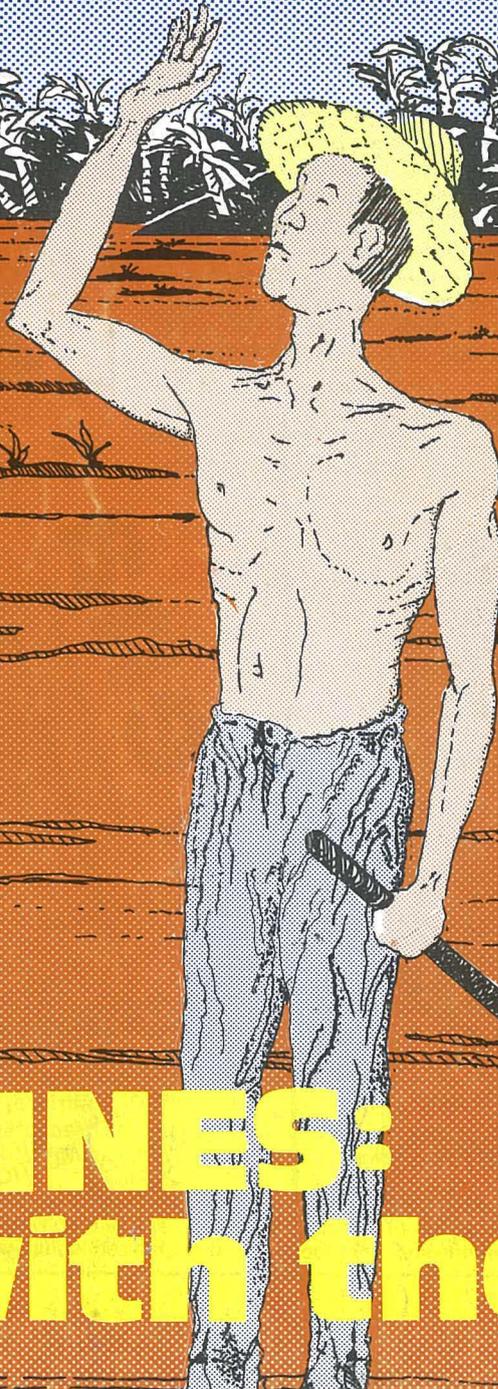


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Number 45 Autumn 1986 \$2.75



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conferences
Rallies

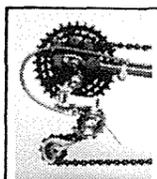
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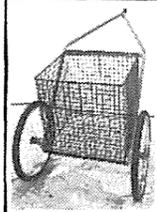
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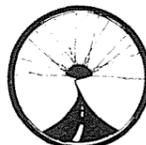
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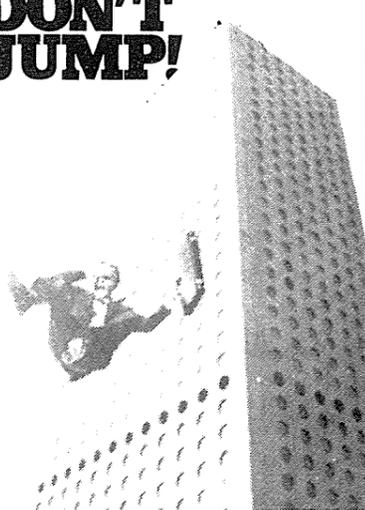


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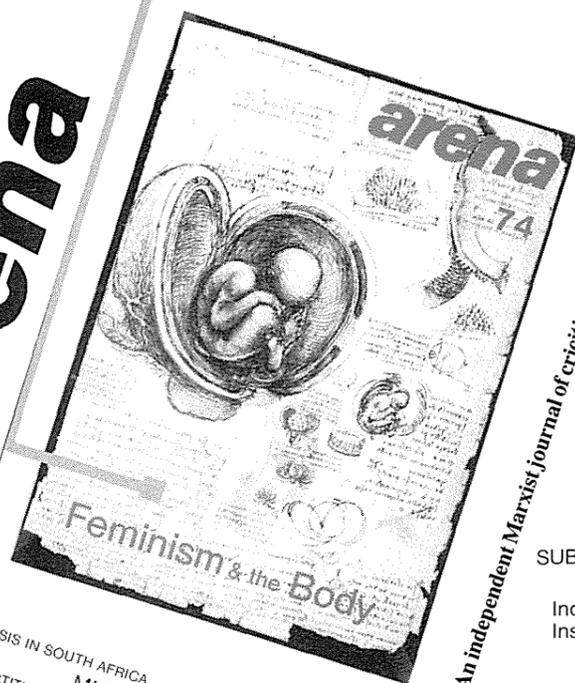
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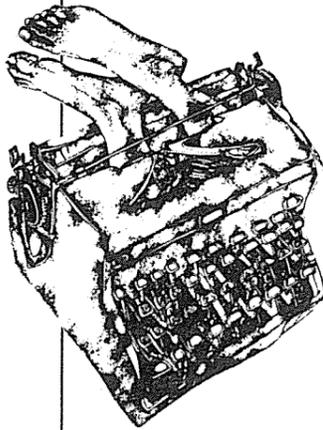
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Contributions to *Chain Reaction* are invited. Please try to send items typed on one side of the page, double spaced and with wide margins. Keep a copy as we do not have sufficient resources to return manuscripts. These few guidelines help in bringing out the magazine better and faster.

LETTERS



► Effective disagreement

I dunno. I mean, I like this broad left coalition stuff, but, well, it looks like a lot of people are using it as a chance to wheel out their barrows and missing the point completely. As I see it, three things are required to build the left:

- Discussion. No goals. No need to agree. Just good listening. We'll probably learn a lot.
- Linking up. Finding areas of agreement. Developing links between groups. Building friendships. Eventually: networks, coalitions.
- Action. Heaps of it. And just as varied as it is now. Just more effective.

Now I reckon these three things have to be happening concurrently. In fact, they overlap. No one of them should be seen as a higher priority than the others, although, some areas may require more work than others.

What we are talking about

with this broad left stuff is building unity. How to convince the grassroots (like me) that the political lobbyists are actually comrades and we can unite our struggle (maybe without even drastically changing how we work). The left is composed of a huge spectrum of tactics and styles, and that's fine. Wonderful, in fact. Unity, I reckon, doesn't require agreement.

But agreement does help to strengthen unity. It is vital if we are to avoid working against each other. Most people can see that. What's not generally recognised is how important it is to agree to disagree. That's why most of the broad left initiatives so far won't satisfactorily fulfil the need for discussion: they will be attempting to build agreements. Before we can agree, we need to be able to listen well to each other, and the best way to do that is by making agreement a low priority.

An example: During a meeting of the Campaign Against PADEX group, we were trying to reach agreement on something real snarly. Poor listening, lack of trust — we were a mess. Well, we all got sick of it, and had a break. We started chatting about our various positions. And there was something in the tea break structure, and in the fact that we were lounging all over the RMIT staff lounge (not huddled around a table), that meant that we could listen to other people. This was a tea break, and we didn't have to reach agreement, so it was OK if people were saying things we thought were silly. Well, we ended up agreeing. In mid tea break. It was embarrassing.

So, as I see it, the cleverest thing the left can do now is separate the work of discussion from the work of building agreement. What I would like to see is an on-going series of discussion nights, open to anyone, to enable anarchists, for instance, to listen to and hopefully understand what the Socialist Left of the ALP is up to, and vice versa. And the rest. A kind of forum, where we could

have a go at understanding and accepting the ideologies of our comrades. Oh, sure, we'd get some real wham-bang arguments. But what fun, knowing that when the night was over it really wouldn't matter who won. But our understanding of leftist ideas would be just a little broader.

I'm interested in starting something like this in Melbourne. Anyone wanting to work with me, or just have a chat about it, please get in touch.

Neil Huybregts
Thornbury, Vic.

► The NDP and the Democrats.

You devoted a great deal of space to the Nuclear Disarmament Party (NDP) in your September edition; and rightly so, since all our activity is useless unless it culminates in legislation.

Yet we already have a party in Parliament doing everything the NDP promises, plus a great deal of work in 'conventional' conservation as well. Why does this party gain no recognition whatsoever in your pages? Why do you give so much encouragement to those who promise, but none to those who deliver? And if you are unaware of these activities (which would be amazing, given the high standard of research in your articles), a request to Senator Chipp to keep you informed would result in a flood of press releases and position papers pouring into your letterbox.

I enclose for an example a copy of Chipp's report to his state council; note that pride of place is given to the anti-nuclear issue, and that the criticism of the media on the last page applies to you no less than the capitalist press.

So please, how about at least the occasional mention of what the Democrats are *doing*, as well as what the NDP, etc, are merely *planning*?

Alvia Reid
FOE (Ryde)

► PADEX

In *Chain Reaction* 44 you ran a story about the cancellation of the 1986 Pacific Area Defence Equipment Exhibition (PADEX). I was in Darwin during the week of maximum controversy, when the Territory government decided not to have PADEX going ahead.

In arguing against PADEX going ahead, I also urged that the peace movement should use this as an opportunity to make an alternative positive proposal. The peace movement is easily characterised by the mass media as being opposed to something — it is necessary also to make constructive proposals.

The peace movement should propose to the Territory government, business interests and the Trades and Labor Council that there be a joint working party to examine the conversion of the Territory's military facilities to civilian use. It is a short-sighted policy to count on defence expenditure being a stable source of the Northern Territory's income.

Even if all the parties refuse to go ahead, it should still be possible for the peace movement to find some allies in this venture. The venture will demonstrate that the peace movement is concerned about local employment opportunities. There are various overseas studies to guide how the Northern Territory one could be carried out.

Getting PADEX cancelled is only half the task. The other half of the task has got to be started.

Keith D Suter
President, United Nations
Association of Australia
(NSW)

You are invited to write letters to *Chain Reaction* with your comments on the magazine or on other issues of interest. Letters should be kept within 300 words so that as many as possible may be published. Longer letters may be edited. Write today to *Chain Reaction*, GPO Box 530E, Melbourne, Vic 3001, Australia.

Wildlife management

In Papua New Guinea (PNG) a special system of wildlife conservation has been developed. The setting up of National Parks is not often a viable proposition because of the difficulty of obtaining land (98% of land in PNG is tribally owned). Instead the Dept. of Environment and Conservation assists in the establishment of Wildlife Management areas. Local people themselves initiate the move and approach the Department requesting the establishment of a Wildlife Management Area (WMA). Three years of preparation are needed in setting up a WMA. An inventory of species is taken, land rights must be established, rules for the running of the WMA agreed on, boundaries established and a committee of local people appointed. People do not need to be coerced into measures to conserve their wildlife. They are coming forward at such a fast rate that the Department, with only three officers to cover the whole country in the work, has difficulty keeping pace. So far sixteen Wildlife Management Areas have been established and there are another four in the pipeline.

Source: *Friends of the Earth (PNG) Newsletter* February 1986.

Warm-up

The world is likely to heat up by at least 1°C and perhaps by 5°C by the year 2000, because of the combined 'greenhouse effect' of many trace gases. The US National Centre for Atmospheric Research reported these conclusions in *Nature* after reviewing the available information on the effects of different gases which includes carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and chlorofluorocarbons in spray cans and coolants in refrigerators.

Source: *New Scientist*, 16 January 1986.

EARTH NEWS



Gippslanders with supporters march in protest

Disaster at Dutson Downs

Ecological disaster looms at Dutson Downs on the edge of the Gippsland Lakes, South East Victoria. As long ago as November 1984 Latrobe Valley Water and Sewerage Board issued an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) proposing the establishment of an industrial waste dump at its sewerage farm at Dutson Downs. The wastes are highly concentrated saline liquids, solid salt cake and carcinogenic coal by-products.

In February 1985 the Conservation Council of Victoria in conjunction with a group of Latrobe Valley residents submitted a report on the EES to the Minister for Planning and Environment objecting to the proposal for the following reasons:

- the previous irrigation of land at Dutson Downs by highly polluted saline wastewaters from Australian Paper Mills (APM) and State Electricity Commis-

sion had resulted in extensive degradation to parts of the Gippsland Lakes system.

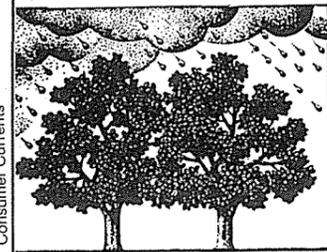
- the area immediately adjoining the treatment farm included habitats of special botanic significance.
- the unsuitability of the proposed site because of its proximity to the lakes and its lack of hydrogeological isolation from the valuable wetland habitats which the lakes support.

In spite of all this concern which reached ministerial level, the EPA in July 1985 issued licences for the establishment of the waste dump. An incredible situation has arisen. The APM effluence apart from brown-black colour and heavy metal content, has a very high salt concentration which causes degradation and because of this the EPA has ruled that APM must withdraw by the end of 1986 from the Latrobe Valley Outfall which discharges at

Dutson Downs, while at the same time issuing licences to dump more of the same salts at Dutson Downs provided they did not come via the sewer. APM, in spite of installing new plants to overcome the colour problem and some of the salt, still had wastewater too polluted to go down the sewer, so they decided to apply for permission to pump into the Latrobe River which flows into the Gippsland Lake system. The EPA has to make a decision soon whether to issue a licence.

It is possible that the government may go ahead with a costly ocean outfall project to take the Latrobe Valley wastes out to sea off the Ninety Mile Beach if a significant portion of the cost is borne locally. Completion however should be several years ahead and meantime irreversible ecological damage would have been done.

Source: From an article by Paul Rutherford (CCV Executive) *Environment Victoria*, March 1986.



Dieback survey

The release in February 1986 by Friends of the Earth, London, of a Tree Dieback Survey over two months was the first study in Britain to include both broadleaved and coniferous native species at the detailed level. It showed that 69% of Britain's beech and 78% of Britain's yew trees are displaying some signs of acid rain dieback (14% and 22% respectively, showing advanced dieback) and there are at least ten other species, including fir, oak, spruce and pine also damaged. The survey, carried out by more than 500 members of the public, indicated that Britain's tree dieback is comparable with that in Germany five or six years ago and the prospects for Britain's forest is bleak. The report concludes that pollution episodes magnify the effect of natural stresses, such as droughts and frosts, but air pollution is the only common denominator in any explanation of this damage to Britain's trees.

The report makes several recommendations for further research, including a nationwide emergency tree survey this year by government agencies other than the Forestry Commission, cooperating with voluntary groups and specialists. It is recommended that there should be an immediate programme of controls to reduce emissions of SO₂ and NO_x from power stations and cars should be fitted with converters to meet US-style emission standards to reduce hydrocarbons and NO_x. Copies of the Survey are available from *Chain Reaction*.

Problems at Ranger

Major operating problems continue at the Ranger uranium mine in the Northern Territory. After a series of radio active water leaks this year, mine workers have now begun an indefinite strike following a major leak of sulphur dioxide gas on 4 March when over 60 workers were affected.

