schools of thought (Marxism, Frankfurt critical theory, neo-Weberianism and post-modernism being the most salient trends), a common starting point is nevertheless widely shared which views the new movements active in the contemporary period as being discontinuous with both the social movements of the past and with the realm of institutional politics. The new movements are held to be symptomatic of the structural shift from industrial capitalism to an new era variously described as late/monopoly/post-industrial or post-modern capitalism where traditional class based political cleavages which defined the 'old' politics have either altered significantly or have broken down altogether thus bringing into being new historical actors in the form of the new movements. The new movements break with institutional politics because they operate outside the realm of the polity at the level of civil society and culture where they work in radical opposition to the technocratic state and hegemonic capitalist culture to advance progressive social change through the propagation of expressive values and the raising of new issues which both defend and extend the public sphere. In the European conception of social movements (both 'old' and 'new') as historical actors, is therefore the implicit assumption that they are seeking to bring about fundamental social change. In the case of the 'new' movements this aim is also reflected in their organisational structure which tends to be non-hierarchical, decentralised and participatory in form and operates through informal networks of interaction as opposed to the formal structured hierarchies which characterised the 'old' political paradigm. Thus the new movements propose in their form, ideological content and actions an alternative model of development to the hegemonic capitalist model.

In chapter two's critical evaluation of 'new' social movements theory it was argued that the discontinuity thesis was problematic and that the adjective 'new' should be dropped in favour of the adjective 'contemporary'. This is because historical sociological research has revealed that each of the supposedly 'new' characteristics of social movements active in the current period had predecessors reaching back to social movements active in the 19th century. Research has also illustrated that by no means all the so called 'old' social movements were primarily class based or merely concerned with narrow economistic or distributional demands. A further reason for discarding the adjective 'new' is that it implies that the 'new' movements have replaced the 'old' movements (in particular the labour movement) or

that the 'old' movements are no longer active. This is an erroneous assumption because although contemporary capitalism may be undergoing processes of structural change, it continues to be defined by the capital/labour dialectic of which the numerous incidences of labour conflict and working class struggle ongoing throughout the world serve as ample reminders.

In a further development of the last criticism it was also argued that what new movements theorists often fail to recognise is that the evolution of contemporary social movements like the women's movement, the students movement and the peace movement during the 1960s and early 1970s was accompanied by an upsurge in labour movement militancy. When that militancy died down in the late 1970s and 1980s the other movements also tended to adopt more compliant and less radical postures. Thus there would appear to be an intrinsic relationship between the radicalisation of different social sectors and social groupings and that the social movements borne of those sectors and groupings go through cycles of upturn and downturn in struggle. The final criticisms made of new social movements theory in chapter two's critical evaluation were that European approaches tend to overly downplay the instrumental/strategic aspects of collective action and to simply ignore the political dimensions of social movement mobilisations. Thus while RMT wrongly emphasises these dimensions of collective action to the detriment of all others, it can nevertheless act as a useful corrective to theories of the new social movements which place an over emphasis on the impact of expressive values in social movement mobilisations, fail to recognise the importance of resources and organisation in movement mobilisations and limit their impacts to the realm of culture and civil society.

As at least a partial solution to the problems associated with new social movements theory it was argued at the end of chapter two that Byrne's (1997) conception of social movements as forming part of a 'continuum of political action' is a good starting place. According to Byrne collective forms of political action should be conceived of as constituting a fluid matrix where organisation, tactics and ideology are in a constant state of flux. Key trends can nevertheless be identified which allow a loosely graded categorisation to be made using differences between organisation, tactics and ideology as evaluative criteria. Political parties which are organised formally, use conventional tactics and normally hold a reformist ideology are at one end of the continuum, and riots which either have informal or no organisation, use

unconventional tactics and are usually radical in their ideology, are at the other end (see section 2.5.6, Table 1). In between these two extremes however the differences between organisation, tactics and ideology become more difficult to delineate. It is in this constantly shifting 'grey area', that different types of interest group (protectional and promotional) and social movements are respectively located. In the case of social movements the blurring is particularly intense because they represent the point in the matrix where organisation may be formal and/or informal, tactics may be conventional and/or unconventional, and ideology may be reformist and/or radical.

Thus for Byrne there is no singular or decisive break point between conventional and unconventional forms of politics; instead different combinations of organisation, tactics and ideology may or may not give rise to forms of collective action including social movements which contain elements of both, or may lean towards one end of the continuum or the other. This conceptualisation is based upon research on social movements in Britain and is rooted in a European definition of social movements as historical actors which in different ways challenge the prevailing cultural, social, political and economic norms of advanced capitalist society in order to bring about fundamental structural changes. Byrne cites four major examples of social movements which came into being in advanced capitalist societies during the 1960s and 1970s which fit this 'pure' model; ie, the students, womens, environmental and peace movements. Other groupings and organisations have of course been active in challenging the prevailing social order and indeed sometimes in very radical ways, however for Byrne they should not be conceptualised as social movements because their aims have been more limited in scope and hence their lifespans have tended to be much shorter. These groupings he argues should be defined as either protest campaigns or protest movements depending primarily upon the scope of their aims and their durability over time.

A protest campaign's raison d'etre is to change one particular area of government policy and once that singular aim has been achieved it will fold. Protest movements also focus on one particular area of government policy but will also incorporate wider issues and explicitly aim to achieve changes in social attitudes and cultural values. Both protest campaigns and protest campaigns may use unconventional tactics and may make radical demands but will have more of a tendency towards a formalised structure than social movements. Where however the crucial distinction lies is that neither is seeking the wholesale socio-cultural

transformation that social movements strive for. Protest campaigns, protest movements and social movements although conceptually distinct are though often intimately linked to one another. For example it is the norm for a social movement to contain one or more protest campaign or protest movement within its network of interaction. Equally because the boundaries between different types of collective action are far from set in stone what begins as a protest campaign may develop wider interests to become a protest movement or even a full blown social movement. Despite the fact that Byrne's conceptualisation of social movements and his definitional distinctions between different forms of collective political action are as he himself acknowledges 'clumsy', and are indeed far from universally valid in their application, they nevertheless contain important elaborations of European social movements theory which help in the conceptualisation and definition of the contemporary protests against road building that constitute the subject matter for this thesis.

It is clear from the evidence cited in chapters three to five that the network of protesters and organisations which have animated the contemporary protests against road building share a number of affinities with a European conception of what a social movement is. Firstly the anti-roads protests can be viewed as the product of a structural contradiction between the need for advanced capitalism to have an efficient transport infrastructure and the needs of ordinary people to have a reasonable environmental quality of life. For example in Castells' theorisation the protests could be viewed as symptomatic of an 'urban contradiction' engendered by the competing demands of the productive sector of the economy and the non-productive sector of collective consumption. Alternatively, in Habermas' theorisation, the protests could be viewed as symptomatic late capitalism's ongoing crisis of legitimation which is borne of the contradiction between public expectations of the political administrative system and the state's inability to satisfy both these expectations and the acute demands of economic restructuring. Secondly, and related to the last point, the anti-roads protests have raised new issues in the public sphere relating in particular to environmental quality of life and in doing so have challenged the legitimacy of technocratic decision making that is based solely upon economic criteria. Thirdly, the anti-roads protests have often taken an unconventional form involving various forms of direct action that break with the social norm of 'respect' for the law and bypass the traditional channels of dialogue and decision making between the state and civil

society; and fourthly, the anti-roads protests have been organised from the 'bottom up' in a grassroots participatory manner through decentralised coalitions and networks involving a diverse mix of individuals, groupings and organisations. However despite these affinities with a European conception of what a social movement is, the anti-roads protests have been limited in their aims to changing an area of government policy and therefore should not be defined as such. Here Byrne's conceptual distinctions and theorisation of the relationship between protest and social movements are especially useful.

In accordance with Byrne's conceptual distinctions, the protesters and organisations which were central to generating the widespread protests against road-building which took place in Britain during the 1990s constituted a protest movement - hence the title of this thesis. This is because because unlike a social movement the activists involved were not seeking fundamental socio-economic change through their actions but rather aiming to radically challenge government policy in the area of its road-building programme. The road building issue is however one which cannot stand alone and indeed is one which by its very nature unavoidably necessitates an engagement with wider transport and sustainability issues and forces the consideration of alternatives. Thus in challenging the governments road-building programme the anti-roads activists and their organisations challenged a wide area of government transport and environmental policy bringing issues such as investment in public transport, integrated transport, sustainable development and accountability in planning to the fore while also acting to bring about cultural changes relating to lifestyle and values.

The fact that the anti-roads protests took on these wider issues and incorporated them in different ways into their agendas is a key factor in the argument that if taken as a whole they differ from a protest campaign which has more limited aims directed to changing singular aspects of central government legislation or local government planning decisions. This is not to argue that the anti-roads protest movement did not contain protest campaigns which it did in the form of the numerous local groups fighting road and motorway schemes across the country. Rather it is to argue that those 250-300 local groups who affiliated to the Alarm UK national co-ordinating network, and many of whom worked together with with militant environmental groups like Earth First ! and/or more mainstream environmental groups like Friends of the Earth, constituted a mass protest movement whose aims and concerns extended

beyond the immediate issue of road-building itself and into the whole area of progressively reforming transport and development policy. Moreover, the fact that protests on the anti-roads model have continued around wider transport and developmental issues even after the government began to reverse its road building policy in late 1996 (eg, the protests against a new runway at Manchester Airport in 1997 are one particularly high profile example) lends further credence to the protest movement argument. Perhaps though the factor which seals the argument that together the anti-roads protests should be conceived of as a protest movement is that alongside aims related to reforming transport and environment policy was an inter-related desire to change public attitudes by questioning the basis of 'car culture', promoting green lifestyle alternatives (eg, cutting down on car use) and propagating green values. Indeed it was recognised by those active in the protest movement that this was necessary if they were to be successful. Thus activists recognised that although individual protest campaigns might be lost, the local interest and media coverage generated by a protest campaign was invaluable in bringing the issues to the wider public and in getting activists' arguments across so that the wider protest movement would be successful in the long term. As indicated by the British Social Attitudes survey data cited in chapter one (see section 1.2.1) there is evidence to suggest that the protest movement did indeed succeed in changing public attitudes across a range of issues relating to road building, transport, sustainable development and the environment - the longevity of this change is however a very open question.

While the anti-roads protest movement can be said to have contained numerous local protest campaigns, it was also at one and the same time intrinsically linked to the wider social movement that environmentalism constitutes. There was a fluid interactive relationship between individual localised protest campaigns against road building, the protest movement oriented towards changing government transport and development policy and the wider environmental movement which seeks fundamental structural change across all economic and social spheres. This is evinced by the fact that the activists involved in the principal organisations researched for this thesis (Alarm UK and its affiliated local groups, and Earth First !), who were at the forefront of the protests, were to a large extent influenced by different shades of green ideology, tried to live green lifestyles and were either members or supporters of a variety of green organisations and campaigns which work on numerous different fronts to challenge the prevailing profit-oriented socio-economic order. Equally, as

the research also shows, the discourses of opposition to road building tended to be framed using green language, the protests legitimised with recourse to green ideology, and arguments against roads validated with green scientific research. Where this was not the case as in Corkerhill Community Council's working class opposition to the M77 extension in Glasgow (see chapter 4) which was built around class identity and class solidarity, lack of direct support from the mainstream labour movement meant that once legal processes had been exhausted and direct action became the only option left, the M77 campaign became increasingly environmental in tone as an alliance with militant greens was formed (see the following sections for more on the nature of this alliance).

Perhaps the most important impact that the anti-roads protests have had upon the wider environmental movement is that they may have at least partially shaken many of the larger environmental campaigning organisations out of the complacency and deradicalisation that set in during the downturn of the 1980s. By the fact that local anti-roads protest groups emerged in a grassroots manner largely outside the boundaries of the established environmental groups and engendered the birth of new militant participatory networks and coalitions in the form of Alarm UK, Earth First ! and Reclaim the Streets, the British environmental establishment has been forced to take note that effective environmental campaigning is more than simply about generating large but passive memberships, professional protest and high level lobbying. Moreover, because the anti-roads protests were often direct and confrontational in style and yet still gained a significant amount of public sympathy, they have callenged large established environmental groups to re-examine their stance on the question of breaking the law. How the environmental establishment will respond in the long term to the threats posed to its hegemony by the anti-roads protest movement remains to be seen but to attempt to control the ongoing groundswell of grassroots militant campaigning over roads and related issues that has been brought into being by the anti-roads protest movement would prove to be a difficult and perhaps costly task in terms of both public relations and membership. It would also be difficult to control because of the decentralised structure of the environmental movement. Unlike for example the British labour movement where there is a centralised organisation in the form of the TUC bureaucracy that facilitates control of militant tendencies in the trade unions, the environmental movement has no equivalent central coordinating body and therefore similar tendencies have more

freedom to flourish. In fact there are signs in relation to recent protests against destructive and polluting forms of development and in the campaign against genetically modified food that the wider environmental movement in the UK, including the established groups, is responding positively to the injection of militancy that the anti-roads protest movement has brought.

