

# Chain Reaction

Friends of the Earth Australia

Number 63-64 \$3.00

**Tobacco and the environment**

**Green, gay ... and Christian?**

**Constructing war**

**SPECIAL  
DOUBLE  
ISSUE**

**Corruption in the  
environment movement?**



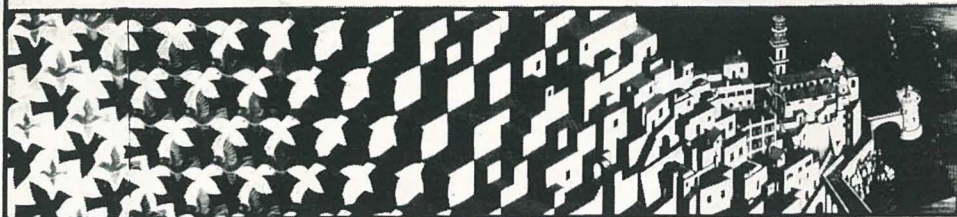


# Ecology, Socialism and Human Survival

**Socialist Scholars Conference**  
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**University High, Melbourne**

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## International Guests so far include:

- Alexander Cockburn (USA)
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- Francisco Nemenzo (Philippines)
- Peter Camejo (USA)
- Mary Mellor (England)

Other invited speakers awaiting confirmation include Nawal el Saadawi, Lynne Segal, Mike Davis, Barry Commoner, Roy Bhaskar.

## Chain Reaction

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Just when  
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 it was safe  
 to go back  
 in the  
 garden...

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# Letters

## Open invitation

We wish to object to your magazine publishing the piece by Richard Gosden on ICI (*Chain Reaction* 61).

The piece had a number of inaccuracies and exaggerations and such distortion of the facts is quite irresponsible.

It first surfaced in March 1990 as part of an election campaign stunt; it is particularly inappropriate to now publish it in your magazine.

Solutions to environmental problems will need industry and FOE supporters to work together with some measure of common understanding. To that end there is an open invitation for Gosden and all environmentalists to visit ICI Botany and observe what is actually occurring.

Michael M. Henry  
Manager, Corporate Affairs  
ICI Australia  
PO Box 4311, Melbourne,  
Victoria, 3001

## Errata

Your last issue advertised the book *A Look Inside the World Bank* as free. It is not free, it is published by Envirobooks and is on sale at environment bookshops at a recommended retail price at \$7.95, or special price from me at \$6. Thanks and have a good new year.

Carol Sherman  
PO BOX 161, Byron Bay,  
NSW, 2481

## Hamburgers and rainforests

Contrary to McDonald's denials of serving beef that has come from cattle grazed on ex-rainforest land — there is no way that Roger and friends could 'think' they were telling the 'truth'. Let me explain.

Any beef coming in to the USA has to be examined by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) food inspectors. Let's say country 'X' has a lot of beef since they chopped down their rainforest and converted a "useless piece of jungle", into a cattle ranch. Well the better off who owned the cows heard that there was a peso or two to be made selling beef to the overfed, up north, while the masses in country 'X' were often hungry.

Well this USDA inspector stamps 'USDA approved' which signifies that the beef passed a certain standard. This beef is then put up for sale with other shipments of beef — some locally grown, some abroad. A purchaser then buys and sell to Roger. Most people in the US would assume that a carcass with a USDA stamp on it would be from America, so Roger might think that he's buying good ol' US beef when in reality he's getting conned, and so are we.

Now this could all be a fairy tale, or a tall one, but this was the system of certification several years ago. So if you wanted to check this marketing matter, or have Roger McDonald check it out and report back, we'd appreciate it.

Tlaloc Tokuda  
Upper Coopers Creek  
FOE Lismore



## Americium 241 and smoke detectors

Recently in New Zealand, several scientists and a television broadcaster made a documentary highlighting the issue of smoke detectors which contain the radioactive material americium 241. Unfortunately these scientists and the broadcaster are now being sued for 1.5 million dollars for alleged defamatory statements made in the documentary.

Greenpeace is supporting their case and in doing so is trying to collect as much information as possible on americium 241 and its use in smoke detectors. In particular we are concerned with:

- the precise source of americium 241 used in the ionization type smoke detectors (we understand the source of americium 241 is from the nuclear weapons cycle);
- the radioactive dosimetry of 0.1 microcuries of americium 241 should it be inhaled or ingested into the human body;
- the conditions of manufacture of ionization type smoke detectors especially in third world nations, and any testing carried on the manufacture of ionization type smoke detectors before distribution;
- the labelling required of ionization type smoke detectors;
- the ultimate disposal of ionization type smoke detectors, and the environmental implications of disposal in landfills;
- the differences between ionization type smoke detectors, and photoelectric type smoke detectors.

We would be grateful if you could supply us with any information on the

above issues, or any other information you have on smoke detectors containing americium 241.

Grant Hewison  
Greenpeace New Zealand  
Auckland New Zealand

## A booming problem

An Australian visitor brought me a copy of your mag recently (*Chain Reaction* 61).

I enjoyed it, but was astounded to see it made no mention of human population at all. You may think you're insulated from this problem in Oz, but you're not at all!

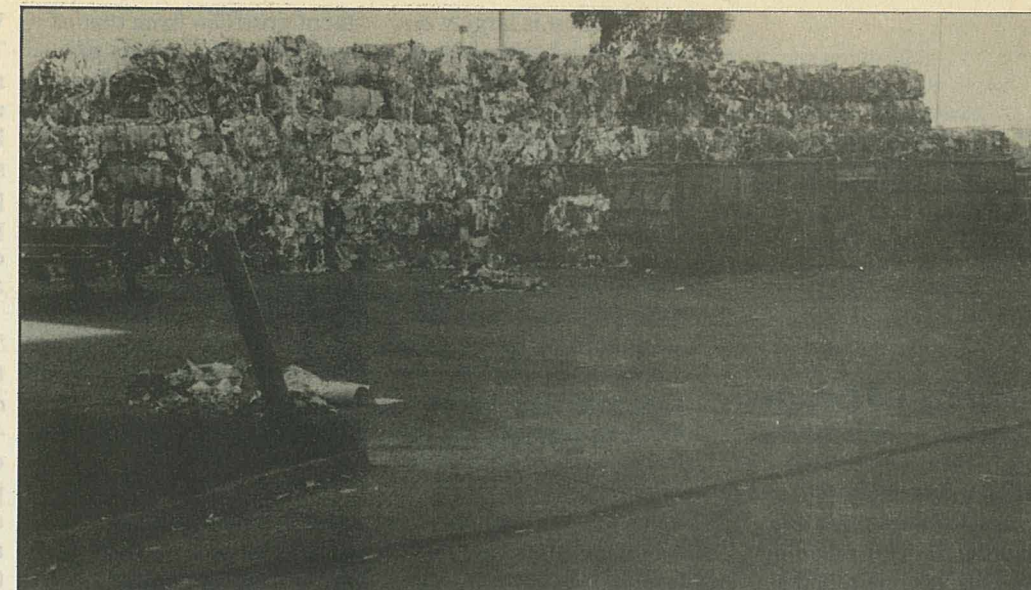
For starters, you should read Paul and Ann Ehrlich's new book *The Population Explosion*. I could include loads of literature but won't. The book says it all really.

If you've already had pieces on population, I apologise: except that it needs to be mentioned in practically every 'green' article, from fishing to forestry.

FOE(UK) is going into the issue seriously soon, I'm glad to say. No need for you to reply, but I beg you to have the courage to think about it!

(Mrs) Jo Hanson  
London, England

**You are invited to write letters to Chain Reaction with your comments on the magazine or any other issues of interest. Write today to Chain Reaction, GPO Box 90, Adelaide, 5001, South Australia.**



## A package of problems

Within Australia and overseas there has been considerable effort by certain sections of the packaging industry towards the introduction of kerb side recycling schemes.

The general direction of the industry seems to be towards legislated recycling levels for Local Government. This approach is counter productive and has led to the collapse of viable recycling industries in other countries. Once the packaging industry is successful in obtaining legislated recycling rates it can effectively control the market price by refusing to pay for materials which local authorities are forced to collect by law.

The end result is that local authorities are forced to collect the raw materials for the packaging industry, which they are not obliged to accept.

This scatter gun approach means that the user pay principle is not applied and the general public is forced to subsidise an industry which individuals may not choose to support.

All local authorities are crying out for markets for recyclables. It is only common sense to realise that if profitable markets exist an industry will develop to exploit this niche. With profitable markets recycling will occur independent of Local Government, which is the most preferable situation.

The packaging industry supports its case for Local Government funding of recycling schemes by suggesting that foregone cost of disposal should be considered and used to offset collection costs. What they neglect to mention is that a viable recycling industry based on stable markets for recycled materials would divert an equivalent amount of material at no costs to the local authority or general public.

Good steady markets for recyclables will create a private enterprise solution to the problem.

This is where the politicians need to apply some lateral thinking to the problem and legislate for a minimum recycled content for all packaging items and newsprint. In one action they create stable markets

and reliable pricing structure. The value of the recyclables will be set by the industry's demand and the volume required will be controlled by their growth rate and market share. As they are all keen devotees of kerb side recycling they may even choose to band together and fund the collection of their own raw materials as APM did by contract in Queensland until they were overwhelmed by public response to recycling.

Their ability to go into the market place and collect their own recyclables will ensure that the cost of collection and packaging will be added to the cost of the packaging. Therefore the packaging or newsprint consumer funds the recycling.

I would strongly urge you to consider this approach before backing any Local Government operated recycling schemes. Because there is nothing more certain than failure if quantities of recycled materials increase without secure markets.

Greg Robson  
Development Engineer  
Waste Management Branch  
Brisbane City Council



# Letters

## Keeping us pegged

Many who attended the IUCN meeting in Perth realised how difficult it can be to get things done at a meeting when an agenda has been pre-set months beforehand. We can only get so far reacting to fixed agendas — we need to start setting the agendas.

The UNCED conference in Brazil in 1992 will be another case in point if we don't act soon. The reality is that the next few months will largely determine what the agenda is.

In particular, the UNCED process to date has talked about large scale non-government organisations (NGO) involvement in preparing national responses. It seems our responsibility to make sure that the Australian position on this is as strong as we can make it. Several countries now have national NGO forums on UNCED. Australia needs one as well, involving both environment and development/aid groups. Pegasus can assist this process.

En.unced.inbox is a strategy conference, with the aim of getting full NGO involvement in the consultative process. This will be one place to find out what other groups around the world are doing and how we can work together.

A conference called oz.esd looks at Australian involvement in UNCED. At

the moment it is largely informational, but we hope it will become a strategy forum before too long.

Other conferences have been set up with the co-operation and involvement of the UNCED Secretariat.

en.unced.documents contains detailed material on the preparatory meetings under way for UNCED.

en.unced.general is where specific groups following up areas of involvement are getting in contact with each other. Each topic contains the latest stage of preliminary documentation on the subjects involved, with responses from NGOs interested in specific areas.

en.unced.update is a smaller conference giving progress reports on the UNCED process.

Please get involved. If you need any help in conferencing or don't know how to set up, please contact us here at Pegasus and we will help.

Ian Peter

Pegasus Networks, PO Box 424, Byron Bay, NSW, 2481

## Resource Security

The Federal Government's adoption of Resource security legislation, which guarantees exploitive industries access to natural resources, has drawn cries of horror from the officially recognised spokespeople of the conservation movement.

These cries of horror are either base hypocrisy or politically pathetic as it has been clear since just after the last Federal election that the conservation movement had served its purpose and got the Labor Party re-elected. The first indication was in the downgrading of the environ-

ment portfolio from that of senior minister to that of junior minister and it has been downhill all the way since.

It is long past time for the environmentalists to stop swanning around the lobbies of Parliament House. The concept that there can be some sort of balance between protecting the environment and further development has been exposed for the dream that it always was.

There can be no conciliation. It is up to the conservation movement to get back on the streets, into the forests and in front of the polluting factories and abandon the Parliamentary process.

C. Friel  
Alawa, NT

## Land rights and wrongs

The article 'Towards Aboriginal Sovereignty' (Chain Reaction 62), does show some insight into how Aborigines might attain control over their lives and maintain their cultural traditions. It would be a positive step to occupy traditional lands and establish Aboriginal communities. Nonviolent action to this end could serve to break the sense of frustration suffered by Aborigines following years of inaction by the White community.

However, the Aboriginal Provisional Government Council with its claim to sovereignty and nationhood is moving in a direction which can only lead to greater disaster for Aboriginal people. These Western structures are alien to all indigenous cultures; they have emerged in the modern world out of

White Western traditions. To be an effective part of a new emerging world community, Aboriginal people have no need to align themselves with social and political structures of the past which are really the core of the problems we are all facing.

In an article, 'The Scourge of Nationalism in the Modern World' in *Social Alternatives* (Vol. 8 No. 4, January 1990), I have detailed the dilemma for all people with a suggestion concerning actions which are humanly possible. A further article, 'The Right and Wrong of Land Rights', *Social Alternatives* (Vol. 9 No. 4, January 1991), deals more specifically with the tragedy involved in Aboriginal people pursuing sovereignty and nationalism.

Land rights are not only a problem for indigenous people; the Western view of land being just another commodity is a different form of the problematic. The Western focus, in the social sphere, on human rights cannot find effective expression without some deeper understanding of the land question. To quote my article:

"Land rights are right and they are an essential element in human rights. When merged with nationalism they are wrong because nationalism ultimately negates human rights."

I am prepared to forward free of charge copies of the above articles (or complete copies of *Social Alternatives* to anyone who would care to write to me at *Social Alternatives* c/- Department of Government, University of Queensland, 4072.

Les Hoey  
St Lucia, Qld

## The gloss wears through

I was really pissed off to receive from Friends of the Earth (in company with *Chain Reaction* 61) an Australian Conservation Foundation promotional glossy of so-called environmentally sound products. My own view is that FOE should not get involved in merchandising.

As a low income earner, (who manages to survive quite nicely without an Aironic Ionizer - page 14 'ACF environmentally Sound Products'), I don't want FOE to follow some of the more 'glossy' conservation groups and start

catering for consumerism, even if that consumerism is said to be green. FOE has a special role as Australia's down to earth and idealistic organisation, especially from the viewpoint of living simply. FOE presents a well researched and respected platform on waste reduction, including waste paper. To maintain its credibility, FOE should avoid distributing (and generating) promotional material, even if, in this case, the catalogue's source was not FOE, and even if the ACF had piles of them lying around the place. I have recently dropped my membership of The Wilderness Society because of the amount of promotional

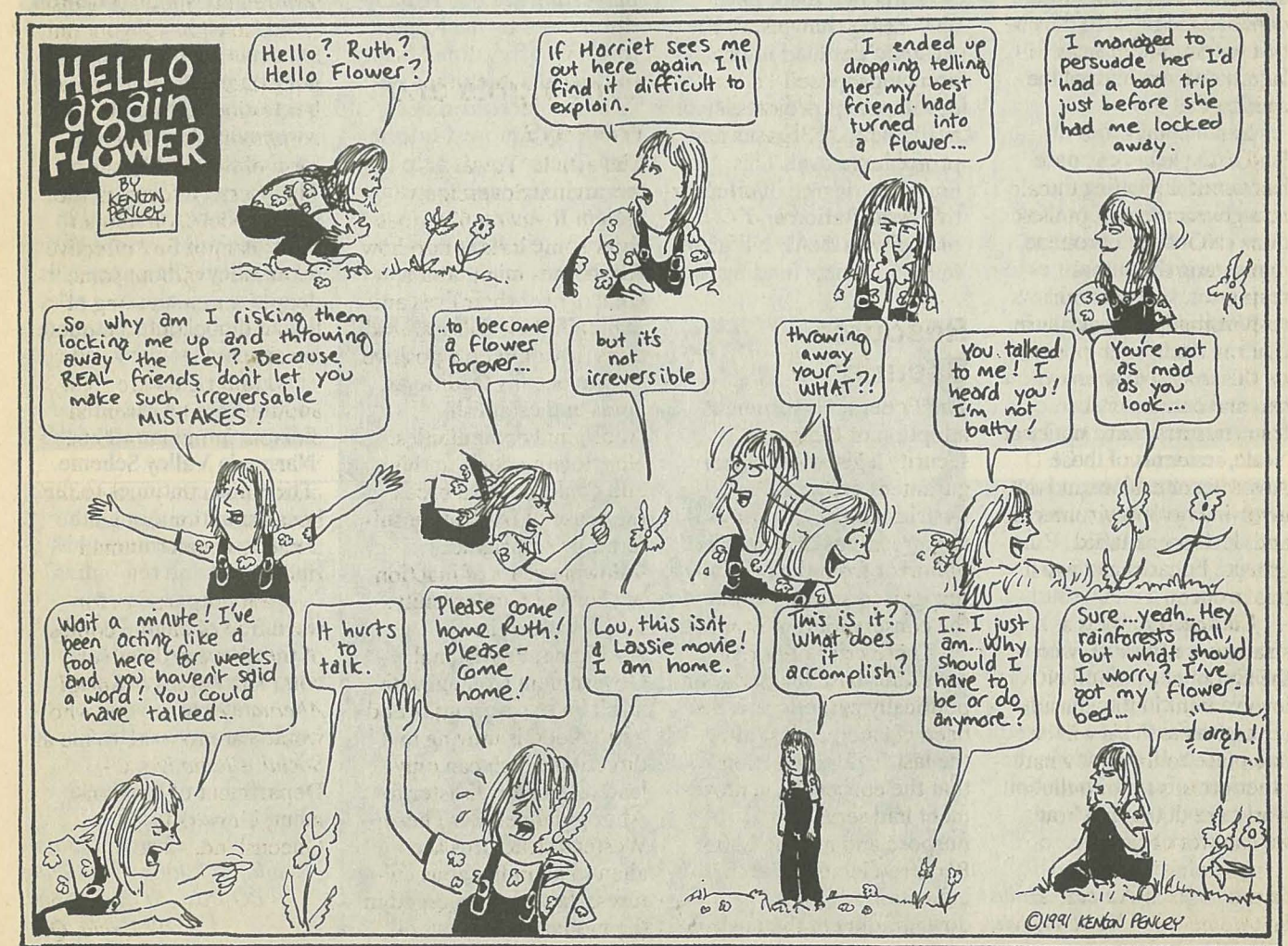
material they kept sending me. Please don't misunderstand me, I do think there is a place for such promotion and I have no quarrel with ACF over this (I only wish they wouldn't send the stuff to me and I have written them accordingly.) Friends of the Earth should, in my view, leave merchandising to groups like the ACF and keep right out of the promotional scene.

Ross Bridges  
Member Friends of the Earth,  
Greenpeace, and ACF.  
Summer Hill, NSW

Editors Note: You raise a dilemma we often consider - how to reconcile environmental principles with

magazine production. We take your point about consumerism but we need money to operate in this less than ideal world, and we received \$400 for inserting those catalogues. Our policy is to limit inserts to two per issue, and to only insert those of organisations who are doing something for the environment, even though they might not necessarily do everything the way we would want.

We are currently looking at this policy, and may restrict our inserts further after current commitments have expired. We are considering running only not-for-profit, appropriate inserts and swaps, where we put our low-gloss promotional material in other publications. This will reduce our income, and may lead to cover price increases.





# Letters

## Where's the sunshine?

I live on the Sunshine Coast, and for six months of the year, my wife and kids live in a haze of smoke, a result of the archaic practice of burning cane during the harvesting season. I say archaic because in this day and age, with all the talk of pollution, ozone layer, and greenhouse effect, you would think that economics would take second place to the environment. There are alternative methods of harvesting that are environmentally friendly, and in the long run, more economical. Getting the cane farmer to accept these new methods is a problem, but getting the authorities to enforce environmental laws is even harder, especially in Queensland.

There is a chain reaction to cane burning. Because cane farmers burn on a large scale, residents of those areas become blasé and do their own property burns on overgrown vegetation. Ring the fire brigade, and you find that even on a dangerously dry, hot period, there is no fire ban, or any sort of control on smoke pollution.

To add clout to my letters to the authorities, I need scientific data that shows the ill-effects of smoke pollution. Anyone out there with any info on the above, please reply.

M. Read-Andia  
Yandina, Qld

## Aid and the environment

Since the Government's recommendations were tabled earlier this year in response to the Senate Inquiry into Australian Overseas Aid, the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB) has been keen to enhance its image.

Recently, it distributed a paper that will form the basis of an ecologically sustainable development policy. NGOs who were given very little time to comment on the draft, voiced their concerns that vital issues including protection of tropical rainforests, rights of local communities, access to information, were not fully addressed.

Although there have been some changes within AIDAB, detailed information on proposed development projects is not available to NGOs until project approval. This limits the degree of effective consultation and dialogue. AIDAB has also failed to renew funding for

a position held in the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, which concentrated on development and environmental issues. It continues to fund projects which will facilitate tropical deforestation. A loan to PNG will educate land-owners on how to get a better deal from logging companies, rather than being offered viable alternatives, while primary tropical forest in Queensland will be used as a demonstration site for a tropical rainforest management training project, which is based on the experience and expertise of the 'successful management' of Australia's own tropical forests in Queensland. However, this example of ecologically sustainable management and harvesting has been totally discredited by the Rainforest Conservation Society in Brisbane and other environmental researchers.

The Rainforest Information Centre needs help if we are to expand the campaign. If you could contribute towards fax/phone, mail, office and

campaign expenses, we would appreciate it. Any contributions of documentation on bilateral aid project would also be welcome.

Meanwhile, the World Bank continues to fund the most environmentally destructive projects. The Centre has a number of resources, draft letters and articles on a variety of issues. These include;

- Nam Theun 2 dam in Laos. The Bank is supervising planning although an early feasibility study for this project recommended against construction. If the dam goes ahead, it will destroy vast areas of irreplaceable primary tropical forest.

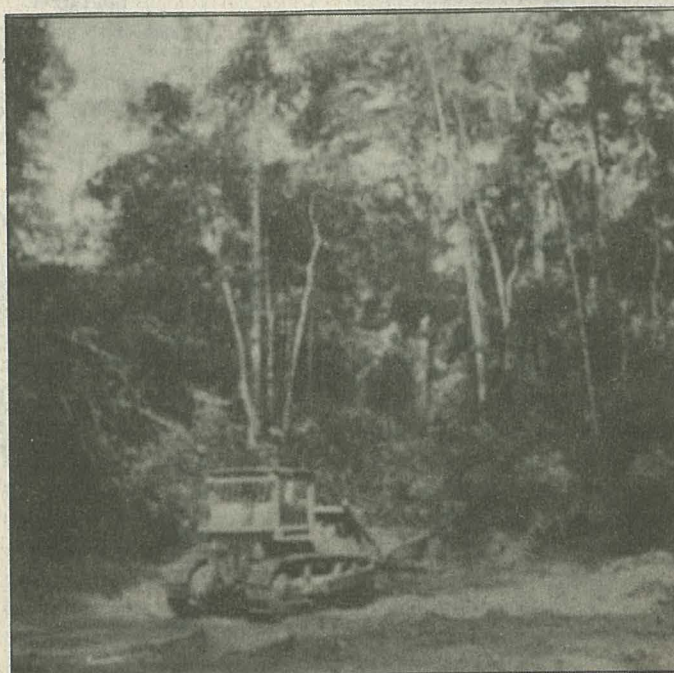
- Cameroon Forestry and Environment Loan. The Bank is lending US\$30 million which will primarily be used to finance the infrastructure for commercial logging in 3.5 million ha of rainforest without an environmental assessment.

- Forestry Policy. The Bank's Forest Policy Approach Paper released in October will form the basis of a policy. The paper fails to address vital issues relating to global deforestation, forest management and conservation issues.

- Updates on the Sardar Sarovar project part of the Narmada Valley Scheme. The Bank continues to fund this dam even though the Japanese government has pulled out and the Indian Department of Environment has retracted its clearance as crucial environmental studies are still not complete.

- Discussion on the Green Fund.
- Article on the World Bank poverty report.

Carol Sherman  
Rainforest Information Centre  
PO Box 161, Byron Bay,  
NSW 2481



## Patrick White

On Sunday, September 30 1990, Patrick White died at his home in Centennial Park at the age of 78.

His writings occupied a major place in Australia's literary landscape and were recognised internationally. In 1973 he was awarded the Nobel prize for literature for his novel "The Eye of the Storm".

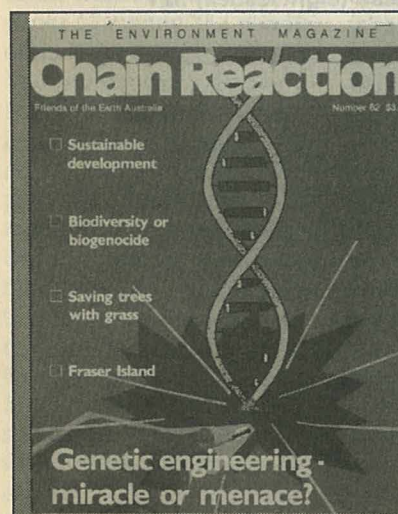
Patrick White was also a Friend of the Earth. His contributions were not only financial, as Patron of Friends of the Earth (Sydney), but also in the form of endorsement and encouragement to our many campaigns, particularly against the mining and export of uranium.

He bemoaned the rise of materialism in Australian society. "What I do know for certain", he said in 1982, "is that what is regarded as success in a rational, materialistic society only impresses superficial minds. It amounts to nothing and will not help us rout the destructive forces threatening us today. What may be our salvation is the discovery of the identity hidden deep in any one of us, and which may be found in even the most desperate individual, if he cares to search the spiritual womb which contains the embryo of what can be one's personal contribution to truth and life".

His life was lived trying to, as he said "know the answers" and finding them "only by glimmers, as though through a veil".

He is survived by the man he shared his life and love with for the last 43 years, Manoly Lascaris. "If I were to stage the end", Patrick White wrote in the final passages of his autobiography *Flaws in the Glass*, "I would set it on the upper terrace, not the one moment of the morning, but all that I have ever lived, splintering and coalescing, the washed pane of a false dawn, steamy draperies of Sydney summers, blaring hibiscus trumpets as well as their exhausted phalluses, ground mist tugging at the dry grass of the Centennial steppes, brass bands practising against the heat, horses cantering in circles to an accompaniment of shouted commands, liquid calls of hidden birds, a flirt of finches, skittering of wrens, bulbuls plopping round the stone bath carved by Manoly in the early days at Castle Hill, as though in preparation for the Twyborn moment of grace".

Stuart White



## Back Copies Available

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52 back copies of *Chain Reaction* — all of those published from Autumn 1976 to Number 60 (April 1990) are available as a set for \$100. Add another \$3.00 for each issue after 60.

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33 back copies of *Chain Reaction* — from Number 27 (Autumn 1982) to Number 60 (April 1990) are available as a set for \$65.00. Add another \$3.00 for each issue after 60.



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*Chain Reaction* is the national magazine of Friends of the Earth Australia. Since its establishment in 1975, it has covered a broad range of issues relating to the environment and has provided a resource for all those concerned to know the stories and issues ignored or hidden in other media. The best way to receive *Chain Reaction* is through a subscription. Return the form below and keep in touch.

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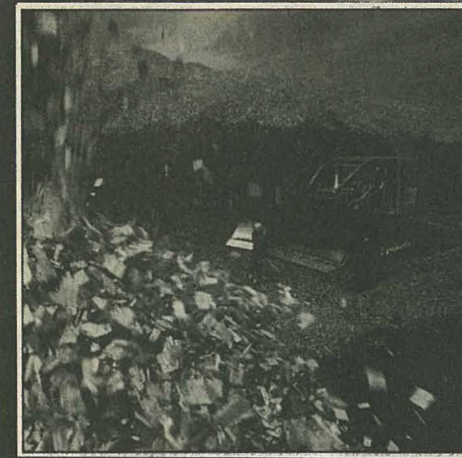
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want the "behind the scenes"  
story on the environment?

# Earth News



The forests of Madang Province, PNG, are being used for woodchips for disposable paper products, and replaced with plantation hoop pine for the manufacture of disposable chopsticks.

## Logging blockades in PNG

After twenty years of abuse from Japan's Honshu paper Company, the people of the Gogol-Naru valley in Madang Province, Papua New Guinea, are blockading the roads that give access to the Honshu company mill. Three times the mill has been closed down due to action from the local residents. The Jant corporation has been clear-cutting rainforests in the region for twenty years, destroying 120,000 acres. The mill is still the only one in the world which converts tropical hardwoods to chips that are used to produce dis-

posable paper products.

The Gogol-Naru Valley is an environmental nightmare. The topsoil is badly disturbed and erosion is rampant. Local subsistence agriculture has been badly affected. The river suffers from severe sedimentation and turbidity, which along with oil and diesel spills, have destroyed the fishing grounds. Birds and animals have fled, reducing the food supply available. Standing water in the clearcuts has triggered an increase in the mosquito population, increased malaria outbreaks, and then spraying of DDT by the Health Department.

For this the locals have

received little. Through a book-keeping arrangement known as 'transfer pricing', Jant has always managed to record little or no profit on paper. This has meant that the locals have received little more than a dollar a year per person. Infrastructural improvements promised twenty years ago such as schools, and medical aid stations have never materialised.

On October 12, 1990, the locals presented a 2500 signature petition to the PNG government demanding US\$15m compensation and a renegotiation of contracts with Jant. Having received no reply in fourteen days, they blockaded

two roads in the valley, shutting down the operation for five days, causing an estimated US\$50,000 loss. Government officials agreed 'in principle' to the demands, and entered into negotiations. These broke down and the blockades were re-established. Jant plans to expand its operations into another 145,000 acres of rainforest.

*What you can do:* Send a donation to *Madang Citizens for a Better Environment*, PO Box 1, Bogia, Madang Province, PNG to assist the campaign. Write to PNG Minister of Forestry, Mr Karl Stack, PO Box 5055, Boroko, PNG.



## Some fridges ain't so hot

Refrigerators rank second in domestic electricity use, after water heating. They are the classic case of deception in appliances. But the drive for more efficient units, and the system of star rating, will alter this. Energy efficiency labelling of appliances began in NSW and Victoria in 1987. The USA also has had laws for minimum standards since 1987.

A fridge is one of the better consumer items. It will last 20 years, and if looked after, it deteriorates very little, except perhaps in door seals. It looks sleek, efficient, it has style, and, it

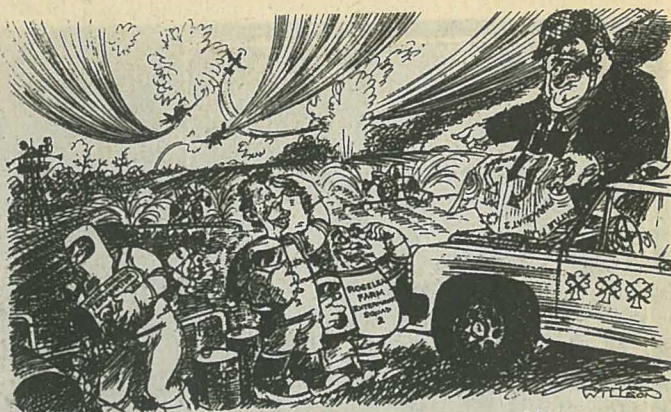
is hoped, runs quietly.

But is it efficient? The answer is almost certainly no. The efficiency of fridges is a key energy topic, whereas the efficiency of some items such as clothes dryers and dish washers must be rated as of dubious importance if we are serious about lifestyle. Virtually every house has a fridge, lots of homes have two. A fridge uses somewhere between 300 and 1,100 kilowatt hours per year.

Broadly speaking, a purchaser would be foolish to buy a 3 or 4 star fridge. Among the worst fridges in the world are those in the UK. Japan and the USA have developed much better units in recent years. Australia's are mostly still poor; the 6 star, our best, is almost on a par with Japanese and USA models.

The energy efficiency of fridges of different sizes can be compared by using an index which is the kilowatt hours used per year divided by the litres of storage space. For example, a fridge of 400 litre capacity using 800 kilowatt hours per year has an index of two.

Denmark has shown the



And if you take out the area of outstanding natural beauty on your right, there will be a Ministry of Agriculture medal for you.

way, not with cosmetic features but with good engineering. The best mass-produced fridge is the Danish *Gram* model. This has more insulation, better door seals and a more efficient motor-compressor-evaporator-condenser. The index of this fridge is only 0.4.

The annual saving in running costs between good and mediocre units is appreciable. For a fridge of approximately 400 litres, the difference between a Danish model and a 3 star Australian model will be 600 kilowatt hours, or \$60 per year. Yet less than a decade ago, manufacturers and importers were opposing energy labelling. The Victorian State Electricity Commission has estimated that its appliance labelling scheme could reduce fridge electricity consumption by 36 per cent in 7 years. The lesson is clear. Market forces or reliance on the producers is not enough. This is one case where government action should be taken — legislation is a must. Market forces do not necessarily mean marketing honesty. A shiny new sleek fridge may look impressive but that may be an illusion.

References: *New Scientist*, 12 May 1990, p20; also *Choice*, Sept. 1990.

## World agchem sales peaked?

World agrichemical company sales and profits are likely to have peaked in 1990, and are expected to decline in 1991, according to an English brokerage house. This forecast is based primarily on falling crop prices, a result of record crop harvests worldwide in 1990. Other factors contributing to the expected decline in agrichemical use include lower U.S. and European farm incomes in 1990, increased world grain stocks, and the planned government set-aside of 10-20 per cent of US agricultural land this year. (These projections were made prior to the start of war in the Gulf, which will likely also affect pesticide production.)

Although agrichemical use is stagnant or declining in most industrialized countries, sales are increasing rapidly in many developing countries, where controls are weakest and the health and environmental effects of agrichemical use most severe.

Source: *Agrow*, Dec. 14, 1990, excerpted from the *PANNA Outlook*, a bimonthly bulletin covering pesticide and related issues published by the Pesticide Action Network North America Regional Center.

## Chemical incinerator accident

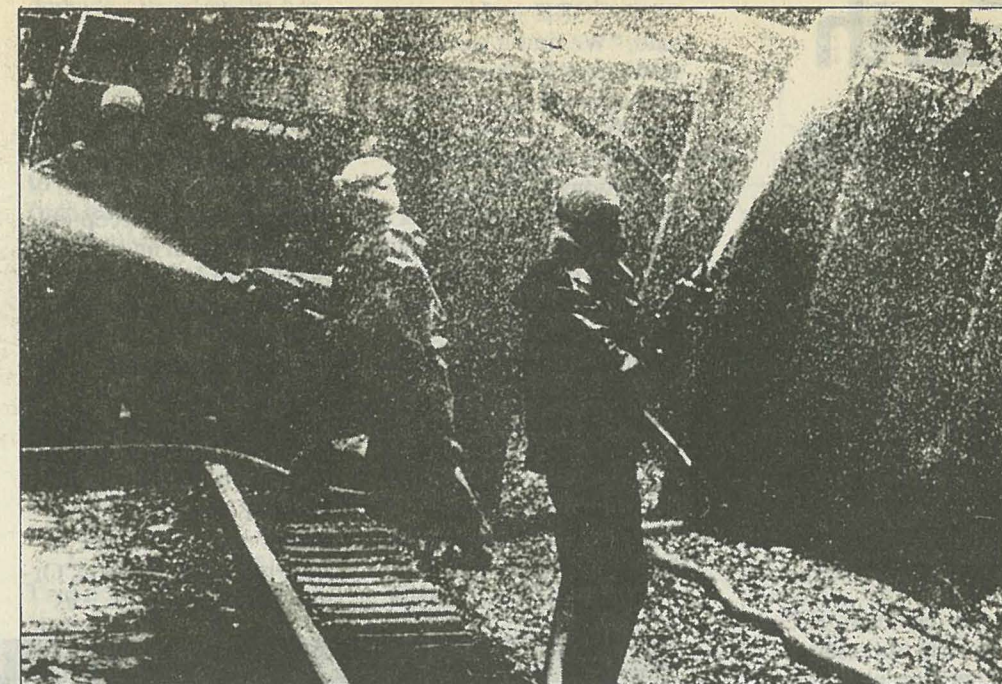
An explosion occurred at the Chemical Waste Management facility on Stony Island, Illinois, around 12.30am on February 13, 1991, breaking the door seals on kilns burning hazardous waste, releasing undisclosed quantities of toxic substances into the air.

The incident happened days after the company announced that it completed its final quarter of 1990 with record profits of almost US\$48 million. There were no reported injuries to workers, although the long term health effects of the incident are not known.

Greenpeace was quick to note how many environmental disasters seem to always happen under the cover of darkness, a time when many factories and waste management facilities exceed environmental regulations in their standard operations because of the lack of regulatory oversight.

"Do we have to wait for a Bhopal on the Calumet River before EPA shuts this place down?" Greenpeace mid-west toxics campaigner Charlie Cray asked. "The Environmental Protection Agency is just as much to blame for this incident as the company. EPA claims this is the most closely monitored facility in the country. An incident like this proves that the technology is inherently unsafe and can't be made safe by regulatory oversight."

The company paid a record US\$3.75 million in a settlement with the US EPA last autumn. The fine resulted from charges brought against the company after a worker threatened to reveal how



plant managers pressured him and others to ignore reportable spills, and "burn as much as possible" while monitors were disconnected. The facility has an extensive record of environmental violations, including occupational safety and health violations, violations of sewer discharge standards for heavy metals and PCBs, and violations of transportation laws by trucks bringing in the waste.