The Miscellaneous Workers Union and the Australian Society of Engineers, who cover the on-site workers, called a series of 24-hour stoppages, and called for independent consultants to prepare a safety report and for firm assurances from the owners, Energy Resources of Australia (ERA), that it

would act on any recommendations. The lack of response resulted in an indefinite strike.

Deficiencies in safety procedure were further highlighted when fire broke out as production continued with staff labour. ERA refused to acknowledge any problems. It is presenting the dispute in terms of the unions' claim for extended superannuation and completely ignored the gas leak and later fire. ERA on 21 March was granted a supreme court injunction by the Northern Territory Court which specifies 'induced breach of contract'. Meanwhile members of the two unions continue to picket the mine site and a shipment of 27 containers of yellowcake intended for loading on the *MV Forthbank*.

Source: *Tribune* 19 and 26 March 1986.

Lindeman victory



A proposed atrocity, now a non-event

The back-down by East-West Airlines and the Queensland National Party Government over the proposed sale of Lindeman Island National Park was a great victory for conservationists. Over 51 000 in only ten days signed a petition calling on the government to abandon its reprehensible plans to revoke the island's National Park status to give East-West freehold title. The petition response broke all records for Queensland; the public opposition to the plan was so great that people even

queued in the rain to sign. The Lindeman Island win was the first major success for the environment movement without Federal government help for almost 20 years. The campaign was initiated and organised by the Wilderness Society, the Wildlife Preservation Society, the Queensland Conservation Council and the Rainforest Conservation Society.

Source: *Wilderness News* March 1986, Wilderness Society, 130 Davey Street, Hobart, Tas. 7000.

Asia-Pacific conference

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) and the Asia-Pacific peoples' Environment Network (Appen) are organising a conference on Development and Environment Crisis in the Third World to be held 6 — 10 September 1986. The conference will bring together representatives from people's movements, non-government organisations, international networks, resource persons and media working on problems relating to development and environment issues who aim to discuss and share experience of the various organisations in education, mobilisation, representation and media work towards a better environment. A possible follow up to the conference is the establishment of an active link between representatives and organisations within different countries and regions in the Third World and an active link with non-government organisations in the industrialised countries of the North, to work out joint programmes and strategies.

Contact: V.C. Mohan, Friends of the Earth (Malaysia), 37 Lorong Birch, Penang, Malaysia.

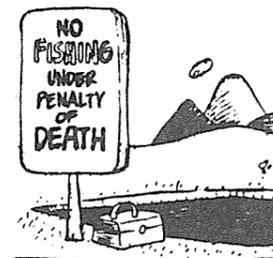
The Thames is better

A report in *Naturopa*, the journal of the European Information Centre for Nature Conservation makes the surprising claim that the tidal Thames, London, is now the 'cleanest metropolitan estuary in the world'. Formerly one of the most seriously polluted rivers in the world the Thames now supports almost 100 species of fish in its lower reaches as a result of the clean-up program launched in 1974. Between 1920 and 1960 the Thames was so polluted that no fish or marine life could survive in the stretch which includes metropolitan London. The clean-up which is continuing has cost over A\$410m so far.

Source: *Bulletin of the Australian Littoral Society*, PO Box 49, Moorooka, Qld. 4105.

The Blob

The residents along the St Clair River and further downstream near Sarnia Ontario, continue to worry about the implications of the toxic 'blob' which was oozing about just above the bed of the river and which was cleaned up in late December last year by Dow Chemical Canada at a cost of more than \$1m. The 'blob' was created in August last year when Dow Chemical spilt 11 000 litres of dry cleaning solvent perchlorethylene creating a black tarry mass which contained at least eighteen hazardous chemicals. Questions arise as to where did these contaminants come from, how much more is down there and are they being added to?



A survey released in November last year by Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment showed that industry reports an average of one spill per month of hazardous substances into the St Clair River and its tributaries. The residents question the number of unreported spills. In addition discharges under regular permits total 1 700 million litres of contaminated industrial waste water are poured into the river. Indications are that the 12 000 million litres (at least) that have been deposited in the Sarnia areas, some in sixteen deep wells, some in two salt caverns, are welling up. Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment continue to assess the extent of the contamination and to explore its sources. They have promised to put more stringent controls on the discharge of toxic substances into the river.

Source: *Infoetex* February 1986, published by Friends of the Earth, Ottawa, Ontario.



Peace Camp

Jervis Bay, just south of Nowra on the NSW coast is threatened by a recently announced military development and plans for continued urban development. The bay has features unique on the NSW coast. It is formed by a synclinal depression in the major outcropping of Permian marine sandstone beds on the coast and no large river flows into the

bay. The first feature has created a scenically magnificent coastal area and both factors enable the seawater of the bay and adjacent ocean to maintain an extraordinary clarity providing the habitat for a rich and colourful array of marine flora and fauna.

A plan will be released in June this year (1986) to build a munitions depot in Currumbene State Forest followed by the dredging of the adjacent Hare Bay. The projects, beginning in less than three years, would be strategically and environ-

mentally unsound besides bringing to an end a recreation area used by 700 000 people from Sydney, Woolongong and Canberra.

A sixteen-day Peace camp was set up on 2 May at Bristol Point on the south side of Jarvis Bay. The campers organised a support campaign to oppose the development plans and workshops were held to share knowledge and skills.

Contact: Peace Camp, PO Box 135, Nowra, NSW 2541. (SAE please)

Water please!

American scientists have been strapping electronics gadgets to plants and listening to the noises made when they are parched. The sounds are inaudible to the human ear, but can be converted electronically into alarm calls. The scientists, from the US Department of Agriculture, say the research was aimed at helping farmers know when their crops need water, but the idea could be adapted for house plant care. So your houseplants may soon be able to wake you at night by calling for a drink.

Source: *Mirror* (UK), 6 January 1986.

Democracy at work

'Having a Say' is a training booklet which explains the principles of genuine industrial democracy. It takes unionists through the arguments of why democracy at work, who gets involved, unionists' needs and rights, the potential pitfalls and has a practical emphasis on how to develop a genuine industrial democracy process.

Booklet \$4 available from *Labour Resource Centre*, PO Box 62, Carlton South, Vic. 3053. Tel: (03) 662 3844



Having their say

EARTH NEWS

Apartheid declaration



The Fremantle City Council on 21 March 1986 — United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination—declared its abhorrence of, and its firm opposition to, the apartheid regime of South Africa and its illegal occupation of Namibia, condemning the system as an affront to human dignity and a threat to world peace and racial justice. In accordance with these views, the Council, within the limits of its legal powers, will progressively end all links between the City of Fremantle and the South African regime. In particular it will:

- Cease the purchase of goods which are known to originate in South Africa.
- Refrain from entering into contracts with companies having majority South African ownership.
- Progressively withdraw all City Council investments in South African dominated companies or other companies with investments in South Africa or Namibia.
- Restrict all employees and elected representatives of the City Council from using the facilities of South African Airways whilst on official Council business.
- Discourage the advertisement of South African products and services at public sites and facilities within the City of Fremantle.

- Support, wherever practical, greater economic cooperation and trade between Australian firms and the 'front-line states' of Africa.

- Ensure that the City Council is not officially represented at any function attended by representatives of the South African government, the 'Bantustan' administrations, or trade missions promoting South African business.

- Withhold the use of Council facilities from any team sports-person whose name appears in the most recent register compiled by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid or any entertainer who has performed in South Africa or Namibia and has not subsequently renounced their involvement.

- Remove all South African produced or endorsed literature from Council libraries and other facilities. Such an edict excludes any publication originating from South African sources which declares its total opposition to apartheid laws and practices or is restricted to the provision of factual information.

- Encourage, where appropriate, the positive public understanding of the history, culture and struggles for self-determination of the African peoples.

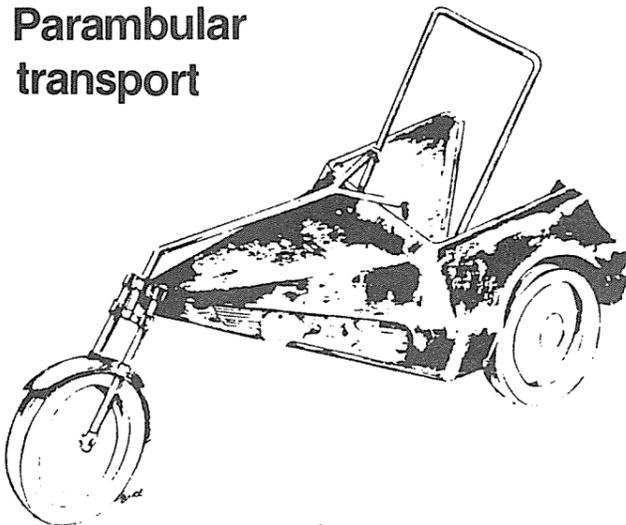
- Take initiatives to widen awareness of apartheid within the City of Fremantle.

- Support local community groups or organisations in their efforts directed towards ending apartheid in South Africa and racial injustice elsewhere.

Also included in the declaration is the Council's recognition of the need for the protection of national, ethnic and indigenous minorities within the City of Fremantle. This includes the recognition of the need for the distribution of public funds for the promotion of the economic, cultural and social development of the minorities, and also to compensate for the loss of indigenous territory where necessary and feasible.

Source: CARE Newsletter, Campaign Against Racial Exploitation PO Box 51, Kensington Park, SA 5068.

Parambular transport



Over the past twelve months the Trade Union Unemployment Centre has been assisting Tony Beks to get support for developing the idea of a motorised platform for a wheelchair. Called the Parambular, it would be slightly bigger than a motorbike, with the rear section having a hydraulic ramp to allow entry and exit of a wheelchair and occupant. Support and encouragement for Tony's idea have come from the Disability Resources Centre, the Shop Committees at both the Government Aircraft Factory and Williams-town Naval Dockyard, the

Economic and Employment Unit at Melbourne City Council and the Centre for Innovation and Development at Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Tony is seeking financial assistance to build a prototype. He has prepared a questionnaire on the transport needs of disabled people, as part of a feasibility study and would like to hear from anyone who is interested in assisting research and development of the concept.

Contact: Peter Green, Trade Union Unemployment Centre, 54 Victoria Street, Melbourne, Vic. 3000. Tel: (03) 663 5183

Close the Cape in '88

The 21 year lease agreement in respect of North-West Cape signed in 1967 by the US and Australia will expire in 1988. The agreement will then enter a new phase when either party will need to give 180 days notice to the other to terminate the agreement.

At the 1985 ALP National Conference the Foreign Minister Bill Hayden announced that if he could be convinced that the North West Cape had a first strike capability he would close the base. In The Australian, 12 February 1986 the Minister for Resources and Energy, Senator Evans for the Minister of Defence assured Parliament that the government stood by this promise.

With the imminent deployment of Trident II missiles, 1988 would be an appropriate time for Australia to terminate the base agreement and close the base. To do this it will be necessary to mobilise public opinion and encourage the Government to choose this course of action. One step in that direction is the ALP National Conference to be held in July this year. Conference delegates from Western Australia have not yet been appointed but when announced they need to be contacted and made fully aware of the issues before casting their vote.

Contact: Fremantle People for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament and Scientists Against Arms Tel: (09) 335 3429 or (09) 332 2274

Away with asbestos

It has been reported that the South Australian government has set an example to other states in taking the initiative on asbestos removal. New regulations under the *Industrial Safety, Health and Welfare Act, 1972* have set a clear priority for the safe removal and disposal of asbestos, as opposed to the less costly options of sealing and encapsulation that are favoured by many building owners and employers.

Regulation 161C states that 'no person shall cause or permit installed thermal or acoustic insulating materials which consist of or contain asbestos to be sealed'. This complete ban on the sealing of asbestos material

is accompanied by a ban on the enclosure or encapsulation of asbestos material without the written permission of the Head of the Department of Labour. This can only be obtained after a tripartite Asbestos Inspection Committee has recommended that asbestos removal is not practical in a particular situation. It should be noted that these regulations apply only to asbestos thermal or acoustic insulating materials (eg pipe lagging) and not asbestos fibro-cement products.

The regulations clearly establish asbestos removal as the central priority in the South Australian Government's strategy to eliminate asbestos. Removal contractors must be licensed.

Source: Work Hazards, December 1985, Workers' Health Centre, 27 John St., Lidcombe, NSW 2141. Tel: (02) 646 3233

Rush to irradiate



Playing with fire

The Consumers Association of Penang, Malaysia, in a recent memorandum to the Ministry of Health, said that the accumulation and disposal of radioactive waste poses a problem for the USA and claim that the US Department of Energy's support for irradiation technology for food preservation is only a decoy to allow the US government to export its nuclear wastes to Third World countries.

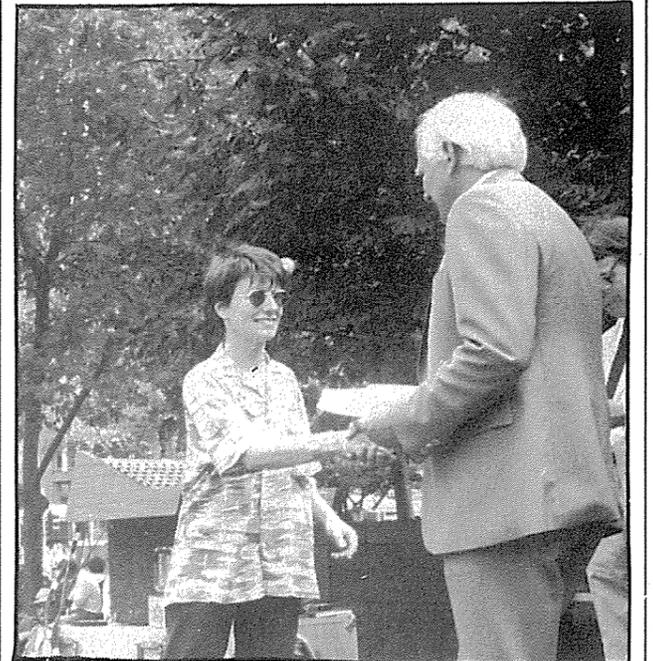
Consumers in the USA are already eating unlabelled irradiated food without knowing it.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved bacteria in spices and seasonings, which are sold without explanatory labels. Kathleen M Tucker, President of the Health and Energy Institute, said that the US federal government wants to take garbage from its nuclear weapons production program and use it for food irradiation, a convenient way of using up cesium-137, a by-product of nuclear reactors.

In Malaysia, food irradiation promotion exercises were begun in April 1985 through workshops organised by the Nuclear Energy Unit of the Prime Minister's Department. The propaganda centred on the consumer's desire for fresh food in its original form. A paper from a one-day Malaysian-Canadian seminar disclosed that frozen shrimps are likely to be among the first food products to be commercially irradiated in Malaysia.

Proper studies into irradiation technology, particularly its hazards, are needed before food irradiation is boosted as a perfect way of food preservation.

Source: Suara Sam Newspaper (Friends of the Earth Malaysia)



The presentation to FOE

IYP launch

International Year of Peace (IYP) was launched by Ian Cathie, Victorian Minister for Education in the City Square on Friday 14 March 1986. Children from Melbourne schools, community theatre groups, the band Bush Whazee and passers by all joined in the celebrations, singing, dancing

and generally enjoying themselves. Cathie presented cheques to sixteen groups, including Young People for Nuclear Disarmament, Movement Against Uranium Mining and Friends of the Earth. A Women's Initiative for IYP has been formed to co-ordinate a peace day on 25 October 1986 in Melbourne.

