

Chain Reaction

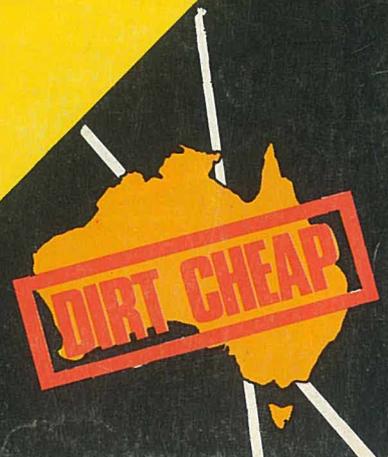
Friends of the Earth Australia Volume 5 Number 4 August-September 1980 \$1.20



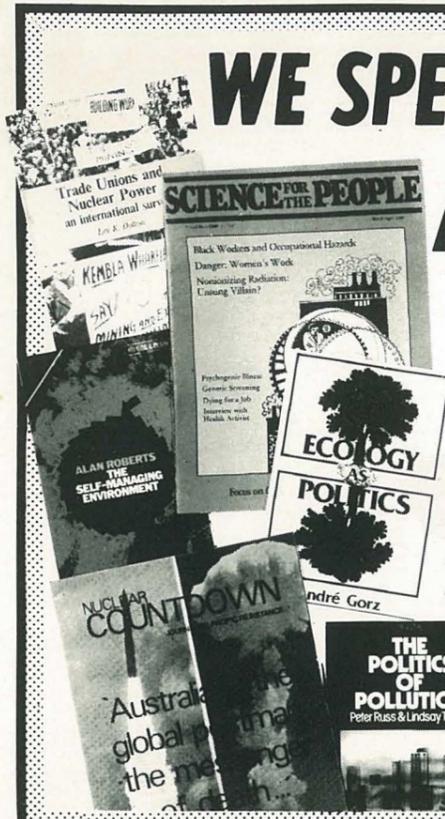
DIRT CHEAP

New Australian movie

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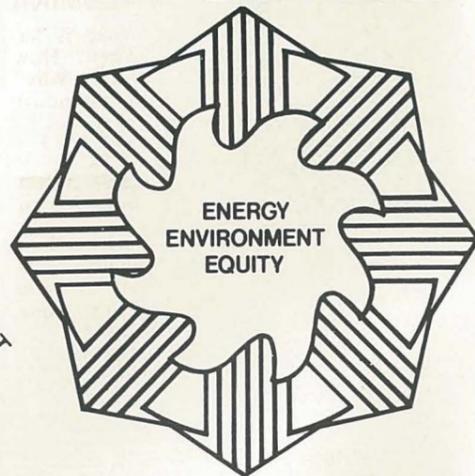
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Chain Reaction

Established in 1975
Volume 5 Number 4
August-September 1980

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Friends of the Earth
Australia

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Thanks to Mick McKeon,
the Canberra & South East
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Centre and the Tasmanian
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CONTENTS

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AXE

Does Malcolm Fraser approach this year's election with a better image on the environment than he deserves?



LOGGING THE ISLANDS

Forestry problems are not confined to Australia. And Lever do not just make detergents.

10

ALUMINIUM

What is happening? Where? When? How? Who is up to what? Why? Australia's new boom industry.

12

POWER POLITICS

The south-east States and the federal government explore new possibilities for co-operation. Look out for nuclear power

14

LIFE IN THE COLD

Two views of the recent conference on Antarctic Marine Living Resources.

16



DIRT CHEAP

Special programme/report on this important new Australian feature film.

17

WHAT WE CAN NOW DO TO STOP URANIUM MINING

A debate begins on 'where to now?'

24

BOMB SURVIVORS

A large island where atom bombs have been tested, uranium is mined, and there is a shortage of doctors specialising in radiation sickness, but no shortage of patients requiring attention.

31



BLACK IS GREEN

While one gathering of 'conservationists' clutched their new free briefcases and listened to Malcolm and Joh, in Cairns, nearby an 'inspiring alternative' was being attended by Aboriginal elders, conservationists, feminists, and *Chain Reaction*.

32

REVIEWS

Dirt Cheap, the new movie. *Tasmanian Aborigines, A Perspective for the 1980's*, a compelling new book. *Nuclear Knights*, previewed.

34

LETTERS	2
LEUNIG	3
EARTH NEWS	3
ACTION GUIDE	39
FOE GROUPS	40

Cover: Toby Gangali, one of the traditional Landowners of the land where the Ranger and Pancontinental uranium mines are located (from the film *Dirt Cheap*). Design: Mark Carter.

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Contributions to *Chain Reaction* are invited. Please try to send items typed, on one side of the page, double spaced and with wide margins. Keep a copy for yourself. We do not have sufficient resources and people to return manuscripts. These few guidelines are to help in bringing out the magazine better and faster. The next edition will appear in early October 1980.

Chain Reaction is supplied to all members of Friends of the Earth in Australia (except in NSW) as part of their membership. Membership is \$10 per year, or whatever you can afford. See lists of state and territory groups on page 40. FOE (NSW) members are invited to become subscribers. A subscription is \$5 for four copies (posted in Australia) for individuals and community groups and \$7.50 for libraries and other institutions. Overseas airmail \$A14.00, seairmail \$A7.50.

LETTERS



SCOTLAND

Further to the photos in the latest *Chain Reaction*, I took this at an anti-Torness rally in Edinburgh last September.

Margo Lines.

UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

In an era of unemployment the Federal Government has seen fit to further punish those without jobs by harassment. Not only is the unemployment 'benefit' disgustingly inadequate but recipients are required to prove that they have been looking for work by detailing their efforts on their dole forms.

To this ignominious activity is added 'visits' by Social Security inspectors to the homes of unemployment benefit recipients for 'reviews', checking of bank books and the gathering of damaging information against the person.

The cost of employing these odious people must be great, but at least they've got jobs - even if socially unacceptable. However, many of the people they visit are working.

They are working for no pay in the environment movement, in the women's movement, on Aboriginal rights, in anti-racist groups and in many other socially necessary organisations. People on unemployment benefits who choose to work for or within these organisations should be able to do so as an alternative to being a professional job-seeker.

The government should recognise that there are few, if any, jobs available for the bulk of the unemployed and that people who are prepared to give their time, or part of it, to an organisation of their choice are not bludging off the community but contributing to it.

It is my suggestion that people in this situation agitate for the acceptance of the above as an alternative to useless job-seeking and an end to the persecution of the unemployed.

P de Laine
Fitzroy, Victoria

SEEDS

I was most relieved to find the article *Vanishing Seeds* in your last issue, which highlighted some of the dangers inherent in plant patenting legislation.

As Mark Cole pointed out, overseas experience clearly shows that only large, usually petrochemical, corporations benefit from this type of legislation. It gives corporations the security they need to take over the industry, and once they do, their breeding programmes are biased toward the profitability of the corporation as a whole, the farmers and consumers become necessary evils. Corporation breeding programmes result in increased costs for seeds, chemical inputs, and the final product; and decreased, disease and pest resistance, choice of seed types, and nutritional quality of food.

The lobby group pushing for Plant Patenting, the Joint Committee for Plant Breeders Rights, who are partially funded by Shell Oil, who already own 40% of Wright Stephenson's, and Continental Grains, who control Pacific Seeds, are putting forward the idea that if Australia doesn't fall into line on plant patenting we will be denied an abundance of seed types developed in Europe and the USA. This argument holds little water as 70% of Australian seeds are planted on large acreage, low input, low yield country, for which privately bred seeds are unsuitable. Moreover it is likely that once Australia rejects patenting, any corporation seeds that could be of value here, would be available through licencing agreements with existing seed firms.

I'm positive that if the bulk of your readers could spend a few minutes to request information from your Free Access to Seeds Committee, an hour to read it, and half an hour or so to write a short letter or two to the relevant politicians, the legislation could be defeated.

Robert Bell
Newtown, Victoria

SUCCESS STORY

I have already renewed my sub to your excellent magazine! I hand it on when I have read it.

It was mentioned at a Seminar last weekend organized by the Findhorn Festival Group. Members praised your work too. However they agreed in the idea of asking for more 'success' stories! The one on the teaching of Central American women how to use the soya bean in a variety of ways, was an example. We felt that people need to see light in the sky and not merely the

threatening storms! It is easy to be overwhelmed and hopeless unless there is a balance of good news of achievement. Therefore Alan Greve's story of tree-planting throughout the world was a lift and an inspiration. His talk on the Science Show, the story of Terania Creek where the New Age folk won out against the bull-dozers - and the Week-End Magazine feature on Nimbin, all gave heart to people who think and feel but can easily be discouraged to the point of dropping their bundle.

Margaret Howells
Olinda, Victoria

SPECIAL APPEAL

You'll read letters from the Editors, won't you?

Chain Reaction is an unusual magazine. Not many magazines ask their readers to become heavily involved in production of each issue. *CR* does - indeed we are in great need of your involvement.

How many of you have articles you think we should run, suggestions of books to review, letters for this page or criticisms of articles? We welcome your contributions, your graphics, your photos.

CR aims to do a whole lot of things - to act as a voice for Friends of the Earth, to expose issues which receive too little coverage elsewhere, and to act as a national link between controversies and campaigns.

It is a difficult job - and for it our finances are much too small. Just having to pay our phone and postage bills is a problem. Particularly as it's a national journal. We need many more subscriptions and new members to provide a stronger and more permanent base. We need donations. We need advertisers.

We ask you to encourage libraries, schools, community groups, even your workplace to subscribe. You can do it so much more convincingly than us.

CR will be out twice more this year in an October-November edition and for the holidays in December.

We can only do it all with your help.

Mark Carter
Leigh Holloway
Editors

LETTERS

You are invited to write to *Chain Reaction* with your comments and criticisms of articles or on other issues of interest to you. We are more able to publish your letter if it is under 250 words. Write today to the Editors *Chain Reaction*, 366 Smith Street, Collingwood, Victoria, 3066, Australia.

EARTH NEWS

Cyanamid caught

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the USA has proposed a \$10,000 fine against American Cyanamid for a policy requiring women employees to be sterilized so they could continue working in certain areas of the chemical plant. OSHA said it was their view that the hazard, not the employee, should be removed.

Source: Big Mama Rage, January 1980, as reprinted in the Women's Liberation Newsletter, Melbourne.



Alternative Technology Co-op

The Alternative Technology Co-op has produced the first of a series of magazines on Alternative Technology in Australia. The Melbourne based group have regular meetings and are involved in a variety of activities aimed at helping people with construction of AT hardware. The group can be contacted at 366 Smith Street, Collingwood, 3066. Membership is \$10 or \$5 for students and unemployed.

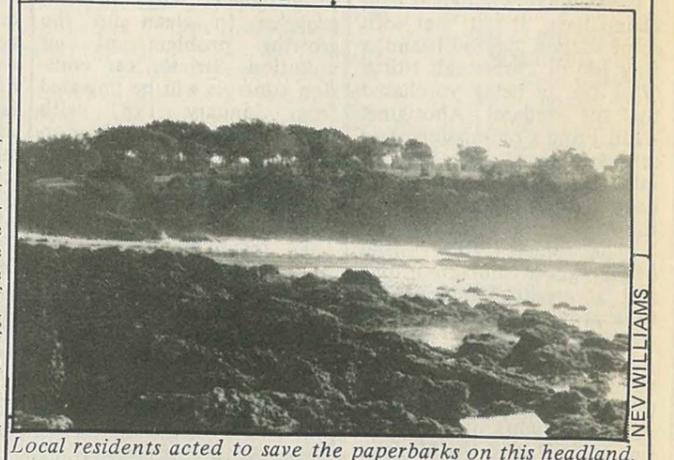
Paperbarks saved

A stand of seventy to eighty mature paperbarks on a prominent headland on the main tourist road south of Port Macquarie (NSW) was saved from destruction by the concerted efforts of a few local families recently. They organised petitions, encouraged people to write to politicians, council and local newspapers, as well as contacting the local Lands Department and finally making direct representations to State Ministers.

The fight began with a petition in September 1979 and was finally won in late April 1980 with the Council

referring the whole matter back to the Lands Department.

Local residents and tourists may still have to forgo the general recreational use of the headland until such time as alternative sites are developed for caravans which occupy the headland at the moment. The important thing is, though, that any interim improvements to the caravan park will not result in the destruction of the trees, so that the natural beauty of the area will be preserved for future generations.



Local residents acted to save the paperbarks on this headland.

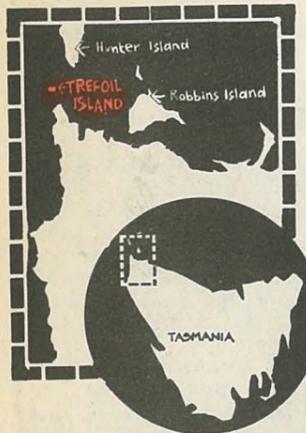
NEV WILLIAMS

EARTH NEWS

Earth News brings together the previous columns Chancy, Ocean News and Earth News.

We greatly need your contributions - concise, and where possible with visual material. Write to the Editors, *Chain Reaction*, 366 Smith Street, Collingwood, Victoria, 3066, Australia.





Tasmanian land claim won

Tasmanian Aborigines land claims have, at last, met with some success. Trefoil Island, a tiny isle of Tasmania's North West tip, is being purchased by the federal Aboriginal Land Fund Commission after representations by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre to have the island returned to the Aborigines.

The snake free island offers good mutton-birding and access to fishing areas, thus providing some seasonal work for Aborigines.

A Trust will be set up to administer the island. However it will not have mining rights, or rights of alienation (ie: to sell), and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has veto power over Trust decisions. The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre which has a claim before the Tasmanian Government for the rest of the state has expressed dissatisfaction with these arrangements, which deny control to the Aborigines.

Sabotage

Demonstrators in Zerbrugge, Belgium, on 16 June boarded a Dutch ship loading nuclear wastes, which were to be dumped in the Atlantic, and smashed the automatic pilot, radar and radio equipment. Eight demonstrators were arrested.

Wollongong nuclear free

Wollongong is the first major provincial Australian city to have declared itself nuclear-free. By doing so it is resolved to prevent:

- the transport or storage of nuclear wastes and uranium
- the construction of nuclear power plants
- the mining of uranium within the city limits.

WEL environment policy

At the Women's Electoral Lobby national conference in February this year, environmentalism came to the fore. The conference voted environmental health issues as a major lobbying area for the 1980 federal election.

WEL has had environmental lobbying groups in three states for some years, and a national anti-nuclear policy since 1976.

The conference reaffirmed WEL's opposition to uranium mining, called on the

federal government to implement Senate committee recommendations on alternative energy, and to insure nuclear workers against radiation-connected illness. An important campaign emerging from the WEL conference is a call for the Federal Government to set up, as an urgent priority, national registers of birth defects, and cancer, with research funding into the causes.

NSW acts on pollution

Tired of the repeated delays by the other States, New South Wales has decided to go ahead with its own program to clean up the growing problem of air pollution. Stricter car emission controls will be imposed from January 1981 with further controls on evaporation of petrol from engines to be introduced in 1982. NSW has also indicated it will introduce lead free petrol in 1984 regardless of the attitude of the other States and Federal Government. The new Minister for Planning and Environment, Eric Bedford, has produced a very informative leaflet, *Lead In Petrol*:

Questions and Answers, explaining the Government's views (available free from the State Pollution Control Commission, PO Box 4036, Sydney 2000). Because 35% of all cars in Australia are used in NSW, car manufacturers will be forced to make all cars meet the standard. A showdown on the issue is due in August at a special meeting in Adelaide of the State and Federal Environment and Transport Ministers.

Action: Write to your State Environment Minister calling for lead free petrol and tighter pollution standards.



Richmond, Melbourne.



Black Hills

As this issue goes to press, thousands of people are gathering in the Black Hills of South Dakota USA for the 1980 Black Hills International Survival Gathering. The gathering which is organised by an alliance of Indian, anti-nuclear, environmental and farmer interests, will concentrate on three main areas - a citizen review commission on energy development corporations, an alternative technology/land self-sufficiency project and a forum on Indian genocide and the planned extinction of the family ranch and farm.

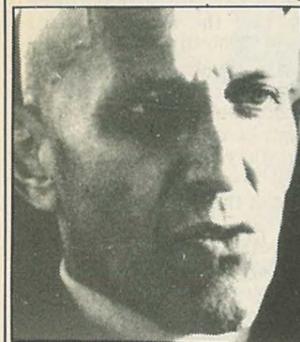
The gathering is an effort to loosen the corporate grip on all our lives and an expression of opposition to gargantuan energy developments now affecting occupied Sioux territory. The greatest single threat to the Black Hills and to all native Americans is President Carter's new energy policy which depends on 'national sacrifice areas' to provide coal, oil and uranium for USA industrial power.

Psychologists biased

A study was recently completed at the California School of Professional Psychology in which 106 clinical psychologists viewed a twenty minute video of a therapy session. They were told the woman client had just ended a relationship. Half were told the other person in the relationship was a man and half were told it was a woman. Psycho-

logists who thought the client was heterosexual found her 'above normal' in all characteristics. Those who were told she was a lesbian gave her an overwhelmingly negative rating with low personal adjustment, poor personality and self-control.

Source: Big Mama Rag, January 1980, as reprinted in the Women's Liberation Newsletter, Melbourne.



Paul Jacobs who died in 1978 of lung cancer which doctors believe he contracted investigating the story in 1957.

Paul Jacobs banned

A strange irony developed during the Swedish nuclear referendum campaign in March. The producers of *Paul Jones and the Nuclear Gang* were told their film was 'too good' to be shown. The justification behind the ban was that there was no pro-nuclear material of a similar standard to dispute the evidence in their film. Hence the balanced presentation requirements of Swedish television could not be met.

Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang, the highly successful film about the health effects of radiation, has been shown in Australia on the ABC's *Four Corners* program. (It is also available to hire from the Australia Party (03) 870 9217, or from the Sydney Filmmakers Cop, (02) 33 0721.

Johnny Junkfood



Johnny Junkfood is the latest slide kit available from Environment Audio Visuals. It deals in a simple and entertaining way with the health risks associated with consumption of excessive amounts of junkfood. It explains in commonsense terms the relationship between poor diet and health, and the effects of food processing.

For more information on this and other audio visual kits contact Environment Audio Visuals, 76 78 King William Street, Fitzroy 3065. Telephone (03) 419 8608.

