

GLOBAL NETWORK NEWS

A quarterly newsletter for groups organising international meetings of children and youth

Vol. 1 No.3

Winter 93

HAARZUILENS UPDATE OCTOBER 29-31

One year after our conference at Haarzuilens, representatives of United Games, Peace Child, Voice of the Children, Natur Kindergipfel and the Austrian Children's Summit met on October 29-31 in England. We reviewed our activities, assessed the benefits of cooperation and set priorities for the future, in particular the UN 50th Anniversary in 1995. Areas discussed were:-

Cooperation: We agreed that a good network exploits the particular expertise of each member: we are still a long way from success, but the experience of working together at the Austrian Human Rights Conference was generally felt to be successful. We are now planning an initiative to bring the children of former Yugoslavia together, looking carefully at where our different skills might be used. (All members of the network are urged to join in this initiative.)

Handbooks: We feel that it is vital that we establish what our skills are; we agreed that we should each produce Handbooks - "How to ... ?" Manuals explaining our techniques along with the necessary back up material. We committed to circulate drafts of our Manuals to each other for comment by the following dates:

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|-------------------------|---|---------------|
| • Voice of the Children | - | Feb 28th 1994 |
| • Peace Child | - | Mar 15th 1994 |
| • United Games | - | May 1st 1994 |
| • Natur Kindergipfel | - | May 1st 1994 |

We invite other groups that have, or are thinking of writing, a handbook which explains their skills and techniques to help. The principle is very simple: send us your handbook for comment (or a date by which you commit to produce one), and we shall send you our's. It would be great to see the European Youth Parliament Manual, or the Model UN, or "How to create a YOUTHFEST USA". We need a body of skills written down on which to build our future.

Youth Involvement: Several of our groups have started to involve young people on the staff and planning committees for their events. This must be encouraged but used with care: we are all aware how

quickly over-empowered youth can bring chaos to meetings. True partnership involves discipline from each side. As we agreed at the first Haarzuilens meeting, we are not proposing a child-ruled world.

Local Action: We agreed our major focus should be to encourage more action by children at local level. Large International meetings can be very useful if their impact trickles down to stimulate local actions (- like the Human Rights Conference encouraged local meetings in schools and communities). Too often, large meetings designed in isolation may succeed in boosting the image of the organizer or sponsor, but have limited long term effect. We feel that children should not be exploited in this way.

UN 50th Anniversary: We agreed we can best promote the UN 50th Anniversary by organizing festivities, meetings, dramas, conferences etc. at a local level. It would undoubtedly help if some large-scale international event happens in San Francisco, or in the media or in one of the major UN centres around the world. We want to support and link into such an initiative should it happen. But we do not see it as our role to organize it. The importance of this network is to tap the excitement of such events to stimulate activity at many levels and, by so doing, enrich and expand the impact of such events themselves.

Perhaps, once we have digested the contents of each of our manuals, our contribution to this important anniversary will be a joint manual on "How to Celebrate the UN 50th Anniversary in our community."

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

One World TV Network:

- A Day in the Life of the World - Book & Documentary filmed by award-winning photographers all over the world;
 - Chain of Hope: passing a portable Video camera between children's groups, encouraging them to record their concerns, lifestyles, hopes, fears for the future etc.
 - Under the Blue Flag: 6-part official documentary on the history of the UN; (Educational materials to accompany this series being prepared)
 - 24 Hours for the Earth Concert, June 1995: For More Information, please write: Jacob Schimmel, 54-56 Euston Street, London, NW1 2ES. (44) 071 387 0155.
- Also under discussion by One World TV is an idea to hand out Children's World Citizenship cards, which twin a child of the North with a child of the South.

United Games: 5-7 towns to be linked in a massive United Games celebration of signing of UN charter in June '95, possibly with a simultaneous performance "Peace Child" designed to link the cities via satellite TV.

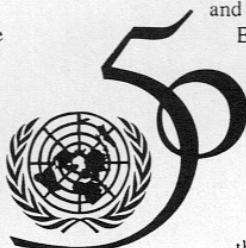
Leave it to Us Conference, Eastbourne, UK: October '94 Conference now postponed until October '95. Links with UN 50th Anniversary being explored.