The research on the anti-roads protest movement carried out for this thesis illustrates something of the fluid dynamic and interactive nature of the relationship between protest and social movements. Social movements are far from monolithic collective entities but rather contain a variety of disparate, sometimes allied, sometimes competing interests, each vying for ideological, tactical and organisational hegemony within a network milieu of which protest campaigns and protest movements constitute integral parts. Protest campaigns and protest movements themselves are also far from monolithic containing a variety of different currents and tendencies. Protest campaigns and protest movements inevitably impact upon the social movements they are related to in a variety of different ways. They may engender new organisations, raise new issues, develop new tactics or revive old ones which both further the aims of the wider social movement or even have the potential to alter its developmental trajectory. A social movement also impacts in a variety of different ways on the protest campaigns and protest movements which it contains; for example it may supply expertise to further the protests' aims or supply ideology and framing discourses to underpin, solidify and lend legitimacy to the protests.

The anti-roads protest movement in Britain during the 1990s has constituted what has perhaps been the most widespread expression of militant environmentalism this country has yet seen. Through the mobilisation of numerous local protest campaigns against road building a mass protest movement came into being which was prepared to challenge the government in the area of its transport and environment policies in a very direct and confrontational manner. Using in the main the rhetoric of environmentalism to legitimise its actions the anti-roads protest movement forced the government into a policy U-turn on road building and to consider more sustainable alternatives in the areas of transport and development while at the same time acting through the cultural realm to change public attitudes, values and lifestyles accordingly. The latter changes are much less tangible and much more difficult to gauge than the former and perhaps can only be measured in terms of the long term evolution of the wider green movement. Undoubtedly though the anti-roads protest

movement impacted upon the British environmental movement (and also the international environmental movement) in that it has altered its tactical repertoire and has engendered new militant organisations to challenge the hegemony of the older established environmental organisations. The dynamic dialectic between the anti-roads protest movement and the environmental movement is set to continue in coming years as the protest movement broadens out to take on new issues.

1.3 *Mobilising Factors*

The quantification of mobilising factors behind the anti-roads protest movement is a difficult and complex task where it would be all too easy to fall into the trap of over emphasising particular political, social and ideological determinants to the detriment of others or indeed in forwarding simple causal relationships. The task is further complicated by the fact that the anti-roads protest movement was constituted by an alliance of two distinct wings; ie, the militant environmentalists associated with groups like Earth First ! and the local action groups affiliated in the main to Alarm UK (Doherty, 1996). The nature of this alliance will be discussed in the next section. What will be argued here though with reference to the research is that a number of social, political and ideological causal factors predisposed individuals to participate in the protests in different ways but did not directly determine their participation. Moreover at a macro level, a number of structural factors related to political opportunities, political culture, and contemporary educational and economic changes facilitated the participation of those predisposed to do so and hence facilitated growth of the anti-roads protest movement's mobilisation.

In relation to the local group wing of the anti-roads protest movement, survey data presented in chapter three on Alarm UK's affiliated groups, reveals the ideal type of local group member or supporter to be a white, middle aged, male, home owner, who is highly educated and does professional white collar work which is relatively well paid in the public welfare/creative sectors. What was particularly noteworthy about the statistics pertaining to these basic sociological variables was the almost complete absence of working class respondents engaged in either routine white collar work or manual work. This evidence broadly corresponds to the theoretical literature on the class nature of 'new' social movements which posits that adherents are in general relatively affluent, highly educated and rooted in the professional new middle

class (Habermas 1982, Offe 1987, Touraine 1988, Gorz 1982, Scott 1990, Melucci 1989, Eder 1993). The figures also display a consistency with empirical research carried out in the UK on the memberships of anti-nuclear and environmental organisations which reinforce the new middle class thesis (Parkin 1968, Cotgrove 1982, Porritt and Winner 1988, Mattausch 1989, Bennie, Rudig & Franklin 1991).

Why proportionately, the professional new middle class should be predisposed to participation in protest and social movement activities has been the subject of much sociological debate in both the fields of social movements theory and class analysis. It is a debate which pivots around the notions of self-interested instrumental sectionalism and expressive values. On the one hand there are those theorists who argue like Frankel (1987) that new middle class activism in the protest and social movements is the expression of a sectional politics which is aimed primarily at furthering self-interest by both defending new middle class identities and lifestyles, and by securing resources which ensure the continuation of the NGO's, charities, campaigning organisations and state sector institutions where new middle class careers are located. Thus Frankel critically notes that the 'the majority of peace activists, feminists, gays, environmentalists and animal liberationists have tended to focus their activities on capitalist enterprises and those state apparatuses (eg, defence departments), which do not necessarily threaten jobs in the 'social wage' services of local and national state sectors'[418]. On the other hand there are those theorists who follow Parkin's (1968) position which puts much more of an emphasis on the expressive dimensions of middle class politics. In his classic study of CND, Parkin noted that 'movements with a middle class base have a definite bias in favour of moral rather than economic reforms'.[419] Parkin argued that animating these movements were welfare/creative professionals working in the state sector who had chosen their occupations over more lucrative commercial and industrial employment because of a general orientation towards expressive as opposed to instrumental values. In recent years much debate has centred upon where such values emanate from with a variety of suggestions being put forward by different theorists; eg, socio-cultural socialisation, occuptional socialisation, habitus, educational socialisation etc (see Bagguley 1997, Maheu (ed) 1997).

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[418] Frankel, B. (1987), op cited, p. 239
[419] Parkin, F. (1968), op cited, p. 41

In relation to professional new middle class participation in the anti-roads protest movement there would appear to be evidence to support both positions. Chapter three's survey data illustrates that a majority (albeit a small majority, ie, 58%) of respondents from Alarm UK's local groups were involved in protesting against the building of a road which would negatively impact upon the area in which they were living. Thus it is possible to infer that a NIMBY self-interest in preserving the value of property and a particular quality of life lies at the root of these respondents participation in protests against such roads. Participation of Alarm UK respondents in the protest movement could also be interpreted as acting to defend a new middle class identity or even as an assertion of that identity in an intra-class conflict with the petty bourgeois and managerial middle classes whose class interests, lifestyle and politics are generally different and whose vision of development has concomitantly also tended to be different. Short el al (1985) in their research on conflicts over rural development and housebuilding distinguish differences in the middle classes between what they call 'stoppers' and 'getters', the former tending to be drawn from the professional public sector middle class and the latter from the petty bourgeoisie, while the managerial middle class tend to be split between these two categories.[420]

The research data in chapter three illustrates however that a significant minority of Alarm UK respondents were however involved in opposing road schemes which did not directly affect the areas in which they were living, while in the modified version of Inglehart's test for post-materialism which was included in the survey, almost all the respondents consistently chose priority options that pertained to expressive values and the quality of life as opposed to narrow material interests and conservative preservation of the status quo. These two pieces of evidence are of course inconclusive on their own but they do point towards the fact that alongside self-interest expressive values were also at work as a mobilising factor. This argument is reinforced when the fact that the central plank of Alarm UK's strategy was to encourage affiliated local groups to oppose all road building schemes and not merely those in their 'backyards' and to network information, speakers and other resources amongst themselves for the purpose of furthering that goal. Interviews with Alarm UK's organisers also made clear their perception that what often began as a self-interested local protest developed through participation in the protest movement

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[420] Short, J. & Fleming, S. & Witt, S. (1986), Housebuilding, Planning and Community Action, (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul), pp. 203-239

coalition to engage with wider concerns related to the areas of transport, development and the environment. The research therefore points towards the way in which values can change over time through the experience of collective action. Thus what often starts as a sectional interest develops into an engagement with more universalistic concerns. Alternatively, the arrival of an issue in an individual's 'backyard' may cause that individual to bring otherwise inchoate concerns and ideas together thus propelling he or she from vague sentiment towards concrete action.

Politically, the survey data presented in chapter three reveals that the local groups affiliated to Alarm UK had memberships which were broadly homogeneous and moderately left wing in their ideological orientation. Statistics from questions which asked respondents to locate themselves on a left-right scale, through to those which tested 'attitudes to the market' and 'post-materialism', constitute evidence to support this thesis. It is important to note however that despite this general left-wing orientation, respondents did not define either themselves or their political concerns in a traditionally left-wing manner (ie, as socialists with socialist concerns) as the prominence of the self-description label 'Green' (50 per cent – double that of 'socialist' 25 percent), and a prioritisation of the environment as the number one political issue, illustrates (64 per cent - more than double its nearest rival 'social justice' on 30 per cent). One of the key findings in relation to the politics of the Alarm UK respondents was that a high proportion translated their political beliefs into forms of political action. Survey data reveals that a significant minority of respondents were currently active (35%) in political parties like the Greens, Labour and the Liberal Democrats or had been in the past (20%). Moreover high proportions were also active across a range of organisations and campaign groups related to the wider Green Movement (eg, 62% were active members of FoE). These findings suggest that local groups affiliated to Alarm UK contained many experienced political/social movement activists who already had a left identity of one type or another prior to their involvement with anti-roads activism and could bring campaigning and organisational skills gained from such experience to bear in the cause of the protest movement. Indeed the research suggests that these skills coupled with the resources of education and money which the professional new middle class possesses played an important role in facilitating the mobilisation and in determining the overall success of the anti-roads protest movement. It is also indicative of the way in which the the mobilisation

and success of the anti-roads protest movement was bound up with the longer term growth of the wider Green movement.

The government's road building programme was centred upon semi-rural areas in the 'home counties' and the south of England and this goes some way to explaining the class nature of the ideal type of activist in the local groups affiliated to Alarm UK. Protest mobilisations did however also take place in urban settings like that which grew up around the M77 extension in Glasgow which chapters four and five focus on. In the case of the No M77 campaign the socio-political profile of the local groups opposing the motorway's construction was very different from the norm in the south of England. Here the local opposition led by Corkerhill Community Council was working class and articulated socialist discourses of class solidarity in the face of class oppression. Indigenous leadership and organisation in the form of experienced and respected community activists, and in the later stages of the campaign in the form of Scottish Militant Labour, played an important role in facilitating the mobilisation of protesters from the council estates surrounding the motorway route. While far left groups like the SWP within the wider labour movement also supported the M77 campaign, support on the ground from more mainstream elements was not forthcoming. It is probable that this was because it was a Labour Council which had taken the decision to build the motorway and backed its building despite the widespread public disquiet. Another probable reason for the lack of Labour movement support was that as the protest campaign developed it became portrayed in the media as a 'green issue' as opposed to as 'social issue'. Whatever the reason though, the lack of mainstream labour movement support meant that the local opposition increasingly looked to the Green movement for support. In the early stages of the campaign this support came from the Glasgow for People city-wide alliance of public transport and environmental groups, and in the later stages from the militant eco-activist grouping Earth First !

The research conducted on the No M77 campaign in Glasgow and the survey data pertaining to the EF! activists who were involved with local action groups affiliated to Alarm UK, indicates that EF!'s support base is both working class and middle class, contains large variations in levels of educational attainment and political experience, is younger in the main than is the norm for the local action groups, and is motivated by an eclectic cocktail of anarchist and deep green political and philosophical thinking. It is notable that evidence from the research conducted in

Glasgow suggests that a defence of ethnic identity revolving around a notion of 'Scottishness' or 'Celticness' against the homogenising effects of consumer capitalism that ties into the romantic aspects of green ideology was also at work as a mobilising factor for the Earth Firsters involved in the M77 protests. In England it is possible to surmise that a similar defence of 'Englishness' harking back to an idealised notion of rural idyll in a bygone age may also been a contributing factor to EF!'s mobilisation. EF! in the UK grew almost symbiotically with the spread of anti-roads campaigns which provided an ideal opportunity for EF! activists to gain publicity for their ideas and to employ the tactics of ecotage that had made its sister organisation in the United States famous during the 1980s. While EF! in the UK gained enormously from their involvement in the anti-roads protests, the protests also gained enormously from the involvement of EF! Out of all the different groupings involved, EF! in particular stood in the front line of the NVDA which took place around many of the contested road-building sites and EF! activists contributed skills in this area such as climbing, fortification and resistance to arrest that the local groups did not possess and which the state authorities found very difficult to counteract. Equally the militant green and anarchist ideology which EF! espouses had a radicalising effect upon the protest movement which would have not been there otherwise.