Squeezing oil from shale

The existence of shale rock at Rundle, just north of Gladstone in Queensland has been known for many years. However the economic extraction of oil contained in the rock appeared unlikely until the world's largest oil company, Exxon, brought a majority share from the small Australian speculator company, South Pacific Petroleum for a rumoured \$300 million. Exxon have slowed their operation, though, and it is anticipated that oil will not be produced till 1984.

The Rundle oil shale project would be the world's largest mining operation producing about 10% of Australia's current requirements. In the words of the companies environmental study report:

"In broad terms the project will temporarily change the topography of about sixty square kilometres of the central Queensland coast from a rural, natural environment to a mining-industrial complex."

This transformation of an area the size of Sydney would lead to massive environmental pollution particularly from toxic material escaping into ground water and nearby streams. The project is situated immediately adjacent to a large mangrove wetlands area known as the Narrows which is the source of a significant percentage of Queensland's mud crabs. Just off shore is the only section of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park so far declared.

Environmental groups around Australia have successfully pressured for a full environmental impact statement on the project. Friends of the Earth have called for this to be restricted to the pilot stage with approval for any expansion to be considered when more information is available on different processing techniques, changing economics and the effectiveness of environmental protection measures. FOE has also called

£75,000 for Shale Oil Shares

This Affirms Australia's Confidence in a Vital National Enterprise

This Sum Represents the Total Application for £1 Share in Less than a Week

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360 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE.

Ballarat Courier, 13 September 1924... There's nothing new under the sun!

for greater public participation and special funding for groups to enable adequate investigation of the multi-billion dollar proposal before it goes ahead.

Note: Queensland Conservation Council will be producing a booklet on Rundle shortly.

Action: FOE is collecting information and investigating the situation. People are needed to help with research and campaign organisation. Contact your nearest FOE group.

NSW U. free

The New South Wales government has banned uranium mining and exploration within its state borders.

Minatome uranium lease granted

On 23 March, Queensland Minister for Mines and Police, Ron Camm, granted the French company Minatome a mining lease at Ben Lomond near Townsville. This was four days before their impact statement study was tabled in parliament.

This is not an Environmental Impact Statement and would not satisfy even Federal standards. Under the legislation the Minister for Mines has the discretion to call for public comment. Camm obviously chose not to.



Minatome exploration at Ben Lomond.

Nuclear uneconomics

The South Australian Legislative Council is currently holding an inquiry into uranium mining in that state. Friends of the Earth, along with other anti-nuclear groups, have appeared before the Council's Select Committee.

John Hallam of FOE Collingwood has prepared estimates on the nuclear industry and its long term prospects. Judging from his predictions of world nuclear capacity, the industry's future is considerably less buoyant than we are led to believe.

Unlike the Australian Atomic Energy Commission's figures, FOE's figures take

into account the realities of safety problems, eroding political support, rising costs and declining efficiencies, and reactor cancellations that have occurred particularly in the USA.

One trend that was discovered in the compilation of these figures was that at certain times FOE's figures converge with the USA Department of Energy's figures. It seems that it is taking a more realistic approach than the AAEC.

On world demand for uranium FOE's estimates once more significantly differ from the AAEC's. For example, FOE predicts demand at 41,000 tonnes per

Predictions For World Nuclear Capacity

	UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	
	AAEC	FOE
1985	105	102
1990	170	128
1995	225	130
2000	295	130

	WORLD	
	AAEC	FOE
1985	251	219
1990	440	290
1995	640	340
2000	885	340

(figures in 1,000's of megawatts.)

year by 1990. This falls short of the AAEC's figures by 18,000 tonnes.

New food 'crisis'?

World grain and rice harvests have fallen well below last years figures and only a good harvest next season will avoid another world food crisis, like the one which killed millions in the early 1970's.

Particularly as a result of drought and war the world market price of food has risen and stocks are disquietingly low. Had the world's governments honoured the undertakings made at the 1974 United Nations sponsored World Food Conference, this danger would not exist. However they have consistently failed to establish the grain reserves they promised.

'Crisis' is, of course, a relative term for there is an ongoing crisis situation where two-thirds of the world suffers from hunger. This problem is of a structural nature for generally food goes to where there is profit not necessarily need.

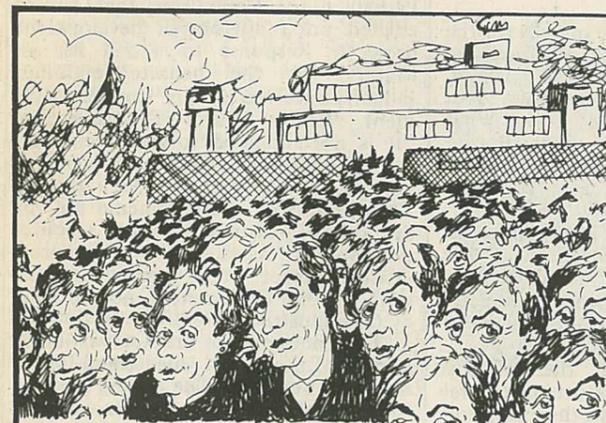
The current 'crisis' is compounded by moves to produce fuel (gasohol) for cars from food crops.

THE CHAIN REACTION



... now the movie. A scene from the film Chain Reaction, it's about a nuclear waste spillage and the fight to let the public know.

Patenting life



APRIL 1983: AFTER FREAK ACCIDENT, 475 MOLLY MELDRUMS ESCAPE FROM TOP SECRET CLONING ESTABLISHMENT NEAR GEELONG

The recent United States decision to allow the patenting of new life forms has paved the way for companies to become more deeply involved in genetic engineering.

The five/four Supreme Court decision did not take into account the risks of genetic engineering declaring that such questions were beyond their 'competence'. In fact it appears that the court was determined only to vin-

dicate the decision of General Electric which appealed against the Patent Office refusal to accept a patent on an oil 'eating' bacterium.

With this precedent genetic engineering and biological manipulation will probably become a super growth industry and a super dangerous one, already rumours of sickness and death of workers in biological laboratories abound.

Labrador uranium lease withheld

A development license for the Brinex, Kitts-Michelin, uranium project in Labrador (Canada) will be withheld until the company 'satisfies government that it can, and will, safely and permanently dispose of the vast materials' from mining and milling uranium ore.

Brinex, which is part of Brinco, a subsidiary of Rio Tinto Zinc, submitted an environmental impact statement (EIS) which was described as 'woefully inadequate' by the Environment Assessment Board (which was appointed, with very narrow terms of reference, to assess the impact of the proposed mine on the environment) and 'poorly founded'

by the Newfoundland Environment Minister, Hazel Newhook. Native and community development organisations were given only five weeks to digest and rebut the thousands of pages of technical information contained in the Brinex EIS. But a co-ordinated effort was launched to address the questions of who controls and who benefits from development and express concern about the impact on human and natural environment. The Indians of Sheshit (which is on the access road to the mine) and the Inuit/Settler people of Makkocik and Postville (both are within fifteen miles

South West Tasmania

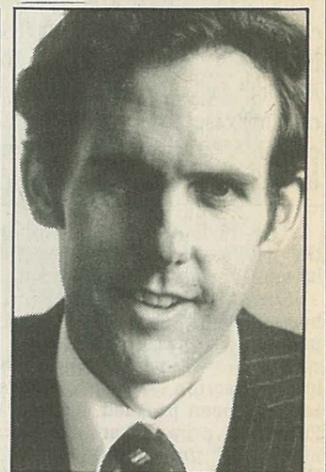
"Somewhere in the last three months is a line we will never quite place: it is the watershed of our campaign for the wild rivers. It is the line we crossed which lets us now say that 'we are winning', whereas we used to think 'we might win' and, earlier still, that 'we have little chance - but must try'.

So says Bob Brown, Director of the Tasmanian Wilderness Society.

In the next *Chain Reaction* he writes a special report on South West Tasmania and its future.

The decision of the Tasmanian Labor Caucus to flood the Gordon River, above the Olga, will meet with heavy resistance. This new scheme is the second on the Gordon. It is reminiscent of when the Tasmanian Government agreed upon the present SW National Park but also decided to flood Lake Pedder. Nothing new will be created - the status of an existing beautiful area will merely change. And another 9% of the wilderness will be destroyed.

The issue is not over yet... this new project has not been considered by the Parliament, and the legislative Council still has a select



Bob Brown

Committee Enquiry on the issue. *CR's* next edition cover story will be looking at the national implications of this latest decision.

Watch for our October-November edition.

Car-cade

Direct actions at Australia's uranium mines and proposed sites are hampered by the distances involved. However, the South Australian Campaign Against Nuclear Energy attempted to overcome this problem with a car-cavalcade in May. The procession of 150 people left Adelaide on 18 May and headed for the Port Pirie tailings dams and the Redcliffe site.

WISE

Australian links with the World Information Service on Energy, based in Amsterdam, are likely to improve this year. Activist Laurie Shane, of Canberra, has been in Europe lately for discussions with anti-nuclear groups and WISE. A proposal has been put forward for an Australian relay service. WISE Amsterdam now have a telex service - their number is 15018 WISE NL▼

Sack-Mac campaign

'Muck-Donalds' complained one of the placards at the launching of the anti-McDonald's booklet *Rip-Off Ronald* outside a Melbourne McDonalds store recently.

The launching of the booklet also marked the launching of the Sack-Mac Committee - a group which intends to continue the campaign to force McDonalds to unionise its stores and to



alert consumers to the product they are eating and the company they are supporting. Other campaigns planned are a demonstration by anti-Ronald clowns, a 'fast-in', and the leafleting of as many outlets as possible.

Action: Join the Sack-Mac Committee by phoning Melbourne's Labor Resource Centre on (03) 662 3828.

Environment protection axe

This year's national election and conservation and environment issues — a special *Chain Reaction* report by David Allworth. (In our next edition a report on the election and energy and resources issues.)

The Federal Government goes into the 1980 elections with a far better image on environment than it deserves.

Since it took office in 1975 there has been a clear strategy, particularly on the part of the Prime Minister, to give strong Government support by word but not action. A very effective double talk has been pursued. Kakadu National Park is a prime example. Kakadu was nominated for listing on the World Heritage Register by the Government earlier this year, yet the same Government gave approval to uranium mining ventures in the core of the area 18 months before.

The Government points to its efforts on Fraser Island and whales as examples of a good record. What of the losses?

- the great Jarrah forests of Western Australia.
- no Great Barrier Reef Marine Park
- uranium mining in a World Heritage area of Kakadu National Park
- no federal environmental inquiries
- massive surge of resource hungry development projects
- lead remains in petrol
- drastic cutbacks in the federal Department of Environment
- abrogation of responsibility for forests in woodchip areas

Using its federalism policy the Government has let numerous issues slide when it could have taken positive action. A situation has been created where environmental controls are compromised as states vie for development projects.

By looking at particular areas the Government's record becomes clear.

GREAT BARRIER REEF

The Reef of all conservation issues is the Government's most vulnerable point. In election year conservationists should strive to take advantage of that. Disaster for the Reef has been staved off, so far only because of the hard work of the federal opposition and the conservation lobby. Protection of the Reef is one of the most widely supported conservation concepts in

Australia, with over 60% of the population supporting conservation of the Reef area.

Despite over a decade of calls for the preservation of the entire Reef area no meaningful arrangements have appeared. The declaration of 5% as Park does nothing to better the situation. What is needed is for the whole Barrier Reef area to be declared a marine park. This would cover an area of some 250,000 sq km.

To help maintain a good image on the Reef issue the Government has nominated the Reef for World Heritage classification. The experience of Kakadu and uranium mines gives the move a hollow ring.

We need to watch the recently introduced legislation returning coastal waters to the States (with the exception of the small percentage of the Barrier Reef actually declared as Marine Park under federal legislation). The current situation makes it possible for the Queensland Government to permit oil drilling at any time on the bulk of the Reef.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION ACTS

One of the major pieces of Australian environmental legislation, the Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act has been thwarted by the Government. Since 1975 there has not been a

single federal environmental inquiry, despite recognition by a Standing Parliamentary Committee that a case existed on a number of development projects. Response to a call for an Inquiry on the bauxite/aluminium industry received a reply from Environment Minister David Thomson that "it is not intended to seek comments on the national ramifications of the various smelter proposals as a group." These industrial developments are, by far, one of Australia's biggest resource development areas, with vast environmental impact. It is grossly irresponsible of this Government not to look at the industries potential total impact.

The contempt for the Act was shown in case of the North Queensland tourist resort at Yeppoon. The Acting Minister for Environment, Mr Viner, contravened the administrative regulations of the Act in giving approval to the project. Failure of the Australian Conservation Foundation to gain standing before the High Court stopped legal action against the Government.

Numerous reviews have been made of the Act within the Government bureaucracy. In typical style, the Government is unlikely to amend the Act before the election, if at all. Leaked documents in late 1979 publicised the Government realisation that it can achieve the watering down of the Act without amendment.



Parts of Australia are at risk of becoming desert.

SOIL CONSERVATION AUTHORITY, VIC

*David Allworth is a former Co-ordinator of the Canberra and South East Region Environment Centre, and is a member of the Australian Conservation Foundation Council.

WORLD CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The Government has engaged in double talk on the *World Conservation Strategy*. This document was prepared by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, and the World Wildlife Fund. It received the "full" support of Australia's federal government. It identified parts of Australia at risk of desertification — a fact identified earlier by a (CSIRO) Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation study. The *Strategy* recommended that \$675 million was needed for soil conservation work — yet the Government has only spent a few million dollars.

Since the launching of the strategy, in March, by the Prime Minister, there has been no discernible moves to have its concepts introduced into Government policy and operations.

SOUTH WEST TASMANIA

Perhaps the most active environmental campaign in Australia today is that to save South West Tasmania. The federal government could play an important role in this preservation by taking steps to block funds at the Loans Council or by offering compensation to the Tasmanian Government.

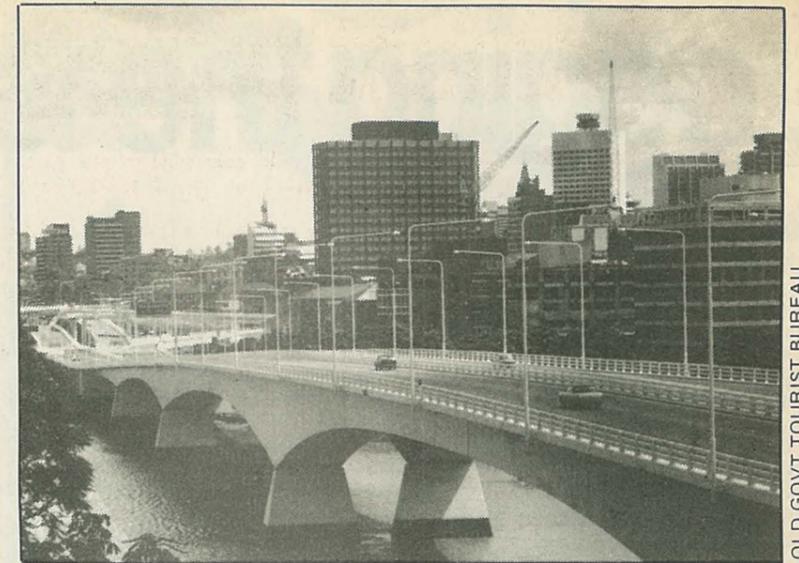
The House of Representatives Committee on Environment and Conservation tried recently to introduce a report into the Parliament which is understood to have recommended the Government invoke the Environment Protection Act. The tabling of this report was blocked by the Government. Interestingly in the vote as to whether the report be tabled a Government member, Barry Simon, crossed the floor.

South West Tasmania's wilderness has finally been placed on the National Estate Register. But, it is understood that this was delayed so long as a result of opposition from Mr Ernest Sinclair, a member of the Australian Heritage Commission. Mr Sinclair, of Melbourne, is a former consultant to PM Fraser, a director of Australian Paper Manufacturers, and in the 60's was Editor of the *Melbourne Age*.

Clearly the federal government is trying to keep the South West issue out of the federal arena.

GRANTS TO CONSERVATION GROUPS

There has been no increase in grants to voluntary conservation groups since 1977. There is unlikely to be any great groundswell to make this an election issue. However any move on the part of the Government to cut grants in the 1980 Budget will bring considerable flak.



OLD GOVT TOURIST BUREAU

"Under a Labor Government one can expect improvement in attention to urban issues."

THE GOVERNMENT

In the coming election the Federal Government is going to make all possible efforts to create an image that it is responsible and concerned about the environment. The Prime Minister's recent speech at the World Wilderness Congress in Cairns is an example of the line that will be put out. In that speech he went to considerable effort to outline what he holds is a strong pro-environment record. The task of the environment movement is to expose how the federal government's policy on environment has really been working and to formulate a very clear package of demands.

The task of creating a package of demands is presently being undertaken by the Australian Conservation Foundation. What it and the many other groups do in the coming months will dictate how much the Government can continue to use its 'double talk' as it enters the election period.



THE AGE

Fraser — better image on environment than deserved.

THE OPPOSITION

The position of the Australian Labor Party on environment as seen in Government from 1972-75 and as the opposition from 1975, has been a good deal better than that of the Liberal and National Country Parties. Their action on the Reef issue has been excellent achieving a considerable delay of any Government moves on the oil drilling and other damaging activities. However responses to calls for a federal inquiry into the bauxite/aluminium industry have been poor to date. Perhaps this indicates one of Labor's greatest difficulties — how it will deal with large resource development projects. This problem stems from them seeing resource development projects as important to their programs. Labor's concurrence with large resource projects is clearly shown in the development of the aluminium industry in New South Wales.

In the 1972-75 period there was considerable tension between the then Labor Government and conservation interests. This tension is and conflict is unlikely to disappear. Under a Labor Government one can expect improvements in attention to urban issues — an area virtually forgotten by the present Government.

Improvements should also be seen in the application of the Environment Protection Act, grants to voluntary conservation bodies and pollution control programs.

If the environment is to be of any significance in the coming election considerable work will have to be done by the environment lobby. Resource development projects will feature for their wider economic and social implications — environment groups must be prepared to make a major contribution to such debates.▼

Logging the islands

By Ann Wigglesworth

In the Solomon Islands, a successful community development program at Iriri village, on Kolombangara Island, is under threat. Lever Pacific Timbers (a Unilever subsidiary) are trying to force their way onto Iriri land to extract timber, in spite of total opposition from the villagers.

Joini and Vaeda Tutua, from Iriri village, were recently in Australia to talk about this conflict, and to gain support for village development projects.

Whereas in Australia the destruction of natural forest is of great concern to many people, the problem in the Pacific islands is much more serious, as the forests provide many of the basic materials required for village life.