Peace Child:

Plans for the 50th Anniversary revolve around getting children to implement their version of Agenda 21 now known as 'Rescue Mission : Planet Earth'. The Anniversary will be used as an excuse to remind young people of the commitments their governments made at Rio, and to gain a charter for the Day of Access. (See Guest Editorial). Under the umbrella of the Rescue Mission, Peace Child also plans the following:

Rescue Mission : the TV Series: A TV series made entirely by kids about environment and develop problems / solutions in their own region. To be hosted by kids with a panel of expert advisers, each programme will include reports from Rescue Mission "correspondents" in different parts of the world on a chosen theme. Children's Book of Human Rights: plans are in place to follow up the Children's Agenda 21 with a human rights book written and illustrated by children.

Peace in their time? - A series of documentaries on what children are doing to secure peace in the Peace Child focus areas - ex-Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Ireland, Cyprus, Sri Lanka and West Africa. To be accompanied by a book written by children called: *The Children's Book of Peace*.



FROM THE NETWORK

Youthfest US '93: David Pines reports "We had a lot of fun in over 30 US cities this year on National Children's Day (2nd Sunday in October). There were community awareness programmes by, for and with kids. We had a congressional hearing, and meetings between Youth and Civic leaders. There were youth planning committees in every location, and there were problems: but as they say, 'mistakes are evidence of work being done!' Next year, we plan to be in every state!" *Contact: David Pines, New Futures, 11426-28 Rockville Pike, #100, Rockville, MD 20852 USA. 301 468 9431; Fax: 301*



UNOY: "The conference, Youth on the cutting edge of conflict was our most significant so far", reports Nikolai Firoubine. 51 youth from 31 conflict areas attended along with 30 adult advisers and guest speakers from 15 countries. UNOY now has a new office in Purmerend with Eric Ansah from Ghana as their first, youth staff member. Future plans include the UNOY Africa Conference and a UNOY review of Agenda 21 and the Earth Summit Treaties to be held in Nigeria, politics permitting. *Contact: UNOY, Watersnip 62, NL-1452 Ilpendam*



TEIMUN: The Sixth European Model United Nations was held in the Hague in July. 100 University Students met and assumed different nationalities to model UN procedures in the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the International Court of Justice. Amongst the issues discussed were the situation in former Yugoslavia, Sustainable Development, preparation for the 1995 Peking Women's Conference and the Indo-Pakistani dispute over Kashmir. For more information, write:

TEIMUN, Postbus 41161, 9701 CD Groningen, The Netherlands. (31) 50 130 224.



Children of the Earth: Nina Lynn reports a "blissful" leadership meeting in Vermont in August. 50 children attended from many countries. A statement was produced. Nina is now seeking funding for a major programme of preparatory meetings prior to the World Summit of Children in San Francisco in June 1995. The North American Prepcom will be held at Heart's Bend and will "focus on educating the participants on United Nations documents, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as developing a broader awareness of global realities. The children will be encouraged to recognise their own leadership abilities and to interact with US and UN officials." Representatives from each state in the USA, Canada and Mexico will be sought. Nina also plans a Heart's Bend Programme for Eco-learning, a 3-week course in ethical living for kids 5-16 plus a "Leadership in a Multi-cultural world" programme, and an International Leadership for a Better World programme.

Contact: Nina Lynn, President, Coalition for the Children of the Earth, PO Box 217, Newfane, VT 05345 USA.



World Children's Ride for the Earth: August '94, 14-day journey through the major natural sites of Tanzania organized in association with UNESCO. It aims to instil in young people (14-16) from different countries, an awareness of the importance of the natural environment, its destructibility and the need to protect and preserve it". *Contact: Esther Kamatari: (33) 1 47 12 00 46 or 46 04 72 63.*



Polish Children's Parliament: This is organized by a group called WYSPA - The Island. It forms a small part of their activities. The major part is offering support to children - a 24-hour phone line; a shelter for homeless children; holidays for inner city youth, all managed and organized by young people, for young people. They are also very concerned about education: they had a meeting with the Kurators from each province earlier this year to tell them students wishes and to encourage the setting up of Island projects and parliaments in each province and large city. Specifically, they agreed to request:

- The replacement of Russian language teaching with lessons in English, German and French; set up colleges for English Language teachers for this purpose;
- Eco-camps and workshops to be set up by Youth Parliaments to discuss initiatives, and encourage action at local level;
- Defense of Children's Rights: expand the telephone help line, and run more summer camps and shelters for disadvantaged kids. This summer, 50 camps were held.