Evidence from the research presented in this thesis indicates that EF!'s support base is split between those activists based in autonomous local action groups and those full-time activists who are geographically mobile and move to and from different protest sites where and when needed. The locally based action groups are largely made up of students and new middle class professionals. EF! recruits its full-time activist support base mainly from two social groupings where the time needed to be a full-time activist is most available. The first grouping that it draws support from is that constituted by angry disaffected youth who are unemployed (eg, as at the Pollok Free State in Glasgow) due to long term changes in the structure of the British economy for which Thatcherism is largely responsible. EF! gives these young people a vehicle to vent their anger and disillusionment in a very direct manner, an alternative lifestyle which is based around solidarity and community where latent skills can be developed, and an oppositional critical ideology which offers hope for progressive social and environmental change. The second grouping that EF! builds its full time activist base from is made up of young unemployed graduates. Purkis (1996)

following Bourdieu, describes this grouping as constituting an 'educated underclass' who are resourceful and rich in 'cultural capital' but are economically decommodified, no longer expect security of employment and subsist on very low incomes. As such these graduates either spend extended periods of time in education and training, in long periods of unemployment and under-employment or they choose to reject the 'system' altogether and instead try to live 'alternative lifestyles'.[421] The latter grouping in EF! also tend to be skilled in using information technology and the explosion of internet and e-mail usage that has occurred during the 1990s has meant that these skills have become invaluable in conducting oppositional campaigning of any type. The anti-roads protest movement has used these skill resources to full effect as the list of websites reviewed in chapter one indicates.

Two other key external factors also deserve attention as mobilisation facilitators of the anti-roads protest movement. The first of these factors centres upon the structure of political opportunities which existed in Britain at the time of the protest movement's mobilisation. The environmental movement had during the 1980s generally switched its focus from grassroots campaigning to an approach centred around high level lobbying. By vacating the ground of militant grassroots opposition the mainstream established environmental groups had in effect created a space or opportunity for new activist based organisations or groupings to exploit and even challenge their hegemony. This is something which Earth First ! has done to great effect during the 1990s around the issue of road-building. Within the general network of public transport campaign groups Alarm UK acted similarly by filling a long standing niche in this area for the creation of a militant grassroots network based around road and transport issues. On the wider political front the protest movement's growth was facilitated by the political opportunity presented by the widespread dissatisfaction with Major's Tory government which as the 1990s moved on became increasingly weak and therefore susceptible to public pressure. Moreover during the 1970s and early 1980s the Labour Left would probably have been a natural home for many of the young people involved in anti-roads protesting and militant environmentalism. However Kinnock's purges of the Left in the mid to late 1980s and the onset of Blairism in the 1990s has made the Labour Party a deeply unattractive

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[421] Purkis, J. (1996), Daring to Dream : Idealism in the Philosophy, Organisation and Campaigning Strategies of Earth First !, in, Barker, C. & Kennedy, P. (eds), (1996), To Make Another World - Studies in Protest and Collective Action, (Aldershot : Avebury), p. 200

organisation to young people and indeed anyone who has even a touch of radicalism in their values, politics or lifestyle.

The second external factor which can be interpreted as facilitating the mobilisation of the anti-roads protest movement revolves around the nature of British political culture which is not underwritten by a formal constitution setting out the positive rights of the citizen, and whose defining feature is a closed first-past the post electoral system in which two political parties dominate. As Byrne (1997) argues, these aspects of British political culture give 'a special resonance to moral protest',[422] something which the protests around the roads issue were often framed as by both activists and media alike. This resonance exists because such protests represent opinion which has no other outlet for expression. Moreover such protests also perhaps have a certain resonance because in themselves they express a liberty which although in retreat in recent years due to the incremental expansion of state regulatory powers, is nevertheless deeply embedded in the public consciousness after the generations of protest, struggle and conflict which have been necessary to achieve even the modicum of liberty which currently exists.

As is outlined above, the mobilising factors which animated and facilitated the anti-roads protest movement are many and varied and each impacted upon the mobilisation in very different but at the same time inter-related ways. The relationships of causality between each of the mobilising factors are however extremely difficult to untangle with often a 'chicken and egg' type of choice being created as each factor is weighed against another. Thus what the interpretation offered here suggests is that beyond the immediate issue of opposition to the building of a road or roads, an accumulation of causal factors of uneven weight acted together at a favourable historical juncture to mobilise the protest movement and to determine its evolution and success. On the individual level predispositions to involvement in the protests were engendered by a combination of self-interest, class, values, ideology and identity. The growth of the protest movement's mobilisation was facilitated by the availability of resources and organisation, while the structure of political opportunities at the time of the protest movement's mobilisation was favourable to its growth and its impact upon politics and culture. Equally British political culture, because it is

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[422] Byrne, P. (1997), op cited, p. 174

defined by negative liberty and a closed political system lends moral protests such as those which drove the anti-roads protest movement a 'special resonance'.

6.4 *Alliances and Alliance Contradictions*

In terms of activism and support the anti-roads protest movement crosses traditional class boundaries and unites the members of different classes depending upon the locality of the protest, i.e. city, town, village, countryside. Thus in urban Glasgow the protests against the M77 extension had large numbers of working class people from the local community participating, whereas at the Newbury or Twyford Down protests in semi-rural areas of southern England the protests tended to be largely middle class (and especially professional new middle class) in composition as the survey data from the Alarm UK case study indicates. In the development of the anti-roads protest movement, the professional middle class fraction, and to a lesser extent other middle class fractions, have united in local action groups, sometimes even with members of the landed class, to counteract a threat to their quality of life and to their property, and to challenge the government in the area of its policies on transport and development. What though is striking about this alliance is that these classes have done so in conjunction with young militant eco-activists who are mostly unemployed, often hold much more radically critical socio-political views (ie, green variations of anarchism), and often have very different reasons for protesting. Moreover members of the local action groups have supported the young eco-activists materially, financially and also physically - a third of respondents to the Alarm UK survey had taken part in various forms of NVDA and approximately three-quarters agreed with breaking the law if it was necessary to do so. Although the social composition of the alliance described latterly was the norm in the anti-roads protest movement there were exceptions as in the M77 campaign in Glasgow where working class people took the place of the middle classes in the local group/militant green alliance partnership.

Had the partnership at the heart of the anti-roads protest movement between local people and militant green activists not existed and each wing of the movement acted autonomously then it is difficult to see where success in stopping the roads programme, changing government policy and altering public attitudes could have come from. The local groups would probably have taken legal processes to their limits, lobbied through the usual channels and perhaps even have disrupted public

inquiries as some did in the 1970s but would not have gone much further.[423] On the other hand, the eco-activists would no doubt have made their moral point by taking direct action, but lacking in material and financial resources, in large scale support on the ground and in the legitimacy that middle class participation added it is likely that they would have been suppressed by the state and marginalised by a hostile media. In contrast, the partnership created a protest movement that was focused, innovative, dynamic and well supported, with each wing complementing the other. In this partnership as was argued in chapter three, Alarm UK played the vital bridging role of facilitator by on the one hand consistently endorsing the direct action of the militant protesters and on the other hand maintaining a narrow concentration on relatively 'safe' transport and development issues which would not alienate the middle classes. By bringing the two wings of the protest movement together, Alarm UK enabled something akin to what Habermasians call a 'communicative dialogue' to take place amongst the different social interests and diverse environmental and political groupings involved.

Outwith the realm of organisation one possible point of contact that helped join the different social groupings in the anti-roads protest movement (excluding the minority of working class participants) is an anti-modernist tendency that is manifest in a nostalgia for rural life and an idealised picture of the past. The landed class have since the onset of industrialisation in the late 18th/early 19th century harked back to an idealised pre-industrial Britain - a vision that goes back to the revolt of the romantics. The middle class is also caught up with the culture of nostalgia but in a different way, ie - in their consumption of romantic kitsch, eg mock Tudor houses, Laura Ashley, William Morris designs, antique fairs etc. The members of this class have also viewed themselves as escaping the worst aspects of urbanisation and industrialism by living either in the suburbs of cities or in the commuter towns and villages of the countryside. Finally, the young eco-activists, many of whom have been brought up in urban settings also tend to illustrate an idealised vision of the past in their treehouses and 'medieval' encampments, their revival and reinvention of folk songs, traditional stories, and pre-industrial mythologies, and in their attempt to revive the arts and crafts tradition in decentralised self-sufficient ecological communities. Such manifestations of romanticism are also as chapter five indicates intimately

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[423] For example see Tyme's account of this type of opposition in, Tyme, J. (1978) op cited

linked to the deep green/anarchist ideology of Earth First ! 'disorganisation' to which many of the eco-activists are affiliated. Although this romanticisation of the past may provide a meeting point for each of these social groupings it is also a source of potential conflict because each social grouping has a very different vision of an ideal way of living and therefore the alliance that exists between them against road building and other forms of development is very tenuous one.

Lowy (1981), argues that romanticism is defined by a 'nostalgia for pre-capitalist societies and a cultural critique of capitalism'.[424] However within this general definition he distinguishes four different types of romanticism : firstly 'past oriented' or 'retrograde romanticism' which wishes to re-establish an earlier social order that existed prior to the development of bourgeois society; secondly 'conservative romanticism' which wishes simply to preserve the status quo by maintaining things as they are; thirdly 'disenchanted romanticism' which recognises that it is impossible to return to a pre-capitalist past but laments the cultural decline associated with industrial capitalism; and fourthly, 'revolutionary romanticism' which 'refuses both the illusion of returning to the communities of the past and reconciliation with the capitalist present, seeking a solution in the future'.[425] It is arguable that the type of middle class romanticism that has been described above in relation to the middle class anti-roads activists comes closest to the second and third of Lowy's categories with an emphasis upon the latter. Although the Alarm UK case study did not really investigate this area it provided some evidence in the form of the survey respondents pessimism about the future of modern society and their green moralism which is indicative of such romantic tendencies. The romanticism of the militant eco-activists displays a curious and contradictory mixture of Lowy's first and last categories and this is evinced in chapter five's exposition of EF!'s ideology and its analysis of that ideology in practice in the campaign against the M77 at the Pollok Free State.

The tensions which exist in terms of variants of romanticism are further compounded by possible conflicts over the status of science and technology. For some in the green movement to which the anti-roads protests were intimately connected, technology and 'positive' science have the potential to make possible the creation of a 'post-industrial utopia' whereby the 20th century decentralising shift from urban to

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[424] Lowy, M. (1981), Marxism and Revolutionary Romanticism, Telos, No 49, Fall, p. 83
[425] ibid, pp. 84 - 85

suburban living and working is further extended outwards so that in the future cities will become redundant for the majority of the population. Equally e-mail and the internet have made new modes of posting and retrieving campaign information related to anti-roads protests or other campaigns possible for those with access to the requisite technology. In contrast to this positive perspective however lies the perception prevalent on the movement's deep Green wing that science and technology are in the process of creating a Gibsoneque dystopia which both represents and flows from humankind's Promeathean and alienated relationship with inner and outer nature. Alarm UK respondents reflected something of the views of both tendencies in that a high proportion were regular users of information technology but yet at the same time displayed a general mistrust of technological advancement in for example their agree/disagree responses to the statement 'technology is out of control' (39% agreed or agreed strongly, 33% disagreed or disagreed strongly). It is only though in rare cases (including in the practice of militant eco-activists) that these positions are clear cut and it is much more usual for activists to adopt a pragmatic attitude to science and technology using it where and when it is advantageous to do so and criticising the lack of accountability and democratic control over its use by government, the scientific establishment and large corporations. Indeed the Alarm UK respondents answers to the question of whether or not 'technology is out of control' may reflect a mistrust of those who control technological advancement as opposed to reflecting a mistrust of technology itself. The problems associated with interpreting respondents' responses to this question are also indicative of the shortcomings of questionnaire based research.

The splits that are manifest between the different groupings involved in the anti-road protest movement in terms of progressive and regressive visions of the future also very much mirror the ideological divisions that exist within the wider Green movement. Here Scott's (1990) typology is useful for the purposes of clarification and for illumination of the types of internal conflict which are likely to occur. According to Scott there are four main ideological positions within the Green movement : the 'fundamentalists' who are uncompromisingly anti-capitalist and are more orientated towards 'movement' politics than institutional politics, the eco-socialists who oppose the capitalist state and link social and ecological issues, the conservatives who take a romantic anti-capitalist stance, and the 'realists' who view progress as ultimately coming through 'feasible' reform of capitalist economic and social structures, and

thus advocate alliances with political parties and the lobbying of government.[426] Thus there is the distinct possibility of ideological conflict between for example the 'realists' and the 'fundamentalists' or between the eco-socialists and the conservatives etc. Within the anti-roads protest movement the militant eco-activists associated with Earth First ! broadly correspond to the 'fundamentalists' in Scott's typology, the local groups affiliated to Alarm UK contained elements of each faction but with a strong skew towards left/liberal green 'realism' (very few of the survey respondents could be described as revolutionaries in the sense of wishing to overthrow or dismantle capitalism), while the opposition to the M77 in Glasgow led by Corkerhill Community Council could be described as being animated by eco-socialist ideology.