Source: Tribune

Pollution probe

Pollution Probe, Toronto, Canada, will be releasing a publication in May 1986 based on material presented to a two-day conference on 'Permanent Solutions to Buried Hazardous Wastes' held in Niagara Falls, Ontario in early November 1985. The conference, co-sponsored by Pollution Probe and the Environment Defence Fund in Washington DC was attended by approximately 120 people from government, the waste management industry, consulting firms and environmental organisations.

Several examples of excavating hazardous waste sites were given. In almost all cases the wastes were transported to another landfill and re-buried, this procedure viewed by many conference participants as just delaying the problem. Using the dumpsites along the Niagara River as a model, they detailed the costs and consequences of three strategies for responding to the problems created by these sites: taking no action; containment; and removal and thermal destruction. It was determined that in the long term when all costs were considered, the least costly and most effective option is removal and destruction.

Source: Infoetex, February 1986, Friends of the Earth, Ottawa, Ontario.



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FOE NEWS

Oakleigh

In Oakleigh there exists a 14 ha strip of heathland, part of the ancient heath that once spread across Melbourne's sandbelt region. Over the years there have been several proposals to develop this land, such as an old people's home and in 1984 a soccer ground, to add to the existing soccer ground in the area. FOE Oakleigh, along with other local groups, campaigned successfully to halt the development of this remnant of Melbourne's flora. The heath now seems secure. A Grange Heathland Advisory Committee is surveying the area and taking measures to protect it from public abuse.

FOE Oakleigh has also been campaigning for animal rights. When Perry's circus, complete with animals, visited Oakleigh recently FOE Oakleigh approached the local council over the issue. In response to this, the council resolved to formulate a policy on circuses and also voiced its opposition to the proposed \$18m dolphinarium in neighbouring Springvale. FOE Oakleigh has also successfully campaigned to have Oakleigh declared a Nuclear Free Zone, despite the local federal MP, Joan Childs, being aggressively unsympathetic.

Politically, FOE Oakleigh believes there is a need for a Greens Party with a strong philosophical constitution and a spiritual, though not religious, base. They believe that we need to learn more from indigenous peoples such as the Aboriginals, the Pacific Islanders and the American Indians. At present they believe that the Australian Democrats are our best pragmatic option but they find their union-bashing unacceptable.

FOE Oakleigh, 69 Waratah St, South Oakleigh, Vic 3166

Friends of the Earth's entire existence rests upon getting convincing, well researched ideas to as many people as possible.

To do that FOE needs people and resources. You are invited to join us directly in this work, and to give financial support — by becoming active, joining up as a FOE member and urging others to generously support the organisation.

One of the best things about FOE is its unending sense of optimism. It approaches issues from as positive an angle as possible. It confronts and seeks solutions to what are literally some of the most daunting environmental, social and political threats faced by human beings.

Friends of the Earth is currently facing a severe financial crisis. It could be forced to bring into operation a 'razor-gang-style' slash of important activities. Many of our hopes are pinned on encouraging more people to join FOE, to give **time** and/or **money** to maintain and boost the work.

If you think this is worthwhile work and want it to continue, please help bring into FOE more people. **Let us know what you think of what we are doing, and how you can become a part of it.**

Sydney

The bulk of FOE Sydney's work is taken up with running a comprehensive resource centre: running many stalls, answering requests for information, and writing endless lobbying letters on a multitude of issues. People representing FOE work with many groups including the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Coordinating Committee, the Sydney Peace Squadron, the Inner Sydney Regional Transport Group, and the South-East Forest Alliance (a coalition of environment groups fighting to halt the woodchip industry based at Eden). At our request, FOE Japan produced a very useful report on the end use of Australian woodchips.

Jan Ardill worked consistently on transport related issues in Sydney (see 'Laurie goes for Lorries', *Chain Reaction* 44). Her work included radio interviews, submissions on the Eastern Distributer Expressway and fighting the monorail, an amusement park style people-mover masquerading as public trans-

port to be plonked on Sydney streets despite widespread opposition.

Towards the end of 1985 some FOE people formed an *ad hoc* group to work on submissions to a Commission of Inquiry into electricity generation in NSW. Like most states NSW has a large over-capacity of electricity. The bulk of this comes from large coal-fired plants and there are plans for several more plus proposals for hydro-electric dams, some in wilderness areas. FOE's submissions stressed soft energy options such as energy conservation as well as the need to develop an energy strategy based on matching the most ecologically sound and cost effective energy source to a given end use.

FOE Sydney prepared other submissions during the year including comments on Flood Prone Land Policy, the Eastern Distributer Expressway, recycling, and the Tasmanian Woodchip Environmental Impact Statement. We will be giving this work a lower priority during 1986 as we are sceptical of the value of detailed submissions.

We welcome all interested self-motivated people to work on the resource centre, the issues mentioned or any related issues in which they are interested.

FOE Sydney, Floor 2, 787 George St., Sydney, NSW 2000. Tel: (02) 211 3953.

Diamond Valley

FOE Diamond Valley is a group of about 60 people with a small active core. This year it will concentrate on helping the South Eastern Forest Alliance, saving the Otways forest and working on a bus to tour Australia promoting peace and the environment.

In 1985 FOE Diamond Valley lobbied against Project Sparrow at the Watsonia Army Barracks, handing out leaflets on their open day. It also collected signatures for a petition about the Daintree rain forest, lobbied against the proposed dolphinarium and campaigned for the Victorian Alpine National Park.

Locally it managed to get the peace issue into the local press by organising a display of peace posters in the local library. All the posters in the display were by local school children.

FOE Diamond Valley has a bi-monthly newsletter on local and international issues and holds regular information get-togethers. In June there will be a peace and environment film night and in July a film and discussion on electro-magnetic radiation.

FOE Diamond Valley, PO Box 295, Eltham, Vic. 3065. Tel: (03) 435 9160.

Ryde

Ryde Friends of the Earth was started in 1977 by Ian Boetcher who became intensely interested in the consequences of uranium and radio-active waste material after being wrongly arrested by the police. For Ian was an innocent curious bystander at a demonstration trying to stop the loading of yellow-cake at the Balmain docks. He found himself asking many questions of his fellow detainees as to why they were demonstrating against the export of uranium, and he decided to become active and alert people to the dangers of the nuclear fuel cycle. He started a Friends of the Earth group in his home area, Ryde. Ian died of leukaemia in 1980, aged twenty.

Ryde FOE has since been involved in many aspects of the nuclear issue. They have pressed for balance in the debate by requesting the Education Department to place anti-nuclear material in school libraries to balance the pro-nuclear material already present. They also objected to Archbishop Loane for not permitting a speaker who would show the other side of the story when Bill Glover, author of *The Struggle For Power*, was invited to speak at a local Church of England event.

Members of Ryde FOE also discovered drains carrying radio-active waste from a CSIRO complex through Lane Cove Recreation Park and emptying into the sewerage system.

Ryde FOE has held stalls, displays, an alternative energy fair and has lent its support to local environment groups. Recently members of the group became part of a Peace Coordinating Committee which represents eleven groups. These groups are working to promote peace education at the grass roots level.

A video film is also in the planning stage. After sorting out priorities, material, evidence and data a professional technician will be approached to handle production.

FOE Ryde, 18 Kokoda St., North Ryde, NSW 2133.



Sydney peace squadron in action in Sydney harbour.



● Australian Capital Territory

CANBERRA: PO Box 1875 Canberra, ACT 2601

● New South Wales

BLUE MOUNTAINS: c/- 156 Megalong St, Leura NSW 2780

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY: c/- SRC, Union Building, Macquarie University, North Ryde, NSW 2113

NEWTOWN: PO Box 169, Newtown, NSW 2042 Tel: (02) 517 2139

RYDE: 18 Kokoda St, North Ryde, NSW 2113 Tel: (02) 88 2429

SYDNEY: Floor 2, 287 George St, Sydney, NSW 2000 Tel: (02) 211 3953

UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND: c/-SRC, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2006

UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY: PO Box 364, Wentworth Building, University of Sydney, NSW 2006

● Northern Territory

DARWIN PO Box 2120, Darwin, NT 5794. Tel: (089) 81 6222.

● South Australia

ADELAIDE: 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide, SA 5000

WILLUNGA: PO Box 438, Willunga, SA 5172

WILLIAMSTOWN c/- Willunga FOE PO Box 438, Willunga, SA 5172.

● Victoria

COLLINGWOOD: 366 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066 Tel: (03) 419 8700

OAKLEIGH: 69 Waratah St, South Oakleigh, Vic 3166

ORGANIC FRUIT AND VEGETABLE COOPERATIVE: 408 Smith St, Collingwood, Vic 3066

Tel: (03) 419 9926

PENINSULA: PO Box 319, Seaford, Vic 3198

DIAMOND VALLEY: c/- 101 Hillcrest Ave, Eltham, Vic 3095

CHAIN REACTION: GPO Box 530E, Melbourne, Vic 3001 Tel: (03) 419 8700

Marching for peace



'In the time it takes for us to hold this rally about \$400 million will be spent for military purposes.

In the same time 5 000 children will die of hunger.'

An estimated 320 000 people marched in Australia: 130 000 in Sydney; 100 000 in Melbourne; 30 000 in Adelaide; 20 000 each in Brisbane and Perth; 2 000 in Hobart and thousands more in Canberra, Darwin, Alice Springs, Albury Wodonga, Launceston, Wollongong and dozens of other towns in New South Wales . . .

'It drew in many new people, particularly young people, for whom this was the first step towards greater involvement. A new development was schools, marching under their own banners, sometimes against the wishes of their school hierarchies. These included girls-only schools. Many people joined PND immediately afterwards.'

'The rally is everybody's.'

Regarding the anarchist action: 'I get a little sick of right-wing parasites on bridges disrupting the march. I believe in direct action in the right place, but not knee jerk attention seeking. They didn't really respect other people's rights.'

Richard Bolt, an organiser of the rally.



URANIUM? LAND RIGHTS?

We were very angry that a pro-uranium speaker, such as the ACTU secretary Bill Kelty, was allowed to address a rally which was supposed to promote peace and oppose uranium mining. Kelty has been a Hawke supporter for many years. He even spoke to Hawke's proposal to destroy the ACTU's anti-uranium policy in the late 1970s. Many of our members were very upset by his presence and question PND's reasons or

his inclusion. Are we to take this as an indication of PND's future stand on the uranium issue?

We would also like to register a protest over PND's handling of the Land Rights issue. We believe that it is time that environmental and peace groups fundamentally assessed their attitude and commitment to aboriginal rights. We have been making some approaches to the Koori Information Centre in Fitzroy and were most angered by PND's lack of consultation with the Koories, especially over the use of their flag on the poster. The graphic used — with the sun on the Land Rights flag as a balloon — was quite offensive.

We believe that it would be disastrous if the peace/anti-nuclear movement took up Land Rights in a paternalistic fashion as in the past or as an attachment to a peace/anti-nuclear campaign.

*Anti-Uranium Collective
FOE (Collingwood).*



ANARCHY ON PALM SUNDAY

Half way down Collins St . . .

the big march appeared to expel the Anarchists. Naughty, naughty, too rowdy and not marching neatly behind the big Palm Sunday banner, which everybody is supposed to do (except the police). The Anarchists free at last, took off down the street, black flags flying high and chanting 'The People United Will Never Be Defeated.'

In Swanston St . . .

they spot the 40ft Pro-Anzus banner hanging off Princes Bridge. That was enough! The Anarchists took off up the stairs to the 'we'll agree to anything Reagan says' rally. Pro-Anzus placards soon went flying, the 40ft banner was ripped down fast. The Pro-Anzus speaker shouted into his mike: 'star wars could never be an act of aggression'. The Anarchists certainly get to the root of the problem fast.

On to the gardens . . .

where, arriving a bit late due to police problems at Princes Bridge, they spot the Liberal placards — 'Peace through Anzus'. Red flag to a bull! Off trot some Anarchists and the Liberal placards disappeared very quickly out of view. Then it was spontaneous combustion time. Burn the banner! So with fire in their eyes, Anarchists plus an extremely long Pro-Anzus banner, wound their way to the front of the stage, lined themselves up at the side and at the appropriate gap in proceedings (after prayers), walked in, set themselves up in a large circle and gleefully started ripping the banner to shreds!

Meanwhile . . .

one Anarchist hopped on stage, hassled for the mike, got it and two tokenistic minutes (democracy??), in which he informed the rally of the three Anarchists arrested at the Pro-Anzus demo and urged the rally to support them! But the microphone was quickly repossessed by a peace official, who apologised (for what?) and continually referred to the Anarchists' arrests as 'that unfortunate incident'??

Final scenario . . .

circle of happy anarchists throwing the shredded Pro-Anzus banner into a burning pile in the dirt, amid lots of positive noise. Officials on stage look worried — this action was not on the agenda! Bland calls for non-violent action, join the ALP or the Democrats or the Liberals and the inevitable peace, children, futures and flowers came over the PA system for the next half hour. Fairy floss overdose to Anarchist ears!

PS — Soon hordes of police arrived and . . .

PPS — Helen Caldicott did attempt to show the rally a long long picture of lots and lots of little bombs — hope everybody could see!

Freida Black

Editors footnote

The three Anarchists arrested have been charged with resisting arrest and assaulting police. PND did eventually get a lawyer down to Russell St police station to help out.

Easter in Sydney

The future of the alternative and left movements were discussed at two conferences held in Sydney this Easter. At the NSW Institute of Technology the Broad Left Conference discussed the emergence of a more extreme and confident right wing and how the left in Australia can effectively meet this challenge. Meanwhile at Sydney University the Getting Together Conference attempted to show the common ground shared between the various faces of the alternative movement in Australia and to find ways of using our common ideals to strengthen mutual support. **Jonathan Goodfield** reports on the outcomes of the Broad Left Conference and **Ian Foletta** discusses Getting Together.

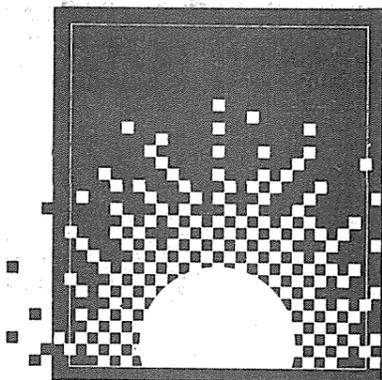
The Getting Together conference at Sydney University this Easter drew together people from all over Australia representing a wide range of groups in the environmental, social and peace movements. The aim of the conference was to outline the similarities between the groups so as to promote closer links and understanding between them and to facilitate discussion so that we may create fresh approaches to solving our common problems.

Amongst the practical outcomes of the conference was the decision to form a working group concerned with the establishment of an Australian Coalition of Community Organisations (ACCO), similar in concept to the ACTU. The aim of the coalition is to work on active support and networking between community groups with its ultimate structure to be decided by the groups participating in it. However, it was decided that the prescribed structure would have to be one open to all social change organisations, and one that would inhibit domination by any one group or ideology.

