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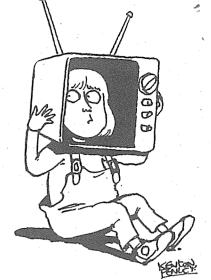
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Chain Reaction

Number 65 March 1



18 The Federal EPA

EPAs are nearly here – many agencies, but how much environment protection? *Rob Fowler* and *Paul Rutherford* look at the way things are shaping up.

23 Development, democracy and the MFP Ade Peace read at least 800 pages on the MFP, and is still left with unanswered questions.

27 How was AIDEX?

Louise Macdonald was asked so many times, she's put it down in writing. Meanwhile Bill Williams was inside having a guided tour with one of the exhibition organisers.

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A team of people seeking peace can still have much on which to disagree. *Liz Denham* reports on life among the lines.

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Publisher: Friends of the Earth, Chain Reaction Co-operative Ltd, GPO Box 90, Adelaide, SA, 5001. Editors: Clare Henderson and Larry O'Loughlin. Production: Margaret Dingle, Vicki and also Maggie Hine, Danny Brown Front and rear covers: Artwork by Barbary O'Brien, printing by Andrew McHugh on the Empire Times Press Reprographics: Andrew McHugh Printing: Cadillac Color Web Paper: Reright 80 gsm (100% recycled, de-inked) Ink: Black, soya bean-based

Correspondence: Chain Reaction, GPO Box 90, Adelaide, SA, 5001. Tel. and facs.: (08) 293 8535. E-mail on pegasus – peg:chain.

Registered as a periodical category 'B' by Australia Post No VBQ 2034

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Chain Reaction is indexed in the Alternative Press Index.

The opinions expressed in Chain Reaction are not necessarily those of the publisher or any Friends of the Earth group.

group. ISSN 0312-1372.

Recommended retail price \$3.00.

Letters



Greenpeace reply to 'Hazel Notion'

All at Greenpeace took strong exception to Hazel Notion's article, 'Greenpeace – getting a piece of the green action' (Chain Reaction 63/64). This is the level of debate we would expect from a right wing think tank like the Institute of Public Affairs, not from a supposedly experienced political activist or a magazine that purports to support environmental issues and campaigns.

Greenpeace took exception to the article on two grounds. Firstly, the attitude that Greenpeace was adopting a 'business as usual' approach to campaigning and, secondly, the astounding level of factual inaccuracy contained within the article. Before addressing these inaccuracies a few general comments.

An experienced political activist knows that anyone who makes allegations of the nature of Hazel's has no credibility if they do not have the courage to support those allegations in person; not via pseudonym. The use of a pseudonym is a cowardly way of making statements that are supposedly based

in fact but on which the author cannot be directly challenged. At Greenpeace we have always been of the belief that one of the major philosophies behind activism is that one must stand up and be counted and have faith in what you believe and stand by those beliefs even in the face of adversity, ridicule or censure.

Hazel's unwillingness to do so is comment enough on the depth of his or her commitment to activism. A second general com-

ment is that I am astounded that the editors of Chain Reaction were prepared to. print such an article without one single attempt to clarify some of the supposed facts. This is by no means to suggest that they should have taken any responsibility for the opinions expressed by Hazel. There is however, a responsibility upon editors to ensure that the material printed in their publications is factually correct, particularly when they choose to print articles by anonymous authors. Many of Hazel's facts were wrong and a simple phone call would easily have clarified this situation.

Now to the article itself. The following comments do not, unfortunately, deal with all the issues arising from the article that Greenpeace believes need to be addressed. To do so would require significantly more space than is available. The following addresses what we saw as some of the more serious issues.

The article suggests that Greenpeace has become 'soft', that we support a 'business as usual' ap-

proach to society. If the concepts of zero pollution, clean production, the creation of a World Park for Antarctica, the stopping of uranium mining in Australia, international nuclear disarmament. dramatic reductions in the emissions of Greenhouse gases leading to the phaseout of fossil fuel usage, restoring the ozone layer, the prevention of future offshore oil exploration in Australia, (and the list goes on), are symbolic of a 'business as usual' approach to both campaigning and the environment, then the author has a very different definition from Greenpeace of 'business as usual'.

Hazel seems to believe that Greenpeace is involved in environmental activism purely for the purpose of making more money, to get bigger, to promote Greenpeace more effectively, to make more money and so the cycle goes on. But let us examine the sense of this and try to understand why Hazel would have such an opinion.

Greenpeace is a large successful international environmental and peace organisation. The reason for our existence is to preserve the environment and species that inhabit planet earth. In an attempt to ensure that Greenpeace Australia is effective in our attempt to meet these goals Greenpeace Australia approached Greenpeace International in Amsterdam and asked for help in 1989 to restructure our national office and make us more effective in the environmental battle we all faced as we entered the nineties. Steve McAllister was asked to

come and he agreed. It was not, as Hazel suggests, that Greenpeace United States forced McAllister on an unwilling Greenpeace Australia.

There were a number of references in the article to Steve McAllister's personal financial situation and the salary package that he received while in Australia. I fail to see how these issues are anything but his own personal business, but to set the record straight the following is the correct account.

Whilst employed by Greenpeace Australia, Mc-Allister received a salary of \$45,000 Australian and a Holden station wagon. This salary package was equal to or less than that paid for equivalent positions in at least two other major environment organisations in Australia. The McAllister family rented a large and run down house which was due for demolition, for the eleven months that they were in Australia. This accommodation was not paid for by Greenpeace but by them personally. Greenpeace rented one room in the house for the use of international Greenpeace visitors to Australia. The house was shared with a number of other people and some of them still live there.

Concerning his personal assets, he and his wife own an organic fruit farm that is fully operational as a farm. The farm is their family home, there is no 'high density residential development' and there were never any plans for such. Upon leaving Australia, Steve became the Deputy Executive

Director of Greenpeace International, which is based in Amsterdam. He has recently resigned this position to return to the United States and run the farm.

It is an extraordinary invasion of privacy that someone's personal and financial situation should be discussed as it was in the pages of *Chain Reaction*. That the details should be so appallingly incorrect, only adds insult to injury.

It would appear that Hazel, the so called 'experienced political activist', does not approve of direct action, especially if it is effective. Direct action has been a fundamental part of Greenpeace since its inception in 1971 and something that we make no apologies about. On the contrary, we are extremely proud of the environmental gains that non-violent direct action has achieved. For Greenpeace it is about 'bearing witness' to environmental

wrongs and attempting to stop them whenever possible. The choice of issue and timing is dictated by environmental pressures and an analysis of whether a direct action or some other form of campaigning is the best approach to take at the time.

Hazel claims that one complaint levelled at Greenpeace is that we don't have the commitment to follow issues to a conclusion. S/he however provides no details of from whom such complaints have come. Greenpeace on the other hand, can identify scores of community groups that we are currently, and have previously, worked with to the successful completion of an issue.

The next complaint was that Greenpeace uses 'canvassers' who doorknock and 'ask for donations and sell subscriptions' and are then paid 40 per cent of what

they raise. (Hazel's comments imply that canvassers shouldn't be paid. I'm sure that if they were unpaid Hazel would be up in arms about slave labour! It is a case of damned if you do and damned if you don't.)

Canvassers are an extremely valuable part of every Greenpeace campaign. They are environmental ambassadors who promote awareness of environmental issues throughout Australia. Greenpeace considers that getting out into the community and talking personally to people who have little direct contact with our issues is a critical and valuable part of environmental work. We also value the people who do this difficult and demanding work and, yes, we pay them for it. We don't believe that the long-tried political approach of sitting around feeling warm and pure and talking to each other is a

very effective way of changing the world!

Hazel, it seems, is confused. S/he states on one hand that if Greenpeace receives information from canvassers about an issue of environmental concern amongst the public then 'this may lead to Greenpeace adopting the relevant cause'. However, in the very next paragraph Hazel says the 'most cited criticism of Greenpeace is the centralism of power, the old boy promotion network [a comment that many members of staff found somewhat sexist] and the rigid bureaucratic authority structure'. Now Hazel, you can't have it both ways; either Greenpeace is rigid and bureaucratic or it will pick up an issue of concern among the general public and campaign on it. But it would seem that we couldn't be both.

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Letters



For reasons known only to him or herself, Hazel seems far more concerned with spending time writing articles that promote divisions within the environment movement. Hardly, one would have thought, the sort of thing on which someone concerned about political activism would be interested in spending their time.

has been on the far right

hand side of the political

fence.

Hazel, next time you want to write such an article may I suggest that you take the time to research it properly and that you pick a target that enhances your goals and aims for the world. But then again, maybe you did.

Paul Gilding, Executive Director, Greenpeace Australia.

Let's hear it from the workers

Well, imagine our surprise to learn that our employment at Greenpeace Australia was due to the fact that we were 'better suited to the new conservative and bureaucratic requirements' of GP OZ (Chain Reaction 63/64).

Gee, and we thought that our history of working in the trade union movement, anti-racist groups, the public housing lobby and other radical social change groups might have had just a little to do with our being here at Greenpeace. Just goes to show how wrong you can be!

Seriously though, folks, the article printed in the last edition of *Chain Reaction* was extremely nasty, bitter even, and in our opinion does not come close to reflecting the reality of Greenpeace Australia. If it did we would not be here.

would not be here.

What the article did was try to undermine the work of us here at Greenpeace who, in common with the rest of the green movement, are committed to working long hours to protect the planet and effect real social changes. To us personally the article was insulting and upsetting.

The fact that such an article appears in a journal like *Chain Reaction* at a time when Greenpeace Australia is under severe attack from companies like BHP and Nufarm and individuals like Peter Walsh and Arvi Parbo is at best disappointing and at worst makes us wonder what were the intentions of the editors.

We don't believe in shying away from open and

honest critical debate, and for this reason were especially disheartened that the article was published under a pseudonym. Why isn't the author prepared to stand up and defend his/her personal views? It's cowardly, and taken to a logical extreme, begs the question; 'Was Arvi Parbo the author?'. If the author is not Arvi and Hazel Notion is, as the byline states, an experienced political activist then one might imagine that s/he would respect the long held traditions in the social change movement for openness and honesty in criticism.

