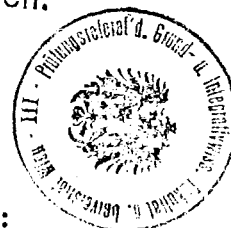


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**COMPARING ENVIRONMENT PROTEST MOVEMENTS
IN DEMOCRATIC AND NON-DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES:
THE GABCIKOVO NAGYMAROS DAM SYSTEM AND THE HAINBURG DAM**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1	Introduction	3
PART 2	The Gabčíkovo Nagymaros Dam Controversy	5
	Origin of the GNDS	5
	The 1977 GNDS Treaty	9
	Opposition to the GNDS	11
	The Hungarian Parliament Debates the GNDS	27
	Hungarian Public Opinion About the GNDS	36
	Hungary Suspends Construction	40
	Expected Environmental Problems of the GNDS	42
	Hungary Cancels Nagymaros - Czechoslovakia Builds Alone	45
	Protests Against the GNDS in Slovakia	49
	Protests Are Defeated - Slovakia Builds Alone	53
	Negotiations and Construction Continue	55
	Danube Diverted - Pointless Legal Arguments Continue	61
	References for Parts One and Two	65
Maps:		
	Bös-Nagymaros Plan based on the 1977 treaty	73
	Hainburg	74
PART 3	The Hainburg Dam Controversy	75
	Background of the Hainburg Dam Controversy	75
	Supporters of the Proposed Dam at Hainburg	77
	Arguments in Favor of the Dam	78
	Arguments Against the Dam	79
	The Decision to Build	80
	Opponents of the Dam	81

	A Detailed History of the Two Weeks of Demonstrations	83
	Who Were the Demonstrators?	103
	Political Reaction to the Conflict	106
	Reaction of the Churches	112
	Foreign Reaction	112
	Attitude of the Austrian Press	113
	Reactions in the Foreign Press	123
	Legal Arguments	126
	References Part Three	132
PART 4	Conclusions	144
	"You Can't Stop Progress"	144
	Centralized Energy - Centralized Government	147
	Beyond Materialism	151
	Philosophical Basis of Environmentalism	155
	Comparing Decision Making Processes	158
	Summary	161
	References Part Four	166
Bibliography		169

COMPARING ENVIRONMENT PROTEST MOVEMENTS IN DEMOCRATIC AND NON -DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES: THE GABCIKOVO NAGYMAROS DAM SYSTEM AND HAINBURG DAM

Part One: Introduction

The Danube River was re-routed in 1992 so that instead of forming a border between Slovakia and Hungary, downstream from Bratislava, it flows through the world's largest artificial canal for 25 km. before rejoining the original river-bed west of Győr, Hungary. The project started as a joint Hungarian-Czechoslovakian plan to improve navigation and to generate electric power, but Hungary backed out and Slovakia finished as much of the project as they could on their own territory over the objections of the Hungarians.

Austria had proposed a similar project (which Czechoslovakia objected to) but domestic Austrian political protests killed the project. Later, Austrian companies took part in the financing and construction of the Gabčíkovo Nagymaros Dam System (GNDS)

This paper focuses on the decision-making related to the project in Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and its successor state, Slovakia. The paper discusses the conflicts between Slovakia and Hungary, and between proponents and opponents of the dam on both sides of the river. This has been described as "A conflict between the Slovak and the Hungarian representatives of the old fashioned Communist approach to nature, and the Slovak and Hungarian representatives who support the preservation of natural values and sustainable development." (1) There are interesting differences in the way conflicts are resolved and the way that governments respond to opposition in a democracy like Austria, and in Communist countries in transition. In Hungary, opposition to the dam was a watershed issue which separated supporters of the old regime and supporters of the new. In Slovakia opposition to the dam did not come with opposition to the Communist dictatorship; Slovakian supporters of the dam attempted to polarize opinion along ethnic lines so that opponents within Slovakia were labeled as disloyal ethnic Hungarians, and construction was seen as building energy independence for Slovakia.

The main thesis of the paper is that governments which do not allow a free circulation of information, and suppress opposition instead of allowing a free competition of ideas, are less able to correct policy mistakes and are liable to incur needless financial costs and damage to the environment.

Part Two: The Gabčíkovo Nagymaros Dam Controversy

Origin of the GNDS

There were plans for a waterpower dam on the Mosoni Danube as far back as 1911. In 1912 there were plans for a water power dam on the Soroksávi Danube. At the end of World War One, there was a plan for a 50,000 horsepower hydro-electric plant near Bratislava .(2) In 1930, Hungary's Minister of Agriculture accepted a proposal by Elemér Sájo to build a hydro-electric plant on the Mosoni Danube. In 1947, Czechoslovakia planned to build a canal from Bratislava to Komaron with some hydro-electric plants. (3)

After 1948, the Soviet Union urged the Danube Committee to construct a joint Czechoslovakian-Hungarian system of dams on their common border to eliminate the shallows in the Danube "The improvement of navigability has mainly been a Soviet interest, since Soviet ships have transported the greatest amount of goods in this section of the Danube." (4)

In 1950 Professor Emil Mosonyi of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (M.T.A.) recommended building a hydro-electric plant in Visegrad in cooperation with Czechoslovakia. (5) . The following year, Hungary's water power planning bureau prepared a plan for a hydro-electric plant at Visegrad.

In 1951 the Danube Commission was established as a result of a meeting in Belgrade between July 30 and August 18. Czechoslovakia proposed a joint dam, but it was rejected by Hungary's Prime Minister Rákosi because Czechoslovakia wanted to take 30 km. of the Danube.(6)

In 1952 a joint Czechoslovakian-Hungarian Government Commission for harnessing the resources of the Danube was established. (7) In August, 1952, the Hungarian government asked for plans for a 230 MW hydro-electric plant. (8)

The following year, Hungary's Prime Minister Ernő Gerő rejected "...the side-channel plan forming on the Slovak side, " which meant ten more years would pass before a similar proposal was approved "...on the government commissioner level." (9)

In 1957 Austria made a contract with Czechoslovakia to build the Wolfsthal-

Bratislava dam, but Austria withdrew from the joint plan in 1960. (10) Later when Austria proposed to build alone, Czechoslovakia objected to a dam's possible damage to the environment. When the Czech's decided to build alone, Austria financed the project while Austrian and other environmentalists objected to it.

The original plan changed from elimination of a shallow section of the Danube to a much more grandiose project. In 1958 Hungary and Czechoslovakia decided to construct a hydro-electric power station at Nagymaros, near Visegrad, 146 km. downstream from the original site at Gabčíkovo between Bratislava and Győr. (11) A standing committee of COMECON approved the plans in 1961, and the Czechoslovakian and Hungarian governments accepted them in April, 1963. "At that time the only mention of water power was the observation that a power station on a flat stretch of the Danube would not be efficient....The main issue was the uninterrupted waterway." (12)

At this time there were plans for a side canal in Czechoslovakia and the expected date of completion was 1975. (13)

Economic efficiency of trying to generate hydro power on flat land was not an important factor in the decision to build the dam. Judith Galambos says that Communist ideology was the reason that Hungary got involved in the GNDS. "In the years after World War II, even prominent water management specialists emphasized the serious technical, economic, and ecological limitations to using water power in Hungary." (14) Objections which might have stopped West European planners did not stop East European planners. "Transformation of nature' was an important element of Communist ideology, which was not restrained by the 'capitalist' categories of efficiency and profitability." (15) Just as industries were located in places which defied economic common sense, state enterprises which lost the most money got the biggest financial bail out, since no one wanted to admit mistakes in management. (16)

This was also true for large investments: once construction has been started, it is easy to get more and more resources to complete the project. Therefore the costs and difficulties were usually underestimated considerably at the outset, in order to influence decision-makers in favor of the project. If new

difficulties arose...the same bureaucracy removed them in order to ensure employment for a growing number of people, especially bureaucrats, for a long time. (17)

She says this was the case with the Hungarian Water Management, O.V.H..

In order to obtain the necessary support and resources, planners and the water management establishment started to emphasize the energy production side of the project. Since for the same expenditure, a thermal power station could have been built with a capacity twice as great as that of the hydro-electric plant, energy production from the planned hydro-electric plant could not be competitive because of unfavorable natural conditions, the costs of the investment had to be curbed through manipulation: for example, the investment costs were reduced by the amount of money provided by the energy sector, and other sectors were charged with the expense of the necessary additional investments (e.g. sewage treatment), etc." (18)

The Communist system disregarded data which said that the GNDS may not have made sense physically or financially and was not equipped to consider a full range of policy alternatives.

Instead of selecting and analyzing alternatives, 'the solution' was pointed out at the beginning, and consequently there was no need for an economic or multi-objective evaluation. Identification, assessment, screening, selection etc., of project alternatives were all unknown in practise, as decision was the task of the 'all-knowing' central government....Under such conditions it is not a surprise that ...in Hungary no multi-objective water resources project assessment or environmental impact assessment...(existed). (19)

As will be shown later, when committees were established to measure the environmental impact of the GNDS, their reports were either ignored or suppressed because there was no provision in the system to handle data which contradicted the original decision of the political elite.

Czechoslovakia speeded up its plans for the GNDS after the Soviet invasion of 1968 re-established the power of the conservative faction of the Communist party, which "re-centralized its power....The new First Party Secretary, Gustav Husak,-being a Slovak - favored specifically Slovak schemes such as the GNDS." (20)

A joint investment program proposal for the GNDS was completed in the winter of 1972-73. (21) It was accepted by the government of Czechoslovakia in January, 1974, and by Hungary in February, 1974. (22)

After the oil shock of 1973, the purpose of the project emphasized energy generation more than improving navigation. (23)

On May 6, 1976, an inter-governmental agreement was signed at Bratislava. It stated the following purposes for the GNDS: "...for the production of electric power, for international inland navigation, for the management of water supplies, for the economic development of neighboring regions." (24) The shift in emphasis from navigation to generating electric power was probably caused by the rise in world prices of oil, especially in 1973, which made oil-fired generating plants relatively more expensive compared to hydro-electric plants.

The Hungarian Water Management officials have been credited with "...cleverly making use of the period of flooding danger," to grow from 7,000 to 70,000 people between the early 1950s and the early 1970s. (25) Fleischer says that even between the two world wars, "Slovak and Hungarian water management specialists continually called on their governments to accept...Danube barrages as energy-creating works." (26)

He adds that the habits of secrecy in government in East Europe were so strong that they went beyond any objective requirement, but served as maintainers of class of class and status differences, so that it is difficult to trace the history of a massive investment such as the GNDS which was conceived and born in darkness. He says "...it is no coincidence...that the agreement to accept the plan came about relatively smoothly ..." between 1974 and 1977, "...precisely in a period when a centrally directed force to return to order was gathering strength in opposition to the limited economic reforms unfolding since 1968,...". (27) In this period, intellectuals were forced to emigrate, and ideologists won out over economists, claiming that world oil prices could not effect the socialist economies. Because of the oil shock, Fleischer draws a parallel between the ascendance of atomic power in France, while in Hungary, "...the plan for the (GNDS) barrage arrived on the threshold of signing." (28)

The 1977 GNDS Treaty

"A Treaty Between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic Concerning the Construction and Operation of the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Systems of Locks" was signed in Budapest on September 16, 1977, by Prime Minister György Lazar of Hungary and Prime Minister Lubomir Štrougal of Czechoslovakia. It obligated the two countries to build dams at both Gabčíkovo and Nagymaros, 146 km. apart, and said that they would be "...a single and indivisible operational system. (29) . The treaty's

articles 2 and 3 spelled out exactly what was to be built, the dams, locks, power generating plants and river dredging as follows:

"2. The principal works of the Gabčíkovo system of locks shall be as follows:

(a) The Dunakiliti-Hrusov head-water installations in the Danube sector at r.k.m. (river kilometre(s)) 1860-1842, designed for a maximum flood stage of 131.10 m.B. (meters above sea-level, Baltic system) in Hungarian and Czechoslovak territory;

(b) The Dunakiliti dam and auxiliary navigation lock at r.k.m. 1842, in Hungarian territory;

(c) The by-pass canal (head-water canal and tail-water canal) at r.k.m. 1842-1811, in Czechoslovakian territory;

(d) Series of locks on the by-pass canal, in Czechoslovak territory, consisting of a hydro-electric power plant with installed capacity of 720 MW, double navigation locks and appurtenances thereto;

(e) Improved old bed of the Danube at r.k.m. 1842-1811, in the joint Hungarian-Czechoslovak section;

(f) Deepened and regulated bed of the Danube at r.k.m. 1811-1791, in the joint Hungarian-Czechoslovakian section.

3. The principal works of the Nagymaros system of locks shall be as follows:

(a) Head-water installations and flood-control works in the Danube sector at r.k.m. 1791-1696.25 and in the sectors of tributaries affected by flood waters, designed for a maximum flood stage of 107.83 m.B. in Hungarian and Czechoslovak territory;

(b) Series of locks at r.k.m. 1696.25, in Hungarian territory, consisting of a dam, a hydro-electric power plant with installed capacity of 158 MW, double navigation locks and appurtenances thereto;

(c) Deepened and regulated bed of the Danube, in both its branches, at r.k.m. 1696.25-1657, in the Hungarian section." (30)

(River kilometers are measured from the mouth of the river towards the source.)

The construction work was divided between Czechoslovakia and Hungary under chapter

III, Article 5, paragraph 5, as follows:

(a) The Czechoslovakian Party shall be responsible for:

(1) The Dunakiliti-Hrusov head-water installations on the left bank, in Czechoslovak territory;

(2) The head-water canal of the by-pass canal in Czechoslovak territory;

(3) The Gabcikovo series of locks in Czechoslovak territory;

(4) The flood-control works of the Nagymaros head-water installations, in Czechoslovak territory, with the exception of the lower Ipel district;

(5) Restoration of vegetation in Czechoslovak territory;

(b) The Hungarian Party shall be responsible for:

(1) The Dunakiliti-Hrusov head-water installations on the right bank, in Czechoslovak territory, including the connecting weir and the diversionary weir,

(2) The Dunakiliti-Hrusov head-water installations on the right bank, in Hungarian territory;

(3) The Dunakiliti dam in Hungarian territory;

(4) The tail-water canal of the by-pass canal, in Czechoslovak territory;

(5) Deepening of the bed of the Danube below Palkovicovo, in Hungarian and Czechoslovak territory;

(6) Improvement of the old bed of the Danube, in Hungarian and Czechoslovak territory;

(7) Operational equipment of the Gabcikovo system of locks (transport equipment, maintenance machinery), in Czechoslovak territory;

(8) The flood-control works of the Nagymaros head-water installations in the lower Ipel district, in Czechoslovak territory;

(9) The flood-control works of the Nagymaros head-water installations, in Hungarian territory;

(10) The Nagymaros series of locks, in Hungarian territory;

(11) Deepening of the tail-water bed below the Nagymaros system of locks, in Hungarian territory;

(12) Operational equipment of the Nagymaros system of locks (transport equipment, maintenance machinery), in Hungarian territory;

(13) Restoration of vegetation in Czechoslovak territory." (31)

Chapter I, Article 2, allowed either country to build anything else they wanted alone, but paragraph 3 stipulated that "National investment may not have a detrimental effect on the results of the joint investment." (32). This was later used by Hungary as a rationale for opposing the construction done by Czechoslovakia and Slovakia, when Slovakia decided to continue alone after Hungary backed out of the project.

Under the treaty, the generators at Gabcikovo were supposed to start generating

power in 1986, and at Nagymaros in 1989. (33) The treaty came into effect on June 30, 1978, when the instruments of ratification were exchanged in Prague, but Czechoslovakia started construction in April, 1978, before the ratification. (34).

Opposition to the GNDS

"The first professionally valid...criticism of the project came in 1976, from two institutes of the Slovak Academy of Sciences." (35) Also in 1976, there was a report from the UNDP / WHO on water quality management which said there could be "...negative impacts of the barrage system on the water quality of the Danube." (36) Between 1976 and 1978, VITUKI (Water Research Institute) and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences' Danube Research Station began a research program to study these impacts. "There is no response from the policy makers. They do not share the concerns." (37)

A Czechoslovakian-Hungarian Joint Committee of Science and Technology planned a study that would have assessed the GNDS' effect on the environment, and on regional development, by the end of 1978. However, "Because of the oil crisis...the GNDS Treaty was hastily ratified in 1977..." (38) before the committee's study was finished.

Although public opposition was illegal, "very opinionated articles were published which drew attention to both the ecological hazards and the irresponsible design of the construction." (39) The Slovak Union of Nature and Landscape Protectors, SZOPK, published an article in 1981, and its magazine was suppressed for six months. (40)

On the Hungarian side, reconsideration of the hydro-electric power generating station "...began in 1978 with the announcement of the Győr-Sopron County Central People's Supervisory Committee report on the insufficiencies of the plan." (41) In May, 1980, the project was sharply criticized after work had begun on the Hungarian side when "...the Hungarian Hydrological Association and the Patriotic People's Front organized a debate..." about the GNDS. (42) The Association of Technical and Natural Sciences Societies of Hungary also debated the issue. (43) .

The Czechoslovakian government responded to these Hungarian protests by

speeding up construction. (44) .

Fleischer says that the early opposition generally came from experts outside the "water lobby".

(They) did not call into question the fact of the barrage's construction, or of the objective of energy production. They aimed at instead the improvement of individual, mistaken, partial solutions and at supplementing individual tests that had been left out... (W)hen in 1981, biologist János Vargha, a journalist of the *Búvár* (=Diver) nature protection monthly...(took up) the theme,...it was not the professional debating points that brought the first shock, but rather the realization that the matter was full of hurt, shelved people, silent and silenced opinion, and publications that had been laid aside. There was still no question of water management, environment or energy: it was simply a political affair that steamrolled ahead, grinding opposing opinions beneath it. The tools of repression were all out of proportion to the weight of the opposing opinions:...it was precisely this that betrayed how the plans' partisans feared that the system...could show how weak their base was. (45)

The Communist Party blocked the publication of *Búvár*, which

led Vargha to broaden his offensive, speaking out publicly, contributing to underground samizdat literature, and printing internal assessments by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences that called the dam a nightmare. In 1983 Vargha was fired from *Búvár* for his one-man campaign; later he was sacked from a job on the Hungarian edition of *Scientific American*. (46)

Vargha was not entirely alone. Fleischer says that some people in power shared his misgivings.

At the time it was obvious to the competent circles of government that something was not right. In 1981, everything was done to slow down the preparations: The economic Committee passed a decision by which the Hungarian-Czechoslovak Economic and Technical-Scientific Cooperation Committee would agree on interrupting the construction of the barrage system." (47) .

He goes on to say that the second oil price shock of 1979-1980 "...forced the (Hungarian Communist Party of János Kádár) leadership's mistaken strategy to be brought

under control and the ...weight of economic specialists within the government temporarily grew." (48)

A history written by the first post-Communist government in Hungary (MDF coalition) said that while the first oil shock pushed the GNDS forward, the second oil shock, and the world recession of 1980, slowed it down, because both countries were short of money. In June, 1981, the two countries started negotiations to delay or even stop the project. Construction was suspended on the Hungarian side, (but not on the Czech side), "...because of lack of budget and environmental concern" (49)

On October 10, 1983, Hungary and Czechoslovakia signed a protocol in Prague which postponed the generation of electricity for five years. Another protocol delayed the planned completion of construction until 1995. (This agreement was modified once more in Budapest on February 6, 1989, and the deadline was brought forward to 1994). (50)

Rather than try to pay for it themselves, Hungary started negotiating with Austria's Chancellor Sinowitz in 1983 offering to supply Austria with electricity if they would pay for Hungary's share of the construction. In January, 1986, Austrian and German Greens held a press conference with Duna Kör to protest Austria's planned involvement in the GNDS. By May, a contract was signed giving Austrian companies 70% of the building contracts, including supplying gravel and building material, in exchange for 2/3 of Hungary's share of the electricity the GNDS was to produce, most of it was to be supplied in the winter. The Danube has its minimum flow in the winter, so Hungary planned to build additional electric power plants to make up the shortfall. The electricity would be delivered to Austria from 1996 to about 2015, which might be the normal life span of this kind of dam and power plant.. (51) Hungary gave the work of dredging the Danube to a Yugoslav company. Financing was arranged through Austria's former Vice-Chancellor, Hannes Androsch, formerly the head of the Credit Anstalt Bank..

The loan would cover the costs of hiring Austrian contractors; the money would be re-paid in electricity, and any idea that the dams would produce power for Hungary went out the window. In short, Hungary was to be an electric colony for Austria's seemingly ennobled environmentalists. (52)

Eventually both governments consulted experts for their opinions of the GNDS. The President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (M.T.A.), Tibor Erdey Gruz, first heard about the GNDS in 1974, and he asked the State Planning Committee to discuss it. At the beginning of 1975, the Hungarian Water Management Office (O.V.H.) told the M.T.A. that they had sent all the plans to the competent authorities. Since the M.T.A. was not included, that shows that the government did not consider them competent. Later, the M.T.A. sent the plans to the M.T.A. "for their information." (53)

A later president of the M.T.A., János Szent Ágothai, said he only heard about the 1977 Treaty in 1981. In 1981, Hungary's Vice-Prime Minister, János Bordandi, asked the M.T.A. to found a committee to study the GNDS, but he appointed all but two of the members himself, and passed over all full members of the academy. He let the M.T.A. appoint two environment experts. (54)

The following year, in 1982, the next vice-Prime Minister of Hungary, József Marjai, appointed a different committee of the M.T.A. to study the GNDS, (the Polinszky Committee). This second committee included experts from a large number of disciplines, including experts on economics. The economists said that they considered the GNDS plan absurd, and that it would not improve, but rather worsen Hungary's energy supply. (55)

The Hungarian National Technical Development Committee, (O.M.F.B.), appointed a committee led by Imre Dimény, which declared that the GNDS had damaging social and political effects. (56)

During 1982 and 1983, the M.T.A. continued investigating the GNDS on its own initiative. In October, 1983, György Aczél, possibly the second most powerful man in the Communist hierarchy, asked the M.T.A. for their opinion on the GNDS. (As the Communist Party's Secretary of Culture, he controlled broadcasting and publishing and therefore Hungary's information flow). However, in June, 1983, "...the Politburo...secretly decided that the project was to be completed." (57)

On December 20, 1983, the M.T.A. gave the government their opinion that the plan was bad from all aspects and they recommended that it should be terminated

immediately or else postponed for a long time. (58) The M.T.A. report said that "No comprehensive approach to ecological effects and consequences of the GNDS was made in the agreed plan. To date, no survey has been made with the aim of revealing the technical, ecological and relevant hazard relations..." (59) The resources which the M.T.A. used to reach this conclusion were labeled "top secret." (60) The Hungarian government in turn, treated the M.T.A. report as "secret" and refused to let them publish their results.

All this opposition to the GNDS did not worry the Hungarian government.

By the beginning of 1984, the Water Management felt as if it had won the battle. ... a political decision was taken to begin an information campaign. But even here...they wanted to avoid a real debate. When on January 27, 1984, the Deputy Office Director of the National Water Management Office was to debate with János Vargha, at the last moment the office renounced the debate to which it had previously agreed. In place of the debate, János Vargha told everything he knew about the barrage. Numerous specialists attended the presentation ... and they told how they had been set aside through every means. Afterwards, a few of the audience stayed behind, and they decided to initiate a movement, an educational and signature-collecting campaign to call attention to the dangers of the barrage. This moment can be considered the birth of the Danube movement...In the same year, the Hungarian Architects' Association took a position at its general meeting calling for reconsideration of the barrage system, and the Budapest City Builders' Association and the Communist Youth League Committee of the Eotvos Lorand University's Humanities Faculty also made an appeal. Until May, clubs from many Budapest universities and institutes offered space for debates organized by the new movement. It turned out that the Water Management was unable to produce presenters capable of debating. They ordered an 'information embargo' to avoid further struggles. (61)

It is amusing to note that protesters were not the only ones hurt by the embargo. Later government supporters of the plan claimed that they were prevented from telling the public the advantages of the GNDS. (62)

Thus by the middle of 1984, it was obvious to the Water Management that political support was not enough to defend the construction in open "democratic" debates. Every further effort to move the construction along was made in this knowledge. The defense of the compromised economic policy makers was always the "sincere" surprise: they did not know, if they had known, etc. (63)

The protesters confronted the "sincere" officials.

The starting strategy was to seize every legal means, offer petitions and ask for official permission to operate. These tactics forced the authorities to decide that they could not play well-meaning and misled anymore. It is true...that even without this they were inclined to a tougher stance. Successfully surviving the beginning of the 1980s (avoiding the payments crisis that threatened) made the holders of power conceited, and in preparation for their new party congress those who had felt they had given too wide a sway to more liberal economic policies gained the upper hand. It was time to tighten the reins....Gorbachev's Soviet Union...(was a weaker base of authority than) Brezhnev's, and the conceived hard line turned out to be softer than planned. (64)

The first grass roots environmental group in Hungary, called "The Danube Committee" collected 10,000 signatures on a petition urging postponement of the GNDS, after it was founded January, 1984. (65) .

The Danube Circle, (Duna Kör), was founded in János Vargha's living room in the winter of, 1982.

"This branch of the movement was supported by specialists opposing the construction." (66) The Danube Circle also developed working relations with groups in foreign countries. In October, 1985, János Vargha and the Danube Circle won the annual alternative Nobel Prize, the "Right Livelihood Award" for its activities. The Hungarian government suppressed the news of the award, and prevented the group from using the prize money to sponsor research on the Danube.

Another group specialized in gathering signatures on a petition asking for a referendum on the GNDS. "In January, 1986, they presented a letter with 2,655 signatures, protesting the project and calling for a referendum, to the Hungarian Presidential Council, because in the summer of 1985, the Hungarian government had circulated a color advertisement implying that the GNDS was an accomplished fact. (67)

Yet another group, "The Danube Blues," concentrated on pressuring parliament to vote on the issue of the GNDS. Another group, combining 15 smaller groups, "The Nagymaros Action Committee," focused their energies on stopping construction at Nagymaros, near Esztergom., when Austrian companies started work there in August, 1986. (68)

In 1984, a Hungarian living in the United States, Béla Lipták, was informed by an anonymous member of the M.T.A. that the Hungarian government was planning to build the GNDS, and that the M.T.A. had protested against it in 1981, 1983, and 1985, without effect. (69) Mr. Lipták investigated the report and decided to found the Magyar Környezet Védelmi Alap (Hungarian Environment Defence Foundation) in 1986. In 1987, the M.K.V. drafted a petition with 26 arguments against the construction of the GNDS. It was signed by about 10,000 individuals, and 232 Hungarian and foreign environment protection groups representing a total of about 3 million members. The petition was presented to the Presidium of the Hungarian Communist Party on January 2, 1988, asking for a referendum on the decision to build the GNDS. (70)

Since no Communist government was in the habit of holding referenda suggested by people outside the government, this was either a bold or quixotic effort. Hungary's 1949 Constitution did have an article which allowed plebiscites, but no one had ever tried to use it. One of the organizers of a petition signing campaign, Imre Mecs, said that their goal was to give their silent friends in government a legal way to pull back from or modify the GNDS. (71) Once the movement started, members of the Peoples' Patriotic Front, a quasi-government organization, also tried to help the campaign for a plebiscite on the GNDS.

Copies of the petition were sent to Western newspapers such as the New York Times, which published it in March, 1988. By this time, the Austrians had decided not to build more hydro-electric dams on the Danube, but they were the major financial backers of the Dunakiliti dam at Gabčíkovo. A full page advertisement in Vienna's Die Presse, on April 16, 1988, asked Austrians not to join the movement for constructing the GNDS because this would repeat the problem posed by the proposed Hainburg dam, which had recently been rejected after a massive campaign by environmentalists. (72) The advertisement said that Austrians were taking advantage of the lack of democracy in Hungary to pursue their own financial advantage. (73) The advertisement said that the signers were not Greens, and that they saw this as an economic and political problem as

well. (74) The ad was signed by 30 Hungarian intellectuals. They were called "...amateurs looking for political scandal," by Hungary's official Communist newspaper, Népszabadság. (75)

Later Imre Mecs, one of the signers of the ad in Die Presse, called the petition signing and advertising campaign, one of the most successful actions to date. He said that It promoted the largest involvement of people, including the former rebels of 1956. The campaign showed that people who were forced to be apolitical for a long time had a potential for political mobilization.

If we fail now, people will still be less afraid in the future, will not hide, and will express themselves, It started a thought process in government. they will consider more before they act and try to have more discussion. (76)

On August 10, 1988, Lipták's organization, the M.K.V., asked Western countries and Hungarians living abroad to stage boycotts, protests and demonstrations against the GNDS.

Lipták was interviewed by Hungarian State Radio for a program broadcast on May 16, 1988. He said that the interview was highly distorted in the editing and tried to correct it in an interview with the magazine H.V.G.. He said that all his interviews were manipulated. (77)

The radio interviewer asked Béla Lipták about his efforts to organize protests and boycotts abroad against the GNDS. Because of the editing, the listeners never heard a single word that the Hungarians living in the West have against the dam. (78)

The final question in the interview was "Can we imagine that in a certain moment you take the interests of the Hungarian nation into consideration?" Lipták's original answer was:

Look, the sanctions are only to draw attention to this topic and we have not used them so far. We hope that we don't have to use them, but reality is that there is a three month time lag in the world's environment newspapers, so to be able to make world wide demonstrations and boycotts we have to give this information to the papers three months before the actual events. (79)

After editing, the listeners heard the first two sentences ending with "...to use

them." Then the rest of the original answer was cut out, but another part of the interview was inserted: "Of course we would like to use them in a way that the Hungarian people would not have to suffer anything, and I still believe and hope that it will be this way." This suggests the opposite of his original answer. (80)

In a different interview, Lipták and two other environmentalists, László Szekeres and János Vargha, were invited to observe the construction of the GNDS and listen to the government's point of view on the television program "This Week" ("A het"). In the editing, Vargha and Szekeres were eliminated, but a Communist Party functionary, Mr. Szántó, (an aide to the Minister of Water Resources and Environment Protection, László Maróthy) who was not even present in the studio, was added to the tape. In the finished production, it appears that Mr. Szántó, the patriot, sweeps away the incompetent foreigner, Lipták, who wants to harm Hungary. (81)

(Protests and demonstrations were finally held in 27 cities around the world on October 30, 1988, after Hungary's parliament voted to continue construction of the GNDS.)

On September 27, 1988, the Pest Megyei Hírlap published an article about Lipták which he says libeled him. (82) ..