In the Solomon Islands at least five companies, including the Australian Foxwood and Allardyce companies, are exploiting timber reserves for the use of western consumers. Lever, the largest timber extractor, has been logging on Kolombangara Island since 1968. The

island is circular, formed from a volcanic core, and about 27 km in diameter. Lever has logged most of the island and has now reached the last quarter segment. This is customary land (legally recognised tribal ownership), unlike most of the island which was acquired by the Government during colonial days. The company has shown little concern with obtaining the consent of villagers before moving onto this land.

A community farm had been started at Iriri village with the assistance of two Australians, Clive and Joy Gerrard, who formerly worked at the nearby Kukundu mission. Iriri people were impressed with the wide variety of crops grown at the mission and they were interested in setting up a community farm themselves. Joini Tutua, who was at the time teaching at Kukundu, agreed to help with this, and is now their economic adviser.

Clive Gerrard showed the Iriri people new farming techniques, as well as assisting them in applying for finance from Australian aid agencies. This aid was used to purchase a compost shredder and to set up a plant nursery.

There are now over twenty crop varieties, which has led to an improvement of the village diet and a cash income through sales, mostly at nearby Gizo market. \$200-\$300* is made each week. Individual families also sell produce from their own gardens.

The whole village, with a population

of about 120, takes part in the community activity - a substantial break from tradition where each family only tended its own gardens. The village is organised into three work groups: the community farm, a recently established sawmill, and building construction. However, at times the whole community is called on to assist in major tasks. The timber milled at Iriri is in great demand for building construction at Iriri and elsewhere in the Province. Plans for the future include setting up a furniture and wood products shop.

However, the Government has used the sawmill to pressure the Iriri people. The Chief Forestry Officer told them that they would not be granted a licence for the sawmill unless they agreed to allow Lever to build a road on their land - Lever wants to extend its present access road in order to log the customary land. The people were expected to mill the trees that Lever left behind! However, they have now obtained a licence, due to the insistence of the Provincial Government, as sawn timber was required for house construction in the Province.

Conflict with customary landowners started as soon as Lever moved onto customary land.

In September 1977 Lever signed an agreement with the Chief Trustee of the Viuru tribe, George Lilo, who, conveniently for them, was one of their employees. The agreement was for building a road and logging the land near Varu village.

Although the Viuru tribe were the customary owners, Gideon Ghomo, of Varu village, had "the exclusive and irrevocable right of occupation" of this land, by High Court ruling. He put up a notice at the boundary of Varu village saying 'ROAD STOPS HERE' and showed a copy of the High Court ruling to the General Manager of Lever, who said it was not legal. Lever knocked down this sign, then proceeded to build their road through Varu land, destroying trees and removing coral gravel from the waterfront for road building. They cleared sixty feet of land on each side of the road, pushing mounds of soil and trees towards the embankments of the waterways, which caused severe erosion and pollution of the village drinking and washing water.

*The Solomon Islands used Australian currency until 24 October 1977. References here to pounds (1965) are to Australian pounds. References here to dollars are to Solomon Islands dollars, which on 18 June 1980 equalled \$1.07 Australian.

Early in 1979 Gideon, who was pressing for compensation, decided to seek legal advice from outside. He asked Clive and Joy Gerrard, living in Sydney since the expiration of their visas, to arrange for a solicitor. They did this, and wrote to Varu of the arrangements. The letter was never received. It was intercepted, apparently by an employee of Lever's, and delivered into the hands of the Prime Minister and Commissioner of Police. The solicitor was thus expected by the authorities, who deported him shortly after his arrival. He never saw the Varu people.

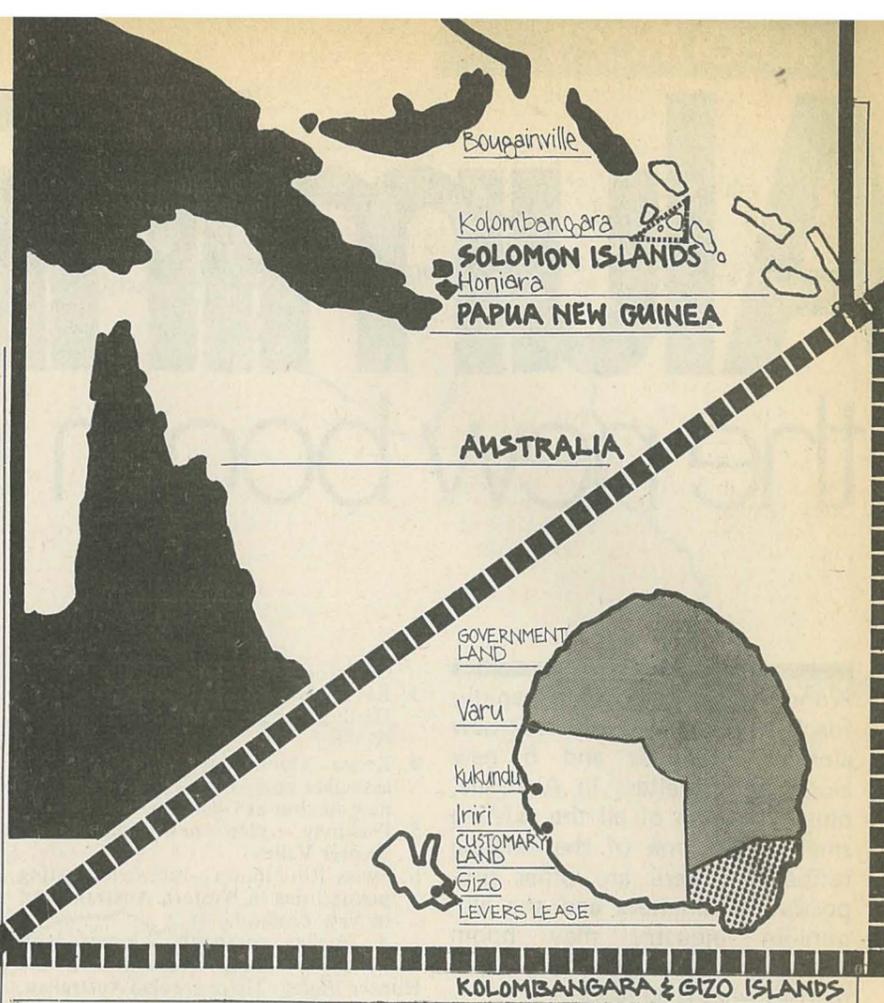
A few months later, Joini Tutua visited the Prime Minister to press for residency permits for the Gerrards. They were refused permits following complaints from the General Manager of Lever that they were causing trouble on Kolombangara. Joini realised the immense difficulties faced by the people when the Prime Minister told him "Anybody who is anti-Levers is anti-Government". It seemed that Levers were more powerful than the Government itself.

After being sold in the 1920's, the Iriri land was bought back from the Government in 1965 for £25. Five trustees were appointed, three from Iriri and two from the Viuru tribe. Subsequently, a land survey was carried out at a cost to the owners of £333.90. Unless the fee was paid and the Certificate of Registration signed, the land would revert to government land.

In July 1977 the money had been raised by the Iriri people and attempts to pay it had been made, but refused. In December the money was accepted, but the Certificate of Registration was not issued, apparently because it required all five trustees to sign. The Viuru people did not keep appointments to sign the document.

In September 1977 the Viuru trustees had signed an agreement with Levers allowing access to Iriri land. The District Magistrate was consulted by Iriri trustees who were advised that Levers could be sued for damages if they entered the land, as the September agreement was not valid.

Eventually, in December 1978, all five trustees went to sign the Certificate of Registration, and discovered the following clause had been inserted into the Certificate: "Lever Pacific Timber Limited . . . shall have the right to construct a road through this parcel of land . . . The Company and its employees shall have the right over the aforesaid roads. No payment shall be made for logs used in road construction. Any



coral or gravel lying within this estate will be made available free of charge to the Company for use in road construction."

The certificate was not signed. In July 1979 a meeting was held at Iriri with Lever representatives, who unsuccessfully tried to persuade the people to allow the road. Early in 1980 another meeting was held with both Lever and Government officers, at which the people were told the road was coming whether they liked it or not. This greatly angered them.

When Lever's survey team came onto Iriri land, they were removed by the people, who were so furious about the tactics used that they have now refused to have any more discussions with Levers or the Government.

Other people, including experts from the British Ministry of Overseas Development, believe the customary land should be saved as a biosphere reserve. Physiologist Professor Jared Diamond says "Kolombangara has the largest species number of all islands in the western chain, including many unique or nearly unique species confined to the small area of its mountain."

Lever has left a forest reserve - it is less than 1 km wide, in an area likely to be a centre of development. There is already a forestry camp on the ridge beside it, and it runs into the sea within 1 km of a wharf and quarry.

Professor Diamond believes the area is "a natural heritage and a potential economic asset" to the Government. Lever's operations do provide the Government with badly needed export earnings, but what are the benefits to the people?

The main benefit is the road - but all villagers travel by canoes (carved from one type of tree in the forest) and none possess vehicles. Anyway, without maintenance, every bridge would need replacing within five years.

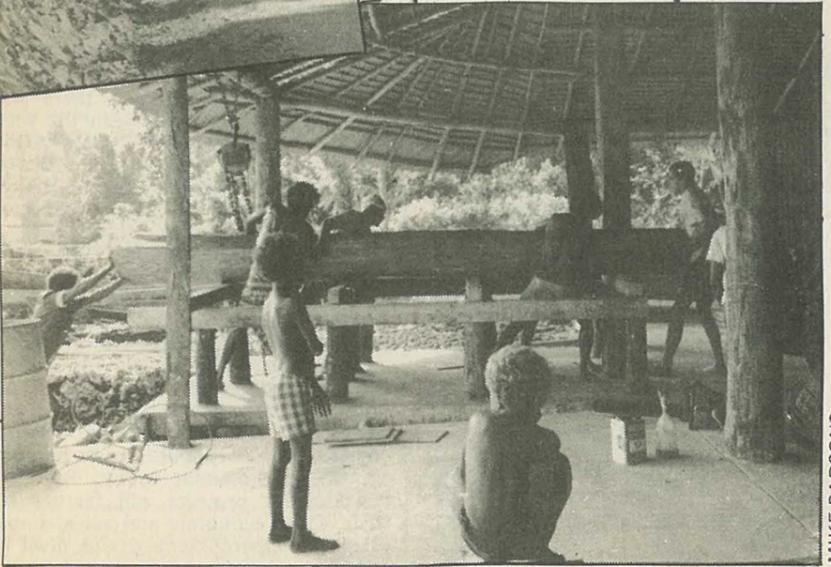
Royalties are another benefit - the customary owners get only 65 cents per cubic metre for logs which sell for at least \$40 a cubic metre on the world market. If milled at Iriri they would bring vastly more money into the community.

Many other villages have heard of the developments at Iriri, and are setting up their own community projects. In this way they can develop their own resources for the benefit of the community, and are not forced to rely on the dubious benefits afforded them from resource exploitation by foreign corporations, over which Solomon Islanders have little control.

People interested in taking action on this issue can contact Anne Wigglesworth at International Development Action, 73 Little George Street, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065 - telephone (03) 41 6898



MIKE PARSONS



MIKE PARSONS

Village people in the Iriri timber mill. Inset: Lever Pacific Timber's road - access for their massive logging operations.

Aluminium

the new boom industry

Proposals are advancing rapidly for 2 new bauxite mines, 2 new alumina refineries and 5 new aluminium smelters in Australia, plus expansion of all the existing smelter and one of the existing refineries. There are other proposals for smelters and the aluminium industry may boom further. *Chain Reaction* summarises what is going on:

"The Australian aluminium industry is characterised by a small number of producers who mostly produce from world scale plants, widespread geographical distribution of these plants, considerable vertical integration, and a high degree of foreign ownership."
 — *The Australian Aluminium Industry*, Department of Industry and Commerce, Canberra, 1979.

WHAT IS PLANNED? BY WHO?

A few multi-national companies dominate the whole aluminium process — from mining through to manufacture and sales of products. This vertical integration is similar to that of the oil industry.

The big six aluminium corporations are all looking to invest in projects in Australia.

1. Alcoa — plan a new mine in the Darling Range, a refinery at Wagerup, and a huge smelter at Portland.
2. Alcan — plan a new smelter at

Chain Reaction acknowledges the assistance of Don Siemon, of International Development Action, and Phil Gleeson in producing this guide to the aluminium industries expansion plans. CR will be presenting more information on aluminium in future editions — we welcome contributions of material (background information, photos, graphics, articles) and suggestions on what we should cover. Eds.

3. Reynolds — plan a new mine in the Darling Range and refinery at nearby Worsley.
4. Kaiser Aluminium with their local associate company Comalco — plan a new smelter at Gladstone.
5. Pechiney — plan a new smelter in the Hunter Valley.
6. Swiss Aluminium — are investigating possibilities in Western Australia and in New Zealand.

A smaller company, Alumax with BHP, are planning a smelter in the Hunter Valley. There are also Australian, Japanese and other international partners involved in many of these ventures.

HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH?

The proposals for aluminium industry expansion in Australia over the 1980–85 period amount to a private sector investment of \$2,500,000,000. Another \$2,500,000,000 is likely to be spent over the second half of this decade on even more aluminium development.

Your money — public funds — will exceed this investment. Public expenditure will be mainly on power stations, but will also include other infrastructure services — communications, power lines, roads, port facilities, etc.

By 1985 aluminium industry exports will be Australia's second biggest mineral export, second only to coal, and ahead of iron ore.

Currently around a quarter of a million tonnes of aluminium are smelted in Australia, almost entirely for domestic use. The new proposals will, if implemented, increase production by 1985 to 1¼ million tonnes, of which 1 million tonnes would be for export. By 1990 it could be up to 2 million tonnes.

Some 35% to 40% of total export earnings of \$1,500,000,000 will go back out of Australia in loan repayments and profits to overseas companies.

Taxation gains for the government remain to be proven, but it is worth

noting that Alcoa had been operating here for more than ten years before they paid tax. These big companies know how to avoid taxes.

4,000–5,000 new full-time jobs will have been created by 1985 in the aluminium industry. But that will require a half million dollar investment per job — approximately ten times what it would take to create jobs in other manufacturing areas.

AUSTRALIA'S SIGNIFICANCE

Bauxite — Bauxite mined in Australia is 31% of the world's total — making Australia the largest centre anywhere, of bauxite caused ecological destruction. Eighty percent of the mineral is exported.

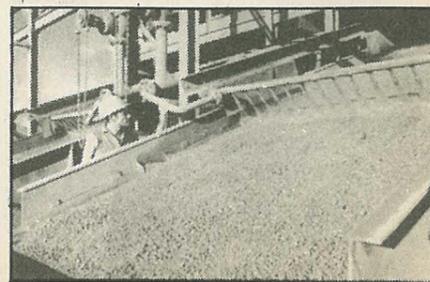
Alumina — Australia is also the largest producer of alumina in the world, with about 25% of world production. Ninety per cent is exported, though by 1985 this figure will be 30%. Within 10 years, the alumina refined here will be 2½ times what it is today.

Aluminium — Australia ranks tenth in world production, with less than 2% of world capacity. Within 10 years, the aluminium-smelting capacity in Australia will have risen dramatically. (from the 257,000 tonnes/year in 1979, to around 2,000,000 tonnes/year in 1990).

continued on page 14

THE PROCESS

Bauxite is mined and



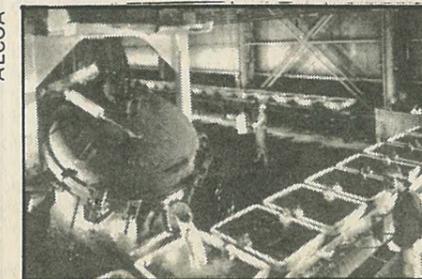
ALUMINIUM DEVELOPMENT

refined using hot caustic soda into alumina (aluminium oxide) which



ALCOA

is smelted electrolytically into aluminium and this is fabricated into products



WOLFGANG SIEVERS



L & D KEEN



WHERE DOES IT GO?

In Australia most aluminium is used for construction purposes, about a quarter of our use is on packaging, and smaller amounts go to transport and electrical applications.

The world-wide consumption (nearly 17 million tonnes per annum) pattern would be similar to the Australian situation. But there are considerable variations. As with most of the world's wealth and resources, an overwhelming percentage of this aluminium is used in the USA, USSR, Japan and Europe — the rich countries.

The potential for aluminium exports has opened up greatly because there has been no growth in Japanese and USA smelting capacity, as electricity costs have become too high or power is not available there.

Australia's aluminium exports will be to Japan, the west coast of the United States of America and to a lesser extent the ASEAN nations.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIONS?

This massive expansion of the aluminium industry leads to many severe problems. This is just a brief list of some of the consequences:

1. Perpetuation of existing problems. Continuing loss of Jarrah forests in Western Australia, as bauxite mining expands in the Darling Range (See also *Chain Reaction* Vol 4 No 2/3). Further denial of Aboriginal Land Rights in North Queensland at Weipa, Mapoon and Arakun. Instead of moving towards some solution of these conflicts the expanded aluminium industry will be so dominant nothing will be allowed to stand in its way.
2. This aluminium boom will further embody a trend in the Australian economy towards more exports, and consequently a need to import more products. This downgrades Australian labour intensive manufacturing and encourages even more foreign control of this country.
3. To smelt 1 kg of aluminium 15 kilowatt hours of electricity are used. By 1985 around 10% of all electricity generated in Australia would go into aluminium smelters. This requires continuing rapid construction of power stations, using public capital to serve private interests, without return to the public. Power rates for smelters are cheap — to attract them there is competition between the States of Australia and this leads to underpricing and effectively a consumer subsidy. It takes 9 tonnes of coal to produce 1 tonne of aluminium. The price charged for electricity is very cheap, because the power generating authorities are not paying world parity price for their coal.

4. There are a whole host of other problems: local residents and, especially, Hunter Valley vineyard owners and workers are concerned about the high levels of fluoride emissions into the air — for example, at Portland Alcoa will be putting out 1.38 times the USA standard for this pollutant.

There are concerns that the plants will be located too close to towns and of the massive social impact such big industry would have upon existing small towns.

AND NOW?

Already government approval has been given to Alcoa's Portland smelter, the Comalco/Kaiser Gladstone smelter and for two mines and two refineries in the Darling Ranges. These have been approved over the past year.

Environmental impact statements will have to be carried out for all the other projects over the next year.

A Senate Select Committee is enquiring into the aluminium industry — despite a federal government decision not to investigate the broad national implications of the proposals (see David Allworth's election report on page 8). Submissions need to be lodged by 30 September 1980. Hearings will be held after the federal election due later this year.