Greenpeace is not a perfect organisation. Like all groups working to achieve radical social change we do make mistakes and there is certainly room for improvement both in our organisation and in our campaigning work. But to suggest as Hazel does that we are of the business-as-usual-school of light green greenies is untrue. Greenpeace is not a grass-roots organisation, but works closely with many. We believe we occupy an essential niche in a range of environmental activism, especially in terms of our commitment to direct action, and after many years of trial and error, some pretty well honed media skills.

In the last couple of years we have widened our work and are now making a concerted effort to deal effectively with the concerns of the trade union movement and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, two sections of society the green movement, including Greenpeace, have a not very proud history of dealing with. We have also made a real attempt to improve our relationship and work with local groups and we enjoy a good working relationship with such groups across the length of Australia.

In short we at Greenpeace are not corporate careerist yuppies but activists who come from disparate backgrounds but who all share a desire to work together and with others to protect our planet.

Ultimately, it's disappointing to be attacked on the basis of a lot of rumourmongering and assertion ... those very activities of which the 'forces of darkness' accuse all of the environment movement, and the very activities we should take absolute care to avoid.

Meanwhile, there's a planet to save and, despite the best efforts of the Parbos, Walshes and, it seems, the 'Notions', we at Greenpeace intend to continue working hard and effectively to this end.

Lynette Thorstensen & Alastair Harris, Greenpeace Australia.

You are invited to write 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. Fax: (08) 293 8535.

Politics of manipulation

Thank you for your feature on 'Corruption in the environment movement' (Chain Reaction 63/64). I was particularly tickled by Tim Doyle's article, as it once again confirmed all my prejudices about élite groups and the ALP.

Indeed, this is stuff
people ought to know. It illustrates just how a politics
of manipulation can operate,
and can appear to succeed
in the short term.

I share Tim's belief that, in the long run, such a politics will weaken the 'organised movement', making it narrower, shallower, and less able to resist the economic rationalist approach to conservation. An increasingly pervasive P.R. campaign to 'privatise' environmental controls is already under way.

The question, I suppose, is what to do about it. I don't believe confrontation is in order.

For one thing, to somehow fight for 'control' of the existing organisations from within would invite bitter recriminations, ugly scenes, hysteria, burn-out, and probable destruction of the goal anyway. This has been my past experience with the ALP, and other technocratic élites.

All my own experience and reading leads me to believe that 'real' long-lasting power is to be had through grass roots organising (as distinct from organisations), which can take place under even the most adverse circumstances.

For example, even in the horribly technocratic office of the Wilderness Society in Brisbane, grassroots action groups form and reform as 'need' arises. Here, people are empowered, and cast their awareness much further afield than any office, political party or élite preferences. I only worked with one such group, the Brisbane Rainforest Action Group, around the blockade of logging on Fraser Island. So perhaps my experience isn't representative.

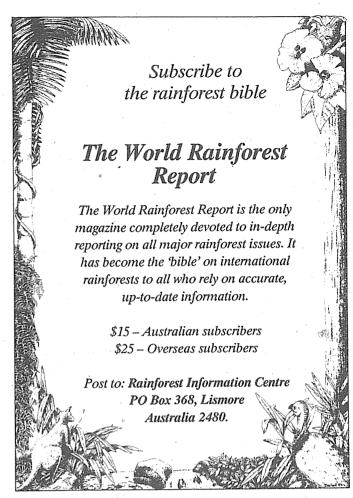
This group had visions of how the world should be, and were looking for their own ways to make it happen. They felt able to refuse suggestions by TWS and ACF leaders to 'postpone' NVDA for a year or so, and they eventually succeeded in laying down an extensive and effective blockade which, for a few weeks, stopped all logging activity on the island.

I watch some people in the environment movement, taking up the weapons of power politics – over-simplifying issues, creating false dichotomies, seeking glossy photo-opportunities – and apparently looking towards a glorious future of 'eco-fascism' (with themselves on the Board of Directors).

Sometimes I find it hard not to despair when I think of all the resources and labour going into an electoral strategy I believe is wrong, based on issues I believe are right.

So the more direct community power we build now, the better off we will be in future. Even if 'we're' the ones who are wrong, I don't think we can do too much harm with such a strategy.

Brian Law, Malanda, Queensland.



Greenword solution 63/64

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Letters



... and one from Jon West

Tim Doyle's nasty allegations against The Wilderness Society, in 'Corruption in the Environment Movement' (Chain Reaction 63/64), are wrong in both fact and interpretation.

It is a gross exaggeration to assert that the 'voluntary membership was quite shocked' by the Society's decision to support the ALP and had not been consulted. While it was inevitable that some members would disagree with the choice, the decision was supported by the vast majority of The Wilderness Society. It was taken after an extensive formal and informal decisionmaking process.

Tim Doyle is the only person I know of who believes The Wilderness Society's leadership is 'intensely Labor Party oriented'. I doubt even Robin Gray would agree with Tim on that one. Of the nine 'key individuals' he lists, only one, maybe two, have ever been associated with the Labor Party. None could be described as 'intensely oriented' to the ALP and none were currently active in the ALP in 1987. Certainly the Labor Party

leadership at the time did not regard either the Wilderness Society or ACF as the least bit 'ALP oriented'.

It is not true that environmentalists have 'seldom' backed political parties. Offering electoral support is an established tactic. Environmental groups have repeatedly supported various candidates and parties when it advanced our cause. A notable example was the highly successful, and virtually unanimous, support by hundreds of groups across the country for the Democrats and ALP in the 1983 election (when the Franklin River faced destruction).

No 'trade-offs' or 'deals' were made between the ALP and the environmental organisations. Tim offers not a shred of evidence for this assertion. This is an important clarification because a 'trade-off' suggests that environmentalists gave away something to conclude a deal. I ask Tim to specify: Which wilderness areas or other conservation issues did the environmental leaders sacrifice in this alleged 'trade-off'? The answer is: none. There was no such 'deal'.

In reality, the process leading to the decision was quite open. The Government considered and then announced its policy on the major environmental issues (certainly with considerable input from many conservationists). Environmentalists saw that the policy was sharply superior to the Liberals' alternative, and, after much discussion, decided to support it. Unfortunately for those who

like to see conspiracies, it was as simple as that.

No gifts of either money or free advertising were accepted by The Wilderness Society (or to my knowledge any other environmental group) from the Bond Corporation during the 1987 federal election. This claim is simply false. Nor was the content of the Wilderness Society's advertising in any way influenced by anyone associated with Channel 9. We did, however, receive several calls from a rather anxious Channel 9 advertising-account executive wanting his bills paid.

The Wilderness Society paid for its advertising with donations; a couple of large ones from wealthy supporters and many small ones from less-wealthy backers. (One of the wealthy sympathisers was Richard Farmer, no doubt considered a highly suspicious character by Tim Doyle because he was a friend of, and occasional adviser to, Bob Hawke. I'll now let Tim into a 'secret': Farmer had in the past made other donations to The Wilderness Society, including some wine for a raffle. Shall we look forward to a thorough investigation of this 'corruption' as well?)

Much of Tim's conspiracy theory seems based on the fact that I had worked briefly for Environment Minister Barry Cohen before becoming TWS director. Tim implies that I was some kind of ALP hatchet man sent into the environment movement to secure its support. Unfortunately, Tim either did not know, or conveniently ignored, the fact that I had worked with The Wilderness Society and ACF for years before becoming Cohen's environmental adviser. In the light of events both at the time and subsequently, to suggest that the ALP-environment movement link is strongest in my home state of Tasmania is

truly laughable!

The Wilderness Society did not drop arguments about aesthetics and spirituality, nor science and economics, when it intervened in the election. As all who saw our publicity will remember, these remained the centre of our campaign.

I am reminded of a comment made some years ago by Lech Walesa. Walesa recalled that - contrary to popular belief - his most stressful battles had not been against Moscow's tanks and Warsaw's Stalinists, but with extremists within Solidarity, his own movement. The hotheads refused to be satisfied with anything less than permanent confrontation, regardless of whether such conflict helped or hindered Solidarity.

These internal disputes were especially tiring because they too often cross the threshold from legitimate discussion of ends, means, and tactics, to become slanging matches about the personal morality and lovalty of individuals. Walesa himself was repeatedly accused of having 'sold out' (given in to 'corruption') because he sometimes counselled compromise and creative tactics.

Unfortunately, Tim
Doyle has crossed this
threshold. His venomous
tone and disregard of truth

introduces a style of debate that environmentalists have tried to avoid.

The overwhelmingly important fact is that the Wet Tropical Rainforests are now safe from the chainsaws. This is because the ALP – not the Liberals – won the election. In his fruitless quest for non-existent 'corruption', Tim disregards that vital reality. Nonetheless, it remains the only reason environmentalists backed Labor in 1987.

Jonathon West Former Director The Wilderness Society.

Editor's response

There were other letters in response to the 'Corruption' articles, and we're sorry we haven't the space for all of them, or for all our replies, but we will reply briefly to criticisms of the editors.

Chain Reaction aims to

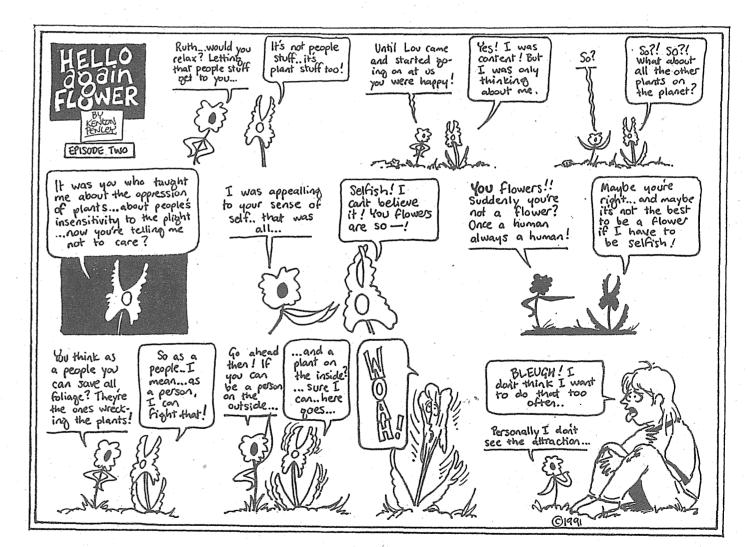
encourage debate on important issues and there will sometimes be unpopular articles. If there are, however, any sacred cows in the environment movement, we do not know what or who they are, and would welcome suggestions. We do not edit the substantial opinions out of articles we publish, even if

we don't agree with them.