Currently the facility is operating without a permanent Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permit, which the state EPA denied the company last autumn.

Residents of South Chicago have called for the closing of the facility on numerous occasions, in protests and pickets. In December, three south-east side residents were arrested for blocking fuel trucks attempting to enter the facility.

In late February, citing ongoing health threats and recent explosions, citizens of Chicago's south-east side

and Greenpeace called on the EPA to permanently close the facility. Citizens say that a letter released from the Illinois EPA to ChemWaste indicates that the company has withheld important information from the agency regarding the most recent explosion at the incinerator.

"If this incinerator is not shut down permanently, the Southeast Side will remain at the mercy of ChemWaste's profit margin," said Marian Byrnes of C.U.R.E. (Citizens United to Reclaim the Environment). Byrnes was one of residents who blockaded the ChemWaste incinerator for 13 hours last December in order to focus attention on the potential for a dangerous incident and to call for a permanent shut-down of the facility.

The Illinois EPA has temporarily shut down the South Side incinerator pending compliance with an ongoing investigation of the explosion which took place on February 13. The letter indicates that ChemWaste thus far has refused

to tell the EPA what was being burned at the time of the explosion, or who the generator of that waste was. EPA officials also charge that ChemWaste's 'waste analysis plan' is deficient and was undoubtedly the major reason for the explosion.

Additionally, the letter indicates that ChemWaste lied about notifying the Illinois Attorney General's office regarding the explosion. Source: *Greenpeace Great Lakes (USA)*

## Food standards

A Commonwealth/State food standards authority is to be established to create uniform national food standards. This could prove advantageous, bringing review of the labelling and ingredients of foods. However, because of the joint nature of the standards, the possibility of lowest common denominator standards.

Further information: *FOE Sydney*.



Despite their sleek looks, many fridges are a load of rubbish when it comes to energy efficiency.



## Britain's nuclear waste problem

On the day that UK Environment Secretary Michael Heseltine opened the new vitrification plant at Sellafield (February 26, 1991), Cumbrians Opposed to a Radioactive Environment (CORE) condemned Sellafield management for the continued production of excessive quantities of nuclear waste.

Whilst any conversion of the lethal liquid High Level Waste to a more manageable form is welcomed, the continuing reprocessing operations at Sellafield will mean at least 55,000 gallons (at any one time) of this dangerous liquid waste will still be stored in tanks on site. Such storage, which allows cooling before vitrification, poses risks that are unacceptable.

CORE also pointed to the latest Government figures which show that nearly 120,000 tonnes of foreign intermediate and low level nuclear waste will remain in Cumbria forever. This waste will mainly originate from the reprocessing of foreign spent fuel in the Thermal Oxide Reprocessing Plant (THORP) which BNFL plans to open next year.

A CORE spokesperson said, "We find it ironic that a Minister for the Environment should open this plant for BNFL, considering that it is their reprocessing operations at Sellafield which are responsible for the gross contamination of our own environment and for the production of the majority of Britain's nuclear waste mountain."

The spokesperson added that rather than solving the problem of High Level Waste, vitrification posed many as yet unanswered problems for the future. These included its transportation and receipt

the soil. Private sampling by one affected landholder detected DDT at 2,426 ppm and arsenic at 880ppm.

Arsenic, according to Federal Draft Guidelines, requires clean up at 50-200ppm with an acceptable level of 30ppm and DDT, a Scheduled Hazardous Waste, requires cleanup at 5-10ppm.

High arsenic and organo-phosphate contamination has also been evident since 1980, according to the Tick Control Board's own records obtained under Freedom of Information legislation. Organo-phosphates such as

with tick control fences and gates going back many years. These may not be included in existing files.

The SPCC freely admits it has no policy to deal with contaminated dip sites, yet states in its literature that dip sites are "special areas that may warrant systematic attention" owing to their use of "hard pesticides, e.g. arsenicals or organo-chlorines."

Although experimental technology may be an option for the removal of DDT in the near future, there is no foreseeable way of decontaminating arsenic in soil. Sampling of human



(translation) "Presumably a shrine for one of their primitive religious cults."

abroad and the uncertain safety of its final disposal. Source: CORE/Greenpeace.

## Toxic hot spots — North Coast NSW

Sampling of about 1300 cattle dip sites on the North Coast between the Queensland border and Grafton has indicated contamination by DDT in concentrations between 500ppm and 2000ppm in

Coumaphos have been detected in soil from dip sites at 100 ppm.

Many dip sites are situated in flood plains or adjacent to creeks owing to the need for water in the dipping process. With encroaching urban development many dip sites are adjacent to residential sites and represent a major exposure threat.

There is evidence of historical dip sites associated

blood, breast milk and local wildlife indicates DDT contamination is extensive.

Unless the Government allocates resources to this vast problem, it is meaningless to 'Schedule' these sites. Scheduling does not prevent transmigration of pollutants, nor does it deal with the threat to public health.

For further information: M. Grinter, PO Box 1551, Coffs Harbour, NSW, 2450.

## Sea Shepherd rams tuna boat

The marine mammal conservation ship *Sea Shepherd II* intentionally rammed a Mexican tuna boat early Friday morning, 110 miles off the Pacific coast of Guatemala.

Captain Paul Watson said the intentional collision was a protest because the captain and crew of the *Tungui* were killing dolphins in the course of catching tuna. Watson said, "The captain of the *Tungui* admitted to killing over 1000 dolphins during his current trip to the fishing grounds."

The captain of the Mexican vessel based in Ensenada was reported as saying over the radio, "Why are you after us? We are doing nothing illegal." Mexico still allows the killing of dolphins in the course of tuna fishing for domestic consumption. The captain reportedly went on to say, "Americans are out here killing dolphins illegally." Watson says he is trying to verify that statement.

Meanwhile, the Mexican government has said it will investigate the incident and has dispatched a naval vessel to the vicinity of the tuna boat.

The *Sea Shepherd* crew reported seeing several hundred endangered spotted dolphins in the vicinity of the collision.

The *Sea Shepherd II* and the *Tungui* sustained little damage in the incident. The *Tungui* left the area, but the *Sea Shepherd II* continued to patrol for 24 hours after the ramming. The ship, owned by the *Sea Shepherd Conservation Society*, is on its way with an international crew of 20 to the Persian Gulf to document the environmental

damage caused by the hostilities in the region.

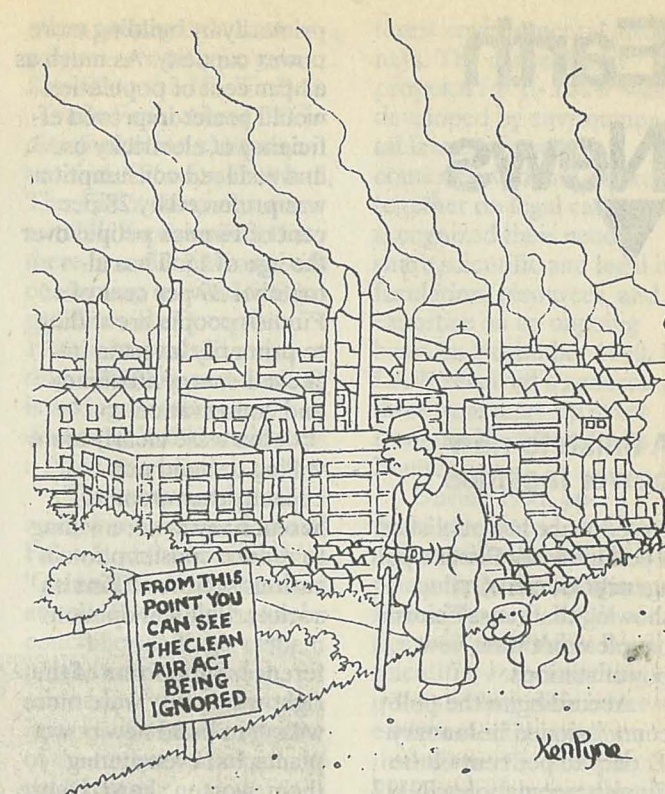
In a related development, environmentalists have asked a federal appeals court in Los Angeles to reinstate an embargo on tuna imports from Mexico because Mexican fishermen have failed to reduce the number of dolphins killed by their nets. The *Los Angeles Times* of February 15 quoted the Earth Island Institute, as accusing the U.S. Commerce Department of 17 years of foot-dragging in implementing the intention of Congress.

In November 1990, President George Bush signed a bill setting strict guidelines and procedures to assure consumers the tuna they buy in cans marked 'dolphin safe' has been caught using methods that are not harmful to dolphins. Two U.S. tuna canners, H.J. Heinz Starkist and Chicken of the Sea have pledged not to purchase tuna from fishermen setting their nets on schools of dolphins which often swim with yellowfin tuna in the eastern tropical Pacific. Source: *Environment News Service* © 1991.

## UK Government soft on acid rain

Research by Dr Jim Skea, commissioned by *Friends of the Earth*, shows that the UK Government is relying on ineffective technology to deal with emissions of nitrogen oxides (NOx) from coal-fired power stations, and that Britain's program lags 10-20 years behind that in the US, Japan and Germany.

National Power and PowerGen have published their clean-up plans for emissions of NOx and sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) — the main acid rain gases. The



Government has yet to publish details of the types of pollution-abatement technology which should be used or publish the results of its own research on the technology for NOx abatement. This report was received by Environment Minister David Trippier last year.

FOE research also reveals that stepping up the UK's program to reduce NOx emissions, or making power station operators in Britain reduce SO<sub>2</sub> emissions in line with the action being taken in most EC countries, would cost the equivalent of only 1 per cent on UK electricity prices.

Britain already faces the prospect of legal action by the European Commission because of its decision not to require National Power and PowerGen to fit up-to-date pollution abatement technology to their coal-fired power stations.

The research published

by FOE shows that:

- The UK is relying on outdated technology to clean up emissions of NOx and SO<sub>2</sub> from power stations. 12 coal-fired power stations in the UK will be fitted with Low-NOx Burners which only reduce NOx levels by 30 to 40 per cent.

- However, Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR), widely used abroad, reduces 80 per cent of the NOx. It is to be installed on 33,000 MWe of capacity in FR Germany, but Britain has no plans to install SCR on any large power stations.

- By 1993, the Federal Republic of Germany will reduce power station NOx emissions by 74 per cent, whereas Britain's target is a pitiful 15 per cent. East German power stations, now subject to German and EC legislation, must choose to clean up or shut down by 1992.

Source: *Friends of the Earth (UK)*.



## A finish to new power facilities

Greenpeace has published a poll made by Finnish poll agency Suomen Gallup showing that most Finnish people don't want new power stations.

According to the poll commissioned in January 91 only 10 per cent of the Finnish population would solve energy problems

primarily by building more power capacity. As much as 61 per cent of population would prefer improved efficiency of electricity use and reduced consumption was preferred by 28 per cent of Finnish people over the age of 15. Thus altogether 89 per cent of Finnish people are willing to primarily invest in improved energy efficiency and conservation.

Men were clearly more willing to build new capacity than women. Women were more willing to reduce consumption in various sectors of Finnish society. Political opinion made a significant difference. Supporters of the right wing party were more willing to build new power plants, but even among them, women showed more reluctance to build new

capacity. There was no support for new power plants among the supporters of the Greens.

The other questions dealt with the role of power producers, government subsidies and information on energy consumption in product information sheet.

Over 80 per cent of the respondents regarded the role of power producers to be the incorporation of education of energy consumers and promotion of energy efficiency as well as energy production.

Government subsidies should be substantial according to 25 per cent of the population, moderate subsidies were considered to be appropriate by 40 per cent of the population. Energy information in the product label was regarded as extremely important by 71 per cent of the population, important to some extent still by 22 per cent of the Finnish people.

"This poll clearly points at improved energy efficiency and conservation. Accusing private consumers of increasing their energy consumption and at the same time carrying out plans to build more power plants is totally irresponsible. It shows that decision makers completely underestimate public opinion", said Greenpeace representative Pekka Jarvilehto.

Source: Greenpeace Finland

## NSW Wilderness Threatened

The Binghi and Bindi Wilderness Areas in New South Wales are under threat from mining and forestry operations. The Binghi Wilderness is the only wilderness area on the Western Slopes of New South Wales and provides habitat for a number of rare

and endangered species, while the Bindi (Mann) Wilderness includes the spectacular gorge of the Mann River. The areas were nominated as wilderness areas two years ago and the National Parks and Wildlife Service has yet to make a recommendation in accordance with the Wilderness Act to the Minister for Environment.

Until these areas are protected as wilderness under the Wilderness Act or gazetted as national parks, action in the form of letters to the Premier and the Minister for the Environment are required. Part of the Bindi Wilderness has been added to the Nymboida National Park, but other significant sections are unprotected. The Premier has hinted that an early election may be called, so keep writing, urging politicians that all nominated wilderness areas in NSW be given the protection required under the Wilderness Act. Remind the Premier that as Opposition Leader in 1987, the Coalition supported the Wilderness Act in the Parliament.

### What can you do?

- Write to the Director of the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service, requesting that recommendations on wilderness protection be made to the Minister as a matter of urgency. Also mention your support for protecting the areas as wilderness.

- Write to the Premier, Mr Nick Greiner and the Minister for Environment, Mr Tim Moore, urging them to protect the wilderness values of the Binghi and Mann River areas under the Wilderness Act, and to declare the areas as National Parks.

## Timber tycoons to tour

Following a tour of Europe in 1990, representatives of the Malaysian and Indonesian timber industries have planned a tour of Australia, the US and Japan to speak against plans to reduce tropical timber imports.

The mission was announced by Indonesia's Forestry Minister, Hasjriul Harahap at a recent meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Harahap said that ASEAN countries should divert their timber exports to the Soviet Union, China, and India, if Western countries were to impose prolonged bans on rain-forest timber imports.

Indonesian timber tycoon Bob Hasan is backing the campaign, and has

alleged that 15 million people in Indonesia are likely to be affected by any Western import restrictions.

Such assertions were immediately attacked by the Indonesian grass-roots NGO, WALHI. A spokesperson for WALHI said, "only a small portion of people living near forests are involved in logging and wood processing activities, and those who are involved are mostly underpaid, without any guarantee of their welfare." WALHI's position is that Indonesian forestry policy fails to consider how it destroys the livelihood of those forest dwelling indigenous people and peasant communities who depend wholly or partially on resources from primary forests.

Mr Hasan has backed

other propaganda campaigns — recently he gave £25,000 to the UK Timber Trade Federation (TTF) disinformation campaign entitled, "Forests Forever". The TTF's campaign aims to tell UK consumers that there is nothing wrong with consuming tropical timber products. By December 1990, it had raised more than £250,000, and the TTF is asking members to donate £400,000 each over a three year period.

The campaign has already been awarded one of Friends of the Earth UK's 'Green Con of the Year' award. The judging panel concluded that the campaign had published misleading and inaccurate information on the impact of the timber trade on tropical forests.

Source: *Down to Earth*, magazine of the International Campaign for Ecological Justice in Indonesia, Feb. 1991.

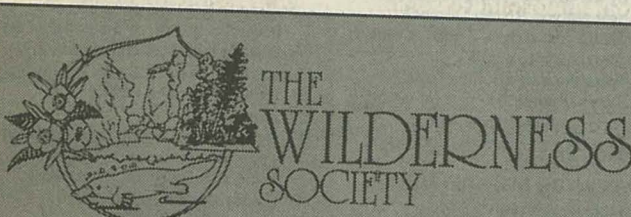
## Environmental lawyers join forces

Environmental Law Alliance Worldwide (E-LAW) is forming the first worldwide network for local, grassroots, public in-

terest environmental attorneys. The concept and proposal for E-LAW was developed by environmental lawyers from ten countries who had worked together on legal cases and recognized their need to share scientific and legal information, resources, and expertise on an ongoing basis. In November 1990, E-LAW received a generous, three-year start-up grant from the W. Alton Jones Foundation.

During 1991, approximately ten E-LAW offices will open worldwide, primarily in the Southern Hemisphere. E-LAW offices will respond to legal, scientific, and consulting requests from public interest environmental lawyers throughout the network. E-LAW will also contribute to the development of sound national environmental laws.

Source: *PANNA Outlook*, a bimonthly bulletin covering pesticide and related issues published by the Pesticide Action Network North America Regional Center (PANNARC).



## Tasmanian Coordinator National Campaign Team

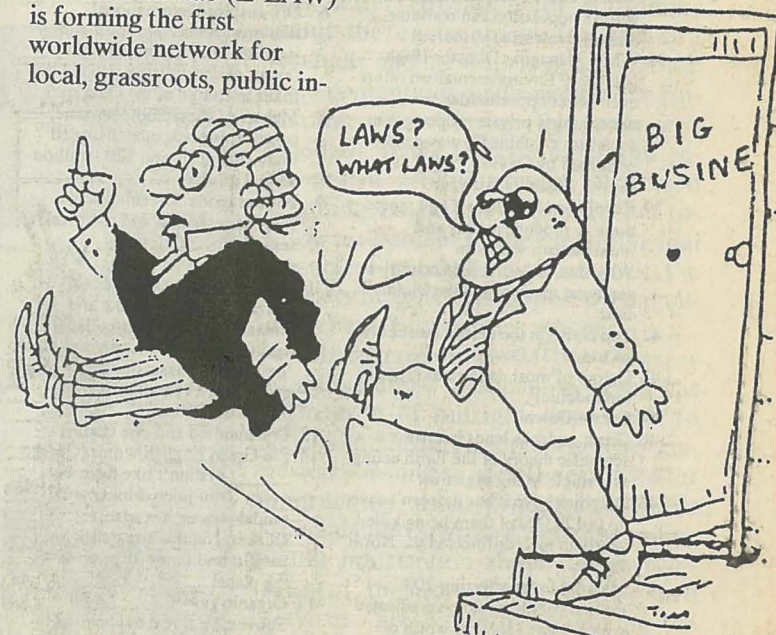
An experienced and committed activist is required to do this challenging job in the only conservation organisation campaigning solely on wilderness issues.

### You will have:

- Experience in strategy development, media work, and grassroots motivation and coordination.
- Strong communication, leadership and organisational skills.
- Commitment to consensus decision-making and the non-hierarchical, non-violent philosophy of The Wilderness Society.
- Skills in conflict resolution and personnel management.
- Active involvement in the conservation or social change movements an advantage.

Although the position is based in Hobart, an ability to travel is essential.

For enquiries and job description contact:  
Fiona Meredith (002) 34 9366 or (002) 23 5112 Faxes  
Written applications by 6 May 1991 to:  
Fiona Meredith, 130 Davey St, Hobart, Tas., 7000.





# GREENWORD

— by Phil Shannon

Solution next issue

## ACROSS

- 2 "Twas (64 Across) and the slithy toves did gire and gimble in the (2 Across)" (Lewis Carroll on, a post nuclear/Greenhouse/bio-tech world)  
7 1,1,1 chloroethane. Ozone-eater found in liquid paper  
9 Overclearing and deforestation brings this white death to land  
11 "Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on forever in a finite world is either a madman or an idiot" - Kenneth

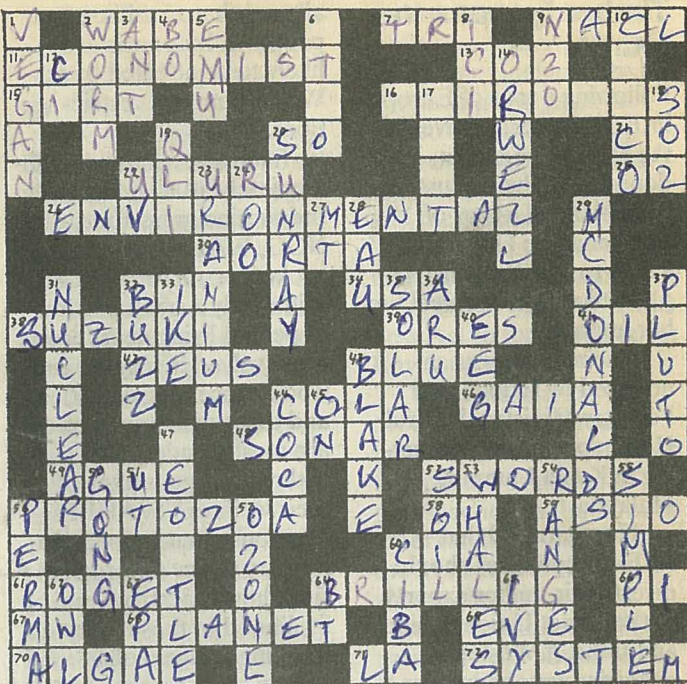
- Boulding, a heretical one (who also coined the term Spaceship Earth)  
13 Friendly gas for humans but only at around 300 ppm in the atmosphere  
15 Australia once \_\_\_\_\_ by sea, now fast becoming \_\_\_\_\_ by sewerage  
16 Lepto \_\_\_\_\_. Disease transmitted by rats (one species which thrives under human domination of Nature)  
20 Fifth note in the octave  
21 Another automotive pollutant  
22 Ayers Rock, now back in the hands of its traditional owners  
25 Humans recycle this waste from trees  
26 The Government gave us the World's Greatest Treasurer and brought us the World's Greatest \_\_\_\_\_ Statement in 1989

- 30 The great artery  
32 In an ecotopia every household's rubbish \_\_\_\_\_ will be a resource recycler  
34 This country needs a 'stable' supply of 41 Across from the Middle East so that its 6% of the world's population can consume 30% of the world's resources  
38 WMC Managing Director Hugh Morgan ("Environmentalism offers even better opportunities for undermining private property than socialism contained") was deeply perturbed by David \_\_\_\_\_'s visit to Australia last year  
39 Revolution 5,000 years ago mined these to produce metals and industrialism was born  
41 Why rich, industrialised countries send war machines to the Middle East  
42 Top Noise in the deities business — on top of 37 Down  
43 Colour of most dangerous asbestos (crocidolite)  
44 See 44 Down  
46 Greek goddess lends her name to a scientific theory of the Earth acting as a single living organism  
48 Dolphins have it but it doesn't save up to 120,000 of them being killed yearly in tuna driftnets in the North Pacific  
49 Malarial fever affecting 200 million people could be eradicated with 8 hours (\$680m) worth of military expenditure  
52 "Strong nations afar off.... shall beat their \_\_\_\_\_ into

- ploughshares" (Micah - Old Testament Prophets For Disarmament)  
56 Our little single-cell ancestors  
58 Hydroxide  
59 They're watching us! (so Hugh Morgan hopes)  
60 They're watching 59 Across  
61 Useful for tricky bits of crosswords (eg 49 Across)  
64 See 2 Across  
66 3.14159  
67 Big energy measure  
68 Ours is 4,600 million years old but some want to trash it in a frenzy of consumerism  
69 First oppressed woman  
70 If there is too much untreated organic waste in water bodies, this plant eats all the oxygen (eutrophication)  
71 This city of 12 million has 8 million cars driven 376 million kms a day on 4,000 miles of freeway emitting 6,000 tons of pollutants, and has a pollution index ranging from 'unhealthful' to 'hazardous' 300 days a year  
72 The plants, animals and micro-organisms that comprise a community, and the physical environment with which they interact, are collectively known as an eco- \_\_\_\_\_

## DOWN

- 1 Cruelty-free diet  
2 Soil-aerator  
3 One of Nature's little hymenopterous helpers (& 50 Down) Canberra's favourite moth (one word)  
5 Large Australian bird  
6 UN-auspiced international rainforest timber producer and importer body claims to be in favour of conservation (so did the foxes in charge of the chickens)  
8 Makers of Hexachlorobenzene, organochlorines, other assorted toxic chemicals and \$200 million annual profits  
9 Nitrous oxide. Greenhouse gas from car exhausts and chemical fertilisers, 200 times as destructive as 13 Across  
10 \_\_\_\_\_ Mendes. Leader of Brazilian rubber-tappers and Amazonian rainforest Indians against loggers, ranchers and other 'developers', assassinated by hired gunmen in 1988 after five previous attempts  
12 One hundred and one (Latin)  
14 Pre-Green English writer (George \_\_\_\_\_) didn't like them but every "fruit juice drinker, nudist, sandal wearer, sex maniac, Quaker, Nature-cure quack, pacifist and feminist" may save the planet  
17 Organic garden \_\_\_\_\_ Subversive threat to chemical companies  
18 Coal-fired electricity station emission rains acid



- 19 \_\_\_\_\_ality of \_\_\_\_\_life \_\_\_\_\_ndex. Economic index as if people and Nature  
20 Sheds light on renewable energy matters  
22 Hail the CFCs, let the \_\_\_\_\_ shine in!  
23 Miracle fuel (this clue sponsored by the SA Government who also brought you Roxby Downs)  
24 This target turns a 7 million annual slaughter into a cull  
27 After the mega dollars from 23 Down, comes the \_\_\_\_\_s (measure of force) and the mega deaths  
28 If you go to Murorua, don't drink 1' \_\_\_\_\_ (Fr.)  
29 Causes Big Macdeaths of forests and burger-eaters  
31 Cheap, clean, wonder energy of the future (this clue sponsored by Roxby partners WMC and BP)  
32 Bees do it better but chain-saws do it louder  
33 Nickname of US WWII General who said of Hiroshima "We didn't have to hit them with that awful thing" but, when President, wanted to nuke Korea and China  
35 Renewable energy source provides more energy in three days than is contained in all the fossil fuels and uranium on Earth  
36 National strike by this union in 1976 after a Townsville shunter was sacked for blackbanning freight cars to Mary Kathleen uranium mines  
37 Ancient Greek god of the Underworld lends his name to exceptionally toxic by-product of nuclear fission  
40 An \_\_\_\_\_lectro- \_\_\_\_\_ncephalo- \_\_\_\_\_raph machine won't find many Green waves in John (mine it and sell it) Kerin's cranium  
43 "The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in the way" - William \_\_\_\_\_ 1799  
44 44 Down-44 Across. The energy used to produce the 100 million cans a day of this sucrose and caffeine health risk equals the entire daily energy consumption of Ethiopia  
45 "Power to the People, Right \_\_\_\_\_!" (John Lennon)  
47 Chief \_\_\_\_\_ Nineteenth century American Indian reported to have said "There is no quiet place in the white man's cities, no place to hear the unfurling of leaves in spring, or the rustle of an insect's wings.... The clatter only seems to insult the ears"  
51 Now 'Do' in the octave  
52 Dirt to some  
53 Used to be many millions of these grand beings but over 90% of some species (Blue, Humpback, Right) slaughtered for such 'essentials' as perfume  
54 "I love a sunburnt country — a land of salted plains — of clear-felled mountain \_\_\_\_\_ — of smog and toxic drains" (apologies to Dorothea McKellar)  
55 The materially \_\_\_\_\_ life is ecologically and personally rich  
56 \_\_\_\_\_ culture. Form of organic agriculture which lets Nature do the work, developed by Bill Morrison from the Japanese farmer M. Fukuoka  
57 Filters out 22 Down but going, going, ....  
60 \_\_\_\_\_ Geigy. World's fourth largest drug company suppressed its own research linking one of its painkillers to 1,000 deaths, falsified safety data on 46 antibiotic and other drugs last decade and dumps toxic waste  
62 The Powerful \_\_\_\_\_ (Ninox Strenua). Bird of prey threatened to become prey to logging in south east forests of NSW  
63 Environmental watchdog without teeth is harmless  
64 \_\_\_\_\_ite \_\_\_\_\_he Bullet. What the poor are expected to do in those poor countries which export food to pay for \$61 billion annual arms sales from the industrialised countries  
65 Climbing evergreen can be poisonous

# Friends of the Earth News

## National meeting

The annual meeting of Friends of the Earth Australia occurred 19-20 January 1991 at Morpeth, NSW, on the banks of the Hunter River.

Two new groups were accredited — FOE Adelaide Hills (SA) and FOE Maryborough (Old) — and delegates from most other Friends of the Earth groups arrived, although FOE Fitzroy delegates unfortunately missed the occasion following transport failure.

Speakers addressed the meeting on subjects such as: a proposed explosive factory in the Hunter Valley and the campaign against it; the deteriorating water quality of the Hunter region; organic farming in the district.

The meeting met its constitutional requirements and also allocated a grant

from the Federal Government under the National Voluntary Conservation Organisation scheme.

A number of spokespeople were also appointed (see page 21). They will each be preparing an outline of the area of their area, for circulation to all FOE groups, and for possible printing in these pages. They have been nominated to speak in a particular area on behalf of Friends of the Earth Australia, should they ever decide that is necessary. In all other cases, people speaking on behalf of Friends of the Earth do so officially for their group only.

Cam Walker was not able to attend the meeting, so in his absence was re-appointed as National Liaison Officer with a number of responsibilities for Friends of the Earth Australia between national meetings.



Morning tea at the FOE Australia national meeting, January 1991.

## The Federal Government's Environmental Choice Program

Federal Environment Minister Ros Kelly held a round table meeting in early December 1990 to discuss the proposed Environmental Choice Program with industry representatives, along with a handful of environment and consumer representatives, including a FOE representative.

The Environmental Choice Program is the latest incarnation of the proposed Green Spot environmental-labelling scheme. The new scheme has the potential to be much broader than the Green Spot, which was essentially a labelling scheme.

While all parties at the round table agreed, no doubt for different reasons, that better education for consumers about the environmental impacts of products and services is necessary, the most contentious component of the Environmental Choice Program was labelling. While the consumer and environment groups present supported labelling based on a conception-to-grave assessment of the environmental impact of products and services, the industry moguls were opposed to labelling schemes for various reasons.

Most hard-line was the Grocery Manufacturer's Association which has a position of outright opposition to labelling. K-Mart's representative suggested consumers aren't seeking better information about products and only 'special interest groups' are demanding better information about the environmental impacts of products and services. Yet K-Mart was among the first to launch 'green' products, with the K-Green range of products like cloth



nappies, recycled paper and re-refined engine oil. While some parts of the industry are happy to put their own green labels on products they are not so keen on labelling being regulated. As a wonderful example of self-regulated 'green' labelling and corporate responsibility, Samuel Taylor spoke proudly about their 'Down to Earth' range of cleaning products (which has been widely criticised for its 'green' claims) and the company's removal of CFCs from their spray cans from 1985 onwards, only ten years after we found out that they were destroying the ozone layer.

The overall picture from industry: steady as it goes, trust us, we're really doing our best for the environment and the consumer and as for those shonky operators who make suspect environmental claims — well, the Trade Practices Commission will look after them.

As for Ros Kelly, she seems much more keen on the educational aspects of the Environmental Choice program than on labelling, though labelling appears to be an integral part of the program as proposed though only for a limited range of products. Pressure needs to be maintained by environment and consumer groups to try to keep Ros Kelly from moving away from labelling, which she described as a 'nightmare' because of its complexity.

The draft proposal for the Environmental Choice Program is publicly available following the ANZEC meeting (where the state, federal and NZ environment ministers got together) in March. A copy can be obtained from Kerrie Smith at DASETT tel. (06) 274 1111. The Minister hopes to finalise the program in July 1991.

The Trade Practices Commission (TPC) released at the Roundtable a discussion paper on "Environmental claims in marketing". If taken up the

recommendations should help to put a stop to some of the 'greenwashing' happening in advertising and promotion of products. The paper suggests that environmental claims likely to mislead the 'average shopper' would be in breach of fair trading laws. Use of terms such as environment-friendly or 'environmentally-safe', without qualification, are misleading, according to the paper. Copies can be obtained by contacting Robert Piani, TPC, tel. (06) 264 2914. Source: FOE Sydney

## Adelaide Hills Friends of the Earth

To all our friends and the earth

We are a small Adelaide Hills based Friends of the Earth group still in its infancy. We have come together obviously to help our ailing planet and have been looking at issues such as educating ourselves, recycling, promoting organic agriculture and looking at anything happening in our area which isn't environmentally friendly.

With the advent of war in the Gulf it has become even more obvious that the problems at hand have a much deeper dimension. The feeling here is that we really are friends of the earth, and just as charity begins at home, so does peace and love. If we can each find these things in our hearts and lives and come together to share this understanding, then our concerns and efforts are based on sound principles, which if practised will naturally generate lifestyles to support our global environment.

We have organised a peace dance, as opposed to a war dance, to generate some positive energy.

Looking for guidance to John Seed — a well known rainforest activist now involved in 'The Council of All Beings' workshops — a space is created in which to channel frustration and anger and give individuals an opportunity to transform these feelings into positive action.

The earth needs lots of love, care and nurturing at this point in history. If we can start with ourselves and make these things reality in our lives, then it becomes more realistic to change the consciousness in the world and then Gaia will be a place we can all enjoy and share instead of fighting to save her.

Anyone wishing to share with us, please contact Kate on (085) 387 108.

## Fitzroy takes on McDonalds

One major issue of concern for FOE Fitzroy is the proposal to allow a McDonalds 'restaurant' in the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne.

McDonalds has been granted permission to replace the current hospital catering service, thereby creating concerns about the continued privatisation of public services in addition to the well documented environmental problems associated with this mega-corporation.

Concerns include the poor nutritional quality of the 'food', the lack of control over prices, the lack of adequate community consultation, and the question of private control over what should be a community service.

Environmental concerns include the problem of waste — McDonalds is the world's largest producer of styrofoam packaging waste (Is it any wonder that it co-sponsored 'Clean Up Australia Day'?), the questionable 'ozone friendly' packaging (still containing the major greenhouse gas CFC-22), the fact that the company epitomises throw away society and big business control of natural resources, and the massive land degradation caused by cattle grazing in northern Australia.

McDonalds has signed a 20 year contract with the Board of Management at the hospital, after initially obtaining approval from the Melbourne City Council. The Council subsequently wanted to withdraw approval, and is preparing to fight the issue in the Appeals Tribunal. Already public concern has set back the date of the McDonalds opening — originally set for August 1991.

FOE is working with a broad based, informal coalition of unions, health, community, and environmental groups. The current focus of the campaign is to raise public awareness — largely through advertising in the print media and extensive radio interviews. With further community involvement, McDonalds can be stopped entirely.

While this is a local issue, it represents a 'foot in the door' into public hospitals for McDonalds — already a common occurrence in the USA and Canada — and so we encourage help from other parts of Australia. Concerned people should write to Mr John Dowling, President, Royal Children's Hospital, Flemington Rd, Parkville, Victoria, 3052.

## Friends of the Earth (UK) presents 'Green Con Award'

Claims that using more electricity in the home helps to fight global warming have won Eastern Electricity, one of the newly privatised area electricity boards, the unprestigious Friends of the Earth (UK) 'Green Con award'.

In a letter to over 1,000 of its customers, signed by the chair James Smith, the board explained that "you should consider using more electricity than less. The advantage is that there is very little CO<sub>2</sub> or global warming gas emissions from an all electric home." While this may be true the letter ignores the fact that electricity generating stations are the greatest contributors to global warming.

FOE described the letter as "outrageous, a green con of the highest and most sinister order." It hopes the annual award of the green, Janus-faced trophy would encourage people to look beyond the simple advertising hype and examine all the processes involved in products they buy — the so-called 'cradle to grave' approach.

Last year's winners, British Nuclear Fuels, the first recipients of the award, say they were surprised to hear that FOE had only loaned them the recyclable trophy, and said: "We never asked for such a dubious object in the first place. We were never told it was on loan and we certainly don't intend to pay the cost of a Red Parcel Service to return it."

## Sydney FOE activities

### The Greenhouse Collective

It's been a long, hard, hot summer to get governments to act on global warming issues; it's much easier to get platitudes.

Four of us visited Jeanette McHugh, Chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment, Italy, for a Parliamentarians for Global Action discussion on Global Warming. She brought back various reports from "conservative organisations such as the World Bank" which argued for a 20 per cent reduction(!) and gave them to Ros Kelly to present in Cabinet, and says they swayed many Ministers. We are attempting to obtain these reports.

The Federal Government Industry Statement presented us with an opportunity to lobby for action. Global warming was not addressed by the Hawke government. The Ecologically Sustainable Development Committees are not working. The only groups wanting to progress on the issues have been the environment groups. They have seen the light. Greenpeace has left and the Australian Conservation Foundation, after pressure to do the same thing, remains with the World Wide Fund for Nature to be insulted by industry groups and government departments.

Meanwhile, Ted Floyd continues to write on the issues confronting us. In *Beyond the 20 per cent Barrier: Global Warming and Number Bending* he warns of the potential for misrepresentation of any fall in greenhouse gas emissions due to the economic recession.