A film supporting the GNDS was shown on Hungarian TV which claimed that all Hungary supports the dam except a few rebellious opponents. (83) The film said that there would be pretty sunbathers enjoying the shores of the Danube, but it used pictures from Austria. (84)

Attempts to form non-government organizations, (n.g.o.'s) such as environment protection groups were opposed by the Hungarian government, which saw them as a challenge to its monopoly on power. One of the first environment groups was within the existing power structure "an 'umbrella' organization integrating environment protection groups...within the Communist Youth League," in 1984. (85) . Two years later, in 1986, an "Environment Protection Council in the Federation of Technical and Natural Sciences Associations" was formed to consolidate the views of professionals. (86)

The Duna Kör (Danube Circle) planned to hold a "study walk" along the shores of

the Danube and on Margit Island on February 8, 1986. They called it "Our Daily Drinking Water and Dams on the Danube." Their invitation for Saturday, 11:30 a.m., at Batthyány Square, said: "We are waiting for everybody with love." (87)

The authorities could not see any difference between a study walk and the traditional political demonstration. In the week before the "walk", they summoned Duna Kör leaders to police stations and warned them not to hold a public gathering. Other known environmentalists were visited at their schools, or they were called in to be scolded by their employers. They were reminded of the 1956 revolt.

Duna Kör issued a communique on February 6 postponing the walk. They said that the police claimed that the walk harms the public interest and jeopardized public security. Some activists were told that there might be provocations. Although their goal was to persuade the government to abandon the GNDS by peaceful means, given the government's attitude, they did not see how the walk could be held without violence and this was why they had to postpone it.

Many local and foreign supporters did not get the message. About 200-250 people showed up at Batthyány Square on Saturday. Some did not know about the postponement and others were against it. Uniformed riot police with plastic shields outnumbered the "demonstrators." Margit Island was sealed off against pedestrians. Anyone who wanted to cross the police cordon was told that there was an important delegation on the island. People were stopped and asked for their identity papers. Small groups of people went north from the square toward Margit Bridge. Others decided to go home. Police did not see the difference between those who wanted to go home and those who wanted to demonstrate. The police attacked groups of young people with billy clubs and kicked them.

A young Hungarian man about 20 was surrounded by two or three policemen. They tore off his Duna Kör badge, beat, tripped, and kicked him. A number of police beat one Austrian man, and even more scandalously, a German or Austrian woman was beaten as well....A small group of Hungarian youths were made to turn back, and they were followed for a long time, and they were beaten on their shoulders and heads. (88)

"The government's action was internationally condemned..." (89) The European parliament passed a resolution, in March, saying that the GNDS was bad for both countries as well as a threat to the environment. The O.G.Y. passed a similar resolution in April. (90)

In February, 1987, a group of architects, lawyers, biologists, artists and engineers wrote to the Hungarian National Environment Protection Office (O.K.T.H.) asking for permission to register their group which they said would collect and publicize information about the state of the environment and give suggestions about what to do to correct existing problems.

Answering on behalf of the Hungarian government, Dr. Kálmán Ábrahám advised the group to form only within one county.

On April 15, 1987, the environment group replied that according to the 1982 4th law, 22nd paragraph, and 1055 per 1985, September 25th (order-in-cabinet), and on 1981, 29th law, 5th paragraph, Dr. Ábrahám was the competent authority to register their group. (91)

On May 12, 1987, Dr. Endre Romhányi wrote back on behalf of the government saying that the group should give a more precise description of their activities. He ordered them not to do anything until they were registered. (92)

Duna Kör replied on May 20, that the organizing period was over and that they had adequately described their program in their first letter so that should have satisfied him. Duna Kör said that the official could not order them to stop their activities, because his own letter had said that existing Hungarian law did not provide a legal basis for suspending the activity of a volunteer group. They announced that June 5, 1987, would be their founding date. (93)

Dr. Romhányi replied in another letter and forbade the group from holding their founding meeting on June 5.

On July 20, the government sent another letter saying that "According to the available data, this group could not be registered because their activities and aims are not in

harmony with the Hungarian People's Republic's state social and economic system." (94)

On September 23, 1987, Duna Kör wrote to the Hungarian cabinet complaining that the procedure which prevented them from registering had no legal basis.

On January 2, 1988, Mrs. F. Rottler, the leader of the Office of Complaints, replied for the government that "...according to the 1981 1st law, Article 68, 2nd paragraph, 2nd phrase, and Article 97, point "A", there was no basis for appeal." (95)

The government claimed that existing organizations were already working in environment protection so that independent n.g.o.'s were not needed. In 1988, while the Duna Kör was trying to register,

...(T)he 'Hungarian Environmental Protection Union' was hobbled together under the aegis of the Patriotic People's Front which, monopolizing the problem-field, according to the official conception and declaration, would be made responsible for every other national...environmental protection organization. This action so amateurish that already at its founding sessions, with their exclusivist organizations and the choice of invitees on a political basis, the organizations managed to discredit themselves. (96)

Another group of environmentalists tried to found a "National Danube Protection Area" as an independent society. They planned their first meeting for November 5, 1987, but on November 3rd, the government banned it. The environmentalists claimed that their group was part of an already existing society and that they did not need permission to form. (97)

In May, 1988, The Communist Party forced Janos Kadar to retire. He had restored Communist rule after the 1956 revolt, and hung onto power for 22 years, eventually blocking all reforms. The reformers won a pyrrhic victory, because instead of making adjustments to the system, once the possibility of change was admitted, the system itself collapsed within 18 months. However, in early August, 1988, the Hungarian government hurried to expedite construction of the GNDS to create a fait accompli. The government issued a report with no compromise to those who had raised objections to the dams and no significant changes in the plan and sent it to various authorities for their comments. The gave the M.T.A. just five days to reply, which suggests that the government was not serious

about getting feedback. The M.T.A. insisted on taking the time it felt was necessary to provide informed comment after the five day deadline. The M.T.A. referred to their critical report in 1983 which raised strong objections to the dams.

The Hungarian government then claimed that the M.T.A. supported the GNDS. (98) An article in the newspaper Népszabadság said that the M.T.A. were leaders in a plan to take all possible effects of the GNDS into consideration. (99)

The government's control of the press was not monolithic. An interview on Hungarian State radio on August 28, 1988 where an expert called the GNDS "...one of the worst investments in this century." Some of the text was printed in an article in "Literature and Life," five days later. It said that the dam was being built without the agreement of parliament, but that did not matter because they had not been asked and did not give their assent. The author said that the people in Hungary got either nothing or just a little manipulated information. He concluded that "The fact that we can now talk about such things is the result of today's social pressure." (100)

The group (referred to above) which tried to found "The National Danube Protection Area", at the end of 1987, organized a conference "Dams on the Danube" for September 2-4, 1988. The government wanted to ban the conference but since the group had not applied for permission, permission could not be denied. This was the first large public meeting in Hungary on the GNDS. It was organized with the help of Duna Kör and the World Wildlife Fund. (101) It was attended by Austria's Minister of the Environment, Marilies Flemming, Austrian n.g.o.'s, the International Rivers Network, the M.T.A., and FIDESZ, (who later became an opposition party in Hungary's first non-Communist government). There were over 400 official participants at the conference. The former president of the M.T.A., János Szent Ágothai, opened the conference and said that economic reasons were even more important than hydrology for opposing the GNDS. Then experts from England, Germany, Switzerland, and Austria talked about the problems caused by big dams around the world, such as earthquakes and the displacement of population. Hungarians discussed the negative effects of dams on the Tisza River, including

the destruction of the foundations of houses caused by a rising ground water level. An Austrian hydro-biologist and a German virologist said that there was a large concentration of viruses at Nagymaros, which was dangerous for children under ten years old. They said if there was further construction, the danger would be increased. Hienz Löffler, of the University of Vienna gave a slide presentation about existing dams on the Danube and warned that rare species of birds would die out. He also warned of the danger to drinking water. Janos Toth, an ichthyologist, said that there would be 70%-90% fewer fish in the Danube between the two GNDS dams. Gabor Vida, a geneticist, predicted that half of the existing 5,000 species of plants and animals in the affected area of the Danube would die out. Istavan Horvath, an archaeologist said that many important sites would be flooded. Peter Hanak, a historian said that no other country had ever given away its border. Zoltan Endreffy, a philosopher, said it was immoral for the government to play with the health of other people. Other speakers from Austria said that the Greens had been protesting their country's 70% investment in the costs of the GNDS for several months, but that public opposition in Hungary was more recent. Walter Geyer of the Austrian Greens said Austria was building the dam in Hungary because people in Austria had protested against the proposed dam at Hainburg and would not allow it to be built. He said that it was being imposed on Hungary by anti-democratic methods. (102)

Hungary's deputy minister for Water Resources and Environment protection, Zoltan Rakonczay attended to report on the conference to his ministry. Another government representative, Andras Nagy Söllösi, deputy director of the water research institute, complained that there were no speakers in favor of the GNDS. A member of the Hungarian Parliament said that he had recommended to Parliament in June not to build any more of the GNDS but his suggestion had been rejected. He said he hoped Parliament would vote on the issue in the fall, and he wanted to hold a plebiscite on the GNDS. He said that the M.T.A. study on the GNDS was still suppressed but he hoped to get a copy of it to give to the parliamentarians before they voted. Mr. Kiraly said the fact that articles against the GNDS could now be published in Hungary meant that the government knew

there were many people opposed to the GNDS and wanted to re-evaluate it. (103)

The government feared there would be chaos with the capital city's traffic. There probably was since 40,000 people came out and demonstrated in the streets. According to a participant, many were simply anti-government and not particularly interested in the environment. (104)

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Pressure came from abroad as well. In Vienna, the Austrian environment protection group, Global 2000, occupied the offices of Donaukraftwerk and put dead fish on the director's desk. They hung a 9 meter long banner on the front of the building which said: "Donaukraftwerk is occupied - Donaukraftwerk get out of Hungary - Stop Nagymaros" Police arrested a group of 15 Austrians and Hungarians. (108)

Ignoring all protests, the Hungarian cabinet told the Parliament on September 7, 1988, that construction of the GNDS should proceed.

The next day, Duna Kör published a declaration protesting the decision.

Two days later, on September 10, The Magyar Democratic Forum, a small protest group which later became the dominant party in the first post-Communist government, held a conference in Esztergom to promote protests against the dam. (109)

As in much political activity, there may have been an element of expediency in their

concern for the environment because in both the 1990 election (which they won) and the 1994 election (which they lost) the M.D.F. made only perfunctory references to environment problems.

Two days later, on September 12, 1988, 20-25,000 people marched from Budapest's Vörösmarty Square to the Parliament. It was the largest environment demonstration ever held in the country. They gave a petition to the president of the Presidium, Bruno Straub, demanding an end to construction and a plebiscite on the GNDS. Speakers at a rally in front of the Hungarian Parliament said that the GNDS was a swindle wasting 5-10 million Forints per day. They said the 1977 Treaty had been forced on Hungary, and Hungary needed democracy and a democratic vote in parliament. The same day there was a demonstration in Szeged, the largest city in southern Hungary. (110)

The Young Democrats, FIDESZ, helped organize a demonstration at Nagymaros on September 17, called "Women for the Danube." (111) Since FIDESZ did not stress environment issues in its election campaigns of 1990 or 1994, one could assume that they too were simply using the GNDS as a club to beat the Communist government. The Esztergom demonstration had its roots in a human rights conference in Krakow, Poland the month before. One of the participants said that women should do something about the GNDS because it would affect them and their children. About 600 women demonstrated, and 5 local women joined the demonstration. Other local people said: "You come here from Budapest, and you do not care about our area." (112)

One of the leaders of the Esztergom demonstration, Zsuzsa Szelényi, said that there was a lot of propaganda from the local city council sent to each citizen of Esztergom. She said that most people remained non-committal, with comments such as "This has been going on for years. What can you do?" (113)

It would be easy to assume from reading the literature written by opponents of the dams that only a handful of government leaders and bureaucrats wanted to build the GNDS, and that the people of Hungary were almost united in their opposition to it. Public opinion surveys show that this is not the case. In a country with 20% the per capita income

of Austria, industrial development and the promise of energy and jobs is popular. A look at the littered Hungarian countryside shows that the idea of protecting the environment is also not as developed as in Austria. On the other hand, Hungarian officialdom was not united in its support of the GNDS either. When the People's Patriotic Front tried to organize a counter demonstration in support of the GNDS, the police refused to give them permission.

While it was politically risky to question the wisdom of the Hungarian Communist Party, it was perfectly acceptable to quote Soviet leaders. A week after the Nagymaros demonstration, in an oblique criticism of the GNDS, the magazine H.V.G. quoted Soviet Premier Gorbachov as saying: "I wonder where the scientists lost their foresight when they recommended construction of the dams on the Yennessei River. If we go ahead, we waste money and create an unendurable situation. (114)

On September 26, the Vasváry Pál Society organized a debate on the GNDS.

Three days later, on September 29, Duna Kör issued a declaration saying there is still a chance for compromise. They said that construction of the GNDS should be halted, and an independent scientific investigation should be made. They said the public should be told the truth and there should be a plebiscite on the issue. (115)

The Hungarian Parliament Debates the GNDS

The Hungarian government finally decided to let Parliament vote on the question of continuing to build the GNDS or stopping construction. When the public learned about the government's intention to vote on the issue, many independent groups wrote to members of Parliament giving their opinions. (116) An opponent of the dams, Tamás Ökrös, wrote a letter to a Hungarian Member of Parliament, Dr. Aladár Juratovics, on September 13, 1988, asking the government to hold a plebiscite on the issue. He wrote: "We strongly request the government to fulfill the basic demands of democracy on this question which concerns the whole country's future." (117)

The reply from MP Juratovics is a classic example of a Communist legislator's attitude toward a member of the public. After expressing support for the construction of the

GNDS, and disagreeing with all of Mr. Ökrös' reasons for stopping construction or holding a plebiscite, he wrote: "This is an international economic problem which can not be a subject of a plebiscite. In the future, since I have a responsible role as an economic manager, and important work in public life, I ask you not to bother me with your lay opinions that I think are without any basis. For my part, I consider any kind of correspondence on this topic unnecessary, and I do not need it." (118)

Supporters of the GNDS were not idle. In the first week of October, 1988, all members of the Hungarian Parliament received an anonymous report criticizing the M.T.A.'s critique of the GNDS. It said that "...the methods of calculation, and the calculations themselves are not valid." (119) It said that the "M.T.A. made an incorrect estimation of the International effects of stopping construction, that there were no scientific investigations on the effects of stopping construction, and that the M.T.A. did not give a scientifically supported basis for Parliament to make a decision." (120)

Under "democratic centralism" power flows down from the top, as shown in this speech by the Minister for Environment and Water Management, László Maróthy, during the parliamentary debate on the GNDS:

(I)t was decided that the legislative assembly should be informed on the state of the Bös-Nagymaros river dams project....Competent bodies of the government repeatedly reviewed the main issues related to the project....The Council of Ministers has discussed the report, taken its stand and charged the Minister for Environment and Water Mangement with informing the National Assembly about it." (121) .

He said that the GNDS project was 25% complete on the Hungarian side and 60% complete on the Czech side. The Minister admitted that "...the current knowledge of the population is less than they are entitled to. This is the fault of the former information policy." (122)

Mr. Maróthy pointed out that there were 40,000 similar dams in the world, and he said that the GNDS would improve flood prevention and navigation, and would provide 1,900 million kwh of electrical power per year and there would be new public works and

"environmental facilities" on the river banks. He said that by adjusting ground water levels, agricultural production would be improved, and that supplies of drinking water would be increased. (123) He said that "...amongst the socialist countries, Hungary alone has so far had no problems with electrical energy supply," (124) , and that this additional facility would ensure future energy supply.

The Minister acknowledged that there were concerns about environment problems and accidental flooding, but he assured his listeners that sewage would be treated and all possible safety measures would be taken. He went on to say:

The manner of construction is not indifferent to public opinion. Social reaction to such construction is quite different in an upswinging stable economy than in a period when social values are upset and the possibilities for concrete social activity are not entirely clear. We live in such a period now. Continuity, always strongly stressed and a characteristic of Hungarian society in the last decades, has been cut off. Suddenly, in the process of breaking with former practices, and in the not always healthy "reform impatience", everything becomes questionable which can be linked to the past four decades and its political-economical decisions.

As a specific part of the young environmental protection movement, several anti-dam groups have come to life which, struggling with the lack of publicity and organizational possibilities alike, more and more resolutely came out against the building of the project. The debate initiated by them continued with previously unheard of means in Hungary, has extended over ecological and technical questionsw for several years. NOT ONLY ENVIRONMENTAL, BUT POLITICAL GROUPS ALSO HAVE JOINED THEM AND WITH THEIR TACTICAL ALLIANCE THE DEBATE HAS BECOME RADICAL AND OF A POLITICAL CHARACTER TO AN EVER INCREASING EXTENT. (125)

The Minister found it remarkable that lobbying took place, which representatives of a western democracy would assume was a normal part of the day's business. He said that some of his fellow M.P.'s had been visited the previous evening by opponents of the GNDS. He said they "...tried to transform the construction of the project into a sentimental, moral problem." (126)

Mr. Maróthy quoted public opinion studies which favored the GNDS and claimed that the M.T.A. supported it in 1986. (127) He noted that the latest M.T.A. report advocated postponement or cancellation, but then he rejected their advice.. He said that

there was a lack of "...full macro-economic and cost-benefit analysis,¹ and that "...scientific analysis could help". He added that "It is not known whether the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (M.T.A.) has ever compiled such a study." (128)

Here the Minister seemed to admit that he did not read his mail. If he had read the reports that the M.T.A. sent the government, he would have known what kind of studies had been conducted, and what had not.

He followed with a summary of the expected costs of completing construction of the GNDS compared to the costs of breaking their contracts and treaties by halting construction, and recommended going ahead with it. Summing up the history of the project, the Minister said: "It is clearly visible how much damage has been caused by the lack of publicity, superficial information and unjustified silence. Insufficient examination of risk elements and leaving signals of public opinion unheeded created distrust and even antipathy." (129)

Mr. Maróthy said that investigating the GNDS "I did not find secrecy, I found prohibition. In the past the government prohibited releasing any information about the GNDS. This was the case from 1978 to 1988" (130)

The secretary of the Committee of Construction and Transport, Gabor Szilágyi, also supported continuing construction of the GNDS for the same reasons, and echoed similar criticism. He said that during the meetings of his committee, "...the government was severely criticized for neglecting to perform its duty of rendering information and for its long delay in doing so. Among other things, this was the reason...that various groups have made the affair of the dam serve political purposes." (131) Mr., Szilágyi criticized the media for supporting "...the initiatives of the newly founded organizations, unequivocally backing those which strengthened the population's doubts and mistrust related to the river dams project." (132)

The chairman of the Committee of Planning and Financing, Bertalan Mayer, "...pointed out that several people had emphasized that this debate should have taken place, not now, but in 1985 or even earlier." (133) He added that "The silence surrounding the beginning of

operations, experienced in recent years, significantly contributed to the making of incorrect decisions." (134)

The MP from Csongrád County, Zoltán Király, objected to the government's proposal to continue construction.

He pointed out that earlier, no counter-opinions could be voiced, and that a heated debate had been going on in the country for only a month and a half. If in 1977 - when the decision was made on the project - there had been democracy in Hungary, today there would be no such debates. Acting from a position of power, a narrow minority had achieved the silence of the great majority by exercising pressure for decades, and not merely on the Bös-Nagymaros question. Here several MPs remarked...that there were people who tried to undermine the credit of the government under the guise of opposing the dam. But he added: "The political and governmental practices of the past decades are what have most ruined the credit of the government ... and encouraged the creation of a confidence crisis." (135)

Although speaking in favor of continuing construction, the Deputy Minister of Water Management and Environment Protection, Lajos Faluvégi, admitted that if the government "...had known the ecological and other problems, WE WOULD NOT HAVE SIGNED THE 1977 TREATY." (136)

A similar point was made by the chairman of the Committee of Settlement, Development, and Environmental Protection, Béla Berdár.

He looked back on the torrent of information which had recently been poured onto public opinion, emphasizing that society's sensitivity towards, and its interest in, the dam had significantly increased, and this could...be attributed to the unfortunate silence which had lasted for many years.....The question at issue is not that people do not understand the significance of this affair, but rather that they have not been properly informed about it. And that is the sin of those who should have informed the masses (137)

However, his committee felt it was too late to cancel the GNDS and his committee had only one negative vote and one abstention.

Prime Minister Károly Grósz said that the whole problem is a political problem, not an economic or environmental problem. Referring to the recent demonstrations, he said that politics does not begin with demonstrations and strikes, but the demonstrations and strikes are the culmination of a series of events in politics. In this case the events were a series of

decisions to construct the GNDS. These decisions were purely political and not economic or technical. In a surprising admission, the Prime Minister said he could not say where or how the original decision to build was made. The idea had been considered and dismissed in 1951. He asked if new investigations were made to arrive at the decision to build, or did they just modernize old data? (138) Both the M.T.A. and the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce had said that they doubted that the project was adequately supported by data. They doubted the reliability of the data supplied by the Ministry of Water Management and Environment Protection. A member of parliament opposed to the dam, Bertalan Südi argued that "...the advanced stage of construction was not a sufficient reason for its continuation." (139) He said "...that in creating this state, a significant role had been played in their earlier neglect (sic) of wide-ranging social debate." (140)

When Parliament got ready to vote on the GNDS, on October 7, 1988, a group of 32 M.P.'s made an appeal for the vote to be recorded. According to the House rules, (42nd paragraph, 7th sub-paragraph) if at least 30 M.P.'s want a recorded vote, the Speaker must order a recorded vote. The Speaker, Miklós Vida, did not order a recorded vote. (141) Instead he asked those who wanted a recorded vote to stand.

Then there was an appeal for the session to be held "in camera." According to a professor of law at Eötvös Loránd University, István Kukorelly, the Speaker should have refused this request. Instead he asked those who wanted a secret session to stand. (142) Questions of procedure are not debatable, but the Speaker recognized M.P.'s who then debated the procedural motions.

After this, those who wanted a recorded vote, and those who wanted a meeting "in camera" stayed away from the session. (143)

If the Speaker refuses to recognize an MP who wants to speak, that MP can appeal to the parliament and the parliament decides without debate. The Speaker refused to recognize MP Bertalan Südi, but the House was not allowed to vote on Mr. Südi's request to speak. (144)

On the main question of the future of the GNDS, the Speaker accepted a proposal to

allow a standing vote, which was not one of the three existing legal methods of voting (secret, show of hands, or recorded vote). (145)

On the question of holding a plebiscite, the Speaker asked the Minister of Justice, Kálmán Kulcsár to explain the law about plebiscites. The Minister said that Parliament must ask the Presidium for permission to hold a plebiscite. While that may have been practical advice considering the reality of the distribution of power, it was not legally required. (146) Mr. Kulcsár "...added that the legal regulations on the basis of which a referendum could be carried out were lacking..." (147)

The point of all this faultfinding is that as a dictatorship, Hungary did not have a rule of law. Since decision makers could be as arbitrary as they liked, the normal rules of procedure were often unknown or ignored in practice. This produced the kind of chaos which the M.P.'s complained about where decisions were made which were later regretted and where it was difficult to assign responsibility.

Not surprisingly, the government was not defeated, and its expressed wish to continue construction of the GNDS was upheld by 375 yes votes, to 19 "no" votes, with 31 abstentions. The "no" votes and abstentions mark a significant departure from the usual rubber stamp legislature of Communist regimes. In 1985, the Hungarian government had allowed competition for nominations. Although candidates opposed to socialism were not allowed to stand for election, there was still an opening for differences of opinion. The winning candidate might feel more loyalty to his electors than to his party boss.

The resolution to continue construction showed some success for the protest movements. It had the important qualifier that

The ecological risks must be minimized, therefore the ecological interests must have priority over the economic interests during construction as well as operation. The fundamental principle of the operation must be that the quality of the water of the river must not deteriorate. The peak-load operation must not begin before building sewage farms on both sides which is necessary for the safe operation of the barrage system, free of environmental risks. (148)

Fleischer says that by machine voting, since the Communist party wanted "...to

prevail at all costs," the Hungarian Parliament "...openly, spectacularly, and perfectly discredited itself." (149) Another reason the parliament was discredited was that instead of meeting "in camera," it was the first time it met "on camera" and the entire affair was broadcast on television.

(One of the 19 members who voted "no", Ádám Reviczky, said that most of the information given to the M.P's was modified or corrupted. He believed it was a mistake to try to build a hydro-electric dam in Hungary's flat countryside. Reviczky said he thought the reason the government went ahead with the dam was the leaders' desire to appear to be infallible. If they had to admit a mistake, they might lose their position of power. (150)

Another MP, László Szále, said he felt it was a mistake that the M.P.'s voted in favor of continuing construction because they lacked the necessary technical knowledge. (151)

Looking back four months after the vote an MP (whose name was not given in the article) said:

The Nagymaros dam will not give enough electrical energy for 20 years. It requires motorways, weirs, and other protecting investments which the Hungarian government can not cover with money. It surpassed the Hungarian government's ability to pay. The Hungarian government does not have a Czech guarantee that they can pay for their part. The Hungarian government does not have any information whether the Czechs have enough money to begin the construction. Ignorance of the water treatment system will lead to ecological catastrophe. The M.P.s WERE NOT PROPERLY INFORMED ABOUT ALL THE EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT. They were not properly informed about the contrary opinion, for instance the opinion of the Hungarian Academy of Science, the M.P.'s got only on the evening before the vote...IT MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE A RESPONSIBLE DECISION.The scientific investigation would enable the Hungarian Parliament to make a responsible decision on this issue. Up to that time, it would be inevitable to suspend the work." (152)

In spite of the vote in parliament, the demonstrations and petition signing continued without a pause. Three weeks after the vote, on October 30, 1988, there were simultaneous demonstrations held in 27 different world capitals, organized by Béla Lipták and his Foundation to Protect the Hungarian Environment. (153)

By February, 1989, "...the movement could hand 140,000 signatures to the

parliamentary president." (154)

On November 24, 1988, Prime Minister Grósz turned over the job of Prime Minister to Miklós Németh, (Hungary's last Communist Prime Minister), but retained the position of First Secretary of the Communist Party. At that time he was only 40 years old, Hungary's first and only Prime Minister born after the Second World War. He had studied at Harvard, so his outlook was not the same as the older leaders whose experience was limited to the socialist bloc, and who saw the Communist present as an improvement over the Great Depression or the Second World War. Fleischer says that Németh "...wanted to avoid...that a referendum against the barrage should demonstrate the masses' dissatisfaction with the regime. As a first decisive step...through the barrage affair, he found it necessary to markedly separate himself from the party leadership that continued to bear the stamp of Károly Grósz." (155)

There was a break with the past when just three weeks later, First Secretary Grósz said that Hungary needed a multi-party system (in a speech to a Communist Party meeting in Miskolc) (156) Another milestone in Hungary's transition to democracy was the right of freedom of assembly. The environment movement had won the right to protest publicly de facto in 1988, and this was recognized in law on January 4, 1989, when the Németh government passed a law allowing freedom of assembly (1989 - III) which was improved on April 12, 1989, by a further act of parliament (1989 - 7).

While recognizing the opposition to the GNDS, Prime Minister Németh equivocated instead of forthrightly opposing continued construction. In February, 1989, he sent a delegation to Czechoslovakia "...to sign a protocol concerning the speeding up of the work." (157)

One month later, the Hungarian government asked for a recommendation from the 'Ecologia' group of the University of Massachusetts. In part their advice stated:

Certain decisions of the Hungarian, Czechoslovakian and Austrian governments were made ignoring environmental and other serious misgivings....Thus the procedure failed to follow the recommendations given previously by us, proposing that the effects and alternatives should be

thoroughly examined before anything else is done....In regard to the power station and shipping...international misgivings...were expressed. (158)

Hungarian Public Opinion About GNDS

The debate in parliament influenced public opinion in Hungary. A public opinion poll found that 61% of the respondents had watched the debate on TV. A majority said it was very interesting. After the debate people had less faith in parliament than before, perhaps because 10% said the MP's never followed the rules and 18% said they sometimes did not follow the rules. (159) Phrased differently, after the debate, 50% of the public believed less in parliament, while 20% believed more in parliament. (160)

In the fall of 1988, 90% of respondents knew about the GNDS, one third were very interested and one third were somewhat interested. (161)

Another interesting change in public opinion took place between early September, before the parliamentary debate, and November, after the debate. The number of people in favor of building GNDS dropped from 45% to 20%, while those opposed to building the dam dropped from 30% to 13%. Because of the increase in information, those who had no opinion dropped from 28% to 10%. (162)

There is a most interesting difference of opinion between men and women. Before the debate 55% of men favored building GNDS and only 30% of women. After the debate support dropped to 29% of men and 28% of women. (163) Another difference was that far more men than women said they did not have an opinion. (164)

In answer to the question, "Do we need a plebiscite on GNDS" only 28% said "yes" in September but the number increased to 42% in November, after the debate. (165)

The difference in reaction between social classes is quite marked. In answer to "Are there questions that need a plebiscite," only 25% of the population as a whole said "no", but among those with the highest education, 48% said "no." (166) This shows a mistrust of the power of the masses. It also suggests that the educated class values its own opinions

very highly.

Two thirds of respondents agreed that questions existed in Hungary that needed a plebiscite in the future, and they felt that the most important issue was the GNDS, ahead of taxes, prices, incomes, and the right to bear arms (167). At the end of November, 1988, the question was asked: "Should we have a plebiscite in the future?" In Budapest 78% said "yes" and 13% said "no." In the rest of the country, 95% said "yes," and no one said "no." (In both cases 5% had no opinion) (168) It is not easy to say why there is such a difference of opinion, but it could be that people in the capital do not put much value on the opinion of the people in the rest of the country.

Those most in favor of future plebiscites were the educated people outside Budapest, and those least in favor were the uneducated in Budapest. (169)

In answering the question: "Is the GNDS good or bad?" 45% had mixed feelings, 25% said "bad", 17% "good," and 14% "no opinion" (170) The greatest support was in the villages of the Szigetköz where 66% were in favor. (171) This is something of a surprise because this is the area that would suffer the most negative effects.

Local support for the GNDS in the Szigetköz could come from the promise of economic development. A Hungarian language newspaper in Bratislava wrote: "The 3 remaining villages, Budak, Vajka, and Dobogaz would become metropolises with new industry, new houses, new roads, more businesses, local employment, new sewage systems, water treatment plants, and wider ranges of products and food in the stores. Local people would be more independent. Small villages would have more local autonomy and better social services. (172) Local people could buy their heating fuel sooner. There will be new post offices, new telephones, and new primary schools with teaching in Hungarian. There will be a local doctor. (173)

There were estimates that there would be 3,500 jobs involved in the construction of the GNDS., New holiday resorts were promised for Hrusov and Cilistov. (174)

The following opinion is not scientifically selected, but gives points of views which are not reported in tightly controlled surveys. The government sponsored a public

information exhibition called "Dams on the Danube," and these comments were written in a guest book.

Supporting the construction of dams there were comments such as these:

"Nagymaros is a great work and you should build it. Instead of a neglected river bank, we should have a cultured river bank and I congratulate the planners."