The political direction of the movement was also a topic of much discussion over the weekend. The formation of a Green Party, based to a certain extent on the European Greens, was one option put forward. The party would function at all levels of the electorate, and be located within the proposed ACCO. As such it would effectively be the political arm of the coalition, working through it to gather, discuss and disseminate information and ideas.

An alternative to this was the proposal to establish a Greens Network, a political force built from the grass-roots level up. It was felt by those in favour of this proposal that the traditional party structure is not one which lies within the ethics and work-

Getting Together



ings of the alternative society which we wish to establish. It was argued that networking a federation of autonomous regional groups is preferable to the centralised, bureaucratic executive structure that typifies political parties.

Another option put forward was that of exploring political strategies utilising the present political structure and, most notably, the work that can be done through the Australian Democrats. The changes that need to be made within the Democrats were considered including a review of their economic policies and their relationship with the trade unions. It was decided that 'green' people who are not members of the Democrats should be invited to sit on policy committees and that a green-link strategy be negotiated. It was envisaged initially that Greens would work at a local level, Democrats at a federal level and that there be negotiated links at the state level.

An action group was also formed to discuss alternative economic strategies to those presently found in our society. It was considered that ethical investment and

alternative economics must be a central concern of any ongoing process. A high priority was given to the promotion of bartering, self-reliant money control, ethical investment and alternative financing, gifting and tithing and widespread support of existing ethical investment initiatives, pointing out that while many of us may oppose such things as uranium mining we are unwittingly supporting it through banks such as the ANZ investing our money in such ventures.

An important aspect of the conference and the Getting Together process is that it be an ongoing process. A task force was formed to work on the credo, principles and rules for a Getting Together Futures Congress, responsible for the production of a newsletter, to organise future conferences and to organise regional meetings of people interested in the Getting Together process. The Congress is an umbrella identity to be utilised by any variety of groups with differing themes, guided by the Congress credo and principles which focus on social change for a sustainable and equitable society.

Problems

One of the problems associated with the Getting Together process, and one which was evident at the conference, is that of having equal representation of all concerned. Within the groups in Australia working towards an alternative society there are many interests that were not discussed or represented at the conference. The issues facing migrants, the unemployed, the homeless, the poor and many others were not considered in the agenda or in any of the workshops.

The overall emphasis on green issues meant that a great deal was lacking. Getting Together should not mean looking at the green tinge groups may have but at all their other aspects as well. The Green movement must do more itself to get together with the other movements for social change rather than let them come to it. It must realise that a Green Party, no matter how it is structured, is not the party of the social change movement, that such a party needs to be purple and red as well, just as the movement itself is not of any one colour.

For further information about the ongoing outcomes of the conference, write to: Getting Together, 130 Davey St, Hobart Tas. 7000.

Ian Foletta is a member of the Chain Reaction collective.

Broad Left Conference



Maybe it had something to do with the confusion in Melbourne after the car bombing on the Thursday before Easter. I felt like I was on a bus of refugees from the smoking ruins of Melbourne, heading for the peace and tranquility of the Broad Left Conference in Sydney.

I suppose everyone who attended the conference will have a fragmented impression of it and what was achieved. Its size — there were over 1800 people over the four days — and the huge range of issues addressed, would ensure that an 'objective' assessment would be impossible at this stage. Most of the reports I have heard have been favourable, even from people who were initially sceptical of its value or the 'hidden agenda' of the organisers. It has even been described as 'one of the most important gatherings of left-wing forces since the end of the war' (*Tribune*, 2 April 1986).

For the participants, mostly activists in left organisations, the labour movement, community groups and other progressive social change movements, it was an opportunity to meet with others, to learn from each other, to establish links, to find common ground, and most importantly, to discuss their differences. One of the aims of the conference was to try and overcome the divisions and lack of interaction between people working in left and progressive movements, in order to build alliances and develop a more coherent program for social and economic change.

Was the conference successful in beginning the process of creating a 'broad left' movement? Only time will tell. Certainly the conference worked surprisingly well,

and the atmosphere was generally friendly and relaxed, despite the mammoth task of organising for almost twice the number of participants expected, and the deep divisions that exist in the left. The size of the conference also meant a lot of the workshops were too large to allow many people to participate effectively.

Organisation for the conference began only six months prior to it, and only the dedication and tireless work of the organisers — Roz Schmit and Jane Martin in Sydney and Marie Goonan in Melbourne — and members of the national organising committee saved it from disaster. Attempts were made to obtain representation from as wide a variety of groups and opinions as possible, and to structure the meeting to avoid the marginalisation of issues, so that, for example, speakers were instructed to address women's participation in the workforce when they were discussing the Accord.

Despite this, certain groups were excluded or marginalised. Among these were the gay left movement. Also, because of the unfortunate clash with the Getting Together Conference, many environmentalists and members of 'alternative' movements were not present in proportion to their influence in progressive social change movements. Many people 'conference-hopped', and there were joint meetings and social events organised between the conferences that were quite productive.

Women involved in the organisation of the conference had to work hard to achieve good participation by women — most 'left' conferences are usually dominated by men.

Half of the speakers and chairpersons were women, and there was an ongoing assessment of the participation of women in discussions.

In terms of concrete proposals, it is difficult to say what the conference achieved. The report-back process was done by seven commissions drawn from the conference sponsors, who worked late sifting through reports and proposals from over a hundred workshops and panel discussions to identify common themes and areas of dissent.

Two issues I felt come through strongly from the conference: the urgent need to support the Aboriginal demands for adequate land rights; and the need to increase the social wage.

Land rights was given an important place on the conference program by the organisers. Marcia Langton, from the Central Land Council, spoke at the opening and closing plenaries, black dancers and singers helped open the conference, and several panels and workshops discussed Aboriginal campaigns. Aboriginal participants from outlying areas had been assisted in their travel costs, and money was raised at the conference to publicise Aboriginal demands in the national media.

The need to maintain and increase the social wage — the proportion of taxation revenue returned to the community in the form of social services and welfare payments — was another common thread, even in discussions of a divisive issue like whether we should support the Accord. The social wage clauses of the Accord can be implemented if we support it and push hard enough, argued on side. We won't achieve a redistribution of wealth and power from rich to poor, from men to women, if we accept the Accord of government, big business and union bureaucracy, argued the other.

In general discussion on issues such as the deregistration of the BLF or the Accord, was heated, but not as polarised as I expected. Many people were not sure where they stood on these issues and listened to all sides of the debates.

What many people got from the Broad Left was a feeling of hope and beginnings of unity among left and progressive movements, a recognition the common threat is the resurgence of the right-wing and conservative forces worldwide. There was enthusiasm for further discussions and action which hopefully will be organised regionally during 1986.

For further information or contacts in your region, write to: Broad Left Conference, PO Box 17, Railway Square, Sydney, NSW 2000.

Jonathan Goodfield is an editor working with Peace Studies magazine, and a member of the Broad Left Conference organising committee.

Bases of exploitation

By Gwen Gibbon

I began to ask myself ten years ago — how come I'm going out blessing dead babies every day, it's ridiculous, we have to get to the root cause of this. *Father Cullen of PREDA*

Father Shea Cullen is a Columbian priest who has been working for the past sixteen years in the Philippines at Olongapo, the service town of Subic Bay Naval Base. Along with six Filipino community workers, he runs a drug rehabilitation and human development centre called PREDA which overlooks the base. Father Cullen works with the 'marginal people' of Olongapo — the displaced people whose villages were demolished to make way for the base, squatters, prostitutes, tribal Filipinos and drug abusers.

Subic Bay is primarily viewed internationally in terms of nuclear war, but currently social effects of its presence are also of grave concern. Before World War II, Olongapo was a small fishing village but it has expanded rapidly since the installation of the Base immediately prior to the Cold War. Today Olongapo's population stands at 255 000 and its economy is entirely based on servicing the US Navy.

Subic Bay Naval Base is the largest US naval facility outside mainland USA. It is the home port of the US Carrier Task Force and also performs two-thirds of the repair work and support functions for the US Seventh Fleet: 90 ships, 550 aircraft and 70 000 personnel.

Subic Bay is a 'forward base and repair logistics facility' covering 25 000 hectares, 10 000 of which are water. The complex is composed of several parts:

- Cubi Naval Air Station which has a 2.7 kilometre runway, holds up to 200 planes at any one time and accommodates 17-19 000 takeoffs and landings per month. It

Gwen Gibbon is a member of the Anti-Uranium collective at FOE Collingwood and has recently returned from the Philippines. The information contained in this article is based on conversations and information-sharing with Father Cullen of PREDA and Adul de Leon of GABRIELA.

has 5 600 cubic metres of ammunition storage space.

- Naval Supply Depot with sixteen hectares of storage space which is the largest facility of its kind in the world.

- Naval magazine or weapons store of 5 200 hectares which holds 42 000 tonnes of ammunition.

- Naval Ship Repair Facility with 7.4 hectares of building space, four floating dry docks and three wharves including 1.8 kilometres of berthing space. This repair facility operates twenty-four hours a day and has a typical base load of between five and fifteen ships.

Between 5 000 and 10 000 US service people plus dependents are permanently stationed there. The Base also houses four schools, three golf courses and a medical centre equipped to handle a number of

patients twice the population of the Base itself.

The Base is partitioned from the town of Olongapo by a cyclone fence and a stinking canal in which garbage, untreated sewerage and radioactive effluent from the nuclear ships, collects. Facing the Base, tribal Filipinos live on and around the garbage dump in the area known as 'the place with no name'. In return for guerilla and courier assistance to the US in the Second World War, the tribal Filipinos have been given the 'rights' to salvage what they can from the Base's trash. In this and other areas adjoining the canal, malnutrition and disease are rife. Every second child dies before the age of ten from malnutrition, diarrhoea, tuberculosis or pneumonia.

The neat sterility of the Base, with its dormitory-like buildings, manicured lawns and multi-million dollar facilities makes a striking contrast to the desperate poverty, ramshackle houses and lack of sanitation or access to clean drinking water on the other side of the canal.

Olongapo is in a unique position and has manifestations of problems peculiar to this



'The place with no name'

KEN MANSELL

town. Between 20 000 and 40 000 Filipinos work on the Base but the rest of the town is dependent on the 'hospitality' trade and other service jobs. There is no other industry and no manufacturing in Olongapo.

One main heavily guarded bridge separates the Base from Magsaysay Strip and the rest of Olongapo.

Magsaysay Strip is lined with shop after shop of cowboy boots, baseball caps, curios and tee shirts with two common themes — 'Nuke the Russians' and sex. Magsaysay is also the area where sex and drugs of every variety are available at any time of the day or night. Banners flap out a welcome for sailors and security guards invite themselves inside. Each bar displays flesh of one variety or other — women wrestling in oil, women dancing in g-strings, women in glass cages, child prostitutes and male prostitutes. Country and Western and disco music blares out of the bars as they vie for trade.

There are between 500 and 600 bars, discos, massage parlours and restaurants with 16 000 registered 'hospitality girls' and 3 000 waitresses. Conservative estimates add another 7 000 unregistered prostitutes and street walkers. Sexually transmitted diseases are a perpetual problem and more recently AIDS has become more prevalent. For the 16 000 registered prostitutes, bi-weekly examinations are compulsory at VD Clinics. Check ups for sailors are not.

Corruption is rife. Local politicians are invariably heavily into the business and condone the exploitation of their own people. They themselves own bars and rake in the dollars. The rows of glittering neon signs and gaudy slogans of 'Aim High Olongapo' and 'Team Work Olongapo' cannot hide the true situation of the people.

The dependence of the local population on the Base and the Rest and Recreation of the Seventh Fleet has had far reaching effects. The people of Olongapo have come to value sex as a commodity. There has been a process of dehumanisation on a vast scale with a major impact on their physical and mental health. Broken homes, mental problems, drug and alcohol abuse, glue-sniffing and suicides are becoming more common.

Years of martial law during the 1970s and brutal repression of union and community groups trying to improve wages and social conditions, have left deep scars on the mentality of the people of Olongapo. Police and military personnel are still a major part of the streetscape, making sure that people toe the line.

Until recently there has been little attention focussed on the effect of US military bases on women in the Philippines. However two female church workers have just completed a year-long study of the prostitutes of Olongapo. They found that the



Banners flap out a welcome for sailors along Magsaysay Strip

women came from all over the country but mostly from very poor families in the highly militarised areas of Samar and Visayan Islands. Most had very low educational levels but there were some with College degrees. Ages ranged from fourteen to forty.

Their reasons for becoming prostitutes were most often related to poverty. Many had come to Olongapo to find work on the Base but had ended up in bars. Most had come to earn money to send back to feed their families in the provinces. Many had had a troubled past or a broken marriage and turned to prostitution for survival. Others had come to the Base for 'adventure' or to find an American husband. This is not an uncommon aspiration, as marriage to a Westerner is often seen as a way out of poverty for a woman and her family.

Many of the women in the survey did not want to be in Olongapo and dreamt of other work or getting a better education. Many also expressed hatred of themselves as they could not tell their family how they earned the money. Abortion is also common as few of the women have knowledge of contraception. In a country like the Philippines where the majority of the population adheres to a very rigid form of Catholicism, women who have abortions suffer tremendous guilt. For many of Olongapo's prostitutes, drugs and alcohol have become a way of life.

There are virtually no support services for the women of Olongapo so; many remain for years in the cycle of poverty,

prostitution, debt and drugs. Wages in bars are very low or non-existent. Waitresses and dancers usually work on a commission basis with no basic wage. For a \$1.25 drink the woman gets 5c. Prostitutes get half or less of 'bar fines.' These fines apply when a sailor takes a woman out of the bar for sex. Average charges range between \$12.50 and \$60. When there are no ships in port, the women have no income so they often have to borrow from the bar owner for food and rent. This has to be repaid later with interest.

Father Cullen and his PREDA co-workers have been actively working with the people most affected by the Subic Bay Naval Base for many years now. Despite the label 'communist' and constant harassment by local officials, the PREDA workers have been organising people into small basic communities, to get clean water and sanitation, organise community health centres and embark on money-spinners such as backyard planting and handicrafts. In the longer term, PREDA people are also working on a 'blueprint' of alternative commercial uses for the Base.

A coalition of diverse Philippines women's organisations, GABRIELA, is also becoming increasingly concerned with the social consequences of the US Bases. In Manila a refuge has been set up to provide legal assistance and health advice to women who have been adversely affected by militarisation. As yet there is no local group which has taken on a similar role in Olongapo.

Black issues: white movements

Conservationists need to ask and learn from Aboriginal people; and to approach asking and education with open minds. Preconceptions may need to be consciously put aside. **Lyn Allen** looks at how the two movements relate and recommends ways to improve the relationship.

Like so much of science and literature, the definitions of national parks and wilderness developed by European southern-based Australians traditionally exclude any mention of the Australian indigenous population.