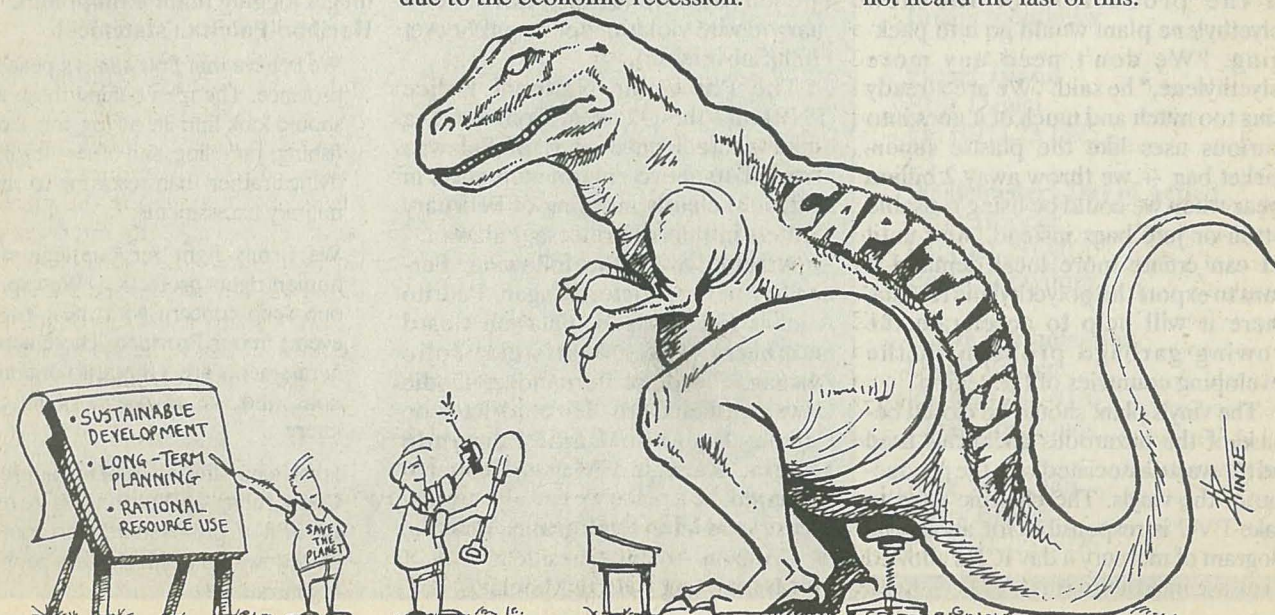
### Water quality

The State Pollution Control Commission in November released a discussion paper on revising the Clean Waters Act so as to include diffuse sources of water pollutants. These are pollutants that come from no single point. Examples are fertilizers on agricultural land, and oil and grease on roads.

The discussion paper was, in fact, an attempt at reducing the water quality of rivers and streams. In a new methodology, it proposed the replacement of standards of water quality now required with Goals and Objectives. These goals and objectives did not require a mandatory program of water quality improvement run by watershed Total Catchment Management Committees and the goals and objectives could be 'watered down' upon revision triggered by a developer.

The Water Quality branch spoke with FOE, Greenpeace, Total Environment Centre, Nature Conservation Council and Beachwatch early March to find out more about what we thought. Sadly, it will incorporate our views in its report to the Minister but does not agree with us. We asked for further discussion to elaborate a workable model. We were at that time under the impression it might accept our views.

It seems it has been given instructions to introduce diffuse sources of pollution into the water quality arena (about five years after the US) and is using this to allow the extension of pollution of rivers by other government departments and industry. They have not heard the last of this.





# FOE News

## FOE not Rapt in Plastic

Friends of the Earth 'Wastebusters' activists wrapped chains of plastic bags around the vinyls (PVC and VCM) administration plant of chemical giant ICI at Botany in November 1990. The activists, clad in black overalls and sporting hard hats, hung a banner from the building proclaiming "Friends of the Earth Not Rapt in Plastic."

Spokesperson David Vincent said the group was protesting against the proposed polyethylene plastic plant at the Botany site and the continued operation of the company's vinyls plant, which produces polyvinyl chloride (PVC) plastic and hazardous vinyl chloride monomer.

Mr Vincent demanded that ICI close down the vinyls plant and abandon its proposed polyethylene plant. "We are concerned about the chemicals released in the production of these plastics and the near certainty they will end up contributing to our exploding garbage mountain." Landfill space in Sydney is expected to expire by the turn of the century. Plastics take up about 25 per cent of landfill space yet only 0.5 per cent of consumer plastics are recycled.

Mr Vincent pointed out that almost all the production of the new polyethylene plant would go into packaging. "We don't need any more polyethylene," he said. "We are already using too much and much of it goes into spurious uses like the plastic supermarket bag — we throw away 2 billion a year when we could be using reusable cotton or jute bags instead. And until ICI can create more local demand it plans to export the polyethylene to Asia, where it will help to accelerate the growing garbage problem in the developing countries of the region."

The vinyls plant should be closed because of the hazardous chemicals used and the waste associated with the production of the vinyls. The chlorine used to make PVC is responsible for about one kilogram of mercury a day ICI is allowed to release into the sewers."

Mr Vincent called on the NSW Minister for the Environment, Tim Moore, to stop making concessions to ICI. "The latest concession is the trade waste agreement with the Water Board which allows ICI to increase the level of toxic chlorinated hydrocarbons released into the sewers. This shows that when ICI yells the government jumps. It's time for the government to shut down the vinyls plant. And he should be moving to introduce regulations to reduce plastic packaging."

The protest occurred four days before National Waste Busters Day, which was co-ordinated by Friends of the Earth. "Reducing waste is the theme of the day", said Mr Vincent, "and the production and use of plastic is a major generator of waste."

Friends of the Earth held a plastic-free picnic outside ICI after the protest action to demonstrate how throwaway plastics can be avoided. The only waste was food waste, which was composted. Further information: David Vincent, Leanne Philpott (02) 281 4070.

## Support Arrested Palawan Environmentalists

Friends of the Earth-Italy is asking support for the 13 environmentalists from the island of Palawan (Philippines) arrested by the police. They are members of Haribon-Palawan, well-known and respected organization which is co-sponsoring FOE-Italy's ethno-environmental project in Palawan, led by the Italian anthropologist Dario Novellino. The environmentalists have been charged with violations of Republic Act 1700 (Subversion).

The Philippine National Police (PNP) and the U2 West Command (a military intelligence arm) of Palawan arrested 16 active environmentalists in raids in the early morning of February 15, 1991 in Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

Arrested were the following: Fernando Fuertes, Victor Silagan, Pedrito Atienza (all Haribon, Palawan Board members), Peter Maristela, Julio Alisuag, Flordeliz Fernandez, Dodie Cawaling, Felixberto Hizon, Victor de Felipe, Rolando Buni, Fernando Lopera, Raymund Magay, Roberto Oquendo.

Please send letters, telegrams, faxes to:

- Corazon Aquino, President, Malacanang Palace, Manila,

Philippines Fax (632) 712-41-00.

- Fidel Ramos, Secretary, Dept. of National Defense, Camp Crame, Quezon City, Philippines, Fax: (632) 79-41-33.
- Fulgencio Factoran, Secretary, Dept. of Environment & Natural Resources, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines, Fax: (632) 922-6991 / 99-49-38.
- Ramon Mitra, Speaker, House of Reps, Fairview, Quezon City, Philippines, Fax: (632) 921-6374.
- Jovito Salonga, Senate President, House of Senate, Manila, Philippines, Fax: (632) 46-15-04.

Please send FOE Italy a copy of replies (if any) as well as notice of your letters.

### Suggested texts:

1. We condemn the harassment of environmental activists of Palawan. We urge you to stop this unjust practice.

We also urge immediate action against illegal logging which severely undermine the survival of indigenous communities and the unique biological diversity of Palawan.

2. We condemn the arrest of 16 environmental activists in Palawan. We demand the immediate stop of all arrests and harassment.

We strongly recommend the approval of the surveyed communal forest stewardship contract in Southern and Northern Palawan.

3. We condemn the harassment of environmentalists in Palawan. We demand an immediate investigation of the incident.

We urge immediate action against illegal logging in the Philippines.

### Haribon-Palawan statement

We believe that Palawan is a peaceful province. The men behind these acts should look into illegal logging, illegal fishing, gambling, and other illegal activities rather than resorting to these military harassments.

We firmly fight for our legitimate human rights protection. We express our deep concern with these recent events in our Province. These acts of harassments are a threat to organizations who are advocates of peoples interest.

Is this a manifestation of the Supreme Court ruling on Warrantless Arrest? Or is it a pre-condition of another crackdown against legitimate people's organization?

# Friends of the Earth Australia

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These people are authorised to speak on behalf of Friends of the Earth Australia in specified areas.

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Email: foenthnsw

**Fraser Island**  
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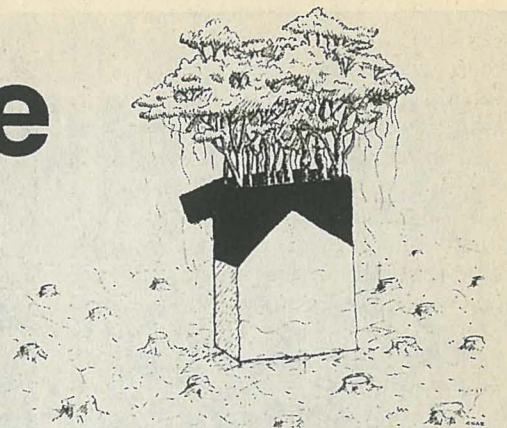
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Email: foesydney

**Waste Minimisation**  
David Vincent  
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**Nine Year Plan**  
Barry Brown  
Ph: (07) 221 1096



# Tobacco and the environment



*How many green smokers do you know? Do they roll a quick one to calm the nerves before the action begins? For many it seems a key part of the kit. Fruit cake, kryptonite lock, guitar strings, and tobacco — just the thing for a cold night's blockade.*

*The unfortunate fact, according to research recently published by the International Organisation of Consumer Unions is that there's a good chance the tobacco has been cured with wood — in a country facing a massive deforestation crisis.*

*Dr Simon Chapman and Wong Wai Leng come to these startling conclusions in their recent book **Tobacco Control and the Third World**.*

**B**eing wrapped in paper and sold in packs, cigarettes are voracious users of paper and therefore forest resources. A modern cigarette manufacturing machine uses four miles of paper per hour. But a far less apparent cause of deforestation is the use of fuelwood in the curing of tobacco leaf.

In countries where curing of tobacco by flue (by fire or circulated heat) cannot be carried out with the use of coal, natural gas, oil, electricity or LPG, owing to cost or lack of access, tobacco is cured in wood fired ovens with wood or wood derived charcoal.

Brazil, the world's fourth largest

producer of tobacco, cures all its crop with wood fuel, as does most of Africa, India, Thailand and the Philippines. A World Bank report in 1984 stated that "Pakistan alone annually consumes 1.5 million cubic metres of wood for tobacco curing. About 8,000 ha of forest on the island of Ilocos, Philippines, are consumed annually for curing."<sup>2</sup>

How much forest is destroyed for global tobacco production?

There are wide disparities in various reports of the extent of the global tobacco industry's use of fuelwood. The World Health Organisation claims that fuelwood curing requires about one tree for every 300 cigarettes produced.<sup>3</sup>

A 1984 Earthscan report estimated that the production of a one hectare crop of tobacco each year requires the destruction of an identical area of forest.<sup>4</sup> Estimates of the number of kilos of wood required to cure a kilo of dry tobacco range from 13 to 230 kg. Because of the inefficient design and manufacture of the curing barns in most countries, up to 80 per cent of this wood fuel is wasted.<sup>5</sup>

These widely divergent estimates throw into question any particular claim for any alleged global ratio of fuelwood to tobacco cured.

The tobacco industry, obviously concerned to dampen international interest in the industry's contribution to global deforestation, commissioned the International Forest Science Consultancy to study the situation. The IFSC's 1986 report provides information on fuelwood consumption in 69 major tobacco producing countries and presents a very mixed picture. Some of its main conclusions are:

the equivalent of about 1 ha of trees managed on a sustained yield basis would meet present and future requirements of one hectare of tobacco in perpetuity. In some countries this ratio is not being met...

In some countries, most notably Malawi and Thailand...inefficient use of fuelwood at present and only modest or non-existent efforts to establish supplies for the future are contributing to a generally serious situation. In these countries overcutting will lead to accelerating deforestation unless a substantial and concerted effort is mounted

## The consequences

There is a multiplicity of effects flowing from the felling of trees for tobacco

curing. Fuel for cooking is reduced and those not growing tobacco must walk further seeking it. If tobacco is grown in hilly areas, soil erosion is common. In arid and semiarid areas, clearing adds greatly to the risk of desertification.

The table summarises global use of fuelwood for tobacco curing and the hypothetical requirements for sustained-yield reforestation plantations. The cost of reforesting the 2.5 million ha deforested annually for tobacco curing would run to US\$15 billion each year, if it were to be undertaken.

## Public relations

The international tobacco conglomerate, British American Tobacco (BAT), has afforestation and reforestation programs in twelve countries. Yet BAT's reforestation projects are little but public relations exercises, when evaluated against the dimensions of the ecological problem. Land tenure, so insecure throughout the Third World, also has implications for reforestation projects, for only people with secure title to land are likely to consider making the long term investment required for tree growing. As the Economist Intelligence Unit says:

Farmers are naturally reluctant to tie up their land for ten years or more to provide fuel which, even now, is still obtainable — albeit with increasing difficulty — from outside the farm.

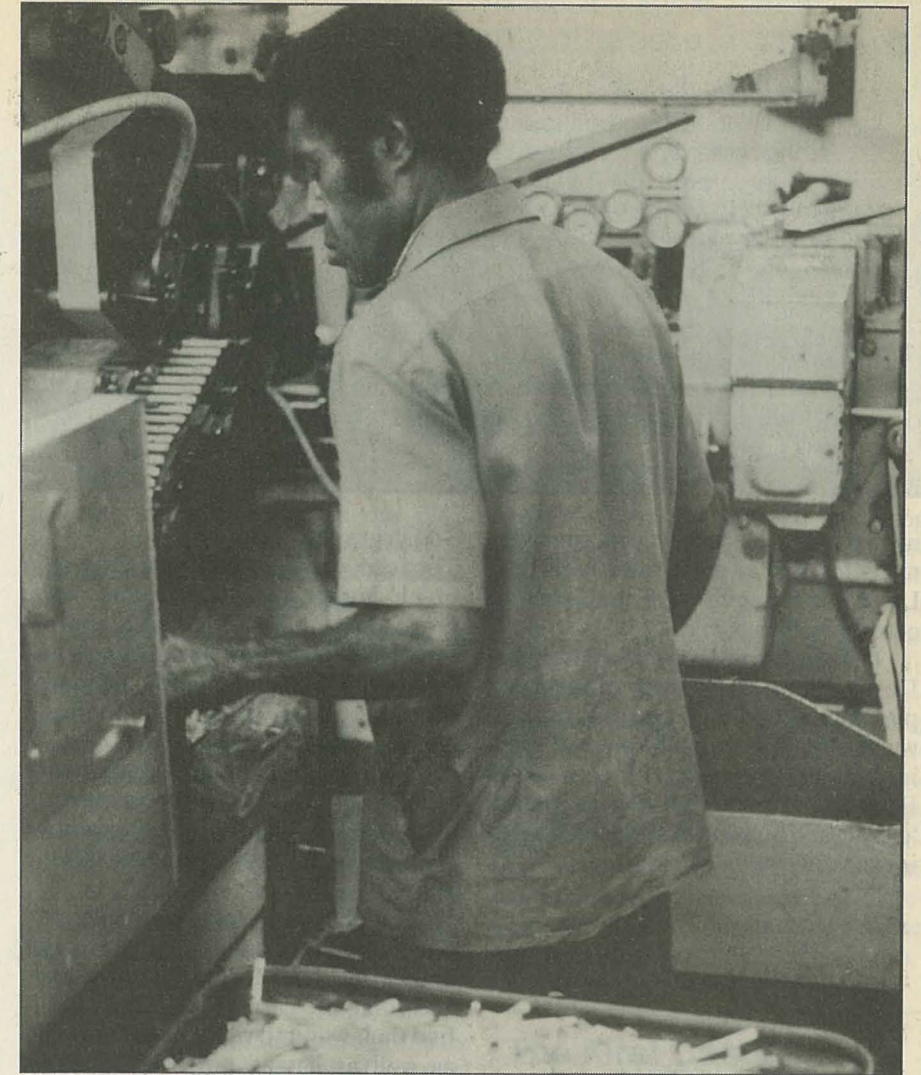
Throughout Africa, replantings account for less than 5 per cent of wood supplies to the tobacco curing barns.<sup>6</sup>

BAT engages in 'ceremonies' of tree planting in Zimbabwe. A writer in *Tobacco International* notes "the objective is to create fuel woodlots which will hopefully ease the pressure from natural woodlands which are being devastated by illegal tree cutting" [emphasis added].<sup>7</sup>

## Malawi — case study

Flue cured tobacco is grown for export on about 500 estates, many of which are managed by expatriate Europeans and Zimbabweans. Nearly half of Malawi's export earnings come from tobacco.

Wood is the only practical fuel for curing flue cured or fire cured tobacco. Coal is readily available but coal fired barns require electricity to drive the fans. The majority of farms are not con-



Inside the W.D. & H.O. Wills factory in Madang, Papua New Guinea.

## Smoke rings

**O**ne can conclude from the work of Chapman and Wai Leng that smokers in rich countries such as Australia may be smoking tobaccos that have been sprayed with pesticides and other agricultural chemicals that have been banned in Australia for environmental and health reasons. This particularly ironic possibility was dubbed the 'circle of poison' by US food and aid researchers, David Weir and Mark Schapiro<sup>1</sup>.

Australian Bureau of Statistics figures indicate that Australia on average imports \$92 million worth of tobacco per annum and that 58.5 per cent of the tobacco sold in Australia has been imported.<sup>2</sup> Given that most cigarettes sold in Australia are likely to contain a mix of locally grown and imported tobaccos, to smoke could be to contribute to deforestation in Third World countries.

— James Prest

1. David Weir and Mark Schapiro, *Circle of Poison*, Institute for Food and Development Policy, San Francisco, 1981.

2. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cat. Nos. 5426.0, 5424.0, 7503.0.



## Deforestation for tobacco curing

1. Annual world tobacco production	5.66 m. tons
2. Annual world flu-cured tobacco using wood	2.50 m. tons
3. World requirement to cure 1 ton	70 metres <sup>3</sup>
4. Annual wood harvested for tobacco curing (#2 x #3)	175 m. m <sup>3</sup>
5. Area woodland equivalent consumed annually (#4 x #3)	2.5 million ha
6. Hypothetical sustained-yield fuelwood plantations needed to provide #4.	17.5 million ha
7. Direct cost of hypothetical plantation needs	US\$15.0 billion

Notes: These are very approximate only. #2: firewood or charcoal; #4: most tobacco is grown in seasonal woodland vegetation types, where a 70m<sup>3</sup> is a reasonable estimate of the total stock per hectare. As the annual increment is only 1-2m<sup>3</sup>, the total stock is depleted. #6: Intensively managed fast-growing fuelwood plantations can produce about 10m<sup>3</sup>/ha pa on a sustained yield basis. Source: World Bank 1984:15.

nected to the electricity grid, so coal is not a feasible alternative to fuelwood. Liquid fuels such as diesel are not economically feasible.

Deforestation is a major problem. Despite the establishment of fuelwood plantations, about 60 per cent of fuelwood supplies are still obtained from indigenous forests. In 1984, a World Bank report predicted that in Malawi 'cutting and burning of all wooded areas is expected within 8 years.'

### Soil degradation

Tobacco depletes soil nutrients at a much higher rate than many other crops. In tropical soils which characteristically have low nutrient content, this usually results in the need for regular inputs of commercial fertiliser, adding significantly to the cost of production. A common alternative to recourse to fertilizer is the practice of exhausting soil fertility in one or two years and then deforesting new plots in which to plant new tobacco.

Tobacco also requires heavy and persistent applications of pesticides and herbicides. Most of these are toxic and some are carcinogenic and readily find their way into village water supplies as well as having potential to affect those workers who use them. BAT has supplied its Kenyan growers with Aldrin, the obsolete persistent organochlorine, banned or heavily restricted in most Western countries.<sup>8</sup>

Further, peasant farmers in most Third World countries receive poor training in pesticide use, that widespread illiteracy makes instruction and warning labels useless and that the scarcity of medical facilities in the remote rural areas where tobacco is often grown make it likely that problems arising from pesticide misuse will go untreated.

### Bank strikes again

Given its history of inadvertently promoting ecological disaster, it should come as no surprise to find that the World Bank promotes tobacco growing. Bank support for tobacco growing to nineteen countries over the period 1974-1988 totalled US\$1.56 billion. In our region in the 1980s it funded tobacco projects in Indonesia (US\$70m), India (US\$222m), and Nepal (US\$6m).

The ecological impact of tobacco on Third World economies may cause the industry to lose favour at a much faster rate than its consequences for the health of their populations. This in turn may generate a climate where domestic smoking control policies are more likely to ferment.

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2. World Bank, *Bank Tobacco financing: the environmental / health case: background for policy formulation*, Washington, 1984.
3. World Health Organisation, *Save the rainforests*, IUCN Bulletin, 1980, 11 (5).
4. Eckholm, Foley, et al, *Fuelwood: the energy crisis that won't go away*, Earthscan, London, 1984.
5. Economist Intelligence Unit, *Leaf tobacco - its contribution to the economic and social development of the Third World*, The Economist, London, 1980.
6. World Bank, *World Bank Staff Working Paper #704*, Washington, 1984.
7. T. Kille, 'BAT Zimbabwe', *Tobacco International*, June 10, 1988, pp 36-8.
8. J. Madeley, 'Kenyan farmers risk their lives for smokers', *New Scientist*, 8 April 1982.

Adapted by James Prest from Simon Chapman and Wong Wai Leng *Tobacco Control and the Third World: A Resource Atlas* (1990). Dr Simon Chapman is a lecturer at the Department of Community Medicine, University of Sydney, Westmead Hospital, NSW. Wong Wai Leng coordinates the IOCU Tobacco Campaign.

# Corruption and the environment movement

Could it happen? Would the environment movement ever be tainted by influence, power or money? Would it be possible for a small group to take control of the movement for brief or extended periods of time? Would the movement ever adopt the strategies and tactics of the corporate world, and eschew the membership involvement and consensus politics that have been so much a part of its history?

The Macquarie Dictionary presents ten definitions of corruption, including "... the perversion of integrity; ... corrupt or dishonest proceedings; ... bribery; ... debasement, as of a language; ... putrefactive decay."

The issue of corruption is important for the environment movement. It often relies on moral arguments, and attacks governments and corporations for their lack of integrity, and therefore it must ensure that it is itself beyond reproach.

The movement relies on adherence to principles when campaigning, and it is this commitment which makes it so important as a harbinger of social change. If these principles can be bought, sold, diluted or compromised, then what makes the movement any different from the engines of society and culture we are trying to change?

*Chain Reaction* presents here three articles published for the first time in Australia. Each looks at facets of corruption in relation to different groups within the environment movement.

Two articles, those of Doyle and Notion, were first published in the Indian journal *Philosophy and Social Action*, while the Hungry Coyote article was in the US *Earth First!* journal.

Timothy Doyle presents his analysis of the development of an élite network which effectively decided the shape and

direction of the environment movement's involvement in the 1987 Federal election campaign. He looks at the issues of endorsement of political parties, and the acceptance of corporate sponsorship by an Australian environmental group. He exposes the secret decision making by members of a green 'élite', and describes how fundamental decisions were made without the consultation of members.

Hazel Notion presents a view of Greenpeace Australia as an organisation with radical roots and external appearances, but with some very conventional aspects, and discusses it in light of the many shades of green reflected in the environment movement.

Hungry Coyote, a Friends of the Earth (US) worker sacked in a purge in 1986, looks at the fall and fall of Friends of the Earth (US), and the machinations and attitudes which transformed a major grass-roots organisation.

The articles are presented to raise a number of issues which face environment groups, and which must be considered for the movement to attain integrity between its principles and its actions. If the centralisation of power occurs, there will be a loss of internal democracy in environmental groups.

In the estimation of our three authors corruption has occurred, and there are lessons to be learned. Their writing will assist the necessary debate that will be part of this learning process.

Many things have changed since these articles were written, and updates, additional information and replies will be printed in the next edition of *Chain Reaction*. The intention in publishing them is to raise general points about openness and accountability in environment groups — issues which are currently being addressed by

many grassroots members. The problems have not received the airing they deserve, and the environment movement as a whole has remained uninformed.

We are not presenting evidence that money has changed hands for the benefit of individuals in the the environment movement, or that people have used the movement as a means of gaining power and influence for themselves or their associates, although these may happen. The issue at stake is the corruption of the internal democracy of the environment movement by the abandonment of principles and the seeking of power for short-term political ends.

— Larry O'Loughlin.

## The First Casualty — a forum on the media

Sunday 26 May, 1991  
11 am — 4.30 pm  
Glasshouse Theatre  
360 Swanston Street, Melbourne

### Guest speakers:

- Peter Watkins
- Di Bretherton
- Paul Chadwick
- Julianne Schultz

Chaired by Belinda Probert  
Audience discussion

Telephone (03) 486 1853  
Pre-registration essential  
\$10, \$5 (concession). Special  
price for group bookings  
Make cheques payable to  
Media Forum, Ground Floor,  
Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane,  
Melbourne.



# The green élite and the 1987 election

*Despite widespread perception of the environment movement's 'success', little attention has been given to the internal politics of the movement itself. Tim Doyle presents an analysis of operations within the environment movement during the 1987 Federal election campaign.*

**T**he Wet Tropical Forests of North Queensland was one of the foremost conservation issues in Australian politics during the 1980s. This particular environment was deemed unique and, as a consequence, the environment movement campaigned for its conservation.

The campaign was waged by many different networks of environmentalists over the decade, and each network enjoyed the primacy of the political limelight at different stages.

In 1983 and 1984, the blockaders at Cape Tribulation dominated proceedings. The main arguments for conservation of the area revolved around aesthetics, wilderness, and survival. The key network consisted mainly of local inhabitants.

In 1985 and the first part of 1986, Brisbane was the centre of a more formal Wet Tropics environmental campaign. The Rainforest Conservation Society of Queensland, the Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland and the Queensland Conservation Council were key organisations.

The Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) and The Wilderness

Society (TWS) — two national environmental organisations — recognised Brisbane as the campaign hub and established branch offices there. Because the focus of the campaign was now in a northern state capital, the focus of politics was at the state level also. The movement argued interminably with the Queensland Government to list the Wet Tropics as a 'World Heritage Area'. The conservation arguments were now based on science and economics.

## Élite power brokers

During the final eighteen months of the campaign the focus moved out of Queensland into the south-eastern cities. An informal élite network of up to a dozen professional environmental activists now dominated all Wet Tropics environmental initiatives. As a direct consequence of this dramatic shift in the movement's power base, the environment movement became totally immersed in the 1987 federal election. This was quite remarkable, as previously party endorsements by environmental groups had seldom occurred. Gone were the arguments about aesthetics and spirituality; gone were

those of science and economics; the era of political expediency had arrived.

The environmental movement's involvement in the 1987 Australian federal election was a 'success' in the terms of the political game as defined by the dominant, mainstream agenda. The movement, or more correctly, parts of it, managed to prove their political clout in the electoral game. The swing in the voting in the movement's targetted eleven seats was 0.89 per cent to the Australian Labor Party (ALP), compared with a 1.31 per cent swing away from the ALP on an Australia-wide basis. The claims were, therefore, that the campaign contributed an average 2.2 per cent of the ALP vote in this election. Even if this figure is somewhat exaggerated, even hard-headed political analysts do not deny the movement's electoral might.

The Wet Tropics campaign had been fought throughout a decade. Why, in the twilight years of the 1980s did the movement finally achieve this 'success'?

Part of the answer lay with the ALP's willingness to accommodate the movement's wishes in a trade-off for electoral support. More importantly, various changes to the movement's structure, goal-seeking and power distribution all contributed. The environmental movement involved with the Wet Tropics, however, originally operated in a way which valued consensus and demanded that the processes of democratic representation be fulfilled before any initiative be implemented.

## Who are these élites?

Members of this élite network had three essential characteristics. First, they were professional activists. They were not volunteers; nor were the majority

honorary elected officials. They were employed to do a job. Secondly, members of this exclusive network worked for either the Australian Conservation Foundation or The Wilderness Society. Finally, all members were strategically located in the four south-eastern capital cities: Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne and Hobart. Despite the intense involvement of Queensland groups over the past years, not one Queensland was in this network.

The de facto membership of this network was determined by asking several key individuals to nominate the network participants who dominated environmental proceedings in the election campaign. By cross-referencing names, I compiled this list:

- Jonathon West, Director, TWS, Hobart
- Karen Alexander, Councillor, ACF, Election Officer, TWS, Melbourne
- Michael Rae, Co-ordinator, TWS, Melbourne
- Phillip Toyne, Director, ACF, Melbourne
- Bill Hare, Campaign Director, ACF, Melbourne
- Jane Elix, Campaign Director, ACF, Sydney
- Margaret Robertson, Co-ordinator, TWS, Sydney
- Judy Lambert, Liaison Officer, TWS, Canberra
- Joan Staples, Liaison Officer, ACF, Canberra

It was this network which bargained with the Labor Government before and during the 1987 election campaign. It was not representative, in any way, of the environmental movement as a whole. But, due to the key positions of power held by this national élite, it was possible for it to portray its actions as representative to the politicians, the media and the general public.

The decision to play electoral politics — and back the ALP — was in no way representative of the broader movement in either a direct or indirect sense. Consensus was no longer practised by the dominant groups involved in the campaign to save the Wet Tropics.

The decision to play the electoral game and to back the Labor Party was first made by TWS and later endorsed by the ACF. In the past, the ACF has been the front runner in electoral involvement. In the 1987 election, however, TWS had the upper hand all the way.



The National Meeting of TWS constituted an attempt by the organisational élite to gain ratification from the membership for its electoral strategies. The voluntary membership was quite shocked at the extent of preparation which had been undertaken by the organisational professionals. Two extensive documents had been prepared by élite network members who had set the agenda. One TWS volunteer wrote of the decision at the National Meeting to play party politics:

All those supporters of TWS, ... who believe that TWS should take no party political stance at all could very rightly feel angry, misrepresented and wonder just whose decision ... that really wasn't consensus decision-making at all. I see TWS as losing what has always been its most attractive quality, that of grass roots involvement ... Power ... is vested in those who are paid ...

Indeed, few volunteers were admitted to the network; but this is not the full extent of the division between élites and non-élites. The organisational profes-

sionals operating in Brisbane, Cairns, Adelaide and Perth were equally surprised. Harry Abrahams, Co-ordinator of the Brisbane Branch, wrote:

The Brisbane Branch was not thinking strongly about elections before the meeting, hence some members may have felt there was a bit of 'steamrolling' going on.

This strategy of not consulting organisational workers 'outside' the network continued throughout the campaign. The Brisbane employees of both the ACF and TWS presented a brief report for the campaign post-mortem held in Melbourne the week after the election. They voiced disappointment about being left out of the central nexus of decision-making. They wrote:

We were not told who was working where and what numbers were to be used to contact whom when the branch offices were established. We found out ... rather than being told. Somehow we felt that we were not aware of where and when decisions were being made in Melbourne. Did regular meetings exist between the



ACF and TWS? We felt more that we were finding out the decisions after the meeting rather than that a meeting was going to be discussing XXX [sic.] this, what do you think?

So, at some stage before the National Meeting of TWS, the professional élites had made two decisions: one, to play the electoral game, and two, to back the Labor Party. Proof of the second point is found in Geoff Lambert's report to the National Meeting. He writes:

This morning's [23 March 1987] report that Howard [leader of the Liberal Party] would abolish everything including motherhood, if elected to office, opens up greater scope for differentiating between Liberal and Labor in the eyes of the conservation-minded voter. Perhaps Labor is a viable choice. Howard has turned rather dry on conservation, as evidenced by his promise to abolish support for the ACF (and us too?)

But the decision to back Labor goes even further back. One does not have to be a genius or a conspiratorist to work out that a deal had been struck by Barry Cohen — Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Environment — and Jonathon West. Before November 1986, West worked for Cohen as his private secretary.<sup>2</sup> West's timely departure from under Cohen's wing to the directorate of an organisation which would take the lead in the environmental movement's election campaign is far from coincidence. According to one TWS source, the decision to make West Director of TWS had been made some eighteen months before by the TWS élite. It was just a matter of timing.

West was the leader of the movement during the election campaign. Trade-offs and deals were achieved through his negotiation with both parties. It is irrelevant to ask which entity is more important to Jonathon West: the movement or the ALP. What remains crucial to this analysis is to recognise the key role he played in the movement's election campaign and the consequent endorsement of the Labor Party.

Although the environmental movement cannot be delineated on party political grounds, this élite group — particularly the TWS members — is intensely Labor Party oriented. The connection between these two entities will be later discussed. Thus, the TWS

move to focus on the 1987 federal election, and the consequent support it gave the Labor Party, was in no way representative of its membership and, more importantly, of the movement as a whole: yet it portrayed itself so.

TWS is not an organisation which operates around a tightly constructed constitution. The constitution was not designed to restrict powers. Four people can 'exercise all such powers and functions that are required by the Association'. The inbuilt flexibility of The Wilderness Society's constitution has been used in the past to act quickly in certain crisis situations. Unfortunately, without these constitutional controls its organisation has been seized by a small band of élites.

The ACF voiced its support for the Labor Party officially on 15 June. The Adelaide *Advertiser* printed the following the next day:

The 20,000 strong Australian Conservation Foundation will endorse the Hawke Government and the Australian Democrats in the election campaign ... The decision, based on a two-thirds majority vote in the ACF secret ballot of its members, is a big plus for Labor, which has made several pledges to woo the conservation vote

The general public, on reading this story, would have been convinced, wrongly, that two-thirds of ACF's 20,000 members had voted to support Labor in the election. In both previous elections, the ACF membership was polled to ascertain whether or not the ACF should back a political party. In the case of the 1987 election, however, the ACF did not adopt this policy. Instead, the broad decision to back the Labor Party was left to the ACF Council, whilst the nuts and bolts of the campaign were formulated by the seven-member Executive.

The ACF argued that this process saved time and money. It also substantially disempowered its membership. The ACF Council decision was not representative of its membership. Consider the response of the WA ACF branch President, Colin Hall:

We were notified of Council's decision three weeks before the election. We weren't consulted. We are sick and tired of not being consulted ... Some individuals within the chap-

## Getting to print

Doyle tried to present the issues raised in this article to a wider audience, way back in 1987, when he wrote a short piece for the now defunct *Times on Sunday*. Although the *Times* usually delved into matters far more thoroughly than other papers dared, this time it had a different approach. Having acquired the idea for the story from Doyle, they asked their staff journalists to cover it, refusing to print Doyle's article.

The journalist contacted the organisations concerned and wrote the story.<sup>1</sup> The individual members of the environmental elite denied the implications of the analysis.<sup>2</sup>

One year later, evidence supporting Doyle's contention of massive corporate donations to environmental organisations was published in Brian Toohey's rebel paper *The Eye*,<sup>3</sup> and later in *The Australian*.<sup>4</sup>

The article was then printed in *Journal of Philosophy and Social Action* in 1990, and has been edited by *Chain Reaction*.

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3. 'The greenies' friend', *The Eye*, Summer 1988-89, pp. 9-10.
4. Peter Logue, 'Farmer admits \$70,000 donation', *The Australian*, 9 Nov. 1988, pp. 1-2. Research: Brian Martin, Editorial, *Philosophy and Social Action*, Vol. 16 No. 3 pp. 4-5.

ter challenged the Council's decision. But they were heaved out of this stance by Labor Party sympathisers ...

One ACF Councillor made the following statement about his role in the Labor Party endorsement:

We had been lobbied heavily before we cast our vote. It was a secret ballot; but in reality it was a foregone conclusion.

The ACF members of the élite network, unlike their TWS counterparts, did go through the formality of seeking some sort of ratification from its membership. But this was merely a formality.

The ex-Director of the ACF, Dr J.G. Mosley, sees the changes in the ACF's election procedures as just one example among many of the increased élitism in the organisation. This unrepresentativeness is rarely a deliberate ploy of the professional élite. Some of the élites are equally concerned with this increasingly unrepresentative decision-making process. For example, Michael Rae, Co-ordinator of the Melbourne Branch of TWS — and élite network member — wrote of his uneasiness:

... that of the "executive decision making process", I do not deny that such a thing exists. I have my own concerns about this but I will have to take this issue up in a future letter. My apologies but I am not able to write about this at the moment due to the pressures of time and the fact that elections are screaming around my head.

This is a perfect example of the fact that this network was dictated to by the short-term time frame and the agenda of political parties. By playing the electoral game, the structure of decision-making and the scope of the movement's goals were dramatically affected. The long-term effects were that the terms of reference fell out of the membership's hands.

### The ALP Connection

The 'necessary and sufficient conditions' for movement support of the ALP were spelt out at the Sydney meeting of élites in late May:

- Unilateral nomination of the Wet Tropical Forests and the commitment to use Commonwealth powers to stop the degradation of this area (logging, roads, real estate, etc.)
- Injunction to stop illegal logging and forestry operations in Tasmania.

The Labor Government did promise to meet these two criteria, thus satisfying the movement élite that a substantial bargain had been struck. What helped the élites further in their endorsement

of the ALP was the disastrous performance by the opposition parties in terms of the environment in the lead-up to the election.