A pensioner wrote: "I am waiting for it to be constructed and I would like to spend a few years fishing at this wonderful place." (175)

"I wish further success for the construction and I hope that the electricity supply will never stop." (176)

"I am for it. Many lay people are taken in by the shouters who do not want hydro-power, neither nuclear power, or coal energy, gas or oil pipelines. From where should we get the energy? Do they want to destroy the country?" (177)

Students from the Marxist Leninist Evening University wrote: "We understand many things after seeing the detailed and esthetic exhibition. We thank you for the opportunity." (178)

While support may have been influenced by support for the Communist Party, opposition often had an anti-Communist flavor.

"It will be at least as nice as Ceausecu Avenue in Bucharest." (179)

Another visitor took a familiar Stalinist slogan and added a question mark to make it ironic: "The country is ours and we will build it for ourselves?" (180)

"This exhibition is conspicuously one-sided and I feel manipulated even now." (181)

"It is decided. You won, but we will all lose. It would be better if only you had to pay the piper." (182)

Another visitor had a nationalist sentiment: "We have enough hydro dams in this country and we do not have to accomplish the ideas of the stupid Czechoslovakians." (183)

Only a few dealt with the environment: "You can deceive people but you can not deceive nature. The one is politics, and the other is the eternal law of the earth. I do not think we should stand against this law of the earth..." (184)

I found this student's comment the most poignant: "We don't have money for chalk in school, but we have the money for the hydro-electric plant." (185)

A different study of public opinion in the Szigetköz had less enthusiastic attitudes toward the GNDS. The question was asked in November 1988 if it would be good or bad if the GNDS was built. The answers were "good" 24%, "bad" 24%, "both good and bad" 38%, "don't know" 14%. After Hungary withdrew from the project and the Slovaks were completing the Gabčíkovo dam nearby, opinion changed toward the negative, with only 12% saying it was "good", 64% "bad", only 10% "good and bad" and 14% "don't know." (186)

The answers which the people of Szigetköz gave to the question "What would you do if you were in government?" help explain their earlier enthusiasm for the dam and the economic development it promised. The respondents said they would solve unemployment, raise pensions and help the economy. The second rank problems were regional development, sewage, drainage, and litter. Another question was "What are the most important environment problems?" The answers were: 1) "regional development and infrastructure," 2) "protecting the Danube," and 3) "preventing eutrophication," and "preventing mosquitos from breeding." (187)

Most people said they were worried about a dam on the Danube and concerned that the dropping ground water levels meant their wells would dry out. Eighty seven per cent said they hiked, fished or relaxed by the Danube, and 81% said the area should be an international nature preserve. (188)

Returning to national opinion about the GNDS in Hungary, the greatest opposition was in Budapest, where 50% were against it, and the main reason they cited was the threat to their drinking water. In all of Hungary, in the same poll of September, 1988, 44% were opposed to the GNDS, and 28% were in favor. Ten percent of the women favored the GNDS, but 20% of the men. While 30% of the women had "no opinion," only 13% of the men had "no opinion" (189)

The smallest support for the GNDS came from youth aged 18-20, with 10%

supporting it. In the 50-year-old age group, 20%, or twice as many favored it. While 22% of the 18-20-year-old youth opposed the GNDS, only 18% of the 50-year-old group opposed it. (190)

People with the highest level of education were the most strongly opposed to the GNDS, - 48%. This educated group had the smallest amount with "no opinion," they also reported the strongest support for the GNDS - 18%. A poll broken down by income showed the same thing, that the highest income had the most definite opinions and the most opposition to the GNDS. At the other extreme, semi-skilled workers showed the least support for the GNDS; only 18% said it was "good," while 13% said it was "bad." (191) Skilled workers were the most in favor, and unskilled workers were the least in favor of building the GNDS. (This seeming contradiction between unskilled workers and semi-skilled workers is explained by varying numbers of "no opinion" so that a lack of support is not necessarily a declaration to oppose the project) . The greatest opposition was found among intellectuals and managers. (192)

Hungary Suspends Construction

On May 13, 1989, the Németh government suspended work at Nagymaros for two months and informed the Czechoslovakian government on May 24, asking for further studies of the ecological risks. (193) "By then the reformists had become stronger: they publicly admitted that the 1956 Hungarian uprising was not a 'counter-revolution' - as it had been earlier labeled by the party-..." (194)

The Hungarian Parliament asked the government " '...to enter into preliminary negotiations with the Czechoslovak Party about the conditions and possible consequences of the modification of the 1977 Treaty, should this be required by the results of the investigation carried out during the suspension.'" (195)

A goodwill delegation of Hungarian MPs and environment n.g.o.'s went to Vienna to ask the Austrians to let Hungary out of its contract obligations as cheaply as possible. (196) They argued unsuccessfully that if Hungary had to pay a high price as compensation, it would simply set the country further back in repairing its damaged environment.

Austria's Minister of Economics asked for 2,600 million Schillings in cash, or a higher sum with interest added if Hungary paid with electricity.

The minister rejected the Hungarian proposal that the Austrian firms could be compensated by new contracts, (e.g. road building) in Hungary. The Hungarians considered the claim for interest unfair since Hungary did not denounce the energy supply treaty. (197)

While the contract was officially ended in November, 1989, Austria's compensation was not settled until the MDF government took office. Donaukraftwerke asked for about four times the value of the work it had actually done. The difference was for unrealized profits, orders for building material, and preparatory work. In November, 1990, Hungary agreed to pay Austria 2.6 billion Schillings or \$240 million U.S. dollars. (198)

On July 20, 1989, the Hungarian and Czech Prime Ministers met in Budapest, and announced Hungary's suspension of work both at Nagymaros and at Dunakiliti (Gabcikovo) until October 31. (199) This threw a wrench in the works, because without the dam at Dunakiliti, Czechoslovakia could not divert the Danube into the by-pass canal it was building. (200)

The still conservative Communist Czechoslovakia reacted with crushing words: its press accused the Hungarian government of submitting to political pressure by the opposition and labelled the decision anti-Socialist and hostile to Czechoslovakia, jeopardizing the 'good neighbor' relations of the two countries. The Slovak leadership (in an aide memoire on July 25 and then a diplomatic note of August 18) demanded completion of the project in its original form, otherwise it would file for compensation. The case strained the already tense relations between the two countries resulting from the growing difference between their political systems, even further. (201)

The Czechs demanded compensation but the Hungarians claimed that damage and expenses must be shared as well as the benefits. (202)

Before continuing to list all the complicated negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia, it would be helpful to examine the substance of their disagreement about the GNDS.

Expected Environmental Problems from the GNDS

Between July 17 and 19, 1989, the Hungarian-Slovak Joint Commission met in Budapest and examined the GNDS with regard to ecology, hydrology, geology, seismology, pedology, and agricultural production. They agreed that the GNDS is a great interference in the environment, and that the protection of the drinking water is very important since 3 million Hungarians and 5 million Czechs would be affected by polluting the drinking water. (203)

There was a similar disagreement when the group met in Bratislava between September 25 and 27, 1989. The Hungarians dissenting opinion said:

We do not agree with the opinion of the Czechoslovak delegation that the majority of the problems could be solved after accomplishing the construction of the barrage system and filling up the Dunakiliti-Hrusov reservoir. The possible alternatives are unknown in many cases, therefore, it is extremely dangerous to carry out 'experiments' in nature. We consider it a proven fact that the functioning of the Dunakiliti-Hrusov reservoir would result in a disadvantageous...multiplication of the algal biomass. (204)

A technical description of the chemistry and biology of water pollution is necessary at this point. Damming a flowing river into a reservoir slows the speed of the water to almost a standstill. Between the two proposed dams, the velocity of the water would also be slower than normal along a 200 km. stretch of the Danube. The dirty color of the Danube is largely caused by the load of sand and gravel it carries. Building a dam and reservoir stops the transport of both. The first effect of a river dropping this load of sediment is that the water clears and allows more sunlight to penetrate. This nourishes the growth of algae, which like yeast in fermenting beer, (or the human race on earth), reproduces to the point of self-extinction. The dead algae rots and uses up the dissolved oxygen in the water. The oxygen in the water in the Dunakiliti-Hrusov reservoir is expected to decrease 40-50%. (205) The decrease in oxygen, or anaerobic condition, also has multiple effects which are discussed below. The surface of the nearly stagnant water also receives more warmth from the sun, since its heat is not dissipated into the rest of the river by the turbulence of its natural flow. The warmer water also promotes the growth of

algae and other plants, and warmer water holds less dissolved oxygen than cold water.

In addition, chemicals such as phosphates and nitrates from fertilizers, soaps, and other pollutants are called the "nutrient load" because they nourish further plant growth. "During the last three decades, the nutrient loads across the Rajka section of the Danube (where the river enters Hungary) have increased 5-10 fold due to upstream pollutant discharges." (206) He adds that existing dams upstream from Gabčíkovo have already trapped sediments and increased the transparency of the water with its attendant negative effects.

A second effect of the dam stopping the transport of "drift gravel" along the Danube bed is that this gravel is an important part of the natural filter which purifies the water which seeps into the wells next to the river. This gravel bed is 25 meters thick at Bratislava and 400 meters thick at Nagymaros. (207) This creates central Europe's largest reservoir of fresh water.

Polluted mud, unfiltered by gravel, will settle on the banks and on the river bottom for about 200 km. where the river is artificially slowed....Along the riverbanks,...even the finest granules of mud (will) settle on the gravel....Oil Pollutants, becoming more and more frequent tend to block this gravel filter. The increased water pressure, instead of washing the blockage away, tends to make the mud more compact, with an increase in oozing resistance, and a decrease in dissolved oxygen. (208)

Another source of mud which would interfere with natural filtration would be from the dredging which was planned. It is the oxygenating process which destroys much of the bacteria which are harmful to man. This happens naturally in rapidly flowing water, and is artificially created in man-made water purification plants. Therefore the net result would be a decrease in the amount of water entering the river- bank wells, and a decrease in its quality.

Somlyódy says that "The development of anaerobic conditions in the sediments will be favored, thus giving more chance for the occurrence of ammonia, manganese, and dissolved iron in the water produced." (209) . Other experts say that this will produce the rotten egg smell and taste of hydrogen sulfide. Somlyódy says this means that Budapest which now

gets "more than 85% of its drinking water from bank-filtered water" (210) will need "additional technological means for removing these poisons from its drinking water." (211)

The Cousteau Foundation studied pollution in the Danube with over 10,000 measurements creating "...the largest information base yet base yet obtained from Danube sediments." (212).

Danube sediments are often highly polluted with sewage. This is undoubtedly related to high population densities along the river and the lack of effective urban waste water treatment. Any dam in the river downstream of identified pollution creates a potential buildup of contaminants and in some cases a future "chemical time bomb." Today such a situation exists in the Iron Gate Reservoir, and tomorrow it would be true for the Gabčíkovo dam. (213)

The sources of this pollution are 1) all the countries upstream on the Danube, 2) the entire Morava River watershed where there is almost no sewage treatment, 3) Bratislava's Istrochem Chemical plant, and Slovnaft, and 4) Bratislava's suburb, Petržalka, (population 120,000) which has no waste water treatment. (214)

Downstream from Gabčíkovo, the first large Hungarian settlement, Győr, (population 140,000), is located at the confluence of four rivers. Here "...the amount of pollutants entering this stretch of the Danube from the Czechoslovakian side is ten times greater than the amount entering from Hungary." (215) If the GNDS operated at its originally planned peak mode, with a five meter fluctuation in water level, municipal and industrial sewage would back up 20 km. along the riverbanks at Győr. Researchers said "Riverside wells will be irrecoverably polluted..." if the power station started operation before sewage treatment plants were built. (216)

It is not only Hungarians who would suffer from the increased water pollution. The Slovakian government recognized the importance of Zitny Island, (also known as Csallóköz, or Wheat Island, the large area of land between the main channel of the Danube and the Maly River to the north) downstream from Bratislava as a source of pure drinking water when they passed government order 46-1978 designating it the first "Protected Water Management Region." (217). However the Zitny Island aquifer gets its water from the area where the 52 square km Hrusov reservoir will collect the wastes from Bratislava. (218)

The research showed that in the Zitny Island area "...all currently used water sources - Kalinko, Hamuliakovo, Samorin, Gabcikovo...are endangered by the operation of (the dam)." (219) Bratislava and Hrusov have ten times the amount of nitrogene as pure natural waters.

The concentration of Nitrogene and Phosphorous are high in the yearly average, and in the winter months, they are almost double." (220) (The water entering the Hrusov reservoir) "...contained the following inorganic micropollutants: copper, total chrome, lead, cadmium, nickel, arsenic, mercury, zinc, iron and manganese....In addition 255 organic substances were found in this part of the Danube, including the so-called 'forbidden pollutants.'... These are isomers of linan, aldrin, dieldrin, hexachlorobenzene, alachlorine, pentachlorophenol from phenol derivatives, diazobenzene from polyclinic aromatic hydrocarbons. (221)

The same experts predicted that

A considerable and fast decrease of groundwater quality will occur....Fast transport of various hydrocarbon substances and others of a mainly organic character can be expected (oil hydrocarbons, chlorinated hydro carbons, CL-insecticides, phenols, products of organic decomposition, decades of sludge deposits....These water pollutants will penetrate and spread relatively quickly even to regions distant from the reservoir edge, to a distance of hundreds of meters or even some kilometers, by groundwater flow and diffusion flow. (222)

On a final chilling note, the report reminds us that "It is necessary to stress that these pollutants are dangerous in drinking water in microgram amounts; some are carcinogenic or have mutageneous and tratogeneuous effects." (223)

Returning to the negotiations between the experts of the Hungarian and Czechoslovak Joint Commission, the main point of disagreement was: can these physical and chemical processes be reversed after the GNDS is built? It seems and extreme case of wishful thinking for the Czechs to maintain that once mud has been compacted, it can be uncompacted, or that after these hundreds of pollutants have infiltrated into the ground water reservoir they could somehow be vacuumed out.

Hungary Cancels Nagymaros - Czecholslovakia Builds Alone

On August 31, 1989, Czechoslovakia's Prime Minister Husak wrote to the Hungarian government threatening a "provisional solution" if Hungary withdrew from the

GNDS. Czechoslovakia would unilaterally divert the Danube onto Czechoslovakian territory (224) In the new plan the Czechs could get along without the Hungarian weir at Dunakiliti to fill up the reservoir. "At this point, the tension between the two countries reached a climax. The Hungarians suspected that Czechoslovakia was only bluffing..." (225) , but they were wrong.

Citing the objections of experts, Prime Minister Németh of Hungary objected to to this provisional solution in a letter of October 4, 1989, saying it was "irreconcilable with the norms of international law." (226) He also proposed abandoning the Nagymaros dam, which would make it impossible for the Czechs to use the peak-load operating mode. (227)

The Hungarian Communist party dissolved itself on October 11, 1989, which marked the effective end of the old regime. By October 23, Hungary was no longer a "People's Republic." Since opposition to the GNDS was one of the dividing lines defining opponents of the Communist government, as the government gave up power, it was ever more likely that it would also surrender its attachment to the GNDS.

The two Prime Ministers held another fruitless meeting in Bratislava on October 26. The Hungarian government proposed a compromise.

This compromise was greatly resented by the Hungarian environmental movement, because in exchange for abandonment of the Nagymaros part of the project, it would have allowed Czechoslovakia complete use of the Gabčíkovo dam provided it gave appropriate ecological guarantees. According to the environmentalists, such guarantees were meaningless....(228)

This offer was expressed in a resolution by the Hungarian Parliament on October 31, 1989. The Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a memorandum to this effect on November 3, but it was ignored. (229) In hindsight it is clear that this resolution was the end of Hungary's involvement in the GNDS, although it was probably not clear at the time...If environmentalists are looking for victories to celebrate, they could make this day a holiday celebrating the end of the Nagymaros dam, the second of the originally planned pair of dams From this point on, GNDS ceased to exist and became simply the Gabčíkovo dam..

Fleischer says that this kind of compromise was a sign of the Németh government's "...vacillation to please everybody," as for example when he wrote to the Czechoslovakian head of government about "...the suspension of Hungarian work on ...Slovak territory, and meanwhile, the execution of the steps mentioned in the letter was not initiated." (230) Further vacillation was caused by the fact that the Hungarian negotiators were often the same experts who favored building the GNDS in the first place, and frankly told their opposite numbers about their real sympathies. (231) Therefore it is hardly surprising that the Czechs did not take the Hungarian objections seriously.

It is ironic that the Götterdämmerung of the Czechoslovakian Communist government took place against a backdrop of the GNDS.

The regime invited diplomats from the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, Cuba, and Poland to the Gabčíkovo Dam site, along with Austrian contractors, on the very day, November 17, 1989 - of the huge student protests in Prague that finally toppled the government. (232)

Hungary finally showed its seriousness about abandoning the GNDS by cancelling its contracts with the Austrian companies in November, 1989, and with the Yugoslav company in June, 1990. Austria was to get 2.65 billion schillings (\$U.S. 255 million) , to be paid in electricity between 1996 and about 2015. (233)

Relations with Hungary improved when the Czech Communist government fell. Although the tone of the correspondence became less acrimonious, the construction continued without a pause on the Slovak side of the river.

On January 10, 1990, Hungary's Prime Minister Németh wrote to Czechoslovakia's new Prime Minister, Vaclav Havel, saying that Hungary would suspend all construction work and asking Czechoslovakia to do the same. (Hungary proposed the same thing on March 6, and was again rebuffed.) (234)

In February, 1990, Prime Minister Havel replied: "What has been built at Gabčíkovo - that nightmare - can not be destroyed. A plan needs to be made to protect the environment and also salvage what has already been built..." (235) The new Czech government said it was going to allow work to continue but only work which prevented floods or protects

land. (236)

In the same month, "...Vladimir Lokvenc, the Slovakian commissar of investment, who had fanatically defended the scheme for decades, was dismissed by the Slovakian government." (237)

The first post-Communist government in Hungary, led by József Antall of the Magyar Democratic Forum, announced on May 22, 1990, that 'The government on the ground of experts' opinion, considers the construction of the Danube Barrage System a mistaken project, and will initiate...negotiations on the rehabilitation and sharing of the damages with the Czechoslovak government to be elected" (238)

In Czechoslovakia the Civil Forum won the elections, (June 8, 1990), but unfortunately this did not result in a radical shift of the Czechoslovak GNDS policy. One reason for this is that several members of the previous Communist government joined the victorious Civil Forum and were appointed to high positions in the new government (including top positions in the environment and energy administrations, while their real views did not change much. On the other hand, ex-opposition politicians ceased to criticize the GNDS scheme once they took on 'the burden and responsibilities of power.' A more important reason is that those opposed to the project have had less time (compared to Hungary) to convince decision makers and the public. (239)

She adds that it was not a symbol of opposition to dictatorship, but a source of Slovak pride, and that the federal government did not want to antagonize the Slovak separatists. (ibid)

The first meeting about the GNDS between non-Communist representatives from both countries took place on May 31, 1990, in Győr. (240)

On January 9, 1991, at a meeting in Bratislava, the Hungarian Joint Commissioners gave the Czech Commissioners an M.T.A. report on the dangers to the environment posed by the GNDS and a World Wide Fund for Nature report on the same topic written the year before. (241)

On April 16, 1991, the Hungarian Parliament authorized its government to negotiate an end to the 1977 Treaty. The following week, on April 22, negotiations resumed, with the Hungarians stressing the danger to the environment and their shared drinking water.

The Czech and Slovak Party, admitting the importance of ecological aspects stressed its determination to accomplish the construction according to the original treaty. Judging the environmental damages avoidable by additional technical interventions..." (they proposed further study.) (242)

The Czechs and Slovaks "...did not see any possibility" (243) to suspend construction, because they said the construction was 90% complete.. This claim can not be taken seriously because they had to borrow about one third of the cost of the project to complete it.

Protests Against the GNDS in Slovakia

With the end of Hungarian participation in the dam system, the focus of protests against the GNDS shifted from Hungary to Slovakia.

Before 1989, Czechoslovakian protests were largely underground. In Bratislava a group called the Slovak Union of Nature and Landscape Protectors tried to oppose the project overtly but that was impossible. (244)

An anti-dam activist, Clara Benkovics said: "The only way to fight against it was to use experts to show the negative effects." (245)

On December 16, 1989, just a month after the velvet revolution, there was the first free demonstration against the dam at Bös (= Gabčíkovo). (246)

Then in January, 1990, at Samorin, a Slovakian town not far from the dam site, Slovak ecologists, (who up to then had been communicating through the underground press) met and decided that they would have to prepare for a lengthy opposition. The first step would be to organize a 'living chain' or picket line all along the dam dike, (247) ,

This living chain was planned for February, 1990. To organize opposition to the dam, the environmentalists used the loudspeakers which the "Communist regime had installed in every village for propaganda harrangues. In the end they enlisted 60,000 people in a living chain that extended from the Gabčíkovo Dam, more than 100 kilometers to the Austrian border." (248) (Béla Lipták who was there, estimates that there were really only about 10,000 demonstrators in the human chain. (249) With the Hungarian flair for the dramatic, the MTI news agency reported that there were 100,000 demonstrators).

They held a press conference and sent a letter of protest to the Slovakian

government. "The silence was deafening." (250) . The Human chain went from Bratislava, through Csolozto, Gabčíkovo (= Bös), Medve, to Komárom, Hungary. The meeting which drafted the letter to President Havel was held in Csolozto. (251) Participants in the human chain included members of SZOPK, Global 2000 from Austria, and the World Wildlife Fund from various countries.

At the same time, (February, 1990), two committees of the Czechoslovakian Ministry of Forests and Water Management released their studies on the GNDS. The first committee pointed out that there were serious risks of contaminating groundwater from toxic sediments settling in the Körtvélyes Reservoir . However, they said that by filling the reservoir, the quality of the Danube River would improve. A second committee said that a hydro-electric plant could operate with less than the original planned output of electricity, but that a minimum amount of water should continue to left in the original river bed, water should be allowed to flow into the side arms of the Danube, and "...the natural dynamics of the river must be preserved." (252)

In the summer of 1990, the new non-Communist government of Vaclav Havel said it was going to continue construction of the GNDS.

Since demonstrating as silent witnesses had failed, the protestors planned new demonstrations to actively block the construction.

In July, (1991) environmental activists of Eurochain occupied a pump station at the construction site in order to prevent the planned filling of the 25 km long canal of the power station. The purpose of this operation was to stop the further melting of the asphalt sealer of the canal, due to the hot weather. (253)

Here is a daily diary of the July, 1991 demonstrations at Gabčíkovo:

Wednesday, July 3, 1991, 17 demonstrators occupied a part of the dam at Gabčíkovo which was necessary for a water pipeline to be welded together. A member of the Slovakian government, Dominik Kocinger, tried to persuade them to leave, but they would not. They demanded the creation of a nature park in all three countries, and the rehabilitation of the construction area, and referred to a petition opposing the GNDS

which mayors of the local communities had signed. The protestors said they did not agree with the filling of the canal or the financing of the project. (254)

July 4. The number of demonstrators increased to about 50 after many local residents joined them. They decided to extend the demonstration from the original three days to a full week. (255)

Monday, July 8, a vital part of the dam was occupied again, and the number of demonstrators grew to about 100. Many were local mayors, or representatives of local governments. from the surrounding villages.

July 9. The government of Slovakia discussed finishing the dam on Slovakian territory alone.

July 10, The Prime Minister of Slovakia, Jan Carnogursky, toured the dam site with the directors of one of the construction firms in a helicopter. Twice he buzzed very low over the demonstrators.

July 11. A representative of the Slovakian Ministry of Forests and Water Resources, August Jambor, tried to persuade the demonstrators to stage their protest off the construction site. He offered to arrange a meeting with the chairman of the Slovak Parliament and the Prime Minister. The protesters wanted to discuss the offer with local mayors. The discussion came to nothing because Mr. Jambor could not guarantee that the installation of the pumps would not proceed during the talks. The District Attorney General warned the demonstrators that they were illegally occupying the construction site.

July 12, There were over 100 demonstrators. The District Attorney General persuaded the local mayor, Gyulai Ludovit, of Schaporis, to declare that the permit for the demonstration was not valid. Two thousand demonstrators from Global 2,000 displayed a large 400 square meter sign "No Large Dams."

Monday, July 15, the demonstration was extended. The demonstrators awaited the negotiations between Hungary and Czechoslovakia which were promised for Tuesday.

July 16. Hungarians and Czechs negotiated at the Borik Hotel while anti GNDS demonstrators waited.. The delegates agreed to make proposals at the end of July, and to

name a joint commission which would meet in September.

During a sitting of the Slovakian Parliament, the Interior Minister, Ladislav Pittner, said that the local ethnic Hungarians are responsible for the protests.

At the dam site, protestors believed that the police were preparing for an assault.

July 17. More demonstrators came from all over Czechoslovakia. There was thunder and lightning at twilight, just before the police raid. About 500 police blocked off access roads to the construction site and to the village of Cillistov, and prevented anyone from using the village's public telephone. (256)

July 18. Police removed the demonstrators at the dam site. They were released after paying fines from 100 - 1,000 Korona. (257)

July 19. No demonstrators were allowed on the work site at the Körtvélyes Reservoir. However, police allowed eight members of the Slovakian parliament into the work area. (258) They said they had been well informed on the dangers and damage to the environment which the dam might cause. In the evening, János Vargha of Duna Kör gave a lecture on "The Future of the Danube." (259)

On the weekend, Eurochain asked Hungarian supporters not to take part in the demonstrations at Samorja because they wanted to avoid having the Slovakian news media generate tension between the two countries. They said that the Slovakian news reports were now "correct and objective" but only if the demonstrations are organized by local residents. (260)

July 22. Demonstrations at the dam continued for the 16th continuous day on Monday. During the previous night, police came with search lights. By early morning, there were only a few demonstrators at the work site. Suddenly, quite a large group came from everywhere. Tension remained high in the morning. While the main group of about 500 demonstrators kept the police busy, a small group planned to occupy the pumping station. There was a battle of loudspeakers as the police and demonstrators shouted at each other. In the afternoon, the police let the demonstrators look at the work so long as they stayed next to the bottom of the dam. Twenty young people broke away from the main

group and ran to the working area. Ten demonstrators handcuffed themselves to the bars of the pumping station. Police arrested them. Three other people who tried to film the demonstration were arrested but then released. They belonged to the "Black Box" organization which tried to break the news censorship during the Communist era. (261) Five other demonstrators climbed into the mouth of a pipe, but after 5 hours they were persuaded to leave by a member of the Slovakian Parliament, Dominik Kocinger. The entire demonstration was relatively peaceful because of the presence of the Members of Parliament. (262)

Protests Are Defeated-Slovakia Builds Alone

July 23. The Slovakian government announced it had chosen "variant 'C' " from among the 7 alternatives which they had considered after Hungary abandoned the GNDS. It is the present day form of the dam, by-pass canal, and hydro-electric power generating station, all on Slovakian territory. On the same day, the Deputy Chairman of the Slovak Parliament, Milan Zemko, met with representatives of the Eurochain and the local area. Mr. Zemko promised that he would try to have the police cordon removed from the dam, and that he would ask the Chairman to have the legislature discuss the dam at its next meeting. (263)

July 25, The decision was confirmed by the Czechoslovakian federal government, although they said they intended to negotiate further.) (264) There was a protest exhibition by the international union of trained alternative artists. (265)

July 27, The demonstrators saw that the pumping facility had been completed and the filling of the by-pass canal had begun. After a short debate with the police, the demonstrators were allowed onto the dam to watch the filling. The dam builders had wanted to bring in the pump secretly at night. The captain of the ship, which was supposed to deliver it, quit on principle, and informed Miklós Duray, a member of the Czechoslovakian Parliament. Duray was the leader of a movement called "Living Together," and organized a demonstration at Csoloszto. (266) Six other ethnic

Hungarian MPs were part of a group of about 600 protestors. (267) Mr. Duray said the campaign was being pressed by the Slovakian government to raise national feeling against the Hungarians" (268) .

With passions mounting and Slovakian nationalists who supported the dam calling environmentalists 'Hungarian Traitors', Jaromir Sibl (a leader of SZOPK) ...received an anonymous note that read: "We will kill you. Stop your fight." (269)

Cadets from the police academy were there but the crowd went around them. More regular police came but since they did not have any orders, they did not use violence against the crowd. The police guarded the workers who worked around the clock to install the pump. They accomplished the work in an unbelievably short time, just two weeks. When the workers tried to operate the pumps they did not function. Demonstrators asked the workers to join the demonstration, but replied that they had children to support and no other chance for a job. Demonstrators tried to negotiate with the builders since there was no signature authorizing anyone to start the pumps. (270)

July 29. The demonstrators blocked the exits of the Cillistov facility built by the Hydrostav and Vahostav state companies. They said that the rental agreement for this property had expired so the companies were occupying it illegally. A special unit of police came from Bratislava, but they did not attack the demonstrators. In the afternoon, the demonstrators said that the water rights permit for filling the canal was invalid. (271)

July 30. The coordinator of the nature protection group, "World Fund for the East," Alexander Zinke, said that if the Slovakian government did not negotiate with the representatives of the local populations, there would be demonstrations in foreign countries as well. (272)

The chairman of the Czechoslovakian Federal Environment Protection Office, Jozef Vavrousek, said that he would like to make a proposal to the Hungarian Parliament for the

completion of the GNDS which was acceptable to both sides.

July 31. The demonstrators heard that the Prime Minister of Slovakia, Jan Caranogursky, would meet with a representative of the protestors.

August 1. Representatives of the Csallóköz (= Zitny Island = Wheat Island), Eurochain, and SZOPK asked for a halt in construction while independent experts studied the probable consequences of the dam and gave their opinion. Mr. Carnogursky agreed to have a public discussion of opinions in the autumn but he would not stop the construction. (273)

August 3. Two hundred people were at the Hrusov pumping station. Thirty people occupied a ship which was going to be used for the work of filling the canal with water. In the evening they were removed by the police. (274)

A month of demonstrations resulting in beatings, arrests, fines, and finally failure.

The immediate effect of filling the canal was that three villages in Slovakia populated by ethnic Hungarians were isolated by water so that the local people had to travel 50 km just to leave their villages. (275)

The continuity of business as usual after Communism was shown by the Slovakian minister who said in late August that the GNDS "...is a technical professional question. Experts should discuss it, not the public." (276)

On October 30, the Slovak Environment Commission gave permission for work to start at Site "C" , adding 19 conditions which it said had to be met to protect the environment. Construction work started on November 18. Like the rules painted on the wall of the barn in the novel Animal Farm, the conditions disappeared and no one spoke of them again.

Negotiations and Construction Continue

Negotiations continued between Hungary and Czechoslovakia. In Budapest, on December 2, 1991, the two countries agreed to set up a committee including

representatives from the European Community to decide on the future of the GNDS. The Hungarian delegation said:

The committee's activity had no sense if the Czech and Slovak Party continues...diverting the Danube. The head of the Czech and Slovak delegation declared, however, that the suspension of the construction, even temporarily, was out of the question. (277)

In December, 1991, Hungary sent a number of ultimatums to Czechoslovakia demanding that the work stop. (278)

On Jan 23, 1992, Czechoslovakia's Prime Minister Marian Calfa wrote that his government would consider the conclusions of the committee, but they would not suspend work on Variant "C."