We do not contact every organisation we mention, whether to verify facts or not, because of the potential for inordinate pressure on us not to print. As it stands, the facts in the article and the Gilding response are very similar. The divergencies are between the facts according to Gilding and statements attributed to the former Executive Director, which Gilding cannot say were never made because he was not always at McAllister's side.

There are problems for editors in publishing work written under a pseudonym. We published, in this case,

because it was referred to us by someone we respect and trust, it had already appeared in another journal and it did raise some of the many issues about Greenpeace which deserve an airing. Hazel's choice of anonymity may have been wise for Hazel, given the threats that followed, but, sadly, it allowed the use of diversionary tactics such as the suggestion that it's all a Right Wing plot. Chain Reaction is not involved in any such conspiracy, but, at the same time, it should not be expected to sit on issues while waiting for the Right to go quiet.



We have been quite busy since the last Chain Reaction, and the pressures of life conspired to force us to prioritize making a living for a while. It would be nice, but not likely, for Chain Reaction to be able to pay its editors a living wage, allowing them the time to concentrate on the administration and production of the magazine. Money is necessary in our society and it is currently difficult for

LINE SHOT We found this artwork while sorting through old Chain Reaction files, in an effort to fit everything into our new and smaller office. We don't know when it was produced, but it's obviously a fantasy someone had

ELCOME to another issue of Chain Reaction. It's been so long since the last one that we have included a Backstage, to let you know some of the things that have been happening behind the scenes in the production of the magazine, and perhaps make some tentative predictions for the fu-

many of us to get adequate quantities of it, but we have tried by taking short term and part time work and chasing full time work. This erratic type of living has made it difficult to plan issues of Chain Reaction, and they do need a lot of planning and preparation.

that there would still be milk bottles around in 1992.

We talked about this situation at the annual meeting of Friends of the Earth Australia, and received support and understanding. We, Clare Henderson and Larry O'Loughlin, were again elected as editors, and a number of measures were proposed to assist Chain Reaction to come out more frequently and regularly, without overloading or overlooking the editors.

One proposal was that guest editors be used to produce a substantial portion of the magazine. In most cases, the guest editors would solicit, edit and find graphical material for many or all of the major articles in an issue (usually twenty to thirty pages), and the regular editors would prepare Letters, Earth News, FOE News, Reviews, Resources and other 'regulars' such as the back page cartoon, Hello Flower and Greenword.

This will be trialled with the next issue, when FOE Nouveau, the Adelaide-based Friends of the Earth group, will be guest editors in conjunction with the Eco City 2 conference to be held in Adelaide in April 1992.

We will also be approaching other people to do some of the hard work of gathering appropriate, stimulating articles for other editions during the year. It should be very interesting and will, hopefully, reduce some of the workload on the regular editors.

Friends of the Earth groups also promised to provide more material to the magazine, not just about things they have been doing or strictly local issues, but also contacts with good writers on interesting subjects.

We editors will also try to stabilise and secure our own incomes. This is not entirely up to us, as we are part of an economy which is not very successful at providing for everyone's needs. But we have to try as it will assist us to bring out Chain Reaction regularly.

The Chain Reaction office has moved to make it more convenient for the editors, and we have a new, combined telephone and fax number: (08) 293 8535, though bear with us if there are problems getting through. You will usually be able to leave a message if there is no-one in the office. Our postal address remains the same: GPO Box 90, Adelaide, SA, 5001.

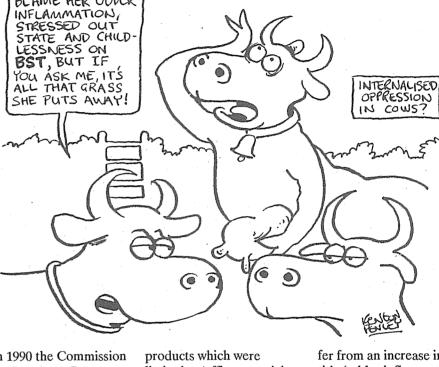
Earth News

Cows, people and BST

It appears that a decision has been made that genetically engineered agricultural microbes will be assessed for commercial application through existing controls, despite a lack of public consultation as to whether this is an appropriate regulatory structure.

It is likely that Bovine Somatotropin (BST), a genetically engineered growth hormone designed to increase milk production of cows, is being assessed for use in Australia. The Australian Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Council, in the Federal Department for Primary Industries refuses to deny or confirm that BST is currently undergoing a 'clearance' process under the Agricultural and Veterinary Chemicals Act 1988. If cleared by the Council, BST could then be registered for commercial use.

BST is being promoted by Monsanto, American Cyanamid, Eli Lilly and Upjohn Company. It is unclear which of these companies is seeking clearance for BST in Australia. Yet these companies are having difficulty finding a market for BST.



In 1990 the Commission of the European Communities placed a moratorium on the use of growth hormones, including BST, and it has been extended for another two years until the end of 1993.

The rationale for the

SHE'S TRYING TO

BLAME HER UDDER

moratorium was the lack of adequate data on the socioeconomic, ecological and health effects of growth hormones. Part of the debate surrounds the concept of the 'fourth hurdle' which brings in questions such as the 'need' for the product as well as the traditional questions applying to the registration of agricultural

limited to 'efficacy, toxicity and safety'.

BST has been equally controversial in the United States, and is currently under review by the Federal Food and Drug Administration and its use is outlawed in several US States.

Given the restrictions on the use of BST in the United States and Europe, the companies with an interest in BST are conducting field trails and promoting the sale of BST in the third world.

BST increases milk yields by 10 to 25 per cent – yet cows injected with BST suffer from an increase in mastitis (udder inflammation), decreased fertility and signs of stress. There are also concerns that BST will wipe out the small dairy industry and the debate rages as to whether it poses adverse health risks to humans.

Given the controversial nature of BST, and genetic engineering in general, it would seem that any consideration of its use in Australia should be fully and publicly debated.

Source: Genewatch, March 1991; RAFI Communique, October 1990; New Scientist, 2 December 1989.

Earth News

The closed doors of genetic engineering

Genetic engineering is rapidly moving from laboratory research to deliberate experimental releases and into commercial production, yet there are currently no specific laws in place to govern these developments nor is the public being kept informed.

It is expected that the House of Representatives Inquiry into Genetically Modified Organisms, due to report in March 1992, will recommend a legislative approach to the operation of genetic engineering in Australia.

Currently the regulation of genetic research and development is guided by a series of non-statutory guidelines prepared by the Genetic Manipulation Advisory Committee (GMAC) which are adhered to on a voluntary basis by genetic engineers.

Yet the Chairperson of GMAC, Nancy Millis, believes that the current voluntary guidelines are adequate and that safety has not been compromised. At a conference on biotechnology in February 1992, she said, 'In the face of this record over 10 years, why legislate? It's a case of - if

it ain't broke, don't fix it'. She also believes that tighter laws would hinder the ability of this new industry to compete in the world marketplace.

The work of GMAC.

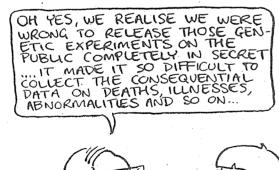
however, has been predominantly concerned with small scale research activities. Even at this level there are doubts about the effectiveness of the voluntary system. There are currently 1,283 'small scale' genetic engineering research projects underway in Australia and most of these are conducted within the confines of the laboratory. Some, however, require the experimental release of genetically engineered organisms to the environment. Eleven such releases have been approved by GMAC.

Although GMAC provides advice on appropriate safety measures. researchers are under no obligation to follow the advice provided. Nor is there any requirement that the public be informed of these releases. There is also concern that planned releases are occurring without the advice of GMAC. In 1990 genetically engineered pigs were sold for human consumption without GMAC authorisation and it is rumoured that an experimental release took place at Murdoch University without approval. The Chairperson of the BIOSAFE Committee at Murdoch refused to comment on whether this occurred, or acknowledge that all work conducted at Murdoch has occurred in accordance with GMAC guidelines.

Another area of concern with GMAC guidelines is those which relate to 'large scale proposals' which generally means industrial scale production. The GMAC Guidelines covering such proposals provides for the discharge of genetically engineered material into the sewerage system. The 1990/91 Annual Report of GMAC states that it has assessed four 'large scale proposal's'. No information is available to the public on these proposals as they are classified as 'Commercial-

Source: GMAC 1990/91 Annual Report; Australian, 5 February 1992.

in-Confidence'.







Genethics Network

In an effort to increase public debate on genetic engineering the ACF has established an 'Australian Genethics Network'. The network will work to link all those who want to debate and resolve genetic engineering issues in the public interest. Through the network ACF will be producing a regular newsletter, The Gene Report, and a series of Weekend forums will be held in capital cities in the middle of 1992.

For further information contact: Bob Phelps. Co-ordinator Australian Genethics Network, C/- Australian Conservation Foundation, 340 Gore St. Fitzrov Victoria 3065 Ph: (03) 416 2222 Fax: (03) 416 0767

Antarctica Saved!

In October 1991 Australia ratified the 'Madrid Protocol to the Antarctic Treaty'. The protocol is binding on Australia in international law and will probably prompt amendments to Australian Antarctic legislation.

The primary effects of the Protocol are to ensure environmental impact assessment of activities in the Antarctic and to ban mining and oil drilling for at least 50 years.

The Protocol can be amended at any time with the consent of all parties. After 50 years the Protocol may be amended with the consent of at least 75 per cent of the current consultative parties.

Source: WWF News, December 1991.

Better left unsaid

The second United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the so-called Earth Summit, will take place in June 1992, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Two of UNCED's major goals are to produce an 'Earth Charter' that will embody basic principles governing the economic and environmental behaviour of peoples and nations. Such an agreement is needed to ensure 'our common future' and to implement 'Agenda 21', a blueprint for action in all major areas affecting the relationship between the environment and the economy through the 21st century.