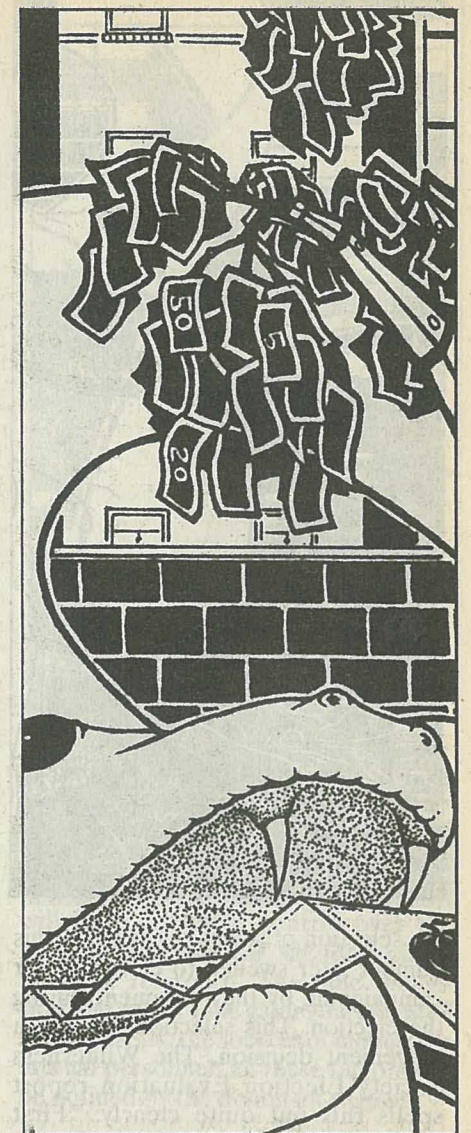
Given stark differences between the political parties' environmental stance, it could be rationalised that the movement picked the lesser of two evils. But if the policies and past performances were the only criteria, then the Australian Democrats should have received support in both houses. The issue of ALP endorsement by the movement élite is far more deeply entrenched.

There is no evidence which suggests that the ALP has deliberately infiltrated the movement. Despite this, from 1985 to 1987 it attained increased access to movement politics. This phenomenon is explained by a number of factors.

First, it is necessary to re-emphasise the importance of the role one person: Jonathon West who has played 'the middle man'. West was influencing the movement's path directly, even whilst in Barry Cohen's employ. While working for Cohen, West has used ACF and TWS letterhead when expressing his views to the organisational élite. One such paper — written early 1985 — entitled 'The Wet Tropics: What can we expect from the Labor Government in its second term', is an excellent example of the dual role and political world of West. It begins:

This paper aims to set out briefly some thoughts on how the re-elected Labor Government might react to the tropical rainforest issue in 1985 and how conservationists can orient in the new circumstances.

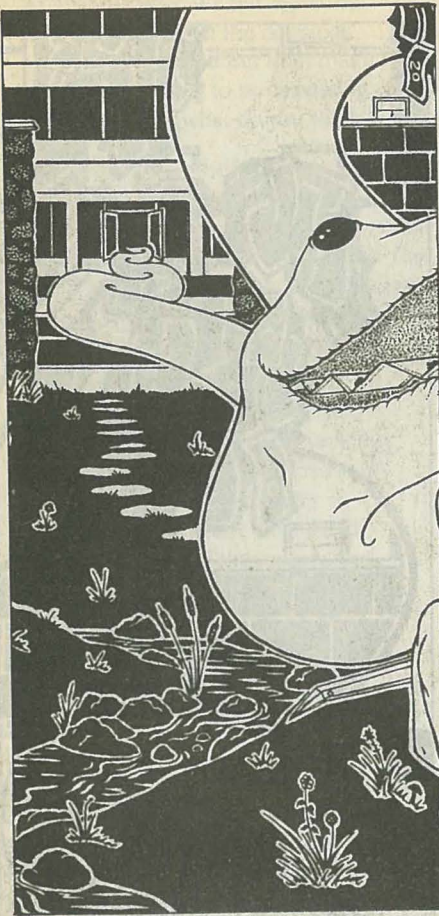
Apart from supplying advice to movement participants, West directly involved himself in the organisational élite power-plays of the environmental movement in this country. He was instrumental in the link between the ALP and the environmental movement. He operated in the Federal party political forum, and his perceptual boundaries of environmental issues remain confined to this mainstream 'appeal to élites' agenda.<sup>3</sup> He brought the ALP much closer to the movement. In the words of Michael Rae (TWS Convener, Melbourne), West 'provided us with far more access to the Labor Party political machine and the higher echelons of the bureaucracy'.



The relationship between the professional élites and the ALP during the election was far more closely linked than just a mutual back-scratching exercise. Some members of the élite network had ALP membership. But this is not the crucial factor in the explanation of the extent of the ALP-movement link. Instead, and more importantly, top Labor Party organisation officials became part of the movement élites' network during the election campaign. Bob McMullan (Federal Secretary, ALP), Peter Batchelor (Secretary, Victorian ALP) and Peter Beattie (Secretary, Queensland ALP) were the key Labor members of this network, and were involved in discussions relating to movement strategies.

As evidence of this direct involvement of the ALP in the movement's affairs, one has to look no further than





the selection of seven key seats — this number later swelled to eleven — for campaigning by the movement during the election. This selection was not a movement decision. The Wilderness Society Election Evaluation report spells this out quite clearly: "First decisions (about seat selection) were made at ACF/TWS Sydney Meeting on June 6 on advice from ALP Secretariat."

Not only did the movement endorse the ALP during the election, but its own campaign foci were initially defined by the ALP and, in certain electorates, the movement's campaign became almost inseparable from that of the ALP. The case of the Denison electorate in Tasmania is a classic example. Nowhere else in Australia is the ALP-movement link stronger than in Tasmania. The swing of 4.69 per cent away from the sitting member Michael Hodgman was more than enough to put his ALP opponent into the House. In this electorate, TWS did a substantial amount of the ALP letter-boxing.

There remains another important reason explaining increased interplay between the ALP and the movement:

the ALP is in government. Over twelve months directly prior to the 1987 election, the professional élite concentrated its efforts more on direct lobbying techniques aimed at influencing the politics of powerful people in the mainstream political sphere. The days of mass mobilisation campaigns, for which TWS is renowned, were over.

The power of the movement seems now to be in the hands of a small group of professional élites who, in turn, are far more interested in dealing with their counterparts in government than generating grassroots action. Thus, the movement has moved closer to government in recent times: the ALP just happens to be in government.

The professional élite speaks the language, utilises the same arguments, and is beginning to think in the same way as the governors of our society. No more arguments about wilderness; no more talk of scientific diversity; instead the game is mainstream politics: deals, bargaining, pragmatism and money.

The movement is now playing the political game, as defined by the dominant power-brokers, and playing this game properly requires large quantities of money. The actual source of movement funding during the election campaign illustrates the ultimate authority of the professional élites, who, on their rise to power, brought with them an ideological package reflecting mainstream values. Means are not especially important to the élites. Ends — short-term ones — are top priority.

#### Corporate Sponsorship

For the first time in the history of the Australian environmental movement funds came from corporate sponsors.

In the 1987 federal election, vast sums of money came from corporate sponsors in a bid to influence the outcome of the election in favour of Labor.

This occurred for two major reasons. First of all, some of the largest and most powerful corporate bodies in Australia were backing a Labor Government. Secondly, the movement — or those networks which dominated it — witnessed a fundamental change in the structure of its power distribution. This transfiguration was matched by dramatic ideological changes.

The largest donation came from Bond Corporation. In mid-June 1987, it made an approach to the ACF and offered

#### Some recent changes

There have been changes to the organisations described in this article since it was written.

For example, the four individuals named as TWS members or employees are no longer employed by the organisation.

Within TWS, new measures have been introduced with the aim of giving branch members more access to information and decision making. These include unrestricted access to regular (monthly) national phone link ups and access to TWS' own private conference on the Pegasus computer communications network. Further, the April national conference of TWS considered proposals including that each branch be an incorporated body run by a Members Steering Committee (of which no employees shall be permitted to be members).

TWS has also adopted a more independent political approach with its refusals to participate in the Resources Assessment Commission's enquiries, and the Government's Ecologically Sustainable Development committees (despite Government funding for participation).

\$250,000 of free advertising on its east-coast seaboard network, Channel Nine.

Bond Corporation specified what type of advertisement it had in mind. Its advertising consultants drew the picture of two trees: one being knocked down — the result of the election of a coalition government — whilst another tree thrived under the Labor Party.

In the months leading up to the election, the seven member ACF executive council met several times. At one such meeting, after much debate, a decision not to accept the Bond offer was made. According to one member of the Executive, the decision was made on two grounds. First, to accept funding from Bond Corporation would be ideologically unsound. On past occasions the Foundation had come into direct con-

flict with Bond Corporation. These actions ranged from a boycott on Bond bottled products in South Australia because of the Corporation's poor recycling record to a more direct conflict between the Western Australian chapter of the ACF and the Corporation over a high rise development in Perth. Secondly, the eventual disclosure would be politically damaging.

TWS accepted the offer. The advertisement was screened in prime-time on Channel 9 and 10 in Sydney and Melbourne; Channel 9 and 0 in Brisbane; and Channel 6 in Hobart. The 'Carleton Walsh Report' also screened the ad.

Only the informal executive of TWS knew of this deal. To this day most of the membership of TWS remains ignorant. In the draft election evaluation document which TWS prepared for its members, there is no reference to this donation. In fact, under the heading of 'Donations', only \$11,000 is recorded, coming from the generous pockets of the general public.

Secrecy existed between this élite network and the rest of the environmental movement. Files were off limits. All was done on the phone.

#### Conclusions

What have been the effects of the recent dominance of professional élites on the whole environmental movement?

During the 1987 election campaign, a network of professional élites acted unilaterally as representatives of the environmental movement. This act, resulting from the dominance of this network, will change the membership — along with the ideology — of the environmental movement in Australia.

The organised environmental movement will become more narrow in its base and less ideologically diverse. The former President of the ACF, Hal Wooten, supported this contention when he wrote:

Actual party endorsement is divisive and may narrow our base. It brings all the problems of single issue politics. Do we need it? Also, the organised movement is far more homogenised in its belief structures, as the dominant élites continue to demand more uniformity in environmental ideals.

The demand to conform to the professional élites' ideology will alienate large

sections of both the organisational membership and the movement participants who choose to operate outside the structures of formal, constitutionalised organisations. In turn, this alienation will lead to polarisation and conflict.

Most alienated will be the voluntary workers in the more formal groupings; those people who involve themselves in the 'grassroots', everyday, 'nuts and bolts' of any environmental campaign.

Apart from being tied to particular political parties, they have lost all of their power: a feeling of uselessness prevails. Craig Jones, another TWS volunteer who resigned, wrote to the Society Director explaining his disappointment:

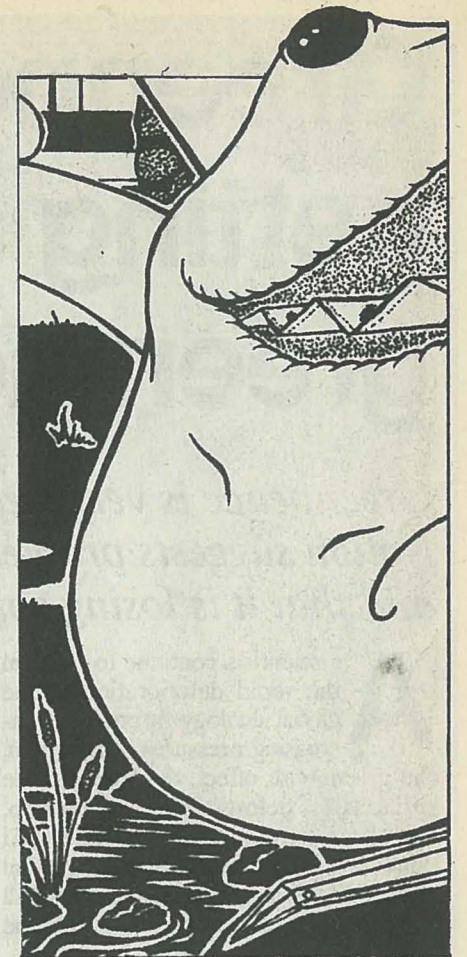
I believe that the 'raison d'être' of TWS was that it provided a basis for a 'grassroots' conservation movement ... With increasing executive power ... comes a limiting of the ordinary member's ability to participate in any way ... Not all of us are involved in The Wilderness Society simply to ease our consciences. We need to be active, and we need to be able to participate ... Without this ... the Society will wither and die.

The letters are not unique. Following the election of West to the top TWS job, TWS continually alienated its volunteer members and became increasingly centralised. According to Geoff Holloway, a long-time commentator on TWS, it no longer operated from a 'grassroots' basis. He said that from 1986 to 1987, active TWS branches diminished in number from approximately forty to twenty. This is, arguably, a direct result of the centralisation of decision-making.

And so with the ACF. Similar events occurred in all major capital cities: the organisational membership changed. And who replaces the volunteers who leave?

Could it be that the movement, through continually aligning itself with the Labor Party, will be increasingly attractive to Labor Party members? If so, the movement's environmental agenda will also be increasingly dominated by party politics.

If these trends of élite dominance continue, with emphasis on electoral politics, then the politicians, the government bureaucracy and the developers



will have complete control over the movement's political agenda and its terms of reference. The time dimension; the rules of the game; the extent of the trade-offs; the sources of money; the mutual personnel: all these factors will be defined by the dominant regime.

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2. Ruzicka, E., 'Meet Jonathon', *Wilderness News*, Vol. 8, No. 1, February 1987, p.2.
3. The 'appeal to élites' strategy has been analysed in the context of the environmental movement in Australia by Brian Martin, 'Environmentalism and Electoralism', *The Ecologist*, vol. 14, no.3, 1984, pp. 110-118.

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# Greenpeace — getting a piece of the green action

*Greenpeace is very well known but Hazel Notion suggests problems with its approach and that it is losing some of its green.*

As scientists continue to confirm the rapid deterioration of the global ecology through the increasing pressures of acid rain, the greenhouse effect, depletion of the ozone layer, deforestation, soil erosion, loss of species, contamination of the food chain with toxic chemicals and pollution of the world's oceans and waterways, all rational people have come to agree: the greens (environmentalists) are right. Naturally enough, everyone now wants to be a greenie. All sorts of people are rushing to don the verdant colours. There are evergreens and seasonal greens, red/greens (those migrating from the left and blue-greens (from the right), verdigris (green rust on copper) and jade, but the fundamental division is between light and dark greens. Dark greens want to change the world; light greens want to clean up the one we've got.

Since most of the major manifestations of the environmental catastrophe occur as expressions of industrial/consumer culture (or emulations of it) the dark green school says there is no way of saving the planet short of a total cultural reformation. Such a cultural deviation would have to be at least as dramatic and far reaching as the one that gave us the industrial revolution in the first place. This school of thought is largely an outgrowth of the hippy/utopian vegetable growing movement so popular twenty years ago. These days, however, they are sometimes more sophisticated in their thinking and often style themselves as 'deep ecologists'.

The light end of the green spectrum, meanwhile, says it's just business as usual. The solution to pollution problems is to have cleaner industries, environmentally safer products and sustainably yielding forests. Furthermore, just around the corner there's a new technology or chemical that will fix whatever it is you're worried about. But whatever you do, don't panic.

In between these two doubtful shades there doesn't seem to be anything but varying shades of inarticulate camouflage, confusion and angst. The situation seems to be giving rise to a slowly growing panic among those too young to say with any degree of confidence, "at least it won't happen in my life-time".

Increasingly it seems people, desperate to be reassured that somebody is doing something to save the planet, are placing their faith in international environmental organisations like Greenpeace. This is unfortunate because many of them will be unaware just how far Greenpeace has gone in aligning itself with the 'business as usual', light green school. A sell-out? Well, yes, but for a good price.

One has to understand that the business as usualists (BAU) are just the leading edge of the free market economy adapting to and exploiting a new market. To them an environmental catastrophe is just a new frontier to conquer and an opportunity to market new products and services. To the BAU environmental engineers, scientists and businessmen the mainstream environ-

mental movement is the greatest promoter and asset their new environmental industry could hope to possess.

Without really realising what was happening, organisations like Greenpeace have become fully integrated into this new environment industry. How did this happen? Well they were just successful and got big. And they started caring more about their corporate fortunes than about changing the world.

In 1989 Greenpeace had a turnover of nearly \$100 million, of which \$35 million was dedicated to fighting environmental campaigns around the world. To the BAU people this was a whole lot of free publicity for their environmentally sound products and pollution control equipment.

In 1989 Steve McAllister came to Greenpeace Australia from the US, to promote the Greenpeace agenda. As Executive Director, he put the corporate image in perspective. He said he'd been sent out from the United States to clean out the hippy image of the local outfit and bring it into line with the rest of the Greenpeace world. He immediately fired a quarter of the existing campaigning staff and replaced them with people better suited to the new conservative and bureaucratic requirements. The survivors of the shake-out tended to be those skilled at internal campaigning. That is, instead of spending their time campaigning on environmental issues, they saved their best efforts for promoting themselves on the internal Greenpeace network. Career orientation and corporate loyalty were apparently the qualities Greenpeace was seeking in employees.

Steve McAllister was quoted offering gratuitous flattery of the Australian Prime Minister, normally more noted for his support for uranium mining,

Australia's nuclear alliance and the pocketbooks of large corporations.

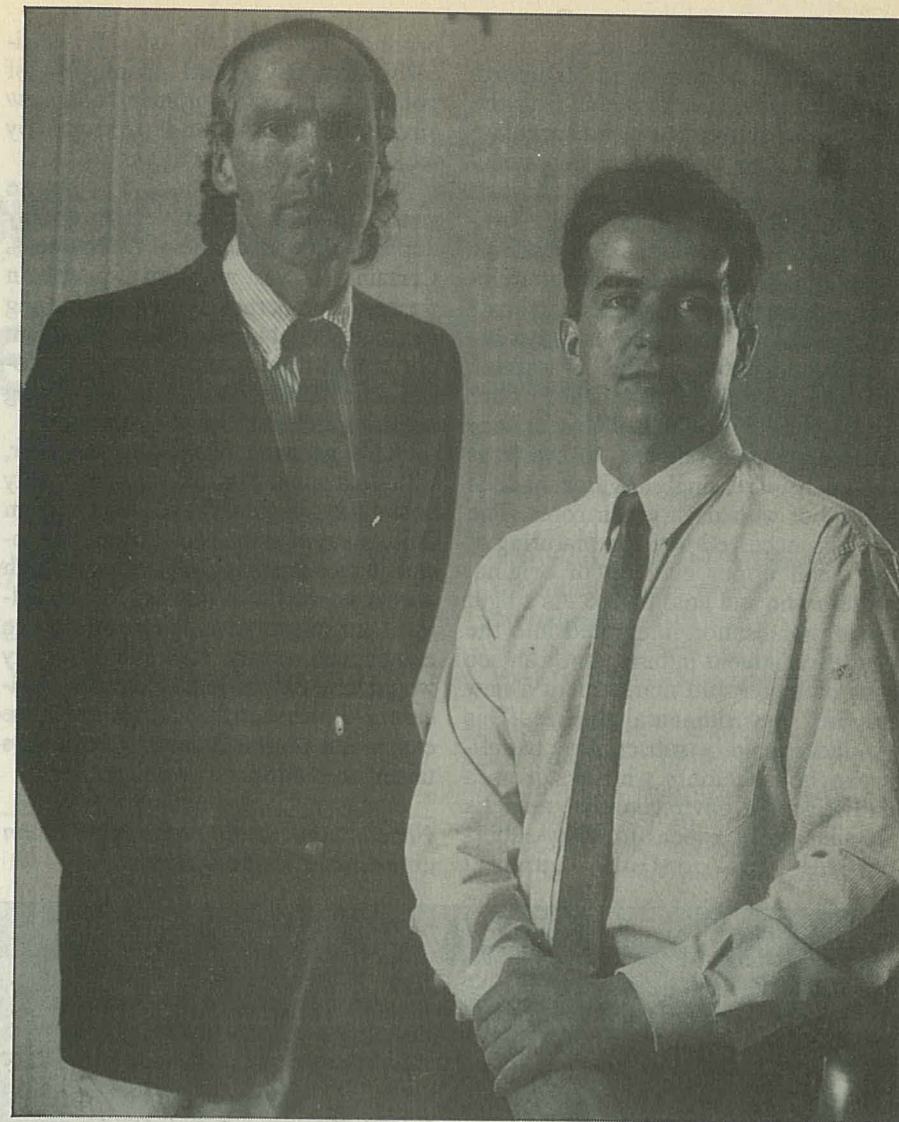
Never before have I seen a leader who is so green. Hawke is doing for the Environment Movement what Gorbachev did for East-West relations. He is ahead of us all.

These are the words of a man who was perhaps capable of making small sacrifices of reality in the interests of pragmatism. Being the Prime Minister's friend, it seems, would have been to his advantage. And those pragmatic interests he states repeatedly. He wants to quadruple the local 'subscribership' to one per cent of the population, 170,000 people, and increase the Greenpeace income proportionally. (At that stage, you could become a subscriber to Greenpeace, not a member.)

Greenpeace Australia no doubt chose a competent person to clean up the hippies and raise money. He was a veteran of the Vietnam war and during a three year sojourn away from Greenpeace managed to turn himself into a multi-million dollar property developer. (He told startled Australian staff members he was planning to turn an organic fruit farm, that he had bought in the US as a speculation, into a high-density residential development. He also confided that if he was successful in re-ordering the Australian branch he had been promised the top job in the US, possibly to be followed eventually by the top job in Greenpeace International.) His salary package for the Australian job included a rent-free mansion with views of Sydney Harbour (worth \$37,000 per year), a car and a \$45,000 annual salary.

With such conventional minds in charge of Greenpeace it makes one wonder just how they ever acquired their radical image and just what function they are actually serving in the world.

In discussions with Australian staff about campaigning tactics McAllister dismissed suggestions that tactics should be adapted to local political and cultural conditions. He said Greenpeace was like McDonalds and it had its own well proven recipe that had worked successfully all over the world. What he was apparently referring to was the Greenpeace propensity for direct action against known polluters to publicise the pollution they cause. This often takes the form of harassing dump



Paul Gilding (seated) replaced Steve McAllister (left) as Greenpeace Executive Director. The hippy image has changed, but how green is Greenpeace?

ships in zodiacs (small sea craft) and placing temporary blockages in disposal pipelines. All done, when possible, with full television coverage.

The dramatic pictures that these actions produce for TV news are often flashed around the world and constitute the recipe of Greenpeace at work that has proved to be so successful. The appeal to the public of this kind of dare-devil opposition to polluters and whalers is undeniable. However, it is obvious that the choice of issues and the timing of actions are more dictated by Greenpeace's need for self-promotion than by an inspired commitment to the environment. One complaint regularly levelled at Greenpeace is that it doesn't have the commitment to follow issues to a conclusion. It just publicises an issue (and itself) and moves on.

Another complaint, linked to the need for publicity, concerns the way it raises money. It has been described as pyramid-selling environmentalism. Every evening dozens of 'canvassers' are despatched in teams to the suburbs of all Australia's major cities to knock on doors, ask for donations and sell subscriptions. The canvassers keep 40 per cent of the money they collect. Their task is made much easier and more lucrative by good news coverage of Greenpeace's actions. If householders repeatedly ask them why Greenpeace isn't doing something about a particular issue, this may lead to Greenpeace adopting the relevant cause.

The most cited criticism of Greenpeace is the centralisation of power, the old boy promotion network and the rigid bureaucratic authority structure.



The commando style actions, coupled with a military command structure, have led many a dark greenie over the years to lift an eye-brow and speculate as to just who the remote and unaccountable leadership might be using as role-models. One question these eye-brow raisers sometimes ask is just how does Greenpeace always manage to locate its target whaling and fishing boats in the midst of vast oceans? Is it possible it might sometimes be satellite-assisted, and, if so, how does it return the favour?

To put the activities of Greenpeace into perspective one has to see it as becoming increasingly a lighter shade of green but with dark green roots. The shift has occurred with the maturing of the small upper echelon of original leaders who still hold power. As a light green organisation integrated into the new environment industry one can see it as packager and marketer of a new product: environmental theatre. This product is sold by subscription to suburban householders who use it as a palliative for environmental anxiety. Regular doses appear to allow suburbanites to continue normal

producer-consumer lifestyles. It is basically advertising and promotion of pollution control equipment and new environmentally-sound products by creating a demand for them.

Whether one sees it as doing more good than harm or vice versa probably depends on what shade of green one is. Certainly the vast majority of people in western democracies are now varying degrees of light green and most of them are bound to give some degree of approval to harmless consciousness-raising activities such as those of Greenpeace.

This growing obsession, however, with what amounts to a civilisation's dirty habits is fast beginning to distract us from those areas of human endeavour, like social justice and spiritual quest, which always seemed so promising for the cultural evolution to a fairer and more enlightened society. That such a society would have the wisdom to avoid ecological self-destruction through the collective expression of greed used to be always taken for granted.

*Hazel Notion is the pseudonym of an experienced political activist.*

## New Broom?

Paul Gilding became Executive Director of Greenpeace Australia in June 1990, and in *Business Review Weekly* acknowledged some perceived problems with the group such as lack of follow through and consultation with local groups, and said that things had changed.

A thorough analysis of whether this is true or not could be the basis of another article, but it is true that the corporate style of Greenpeace has not changed.

Greenpeace 'supporters' are now 'members', but that largely passive, with little scope to participate in the organisation's decision-making process. Greenpeace has an extensive direct mail operation, and canvassing continues in most States. Direct actions are still conducted with the aim of maximum publicity.

# The corporate takeover of Friends of the Earth

*The story of Friends of the Earth (US) is contentious, yet in any telling it shows the potential for corruption in environmental organisations. Hungry Coyote produced this analysis.*

FOE would not be clearly organized or directed by some old tired bureaucratic formula from the top. Find good people with the right ideas and let them move ahead their way.

Under Brower's leadership, FOE gained influence in the environmental movement commensurate with the much bigger groups. FOE's role was twofold: to raise new issues and move onto the agendas of the mainstream groups; and, much to the consternation of the larger groups, to take uncompromising stands on issues once thought to be their exclusive domain.

Brower's reputation, style and vision attracted a cadre of loyal staffers. But increasingly members complained, "You're not out there in front of the bulldozers." Many then joined the more militant groups like Earth First!, and when Brower retired from FOE's presidency in 1979, many felt that the organization had lost its centre.

"There has always been great trust that people making decisions shared values, and Brower's views held sway," said Charlie Drucker, former FOE energy staffer. "When he left, it was unclear where new values were to come from".

Brower's improbable choice of successor, Edwin Matthews, a Manhattan corporate lawyer with the international firm of Coudert Brothers, set the stage for the inevitable showdown at FOE. Matthews' role at FOE raised questions about FOE's future direction. Clients of the business oriented law firm included multi-national energy conglomerates and banks, such as Utah International Mining and Citibank.

Matthews was dismissed by FOE's executive committee within a year, but

## Greenpeace dissidents: the Seattle 'phoners

In June 1988, telephone canvassers at Greenpeace USA's office in Seattle, were congratulated by management for taking the largest weekly revenue ever. A few days later, the same canvassers were confronted by an 'efficiency' directive. Following the advice of an 'efficiency expert' from the National Office, management ordered the 'phoners to adopt (on pain of dismissal) high pressure sales techniques which involved suggesting donation levels starting at US\$250 and working down, irrespective of the individual member's financial situation'.

Greenpeace management also announced the installation of phone surveillance equipment at a cost of thousands of dollars to monitor phone calls, "for training purposes". 'Phoners protested against both moves, calling the latter a violation of the trust and privacy of members and as indicative of management's lack of trust in its employees. Many long standing and productive employees quit, halving the number of staff.

The majority of the remaining 'phoners voiced their disgust by forming a branch of the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) and warned that such surveillance was illegal in Washington State. Management responded by stating that such equipment had been installed at the Boston Greenpeace phone bank. Later, negotiations lead to a verbal promise to delay installation of the equipment, yet all other issues were declared to be not open for discussion.

On August 8, twelve 'phoners were sacked for forming a union branch<sup>2</sup>. Allen Thompson of Seattle said that "Greenpeace is very, very obstinate" and recounted that disgruntled Greenpeace employees had staged a sit-in in France. It has been suggested that management called police who broke up the sit-in with clubs and mace<sup>3</sup>.

Further, Greenpeace canvassers in New York are suing management over alleged misappropriation of funds. The Council for Better Business Bureaus maintains that Greenpeace USA does not meet minimal standards in three separate categories because of incomplete disclosures, including financial data.<sup>4</sup>

Thompson argues that the problem with Greenpeace is structural. "Less than 50 people [in Greenpeace USA] control donations from nearly 1,000,000 people." Greenpeace USA workers must have six years full-time experience before they can get a say as to who forms the board of directors. He adds, "In the long run, Greenpeace will not contribute to saving the environment if they persist with a top-down authoritarian structure."

### References:

1. *Industrial Worker*, Aug. 1988, pp. 1-4, Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), Chicago, Illinois. 2. *Industrial Worker*, Nov. 1988, p. 3. 3. *Industrial Worker*, February 1989, p. 1. 4. *Changing Times magazine*, USA, May 1988.

In 1986 Friends of The Earth gained the unfortunate distinction of becoming the first national environmental organization to fall victim to a hostile corporate-style takeover. The conflict at FOE was described in *Outside* as:

A clash between two increasingly irreconcilable factions of the modern environmental movement: those grass-roots environmentalists who like David Brower, are most comfortable on wilderness trails; and the 'professional' environmentalists, managers, lobbyists and attorneys for whom the movement is less a passion than a career. Ultimately, the showdown at FOE says as much about the environmental movement today as it does about Brower.

The contemptuous attitude of this new generation of 'professional' environmentalists toward the idealists that gave the movement its initial momentum was perhaps best expressed by FOE's 29 year old Conservation Director Geoff Webb, in a *Mother Jones* interview:

Dave (Brower) hasn't actually done anything in a long time ... If he did do anything at all, it was talking

about Nuclear War ... Dave's moral ability to make that argument is greatly diminished by his personal behaviour. He is just the sort of person he decries ... He is just the one who would push the button."

Webb's cynicism towards Brower, who was twice nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, is matched by his dismissal of grass roots radicals, particularly Earth First!:

They are hard pressed to point to anything they've accomplished. They're basically just doing 'guerrilla theatre'.

David Brower, 76, the indefatigable visionary leader of the modern North American environmental movement, founded Friends of the Earth in 1969 shortly after his forced resignation from the position of Executive Director of the Sierra Club. During 17 years in that post, he led the Sierra Club's evolution from a genteel social club of 2000 hikers to a major environmental force 77,000 strong. Brower went on to found Friends of the Earth in his own image: lean, decisive, decentralised, iconoclastic, prescient in defining new environmental issues, and most importantly, uncompromising. He stated:





Dave Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth, was eventually forced to leave the organisation by a new breed of directors on the FOE(US) Board.

remained on the board to become a leader of its anti-Brower majority.

In 1980, Brower yielded to the Matthews-led board faction and acquiesced to the appointment of former Capitol Hill lobbyists as FOE's administrators. These new administrators quickly advanced a 'professional' centralized model to restructure FOE. Predictably, this split the staff into two camps: the Brower-led San Francisco staffers and most of the field representatives versus the Washington D.C. lobbyists and the Seattle office staff.

The next few years saw the gradual elimination of FOE's most autonomous staffers — its far-flung field representatives. Among the first to be axed was FOE Wyoming Representative, Howie Wolke, who went on to found Earth First! FOE staffers were convinced that the cuts were part of a political agenda and an attempt to cover up the administrative inabilities of the new management team.

FOE's 11 year veteran mid-Atlantic representative, Lorna Salzman was fired in May 1984, for 'insubordination' i.e. her demand that FOE's volunteer branches and field reps have veto power over the various endorsements of Congressmen made by the Director of FOE's Political Action Committee (PAC). Salzman rallied FOE's beleaguered staffers with her outspoken criticism of the board and its PAC,

which she described as "a self-congratulatory exercise in career building." She went on:

Just look at this board, they're a power elite. I'm no Marxist but class analysis can be useful sometimes. And there's no way, considering this board, that you're going to get a populist, decentralised, bioregionalist, or radically ecological view.

Salzman views the transformation of FOE to FOE-PAC as symptomatic of the infiltration and corruption of the environmental movement by four groups: "Fast talking political operatives" who suck up to Congressional aides to ensure themselves access to the political power brokers on Capitol Hill, "public-interest administrators" loyal only to themselves and their cronies instead of to issues and members, "power-hungry flakes" and "pseudo liberals" wanting to appear respectable and moderate, and "bland non-entities who live to put another feather in their caps for prestige but otherwise have no environmental credentials."

By June of 1984, the board decided to cut another 30 per cent of FOE staff to pare \$350,000 from the then \$1.5 million annual budget. Predictably, the 12 targetted personnel included a disproportionate number of field representatives and those San Francisco staffers who tried to affiliate

themselves with the United Auto Workers Labor Union (an effort the FOE board allocated \$10,000 to fight).

What the board didn't know was that Brower would not give up. He prepared and paid \$350 for a full page advertisement in the July, 1984 issue of *Not Man Apart* titled 'Save the Team!'

The Brower appeal stated, "the motivations behind these cuts are deeply wrong," and noted alternatives to wholesale firings, including the substantial pay reductions offered by the staff.

The ad was discovered by an assistant executive director and the entire press run was immediately impounded. The papers, a spokesperson assured the Press, would be "ecologically recycled".

On July 2 1984, the FOE board held an extraordinary six hour trans-continental conference call, debated Brower's alleged insubordination and then voted to throw the Archdruid off the board of the organisation he founded.

Brower was reinstated to the FOE Board Chair a month later, after filing suit against the board's illegal action: no quorum was present when the board voted and some directors weren't given the opportunity to vote. Brower also extracted an agreement to restructure the board, cutting it from 27 to 15, and to provide for membership elections of directors. The board agreed to find a new CEO outside the organisation. In February of 1985, the FOE board again turned to an unlikely leader to heal the organisation's wounds. The selection of former electrical engineer Karl Wendelowski from MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) to be FOE's new CEO (at a \$55,000 salary) hardened everyone's line on the professionalism debate.

The April 1985 election narrowed the board's anti-Brower majority to a one vote (8 to 7) margin. One of the four new directors was former Colorado Plateau Regional Representative, Gordon Anderson, who became the only person ever nominated by members' petitions to be elected to the FOE board. Anderson ran on a campaign to decentralise FOE and allow members a decision making role in setting policies and funding priorities. He recalled "The eight majority directors consistently thwarted every pro-grassroots motion we introduced."

After six months of continued in-

trigue, the September 21 board meeting confirmed the staff's worst fears. Wendelowski outlined his plan for the complete reorganisation of FOE and threatened to resign if the board did not approve it. Under Wendelowski's leadership the 'old' FOE would be abolished, four more San Francisco staffers sacked and the Washington office strengthened. (Only one day earlier, Wendelowski had called the FOE staff together to dispel rumours that a new round of staff lay-offs were in the works.) The renewed targeting by Wendelowski of FOE's International Soft Energy and Nuclear Energy Alternatives programs raised speculation, among critics of the restructuring, of a hidden agenda. Brower criticised FOE's Washington administrators for having been "soft on radiation and radioactive waste," and having taken positions that would "delight the Atomic Industrial Forum."

Wendelowski tendered his resignation on November 4, 1985, and on November 23 the board met to consider whether to accept it. Unbeknownst to the San Francisco staff, the pro-DC board members and the DC staff had developed a strategy to close the San Francisco office, fire its remaining staff, bust their labor union and oust Brower and the other pro-San Francisco directors.

Meeting participants listened in astonishment as FOE Foundation President Alan Gussow, a wealthy retired artist, described how the Foundation, which contributed almost half FOE's operating budget, had suspended its financial support until "management difficulties" were resolved — and Brower's interference stopped.

"It was the most silver tongued description of blackmail you could ever imagine," remembered one staffer.

As tensions mounted, anti-Brower director and Methodist Minister Paul Burks faced his adversary and screamed, "Shut your god damn mouth!" and led the charge against Brower with an acrimonious character attack asserting FOE's headquarters would be moved to Washington to "get it away from David Brower."

Two weeks later, the majority directors shifted their offensive to the courtroom. Their first law suit against Brower sought to block his use of FOE's mailing list to contact members, and to

## "Murky speculations"

In a letter to *Earth First!* journal, (1 May 1989), Tom Turner responded to Coyote's article, alleging many inaccuracies, beginning by quoting the offending sections:

(Brower) led the Sierra Club's evolution from a genteel social club of 2000 hikers ...

Gentility is in the eye of the beholder. The club's membership stood at about 7700 when Dave took over.

"Brower's improbable choice [for a] successor, Edwin Matthews, a Manhattan corporate lawyer ... with Coudert Brothers ..."

Ed Matthews was anything but an improbable choice, and he practised law in Paris, not New York. Brower and Matthews had been friends and co-operators since the 60s, when they worked together to block construction of a restaurant in Central Park. Matthews had sparked the creation of FOE affiliate groups in France, England, and Sweden in the early '70s. He had always been a leading candidate to replace Brower. That his tenure ended in failure and he eventually turned against his former mentor doesn't change what went before.

Coyote misleads readers by neglecting to report that throughout the '80s FOE carried a large and growing debt. The main reason for the final laying off of so many staff was ostensibly a need to pare back the budget. Political struggles went hand in hand with these debates, but the debt was real.

— Tom Turner worked for David Brower from 1968-9 at the Sierra Club, got fired, then worked at Friends of the Earth from 1969 to 1986. He later became staff writer for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund in San Francisco.

stop his requested vote by members on their removal.

"They have only one choice to explain why things haven't worked, and that's to try Brower. He's the most visible," said San Francisco staffer David Phillips. The majority directors hired a business-oriented law firm that specialized in over-seeing corporate takeovers to represent them.