Intrinsically linked to the ideological divisions within the anti-roads protest movement is of course the issue of class division which as Keating (1990) argues is the inherent weakness of 'rainbow coalitions' which lack a cohesive and cogent over-arching ideology. Keating points to the fact that 'the economic class interests of individuals are likely to take precedence over shared neighbourhood or other values in the long term'. He also points out that by making 'staged and modest concessions' those in positions of authority can split off sections of social movements and effectively achieve 'a progressive demobilisation'.[427] The contradictions in terms of ideology and class that Scott and Keating respectively emphasise indicate that the alliance which lies at the heart of the anti-roads protest movement is a tenuous one. These tensions have though been present in the movement since its inception and yet it has shown a remarkable cohesiveness, drive and determination in pursuing its goal. Now however that the goal of stopping the government's road building programme has been largely achieved and the government is considering alternative transport and development policies, the inbuilt contradictions which had hitherto been suppressed by the concentration upon such unifying issues, are likely to increasingly come to the fore as the protest movement fragments and the different organisational groupings and ideological strands begin to pursue other, often broader issues and interests. A fundamental question that remains though is a political one; ie, whether or not the anti-road protest movement and others like it can provide inspiration and perhaps form the catalyst for the development of a wider 'offensive' social movement that in

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[426] Scott, A. (1990), op cited, pp. 81 -87
[427] Keating, M. (1991), Comparative Urban Politics, (Aldershot : Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd), p. 88

terms of both theory and practice will fundamentally challenge the social and environmental status quo ?

6.5 *Emancipatory Potentials*

Barker (1999), writing of the contagious effervescence of the experience of collection action makes the following observation on the way in which a movement undertaking collective action necessarily demands responses from individuals and groups operating within that movement's multi-organisational 'conflict system' :

> 'Movements embarking on collective action normally seek to mobilise others. Beyond their own immediate forces, most of the 'resources' they can bring into action belong to potential allies. These are themselves located within their own, distinct or overlapping organisation networks. Responses from potential allies may take a variety of forms. At one end of a continuum, additional groups and individuals may directly involve themselves in the processes of collective action initiated by the originators, or may initiate parallel and sometimes emulative forms of collective action. They may provide less directly 'active' support such as financial assistance, technical advice or that rather tenuous entity 'moral support'. Or they may respond negatively.... Some responses will have little 'transformative' effects upon allies' own functioning, others may have extensive implications for their own futures.'[428]

Barker's observation here is highly pertinent to the operation of the anti-roads protest movement which as has been illustrated throughout this thesis, operated in the form of an organisational alliance between two distinctive but overlapping networks; ie, the local action groups who were mostly affiliated to Alarm UK, and the militant eco-activists who largely work under the aegis of Earth First ! In the last two sections it was argued that this partnership was crucial to the anti-roads protest movement's mobilisation and ultimate success because each partner possessed vital resources which the other didn't and drew positive responses from one another in much the way that Barker details in relation to the continuum of types of response described above.

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[428] Barker, C. (1999), Empowerment and Resistance : 'Collective Effervescence' and other Accounts, in, Bagguley, P. & Hearn, J. (1999), op cited, p.25

When it came to direct forms of direct action involving civil disobedience they also though at times drew negative responses from some of the established environmental organisations. While the impacts that the protests have had upon government policy and the wider environmental movement have been discussed in earlier sections of this chapter, what hasn't yet been considered are the possible 'transformative effects' that involvement in the protest movement may have engendered amongst those participating. This is a question which is central to the evaluation of how the anti-roads protest movement should be conceived of politically and indeed how it and other protest movements like it should be understood in relation to the possible longer term development of a wider emancipatory social movement to bring about fundamental social change.

The anti-roads protest movement contained a number of transformative potentials for the participants which operated at a variety of different levels. One such potential is in the nature of the alliance of militant environmentalists and local groups which animated the movement. Undoubtedly, this alliance had the effect of bringing individuals from different social backgrounds, with different experiences and different ideologies and values together, therefore promoting free ranging dialogue, discussion and debate which otherwise would not have taken place. In short the alliance itself created a new democratic space which broke down social barriers between diverse groups and individuals. Habermas (1987a), has for example argued that such communicative dialogue is essential if the public sphere lifeworld is to be revitalised and hence defended from the colonising encroachments of the System.[429]

Where the transformative effects of participation in the anti-roads protest movement are at their sharpest however is in relation to the transgressive direct action protests taken by many of the activists to confront road contractors, developers and the state. Here again Barker's (1999) analysis is highly relevant to the thesis subject matter. Taking the decision to participate in this type of collective action which breaks with social norms and conventions is necessarily a collective decision which as Barker argues, implies 'a different type of commitment' than the type involved in participation in movement networks at a more passive or submerged level. From the beginning it involves visibility to the state, to other activists and to the watching public. Furthermore it is a decision which tests in practice the bonds linking

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[429] Habermas, J. (1987), op cited, p. 394

organisations and networks, where 'those who disagree with the collective action either cease to participate or indeed act against it' or where 'others, in turn, who have previously stood apart may now enter.' In practice the decision to take transgressive collective action will necessarily create a 'culture of solidarity' amongst those participating but also create new problems of organisation, decision making and organisation due to the entry of new actors upon the scene – thus 'the whole character of the initial protest may be altered by escalation'. This is the zone of unpredictability which transgressive collective action generates by setting into motion a chain of events which the participants cannot predict the ending of. In essence a 'collective actor' is formed as 'individuals become a 'crowd', a 'movement', even a 'class' or a 'people''. For Barker it is at this point that 'history and biography intersect as people set out to make history on some small or large stage. They declare themselves in action.' [430]

In the high profile sites of direct action anti-roads protest as at Twyford Down, Leytonstone and Wanstead in London, the Pollok Free State in Glasgow, Newbury and Fairmile in Devon, as well as at numerous less well publicised sites of direct action protest, the participants 'declared themselves in action' and although the immediate focus their protests was limited, their actions in each case opened up a field of possibilities and effects which contained radical political potentials that reach far beyond the issues of roads and transport. In the end, of course, each of these instances of collective action was suppressed by the state and as time has moved on the protests surrounding these issues have become less frequent due to changes in policy made by the government. The fact that this has happened however does not diminish the latent potentials which the protests engendered or indeed the real effects which they had, some long term, and some short term, on the participants involved and also to a lesser extent upon the watching audience. The case study of the M77 protests gives a number of insights as to what the radical wider effects of participation in direct action protest of the type central to the anti-roads protest movement's development might be while also pointing to latent political potentials. In order to contextualise these effects and potentials a number of parallels between the M77 protests and Barker's description can be drawn. First of all the decision to take direct action against the road contractors by the axis of local community groups and militant environmentalists had

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[430] Barker, C. (1999), op cited p.23

the effect of causing a number of the groups involved in the STARR Alliance to withdraw their active support for the campaign, while it also attracted other activists involved with far left groupings and militant environmentalism to come and take part. Secondly the commitment to direct action also created a culture of solidarity as evinced by the research on practice of the Pollok Free State, and the relationship between the Free State's residents and the local community of Corkerhill. And thirdly, as is documented in chapter four the entry of increasing numbers of militant eco-activists to the protest campaign created new problems related to organisation for the campaign while also significantly altering the nature of the overall campaign.

While some of the discourses employed by some of the eco-activists at the Free State can be described as contradictory at best, in conjunction with the local community opposition and the participation of left-wing activists largely associated with Scottish Militant Labour, the decision to take direct action had a clear radicalising effect upon the campaign. The campaign took on new issues such as the Criminal Justice Act, linked the fight for a better environment to issues of social justice, exposed a clear instance of class oppression and exposed the repressive power of the state. As interview extracts illustrate, for many of the activists from the local community the sheer brutality and force which was used by the state to quell the protests was an 'eye-opener' and changed their views on the nature of the police.[431] Equally what came across constantly in interviews with Earth First ! activists at the Pollok Free State was the sense of empowerment and confidence which taking part in direct action protests engendered in the participants. For the activists involved taking direct action meant not merely taking a moral stand or being counted but actively taking control of one's life. Indeed life at the Free State embodied this ethic as even through the simple illegal occupation of land designated for construction use and turning it into an autonomous zone, the activists empowered themselves by taking control. The accounts given by the activists involved in direct action confrontations with the road contractors and the state in the protests against the M77 extension tie in well with other accounts of the transformative effects of collective action which include 'a sense of changed personal and collective identity, feelings of joy and well being, altered forms of public speech and ideas, a sense of self-empowerment, the de-legitimation of existing authority, and the creation of new informal and formal

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[431] For example see, B. Campbell and Rosie interview extracts in section 4.4.5

networks and institutions'.[432] The M77 protests and others direct action protests like it which occurred across the UK during the 1990s thus contained kernels of rebellion and revolt which went beyond roads and transport issues, and were both threatening and unpredictable in their outcomes – hence such protests were suppressed by the state.

As described in chapter two, Habermas's (1987a) analysis of 'new' social movements in relation to the theory of communicative action constitutes one of the most powerful statements of the latent emancipatory political potentials contained within contemporary movements and it, like Barker's analysis, can be readily applied to an analysis of the potentials of the anti-roads protest movement.[433] For Habermas the emancipatory potentials of the 'new' movements stem from their disposition to create alternative institutions and practices which run counter to the dictates of the state and capital, their encouragement of experimental forms of democracy which is vital for the revival of communicative reason, their defence of the lifeworld from System intrusion, and their exemplar function of providing examples and prototype models for a new society predicated on equality, universal rights and radical democracy.

The anti-roads movement in many respects fulfills each of Habermas's positive criteria; eg, in its base community like protest camps and Free States which although far from ideal offer a culture of solidarity that stands in opposition to the social alienation that is the norm; in its law breaking NVDA which exposes the repressive power of the state; in its grassroots participatory orientation, and in its refusal to abide by the state's repressive laws or planning decisions. In fulfilling these criteria the anti-roads protest movement has not only brought to light policy decisions which run counter to universal interests but more importantly it has opened up those decisions and indeed other wider related issues to debate in the public arena. Perhaps though the most important thing in terms of emancipatory politics that the anti-roads protest movement has achieved in the Britain of the 1990s is simply being successful. With success comes political inspiration, confidence and hope and such commodities have been scarce amongst oppositional groups, movements and networks for many years now. Prior to ousting the Conservative government in 1997 the last great victory was that of the anti-poll tax protest campaign of the late 1980s. The explosion of direct

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[432] Barker, C. (1999), op cited, p. 11
[433] Habermas, J. (1987), op cited, p. 394 - 396

action activism in recent years that is described in chapter one is evidence to suggest that the impact of the anti-roads protest movement has been highly positive in this area and that perhaps 'the times are a changin' - or at least beginning to change once again.

6.6 _Concluding Summary_

The mobilisation of collective action against road-building which grew up across Britain during the 1990s has constituted one of the most successful protest movements this country has experienced in the latter half of the twentieth century. Facilitating the movement's mobilisation have been a combination of 'internal' and 'external' factors. Internal factors include class, values, ideology, self-interest and the availability of resources related partially to the latter factors but also to the protest movement's intimate relationship to the Green movement, while the external factors relate primarily to the generally favourable political opportunity structure which existed at the time of the movement's initial mobilisation in the early 1990s. The impact of the protest movement has been to force the government into a U-turn on its road building policy, to put the issues of transport, development and planning accountability to the top of the political agenda, to begin a process of changing public attitudes accordingly, and to add a new legitimacy to direct forms of collective political action. At the heart of the protest movement's mobilisation was a fluid and dynamic partnership between local people who had mobilised against a road which would negatively affect the area in which they were living, and young, often geographically mobile, eco-activists committed to deep Green and anarchist ideas. Although full of tensions and contradictions this partnership and the new grassroots dialogic activist networks, and new organisations, which it has spawned, have challenged both tactically and ideologically the hegemony of established environmental and transport pressure groups in the wider green movement to which the anti-roads protest movement is intimately related. Perhaps though the most lasting impact of the anti-roads protest movement will be in relation to its enormous contribution in creating a new sense of empowerment and confidence amongst all those campaigning for progressive social and environmental change.

6.6.1 Suggestions for Future Research

As intimated above, during the mid to late 1990s in Britain, there as been a rapid expansion of direct action activism over a wide range of issues, and in particular those related to different facets environmentalism. One possible future direction of related research to that which was carried out for this thesis would be to investigate the nature of the cross-over between this 'new' activism and the anti-roads protest movement. Key questions here would relate to the involvement of ex-Alarm UK members and supporters, the extent of Earth First's involvement, and what experiences, resources and tactics overlap with one another in the direct action movement milieu to which anti-roads protests were once so central. Equally it would also be useful to look at the relationship between the new direct action scene and the established environmental organisations to see how much attitudes have changed within the latter organisations after the success of the anti-roads protest movement. Looking at the different overlaps involved would also help to develop theory in the area of conceptualising the relationship between protest movements and social movements. A further new political development that demands research is the advent of the Countryside Alliance in 1997. This protest movement would appear from its statements and prominent supporters to be conservative, if not politically reactionary. It is probable though that there are some overlaps with the anti-roads protest movement but the nature of these overlaps is impossible to determine without sociological research.