If these conclusions and the trial operation of the Gabčíkovo plant prove that the harmful ecological consequences are higher than the expected benefits, the Czech and Slovak Party will be ready to cancel the work on the provisional solution. (279).

Since the major environmental damage which the experts predicted was the infiltration of toxic wastes into the groundwater, it is difficult to see how this could be reversed once measureable quantities of pollutants were detected in the aquifer.

On February 14, Hungary protested to Czechoslovakia again about the construction and the diversion of the Danube, and on March 18, Czechoslovakia rejected the protest.

On February 26, the Hungarian government wrote that there was no sense in establishing the proposed tri-lateral committee if it was simply going to be presented with the completed construction work. It also said that Czechoslovakia's unilateral construction violated international law, and threatened to terminate the 1977 Treaty.

On April 13, the vice-president of the European Community's Commission wrote to both countries that his organization was willing to help resolve the dispute, but that both countries "must refrain from steps that would influence or anticipate the future conclusions of the trilateral committee." (280)

On April 23, Czechoslovakian Prime Minister Marian Calfa replied that they would not suspend construction, and that they planned to complete the diversion of the Danube by

October 31, 1992. (281)

On May 8, Hungary again asked Czechoslovakia to stop work so that the triateral commission could begin its investigation, but the request was refused, (282) so the tri-lateral committee was never established.

In June, 1992, Slovakia's Premier Jan Carnogursky was replaced by former Premier Vladimir Meciar. This did not change Slovakia's attitude toward the Gabcikovo dam, or negotiations with Hungary. Both men had represented Czechoslovakia in negotiations with Hungary about the GNDS. Slovakia's negotiating stance may have hardened because Premier Meciar was even less symnpathetic toward the ethnic Hungarian minority, and less tolerant of oppositon of any kind.

Legal Arguments

The Hungarian government argued that it had the right to terminate the 1977 Treaty. It said that even though there was no provision in that treaty for either party terminating it, the general rules of international law allow termination if either party has sufficient grounds. It quoted Part V, of the 1969 Vienna Convention on the Termination of Treaties. (283). Citing Article 62, paragraph 1, it argued that the treaty could be terminated because there was "a fundamental change of circumstances." The first change, was that Communism had ended in both countries, and one of the purposes of the 1977 Treaty was 'the socialist integration of the member states of the C.M.E.A' (COMECON), (284). Since neither state was officially socialist any more, and COMECON was out of business, there was no longer any need for such a treaty. A second fundamental change was that the end of Communism put "...similar gigantic constructions in a different light ...(making) it possible for environmental considerations to become a priority, at least in Hungary." (285)

A legal study of the Gabcikovo "Variant C" commissioned by the World Wildlife Fund questioned Hungary's claim that the change of political system or growing environmental awareness or the end of COMECON were fundamental changes of circumstances (286)

The end of COMECON was in sight when Hungary

reconfirmed its intention to build GNDS in February, 1989. (287)

The Hungarian government took a chop in the other direction when they accused their former partners of not fulfilling THEIR duties under the 1977 Treaty to protect nature and water quality. Articles 15 and 19 in the 1977 Treaty (which were probably inserted as bromides) were invoked as if they were meant to be taken seriously. They said that "The Contracting Parties ensure that the quality of the water in the Danube is not impaired as a result of the construction and operation of the barrage system" (288)

Still sheltering under the 1977 Treaty itself, the Hungarian government said that the Slovak's diversion of the Danube near Bratislava was not part of the original contract. (289) which precisely spelled out what work was to be done and by whom. However, the W.W.F. report says that the 1977 Treaty allows the diversion of the Danube into Czechoslovakia, and Variant C does the same thing only 11 KM upstream. Therefore permission for the diversion was granted. (290) The report says that Hungary loses control of the Danube in case of ice or flooding (291) and the Slovaks would not be happy if Hungary continued to build on their land if the Slovaks had withdrawn from the project. (292)

Hungary cited paragraph 1, of Article 33 of "The Draft on State Responsibility" by the United Nations International Law Commission. which said a government could terminate a treaty to protect itself against "A grave and imminent peril." (293), and cited Czechoslovakia's announced intention to divert the Danube by October 31. It also quoted the principle of "ad impossibilia nemo tenetur maxima," that is, one cannot be obliged to perform the impossible. (294)

The W.W.F. study did not support the Hungarian claim because the harmful effects of the 1977 Treaty or Variant C "could not be considered as endangering the very existence of Hungary." (295) . The report went on to say that it is difficult to say if the original GNDS projected in the 1977 Treaty endangers an essential interest of Hungary." (296) It also said the protecting the ecology has only been an interest to states in recent years. (297)

The next legal argument Hungary made was that Czechoslovakia had no right to

move the international boundary by diverting the Danube. (298)

(This is provided for in the 1976 Water Management Treaty, Article 4, paragraph 3.) (299)

Since the Hungarians had not objected to this in the previous 15 years since they signed the Treaty, one could understand if the Czechs reacted to this objection with some skepticism.

The W.W.F. study cited Article 3, paragraph 1 of the 1956 Boundary Treaty which said the frontier line between two states using a river as an international boundary "shall not be affected by other changes" (not natural causes) "in the flow of a frontier watercourse unless the parties conclude a separate agreement to that effect." (300) However, the report notes that Article 14 of the same treaty says that no country shall unilaterally change the flow of boundary waters." (301) The Hungarian legal complaint is questioned by the W.W.F. report because it notes that if the boundary is changed by the diversion of the Danube, it actually adds a little territory to Hungary at Slovakia's expense, and that is not normally considered a cause for legal complaint. (302)

Returning to an earlier bi-lateral treaty of 1976, the Hungarian government quoted Article 5, paragraph 1, where the two countries promised to maintain the riverbed in their own territory in good condition and "...not to do damage to each other." (303) (The 1977 Treaty says the same thing in Article 3, paragraph 1 a.) (304) Then Hungary cited the International Law Association's Rules on water of international rivers, which were written in Helsinki in 1966. "Article V, paragraphs 1 (f), (g), and (i) say that countries must use international water within the limits of reasonableness and equity." (305) Hungary said that this same principle was adopted by the United Nations International Law Commission's draft law on non-navigation uses of international watercourses. (306) They also cited the U.N. Economic Commission for Europe, the International Court of Justice, the Stockholm Conference on Human Environment, the Conference on the Law of the Sea, and the Brundtland Report. (307)

Finally, the Hungarian government cited the Belgrade Convention on the Danube of 1948, and admitted that "The danger that one of the Contracting States would divert the natural course of the river from its natural riverbed did not occur to the signatories." (308)

However, they stressed that this agreement's Article 3 says that "Lawful interventions can be carried out only by agreement of the riparian states." (309)

The W.W.F. report does support some of Hungary's legal claims. It says that Variant C violates the principle of good neighborliness. Variant C will cause damage to Hungary's drinking water, its agriculture, water table, and ecosystem. (310) The diversion will also have a negative effect on the Danube's self cleaning ability and its hydrology. (311)

Variant C violates the principle of equitable utilization of a boundary river. It says "the negative effects of Variant C far outweigh its benefits and the legitimate interests of Czechoslovakia and Slovakia" (312) . Because of the dam's negative effects "it must be regarded as inequitable." (313) The reports says that there are many other ways for Slovakia to generate energy and to develop economically. (314)

The W.W.F. report goes on to say that the International Law Commission Watercourse draft says a state must suspend a project for up to six months if another state objects. "It is questionable whether Czechoslovakia and Slovakia complied with this requirement," (315) since Slovakia refused to suspend construction during negotiations about Hungary's objections.

The W.W.F. report says that the 1977 Treaty is valid because it does not violate usual legal norms -"is cogens"-so the treaty was valid, and "could constitute a valid consent by Hungary to the construction and operation of Variant C." (316)

Variant C is not a legitimate response of Czechoslovakia or Slovakia to an alleged violation of the 1977 Treaty by Hungary. It is not a legitimate "reprisal" since Hungary was not willing to fulfil its obligations according to the 1977 Treaty but it was willing to pay compensation. Therefore for Slovakia to argue that building Variant C was a legitimate act of reprisal is not acceptable. The dam is also out of proportion to Hungary's violation of the 1977 Treaty, because it is out of proportion to Slovakia's loss and it will cause irreversible damage to Hungary." (317)

Variant C breaks the 1977 Treaty "because it is a unilateral project that is in violation of the underlying obligation of the 1977 Treaty to carry out...a joint project....Thus the

Hungarian declaration of 19 May, 1992 terminated the 1977 Treaty." (318) The report concludes that Variant C "violates customary international law on the environment and the use of international rivers." (319) . Czechoslovakia's only justification is Hungary's consent to divert the Danube in the 1977 Treaty. (320)

Danube Diverted - Pointless Legal Arguments Continue

On October 24, 1992, The Danube was blocked at Cunovo, Slovakia, and diverted into the by-pass canal bringing water to the Gabčíkovo power station. This marked the final defeat of the Slovakian and Hungarian environment protestors. While negotiations and legal arguments continued, after this date it should have been clear that the Gabčíkovo dam was not going to go away and the Danube would not be rehabilitated in the near future.

Four days later, Hungary and Czechoslovakia signed "The London Protocol," brokered by the European Community. Czechoslovakia agreed to stop all further construction, return 95% of the water to the original bed of the Danube, to take the Gabčíkovo plant out of operation, and the dispute was referred to the International Court of Justice in the Hague. (321) By this date, it was clear that that Czechoslovakia was splitting up, and the dying federal government was washing its hands of the Gabčíkovo dam which was now a Slovakian project. Since Hungary could not hope to win back the Danube and make the dam go away with a victory in the International Court (which it had not been able to achieve with years of bi-lateral negotiations), it is not at all clear why Czechoslovakia signed an agreement which it simply ignored. Construction did not stop. The dam was not taken out of operation, and most of the Danube's flow remained in the by-pass canal. Although the case is still before the International Court it is reasonable to assume that whatever the court decides will have no more effect than the London Protocol.

In January, 1992, the EC recommended returning two thirds of the Danube to its original river bed, but Slovakia "refused to return more than a third of the water," (322) In February, 1993, the Czech Republic withdrew from the dispute saying it was now an issue between Slovakia and Hungary. (323) The European parliament asked Slovakia "to

display more flexibility." (324) The European Parliament asked the European Commission to find a compromise which would protect the ecology of the Danube and compensate Slovakia for giving up some of its electrical generating capacity. (325)

Slovakia and Hungary signed an agreement in Brussels on April 7, 1993, acknowledging the jurisdiction of the International Court. (326) Slovakia gave in to pressure from the EC to abandon its demand that an agreement had to be reached on the division of the Danube's water before the dispute could go to the I.J.C..

In further negotiations on June 18, 1993, Slovakia said it was not bound by the London Protocol, since it was signed by Czechoslovakia and not Slovakia. In July the two countries again failed to agree on a division of the Danube's waters. Slovakia's Prime Minister Meciar "Claimed that the ecological situation in northern Hungary had improved considerably" because of additional waterworks. (327)

Another issue in legal dispute was the obstruction of navigation caused by the re-routing of the Danube. Commercial traffic is supposed to go through the by-pass canal, but shortly after the canal opened a barge loaded with cement sank in one of the locks and stopped all traffic for several months. Hungary sought legal redress for this problem as well.

While Hungarians say that the diversion of the Danube has dried out the Szigetköz, and damaged flora, fauna and well water, Slovaks such as Julius Binder, chief engineer of Vodohospodarska Vystavba, the state company in charge of Gabčíkovo, and Dominik Kocinger of the Slovak government commission on Gabčíkovo, as well as Prime Minister Meciar all denied these complaints. "The truth of the matter is probably that the Slovak side of the Danube has been affected positively while the situation on the Hungarian side has worsened." (328)

Slovakia announced plans to sell shares in the Gabčíkovo dam in December, 1992. After spending \$700 million dollars on the project to date, there was no money in the 1993 State budget to finish the dam but they hoped that by privatizing it they could get the money from Germany or Canada. (329)

In November, 1993, Hungary began dismantling the partly constructed dam at

Nagymaros. It was about 30% completed and cost \$250 million U.S.. The cost of restoring the landscape to near its natural state will be about \$104 million U.S. (330) When The Hungarian parliament authorized the first \$5.3 million dollars for the clean up in July, 1993, the government of Slovakia complained that Hungary could not dismantle Nagymaros without their approval because they owned one half of the dam. (331) After refusing to stop work on their own dam at Gabčíkovo while negotiating with Hungary, they said that Hungary should stop dismantling Nagymaros as long as the legal dispute between the two countries was being considered by the International Court of Justice. (332)

In March, 1994, the Hungarian Foreign Ministry of the the new government of Prime Minister Peter Boross (who took over after Premier Antall died) complained to Slovakia's new government of Premier Moravčík, that Slovakia was obstructing international navigation on the Danube. A barge loaded with cement had sunk in the bypass canal and two Hungarian ships were stalled. The Slovak Foreign Ministry complained the Hungary "was exerting pressure on international public opinion with the aim of discrediting the advantages of the hydropower system." (333)

It seems that the story never ends, and that Hungary can not make up its mind on the issue. In April, 1994, there was a press conference in Budapest, where officials of the water lobby held an open house and tried to promote the idea of finishing the second dam at Nagymaros to build the project according to the original terms of the 1977 Treaty.

After the MDF government was voted out of power in Hungary, the new Socialist Prime Minister, Gyula Horn, who had defended the GNDS when he was a minister in the Communist government, went to Bratislava in August 1994, to continue negotiations with the government of Slovakia over what to do about the Danube and the dam at Gabčíkovo. (334)

The W.W.F. who were major opponents of the dam, and helped organize the opposition to it in Slovakia and Hungary, have now reconciled themselves to the existence of the Gabčíkovo dam and are trying to make proposals to rehabilitate the Danube. The propose constructing artificial islands, raising the river bed, and increasing the water level by

constricting its flow. This would increase the level of ground water and improve the supply of drinking water in the wells near the river banks. (335)

Slovakia hopes to gain energy independence with the Gabčíkovo dam, whatever it costs. Diplomatically it is considered a loss because it is generally agreed that Hungary won the propaganda war and "the dispute has severely tarnished Slovakia's international reputation." (336)

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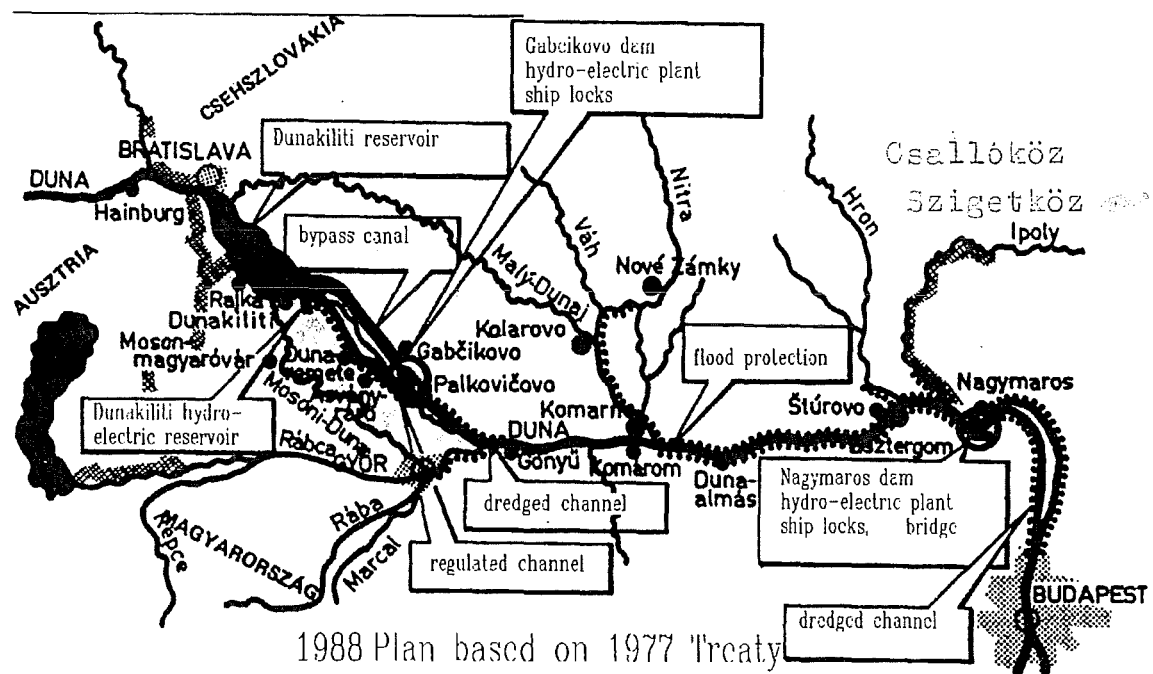
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Part Three: The Hainburg Dam Controversy

Background of the Hainburg Dam Controversy

Since the mid-1950s, Austria built one dam after another on the Danube from the border with Germany at Passau moving steadily downstream toward Vienna. They planned to build 15, but by 1983 they had built only 9. To keep up this rhythm of building and employment, after the celebration of the opening of the ninth, the Greifenstein hydro-electric plan, in May, 1984, construction should have started at the next location, Hainburg, the same month. The builder complained that a one month delay would cost 26 million Schillings. DoKW had already surveyed the Hainburg site in 1976. (1)

Since the end of the 1970s, nature conservationists in Hainburg and Marchfeld knew that a power plant was planned for the Hainburg area, and they felt that it threatened the environment. Some of the early opponents of the dam were Frau Silvia Leitgeb, a chimney builder from Leopoldsdorf, Frau Dr. Friederike Pesaro, an orthopedic physician, and Robert List - all founders of the Hainburg Citizen's Initiative. They conducted petition signing campaigns, manned information tables, and met with politicians. (2) Working with well known environmentalists, they tried to find another location for the power plant.

Two federal ministers, Günther Haiden of Agriculture, and Kurt Steyrer of Health and Environment supported these concerns and asked the DoKW to survey various other locations for the next power plant. (3)

In Early 1981, Environment Minister Steyrer flew over the Hainburg site with a photographer from the Kurier newspaper and said: "I will not allow the forest to be cut.,"

(4) In October, 1981, Agriculture Minister Haiden, who was responsible for the federally owned forests as well as water rights, told the Arbeiter Zeitung: "Cutting the Stopfenreuth forest is not under consideration." (5)

The decision to build the hydro-electric plant at Hainburg was probably made soon after a meeting of the leaders of the electric utility industry in Gmund early in 1982 where they discussed how to market an expected surplus of electricity. (6)

In the fall of 1982, the World Wildlife Fund allocated 80,000 Swiss Francs to save

the Auwald (riparian or wetlands forest) east of Vienna. This led to conversations with the Kronen Zeitung, Vienna's largest newspaper, which aroused the editors and publishers to a massive campaign to save the Danube Auwald. The W.W.F.'s campaign to "Save the Au" began in February, 1983. (7) In late July, the Kronen Zeitung "discovered" the plan to build the dam at Hainburg and began a campaign against it.(8) This newspaper's extensive and positive coverage of the later protests against the construction of the Hainburg dam appears to have been a significant factor in the success of the protests.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, 80% of the banks of the Danube had been paved or canalized, except for the Wachau area and the river banks downstream from Vienna, unnoticed by the average citizen. (9) While stabilizing the river banks, this effectively seals off the wetland forests from their source of life-giving water. In Austria, little was known about how the Auwald functioned, or how it would be affected by a hydro-electric plant. To test the arguments of the supporters of the dam, Austrian conservationists called on foreign experts, such as Dr. Emil Dister of the University of Saarland. In 1983 he devoted half a year to holding seminars and lobbying politicians in Austria. His conclusions were that none of the proposed compromise solutions which were being offered in Austria were compatible with the survival of the Auwald. The results of this research would have been ignored by the authorities if the environmentalists had not brought them to the center of public discussion with the strong support of the newspapers. (10) The Kronen Zeitung even paid for a study of the water quality of the Danube, which a hygienist from Graz, Dr. Josef Möse, called a "cesspool" (11)

Scientists and physicians warned of the danger to health in damming the Danube, (loaded with Vienna's untreated sewage) for more than a year before the Health & Environment Minister Steyrer commissioned a study to be made. However this study was not completed or used before the water rights permission to build the dam were given. (12) The government tried to "hush up" the basic research demanded by the environmentalists. In 1983 the supporters of the dam, now including Health and Environment Minister Steyrer

prepared their arguments in favor of constructing a hydro-electric plant at Hainburg. (13)

Opposition to the Dam Begins

Twenty environment protection groups, and citizens' initiative groups came together in September, 1983, and formed the "Aktionsgemeinschaft Gegen Hainburg" (Action Society Against the Hainburg Plant.) They met every week in the Votiv Cafe, In Vienna, and worked out strategy and assigned tasks. By maintaining close links with their member organizations and others, such as Global 2000, Youth Protecting Nature, Friends of the Earth, and the Austrian University Students' Association, they informed a wide circle of people about the damage to the environment which a dam at Hainburg would cause, especially to the "Auwald." They made the Hainburg dam a political issue in Eastern Austria. Since nature protection is the responsibility of each province, or "Land", they took action in Nieder Österreich. However since Austria has a federal system of government, the responsibilities are divided and water rights are the responsibility of the federal government. This created a frustrating situation for the opponents of the dam, since people in authority regularly claimed that someone else was responsible. The result was it was difficult to find anyone who would debate them. For example the Landeshauptmann (the head of the Land government) Siegfried Ludwig, of Nieder Österreich said he could not have an opinion on the issue. (14) The opponents of the dam insisted that the government and the interconnected interest groups of the social partnership had to recognize that the issue of megaprojects must be put before the public for discussion (15) However, the Kronen Zeitung, carried on a monolog, publishing attacks on the Minister of Agriculture Haiden, almost every day. (16)

Before the plans were given to the Ministry of Agriculture, the public was told that the project was not definite enough to be discussed. (17) The government did not plan to allow public discussion at any time. (18)

Supporters of the Proposed Dam at Hainburg

The following groups supported construction of a dam at Hainburg: The Austrian coalition government, including the S.P.Ö (social democratic party) and its partner, the

F.P.Ö (then a liberal party), much of the the opposition Ö.V.P. (conservative party, which was also a coalition partner in the Nieder Österreich Land government), the trade unions represented by the Ö.G.B., industry, represented by the Handelskammer and the Union of Austrian Industrialists, the Builder's Society, and the electric utility industry.

There is a closely entwined relationship between Austrian politicians and the builders of hydro-electric plants. For example, Franz Köck, was both an MP in the Austrian Parliament, and the Zentralbetriebsratsobman (local union chairman) of the Donaukraftwerke (Danube hydro-electric plant.) Andreas Maurer, a former Landeshauptmann (head of provincial government) of Nieder Österreich now held three posts, Aufsichtsrats Präsident (similar to Chairman of the Board) of DoKW, president of the Nieder Österreich Bauernbund (farmers' organization of the Ö.V.P.), and executive member of the Nieder Österreich Ö.V.P., K. Heindl, was both the energy spokesman for the S.P.Ö (social democrats) and executive director of the firm of Hofmann and Maculan, a construction company. (19) Karl Dittrich was an Ö.V.P. Member of Parliament, Advisory Board President (Aufsichtsrat Präsident) of the construction firm Konstruktiva Ag, owner of several other firms, and President of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce. (20)

Arguments in Favor of the Dam

The proposed dam would maintain high ground water levels and keep the forest from drying out. For some reason the Danube bed was getting deeper, and a dam would stop this problem. It would reduce Austria's dependence on imported oil and help the balance of trade. It would lower the price of energy, which in turn would encourage people to switch to electric heating in new homes and this would reduce air pollution. By using hydro-electric instead of thermal-electric, the harmful emissions from a coal or oil-fired plant which cause forest die-backs (Waldsterben) would be reduced so that the health of all forests in the area would be improved. Maintaining a supply of cheap energy for industry would promote employment. VÖEST Alpine AG the construction of the dam would create

800 permanent jobs. (21) A trade union official, Friedrich Verzetnitsch, estimated that 5,000 jobs would be created in the construction of the dam. (22)

Arguments Against the Dam

Building a dam would not prevent the forest from drying out, or other cheaper structures could be built to stabilize the Danube River bed. Instead of stabilizing ground water levels, constructing dams can cause them to sink. (23) If the Danube river bed was deepening that could be the result of having too much of its river bed gravel mined for construction, or the effects of canalization up stream accelerating its flow.

Austria had already reduced its use of oil by 10% since 1978 by energy conservation measures. Three quarters of Austria's electrical energy was already produced by hydro-electric power, so there would not be a significant reduction in emissions. (24)

Cheaper energy prices and the promotion of electric home heating raise the demand for electricity which is self-defeating. (25)

Vienna's drinking water would be polluted as untreated industrial and municipal wastes settled into the ground water instead of rapidly flowing downstream to neighboring countries. (This process is described in detail in the section on the Gabčíkovo dam) The hydro-power station at Krems, in Austria was cited as proof of this. (26)

The amount of money the dam would cost could be used instead to clean up Austria's 40 most polluting industrial plants. (27)

Opponents also argued that the cheapest way to meet demands for electricity is not to build more generating plants but energy conservation measures to use existing supplies more efficiently.

There were also non-utilitarian and non-economic arguments, i.e. a wilderness has inherent value which is not measureable in money. The Hainburg Auwald was the last large forest of its kind in Europe, covering 270 square kilometers. In comparison, France had only 74 hectares of forested wetlands. (28) As a recreation area, the Auwald near Hainburg was less than an hour's drive from Vienna.

There were also legal arguments. The nature protection laws of Nieder Österreich

specifically forbade such construction. The necessary building permits had not been applied for. Water rights had not been properly applied for. In the end, this argument stopped the construction of the dam. (29) Austria specifically agreed to maintain this Auwald in its natural state under the United Nations Ramsar (Iran) convention and the Bern Convention. (30)

The Decision to Build

While it seemed that no one in power wanted to claim paternity for Hainburg, the Nieder Österreich Landtag's (provincial) Environment Minister, Ernest Brezovsky, said he would take the responsibility on himself alone for deciding the issue. On November 26, 1984, Mr. Brezovsky announced his decision to go ahead with construction of the Hainburg dam at a press conference. Opponents called it "One of the most scandalous decisions of the Second republic, which was declared illegal by legal experts and politicians, and whose technical basis was refuted by each Austrian ecologist." (31) Mr. Brezovsky announced that of the 12 scientific studies he received, only one was opposed to the dam.

(There was an uproar of objections and the next day, after 100 students occupied the Nieder Österreich Landtag to protest the decision, and the KLVb submitted a petition with 10,000 signatures gathered in the spring demanding a referendum, the number of negative opinions climbed to three.) (32)

Only 7 of the 12 studies dealt with nature protection, and 4 of these 7 were against the dam. The fifth was from a behaviour researcher and popular science television broadcaster, Otto Koenig, whose research foundation was supported by the DoKW. The sixth was an electrical engineering opinion and the seventh took no position for or against the dam. (33)

There were 5 opinions about water rights. The first from professor Hans Steiner was clearly against the dam. Two others said nothing about nature protection and a fourth was concerned with deepening of the river bed. One study which favored the dam was from a forrester occasionally employed by the Donaukraftwerke (Danube hydro-electric plant).

Mr. Brezovsky asked an expert with close ties to the electrical industry, Hofrat Dr.

Eduard Nowotny for his "independent" advice. He also appointed a woman from his office with no known expertise about energy or environment to evaluate the studies. (34)

Representatives of Austria's federal Ministry of Agriculture met with the European Council in Strasburg, on December 5, 1983, and said that the matter was not decided. The next day, Dec. 6, the Minister of Agriculture Haiden, granted the water rights for the construction of the Hainburg dam. (35)

In early December Chancellor Sinowatz announced a quick completion of the land clearing work. Mr. Haiden signed a land clearing permission which provided for an "iron curtain" around the power plant building site, a fence which would allegedly protect wildlife, but which in really was to protect the site from possible demonstrations.. (36)

Opponents of the Dam

The following groups were opposed to the dam: The World Wildlife Fund, Global 2000, Friends of the Earth, Youth Protecting Nature, The National Union of University Students. (They divided over the issue because a number of politically committed students felt obliged to follow the line of the 3 political parties which favored the dam). Other opponents were unaffiliated artists, scientists, and people not deeply involved in the organizations constituting Austria's social partnership, (a meeting of interest groups which forms almost a shadow government.) Some prominent public figures who opposed the dam were Thor Heyerdahl, the Sadruddin Aga Khan, Günther Nenning, head of the journalists union, Erhard Busek, leader of the Vienna Ö.V.P., and Deputy Mayor of Vienna, Othmar Karas, head of the Ö.V.P. Youth, Arik Brauer, a painter, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, an artist who had won "the Grand Prize of Austria", Freda Meissner Blau, a socialist writer who later became the Green Alternative candidate for President in 1986, and led the Green Alternative Parliamentary Caucus from 1986 to 1988, and the Nobel Prize winner, Konrad Lorenz. He let his name be used by a group which successfully campaigned for a referendum on the Hainburg issue (Konrad Lorenz Volksbegehren, which I refer to as the KLVB) which benefitted from his prestige. This kind of endorsement is more important in Austria

than it might have been in other countries, because Austrians are very concerned with social status.- some people have titles longer than their names - and scientists and intellectuals have a much higher status than in countries like the United States. The KLVB was founded by Günther Nenning and Gerhard Heilingbrunner. Nenning was a prominent journalist, and Heilingbrunner was a conservative who later became secretary to a Minister of the Environment, Marilies Flemming.

Another prominent opponent of the dam was Britain's Prince Philip, president of the World Wildlife Fund, who came to Vienna on May 3, 1984, and reminded Austrians, that as signatories to the United Nations Ramsar (Iran) Convention protecting wetlands, they were specifically obligated to protect the Danube "Auwald." Philip asked rhetorically, "How can we press the Third World countries to uphold this convention when a rich country like Austria will not?" (37) .

On May 7, 1984, there was a "Press Conference of the Animals" at the Vienna Press Club Concordia. Opponents of the dam dressed as animals and birds and asked the press to save their lives. Some of the "animals" were Günther Nenning, Jörg Mauthe, a member of the City Council of Vienna (stadtrat), famous for reviving Vienna's coffee house intellectual culture, Othmar Karas the chairman of the Ö.V.P. (conservative party) Youth Group, Bernd Lötsch, Professor of Ecology, Herbert Rainer, President of the Austrian National Union of University Students, Peter Turrini, an author, and Freda Meissner-Blau, a socialist publisher and later leader of Austria's Green Alternative party.