The Island has received some money from the Kellogg-funded International Youth Foundation which supports "projects that work." It has strict rules: No smoking, no alcohol or drugs, no aggressive behaviour. It is also clear about its priorities: "International meetings are very nice, but if you are homeless, you need a bed; if you are being abused, you need protection; if you are hungry, you need food; if you are young and pregnant, you need help. These are our priorities," says Marcin Stolar, "and they are needed more and more. A year ago, we had 10 volunteers. Now it is up to 100 and we need more. One of our camps this summer had 2000 young people."

In 5 years, Marcin would like to see a National Children's parliament and lots of little "Islands" all over Poland. He would like to see perhaps fewer programmes but have each one better organized. Chiefly, he would like to see fewer depressed young people, and a lower suicide rate in the Katowice region. For more information, write: *Marcin Stolarz, WYSPA, Ul. Omarskiej 1.41-500 Chorzow, Poland*

EYP: Successful European Youth Parliaments were held in Luxembourg in July and Fontainebleau in October. Each involved 200+ young people. Bettina reports an EYP has been set up Berlin, 11-19 February 94 with a final session in the Reichstag. Next EYP is in Holsterbro, Denmark, 28 Oct.-6 Nov. The new programme, European Challenge for Universities (ECU) will be held in Oxford, March '94. EYP has been bequeathed a "substantial property" in England from which, eventually, Bettina hopes to run the organization using EYP graduates! *Contact: Bettina Carr-Allinson, 110A Banbury Road, Oxford UK, OX2 6JU.*

Peace Child Ireland: July, London/Derry; Rosey Simonds reports a successful programme. Children from the protestant and catholic communities met with Serb, Croat and Kosovans, Turkish and Greek Cypriots, Israeli and Jordanian, Germans and Americans to create their version of the Peace Child story. The performance made a huge impact on the Derry community: the city council is working with children from the east to find out how many children in Derry would like to have integrated education. For info, write: *Peace Child International, The White House, BUNTINGFORD, Herts, England SG9 9AH*



Guest Editorial



"What does your Dad do?" someone asked my 8-year old. "He goes to lots of conferences and gets given stuffed animals..." she replied. True! In September, I got a cow, a Humpty-Dumpty and a 5-headed dragon. "Appeals to World Leaders" generally accompany such animals. Are they any more substantial? All seem to demand Peace, Human Rights, free medical care, an end to hunger, to the destruction of the rain forest, to save the whales, the pandas, the tigers etc. etc. Yet their appeals go nowhere. Except into my files. At Haarzuilens, we talked about an Annual Day of Access for Children. It seemed like a nice idea, but people wanted it to be "fleshed out a bit..." Through the year, I have been reflecting on this. If we think that politicians will listen nicely to what the children have to say once a year and meekly go off and do what they ask, we are in cloud-cuckoo land! To date, we have always relied on their goodwill: successfully in some cases, not in others.

A Charter for the Day of Access would guarantee the children's right of access - legally, constitutionally, morally and media-wise. It will be a document that governments will sign, committing their members to listen, once a year, to the concerns of the non-voting members of their society. Such a charter will have to include many things: we, as a movement, will have to get our act together to ensure that the concerns of children are democratically selected and fairly represented. We shall also have to have the Handbooks and the back-up materials to ensure that children's meetings are properly run, that all children's concerns have a chance to be aired. And we shall have to have good, sensitive partners in the media to ensure that both the process and the children's concerns are fairly represented, and not trivialised, in the press and TV.

Much of this work is in the background, but I feel the idea of a Charter, perhaps to be signed on June 26th 1995, the 50th Anniversary of the signing of original UN Charter, would be the breakthrough event our movement needs to give stature and confidence to itself and to the children it represents. In many ways, this has been a good year, with excellent cooperation over the Human Rights Summit, and a real commitment breathing through the network to share ideas and work together. We have also all recognised the primacy of working in our own constituencies at local level and not pursue mega-global projects the whole time.