Another area of research that would prove fruitful are the developing but as yet tentative links between groups involved in anti-roads protests and the left of the labour movement. Research conducted for this thesis suggests that Reclaim the Streets has taken the lead in this area but that research is far from detailed and requires future development. A final area of research that might prove particularly valuable in the area of conceptual tools for thinking about the mobilisation of the anti-roads protest movement is in relation to an application of Bourdieu's notion of 'habitus' as 'a structure of thinking and feeling'.[434] A research application of this concept could perhaps help to account for the cultural aspects of the movement's mobilisation and the attraction of for example the professional middle class to participation in the local groups affiliated to Alarm UK. Indeed it could also, in conjunction with in-depth life

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[434] see Bourdieu, P. (1984), op cited

history interviews prove a forensic tool in unearthing individual motivations to participate in protests such as those around the roads issue. Lastly, the notion of habitus could also probably be applied in research to help account for the cultural aspects of the wider environmental movement and individuals' attractions to different forms of environmentalism.

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Appendix 1 : Questionnaire to the Alarm UK 1996 National Conference

Wallace McNeish, Department of Sociology, University of Glasgow,
Glasgow, G12 8QQ, phone : 0141 - 339 8855 (ext - 2449),
E-mail : 9407679m@udcf.gla.ac.uk

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROFILE
OF ANTI -ROADS PROTESTERS

This **questionnaire** has been designed as part of a research project aimed
at building up a social and political profile of core activists involved in
anti-roads protests. The results will eventually be published as part of a
sympathetic sociological study of the anti-roads movement in the UK.

I would therefore be grateful if you would take a couple of minutes to fill
it out. The questionnaire is **ANONYMOUS** and its completion will greatly
help my research.

Boxes are provided at the main entrance for the collection of completed
questionnaires. **THANK-YOU** for your time.

Please **TICK** the appropriate boxes unless otherwise specified :

1) HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OPPOSING THE BUILDING OF NEW
ROADS AND/OR MOTORWAYS ?

Yes ( ) No ( )

If Yes please specify where : (eg Newbury Bypass -- A34, Glasgow - M77 etc)

....

2) WHAT FORMS OF ACTION HAVE YOU TAKEN IN OPPOSITION TO
ROAD/MOTORWAY BUILDING ?

Writing to Councillors, MP's, the Press, etc   ( )
Petitioning   ( )
Organising Public Meetings   ( )
Demonstrations   ( )
Non -Violent Direct Action (eg, trespasses, obstruction etc)   ( )
Other (please specify) ....
....

3) ARE YOU ACTIVE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OPPOSITIONAL
MOVEMENTS AND PRESSURE GROUPS ?

Anti-Roads, ie, Alarm UK, Road Alert !, Reclaim the Streets etc ( )
Friends of the Earth ( )
Greenpeace ( )
Animal Rights, ie, Anti-Live Exports, Hunt Sabs, Anti-Vivisection etc ( )
Campaigns Against the Criminal Justice Act ( )
Earth First ! ( )
Freedom Network ( )
CND ( )
Other (please specify) ....

4) HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE YOURSELF POLITICALLY ?
(eg, non-political, socialist, green, conservative, feminist etc please specify)

....

5) WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE KEY ISSUES FACING
BRITISH SOCIETY IN THE MID-1990'S ? (please specify)

....

6) ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS : do you possess any of the following -

No Qualifications ( )   O-Levels/Grades ( )
A-levels/Highers ( )   HNC/HND ( )
University/Poly Degree ( )   Masters Degree ( )
Research Degree (M.Phil/PhD) ( )
Other (please specify) ....

7a) ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A TRADE UNION ?   Yes ( ) No ( )
If Yes please specify which one : ....

b) ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A POLITICAL PARTY ? Yes ( ) No ( )
If Yes please specify which one : ....
If No but you have been a member in the past please specify which one
and also when you were a member : (eg Labour 1982-1986)

....

8) ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE ?   Yes ( ) No ( )

9) WHICH POLITICAL PARTY DO YOU INTEND TO VOTE FOR AT THE
NEXT GENERAL ELECTION ?

Not Voting ( )   Conservative ( )   Liberal Democrat ( )
Labour ( )   Green ( )   Undecided ( )
Other (please specify) ....

PLEASE TURN OVER

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE

10) GENDER : are you... Female ( )   Male ( )

11) AGE GROUP :   Under 19 ( )   20-24 ( )
                               25-29   ( )   30-34 ( )
                               35-39   ( )   40-44 ( )
                               45-54   ( )   55-65 ( )
                               Over 65   ( )

12) RELIGIOUS BELIEFS - DO YOU <u>PRACTICE</u> ANY OF THE FOLLOWING FAITHS ?

Christianity ( )   Buddhism ( )   Hinduism ( )
Islam ( )   Judaism ( )   Paganism ( )
Atheist ( )   Agnostic ( )
Other (please specify) ....

13) HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ETHNIC BACKGROUND ?

....

14) EMPLOYMENT :

Are You....... Employed ( )   Unemployed ( )
               Student ( )   Retired ( )
               Other (please specify) ....

If you are employed please specify occupation : ....
Is your employment......   Part-time ( ) Full Time ( )
If you are a student please specify what course or qualifications you are taking :
....
Do you study.....   Part-time ( ) Full-Time ( )

15) INCOME PER ANNUM : (please enter the letter code that corresponds to
                                 your income group in the box below)

A - Under £5000   Income Group Code ( )
B - £5000 - £9,999
C - £10,000 - £14,999
D - £15,000 - £19,999
E - £20,000 - £24,999
F - £25,000 - £29,999
G - £30,000 - £34,999
H - Over £35,000

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK-YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Appendix 2 : Postal Questionnaire, Covering Letter and Reminder Letter

ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE

Wallace McNeish, Department of Sociology, University of Glasgow,
Glasgow, G12 8RT, phone : 0141 - 339 8855 (ext - 2449),
E-mail : 9407679m@udcf.gla.ac.uk

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROFILE
OF ANTI-ROADS PROTESTERS

Please **TICK** the appropriate boxes unless otherwise specified :

1) HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN OPPOSING THE BUILDING OF NEW
ROADS AND/OR MOTORWAYS ? Yes ( ) No ( )

If Yes, please specify where and when : (eg, Glasgow - M77 from 1994)
....
....

2) DO ANY OF THE ROADS/MOTORWAYS WHICH YOU HAVE
MENTIONED <u>DIRECTLY</u> AFFECT THE AREA WHERE YOU LIVE ?

Yes ( ) No ( ) If Yes, please specify which one ....

3) WHAT FORMS OF ACTION HAVE YOU TAKEN IN OPPOSITION TO
ROAD/MOTORWAY BUILDING ?

Writing to Councillors, MP's, the Press, etc ( )
Petitioning ( )
Organising Public Meetings ( )
Demonstrations ( )
Non -Violent Direct Action (eg, trespasses, obstruction etc) ( )
Other (please specify) ....
....

4) ARE YOU A MEMBER/SUPPORTER OF THE NATIONAL ANTI-ROADS
COALITION 'ALARM UK' ? Yes ( ) No ( )

If Yes, do you think that apart from roads, Alarm UK should concern itself
with wider social and environmental issues ? Yes ( ) No ( )

5) WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE <u>KEY</u> ISSUES FACING
BRITISH SOCIETY IN THE MID-1990'S ? (please specify)
....
....
....
....

PLEASE TURN OVER

6) ARE YOU/HAVE YOU BEEN ACTIVE IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING OPPOSITIONAL MOVEMENTS AND PRESSURE GROUPS ?
(Please tick all that apply to you)

Other National Anti-Roads, eg, Reclaim the Streets, Critical Mass etc ( )
Local Anti-Roads (please specify) ....
Friends of the Earth   ( )
Greenpeace   ( )
Animal Rights, ie, Anti-Live Exports, Hunt Sabs, Anti-Vivisection etc ( )
Campaigns Against the Criminal Justice Act   ( )
Earth First !   ( )
Transport 2000   ( )
Freedom Network   ( )
CND   ( )
Other (please specify) ....

7) DO YOU WORK FOR A CHARITABLE ORGANISATION ON A REGULAR BASIS ? (eg, Oxfam, Shelter etc)

Yes ( ) No ( ) If Yes, please specify which charity you work for :
....

8) HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE YOURSELF POLITICALLY ?
(eg, non-political, socialist, green, conservative, feminist etc please specify)
....

9) ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS : do you possess any of the following -

No Qualifications ( )   O-Levels/Grades ( )
A-levels/Highers ( )   HNC/HND   ( )
University/Poly Degree ( )   Masters Degree ( )
Research Degree (M.Phil/PhD) ( )
Other (please specify) ....

10a) ARE YOU A MEMBER OF A TRADE UNION ?   Yes ( ) No ( )
If Yes, please specify which one : ....

b) WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF THE POWER OF THE TRADE UNIONS ?

They have..... Too Much Power ( ) The Right Amount of Power ( )
Too Little Power ( ) Other (please specify) ....
....

11) HOW MUCH INTEREST DO YOU GENERALLY HAVE IN WHAT IS GOING ON IN POLITICS ?

A Great Deal ( ) Quite a Lot ( ) Some ( ) Not Much ( ) None ( )

12) ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE ?   Yes ( ) No ( )

13) HAVE YOU EVER BEEN A MEMBER OF A POLITICAL PARTY ?

Yes ( ) No ( )
If Yes please specify which one/s and when : (eg, Labour 1982 to 1986)
....

14) WHICH POLITICAL PARTY DO YOU INTEND TO VOTE FOR AT THE
NEXT GENERAL ELECTION ?

Not Voting ( )   Conservative ( )   Liberal Democrat ( )
Labour   ( )   Green   ( )   SNP   ( )
Undecided ( )   Other (please specify) ....

15) WHICH POLITICAL PARTY DID YOU VOTE FOR AT THE LAST
GENERAL ELECTION ? ....

16) WHICH POLITICAL PARTY'S VIEWS ON THE ENVIRONMENT COME
CLOSEST TO YOUR OWN VIEWS ? ....

17) ON THE FOLLOWING SCALE OF LEFT TO RIGHT WHERE WOULD
YOU SITUATE YOURSELF POLITICALLY ?

Far Left ( ) Centre Left ( ) Centre ( ) Centre Right ( ) Far Right ( )

18) WHAT CHANGES - IF ANY, WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE MADE TO
THIS COUNTRY'S POLITICAL SYSTEM ? (please specify)
....
....

19) GENDER : are you... Female ( )   Male ( )

20) MARITAL STATUS : are you... Married ( ) Single ( ) Cohabiting ( )

21) AGE GROUP :   Under 19 ( ) 20-24 ( )
                       25-29   ( ) 30-34 ( )
                       35-39   ( ) 40-44 ( )
                       45-54   ( ) 55-65 ( )
                       Over 65 ( )

22) RELIGIOUS BELIEFS - DO YOU PRACTICE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING
FAITHS ?
            Christianity ( )   Buddhism ( )   Hinduism ( )
            Islam ( )   Judaism ( )   Paganism ( )
            Other (please specify) ....
            Or are you an : Atheist ( ) Agnostic ( )

PLEASE TURN OVER

23) WHAT <u>PRIMARILY</u> INFORMS YOUR VIEWS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR ANTI-ROADS ACTIVISM ? (please tick **one** box only)

Religious/Spiritual Beliefs ( )   Political Beliefs ( )   Other ( )

Please briefly state your motivations ....

....

....

....

....

24) HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR ETHNIC BACKGROUND ?

....

25) ARE YOU A : VEGETARIAN ( ) VEGAN ( ) MEATEATER ( )

26) WHICH NEWSPAPER/S DO YOU REGULARLY READ ? (please specify)

....

27) DO YOU PRIVATELY OWN A CAR ?   Yes ( ) No ( )

28) TECHNOLOGY : DO YOU REGULARLY USE A COMPUTER FOR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES ?

Word Processing ( )   E-mail ( )   The Internet ( )
No I do not use a computer regularly ( )
Other (please specify) ....

....

29) SOCIO-POLITICAL ATTITUDES - DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ?
(Please **circle** the **number code** which corresponds to your belief :
1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)

a) Technology <u>is out of</u> control   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

b) Breaking the law is <u>always</u> wrong   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

c) <u>All</u> politicians are corrupt   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

d) Human beings are <u>inherently</u> greedy   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

e) Private car use should be <u>severely</u> restricted   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

f) There is <u>no</u> alternative to a market economy   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

g) The <u>future</u> of modern society is bleak   1.......2.......3.......4.......5

CONTINUE ON NEXT PAGE

30) ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES - DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE
WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ?
(Please **circle** the **number code** which corresponds to your belief :
1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)

a) The government should do more to protect the environment, even if it leads
to higher taxes   1......2......3......4......5

b) Industry should do more to protect the environment, even if it leads to
lower profits and fewer jobs   1......2......3......4......5

c) Ordinary people should do more to protect the environment, even if it
means paying higher prices   1......2......3......4......5

d) For the sake of the environment, car users should pay higher taxes
                                                        1......2......3......4......5

f) For the sake of the environment, laws should be made in each country to
restrict population growth   1......2......3......4......5

31) APART FROM THE BUILDING OF NEW ROADS AND MOTORWAYS
WHICH ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES CONCERN YOU MOST ?
(please specify) ....
....
....