In preparation for UNCED, the United Nations Secretariat requested from all participating countries a 100-page national report reflecting a diversity of citizens' views.

A public discussion draft of the Australian report was released 30 July 1991 with comments closing on 30 August 1991. It covered a wide range of issues within the ambit of environment, but tended to be Government oriented. For example, it did not strongly

Once we grew our own food, but

said cotton would

foreign experts

earn more...

depletion, use of non-renew-

What's in your sofa?

Scientists from the Swedish Environmental Research Institute in Stockholm carried out a cradle to grave impact analysis of a sofa, and found that it contributes during its lifetime to the greenhouse effect, ozone

able resources, and acid rain. They found the average sofa causes 70 kilograms of carbon dioxide, 700 grams of nitrogen oxides and 500 grams of sulphur dioxide to be produced in the transportation of raw materials and the finished sofa. Painting releases 100

grams of volatile organic

compounds, production of metal components produces 20 nanograms of toxic dioxins and 60 grams of trichloroethane evaporates from the glue. Finally, the blown foam used in some sofas is formed using ozone unfriendly CFCs. The Swedes split the Sofa's life into stages, and examined how each one affects the environment through factors such as the extraction of raw materials, manufacturing processes and wastes generated, transport, energy use and ultimate disposal and degradation.

Source: Consumer Currents, September 1991.

Cut backs at

cover the North-South issues which are predicted to be a major issue at UNCED.

The United States draft report has been widely criticised there. It is a retrospective document only, generally congratulating the US for the progress it has made while ignoring or minimising the much greater slide away from ecological health. Partly, as a consequence, the US Citizens Network has been created to facilitate a broader perspective. It is preparing an alternative

.and we could use R

the pofits to buy

machinery so

imported

we could

industrialise

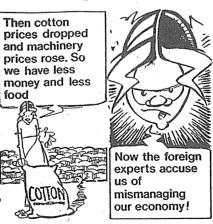
report which takes a more integrated approach to the environment.

These critiques reflect the view of many nongovernment organisations that the UNCED is being used as a public relations exercise by political and business élites everywhere to stem public alarm over environmental threats but to not really address the root causes.

Journal, Fall, 1991: Resurgence November 1991.

Ranger As the world recession in nuclear plant ordering continues to deepen, the effects are being felt by the uranium mining industry.

Source: Earth Island



Energy Resources of Australia, who operate the Ranger Mine in the Northern Territory, are cutting back their operations. Over half of their employees have now been made redundant. The workforce, previously 302, is now 126. The company said they took the decision with 'the greatest of reluctance following an exhaustive re-evaluation of

Yellowcake prices on the world spot market have fallen to a low US \$7.60 a pound compared with a peak in 1978 of \$43.40.

the option ... in the face of

a steady deterioration of

the uranium market'.

Source: Safe Energy, January 1992.

Earth News

Greens retain seats in Tasmania

The Tasmanian State election on the first of February 1992, resulted in the election of the Liberal party, which gained two seats at the expense of the ALP. The Green Independents retained all their five seats, although their primary votes were reduced. They will no longer hold the balance of power.

In comparison to the May 1989 state election, it appears that the Green Independents vote dropped from around 17 per cent to 12.8 per cent.

However, one of the Greens, Gerry Bates, sees much promise in the result.

'I think it's pretty significant for Green politics on a national level, because in a recession the environment is supposed to be the least of everyone's concerns and yet we've shown that politically the vote has held up, we've retained all our seats.'

The newly elected Liberal Government has threatened to permit mineral exploration in National Parks and will open up 360,000 hectares of forest for logging.

Source: Green Left Weekly, 12 February 1992; Gerry Bates, M.H.A.

Demise of the 'drins'

According to Shell Chemi-

cal, world production of the pesticides aldrin, dieldrin, and endrin (the 'drins') has ceased, and sales of the insecticides were due to end in December 1991. The drins, produced only by Shell since their introduction in the 1950s, were once widely used, however, their use has declined to 5 per cent of previous levels, according to a representative of Shell Chemical in Australia.

Eric Nickson at Shell's international headquarters in London characterized this decline as 'quite natural' as 'business moves on [and] new products are developed'. He cited 'pressure ... from various sources', primarily the loss of government registrations, as a major factor contributing to the product phase-outs.

The drins are perhaps most notorious for their environmental persistence and harm to wildlife, yet they are also the most acutely toxic organochlorine pesticides and have caused numerous poisonings of workers and consumers, some involving mass fatalities. They have

also been linked to chronic health problems such as cancers, birth defects, liver damage, and nervous system damage.

Production of endrin ceased in the early 1980s. Dieldrin and aldrin production at Shell's Pernis, Netherlands site, the last in the world, were halted in April 1987 and February 1990, respectively. According to Nickson, Shell is unaware of aldrin or dieldrin production by any other firms in the world and considers it quite unlikely, as their company manufactures a key intermediate which they will not sell to anyone else.

Australia, France, South Africa, and 'probably' India continue to formulate aldrin; Spain 'may' still formulate dieldrin, according to Nickson. Aldrin and dieldrin sales continue in these and a few other countries. Shell claims it sells these products only to other Shell companies with effective stewardship programs, and anticipates that existing stocks will be exhausted by the end of 1991. The company does not have a plan to recall stocks which may remain after 1991.

Source: PANNA Outlook, United States, 1991.

FESTS PEST CONTROLLERS

New global forest alliance

Representatives of tropical forest dwelling communities from around the world, met in Malaya in February 1992.

The conference produced a 'Charter of the Indigenous – Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests' and passed a unanimous resolution setting up the 'World Alliance of the Indigenous Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests'.

The Charter advocates a new approach to development and conservation in the tropical forests based on securing the rights of the forests' original inhabitants.

'There can be no rational or sustainable development of the forests and of our peoples until our fundamental rights as peoples are respected', the Charter declares.

The alliance demands respect for the human rights of forest dwelling peoples and above all their rights to determine their own ways of life and ways of organising.

In place of large-scale development projects, logging, mining and other destructive practices, the Charter advocates an alternative development approach based on securing the lives of those who live in the forest and promoting small-scale community initiatives under the control of the peoples themselves.

The Charter condemns the damage caused by logging as 'a crime against humanity' and calls for the suspension of logging concessions on indigenous territories.

Source: Third World Network, February 1992.

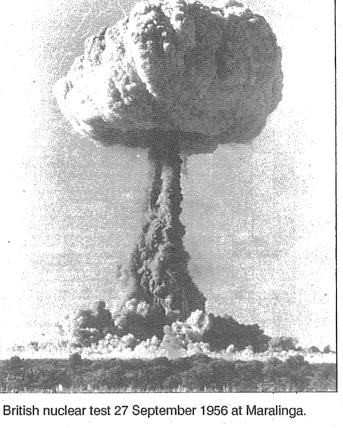
The Maralinga Legacy

In 1991 the Technical Assessment Group (TAG) released a report outlining a number of clean up options for the contaminated 1950s British nuclear test site at Maralinga, South Australia. TAG, with members from Great Britain, United States and Australia, had a mandate to assess the nature and extent of radioactive contamination in the area.

TAG was set up as consequence of the Royal Commission into British Nuclear Tests in Australia which found that the Maralinga and Emu sites remained highly contaminated despite previous clean up attempts. According to the Royal Commission 34 square kilometres of land in the Maralinga Tjarutja lands, which were returned to the Aboriginal community in 1983, were contaminated with plutonium at levels that rendered the area uninhabitable.

Two previous clean up operations had been conducted in 1968 and 1979. The British Government has claimed that its involvement in these previous operations absolves it of any further liability. As a result of the Royal Commissions findings, however, it agreed to be involved in the technical assessment undertaken by TAG but refused to discuss financial liability until the TAG Report was concluded.

The TAG Reports recommend a number of clean up options - the cost of which range from \$13 million to \$630 million. The option preferred by the South Australian Govern-



ment and the Aboriginal community costs \$93 million. It involves the refencing of a 100 kilometre contaminated area and the mixing of soil and in situ vitrification of contaminants in burial pits. The most costly options were refused by the Aboriginal community as they would involve the removal of topsoil and vegetation which they saw as replacing one environmental disaster with another.

In addition the
Aboriginal community has
only agreed to this option if
their additional compensation demands are met,
which include compensation for risk and disadvantage for living around
the contaminated site and
the loss of the land which
will remain fenced and

patrolled indefinitely. Their position has the support of the South Australian Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Mike Rann, who recently condemned the Australian Federal Government and the British Government for delaying a decision on the issue.

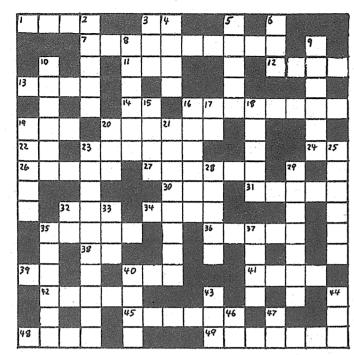
The Federal Cabinet is deferring a decision until negotiations between the British Government and the Federal Minister for Primary Industries and Energy, Simon Crean, begun in November 1991, are completed. The British Government is currently offering \$30 million, but is refusing to consider additional compensation to the Aboriginal people. The Australian Government is arguing that the clean up costs be shared equally between Australia and

Britain, but it also has not addressed the issue of compensation. As a result, in October 1991, a delegation from the Aboriginal community visited Britain to lobby for compensation and have threatened that on their next visit they will deliver a load of plutonium contaminated soil from Maralinga to the doors of those responsible for desecrating their land.

In September 1991, SBS's Dateline program, disclosed that a report to TAG on the distribution of radioisotopes at Maralinga had been sanitised on instructions from the Australian Government at the request of the British Intelligence Service. The British claimed that the report contained information on radioactive fallout that gave away details of the 'minor trails' testing. There is evidence to suggest that the information omitted from the suppressed report could implicate the British in breaching the 'Atmospheric Test Ban' that was in place when the minor trails took place.

At the Australian Radiation Protection Society Conference in September 1991, it was suggested that TAG and the Federal Government should consider locating a national repository for low and intermediate radioactive waste at Maralinga, the rationale being that the land to be fenced off could provide a suitable site. The Aboriginal community has not been consulted in regard to this proposal.

Source: Maggie Hine, Greenpeace Australia.