WHAT'S THE RESPONSE?

All the major conservation organisations in Australia (including Friends of the Earth and the Australian Conservation Foundation) have voiced concern about the plans for massive expansion of the aluminium industry. A number of special local groups have been formed in the areas where development is proposed. These groups are researching the various proposals; analysing their potential effects on the environment, the economy, and the community; preparing submissions for presentation to the Government; lobbying; seeking publicity and public education; and developing alternative economic proposals for the development of their areas. Here are some contacts:

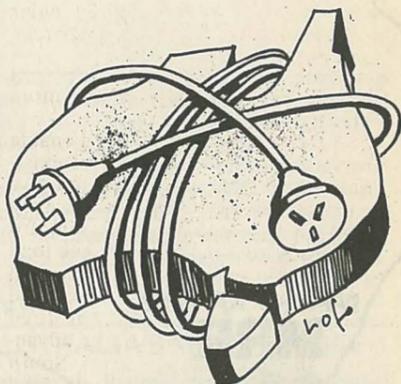
South West Alcoa Action Group
PO Box 394
Portland
Victoria 3300
Telephone (055) 26 7215

Ecology Centre
Trades Hall
Union Street
Newcastle
New South Wales 2300
Telephone (049) 25641

Campaign to Save Native Forests
537 Wellington Street
Perth
Western Australia 6000
Telephone (09) 321 5942

ELECTRICITY

Power politics

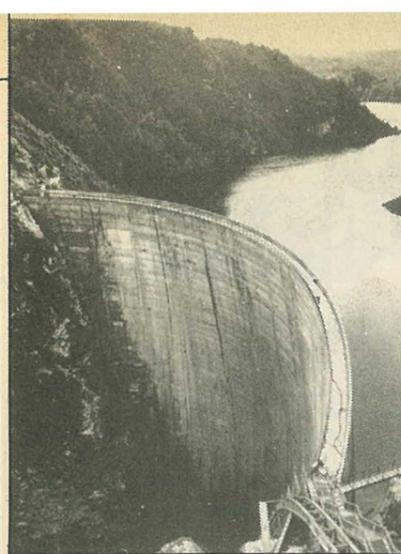


The prospect of New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria establishing a grid for sharing electricity systems is being investigated. Michael Lockwood of the Conservation Council of Victoria looks at what it means for the environment and for the environment movement.

The Federal Government has announced that the former chairperson of Imperial Chemical Industries (ICI), Sir David Zeidler, will head a committee of inquiry into the sharing of power resources in south-east Australia. To ensure adequate environmental input into this inquiry, it is important that the environment movement start to develop a comprehensive and unified policy on interstate power grids.

This will not be an easy task. The arguments both for and against are many and complex. This brief discussion will outline some of them.

At present there are three existing links between New South Wales and Victoria, which are mainly used to provide peak load hydro-power to Victoria. Possible major links in the future are between South Australia and Victoria, Tasmania and Victoria and further connection between New South



The Middle Gordon dam in Tasmania's south-west . . . 10,400 million cubic metres of water to use . . . for peak load in Victoria?

Wales and Victoria to allow a more useful interchange of power.

A network such as this would enable more efficient use to be made of existing power generating facilities, and give a greater security of supply. Efficiency is increased by using Tasmanian hydro or NSW black coal to generate peak load power for the south-eastern states. In return Victoria can supply base load electricity from its brown coal fired stations. In addition, by taking advantage of the time lag between South Australian and Victorian peak load periods, an exchange of power can occur so that less pressure is placed on each state's own peak generating capacity.

Greater continuity of supply is assured because if, for example, several generators in Victoria's Latrobe Valley are out of action, emergency power can be supplied from interstate.

However there are several other possible ramifications of a south-east Australian power network which are somewhat less encouraging.

Nuclear plants are at present being seriously considered as a future energy supplier in several states (see for example Phillip Sutton's book *Victoria's Nuclear Countdown*). Developments such as Alcoa's move to establish a smelter at Portland, Victoria, enhance this possibility, as well as facilitating a future link with South Australia. A nuclear station at Portland would give Alcoa a security of supply not afforded by the long transmission line stretching halfway across Victoria. Such a power station could also be used to feed electricity back into the Victorian central grid, as well as providing power for South Australia via an extension of the Melbourne-Portland transmission line. It has been suggested that even without an additional power station at Portland, the new transmission lines could be extended to link South Australia and Victoria. However, the design



Extraction of coal at Yallourn's open cut, Victoria . . . base load electricity for south-east Australia?



Completing work on the chimney at Newport power station, Victoria . . . despite union bans . . . where will the power go?

of the lines tends to discount this possibility — for technical reasons the proposed lines would be too inefficient to supply power to South Australia. Any link would require a power station to be built at Portland unless a completely different type of transmission line was constructed in addition to the proposed Melbourne-Portland line.

A link between Tasmania and the mainland may, in the short term, prevent the "need" to develop any further hydro-electricity projects. Tasmania could receive base load power from Victorian brown coal stations, in exchange for peak load hydro power. However in the long term such a link may actually increase the pressure to develop areas such as Tasmania's Gordon and Franklin rivers. In the 1990s Tasmania will probably have negligible surplus peak capacity, and therefore will be unable to export peak electricity to Victoria without substantial development of additional hydro power schemes.

Other areas of concern associated with interstate power grids include the increased options available for the development of industry (such as aluminium smelters) throughout south-east Australia because of the greater security and wider distribution of power supply; the implications for electricity tariffs; and the impact on the development of alternative energy sources.

On this last point, the continued establishment of centralised power stations to supply power to south-eastern Australia through a high-voltage

transmission line network may, because of the size and scope of the investment, rule out the development of decentralised, environmentally soft energy sources. High-voltage lines are also technologically inappropriate for the efficient distribution of power from environmentally desirable sources such as wind or solar.

However, the option of low-voltage links must not be ruled out at this stage, and more research is needed into how such links may facilitate the distribution and maintenance of supply of various alternative energy sources.

STOP PRESS: Tasmania's Senator Peter Rae has now suggested that Clarke Island, off the north-east tip of Tasmania, be considered for a nuclear power station. He said "there is every reason to give serious consideration to this alternative to the destruction of one of Australia's and the world's most magnificent wilderness areas." The Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre and Tasmanian Environment Centre have severely criticised the suggestion. A considerable number of the Tasmanian Aboriginals live on the islands in the area. Senator Rae suggested that a nuclear station would provide employment opportunities and population growth there — "something they had desired for many years". The Environment Centre pointed to technical problems, as well as indicating that there would be ethical considerations.

Eds

Life in the cold

two reports

The fortunes of an icy continent, or more especially the waters that surround it, took a more formal and forbidding shape in May, when the 13 Antarctic Treaty nations (Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Chile, France, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, South Africa, USSR, UK and USA), plus East and West Germany, met to finalise a convention ostensibly for the conservation of Antarctica's marine living resources. The aim was to provide for a regime for the management of these resources, particularly krill, main food of the great whales, and most critical link in the entire Antarctic ecosystem.

Despite what amounts to a revolutionary management concept ie "the ecosystem approach" (Article 2), the major concern is that the mechanics of the Convention will not permit the lofty

principles alluded to in Article 2 to be reached. In particular the restricted membership, the obligation to observe certain articles of the Antarctic Treaty, and the consensus system of voting, coupled with a 90-day objection period for those nations that do not like, upon reflection, the decisions of the Commission, combine to open the door to possible over-exploitation of krill and other marine resources in the Southern Ocean.

In brief, the Conference has produced a compromise Convention, the primary beneficiary of which has been the fishing states. Although as has already been mentioned, this Convention represents a breakthrough in management principles for living resources, its success or failure will depend to the greatest extent upon the goodwill and co-operation of the

nations involved.

As *Eco** stated:

"Some will feel that the Convention is not worth supporting, others will wish to support it, but work to improve it."

"In fact ratification will no doubt happen, regardless of the inputs of non-governmental organisations. The gap that most urgently needs to be filled is public and Parliamentary education into the issues of Antarctica, the faults and strengths of the Convention, positive actions that can be taken — like getting countries to engage in Antarctic research (say on feeding areas of Blue and Humpback whales), thus qualifying to become active members of the Commission or getting information packs on the biology and politics of the area, or pressing interim measures or fishing nations."

Michael Kennedy

Manuka, a suburb of Canberra, became the Antarctic Supreme Court recently and the life forms of Antarctica were sentenced to death.

This occasion of great moment — surrounded by pomp, ceremony and ill disguised avarice — occurred when, after two years of debate and political points scoring the thirteen ticket holders to the Antarctic Treaty and a couple of close friends signed the euphemistically titled 'Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources'.

The convention became necessary when it was clear that the Third World and others were very interested in the wealth Antarctica seemed to offer. Such interest was odious in the eyes of the thirteen and their convention reflects their possessiveness and greed. It is vacant of forethought, absent of

concern for the world's hungry and lacks even a thin veil of conservation cover.

The Treaty States themselves waxed self-righteous over their document and pointed to the so-called 'eco-system' approach they had adopted. This 'approach' is one where in harvesting one species the affect on other species in the eco-system is taken into account. Unfortunately this ideal is a fraud. For example, Article II of the convention states no situation should be allowed to occur which is not 'potentially reversible' over two or three decades — twenty or thirty years.

How arrogant. How blase. They do not even use the words 'positively reversible' or 'definitely reversible', they say 'potentially reversible' and they want twenty or thirty years to play with as well.

It is to the lasting discredit of the Australian environment movement and their jet-setting USA and UK counterparts that tacit support was given to the Treaty States' convention in the first place. The convention has no legal basis; it is and always has been an elitist and sectarian document designed to keep the Antarctic in the hands of a very wealthy minority.

Environmentalists should have bitterly opposed it from the start, but there is still time to stop it coming into force.

The various governments are yet to ratify the document, so the opportunity exists to heavily and extensively campaign against them doing so.

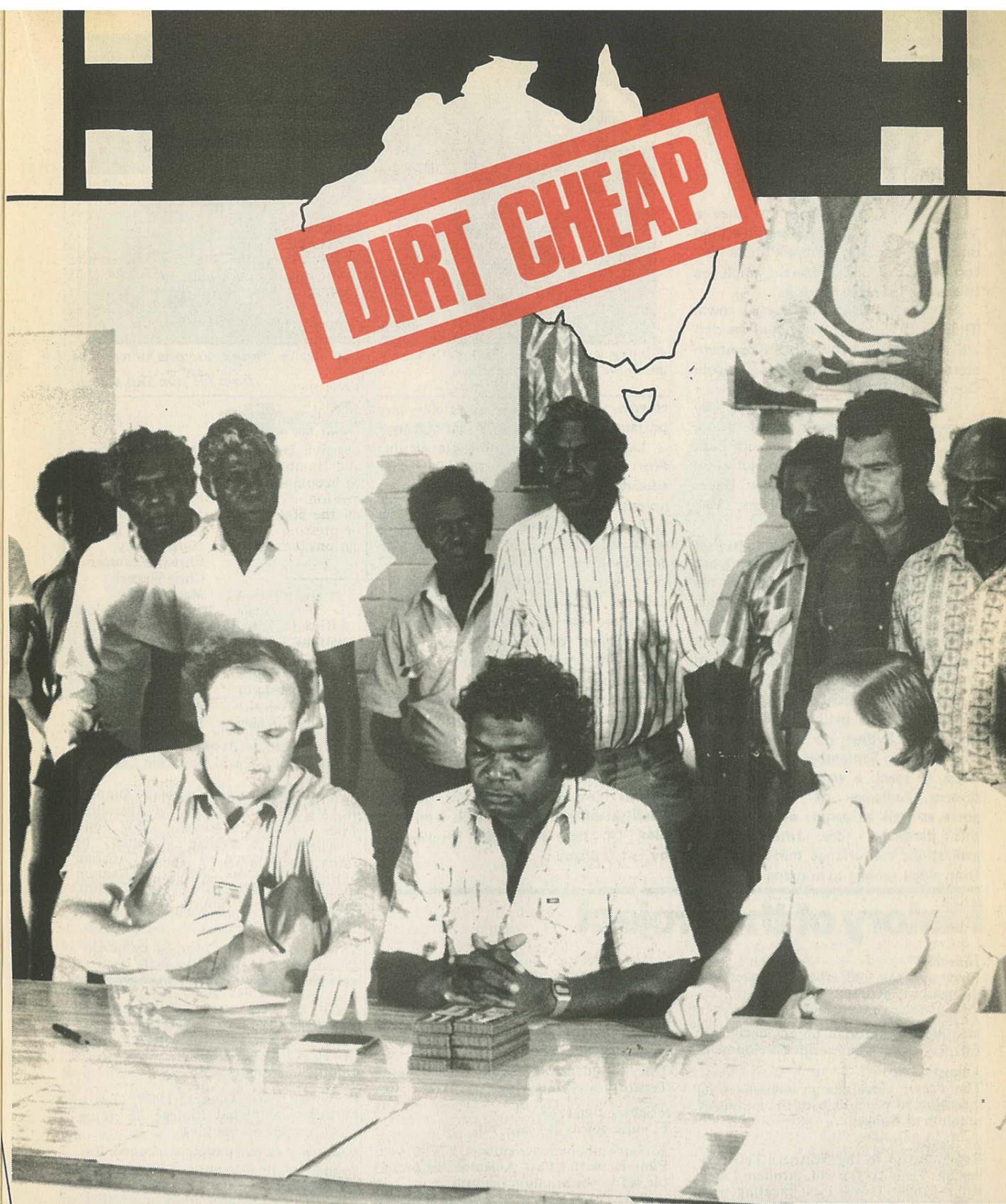
Antarctica, and ultimately the whole world, will suffer if we give up now.

Brian Appleford

CONTACTS: If you would like to join the work to protect Antarctica please contact Brian Appleford in Melbourne on (03) 419 8700 or Michael Kennedy on (02) 235 8037▼

**Eco* is an occasional newspaper published by Friends of the Earth with others at international meetings of environmental importance. *Eco* Vol XVI Nos 1-4 covered the recent Diplomatic Conference on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. Copies are available from FOE Sydney, 232 Castlereagh Street, Sydney, 2000 — for \$1 a complete set. No. 4 includes the full Convention as adopted at the Canberra conference.

Left: Canberra 1980. 85 delegates from thirteen countries decide the fate of Antarctic life.



Oenpelli, Northern Territory, 3 November 1978: the 'signing' of the Ranger Agreement. (From the film *Dirt Cheap*.)

MOVIE DIRT CHEAP

"The big states down south, they're jealous . . . this is a multi-multi-billion dollar project . . . we could mine here for 200 years." (Mick Martin, employee of Ranger Uranium Mines.)

"We don't want that Ranger town. That's our country. We could be destroyed, like our people in the southern states." (Silas Maralngurra, Oenpelli Council Chairman.)

"People come to work because they have to . . . they can't afford to lose their jobs . . . Therefore, it's our business as unionists to try to retain those jobs as best we can." (Helen Davis, shop steward at Mistral Fans, Melbourne.)

Australia has some of the world's largest reserves of uranium. The push to develop them has been fiercely opposed by many Australians. Through the daily lives of people in the remote north and the urban south, *Dirt Cheap* provides an intimate description of these conflicting interests.

The film's release plan starts with theatrical release in the capital cities — opening in Sydney on 17 July, and in Melbourne in September. The producers hope to reach a very large and quite diverse audience of regular film-goers as well as people coming to see this particular film. Interested organisations can arrange theatre parties, from small groups to booking the entire



Filming with women workers in a metal fan factory in Preston, Victoria, where jobs are being lost.
(from the film *Dirt Cheap*)

cinema. This will be especially important when the film is just starting.

Later there will be print sales of the film — to community organisations, educational institutions, church groups, unions, government agencies, etc.

A tour of Arnhem land is being planned for the film to reach Aboriginal communities.

It is also being booked into international film festivals, with the potential there for television broadcast to tell the rest of the world about the continuing attack on Aborigines and the environment in Australia.

Chain Reaction presents this special report/programme on the film — outlining what it is about, giving the history of the project, details of production, and telling a little of the story behind making the film. We publish a full set of the available stills from the film. On page 34 the film is reviewed by Pat O'Shane.

Credits

Director : David Hay
 Lighting : Ned Lander
 Camera Operators : Jaems Grant
 Ned Lander
 Annemarie Chandler
 Sound Recordist :
 Production Management : Marg Clancy
 Christine Dustan
 Chris Warner
 Distribution : Marg Clancy
 Music : The Early Kookas
 Assistant Editor : Chris Warner
 Sound Editors : Greg Bell
 David Hay

Gunwinggu Translator : Andrew Managku
 Graphics : Aleks Danko
 Publicity Design : Lee Whitmore

Produced, written and edited by Marg Clancy, David Hay, Ned Lander.

The film was made with the support of Friends of the Earth, 38 Australian trade unions (Federal, NSW and Victorian), Australian Council of Churches (Division of World Christian Action), Doctors Against Uranium Mining, the Newcastle Workers' Club, and the New South Wales Film Corporation.

Dirt Cheap, 16mm. Color. 88 minutes.
 © M Clancy, D Hay, N Lander, 1980.

2 November 1978.)

14–26 November 1978
 Filming in Melbourne.

December 1978–October 1979
 Editing. Completed footage 25 hours.
 Final footage 88 minutes.

November 1979–February 1980
 Sound editing, subtitles, laboratory work commences.

17 July 1980
 World premiere at the Opera House, Sydney.

September 1980
 Melbourne release at the Longford Cinema.

The Producers

PONCH HAWKES



MARG CLANCY
 Distributor — Co-Producer:

DAVID HAY
 Director — Co-Producer:

NED LANDER
 Cinematographer — Co-Producer:

In June 1977, Marg Clancy was working with the Australian Performing Group (Pram Factory), as project director responsible for promotion and production management on *The Radio-active Horror Show*. During this time discussions about *Dirt Cheap* began. "I regard distribution as a fundamental part of filmmaking and will continue working to see that *Dirt Cheap* is used effectively."

"The work has been a form of political activity involving many people, Aboriginal and white, and central to that for me has been the part that women have played, both in the film itself and in the events it analyses."

"I think it was pretty clear between the three of us that the background of experience that we all had was different and in various areas. You discuss it — you talk about who wants to do what, who can do what — and the discussion is influenced by your own wishes and other considerations, and as with all other decisions, you come, in a group, to a decision as to who is going to do what."

