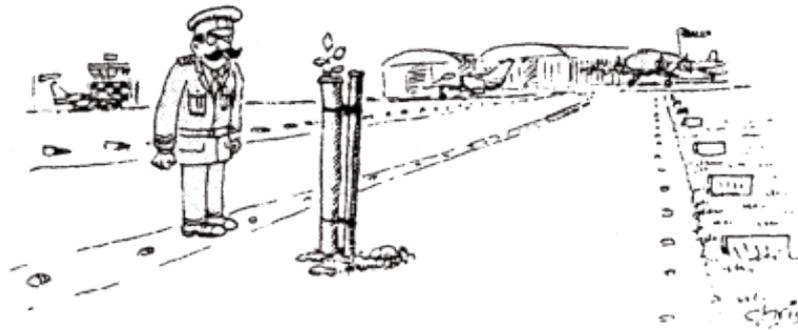


# Manifesto of the Phantom Treeplanters



*As was read out in the Pentland Hills of Scotland at Spring Equinox 1991 when a group of people gathered to phantom treeplant on barren Ministry of Defence land to mourn the dead of the Gulf War and to celebrate the peace movement.*

Planting trees opens our hearts to Nature's wisdom. Nurturing them gives exposure to life's vulnerability and teaches how to build ecological and human community.

We plant trees not for ourselves, but for those who will follow. Life gives unto life, and by dancing to its rhythms we can enjoy with clear conscience what has been handed down from the past.

Many people have never planted a tree because they think they do not own land. This is mistaken. We are all children of the Earth. We share equally in the valleys, hills, rivers and seas. Let us no longer be deceived otherwise!

Phantom Treeplanters have no formal organisation, no joining fee, and only the Earth holds its membership list throughout time. To belong, simply plant a tree without expectation of material gain, help care for existing ones, or hold in your heart what they mean.

With due sensitivity, plant trees on any land and in any place where they have a chance of surviving. Do not be put off by feeling you always have to get permission. Nature sows without asking. You are part of nature. Reconstituting the world is a duty and a right which extends beyond legal concepts of land ownership.

You can buy suitable native species from nurseries. But better still, root a length of willow in a bottle or collect and sow seed from original local sources.

Is it too long to wait for an acorn to grow? Maybe you do not need to live so fast that only instant results satisfy.

Try starting some trees in a deep pot on the window ledge or dig up a stretch of lawn. Never mind if you cannot foresee where to transplant the seedlings. Grow them first. Life will work out the rest, when the time is right.

Do not worry too much about losses. Accept these as part of the process. Take heart that other treeplanters are also at work. What matters is not individual success or failure, but the overall process we share in.

Planting trees is about making love with the Earth. Phantom planting recreates wildness. So let us live and love wildly. Let us not be afraid to grow and change. Let us celebrate - life itself.