During the Fox/Ranger inquiry, many anti-uranium activists rallied to the call of 'land rights, not uranium'. However when Aboriginal people conceded that they were unable to prevent mining in the Alligator Rivers Region and entered into agreements with the miners and the government, the conservation movement's support for land rights faded. Land rights activists perceived that the anti-uranium movement had offered only lip service to land rights when it suited it politically to use the alliance, but were not really interested in Aboriginal self-determination. The conservation lobby considered that Aboriginal people had sold out to the mining companies and would more than likely continue to do so. Mutual distrust prevailed.

More recently, some token recognition of Aboriginal rights to land, the presence of sacred sites and artefacts, has become more common. This type of tokenism needs to be superseded by a positive commitment to Aboriginal aspirations for land and lifestyles. Established green concepts may have to be redefined.

Top end — Northern Territory
Over the last century intrusion of European pastoralists has been the main cause of land degradation in the Top End of the NT. Areas which were seen as completely unsuitable for pastoralism were handed to

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Aboriginal people as reserves. Hence Arnhem Land, which has no cattle potential has been relatively undisturbed on both social and ecological levels and constitutes a very valuable cultural and natural resource.

Mining interests pose a new threat to the integrity of Aboriginal land. Proposed changes to the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act will make it much more difficult for Aboriginal people to resist mining developments on their land, should they choose to do so. The conservation movement must take a much higher profile in the campaign to prevent loss of the already incomplete mining veto.

Aboriginal freehold title to land offers protection from exploitation should traditional land owners wish to be undisturbed. Unfortunately, the prevailing economic system does not recognise non-use as a legitimate form of land management and tends to pressure people towards production/development/harvest of land. Many Aboriginal people are inexperienced about measures required to prevent serious degradation of accompanying development, and are not adequately informed of consequences by proponents of schemes. This is not particularly different in non-Aboriginal communities, but on Aboriginal land the loss of resources may be more severe.

Where traditional knowledge about the country remains, Aboriginal people have an intimate perception of the workings of ecological systems. Some conservationists blame aspects of the Aboriginal lifestyle such as hunting and burning for the over-exploitation of native species, and use this as an excuse to preclude Aboriginal involvement in nature conservation and preservation. In most instances, the real cause of decline including pastoralism, commercial fishing and the invasion by feral animals, are not highlighted.

In the Top End, two major national parks — Kakadu and Gurig — exist on Aboriginal land and a third, Katherine Gorge, is under claim. There is no indication that formal nature conservation through reservation is incompatible with Aboriginal freehold title. The main prob-

lem has been a reluctance on the part of the government management authorities to include traditional owners more positively in the management process.

Recommendation

A positive approach to Aboriginal issues must be made by conservationists. Sensible and proper land management by Aboriginal people is the norm rather than the exception as a land ethic has been part of Aboriginal tradition and culture for thousands of years. The conservation movement should ensure that Aboriginal communities receive advice about the consequences of proposed developments.

There needs to be a reinterpretation of some traditional green concepts. Wilderness, as it is currently defined, is not appropriate to the present situation in the NT. It may be that there is no wilderness in the NT. This must not overshadow the fact that some of Australia's best natural and cultural resources are effectively reserved and protected on Aboriginal land, and must be vigorously defended by the conservation movement.

Aboriginal land must not be seen to be a competing land tenure with conservation. The two are quite compatible, highlighted at Kakadu and Gurig. The notion that seemed to arise following the Ranger agreement that all Aboriginal people are pro-mining must be exorcised. Aboriginal communities are heterogeneous in the same way as non-Aboriginal communities.

Only on Aboriginal land does the chance to say no to development legally exist. This choice must be maintained. A more vigorous campaign by conservationists to support the retention of the mining veto in the existing NT land rights act, and to have it reinstated into the WA act, is warranted.

Conservationists can learn from Aboriginal people and should have open minds, consciously putting preconceptions aside. By approaching Aboriginal people and organisations in all the states and territories, the environment movement can be educated to most effectively wield its considerable power. The Northern Land Council, Central Land Council and other land councils have staff employed at the point where white culture meets Aboriginal interests.

Telling white lies

The Prime Minister, Mr Hawke, has tried to justify the government's backdown on land rights on the basis that the public is not ready to support it. Surveys show public opinion, especially in Western Australia, swinging against Aborigines. The Liberal party has based its land rights policy on these surveys and the press has accepted them at face value, or in the case of *The Australian*, portrayed them worse than they really are. **Eve Fesl** looks at these surveys and how they have been presented.

If the decisions on land rights by the Labor and Liberal parties have been based on 'political expediency' relying on attitudinal surveys to land rights, then those decisions are incorrect.

A close reading of the published surveys shows that the majority of non-Aboriginal Australians are undecided as to whether to

support or oppose land rights. The results of the West Australian election gives no justification for the hysteria into which Premier Burke inflamed himself on the land rights issue, and the consequent effect on cabinet decisions.

A report of the opinion poll published in *The Australian* on 28 August 1985 headed 'Few support Aboriginal Land Rights', implying that many were against, showed that whilst 24% were definitely against and 18% definitely for, 52% were undecided. The Australian Press Council upheld a complaint by the South-East Land Council that the headline was misleading. In its adjudication the Press Council reported:

The Australian in its reply to the complaint says that 18% is a small number and justifies the use of the word few. Leaving aside the point that 18% of the Australian population is a large number of people, there is the difficulty that in the largest group of 52% is an unknown number of people who support land rights with reservations, and who cannot be dismissed, as the paper's argument does, as people who do not support land rights. One might have thought that the striking result of the poll was that the majority of Australians did not have strong views one way or another.

The Press Council upheld that two other headlines related to land rights that same week were also misleading. The adjudication stated that the 'succession of headlines consistently reflected the least favorable interpretation from an Aboriginal standpoint.'

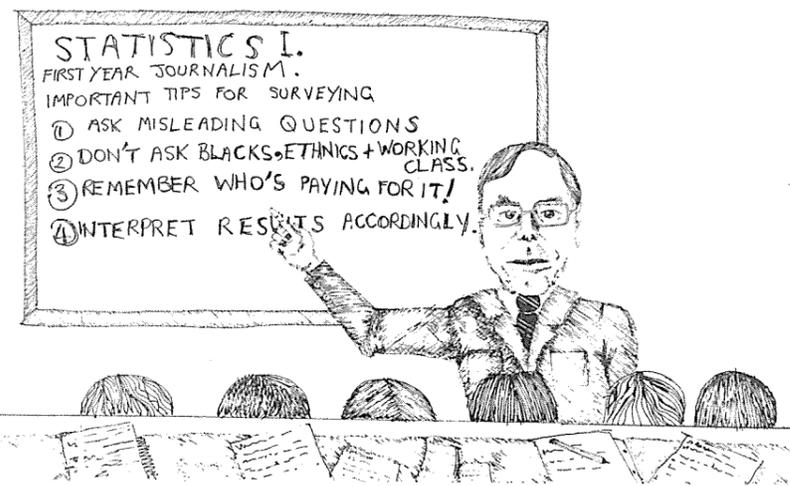
A report published in *The West Australian* and commissioned by the Liberal Party was headed '70% oppose land rights — Lib poll'. On a closer examination one notes that the figure of 70% was arrived at after interviewees were made 'aware of the implications'. A firm commission to obtain accurate results was arriving at conclusions after interviewees had obviously been fed biases to persuade them to answer in a particular direction.

Leaving aside the question of ethical research methods, there is the question that the public and the Liberal Party were given inaccurate information regarding the major outcome of the survey.

Only the results of the WA Chamber of Mines survey was headlined accurately 'Survey: Divided on Grants Issue'. This survey showed that 45% favoured granting Aborigines land and 45% did not. This survey made a distinction between rights and grants, indicating that whilst half the population were not opposed to giving the Aborigines land, the question of rights on that land produced a different answer. It would be interesting to see how the question was phrased.

Finally, survey results in *The Sydney Morning Herald* 14 November 1985 headed 'Fewer support Aboriginal Cause' showed in the text that although support had been lost, there were still more sympathisers for the Aboriginal cause than opponents. Accurate results of surveys thus indicate that despite intensive campaigns by some groups against the granting of land rights, governments would lose little if any electoral support if they were to proceed with land rights legislation in the terms that Aborigines want.

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DAVID SPIERS

The not so preferred model

The Hawke Government has shelved its proposal for national land rights legislation. Its preferred model for legislation tried to compromise between returning the land to the Aborigines and giving it to the mining lobby. It pleased no-one. In the meantime West Australian Aborigines have been given leases to reserves, a weak gesture when vast areas have been taken from them in living memory. In Queensland, Aborigines are finding big slabs have been excised from the reserves that the Bjelke-Petersen Government promised to lease back to them. **Deborah Moon** examines the weaknesses of the preferred model.

History has 'proved' that the Aborigines lost all right to land because they had not developed it. To the invaders 'development' meant exploiting the land for economic gains. In fact, we still pursue the same argument. History has set the precedent — 'Aborigines have no legal right to land . . . they are a minority, and therefore should not have more rights than anybody else.'

However, for Aborigines, the war is not over and won't be until a true National Land Rights Act is put into effect — one that recognises the Aborigines' ownership of Australia prior to the invasion of 1770 and provides reasonable compensation.

The 1967 referendum gave the Commonwealth Government the power to make laws in the interests of the Aboriginal people. This change gave a glimmer of hope for legal recognition of Land Rights but it was to be nine years before anything positive took place.

In 1968, the Yirrkala people put Australia's first major Aboriginal land dispute, the *Gove Land Rights Case*, before the Supreme Court. They were seeking to prove the doctrine of 'Communal Native Title.' It took three years before a judgement was handed down. In his decision, Mr Justice Blackburn found that 'Communal Native Title' could not be recognised under Australian Law as it then stood.

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In December 1972, the Commonwealth Government froze the allocation of Crown Land in the Northern Territory. This was a holding move until the establishment of the Aboriginal Land Rights Commission, two months later to look at how land rights were to be granted.

In response to the Commission's two reports, the Federal Labor Party introduced the Land Rights (NT) Bill in 1975. It was finally passed in 1976 by the Liberal Government as the Aboriginal Land Rights (NT) Act.

The mining industry realised the potential wealth of the regions claimable under the act including the bauxite at Gove and the uranium at Nabarlek: the wealth in Aboriginal reserves and 'worthless' unalienated Crown land, which the Aborigines were allowed to claim.

Thus the war took on a greater dimension — though not a new one — Australia's Resource Development versus Aboriginal Rights. Those in government committed to Land Rights, but under pressure from the 'Big Dollars', walked a tight-rope. The result was the Preferred Land Rights Model.

Many of its provisions were the same as in the Land Rights (NT) Act. For example the land would be held under inalienable freehold title, ie. it could not be sold. It would be vested in local or regional Aboriginal bodies (Land Councils).

Land claims could be based on traditional entitlement, historic links, long-

term occupation or use and specific purposes. Only former reserves and other vacant Crown land could be claimed provided it was not allocated for anything but mining. Commonwealth National Parks could be claimed (subject to conditions) but not State Forests. Small living areas could be set aside for Aborigines on pastoral leases, under certain conditions. Access to land would be subject to the Aboriginal owners' consent (except for government officials on duty). But unlike the NT Act Aboriginal owners would not have the power to veto mining.

The NT Act would be further watered down to fit in with this provision. It has already been amended several times, making it far weaker than the Land Rights Commission Report recommended it should be. Under the preferred model:

- The Aboriginal owners and the mining companies were expected to reach agreement on compensation by direct negotiation within a reasonable time. Otherwise the issue would go to arbitration giving the government the final say.
- Aborigines would be entitled to compensation for 'actual damage or disturbance to their land' including social or spiritual loss or damage.
- The government would decide the proportion of royalty money to be paid to the Aboriginal owners, and how this money would be distributed.
- Aborigines could claim land that is subject to existing mining leases, but not any compensation or conditional claims.
- Sites of significance would be identified and protected by the States, or the Commonwealth, if there is no state legislation.

The 'model' in itself was a retreat from official ALP policy, and has been criticised by Aboriginal organisations, the Australian Mining Industry Council (AMIC), the West Australian, Queensland and Northern Territory Governments.

The Aborigines believed that the 'Preferred Model' did not give them enough rights, and for some it has eroded rights won in the past. For Aborigines the preferred model failed to recognise:

- prior Aboriginal ownership of Australia;
 - the continuing dispossession and cultural alienation of Aborigines. For example, those communities who have been forced to move because of poor facilities and racial tension, such as the community at Lake Nash in the NT;
 - the rights of Aborigines to compensation;
 - the rights of those already dispossessed.
- There was no safeguard against land being suddenly converted into used or allocated land, as happened in the NT, when the government in 1982 extended the town boundaries of Tennant Creek and Darwin, enlarging the two towns to something like fifty times their original size.
- the importance of Aboriginal relationships to the land;
 - the need for autonomy and self-determination. The Preferred Model maintains that Aboriginal land is to be subject to normal commonwealth and state laws. Thus it appears that the government has disregarded customary law, particularly in the traditional Aboriginal communities;
 - the moral and official obligations to provide justice.

Aboriginal groups objected to the sect-

ions of the Preferred Model which deny Aboriginal owners the power to veto exploration and mining on their land. They also attacked the provision giving the government the right to administer royalties. To quote from the Land Councils:

Protection of sacred sites, rejection of mining, and compensation and royalties, will all be subject to the scrutiny of a third party.

The government argued that the Crown owned all the minerals and, being accountable to the Australian people, should make final decisions on matters of public interest. This argument runs counter to the United Nations recognition of indigenous peoples' rights to self determination and economic independence through land rights.

In the language of the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights:

1.1 All people have the rights of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

1.2 All people may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their own natural wealth and resources . . . In no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence.

The concept of Land Rights aims to rectify actions perpetrated on Aborigines, such as murder, rape, and ethnocentric government policies. It also means recognising Aborigines as the original owners of Australia, giving them land where they can control their own future. In denying them the right to control mining and compensation the government has denied the basis of Land Rights.

Jim Strong, spokesperson for the Mining Industry Council has argued that giving Aborigines the right to negotiate with mining companies would cause lengthy delays, as in the Northern Territory, crippling exploration and mining. The mining companies also claim Land Rights would lead to the development of a separate nation and is a form of Apartheid.

Statistics show that mineral exploration fell through Australia between 1981 and 1983 by 24%. In the NT the downturn was only 20%. It appears the downturn was caused by commercial factors (world market prices etc.) and government decisions (eg. on uranium mining), not by Land Rights legislation.

There is no way to compromise between the interests of white people pursuing wealth, and those of an indigenous people who demand justice and self-determination. Doing so, must put some people's noses out of joint. As the Melbourne "Age" editorial of 18 October 1984 stated:

The Government must be prepared to defend the principle of land rights from silly and shallow attacks, emphasising that land rights are not restitution for past guilt but a remedy for a continuing injustice.

One way of achieving this would be to educate the general Australian populace. To promote awareness of Aboriginal culture, needs and aspirations — not only of the traditionally orientated Aborigines, but also the fringe dwellers and urban Aborigines. Obviously it will not change attitudes overnight. Legislation is still required. It must allow for complete self-determination in the process of giving land, otherwise there are no rights, just empty promises.