Brower again defied the pro-DC directors and sent a letter to members informing them of recent events within FOE they would not read about in *Not Man Apart*. The letter generated about \$25,000 in contributions to fight the DC takeover. In response, the pro-DC directors filed another law suit against Brower for recovery of the funds raised by the letter as well as "unspecified damages". The pro-DC directors' unsuccessful legal maneuvers cost FOE an estimated \$30,000 and were funded by member donations contributed for environmental advocacy.

Brower recommended that the recall election of the pro-DC directors be supervised by an impartial referee, such as the American Arbitration As-

sociation. Instead, led by FOE President, millionaire chemical engineer Dan Luten, the majority directors forced through an election procedure with questionable aspects including promotion of their own candidates at the organisation's expense, in contravention of FOE's by-laws, and production of an election ballot giving nine times the space for the pro-DC directors as allowed their opponents.

Many FOE members, particularly those in California and in remote communities, did not receive these biased ballots in time to participate in the election because the pro-DC directors insisted on sending them by bulk ('third class') mail from Minnesota against the recommendation of a bi-partisan committee appointed by the board.

Although the pro-DC directors insisted that first class mailing would be too expensive, they also authorised the release of three propaganda mailings prior to the recall election as part of their smear campaign against Brower. These were all sent first class.

As a result of what Brower's attorney Brian Kemnitz called, "the



under-handed tactics used by Edwin Matthews to create what is clearly an unfair ballot and election procedure designed to reduce and skew the vote," the pro-DC directors only survived the recall election by 181 votes out of 5,613 received by the deadline. A year later, incidentally, the FOE board secretly adopted the policy introduced by Seattle Director Mark Terry and abolished free competitive board elections.

With the resignation of Brower and the other six pro-San Francisco directors following the election, the DC hijack of FOE was complete, leaving the organisation with a staggering \$627,000 debt, loss of its most experienced staff and valuable programs, closure of all but one (Seattle) of its 14 field offices, departure of 18 of its 21 branch leaders, and a significant loss of members (from 30,000 in 1980 to 16,000 in 1985).

Despite Geoff Webb's proclamation, "We have wrestled our demons to the ground," the departure of Brower and his supporters did not alleviate the financial problems of the 'new FOE'. In May 1986, the Cook Trust Foundation filed a law suit in California Superior Court against the FOE board for misappropriation of donated grant funds, seeking \$50,000 in actual damages and \$500,000 in punitive damages.

"The Cook Trust lawsuit has had a chilling effect on FOE's ability to raise funds from the environmental foundation community," according to one insider.

The Kendall Foundation, once FOE's largest contributor, also withdrew its annual support grant in 1986. According to one Washington attorney, FOE's directors could also be held personally liable for not fulfilling their fiduciary responsibilities should members file an expected class action law suit demanding repayment of the \$300,000 in their outstanding personal loans to FOE.

FOE's continued erosion of foundation support and membership renewals (FOE's membership had by now dropped to 8000 members, from a peak of 39,000 in 1981) may be partly a result of its inability to define a new niche for itself amongst the fiercely competitive Washington based lobbying groups. Tom Turner, former editor of *Not Man Apart* observed, "FOE no longer does what needs doing, it does what it thinks will sell."

## FRIENDS OF THE EARTH®

### The lessons:

First, it is a lesson of the need for built-in, pervasive accountability at all organizational levels, in all movements, and in particular accountability to members and potential constituents. Second, the environmental movement indulges in little self-criticism and even less of associates.

The dues paid by all the members result in a lot of money being paid out to these groups. But there is no reciprocal right granted to members to participate in or be privy to all organizational decisions. Moreover, money is solicited on behalf of the 'public interest' — by the 'good guys' fighting the 'bad guys', who say: trust us, give us your money and we will protect your interests and the environment. But mostly what members get is a monthly publication telling them what has already been done, or whom to call or write, or asking for more money.

### The details:

Here is a partial list of their actions [the actions of the Board] between 1980 and 1986, actions taken over the objections of Brower and his supporters on the Board:

- terminated FOE's anti-nuclear lobbying in Washington D.C.
- vehemently resisted the unionising of the San Francisco office.
- hired a law firm charging \$150 per hour, at FOE expense, to file groundless lawsuits against Brower; refused to set limits to this litigation.
- continued to appeal to members for funds for four FOE programs, three of which had already been discontinued because of staff cuts.
- refused to act on a legally authorised resolution by the Board minority members calling for a special member's meeting.

— Lorna Salzman, 'The Decline and Fall of FOE in the United States', *Philosophy and Social Action*, July-Sept., 1990.

"FOE's recent fund-raising appeals solicited support for Acid Rain, Tropical Deforestation and Nuclear Power, three programs for which they have no Washington staff," according to a DC based environmental consultant.

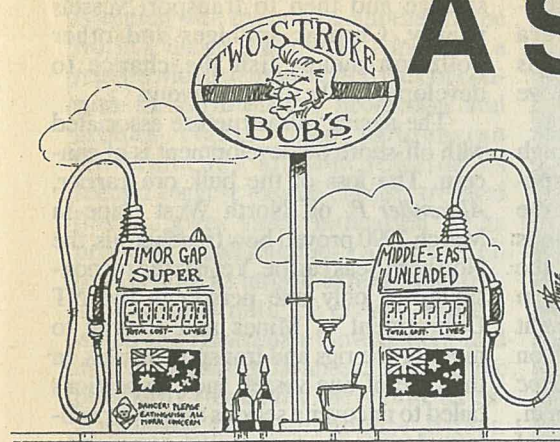
To many former FOE associates, the decline of the organisation can also be traced to public reaction to the board's "the ends justify the means" corporate take-over tactics.

While almost fifty dedicated staffers lost their jobs in the course of the takeover, a dozen subsequently banded together to form the Earth Island Institute and continue their varied programs — including Rainforest Protection, Marine Mammals, Third World Dams — and to publish *Earth Island Journal*, now a highly acclaimed news-magazine. The success of

Brower's new organisation, which has recruited 25,000 members, is a dramatic contrast to the demise of FOE.

Brower's enthusiasm and eloquence continues to inspire a constant upswelling of grassroots radicalism. "The Sierra Club made the Nature Conservancy look reasonable," he preaches. "Friends of the Earth made the Sierra Club appear reasonable, and Earth First! made FOE appear reasonable. Now we need some people to make Earth First! appear reasonable."

*Hungry Coyote is a former FOE supporter, is co-founder of Coyotes Would Puke, a Seattle based 'truth squad' dedicated to exposing the facts behind the corporate takeover of FOE. This article is reprinted and abridged from Earth First! 21 Dec. 1988.*



# A Slick Business in Northern Seas

*The oil industry poses a number of environmental dangers, and, according to Matthew Jamieson, there will be major problems in the seas to the north of Australia if current trends continue. Although the focus has been on the threats to the Great Barrier Reef, there are other areas facing more immediate problems.*

**T**he issue of jobs and the environment came together in an unusual protest in Darwin in October, 1990 when oil rig workers picketed the offshore exploration vessels, the *Sedco 708* and the *Zeparta Arctic*, operating in the Timor Sea.

The rig workers, members of the Australian Workers Union, were protesting that the workforce for rigs off Darwin is being drawn from overseas and interstate. The union said that local workers would not let the companies get away with what is going over the side, just 200 km off the coast, and argued that people from elsewhere will not put their jobs on the line and stand up for Darwin's back yard.

The union argued that if the biologically dead oil fields elsewhere in the world are any indication of industry self-regulation, then we don't want it on Darwin's doorstep. The NT Government is talking of building a new wharf—free of trade unions—and the Treasury and Federal Minister for Resources, Alan Griffiths, have petrodollars in their eyes.

While attention is focussed on the impact of exploration on the Great Barrier Reef, the oil industry is virtually having an open run elsewhere in the north. The most promising oil fields lie in the Timor Gap—Senator Gareth Evan's coveted 'Zone of Cooperation' with Indonesia, which is due to come into effect in 1991. Australia's closer economic relations with Indonesia mean expanding resource extraction and military ties. With international investment and oil production at stake Indonesia will gain support to silence the increasingly active East Timorese resistance. The Australian Government will also remain silent and cooperating.

Not only is the search for oil proceeding in the Timor Sea off Darwin, but south to the North West Shelf and north through Timor Gap and the Arafura Sea, and also in the Gulf of Papua and on and around Indonesia's other unwilling colony, Irian Jaya (West Papua).

I asked Bob Hawke when he was in Darwin promoting the ALP for the NT election, "Why are you sending frigates to Kuwait, when you're condoning

Indonesia's invasion of East Timor by moving to exploit oil in Timor Gap?" A minder stood on my foot, and Bob said: "I don't want an argument."

With world oil consumption increasing, financial institutions are keen to invest in new oil and gas fields. Northern Australia and Indonesia, PNG and the Pacific are a boon for Australian resource companies. Largely unexplored, they present new untapped riches for Australian companies, with the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs' AUSTRADE, with its new arm called AUSTMINE. The Australian Government is actively exporting the mining know-how of our 'clever' country, and quietly establishing a very lucrative Joint Venture relationship in the region.

### Covert operations

Australia's role in environmental destruction becomes more insidious when one considers the tightening 'triangle' relationship developing between the Governments of Indonesia, PNG and Australia. Brian Toohy uncovered the role of ASIS<sup>1</sup>, ASIO's direct action arm, in training the PNG defence force in counter-insurgency techniques—great for getting rid of unruly traditional owners and West Papuan rebels on the border.

The riches of West Papua are being stolen and Australian companies are at the forefront. The Australian Government, through the Bureau of Mineral Resources and the Australian Army, has undertaken extensive mapping projects in West Papua.

Little information is available about what is going on in West Papua, but the rumours sound bad. In 1990, the Big



Australian, BHP, with Mobil, increased its oil interests on the Bomberai Peninsula. When I broached the issue, an oil rig worker said, "BHP, they're tearing the place apart, they've got an open exploration permit."

TAPOL, the UK based human rights organisation, has documented some of the local reactions to the oil industry<sup>2</sup>. Shell withdrew from its exploration program after a series of attacks from the OPM (Free West Papua Movement) in 1986. Conoco, in partnership with Petramina, the Indonesian state oil company, came in conflict with local people over compensation and food supplies, when drilling near Sorong in 1983. One local employee was killed and a French oilman injured when violence erupted. In 1988, villagers gave up waiting for compensation, and sued for the loss of 931,944 sago trees.

Australia's support for joint military operations by Indonesian and PNG defence forces is increasing the pressure on the OPM. The massive increase in military aid provided to PNG to enable the reopening of the Bougainville copper mine gives an indication of Canberra's willingness to protect resource interests. It is easy to see why the Australian Government would not want to stir up the Indonesians by banning rainforest timber imports.

#### Back to oil

The US currently has a 10 year moratorium on expansion of the oil industry along major sections of the its coast. This was the result of sustained protest across the US over many years. Several loopholes, including a National Security clause, exist. Yet for President Bush, an oil man himself, to be confronting such an issue, suggests that Australians should be making some hard decisions about the expansion of this industry in our region.

Offshore oil exploitation has some significant environmental implications. It starts with seismic pulsing, problematic for fish larvae and eggs, and sensitive life on the sea-bed. An exploratory rig then moves in for the most risky stage. Research published by Greenpeace suggests that 1 in 500 exploratory wells blow out<sup>3</sup>. Some of the biggest off-shore spills in the world have originated from exploratory well blowouts. Although no oil blowouts

have occurred in Australian waters, a number of gas blowouts have. Experience from the Santa Barbara blowout in 1969, which started as gas and then changed into oil, proves we have been lucky.

Drilling into oil or gas under high pressure has always been risky, especially down to 1500 metres, as will be the case in the Timor Gap. The previous largest oil spill in history (before the Gulf War) occurred on 3 June 1979, in tropical waters off Mexico, with light crude, the same as that produced on Australian rigs. This spill from the *Ixtoc 1*, an exploratory drilling platform, released an estimated 475,000 tonnes of oil into the ocean. An estimated 25 per cent of the oil sank, contaminating sea life, in areas which included most of the shrimp and prawn fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. Oil also ended up on the beaches of Texas, more than 1,000 km from the site of the spill<sup>4</sup>.

Even when no accidents occur, there is still acute localised toxicity, which can lead to complete destruction of all marine life in the vicinity of the rig. Drill muds dumped beneath a rig in Santa Barbara Channel, US, killed everything there<sup>5</sup>.

Pollution around oil rigs occurs on an on-going basis from disposal of degreasers, use of antifouling compounds, small oil spillages, leaks and sewage effluent and the water which comes up with the oil. Over the side goes the drilling mud—a caustic, radioactive mix, containing heavy metals. Each time a well is drilled off-shore, an average of 1500 to 2000 tons of such 'drilling muds', which lubricate the drill bit and maintain downhole pressure, and 'cuttings', pieces of rock ground by the bit, are discharged into the ocean<sup>6</sup>.

How large the dead zones become depends on the current and depth of water. Industry people claim that they see lots of fish under the rigs—yet rig workers say no-one is allowed to fish. No environmental monitoring program is being undertaken by the NT or Federal Governments, and no baseline studies have been done for the Timor and Arafura oil fields.

After drilling comes the production stage, with a few patches of ocean already fatally injured. Dredging the bottom and laying down pipes ensures that a good deal more damage is done.

A rhyza system pumps oil and gas into storage and then to transport vessels nearby. Chronic spillages and other pollution means fish the chance to develop a full kerosene flavour.

The ageing infrastructure associated with off-shore oil development is of concern. The loss of the bulk ore carrier, *Alexander P*, off North West Cape in March 1990 proved how treacherous the Northern Seas can be. Yet it is the responsibility of only one person in the NT Department of Mines and Energy to monitor the rigs and transport vessels. In the case of one vessel, such inspections failed to uncover a serious asbestos problem, despite previous union complaints. Major oil spills such as *Exxon Valdez* in 24 March 1989 and *Kharg 5* in January 1990 have proven 'cleaning up' provisions are inadequate. The industry is arguing that Prince William Sound, the site of the *Exxon Valdez* disaster, is clean. An on-site inspection reveals otherwise.

Oil pollution is a chronic problem. In the US, the Coast Guard investigated 265 oil spills from tankers in 1989 alone. If 639 tank barge incidents are included, the average is 17 spills per week<sup>7</sup>. With increased oil industry activity, more spills can be expected.

#### Demand

The industry has to satisfy consumer demand. Is it worth considering if this 'need' is created by market manipulation? But who would manipulate the market? The Minister for Oil in Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest exporter, said at an US oil industry meeting in 1989:

The US can secure its freedom in the use of oil by recognising the necessity of importing it in increasing volume over time, and you can import it most freely from Saudi Arabia ... the interests of both Saudi Arabia and oil independents [that is, oil companies] are best served by co-operation that keeps the oil prices down and alternative energy uneconomical.<sup>8</sup>

It is in the best interests of the oil independents to keep the market flooded and prices relatively low, thus thwarting conversion to an alternative economy. That the Government sent frigates to the Gulf is an indication of how Australia is being made to play along with this crazy agenda.

By going into Timor Gap, Australia is joining with Indonesia, another of the world's major petroleum suppliers, a regime with a demonstrated lack of concern for environment protection and human rights. The Indonesian Government's attitude towards its second biggest export earner, tropical forests, gives some indication of its probable unwillingness to reduce oil production, its largest export industry.

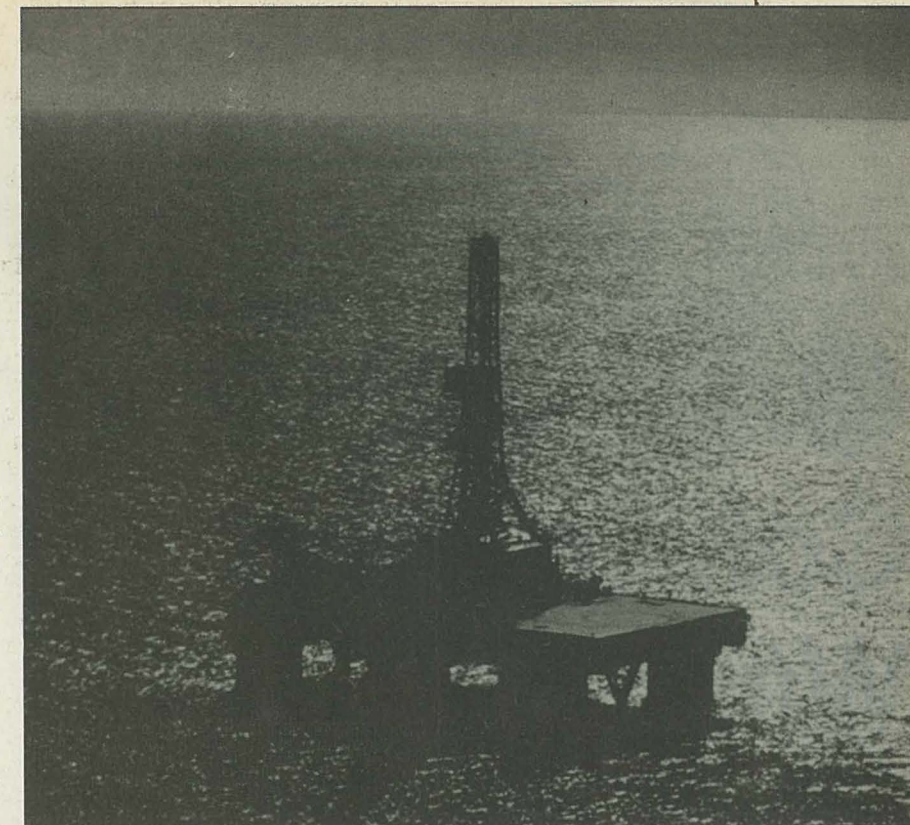
The new path of energy exports which the Australian Government and industry say will guarantee us economic prosperity—commits the world to exacerbating the Greenhouse Effect. With the potential appearance of oil rigs and exploration along the whole of the north of the Arafura Sea, the Gulf of Papua, and throughout the Timor Sea as far south as the North West Shelf, sustainable use of coastal and marine resources is seriously threatened.

The oil industry has all the hallmarks of that other dinosaur, the nuclear industry. It is doing its best to take us with it. Things are beginning to happen in the Top End, but with the pro-development agenda in Canberra and the NT Government re-elected for another four years, it will be a long fight to prevent this greasy story from becoming a requiem for our northern seas.

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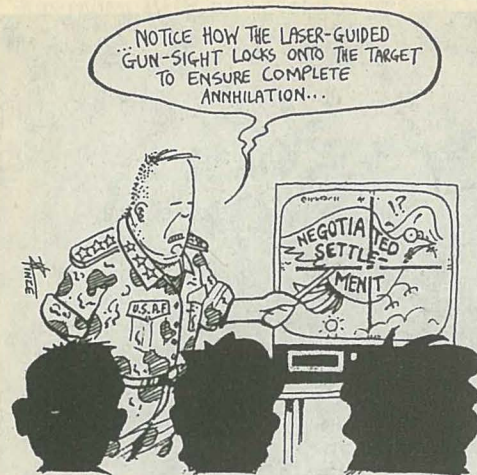
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Sea otters were one of the first casualties of the Exxon Valdez spill. Many died immediately, the survivors may have problems in the future.





# Constructing War

*The media played a major role in the development of public perceptions of the Gulf War, and Maggie Emmett looks at some of the themes the media followed. This speech was presented at a public meeting in Adelaide in February 1991.*

**H**ello to all wimps and the so called mindless few. I suspect we're really the thinking many. I have been asked to speak about the media and the Gulf War.

My interest in the subject began in March 1990 when I was teaching in the Mass Communications course at the University of Adelaide. We were analysing among other things television news and the reporting of war.

Wars have to be constructed politically. They are supported and sustained by ideology. Ideology refers to the codes that define our cultural values; what is seen as naturally right and acceptable. Ideology is like a prism filtering cultural meaning. Ideology and its processes are expressed in discourse. And discourses are realised in texts. The texts I'm going to discuss are the media messages that express the discourse of war.

Wars begin before the bombs are dropped. One of the media's first roles in War is to construct the enemy using powerful images and loaded language. Then the armed forces deconstruct that enemy with their powerful presence and their lethal weapons. When the killing and dying begin the media takes up a continuing role in the war.

Ostensibly they are there to provide information to the folks at home. Information can help us to understand significant events in the real world, clarifying issues, generating knowledge and understanding. Most people would agree with the idea that the more we know and understand events, the more we can actively and intelligently engage in critical questioning and positive decision making.

So, in time of war the Media could theoretically play a vital role for us. But is that what happens? Is that what we've

seen? The trick for us is trying to read the media, examining the texts of image and language; and decoding the messages.

To date the media seems to be presenting the Great Electronic Epic. At the mythic level this epic, like other epics, is heroic. The style of presentation is dramatic, episodic and fragmented. There is a loose chronology. Reports can be live, immediate, or from an ongoing war history. We watch live the overnight CNN, NBC, ITN, BBC coverage as the night before's action occurs in Riyadh. It is then relayed to us via the morning shows from the different time zones in New York and Atlanta and London.

There are digressions where we look at:

- families at home
- postal service to the troops
- personal profiles on the heroes with graphologists and astrologers interpreting character.

There are so called expert opinions from:

- politicians
- retired military men
- diplomats
- church leaders
- even academics.

We trek across the plains and prairies into hospitals, fire stations and kindies asking Americans what they think of the war. These digressions are to entertain us and they are essential for fragmenting the boredom of the war with its same stories night after night. They juxtapose the impersonal military coldness with warm, deeply personal experiences. This is often the place where you will find the women's stories.

## The media's narratives

This Epic has three main narratives.

- focusing on The Enemy
- the Adventure
- the Military

The first narrative I call the Construction of an Enemy. A central motif in this story is the Hate Saddam Campaign. From my research I think this narrative began several years ago, but was more ardently pursued from March last year.

Most articles about Iraq focus on their leader, as the Western Press often does. Our ideological frame demands support for the capitalist mode of production so it naturally focuses on the individual, using psychological models to explain and explore the real world — out there. The movement of such narra-

tives is driven by such things as: the psychological traits of a country's leader, his personal choices and decisions. It never refers to economic or political considerations or to collective decision-making. President Saddam Hussein was cast as dictator, villain and bogeyman from the Middle East, e.g. on the American Broadcasting Company (17 February) Baker was asked about the Glaspie interview with Hussein and its implications in assessing the causes of the invasion. Baker stated "Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait for his own self aggrandisement."

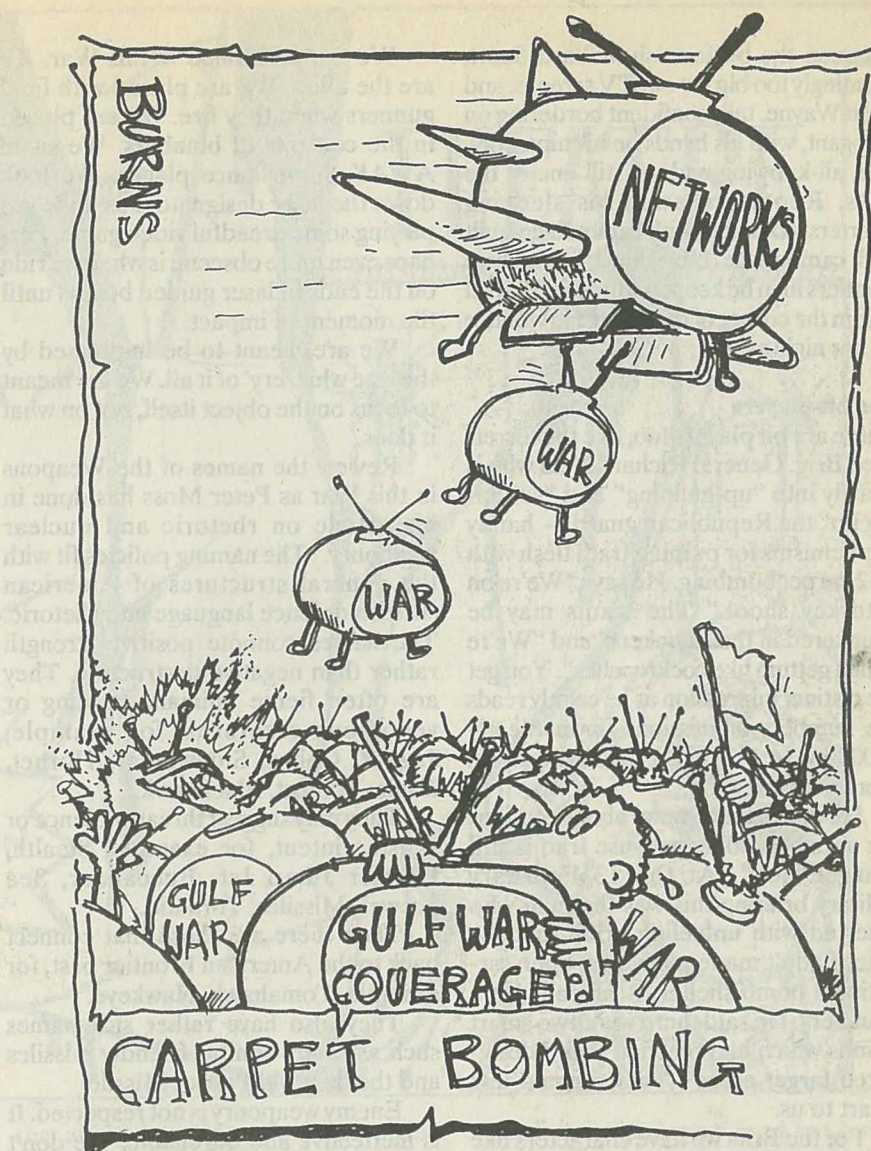
Few articles examine the Ba'ath Party, its policies and achievements in Iraq. This often leads to the media unwittingly providing disinformation to its audience. For example, Hussein has not opportunistically linked the Israeli problem to the peace solution. Since 1947 his party has identified Pan Arab nationalist aims and its desire to see a safe Palestinian homeland.

Few articles review the domestic achievements of Iraq, for example:

- the expenditure on infrastructure
- the building of an industrial base
- the health, welfare and education programs (including free education for every person to Ph.D. level)
- the highly successful literacy programs (in fairness I must add that when they were first introduced people who refused to attend were gaol).

In 1973 Gavin Young from *The Observer* called Saddam Hussein "the friendly strong man of Iraq". They had a four hour chat and Hussein was described as "young, forthright and relaxed". By 1988 a different picture emerges. He begins to be compared to a bevy of "evil dictators": Kim Sung, Nicole Ceausescu and Hitler. He's even been called the "Stalin of the Arab World". Bishop's article (1982) stated: his "generous moustache ... the wide smile that in no way affects his dark eyes ... the avuncular way he kisses babies and bounces children on his knees whenever there are cameras around — all smack of Stalin". We're told he is "an old fashioned despot just wanting to be loved."

Saddam Hussein is a "latecomer to the list of Western bogeymen in the Middle East"; he is the latest in a line stretching from Nasser to Ayatollah Khomeini through to Moammar Qad-



dafi. Now he is the "Butcher of Baghdad", and "The Most Dangerous Man in the World". But he comes to represent the Iraqi people and they are constructed as the enemy, *our* enemy. We have to create the strong, simple polarities of *them* and *us*. This is an essential part of propaganda.

A World War II propaganda manual advises:

- oversimplify issues
- stereotype the enemy
- aim at the lowest common denominator
- over-generalise through "glittering generalities"
- create 'bandwagon' peer pressure and use psychological techniques.

All this is being done today. The enemy is stereotyped and it contains many strands of the main racist, anti-Arab tradition, for example: mad mullahs, fundamentalist crazies, dumb stupid

Arab, deceitful double-dealing Arabs, threatening and inherently violent Arabs etc.

The metaphor from this narrative worth mentioning is the Extended Hitler Metaphor. It has been extremely useful to the Americans who talked for example about Iraqi tanks storming through Kuwait in "blitzkrieg fashion". And Bush sent shivers down the spines of people around the world who remembered World War II when he said, "Appeasement doesn't work." The word 'appeasement' has now been relegated forever to negative usage.

The second narrative is the Adventure story: the Boys Own Ripping Yarns for the Brits, and the Cowboy/Superhero version for the Americans. It's about boys becoming men; the baptism by fire; it's about boys with lethal toys.

Pentagon Central Casting put Schwarzkopf in charge. He's like a cross



between the buffoonish Willard Scott, seemingly too big for our TV screens, and John Wayne, tall, confident bordering on arrogant, with his hands on his hips, cool, glib, all-knowing and yet still one of the boys. Reports showed his sleeping quarters, complete with camouflage quilt and camouflage bible; and like a true frontiersman he keeps a sturdy two barrel rifle in the corner of the room. No wonder he has nightmares.

### The bit players

There are bit players too, like the ferret-eyed Brig. General Richard Neal who is heavily into "up-gunning" and "softening up" the Republican guard — handy euphemisms for pulping Iraqi flesh with B52 carpet bombing. He says "We're on a turkey shoot." The Iraqis may be "hunkered in their bunkers" and "We're gonna gettun like cockroaches". You get the distinct impression as he calmly reads the numbers of missions flown (nearly 70000 by 14 February) that the army is more than just a job.

He has definite views about continuing aerial bombing because Iraq is still "target rich". At the 13 February military briefing this was the man who asserted with unfeeling pride that the allies hadn't made a mistake when targeting a bomb shelter — he called it a "bunker". He said there were two smart bombs which had reached their "designated target areas". They seemed less smart to us.

For the Brits we have characters like Group Captain Niall Irving and Sir Peter de la Bilière who talk about "attractive targets" needing "serious punishment ... to be exerted", in the form of "textbook attacks", making "good hits", and producing "highly satisfying results". Their men are said to be "putting on a jolly good show ... with a sharp cutting edge". They are "applying the grinding wheel to the Iraqis" and as Niall said, allowing a slight smile, "We normally expect a few sparks but we're only getting gigantic explosions". These spectacular explosions are often likened to natural phenomenon like erupting volcanoes making them seem natural and inevitable.

The third narrative is a military one. It consists of two parts: the Advertising of weaponry (like an electronic worldwide expo on arms) and the Domestication and Familiarisation of the military.

We are positioned in this War. We are the allies. We are placed with field gunners when they fire. We are placed in the cockpits of bombers. We sit in AWAK Surveillance planes. We look down the laser designators as if we are playing some dreadful video game. Perhaps even more obscene is when we ride on the ends of laser guided bombs until the moment of impact.

We are meant to be impressed by the 'gee whizzery' of it all. We are meant to focus on the object itself, not on what it does.

Review the names of the Weapons in this War as Peter Moss has done in his article on rhetoric and nuclear weaponry.<sup>1</sup> The naming policies fit with the general structures of American /British defence language and rhetoric. The names connote positive strength rather than negative destruction. They are often fierce animals, hunting or venomous creatures, for example, Jaguar, Cobra, Sidewinder, Hornet, Eagle, Tomcat, Blackhawk.

They may suggest threat, violence or sinister intent, for example, Stealth, Harrier Jump Jet, Buccaneer, Sea Scower, Missiles, Tornado.

Then there are those that connect back to the American Frontier past, for example, Tomahawk, Hawkeye.

They also have rather sick names such as smart bombs, friendly missiles and the dear old Patriot Missile.

Enemy weaponry is not respected. It is ineffective and unreliable. We don't even use their names. The Al-Hussein missile is called the SCUD; a word that has gone forever into our vocabulary, helped along by the homely renaming of the Patriot crews as 'Scudbusters'.

The Riyadh military briefings help us to develop this new vocabulary. We have to learn the familiar catch phrases we hear in the media reports and then we begin to use the language in our daily lives. The language of war gives regimental details, weapon names, biographical details of size, range, calibre etc. They even show us little pictures as the weapon is named. This is a familiarisation process.

We have "surgical strikes" at the rate of over one combat mission per minute. Our missiles and bombs cause collateral damage; theirs cause innocent civilian casualties. We are not in a war, it is "a deployment of forces to end aggression", just as we didn't have

an American blockade but a UN "interdiction".

We lase bridges, kill tanks, take out supply lines, eliminate strategic targets, unload bombs, pound positions, pressure his army or soften up his Republican Guard, we penetrate into territory; we have naval superiority and air supremacy.

The language is impersonal. Verbs are often passive. Nouns are collective and abstract. Its aim is to distance us from the realities of war. The language is there to reassure us we are not killing people, then we can feel safe absolved from responsibility and guilt.

Until quite recently the real situation in Baghdad was rarely seen on our TV sets. In Baghdad there is no water supply; the sewage is no longer isolated; there is no gas, no electricity, no heating fuel, no domestic petrol products, no powdered milk, and diminishing drug and medical supplies. They have air raids every night. They have no jobs to go to in the morning and few bridges to cross from one side of the Tigris to the other. There is no school, no kindy and no university.

Reports from Germany estimate the real casualty count across Iraq may be as high as a quarter of a million people. People do die in war inside those buildings — crushed and maimed. People do die in those tanks — incinerated and charred to dust. Let's not call them KIAs or MIAs — they are dead people. Allies are going to send the boys home in HRPs, that is Human Remains Pouches. Corpses aren't coming home in body bags this time. No doubt there will be a special desert death euphemism to match the "he bought a rice paddy" one from Vietnam. Perhaps you can imagine one ...

### Images of the war

One of the military cast of thousands recently said: "Photography may not win a battle but it can sure win a war."

And there can be little doubt in the late twentieth century that the texts people read most often are the pictorial photographic ones. Ours is a visual age. Images are powerful. In the Vietnam War they certainly helped to change minds and end the war. A man was shot through the temple right in front of the camera, our eye. A little girl ran down a road crying in pain, terrified and hideously burned with napalm. Only the



most cruel and heartless could fail to be moved.

There are many powerful images of this war which already seem unforgettable: that eerie green lit film of Baghdad, the anti-aircraft tracers lighting up the night sky; the sudden white flashes of exploding bombs and the distant orange glow of fires on the horizon.

This was called the liberation of Kuwait. Bombing pilots seemed delighted comparing it to fourth of July fireworks. A man in the Al Rasheed said gleefully, "This is fantastic."

Then there was the angry Iraqi woman clambering over the rubble of her home, coming towards us through the camera. Declaring: "We are human beings. Who is responsible for this? The West. The West is doing this to us. The West is doing this for oil."

There was the image of frontline American Marines staring out into the bleak blackness of the desert night with

the allied bombing providing distant and occasional illumination. Fear and thoughts of death are in their eyes, and one mutters, "We're not supermen."

Then there are those special images we can only see in our mind because the media was not there to record the actual event. These are sometimes the most powerful of all.

On the first Sunday of the war I heard this story on two afternoon radio bulletins. I knew there would be no pictures from the West Bank Occupied Territories because of the Israeli curfew and media blackout, but I still held out hope that the ABC would tell us more in their evening news. But the story was dropped, classified, I was informed, as "un-newsworthy".

It was a simple story.

A Palestinian woman took her child onto a first floor balcony overlooking the street. She wanted to breast feed her child peacefully in the fresh air. The

Israeli security forces fired ten bullets into her face and chest. She was killed, dead. She was apparently breaking the curfew.

The first report never told us her name or told us what happened to her suckling infant. She had become one of the over a thousand Palestinians who have died over the past few years. I can now tell what I found out about her. She was called Lubna Aziz Al-Kadash and she was 24 years old.

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# Uranium — the heat goes on

*Ignore it and it will go away. Some people in the Australian Labor Party and Government undoubtedly wish this could happen with the uranium issue. However it has remained a thorn in the ALP's side that is once again drawing blood. Maggie Hine reports on the build up to the ALP National Conference debate.*

**C**urrent ALP uranium policy allows three named mines to operate: Roxby Downs in South Australia, and Ranger and Nabarlek in the Northern Territory. This policy was established at the 1984 ALP National Conference, and in its wake a number of other uranium deposits under development but not cited in the policy were put on hold. The door had been firmly shut in their face, or so it seemed.

The Uranium Policy Review Committee of the ALP recently came out in favour of a vote to change the present policy and allow unlimited uranium mining. The three Left wing members of the Committee publicly declared their opposition to the Report's recommendations, and subsequently published a minority dissenting report.

To put this situation in context it is necessary to look back down the ALP uranium policy trail, one littered with controversy.

## Let there be a committee

At the 1988 ALP National Conference there were calls for the existing 'Three Mines Policy' to be altered. Rather than take on the issue at the conference, a resolution was passed for a "...thorough review of all aspects of the uranium policy ... conducted in such a way as to ensure the party at large is fully involved. Conference accordingly instructs the National Executive at the conclusion of this conference to establish an appropriate process to review the current policy ... conference further resolves that no change in the current policy be approved except by a decision of the National Conference".<sup>1</sup>

The Uranium Policy Review Committee (UPRC) was established, and so began the national roving tour of submission taking from the Party, Government, industry and public. In its terms of reference the Committee was instructed to report its findings and recommendations to the National Ex-

ecutive, only after it had circulated the report within the Party for "comment and consideration".<sup>2</sup>

While this process of policy review could be seen as a valid effort to involve both the public and the party membership in the formulation of the Party platform, it was also a delaying mechanism. At the 1988 conference perceived Party and Government cohesion was vital. Experience had taught the ALP that the uranium issue was one of its most divisive policy areas. The previous change of policy from a 'phase out' platform to one of allowing three mines to operate, had caused a great rift between the anti-uranium Left and the pro-uranium Right of the Party. With the inevitability of a Federal election between the 1988 Conference and the next conference (due in 1990, but delayed until June 1991), the ALP could not afford to make any changes to the existing policy which would exacerbate these divisions. Nor could it afford to alienate the environmental movement and the Green vote, which it was openly courting. So, the platform was opened to criticism, with the need for a decision deferred.