This kind of routine event would have been impossible in Czechoslovakia at the time, and became possible only under the death throes of Communism in Hungary. Instead of being threatened at work, these celebrities were feted. There was free wine, music from the Pfaffstättner Weinhauer Kapelle, and dancing in Stephansplatz in Vienna, complete with protest signs.

Perhaps in reaction to the growing visibility of the anti-Hainburg protest movement, supporters of the dam felt obliged to show their strength. On May 17, there was a demonstration by 30,000 trade unionists in Vienna demanding construction of the dam. It

is a fascinating glimpse into the corporate nature of Austrian society under its social partnership, that the demonstration was organized by trade union leaders with the active cooperation of employers. A radio interviewer asked a worker if he would have participated in the demonstration without being able to do it on company time and without free transportation, and he replied in effect "Do you think I am crazy?" (38)

On May 30, about 3,000 opponents of the dam held a rally in Hainburg and took "the Hainburg Oath," vowing to do all they could to stop the construction. (39)

However the Hainburg protest was not all dancing, toasting and joking. There were six weeks of sit-ins and occupations at the construction site in the Auwald. Many demonstrators were beaten by the police, but there are no known fatalities. Many other people were arrested, got criminal records and had to pay fines. However extensive newspaper, radio and television reports and pictures of the police violence helped turn public opinion against the dam. This kind of commonplace was almost impossible in Czechoslovakia and Hungary except for the efforts of groups such as the "Black Box", who were usually denied access to the airwaves. It is interesting to note that the newspaper reports in Hungarian newspapers rarely mention protestors being beaten, although one Czech newspaper article obliquely mentioned that they "were not treated as eggs." (40) However eyewitnesses say that there was less violence in the 2 Communist countries, especially at the Gabčíkovo dam in 1991. (41)

A Detailed History of the 2 Weeks of Demonstrations

Dec. 8, Saturday - There was a demonstration-walk from Orth to Stopfenreuth. (42) and 8,000 people demonstrated at the Brücklwiese.

Someone grabbed a microphone and told everybody to stay in the Au and resist (43)

Dec 9, Sunday - A few people pitched tents in Stopfenreuth in the Au (44)

Dec 10, Monday - (Summary) There were the first barricades, arrests and injuries in the Hainburg Auwald.

In early morning darkness, the first blockade was built. It was calm until midday, so

many occupiers left. In the early afternoon police successfully removed many of the few remaining occupiers. News reports and word of mouth spread the alarm, and many more demonstrators came from Vienna (45) Early in the morning, 50-60 workers began cutting trees to build a deer fence in preparation for clearing the land in the Stopfenreuth Auwald for the construction of the hydro-electric plant at Hainburg. About 150 police confronted the 400-900 demonstrators who had blocked the movement of logging machinery and the tree fallers. A statement released by the KLVB said the environmentalists were driven away and brutally beaten by the police. A newspaper report said three people were arrested, and one woman was injured.(46)

"I saw people flying through the air like dolls" said a 48 year old mother of three, Valerie Publig.

"I will never forget how the police threw us with hate filled looks." Her left ankle was broken and she may need an operation to have a plate inserted. "I'd do it again. What is my wrecked foot in comparison to the threatened destruction of the Auwald? My brother is a construction worker. I know he has to live from it, but in spite of that, I will carry on fighting for the Au." (47)

Later Mrs. Publig became a founding member of Vienna's 21st District Green Party organization.

According to Vienna's Kurier, newspaper, police threw demonstrators down slopes and stamped on them. It said a few demonstrators were seriously injured. During the attack the demonstrators sang Christmas carols and the national anthem. (48)

Dec. 11, Tuesday- (Summary) A Second police assault miscarried - 1,000 demonstrators remained in the forest clear cutting area. there was a stalemate at midday. Police waited for orders from the Minister of the of Interior. The government began negotiations with KLVB (49)

Overnight, protestors had rebuilt dozens of stone and wood barricades that had been destroyed on Monday. Some were as high as two meters. "The Struggle in the Auwald was harder and more brutal than 24 hours ealier," was the Kurier's description of

Tuesday's events. (50) . To begin the day, a police officer using a loudhailer wished everyone a good morning and asked them to remain calm. Soon there was a hand to hand struggle as the police stormed two barricades. Eyewitnesses said there were dozens of wounded with abrasions and bruises. A woman suffered a cracked rib, and a man had a bruised larynx. (51)

A 70 year old woman, Lore Marie Schönborg, was hospitalized after police broke two of her ribs while attacking the demonstrators.

"As police attempted to tear apart a human chain that was sitting on the ground blocking an access road out of protest, an officer jumped on my chest. I could not speak. I could not breathe. I was lucky that inspector did not step on my stomach. We thought that through the talks in parliament the violence would come to an end." This was her first time in a demonstration. Her grandfather was minister of the army in the first republic. She borrowed money and bought walkie talkies to help the demonstrators. She said: "As soon as I am healthy, I will go back to the Au." (52)

Another news report said both the police and demonstrators accused each other of violence. Demonstrators said they were beaten, kicked and had bushels of hair torn out. A police officer said he had a broken arm.(53) Precinct Inspector Ferdinand Woltran said he was clearing a path through the demonstrators to let the forest workers in early Tuesday morning. "My legs were grabbed and I got a fearful blow on my arm." It was later diagnosed as a bruised muscle. (54)

DoKW managed to build a deer fence in the 700 meter opening they had cut in the forest on Monday. It was supposedly to protect animals, but there were no wild animals left in the area after the tree cutting on Monday. Three demonstrators managed to get over the fence at dawn and were promptly arrested. (55)

Police climbed over one barricade but were stopped at a second. A news report described human chains made by 3,000 demonstrators. To avoid "difficult incidents," a further advance was stopped by officials from Nieder Österreich who waited for express orders from the federal Minister of the Interior. "If we had orders to advance further, naturally we would." (56)

An official in civilian dress said "We were surrounded. There were only two possibilities, retreat or the billy club, but that will be decided in Vienna, not by us." (57) About 50 forest workers with chain saws and axes were surrounded by a ring of about 200 to 250 police from Mödling. They in turn were surrounded by about 1,500 demonstrators. The decision to call a truce was made "to avoid further injury to both sides." (58)

Two young women walked through the police lines with cups of hot tea for the workers. Someone said: "If this keeps up, there will be a sausage stand here tomorrow," someone quipped. (59) Later the same day a butcher did bring a sausage wagon and tea. Fallers and demonstrators ate together and discussed the situation. (60)

A student who told a policeman "You will have to walk over me if you want to come any farther." He said he had already lain down in front of construction equipment on Monday. When he was asked what he would do if he was fined the 3,000 Schillings for entering the closed area, he said he would rather go to jail and study for his final exams. Then he asked the policeman: "Could I bring my study materials with me?" (61)

All during the day, busloads of students came from the University of Vienna. The shuttle service was organized by the chairman of the Association of University Students, Herbert Rainer. He described the demonstration as a "non-violent jungle warfare." (62) In Vienna, the ecologist Bernd Lötsch worried that "eco-rilla tactics" would be criminalized." (63)

The DoKW asked the government to enforce an order prohibiting entry to the construction site. The town of Gänserndorf designated one hectare of the forest a construction site in the previous week..(on December 6). (64)

DoKW's general manager, Josef Koblika, demanded that the police protect the right of the fallers to do their work. After demonstrators blocked all access roads, he tried to sneak his workers into the construction site from the banks of the Danube. (65) DoKW said they could not postpone the land clearing because they did not want to disturb the nesting and breeding of protected species of birds, so they could cut the trees only in December and January. (66)

While much of the forest industry in Austria is unionized, DoKW hired fallers as non-union independent contractors, who would be paid only for the amount of wood they cut. It seems reasonable to assume that this was to motivate them to do battle with the demonstrators when there were physical confrontations. One reporter said that the accents of the fallers made him believe that they came from areas of high unemployment from Kärnten and South Styria. (67) Other workers who needed the money and would be less inclined to sympathize with environment protectors were Yugoslavian guest workers. (68)

To buy off the opposition of the forest workers, the KLVB opened a bank account at the BAWAG bank to collect money to compensate the fallers for their lost income. (69)

To counter the effect of the demonstrators, DoKW invited all the local inhabitants from Engelhartstetten to come into the forest and cut free firewood for a week. (70)

Chancellor Sinowatz said the government will do what it can do avoid a sharpening of the situation, but he said that he had no understanding of the behaviour of the Hainburg opponents. He said that in Austria it must be guaranteed that the law will be supported to the breaking point. (71)

As a result of this confrontation, one of the Chancellor's cabinet ministers, Justice Minister Harald Ofner of the coalition partner F.P.Ö, distanced himself from the government. Ofner was also The Nieder Österreich Land's leader of the F.P.Ö. He said that until now he has been a loyal supporter of the national coalition government but now he is a convinced opponent of the Hainburg dam. (72)

Less surprisingly, some leaders of the opposition Ö.V.P. also denounced the dam after this clash. Ö.V.P. Opposition Leader Alois Mock said "I am unhappy that politics has to show its strong hand here. Such problems should be solved in the social partnership." (73) Mock called on Chancellor Sinowatz to convene a Hainburg conference and he reminded the Chancellor that his government had promised two and a half years earlier to treat the KLVB "with all respect" (74)

"The fighting spirit of the Vienna Ö.V.P. against the construction of the Hainburg power plant remains unbroken." (75) Vienna's Deputy Mayor, Erhard Busek, appealed to

Vice Chancellor Norbert Steger to "call the DoKW to reason" to halt the illegal clearing of 1.2 million trees. The Vienna Ö.V.P. demanded an official legal opinion to see if the tree cutting was not against the law. Busek quoted a study which warned that the dam would deteriorate the quality of Vienna's drinking water. (76)

In another newspaper report, Busek said "This goes beyond saving the Auwald, protecting our drinking water or energy conservation. Democracy should not drive all young people into an inner-emigration just because a few powerful politicians interpret the existing laws after their own opinion." (77) He called the Hainburg issue a "fundamental question of democracy," and appealed to Austria's President, Rudolf Kirchschläger to wait for the results of the KLVB referendum. (78)

The Ö.V.P. Environment Spokesman Walter Heinziger also called for a truce. He said there were legally effective solutions and said that Mr. Brezovszky had broken the law, while the Environment Minister Haiden was guilty of a "surprise attack" decision. (79)

On the same day the President of the Austrian UNESCO Commission, Professor Manfred Wagner, resigned in protest at the decision to build Hainburg. The Austrian Art Council also protested against the dam. (80)

Wednesday, Dec. 12 - The KLVB filed a complaint against the Nieder Österreich Environment Minister, Ernest Brezovszky, charging him with misuse of public office. (81) The legal actions are described in detail in a following section.

In the Austrian Parliament, a motion introduced by the the ruling S.P.Ö. and F.P.Ö. for the peaceful settlement of the conflict, and the peaceful start of tree clearing was adopted, and an Ö.V.P. motion to start construction was tabled. (82)

A tense third round of negotiations continued between the government and the KLVB, who were in radio contact with their supporters in the Auwald. (83) An official in parliament looked at the KLVB negotiators and said: "After 1987, these Greens will be coming and going here every day." (84) Although the talks were fruitless, at midnight there was an announcement that there would be no more clearing of demonstrators and no

more tree cutting until Sunday Midnight. Police and forest workers left the Auwald. Chancellor Sinowatz said: "There is no other country in the world where the head of a government would negotiate 15 hours with representatives of people who are in constant violation of the law." (85)

On Wednesday afternoon, a four man delegation of police went to the editorial offices of the Kurrier newspaper and said that a majority of police from Brück an der Leitha, Gänserndorf and Mödling disagreed with the action of the Interior Minister. "The police will not be sent into the war and used as cannon fodder. It looks like a civil war. Our role as 'friend and helper' will be destroyed. The politicians should wait for the citizen's initiative. The protest is being taken out of the expert committees and dumped on the police." A policeman in the Au said: "If I did not have this jacket on, I would be on your side. As kid I used to watch the deer with field glasses." (86)

Dec 13, Thursday - (Summary). Camps were built. Supply of water and food was blocked by the government. The Au newspaper was established. (87)

At 3:30 a.m. on the coldest night of the continuing demonstration, police entered a tent city and refused to allow anyone who was bringing food to enter. (88) Police would not allow people to bring hot tea and blankets through their lines into the Au. Even a forester coming into the woods had to open his pack to show that he was not bringing in food. (89)

At 6 a.m. police extinguished some of the demonstrators' campfires warning of the danger of forest fires. The temperature was minus eight degrees.

Thursday afternoon, police began to block off access roads into the Auwald. Although the Minister of the Interior had said the Auwald was closed to additional demonstrators, new people continued to find their way in.

With continuing rumours of police raids, a reporter found the insecurity of the demonstrators "astounding." (90)

About 1,500 demonstrators faced 60 - 70 police. A deer fence was torn down. 20 more busloads of demonstrators arrived including two school classes from A H S Diefenbach from Vienna Fünfhaus. A mother of a 15 year old student said : "One should show the children that the law comes from the people. What they want to do here in the Au is a scandal." (91)

Interior Minister Blecha said that "The claim that the government is starving demonstrators is nonsense." He said that he informed the local head of police to allow the delivery of food. (92)

Dec. 14, Friday. Twelve demonstrators had to leave the Auwald after they became ill after camping out in winter weather for five days.

Local farmers prepared a tractor parade to support the nature protectors. Gottfried Parmer, from Grossenzersdorf, said he was impressed with the idealism of a group which supposedly had no goals. He estimated that behind each demonstrator in the Auwald, there were 500 sympathizers in the country. (93)

Demonstrators planned to spread Austrian flags on the ground as a defence measure, hoping that police would not step on them. (94)

A sense of humor remained. One road barricade had a sign on it: "Gandhi's Barricade"; another said "Barricade of the Babysitters' Trade union." (95)

The Kurier reported that "In the climate of Orwell's 1984, there is circumstantial evidence that (the demonstrators') telephone and radio frequencies are being monitored by the police." (96) Another paper had a similar report. "There is a suspicion that public telephones in Hainburg and Stopfenreuth are tapped. Reporters who called out heard 3rd voices in their calls. The telephone company says it was a case of repairs being made" (97)

The National Association of University Students also complained that all four of their telephone numbers in Vienna experienced interference. They said they would start legal action. (98)

The Kronen Zeitung's prediction that 10,000 demonstrators would come to the

Auwald at the end of the truce is almost three times the number who were ever in the Auwald at one time. It could have been wishful thinking by partisan reporters, or a desire to sway public opinion.

Greenpeace announced plans for protests in 14 countries against the clearing of the Auwald. (99)

Speaking to Parliament, Austria's President Kirchschläger demanded fair play for the opponents of the Hainburg power plant in the government's formation of public opinion. (100) He warned Austria's politicians that we are all inclined to ossification. He asked all parties in parliament to be open to new social groups. He warned of a possible deep rift in society "if we do not seriously come to terms with the concerns of youth." (101) He asked Members of Parliament to consider using the methods of "direct democracy," (102) which seems to suggest that he favored the KLVb's proposal to hold a referendum on the Hainburg issue.

Chancellor Sinowatz said "The Auwald will be cut," although he did not want violence. He said, "there can be no compromise." (103) He lashed out at Swiss and German critics of the Hainburg dam proposal, saying they had already dammed every river they could and had many atomic power plants as well. A single German thermal power plant, Buschhaus, "pollutes more than all the thermal plants in Austria." (104)

Dec. 16, Saturday. New Groups of demonstrators set up their tents outside the restricted area of the Auwald. Police tried to persuade them to leave because camping was against the forest laws. (105)

The Kronen Zeitung printed an editorial about the planned use of police in the Auwald. They wrote: "As soon as news was released that hundreds of specially trained police from Vienna's Marokkaner barracks will be sent to Hainburg on Monday to remove the demonstrators, many police telephoned the Kronen Zeitung newspaper.

'It is terrible what they are doing to us. For years we have taken the trouble to be there for the people to help them and care for their security to fight

criminals. Now we are forced to march on people who do not want anything else except to demonstrate in a peaceful and non-violent way for the maintenance of nature.'

We in the Kronen Zeitung, together with the support of the KLVVB struggled against the wood cutter and cement spreaders in the Auwald, share the dread of many police about these marching orders. We in the editor's office are well acquainted with many of these officers. We have watched their work. We were there as they risked their lives to save people in dangerous situations, as they freed hostages from terrorists, or disarmed dangerous criminals. If those in authority remain so stubborn, then far more will be destroyed than nature. (106)

Dec. 17, Sunday. (Summary - thousands attended an outdoor mass near the Auwald. Government leaders divided over Hainburg)

An ecumenical Mass was held outdoors at the Stopfenreuth football field near the Auwald. Archbishop Kuntner got an agreement from the Interior Minister that young people who left the Auwald to attend mass would be allowed to go back into the forest. (107)

Die Presse reported later that "100 police gnashed their teeth that they had to let the demonstrators back into the Auwald after the mass..." (108)

Farmers, opposed to the Hainburg dam, made a convoy of 150 tractors but they were blocked by the police from coming to the field for the mass. A few farmers drove around the police and blocked the road by parking their tractors sideways. They were all charged by the police. As a result, the Mass started late. (109)

An estimated 4,00 people attended the mass. (110)

Pastor Helmut Blasche said that the Mass should be a reconciliation between demonstrators, forest workers and police. (111)

In a similar almost neutral vein, Die Presse quoted Father Blasche saying: "The Mass should not be Mass for or against anything, and it should not be a mass before the battle." (112). He called for a non-violent solution and hoped for a Christmas miracle in the Auwald. He also hoped that the political landscape of Austria could radically change to allow the established parties to take note of the new signs of the times. He also prayed for

"the rescue of this landscape." (113)

The Kurier, in a less neutral version of the sermon, reported that Father Blasche urged the demonstrators to carry on ("haltet durch") with their occupation and to "set a good example for legality in our democracy." (114)

Another priest, Wenzel Winter from Schwechat, thanked the local people for their support of the demonstrators. (115)

The Mass was not simply a pep rally supporting the Hainburg demonstrators. One man prayed aloud for the construction of "this environmentally friendly and job providing dam." (116)

Vienna's Deputy Mayor Busek was conspicuous by his presence at the Mass. He said: "I can not imagine that the Au will be cleared tomorrow. The government is not that dumb." (117)

Interior Minister Blecha said that "The present situation is unsustainable" (118) He hoped that construction could begin with peaceful methods. He also said that only the most experienced police will be sent to the Auwald. (119) The Minister said that "interfering with the construction of the deer fence is against the law. The state cannot tolerate illegal behaviour because then it would be in danger of conditions of anarchy." (120)

He said that removing the demonstrators was a last resort., and that he would try to use all other means to persuade the demonstrators to give up their occupation. "If it should come to a direct confrontation between the workers and demonstrators, I would see my work as Interior Minister destroyed." (121)

Justice Minister Harold Ofner took the Auwald demonstrators under his protection, warning that these idealistic young Austrians would be made criminals. He disagreed with the Interior Minister's statement that there were many foreign "trouble makers" in the Auwald. "Against all claims, foreigners play no role in the protests against the Hainburg power plant." (122) Ofner said that the demonstrators came from "all classes and all political camps." (123) He was an authority on the demonstrators because his daughter was one of them. (124)

Half of the Environment Protection Ministry were at the demonstration Sunday night and Monday morning. Experts who felt their studies had been misquoted were there including, professors Löffler, Steiner, and Lötsch, and the geologist Boroviczeny. (125)

The Vice-President of the Union of Industrialists, Philip Schoeller, also appeared in the Auwald Sunday night, apparently in support of the demonstration. An industrialist from Salzburg, who normally lives in a villa said he and his wife were camping in the Auwald and prepared to remain through the Christmas and New Year's holidays. (126)

There was a tense "calm before the storm" in the Stopfenreuth Auwald on Sunday. Many new demonstrators arrived with food and camping equipment. They were convinced that "Monday will be the decisive showdown." (127) There was feverish barricade building and resistance training. (128) the story was headlined: "Marching to a test of strength."

Anton Benya, leader of Austria's national trade union organization, the Ö.G.B. added to the tension by once again threatening to bring trade unionists who supported the dam into the Auwald. He said: "We are at the end of our patience." (129)

Dec 17, Monday - (Summary - In the early morning, forest workers managed to cut some some trees under heavy police protection. Union officials met in Hainburg and threatened a workers' counter demonstration.) (130)

Groups of 20 - 40 police from Vienna and Nieder Österreich invaded the Auwald at 4 a.m. The demonstrators formed and disbanded human chains so it would be more difficult to remove them. Police left their billy clubs and riot shields on their police bus. Using an unblocked road, police brought fallers into the forest and the tree felling began at 5:45 a.m. Police formed a human wall around the fallers and then surrounded their own circle with coils of barbed wire. Demonstrators including girls, children and elderly people crept between the policemen's legs and through the barbed wire, and placed themselves under the falling trees. Police reserves were brought in at 6:20. a.m. Half an hour later a protest parade of farmers with their tractors arrived. After about 40 trees were cut, work was stopped. "Human lives were at stake. Women and children put themselves in the way."

(131)

"It has no sense; there are too many demonstrators," an official said. (132)

"We can't do anything. We are supposed to be non-violent. Without weapons, without billy clubs, we can't do anything," said another policeman (133) After two hours the police returned to their barracks.

The Kronen Zeitung editorialized:

The police were not especially eager to take a hard line with the men who were protesting to prevent the last undisturbed river landscape in Europe from deforestation and paving. They also saw that many of their opponents were women and children. After meeting the frozen but brave protestors, these exhausted police were allowed to retreat. Their senior officers in the warmly heated headquarters were angry that they were powerless to force a decision." (134)

The Arbeiter Zeitung reported that the line between violence and non-violence as the demonstrators charged the police lines. (135) Interior Minister Blecha said "The demonstrators have been un-masked. They have switched from non-violent to violent tactics." (136) He said that Chancellor Sinowatz must make it clear that a clearing of the Auwald is no longer possible without violence. (137)

In the Hainburg union headquarters, across the Danube from the Auwald, 1,000 union officials from firms connected with the construction of the dam held an angry meeting. They said if the demonstrators did not leave the Auwald by Tuesday night, the workers would attack them. (138) The leader of the trade union organization of Nieder Österreich, Josef Hesoun said "The patience of the workers is at an end. This action by the students can not go on. There must be a strong hand." (139) He also claimed they demonstrators were getting money from Libya. (140) A local union leader said: "The workers have a right to work. The students who are protesting there are supported by the workers since they get 65,000 Schillings a year from the State." (141) Another said: "A few thousand muddleheads should not destroy what we built up. We will not be stopped from working and we will not bow to the will of a minority." (142) A member of the

provincial government, Landesrat Höger, attacked the Kronen Zeitung for supporting the campaign against Hainburg, and its readers who supported the campaign were mainly people who earn more than a worker could possibly imagine.(143) This was a rhetorical over-statement, since the Kronen Zeintung has the largest readership in the country, and the greatest penetration of its national market of any European of any paper in Europe, it is hard to imagine how its readers could be a wealthy elite.

Outside the hall, a woman held a placard which read: "You should say for me, death has struck me and the Danube." (144)

The Kurier said: "The government must show that they are masters of the situation in Hainburg since the unions threaten to march in with 30,000 men....If workers beat environment protectors, then our famous social peace has gone to the devil, and the government has lost all its authority." (145)

Dec. 18, Tuesday - The planned workers' demonstration in the Auwald was cancelled.. The President of Austria's national Trade Union Federation (Ö.G.B.) Anton Benya said that the cancellation of the demonstration by the workers for their right to carry on their work in the Hainburg forest did not mean the final renunciation of such a rally. He said there would be solidarity actions of a different kind and cooperation with the government to assure that the necessary work can be accomplished on time." (146)

"The rumour percolated out. The price for calling off the workers' demonstration is an immediate removal of environment protectors from the Auwald." (147) The article said the government was planning an attack by 1,000 police at 6 a.m. Wednesday. With "unusual sharpness," the Chancellor placed himself on the side of the argument of the Ö.G.B. He spoke of preparation for military action. He condemned the occupiers as lawbreakers and condemned what he called "the Children's Crusade." "Law must remain the law. One can not the accept violent measures of the forest protectors. It is unthinkable that the Republic could endure it. It is unthinkable that so many people could show up in the Auwald, people who have not worked much yet for Austria." (148)

In a news article headlined: "Ö.G.B. calls off demonstration - we don't want a civil war," a union plant chairman, Josef Kerschbaum is quoted as saying: "Because of their physical activity, the metal workers are much stronger than the baked chicken in the Auwald." (149)

The municipalities of Gänserndorf and Brück an der Leitha prepared decrees for the eviction of the demonstrators on Wednesday. (150) Using the clause allowing suspension of the Constitution of 1929, article II, paragraph 4, they declared the Stopfenreuth Auwald a restricted area "to provide protection against a physical threat to people or property." (It does seem odd that the demonstrators were considered more of a threat to the trees than the workers with chainsaws.) The demonstrators were ordered leave with their tents and food or face fines of 3,000 Schillings or two weeks imprisonment. The police were ordered to stop the inflow of demonstrators and block the transport of food or water into the Auwald. (151) Copies of the municipal orders declaring the forest a restricted area were posted on trees during the night. (152)

At 5:30 a.m. Tuesday, fallers started cutting trees again, protected by hundreds of police and about 40 police dogs. The fallers worked in a remote corner of the forest for about 20 minutes before the first demonstrators arrived. They threw blankets over the barbed wire barricades and hung onto the arms and legs of the fallers. The news reports says there was no violence but Günther Nenning's glasses were broken. Freda Meissner-Blau collapsed and was taken home. A policeman also had a fainting spell, and demonstrators removed a barricade so the policeman could be driven to a hospital. (153)

Celebrities at the demonstration included the composer Gottfried von Einam, the chamber singer Heinz Holecek, the artist Hundertwasser, and professors Riedl, Hauman, Wendlberger, Steiner, and Kintzl. Professor Wolfgang Löffler came with a group from Canada. (154)

Dec. 19, Wednesday - (Summary - This was the climax of the two week demonstration. Police used maximum force, and there were the most injuries and arrests,

followed by a huge sympathy demonstration in Vienna.)

A helicopter had photographed the demonstrators' camps and barricades. Shortly after 6 a.m., a human wall of helmeted police from Vienna's "Alarminsatz" anti-terrorist group, with clubs and dogs, rolled through the forest like a steamroller.. There orders were: "Use your clubs. Go shoulder to shoulder through the underbrush without regard for casualties." (155) There was panic and chaos. Nature protectors were shoved aside and knocked down. A second line of regular police followed the "Rollkommandos" to make sure that no one escaped.(156) Kurier reporter C. Purkhard and Kronen Zeitung reporter Karl Wendl were clubbed. Die Presse reporter Rudolf Blaha was thrown down a hill. A Kronen Zeitung reporter had his camera knocked out of his hands, and a photographer was thrown to the ground. Many photographers had their film torn out of their cameras. One was told: "If you try to take a picture here, I will have to search your camera for drugs" (157) Cameras of two TV crews were destroyed. (158) A woman assistant and a cameraman from Ö.R.F. were both injured. (159) The crew from Bavarian TV were not only clubbed, but arrested. (160) A video cameraman from the World Wildlife Fund drove onto the Danube bridge and was stopped by a man in civilian dress, who punched the cameraman in the face.

DoKW tried to get a bulldozer into the Auwald by unloading it from a barge, but the landing stage was blocked by a meter high barricade. (161)

There was a dangerous situation where demonstrators kept throwing themselves in front of a bulldozer. (162) Police dragged them away through the mud and threw them down an embankment. Fire hoses and water canon were used to keep demonstrators away from a bulldozer. One demonstrator got a head injury from a bulldozer. When the driver stopped, the other demonstrators offered him tea. (163) A 19 year old girl was clubbed on the head. She said: "Anyone who sticks his head in the sand today will gnash his teeth tomorrow." (164) A 25 year old social worker was hospitalized with a sever brain concussion. Later she said: "This must be what war is like." (165) Twelve injured demonstrators were taken to the Hainburg hospital, but there is no count of those who were

taken to Vienna. Demonstrators estimated that up to 100 may have been injured. (166) At least five policemen were injured (167) . Most reports said 40 people were arrested., but one said there were 55. (168)

Fallers worked under extreme time pressure, cutting five trees a minute. (169) This created a dangerous situation for themselves, the police and the demonstrators. A demonstrator was hurt by a falling tree, (170) and a policeman had his leg broken. (171) A dozen police saved their lives by jumping aside in the last second when a tree fell in the wrong direction. (172) About four hectares of land were cleared (173) Work stopped about 1:45 p.m. (174)

Later a policeman said: "It was a victory for you. Surely a politician will fall because of it...You were fair. There was no violence from your side." (175)

The attack leader, Captain Bonweiser, said that no violence was used against the police, but demonstrators complained of choke holds and kicks to the kidneys. (176) Police wrapped an Austrian flag around one demonstrator's neck and dragged him out of the woods. (177) One policeman quit his job in protest. (178).