32) IN WHAT WAYS, IF ANY, HAVE YOU ALTERED YOUR LIFESTYLE IN
ORDER TO BETTER PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT ? (please specify)
....
....
....

33) SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PRIORITIES : (please **rank** the following issues
in order of **priority** in a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the highest priority and
10 is the lowest priority)

a) Fighting Crime   (   )
b) Protection of Civil Liberties   (   )
c) Economic Growth   (   )
d) Protection of the Environment   (   )
e) Maintaining Strong Defence Forces   (   )
f) Creating More Beautiful Cities   (   )
g) Fighting Rising Prices   (   )
h) Creating a Less Impersonal Society   (   )
i) Maintaining Order Within the Nation   (   )
j) Giving People More Control Over Their Lives (   )

PLEASE TURN OVER

34) EMPLOYMENT :

Are You....... Employed ( ) Self-Employed ( ) Unemployed ( )
Student ( ) Retired ( )

Other (please specify) ....

If you are employed please specify your occupation : ....
....

Is your employment......   Part-time ( ) Full Time ( )

If you are a student please specify what course or qualifications you are taking

:   ....

Do you study.....   Part-time ( ) Full-Time ( )

35) ATTITUDES TO WORK: apart from earning money to live, which one of the
following statements most expresses your feelings towards paid employment ?
(please tick one box only)

a) Working is the normal thing to do   ( )
b) Working is necessary to get money for life's luxuries   ( )
c) Working is primarily about fulfillment and enjoyment   ( )
d) Working is primarily about following a career   ( )
e) Working is primarily about interaction with other people   ( )
f) Other (please specify) ....
....

36) HOUSING :   Do You.......   Privately rent your house/flat ( )
                           Rent accomodation from the council ( )
                           Privately own your house/flat ( )
                           Other (please specify) ....

37) HOUSEHOLD INCOME PER ANNUM : (please circle the letter code that
corresponds to your household's income group)

A : Under £5000   B : £5000 - £9,999   C : £10,000 - £14,999

D : £15,000 - £24,999   E : £25,000 - £34,999   F : £35,000 - £44,999

G : £45,000 - £64,999   H : £65,000 - £84,999   I : £85,000 - £104,999

J : Over £105,000

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE
THANK-YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

26/06/96.

Mr Wallace McNeish
E-Mail : 9407679m@
udcf.gla.ac.uk

Dear Sir/Ms,

I am a postgraduate student based in the Department of Sociology at the University of Glasgow. At present I am undertaking an ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) funded PhD research project that is aimed at building up a social and political profile of activists and supporters of the anti-roads protest movement in the United Kingdom.

I would therefore be grateful if you would take a few minutes to fill out the enclosed questionnaire and then return it in the **stamped addressed freepost envelope that is provided** as soon as possible. The results will eventually be published as part of a sympathetic sociological study.

All respondents to the questionnaire **are guaranteed anonymity**, and all answers given will be kept in the strictest confidence. This project has the full support of the Alarm UK organisers without whose generous help it would not be possible. If you have any questions about either the questionnaire or my research in general do not hesitate to contact me at the address or numbers listed below.

Yours Sincerely,

Wallace McNeish

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
Adam Smith Building, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8RT
Phone : 0141-339-8855 (ext-2449), Fax : 0141-330 3554

1/07/96

Mr Wallace McNeish
E-mail : 9407679m
@udcf.gla.ac.uk

Dear Sir/Ms,

I am writing in order to ask you to please return the questionnaire entitled 'Social and Political Profile of Anti-Roads Protesters' that was sent out a month ago along with the Alarm UK newsletter 'Alarm Bells'.

As **the questionnaire is anonymous** I have had to send a reminder letter out to all those individuals surveyed whether they had completed it or not - so if you have completed it and sent it back already then I am sorry to bother you once again and thank-you very much for your cooperation.

If you have not completed or returned it in the **Freepost envelope** that was initially provided could you please do so as soon as possible because the higher a response rate to this survey that is achieved then the more this study of Alarm UK supporters and the anti-roads protest movement will gain in terms of accuracy and sociological validity. If you no longer have the Freepost envelope I would be grateful if you could post the completed questionnaire to the address given below.

Finally, I would just like to thank all Alarm UK organisers, supporters and activists for your generous help with the administration of this survey and to wish you every success in your future campaigning activities,

yours sincerely,

Wallace McNeish

DEPARTMENT OF SOCOLOGY
Adam Smith Building, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, G12 8RT
Phone : 0141-339-8855, Fax : 0141-330-3554

Appendix 3 : Corkerhill Community Council Campaign Leaflets

SOCIAL APARTHEID

In as much as security guards employed by Haggs Castle Golf Club have been stopping people from Corkerhill crossing the golf course at the right of way to Pollok Country Park and beyond, the following facts may be helpful:-

1.   The 1988 Ayr Road Public Inquiry conceded that as an areas of deprivation, Corkerhill would be 'losers' and had little amenity other than its walkway access to Pollok Country Park, it was agreed that this access should be maintained at all times during the construction of the M77 (see picture   above).

2.   It was further agreed that in order to safeguard children from the dangers of the White Cart River, a footbridge path would be built over the M77 at the Corkerhill Farm.

3.   The community council also gave notice in its summing up statement to the Public Inquiry that it still upheld the right of way from Corkerhill to Pollok Country Park.

         a) It was generally agreed by the legal advisers that despite the M77 Inquiry this is still a matter to be settled in the Courts!

4.   We should continue to ask why does the M77 Route swerve dramatically away from Haggs Castle Golf Course and over the children's play areas in Corkerhill when according to the road engineers it would have been cheaper and more direct planned straight over the Haggs Castle Golf Course?

         a) And why was Haggs Golf Club given £85,000 public money to extend its playing area in 1973/74 without consulting the community before it ploughed-up the right of way - all without seeking planning permission?

A BREACH OF TRUST!

5.   Of course of much greater concern should be that the Maxwell family agents
     Nether Pollok Limited, were allowed to sell-off parts of Pollok Estate
     woodlands and farmlands, including Corkerhill Village to the Corporation
     Roads Department in 1972. Contrary to the 1939 Maxwell Family
     Conservation Agreement and Act of Parliament that empowers the National
     Trust for Scotland to protect the Pollok Estate countryside 'forever' in favour
     of the citizens of Glasgow!!

6.   Finally, it should be now evident to all thinking and fair-minded people, that
     while the M77 Public Inquiry conceded that Corkerhill would be 'losers' and
     'suffer' increased Noise, Air Pollution, Vision Intrusion and Obstruction to
     movement to and from Pollok Park, Haggs Golf Course has doubled in size
     all at public expense with two thirds of Corkerhill Village confiscated into the
     golf course!

PARTITION!!

A classic case of planning social discrimination, where not only has the segregation between
the haves and have nots been clearly marked out by a 30ft mound of earth and chainlink
fencing forming a new boundary line of deprivation but with all the traffic problems of the
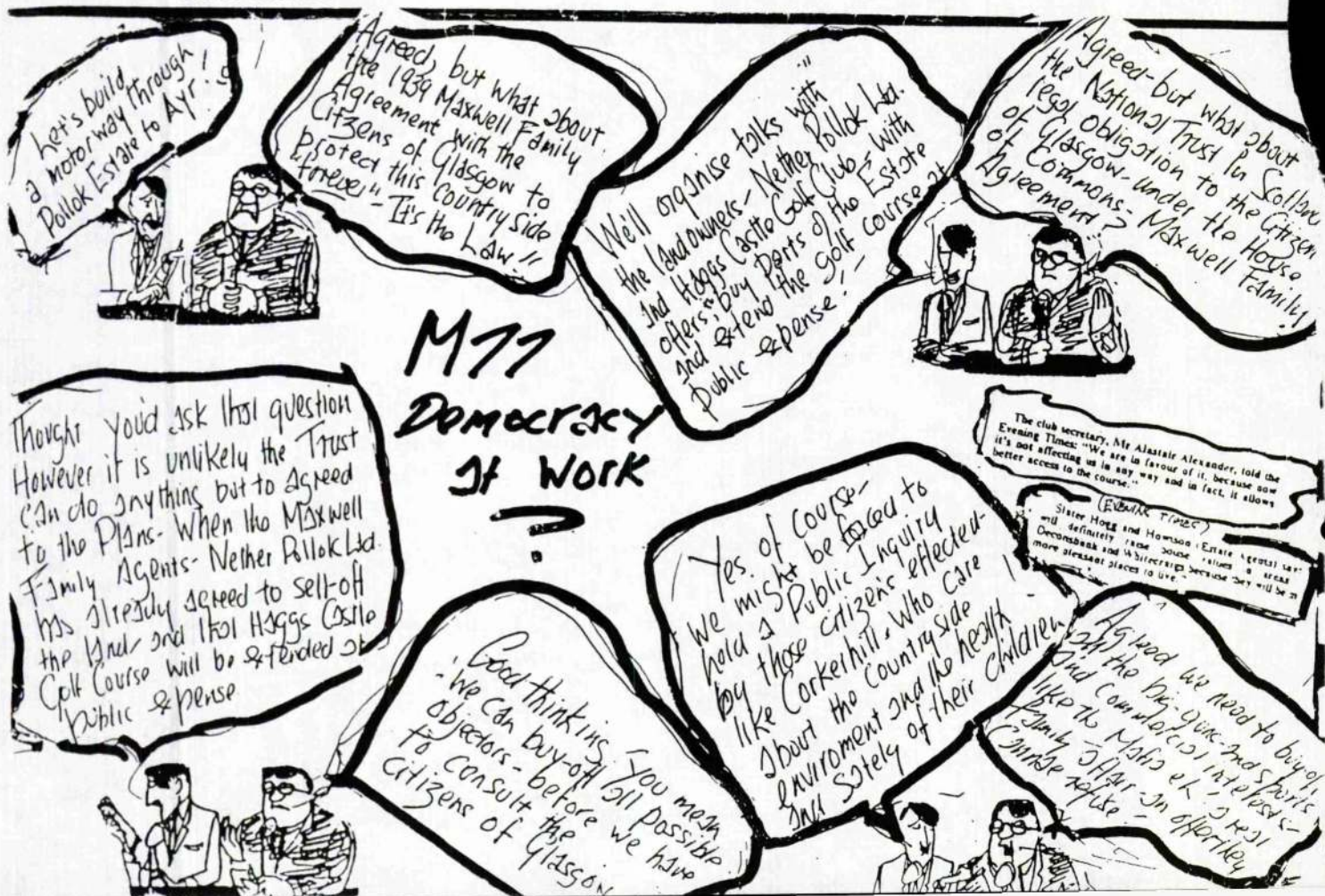better-off areas in Newton Mearns diverted into Corkerhill at the rate of 53,000 vehicles a
day.

We must fight back Now if we are to redress this unfair carve up of our rightful heritage.
The countryside and open spaces of Pollok   A breach of Trust - action against
the National Trust for Scotland is being cons:

**USE THE RIGHT OF WAY ACROSS THE HAGGS CASTLE GOLF COURSE ...... NO
MORE SACRIFICE.**

Walter Morrison

Let's build through a motorway through Pollok Estate to Ayr.

Agreed, but what about the 1939 Maxwell Family Agreement with the Citizens of Glasgow to protect this country side "forever" - It's the Law!!

We'll organise talks with the landowners - Nether Pollok Ltd. and Haggs Castle Golf Club - with offers to buy parts of the Estate and extend the golf course at public expense!

Agreed - but what about the National Trust In Scotland legal obligation to the Citizens of Glasgow - under the House of Commons - Maxwell Family Agreement?

Thought you'd ask that question. However it is unlikely the Trust can do anything but to agreed to the Plans- When the Maxwell Family Agents- Nether Pollok Ltd. has already agreed to sell-off the land and that Haggs Castle Golf Course will be extended at public expense

M77 Democracy at Work?

Good thinking. You mean we can buy-off all possible objectors- before we have to consult the citizens of Glasgow.

Yes, of course - we might be forced to hold a Public Inquiry by those citizens effected like Corkerhill. Who care about the countryside enviroment and the health and safety of their children.

The club secretary, Mr Alastair Alexander, told the Evening Times: "We are in favour of it, because now it's not affecting us in any way and in fact, it allows better access to the course."

Slater Hogg and Howison (Estate agents) will definitely raise house values in areas Crookston and Whitecraigs because they will be more pleasant places to live.

Agreed we need to buy-off the big-guns and sharks like the Mafia ek...

DANGERWATCH KIDS

READ THE CORKERHILL STORY.... Now!

53.000 vehicles a day will be diverted through the hitherto accident free woodlands and childrens play area in Corkerhill.

CHILDREN AT RISK?

M.77.

Publication

Children at risk?
Safety as a social value
Roberts H, Smith S and Bryce C.

Little attention has been paid to the problem of child accidents or to the challenge of accident prevention.

Children at Risk? fills this gap, using survey data and detailed interviews with parents and guardians to explore the causes, consequences and policy implications of child accidents in Britain.