Unfortunately for the mining companies they must learn to realise that they are dealing with a community whose lives are affected by mining activities. Thus they are answerable to these communities.

Surely the Federal government cannot, on the one hand, say that they are giving Aborigines land, and on the other claim that Aborigines cannot have the right to control and use it. It makes the whole act a token gesture.

It is not a question of satisfying all the objections to the preferred model; but of satisfying one basic principle — Land Rights.



Australia day rally for Land Rights.

Conserving the status quo

The Victorian government is soon to release its Conservation Strategy alongside its Economic and Justice Strategy. The development of the Conservation Strategy has involved fairly extensive community and industry consultation. Peter Cock reports.

The Victorian government's Conservation Strategy has evolved into a clear and articulate document that provides an insight into current departmental thinking. However, it fundamentally fails. It remains subservient to economic strategies committed to increases in per-capita income.

The basic argument of this article is that until we change our high consumption lifestyles, the demands for more coal, oil, agricultural lands, timber, buildings, dams will continue until the last river is dammed irrespective of environmental resistance movements. Until the growth in consumption per head is stopped and appropriate patterns of consumption are developed, any conservation strategy however well intentioned, is unsustainable and contributes to the delusion of the public that what needs to be done is being done. This article considers firstly the need for demand management, secondly it examines the issue of strategies for its implementation, and thirdly concludes with a comment on working towards a conserver society.

Promoting consumption

Our society is organised to promote high levels of consumption. There are a number of elements to this, such as the design of the relations between producing and consum-

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ing units so that there is efficiency of production on the one hand and maximum need to consume on the other. This is achieved through decreasing the size of consuming units, so that fewer people constitute the consuming unit. This is basic to the maximisation of throughput by duplication and competition and to the environmental inefficiency of the structure of consumption.

Consumption is further promoted by the separation of components of one's world into a number of different and separate worlds increasing the dependence of the individual on specialism.

The structural propensity to consume is reinforced and sustained by massive investment in advertising to sustain an active consumer consciousness. The media pressures us to use people to gain things and to find our self expression in a lifestyle of self-indulgent consumption of unnecessary, obsolescing items which inhibits our capacity to find non-material means for our psycho/social fulfilment.¹ The short-term capacity of such goods to satisfy then reinforces the need to find the next latest gadget.

In short, we have an economic system that requires people to work in order to consume and consume in order to work. The paradox is that production, and also consumption, is increasingly being done by machines (even if more efficiently). The result is that the demand for goods and services is not matched by the demand for labour and thus the nexus between work and income to consume is being broken.

In this context the presently dominant strategies to protect the environment from the ravages of excessive consumption are unsustainable and largely ineffective.

Treating the victim

The present conservation strategies focus on the victim and the immediate cause of environmental threat treating particular examples of environmental degradation, for example, air pollution and water pollution. The focus of action is on technical fixes and symptom suppression to clean up a particular mess. While energy is centred on treating the victim there will

always be victims. This approach is a repeat of the approaches to social welfare problems.

The first requisite for controlling the pollution producer is to work out acceptable pollution levels, while accepting pollution's inevitability. This is supply management by regulation and surveillance.

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) was set up to monitor pollution and reinforce regulations. This often involves the legalisation of pollution. If the amount is exceeded or committed without a permit, then the individual polluter may be fined, stopped or more likely the quantity reduced. The overall process is only slowed, particularly as regulations are largely dependent on producer information. The EPA has only limited resources available for surveillance and very little follow through as far as effective sanctions. It is often cheaper to pollute and pay the fine than to stop.

Controlling existing producers is one thing, the other side is assessment and prevention. With this idea in mind, environmental impact statements were introduced. These are required but not always produced, before any major development occurs. In Australia, as far as is known they have rarely if ever stopped a proposed development, only slowed it down, or modified it. These measures increase the cost of production, provide public service employment, but have negligible impact in comparison to the extent of the environmental destruction and public expense involved. To be more effective such controls need the support of both the primary users of the environment and the public.

In the face of the increasing failure to control and to design appropriate industries with little environmental impact; one strategy of environmentalists is towards fencing off selected areas from the ravages of industry and the public, we declare certain sensitive areas to be set aside as nature reserves. The future becomes that everywhere else a waste land predominates. There are few or no trees and birds. In short, humans have little contact with nature.

There is more and more need of professional ecologists, environmentalists, whose job it is to protect particular flora and fauna in flora and fauna zoos. If these experts are successful, this will produce a worldwide system of surveillance, planning and administration that will save particular species. However, this has the effect of a still bigger system being needed to police all the other big systems that have proved incompetent. In other words, environmentalism from this frame of reference, means more police forces, just with different coloured uniforms.

The defence of particular areas and species provides at best only short-term shielding. The picture is one of environmental action groups running from one picket line to another, seeking to stop the bulldozers whether they be constructing a dam or felling a forest. While this strategy may relieve consciences, the rest of society remains unchanged. A win today often means a loss somewhere else. Environmental action groups are constantly faced with only being defensive and constantly retreating with some short-term hold-off victories along the way. It is a dead end strategy! It is not surprising that the burnout rate amongst the environmental defence forces is as high as it is. However environmental victims have the potential to challenge the structure of society. This was illustrated by the Tasmanian Wilderness Society Franklin Dam campaign. This was effective in stopping, on environmental grounds, a major development project based on unquestioned demand curves that went for ever upwards.

A sustainable conservation strategy

A conservation strategy that is sustainable is one that focusses on an examination of social structures, lifestyles, and values that promote and enable a reduction in the demand for goods and services without a corresponding feeling of a reduction in the quantity of one's life. The proposed Victorian conservation strategy, despite continuous attempts to modify it in this direction, is essentially geared into an economic development strategy with minimal environmental impact, and no fundamental challenge or questioning of the organisation of society.² A sustainable strategy means decreases in per capita consumption and changing patterns of consumption towards more renewable resources and short-term minimal environmental impacts, and most importantly experimenting with ways of living and being that define appropriate development frontiers as centering on intrapersonal and interpersonal capacities.

The proposed strategy reads as a government document rather than a conservation strategy that attempts to mobilise the *whole* society with the government as catalyst. As a result it tends to see the government as the only arena of significant responsibility. It fails to explore the appropriate relationship between structures of power and effective strategies —when it is better to centralise versus localise, and what mix? If the supplier and user are the same person or group, then 'conservation' becomes more self-managing.

Promotion of such structural changes is possible without sudden revolution: that is promoting the restructuring of personal environments. This involves development of structural circumstances that enable multi-faceted complex relations in contrast with the present dominant mode that demands single function, specialised, but large-in-number contacts between people and their environment. However, this requires changing planning strategies to promote the re-integration of work and living environments and decreasing the need to move. This also involves changing our culture: for example changing our perceptions of acceptable ways of living and doing.

There are substantial regulatory barriers against developing conserver lifestyles such as the health regulations that limit house occupancy to one family, promote excessive packaging; and planning regulations that inhibit solar success.³ An active promotion of shared use of resources, eg in housing and transport, is needed.

The strategy fails to critically assess the environmental impact of the zonal approach to planning. It fails to creatively work with the issues at the borders of zones — to not only build bridges but to begin to integrate approaches to planning, eg conservation with agriculture, urban with rural industrial with domestic, private/public. Breaking down these barriers is fundamental to our capacity to think globally and act locally — to work towards a holistic approach that treats all the elements in a creative way while incorporating preventative strategies.



Development and conservation can be integrated if we move away from rigid single function zoning and work towards multi-function land uses. For example:

- On the urban/rural fringe develop hamlets with multi-occupancy involving varied uses from residential, conservation, recreation, agriculture, and public access.
- The promotion of shared occupancy of the one dwelling as well as dual occupancy where there is two or more on the site.
- Promotion of multi uses of urban building stock, eg working at home.
- The strategy largely fails to bring together environmental users with the environmental protectors, eg rivers are separated from water, appropriate recreation from water catchment.
- Encouraging and enabling sharing and cooperation between consumers, eg food cooperatives.

The promotion of appropriate consumption can be helped by government if it sets an example with its own buildings, its use of transport, the non-advertising or purchase of products that have high environmental impact, and further taxes and incentives to promote one set of choices and to discourage another. A new concept of nationalism is needed that centres on the protection of the continent from our acquisitive, consuming culture.⁴

What is needed are new regulations to restrict consumption promotion; that require products to have a longer lifespan, encourage their reparability; necessitate their recycling applicability and increase their multiplicity of uses. This involves looking towards laws to abolish all calls to buy wasteful products not requested by a potential customer. There is a right to purchase but not to advertise.⁵ There is also a need for a careful examination of indirect methods of consumption promotion, eg credit promotion.

The government can do a lot more than it is presently doing through, for example, the Solar Energy Council and various committees to develop appropriate technology and a form of production and consumption a total environmental impact analysis from production to disposal should be done prior to any choice of one system over another.

Changing the pattern of per capita consumption as well as its level is clearly insufficient if the population of Australia continues to grow. The main variable in our population growth is immigration. Historically the demands for immigrants have been to feed the wheels of industry, to provide an army for defence and to expand the market to a more economical size. However, technological developments are such that machines are increasingly replacing labour both in the army and on the factory floor. An appropriate policy here

would be to allow into Australia, independent of race, but according to skills and family reunion needs, those people equal to the number who leave, thus Australia would then have a zero immigration growth rate as well as a zero population growth rate.⁶

Labor government thinking is dominated with the concern for equity and the cry of how to give those who are less well off a 'larger slice of the cake' and thus a higher per capita consumption. Clearly environmentalists would support the view that the extremities between incomes need to be substantially reduced so as to broaden the base of those open to a low consumption lifestyle; not of necessity but of choice. A guaranteed minimum income would ensure one's existence and break the nexus between employment and income.

The conservation movement has argued strongly to reverse the price structure of production in order to favour labour. Unfortunately increases in demand for goods and services are not matched by an increase in the demand for labour, as investment has an increasing component of labour replacement. What is therefore necessary is a redistribution of the work cake so that there are increasing numbers of part-time relative to full-time workers. We have the present dichotomy between those who work full-time and overtime and those who don't work at all and have so much time but no resources to use it.

However, choosing to reduce one's income as distinct from being forced to, is dependent on challenging the entrenched propensities towards privatisation symbolised by the garden fence, and the commitments to material definitions of psycho/social value which inhibit the stabilisation of material satisfaction. Social and physical contexts that enable time to be used in ways that facilitate personal and community development without destroying the ecosystem are also needed.

Towards a conserver society

We need to be clear of what our longterm objectives are and have some sense of our direction and vision. What are we working towards when we struggle to stop the dam, to reduce our consumption or to change our lifestyle and consciousness? Actions need to be carefully structured so that what is done to respond to the crisis of the moment is consistent with our longterm objectives; curative strategies need to also include a preventative element.

Clearly a sustainable society is a society radically different from that which presently dominates. Any action towards it, is up against the dominant economic/political forces which have a vested interest in maintaining existing structures, however unsustainable they may be in the long term.

A conserver society involves a values transformation as well as a social structural transformation. A conserver society involves a value system committed to the human scale. A value system committed to self-determination wherein the individual with significant others has power to shape their own reality; a value system committed to ecological awareness, ie that everything is connected to everything else. A value system committed to personal growth, enabling the development of the inner richness of human life by improving sensitivity to others, oneself, and the environment and finally a value system committed to material simplicity, to use things for our basic needs for food, shelter and clothing, to use versus idolising the exchange value of things.⁷

These values require for their realisation and sustainable practice a social structure that confronts the person with their connections with the planet. A social structure that is responsive to the needs of the person and of the planet. This means a society that is dynamic, diversified and complex but, from the individual standpoint, is organised so that each individual understands its whole and their part in it. This means complexity at the personal level and simplicity at the macro level, achieved by organising society in such a way that it is multi-centred, each being integrated, relatively small and autonomous from each other.⁸

Such a conserver society perspective involves decreasing the power and size of public realm and increasing that of private realms, that is power centred at the grass roots level within local communities. Developing the personal will, collective power and political modes appropriate to realising this vision of a conserver society is the task to be achieved if we are to survive and live.

Footnotes

1. See: G Katona, *Aspirations and Affluence*, McGraw-Hill, New York, 1971.
2. See: *Draft State Conservation Strategy for Victoria, 1984* Ministry for Planning and Environment, Victoria.
3. For an example see: P Cock and J Miles, (eds) *Regulatory Barriers to Low Energy Housing in Victoria*, Environmental Report No 18, GSES, Monash, 1984.
4. See: T Scitovsky, *The Joyless Economy*, Oxford University Press, 1976.
5. F Fisher, in Birrell et al, *Quarry Australia?* Oxford University Press, Melbourne, pp 295-309.
6. See: R Birrell, D Hill and J Nevill, (eds) *Populate and Perish*, Australian Conservation Foundation and Fontana, Sydney, 1984.
7. See: D Elgin, *Voluntary Simplicity*, Morrow, 1981.
8. See: K Sale, *Human Scale*. Sacker and Warburg, 1980; P Cock *Alternative Australia*, Quartet, Melbourne, 1979; J Robertson, *The Sane Alternative*, 1983.

POLITICAL DIRECTIONS FOR THE PEACE AND ENVIRONMENT MOVEMENTS

Non-violence, let's fight about it



Police on Honeymoon.

by Howard Ryan

Grounded in a deeply-felt reverence for life, nonviolence/pacifism is an attractive philosophy for peace activists working to stop the violence of the military machine and its nuclear buildup.

When Gandhian civil disobedience tactics helped energise and radicalise the anti-nuclear movement, pacifist organisers played a crucial guiding role. There is much in their history and present work in which nonviolent activists can, and do, take pride. Still, there are problems in the theory of nonviolence which can hinder the work of its proponents and which hold implications for the peace movement.

'At the centre of nonviolence stands the principle of love,' observed Martin Luther King. Violence is wrong, points out another pacifist, 'because it denies the value of its victims' lives.' Pacifists are right to love and value human life. But the concept that violence denies life is overly simple. Armed liberation struggles may deny the lives of government soldiers, but they

affirm the lives of oppressed majorities. In fact, where demonstrators and organisers are regularly shot at and tortured, to insist resistors remain nonviolent can deny the value of *their* lives. The pacifist moral notion is dogmatic. It assumes the wrongness of violence in the abstract, apart from social context. As a sure-minded theorist declares, 'For the pacifist, violence to human personality, even in political struggle, is ruled out because it is ethically unrighteous—period.'¹

Not all pacifists are so hardnosed, and many are sympathetic toward armed liberation struggles. But even when pacifists make allowances for the social context of violence, they tend still to see violence as wrong in itself.

The modern tendency has been to emphasise the practical benefits of nonviolence and dangers of violence, rather than moral considerations. But it is significant that many practical

Howard Ryan is involved with the anti-nuclear movement in California and is presently working on a book *Non-violence and Class Bias: from Mahatma Gandhi to the Anti-nuclear Movement*.

pacifists subscribe to the moral principle. For example, Gene Sharp is a leading nonviolent theorist who stresses an analytic, pragmatic approach and criticises those relying on 'moral, injunctions and exhortations in favor of love.' Nonetheless, Sharp shares a personal belief in 'nonviolence as a principle,' meaning as an ethical imperative. He believes nonviolent action can achieve 'a working union of morality and politics,' because it is moral — 'that is, in harmony with one's principles which include nonviolence' — while it is also practical.² If one assumes violence is wrong on moral principle, it is hard to imagine this not affecting one's assessment of the practical merits of violence and nonviolence. Rather, there will be a biased tendency to interpret events to fit one's moral presumptions.