Greenword 65

Prepared by Phil Shannon Solution next issue

Across

1. 40 Across from a sheep and a goat was spliced to produce a __ (a case of 'if it can be

done, it will be done - especially if there's

3. Chemical symbol of the most abundant

mineral in the body. High animal protein diet

7. The largest continent, the coldest, driest,

wildlife sanctuary (and all species of animal

11. Uranium mining company against uranium mining? No, owners of Ranger are opposed to watering down Government's

12. Action Service, France's dirty tricks

13. Alexander ___, 18th century English poet opposed animal 'sports', advocated

vegetarianism, saw connection of all living

'Know, Nature's children all divide her

brigade, kills Greenpeace people

things/'Nature's children':

three mines policy because demand is low and

windiest place on Earth, and the largest

have DDT in their bodies)

- 2. They __ Paradise, and put up a parking 32 - Joni Mitchell (from 'Big Yellow
- 3. 20 Across got it wrong. The __ and truck in the US account for 45% of hydrocarbon pollution(and 70% of CO, 45% of nitrous oxides and 30% of CO2) as they travel an annual aggregate distance equivalent to Pluto
- 4. The Sea in the former Soviet Union, ce the world's 4th largest freshwater lake has been reduced in size by 66%, its salinity ripled, and lost all its native fish, after its feeder rivers were diverted to irrigate cropland
- 5. Lucas Heights' 30 year old nuclear reactor, regarded as unsafe by its engineering workers and local residents, but (surprise, surprise) declared safe by the Federal Government
- 6. One of the measures of the amount of radiation received by the body
- 8. Edward __, Manhattan Project physicist, keen on fast-tracking Darwin. He said radiation contributes to 'random mutation which in turn has been 'responsible in the long run for all the many magnificent living creatures that Nature has produced
- 9. See 29 down
- 10 Dian __, gorilla researcher and ist, murdered by poachers in 1985
- 15. Each __ space shuttle releases 387 tons of CO2, and 187 tons of chlorine molecules (capable over their lifetime of destroying 10 million tons of ozone)
- 16. John von Neumann, mathematician and nuclear associate of 8 down, replaced the Manhattan Project's valve-driven Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) with the high speed _athematical _nalyser, _umerical _ntegrator _nd _omputer (an apt underpinning for Mutually Assured Destruction [MAD] nuclear 'deterrence')
- 17. Indefinite article
- 18. Early Australian naturalist and illustrator John on species outlook of early British colonists: 'a caged lark, linnet or blackbird from the land of their birth are highly cherished and valued while the beautifu productions of the island are passed by unheeded except to deal out destruction among them, with no sparing hand, for some slight injury they may have inflicted on the

- 19. Charles II's aloof, autocratic and intriguing Committee for Foreign Affairs in 1672. Modern 'Cabinet' named after it (a case of 37 Down-vu?)
- 20. They sailed East to defend oil
- 21. Australia separated from this southern ntinent 50 million years ago ,
- 23. Mining industry is eyeing _ Hill in Kakadu National park, but not for its ecological or cultural wealth
- 25. Nuclear __would be fine if it didn't require rare, non-renewable resources, and wasn't radioactive, centralised, complex and expensive. Amory Lovins described it as 'like using a chain-saw to cut butter
- 28. Were planning to end their war toy sales until the Gulf War. Also Norman
- 29. St __ of <u>9 Down</u> 13th century Christian, made patron saint of ecology in 1980
- 32. The city that snowned a thousand mega-trends, dumps 6,000 tons of car-based pollution into its air daily, and where kids ave high school with a 10-15% decrease in
- 33 .Bolivian _ miners breathe the silica dust and 'die with rotted lungs so that the world may consume cheap __' (Eduardo Galeano)
- 35. Peasant women's movement in India. embraces trees to stop logging, chanting:
- 'What do the forests bear? Soil, water and pure air
- They are the basis of sustenance
- 37. See 19 Down
- 40. Last one of this large, gentle flightless dove of Mauritius was clubbed to death in 1680 by Dutch colonists for 'sport'
- 43. More wisdom from __Quayle: 'If we do not succeed, then we run the risk of failure
- _ Jungle was an early uranium mine near Darwin, providing uranium for US and British nuclear bomb tests and polluted the Finnis River as well
- 46. Like most non-renewable minerals: 'It won't last, it's going fast the supply of __ is quite fickle' (chemical symbol)
- 47. Chemical symbol of 49 Across

- 25. Lynn __, microbiologist and Lovelock's 'Gaia' colleague believes microbes are crucial to global ecology. Does her field biology in the muddy haunts of microbes, and is thus known
- 19. Makers of a sweet addictive drug, claim it's natural and therefore good for you (so is

22. LN - a free (if meaningless and

as the 'Wizard of Ooze'

- sunlight, but only in moderation) 20. Hollywood actor turned his hand to low
- farce with these two show-stoppers in 1980: 'The world is experiencing a resurgence of deadly diseases spread by inse because pesticides like DDT have been
- prematurely outlawed', and; 'Approximately 80% of our air nollution stems from hydrocarbons released by vegetation'
- 22. Promissory note for the rest of the vowels (let's get cryptic)
- 23. American biologist whose pioneering 1962 book on DDT concluded: 'The "control of nature" is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born of the Neanderthal age of biology and philosophy, when it was supposed that nature

exists for the convenience of man'

- 24. Early Pink Floyd song from Atom Heart
- 26. Nineteenth century British poet on the death of his dog Botswain in 1808:
- 'to mark a friend's remains these stone
- I never knew but one and here he lies' 27. See 31 Across
- 30. See 31 Across
- 30 Across, Hollywood star of early sixties: 'killing an 27 Across to make a coat is a sin. We have no right to do it'
- 32. See 2 Down
- 34. _utomated _eb for _anopy _xploration, used for studying the tops of tropical
- 35. Familiaris Dingo the only vertebrate species introduced by Aborigines, from Asia
- 36. Radioactive gas produced by the decay of radium. Fancies the lungs of uranium miners and people living near radioactive waste dumps

38. The indefinite article, again!

- 39. Chemical symbol of lithium, a metal required by 25 down, and which is non-renewable, as scarce as uranium, and whose mining is radioactive
- 40. Deoxyribonucleic Acid the four paired chemical building blocks of life's variety, or
- 41. Sect in India who reverence all life including insects and microorganisms which the avoid harming by breathing through gauze
- 42. Not really a Green clue, but this famous first century Hebrew was a prolific writer, historian, theologian, philosopher (and
- 45. Tropical rainforest fruit, tastes like sweet strawberries, smells like rancid garlic.
 Consuming one is described by Norman 28 run-down public toilet
- 48. See 18 Down
- 49. Needed to contain the corrosive 38 Across. Is also non- renewable, rare and radioactive with a half life of 29,000 years

FOE News

How much More can Sydney take?

At a meeting with NSW Environment Minister Tim Moore on 11 February 1992, Friends of the Earth, Sydney (FOE) called on the State Government to initiate a public inquiry into waste management.

'An inquiry is necessary', said David Vincent, National Recycling Spokesperson for FOE, 'because Sydnev is in the midst of a waste crisis, but without a crisis plan.

'We should be in no doubt that a state of crisis exists', he said. If no new disposal capacity is found or waste is not drastically reduced, in six years no tipping space left will remain for the 3.4 million tonnes of garbage churned out

'Despite the evidence of imminent crisis, the government is reacting with all the speed of a glacier but none of the momentum.

The only 'solution' the government has produced is to abandon future responsibility for waste management beyond the lives of its current tips and then to throw the baton back to local government. While there is some merit in returning power to the local level, there are great difficulties in local government attempting to solve a regional problem.

It is also apparent that the the government is preparing to privatise its waste management facilities. But before privatisation occurs, questions have to be asked and properly answered about the benefits or otherwise to the public of pursuing this option. One of the first questions should be whether the goal of waste minimisation is compatible with creation of new areas for

processing of garbage.

And then there is the thorny question of where the government can site new landfills. It has already failed with the proposed Londonderry tip and is heading for another defeat with its plans to massively expand the Lucas Heights landfill. In what must be for the government a disturbing echo of the campaign that stopped Londonderry, the government's member for Sutherland has now come out against the expansion as a result of local opposi-

It is clear that an inquiry is necessary

private profit in the disposal and to shed light on the waste management issue. The following issues should be considered:

- impact of privatisation of waste disposal;
- the volume and origin of waste and its projected growth;
- the environmental impact of the various waste disposal and processing options:
- strategies to reduce waste; and
- barriers to waste minimisation.

Further information: David Vincent (02) 281 4070 (FOE), (02) 365 3837



Action on chemicals

Friends of the Earth (Fitzroy), through its Hazardous Chemicals Working Group, has prepared a submission to the Coode Island Review Panel. Coode Island is the massive chemical storage area in central Melbourne which was ravaged by fire and explosions on two successive days in 1991.

FOE suggests that there are two ways to proceed with industry demand for chemicals in Victoria – a continuation of the current ad hoc, competitive system leading to increasing usage of chemicals, or an environmentally friendly based production and manufacturing system concerned with a 'cradle to grave' production process.

FOE favours the latter approach, and suggests that there are a number of things which could affect the future demand for chemicals and associated storage facilities.

tive proposals such as action to support preparing these goods'. community pressures mount, sometimes with encouragement from replaced with other materials. government, such as fostering the export of organic food.

workplaces should lead to reduced use of chemicals, and consumer awareness should reduced use of consumer goods, especially those with environmentally wasteful packaging, again reducing overall use of chemicals. The submission states: 'If each community group rejects the siting of a bulk storage facility in their area (which they do) due to the dangerous nature of that facility, we believe this is in effect rejecting the concept of the inherent danger of the Friends of the Earth England, wlaes chemical industry as a whole. It is a clear message from the community saying it These include government legisla- is not prepared to accept the risks in

the Montreal Protocol on ozone- The FOE submission also suggests that depleting substances, but demand for after reducing chemical dependency, chemicals could also be reduced as the next step should be source reduction where hazardous chemicals are

The long term solution for the existing industry is to move towards clean Union calls for increased safety in production where every level and stage of production is carefully audited and assessed, and is subject to public scrutiny.

