



A 'Breef' Guide to...

If we want our children to have a future, we must be concerned with ecology. That is the sobering message of Sir Nicholas Nuttall, President of BREEF (Bahama Reef Environment Educational Foundation).

Sir Nicholas, a former Major in the British army, came to the Bahamas in 1979, from England. He and his Bahamian wife, Lady Eugenie Nuttall, work tirelessly to educate people about the importance of ecology. Sir Nicholas is concerned with world ecology in general and the ecology of the Bahamian reefs in particular.

In a recent conversation with Tony Quinn he discussed his concerns regarding worldwide ecological issues.

The biggest ecological issue today is population. There are actually a quarter of a million people born every day into the world - the equivalent of a new Bahamas every single day - and it's becoming increasingly difficult to house them, to look after them, and to give them a decent standard of life without exhausting the world's natural resources. I have discussed the problem of overpopulation, and other ecological issues, with experts from all over the world - people like Ted Turner, Jacques Cousteau and Hans Hass - and all of them believe that the situation has gone too far, and there is nothing to be done. What they are saying is that the human race won't survive because of the ecological problems we are facing. These people know a lot more about ecology than I do, but I don't want to buy into that outlook. I want to do anything I can to make sure we do survive. We all want a life filled with all the modern conveniences - cars, all sorts of electrical appliances, convenience foods etc, but this is continuing to

put a huge, and if we don't take immediate steps, disastrous strain on our planet.

The problem with ecology and conservation around the world is there are too many people of my generation who would rather talk about the issues than actually do something. I believe that you simply cannot turn around to the kids that are being born now and tell them - they have no future. Instead we have got to try and say to them "Welcome to the planet! Unfortunately a lot of mistakes have already been made, so for your own sake and the future of the planet don't have any more than two children." This is the biggest problem facing humanity - trying to bring the population into balance with the limited resources available. If we can manage to do this, then we and our children can have a magical life!

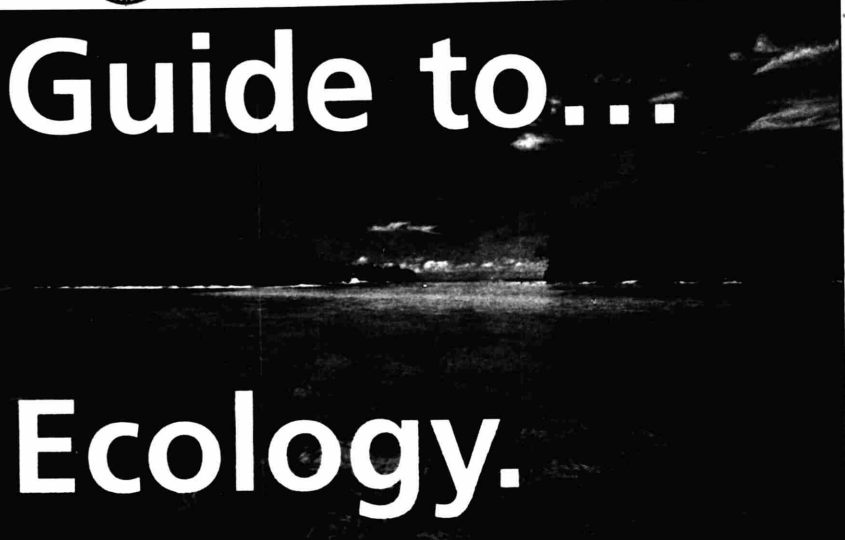
BREEF

However we also need public opinion to force industry and governments to change their policies on ecology. Things are beginning to change slowly, not through Governments or large organisations but because ordinary people are beginning to change their way of behaving. What we are trying to achieve through the Bahama Reef Environment Educational Foundation (BREEF) is to get the message through to people that it is our responsibility to look after the world. So much of it is, like the Bahamas, still so beautiful.

BREEF is all about education. It was founded in 1993, and at the moment is mainly concerned with the islands of the Bahamas - all 700 of them! We began by working with school teachers. Forty teachers a year are educated to think both locally and globally. We help them to run outdoor education classes, to awaken a sense of wonder in and



■ The future of the world is in our children's hands



Ecology.

■ The Bahamas have a special magic which Lord Nuttall has also found in Ireland

ownership of the planet in their pupils, and to teach them that we must allow nature its proper role. The scheme is supported by the Bahamian Minister of Education, and by the year 2001 we will have a teacher in each school here.

BREEF's purpose is to produce an educated voter 20 years down the

line, who knows what he or she wants in looking after the world. BREEF exists to convince our children to care for themselves, for one another, and for the living world around them. The funds we raise are turned into education, and offered to the children as the greatest gift of all, the love that embraces all living things.

REEFS

I am particularly concerned with the Bahamas' reefs. When I first came here in 1979, I used to do a lot of diving. When I dive today I see a huge deterioration in the reefs. That's how I got involved with BREEF. I discovered that this deterioration is a worldwide pheno-

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