Practical View — Violence Doesn't Work

Nonviolence is not only morally preferable to violence, but it is more practical, according to nonviolent advocates. History has shown that violence tends to beget greater violence and injustice. Armed revolutions such as in Russia and China have resulted in new forms of tyranny and authoritarianism. Nonviolent resistance, on the other hand, offers humane, democratic possibilities. In support of these views, nonviolent writings often misrepresent history to make nonviolence more attractive and violence unattractive. For instance, *The Power of the People: Active Nonviolence in the United States* begins with a tribute to the nonviolent tradition of Native Americans. Centuries of armed struggle against the European aggressors are totally overlooked.³

The most common historical misreading by nonviolent theorists involves the father of modern nonviolence, Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi, according to prevailing literature, not only spearheaded India's nonviolent independence movement, but was a social revolutionary who championed poor people's struggles, befriended the untouchables, and worked for Hindu-Muslim unity. Gandhi deeply sympathised with the poor and led several reform-oriented campaigns.

But despite growing socialist sentiments in India he did not favour large scale peasant or worker revolt. Gandhi and his colleagues assured that the nationalist movement did not take anti-capitalist and anti-landlord direction. Thus, British colonial rule ended only to be replaced by Indian capitalist rule, and India's oppressive social structures remained intact.⁴

Whatever its limitations, nonviolent advocates believe the Indian movement demonstrates the immense potentials to achieve nonviolent social change with little cost in human lives. Roughly 8000 people were killed as a result of the independence movement, estimates Richard Gregg in *The Power of Nonviolence*. 'Considering the importance and size of the conflict and the many years it lasted, these numbers are much smaller than they would have been if the Indians had used violence toward the British.'⁵

Several nonviolent theorists have compared the Indian struggle with the armed Mau-Mau rising in Kenya, both having ousted British rulers.⁶ The Indians incurred far fewer deaths than the Kenyans, it is claimed, indicating that violence brings greater violence and suffering than does nonviolence.

A comparison of China and India challenges this thesis. Both countries conducted national liberation struggles during the 1940s, India through a nonviolent movement and China through an armed movement. Debesh Bhattacharya in a 1974 study points out that China far surpasses India in combating hunger and illiteracy, providing health care and full employment, and in equalising the distribution of income, landholdings, and consumption.⁷ China's armed struggle appears to have begotten much less 'social violence' than India's nonviolent movement. Of course, the differing goals and contexts of the two struggles must be acknowledged — Gandhi's movement opposed foreign domination but supported Indian landlord-capitalist rule; Mao opposed foreign domination and class domination. Nevertheless,

the comparison points to problems in the pacifist assumptions regarding violence and nonviolence.

Non-Violence and The Peace Movement

Although pacifists may be wrong in their assessments of violence and nonviolence, some point out a commitment to nonviolent tactics is clearly called for in the peace movement now and for the foreseeable future. Why should nonviolence as a principle or philosophy be debated at all? Should we not simply devote ourselves to nuts-and-bolts organising and leave the violence-nonviolence debate to the distant revolutionary future when violent methods might become a reasonable consideration?

Even if violence is not a short-term option for the peace movement, nonviolence as a theory *should* be critiqued and debated, particularly in the direct action peace movement where nonviolent theory is heavily influential. A philosophical commitment to nonviolence among a large number of activists has long-term implications. Although revolution is unlikely in the short run, fundamental social change is ultimately essential for the peace movement to achieve its goals. Should government repression call for armed self-defence, commitment to non-violence could become a liability.

Effective anti-militarist strategies also demand that peace activists become radical thinkers, informed by political theory and an understanding of historic and current struggles. This includes an ability to assess both violent and nonviolent struggles; the Russian revolution, Gandhi's campaigns, labor, civil rights, and anti-war movements, ongoing liberation struggles today. Insofar as nonviolent theory relies on a distorted view of history which seeks to condemn violence and celebrate nonviolence, the general understanding of history and politics in the peace movement will suffer.

Finally, certain themes in nonviolent theory can lead to problems in daily movement organising. In general, the strong moral tone characteristic of nonviolent philosophy encourages political rigidity. Existing strategies, tactics, or processes come to be seen as being consistent with nonviolence, and they are no longer questioned or critically discussed. Some nonviolent themes relevant in the direct action peace movement are considered below.

We are all one

The concept of human unity and related themes such as love, trust, reconciliation, are a seductive but politically hazardous feature of nonviolent theory. Most radicals, myself included, entertain long-term visions of a harmonious and cooperative world. On the other hand, calls for social harmony and labor-management cooperation are often used by the privileged classes to obscure existing conflicts and discourage lower class militancy. Distinctions must be made between genuine forms of unity based on real agreement and false unity that suppresses conflict underneath.

In the direct action peace movement, excessive concern for harmony often creates a phony pleasant atmosphere where people are afraid to discuss their differences openly. Calls for group unity may be genuine or may be used to advance a particular political position and discourage oppositional views. For example, activists who do not want women's issues raised may accuse feminists of dividing the peace movement.

The friendly attitudes toward opponents and emphasis on converting them, traditional themes in movements guided by nonviolence, have become contended issues in some direct action groups. One of the nonviolence guidelines of the Berkeley-based Livermore Action Group asked that blockaders adopt an attitude of openness, friendliness, and respect toward all people we encounter. A number of activists have objected to the guideline, pointing out that millions of people . . . do not feel 'open,

friendly, and respectful' toward people they rightly perceive as their oppressors.⁸ However, an attempt to modify the guideline prior to the June 1982 Livermore weapons lab blockade failed when consensus was blocked.⁹

Non-violent power theory

This theory proposes that a government's political power is dependent on the cooperation of the people. The withdrawal of that cooperation restricts and can even dissolve power. This is an important truth; a disobedient populace *can* undermine the power of rulers. But its approach is simplistic. A ruler's power relies not only on the cooperation of the ruled, but on a broad number of conditions that often leave people no alternative but to cooperate. Refusal can challenge the power of authorities when pursued in the context of an effective political strategy and broad base of support.

Many direct action groups have come to believe that refusing to cooperate, that is applying civil disobedience, empowers protesters regardless of whether the movement involves a mass following. Some groups develop delusions of grandeur, assuming more power than they actually have. This was exemplified in 1979-81 when anti-nuclear groups such as California's Abalone Alliance and New England's Coalition for Direct Action at Seabrook (CDAS) announced their blockades were no longer 'symbolic' i.e. intended primarily to arouse public concern, but aimed to actually halt nuclear plant construction. Confronting masses of police, the inability of the blockades to stop construction became quickly apparent. The CDAS actions were violently crushed. Moreover, because the actions were planned as 'not symbolic', there had been little publicity. As a result, the public impact of the protests was limited and police had a free rein to carry out repression.¹⁰

Direct action tactics can be empowering for participants in the sense of lifting morale and confidence; they can also be an excellent way to energise a movement and draw public attention to the issues. But obstructionist tactics alone cannot empower the movement to eliminate the nuclear threat or radically alter society. Unfortunately, many groups rely on such tactics to the neglect of public education, alliance-building, and the discussion of broader strategies. Consequently, these direct action groups, tend to be limited to small constituencies who are willing or can

afford to be arrested and spend time in jail. Achieving deep social changes will, of course, require these and much greater risks. But the movement also needs a sense of what its supporters and sympathisers are prepared to do at a particular time. Only with their participation will there be a real empowerment.

Nonviolent theory poses the long-term danger that its supporters will remain rigidly committed to nonviolence when nonviolence is no longer adequate. It also poses more immediate problems in the peace movement with regard to political-historical perspective, organising processes, tactics, and strategies. In terms of the latter, perhaps the peace movement has simply misunderstood nonviolence. On the other hand, there may be basic flaws in nonviolent theory which inevitably lead to various political problems. Either way, a critical discussion of nonviolence and political theory could only contribute to the health of the peace movement.

Notes

1. Mulford Q Sibley, *The Political Theories of Modern Pacifism: An Analysis and Criticism* revised edition, Garland Publishing, New York, 1972, p 28.
2. Sharp G, *Gandhi as a Political Strategist*, Porter Sargent, Boston 1979 pp 252-4.
3. Cooney R & Michalowski (eds), *The Power of the People — Active Non-violence in the United States*, Peace Press, Culver City CA, 1977.
4. See Hirendranath Mukerjee, *Gandhiji A Study*, 2nd Ed, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi, 1960 and Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India 1885-1947* Macmillan, Delhi, 1983.
5. Gregg R B, *The Power of Non-violence* 2nd Ed. Fellowship Publications, New York, 1959, p 100.
6. Deming B, *Revolution and Equilibrium* Grossman, New York, 1971, p 208; Sharp G, *Social Power and Political Freedom* Porter Sargent Boston, 1980, p 167; Oppenheimer M & Lakey G, *A Manual for Direct Action*, Quadrangle, Chicago, 1965, p 116.
7. Debesh Bhattacharya, *India and China — Contrast and Comparison 1950-72*, *J. Cont. Asia* 1974, pp 439-59.
8. *Livermore Weapons Lab Blockade Handbook*, Livermore Action Group, CA, p 32.
9. For a full critique of consensus see *Consensus — Lets Vote on it*, CR 37.
10. At both these demonstrations, the police took off their badges and, instead of arresting people, attacked with batons, tear gas and mace. Several demonstrators received broken bones and concussions.



Police confront demonstrators at Swanston dock 1977 — but the protests eventually bore fruit and the shipping of uranium through Melbourne was halted.

Films

Half Life, produced, written and directed by Dennis O'Rourke. 35mm Widescreen, 86 minutes. Distributed by Ronin Films, PO Box 1005, Civic Square, ACT 2608.

Reviewed by **Heather Hoare**

An elderly islander almost proudly leafs through his photo album for the camera. 'Here we are in New York, these were all taken on Long Island' he says. But the commentary lapses as images of white gravestones appear, as incongruous among the 'holiday' snapshots as the crime behind them was among the tranquility of the Marshall Islands. Because the islander's son, one of hundreds radioactively poisoned by the US nuclear testing in the 50's in the Marshalls died during medical observation (you could hardly call it treatment) in America.

The angering, almost surreal story of the US sacrifice of the islanders in the nuclear test of 1954 code-named Bravo is the subject of a new film by Australian Dennis O'Rourke. In 1947 the Marshall Islands were handed by the newly formed United Nations to the US to be held in trusteeship, involving protection of the rights and fundamental freedoms of the islanders. So what did they do? They exploded at least 66 nuclear bombs there, one of which, Bravo, was the first deliverable hydrogen bomb, and predicted to be 500 times more destructive than its predecessors.

It appears that on this occasion the inhabitants of the nearby islands of Rongelap and Utirik were not evacuated as they had been in the past; a severe indictment on the US. Bravo produced, as planned, huge amounts of lethal radioactive fallout which began to fall several hours later as a white powder on the islanders. The children, having seen pictures of snow, played excitedly in it, and everyone fell violently ill that night.

The official claim was that it was all a mistake; that the wind shifted at the last minute, contaminating the islands. Eye-witnesses, including US weathermen, discount this claim, and it is now evident that the exposure was intentional, that the islanders were purposely established as a



Tanira Jorju holds her grandson, Kimo, born to parents who were children at the time of the 'BRAVO' bomb test in the Marshall Islands in 1954. '... we never saw these illnesses before the bomb.'

control group, as human guinea pigs to test the long and short term effects of nuclear fallout. This theory is further supported by the fact that they were not evacuated for a full two days after the test. Nearby ships capable of immediate rescue were ordered to sail away.

O'Rourke is not new to this type of ethnographic/essay film making. He has long been associated with documenting tensions between western and traditional cultures, from New Guinea to Australia to New Ireland. But despite the fact that *Half Life* comes across as damning the US, this was not intentional. O'Rourke has said:

'I never believed when I started the research that the Americans set out with the deliberate policy to expose the Marshallese to radiation, although I met a lot of people who asserted that they did. But at the end of the project I can say that they certainly allowed the exposure to happen, they have used victims ever since as guinea pigs... My aim was to make a film about what has happened to all of us, not just the Marshall Islanders. There are no villains as

such, just scientists, soldiers, politicians and bureaucrats who believe that they were and are doing the right thing, and who unleashed this monster on the world. The Marshall Islanders are the evidence for all the world to see'.

It is somewhat surprising, but an indication of the same compassion which he used to make the film so moving that O'Rourke is not anti-American. If anything, he is more angry at the United Nations for the way it has stood by and watched the US abuse its trusteeship in the Marshalls by using the islands as a weapons ground.

Half Life is an intensely moving film, both beautiful and infinitely sad. A lot of its power lies in the stark contrast between the footage used. Scenes from US propaganda films of the 40s show the native visiting the 'white mans room' (x-ray — the last thing you'd feel like, I'd have thought) and refers to them, standing solemn and obedient, as 'savages by our standards, but happy and amenable ones'. Oh my God — irony overload!

DENNIS O'ROURKE

These scenes are interspersed with those of islanders describing their experience. One woman tells of how she became pregnant and prematurely gave birth to 'something I cannot describe... like the innards of a beast'.

It is the complete lack of humanity displayed by the US in this instance, that they did not value all lives as equal, that makes the film, and the event, so angering. In a sense, the Marshallese are the first victims of World War III. They are the first culture in the history of our race which has been effectively destroyed by radiation. And they are a small culture — the end of the line. Decisions were made to deliberately allow these gentle and trusting people to be exposed to radioactivity. In the name of national security the US has irreversibly destroyed the fragile world of the Marshall Islanders for countless generations to come.

The US response to the islander's plight was to grant independence. Reagan's sickeningly patronizing message to the islanders was 'You'll always be family to us'. That kind of nuclear family we could all do without.

Heather Hoare is the editor of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology student newspaper, Catalyst.

Books

Abandon Affluence! by FE Trainer, Zed Books, London, 1985, 308 pages, \$24.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by **George Venturini**

If the present trends continue, the world in 2000 will be more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically and more vulnerable to disruption. Serious stresses involving population, resources, and environment are clearly visible ahead. Despite great material output, the world's people will be poorer in many ways than they are today. For hundreds of millions of the desperately poor, the outlook for food and other necessities of life will be no better. For many it will be worse. Barring revolutionary advances in technology, life for most people on Earth will be more precarious in 2000 than it is now — unless the nations of the world act decisively to alter current trends.

These words introduced major findings and conclusions to *The Global 2000 Report to the President — Entering the Twenty-First Century* that the Council on Environmental Quality, the Department of State and eleven other federal agencies presented to President Carter in 1980 in response to

the President's Environment Message to the Congress on 23 May 1977. The endeavour was to serve, in Carter's words, as 'the foundation of our longterm planning.'