To be ordered from: Open University Press Celtic Court, 22 Ballmoor, Buckingham, HK18 1XW, U.K. or 1900 Frost Road, Suite 101 Bristol, PA 19007, USA

SAFE COMMUNITY NEWS

"Why do we remove children from dangerous families / but tolerate and even create dangerous places to play?"

"Social Apartheid" in Glasgow

Walter Morrison, the program Coordinator in Corkerhill, Glasgow, Scotland:

"A new highway situated 30 metres from children's play area is cutting off Corkerhill, from the green open space of Pollok estate. This gives the golfers larger area to play golf, than the entire community will have to live, play and die in.

Walter Morrison, community councillor and active in the injury preventive work for Corkerhill, protested to the very last against the highway without success. Corkerhill, designated as a Safe Community 1992, is a housing

estate in Glasgow, United Kingdom, where the inhabitants already suffer from the effects of high unemployment, poor housing with problems of dampness, poor insulation, inadequate heating and associated illness. The houses along the route will be affected by noise pollution and vehicle fumes which together with fog is forming smog causing an asthma explosion.

This injustice is remarkable, when the Strathclyde Regional Council is party to the World Health Organisations Healthy Cities and Safe Communities concept pledged to promote health and accident prevention."

Walter Morrison showing the beautiful green open space which will be cut off by the road. Photo: Moa Sundström

This is an abstract of a report from

VISIT CORKERHILL....

WARNING TO PARENTS
IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO INTRODUCE AN ALLIGATOR INTO THE DEEP-END OF THE SWIMMING POOL. Should A CHILD BE ATTACKED:- LEAFLETS WILL BE ISSUED !!

Meantime teach your child to swim faster !!! by order

M77

A special meeting was held recently in Corkerhill in order
to explore ways and means of ensuring,that the new play area
currently being built alongside the M77 motorway is made as
safe as possible for the youngsters who will play there.

Indeed,apart from the diversion of 53.000 vehicles a day into
the hitherto accident free woodlands,and play-area..the 1988
Ayr Road Public Inquiry concluded,that the play-area would
suffer from Noise,Air Pollution,Vision Intrusion and Obstruction
of movement to and from the Pollok Estate.

There are 400 youngsters in Corkerhill,many already suffering from
chest ailiments from living in damp houses.

The "Children at Risk" study also found that Corkerhill was a dangerous
place for children, and of course building the M77 through the play
area has not made it any safer/..With many parents expressing genuine
worry about abduction,and wandering associated with the new access
patn through the play-area to the footbridge over the M77..to say
nothing of bullying and vandalism, and that the 350 dogs in the
scheme are left without a proper exercise area...more shit.

Therefore what is required is,that CCTV video cameras be set-up
at strategic points around the play area, with the employment of
wardens where practical...Meantime we have already established in
a survey of the community,that the civil-rights element is not
an issue..And that the cost of installation,manning and maintenance
has to be considered seriously. **What Cost Child Safety ?**

To this end,we brought together Roads,Planning,Police,Parks,City
Housing,and Environment Department officers, with a view to hearing
their views,and to gain their support in an effort to persuade the
Scottish Office,that in return for Corkerhill's sacrifice,for the
benefit of all those others in favour of the M77..such reparations
is a small price to pay."..And of course such a project would also
be good value for money in protecting the Public's investment in
the play-area landscaping and equipment.

****

BUT DOES ANYONE   REALLY CARE   ?   AGENDA 21 What does it mean ?

Long before the Local Agenda 21,and the somewhat less than obligatory
rhetoric of the Rio Summit, this "Dear Green Place"..was covered by
the very first ever Conservation Agreement in Scotland. The Maxwell
Family Agreement. An Act of Parliament in 1939 which empowered
the "National Trust for Scotland" to protect the Pollok Estate,Farmland,
trees, and open countryside "forever" in favour of the citizens
of Glasgow. **THE 1988 Public Inquiry Sham.**

Corkerhill Village comes within the curtilage of the world renowned
Pollok Estate,Pollok House...A classic case of rags alongside riches,
and also shares the land with the Haggs Castle Golf Club.

Therefore with regard to the Scottish Office committment to Local
Agenda 21, and by that we mean the total environment, Health,Safety
and General Social Welfare...We want to know Who Can We Trust,Who
is listening when we"Think Globally and Act Locally" For despite
the formal objections from Glasgow's District Council,and all it's
Environment Groups..The Scottish Office,together with the former
Strathclyde Council are currently responsible for the violation of
the 1939 Maxwell Family Agreement, and the rape of the Pollok Estate
woodlands and Farmland open countryside. by imposing the M77 on some
of the most deprived areas in Europe."

Who cares that's the question, who can we trust.

Preventative medicine is the key to health care today.

(883-9947 or 882-1568)

WE SHOULD QUESTION JOIN THE FIGHT FOR YOUR DEAR GREEN PLACE.
VISIT CORKERHILL.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES
BY WALTER MORRISON

While the Scottish Office and the new local authorities are encouraging all conservation organisations, community councils and others, to take up the challenge of the Rio Summit, Local Agenda 21 to "Think Globally and Act Locally".

It is not generally recognised, that the National Trust for Scotland is already empowered by an Act of Parliament ie the 1939 Maxwell Family Agreement, to protect the Pollok Estate woodland trees, open space countryside, Corkerhill Farm and farmlands "Forever" in favour of the Citizens of Glasgow.

Flagship Ahoy!

On the contrary however, despite such land law, the rhetoric of Rio and its written obligations to the citizens of Glasgow, the Trust has bid for the run-down mansions in Edinburgh's Charlotte Square with the help of £3.7 million lottery cash, and the full support of Scottish Secretary Michael Forsyth MP, who has described the purchase as "a bold and imaginative step to create a flagship project within Charlotte Square" (The Herald).

Pressganged

Meantime the destruction of Glasgow's Pollok Estate continues with the imposition of the M77 Motorway, whilst the National Trust for Scotland, Scottish Office, Members of Parliament, and the mass media remain unconcerned, that Scotland's very first ever Conservation "flagship project" the Corkerhill Farm, has been sold to a road haulier for around £60,000 .... so much for Glasgow's 'Dear Green Place' in the lottery stakes, despite the Trust's somewhat obligatory bleatings at the 1988 Ayr Road·Route Public Inquiry, about wishing to have the Farm adapted for Educational and Community purposes in line with its expressed commitment, and principles outlined in the 1939 Maxwell Family Agreement, and its duty in law to its beneficiaries the Citizens of Glasgow to protect the Pollok Estate and Farm 'forever'.

Indeed this was the explicit condition of the National Trust waiver that allowed the M77 to go ahead!!

Scuttled

Evidently, such lip-service helped conceal their tacit support for the road planners, and those others already bought off at public expense in the early 70's, by financial inducements and arrangements, that planned to divert the M77 Ayr Road Route with its 53,000 vehicles away from the Haggs Golf Course, and into Corkerhill Children's Play Area - now under a 30ft mountain of earth - a shameful sacrifice of children's health and safety in favour of the better off.

When according to the roads engineers, it would have been cheaper and more direct to have planned the M77 route straight across the Haggs Castle Golf Course thus leaving the Corkerhill Farm and the woodland strip in Corkerhill where they rightly belong.

The/

The Nelson Touch

That said, why should we be in the least surprised at such evident social discrimination. When written evidence from the National Trust, and Strathclyde's Estate Surveyor shows, that long before the 1988 Public Inquiry, the Trust did absolutely nothing to prevent the Maxwell Family agents Nether Pollok Limited, from selling parts of Pollok Estate, Corkerhill Farm and woodlands to the Glasgow Corporation Roads developers in 1972. At least two years before they formally rubber stamped the "waiver" and sell-out deal in 1974.

What Now?

We should insist that all land within Pollok Estate, and now surplus to the M77 road requirements should be returned to the citizens of Glasgow, and in so doing help uphold Scotland's very first ever conservation project in keeping with the principles of the 1939 Maxwell Family Agreement, empowered by an Act of Parliament - and that this should include Corkerhill Farm.

No Social Discrimination

Indeed with this in mind, there should be no excuses from the National Trust for Scotland when spending £3.7 million lottery cash on conservation projects, that suggest the run-down mansions in Edinburgh's Charlotte Square are more important to the people of Scotland than the restoration of Corkerhill Farm in Glasgow's equally renowned Pollok Estate.

Think Globally, Act Locally

At the recent 'Greening of the Grey' Conference in Glasgow, Glasgow City Council's Director of Housing, David Comley, said, "In many parts of Glasgow tenants had given up and were simply waiting for the Council to fix everything for them. Habitat II showed that the Government needs to be seen helping people to address problems themselves rather than the Council doing it for them".

Let's have a picnic at the land surplus to road requirements! If you wish to join us in the reclamation please contact Walter Morrison, 31 Corkerhill Place, Glasgow tel/fax 0141 883 9947.

WALTER MORRISON

£5. million

£60.000 sell-out

Scotland's First-ever Flagship Heritage Project Scuttled by The National Trust for Scotland..

CORKERHILL FARM

£3.7m in funding secures

World Heritage Site as flagship for

National Trust

THE MANSIONS EDINBURGH

HEADING FOR THE GHETTO

CORKERHILL

THE FUTURE

SOMETHING Must BE DONE

FOR CASH

Where there is no anger people perish

CHILDREN OF THE WIRE

THE AYR ROAD ROUTE IS
PLANNED DEPRIVATION
SEGREGATION AND APARTHEID

Ghettos Avoidable in Civilised Society

Dear Neighbour,

Corkerhill's problems are of long standing, and the direct result of being shunted about between a number of different constituencies over the last 40 years, causing neglect, and poor representation.

Other causes include successive government cut-backs in public spending, and the more up to date refusal of Strathclyde Regional Council to consider Corkerhill as an area entitled to priority treatment, while at the same time actively promoting the destruction of many of the good things about Corkerhill, by a deliberate programme of planned dispossession.

Indeed despite strong objections, supported by the Transport Consultative Committee, and thousands of others, SRC is directly responsible for the loss of the prize-winning Corkerhill Station, and rail passenger service. They are also responsible for the demolition of the Nethercraigs Games Hall, now earmarked for a car park, with all the problems, and vehicle/pedestrian conflict, that will cause...so much for promoting public transport! In addition they now plan to plough the Ayr Road Route through the much needed breathing spaces of Corkerhill, destroying the woodlands, and wildlife, only 30 metres away from the houses, and childrens play area...Not the best kind of development for an area with high child density, and handicapped persons, with heart, and chest ailments..And this says nothing about higher poll tax payments towards the ARR's maintenance, than those areas who welcome the road, and whose house values will increase, while Corkerhill's continue to devalue, with flat roofs, and dampness through rain penetration....and worse environmental conditions...

These are the facts no- one can escape..Of course Glasgow District Council are prepared to concede that Corkerhill is an area of deprivation, and recently this has been also echoed by the evidence presented at the Ayr Road Public Inquiry...and again so much for SRC's 'positive dicrimination" in favour of areas like Corkerhill....

However more to the point...We all want to know what is to be done about the betterment, and general upgrading of Corkerhill's housing stock, and Environment...What has happened to the money that should have been transferred from Pollok, to Mosspark housing office when it's housing stock was handed over in 1987.?.In the meantime it does appear, that the cosmetic repairs currently underway on leaking roofs, is little more than an expensive public relations exercise, and serious drain on the Mosspark repairs budget..which in time could adversely effect the entire Mosspark Ward.

Therefore it is agaist this background, that the community council launched it's"Community Initiative" in September 1987 in a constructive campaign to make it happen ourselves, by bringing in Heatwise, and Landwise, in order to combat the neglect, and evident run-down of the area by promoting improvement projects, while at the same time keeping the pressure up for the restoration of the rail service, and games hall, and floating other ideas concerning better use of the Nethercraigs as a Family Centre, with floodlighting, and an all weather sports facility....And here those who have seen the various video films produced by the Audio Visual Workshop should take heart from the way we have gone about our business...Indeed there are very few departments in local, and central government, that don't know about Corkerhill, and it's determination to project it's skills, and aspirations Nationwide, not only in the media, but by taking part, and organising schemes, and festivals both within, and outwith Corkerhill. (Watch out for BBCTV, TWO, HEALTH/ENVIRONMENT programme 30th March 89)

Anyway, while the community council has progressed it's strategy doggedly, and consistent with it's "Aims and Objectives" over the last 12 years, we should nevertheless welcome the chance to co-operate with anyone prepared to listen to our ideas, and aspirations, and who at least try to demonstrate by their actions, that they really care, and understand the frustration, and distrust, that has built up in our minds over the years by those who have talked about"caring" while promoting a deliberate policy of planned deprivation.

Mosspark Housing Office, appear to be trying, and for that we are thankfull..."