Further information:

Clive Rosewarne, Friends of the Earth Fizroy, Hazardous Chemicals Working Group Ph: (03) 419 8700.

Toxic profiles

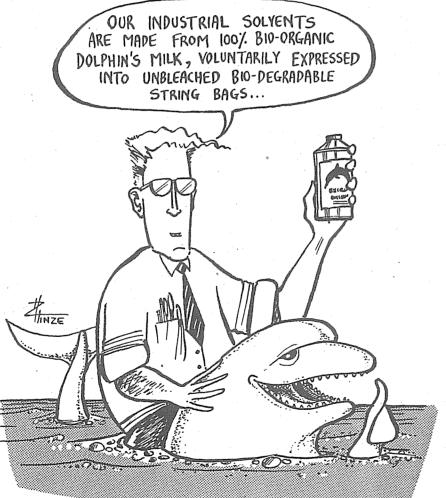
and Northern Ireland have established a Toxic Substances Information Service which is available to community groups in the UK. It will also be available to all members of FOE International. The databse consists of a non-computerised listing of toxicity data for more than 500

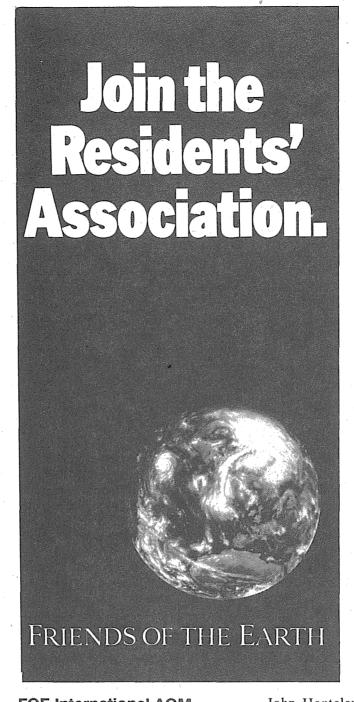
These FOE groups are also working together on a 'right to know' campaign regarding the discharge of hazardous substances by the chemical industry.

In the United States the public can obtain information about emissions of pollution to the air, water and waste. Under the provisions of Federal legislation companies are required to draw up an annual inventory of releases or transfer of 322 specified toxic materials from all production plants of a specified size. This information is publicly available.

FOE has written to each of the major chemical companies asking them to disclose similiar information. Most have refused. This has highlighted the key point that the companies which operate in both the US and the UK operate a double standard with regard to how much information they are willing to provide to the public. This double standard is likely to operate in many other countries apart from the UK. FOE is aiming to extend the 'right to know' principle in the UK and extend it internationally.

For further information contact: Fiona Weir, FOE England 26-28 Underwood Rd, London NI 7JO Ph: 44 71 490 2665





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FOE Flinders University Students' Association Bedford Park, SA, 5042 Ph: (08) 201 2614

FOE Nouveau PO Box 3231 Grenfell St Adelaide, 5001 Ph: (08) 228 5835 (w) email: roman

FOE Willunga PO Box 438 Willunga, SA, 5172 Ph: (085) 56 2252

FOE Cessnock c/- Post Office Nulbulka, NSW, 2325 Ph: (049) 90 2256

FOE Maitland 16 Banks St East Maitland NSW, 2322 Ph: (049) 66 5151

FOE Newcastle 15 Sketchley Pde New Lambton, NSW, 2305 Ph: (049) 52 3385 (049) 674554 (h)

FOE Blue Mountains 156 Megalong St Leura, NSW, 2780

FOE Sydney PO Box A474 Sydney, NSW, 2001 Ph: (02) 281 4070 Facs: (02) 281 5216 Email: foesydney

FOE Perth 280 Newcastle St Perth. WA, 6000 Ph: (09) 335 9359 Facs: Not available

FOE Brisbane PO Box 10159 Adelaide St Brisbane, 4000 Ph: Not available

FOE Stanthorpe c/- Lvn Alexander PO The Summit Stanthorpe, Qld, 4377 Ph: (076) 83 2245

Maryborough 5 Clayton St Maryborough, Qld Ph: (071) 23 1895

Chain Reaction GPO Box 90 Adelaide, SA, 5001 Ph & Facs: (08) 293 8535 email: chain

National Liaison Officer Cam Walker, FOE Fitzroy 222 Brunswick St Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065 Ph: (03) 419 8700

FOE International AGM

The 1991 Friends of the Earth International Annual General Meeting in Brazil, 5 - 9 October 1991, made a number of important decisions regarding the future of the movement, the involvement in UNCED and on other key issues. The Meeting admitted new groups from Norway, Ukraine, Georgia, Malta, Philippines, El Salvador and Grenada, bringing the total number of members to forty-seven.

John Hontelez from Vereniging Milieudefensie (Netherlands) was reelected as chairperson and Theo Anderson from FOE Ghana as vice chair.

The meeting adopted resolutions on a number of burning environmental issues around the world. These can be found in the relevant regional e-mail conferences, or obtained from the International Secretariat.

and very successful Latin American e-mail gn:foeintsecr

conference on NGO input into the 1992 UNCED process. This Conference was co-organized by FOE International, Amigos da Terra Brazil and the Brazilian NGO Forum.

For further information contact: FOE International Secretariat PO Box 19199 1000 GD Amsterdam The AGM was preceded by a large Tel.: +31-20-6221369, fax: -6275287 or

The Federal **EPA: States vs** Commonwealth

The Federal Government is currently considering a range of options for a Federal Environment Protection Agency. Paul Rutherford and Rob Fowler argue that the cooperative federalism approach and the failure to adopt new approaches to environmental management may result in the EPA becoming a 'lame duck' organisation. They outline features they believe should be part of the new EPA.

N February 1991, the Australian Conservation Foundation and Greenpeace Australia submitted a report to the Commonwealth Government, outlining proposals for the proposed Federal Environment Protection Agency (EPA). The report, prepared by Rob Fowler, advanced two fundamental propositions.

Firstly, the EPA should be structured in a way which would not see it hamstrung by traditional forms of cooperative federalism arrangements which require protracted negotiations at the ministerial level between Federal, State and Territory governments.

Secondly, the EPA should introduce new approaches to the protection of the environment that do not rely exclusively upon existing methods such as standard-setting and risk assessment, but rather implement a pollution prevention philosophy by promoting clean production and by applying the 'precautionary principle'.

Constitutional issues

There is a long standing view that the States have primary legislative responsibility to protect the environment, and that the Commonwealth has little capacity to act unilaterally in this area.

Constitutional interpretation by the High Court over the last fifteen years shows that this view is no longer appropriate and is based on political expediency and bureaucratic practice, rather than constitutional necessity.

The Hawke Labor Government was first elected in 1983 on a platform that included using Commonwealth powers to prevent the State of Tasmania from damming the Franklin River World Heritage Area. These powers were subsequently confirmed by a High Court

Despite the use of these powers in some very high profile conservation disputes, the Federal Government is now unwilling in environmental matters to go beyond the 'States' Rights' thinking it previously opposed.

There has been a political decision by Labor not to use those powers which are clearly available to it for environment protection.

The sources of Federal power to

Behind the EPA

(EPA) was the development of a national approach to the environment, such as uniform environment those standards. The process of establishing an EPA has been tied up with wider concerns with Federal-State relations, however, and political compromise has been at stake as much as environment protection.

On 19 March 1990, in the lead up to the 1990 Federal election, the then - Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, made an address which outlined the Labor Party's environmental record and future initiatives if re-elected. He said:

Unlike the Coalition, which has recoiled from assuming a strong role for the Commonwealth in acting in the national interest to protect the environment, we will strive for national strategies of air and water quality - and national strategies to implement them. We accept the value of an Environment Protection Agency to co-ordinate this work and will move to establish such a body in our next term of Government.

In a media release on 21 May 1990, Federal Environment Minister, Ros Kelly, announced that her department had started work on the establishment of an EPA and that the aspects of it, it is not certain that this extends to questions first step would be the establishment of an Environment of environmental policy. It is rumoured that Environment Protection division within the Department.

Subsequent to the ALP's re-election. Hawke declared open for consideration the entire field of Commonwealth-State relations, with the intention of developing a new consensus between the Federal and State governments, including an Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment. Hawke called this process the 'Closer Partnership' initiative, but it became commonly known as Hawke's 'New Federalism'.

Initial drafts of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment were circulated within governments before the cancelled Special Premiers' meeting due late

Environment Minister Kelly also released an EPA discussion paper in July 1991 which rejected decisive use of Commonwealth powers in favour of the continued reliance on negotiated compromise by a Ministerial Council made up of State and Commonwealth environment ministers.

ber of Australia's major environment groups issued a EPAs. Victoria has had an EPA since 1970.

NE of the objectives for the establishment of a statement that New Federalism and the draft Inter-Federal Environment Protection Authority governmental Agreement on the Environment would spell disaster for Australia's environment, arguing that 'without strong Commonwealth leadership on the enquality standards and national strategies to promote vironment recalcitrant States will set the pace and our environment will continue to suffer'. The Australian Conservation Foundation also argued in a paper, 'Background to New Federalism', that the process was going on in secret and that agreements were 'being negotiated behind closed doors by State and Federal bureaucrats with no public input'.

The November 1991 Special Premier's Conference gave informal support to Kelly's Ministerial Council approach to the Federal EPA. In addition, although the States are insisting that any EPA established by the Commonwealth should be a joint Commonwealth-State body, they are unwilling to contribute to its funding.

Paul Keating, on 22 October 1991, made a major speech criticising New Federalism, in which he said that 'there is no case to allow a State a veto over Commonwealth actions in areas of concurrent interest, such as the environment ...' In December 1991 Keating was elected Prime Minister, and while his derailing of New Federalism raised doubts about the future of some Minister Kelly is still enthusiastic about the idea of a Ministerial Council approach.

In February 1992 Dr Ian McPhail, previously Director-General of the South Australian Department of Environment and Planning, was appointed as head of the EPA in Canberra, and it continued in the process of filling Senior Executive Service positions. The functions of the EPA were described as assisting the Commonwealth

to establish, monitor and maintain arrangements for the ecologically sustainable future of Australia. In cooperation with State and Territory Governments, Industry and Interested Groups, the Agency is involved in developing national environment quality standards and programs, including environmental impact assessment and state of the environment reporting. The Agency actively encourages new attitudes in support of pollution prevention and waste minimisation.