The work was to become one of the most explosive and important documents to have been produced in the twentieth century, the most detailed and the authoritative review of the planet problems ever prepared. The Reagan administration deliberately disregarded the Report. Instead, within a month of taking office, President Reagan announced his four-part program for economic recovery: civilian budget cuts and military build-up; tax cuts; rollback of federal regulations; and monetary policies which would cause high interest rates.

The book under review proposes, — in the wake of *Global 2000* — different ways.

Trainer's book argues the now familiar 'limits-to-growth' case, which is developed from examining the main problems of the world's population, some of which continues to lead a resource-expensive way of life, despite energy and resource scarcity, and the unsatisfactory development of nuclear energy. This constitutes a longterm threat to the life support system of the planet and a short-term threat to the Third World, with its unchanged poverty and underdevelopment. International conflict, the chance of annihilation and the erosion of the human family's quality of life are closely linked.

These problems are meticulously examined and documented in Chapters 1 to 9. The author's thesis begins to develop in Chapter 10, which demonstrates inadequacy of science and technology in dealing with these problems. Humankind faces not technical problems, for which it is equipped to deal with, but problems of reorienting basic values, changing priorities, behaviours and institutions and moving urgently to more equitable systems of distribution.

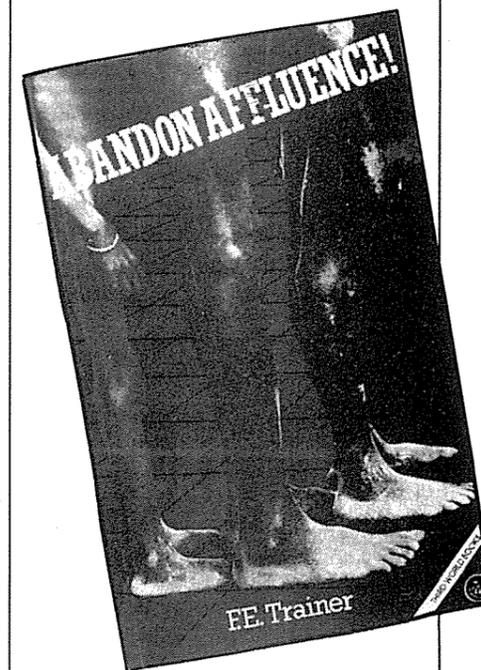
The main source of those problems is the world's present economic system, which is again criticised in Chapter 11.

It is not an economic system which can accommodate to the production of only as much as is necessary for a comfortable way of life. It is an economic system which must produce vast and increasing quantities of non-necessities in order to remain healthy.

Foreshadowed in Chapter 10, development — the first prong of social reform joins with the exhortation to totally reject affluence and growth. As a thorough analysis of the global and human condition, the first eleven chapters of the book are well written and very readable, replenished with data and references. I mean no discourtesy in pointing out that most of the information was already available and not much of it seems to come from this side of 1981.

The declared intention of the author was that of bringing together 'two major strands of thought which might loosely be described as Marxist and ecological'. But the submission for an alternative society seems to contain a great element of faith in human change — and rapid change at that. The author is correct that, having made that assumption,

... it becomes clear that a just and safe world must be built on social units that are highly decentralised, relatively self-sufficient in production, communal and co-operative, rather rural and labour-intensive and not at all materially affluent.



On re-reading the last chapter I could not help reflecting that the author may have underestimated the power of resistance by corporations — particularly trans-nationals — and the array of managers, technocrats and professionals, who can mobilise 'public' servants and their governments in the continued pursuit of affluence and growth. I am looking forward to a new, up-dated and infinitely better indexed edition and one which offers a more realistic conclusion.

Dr Venturini is a Friend of the Earth and was a Senate candidate for the Nuclear Disarmament Party in the December 1984 election.

REVIEWS

The Foodmakers by Sarah Sargent, Penguin, 1985, 295 pages. \$8.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by **Kate Brennan**.

The Orwellian overtones of pig breeding ventures in the Riverina of New South Wales launch the reader into the world of Australian agribusiness, a world of which most of us are ignorant. Sarah Sargent, in her sometimes dense but readable book, leaves no room for ignorance, demanding that we as consumers become involved in what is no longer a natural food chain. Her book, which began as a study of large food-based corporations in Australia, but went on to raise many issues for consumers, policy makers, farmers and economists, challenges both the tradition and control of the food industry in Australia.

Sargent develops a critique of the 'potent and persuasive, inanimate economic model of the free market'. The belief that a market which knows no national boundaries, always decides what is best for it and is just for all participants is ignorant of the devastation it may cause in individual sectors or in the Third World where its policies often contribute to landlessness and rural poverty. In formulating her argument Sargent hopes to stimulate debate both in consumer and policy circles. She strongly believes that we have to reject the tradition that economics is to do with statistics and hypothetical models, not cultural values and social well being.

Her idealism is not vacant for she continues with an argument focussing on the extent of agribusiness control of all food-producing, processing and servicing industries. Australia spends \$20 billion per year on food but behind the seemingly endless variety which confronts the consumer are a handful of companies greedily expanding at the expense of the farmer, consumer, and international community. In fact as few as four companies control aspects of most, if not all, of Australia's food commodity production.

Sargent traces Australia's rural history — interestingly one without peasants — through to the economic crisis which takes its toll of family farms and which she contends, has destroyed the fabric of rural society. She predicts a growth in the trend toward concentrated land ownership and warns that the country might not get another opportunity to fend off the weight of corporate capital, technology and promotions methods, especially from overseas investors. She relates evidence that unnecessary product proliferation, the overuse of agro-chemicals, agromachinery and fertilisers will contribute too, to this concentration of food resources into the hands of large corporations.

She goes on to examine our changing food consumption patterns and raises issues of food, health and the social effects of 'convenience' consumerism. She points out that agribusiness responds to new market demands in one or all of three ways: going for large shares of the domestic market; developing active new product programs; or expanding overseas.

In expanding overseas, Australian agribusiness has seen the populous countries of Asia and the Pacific as a captive market. Free market economists believe that Australia has a natural comparative advantage to produce and export food, and the weight of Western opinion supports this. Sargent believes that amongst the negative effects, the increase in nutrition-related degenerative diseases in the previously agricultural subsistence societies of the Pacific particularly, is a direct result of aggressive marketing of rice, canned and bottled meats, processed cereals like biscuits, snack foods, and dairy and sugar preparations.



While corporate food business see that the Westernising of Asian food habits and agriculture is both an advantage to them and their market, Sargent asks to whose advantage is this kind of development and contends that in no way does such development assist the landless poor of those Third World countries who constitute the majority of the hungry world. She proposes the alternative to this corporativeness as cooperativeness and cites examples of cooperatives which safeguard the interests of the consumer and producer while employing the profitable handling and marketing techniques of agribusiness, without their disadvantages.

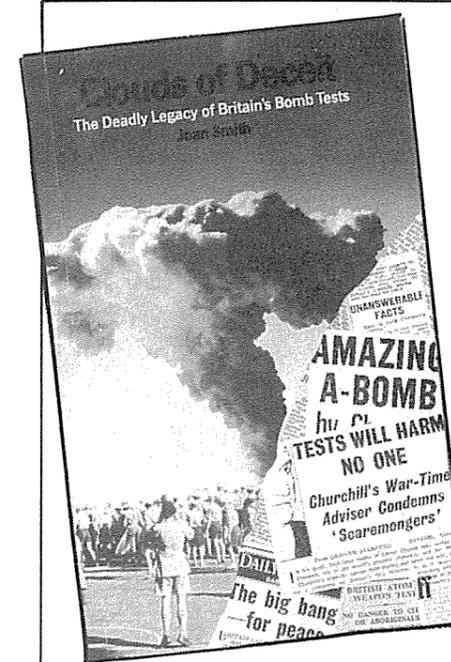
In describing a more cooperative model, both at policy and produce levels, she emphasises the need for Australian consumers to become aware of the threats under which farmers live and the implications of our food supply. The need is too for Australian agriculture policy to analyse its links with the Third World and to take action to combat rural crisis, poverty and hunger as it exists both here and overseas.

Kate Brennan is Education Officer for the Australian Freedom from Hunger Campaign.

Clouds of Deceit: The Deadly Legacy of Britain's Bomb Tests by Joan Smith, Faber and Faber, London, 1985, 176 pages. \$12.95 (paperback)

Reviewed by **Peter Springell**.

Clouds of Deceit was written from a British viewpoint, and before Justice McClelland's Royal Commission Report was published. Although some material stems from the Commission's London hearings, some conclusions, and some of the emphasis, differ. For example, the nuclear research scientist and chair of the Australian Atomic Weapons Tests Safety Committee from 1956, Ernest Titterton, is treated much more kindly by Smith. This committee is depicted in the book as having been largely ignored by the British, whereas McClelland found it to be deceptive, and too accommodating. On the other hand, Smith is more critical of the techniques used to compile fallout distribution patterns over Australia. One is forced to conclude from the book that the official distribution charts are untrustworthy. The author also claims, on the basis of secret documents she uncovered from the Public Records Office, that the yield of the Mosaic G2 test was 98 kilotons. It is somewhat surprising that the Australian Report still sticks to the 56 kiloton figure.



Smith makes no mention of the Marston affair, in which the scientist Hedley Marston was prevented from publishing his post-test gamma spectra observations, and from speculating about the possible dangers of strontium fallout. Furthermore, the Cobalt-60 incident described in some detail by the Royal Commission also does not rate a mention. The book does not convey the full extent of the indifference and injustice to Aborigines, while the so-called Minor Trials, which are of major concern now, are also not given the prominence given to them by McClelland.

There is a useful historical overview, in which nuclear research is traced back to Roentgen in 1895, and which culminates in the H-bomb. Although this story is generally well known, there are interesting snippets, which may be news to some. For instance, the remark made by General Groves, when he was in charge of the Manhattan Project back in 1944: he said that all the work was really directed against the Russians, although they were allies at the time. Then when it became obvious that Hitler would not have the bomb in time, the race was on to ensure an atomic weapon could be dropped on Japan before the end of hostilities.

The British Labour Party appears to be no more trustworthy than its Australian counterpart. A small number of ministers, headed by the then Prime Minister Atlee, decided by underhand means that Britain acquire the atom bomb. Even Churchill, when subsequently returned to power, is said to have been amazed at the amount of money spent on the project without the knowledge of the British Parliament.

Things were not much better in Washington, with Eisenhower advocating public confusion as a means of stifling informed debate on the H-bomb project. Official irresponsibility is further illustrated by the revelation that at one stage 200 ships had been rendered radioactive in US nuclear tests in the Pacific, before any means of decontamination were developed.

The British press gets its share of brickbats. Journalists like Pincher, no doubt gratefully gave glowing accounts in return for a chance to leave their dreary Fleet Street offices for a free holiday in the sunny antipodes. Their uncritical chest-beating reports of the day especially irritated ex-journalist Joan Smith in view of the problems she encountered following Murdoch's takeover of the *Sunday Times* in trying to get the truth printed. She therefore takes some delight in demolishing Pincher's reputation as a reliable reporter.

Perhaps the most startling revelation of all comes at the end. Most veterans of the testing with medical problems received less

radiation at that time in their lives than what most nuclear industry workers receive annually. The future implications for governments and the nuclear industry are absolutely devastating. Not surprisingly, Whitehall is anxious to avoid admitting liability for the veterans' ailments.

When one considers the enormous costs these tests have been to Britain and Australia, not just financially, but socially too, then one is entitled to ask what the exercise actually accomplished.

The index is comprehensive, but the bibliography is too brief. Furthermore, there is no access to any of the numerous original references the author must have consulted, which is regrettable. The text is of course all the easier to read by being uncluttered by footnotes.

Peter Springell is a retired scientist belonging to *Scientists Against Nuclear Arms, People for Nuclear Disarmament, and People for Peace in Cairns*.

LOST & FOUND

Is this your hand making phone calls for Chain Reaction?

Is this your bright idea?

Is this the typewriter you could use for Chain Reaction?

Is this you going to talk to people for Chain Reaction? **KNOCK! KNOCK!**

Chain Reaction

Work with us on *Chain Reaction* and find all the things you've been missing . . . show us the things you've found.

BACKSTAGE

Since *Chain Reaction* commenced in September 1975 as a foolscap, fordigraphed newsletter, it has undergone a number of changes with different editors, designs and policies, yet has always managed to reflect issues of environmental concern throughout Australia and the world.

This will continue with the 'new' collective which has taken responsibility for the production of *Chain Reaction* since the former editor, Jonathan Goodfield, announced his intention to leave after four years in the job. Jonathan's skills and advice will be available, although his full-time presence will be sorely missed.

The collective assembled for this edition and the immediate future consists of Ian Foletta, Eileen Goodfield, Clare Henderson, Gwen Gibbon and Larry O'Loughlin. This is basically a Melbourne collective and we would appreciate a regular input from people in other regions. Ideally there would be collectives throughout the country (imagine the decision-making process!) preparing articles, discussing content and deciding policy. Meanwhile, individual contributions are welcome, especially conservation, the environment and related social and political topics that are not covered elsewhere. Original photographs and graphics are also useful.

Chain Reaction finances and subscriptions need to improve if the magazine is to remain viable. The circulation has fallen and currently does not bring in enough revenue to cover production and distribution, let alone the cost of running an office and paying workers even a miserable pittance. Our reserves will be exhausted by the production of this issue. However, although we will accept your cheques to support, we are making some changes to improve the situation. We will attempt to produce more issues per year and providing the circulation improves we should break even while paying reasonable wages to one or two staff.

We have moved our office to the FOE Collingwood premises where FOE have got their shed together. The room is smaller, but cosier, and Eileen has already noticed an increase in passing traffic. We expect extra energy and bodies will help with work on *Chain Reaction*.

Our postal address remains the same and the new phone number will be listed in the next edition. Visitors and volunteers are welcome and you can do food and book shopping at the same time.

Larry O'Loughlin
for the *Chain Reaction* collective.

GETTING OUR SHED TOGETHER



32 Chain Reaction



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If you are interested in any aspect of the nuclear issue, the bookshop has further expanded its range of titles to cover almost everything you need to know.

The bookshop also welcomes anyone who would like to sing or play an acoustic instrument in the bookshop. A warm, dry alternative for buskers on those cold, wet days.

Volunteers are always needed and appreciated.

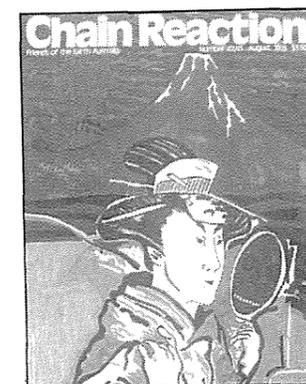
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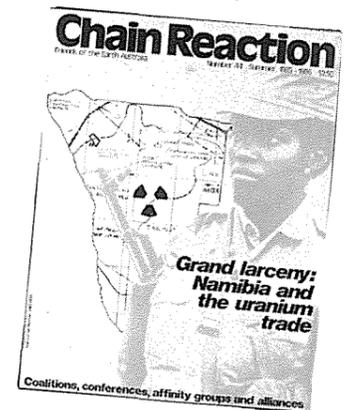
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