With *Dirt Cheap*, David Hay has continued to develop the political and social themes of his earlier films. These include *The Spirit of Seventy Six* (1975) and *Me and Daphne* (1977). *The Spirit of Seventy Six* is a 45 minute dramatic film showing what happens to a service station dealer and his wife when they are forced out of business by a large oil company. *Me and Daphne*, a 35 minute drama, tells the story of a mother and daughter working in a chicken factory outside Sydney. This film caused considerable controversy when it was banned in NSW upon its release in September, 1977.

Talking of his work on *Dirt Cheap*, David Hay says: "It's the first film I have been involved with that deals with issues that are the subject of a bitter and widespread national debate. The people we met during the film were the strongest-willed and most forthright Australians I've encountered. Getting these qualities into the film in a warm and open way was one of my biggest concerns as director."

Ned Lander has been working in film for more than 8 years. He has combined technical work in the feature film industry and a growing reputation as a cinematographer on independent films with his own ambitions as a director. His previous films include a 22 minute drama, *Room* (1974), and *Out Here* (1976), a 20 minute documentary on early childhood development. Ned Lander has also studied at the Australian Film and Television School. Currently, he is producing and directing a 50 minute drama, *Inna*. This film is drawn from the lives of the members of two Aboriginal rock and roll/reggae bands from Adelaide, *No Fixed Address* and *Us Mob*.

Ned Lander says: "The experience of *Dirt Cheap* has strengthened my commitment to socially and politically active filmmaking. In particular, it has given me a greater understanding of the struggles facing Aboriginal communities. This has led me to the current project, which, in a lively context of music, will recount a recent history common to many Aboriginal people living in an urban environment."

History of the Project

June 1977
 First meeting of the producers to discuss project.

27 July 1977
 Meeting of Victorian unions decides to finance research and script development.

August 1977
 The Fraser Government announces its intention to proceed with the mining of uranium at Ranger.

27 August 1977
 Research trip to the Northern Territory begins. Visits to Darwin, Arnhem Land, Rum Jungle, Gove. First meeting with Dolly Jarmarlu.

October–December 1977
 Script written.

9 January 1978
 Final draft of script submitted to NSW Film Corporation.

2 May 1978
 The NSW Film Corporation agrees to become the major investor in the film.

27 July 1978
 Completion of production financing.

31 July 1978
 The producers commence Northern Territory preproduction.

9 September 1978
 Filming begins at Gove, NT.

23 September–5 November 1978
 Filming in the East Alligator region of the NT — the uranium region.

3 November 1978
 'Signing' of Ranger Agreement at Oenpelli, NT. *Dirt Cheap* crew present by invitation of the Gunbalanya Council, Oenpelli, "to report Mr Viner's visit". (Quote from permit signed S Maralngurra, Council Chairman, dated

"Our land, not money"

by Marg Clancy, David Hay and Ned Lander.

What is mining doing for Australians? At Gove, Northern Territory, the bauxite mine on land belonging to the Yirrkala community has changed everything, Roy Marika, Aboriginal community spokesperson, tells us. Down south in Melbourne, Helen, a shop steward at Mistral Fans, fights dismissals in her factory and attends a shop stewards school held by her union, the Amalgamated Metal Workers' and Shipwrights' Union (AMWSU), to analyse the reasons for unemployment in the manufacturing industry, including the role of mining.

Another large-scale open-cut mining operation is about to get underway at Jabiru (NT) — the Ranger Uranium Mine. But first agreement must be reached with the Northern Land Council (NLC), a statutory body under the Land Rights (NT) Act, on the terms of mining. Not only is Ranger in question; there is also Nabarlek (Queensland Mines), and at a meeting there Silas Maralngurra (Oenpelli Council Chairman) leads discussion of the terms proposed. Dick Mulwagu, NLC delegate from Croker Island, sees mining, fishing and pearlshell farms encircling and squashing Aboriginal people in Arnhem land.

Dolly Jarmarlou lives on the land downstream from Pancontinental Mines; she and her brother Bill from Murganella are two of the traditional landowners responsible for decisions about that land. Their land adjoins that of the Ranger area: Toby Gangali, who works for the NT Parks and Wildlife Service, is one of the traditional landowners for that land. Consequently he has to spend a lot of time at meetings, discussing mining and the proposed Kakadu National Park.

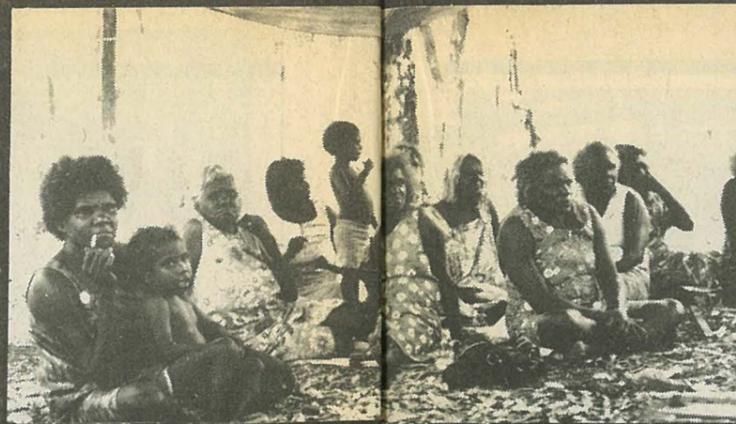
Modern mining takes heavy capital investment (Ranger \$300 million +), is highly mechanized and export-oriented, the Site Manager at Gove tells us. For the mine workers it means good pay and relief from urban problems, though there's not much work for women in the town. So why worry? Well, as Ted Wilshire explains at the AMWSU shop stewards school because mining is largely carried out by overseas-based

multinational corporations, sometimes in joint ventures with the larger Australian companies, there is repatriation of profits overseas. We pay for the infrastructure — roads, railways, etc, the companies get tax concessions and pay no resources tax. The one study that's been done so far, the Fitzgerald Report, found that from 1967-1973 the mineral industry actually cost Australian taxpayers \$55 million.

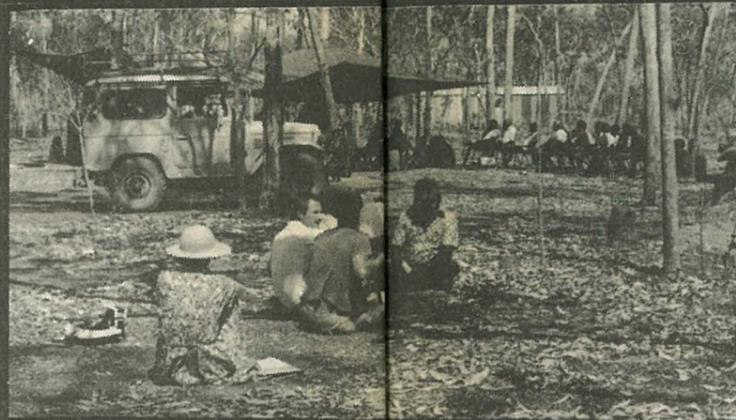
No Aboriginal workers are employed at Gove. The Town's Administrator speaks of white recreation facilities and we visit the Fishing Club. Roy Marika, from the Yirrkala community, articulates the necessity for whites to listen to Aboriginal people, the owners of the land. As Dick Mulwagu from Croker says "Let the Government hear us, Aboriginal people, and recognize that we suffer from Arnhem Land... our land, not money." But the land of Dolly Jarmarlou's birth is threatened by uranium mining. As with other minerals, uranium is to be produced for export to countries like the Philippines, providing energy for a manufacturing industry built on cheap labour, run by those same multinational companies and operating for their profit, not the benefit of Asian workers.

There is also, as Toby Gangali says, the worry that uranium mining and nuclear energy are very dangerous. Workers from the now-abandoned Rum Jungle mine recall the lack of safety and health precautions then and the consequent injury to workers and the environment, yet that mine was tiny in comparison with the massive scale — a 1 mile wide pit area — of the proposed Pancontinental mine at Ja-Ja, near Dolly's camp. The concern of the ex-Rum Jungle workers contrasts strongly with the blasé attitude to health and safety expressed by workers at Ranger, though a biologist cautions them against accepting the assurances of the Atomic Energy Commission, given such experiences as the Maralinga cover-up.

Aboriginal knowledge contains warnings, in the form of the legend of the Rainbow Snake about disturbing the



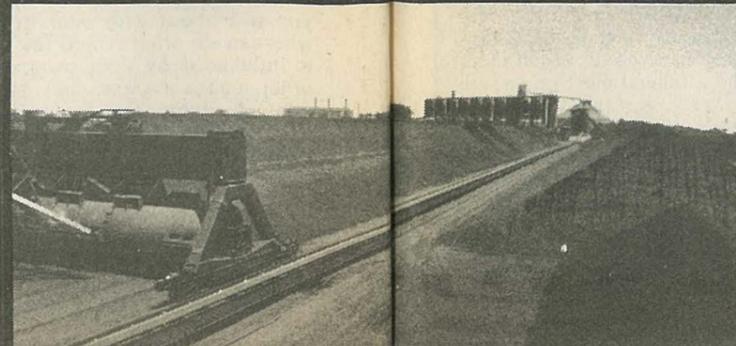
At a meeting at Narbarlek, NT, women discuss the terms of a mining agreement proposed by Queensland Mine developers of the Narbarlek Uranium deposit.



Filming with Dick Mulwagu, Northland Council delegate from Croker Island, at a meeting at Narbarlek, NT, discuss the proposed Queensland Mines Agreement.



Dolly Jarmarlou, one of the traditional landowners of the land where the Pancontinental uranium mine is located. Northern mining piles of bauxite, awaiting export.



Photos from the film DIRT CHEAP

A tense situation

Tina Kaufmann, editor of *Film News* talked with Marg Clancy, David Hay and Ned Lander about the story of *Dirt Cheap*. *Chain Reaction* presents excerpts from the interview.

MARG We were in a very tense political situation. Although the Northern Territory is an enormous, vast physical space, there aren't many people there, everyone knows everyone else. If you are in a situation where the mining companies want one thing and the aborigines another, the church is in the middle and the politicians are flying around, you are likely to run into people all the time, at the airport etc., your car becomes known, and it becomes difficult, politically.

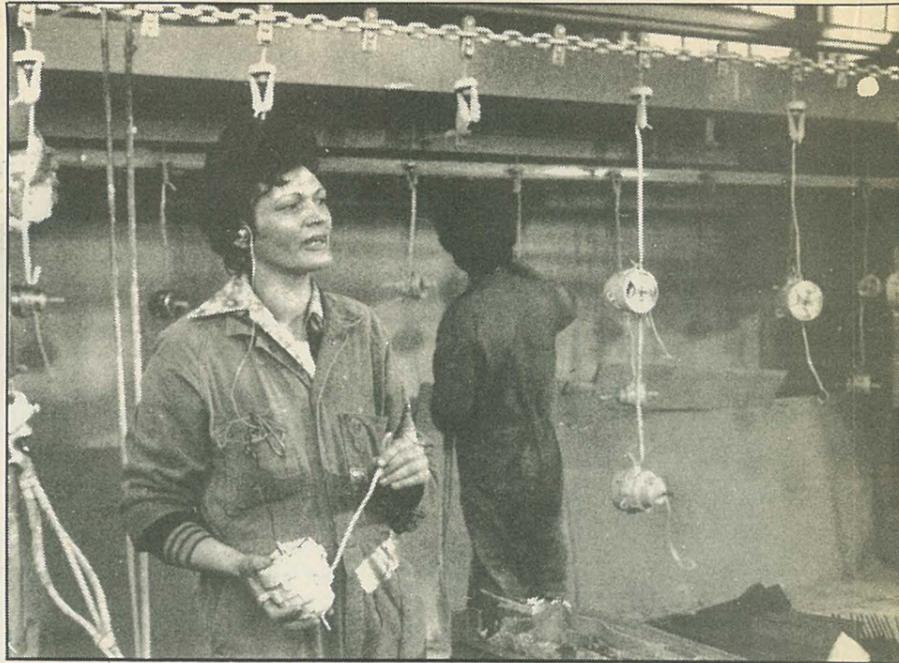
Were the people you filmed aware of the political stance you were going to take in the film?

NED It is extremely difficult for aboriginal people living in the area, because obviously they live alongside those mining companies, their lives are deeply interconnected. And to take a simple stance, an anti-uranium stance, is naive, because their lives are so fraught with those tensions. But they have to act as political beings in their daily lives, and the situation where you can sit down together and talk quite straightforwardly is often a situation that takes weeks and weeks, just finding that moment, not just walking in and turning on the camera and saying now tell us how you feel. Letting people see us, and see what we are doing, and come to know us, and nominate times when they want to speak to us. We were obstructed continually from getting to talk to Toby who works a ranger station for the Parks and Wildlife Department. Just getting to talk to him, just getting to meet him, was a real struggle, because we were constantly being told that he didn't like filmmakers, and that he didn't like this or that, which was not the case.

But as Toby Gangali observed, the Government was pushing the Aboriginal people to sign the Agreement. This was illustrated clearly by the events of the next NLC meeting, held 3 weeks later. The meeting began at Bamyili, near Katherine, NT, and was attended by Ian Viner as Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. After 2 days of deliberations there, the NLC delegates agreed to sign the Agreement provided the Oenpelli people agreed. So next morning Viner, Yunupingu, and the NLC delegates flew to Oenpelli. Silas Maralngurra refused to attend the meeting when informed by Yunupingu that he could not chair it. The Oenpelli people adopted a boycott of the meeting as their strongest form of protest. It was under these circumstances that the Ranger Agreement was declared to have been agreed to by the Aboriginal people. *Dirt Cheap* concludes with a documentation of that so-called 'signing' meeting of 3 November 1978.

Who was telling you this, the Parks and Wildlife people?

continued over...



A shop steward in a metal fan factory in Preston, Victoria explains how jobs are being lost in her factory. (from the film *Dirt Cheap*)

DAVID Yes. Basically there was a very protective, paternal attitude to "our blacks", from all over the place. At one stage we wanted to shoot a little shot with Toby on the front verandah of his house. We'd discussed it with him beforehand, and it was fine with him and we set the camera up, and the ranger came over and said "you can't shoot here" . . . And we were in a situation where that white man was arguing with me, in front of Toby, whose house it was, totally denying that he even had any right to be in the discussion. So when you are faced with a situation like that, our situation was to withdraw, not to have a white man's fight in front of the aboriginal person, fighting over him as property.

MARG And that sort of situation arose all the time.

NED It is very rare to see aboriginal people given a chance on film to talk about the issues that are most important to them, in a reasonable, fair, and open way.

Their experience of the media generally was someone flying in for 24 hours, putting them somewhere and filming them, and then flying out again. So the experience of seeing us regularly, and knowing where our camp was, made a big difference.

With regard to the relationship of feminism in the construction of the film, what did you find to be the tribal situation and the role of women in the tribe?

MARG In the Northern Land Council, which is typical of white structures which are superimposed on aboriginal people, it is a white male structure and there are no women members of the Northern Land Council, and the sexism is transposed.

Marg added that because Rachel Maralngurra, the woman who talks in the first meeting, and Hanna were boycotting the meeting that ended with the signing of the ranger "agreement", the producers didn't get any chance to record their reactions.

MARG They knew the meeting was going to happen, but no-one knew it was going to be the signing meeting. They knew Viner was coming, but they

decided to go ahead with their plans, to take a school party to Groote Eylandt.

DAVID How we incorporated our feminist politics into the film, was through a conscious choice of people, like, in as much as the Northern Land Council reflects white male sexism, in terms of excluding women, having the main characters in the film being Dolly, and Helen, and to a certain extent Rachel, as well, and then in the instance of the miner at Gove, showing the position of his wife, and consistently trying to show the experience of the women, and how the women were major actors in the situation.

It was a very interesting situation when we were filming at Nabarlek. They had the Institute of Aboriginal Affairs video people filming there - they had all the cameras and all the microphones pointed towards the men. You see, at the meetings the men sit at one end and the women sit at the other - and it wasn't until we started filming with the women that they suddenly realised that the women were part of the meeting too, and turned their cameras around.

The *Dirt Cheap* project started back in 1977. In the middle of that year the producers initiated discussions with people in the anti-uranium movement, particularly in Melbourne. They then also began discussions with unionists and, as David said, "it was basically their support for the idea of doing a film that got it off the ground".

DAVID Thirteen unions in Melbourne put up over \$2,000 to pay us to go to

the Northern Territory and do the research and work on the script.

With the money from the unions, were there any conditions attached? MARG The unions hadn't done anything like this before. They gave the research and script development money very much on spec., no strings attached. We didn't ask for a large amount from any one union, just small amounts, so it was a pretty low-risk operation. It was an issue that the unions felt extremely strongly about, and the film gave an opportunity for action. We saw it similarly, as a political action, so we had a joint sense of what we were doing, why we were going to make the film, and we talked about what sort of film was needed, what sort of film would be useful, right through all that time. So when we got the okay from the NSW Film Corporation, it was a matter of going back and saying now is the time when we need larger amounts of money in order to go into production. I think we were seen as having achieved what we had set out to do at that point, and so the unions said righto and came in. And that's happening again, in distribution.

The connection with the unions meant that there was a very concrete political context in which the film was made right from the start. But the film is being released in a year in which there is going to be a federal election, where the Liberal Party has chosen as its slogan - *Go Australia* - mineral development. . . Obviously the argument of the film is one that I'd be happy if everyone had contact with

We Call for a Treaty Within Australia, Between Australians

The position of Australian Aborigines today is among the unhappiest legacies of British colonial administration.

British, and later Australian, law failed to recognise their prior occupation of this land and their system of land ownership. They remain the only indigenous people in any former British colony whose rights to compensation and land ownership are unconfirmed by any negotiated treaty or agreement. Their support in social welfare, health and education are therefore seen by them, and by us, as mere charitable handouts and are dependent on the whim of successive government.

The continuance of this situation leads to further grievance and resentment. For our mutual respect and self-respect, it is time for a just agreement and settlement between the Aborigines and the Commonwealth Government, which bears responsibility for them.

We ask you to sign the statement below, and to make a donation to the costs of this campaign.

Sponsors who give \$7.50 or more will be sent an illustrated book, *It's Coming Yet*, which covers the whole subject. It recounts what happened to the indigenous people of the United States, Canada, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea and compares their experience to the Aboriginal experience in Australia. It examines the legal position today in these countries and in Australia, with a special emphasis on land and compensation. It examines the political situation today, within Australia and overseas. It looks at the future.

The Committee is organising regional and group support committees and seminars in Universities around Australia. The work ahead will be hard and success will not be quick, and it will largely depend upon the pressure that can be put to bear on Government. Your letter to your local member, your discussions, your support will help.