Two years later, we have a re-elected ALP Government with endorsement of its campaign platform from some major environment groups, and a report advocating an expansion of uranium mining.

It was announced by ALP National Secretary, Bob Hogg, that the report was to be deliberated at the National Executive meeting in May 1991. The Executive's recommendations will then



be delivered at the June National Conference where delegates will consider them, along with the Report's recommendations.

Some senior ALP members are now suggesting that, given the divisive nature of this issue, along with other damaging issues facing the ALP in both State and Federal Government, it would be advisable to again avoid a Conference vote — reinforcing the fact that the existing compromise policy is nothing more than a political expedient, created at a time when the ALP was on the verge of achieving Government at both State and Federal levels.

## Contradictory policy

In the 1983 Federal Election, Labor was elected with a platform to phase out the uranium industry. This policy had been endorsed at the 1982 National Conference, although in a contradictory vein the same policy allowed the proposed Roxby Downs mine in South Australia. At the 1982 Conference South Australian Labor Leader and subsequent ALP National President, John Bannon, argued that the SA Labor Party had to support the Roxby Downs project if it was to win the forthcoming State election. Roxby had been sold to the public as an economic bonanza that was to save an ailing economy. So the Federal ALP changed its policy. Labor won, without Roxby Downs being a major campaign issue, and the Federal ALP was subsequently elected to national Government on a platform

endorsing the uranium industry.

Some called these changes a sell-out of Labor Party principles, others a compromise resulting from of a political party recognising the constraints and responsibilities of being in Government. However it is indisputable that majority rank and file Party opinion is opposed to an expansion.

Furthermore, the Party is still suffering from the conflict of the privatisation debate, and is being thrown into turmoil over proposed changes in Party voting powers which would lessen the voting power of the union affiliates, the traditional Labor Party membership base.

There is no sure method of making the 100 delegates to the National Conference vote in accordance with the groundswell of opinion which opposes an expansion. Delegates can ignore the wishes of their State and Territory party members and union affiliates. If the Federal ALP Caucus exerts pressure on State delegates to vote in a particular manner then they are virtually compelled to vote that way. This is known as 'locking in votes' from the top down, and is another issue resulting in dissatisfaction and threats of disaffiliation. There are signs, however, that with regard to uranium State factions are exerting their limited power. In defiance of the Federal Right's pro-expansion stand the Queensland Right wing has stated it will vote against an expansion — in line with the State Branch's opposition to uranium mining.

An illustration of the problem of

delegates ignoring rank and file opinion is the recent public statements made by Brian Ede, ALP Leader of the Opposition in the Northern Territory. Ede is one of two delegates from the NT to the National Conference. He recently stated that the Three Mines Policy was "an absolute and categorical disaster" and that he would be voting at the Conference for an expansion.<sup>3</sup> This is despite the NT ALP Administrative Committee reaffirming that the NT Branch of the ALP is opposed to an expansion. Ede's comments were made in response to the Draft Report on the Kakadu Conservation Zone by the Resource Assessment Commission. The report was undertaken to determine the potential impacts of the proposed Coronation Hill mine on Kakadu Park. The Draft Report gave support to the mine proceeding, only if a dispute with the Aboriginal traditional owners could be resolved. Bob Collins, a member of the UPRC and Federal Minister Assisting on Northern Australian Affairs, supported Ede's calls for an expansion. Collins' rationale was that if the Aboriginal issue became the determining factor against mining in Kakadu, then uranium mining should be allowed to go ahead at Jabiluka and Koongarra. Both mines were put on hold when the Three Mines Policy became effective. The leaseholds for both Jabiluka and Koongarra fall within the boundaries of Kakadu, but are 'excised' from the Park because they were established before the Park was declared.



The fight over Coronation Hill is being seen as a test case — its outcome will determine what stands are taken on other mining proposals within Kakadu.

The pro-uranium lobby, particularly the mining industry, has been putting a lot of pressure on the ALP to change its policy to allow for an expansion. In addition, both the industry and senior ALP MPs are questioning what is meant by a 'Three Mines policy'. If recent statements and corporate moves made by the uranium industry are anything to go by, then the existing policy could be interpreted to allow mines other than Roxby Downs, Ranger and Nabarlek to operate.

It has been suggested that the existing policy is not a three named mines policy but one that allows any three mines to operate. Given that the Nabarlek mine has mined out orebody one, it's being argued that another mine could be brought on line to replace it.

This proposition, apart from ignoring the fact that the policy categorically names the mines allowed to operate, has been put to boot by the recent announcement that Nabarlek is not to close. The company Pioneer International has backed away from selling off its subsidiary, Queensland Mines, who operate Nabarlek. Instead Pioneer is "concluding an arm-in-arm agreement with a major uranium producer"<sup>4</sup> who would fund the development of orebody two at Nabarlek. The producer is the French company Cogema, which also holds shares in both ERA and Pancontinental. Whether orebody two is deemed to be part of the original mine and falls within the definition of the existing policy is disputable.

A further attempt at circumventing the Three Mines Policy is the apparent moves to merge the operations at Ranger with the proposed Jabiluka mine. Energy Resources Of Australia (ERA) operates Ranger. ERA's major owner, North Broken Hill-Peko Ltd (NBH), has recently increased its equity stake in Pancontinental, the company which owns Jabiluka. It is apparent that NBH is keen to "buy a seat at the table"<sup>5</sup> on Pancontinental's management board, so increasing its negotiating position in the event of Jabiluka being allowed to proceed. NBH has put a proposal to Pancontinental that ore from Jabiluka be transported by conveyor belt 15km to the existing Ranger

mill for processing. The theory is that if the ore is processed at Ranger, the policy will not be breached.

Paul Keating, the Federal Treasurer, has said the policy could be interpreted to allow more than three mine sites, his rationale being that the determining factor is not the numerical limit on the number of mines operating but a ceiling productivity limit.

#### Economic rationalisation

The Industry Commission is the Government's principal adviser on economic reform. In its Draft Report *Mining and minerals processing in Australia*, released in September 1990, the Commission concluded that the uranium industry is "grossly overregulated...government intervention should be limited to ensuring adequate safeguards are in place...in particular the development of uranium mines in Australia should be a matter for commercial decisions"<sup>6</sup>. Coincidentally or not, just prior to the public release of this report, Bob Hogg, the National Secretary of the ALP, stated that the three mines policy was illogical and in need of reform. Almost immediately afterwards comments made by Ros Kelly, the Federal Minister for the Environment, regarding uranium mining in Kakadu were interpreted "to indicate that she accepts the strong push within the Labor Government to liberalise the Party's contentious Three Mines Policy and allow new mines to open"<sup>7</sup>. Such comments brought condemnation from the ALP Left. In an effort to head off an internal fracas, Federal Ministers, including Hawke, Keating, and Kerin reasserted that consideration of this issue was not a matter of great urgency, given the depressed state of the world uranium market. The question must be asked, should economic factors alone determine the timing and outcome of this debate?

One event that was a direct result of this economic rationalism was the Western Australian Government's 'Resolution of Conflict' policy decision made in November 1990. The decision allowed the opening up of National Parks to mining. The WA policy paves the way for mining to be allowed in three National Parks that encompass half of all the landed area with National Park status in WA. This decision has added relevance to the uranium debate.

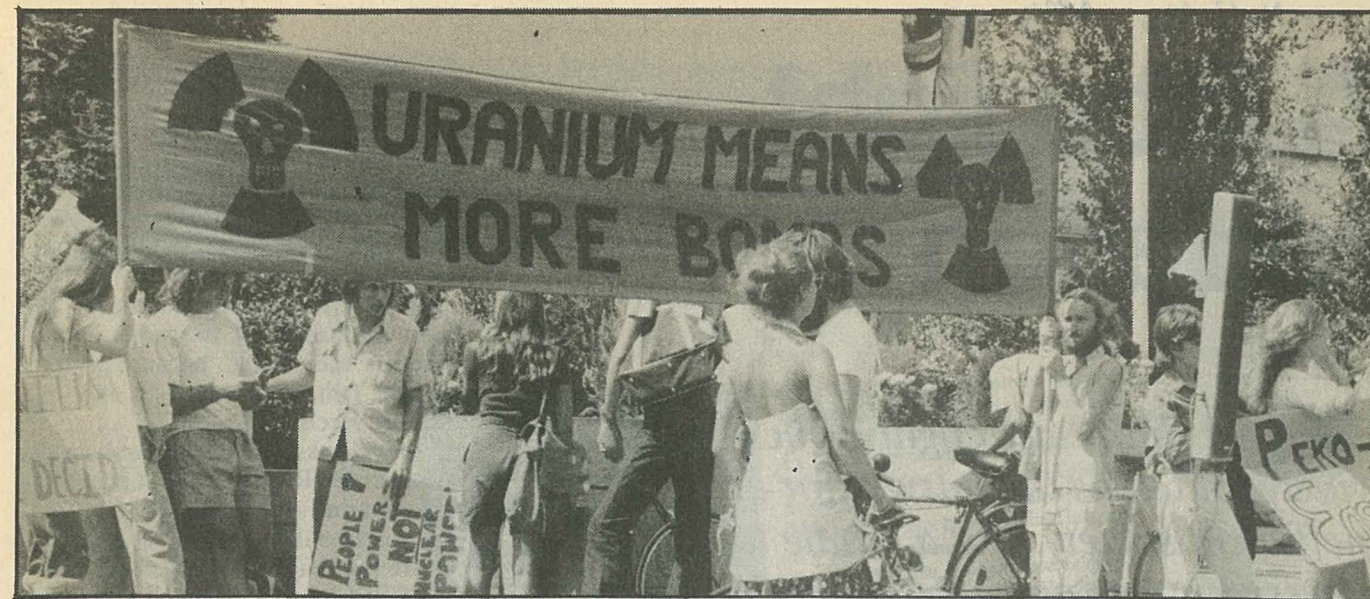
Although the WA Labor Government has reaffirmed that it is opposed to uranium mining, by allowing mining in the National Park called Rudall River, it has effectively removed one of the hurdles blocking the development of the CRA owned Kintyre uranium deposit which is in the Park.

The WA policy embodies the so called compromise between the environment and economy. The Government caved in to pressure from the mining industry, and this should be a warning of what could happen federally. How this industrial lobbying manifests itself is shown all too clearly in the Federal Government's March 1990 Industry Statement. This statement has assured the timber industry of 'resource security' which effectively means that the economic needs of the industry are given priority over its environmental impacts. This decision not only undermines the whole ESD (ecologically sustainable development) process, but is a clear indication of the Labor Government's growing disassociation from the environmental movement.

At an April meeting with environment groups, John Kerin, Federal Minister for Primary Industry and Energy, described the resource security decision as the "psychological prop" the timber industry needed. The concern is that, given the Federal Government's reassessment of the expediency of courting the environment movement and the green vote, a similar concession will be made to the uranium industry's demands.

This is borne out by the recent turnaround that Kerin has made on this issue. In his first submission to the UPRC, he opposed an expansion of the industry, as it was not economically viable given the oversupply of uranium on the world market. He reasserted this line of argument throughout 1990.

However in January 1991 Kerin made a second submission to the UPRC, recommending an expansion. An accompanying letter was leaked to the media and the debate took on new momentum. The Left of the Party came out declaring its solidarity in 'going to the wire' opposing an expansion, while the Right maintained its push for an expansion. Where does this leave the Centre Left? This faction will hold the balance of power if there is a vote at the



August 1986 Rally outside ALP offices against the decision to sell uranium to France. The rally ended with a symbolic 'walking away from the ALP'.

National Conference. After the UPRC recommendations were made public, the Convener of the Centre Left, John Beahan MP, stated that it was likely that the faction would oppose an expansion. It would seem that some members are reluctant to allow debate of the uranium issue, controversial as it is, to dominate the National Conference.

The oversupply of uranium on the world market vindicates the argument that an expansion now is not economically viable. The Uranium Institute, a forum of uranium suppliers and buyers, stated in September 1990 that the world uranium market could expect low demand and poor prices for at least the rest of the decade, due to accumulation of stockpiles as the nuclear power industry failed to grow as expected, and the recent influx of Eastern European uranium onto the open market. Any additional supply, as would result from an expansion of the Australian industry, would exert a strong downward pressure on uranium prices, depressing the market even further.

Despite this the uranium industry maintains its lobbying for an expansion on the premise that a window of opportunity will once again be missed if expansion is not allowed. It is being argued that Australia, with 30 per cent of the world's recoverable reserves of uranium, but only 10 per cent of the market share, should capitalise on an expected improvement in demand in the late 1990s and expand its industry. Such an argument fails to take into account that to hold a certain amount of

the world share of any commodity and then release onto the market is no guarantee of an increased share of that market. Already, politicians in South Australia are voicing concerns that new mines will pose a threat to the economic performance of Roxby Downs, which even now is only able to sell 60 per cent of the uranium it produces.

While the Roxby Downs, Nabarlek and Ranger uranium mines enjoy the luxury of the three mines policy, Jabiluka, Koongarra and Kintyre, amongst others, are excluded from the party. In an interesting gathering of forces, the operators of the latter three mines, Pancontinental, Denison Mines and CRA Pty Ltd have produced a joint lobbying document. The document was distributed to all National Conference delegates and Federal Ministers in February 1991. As would be expected the document called for an expansion of the industry. The encouraging thing is that this 'coalition' indicates that the uranium industry is in desperation throwing all its eggs in one basket in a last ditch attempt to sway opinion to support an expansion.

#### Bottom lines

As the National Conference draws near, debate on the uranium issue will intensify. Such a prospect is obviously too much for some within the party, hence the call for this issue not to be on the National Conference agenda and Bob Hawke's gagging of Cabinet Ministers who have spoken out against expansion.

The bottom line of this debate, if it

goes to conference, is that what happens comes down to the numbers each faction controls on the conference floor. How the delegates choose to vote is not always a result of personal conviction or representation of broad Party opinion. Unfortunately it is mostly a product of wheeling and dealing between Party factions. With the Right supporting an expansion of the industry, and the Left supporting a phase-out, the controlling Centre Left faction holds the balance of power. What deals are made remains to be seen.

What is certain is that a battle weary Federal Government, must be grimacing at the prospect of what is in store on the uranium front.

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# A little light radiation

*Compact fluorescent light globes have been widely touted as the answer for an energy inefficient society. But a cradle to grave assessment by James Prest and Margaret Dingle reveals some problems.*

Environment groups have been actively promoting compact fluorescent lamps as a way of staying off the greenhouse effect. They provide the same amount of light, using 5 to 6 times less electricity and last many times longer than a regular incandescent light globe. Yet

there may be a few glitches along this path to a lower energy society.

According to reports published in both the international anti-nuclear newsletter *Wise News Communiqué* and the journal of the breakaway Friends of the Earth group, Earth Island Institute, some brands of compact fluorescent lamps contain radioactive elements.

Contained in the 'glow switch' in the base, ballast, or socket, they are placed in the lamps by the manufacturers to aid ignition. The discovery was made by the group 'Nuclear Free America' in its

quest to find alternatives to globes made by companies with nuclear weapons contracts, such as Philips, General Electric, and Sylvania.

The radioactive isotopes used are krypton-85, a gas which emits both beta particles and gamma radiation; promethium-147, and tritium, both beta emitters. Krypton-85 is a fission product which escapes from nuclear reprocessing plants). Promethium-147 is a rare-earth metal. Tritium is produced in nuclear reactors.

Beta particles are unlikely to be able to penetrate the casing of an intact lamp. Therefore, they are not likely to immediately affect people. However, when the lamp is dumped, crushed and then probably burned, the radioactivity is released into the environment, inevitably to be ingested.

The amount of radioactivity involved is very small, measured in nanocuries (nCi) - billionths of a Curie ( $10^{-9}$  Ci). The light with the highest radioactive content contained 500 nCi.

The disposal of radioactive substances is covered by State legislation such as the South Australian Radiation Protection and Control Act (1982). The enforcement of such laws is the responsibility of the relevant state authorities, such as the SA Health Commission's Radiation Protection and Control Branch.

Such authorities refer to the standards set by bodies such as the National

Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC). These standards forbid the sale of consumer products classified as 'radioactive', where material with a 'specific activity' exceeding 35 becquerels of radioactivity per gram, and a 'total activity' exceeding 500 Kilobecquerels is present.

Under this regime, not even the most radioactive of the lights is classified as 'radioactive', because its 'total activity' (when converted) is only 18.5 Kilobecquerels.

Yet checks with officials of both the Australian Radiation Laboratories (Melbourne) and the SA Health Commission revealed that neither body was aware (until now) of the level of radiation contained in the globes, and no tests had ever been made.

But scientists generally accept that no level of ionising radiation is perfectly safe and even natural background radiation is not benign. In Kerala, India, where natural background radiation is high, there is a high incidence of Down's syndrome, compared with adjoining areas with lower background radiation. Between 1 and 2 per cent of cancers in the UK are caused by natural background radiation.

What sort of reaction should be demanded from government agencies given a conservative scenario which depicts within the next five years the disposal of 5 million units per annum in the dumps near all capital cities? No legislation exists in any state to limit the total burden of radioactivity in the environment — yet precedent for this type of legislative control has been set to control the greenhouse effect.

*Chain Reaction* contacted the Australian representatives of several manufacturers of compact fluorescent lamp and asked them if their lamps on sale in Australia contained radioactive

## Radioactive Materials in Philips Compact Fluorescent Lamps

- PLC Cluster lamps /10mm ('quad tubes') 10, 13, 18, 26W — less than 500nCi tritium
- PL Lamps ('twin tube') 5, 7, 9, 13W — less than 30 nCi krypton 85
- PLC Cluster Lamps /15mm ('quad tubes'), 16, 22, 28W — less than 330 nCi promethium 147.
- SL lamp with Integrated magnetic Ballast 18W — less than 110nCi tritium

Source: Nuclear Awareness News (Canada), Winter 1989/90, Box 23331, Oshawa, Ontario, L1H 7V4.

additives. At the time of going to press, no reply had been received from Philips Australia. GEC-Osram, exonerated in the *Wise* article, gave verbal assurances that they did not sell radioactive lights and promised to confirm this. Wotan Australia also said they did not sell radioactive lights. Tungsum Australia failed to provide the documentation to prove their claim that their product did not have any radioactive components.

Checks with the ACF's National Merchandising Manager and the Electricity Trust of SA's 'Electricity Centre' which are both actively promoting the compact fluros revealed that neither currently supply any specific in-

formation to customers on the disposal of compact fluros sold for domestic use.

However, consumers are not forced to choose between radioactive light bulbs and less energy efficient lighting. Some brands of compact fluorescent light have an electronic ballast instead of a radioactive one.

US anti-nuke groups have taken a different tack, by promoting 'Ecolights', incandescent lamps 10 percent more efficient than the regular. Clearly this is hardly as efficient as the compact fluros. However, other unsolved questions remain. What are the relative energy costs of the manufacturing processes of each globe?

Another crucial issue is the mercury content of all flurocescent globes. The relevant body in South Australia is the Waste Management Commission. Yet it admitted to *Chain Reaction* that it has no policy on this issue. It has mumbled about places where one can go to have mercury revaporised for reuse, yet has failed to advertise this. It has also failed to push for improved product labelling. The situation is similar in each state.

One thing is certain. Whether radioactive or not, fluorescent tubes should not be discarded into the general waste stream.

### Sources:

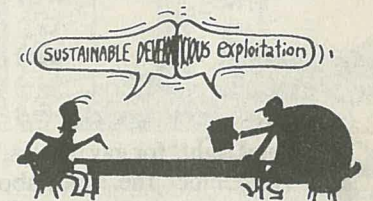
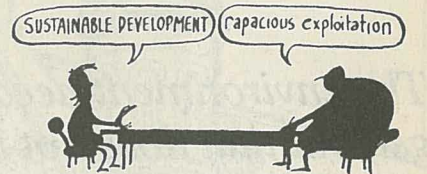
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*James Prest and Margaret Dingle burn the midnight oil at Chain Reaction.*



One certainty about compact fluorescent lights is that they should not be discarded into the general waste stream.

GREAT NEGOTIATIONS OF OUR TIME: GREENS VS CAPITAL!



## What type of radioactivity?:

- Krypton-85: gas, emits beta particles, 0.14 per cent probable gamma ray emitter half-life 10.75 years
- Promethium-147: beta emitter, half-life 2.62 years.
- Tritium, beta emitter, half-life 12.3 years.

## Converting units of radiation:

One Curie (Ci) undergoes 37 billion disintegrations per second. This is the amount of radioactivity present in one gram of radium-226 and is 37,000,000,000 Becquerels.

One Becquerel is 0.37 of a nano Curie (nCi).



# Green, Gay and ... Christian?

*The environment needs all the friends it can get, but that does not include the official Christian churches according to Andrew Dutney, he draws the link between their attitude to homosexuality and inability to go 'green'.*

"Land rights for gay whales." I remember the time, about ten years ago, that I first heard the joke. The office Young Liberal had seen it on a t-shirt at a party meeting. We laughed about it. The girls in the morning tea room didn't get it. And after a while, neither did I. In those days there wasn't anything funny about being black, or gay, or green in Queensland.

The Premier's tactic had been to lump together those who protested for land rights, or gay pride, or conservation, as a single group determined to undermine the morality and living standards of decent Queenslanders. And it was true that many of the same faces could be seen at demonstrations over different issues. It was true too that many of those people were struggling to expose conventional morality as a facade for corruption and injustice, and to explore simpler alternatives to standards of living oriented towards high consumption.

But the elements of truth in the Premier's accusations didn't add up to the invalidation of the protesters' arguments. The issues were linked, but not in the self-contradictory way intended by the Premier and accepted by the joke.

These days the links between land rights and environmentalism are being

explored quite deliberately (for example, *Chain Reaction* 58, 61 and 62). But what about homosexuality and the environment? It's a subject that's hardly mentioned, even though the significant homosexual presence in some environmental groups would suggest that there's a connection to be made.

It seems to me that making that connection depends first on recognising the relationship between patriarchy and environmental degradation. Studies in this area are almost too numerous to mention, but key contributions (in English) would include those of Susan Griffin, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Mary Daly, Caroline Merchant, Ariel Salleh and other writers identified as ecofeminist.<sup>1</sup>

In a variety of ways and with differing emphases, these and other scholars have answered in the affirmative Sherry Ortner's question: "Is female to male as nature is to culture?"<sup>2</sup> It really is a case of man against nature. It is not for nothing that we talk of wilderness as 'virgin' (and assume the adjective to be feminine) and of the degradation of the environment as its 'rape'. Environmental responsibility will not amount to much until it includes taking responsibility for the dismantling of patriarchy.

Once patriarchy is recognised as fundamental to the ecological crisis, the

question of the place of homosexuality in patriarchal culture can be asked.

In her recent study of masculinities, Lynne Segal called the chapter on homosexuality 'Traitors to the Cause'.<sup>3</sup> The 'cause', of course, is the preservation of men's power over women. Homophobia, she argues, "not only keeps all men in line while oppressing gay men; in its contempt for the 'feminine' in men it simultaneously expresses contempt for women." (p. 158)

"Today", she says, "it is clearer than ever that combating women's inequality, combating misogyny, and combating homophobia, are all part of the same struggle against the oppressive gender definitions sustaining an oppressive gender system." (p. 165)

From the perspective of patriarchy, gay men are traitors. Lesbians, on the other hand, are the resistance. As Adrienne Rich argued in a now classic essay, "lesbian existence" and the range of woman-identified experience which forms a "lesbian continuum" constitutes a rebellion against the "compulsory heterosexuality" by which patriarchy maintains itself.<sup>4</sup> The discriminatory treatment of homosexual people is the way patriarchy deals with its traitors and puts down the rebellion. It cannot be patriarchy without it.

So the connection appears to lie along these lines: environmental responsibility requires the dismantling of patriarchy. Discrimination against lesbians and gay men is integral to the reinforcement of patriarchy. Environmental responsibility and discrimination against homosexual people work in opposite directions.

Having sketched the outline of a relationship between homosexuality and environmentalism, I would like to describe its relevance for a matter of some importance to myself: the relationship between environmental groups and Christian churches.

For most of 1990 the Uniting Church in South Australia was involved in a debate over whether one of its leading youth workers should be allowed to retain his positions of responsibility in the church. It had become public knowledge that he was gay, and that he was not interested in being "healed" of his homosexual "condition". (Religious organisations are exempt from the provisions of the Equal Opportunity Act.)

The matter came before the annual

meeting of the Synod. After many hours of argument it was clear that while a majority would have homosexual people excluded from leadership in the church, it was not large enough to carry the day a 70 per cent was required for a resolution on this debate.

Eventually it was resolved that the Synod would encourage the church's appointing bodies "to seek the leading of God in each circumstance as it arises." That is, in respect of homosexual people offering for positions of leadership, local churches are free to be as discriminatory or as non-discriminatory as they like. Given the evidence of the debate in the Synod, most would like to be thoroughly discriminatory; and will make sure they are! A few will continue to follow a policy of non-discrimination.

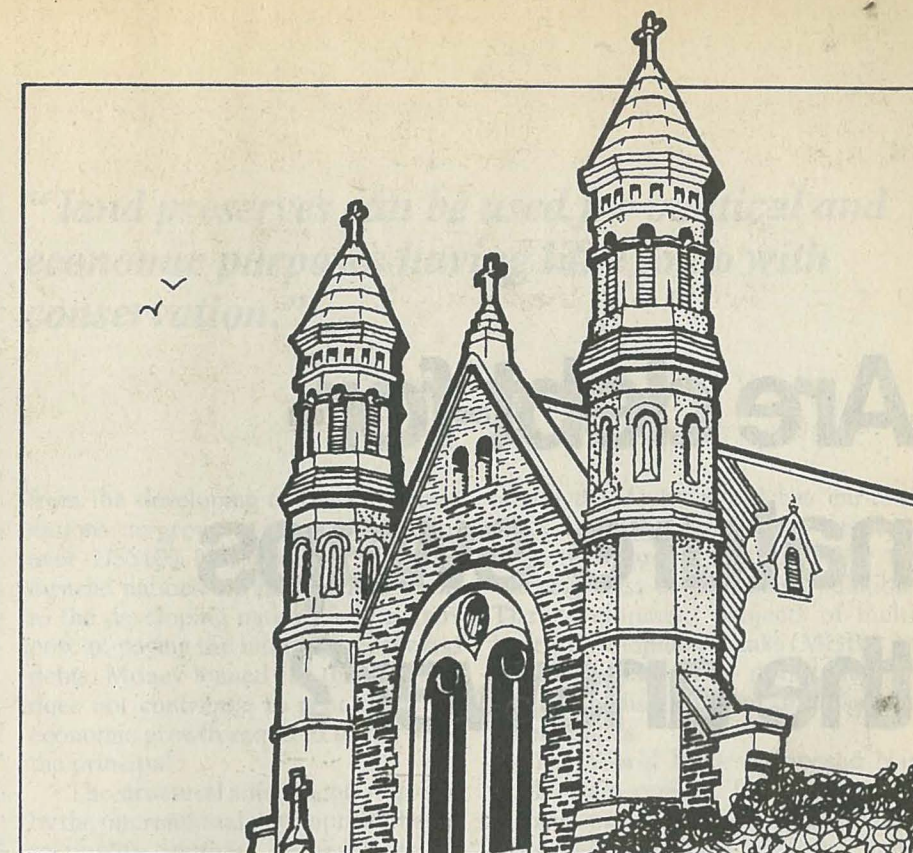
The previous meeting of the Synod, in 1989, had included a debate on the church's environmental responsibility. That debate was far more amicable, and a lengthy resolution was passed which included a number of practical undertakings. As far as I can tell, that resolution had virtually no effect at all except perhaps that members of the 1990 Synod were encouraged to bring their own coffee mugs, to minimise the use of the disposable cups which were still provided.

In the light of the 1990 debate on homosexuality, it should not have surprised me that the 1989 resolutions on environmental responsibility have yet to be put into practice. For as long as the Christian churches remain so divided on homosexuality, with a majority remaining militantly heterosexual, their appearance of support for environmental responsibility cannot be trusted.

There are increasing numbers of Christians becoming involved in environmental groups. Most of them would be in the non-discriminatory minority in their churches, and should be welcomed both for the contribution they can make to the groups and also for the challenge which they will pose to official Christianity.

But many churches are now following their members, and seeking formal working relationships with environmental groups. It is this latter kind of relationship which should be treated with some suspicion.

At some point it has to be said that,



by and large, the churches do not come up to the mark ethically according to the standards of environmentalists.

Take, for example, the fundamental values of green politics as identified by Spretnak and Capra.<sup>5</sup> The churches have a very mixed record in respect of Ecology, Social Responsibility, Grassroots Democracy, Nonviolence and Decentralisation. In some areas the churches' performances have improved a little, but there is still a long way to go. Even the churches' record on Spirituality is ambiguous. Jung's description of religion as a means of avoiding religious experience rings true for so many because of their encounters with Christian churches. And in the matter of Postpatriarchal Perspectives it is not even clear that the churches could survive such a change in perspective. In general, they have yet to show themselves to be anything other than thoroughly patriarchal. According to these seven fundamental values, then, the churches seem to be basically immoral!

The attitude to homosexuality is something of a litmus test, measuring the extent to which churches are trustworthy allies of environmental groups. According to present indications, we can't expect much of churches officially.

The one hopeful sign is the size of the dissenting minority which became evident at the Uniting Church Synod. It surprised itself. It alarmed the majority. Watch this space.

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# Are debt-for-nature swaps the answer?

*The huge debts of developing countries are undoubtedly the cause of much environmental damage. Brad Erickson asks if this 'solution' represents environmental colonialism.*



**T**he developing nations now owe well over a trillion US dollars to private lenders, governments and international banking institutions. The debt increases pressure on the South to exploit its resources as quickly as possible to pay back principal, interest, and interest-on-interest, resulting in severe social and ecological costs.

So, out of a commendable intent to 'save the rainforests', many Western commentators are suggesting we help by buying debt in so-called 'debt for nature' swaps.

The most common model is when a Northern environmental organization purchases debt at a substantial discount from a private bank. It then converts the debt into local currency to be administered by an in-country conservation organization.

The idea seems to be a 'win-win' proposition. However, the world's first debt-for-nature swap, arranged between the US environment group Conservation International and the Bolivian government, is not working out very well. The Moxino Indians of Bolivia are complaining that thousands of trees in the buffer zones of the park are being felled, threatening their ability to survive. The Bolivian government has granted timber concessions in the area to seven companies. One Bolivian timber company spokesperson said that there is no reason to replant trees unless "the industrialized countries guarantee that in 40-50 years they will buy our wood."

## Economic Adjustment

When Southern nations are unable to meet their debt payments, changes in their national economic plans are dictated by international banks, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). These changes are called structural adjustments, and there are two main components.

- The debtor nation is forced to cut imports and reduce spending. More often than not, the first areas to be cut are the environmental, health and social programs.
- 'Structural adjustment' requires that debtor nations increase exports through intensifying labor and resource exploitation. Both components serve to increase the dichotomy between rich and poor by focusing the economy on

production of non-essential export products for consumption in the industrial nations.

The lender—willing to lessen the debt burden, relieve economic and environmental pressure, and protect wilderness—seems to provide an ideal solution with a debt-for-nature proposal. However, this formula is based on assumptions that may vary enormously from nation to nation and may fail to take into account conditions critical to financial and ecological decisions.

## Assumptions

Before accepting or discarding debt-for-nature swaps, environmentalists should examine some assumptions and the conditions governing the success or failure of plans to trade debt for conservation:

**Assumption #1: The original debt, rate of interest, and the terms of repayment are legitimate and fair.**

The post-invasion history of Central America illuminates how the modern debt grew out of colonialism. For three centuries, Central America's trade, resources and labor were controlled by Spain and Britain. In 1870, US banks began the practice of offering to pay a Central American nation's entire European debt in a lump payment. The condition was that the nation would agree to police itself under a customs receivership in which the US would control the nation's foreign trade and many aspects of its domestic economy. This economic relationship replaced political colonization with an equally effective method for controlling the trade, resources and labor of another country. Nicaragua was under a US customs receivership until 1949.

Since 1982, the net flow of money

## What are debt for nature swaps?

A Debt-for-Nature transaction is one in which a lender nation forgives part of a debtor nation's debt in exchange for the debtor's agreement to protect part of its remaining wilderness, such as tropical forest lands.

**"land preserves can be used for political and economic purposes having little to do with conservation."**

from the developing to the developed nations has grown to its current level of over US\$100 billion a year. The industrial nations are now making loans to the developing nations for the purpose of paying the interest on previous debts. Money loaned for this purpose does not contribute to generating the economic growth required to pay back the principal.

The structural adjustments required by the international development banks to qualify Southern governments for new aid are based on the assumption that when these adjustments are carried out, the poor will benefit in the long run. Yet the evidence to support this 'trickle down theory' is slim at best. As the Environmental Policy Institute (EPI) states:

What does seem to trickle down is economic hardship. Extensive research and case studies have pointed out that it is the most vulnerable groups of the society which pay the highest price in structural adjustment programs.

Many environmentalists from developing nations reject outright the notion that their countries owe the north anything at all. The debt, many of our Southern colleagues say, is based on colonialist and more recent imperialist intervention that has left a legacy of poverty and environmental destruction throughout the 'debtor' nations. If anybody owes anyone, they say, it is the North who owes the South in reparations and for restoration.

**Assumption #2: That all sectors of the debtor nation benefitted relatively equally from the original loan and the projects they financed, and that all sectors share an equal burden for repayment.**

We should acknowledge that multi-

lateral development aid has enriched elites in debtor nations but has done little to improve conditions for the working class or peasant populations. The development projects of multi-lateral development banks (MDBs) are often environmentally devastating and frequently displace poor or indigenous communities.

The World Bank's proposed Narmada Dam project, for instance, will displace one million people in India and flood 875,000 acres of forest land, 500,000 acres of agricultural land and 100,000 acres of other land — a total of almost one and a half million acres. While it may generate income, this plan violates the will of the affected population, who oppose it. A series of protests, including one with 60,000 people demonstrating against the dam in Har-sud on Sept. 27, 1989, illustrated the intensity of local opposition.

The austerity measures imposed by the World Bank and the IMF deepen the poverty of the poorest elements of debtor nations without changing the unproductive lending patterns that create and perpetuate poverty. The idea that domestic sacrifices and increased exports will strengthen the overall economic health of the south is a propagandistic myth used to justify continued resource exploitation. In fact, people's real income plummets, unemployment grows, and health, especially among women and children, deteriorates.

**Assumption #3: That establishing parks is socially benign.**

A recurrent problem of development is the displacement of indigenous peoples and subsistence farmers. Landless refugees increase environmental pressures in the areas where they attempt to settle on marginal land or swell the



ranks of the urban poor. People are also threatened with displacement when parks are proposed, shifting the same problem of pressure on resources elsewhere. In nations where the distribution of land is grossly disparate, we should ensure that parks do not adversely affect the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

In El Salvador the government is planning to evict the El Espino Agrarian Reform Cooperative, home to 125 peasant families, declaring the cooperative an "ecological zone." This would be the third attempt by ARENA (Nationalist Republican Alliance Party) forces to evict the peasants and return the farm to the former owner, this time under the guise of environmentalism. 'Land preserves' can be used for political and economic purposes having little to do with conservation.

**Assumption #4: That the creation of parks is always the top environmental priority for debtor nations.**

While protecting wilderness areas is a critical priority, the primary environmental threats in debtor nations are often deforestation, erosion, and agricultural and industrial contamination. The creation of debt-for-nature parks does not address these problems. Parks only control these problems inside their boundaries and only in they are not downwind or downstream of contaminating industries or agriculture. All of these ecological problems characteristic of debtor nations are due to or exacerbated by the development models and structural adjustment policies imposed by MDBs and the unsustainable export economies they help create.

**Assumption #5: That the environmental organizations administering parks and swap arrangements are competent, committed to local ecological sustainability, and are accountable to the international and the local community.**

Not all environmental NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) are qualified to fulfill the complex liaison duties inherent to debt swaps. Those deemed qualified to implement programs by an international NGO are not necessarily the ones who have a relationship of cooperation and trust with the local affected community. The Ecuadoran NGO, Fundacion Natura

(the Nature Foundation), has endorsed a management plan for the Yasuni National Park in which more than 50 per cent of the parks open to oil and mineral (including uranium) exploration and exploitation.

Indigenous groups in Ecuador are also currently protesting the negative impact of oil development in the Yasuni National Park. The impacts include: deforestation; chemical contamination effecting plant life and the life of the Huorani people living there; loss of fishing, medicinal plants, agriculture, and forest products; the introduction of prostitution, alcoholism, and new diseases; the introduction of destructive consumerism; and penetration of colonizers into Hourani territory by roads constructed for oil exploration.

#### Ecological Solutions

Many world leaders advocate the outright cancellation of the Third World debt, and some environmentalists take it a step further. Lorenzo Cardenal, President of the Nicaraguan Environmental Movement, and others have called for the North to pay the South reparations for the 'ecological debt' it owes from centuries of colonial and neocolonial pillage.