The anti-terrorist unit from Vienna was criticized by some of the regular police for their excessive enthusaism in clubbing protestors. One policeman wrote to the Tages Anzeiger newspaper, "I do not know where I stand in regard to this attack by our colleagues." (179)

The Kurier said: "There was a picture of destruction on the battlefield of the Auwald in the afternoon - burned clothing, sawn trees, and somewhere, under the earth, a piece of democracy." (180)

Houses in Witzelsdorf displayed black flags of mourning (181) People were weeping in the streets of Hainburg. (182) Farmers from Eckartsau came with their tractors to break through the police cordon and deliver more straw for the demonstrators to sleep on. (183)

During the day police tried to keep back the flood of demonstrators by stopping chärtered buses 10 km from the Auwald. (184) Some buses were turned back as they tried

to leave Vienna city limits. (185) Some regularly scheduled buses were stopped leaving Vienna, and young people who liked like they might take part in the demonstration were taken off the bus. (186)

At 4:30 p.m. there was a huge demonstration in Vienna against Hainburg as the news got back to the city about the bloody battle in the Auwald. Estimates of the crowd range from 10,00 to 40,000. They assembled in front of the Opera Platz, and sang the Austrian national anthem. There were mothers with children, men with briefcases. they carried flags draped in mourning black, and signs that said : "Social democracy died this morning in the Au,". They overflowed onto the Ring and Kärtner Strasse, stopping traffic and street cars. Demonstrators from the Auwald told what happened. There was applause for the restraint shown by the Nieder Österreich police, and whistles of derision for the violence of the special police from Vienna. (187) Other speakers said they were not against the workers, but against the illegal decisions of the government. (188) In rows of ten they marched to the Ballhaus Platz and sang Christmas carols, and songs about the Auwald.(189) From there they went to the Stephansdom and dispersed at 7:30 p.m. after listening to a concert by the pop group "Schmetterling." (190)

While indignation contributed to the size and enthusiasm of the demonstration, It was not spontaneous as the Kurier report said it was. Hainburg opponents had already scheduled it before Wednesday morning's police attack. "While the unions cancelled their demonstration, the KLVb scheduled a massive demonstration in Vienna today (Wednesday). The SPÖ' s general secretary Peter Schieder called it an irresponsible provocation." (191)

After the demonstration, teachers organizations, trade unionists, and 200 officials from Vienna sent protest telegrams to the Austrian government, (192) Three hundred scientists, professor and artists including the chairman of the Institute for Criminal Law at the University of Vienna, Professor Wilfried Platzgummer sent a combined protest telegram. Professor Platzgummer said that "the behaviour of the authorities is legally unsustainable." (193). The telegram said: "The introduction of direct democracy has been subverted,

scientific opinions have been mis-used, and international agreements have not been taken seriously. No wonder our young people begin to doubt our democratic constitutional state, especially youth who defended their ideals. This protest action should be a warning to us. We call on those responsible not to give lip service to the basic values of the constitutional state, but to really respect them." (194)

Two hundred scientists from the Agricultural College in Vienna sent a telegram to President Kirchschräger demanding additional research in to the protection of groundwater. They said: "We believe that the Stopfenreuth Auwald has the same value as the other natural and cultural landscapes." (195)

Dec. 20 - Thursday - About 3,000 demonstrators remained in the Auwald, but only about 70 police.(196) Another news report said: "The brutal behaviour of the Vienna special police has no doubt increased the number of demonstrators in the Auwald." (197) New demonstrators were expected from Tirol and Vorarlberg during the Christmas holidays. (198)

Other reports estimated that there were 1,500 demonstrators in the Auwald. The supply of food and clothing returned to normal. There were large supply depots in the forest. There was a tense calm but demonstrators feared there would be new attempts to cut the trees. (199) New demonstrators were expected from Tirol and Vorarlberg during the Christmas holidays. (200)

Demonstrators had good reason to be worried. there were rumors of 14 police buses bringing 1,000 policemen. (201) Government helicopters photographed all seven camps. A policeman telephoned newspapers and leaked details of a planned attack by 2,500 policemen with water cannon and tear gas planned for Friday . Hospital staff were ordered to stay on duty all night. (202)

Three seriously injured demonstrators remained in the Hainburg hospital. Doctors and nurses from Vienna's Lorenz Böhler Accident hospital have provided medical service in the Auwald in their spare time, and cared for many injured demonstrators. (203)

Trade unionists continued to threaten to attack the demonstrators. In talks with President Kirchschräger, the President of the N. Ö. Arbeitskammer, Josef Hesoun, "would not rule out the possibility that trade unionists might take direct action against the demonstrators in the future." (204) This was a realistic possibility because German workers had attacked leftist student demonstrators in the 1960s.

The Trade and Transport workers union sent an ultimatum to Chancellor Sinowatz and Interior Minister Blecha. They said:

If the provocation of the deliberate lawbreakers in the Auwald continue, it is doubtful that the workers would again fail to take action against it....A conflict between the workers and demonstrators would be seen as a political catastrophe. (205)

The head of the Roman Catholic Church in Austria, Cardinal Koenig, made a dramatic appeal for peace, for a readiness to compromise, and for understanding "the other side" (206)

Dec. 21. - Friday At 3 a.m., demonstrators in the Auwald heard that there would not be another attack by the police. Chancellor Sinowatz announced a Christmas truce with no more land clearing and no more attacks by police until a cabinet meeting discussed Hainburg on January 4. In hindsight it is clear that at this moment the Hainburg plan died and the demonstrators won. The first bulldozer drove away to cheers and applause at 8 a.m.. The Kronen Zeitung said: "All Austria breathes out." (207) They said that 4,000 more demonstrators arrived in the Auwald including workers from the VOEST Alpine state owned metal industry as well as Vienna city Hall workers, artists and singers. (208) Günter Nenning, the leader of the KLVB said that reason had replaced the billy club, but that the demonstration would continue through Christmas for psychological reasons. (209)

At this point, Chancellor Sinowatz was still fighting. He called the construction of the Hainburg dam "right and necessary" he said the real heroes were not the demonstrators, but the workers who did everything not to endanger the social peace. He said no dam was being built with so many measures to protect the environment, and there had never been so many laws passed to protect the environment as in that year, 1984. (210)

Demonstrations continued in other parts of Austria. In Vienna, Greenpeace delivered a 200 kg concrete block to DoKW director Josef Koblika, which was decorated with fish, plants and heads of wild animals. (211) In Innsbruck, seven demonstrators from Tirol occupied the office of Landeshauptmannstellvertreter Fili (deputy governor of the Land) and sent a fax to Chancellor Sinowatz demanding a plebiscite on the Hainburg issue. They were taken away by the police. (212) Another demonstrator in Innsbruck climbed the Christmas tree in the old market place and ran a chain saw amplified by a megaphon. (213) at the Nieder Österreich provincial government building, there were many attempts at demonstrations or writing graffiti on the walls, that security guards kept everyone away from the building and allowed entry only by one door on a side street. (214) In Salzburg, protestors lit funeral candles in the old market place. Eberhard Stüber, leader of the House of Nature, who had taken part in the demonstration at the Hainburg Auwald, described the demonstrators as heroes, and said: "This involves far more than Hainburg, it is the development of a new way of thinking." (215)

On January 4, the Austrian government announced that construction of a dam would be postponed one year and it has not been seriously discussed since.

Who Were the Demonstrators?

Accusations that German radicals would be brought in were denied by protest organizers. On the contrary, they said that to avoid violence, known radicals from Vienna were discouraged from taking part in the demonstrations. (216)

The Minister of the Interior Blecha sent a photograph to television news bureaus which he said showed two neo-Nazis, Gottfried Küssel and Thomas Resinger in the Auwald. Neither of the two young men in the photograph were Küssel or Resinger. (217)

In response to the campaign to defame them, the demonstrators came up with the ironic slogan: "we are all extremists, we are all foreigners." (218)

A reporter asked demonstrators in the Auwald: "Why did you come. How did you have time to demonstrate?" A 31 year old restaurant owner said: "I had a relative take my

place." A zoologist said: "It was a spontaneous decision by my colleagues. There are no lectures at the moment." A woman office worker said: "I have flexible work hours." (219)

A physician from Salzburg, Dr. Herbert W., explained why he was in the Auwald. "If one could see how our democracy is stamped under foot, how laws are wiped out, and how our nature will be destroyed, one must protect oneself." (220)

A student from Vienna's College of Agriculture, Gerald K., said: "The longer we can stick it out, the better the public will be informed about how politics is arranged in our country." (221)

Some demonstrators wanted to protect the forest. Others were against the building of the dam. Still others were opposed to the decision of Landesrat Brezovszky which they felt was illegal. Others said they wanted to see to what extent Austria was really a democracy. (222)

As is often the case in environment protection demonstrations, the majority of participants were students and professionals. One reporter estimated that two thirds of the demonstrators were students and that the typical student was from the countryside or a small town. (223) . Since there is a larger social barrier between professors and students in Europe than in North America, it was remarkable that they went into the trenches together. A university professor of biology gave a lecture on the biotope of the Auwald to his students gathered around a campfire. (224) Another professor said: "Look, almost my whole class came along." (225) The University of Vienna did not supply all the manpower, universities in Linz, Graz, Salzburg, and other towns also sent supporters. (226)

Not all the students were from universities. On a typical day, 250 students came from Academic High Schools (Gymnasium) in Vienna, and two busloads of students came from a Middle School. (227)

There were many professional people as well. A physician came all the way from Vorarlberg. A businessman from Vienna visited a customer in the area in the afternoon and stayed overnight in the Auwald. A vocational teacher from St. Pölten spent all his free

time in the Auwald. (228)

While environment protection movements often seem to be class war between professionals and the blue collar working class, in the Hainburg protests, support cut across class lines and demonstrators got support from the local communities. Local people let the demonstrators sleep in their haylofts, and use their toilets. (229) A riding stable owner let 80 demonstrators sleep overnight there. (230)

A Gasthaus proprietor, whose inn was near camp 6, let demonstrators use his telephone, and his toilet with "its inexhaustible supply of toilet paper," and brought them a car load of food. A doctor from Hainburg let demonstrators use his house to sleep and shower. A retired couple from Stopfenreuth brought Topfengolatschen (stew). Farmers brought apples. (231) Another farmer donated a ton of potatoes. (232) Farmwives cooked giant pots of Wurstfleckerln for the demonstrators. Others brought musli, fruit and baked goods. (233) Bread was sent from Wachau. Witzelsdorf sent supplies. A church parish in Vienna twice served breakfast to several hundred people. (234) The Johanit Order donated 80 blankets and sleeping bags. A 70 year old pensioned police officer from Vienna collected blankets and coats. A pensioner from Gumpendorfer Strasse brought tea, food, and fruit every day as he took his dog for a walk in the Auwald. A businessman from Vienna let protestors use his jeep. A man brought his camping bus for demonstrators to sleep in. A wood merchant delivered free brought bags of charcoal for cooking fires. A family from Nieder Österreich brought coats and oil lamps. Someone donated 2,000 drinking glasses. An art dealer ordered 200 frankfurters and 6 pails of mustard. When the butcher realized he was serious and they were for the Auwald demonstrators, he made the delivery himself. A woman took the gloves off her hands and gave them to a demonstrator. (235) Two hundred blankets came from Vorarlberg.

There was donations of bicycles from Vienna, oranges from caritas, bananas from Hans Dichand (the owner of the Kronen Zeitung), and 1,000 alarm clocks from Wachau. Volunteers brought solidarity telegrams and letters from parents. (236)

Because of the large amount of donations, the KLVb had to spend only 20,000

20,000 Schillings for supplies. (They also spent 48,000 for blankets, 12,000 for walkie talkies, and 7,000 for tents.) (237)

Political Reactions to the Conflict:

The reaction of Austria's leader of the opposition was tepid. Alois Mock said: "I may say I have been very restrained. In other countries the opposition would have used the clumsy behaviour of the government in a very different way." He avoided any direct criticism of the police. (238)

The Ö.V.P. Environment Critic, Walter Heinzinger, said: "One should not systematically cut down the honor of the demonstrators." (239)

An Ö.V.P. MP., Heribert Steinbauer, said: "The attacks on journalists were a heavy blow against the right of freedom of expression." (240)

President Kirchschräger was shown photographs of demonstrators beaten bloody and said: "This is very terrible." Officially he told the KLVB: "I remain on the side of the government. The State is united. I have nothing to offer you." (241)

There was a hot debate within the governing S.P.Ö. A news report said: "Differences within the S.P.Ö. over the bloody battle in the Auwald can longer be overlooked." An anonymous S.P.Ö. leader complained: "It was a mixture of dilletantism, ignorance, and dominance." (242)

Another anonymous S.P.Ö. spokesman supported the government. "If the police had not attacked, we would have war between workers and students." (243). The article was headlined "Bunker Mentality in the S.P.Ö."

The S.P.Ö.'s Secretary, Peter Schieder said: "The indiscriminate beating of thousands of young people who were there with the best intentions was a really necessary measure." (244)

In another interview Schieder said: "It was not to show the fist of the state, but a necessary emergency measure of the constitutional state and a warning to small groups not to take matters into their own hands. He added that if newspapers "continued to report

events in the Auwald so one-sidedly, then one must consider the expansion into a new medium, private publisher-owned television." (245)

Schieder also said: "A party which bears responsibility for government has duties to fulfil even when it must lose a few percentage points of votes." (246)

The S.P.Ö. of Nieder Österreich distributed a broadside attacking two S.P.Ö. members, Günther Nenning, and Freda Meissner-Blau, which said: "Many teachers and university professors who lead youth this way, and who incite them against the Republic and the constitutional state, can not avoid responsibility for what happens." (247)

An S.P.Ö. MP, Josef Cap, mildly objected to his government's assault on the Hainburg demonstrators and was out of favor in his party. In the following election, in 1986, he was re-elected by personal votes.

(In Austria voters at both local and national elections generally simply chose a party and not an individual. The party chooses the candidates and the rank order of the list of candidates so that those at the top of the list are assured of election. Less commonly, voters may also indicate their choice of an individual. This less commonly used method was used by so many voters that Mr. Cap was easily re-elected, not because of his high standing in the party but because of his popularity with the electorate.)

Here is a condensed version of a guest editorial he wrote for Profil Magazine, "My Party and Hainburg."

The longing for a new type of fundamental democracy should not be met with power, rejection, and condemnation.... New generations have the right to consider new forms of political decision making.... There is a growing displeasure and ingratitude toward the (postwar) reconstruction generation.... We have always solved social conflicts in Austria, but until now the fake harmony of pretence covered up everything. Without our national psychotherapist, Bruno Kreisky, we are thrown back on our own resources. (248) The reconstruction generation says...If they (environment protestors) went in the National Parliament, they could blather as much as they like, and if it becomes too much for us, then we could have the grand coalition.... The S.P.Ö., and the Ö.G.B. must understand that a functioning contract between generations and a believable possibility of integration for new social movements and ideas is more important than the Hainburg dam....How

far can we go toward civil disobedience and passive resistance? The dilemma which the occupation of the Auwald has created has to be seen as a challenge to representative democracy's ability to make decisions and carry them out. The Auwald demonstrators must understand that subjective interpretation of law must find their limits through high court decisions. Each step beyond the example of Gandhi's resistance may cause severe damage to environment protection..... I am in favor of clean, cheap energy, independent of foreign supplies, but why the hurry? The electrical industry does not believe we are going to have an energy shortage in the next few years, so we have time, and we don't have to beat our heads bloody. (249)

For industry this is an opportunity to take back economic decision making competence from the political parties. We need to find entirely new ways, such as changing the law of government and business, so the electrical industry can be reined in....It is not a sign of weakness for the party chairman of the S.P.Ö. or the F.P.Ö. to wait for a decision of the high court or a referendum....If the S.P.Ö. ignores these weather signs, it will sink to a moderately influential center party without demands for reform...." (250)

Former S.P.Ö. Chancellor Bruno Kreisky described as "absolute nonsense," a charge by some trade unionists that the demonstrations were financed by Libya's revolutionary dictator, Muammar Gaddafi. He said those who spread such stupidity should prove it. (251)

The leader of the S.P.Ö Youth (Juso), Alfred Gusenbauer, did not support the government. "In one of the most difficult crises in Austrian politics, it is not adequate to march on peaceful demonstrators with police dogs and clubs." Gusenbauer called for an immediate stop to the land clearing and for an emergency meeting of the S.P.Ö. Executive "because of the high political price which Hainburg will cost." He said the government should wait for the court decision and then hold a plebiscite to give the construction of the dam broader legitimation. (252)

Interior Minister Blecha insisted that the entire Hainburg demonstration was a foreign plot. "We must isolate those forces that in the name of protest want to destabilize democracy." (253) He said that photographs from the Frankfurt (Germany) airport demonstrations showed the same barricades were built, there were the same trenches, the same food delivery system and organization. (254) He said the fact that six policemen

were injured showed that the demonstrators were not non-violent and said that left-activists and neo-Nazis were leading the demonstrations. (255)

Mr. Blecha said:

"The anti-Hainburg actions are controlled from abroad. The youths who call themselves "Green" are ideologically indoctrinated and so they are led to radicalism....(The university professors) want to make an international scandal out of this. The Swiss journalist Franz Weber, flew journalists to the Hainburg occupation at his own expense." (256)

A Kurier article titled: "The Difference" contrasted Mr. Blecha's claim that all the violence came from demonstrators and that foreign professional revolutionaries were behind the Hainburg protests, with statements by Erich Danziger, the head of Public Security. Danziger said: "There were habitual demonstrators from Vienna, but no foreigners, and no weapons, but I saw someone swing a camera. (257)

An opinion piece titled "Rare Socialists" also questioned Mr. Blecha's insistence that the Hainburg conflict was a foreign plot.

"Socialists see themselves as the motor of European unification overcoming the nationalist states' church steeple politics and creators of Europe as our home. Now Foreign Minister Gratz objects to Swiss criticism of Austria's Hainburg policy. He was a young deputy involved in the European Community Council, as was Interior Minister Blecha. Now they are trying to mobilize dangerous hate against foreigners. When they come to power, they fall back into the political stone age." (258)

Nineteen years earlier, a younger Mr. Blecha wrote:

A generation stands before the ruins of its illusion without comprehending and asks: "What will happen?" Especially the young people in Austria are waiting for the suggested solution from the socialists - social democracy not only excludes the rule of private capital, but of bureaucrats and managers as well. (259)

The Kurier questioned Mr. Blecha's veracity. They wrote that Mr. Blecha denied that police used dogs, in spite of their new photos of dogs in action. He denied that C.B.

radios were being monitored even though Kurier reporters saw a car filled with listening devices. Mr. Blecha denied that journalists were attacked. He said: "I find that grotesque." (260)

There were divisions within the ranks of the government. Ö.V.P. Justice Minister Harald Ofner took the demonstrators under his protection, warning that "these idealistic young Austrians should not be made criminals." He disagreed with the Interior Minister's statement that there were foreign trouble-makers in the Auwald. "Against all claims, foreigners play no role in the protests against the Hainburg power plant. (261) Ofner said that the demonstrators came from "all classes and all political camps." (262) He warned of the development of "a deep cleft in society which could not be healed in the near future." (263) He knew what he was talking about because his daughter was demonstrating in the Auwald.

Science Minister Heinz Fischer demanded care and judgment in the treatment of demonstrators and called for more talks. (264) This was not a ringing endorsement of the government's policy.

Environment Minister Steyrer also passed up the chance to unambiguously support his government. He said: "The major loss in all this is our willingness to discuss with each other." While the Greens cooperated with the government in the past, he was "rockbound convinced" that they will be sitting in opposition in the next parliament." (265)

An article "Green with Anxiety" said that the junior coalition partner, the F.P.Ö., had "no convincing line in the Hainburg question".

One F.P.Ö. minister is against the construction of the dam. Others, led by (party leader) Norbert Steger, are for a one year delay. Another is for putting the Zwentendorf nuclear power plant into operation, and the other F.P.Ö. leaders are for the immediate construction of Hainburg. They now suffer 'green anxiety.' Instead of presenting themselves as 'supporters of government,' as junior partners in the coalition, some F.P.Ö. functionaries advise getting out of the government to save a little credibility. (266)

The Political Science Society, which normally inclined toward the S.P.Ö., demanded

a stop to the land clearing. Its chairman, Anton Pelinka said: "The construction plan has been forced through with all power." (267) -

The United Greens appealed to the S.P.Ö. members to throw away their party membership and quit the Ö.G.B. (268)

The head of the Union of Industrialists, Herbert Krejci, supported the government with a little Xenophobia of his own. He said the KLVb had a typical nihilistic dialectic of the antithesis and asked for "an investigation into their financial sources and their international connections." (269) . Later the reporter tried to bait Mr. Krejci for continuing to support the S.P.Ö. as he had in the Zwentendorf nuclear power plant issue, but Krejci replied: "Anyone who believes in the constitutional state must thank the Chancellor for holding to his course in spite of the drumfire of the media. We must support him independent of party membership." (270)

An Ö.V.P. City Council member, Jörg Mauthe, joined the demonstrators in the Auwald, wearing his suit. He opposed the dam because it threatened Vienna's drinking water. In a larger context, he said the conflict was "a turning point of civilization and the end of the modern era." (271) He said: "Beauty is as necessary to life as vitamins. Beauty is a long neglected part of the quality of life which until recently only artists worried about. The second problem is the discontent which oppresses the souls of our young people." (272)

Mauthe said a rapidly growing bureaucracy operates in invisible ways, and that Mr. Brezovszky had pulled off his decision in a bureaucratic way. He felt the decision to build the dam was legally binding, "but it is still against the law. Many of the scientific studies have been mixed up or exchanged." (273) He said that 70% of the youth and a majority of the intelligentsia were against the dam. Mr. Mauthe said there had been no serious political negotiations. If the political parties carried on in the same way, they would have no future and it would be impossible to build majorities. "It is a very difficult transition period from one phase of culture and civilization to the next. I find it terrible, the insensitivity with which our institutions treat the difficult process." (274)

Reaction of the Churches

At the beginning of the demonstrations, the head of Austria's Roman Catholic Church, Cardinal Koenig, warned that bitterness is growing in Hainburg and is coming to a confrontation. The archbishop of Vienna said that "The concerns of youth should be taken seriously. Their arguments should not be shoved aside and we should not fight them." (275) He said: "Young people often argue emotionally, see only one aspect of the problem, and are deeply disappointed when they are not listened to." He called for an end to insults and violence in this tense situation. "Environment problems affect all of us. They can not be solved by a single party or group. We must sit with each other, listen to the experts, and with good will, look for reasonable solutions." (276)

After the climax of the demonstrations, Cardinal Franz Koenig said he was deeply concerned about the events in Hainburg. "It is a satisfying sign that so many people are engaged in maintaining the environment and thus show respect for the creation which mankind is entrusted with preserving." (277) He said he understood that workers were concerned about their jobs. He appealed to all concerned to avoid future confrontations. (278) The leader of Catholic Action, Eduard Ploier, said that the government should reconsider its decision to build. (279)

The Protestant Bishop Knall wrote to Chancellor Sinowatz and asked for a Christmas truce in the Auwald to prevent a further escalation of the conflict. (280)

Foreign Reactions

Foreign reaction to the conflict in Hainburg was almost unanimously negative. The Social Democrats in Germany opposed the Austrian government's policy. The Deputy Caucus chairman of the SPD, Dr. Herta Däubler-Gmelin said: "No doubt the decision as it was done in Hainburg must be answered for in Austria, but the clearer the European dimensions of the environment questions are, the stronger other people are...affected by conflicts like that around Hainburg." (281) She found it sad that the Hainburg conflict could not be settled peacefully, and that once more nature would be the loser. She found it especially depressing that the destruction of the Auwald began before the courts made a

decision. "For anyone who has peace with nature as a front row political objective, it is a scandal." (282)

A spokesman for the Federal Green Party in Germany asked Germans not to take winter holidays in Austria. (283) The boycott call was echoed by the German Union for Environment Protection (BUND), who protested "the barbaric destruction of nature." (284)

In Germany there were plans to take the Hainburg case to the United Nations based on the Ramsar (Iran) Convention on the protection of wetlands which had become law in Austria on April 16, 1983.

The European Community's Council (Eurorat) took up the case based on Austria's signing the Bern Convention. There were plans for a motion in the Swiss Parliament to ask the government to use their right of protest as a treaty signer of the Bern and Ramsar Conventions. Roland Wiederkehr of the Swiss W.W.F. asked: "How can we push the developing countries to protect nature if something like this happens?" (285)

Attitude of the Austrian Press

Just as the American media were blamed for fueling the anti-Vietnam War protests, the same complaint was made in Austria about the Hainburg protests. The Vice-President of the N.Ö. Landtag, Karl Pospischil, said:

The escalation of the conflict over the construction of the dam is the responsibility of the media, especially the daily newspapers. Brezovoszky was treated in a horrible way...by the press. Everything he did was legally correct. The campaign against him in the newspapers damaged democracy." (286)

Similarly, N.Ö. Landesrat Höger blamed the Kronen Zeitung and "its rich readers" for the demonstrations. (With the largest circulation per capita in Europe, it is an exaggeration to say that it is the paper of the wealthy elite). The leader of the KLVB, Günther Nenning, gave the Kronen Zeitung credit for starting the publicity campaign against Hainburg, (287) as well as paying for research into the environmental impact of the proposed dam. (288)

The Hainburg protests are unique in that instead of the predictable clucking about

law and order, the press almost unanimously supported the protests. The Kurier was not as enthusiastic as the Kronen Zeitung. They had diversified ownership, and the editorial policy see-sawed back and forth in the early stages depending on which financial interest was unhappy. While the Arbeiter Zeitung would be expected to take the side of the leaders of the Ö.G.B., they simply reported their official statements, and their coverage was sympathetic to the protest movement if not as enthusiastically partisan as the other two newspapers.

One of the few editorials which supported the government was in Die Presse, a paper which normally represented industry, titled "Where the Fun Stops." Calling the protestors "Au fanatics" it said:

"It is really too dumb to show why the right of law, the legal authorities, and the rule of law does not need to be discussed in this case." The writer asked why the KLVB had waited a year and a half to start their activities, and said the demonstrations were not non-violent. (289)

The Communist newspaper, Volks Stimme, questioned the Kronen Zeitung's enthusiasm for the right to demonstrate, since the Kronen Zeitung had not supported peace demonstrations, workers' demonstrations, or the occupation of vacant housing. An editorial titled "Put Out the Sparks" said the Kronen Zeitung had started the KLVB and by opposing all further use of hydro power from the Danube was hostile to technology, throwing the baby out with the bath water. It said "The common enemy of workers and nature protectors was the bourgeois media who incite people against each other." (290)

One Kurier editorial was mildly critical of the protests:

Listening to many politicians one could get the impression that the young people in the Auwald are linked to Moscow and financed by Gaddafi. In reality they are the children of the red and black bourgeoisie.

The demonstrators are on the edge of damaging the constitutional state if they have not already done so. Austria is not an unjust state which we have an obligation to resist. The government and Chancellor Sinowatz have shown good will to avoid an explosion, but obviously they have not found the right tactic yet....

First they sent the police in. Then they whistled back the state power. The patient Mr. Sinowatz does not believe in the tactic of wearing down the opposition but wants to demonstrate strength. The demonstrators must lose

the struggle in the Au. The Au will be cleared but the demonstrators have shown a political strength which can no longer be ignored. It would be good if they could be integrated into the existing political process. (291)

In a later edition of the Volks Stimme, they wrote:

The orgy of police violence in the Stopfenreuth Auwald made it unmistakeably clear where the fun stops, namely where big capital and profit seeking interests come into play....Democracy is what the social partners need to achieve their interests." (292)

The Kurier wrote: "The Austrian solution to the Hainburg conflict is bloody heads and poisoned thoughts. Fred Sinowatz and Karl Blecha have let themselves be driven into a hateful situation, driven by Anton Benya" (of the Ö.G.B.) (293)

A cartoon in Kronen Zeitung of Herr Strudl, the archtypal Austrian, after the police attack of December 19, had him comment: "Our leaders have led us into many inglorious battles in the past, but this was the most inglorious of all." (294)

An editorial in the Kurier after Monday's demonstrations (on Dec. 10) praised the Austrian workers for not resorting to violence against the demonstrators.

Doubtful political decisions are made every day, but a decision whose legal substance depends on the court should remain an exception. The construction is being hurried so the government can show their enormous ability to accomplish things...That might makes right is a fact well known of old, but in a functioning democracy, not the stronger, but the stronger argument should prevail....We have never had such bungling politics in our country. (295)

The next day, a Kurier editorialist Hans Rauscher wrote "Sinowatz Chooses the Hard Way."

Chancellor Sinowatz has guaranteed the entry of a Green Alternative group in Parliament. While a majority of Austrians would agree with the decision to have police clear the demonstrators out of the forest, but a few percent of the young and first time voters from the liberal class, and from the famous Kreisky voters, will remember this for a long time. From now on, the S.P.Ö. is a party who Interior Minister Mr. Blecha, formerly known as a "leftist" and a protector of the party youth, set the police on the tree protectors. A party whose Environment Minister Steyrer united with the smart aleck philosopher

Hundertwasser takes over sponsorship of a few trees in front of his ministry, but accepts the cutting in the Au. A party who stands in the quick divorce court with its unloved members. A party who rebel Josef Cap is now slandered, perhaps because he too fears the party committee. A party whose chairman clearly decided this entire course...the entire proceedings around Hainburg go back to Sinowatz. He could have waited another year until the People's Initiative expired (if not the appeal to the high court). Energy politics does not require immediate construction. But Sinowatz feared that the situation would slip out of his hand, and he would appear to be a weak Chancellor. Kreisky would have let the occupiers of the Au leave, and then proceeded with the cutting. One hears the slogan in the S.P.Ö. "Kreisky would have done it differently." ...From the election we will see if part of the core support of the S.P.Ö. goes along with this decision." (296) :

A Kurier article objected to the excessive power of the trade unions:

This is the most dangerous and difficult situation in the Second Republic with almost no way out. There is a threat of a union demonstration of 100,000 people between Christmas and New Year. When Benya let Sinowatz wring a concession out of him on Tuesday (Dec. 18) to cancel the workers' demonstration, there were raging protests in the Ö.G.B. Sinowatz will have his hands full to counter the impression that his government is under heavy pressure from the Ö.G.B. (297)

The Tages Anzeiger also objected to the lack of democratic procedure and the excessive power of the trade unions.

Politics in Austria changed permanently on December 19, more than those responsible care to admit. As the police clubs hit the heads of young people, college teachers and the inhabitants of nearby villages, wounds were made that will cause problems for politicians of all colors for a long time

It is more than stopping a power plant, it is a revolt against arbitrariness of the ruling powers and so many who have grown lazy behind a facade of democracy and the lucrative social partnership. The Union of Industrialists wanted to discredit the demonstrators by saying that they wanted to change the entire political system, had no idea how right they were. The generally unpolitical environmentalists are alienated from their alleged comrades in countries to the West. Respectable university professors saw how their scientific studies were distorted by an incompetent administrative lawyer from a provincial government; their expressions were changed to mean the opposite; idealists believing in the authority of the government nature protection organizations, who believed in Austria's commitment to recently signed international treaties, had their political awareness raised in a way that is unusual for this country. People who have been governed from above throughout our entire history, and whose democracy was in part instituted by the victorious powers after the last World War, have discovered the mistrust which is essential in any democracy.

The government negotiated all night with the KLVB and then immediately

bowed to the pressure from the Ö.G.B., who, like the fascist militia of the 1930s, threatened an intervention by the so-called 'silent majority,' who they themselves had incited.

It was also new for a civilized Western democracy that social democrats who once put education at the head of their struggle now incited the workers. For that they even let the economic bosses praise them for being 'restrained.'

The opposition who used to do everything they could to put the government in a bad light were strikingly silent in the Hainburg case. Critics were silenced as were the critics of Hainburg in the S.P.Ö., except for Deputy Mayor Busek who wants to protect Vienna's drinking water. (298)

An editorial in Profil blamed Alois Mock and the Ö.V.P. for failing to oppose the Hainburg dam:

The Ö.V.P. carries part of the blame for saying 'yes' to Hainburg, and then when the fur flies in the Auwald, for presenting a 'peace plan.' On November 28, 1984, the caucus of the Ö.V.P. in the National Parliament agreed almost unanimously to the construction of Hainburg. There were only three dissenters, Marga Hubinek, Walter Heinzinger, and Othmar Karas. The Ö.V.P. women who try to show their green rebellion on T.V. did not find the courage to offer their heads to the supporters of the dam.. Opposition leader Alois Mock turns like a worm trying to avoid answering questions about his position on Hainburg on television....Building Hainburg will please the Ö.V.P.'s industrial power brokers, but at the same time, the youth will leave the party. Countless functionaries have fused their personal interests with their political offices. They will cheerfully sacrifice the concerns of youth on the altar of the party bosses.