*"Where are we?
What are we?
Not a recognised race."*

Jack Davis,
Aboriginal Poet "Desolation"

The Aboriginal Treaty Committee:

- Dr H.C. Coombs (Chairman)
- Mrs Dymphna Clark
- Mrs Eva Hancock
- Mrs Judith Wright McKinney.
- Mr Stewart Harris
- Mr Hugh Littlewood
- Prof. C D Rowley

I/We support the Treaty and enclose a donation of to the costs incurred by the Aboriginal Treaty Committee, PO Box 1242, Canberra City, ACT 2601.

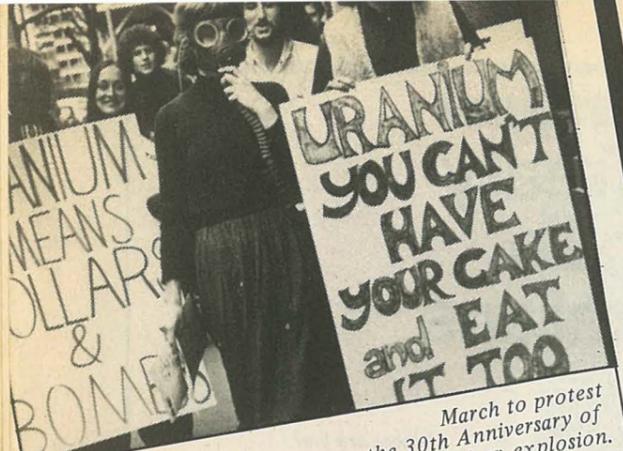
Name Signed

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Please indicate if you want a receipt.

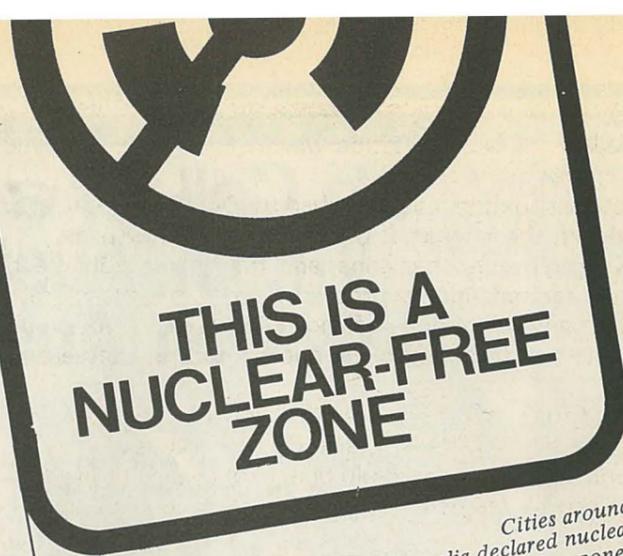
Anyone giving \$7.50 or more will be sent a copy of the book.

Do you wish to join/start a regional support group?



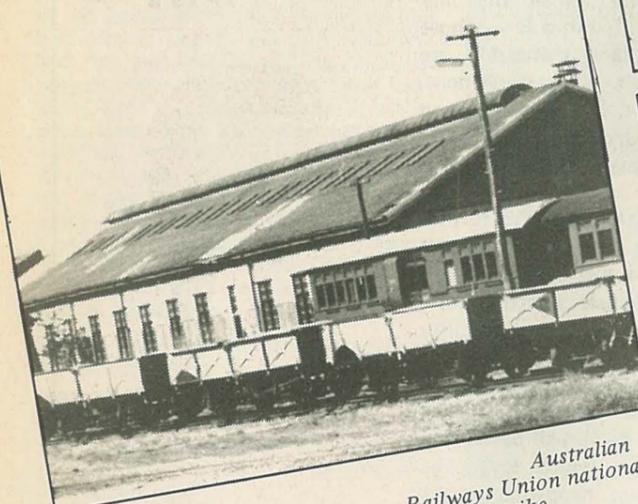
March to protest the 30th Anniversary of the world's first nuclear explosion.

1975



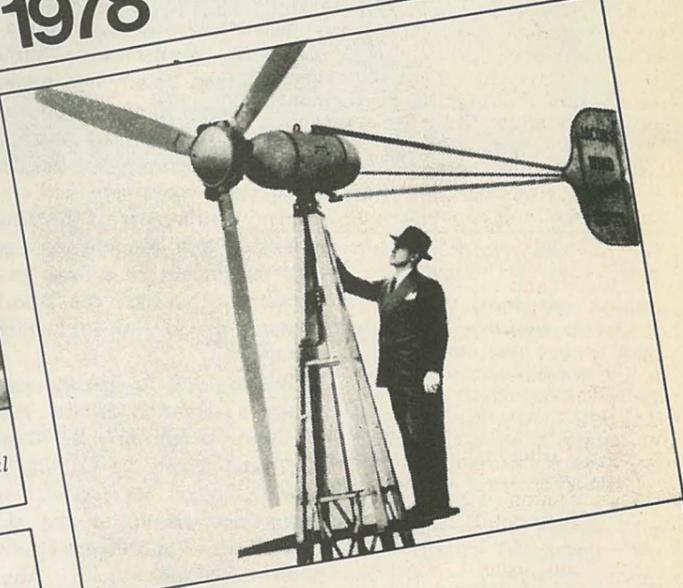
Cities around Australia declared nuclear free zones.

1978



Australian Railways Union national 24 hour strike

1976



1979

RANGER URANIUM ENVIRONMENTAL INQUIRY

SECOND REPORT

Final Report of Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry published

1977

What we can now do to stop uranium mining

THE 1980's

We set people a difficult question when *Chain Reaction* asked what we can now do to stop uranium mining. But it is a crucial question.

The present situation was described by Don Siemon of International Development Action, Melbourne, for *Not Man Apart*, the Friends of the Earth (USA) newspaper:

"The Ranger Inquiry has gone, and the intense public debate over uranium has quietened over the past year. While uranium mining proceeds, and while plans are made for future nuclear power plants, this is beyond the daily experience of most Australians. Not so for many Aboriginal people. They are the first Australians to be sacrificed to the nuclear future: they are seeing their lands and their hopes for the future destroyed."

"The need for support from Australians in other states and for recognition internationally is ever urgent. Otherwise the first Australians, already the victims of uranium mining as they were of atomic testing twenty years before, may lose what could be a final chance to live their own lives on their own lands."

Here we open a discussion which *CR* plans to present over a few editions. We invite your letters on this vital issue.

The stop uranium mining movement is now in a stronger position to stop uranium mining than ever before. We know more about the uranium industry. We have forced the right to access to information about contracts, shipments, users of uranium. We know more about the dangers, the deaths, the environmental effects of uranium mining.

The anti uranium mining movement operates on local, national, international and cross-movement bases. The uranium industry is international, and operates on local and national levels. Our strategy has to attack on all levels, with public awareness programmes, boycott and direct actions, parliamentary actions, research and broadbased solidarity.

We have to determine strategy precisely, using open and regular attack.

We need to work cooperatively, making a union of all Australians working for a peaceful, non-nuclear world. That means groups fighting for land rights, and against uranium mining, enrichment of uranium, nuclear power, the weapons race, US bases in Australia, multinational control of Australia; for

womens rights, as well as nuclear veterans groups and environmentalists, (perhaps this is half the list).

We must keep in touch with developments in other parts of the world. Actions against Rio Tinto Zinc in England or Namibia should also be followed through against CRA in Australia.

Information is a key point in the strategy. We have to make sure that information flows to all people. Aborigines must have information about effects of uranium mining, everyone must know how the Atomic Weapon Test Safety Committee has kept us uninformed about Maralinga for 25 years.

We have to get information out to people who need it, we also have to know who is doing what research and how we can contribute to that. We have to know the tactics of other groups in other countries, their successes and failures. In short, we need an energy information service, created by and supported by the movement. With knowledge, regular access to information, and persistence we can inflict the wounds to kill the monster.

Harry Daphney, an Aboriginal from the Kowanyama * community, talked with Barbara Hutton for *Chain Reaction*, about what he is doing to stop mining.

"Mining has to be stopped because of the culture. In Kowanyama we're going to hold onto the land because we don't want anyone to come in and destroy it. We believe in the culture. The prospectors are taking photographs from the air. If people want to come and make survey maps we don't let them.

"My great grandfather got shot down and I'm walking on his bloodshed. This land is more important to me than anyone.

"We've been held down by the Queensland Government for a long time now since they took our land. Now at last we've got a chance to speak about it and we've got everyone involved with it. The old people of my community sent me down to this conference to speak for us, because they are afraid the mining companies will herd us away from our

own settlement.

"We don't know what the mineral is that they're looking for. Could be bauxite, could be anything.

"I'm going back and I'm going to talk to the people there and tell them what happened here even if I get in trouble. I don't care if the police take me and I go to jail, I'm going to tell the people. I'm going to fight for my own people whether I go to jail or not."

Have you ever been to jail for this before?

"They locked me up about 5 times and I never went through the court. They locked me up for no reason because I was fighting for my People."

*Kowanyama community (formerly the Edward River Mission) is on the west coast of Cape York, Queensland, about level with Cooktown. There is a uranium prospecting lease further up river in the Mitchell River/Edward River region. It is on traditional land but outside the actual reserve.

Lin Pugh

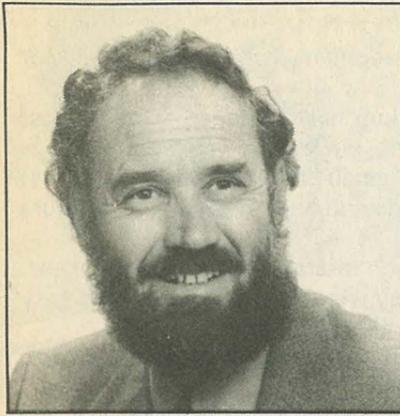


Lin Pugh, formerly of Melbourne, now works for the World Information Service on Energy, in Amsterdam. She recently visited Australia.

Harry Daphney

Harry Daphney is the chairperson of the Land Rights group on his Reserve. He was locked up under the provisions of the Queensland Aborigines Act, which allow the white administrators of reserves to lock up "trouble-makers". Under the same Act, he had to get a permit to allow him to come to the wilderness conference in Cairns, and had to be back the following Monday sharp. So this was his only chance to talk. Unfortunately we were unable to obtain a photo of him.

Norm Sanders



Dr Sanders is a Member of the Tasmanian Parliament and the Australian Democrats national spokesperson on energy.

The uranium pushers knew public apathy would eventually swallow opposition to uranium development. Time and geography favour them. The media get tired of a prolonged story and Australia's major cities are too remote from the Alligator River to feel directly threatened.

Politicians and trade unionists are abandoning the cause in the quest for a quick buck, knowing that the public won't care. We have to inspire people to force their leaders to be honest.

The schools offer a starting place. The kids have to live with our generation's mistakes over uranium and should know all the facts. Activists must put together information kits and lectures with the latest horror stories about Three Mile Island. It has been said before . . . but people forget.

The anti-uranium movement must get more litigious. The courts offer a means of slowing down or halting the nuclear movement in Australia. There is a current myth in Australia that

environmental law suits are impossible here because we lack a Bill of Rights.

Successful legal action in America did not flow from the Bill of Rights, but from repeated assaults on the courtroom door. It's time we stopped moaning in Australia and took to the courts. There is nothing like a good lawsuit to attract media attention.

We must simultaneously step up pressure on the politicians. Of the major parties, only the Australian Democrats have an iron-clad anti-uranium policy. If the Democrats win the balance in power in the next Senate elections, Australia's nuclear policies will change drastically.

The most essential factor in the anti-uranium fight is the re-dedication of Australia's environmental movement. It is time for every one of us to enter the battle against nuclear proliferation. There isn't much point in saving the Franklin-Lower Gordon Rivers if the entire world gets wiped out by nuclear war or "accidental" ionising catastrophe.

What can Christians do to stop uranium mining?

1. What any other concerned human being would and does do. See the other articles here.
2. **Pray.** Pray privately and publicly (in the liturgy). Pray that the forces of greed, exploitation and destruction may not continue to triumph. Pray for the coming of God's Kingdom of peace, justice and love.
3. **Fast.** Along with prayer and naming (see 4), part of the traditional Christian method of exorcism/casting out evil is to fast (see also 7). Like prayer, it means taking the situation deadly seriously.

4. Discover who is going to profit by mining and exporting uranium and name them as tools of the Beast.
5. Bring to the attention of vestries, parish councils, presbyteries, etc. the gravity of the situation — further uprooting of Aborigines, increased possibilities of nuclear war, greater polarizing of rich and poor.
6. Support and join those who are protesting, even to the extent of civil disobedience.
7. By example and discussion urge Christians to live more simply, less reliant on products that waste energy, more willing to share facilities and resources.

Uranium mining in Australia can be stopped. That is so even though the movement has gone through a period of substantial loss of confidence.

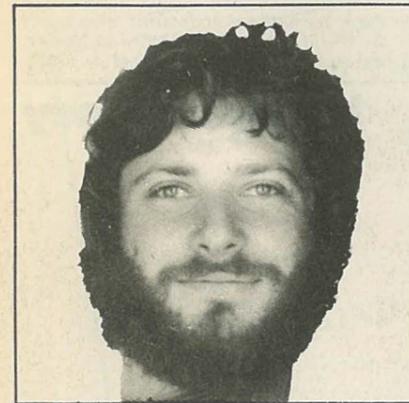
In our present state we need to consolidate into a clearly visible force to be reckoned with. There is legitimate resistance to doing this through highly centralised organisation. So how can it be done? If we are not to have a unified *organisation* then we must find a powerful unified *action* around which diverse groups can organise in their own ways, and which will demonstrate our strength to the trade unions, the ALP, the community and ourselves.

To my mind only one thing will do that — a National Commitment Campaign — not against uranium mining solely — but for a Nuclear Free Australia. This includes total opposition to all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle, and nuclear weapons, in Australia. Signatures to a Declaration of Commitment should be collected across Australia from both individuals and organisations. At the same time a current information kit should be published and distributed in the current state of the nuclear struggle and recent developments in the debate.

The campaign should aim to forge all sympathetic groupings into a drive to achieve legislation for a Nuclear-Free Australia at State and Federal levels, say, prior to or just after, the Federal elections in 1983. The campaign should be launched in a big way, or not at all. Endorsing organisations and groups (such as political parties, environmental groups, women's groups, Land Rights groups, Councils, community organisations) should be lined up publicly to launch it perhaps at a campaign conference. The statement of commitment should contain an invitation to specific Action. Other imaginative actions should be planned to illustrate the progress including direct action (occupations, etc). In embarking on such a campaign we would be paralleling similar actions in France (1972 — 100,000 signatures; 1979 — still under collection), Denmark (1976 — 170,000 signatures; 1979 — still under collection), Sweden (1979 — 40,000 signatures). The proposed campaign has some elements in common with our earlier signature campaign for a uranium moratorium. In other ways it is crucially different. With enthusiasm it can be successful.

John Gaden

Rev Gaden is Director of the Theological School, Trinity College, University of Melbourne.



Dr Jim Falk is a lecturer in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science, University of Wollongong.

Beth Mylius



Beth Mylius has worked in Adelaide with Action for World Development and is now living on a farm at Melrose in South Australia.

Every person in Australia can contribute to stopping uranium mining by the way we live our lives.

There are three main ways for us to live and act.

- First we can protest. We can join in the demonstrations, the letter writing campaigns and the more imaginative actions of the non-violent action movement.

- Second, we can act creatively in the way we live. Sit down with two or three concerned people and write down what uranium mining means to us. For example: nuclear energy is primarily for big industry and corporation profit, who regard people as objects to be employed for profit, and by governments using the development of mining as a way of offering jobs. Jobs which alienate people further from really living. Take each idea which we list down and think about how we can change our way of living to creatively

answer each point. For example: Change the way we use energy and the kind of energy we use. Alter the products we use where possible to those produced by small groups. Begin to build a creative life within our own group or family where people or our children are able to have worth and meaning when they do not have a paid job. Building our lives in a direction which emphasises the values which make people central will move us away from the values of big business and uranium mining.

- Third, we can only do the protesting and creative living with other people. So join the movement of people doing both those things whenever we feel most able to fit in eg: Friends Of The Earth, Action for World Development, Campaign Against Nuclear Energy. Then we need to belong to a small group of people with whom we can talk, act and share. We may have to bring that group together.

It seems imperative that we provide national and local focus to our campaign. Now is a time to raise the issues again with a wide range of people who feel, wrongly, that we have lost this battle.

In spite of the obvious financial difficulties, this is the time to bring together people *actively* working against uranium mining and its out-growths in anti-nuclear, peace, land rights, trade union, party political, and environmental groups.

One tactic to raise active participation might be a nationally launched and researched door knock. Probably one focus of this door knock would be the strong Nuclear Free Zones Campaigns already existing in many areas. A nationally produced set of leaflets could be used. Activists would learn a lot about the "state of the movement"

from people who are not actively involved. A pilot program is tentatively being developed in three states at this time.

Another major effort of people in all groups working against uranium mining and the nuclear world must be to develop, strengthen and share information about our own actions and developments overseas. A complete, annotated list of international contacts must be drawn up and distributed. Also, a quick, efficient way of making contact with activists within Australia must be designed and implemented, perhaps using existing telex links in unions and alternative media. There is much merit in the proposal for an Australian World Information Service on Energy office to complement the work done by the Australian International Nuclear News Service.

Laurie Shane

Laurie Shane is Co-director of the Canberra & South-East Region Environment Centre.

Moorabbin Movement Against Uranium Mining is one of the original MAUM suburban groups and over the years has been very active, particularly in its local areas. It has participated in such a wide range of activities that it has become recognized as one of the City of Moorabbin's more prominent community groups. This is confirmed by the fact that the local Council now invites Moorabbin MAUM to take part in its various Council sponsored events. This stems from an outstanding exhibit put on by the group at a special Council day in a local park. The group has also spoken to the Council and made application for Moorabbin to be declared a Nuclear Free Zone.

It also has a good relationship with union members engaged in local industry, especially at Phillip Morris and Johns & Waygood. Johns & Waygood employees showed their awareness of the dangers inherent in the nuclear cycle by voting to refuse to work on equipment required for uranium mining. Moorabbin MAUM helped support the

strikers at Phillip Morris in their recent struggle against that multinational.

This group is not loathe to show its face to the public. It has occupied and taken part in street marches in local shopping centres and car cavalcades. One of these was from as far away as Frankston and then up the Nepean Highway. It demonstrated at Nylex in Mentone when the factory was visited by Malcolm Fraser. Street stalls have been operated, leaflets handed out and letter-boxed, even a street survey taken to ascertain people's views. Film nights have been conducted, a slide program made available for use by schools and other interested parties and guest speakers have addressed the group and public meetings. In addition to this the group supplies regular news items and announcements to the local paper together with letters to the editor.