Western Australia, New South Wales, and South After a meeting with Kelly in September 1991, a num- Australia are also at various stages of establishing state legislate for environmental protection can be briefly listed:

- Under the corporations power the Commonwealth can regulate all acts of trading corporations performed for the purposes of trade, and hence may control the manufacturing, mining and agricultural activities of corporations.
- Under the trade and commerce power the Commonwealth can regulate not only exports and imports on environmental grounds, but also the trading of products between States, even possibly at the point of manufacture or production.
- The constitutional guarantee of freedom of interstate trade and commerce is unlikely to restrict Federal regulation for environmental purposes, and will only affect State laws of a protectionist nature.
- The capacity of the Commonwealth to raise taxes, spend money and make specific purpose grants provide an important means of environmental protection, whereas the ability of the States to raise taxes on pollution may be limited by constitutional prohibition on State duties and excise.
- The external affairs power provides a basis for future Federal environmental protection legislation in order to meet commitments under pending international agreements such as those for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the protection of biological diversity.
- A wide range of existing Commonwealth legislative arrangements and practices demonstrate the capacity of the Commonwealth to regulate with respect to the environment without seeking the prior consent or agreement of the States. These include those relating to environmental impact assessment, marine pollution and sea dumping, hazardous wastes, nuclear materials, ozone layer protection, motor vehicle standards, risk assessment of pesticides and industrial chemicals, occupational health and safety, etc.

The former willingness of Federal Labor Governments to use Commonwealth

power to over-rule the States on specific environmental issues has all but vanished, coinciding with Hawke's 'Closer Partnership Initiative' on Commonwealth-State relations.

The former Prime Minister promoted a cooperative approach to environment protection, with emphasis on the use of traditional mechanisms, particularly Ministerial Councils, for securing cooperation.

However, there have been very few significant environmental achievements through this approach. Despite the protracted deliberations of Ministerial Councils such as the Australian and New Zealand Environment Council, differing standards and procedures still apply in each State.

Even when agreement can be reached (and this is usually 'lowest common denominator' agreement) it remains necessary for each State to implement and enforce the relevant standards. While getting agreement of the States to national guidelines is often difficult and excruciatingly slow, actually securing the proper implementation of such guidelines as firm standards at the State level is even more difficult.

The reality of cooperative federalism is that there is no mechanism of accountability to ensure implementation and enforcement of standards at the State level other than good will.

A reliance on Ministerial Councils for a 'new' approach to environment protection will continue to blur the responsibilities of each level of government, and will generate political inertia and lack clear accountability. It will amount to little more than maintaining the inadequate status quo in environment protection policy.

The exclusive emphasis on cooperative federalism avoids discussion of whether the Federal Government should impose national environmental standards upon the States, and in what way this should occur.

A different approach

In defining a role for the new Federal EPA, it is also important to take on board the lessons of the past, both in Australia and elsewhere. The emphasis upon environmental standards which is

evident in the current EPA proposal reflects a preoccupation with an outdated and outmoded approach to environmental protection.

Existing methods of environment protection rely largely upon licensing of pollution, an array of prescribed standards, and upon the capacity to give directions or orders to abate or clean up pollution, backed up by poorly enforced penalties for non-compliance.

This approach is based on 'allowable' levels of discharges set through ambient standards or conditions attached to emission licences. It assumes the environment has an 'assimilative' capacity to absorb without damage most pollutants.

The evidence is that pollution has either reduced only marginally or has worsened, despite the operation of extensive environmental controls. Many scientists, administrators and environmentalists now challenge the concept of assimilative capacity, suggesting that it is fundamentally flawed. This is because species, eco-systems and toxic compounds are the subject of enormously complex inter-relationships which often make assumptions about so-called 'safe' levels of pollution or exposure meaningless.

In recognition of this, new approaches to environment protection are being forged. The most significant of these is the commitment to a policy shift from pollution control to pollution prevention. The United States Environment Protection Agency has identified pollution prevention as a high priority because it has in practice proved to be the most effective strategy.

A related development, (of particular relevance to the control of toxic and hazardous substances) is the 'precautionary principle'. When doubt exists about the impact of a substance on the environment or human health, it is desirable to err on the side of safety rather than risk significant and irreversible damage. As a result of the application of this principle, the burden of proof is placed on the prospective polluter to show there is no likelihood of harm, rather than on those concerned with the protection of the environment to show conclusively that harm will



occur. The precautionary principle is be developed, involving: gaining international support and has been endorsed recently by United Nations Environment Program and the EC Parliament.

The Greenpeace and ACF proposal

The Australian Conservation Foundation and Greenpeace Report argued that these new approaches should provide the philosophical underpinning of the EPA's operations and that the legislation which establishes the EPA should enshrine these principles in its terms. The Report also recognised that strong leadership by the Federal EPA would be necessary to promote the acceptance and implementation of such principles among the States and Territories.

In addition the Report argued that the successful operation of a Federal EPA would require Commonwealth legislation incorporating three essential elements:

1. Full use of constitutional powers The fullest possible use should be made by the Commonwealth of established constitutional powers in defining the powers and functions of the Federal EPA.

2. State participation

Mechanisms for securing State government participation and cooperation in the implementation of national environment protection initiatives should

(a) establishment of processes with representation from the States and Territories that are consultative, rather than collaborative (that is, it would not be necessary to obtain State consensus as a prerequisite to implementation of environment protection programs);

(b) establishment of a means whereby Federal standards would constitute a minimum; States being able to impose stricter controls if they wish.

3. Financial support to the States

The Commonwealth must use its financial powers with respect to taxation, special purpose grants and expenditure to resource the operation of the Federal EPA and to support participation of the States in national environment protection initiatives.

The Federal government can impose taxes and allocate taxation revenue for environmental purposes. It can also provide funds to the States as special grants to which specific conditions are attached. Federally directed environment protection programs can be devised and implemented using • Research, monitoring and informa-Federal funds.

Powers and functions

The role of the Federal EPA should be to ensure that adequate and consistent environment protection strategies, standards and procedures are in place

throughout Australia, and that these are properly implemented and enforced within the States. Beyond this general mandate, the EPA should be empowered to address all relevant aspects of 'environment protection', with the term being widely defined. Other Commonwealth agencies should retain primary responsibility for matters such as occupational health and safety and natural resources management.

The Federal EPA's activities should be divided into three broad categories:

- Environmental planning, which would include development of strategic environmental plans and policies and the implementation of environmental impact assessment and risk assessment processes;
- Environment protection in the form of regulatory functions under existing Federal environmental legislation and in new areas of federal concern, together with a back-up role where State arrangements are inadequate; and
- tion functions.

In adopting these new approaches, existing methods such as standards setting and risk assessment processes, would not be replaced overnight. These would have to be maintained by the Federal EPA whilst new regulatory techniques evolve which are compatible with the over-riding pollution prevention philosophy that should form the basis of EPA legislation.

Structure and funding

A key, proposal in the ACF/Greenpeace report is that the Federal EPA should be independent from political influence - in particular, free from Ministerial direction. The EPA should be governed by a Board of Directors comprising a Chairperson and between two and four other persons appointed on a full-time basis by the Federal Environment Minister on the nomination of a Selection Committee. Members should be appointed to the Board in their capacity as experts rather than as representatives of particular interests.

The EPA should be structured to reflect the broad range of functions outlined above (planning, protection, research) promoting an integrated approach to environment protection.

Independence and funding are two key practical issues which will affect the viability of the EPA. In order to balance its independence, the EPA should be accountable to Federal Parliament. We also believe there is merit in creating, through the EPA legislation, an Office Environment, to whom the EPA would be answerable. The Commissioner would have powers to hear complaints about the EPA, to report to the House of Representatives, and to publicise its findings and opinions.

Funding to establish an independent Federal EPA must ensure that it cannot be strangled by lack of financial resources. Accordingly, the legislation should guarantee a budget for the EPA at a prescribed minimum level, any alteration of that level requiring an amendment to be approved by the Parliament of the Commonwealth. Funding beyond the guarantee level would be the responsibility of the Government of the day.

The States are insisting that any EPA established by the Commonwealth should be a joint Commonwealth-State body, although they are unwilling to contribute to its funding. It would be absurd for the Federal Government to concede to this sort of State pressure.

Other mechanisms

The legislation establishing the EPA should provide a 'citizen's suit', enabling a person to bring proceedings to enforce the provisions of the EPA Act, either against parties in default of obligations imposed by the Act, or against the EPA itself where it has failed to perform its statutory obligations. These proceedings could be used to secure injunctive relief or to enforce penalties imposed by the legislation (as is possible in the United States). There should also be rights of appeal for third parties where regulatory functions are exercised by the EPA.

Another aspect of liability which should be addressed is the imposition of criminal responsibility on directors for the acts of corporations with which they are involved.

Finally, there is a need for strong commitment to public participation in the administration of the EPA Act and in the activities of the EPA. One means by which this could be ensured is through community 'right to know' legislation such as was enacted federally in the United States in 1986 following the Bhopal accident in India. The provision of 'intervenor' funding to facilitate community input to public enof Parliamentary Commissioner for the quiry and environmental impact assessment processes is also needed.

Current directions

In July 1991 Federal Environment Minister Kelly released a proposal that failed to address most of the substantive issues raised in the ACF/Greenpeace report. In particular, Kelly's model rejected decisive use of Commonwealth powers in favour of the continued reliance on negotiated compromise by a Ministerial Council made up of State and Commonwealth environment ministers.

The need for a strong Federal EPA was further emphasised by the ACF and the Worldwide Fund for Nature, Australia (WWF) in a wide ranging set of recommendations presented to the Commonwealth's Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD) working group process in December last year. These built on the model developed by ACF and Greenpeace, with its emphasis on clean production.

The ACF and WWF submission argued for a 30-year target to bring all pollution emissions within ecologically sustainable limits. In the medium term a goal for the elimination of toxic and bio-accumulative waste emissions over the next ten years was called for, with short-term targets for the reduction of individual pollutants being set for each year on a five year rolling timetable.