Mock should have supported waiting for the outcome of the KLVB appeal. It was a serious, irreparable mistake. Now that the Auwald is a war zone, he stumbles out with a 'peace plan.'

If the Ö.V.P. parliamentarians were willing to agree to the contamination of Vienna's drinking water, and the contamination of the dammed up water, then he could have at least waited until the KLVB proceedings are finished. The Ö.V.P. made a mistake which can not be rectified for decades. They have guaranteed that ten Greens will be elected. No one would have taken it badly if the Ö.V.P. had not taken a clear position on Hainburg.

Mock dreams of an Ö.V.P.-S.P.Ö. coalition, a total embrace of the economy and the trade unions, and the price is the destruction of a most valuable piece of nature. In this dramatic situation, the will to power silences an opposition party. Saying 'yes' to Hainburg made the Ö.V.P. capable of becoming a coalition partner. (299)

In the next election in 1986, the Greens elected 8 members, and the Ö.V.P. did go into coalition with the S.P.Ö., with Mock as Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister.

Another opinion piece in Profil also castigated the Ö.V.P.:

The Landeshauptmann of Nieder Österreich, Siegfried Ludwig, always supported the dam but did not have the courage to say so. As the head of the Land government, he bears full responsibility for the disaster. Now he dives up out of the trap door and wants to delay construction until the courts decide.

First Ludwig incited Comrade Brezovszky in this misery, and then when the police clubs are pounding on the heads of the peaceful young people in the Auwald, he comes up with a good advice.

The leader of the Vienna Chamber of Commerce, Ö.V.P. M.P. Karl Dittrich, also plays a painful role in this affair. The Vienna Ö.V.P. says clearly what it means: 'no' to Hainburg. Dittrich fights against logic and the Vienna Ö.V.P. as he looks for votes to get elected president of the National Chamber of Commerce. (300)

Another opinion piece in Profil saw the crisis not as the fault of individual villains, but as a breakdown of the system:

A blow on the head only makes it more visible. We have the end of traditional politics. After 40 years the basic consensus of the Second Republic has crumbled. Excavator socialists, and cement conservatives can try to keep it going, but it only leads to a weak final administration....In 1981, 43% of the public felt anger toward the established parties. In 1984 it was 70%....Swing voters are now the majority. (301)

"Backstage conversation" was the title of an article which also predicted the rise of the Green Party:

Cement for the dam serves as political cement to unite the United Greens and the Alternative List. They could have a reservoir of 12-15% of the vote. Rudolf Brettschneider of the Vienna Fessel Institute of Public Opinion said that before Hainburg's battle, Wednesday, they expected 7-8% votes for the Greens and only 3-4% for the F.P.Ö. The more the three main parties talk about 'all being in the same boat,' on the Hainburg issue, the more electoral success there will be for the Green Alternatives. (302)

The actual results in 1986 were 4.82% for the Green Alternative, 43.1% S.P.Ö, with a loss of 10 seats, 41.3% Ö.V.P., with a loss of 4 seats, and 9.73% for the F.P.Ö. under its new leader, Jörg Haider.

A Kurier editorial stressed the lost of trust in authority:

Without instinct this government has staggered into its first test of truth. This is more than an environment protest. It is a protest against the type of political management that the people are becoming accustomed to being lied to by their government. The workers at VÖEST were told that they would not lose any social benefits. As soon as the union representatives were elected, they lost them. The Interior Minister threatens us with a complaint because he says that police dogs were not used in the Stopfenreuther Auwald. Everyday we see pictures of the dogs in the paper. Last the government says the occupation of the Hainburg Auwald could be peacefully solved, and they had already given the order to attack. Eyewitnesses say that children were clubbed by the police. This state has been so proud of its press freedom, but journalists were beaten and trampled on.

Houses are draped in black crepe. People are weeping in the market place. The Supreme Court says we should wait for its decision. What will happen if the high court says construction should not have begun? (303)

The editor of Profil also saw Hainburg as giving birth to the Greens and criticized the government's disregard of due process. Peter Michael Lingens said he did not care if Hainburg were built or not, but he regarded the conflict as a "catastrophe":

The more police Fred Sinowatz and Karl Blecha send to the Auwald, the more Greens will enter the next parliament. The S.P.Ö hopes it will not be more than 9....I think it will be more than 20, and the S.P.Ö. will be forced into coalition with the Ö.V.P. (304) We are surely the first and only country in the world where even the construction of a hydropower dam requires a huge invasion of police, as in other places the installation of rockets with atomic warheads" (305)

Lingens said Chancellor Sinowatz was "a tragic bull in a china shop." (306) There was a slogan, "since we could not build Zwentendorf, (the nuclear power plant) we must see Hainburg through." (307)

Lingens said it was tragic that the Sinowatz government was taking a defeat on energy policy, because the new laws reducing smokestack emissions was one of their major accomplishments.... He also saw it as tragic that if the Chancellor had not supported the construction lobby, he would have suffered twice the political damage. (308)

He said the Chancellor's major mistake was that during the planning stage, there was no "Joint Commission" with environmentalists which would have improved the project and let Austria say to foreign critics that they were giving up 4% of the forest to save the rest of it. (309)

The second tragic aspect was the way in which the construction permit was granted. The Nieder Österreich Land's Nature Protection Law should have been openly amended to allow the construction instead of bending the law. "It gives the impression that the government will do whatever it wants regardless of the law." (310)

The editor said that in Switzerland there would be a referendum. He said the Austrian referendum law should be amended and that if it were put to a vote, it would pass. Then the police could clear out the demonstrators to general applause." (311)

Another opinion piece in Profil stressed the conflict between generations:

It is the right of youth to be discontent. Those who are incomprehending should finally wake up. They are the same people who did not understand the activists of 1968. What brought that generation into the streets...? They were against the establishment, the satiety, self-satisfaction, and the rigidity of the typical characters who said: 'Look what we did.'

The activists of 1968 saw their criticism domesticated to political slogans. Only a few remained in the fire and they are the ignition spark for the 1984 generation. Hainburg itself is not the cause. They are demonstrating against the violence of the state. It is the exercise of power by those who have it against those who should have it. the activists of 1968 did not have an obvious issue at their disposal such as Hainburg. Their concerns can be accepted by non-intellectuals who say: "In Principle I am not against the the construction of the dam, but these methods of procedure..."

The argument that if 1.35 million people sign a petition against the dam, that every other voter is in favor of it, inspires the 19 year olds to demonstrate against such politics.

Democracy means a readiness for renewal. Stability must not become rigidity. The youth of today are convinced that they are locked out of their own future. (312)

Another opinion piece raised the philosophical question of the limits of dissent.

The Austrian constitution does not recognize any right of resistance against the state. The German constitution does in Article 20, but it is an absurdity....

What do you do in a democracy when you have a damn strong feeling that in a certain matter you are right, and the democratically elected decision makers have a different opinion? The Interior Minister says: You can do everything that is legal and nothing that changes the facts. You can demonstrate, but not in the Auwald. You can attack the decision while the trees are being cut. You can express your opinion, as long as you do not work for the government broadcasting network.

True, it is relatively easy to change the government but not the long lasting impression they have made on the landscape....A government chosen for four

years can make decisions which are difficult if not impossible to reverse. (313)

The editorial went on to attack Interior Minister Blecha for saying the protests threatened the constitutional state, while in an earlier burst of leftist rhetoric he said the working class had had to ignore courts and laws at times. The writer noted that only insecure dictatorships had a compulsion to have each rule followed to the letter. (314)

One editorial questioned the wisdom of the electrical utility industry:

The most dangerous opponent of the dam appears to be the DoKW itself. Everyone in the country knows that one of the important tasks of management is to publicly explain the operations of the firm. Only the electrical industry does not know this. (315)

Another editorial questioned their credibility:

"Because of the exaggerated claims by energy managers during the Zwentendorf nuclear power plant debate, their present threats of energy shortages boomeranged. Nobody believes them any more." (316)

The same article repeated the theme of Hainburg as a conflict of generations. "Hainburg is a conflict between the postwar reconstruction mentality of the elders, and the life and future anxiety of the youth." (317)

The Salzburger Nachrichten focused on Hainburg as a reaction to the "self satisfied exercise of power."

The 3,000 Hainburg demonstrators and the 20,000 demonstrators in Vienna do not want to destabilize democracy, but want to shake up a system after decades of paralysis. They want to move the center of gravity down to the people, and not let it remain the unlimited legitimation for the self-satisfied exercise of power. For the former University Rektor, Wilfried Platzgummer, Hainburg has become a high political problem and a phenomenon of democracy without a mandate, aside from environment protection.

In Austria people are striving for changes in the democratic process, not for revolution. In 1848 Kaiser Ferdinand asked: 'Are they really allowed to do that?' Instead of this doubt, today's rulers maintain with self-assurance: "That is against the law." More doubt about their democratic infallibility would do this government good. (318)

Another Salzburger Nachrichten editorial criticized the government's secrecy and

heavy handedness:

Once again our government has shown how incompetent it is to lead the destiny of our state. We must respect the nature protectors because they stand up for their convictions. There could be mistakes in the legal process which allowed the construction. the government wants to present its opponents with a fait accompli instead of waiting for the outcome of the decision of the courts.

The government was poorly advised to wipe away the objections and get involved in a test of strength. When there is a construction project which arouses so much opposition, one must try to avoid the smallest mistake in legal procedure, and one must try to use all possible criteria for making a decision. That has been avoided with disasterous arrogance.

Landesrat Brezovszky never considered publishing the scientific opinions he received although they were public work. If one is not prepared to publicize the content of the scientific studies, then one should not wonder that there are attacks. This shows not just inability, but unwillingness to publicize the information

It is a fact that our energy economy is changing from meeting needs to creating needs. The energy industry has made itself a state within a state.

Young people have the right to ask, with all this environment damage, "How shall we live?" Politics which does not deal with this essential question will run aground. (319)

While a news editor may not always write editorials, there is an intoxicating power in deciding what to include in "the news" and what to leave out. The newspapers also expressed their editorial slant by including items that they would have left out if they had not favored the Hainburg protests.

The Kurier printed a column about a mother's concern for her daughter in the Auwald: "In my opinion, a mother can be proud that the next generation went into the ice cold of the Auwald. Most mothers are not used to having their children 'against the law.' "

(320) The writer objected to the Interior Minister calling the demonstrators "extremists." She hoped the young people had endurance as well as ideals. "They are not used to being beaten." (321)

The Kronen Zeitung printed a father's letter to his 17 year old daughter. He said he was a Christian social democrat, but "the S.P.Ö. leaders can not see beyond the interests of the industrial lobby who see the future in the industrial past," and "We are on the edge of a new orientation where we will not brutally exploit nature." (322)

Die Presse wrote:

We have seldom seen anything dumber than what was played out in the struggle around the Hainburg power plant. Jesus said: 'You have turned my house into a den of thieves.' We should all gather in the Auwald at Christmas. We must turn around. (323)

Reaction in the Foreign Press to the Hainburg Conflict

Editorials in other countries were almost unanimous in their condemnation of the Austrian government and their opposition to the construction of the Hainburg dam.

Under the subheading: "Incompetent Government Procedure," Switzerland's Neue Zürcher Zeitung asked why the Austrian Minister of the Interior Blecha would not wait for the result of the court procedures which the opponents of the dam started.

In the Hainburg case, there are complaints about law and democratic procedure. A part of the population finds the government's procedure undemocratic. One gets the impression that the government wants to have discussions with the KLVV after the forest clearing is accomplished, that the government wants to present a fait accompli which will weaken the resistance as the construction will be seen as inevitable....

Dam opponents in Austria are not radical rightists or anarchists, just idealists who in good faith want to reclaim democracy....Chancellor Sinowatz believes a referendum, a detour to direct democracy would be a sign of weakness. Others think it would strengthen the trust in the functioning ability of Austrian democracy. (324)

Two days later the same paper worried about the excessive power of the Ö.G.B.:

"Monday's meeting of union representatives of firms involved in the construction of Hainburg tipped the balance." (325) It said that Ö.G.B. chief Benya had been known for his moderation, so his claim that the workers were at the end of their patience was taken seriously, and it quoted the angry workers' rhetoric about "gentlemen's sons studying at the workers' expense." (326)

The large majority of Austrians agree that the government must put its decision into effect. When in doubt, Austrians are inclined to a certain faith in authority. What people can not understand is the haste with which the government's decision is being carried out, while the permit for construction is still being appealed to the constitutional court....Landeshauptmann Ludwig,

who left the unpopular decision to Provincial Minister Brezovszky has called for a 6 week truce. Both the Catholic and Protestant churches have called for postponement of construction in the name of maintaining social peace.... Chancellor Sinowatz's judgement seems to be influenced by the unions. (327)

The next day the same paper wrote again about the questionable legality of the construction:

There are justified concerns on both sides....A legal appeal criticizes the intention of the government to create a fait accompli, to subvert the establishment of direct democracy, the arbitrary interpretation of scientific studies, and the misuse of international treaties....

It has not been clarified if the neighboring municipalities have a right to give out water rights permissions....

First Protestant Bishop Knall, and then Catholic Cardinal Koenig called for a peaceful solution and no further confrontation....There is a bunker mentality in the S.P.Ö. Even the formerly critical youth leaders are required to speak evasions.....

The behaviour of the opposition is disappointing. The majority of the Ö.V.P. is in favor of building the Hainburg dam, which no one can make them oppose. It is not understandable that they have not criticized the lack of legality for the water rights permission. They have shown that they are so entangled with the interest groups, that they can no longer take a point of view of their own. Except for Ö.V.P. leader Busek, the rest will get their reckoning at the next election....

Swiss environmentalist Franz Weber has offered one million Swiss Francs for compensation to forest workers not to cut the Auwald. In a telegram he said: "Comrades, we understand your concern for earning your bread and keeping your jobs, but what you are doing in the Hainburg Auwald is no proper work but illegal destruction." (328)

Three days before Monday's meeting of trade unionists in Hainburg, the Süddeutsche Zeitung of Germany published an editorial "Woodchopper Socialism," criticizing undemocratic procedure and calling for a referendum:

Under the pressure of trade unions, Austria's government appears to be decided against all reason to demonstrate government power and on Monday want to start clearing Europe's last great wetland's landscape under the protection of the police. (The decision to build was legally controversial and the decision was senselessly made). If the trees are gone, all political, legal and scientific rescue actions are put aside....The demonstrators who are hemmed in by the police and being denied food are demanding nothing more excessive than the delay of the land clearing until the decision of the referendum and its treatment in parliament. They demand publicity of the questionable basis of the decision, and a scientific debate with the allegedly

positive studies. The agriculture Minister, and 5 studies ordered by the Provincial Minister Brezovszky, wiped out Austrian nature protection laws and the international protection agreements....

All well known scientific experts protest openly against the dam. Ruining a large ecologically important forest hardly bothered the provincial Minister Brezovszky....Objections from the W.W.F. and other international environment organizations are dismissed as outside interference.... Nobody in the Austrian government wonders that the Greens got support from angry members of all parties. A growing part of the youth are losing trust in the established parties. Two thirds of Austrian students are waiting for a fresh political impetus.... The self-satisfaction which the Alpine Republic looked down on the conflict between police and protesting youth or Greens in Germany or Switzerland, bursts like a bubble when their own interests are disturbed. (329)

After the meeting the Süddeutsche Zeitung commented further:

There is a fatal aftertaste when social democratic functionaries calculate that conservative workers can be incited against students and young people who are politically sensitive toward the environment. When the Austrian government spent 25 years deciding to build a hospital in Vienna, and debated the Zwentendorf atomic plant for 6 years, why must they force through a decision on Hainburg in a few weeks? (330)

Germany's Die Zeit also called it a scandal, and questioned the need for a dam at Hainburg, as well as the questionable legal procedure:

"Because the rivers of Europe have been regulated for transportation, there are only a few tiny oases of wetlands forest left, except for the 270 square km Auwald ..." (331) It said that an Auwald cleans rivers and groundwater, and moisturizes nearby farmland.

"Since the 1970s the increase in consumption has grown far less than predicted. In 1983 it grew only 1.5%." DoKW had a "fantasy" that it will increase 3.4% annually. "They are trying to tell a fairy tale that there is an approaching energy shortage" It estimated that about half of Austria was against the dam. It said the three step procedure for getting permission to build was "running amok" against existing laws. (332)

A special report of the Munich "TZ" newspaper said: "Police even beat pregnant women." (333)

The Kurier ran a sample of foreign press opinions.

Tages Anzeiger (Zurich): "We would rather not write that the social partnership is changing into social concrete."

Die Welt (Bonn): "A deep division between generations. What foreigners value as pleasant in Austria has lost its charm in the Hainburg Auwald."

Liberation (Paris): "Whether Czech or Hungarian Communists or Austrian Socialists, in the same way they throw the warning of environment protectors in the wind." Other criticism came from the British Evening Standard, and Daily Express, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. The Kurier concluded: "The neighboring Countries of Czechoslovakia and Hungary gave sober objective reports without comment over these events." (334)

Legal Arguments

Much of the outrage felt by the opponents of the Hainburg dam came from their belief that it was illegal, violating district, provincial (Land), national and international laws, as well as the accepted norms of public administration. To create order out of this legal tangle, I will start at the district level and move upwards.

Districts are responsible for issuing building permits. Under Paragraph 302 of the Austrian National Law Code, a mayor who allows illegal construction can be charged and sentenced. (335) The DoKW did not apply for a permit to build the Hainburg dam (They had not bothered to get a permit for the last dam they built on the Danube either, but no one had objected).

Another lawyer for the KLVB, Friedrich Weber, said that the land clearing and excavation was also against the law. His group had asked the local municipalities to help fight the dam on the basis of the lack of a building permit. Viktor Schneider, the Mayor of Petronell-Carnuntum was the first to reply. (336) The Mayor gave Dr. Weber legal power to represent Petronell-Caranuntum in concerns about the construction of the Hainburg dam. (337). As a resident of Vienna, he was affected by the danger to Vienna's drinking water. (338) This meant that any resident of Vienna could have legal standing to protest construction of the dam in the court.

Paragraph 93 of the Nieder Österreich building code says that "Digging up or filling in of more than half a meter needs the permission of the Mayor." (339) With the same mixture of fact and opinion that characterized the rest of the reporting about Hainburg, the article said:

If a simple citizen builds a farm or a home and digs up or fills in more than 50 cm, he needs a building permit and may not start construction until he gets it. Must not the DoKW and the government get one for a monster power plant? (340)

Since a district regulation declaring the Auwald a restricted area was the legal basis for using water canon, clubs and dogs to attack the demonstrators in the Auwald, it seems an odd contradiction that the Austrian government, which kept saying that the demonstration endangered the constitutional rule of law, should be so cavalier about its own requirement to apply for a district building permit. Although the Interior Minister said that there was a court decision which exempted the government from getting a building permit, a report in the Kronen Zeitung disrupted this claim. (341)

This is especially interesting because one of the characteristics of Austrian society that strikes foreigners is the passion for "Ordnung," following rules to the letter for their own sake, regardless of any visible benefit to anyone. Austrians aggressively defend their rights to every centimeter of the bicycle path, or to push by people who choose not to run up escalators, shouting "Keep to the right!" On the other hand, the notion of equality under the law was never popular under the Hapsburgs, and has probably never been incorporated into the daily behaviour of the power elite since then.

Provincial (Land) laws were also ignored. Section 6 of the Nieder Österreich Nature Protection Law said that "Building or land clearing is forbidden if it will measure, modify,....or damage the view of the landscape., its beauty and uniqueness, its recreation value..." (342) It is hard to see how constructing a 360 megawatt hydro-electric power plant and flooding 800 hectares of forest could not modify the landscape. The authors of the article "Everything that is legal" said that as the provincial minister responsible for environment protection, Mr. Brezovszky had two ways to get around this legal problem.

One was in Paragraph One of the Nature Protection Law which said: "The purpose of this law is to care for nature, in its many forms and structures, and to maintain the health of mankind and the environment which serves for his recreation in the best possible condition for the basis of life and to restore or improve it." (343) The authors said that the government could argue that building a hydro-electric dam would improve the basis of life.

The second way to get around the argument that the dam broke the law was in section 7, which said:

The intervention in nature may be built if it guards against a threat or danger to man's life or health, or if it serves to prevent serious damage to the political economy." The authors said the government could argue that Austria's political economy would be unbearably damaged if the Hainburg dam was not built. (344)

Professor Bernd Raschauer and Peter Pernthal both criticized this judgement as "clearly against the law." (345) Professor Raschauer said: "If the authors of the law wanted the possibility of exceptions being made, they would have inserted it into the law." (346) Ernest Brezovszky, who was known as the "father of the Nature Protection Law said: "It was not necessary. There is no absolute truth." (347)

Under this existing Nature Protection Law, the courts had forbidden the anchoring of a swimming raft, fencing off a part of a lake, and building a two story wood house as "injurious to the landscape." (348) Mr. Tepser asked: "If the Nature Protection Laws do not apply to this (megaproject) , then for what imaginable project could they apply?" (349) Raschauer and Pernthal said that either the Nature Protection Law should be changed or the part of the Auwald affected by the Hainburg dam should be exempted from it. (350)

Another provincial law that would seem to forbid the construction of the Hainburg dam was paragraph 77 of the Game Laws of Nieder Österreich which said that trees used for nesting by birds of prey should not be damaged. (351)

The Kronen Zeitung said that the land clearing was also against the law and the water rights permits should not have been granted. "Agriculture Minister Haiden's water rights allowances are not legally valid either, because the permission for ten detailed projects

does not exist." (352) They quoted the Minister: "Construction can only start after the permits are granted for the ten detailed projects," and rhetorically asked: "Doesn't the Minister know his own decision?" (353)

The Hainburg project got the blessing of one court. The Verfassungsgerichtshof, (a court that decides disputes about constitutional questions) rejected a complaint by a row of property owners. The court said "There was no specific constitutional question to clarify" (354)

According to press reports, another lawyer acting for the KLVB, Heinrich Wille, filed charges with the Attorney General that the KLVB's telephones were being tapped. (355)

Another news report said that Wille complained to the constitutional court that Interior Minister Blecha was violating the Human Rights Convention by blockading supplies for the demonstrators in the Auwald. (356) (Dr. Wille now says he did not take part in either either action, and the press reports are inaccurate).

The best known and most complex legal action was the criminal charge against Landesrat Brezovszky for misuse of office and altering documents. On December 11, 1984, the KLVB's lawyer, Dr. Michael Mayrhofer, gave Austria's Attorney General a 21 page "Sachverhaltsdarstellung," (detailed list of charges) charging Nieder Österreich's Environment Minister Ernest Brezovszky with misuse of office and falsification of documents. A newspaper article showed copies of the original studies about the environmental impacts of the dam, and altered versions which were circulated by the government. Sections of the studies describing possible damage to the environment were blank in the officially circulated version.

Zoologist Hans Steiner said, "I gasped when I read the 'Basis for Decision' by Mr. Brezovszky." (357) In the original version, Steiner had said: "All these factors lead to a destruction of the entire eco-system of the Danube Au (flood plain forest, and associated bodies of water and adjacent land). It is recommended that the realization of the DoKW plan should not be allowed even in a modified form." (358) . Another passage in the original

said: "The destruction of these forests through the planned construction of the power plant would be a nature protection problem of international dimensions." (359) ". All that was omitted. Steiner said: "It is a misuse of my study in that the entire sense of it has been changed." (360)

Mr. Brezovszky saw himself as persecuted. He said: "The Steiner study is negative. I could not follow its recommendations." (361)

Some parts of the study were "enlarged" with another typewriter. (362) , At a press conference given by the KLVB, other experts who thought their studies had been unreasonably altered made their case. Biologist and psychologist Max Piperek said that his opinion was rejected, but still counted as being in favor of the dam construction. Professor Harald Schweiger, the Nieder Österreich Nature Protection Director, was pressed to alter his study, but he refused. (363)

At the press conference, the artist Friedenreich Hundertwasser said: "I am ashamed to have cooperated with such irresponsible people," (the government) and, on television, tore up his State Prize which he had received which he had received in 1981. (364)

After the town government of Gänserdorf reported about DoKW illegally cutting trees in the Auwald, Mr. Brezovszky "let the report fall under his desk." (365)

In a Communist country, a minister can do what he likes with expert studies, and the authors rarely complain publicly. It is surprising that Mr. Brezovszky thought he had the same room for maneuver in Austria.

The proposed Hainburg dam violated two international treaties which Austria had just signed. The Ramsar (Iran) Convention for protecting wetlands designated precisely the area of forest which was to be cleared for the construction as a forest worth saving. An official in Gland Switzerland where the agreement was being administered said: "We are disturbed in the highest degree that the protected area of the Donau-March flood plain forests are not being exempted by the Austrian government. Until now, no one has thought it worth the trouble to contact us." (366) The other treaty was the Berne Convention, which Austria signed on September 1st, 1983, which obliged Austria to protect the natural

habitat of wild plants and animals.

The planned destruction of the Stopfenreuth forest exactly contradicts this agreement.....Are international treaties just a 'scrap of paper' for our national government?....'Laws here, laws there, it will be built.' This seems to be the declared point of view of the top politicians of this country. (367)

One legal action was the coup de grace. The KLVb's Dr. Wille applied to the Verwaltungsgerichtshof (Administrative court) in the name of three farmers from Stopfenreuth and the W.W.F. to stop the land clearing in the Hainburg Auwald, because the farmers' rights would be adversely affected. (368) The result of this case was a victory for the anti-Hainburg dam movement. Both the lawyer, Dr. Heinrich Wille, and the public relations person for the W.W.F. Austria, Alexander Zinke, said this was the reason the Austrian government gave up its plan to build the Hainburg dam. First in January, 1985, the court ordered a suspension of work while it considered the case. When it finally handed down its decision in the summer of 1986, Hainburg was a dead issue.

While the WWF court case over water rights prevented construction, the demonstrations must have had a political effect as well. The predicted loss of votes for the governing parties, the S.P.Ö. and the Ö.V.P. did occur, and the Green Alternative caucus was voted into parliament.

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Part 3

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Part Four: Conclusions

"You Can't Stop Progress"

The conflict over the construction of the hydro-electric dams on the Danube is part of a world-wide conflict. It is more than a conflict between those who want to exploit nature and those who want to preserve it, or those who want democratic decision making and those who do not. There is also a conflict between those who feel that our societies are on "automatic pilot," and those who want to try to control the direction we are going.

There has been an unspoken consensus in both capitalist and Communist societies that technical progress is good, and that both the state and the individual should work toward maximizing material consumption. During the Hainburg debate, Prime Minister Sinowatz said in exasperation: "If we can't build this, then we can't build anything!" Gunther Nenning replied: "The government is not a construction company!" (1) A French sociologist, Jacques Ellul, says that the areas of public policy which we can debate are smaller than we believed. If we want to make electricity, rubbing a glass rod on fur is one way to make it, but a water driven turbine produces more power.

'The one best way' so runs the formula to which our technique corresponds. When everything has been measured and calculated mathematically so that the method which has been decided upon is satisfactory from the rational point of view, and when...the method is manifestly the most efficient...then the technical movement becomes self directing. (2)

Ellul calls this "automatism."

The worst reproach modern society can level is the charge that some person ...is impeding the technical automatism....If a machine can yield a given result, it must be used to capacity and it is considered criminal and anti-social not to do so. Technical automatism must not be judged or questioned. (3)

The most important point that Ellul makes is this: "The choice between methods is no longer made according to human measure, but occurs as a mechanical process which nothing can prevent." (4)

What would happen if someone did try to prevent this inevitable progress? The result is outrage. The anger which the supporters of the GNDS or the proposed Hainburg dam felt toward their opponents is the same as the anger which loggers feel when

environmentalists try to restrict the cutting of forests, which motorists feel when Green demonstrators block an Autobahn, or when planners restrict the use of cars. It is the shock and outrage which western consumers feel when social theorists say they may have to live with less energy or fewer material goods. It is the humiliation of the Trabant driver who is forbidden to buy a fast car.

The iron curtain was lifted not because of outrage over the destruction of the environment, or because of a passion for democracy (although a few people said they wanted it), but because of the outrage people in East Europe felt over their depressed living standards. The period of austerity which was supposed to make possible the socialist paradise was clearly not going to end in the foreseeable future.

Writing a generation ago, Ellul said that Communism has an advantage over capitalism because it has no inhibition about constantly upgrading to the latest technology. Capitalist enterprises frequently hold back new technologies until they have sold existing inventory or amortized their present machinery. (5) For example, digital audio recording tape was held back from the market in North America for a number of years after it was in use in Japan, in order to protect the investment in conventional technology in North America. However, the economic failure of Communism was not caused by a lack of enthusiasm for new technology. The command economy defeated itself by stifling information flow, which made it impossible to utilize the latest technology. The Soviet Union tried to restrict the use of photocopy machines for political reasons. In 1978 I could not find a single photocopy machine for public use in the Lenin Library in Lenngrad, which claims to be the largest library in the world. Similarly, computer technology was held back in Communist countries because computers allow dissemination of information which the political elite wanted to limit and control. In Sopron, Hungary, under Communism, there was no way to link up with computers in Vienna 60 km away, without going through an expensive link in Budapest, which could be monitored. For the same reason, there were only a handful of telephone lines to call out of the country.

Ellul says that efficiency and success lead man in certain directions, not man. The

masses do not make a philosophical choice. (7) While earlier socialist thinkers criticized technology for taking away workers' jobs, Ellul says that Marx was the first to celebrate technology. He says that the basis of Marxism is not economics, but technology. (8) Ellul sees the development of Communist countries into state capitalism not as a result of political choice, but as inevitable. "The socialist state...has been obliged to adopt the principles of capitalism." (9) "The state...becomes of necessity a capitalist state, substituting itself for private capitalists...(and)...modifies nothing that technically speaking pre-existed. " (10)

He says that political regimes are no longer decisive factors in the evolution of technology. "Technique is autonomous with respect to economics and politics." (11) Since these decisions are being made for us, he feels that democracy is a sham.

Popular will can only express itself within the limits that technical necessities have fixed in advance. A politician is deemed to be a non-technical functionary, good for everything, good for nothing. (12)

Leftists complain about the homogenization of world culture, but Ellul says that "In all countries, whatever their degree of civilization, there is a tendency to apply the same technical procedures." (13) He says: "Technique is the same in all latitudes, and hence acts to make different civilizations uniform..." (14) In the past, civilizations took different paths, but "today everything tends to align itself on technical principles...; all people follow the same road and the same impulse." (15)

Ellul says it is no longer necessary to have similar social environments for identical technology to spread. (16) He says that in the past "technique...was merely a single element among a host of non-technical activities. Today technique has taken over the whole of civilization..." (17) including giving birth and dying.