But the Voices of children are still mainly silent. A Charter for a Day of Access could unlock the doors to government and give children the confidence they need to speak out. I feel many governments would be willing to sign. We are pushing on a door that is already half open.

David Woollcombe



Each issue, a different member of the network will be invited to contribute a guest editorial. I did this to start the ball rolling. Who would like to be next? Please write to: David Woollcombe Global Network News, The White House, Buntingford, England SG9 9AH.

Next Issue: March '94.



NEWS

Global Forum '94: Plans are gathering pace for this major International Follow-up meeting in June '94 in Manchester, England. Like the Global Forum in Rio, there will be a host of meetings, cultural events, stalls, displays, exhibitions etc. There was doubt whether there would be a key sectoral meeting for children. Pressure from this net-work has succeeded and, by next issue, we should have firm plans for a significant children's event. Watch this space!

Lillehammer Meeting: Kristin Eskeland was pleased with the preparatory process for this meeting which involved groups preparing answers to the following:

- 1) What is your hope/vision for the future?
- 2) What do you see is the main obstacle to achieving this?
- 3) What possible solutions do you see?

Children from 30 countries, plus chaperones came to the Winter Olympic City for a week. They presented their answers to these questions in the form of dramas, exhibitions, statements and drew up a handsome "Appeal to World Leaders" which they presented on the final night. Under three major sections, Peace, Human Rights and Environment, the children called for such things as respect for the International Court, more participation for children in media and free medical care for all etc. The final line called for an International Day of Access but sadly, no access to the Norwegian government was granted to the children. Kristin was disappointed that few government officials attended. She also recognised that there must be more activities organized for the chaperones of children involved. A common problem this: what to do with redundant chaperones? How many do we really need? Contact: Kristin Eskeland, PO Box 8844, Youngstorget, N-0028 Oslo, Norway. Fax: +47 22-33-33-53.

Natur Kindergipfel: The second Natur Kindergipfel was held in Stuttgart's magnificent International Garden Festival site. A village of Mongolian "yurts" was built to house the meetings, centred on a beautiful reed Ark made specially for the occasion. A maize was built to further amuse the children. Jacques Cousteau, Jane Goodall, Klaus Topfer (the German Minister of Environment) and many other dignitaries attended. Press and TV personnel were in abundance. The stack of press cuttings is enormous, and two documentaries are planned. But reviews for the gipfel remain mixed. Despite two years of preparation and a lavish budget, bad organization blighted the event. It rained a lot, disrupting work in the yurt village. It was perhaps unwise to hold such an event in the open air in Germany at the end of September. The canteen for the children was far away and the meals were unimaginative (chopped pancake, raisins, and canned fruit salad was one!) The workshops themselves were disappointing according to our international participants and the theatre piece, though effective, did display little evidence of youth input. The organizers intend a full review of plans for the next one in Berlin in 1995.

Contact: Gerd Pfützenmaier, Kristin Michna, Ringier Verlag, Gustav Heinemann Ring 212, D-8000 Munich 83.

Green Brigade Meeting: In Manchester, England, went well. Few heard about it, but the kids that went had a great time. 13 projects were selected to happen, including nature clean-ups, building renovation and a school energy audit.



Rescue Mission: Peace Child International met its "impossible" deadline to complete the Children's Edition of Agenda 21 by the UNESCO General Council in October. The Editorial Meeting included young people aged 10-25 from 21 countries. They chose the title *Rescue Mission : Planet Earth* proposed by a Thai participant, and have plans for a *Rescue Mission : Action Plan* to put their ideas into action. The meeting was totally hijacked by the kids: project coordinator, David Woolcombe's plans for the structure were thrown out; designer, Dave West's overall design for the book was replaced by a young Chilean's but both agree that the result is much better. It truly is the kids book - outrageous, beautiful, and much more interesting than the original. Jacques Cousteau looked at it and shook his head: "No - this is not created by children... It is created by clever adults pretending to be children." Wrong! Given freedom, kids are much cleverer than even the cleverest of adults pretending to be children! For information, write: *Rescue Mission Headquarters, The White House, Buntingford, Herts, England, SG9 9AH.*



Deutsche Kinderhilfswerke: Held a Children's Parliament in the Reichstag, Berlin, in September. Our correspondent, Anemon Boelling, reports: "It was horrible. Only one day long, the children had no chance to get to know each other, or talk. We were sitting alone, isolated. When Politician, Regina Hildebrand, criticised the children for not coming up with more new ideas, they were too exhausted to respond. Organizer, Reiner Weibusch, agrees "It was not nice, not comfortable. Not good public relations. But several children who work in children's parliaments in their home towns met and shared experiences. That forms a useful foundation for future working."