Moorabbin MAUM is convinced that it is grass roots movements like theirs that will eventually help to put a stop to uranium mining in Australia and towards establishing a nuclear-free world.

Moorabbin MAUM



Moorabbin Movement Against Uranium Mining

Moorabbin is a south-eastern suburb of Melbourne.

Peter Cook



Peter Cook is Secretary of the Trades and Labor Council of Western Australia.

The 1979 ACTU Congress decision was, for the union movement, a watershed in determining its attitude to uranium mining. The strategy laid down is one of continuing opposition to the mining and export of uranium and the present programme of development including the proposed establishment of a uranium enrichment plant in Australia, and supported 'the Federal ALP Policy of a moratorium on mining, processing and export of uranium, and repudiation of non-Labor Government commitments until satisfactory safeguards are met'.

Additionally, in order to ensure that these determinations did not remain as idle words, Congress called 'on the incoming Executive to immediately embark on a campaign including leaflets, use of the media and statements by the officers to convince the Australian public and those presently working

in the industry of the dangers and consequences of the mining of uranium'. Since these decisions the ACTU has published a leaflet; *Uranium - The ACTU Policy Explained* which has had wide circulation.

As well, a delegation of senior ACTU officials will shortly be going to the Northern Territory for the purpose of putting ACTU Policy directly to the workers and unions concerned with mining.

For unions, as indeed for most of the community, much more of an educative campaign needs to be carried on in order that appeal for support of ACTU Policy is based on an understanding of the issue and is not merely an appeal for union solidarity.

This informational campaigning is targeted primarily for areas in which mining has been designated and apart from the key issues of Aboriginal land rights, lack of proper waste dis-

posal, nuclear weapons proliferation, reactor safety and foreign multinational ownership of Australia's resources, the main concern for workers is, more and more, the occupational health aspects of mining uranium, particularly the effects of low level ionised radiation and information about the cancer causing aspects of that in people associated with all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle.

Prior to mining going ahead, the anti-uranium movement in Australia had a clear cut objective - to prevent that mining. Now that mining is occurring it seems that the issue has lost some of the focus it previously had and/or the game has been given away. What is required is a new rallying point which initially ought to be in terms of the forthcoming Federal election, but subsequent to that (whatever the result), to stopping the mining.

would not only provide a powerful weapon to halt the mining of uranium but could also be used to verify the results to present and future generations of the damage done by other chemical or technological means... eg. food additives, asbestos, microwave technology.

- 1 Rosalie Bertell PhD, *Nuclear Power and Public Health* 1980.
- 2 US Dept. HEW Publication N (HRA) 77-1457. *Statistics Needed for Determining the Effects of the Environment on Health.*
- 3 S Graham & M L Levin et al. *Methodological Problems and Designs of the Tri-State Leukemia Survey. Annals New York Acad. Science.* 107:557, 1963.

ANTHONY

Thank you for your letter of 29 April asking for a contribution from Mr Anthony to your magazine.

I must inform you that Mr Anthony does not agree to your request.

Liam Barthgate
Press Secretary to the
Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister for Trade and Resources
Parliament House
Canberra.

CR invited other comments on the future strategy for the anti-uranium movement. Some declined - including Randal McDonald, Managing Director of Melbourne's fountain of wisdom, The Age. Unfortunately a couple of answers were not directly related to the question - including that of Sir Philip Baxter. We also received the above two letters.
Eds

CANE(WA)



Dave Worth, Lousie Duxbury and Chuck Banzas of the Campaign Against Nuclear Energy (WA).

W.A.'s chief crazy Charlie Court, with his wish for a reactor here in the West, makes more immediate impact on public awareness than does the mining of uranium 600 kms from Perth.

Everyone in the Australian anti-nuclear movement was impressed with the arguments of Sister Rosalie Bertell. We can use her methods to attack the uranium industry. The idea is an environmental health monitoring program, to establish a baseline study of the health of the public, before they are affected by uranium mining.¹ This sort of study has already been undertaken in British Columbia (Canada) where a moratorium has been declared on uranium mining.

The study would involve the medical profession and the Public Health Department in each state. It would cover

age, sex, history of diseases, occupation, place of residence, reproductive history and exposures to known hazards (eg. medical X-rays, chemicals, traumatic experiences)². This data would be provided by the local GP and stored in a central data bank (with proper safeguards of privacy ensured). There would be a tumor reporting centre to be notified as every tumor is discovered.

The statistical procedures are well established and could be modelled on the successful Tri-State Study.³

This large bank of information could then be used to gauge the nature and extent of every new assault on our environment. It would make the industry legally accountable for compensation claims for any damage it causes to either its workforce or the rest of the population. This sophisticated human health monitoring system

promotion of uranium mining in the Northern Territory has been against the interests of the aboriginal people, most directly affected.

Finally, I draw your attention to Mr Hayden's warning to the companies involved, their financiers and their potential customers, in his speech on Atomic Energy Act in November 1978, that Labor will remain committed to its current attitude toward the exploitation of Australian uranium while the various technical and institutional problems remained unsolved, and that a Labor Government will put this policy into effect.

Thank you for your invitation. I am certain that you will find these speeches provide a clear description of the attitude of both Mr Hayden and the ALP toward uranium.

Ian Henderson
Assistant Private Secretary
to the Leader of the Opposition
Parliament House
Canberra

unresolved health, environmental, safety, security and nuclear proliferation problems associated with the operations of the nuclear power industry. As Mr Hayden points out in these speeches, while these problems persist, the ALP remains committed to a policy consisting of three essential components: a moratorium on the mining and treatment of uranium; a repudiation of any contracts undertaken by non-Labor Governments in relation to the mining, processing and export of uranium; and prohibition of the mining, processing and export of uranium.

Moreover, it is clear that uranium mining is not the unqualified employment bonanza promised by the Fraser Government; it is clear that world demand for uranium, especially following public reaction to the Three Mile Island reactor accident, does not justify the further development of Australian deposits; and it is also clear that the Fraser Government's

LETTERS

HAYDEN

Mr Hayden has asked me to thank you for your invitation to write a brief article for *Chain Reaction* on uranium mining.

Mr Hayden has declined your invitation to prepare an article specifically for *Chain Reaction*. However, he has asked me to send you copies of several of his speeches as Leader of the Opposition in which he describes his own and the ALP's attitude to uranium mining, and the reasons behind the ALP's policy.

These speeches, including contributions to debates on Fraser Government amendments to the Atomic Energy Act and an address to a rally in Sydney last December, describe the

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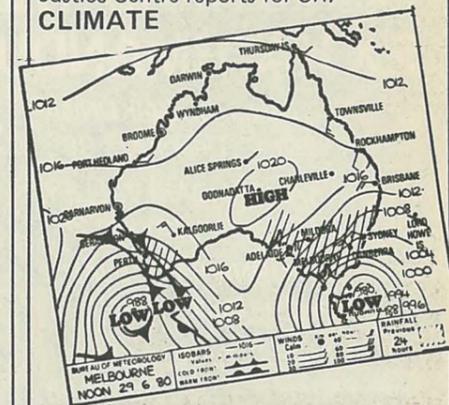
Where do we go now? What is the future of this magnificent wilderness?

ENVIRONMENT MINISTER
Chain Reaction is seeking an interview with the new federal Minister for Science and the Environment, Mr John Thompson.

HARRY BUTLER
A new view of this famous naturalist and environmental consultant.

FOOD VERSUS FUEL
Keeping you abreast of the new controversies. Ben Witham of the Food Justice Centre reports for *CR*.

CLIMATE



Intentional and Unintentional modification. What is happening to your planet? A *CR* special investigation.

ENERGY & RESOURCES
This year's federal election and energy and resources issues. A special report from a Canberra Press Gallery correspondent.

WHAT WE CAN NOW DO TO STOP URANIUM MINING
The debate continues. New ideas. Yours?

YOU are invited to contribute to the work on these stories. If you wish to suggest points, supply material for our reports please write urgently to the Editors, *Chain Reaction*, 366 Smith Street, Collingwood, Victoria, 3066.

Bomb survivors

By Judy Wilks

Piece by piece the Australian nuclear veterans' story is coming together. Yet somewhere in a Top Secret cabinet in the Defence Department lies a file on the British atomic tests in Australia in the 1950's and 60's. If made public, the information contained in this file would answer many questions such as:

- How many Australian servicemen were at the test sites?
- What were the levels of fallout?
- How far did the fallout extend?
- What precautions were taken to protect servicemen and civilians from the radioactive dust?

The victims of the tests not only include the Australian servicemen who worked at the site, but also Aborigines who are reported to have been in the area at the time, and aircraft engine fitters in Queensland who dismantled planes which had flown through a contaminated area.

What is known so far is scant. Between 1952 and 1956 there were twelve tests at Monte Bello, Emu Flats and Maralinga in South Australia. From

1957-67 there were nine more tests at Maralinga. The federal government has been vague as to how many Australian servicemen took part, and estimates their number at "a few thousand".

Until very recently Australia's nuclear veterans had a strong motivation to keep quiet about the tests; "We were scared that we could be prosecuted under the Atomic Energy Act, which has no statute of limitations. What it means to someone who breaks it is their immediate withdrawal from society", Mr Rick Johnson, co-ordinator of the NSW Nuclear Veterans told *Chain Reaction*. Those working at the atomic test sites were sworn to absolute secrecy, and the laws that applied were similar to 'marshall' or 'war' zone laws.

"Although some of us, who have been severely affected by the tests, have been trying to get compensation for twenty years, it is only now that many others have begun to come forward", said Rick recently in Sydney. "I was discharged as medically unfit in 1957 with a condition known as 'anxiety neurosis', after I had served in contaminated areas at Maralinga. From 1957 to 1973 I tried in vain to get compensation

from the Repatriation Department. Eventually I was given medical benefits of \$100 per week."

Not only are the veterans at the mercy of an unsympathetic Repatriation Department, they are also receiving medical advice from doctors unskilled in radiation diseases. However, with the help of John Evans, who is also scientific advisor to the Vietnam Agent Orange Veterans, Rick Johnson is going to court later this year in an effort to obtain the proper compensation which he should have received years ago.

The Australian Nuclear Veterans Association (ANVA) has no real alternative to case-by-case compensation. The USA style class action option, where a number of people can litigate in the one action, is not available to Australians. The federal government has placed itself in the complacent position of demanding that if the veterans think that the tests were responsible for their illnesses, they must first prove it conclusively. Thus the onus has been thrown back on to the veterans.

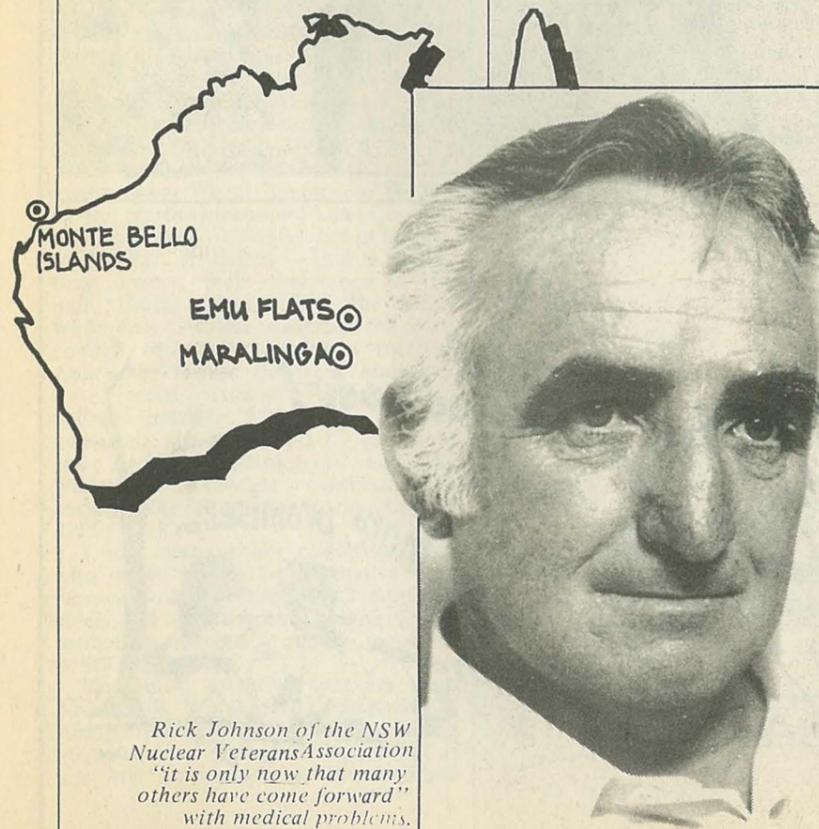
"We're having trouble getting the government to face up to its responsibilities over the whole affair. But that's just one thing. We are also only going to our local doctors, who are unable to give us proper medical consultation and diagnoses on radiation sicknesses."

Rick expressed surprise that there are so few radiation specialists in Australia—"this is amazing in a country like Australia which mines uranium and has had atom bomb tests on its soil".

Advocating the need for radiation specialists may, on the surface, seem to imply that Australia should be learning to live better with its radiation. But right now there is a group of people who greatly need proper consultation. Not only do they need better medical care, they also need doctors who are willing to campaign in their interest for proper compensation. This group of people includes the veterans, the Aborigines, and anyone else who in the past or future suffers from radiation disease.

An idealistic vision, perhaps . . . of Australian doctors out in the field defending public health. Yet a start is being made through the Doctors Reform Society which, in conjunction with Friends of the Earth, is beginning to gather information on the subject.

Contacts:
 Australian Nuclear Veterans Association (02) 623 4060.
 Doctors Reform Association (03) 419 6155.
 Friends of the Earth (03) 419 8700



Rick Johnson of the NSW Nuclear Veterans Association "it is only now that many others have come forward" with medical problems.

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The controversial 2nd World Wilderness Congress in Cairns generated so much concern Aborigines found it necessary to run a counter conference. **Barbara Hutton** reports for *Chain Reaction* on what happened:

Environment Week (8-13 June) was a big event for North Queensland. Cairns had been chosen to host the second World Wilderness Congress: 500 delegates from all states of Australia and as far away as France and South America attended.

The Congress was opened at the Cairns showground in front of an audience of 2,000 delegates and townspeople, by a massed choir of Cairns schoolchildren and the Prime Minister, Malcolm Fraser.

Delegates were each given a free briefcase, TAA biro, a postcard showing a bridal scene (made entirely from shells) courtesy of the Shell Museum, free literature from the Department of Aboriginal and Islanders Advancement, etc.

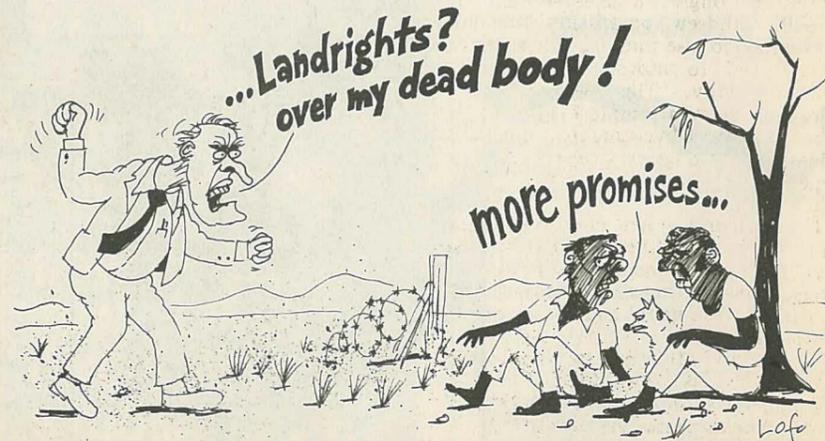
But what was this "World Wilderness Congress" organisation? How many conservationists ever heard of it before the TAA-sponsored publicity campaign began?

The first World Wilderness Congress was held in Johannesburg, brainchild of Ian Player, a South African conservationist, and Harry Tennison, a Texan big game hunter. Little is known about what happened at the first Congress because the man hired to write up the proceedings absconded with the money,



Mornington Islanders dance at Munro Martin Park.

JAN ROBERTS



and no proceedings appeared. However, it was attacked because of certain racist assumptions made by the organisers, and the second congress in Cairns laid itself wide open to the same charges.

In the two and a half years spent on organising the congress not one of the Aboriginal communities on Cape York was invited to attend. Aborigines and Islanders make up three-quarters of the population of Cape York; in the northern part of the Cape (which is the size of Victoria) the figure rises to 90%. It is scandalous that these people have no say in the future of the Cape.

In the past Queensland was criticized because of its lack of National Parks. This has recently been rectified by declaring a string of parks in Cape York. While this is a start there is no protection against mining in the parks, and worse, the Aborigines have not been consulted whatsoever. This was not due to an oversight on the part of the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. Employees of the Service have been expressly forbidden to talk to any Aboriginal communities, by a directive from above.

Aborigines are distressed and worried. In one case a community managed to raise money from the Aboriginal Lands Fund to buy a lease at Archer River. (But Premier, Joh Bjelke Petersen has stated that he will only allow any black communities to get land in Queensland over his "dead body".) The State Government refused to transfer the lease to their name. Most of the land in Cape York is leasehold and thus the Queensland Government has been able to balk aboriginal land purchases several times already. This time the Government also declared the Archer River area to be a National Park, thus putting it out of the reach of the black community for ever.

To publicize issues such as this the Environment Week Committee, backed by the North Queensland Land Council, held an alternative conference in Munro-Martin Park in Cairns - that is to say, they opened their conference in the park. Under pressure from the World Wilderness Congress organisers the town council withdrew permission for the Aborigines to use the park, and they were forced to move to a Catholic church nearby. This was one of numerous petty attempts by the State and Federal Governments and the Wilderness Congress organisers to torpedo the alternative conference. It didn't work.

I and many other conservationists who made it to the alternative conference found it inspiring. Traditional elders, conservationists, botanists, the women's movement and a range of politicians spoke.

The most effective speakers were Aborigines. It is generally accepted that Aborigines in the past had a strong religious bond with the land. What is less well known is that this intimate



Mrs Jean Jimmy of Mapoon speaks at the Munro Martin Park conference.

JAN ROBERTS

knowledge of the land, particularly the wildlife, is still current, even among Aborigines who live in cities. As a community Aborigines seem far more aware of nature than whites, far more concerned. White authorities in Queensland have tried everything, even going as far as shooting the blacks, to separate them from their land and stifle their culture. In 100 years they have not succeeded. There is no reason to think the culture or the strong feeling for the land will die now; we may in fact be

about to see a massive revival. There was real, open discussion at the alternative conference.