What can be done in lieu of a spectacular turnaround in the world economic order? One clear direction toward a solution to debt and development problems is continued and increased coordination between community-based NGOs both South-South and South-North. This will insure that projects and strategies have integrity and will avoid working at cross purposes, thus having a greater chance of success.

The limits of debt-for-nature swaps should not mean that we abandon projects and limit our efforts to a critique of the status quo. But projects must be articulated as part of a larger vision, not an end in themselves. Nor should we assume that somehow one project after another will save the earth and bring us to global justice. Many fall into what Rev. Marta Benavides of El Salvador calls 'projectism,' in which activists syphon off their energy into band-aid measures without addressing macro-level conditions.

Too often debt-for-nature proposals, no matter how positive, become a way of avoiding the fundamental

#### Dodgy deal

Conservation International recently bought \$650,000 worth of Bolivian debt in exchange for a buffer zone around the Beni Biosphere Reserve.

- The buffer zone is not a wilderness area but rather an area where export cattle production and lumbering are being promoted.
- The \$250,000 in local currency supplied by the Bolivian government to protect the zone represents the entire budget for the national parks system.

Bolivia's worker's confederation and the Federation of Press Workers have protested the CI debt swap, arguing that it conceals the sale of part of the nation's patrimony to the large transnationals.

According to union leader Andres Soliz Rada, "If today land can be sold for environmental protection, tomorrow it can be sold under another cover but with the same end: accepting the dictates of the centres of economic and political power."

From: *Earth Island Journal*, Fall 1989.

questions about undemocratic power structures, like the MDB's and unjust land tenure patterns inside the debtor nations. As the environmental movement builds ties with the Southern movement for sustainable development, we need to build a shared vision that is not naively oblivious to its obstacles, but rather identifies those obstacles and struggles for their removal. As we support or engage in projects we must explicitly ask the hard questions so that we widen, rather than limit, the debate around environment and development.

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# Resource Security — a leap backwards

*The proposed introduction of 'resource security' legislation has raised controversy and recrimination. Nick Gill looks at what it is, and suggests what's wrong with it.*

**R**esource Security is a forestry industry initiative, championed in government circles by Senator Alan Griffiths, Federal Minister for Resources. A discussion paper circulated by Senator Griffiths loosely defines Resource Security as:

a process to identify the environmental and heritage values of our forests and importantly, to enhance employment through encouraging a thriving secure, forest products industry.

Under Griffiths' proposal, an umbrella Commonwealth Resource Security Act would be established in consultation with state governments and industry. This Act would provide for industry access to old-growth native forests for "multiple-use", a term used to describe a process whereby all uses of native forests are permitted—provided that loggers have first go at the forests.

Thus, under the theoretical terms of Griffiths' proposal, if an industry wants to build pulp mills over the next ten years or wants to upgrade its timber mills and claims that it needs guaranteed access to forests to allow that investment to proceed, it will be able to have that access guaranteed under legislation—by means of an industry-State Government agreement ratified by the Commonwealth legislation.

#### The real story

In fact, Cabinet has agreed to provide resource security on a project-by-project basis for projects costing more than \$100 million. Under this scenario a company wishing to have access to native forests will have to go to the government and apply for Resource Security for its project, which may, for example, be a large-scale pulp-mill. Immediately a number of problems are apparent.

- Such an approach will require much time and expenditure on behalf of the government and the companies as well as sapping the relatively meagre resources of the environment movement.
- Such an approach leads one to speculate at the red tape, bureaucracy and confusion that may ensue as a plethora of forestry interests of all sizes, from all states, apply for Resource Security.
- This approach will further weight the situation in favour of the large companies with the resources and expertise to develop proposals for large-scale projects and lobby the government. Already the smaller sawmillers in Tasmania, NSW, Victoria and WA are under pressure, in particular from large woodchipping operations. The large woodchipping companies, such as Australian

Newsprint Mills and the Japanese-owned Harris Daishowa, gain control over the native forests with large concessions and chip valuable sawlogs, leaving the sawmill operators to sometimes literally scavenge for millable logs.

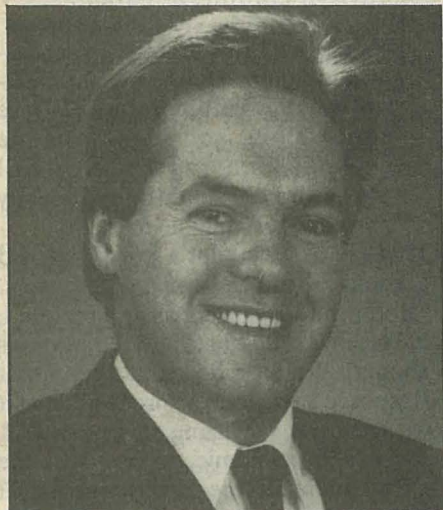
There have been a lot of words bandied around about Resource Security. 'Motherhood' statements, undefined, unclarified statements and red herrings abound. We have heard and read that Resource Security is a "process", that it will "integrate" existing environmental, social and economic policies, that the Department of the Environment will have an "enhanced role" (this is not at all clear from Griffiths' discussion paper), that it will bring "balance" to the forest debate, that the "economics of plantations is very low" (whatever that means) and, of course, as ever, we are told that Australia will go down the economic plughole if industry does not have guaranteed access to native forests. Griffiths' discussion paper is an exercise in intellectual mediocrity and half truths about the state of our forests and the forestry industry.

#### Locked into logging

So far, all the debate has served to obscure the fact that Resource Security will place large areas (1.1 million ha in Tasmania alone) of publicly-owned native forest in permanent logging zones, and more securely in the control of private interests. These zones will truly be locked up and any subsequent resumption of those areas for conservation or other uses will entail compensation payments to industry. In fact this is not entirely dissimilar to the current situation. Already, companies



involved in forestry have considerable resource security through their contracts. According to the Industry Commission, concessions in Tasmania are granted for 80 years, in Victoria for 30-40 years and in NSW concessions are normally of 20 years duration. The Industry Commission, in the second report of its Interim Report on Paper Recycling (1990), notes that, in general, in their submissions to the Commission, "pulp and paper companies did not express concern about adequate supplies of pulpwood". Currently, however, the timber industry can lose access to forests. In Tasmania, Australian



Senator Alan Griffiths, Minister for Resources. Does 'Resource Security' make him smile?

Newsprint Mills has lost part of its concession to World Heritage and National Park listing. However, this is not an everyday event. What Resource Security will do, is prevent such resumption of concessions occurring without compensation from the government, ie. from the tax-payers. The forestry industry is asking the government to provide it with something no other industry has, complete security for its investments.

#### The myth of sustainable forestry

One of the often unspoken assumptions in the Resource Security debate is that forestry practices in Australia are ecologically sustainable. In one sense this argument, which attracts so much attention, is a red herring, in that it shifts attention away from the real issue which is that irreplaceable old-growth forests are being destroyed. However, the sustainability of forestry is hardly the

clear-cut issue that industry and government would have us believe.

Firstly, knowledge of the forest estate and its biological and species characteristics is far from complete. Secondly, current forestry industry practices are relatively recent innovations (ie. introduced within the last 5-10 years), therefore it is absurd to claim that these practices are sustainable. Thirdly, the declining sawlog resource in Australia indicates that sustainable practices are not occurring, with a decline in sawlog yield of forty percent predicted to occur between 1970 and 2010, and reports of decreasing sawlog quality and species variety. The upshot is that we don't know enough about our forests to know what is a sustainable yield. This suggests that we should err on the side of caution. The onus of proof of sustainability should be on industry, rather than on conservationists to prove that sustainability is a myth.

#### What's wrong with Resource Security?

Many would agree that preventing private interests from strengthening their grip on Australia's public forests is reason enough to throw Resource Security out of the window. However, many of a certain moral and political persuasion would see no problem with further privatisation of the forests. There are, however, arguments beyond those of a purely political nature against Resource Security legislation.

- Resource Security legislation will involve once-only assessment of forest areas. This means that areas placed into permanent logging zones now under Resource Security legislation will not be assessed again for values other than timber production. This will occur at a time when knowledge of our forests is incomplete and when the National Forest Inventory and the National Wilderness Inventory are incomplete. Thus we will be locked into current resource use patterns with little opportunity to alter them. Imagine if the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park had been subject to Resource Security legislation 20 years ago.

- One of the aims of Resource Security is to reduce conflict within the community over use of the forests. Resource security will not achieve this aim. It is more likely to increase conflict. Federal cabinet has already indicated that it will "fast-track" approvals for

projects requiring Resource Security. This is no way to reduce conflict and is no way to make decisions in a democratic society.

- Although industry has attempted to blackmail the government by threatening that up to \$4.8 billion of investment will not proceed without Resource Security, these figures appear to have been plucked out of the air. They are an attempt to use the current economic climate to force the government to make short-term and ill-considered decisions. Of the projects waved about by industry there have been no detailed cost-benefit analyses. Some companies, such as Daishowa, have also stated that market forces will still be more important in investment decisions (e.g. concerning pulpmills) than Resource Security legislation. There is still no guarantee, once Australia's native forests have been given away under Resource Security, that the promised investments will ever materialise.

- The introduction of Resource Security implies that it is acceptable to log old-growth native forests, an activity that Australians are increasingly condemning and which Australia has slowly, slowly been moving away from. In this sense, Resource Security will freeze us into patterns of resource use condoned by attitudes that are fast becoming anachronistic. Additionally, by further facilitating the logging of old-growth forests, Resource Security legislation makes the assumption, and perpetuates the myth, that Australia is richly endowed with forest resources and that there is plenty of native forest left to log, with large areas still remaining for conservation. In fact only 5 per cent of Australia's area is covered by native forest. Only 50 per cent of the area of native forest that existed in 1788 remains. Of this, only 13 per cent is protected from logging. Thus, when we talk of native forests we are referring to something that is in fact quite scarce, but which has historically been — and continues to be — treated as an abundant resource.

#### Level playing field?

The relative scarcity of native forests in Australia and the chronic imbalance in the way in which we have used them, suggests that by continuing to log the forests for timber and low value wood-

chips, without establishing plantations, we are seriously undervaluing native forests as a resource valued by the community. In simple terms, if a resource is scarce, its cost should be high. In spite of this we continue to give away our native forests to the forest industry at prices so low that state forestry commissions operate at a loss (\$16.2 million per year in NSW), providing subsidies to the industry by providing infrastructure such as roads and fire protection, and such that plantations remain unattractive to industry even when they would be economically viable when land costs, which are not included in current forestry arrangements, are included in the analysis.

Resource security legislation thus contradicts the government's push for microeconomic reform. It aims to perpetuate a situation in which a resource is undervalued, both in purely financial terms and in conservation, wildlife, hydrological and ecological terms, resulting in large subsidies and windfall profits to the forestry industry. Resource security legislation would thus foster economic inefficiency in the use of our native forests.

#### Plantations

Undervaluing the native forests of Australia has created a situation where plantations are economically unattractive. However, this is not to say that plantations would not be economically viable. A study commissioned by the Australian Conservation Foundation concluded that plantations could in fact be a viable source of pulpwood and sawlogs. The only reason that the forestry industry wants guaranteed access to native forests is to keep its costs down and profit margins up by avoiding the need to spend on plantations. It is possible that the forestry industry is running scared as large areas of softwood and hardwood pulpwood plantations overseas are starting to come onstream. As the woodchip and pulp industry here, which is largely an export-oriented industry, has not established large areas of plantations they face potential competition on the world market from low cost pulp from other sources. Is the woodchip and pulpwood industry asking Australians to cover its poor planning, potential losses and mistakes in not establishing sufficient plantation area, by seeking continued

cheap access to Australian native forests? Is it seeking to get as much out of native forests before market trends and public opinion turn against it?

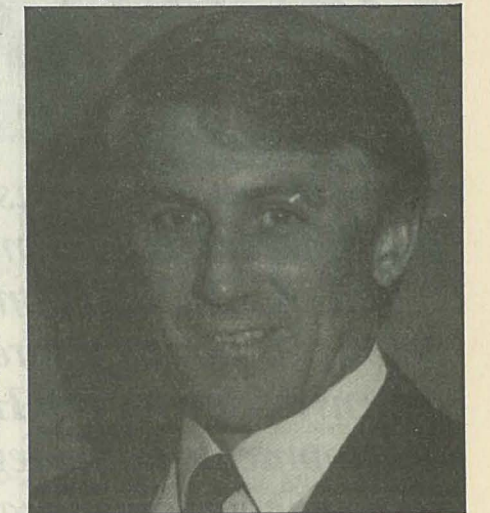
#### True resource security

On anything but considerations that are short-term and focussed narrowly on timber production, Resource Security is only available to industry by establishing hardwood and softwood plantations. Only by doing this will industry have control over the production of timber resource and long-term security of supply which will benefit the industry and Australians, through long-term job security. The woodchip and pulp industry does not exist to provide benefits to Australians, it exists to provide a cheap source of woodchips for overseas paper producers. Tax-payers pay for the privilege of having the forests exported overseas for paper production, for consumption elsewhere. The woodchip industry does not provide large numbers of jobs. The mill at Eden, in NSW, exports 20 per cent of Australia's woodchips, yet employs just 130 people. The timber industry as a whole is not interested in jobs. Since 1969 investment in new technology has reduced the number of people employed in the industry by 24 per cent, despite a 46 per cent increase in production since 1969. When we turn our forests over to industry we sell ourselves cheaply.

What we need to work for in Australia is the development of a self-sufficient, sustainable paper industry, producing for the domestic market, and using pulp from Australian plantations. According to Judy Clark, economist and timber industry consultant, there exist sufficient plantations for this to happen by the year 2000. Resource security will ensure that this will never happen without the destruction of native forests first. It implies continuation of the mentality that sees our forests sold as woodchips to the world's paper-makers for about \$11 a tonne.

By the year 2000 it is likely that sawlogs from softwood plantations will come to dominate the market for sawn timber, so there is no need for Resource Security for the sawlog industry. It becomes clear that Resource Security has been engineered to benefit the woodchip industry that brings little economic benefit to Australia as a whole and which provides relatively few jobs.

Shifting to plantations will ensure that the benefits that come from native forests are available to all, not just industry. Rather than enacting Resource Security, the government should be creating the conditions for logging of native forests to cease within a certain specified time and for a plantation strategy to be given a greater role than is currently the case. Thus, what should be looked at is funding for plantation research, tax regulations affecting investment in plantations and the level of timber royalties currently paid by the forestry industry.



Robert Bain of the National Assoc. of Forest Industries. NAFI supports 'Resource Security' legislation.

These questions have not been sufficiently addressed in the public arena. If we ask such questions and introduce such measures we will facilitate the optimum use of forests in Australia. This would be that use regime that recognises the scarcity of native forests, the full range of values found in native forests and the fact that the community as a whole has a right to the benefits of old-growth native forests.

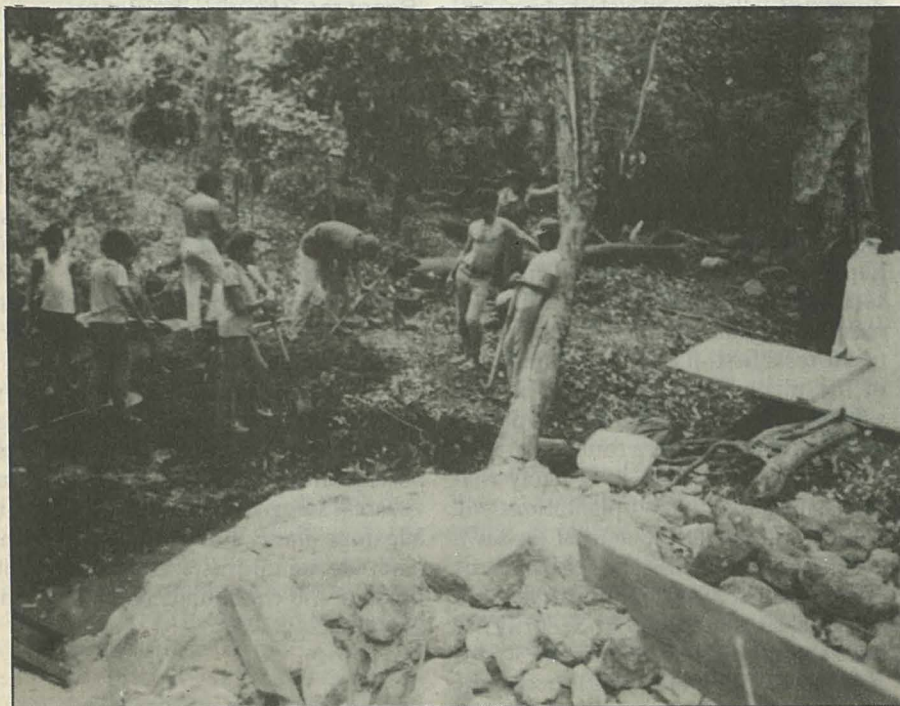
The adoption of 'Resource Security' by the government represents a betrayal of the community on environmental issues. It serves to confirm once again that Australian governments of all persuasions have difficulty determining just whose interests they represent, those of the community or those of the private sector.

*Nicholas Gill is a Campaigner with The Wilderness Society in South Australia.*



# War on the environment in Central America

*There are many threats to Central America's environment, but the most immediate danger is that of war, with bombs, bulldozers and defoliants posing a threat to human life and the environment. Pip Hinman reports on developments in the region and also looks at some encouraging local initiatives which exist despite the crisis.*



Dam under construction — part of the pilot project at Achuapa (see page 62).

Central America's ecological diversity rivals any in the world. From the iridescent blue flashes of the Morpho butterfly in a Panamanian rainforest, to the legendary quetzal whose rare shadow burns into the mist of Guatemala's highlands, the region's natural phenomena have dazzled generations of naturalists. For eons this crumpled isthmus has served as a bridge and transition zone for tropical and temperate life forms from North and South America. Medical and agricultural treasures lie hidden in the more than 1,000 species of plants found nowhere else in the world.

For years the region has suffered ecological degradation brought on by deforestation, soil erosion, pesticide pollution and industrial contamination. Now, Central America's environment faces a more immediate threat. From Panama to Guatemala armies are stockpiling weaponry that could erase in hours the natural beauty that has taken millennia to evolve. The bombs, bulldozers and defoliants that played so central a role in the Vietnam war are resurfacing on this side of the world.

## War and poverty

The worst degradation has taken place in El Salvador where more than 95 per cent of the original tropical forests have disappeared and less than 7 per cent of the country is now forested. In its war against Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) forces, the US-backed Salvadoran army has employed scorched earth policies similar to those used by the US in Vietnam. In one province alone 12,200 acres of forest have been destroyed by fires started by bombing, and defoliants are being sprayed on forests in the mountain regions where the FMLN fighters have taken refuge.

Scorched earth tactics are also being used by the Guatemalan military against an insurgency based mainly in the Indian communities, and 15 years of civil war in Nicaragua have created a severe economic crisis that undermines action against environmental degradation.

Desperate poverty is also a major cause of environmental degradation throughout the region. Landless peasants (*campesinos*) cut down forests in order to create space for farming but the loss of nutrients contained in the

forest canopy leaves the soil fragile and many such farms are soon abandoned in frustration. Alternatively, *campesinos* attempt to grow crops on slopes so steep that they frequently have to tie themselves to a stake to avoid toppling over. The result, of course, is massive soil erosion. In El Salvador soil erosion affects an estimated 77 per cent of the country, while in Costa Rica 41 per cent of the country is described as either moderately or severely eroded.

However, the destruction will continue as long as the vast majority of arable land is owned by the wealthy elite. In Guatemala 80 per cent of farmland is owned by 2.1 per cent of the population; in El Salvador the elite (known as the "fourteen families") own 60 per cent; while in Honduras 44 per cent of the population owns no land at all.

## Beef cattle and pesticides

The production of beef cattle for the North American market is resulting in alarming rates of deforestation. On current trends the following annual rates of destruction have been estimated: Guatemala 900 square km; Honduras 800 square km; Costa Rica 600 square km; and Panama 500 square km. While the majority of people go hungry in Costa Rica large tracts of land are set aside for growing fresh flowers to be flown every day to the restaurants of New York.

Enteritis and diarrheal disorders, resulting from water pollution, are the major causes of death for the undernourished populations of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Waterborne diseases account for an alarming 12 per cent of deaths in Honduras.

A boom in cotton production, starting in the 1950s, led to large scale use of highly toxic organophosphates and the highly persistent organochlorines, such as DDT. By the 1960s Central America was the highest per capita user of pesticides imported from the US, and the results of a survey conducted in 1976 showed Honduras and Nicaragua as the world leaders per capita in illnesses and deaths resulting from pesticide poisoning. An estimated 75 per cent of pesticides still being used in Central America are banned from use in the US.

## The Nicaraguan experiment

During the 1980s the Sandinista government in Nicaragua made some serious



Reforestation at Los Hornos in the Achuapo region, July 1990.

attempts to radically reduce the use of pesticides and slow down the rate of deforestation. An extensive land redistribution program significantly reduced the rates of both deforestation and soil erosion and the government provided backing to the conservation initiatives of environmental organisations and community-based programs aimed at developing ecologically sound methods of farming.

However, as the war against the US-backed "contras" intensified these environmental initiatives were starved of resources, and the Sandinistas are now out of power.

The waters of Lake Managua, heavily polluted by raw sewerage from the capital Managua and large quantities of mercury dumped by the US corporation Penwalt, are starting to seep into the city's drinking water. Furthermore, US corporations are developing a plan to dump toxic ash and nuclear waste in the country's Atlantic Coast region.

## Who is responsible?

Much of the blame for the environmental crisis in Central America can be laid at the doors of the governments in the region which allow destructive trends to continue unabated. In El Salvador and Guatemala, in particular, the US government is directly aiding these

countries' military forces to carry out a strategy of ecocide. In all of the Central American countries the wealthy landowners continue to exploit the region's natural resources with little thought for the future.

However, the patterns of economic development have been largely determined by the needs of the north American market (with European and Japanese traders and investors also coming on to the scene). Multinational banks, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have financed developments that have had devastating consequences. The United States has provided generous support to regimes based entirely on the wealthy elites, with its military aid to the Salvadoran army reaching US\$1.5-2 million a day.

Clearly, little can be done to address the crisis until military conflicts are resolved and external interference in the region brought to an end. However, positive local initiatives need international support, particularly in Nicaragua where a change of government has put at risk many encouraging projects and programs.

*Pip Hinman is Acting National Coordinator for Committees in Solidarity with Latin America and the Caribbean (CISLAC).*



## NICARAGUANS SEEK ASSISTANCE WITH ALTERNATIVES

Despite the change of government in Nicaragua, many regional communities are striving to continue projects initiated under the more ecologically-minded Sandinistas.

The Committees in Solidarity with Latin America and the Caribbean (CISLAC) are currently helping to develop an organic farm and training centre in Achuapa, northern Nicaragua, an area once known as the zone of forest land. Once, sufficient rainfall ensured an abundance of pine, cedar, and other timber-producing trees. However, up until the Sandinistas took government in 1979, international timber companies clear-felled the area without concern for its reforestation.

Clear-felling brought dramatic climate and ecological changes: today Achuapa is a dry zone, with little forest cover and a fraction of the rainfall. The lack of trees has caused severe erosion. Agricultural production has also been adversely affected by the long-standing use of chemicals and the practice of burning the ground before planting.

### Organic Farming Project

A model farm and training centre for organic farming was initiated by the Nicaraguans with the help of the Swiss group, Eco-Solidar. It was in 1986 when Eco-Solidar invited a Nicaraguan farmer from Achuapa to participate in an organic farming course in Switzerland. Since then, CISLAC has helped develop an organic farming pilot project on four co-operatives covering some 2,500 hectares.

The "mini-projects", as they are known, are training farmers in organic farming techniques as well as advising them on the alternatives to chemical pesticides and insecticides.

In just four years, the mini projects have made a discernible difference to the region's forestry and soil recovery effort. Already about 400 hectares have been reforested. And in addition to the traditional species, the cooperatives are planting citrus trees and coffee plants.

The latest project aims to build on the success of the mini-projects in teaching farmers organic farming methods which avoid the use of chemicals. Such methods will be advantageous both ecologically and economically.

Local and overseas training courses will be provided, and both women and men in the Achuapa municipality are being encouraged to participate. It is expected that the model developed in Achuapa will be used in other parts of the country.

The women and men who farm Achuapa stand to benefit immediately from extending the organic farming work already begun. In particular, the members of the Bloque Intercomunitario Pro Bienestar

Christiano or Christian Intercommunity Farmer Organisation (BIP-BC), the organisation which has already invested a good deal of time, money and energy in the organic farming projects, will be able to consolidate its work.

In addition, it is anticipated that farmers from the neighbouring rural communities in Villaneva, Somotillo and Santo Tomas, among others, will be included in the training at the Achuapa model farm. The contribution this project makes to building the fledgling ecology movement in Nicaragua will also be significant.

And of course, any successful project to preserve and restore the environment in Nicaragua will also contribute to solving the global ecological problems we all face as a result of deforestation.

The BIP-BC is taking major financial and organisational responsibility for carrying out this project. Not only have its members gained experience from leading the work on the mini-projects in Achuapa, they also have the capacity, as a broad grass-roots organisation, to extend the project beyond Achuapa.

To guarantee the effective functioning of the project, the Nicaraguan Centre of Social Studies to Support Development (CESADE) which specializes in agricultural consulting will be helping to ensure the optimal utilization of the farm both agriculturally and economically. They will also ensure that social factors, such as the integration of women, are sensitively handled.

### How you can help

The organisations working with the BIP-BC on this project, in addition to CISLAC are: The Achuapa Communal Development Committee; the Institute for International Cooperation in Vienna, Austria, and the World University Services of Denmark.

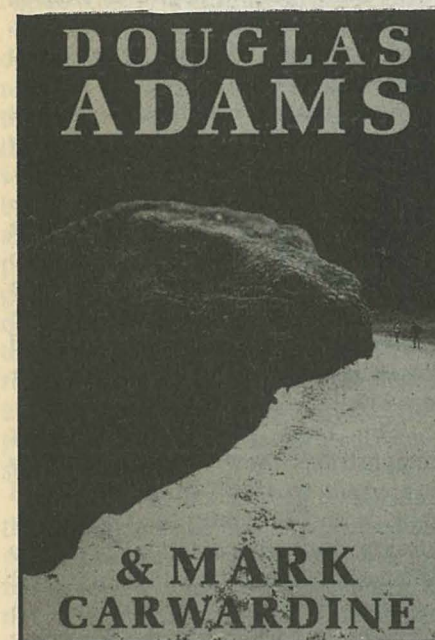
Suitable land, which borders on a river, has already been purchased and a training centre has been built. However, funds to furnish the centre and pay a full-time administrator for both the farm and training centre, a full-time watchperson and a cleaner are urgently required.

CISLAC, with the assistance of the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau, will raise \$22,000 for this project. Please help us. Your donation, no matter how small, will go directly to help Nicaraguan farmers develop sustainable methods of agriculture.

All donations above \$2 are tax deductible. Please make cheques payable to the Nicaraguan Assistance Fund, and send to CISLAC, PO Box A431, South Sydney, 2000.

For more information, please call (02) 660 8391.

# Reviews



### Last Chance to See ...

By Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine, Heinemann, London, 1990, 208 pp. (hb), \$29.95.

Reviewed by Phil Shannon.

The only difference between the Vogons destroying the Earth (to make way for a hyper-space bypass) and us doing the same through our impact on Nature is the time scale. In *Last Chance to See* ..., Douglas Adams turns his wit and satire from science fiction comedy to the definitely factual tragedy of species extinction. Of the known 1.4 million, and estimated 30 million, species of plant and animal sharing the planet with us, 1,000 lose out every year in competition for space with five billion of us, on a one way trip to nothingness from habitat loss, "hunting, pollution, pesticides."

The book records the travels of Adams and the zoologist Mark Carwardine to observe some of the more noted and most threatened species in the wild. The Madagascar 'Aye-Aye' lemur survived the monkey challenge in its monkey-free island refuge but since the monkey's evolutionary descendants — us — got to the island it has become imperilled like the nineteen of the original forty Madagascar lemur species which we have tipped over into extinction.

The Mauritius kestrel lost its habitat to ferociously colonising exotic species imported to the island by us along with the exotic and ferociously profitable cash crop of sugar. The mountain gorilla of Zaire lost not only its habitat but its head and hands "which were sold to tourists who mistakenly thought they would look finer on their mantelpieces than they did on the original gorilla."

The Northern White rhinoceros fell prey to vanity, too, their horn carved up into "tasteless costume jewellery for some rich young Yemeni to strut around and pull girls with." The Yangtze dolphins die from river pollution, the cacophony of river traffic and fishing nets, passing their lives in "continual bewilderment, hunger, pain and fear."

It is a grim litany but there are threads of hope. Our intelligence, while giving us "the power to control our environment" (and which got the Aye-Aye and the others into their fix) also gives us "the ability to control ourselves" and to control our impact on our co-species.

This ray of hope, however, is still feeble compared to a light of murkier origins — economics. For the big, the fascinating, the unusual species at

death's door, the tourist dollar can be worth more than the dollar to be had from crop farming or poaching. However, rather than rely on such tawdry commercialism, says Adams and Carwardine, or appeal to enlightened self-interest (if one species goes, others might disappear taking our life support ecosystems with them) we should, rather, argue to save our co-tenants of Earth "for no other reason" than that "the world would be a poorer, darker, lonelier, place without them."

The Dodo was a "large, gentle, flightless dove" which existed on an island free from predators and the need for flight, and which never knew the meaning of harm. When the last one was clubbed to death on Mauritius by Dutch colonists in 1680 it was our own gentleness being battered by a hard human outlook on Nature as a resource to be dominated and used by us. The "poorer, darker, lonelier place" without the Aye-Aye will be a place without gentleness.

And it will be a world without humour, a humour which, in the hands of Adams, fills every page of *Last Chance to See* ... with a hilariously humbling portrait of the allegedly superior species as overflowing with abundant lunacy and incompetence. Sometimes the humour is a wry self-mocking view of ordinary human foibles and frustrations, sometimes a sharper Monty Pythonish thrust at bureaucratic absurdities.

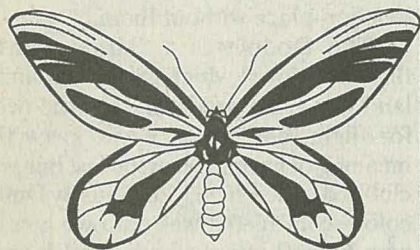
This is a terribly funny book about a terribly serious issue. It is also a bit of a first — a funny environmental book — but it works superbly on both counts.

Phil Shannon is a crossword designer who enjoys a good book.



# Reviews

## The Barnett Report



A Summary of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into  
Aspects of the Timber Industry in Papua New Guinea

### The Barnett Report - A Summary of the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Aspects of the Timber Industry in PNG

by the Asia Pacific Action Group, 1990, 58 pages (pb), \$6.00.

Reviewed by Nicholas Gill.

South-East Asia is almost logged out and the timber trade is on the move, seeking out new sources of cheaply available timber. Papua New Guinea is one of the latest countries singled out to

enjoy the benefits of development brought by the timber industry. The PNG timber industry was investigated from 1987 by Judge Thomas Barnett and his findings included political corruption and feather-bedding, bribery, transfer pricing, abuse and cheating of traditional landholders and a plethora of corrupt and illegal business practices.

Not surprisingly, the report of the inquiry, the Barnett Report, was suppressed. It seems, however, that copies leaked out, for Asia Pacific Action Group, based in Hobart, has produced a summary of the report which should prove useful to rainforest activists everywhere who are unable to get hold of the full report. The summary has been endorsed by Judge Barnett and contains much useful and important information from the report, detailing names, figures, transactions and deals. This information is generally well referenced from the report. Of great use is a map, showing areas and places referred to in the text.

The production of this summary is particularly timely given the existence of the PNG Tropical Forest Action Plan, which has been characterised by Australian involvement. The TFAPs are notorious for overlooking the political factors, such as corruption, in rainforest destruction. Has Australian aid been used in such a way that may hasten the destruction of PNG's forests by effectively legitimising many aspects of the current situation? In addition, the information contained in the summary sheds considerable light and, consequently, doubt on the ability and willingness of the tropical timber industry to even attempt sustainable forestry practices in the tropics. Given the publication budget, the booklet is comparatively well laid out and contains a number of informative maps and illustrations.

*The Barnett Report* is a key document in the international rainforest campaign and the APAG summary makes its contents readily accessible to the activist community.

Write to APAG, PO Box 693, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7005. Phone 002 342 587, or email peg:apag.

Nick Gill is a campaign officer with *The Wilderness Society*, South Australia.

### Humans and Other Animals

By Barbara Noske, 1989, Pluto Press (UK), via St Clair Press, Sydney, 170 pp. (hb), \$21.95.

Reviewed by Ally Fricker

A vigorous and independent mind pervades this densely packed critique of Western human-centred attitudes to other animals and to the various scientific disciplines which aid and abet those attitudes.

At a time when 'green' thinking and politics is said to have arrived, when our language is replete with high-sounding calls to care for the environment and when many people aspire to holistic solutions to our multiple crises, it is good to read a book which gets down to the nitty-gritty of so many of our pitfalls, particularly as they manifest themselves in our relationship with our fellow animals.

This book will be of particular interest to those Marxists who consider themselves to be green and also feminists. On both counts Barbara Noske speaks with considerable authority as she has been actively and closely involved with both groups over many years.

The first part of the book demonstrates "how Western humanity has come to think of humans and animals and of culture and nature in terms of subject and object". The history of human-animal relationships and domestication is briefly outlined; an origin much earlier than the beginning of agriculture is suggested. The dramatic impact of industrial capitalism on that relationship is explored in detail and it is clear that in our present system animals are worse off than at any other time in their history. Whether they are being overcrowded and caged in mass production units, or being carved up (sometimes under anaesthetic) for the advancement of science, their treatment is always justified because ultimately it might benefit us.

Noske uses Marxist concepts to describe the alienation of animals in the many "de-animalizing" situations in which they now find themselves. Surprisingly, she does not include a section on genetic engineering, which is but the latest phase in the process of bringing all of the animal world within the productive sphere. (Could anything be

more alienating than having a gene from another animal or plant implanted in an animal to change its nature in some way?)

How then is the degrading objectification of animals made possible? What is it about Western civilisation which has allowed us to devalue the whole of nature?

Chapter Four answers these questions thoroughly but succinctly. The book is worth reading for this section alone. If we are to give the notion of holistic thinking any real substance we need a good grasp of how it is we have departed so radically from the integrated belief systems of our forebears.

The role of Marxist thought in the debate about nature is particularly significant, given that many people from the political left have clambered onto the green political band wagon. The left was often highly critical when activists began campaigning on behalf of other animals (notably seals, whales and dolphins) in the 1960s and 70s. This same group still has great difficulty in shedding its belief in the neutrality of technology (nuclear power, for some reason, being considered an exception) and the view that industrial society is the peak, thus far, in humanity's relationship with nature.

Whether or not a total reconciliation of humanity with nature is possible within the bounds of Marxism, is, as Barbara Noske says, still very much a matter of debate. Her own view seems to be that those elements in Marxist thought which could make such a reconciliation possible are far outweighed by those which clearly could not. She says:

Indeed, the greater the hierarchy between humanity and non-human nature in a society, the higher its degree of civilisation in the eyes of Marxist theorists. And since this hierarchy between humanity and nature is to be achieved by the former exercising control over the latter, humanity is thereby pitted against nature in an antagonistic way ... Marxism implicitly denies animals the capacity for sociability and for freedom, and consequently the animal's capacity to value its own fate is also denied ... I have always wondered how humans (Marxists and others) can be so sure about their own ability to judge animal inabilities. Humans pretend to know from within that they themselves

possess certain faculties and to know from without that animals do not. (pp. 73,77)

In the remaining part of the book, Noske develops her ideas about what constitutes animal-human continuities and discontinuities, and shows how many of the qualities which have been used to demonstrate peculiarly human attributes, such as tool-making, conceptualisation, language, power of abstraction and sociability, are now recognised in other animals and their societies.

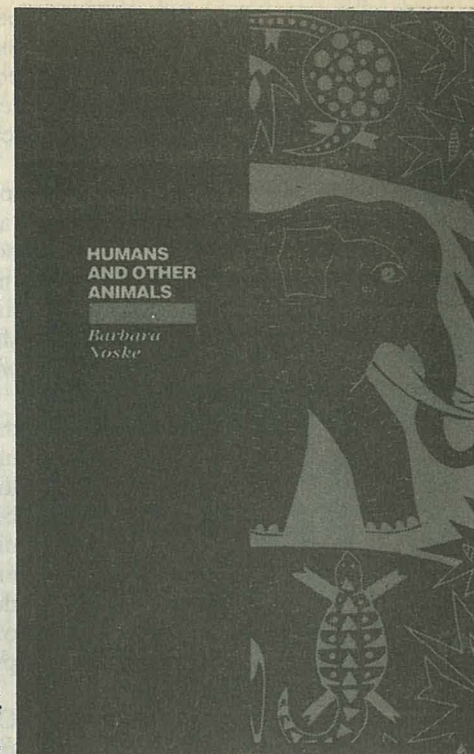
Trained as a cultural anthropologist, Noske bemoans the fact that her own discipline has never allowed her to approach animals in the way in which anthropologists are encouraged to approach humans from other cultures.