JOIN THE FIGHT BACK

Appendix 4 : STARR Alliance Leaflet

SAVE POLLOK ESTATE

The STARR alliance:
Friends of the Earth (Scotland)
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Earth First!
Glasgow for People
Socialist Environment and Resources Association
Glasgow Cycling Campaign
Railway Development Society (Scotland)
Glasgow Buildings Guardians Commitee
Architects and Engineers for Social Responsibility

STOP THE AYR ROAD ROUTE

Plans to bulldoze a motorway extension through Pollok Estate are imminent. Pollok Estate is the jewel in the crown of all Glasgow's greenbelt. One thousand and eighteen acres of woodlands, fields and riverside habitat, it is home to much wildlife: roe deer, foxes and birds of prey. It was to be protected by the first conservation agreement ever entered into by the National Trust for Scotland. Trust founder and owner of the estate, Sir John Stirling Maxwell, wished to secure this amenity of open space and woodland for EVER ... "for the benefit of the citizens of Glasgow". That promise has been broken.

Destruction Without Gain

Despite its outstanding conservation value, a large swathe of Pollok Estate will be destroyed by the construction of the Ayr Road Route (M77). At a cost of £79 million, the M77 is being promoted by Strathclyde Regional Council and the Scottish Office, and it will:

• Blast through the western woodlands of Pollok Estate.

• Funnel cross-Scotland traffic, including heavy lorries, through a peaceful green area and through the city centre, bringing noise, danger and pollution to many communities, including Corkerhill and Mosspark.

• Destroy recreation grounds in Pollok, Nitshill and Darnley.

• Feed up to 53,000 vehicles a day onto the M8 and overloaded Kingston Bridge. Exhaust fumes cause increased health problems such as asthma and add to global warming and acid rain.

Financed by your taxes, it will primarily serve to swell the bank balances of the motorway contractors. Yet this money is desperately needed for better public transport, homes for the homeless and environmentally friendly development that create far more jobs than road-building.

Pledge to Save the Greenbelt

Pledge Your Support

Join the thousands already opposing this road. Help save Pollok Estate from the bulldozer by signing the pledge below.

Reckless roadbuilding is being increasingly exposed as an environmental and social disaster. In England, campaigns by community and environmental groups have succeeded in curtailing one third of the government's £23 billion road building programme. In Oxleas Wood in South London, 3,000 people stopped the destruction of ancient woodlands by pledging to peacefully oppose work there.

This pledge is not a binding document. It simply reflects your personal commitment to campaign and save Pollok Estate.

Visit the woodlands on Barrhead Road (opposite National Savings Bank) and see what advanced works, abandoned due to lack of funds, have done.

By bus: 21, 23 and 48.

STARR

STARR is an alliance of leading conservation and community groups. It has no party political affiliations.

Please cut out the slip below, and return to: STARR, 53 Cochrane Street, Glasgow G1 1HL.
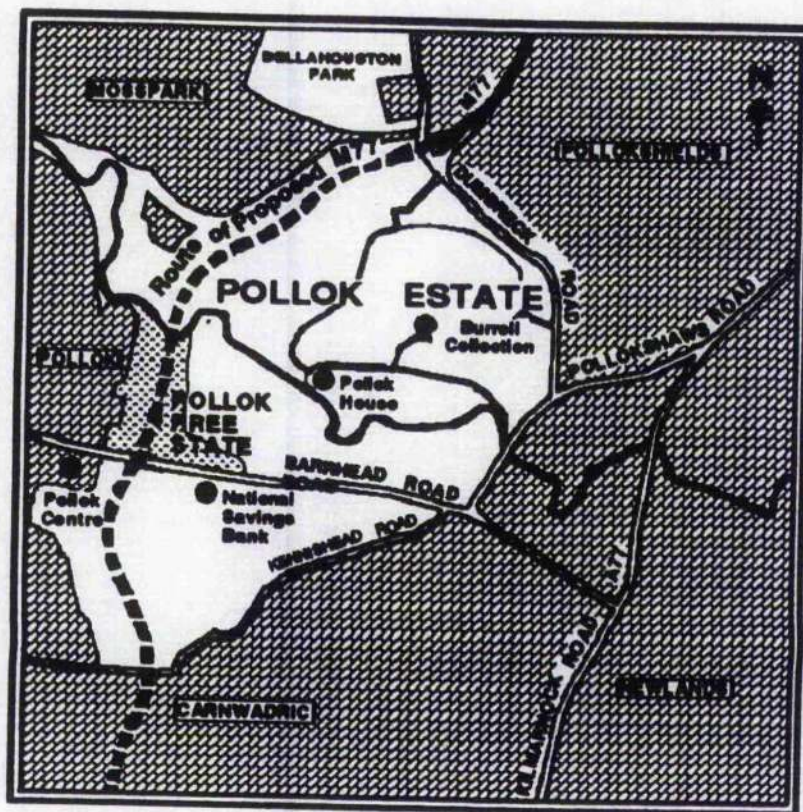Telephone (041) 552 8776 or 041 636 1924

------- ✂ - - - - - - - - - - - - - -

I wish to express my opposition to the proposed Ayr Road route into Glasgow and will peacefully protest against it.

Name: ....

Address: ....

....

Postcode: ....   Tel: ....

Donation: ....
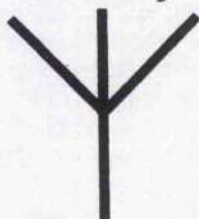
**Appendix 5 : Map of the M77 Route and the Pollok
Free State**

Appendix 6 : The Declaration of Independence from the People of the Pollok Free State

Passport

NO MT1 ON · POLLOK FREE STATE ·

From "The Tree of Liberty", Robert Burns

And banged the despot eel, man.
The hirelings ran - her foes gied chase,
She drew the avenging steel, man;
By her inspired, the new born race
Which pleased them ane and a', man
She sang a song o' liberty,
Her sons did loudly ca' man;
For freedom standing by a tree,

Cut aff his head and a'. man.
For this the watchman cracked his crown
When it was unco sma', man;
King Lou' thought to cut it down,
And grat to see it thrive, man;
The courtly vermin's banned the tree,
The works o' virtue thrive, man;
But vicious folks aye hate to see,

---

*The equal citizens of Pollok
Free State request and require
in the name of our mother
the earth all those whom
it may concern
to allow the bearer
to pass freely without let
or hindrance, and to afford
the bearer such assistance
and protection as may
be necessary*

Passport

The Independent Free Area of Pollok Free State

Pollok Name

Passport No:

Tree adopted:

Declaration Of Independence from the People of Pollok Free State

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds which have connected them with another, a decent respect to the opinions of humankind requires that they should declare the cause which impel them to the separation. We hold these truths to be self evident, that all species are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the chance to fulfil their evolutionary potential. That to secure these rights, the natural laws of Ecology bring equilibrium and fairness to all, these laws alone are pre-eminent.

In human terms, governments are instituted amongst people deriving their power from the consent of the governed, to ensure liberty, equality and survival, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, thereby threatening the existence of all that lives, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, laying its foundation instead on such principles and organising its powers in such form that shall seem most likely to effect liberty and survival. Prudence indeed dictates that the governed should not institute great changes for light and transient causes; and indeed all experience has shown that people are more disposed to suffer than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But at this moment in time, we believe the ecological holocaust facing our lands and wider environment to be so great, that it is our right, our duty, to throw off such forms of government that allow such evils to continue, and provide for our future security. We take this step with great reluctance and it is our intention to maintain peaceful relations with Her Majesty's government of the United Kingdom and Strathclyde Regional Council. Nevertheless it is our view that the undemocratic activities of these two institutions, through the proposed Criminal Justice and Public Order Act and M77 motor way extension are so unpopular, destructive and oppressive and their behaviour so unreasonable in the face of our appeals for mercy that we face no choice but separate and determine our own future.

Our causes are these: The history of our people, from many parts of the earth, but mostly of local origin has led us to the present situation. Our ancestors were cleared from their ancestral homelands by feudal greed. The earth which they inherited was stolen from them and its destruction justified in the name of agricultural "improvement". This process of enclosure, the privatisation of a people's ultimate resource - land - has ripped people away from the earth. The stable system that kept all alive without endangering the future, has been turned on its head in the interests of a selfish few. In this land, Scotland, 500,000 people were cruelly evicted and deprived of what was rightfully theirs. Many were deported to "the colonies" to drive the process of enclosure even further and inflict the same pains on other people of the earth. Those that remained had no choice but to flock to the cities and become part of the "working class". The age of industry is now dead and our labour no longer needed. We live poor lives on the pittance given to us from the profits we have raised. Dependant upon handouts from those that deprived us from our inheritance, many of us have lost the self respect needed by free people. Today the process of enclosure continues as this land, our land, is threatened with destruction in the name of "infrastructure improvement". Pollok Estate was returned to us in 1939 and now it is threatened by privatisation for a car owning elite. At the same time in reaction to resistance by many good people, Her Majesty's government seeks to enclose us even further. Not content with "owning" the land, private interests seek to stymie our protests and ban our access to our ancestral lands. It is proposed that those who wish to touch the earth will be criminalised for wishing to see what is morally, but no longer legally, theirs. The same proposed legislation seeks to restrict even our mental and verbal freedom. We will be presumed guilty unless we speak in our own defence. When we do speak out against injustice we will then also be criminalised.

Those that now use our ancestral lands threaten the existence of all life even further by stripping it of its natural cover and mining its minerals for roadstone. They not only wish to take our land but our air and water too. All of these actions have been taken without consultation and imposed upon us. That all this has been imposed upon us, not through reasonable process of consultation but through a weighted process of "public enquiry" and "representative democracy" in which both local and national government, with unlimited access to taxpayers money, with unlimited powers to select judge and jury and unlimited authority to determine the terms of reference, bears no resemblance to what we consider democracy. Democracy - the will of the people - has not been used. We are ruled by faceless people far from where we live.

We therefore and more generally maintain: That the threat to our environment and liberty by this road and legislation is incompatible with sustainable environmental use and any notion of democracy. This "infrastructural improvement" will generate yet more of the traffic it is ostensibly designed to alleviate. The implementation of the "criminal justice and public order act" does nothing to tackle the roots of injustice but will compound them and create far more injustice and disorder than it will solve.

Finally: We the inhabitants and citizens of Pollok Free State do solemnly publish and declare ourselves to be forthwith absolved of all allegiance to the British Crown and our territory to be a part of the Confederation of Independent Free areas, henceforth to be known as Pollok Free State. We call on all people who share these beliefs, ideals and aspirations to come the defence of this new domain. With a firm reliance on the protection of the international community we mutually pledge to each other our lives our fortunes and our honour. We fight not for glory, nor riches, nor honours but for freedom alone.

Signed:

Appendix 7 : The 'University of Pollok' Leaflet

The Peoples' Free University

of Pollok

where degrees are offered in living

This is to certify that ....

has enrolled to be a student and teacher at the Free University. Entry requirements and educational aims are:

1. *Respect and service to ourselves, others and nature.*
2. *Learning with hand, heart, and head.*
3. *Taking responsibility for the education of ourselves and one-another.*
4. *Listening deeply to others with sympathy and tolerance.*
5. *Gender, ethnic and social justice.*
6. *Standing up, speaking out and being true.*

Seminars will be offered to empower students to become more alive to the aliveness of life. The Board of Studies comprises all students. Any student may recruit another.

The curriculum includes:

Political Empowerment - *reclaiming our human rights and building community*

Social History - *why the poor are poor and the rich have the land*

Spirituality - *how to grow strong from the soul*

Living Skills - *crafts, childcare, cooking, literacy and ways of being useful*

Creativity - *self-expression through music, art, poetry, drama, dance, writing, etc.*

Enrolled .... *(date)* *Witnessed* .... *(Board of Studies)*

"We are discussing no small matter, but how we ought to live" - Plato, 390 B.C.

The Peoples' Free University of Pollok

The decision to build a motorway through Pollok Estate in Glasgow has brought into sharp focus issues which affect the whole of Scotland. Even in such a densely populated area, local people have little control over how the land and the environment is used or abused, and little say over how their communities develop. The parallels with the debate over land use and land ownership in the Highlands are striking. Just as Highland estates are often managed for the benefit of a few outsiders rather than for the local community, so Pollok Estate could be sacrificed for the benefit of car-owners from outside Glasgow. Proposed take-overs of estates by crofters, as happened in North Assynt, have shown that it is possible to challenge this injustice in rural areas. Now it is time for people power to rise in the cities.

The disaster that is the M77 does not augur well for the areas of Glasgow in its path. Far from alleviating economic problems, the motorway will make them worse. It is a blight on the ability of local people to shape their own future. Pollok Free university - a proposed community college offering training in living skills, crafts, environmental and land issues - is an attempt to turn the tide. Going beyond the campaign of resistance to the motorway, it will foster skills and hope in the community and assert the right of local people to control their land and their future.

The campaign against the M77 has inspired thousands of people and shown that people in Scotland will not take abuse of their environment lying down. It has also shown what can be down to construct an alternative. Pollok Free University aims to build on this strength to create a permanent asset to the community - an educational resource which is innovative, practical and accessible to local people. We hope this can be a model for community empowerment and environmental education throughout urban Scotland - and are appealing to people involved in education, the arts, community projects and environmental work throughout Scotland for support. If you would like to be involved in making this happen, please contact us for further details.