The second World Wilderness Congress, also, turned out to be not quite the development forum its mining company sponsors had hoped. One company representative poignantly asked the organisers "How long are we going to let them (the conservationists) attack us from our own podium?"

On the final day of the Congress numerous motions calling for protection for the Barrier Reef, Cape York and wilderness in general were passed. Dr Geoff Mosley of the Australian Conservation Foundation called for Aborigines to have freehold title to any land in the Cape and major control over tourism and land management. Vincent Serventy called for consultation with Aborigines before any further National Parks were proclaimed in any states. Both motions were passed.

It is very valuable for conservationists to get in touch with each other at international conferences no matter who organises them. Let's hope the next one does not cost \$175 plus fares to Cairns! The Congress highlighted the urgent need to protect Cape York and its rainforests from destruction: if this is not done, the Barrier Reef will be irreparably damaged.

But it is at least as urgent for conservationists to get together with Aborigines and work out a common front: we should not let a wedge be driven between us as nearly happened at the second World Wilderness Congress.

This October the North Queensland Land Council will be holding another conference, coinciding with the meeting of the Northern Development Council. This will be a chance to hear what Aboriginal people think, not what white people think they think. We are all welcome. So if you come, remember to act like guests: don't talk too much. Listen.▼



REVIEWS

Film

Dirt Cheap.

Produced by Marg Clancy, David Hay and Ned Lander. Showing at the Sydney Opera House (from 17 July) and Melbourne's Longford Cinema (opens in September) and later at other Australian Film Institute Cinemas. (See also pages 17-22.)

By Pat O'Shane

As the 'flyer' reads: "up north Aborigines are losing their land. Down south workers are losing their jobs." *Dirt Cheap* is a film which explores these related phenomena to show the overall effect on Australian society and



Outside Council Office, Oenpelli, Northern Territory - on the day of the 'signing' of the Ranger agreement, Leo Finlay talks about government pressure. Leo Finlay is the Northern Land Council delegate from Borroloola. (from the film, *Dirt Cheap*)

economy.

It is a short film - only 88 minutes - in colour, produced with short funds supplied by a number of trade union organisations and the NSW Premier's Department Division of Cultural Activities. The theme of the film is well-conceived in that it attempts to show to Australian society (and hopefully others internationally) that the issue of uranium mining in northern Australia is one of vital concern to working people throughout the country.

The positive manner in which the authors have dealt with the issue of land

Pat O'Shane is an Aboriginal lawyer. She is working for the New South Wales Legislative Council Select Committee on Aboriginal Land Rights.

rights and uranium mining can only serve to break down racist resistance to that issue. The technique of portraying the Aboriginal people directly affected and having those people argue their own case is one which must be used more often in similar films and documentaries. The views expressed by the uranium miners - some few against the multinational mining corporations' embargo on information about the effects of uranium mining - are in stark contrast to those of workers in the south who are losing their jobs as a result of the movement of Big Capital from the manufacturing industry to the mining industry. However I don't think the latter are strong enough to overcome the sort of thinking as expressed by a Ranger employee: "The big states down south, they're jealous . . . this is a multi-multi-billion

act in a period of deepening economic crisis such as is being experienced in this country at present.

Whilst workers in the south expressed their strong opposition to uranium mining and told in graphic terms how it affects their job security, there was not, in my opinion, sufficient concentration on counteracting the hegemonic ideology of the multinational capitalists.

It is to be expected, up to a point, that a film such as this, produced on limited funds, would have some shortcomings. The main fault (not to make too strong a point of it) was that the presentation of some views was a little too contrived. This was particularly evident in the segment showing the trade union organisers participating in the Metal Workers union shop stewards school.

Overall, however, I thought the film was very good and I recommend that you see it. By no stretch of the imagination could it be called a "tear-jerker", but I walked out in tears - the utter dejection of the people when they finally lost their struggle against Ranger and the Australian government was too much for me. Notwithstanding that reaction the film left me feeling determined to continue my own commitment to the struggle for land rights and against uranium mining.

See it - I'm sure you'll come away in fighting spirit too.

Books

Nuclear Knights by Brian Martin. Rupert Public Interest Movement, Canberra, to be published soon.

Nuclear Knights is an analysis of the written arguments and statements of the two leading public advocates of nuclear power in Australia - Sir Ernest Titterton and Sir Philip Baxter. The aim of the analysis is not primarily to refute their arguments, which has already been done in debates in *The Canberra Times*, *Current Affairs Bulletin* and in several books by members of the anti-nuclear movement, but rather to uncover the assumptions and associated values upon which the cases of the two knights are based.

In making his careful and superbly documented journey through the repetitious and (in my opinion) shallow arguments of the nuclear knights, Brian Martin has uncovered several points of importance.

For example, Titterton's many

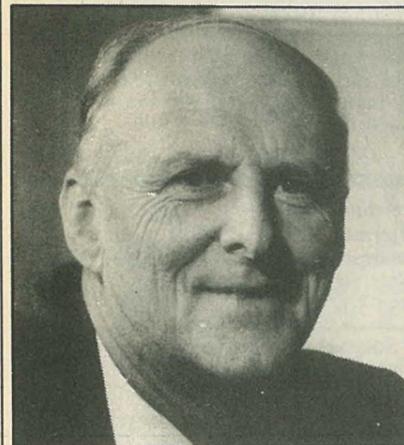
recent statements pooch-pooching the strong link between nuclear electric power and the nuclear weapons are directly contradicted by his own writings from 20 years or so earlier. In the 1950s and 60s Titterton freely stated that "the nuclear power project had its origins in the military production of nuclear weapons" and that nuclear power and nuclear weapons "are inseparable". He also said that "Australia has no atomic weapons project of its own, although once power reactors have been built in Australia it will be possible to enter the weapons fields should she so desire" and that "the most economical way to achieve a reasonable level of production (of nuclear bombs) would be to install a nuclear power station". Martin interprets Titterton's dramatic shift in position as a response to the increased

national Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. However, his advocacy that Australia should acquire nuclear weapons has remained constant.

One of the best parts of *Nuclear Knights* is the exposure of Baxter's social and political values from his writings. The anti-democratic nature of his views and, in particular, his belief in the major role of specialised technocratic experts in making what are really social and political decisions, are explicit.

Nuclear Knights will be valuable reading for all people, whether pro, anti or neutral, who are interested in the debate over nuclear power. It also provides carefully documented source material for the history, philosophy and sociology of science.

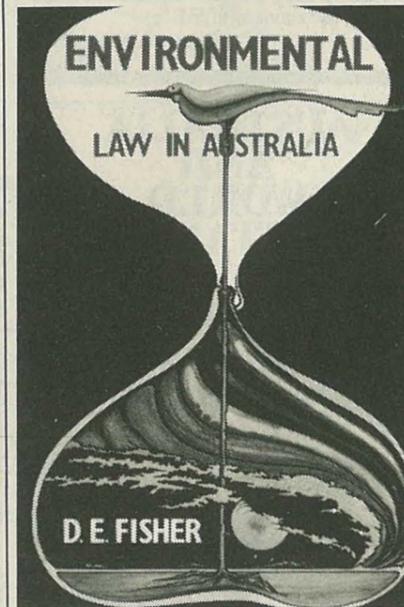
Mark Diesendorf



Sir Philip Baxter

public awareness of this major hazard of nuclear power, coupled with Titterton's consistent promotion of the nuclear power industry.

Baxter also recognised, in the 1950s and 60s, the "indissoluble connection between the peaceful and military uses of fissile materials", and that treaties developed to control nuclear proliferation are almost entirely useless. However, Baxter's conclusion was that the spread of nuclear power and, in some cases, even the proliferation of nuclear weapons may actually contribute to world stability. Since the publication of the Ranger Uranium Environmental Inquiry First Report in 1976, with its unequivocal finding that "the nuclear power industry is unintentionally contributing to an increased risk of nuclear war", Baxter has suddenly expressed faith in the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Inter-



Environmental Law in Australia, An Introduction by D E Fisher, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane 1980, \$14.95 (paperback).

It is only relatively recently that environmental law has been recognised as a separate major division of law. The appearance of the first comprehensive review of environmental law in Australia then has to stand as an important achievement.

Environmental law encompasses many areas of law affecting people and their surroundings, town planning, resource management, individual nuisance and broad environmental pro-

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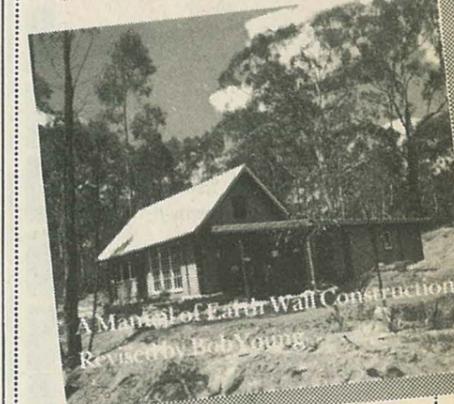


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Compendium. Second Back Row Press.

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On into the Eighties: Oil, Jobs and the Economy by John Price and Robert Butterfield. John Price, Melbourne, 1980, 50 cents.

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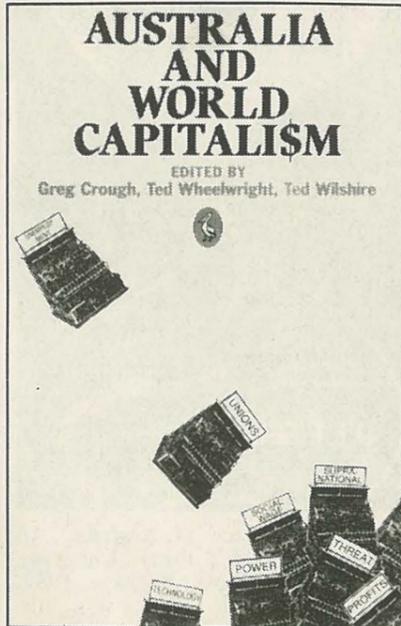
REVIEWS

tection. There is a sorry history of such laws in Australia which have always been subservient to laws providing for development and exploitation. Only a few positive examples of good laws exist, such as the 1974 Federal Environment Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act introduced by the Whitlam Government.

Fisher's book is a thorough review of the state of environmental legislation in each state and of the legal constraints which prevent the public in Australia enjoying the same powers to assert their rights as are enjoyed by Americans. The failure of the Australian Conservation Foundation to even gain the standing to sue in the case of the proposed Iwasaki resort development at Yepoon is a grim lesson that the Government and the High Court are happy to keep the public out of courts on environmental matters.

Although non lawyers may find it a slow read, the book definitely has value to all activists, particularly those grappling with the power of institutions affecting the environment.

Andrew Herington



Australia and World Capitalism by C J Crough, E L Wheelwright and E Wilshire. Penguin Books, Melbourne, 1980. \$5.95 (paperback).

This book is an excellent example of what a strong editorial hand can do to prevent the average reader from dropping off to sleep in the middle of an essay on Australian Political Economy. The thirty-three essays in this

book are blissfully short and to the point. The point being that as world capitalism, in crisis, looks for new avenues of investment, countries such as Australia with its high levels of foreign investment are mere and suffering pawns.

The arguments centre around jobs, technology, investment and the environment. For example, it explains the loss of jobs, particularly in the manufacturing sector, in terms of a deliberate winding down by foreign-owned companies. In other words, their Australian subsidiaries were no longer profitable in the world scheme of their operations. As a result the whole economic base of an area can drop out overnight.

Australia and World Capitalism is a fusion of thoughts and research by the Australian trade union movement, and the more academic political economy movement. Its final chapter, entitled "The Transition to Socialism", makes some original and generally more practical contributions, to a long line of Marxist theory.

However, it is my feeling that this book will be remembered more for its lucid insights into an Australia ripped-off, than for having paved the way to a Socialist Australia.

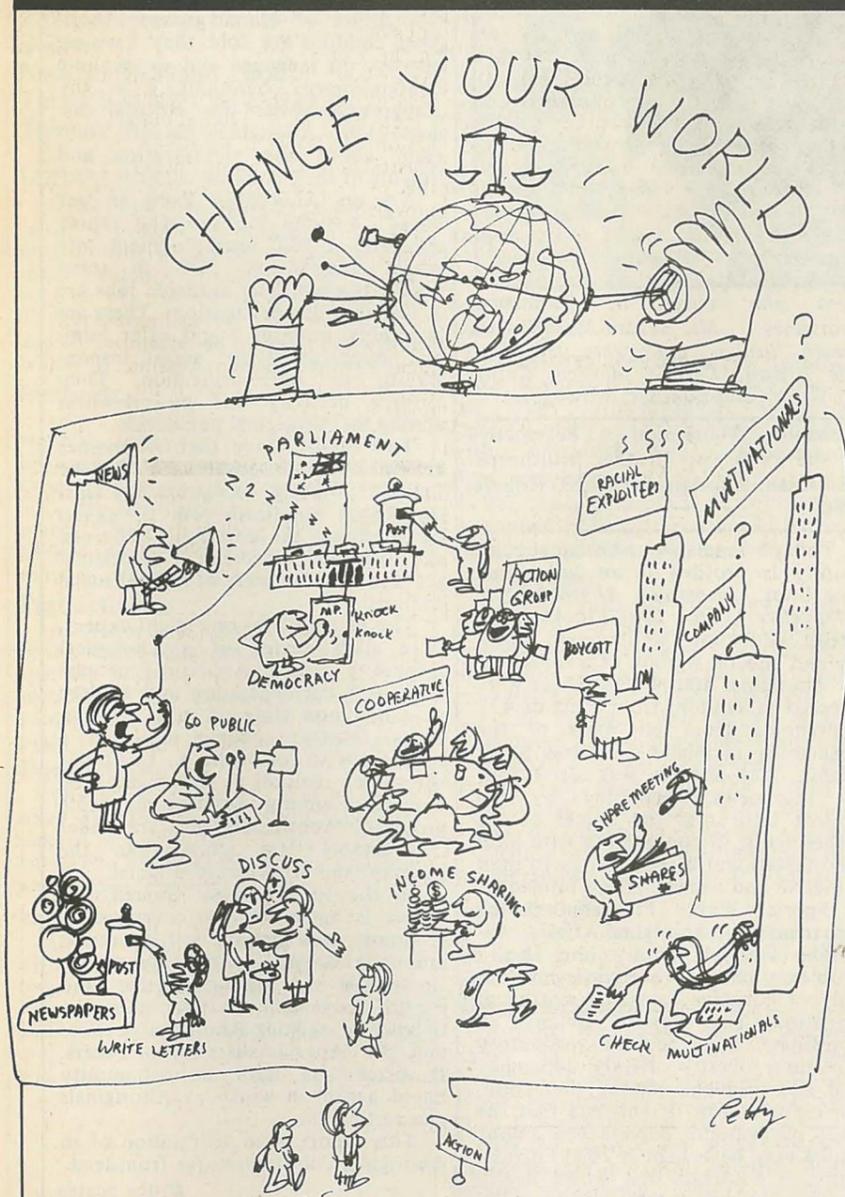
Judy Wilks

The Sun betrayed: a report on the corporate seizure of U.S. solar energy development by Ray Reece, South End Press, Boston, 1979. 234 pages, \$US5.50.

Solar energy technologies provide the promise of increased local self-sufficiency and self-management as well as the provision of energy with minimal environmental impact. But how is the promise to be realised? For those who still look towards big corporations or government for some help in moving towards a soft energy future, *The Sun betrayed* will dash any illusions. Reece analyses the approach of US corporations and government bodies to solar energy from the early 1970s to 1979. He shows how they have attempted to control the rate of commercialisation of solar energy so as to maximise fossil fuel profits, how they have emphasised solar technologies that are capital-intensive and suited for centralised control (such as solar power towers), how government solar funding has been channelled to large corporations, and how control over energy decisions has been centralised. Reece also shows how the energy multinationals are trying to co-opt solar energy as part of a wider strategy: "Not only, therefore, have Wall Street corporations thoroughly 'penetrated' the US solar market

through intracorporate diversification ('cross-subsidization'), extensive government subsidy, and the purchase of smaller firms, they have organised a solar industries association clearly devoted to building a solar market that will be compatible with the larger aims and 'hard-path' energy goals of the corporate elite in general." (pp. 186-7). With several years delay, similar developments may be expected in Australia.

The Sun betrayed is written in a readable, journalistic style packed with numerous thumbnail sketches of key individuals and descriptions of government studies and policies, corporate moves and frustrated innovators. Reece's conclusion is that small-scale applications of solar energy will only be implemented following local and regional initiatives, especially those which unite the poor, unemployed and oppressed in self-help efforts. All that



From *The Third World War, an action programme for the war on poverty.* Community Aid Abroad, Melbourne, 1980, \$2.00.

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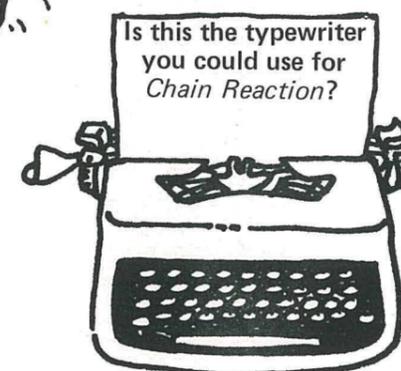
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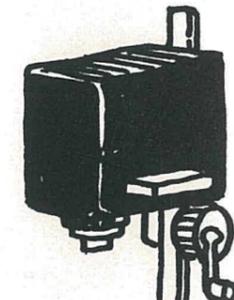
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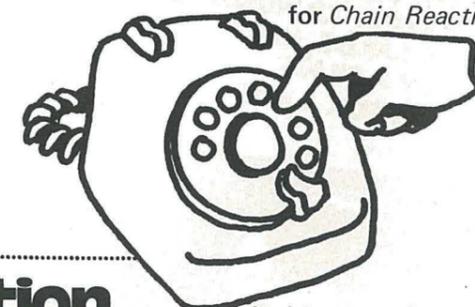


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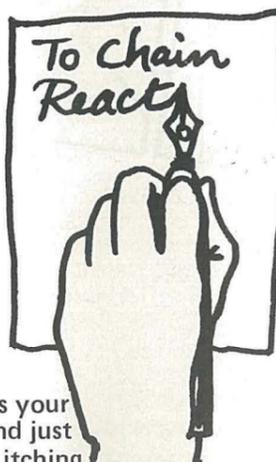
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