Such shortcomings are not peculiar to her own field of study, and Barbara exposes the severe limitations of the many other academic disciplines which contribute to our "understanding" of other animals. The social scientists who happily leave the study of animals to the natural scientists, are, however, not let off the hook, because it is the social sciences which have defined sociability and culturability as exclusively human phenomena, and therefore, by definition, precluded other animals from displaying such attributes.

In criticising her fellow feminists, Noske says they have failed to appreciate that it is the social interpretation put upon notions of woman-animal continuity and not the continuity itself which has so contributed to the degradation of women in Western culture. Consequently cultural feminists (as opposed to eco-feminists, a distinction which Noske does not comment on) have gone to great lengths to distance themselves from association with nature in general.

The final chapter is perhaps the most fascinating part of this genuinely ground-breaking work. In it, Noske calls for a new and integrated approach to the study of animals — an anthropology of animals which would respect their *otherness* and not continue to regard them as lesser humans. It is a call for the "resubjectification" of animals, who for too long have been treated, together with the rest of nature, as mere objects.

In describing how such an approach might be made, she draws on several



accounts of human children being adopted by animals, e.g., gazelles and wolves. She says these children (most of whom were separated from their adopted animal community in very cruel ways by the people who re-found them) had virtually crossed the species boundary. She says, "These human beings not only met the Other, they have almost become the Other."

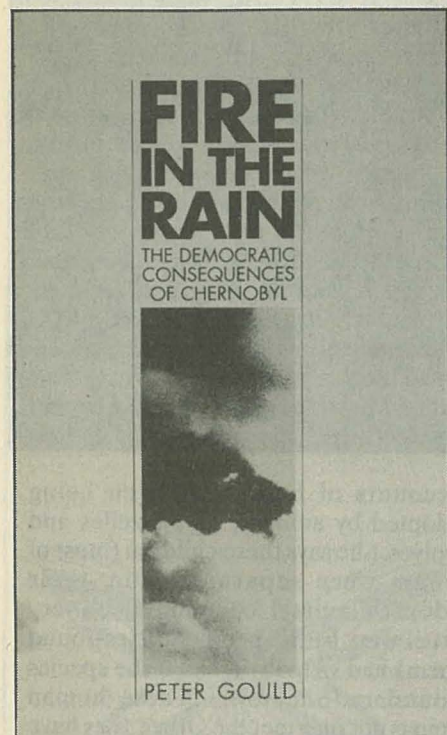
In making her call for a new approach, Barbara Noske concludes: Even though we may not succeed in becoming animal with the animals, we humans may make the effort of meeting the animals on their own ground instead of expecting them to take steps towards us and making them perform according to our standards.

I warmly recommend this book to anyone concerned with the abysmal treatment of animals in our society, and hope that in replacing existing attitudes we might also unlock the barriers to some of our other miseries.

Ally Fricker is an environmentalist and an activist with the Green Party (South Australia).



# Reviews



## Fire in the Rain: The Democratic Consequences of Chernobyl

Peter Gould, Polity Press, Cambridge (UK), 1990, 163 pages. Distributed by Basil Blackwell through Allen and Unwin Australia, \$25.95

Reviewed by Tony Smith.

The Gulf War has demonstrated many things, but perhaps none more effectively than the importance of the media and the ease with which powerful people can control its output. This will surprise nobody but ought to concern us all. Efficient and objective reporting helps us to learn from our mistakes and so avoid repeating them.

The last decade has seen many great disasters. Some, like the Iranian and Armenian earthquakes may be dismissed as natural disasters. But the Bhopal gassing, the Ethiopian famines and Bangladesh floods are preventable given more responsible actions by powerful people. Predictably, these

people attempt to avoid the embarrassment of scrutiny, and use this same power to suppress criticism. In this regard, Chernobyl represents the quintessence of the man-made disaster.

It took ten days and cost many lives to extinguish the Chernobyl fire while radiation spread across natural and political boundaries as far as Japan and the USA. Gould expresses amazement that some governments still refused to share information with one another and with their own populations.

So *Fire in the Rain* is a challenge because readiness to publicise the book may well reflect the openness of the local media. In terms accessible to the lay reader, Gould outlines the documented events leading up to the explosion, and describes the disaster in detail. Even a more technical chapter on radiation measurement is comprehensible.

The title reflects two facts about the Chernobyl disaster: the nuclear fire persisted despite natural conditions, and the fallout patterns recorded in Scandinavia matched rainfall statistics very closely. The sub-title suggests political fallout of significant proportions. *Fire in the Rain* aims to expose the obfuscation and equivocation which continue to characterise official reactions to the meltdown. Gould's research found an inverse correlation between the spread of the admission that a disaster had occurred and local dependence on atomic power.

Eastern European governments having Soviet reactors under construction, took the usual 'no news' approach. In Poland, which was building a plant at Gdansk, information on the iodine treatment of thyroids (known colloquially as 'Russian Coca-cola') simply stopped in December 1986.

The Western record is hardly better. While claiming that there was 'no cause for alarm', and that radiation levels were not dangerous, authorities stopped milk and meat supplies and warned that there could be deaths. In West Germany, 30 per cent dependent on nuclear energy and with an active Green Party, information was free, but France, which derives 65 per cent of its energy from atomic power, denied the problem. The Radiation Protection Service claimed to have issued 200 bulletins on the crisis, but *Agence France Presse* received only twelve.

In Scandinavia, the difference between Norway and nearby nuclear dependent Sweden was marked. Norway had an 'information storm' and the Government placed no restrictions on research. In Sweden, however, the approach was to issue reassurances. Dissidents in the Eastern Bloc have long consoled themselves that at least they *know* when they are being lied to, and reject the idea that we in the West should pity them.

Vladimir Gubaryev's play *Sarcophagus* compares Chernobyl to 5,000 year old Egyptian tombs. Ironically, the Chernobyl tomb which should inter forever the nuclear promise, will still be available for archaeologists—but guarded by a poison curse—in perhaps 100,000 years. It is a dramatic monument to our civilisation.

Other images used by Gould are particularly strong. He sees the sciences splitting off from philosophy as an 'intellectual fission' and contrasts this process with the holistic thinking behind the 'Gaia hypothesis'. Ecologists such as Dr David Suzuki insist that only by treating the Earth as a single ecosystem is it possible to appreciate the enormity of dangers to the biosphere posed by events like nuclear mishaps.

Gould places the disaster into a political context. He likens the fallout to medical isotopes, because tracing the progress of the contamination exposes malignancies in the body politic. While the establishments of science and bureaucracy become defensive and covers up errors of judgement, democratic governments have a responsibility to supervise these closed worlds. Events such as Chernobyl cast doubt upon this theory.

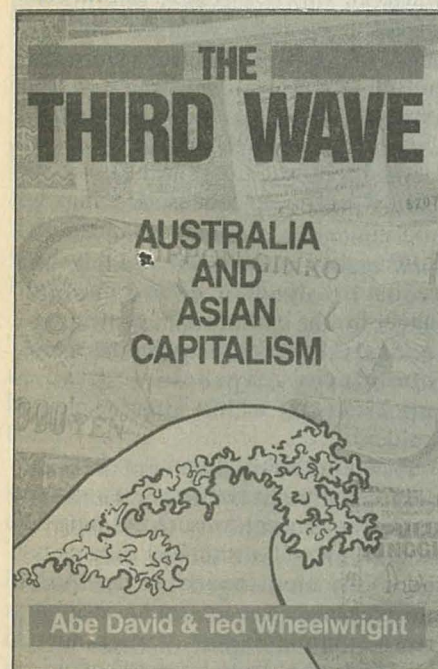
Government reactions to crises range from suppression, to defining the problem away, through belittling critics and obfuscation, to creative deception, information reduction and use of aggressive public relations programmes. Gould accuses 'risk bookies' of using statistics to 'thingify people'. It is easy to dilute figures, absorb contradictions and ridicule dissenters, particularly when 'whistle blowers' are dismissed and many scientists are locked into their careers by thirty years of pleading the nuclear case.

The lies needed by the nuclear industry are 'dissolving the glue of trust', vital in democracies, as people become

sceptical about statements that "there is no cause for concern." Gould constructs a scale of cynicism as running from micro-, through mini-, to kilo- and mega-concern. A concern is "enough luminous sheep in the district to threaten a marginal seat in an election."

Despite the thaw in the cold war we are still hostage to nuclear weapons; despite Chernobyl, the nuclear barons continue to insist on the safety of their plants and Governments still refuse to demand adequate assurances and safeguards for the populations they claim to represent. This is not the first attempt to place Chernobyl into political perspective, but it is both comprehensive and readable. This is fortunate, because the author has anticipated that critical comments on the nuclear industry are generally given scant and reluctant media attention. It will be interesting to observe Australian responses to Gould's challenging analysis.

Tony Smith is a regular reviewer for *Chain Reaction*.



## The Third Wave: Australian and Asian Capitalism

by Abe David and Ted Wheelwright, Left Book Club, 1990, 289 pages, \$14.95.

Reviewed by Margaret Dingle

This book is a critical discussion of the impact of the so-called 'third wave' of foreign investment from Asia on the lives of working Australians.

Hardly surprisingly, the book begins by attempting to define 'capitalism'. As defined by Wheelwright and David, it is the control, by those who own the means of production, of those who have nothing to sell but their labour. David and Wheelwright further define capitalism as having originated in fourteenth century Italy. This is curious—as it excludes the master craftsman, merchant or free farmer of the Early Middle Ages from the definition of a capitalist. The authors fail to make it clear that the opposite of capitalism is not necessarily state ownership of the means of production.

At issue behind such seemingly semantic discussion, is the point that the problem of capitalism is the power it confers on the capitalist, not only to control wages and conditions, but to destroy the environment for profit and to subvert democracy. *The Third Wave* concentrates on Asian capitalism, especially, but not solely, Japanese capitalism, and shows how it is affecting and may affect Australia in all these sectors.

David and Wheelwright quote Eric Ellis, of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, to illustrate how the activities of Harris Daishowa have influenced the political process in New South Wales: "The pro-logging war chest of the wood-chip support group is said to hold over \$200,000, when the Unsworth government stood for re-election last year on a conservationist ticket, the pro-logging war chest helped oust the district's three Labor MPs."

The threat posed to public education and health services by the wholesale adoption of *laissez faire* economic policies and the dangers to national sovereignty of uncontrolled foreign investment are demonstrated.

*The Third Wave* helps to elucidate the connections between the environment, capitalism and poverty; for example, Japan is conserving its own forests and cutting down ours—one might ask, "If we stop them cutting down our forests will they then go to Brazil?" Such a question is not explicitly asked in the book, but the very complexity of the problem and the many issues raised, prompts the reader to ask it. Similarly the reader may be tempted to admire the way Japanese companies are educating their workers, coordinating production and making information

available, but David and Wheelwright remind us that the Japanese are being educated to produce and consume (p. 126). Information industries are booming: one might be tempted to ask "Information about what?" While information technology can aid our understanding of the earth and point to ways of solving environmental problems, the uncritical acceptance of "information for information's sake" must be rejected. So must neglect of 'low-tech' solutions for environmental problems.

The connection between the information processing industry and increased paper use is brought out, but is this really a necessary connection? What happened to the 'paperless office'? David and Wheelwright later discuss unnecessary paper consumer products. I can only agree. David and Wheelwright argue convincingly that the environment, both natural and working, is a matter of concern for trade unions and that poverty of workers may force them to accept unsafe and environmentally unsound jobs and may force countries to accept polluting industries.

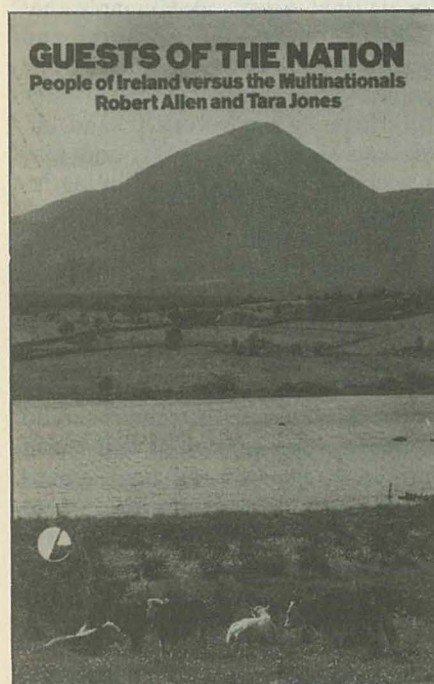
*The Third Wave* is written from a Trade Union perspective: it is the position of the worker, both Australian and Asian, which is the main concern. Although some forms of 'growth' are challenged—Australia should not become a quarry and Australians should not become the lackeys of rich Asian tourists—the general problem of world-wide pollution from humankind's use of resources is not addressed in any detail. However if we cannot control the activities of large capitalists within our borders, we cannot save our environment.

*The Third Wave* is not light reading, especially in the early chapters which deal with such subjects as the balance of payments, exports and foreign investments, but even these chapters are mostly comprehensible to people who have never studied economics and who skip the financial pages in the newspapers. In all, *The Third Wave* is a worthwhile book which raises many issues and helps to make us aware of the danger that international capitalism may cause us to lose control over our economy, political processes and environment.

Margaret Dingle is a writer who helps produce *Chain Reaction*.



# Reviews



## Guests of the Nation: The People of Ireland versus the Multinationals

By Robert Allen and Tara Jones, Earthscan Publications (through Australian Council for Overseas Aid, GPO Box 1562, Canberra, ACT, 2601), 310 pages, 1990, \$25.95

Reviewed by Ade Peace

During the late 1950s, the Irish government determined to economically modernize the country by adopting a concerted policy of "industrialization by invitation". Presently, after some three decades of this program being unswervingly adhered to, there are approximately 850 subsidiaries of foreign multinational companies operating in Ireland and employing well over one-third of the entire manufacturing labour force. In the collective judgement of the country's economic and political classes, the policy of placing industrialization in the hands of multinational enterprises has been an exceptional success so that, for example, it is frequently pointed out by appropriate spokesmen that in the 1970s and 1980s the Irish economy has grown and diversified at a faster rate than that of most other European countries.

In *Guests of the Nation* Allen and Jones detail the other side to this apparent success story, above all the exceptional costs which have been forced upon predominantly small and rural communities who have found themselves with an entirely novel and most unwelcome class of neighbours. For it is these communities which have suffered from the intense profiteering, the manipulation of political linkages, the indifference to health and safety standards, and the unashamed deceptions which have variously become the organizational hallmarks of metropolitan-based multinationals when located in underdeveloped, peripheral locations. Allen and Jones provide a number of thoroughly researched and carefully distilled case studies, commencing with the 1979 Bantry Bay disaster when an oil tanker exploded at Gulf Oil's Whiddy Island terminal, causing fifty lives to be lost and incalculable environmental damage.

The major chapters focus on how in the late 1970s and 1980s, mainly American pharmaceutical and mining

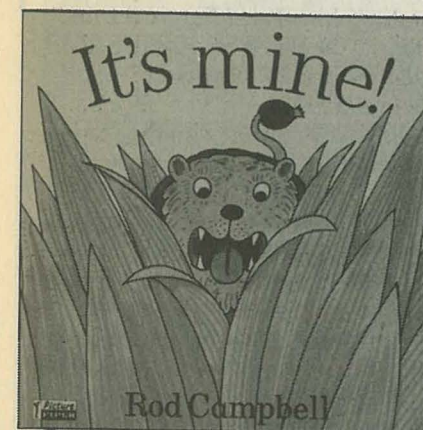
companies have consistently placed their concern for profit ahead of the interests and rights of nearby communities. Thus Merck, Sharpe and Dohme's chemical factory has had a disastrous impact on the livelihoods of farming neighbours in County Tipperary. Various mining companies — including Meekatharra Minerals — seeking lignite, gold and uranium in, amongst others, Counties Galway, Mayo and Donegal, not only destroy the local landscape but leave tailings to blow away as dust over farming terrain. Raybestos Manhattan attempts to dispose of its asbestos waste whenever and wherever (around west Cork) it can; and in east Cork, Merrel Dow, a subsidiary of the giant Dow Chemical empire, attempts to locate a pollution generating chemical factory in the midst of one of the most productive dairy farming areas in the Republic.

Regional bodies such as county councils have been left with the responsibility of policing the performances of such corporations; but for the greater part, economic resources and the political will have been notably lacking. Instead it is the local level action groups which have increasingly set about monitoring and questioning the performances if companies already in place, or sought to prevent their entry altogether into inappropriate locations. It is this dimension of *Guests of the Nation* which makes it essential reading for anyone involved in environmental politics, for the authors demonstrate exceptional skill in detailing the successes and failures of pressure groups generated from within afflicted communities.

The outstanding chapter of the book tracks the attempt by the government's Development Authority to establish a national toxic waste dump, only to be repeatedly challenged by one community after another. The energy, commitment and spirit of these ordinary folk throughout Ireland are qualities which Robert Allen and Tara Jones also bring to this splendid book. If in 1991 you read no other book on environmental politics outside Australia, read this one. It is extraordinarily good.

Ade Peace is a Chain Reaction reader.

These reviews were prepared by staff of the Thebarton Parent-Child Centre in Adelaide, South Australia, after consultation with the one to five year olds in their care. There will be more reviews next edition.



## It's Mine

By Rod Campbell, Picture Piper (Pan Books Ltd), 1990, \$7.95.

This is an appealing book for children aged from 2 – 4. It is a paperback with large print and strong coloured pictures.

This book holds children's interest because they are looking for something and then thinking of what it could be. The story is written to give children a hint of what the animal could be. At the same time it explains one characteristic of each animal. Nine different animals are looked at and it gives scope for reinforcing children's learning about animals and their habits. The pictures have clear simple outlines to distinguish shapes and the language is simple, with "It's mine" repeated. The story works up to a climax full of suspense, then leaves you with a game to play.

The book has a strong appeal to young children, individually or in a group.

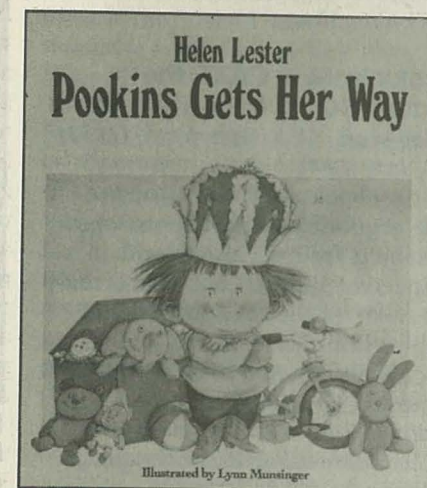


## Something Else

By Wendy Lohse, illustrated by Leigh Murrel, The Macmillan Company, 1989, \$16.99.

It's a story about curiosity, difference, acceptance and friendship. I like the way Bronwyn says: "I've got something else" when it's mentioned that she has no legs. This keeps the story interesting.

The illustrations use pastel colours, giving a soft look. It is suited for 4 – 10 year-old children.



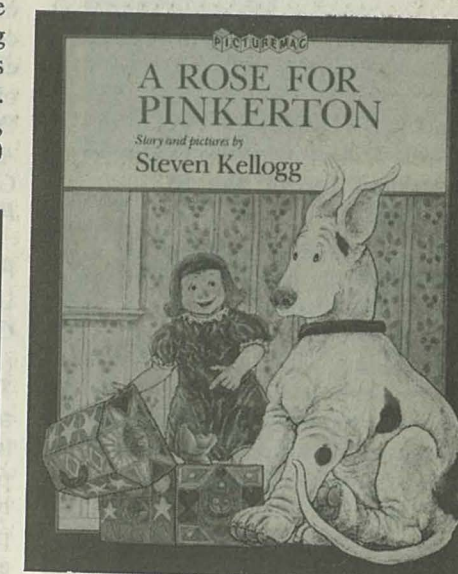
## Pookins Gets her Way

by Helen Lester, Macmillan Children's Books, 1987, \$16.95

A delightful book suitable for the up-to-five years age group. The illustrations are clear, well coloured and the story line has just the right amount of repetition that a child likes in a story.

Surely, Pookins started as a horrible little girl but good nature won the day. This story shows in a way easily understood by the littlies that getting one's own way doesn't always work for the best and that it's nice to be nice.

# Reviews – children's books



## A Rose for Pinkerton

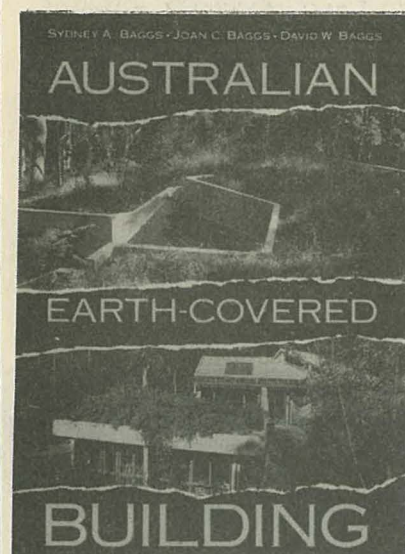
written and illustrated by Steven Kellogg, republished Macmillan Children's Books, 1990, \$7.99

This book seems to have a nice idea behind the story; however I feel Steven Kellogg didn't succeed in bringing it out in this book.

The book seems to rely on the illustrations, as there is little in the way of dialogue, yet the illustrations are too cluttered to be able to tell the story effectively. The characters of a great dane and a small kitten work together nicely but needed more development of their characters. At times the dialogue seems unsuited for pre-schoolers and it doesn't flow.



# Resources



## Australian Earth Covered Buildings

S. Baggs, J. Baggs, D. Baggs, NSW University Press, \$22.00, 1991.

A comprehensive and well illustrated reference book for builders, architects and students, which outlines the philosophy behind terratecture. It makes the case that earth covered buildings are more energy efficient, and less prone to damage from earthquake, wind and fire. A practical guide to building — covering regulations, site selection, etc.

Available from: NSW Uni Press, PO Box 1, Kensington, NSW 2033.

## The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty: A Critical Assessment

Michael Hamel Green, \$15, 196pp., 1990. This study critically assesses the limited and selective character of the SPNFZ Treaty which came into force in late 1986. It outlines how the Treaty allows various nuclear activities to continue and examines the Australian government's motivations in initiating the Treaty, and contains an extensive bibliography covering 36 pages.

Available from: Peace Research Centre, Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra, ACT, 2601.

## Global Warming in an Unequal World: A Case of Environmental Colonialism

A. Agarwal, S. Narain, Centre for Science and Environment, India, 36pp., January 1991.

This stimulating booklet presents the argument that the United Nations Environment Programme and World Resources Institute have spread disinformation about the contribution of developing countries to global warming. It argues that developing countries are liable for only 16 per cent of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, contrary to the claims of 48 per cent. Suggests a case of politics masquerading as science. Provides detailed statistical evidence. Available from: CSE, F-6, Kailash Colony, New Delhi-110048, India. Price on inquiry.

## Recolonisation: GATT, the Uruguay Round & the Third World

C. Raghavan, US\$19 (surface), US\$24 (air), June 1990. The only book available on the GATT trade negotiations which approaches the subject from a Third World perspective. It points out what is really at stake for the environment and people of the Third World, and makes a seemingly dry, and irrelevant subject accessible. Crucial reading.

Available from: Third World Network, 87 Cantonment Rd, 10250 Penang, Malaysia. Send bankdraft / international money order.

## Global Warming: Actions for Control — FOE Sydney Greenhouse Research Report No. 2

Ted Floyd, 24pp., \$4 (\$1 postage), 1990. Presents details of eight possible complementary strategies to combat the global warming. Appendices provide detailed calculations of the CO<sub>2</sub> reduction benefits from simple changes around the home — guaranteed to convince the hardened cynic.

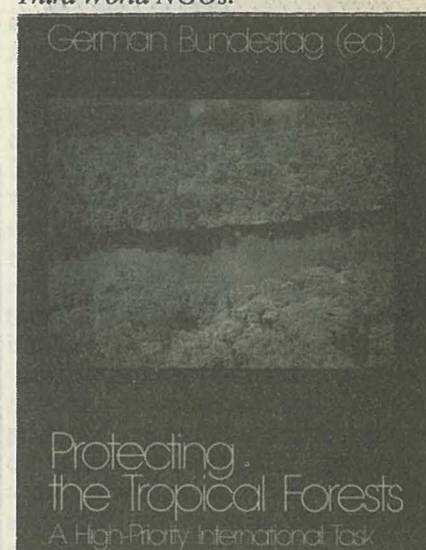
Available from: FoE Sydney, PO Box A474, Sydney, NSW 2001.

## What Works : A Bibliography of Apparent Success Stories in Environmental Management

Compiled by Susan Noalani Terry, World Resources Institute, Jan. 1991.

A working bibliography which focuses on case studies from developing countries since 1985. It includes some examples of failure that are useful as discussions of criteria for viable projects.

Available from: World Resources Institute, 1709 New York Ave. NW, Washington DC 20006, USA. Free to Third World NGOs.

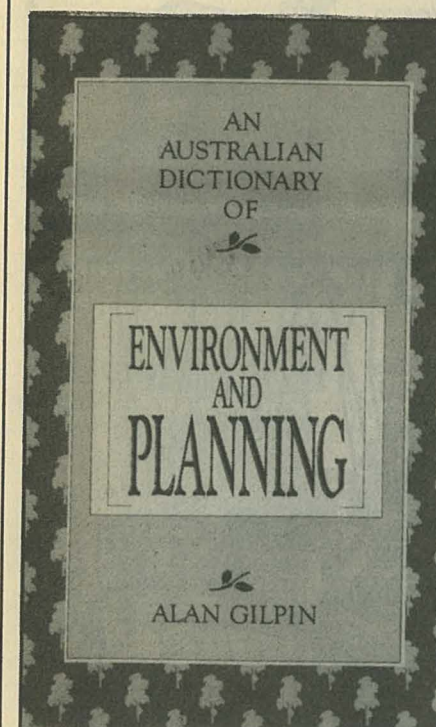


## Protecting the Tropical Forests: A High Priority International Task.

German Bundestag (ed.), 1990, 968pp., (pb).

This lengthy government report contains the usual scenario of dissenting reports, however, in contrast to the usual turgid format, it is well laid out with excellent colour illustrations, charts and diagrams. It gives much information not widely available elsewhere, such as charts giving the composition of the ITTO (International Tropical Timber Organisation), and the internal organisation of the UNEP and World Bank. It has a massive bilingual bibliography.

ISBN. 3-924521-62-X.



## An Australian Dictionary of Environment and Planning

Alan Gilpin, Oxford University Press, 271 pp. (hb), \$60, 1990.

This dictionary has more than 1000 entries with 24 tables and 41 drawings. It contains definitions of environmental terms and terms of interest to environmentalists, from algicide to Windscale. Australian government environment and planning bodies are listed and explained. Major overseas environmental disasters and international bodies and conferences are included. It has a useful list of all relevant Commonwealth, State, and Territorial legislation and an extensive bibliography covering 40 different subject areas.

## Lessons of the Rainforest

Ed. Suzanne Head, Robert Heinzman, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, US\$14.95 (pb), 1990.

This book contains 24 papers dealing with the issue from a variety of perspectives — economic, biological, ecological, legal, activist, and anthropological, by leading commentators such as Bruce Rich, Vananda Shiva and Frances Moore Lappé. ISBN 0-87156-682-6.

## Scratch! A Scrapbook of Radical Cartooning in Australia

Edited Heinrich Hinze, 36pp. \$4 per issue, (biannual).

A magazine for cartoonists who draw cartoons for the peace and environment, womens' and gay liberation movements, aboriginal movement, solidarity organisations, workers in struggle, community health and welfare organisations. It is a good way to get in touch with cartoonists and contains recent examples of cartoonists' work, articles and interviews.

Available from: Labour Studies Resource Centre, GPO Box 498, Adelaide, SA, 5001.

## Films and Videos for a Sustainable World :

The Video Project, 1991.

The latest catalogue from this non-profit organisation contains 40 new releases, and lists 130 films on critical global environmental issues. It includes a 22-video set of post-Glasnost documentaries, including uncensored comment on the state of the environment in the Soviet Union.

Available from: 5332 College Ave., Suite 101, Oakland, CA 94618, USA.

## Green Revolutions: Environmental Reconstruction in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union

Hilary French, Worldwatch Paper No.99, Worldwatch Institute, Washington DC, USA, 62pp., US\$4/£2.75, November 1990.

This is a collation of information on the state of the environment in the Eastern Bloc and makes the predictable suggestion that the only solution to the appalling environmental problems of the region is a dose of free market economic policy. ISBN 1-878071-00-9.

## Global Forest Resources

Alexander Mather, Belhaven Press, London, 341pp., £29.95 (hb).

A comprehensive and scholarly overview of the state of the world's forests, this book is written from a historical and geographical perspective and rejects the view that forest management is a purely technical issue. It stresses that the solutions lie in the areas of politics and economics.

ISBN 1-85293-055-1

## Australian Rainforest Memorandum

Ed. Rainforest Information Centre, Inc., 36pp., \$7.00 (inc. postage), March 1991.

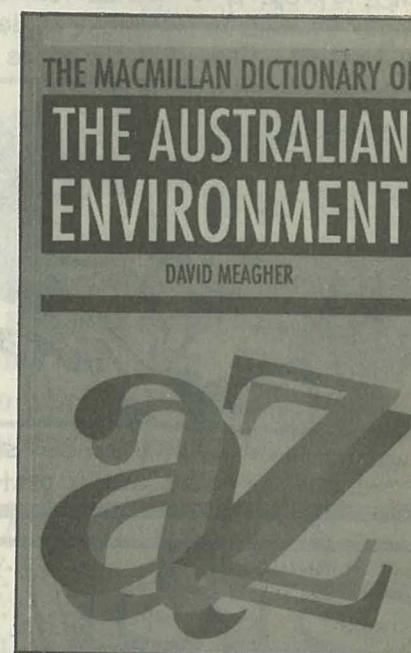
Endorsed by 36 organisations, this concise document comprehensively details Australia's involvement in rainforest destruction. It makes a large number of positive recommendations to government about what should be done. Well referenced, it puts the guttiest arguments all in one place, and should prove an invaluable aid for anyone campaigning on behalf of the rainforests.

Available from: RIC, PO Box 368, Lismore, NSW 2480. Cheaper price for bulk copies.

## Once is Not Enough: A Recycling Policy for FoE UK

45pp., 1990.

This document clearly yet briefly lists the present options, and answers. It gives useful UK figures on percentages recycled relative to other nations. Available from: FoE UK Publications Dept., 26 Underwood St, London N1 7JQ, England.



## The Macmillan Dictionary of the Australian Environment

David Meagher, 366pp., \$29.95, 1991.

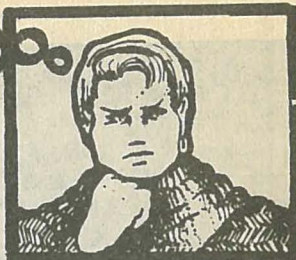
Printed on recycled paper, the dictionary contains more items (6000) than the above, more briefly explained. The emphasis is more scientific and less on government bodies and schemes with the focus on the natural environment.



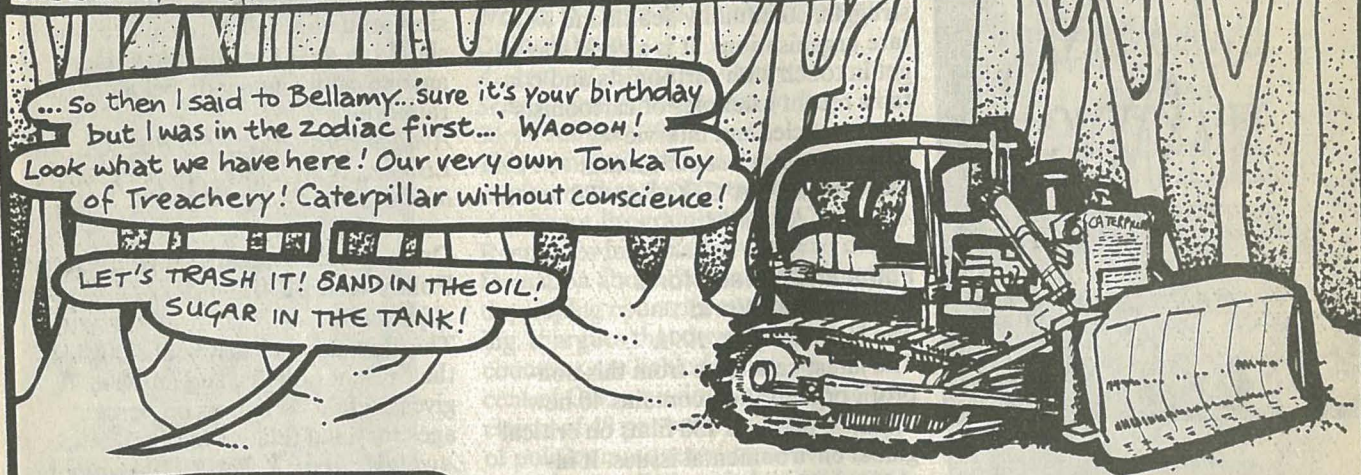
Non-violent Action? Violent Non-Action? Active Non-Violence...  
oh! the perils of an eco-political vocabulary...sigh...

# Sweet Wilderness Blues

An analysis of the inherent violence of sugar



ONE EVENING IN 1984, SOMEWHERE NEAR THE RAGING MAJESTY OF THE FRANKLIN RIVER...



...So then I said to Bellamy..sure it's your birthday  
but I was in the zodiac first... WAOOOH!  
Look what we have here! Our very own Tonka Toy  
of Treachery! Caterpillar without conscience!

LET'S TRASH IT! BAND IN THE OIL!  
SUGAR IN THE TANK!



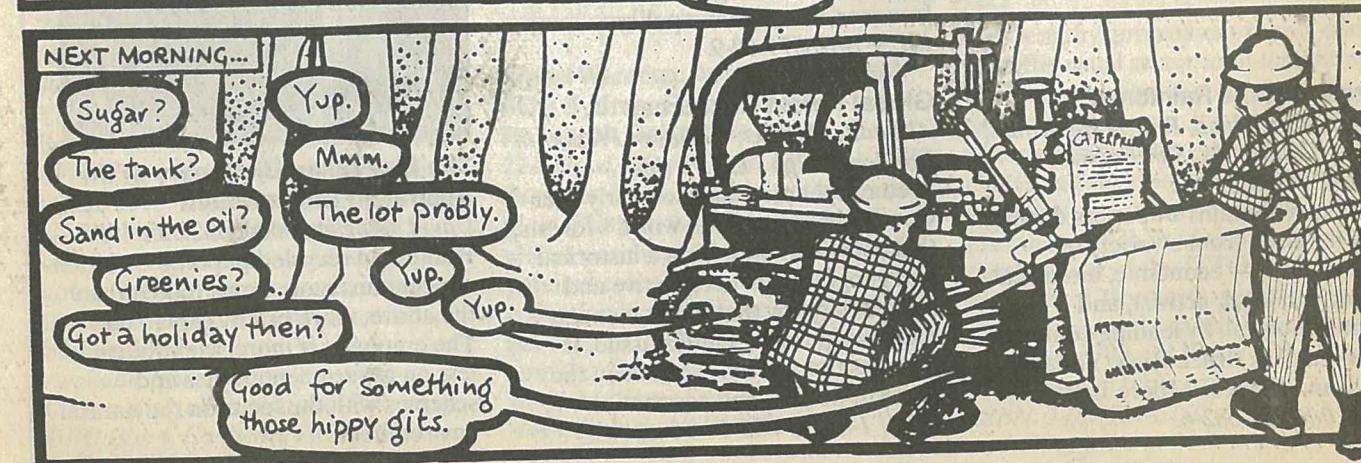
No man don't play their games.  
Violence to property is violence. Your bag  
of sugar becomes an implement of destruction...  
& we haven't liaised with the police yet...

What!? Property is theft!  
Police are pigs & this property  
will plough through untouched  
wilderness tomorrow!

Okay! Okay boys!  
Let's sprinkle sugar around  
the tank. Surely sprinkling  
isn't violent & I'd like a sweet  
& peaceful cup of tea back  
at base camp.

Maybe we could tie my rainbow scarf  
to the bullbar as a symbolic gesture?

Maybe we could tie you  
to the bullbar in a symbolic  
gesture.



NEXT MORNING...

Sugar? Yup.  
The tank? Mmm.  
Sand in the oil? The lot probly.  
Greenies? Yup.  
Got a holiday then? Yup.

Good for something  
those hippy gits.

KATHLEEN MC CANN 1991



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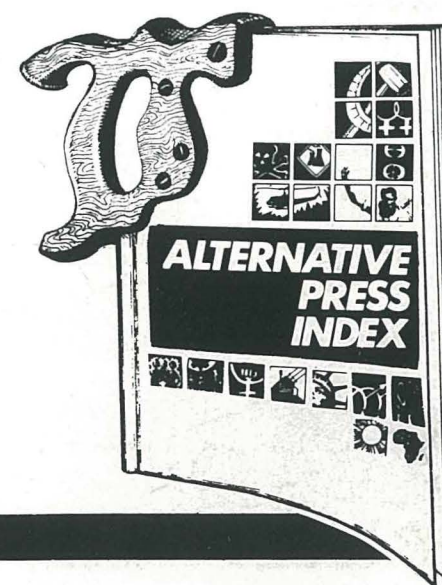
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LEADING ENVIRONMENTAL  
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Note: Due to the expensive bank commission levy on overseas cheques, please try to send all payment to us by BANK DRAFT/INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDER.

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