Technique can not be otherwise than totalitarian. It can be truly efficient and scientific only if it absorbs an enormous number of phenomena and brings into play the maximum data....Totalitarianism extends to whatever touches it...When technique has fastened upon a method, everything must be subordinated to it. (18)

When the baking industry was unable to mechanize traditional bread making, they

produced a different kind of bread, and the public's taste changed to accept it. (19) Ellul says that technology "tolerates no judgment from without and accepts no limitations." (20) He says it is independent of moral and spiritual values and beyond good and evil. (21)

While Ellul makes an impressive case for the power of technology, the success of the anti-Hainburg dam movement in Austria, the plebiscite which decided not to activate their nuclear plant at Zwentendorf, and the protest movement in Hungary which led to the cancellation of the Nagymaros dam and Hungary's withdrawal from the joint project with Czechoslovakia, all show that politics can still influence society's use of technology. These successful protest movements show that we are not entirely passive objects manipulated by an autonomous technology operating independently of political processes.

Centralized Energy - Centralized Government

Is anyone resisting this juggernaut of technology? Both capitalist and Communist societies were in fundamental agreement on the virtues of materialism, but there is another point of view and it was demonstrated in the movements opposing the GNDS and the Hainburg dam. This movement exists around the world. It expresses completely different values and is based on a radically different view of reality. Amory Lovins, a British-American expert on energy policy, says that "Public discourse suffers because our society has mechanisms for resolving conflicting interests, not conflicting views of reality." (22)

Writing in the year the GNDS Treaty was signed, Lovins said that the energy sectors of industrial societies are plagued with "centrism, vulnerability, technocracy, repression and alienation." (23) Agreeing with Ellul that a technically directed society tends toward totalitarianism, he objects to large scale energy projects in principle, because they require "a major social commitment under centralized management." (24) Mega-projects require nationalization or corporate statism. (25) They require extraordinary amounts of capital and make heavy demands on scarce resources.

...(S)kills, labor, materials, special sites...can not be met by market allocation, but require compulsory diversion from whatever priorities are backed by the weakest constituencies. Quasi war-powers legislation...has already been seriously proposed."(V)ast concentrations of social resources must...be

efficiently mobilized without substantive regard to diverse opinions or circumstances....It is a monolithic enterprise that demands sweeping, uniform national politics specially devised, with local efforts only in an instrumental or supporting role. The gargantuan organizations involved tend to accrete great power - not only power given to them by virtue of their supposed public utility, but further power that they subsume by feeding upon their very size... which leads to internal alienation, and external inequity. The giant energy facilities... are arcane, remote, unfamiliar, and so overwhelmingly impressive as to be threatening. Huge sums are at stake, experts argue over arcane technologies, and unimaginable risks, national interest steamrollers over local doubts. It is not surprising that these facilities promote greed, public distrust, and alienation...by denying public participation not only in the procedural but in the psychological sense." (26)

Lovins says that centralized energy generating systems inequitably allocate costs and benefits. He says that finding a location for them "pits central authority against local autonomy in an increasingly divisive and wasteful form of centrifugal politics..." (27)

Throughout the world, expansionist government is trying to promote expansionist energy policies by pre-empting regulatory authority, and in the process is eliciting a strong ...local response. (28) The more the federal authorities treat centrifugal politics as a public relations problem, the more they take the authoritarian point of view (as in West Germany) that local objections must be stifled by national imperatives, the more likely that it becomes that they will not only fail to get their facilities to built, but will also in the process destroy their own legitimacy... (29)

Lovins says a shared distaste for big government now unites the left and right of the traditional political spectrum (30) He says we find concentrations of electrical power with concentration of political power. "Energy decisions...affect the spatial distribution of jobs, hence settlements, hence of political power that can reinforce this pattern. Energy decisions...are unavoidably land use and regional decisions..." (31)

The lack of public participation inspired the environment protest movements in Hungary and Slovakia and to a lesser extent in Austria, where the social partnership seemed to do everything for the individual. The similarity of Communist and capitalist governments in the energy field is striking.

Any demanding high technology tends to develop influential and dedicated constituencies of those who link its commercial success with both the public welfare and their own. ...Moreover, the money and talent invested in an electrical program tend to give it disproportionate influence in the counsels of government, often directly through staff swapping....This incestuous

position...distorts both social and energy priorities in a lasting way that resists political remedy." (32)

In Slovakia, the connection between commercial success and the public welfare was illustrated by the Carnogursky brothers; one ran the government and the other built the dam. In Austria many of the advocates of the Hainburg dam expected direct financial gain. In Hungary, some government officials engaged in land speculation near the Nagymaros dam site according to Béla Lipták . (33)

Lovins makes the point that people at the opposite ends of transmission lines, pipe lines, and rail lines divide costs and benefits. Those at the producing end suffer the environmental consequences while those at the receiving end get the benefits. He says that the weakest groups who suffer the most environment damage suffer as "miners' canaries, whose fate fortells (our) own..." (34) He says that is one reason sympathy is growing for the groups which protest against getting the disadvantages of the mega-projects. (35)

Although there is a generally accepted assumption that a higher standard of living requires an increase in energy consumption, Lovins says that after measuring energy consumption and income in the U.S. between 1850 and 1970, "there is no significant correlation between energy use and standard of living." (36) In Slovakia the per capita use of energy was higher than in West Germany (because of a lack of market control and inefficient manufacturing processes), while the standard of living was much lower than in Germany. Lovins questions the need for any energy mega-projects in the developed world. "... (I)n probably no industrial country today can additional supplies of electricity be used to thermodynamic advantage that would justify their high cost in money and fuel." (37)

He also attacks mega-projects for their negative effects on the economy. They drain capital from an economy which could be used to "make more jobs if invested anywhere else (and)...also worsen inflation by tying up (money)... non-productively for decades." (38) In the 1970s, it required \$250,000 U.S. investment in a power station to create one job. (39)

Lovins also questioned whether large scale organizations can do anything positive for society, let alone generate electric power.

Those social analysts who have asserted that we will inexorably continue to move upward toward higher levels of technology... energy consumption... international exchange of raw materials, good, information, culture, and tourists, may be in for a surprise. Humanly designed and operated systems have upper limits of complexity, and when they reach those limits... they simply break down." (40)

He supports the central thesis of this paper that making decisions without a free flow of information is a recipe for disaster.

There is a great deal of evidence that almost all organizational structures tend to produce false images in the decision-maker, that the larger and more authoritarian the organization... the better the chance that its top decision-makers will be operating in purely imaginary worlds." (41)

An example of this is the genuine surprise that Communists felt when they were completely repudiated in the first non-Communist elections in Hungary in 1990. Because they suppressed criticism, they did not believe how unpopular they were.

In place of the old centralized mega-projects, Lovins advocates decentralized "soft energy" producing units using appropriate technology, which deliver energy as needed, and can be built and repaired by anyone. Appropriate technology would be solar power to heat hot water for home consumption (from 10 to 30 degrees C.) instead of using nuclear power, which has been compared to using a chain saw to cut butter. If electric power generation is decentralized, then settlements and political power can be decentralized.

The advocates of "soft energy" usually explain that there will be no loss in available power, the power could be cheaper, and there will be less undesirable side effects such as air and water pollution. However, not all advocates of alternate energy accept the assumption that we must maintain current levels of consumption. It would help to understand the mentality of the people who protest against new power generating projects by quoting from the American economist, John Kenneth Galbraith.

Nothing could be more discomfiting for the economic discipline than were men to establish goals for themselves and on reaching them say, 'I've got what I need. That is all for this week.' Not by accident is such behaviour thought to be irresponsible and feckless. (42)

This is not a hypothetical possibility in the future. It is the basis of the clash between European managers and non-European workers. In Canada, Canadian Indians are respected

as forestry workers, but not sought after as employees, because in the past, when they have satisfied their immediate needs, they quit their jobs.. This aboriginal philosophy of limiting labor to satisfy needs, instead of working to maximum capacity and finding new needs, appeals to many environmentalists.

Beyond Materialism

To paraphrase Marx, there is a spectre haunting Europe; it is the spectre of bourgeois environmentalists who do not care about economic growth. They are not interested in chasing carrots and no longer afraid of the stick. They are usually not working class, but young middle class people who can say: "I've got what I need." They may be professionals working in the public sector, or for large corporations but not controlling capital themselves, or "socially unattached intellectuals." (43) They have above average education, social status, and income, but they are dissatisfied with society. Inglehart calls them "Post-Materialists." (44) While conventional materialists chase after money and security, the Post-Materialists have different criteria for what makes them happy. In the "hierarchy of needs" defined by Abraham Maslow, the Post-Materialists have satisfied their basic needs. "They are safe and have enough to eat." (45) Now they are focusing on their higher needs of "love, belonging, and esteem,...intellectual and esthetic satisfaction..." (46) They demand participation in decisions that affect daily life "in schools, universities, welfare agencies, offices, factories, and church." (47) They want "more say on the job, a less impersonal society, (to have their own) ideas count, more say in government, freedom of speech, more beautiful cities." (48)

Post-Materialists "have a cosmopolitan sense of identity....(are) open to innovation in general; responsive to ideas rather than immediate circumstances, and to things that are relatively remote in time rather than those which prevail at present." (49) While 25% of Europeans had a "supra-national" sense of identity, 64% of Post-Materialists felt loyalties beyond their nation state. (50)

Post-Materialists are more self-confident and better educated than the average person. In West Europe, the proportion of the population getting higher education tripled

between 1950 and 1980. (51) They are more politically capable, having skills formerly limited to the elite. They are also more demanding that their government and institutions should be more responsive to their wishes. (52) "Insofar as these demands of newly articulate groups cannot be accommodated within existing structures, support for governmental institutions may erode." (53) This describes the case in Austria and Hungary, and to a lesser degree in Slovakia.

Traditionally in industrial societies, politics were "based on mass parties and associated movements such as trade unions and (churches)... that were... bureaucratic and oligarchicEmerging cultural values emphasize spontaneity and individual self-expression." (54) Post-Materialists seem to have an aversion to institutions (55) These young people are repelled by bureaucratic organizations because these institutions were designed for societies where highly trained people were scarce, so there were centralized routines and standardized information processing. (56) The virtues of bureaucracies, "hierarchy, permanence, impersonality, and central control," (57) are an anathema to people who want to think for themselves. Another reason they have weaker ties to trade unions and churches is that with rising levels of education, the members of the middle class move into occupations which are not unionized, and exposure to liberal arts education often weakens traditional religious faith (58) Young people also have less connections with political parties, trade unions, and churches (59) than older adults because they do not have a fixed position in society.

Ellul says that the average man in West Europe or North America in 1950 had the materialist dreams of his grandfather. (60) The generation which came to adulthood in 1968 in North America and much of West Europe, (and a dozen years later in Austria and perhaps a few years later in Hungary), scorned these dreams. The environment protests in Hungary and Austria came after a full generation had experienced peace and prosperity. The Hungarians described themselves ironically as "the jolliest inmates of the concentration camp" of East Europe. The smaller and less effective environment movement in Slovakia may be explained that they were less prosperous and less secure. They also took their

Communism more seriously than the Hungarians or even the Czechs. In 1992, the former Communists, (now called "The Party of the Democratic Left,") got their highest number of votes in Eastern Slovakia and their lowest support (as the "Left Bloc,") in Prague. (61) Slovakia has also been much slower than Hungary to privatize its economy.

If we assume that our political outlook is imprinted as we enter adulthood, those who became adults during depressions or wars keep that mentality throughout life. Conversely, those who become adults in the prosperous and peaceful years, keep that outlook no matter what happens to the economy. I find this true from personal experience. People who reached adulthood in the "Roaring Twenties" kept a more optimistic and risk-taking outlook than those who became adults in the Great Depression. Those who experienced the war years can never forget them; those who have not, can not imagine them. Conventional wisdom says that young people are radical and turn conservative as they age. Opinion research does not support this. (62)

Because of their experience of peace and prosperity, Post-Materialists "are heavily over-represented among the young," (63) but they are a negligible proportion of older voters. Among the young, "they come close to equalling the materialists in number." (64) By the year 2,000 they might be a large share of the total population of Western nations, and "they would be concentrated among the most active and influential sectors of society." (65)

People calling for radical change "were no longer economically deprived but affluent." (66) There was a shift from "material consumption and security toward greater concerns with the quality of life." (67) Post-Materialists are Post-Materialists precisely because they do not derive... great satisfaction from their... favorable material conditions." (68)

Even materialists do not get satisfaction from wealth. When Germany had the most thriving economy in Europe, there were only two out of nine other European countries where people were more dissatisfied. (69) Real incomes in America rose from 1957 to 1973, at the end of that period, there was the most discontent since the 1930s, as people

reported less personal happiness than in 1957. (70)

Post-Materialists have different criteria for what makes them happy compared to materialists. The state of politics is important to Post-Materialists. Although they are generally well off, they are frustrated in pursuit of their political goals. (71) The desire for change brings Post-Materialists into leftist political parties. The social democrats co-existed for a time with environment defenders and old trade unionists in an uneasy alliance. The growth of the Green parties probably came about as a result of the realization that their differences were too great to paper over. Writing in 1977, Inglehart said that there was a change in the social bases of the political left. (70) and that the Post-Materialists offered the Left a new opportunity for growth. (72) Today it looks as if that opportunity may have been lost. Recently the Left has been declining because of a declining number of trade union members, and a lack of a new agenda after the general acceptance of the welfare state. Inglehart says that "strong social class voting spells doom for the left." (73) because of the changing composition of the work force. The social democrats have lost votes in the last two elections in Austria, and the Greens showed an increase in the latest election. There has not been much growth of Green parties in Slovakia or Hungary, or a decline of the left, because the economies of these two countries are not "post industrial," and so they have not given rise to "post-materialist" sentiments.

In 1990, Western observers sensitive to environmental questions generally took it for granted that in Eastern Europe, where the environment movements played such a significant role in motivating the masses and through this in eliminating the old regime, now the development of environmental consciousness had begun....(In Hungary) too, everyone counted on the emerging new parties to pay more attention to environmental problems than the previous policy makers did.... The closer the elections came, the fewer words were uttered about these questions." (75)

In Hungary the former Communists were re-elected as socialists in 1994, but on a conservative platform calling for the return of the professional office holders to replace the dangerous amateurs. It is debateable whether this is an increase in support for the left.

Fleisher also says that "... in contrast to the inexperienced political leadership, the

various industrial lobbies remained on their feet." (76) This also seems to be the case in Slovakia. Not only the top (non-Communist) political leadership was inexperienced, but the grass roots leadership never developed either. My contact with Green politicians gave me the impression that they had never had the chance to learn the basics of democratic politics, fund raising and organization, and most of the activists did not feel the need to learn. Personal observation also leads me to believe that the reduction in purchasing power and standard of living for part of the population has reduced the already small number of "post-materialists" in Hungary. People who took part in the demonstrations against the GNDS in the late 1980s told me that they were not worried about making a living then, but they are now.

Philosophical Basis of Environmentalism

Returning to Lovins' idea that we can only resolve conflicting interests as long as we share a common view of reality, it is worth exploring some of the alternative views of reality which underlie some of the environment movement's political actions. "Reform activists often feel trapped in the very political system they criticize." (77) Unless they talk about forests and rivers as "commodity production systems...they are labelled as sentimental, irrational, or unrealistic." (78) All values have to be reduced to money to take part in political dialog, but the environmentalists' main concern is precisely this reduction of nature to cash.

Rescuing the environment has become like running a battlefield aid station in a war against a killing machine that operates just beyond reach, and that shifts its ground after each seeming defeat. No one can doubt the moral basis of environmentalism, but the essentially defensive terms of its endless struggle mitigate against ever stopping the slaughter. (79)

Man's relation to nature is conventionally viewed as follows: We dominate other creatures on earth because we are fundamentally different. We are masters of our destiny with unlimited opportunities. Progress never ceases because there is a solution to every problem thanks to technology. (80) Much of the landscape of Europe has been re-shaped by materialists holding these assumptions. Cities have been called "the most distinct

expression of man's separation from nature." (81)

We did not arrive at these beliefs suddenly or recently. Martin Heidegger said that all Western Philosophy leads to domination over nature. (82) He said that the idea that all beings are simply raw materials for man to use, is both "the culmination of the history of Western civilization, and Philosophy and ... a triumph of nihilism." (83) Marxism, positivism, and the other philosophies of the nineteenth century "do not, as they claim, make man a part of nature....they make nature ...mere raw material for man." (84)

Instead of seeing the environment as simply resources for human use, environmentalists say all nature has intrinsic worth. Instead of dominating nature, environmentalists want to promote harmony with nature. In place of a dominant position for man, they promote the idea of equality of worth between species, including plants as well as animals. While conventional politics works to ensure an expanding economy for a growing population, the environmentalists want to make the achievement of materialist goals serve the goal of self-realization. In place of consumerism, environmentalists propose recycling and a simpler life style. The conventional view that there are ample natural resources was first questioned by the conservation movement, which still saw resources as existing for human use, but wanted to exploit them more rationally, over a longer time period, so they would not be exhausted immediately. Beyond conservation is "preservation," which wants to keep as much of nature untouched as possible, or to restore land which has already been exploited such as rehabilitating strip mined land. Environmentalists prefer organizing life around bio-regions instead of centralized communities or nations (85)

Competition is associated with masculinity and egoism. Environment movements are sympathetic toward feminism and pacifism. In place of self-centered egoism, they stress consensus. Conventional politicians habituated to clever parliamentary maneuvering in meetings find the meetings of environmentalists painfully vague and unstructured. The discipline of conventional politics and business life requires a subordination of emotions and the worship of machine-like rationality. Spontaneity and a wholesome emotional life are

positive value in the new politics. There is an uncritical enthusiasm for novelty, including the occult and non-Western religion.

Activists who value nature for itself have to leave conventional Western philosophy behind.

...(T)oday the conservation movement finds itself turning back to ancient Indian land ideas, to the Indian understanding that we are not outside of nature, but of it In recent decades we have slowly come back to some of the truths that the Indian knew from the beginning; that unborn generations have a claim to the land equal to our own; that men need to learn from nature, to keep an ear on the earth, and to replenish their spirits in frequent contacts with animals, and with land.(86)

The environment philosopher Stan Steiner said:

In the circle of life, every being is no more, or less than any other Life is shared with the bird, bear, insect, plants, mountains, clouds, stars, sun. To be in haramony with the world, we must be in harmony with the natural world, one must live within the cycles of life. (87)

The poet Robinson Jeffers said: "I believe that the universe is one being, all its parts are different expressions of the same energy and they are all in communication with each other, therefore part of one organic whole." (88) This extends concern from plants and animals to the inorganic parts of nature as well.. Of course, environmentalists do not adhere to a uniform philosophy, so one can not assume that all activists share the most unconventional philosophies.

The American pioneer conservationist, John Muir said: "Nature's object in making animals and plants might possibly be first of all the happiness of each of them, not the creation of all for the happiness of one." (89) Muir had difficulty with "the compromising process of liberal-democratic societies where 'interest group politics'; means 'power politics' (the mobilization of money and constituencies to influence legislators through numbers, not principles)." (90) Muir took part in the political process, camping out with President Teddy Roosevelt, and successfully establishing parks such as Yosemite, and unsuccessfully trying to prevent the flooding of the Hetch Hetchy Valley which San Francisco turned into a water reservoir for itself.

Environmentalists feel frustrated that while the natural environment is deteriorating under the impact of man, and life on earth is threatened, they are "only capable of making a deal." (91) Inspired by ideology, environmentalists have an aversion to making deals. This leads to more intense political conflict. The old conflicts about dividing the economic pie are easy to bargain about because money is negotiable. Conflicts such as an assault on the legitimacy of the existing materialist consensus are not. "Like religious conflicts, they tend to take on a moralistic tone." (92) If an activist feels his drinking water will be poisoned or his family will get cancer from a nuclear power plant, he will not want to settle for being half poisoned or having half of his family get cancer. Environmentalists who want to reverse the policies of industrial countries to always trade off quality of the environment for economic growth are not going to be satisfied with compromises which only slow the rate of destruction of the environment, because the result is the same, only the time is extended.

The spread of the Post-Materialist outlook will cause a "basic social reorganization." (93) The novel Ectopia (94) shows what would result if a political majority decided to take concern for the environment seriously. On a positive note, Inglehart says that the kind of people who took part in the environment protest movements are "a prophetic minority... sensitive to the political issues of the future." (95)

Comparing Decision Making Processes

Decision making in Communist Countries follows a top-down pattern called "democratic centralism." The party leader guides the Central Committee which makes suggestions to the party which are rubber stamped by an elected one-party legislature. The ruling elite does its best to stifle input from below by using police violence, censoring information, and giving or withholding rewards and privileges - manipulation. This system was designed for the Communist Party when it was a clandestine revolutionary organization and it was continued during the Russian Civil War when the new Communist government's existence was at stake. There were efforts to allow real debate within the party after Lenin died, but Stalin's consolidation of power put an end to democratic experiments and

entrenched democratic centralism. The system continued after Stalin's death through inertia and for the convenience and profit of the ruling elite, but showed itself incapable of managing a modern industrial society.

The way that democratic centralism has functioned in practice (as opposed to the way it was to supposed to work in theory) could be compared to a housing estate where there is only one thermostat to control the heat in all the apartments and it is located not in the building where the tenants live, but at a distance in the central heating plant. The janitor who runs the boiler assumes he is providing the right temperature for the apartments and is never troubled by complaints. He is the expert in charge. This is a result of the arrogance of the intellectuals who created this system.

Decision making in a democracy can be compared to a housing estate where each apartment has its own thermostat, and the input of each family controls the use of shared resources. At a simpler level of technology, at least each family would have a telephone and the opportunity to tell the janitor if the apartments were too hot or too cold. If the janitor beat up tenants who complain, or ignored them, there would be a mechanism to replace him, short of murder.

In functioning political democracies, there are inequitable distributions of power and elites do the actual governing and usually initiate new policies. Imperfect mechanisms exist which allow everyone (who wants to) to give input into the system. Policies which are unsatisfactory can eventually be modified. It is this potential for responsiveness which makes democracy superior to any form of authoritarianism. The more complicated a society or an economy is, the more important this kind of feedback mechanism is to its survival.

A generation ago, building hydro-electric dams on the Danube in Austria made financial sense and was not too destructive of the environment according to the commonly held beliefs at that time. However, the proposed Hainburg dam no longer made financial sense and many people felt it was too damaging to the environment in the light of today's values. Although the original initiative probably came from industry, the utility industry is so closely involved with government, it is difficult to separate them. They play a role

similar to the water lobby in Slovakia or in Hungary. There is a significant difference between the decision making process in a democracy like Austria and decision making in non-democratic countries. Political protest and extensive criticism in the news media caused the government to change its policy. By themselves, neither a free press, nor the right to demonstrate is enough. There has to be a consensus that legitimate decisions must be supported by a majority of the people. The decision makers have to let their actions be influenced by public opinion instead of sneering at it as unpatriotic or not sufficiently expert as was the case in Slovakia and Hungary.

When the GNDS was proposed, similar input that the dam made even less financial sense and the damage to the environment outweighed the benefit of more energy, were ignored. The system was not designed to allow or respond to honest feedback. When the Hungarian government finally responded to the pressure, it did so after irreparable damage was done to the environment and huge amounts of money were wasted on construction which will not produce anything. Cement can not be easily re-cycled. Just as the energy of rushing water creates its own channel, the energy of the environment protest movement in Hungary helped create democratic institutions which channel information back to the government.

The former Communist system of democratic centralism in Hungary broke down for several reasons. Formerly subservient institutions rebelled. The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (M.T.A.) refused to support the government's efforts to build the GNDS. Citizens' initiatives such as Duna Kör could no longer be repressed or intimidated. Thousands of demonstrators showed a lack of support for the regime and shook the self-confidence of the leaders. Newspapers refused to be censored. Like a mutiny on a ship, or a rebellion in a classroom, publishers emboldened each other as one defiance of the government after another went unpunished. In 1988 Hungarians gave themselves freedom of the press. New Political parties appeared. Their political profile was shaped in part by their opposition to the GNDS which symbolized a more general opposition to prestige projects and the entire command economy. The Soviet Union's Premier Gorbachov let all

the Communist governments in East Europe know that his government would no longer prop them up with military force. There would not be a repeat of the Soviet repression of 1956 in Hungary or 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Reform Communists such as Mikilós Németh did not try to use the police violence to repress dissent that they had used in Batthyanyi Square in 1986. He saw the need for a multi-party system and hoped to win legitimacy in the first free elections.

The system did not break down enough, or soon enough in Slovakia to change their policy on building at least the Gabčíkovo dam and the by-pass canal. Subservient institutions did not effectively rebel. Citizens' initiatives and new political parties were effectively repressed until the Communist government collapsed abruptly in 1989. The press did not seize the right to print the truth independently of government policy. The Communist elite in Slovakia was more determined to hang onto its power at any cost. Mechanisms were not created for the input of information from below. Construction of the GNDS in Slovakia was not interrupted by a government buffeted by conflicting pressures as it was in Hungary.

Summary

The Gabčíkovo Nagymaros Dam System was planned in an era when very few people worried about a deteriorating environment, and the conventional wisdom said we should conquer nature. Soviet pressure encouraged cooperation between Hungary and Czechoslovakia which historically have not cooperated much with each other. Experts in the water lobby had a powerful influence in the Communist government in Hungary, and Slovakia, and they retained that influence in Slovakia after the end of Communism. The gentle slope of the Danube downstream from Bratislava meant that the river would not generate hydro-electric power profitably, but a lack of freedom of information allowed the top decision makers in both Hungary and Slovakia to make their decisions in a "purely imaginary world." "Since needs were never accurately identified, it follows that goals...were never appropriately framed for the decision process.... Major authoritative

decisions were made without the benefit of proper planning or participation by other groups or individuals." (96) The habitual lack of cost accounting in the comand economies of the two countries also allowed the project to go ahead, since profitability was not high on the scale of values in Communist societies. The objections to the dam system were both economic, that its costs outweighed its possible benefits, and environmental, that its threat to the quality of the drinking water in Hungary and Slovakia outweighed the benefits in electrical power. Since there was not enough money in either country to construct the projects their planners had put on paper, Austria financed the GNDS, to placate its own energy lobby which had suffered defeats on the issue of building nuclear power plants, and the defeat of the plan to build a hydro-electric dam at Hainburg. Since Hungary and Slovakia would not be able to pay back the Austrian loans with hard currency, they mortgaged themselves to pay it back in electricity, becomming electricity generating colonies, suffering the environmental damage, while Austria benefitted by receiving a supply of electricity.

In Hungary, first experts, and later concerned lay people, protested in ever larger numbers against the proposed GNDS. It is impossible to say which arguments were decisive in finally persuading the Hungarian government to back out of the project. Opposition to the dam was also a way of showing opposition to the Communist government in its death throes. Since there was no freedom of the press or freedom of association to allow the environment protestors to state their case, they created it for themselves, defying the government, but winning these freedoms piecemeal at the costs of clubbings and various less violent forms of official harassment. The GNDS became a watershed issue separating supporters and opponents of the Communist government. It became impossible for the MDF coalition government which replaced the Communists to support the scheme since it was a rallying point in their opposition to the former regime. In 1994 the former Communists have been voted back into power as the MSzP socialist government, and they are responsible for the shabby condition of Hungary's environment,, it looks as if Hungary will be less enthusiastic about pressing Slovakia to limit the damage it is doing to the

environment, and less zealous in protecting Hungary's drinking water. At the end of 1994, Slovakia elected former Premier Meciar, one of Slovakia's most enthusiastic backers of the dam, and the least sympathetic to Hungarian complaints.

Slovakia continued with the project alone when Hungary abandoned it. One goal was energy self-sufficiency since they supplied only 14% of their energy themselves and imported 86% at the time of independence. (97) Opposition to the dam at Gabčíkovo failed for many reasons. Opponents were labeled "disloyal Hungarians," since most of the people living along the Danube in the area affected by the dam are irredenta, ethnic Hungarians left outside their country by the Treaty of Trianon. None of the three Prime Ministers of Slovakia, Černogurský, Meciar or Moravčík were sympathetic to the complaints of the Hungarian minority, and Slovakia was criticized by the EC for its harassment and intolerance of its Hungarian minority. Both Meciar and Černogurský were "in turn given the position in charge of the Danube-Gabčíkovo project.", (98) Mr. Černogurský's brother was in charge of construction. The environment movement suffered more repression and had less time to bring the issue to the public's attention after the end of the Communist period. Because Slovakia is the poorer part of the former Czechoslovakia, and is much poorer than Hungary, there were less "Post-Materialists" to get involved in the the environment movement. (Between January 1990 and December 1992, over 14 times as much foreign capital was invest in Hungary than in Slovakia) (99) Slovakia kept authoritarian traditions in its government more than Hungary did, and had more continuity in policy making personnel in its government.. Slovakia turned the building of the dam into a symbol of nationalist pride. Social scientists often struggle to find rational reasons for public policy, where the real reasons are irrational, because they are uncomfortable with the irrational side of mankind, and try to minimize or deny it.

The protests against the proposed Hainburg dam succeeded in Austria because there was freedom of the press and assembly. Television pictures and other news reports of the police beating up the demonstrators probably tipped public opinion (which had been fairly evenly divided) against the dam. The immediate cause of the government's defeat was the

legal action brought by the Konrad Lorenz People's Initiative movement (KLVB) which got a court order to stop construction because the government had not followed correct legal procedure in issuing the water rights for the construction. However if the political climate had not been turned against the whole project by the protest movement, I believe the government would have done whatever was necessary to satisfy the legal objections and gone ahead with the dam. The Post-Materialists appeared because Austria had become a prosperous and peaceful country by the early 1980s. The lines of the conflict were drawn along class and generational lines and paralleled the hippy-straight conflict of 1968, in West Europe and North America, except that there were probably more respectable bourgeois intellectuals on the side of the protestors than is usually the case in other countries. The rise of a class of student counter-culture protestors was later in Austria than in France or Germany because Austria was poorer, and reached post-war prosperity later than some other West European countries. As a smaller country it is also more conservative in most matters. It marked the decline of the trade union movement's political power and an electoral decline of the social democrats, particularly among young voters. It gave birth to the Green Alternative, an effective parliamentary faction championing the cause of the environment. Similar Green parties have been less successful in Hungary and Slovakia because the former Communist countries have less experience with democratic politics, and the poorer the country, the more environment concerns are dismissed as an eccentric luxury of the rich.

If Austria's standard of living declines as it adjusts to its inclusion in the European Community, support for the anti-capitalist and anti-growth Green Party may weaken. Until the economies of Hungary and Slovakia recover from their adjustment to their partial transition to a market economy it is unlikely that environment protectors will be an effective political force in either country. While the Hungarian anti-dam movement was instrumental in helping to bring the Communist period to an end, that was not the case in Slovakia.

The opponents of the GNDS are now focusing the efforts on rehabilitating the Danube, and trying to protect their drinking water. It is difficult to be optimistic about

their efforts if the infiltration of toxic wastes already observed at other dam sites takes place at Gabčíkovo. The public attitudes toward protecting the environment are much less developed in East Europe, but the anti-dam campaigns provide a nucleus of veterans who could lead the pro-environment parties of the future, and function as a "prophetic minority."

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