Kids World Council - Plan It for the Planet: More info. on this important meeting in Florida in April organized by Children's Earth Fund and Nickleodeon kids TV network. 50 US kids + 5 from Guatemala, Belize, UK, the Philippines and Nigeria discussed and approved a 5-part environmental plan of action:

- KNOW IT (enough to convince others to save energy);
- LIVE IT (save a ton of CO2 yourself this year);
- SHARE IT (create kid-to-kid information networks);
- GROW IT (recruit more kids to fight for the planet);
- PUSH IT (Pressure people in government to do whatever it takes to stop global warming and protect the planet.)

The plan was presented to Vice President Al Gore along with a solar water heater for the White House. Kids took a "Power Pledge" - promising to save energy by recycling, walking or riding a bike instead of using cars, or turning off lights. In two hours, Nickleodeon received 387,589 calls pledging to save 107,778,330 tons of CO2 this year. Future plans include promoting Solar Pioneer Programs to promote the use of solar box cookers. A Teacher Guide "Fun with the Sun" has been prepared along with a Pennies for the Planet campaign to raise funds to send solar box cookers to developing countries. A network of Sun Pals is being set up to promote the innovative use of solar energy. *Contact: Annie Brody, Children's Earth Fund, 40 W. 20th Street, New York, NY 10011. USA.*



United Games: Werner Greis and Miclos Banhidi report a successful United Games event in September. Over a thousand children came together from 5 cities for the week-end to share music, dances and entertainment. Also, there were children's parliaments in several cities. "We are getting stronger, adding one new city every year," reports Werner. "We would like to be a model for cooperation between cities and individuals, drawing out the best of their different skills and cultures." The United Games Organizing Committee has agreed to develop a special programme to celebrate the UN 50th Anniversary in 1995. They can offer: A secure budget, efficient organizing teams, continuity & high political recognition; *Contact: Dr Greis, Gostingerstrasse 169, A-8051, GRAZ.*



FEZ, Berlin-Köpenick: The report on 'How to create an International Children's Centre' at this former Pioneer Camp will be delivered by the end of the Year. The author's face a problem: when they arrived at the FEZ for a meeting in September, the staff presented them with a calendar of international youth dance, drama and music events for 1994 which looked much like one from the former communist times. The staff who had put it together didn't seem to understand that some thing new was needed! Gerd Pfitzenmaier and Kristin Michna who are preparing the report need evidence of this. They want to new ideas and request all of us to ask our young members: "What would you like a 21st Century International Children's Centre to look like?" *Contact: Gerd & Kristin at Natur Kindergipfel*



Children's Municipal Councils: This idea seems to work in France and elsewhere. Children are elected through schools to a parallel local council. They track the work of the adult council, offering advice and initiatives of their own. As a result, children become invested in decisions affecting their future at a local level. Franz Ferner, an expert in this field in Austria, is promoting a law which will allow towns and cities across Austria to set up such councils. He has set up an Advisory Board for Children's Participation to advise mayors on how to do it. He believes that the council is not an end in itself: the action itself is important: **impact on traffic flows, especially near schools; dealing with issues important to kids, especially the problem of mobility - how to get to places where things are happening; horrible quality of playgroups and playhouses; the need for more places where kids can go;** Kids parliaments are important for getting children's concerns into the open, but the big international efforts often blur the focus. For instance, at the Austrian children's summit, 70% of the media attention was on the international workshop. "The cameras were more interested in a Ugandan boy riding a bicycle than in the poor state of the Muerzsteg playground where he was cycling...." Franz would like to see the budgets for large international meetings taken and spent on hundreds of smaller actions at a local level. "Ultimately, this would have a greater impact on children's lives."