It remains to be seen whether Prime Minister Keating's government will have the courage to pursue such important environmental policies or whether it will yield to short-sighted demands for 'soft' environmental standards, and in particular, whether Environment Minister Kelly is prepared to push a more decisive role for the Federal EPA.

Conclusion

At a time when the public is demanding an increased role for the national government in protecting the environment, the opposite direction seems to be gaining favour with some of our politicians.

As Australia approaches the centenary of Federation, we need some genuine vision and decisive action to deal with environmental degradation. Regrettably our governments seem incapable of moving on from the failed administrative structures of a colonial

The EPA should be both the servant of and vigorous advocate for the public for a safe and healthy environment. By forming a coalition with the public in the battle to protect the Australian environment, a Federal EPA could bring about changes in the way in which this task is approached and accomplish results which have appeared until now to be beyond the grasp of environmental authorities in this country.

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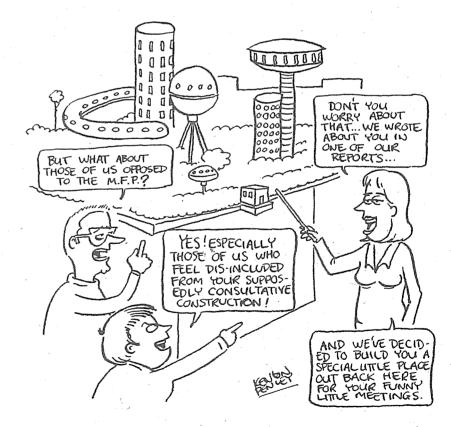
Development, democracy and the **Australian MFP**

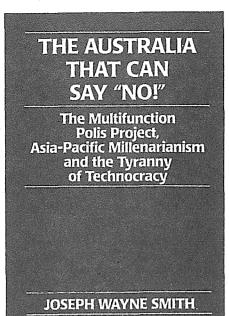
OWARDS the end of a particularly rowdy meeting in the Adelaide Town Hall in mid-July 1991, an older woman in the body of the with about 200 to 250 others, she had had mainly - and sometimes effusively - sung the praises of the Multifunction Polis (MFP) which is destined to begin construction in South Australia in November 1993. Her response was evidently some combination of frustration and anger for she said: 'People like me are sick and tired of being told what a Utopia we have coming. What do you have to do to get rid of them?'

At this she swung her arm across the prestigious panel of invited speakers. 'How do we get rid of these bloody people? How the hell do you get them to just go away?' Not long after this, the meeting was subject to a scintillating hijack and degenerated into bedlam. Yet it was the woman's outburst which had triggered the ensuing mayhem, for she had undoubtedly posed the question which was uppermost in the minds of many present.

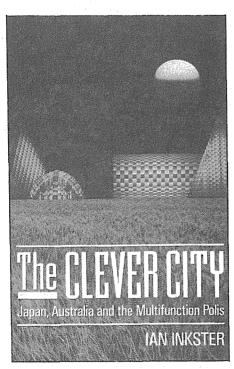
At least four books on the subject of the MFP were published within a few months either side of this meeting. These are two lengthy texts by Ian Inkster (1991) The Clever City and Joseph Wayne Smith (1991) The Australia that can say 'No'!, and two collections of essays, one edited by Paul James (1990) Technocratic Dreaming (TD), the other

The Multifunction Polis proposed to be built near Adelaide has generated a large amount assembly took the microphone. Along of written material and a number of public with about 200 to 250 others, she had listened to a succession of speakers who meetings. Ade Peace has been reading up on the proposal, attending the meetings, and here he links the two experiences.





Joseph Wayne Smith, The Australia That Can Sav 'No!': The Multifunction Polis Project, Asia-Pacific Mil-Ienarianism and the Tvranny of Technocracy, School of Humanities. The Flinders University of South Australia, 1990.



lan Inkster, The Clever City: Japan, Australia and the Multifunction Polis, Sydney University Press, \$17.95, 1991.

by Gavan McCormack (1990) Bonsai Australia Banzai (BAB).

In total these books provide about 800 pages of commentary on the MFP and, therefore, an enormous quantity of detailed information. Yet what this reader finds striking about them is that none provides any answer to the question so stridently posed at the July meeting - and indeed others before and after it. Despite the rhetoric of community involvement having long been scattered across the MFP landscape, none addresses in any depth the issue of democratic consultation. Furthermore, notwithstanding these 800 pages, one ends up with no idea whatsoever as to who is trundling the barrow down the track. The two issues must be, of course, closely related.

Driving around the Gillman locality to the north of the city of Adelaide and to the east of Port Adelaide, it remains difficult to imagine what is being proposed for the next twenty to thirty years. Presently a crescent-shaped, somewhat desolate wasteland, pockmarked with swamp and littered with rubbish and dumps, even the most ardent industrial archaeologist would have to concede this eyesore warrants cleaning up.

Yet by the year 2010, the area is to become a splendid new high-tech city a magnificent, state-of-the-art, technopolis with a population of 50,000, a combined investment in excess of \$800 million, it is to be replete with life styles and consumer facilities most urbanites merely dream of, and within two decades it is to boost the gross product of the state of South Australia by some \$20 billion. Thus the headline in The Australian, August 1, 1991: 'Industry absurdity' (TD p. 12). boost as \$839m future-city gets goahead', and the opening paragraph Australian governments joined in an historic agreement yesterday giving approval to the multifunction polis as a national and international "21st century country, next century.

Meantime there are books to be read, and the first point to be made about them is that they provide a much broader spectrum of opinion than can

be encountered in Adelaide's mass media. Not only is the MFP publicity machine itself substantial: by now it thoroughly encompasses all popular media forms within the state. As a result it is only within select academic texts that it is possible to come across, from one end of the spectrum, strident judgements of the type promulgated by Joseph Wayne Smith or Guy Rundle. Smith declares the MFP project in its entirety to be a 'dogmatic, antidemocratic, highly authoritarian, question-begging decision, not only about the future direction of Australian society, but about 21st century life in a world gripped in a global crisis so severe that it may not survive' (p. 2). On the same page he pronounces that 'the entire political and economic direction of Australia is wrong and that any sensitive thinking and moral person should feel ashamed to live in a land where fundamental democratic values are becoming but a memory of a memory. remembered'. Smith, whose sub-title reads 'The Multifunction Polis Project, Asia-Pacific Millenarianism and the Tyranny of Technocracy', describes himself to be 'an old style philosopher' committed to 'a "green", ecocentric or deep environmental position', all of which Guy Rundle assuredly is not. Yet there is a vast affinity between them as Rundle condemns the MFP and the V(ery) F(ast) T(rain) project to be equally 'crazy schemes ... so seriously flawed in their conception, tainted and besmirched by falsehoods, corruption and secrecy, so riddled with internal contradictions that it more than anything remarkable that they have not collapsed under the weight of their own

All of this may indeed be accurate and true. The problem is of course that reads: 'The Federal and South if one adopts such a morally principled position at the outset, one ends up preaching to fellow travellers - and fellow travellers alone - whilst the economic and political wheels of what project". A clever city for the clever is customarily defined to be progress drive inexorably forward. It is not necessary to be a deep environmentalist to learn a great deal from Smith's 150 pages, but it may well help, faced with chapters bearing such titles as 'An Interpretation and Critique of a Flawed and Myopic Vision of Humanity's Future' and 'A Critique of Blind Opportunist Growth Syndrome'.

At the other end of the spectrum is Inkster's book, well informed, well-argued, at times somewhat laboured, but at all points borne along by the conviction that the MFP is not only in itself an exceptional concept but also the potential point of departure for rethinking and restructuring the entire Australian economy. So far, argues Inkster, two major errors have been made: instead of provoking inter-state rivalry and considerable devolution of control, the MFP should have remained a Commonwealth project throughout, and: Adelaide is not the proper location. Inkster details especially clearly what seems at times to have been an aleatory route to Adelaide, with many fundamental questions (particularly concerning funding) ditched on the way through.

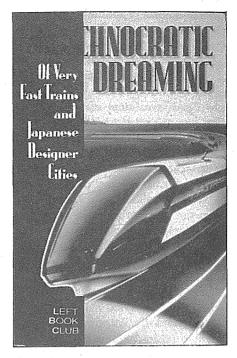
Yet his essential faith in the MFP remains undiminished by virtue of having laboured on two major fronts. The first is his attempt 'to put the debate over the MFP into a fairly wide and historical industrial context' (p. 140). In broad terms this means counterpoising the relative decline of the Atlantic economies against the phenomenal dynamism of the Pacific Rim with 'Japan as Phoenix' (pp. 8-10). The second, more contentious, front is the argument that 'the MFP may be interpreted and defended as an institutional focus for technology transfer, improved R & D, redirection of foreign capital, and positive experimentation in Australian industrial policy' (p. 140).

At times Inkster is especially scathing about the capacities of the present MFP decision-makers: the politically significant (July 1990) final feasibility study by the Australian-Japanese Joint Steering Committee (which he insists on renaming throughout the 'Joint Standing Committee') is dismissed as 'more of a Christmas list than a programme for/of action' (p. 64)! What is needed is the drive and vision to break free of protectionist industrial policies, to increase foreign and venture capital investment levels, to

deregulate and above all promote export-oriented manufacturing industry. This is where, for Inkster, the MFP fits the bill: the R & D system of the clever city provides an institutionalised core from which newly expansionist industrial policies can take off. In short the MFP should become - if it is not already – a key element in any economic rationalists programme for the future, not least because in the clever city trade unionists are confined to the mangrove swamps. Private viewing by guided tour, Sundays only.

It is at this juncture that some of the

essays in Technocratic Dreaming and Bonsai Australian Banzai come into their own with salutary arguments. In contributions to both volumes. David and Wheelwright provide a political economy of recent Japanese expansionism into Australia and, in opposition to analysts such as Inkster, maintain that 'to deal with Japan's global strategy (sic) ... a much more interventionist state will be required. for the existing comprador business class is not up to the task. Its major objective seems to be to sell of what is left of Australia to the highest bidder, while the ideology of the auctioneer, the huckster and the con-man seem to have permeated the traditional political parties' (BAB p. 81). In broadly congruent terms but much more refined style, Rimmer in TD charts the phenomenal emergence of Kumagai Gumi as a major force in the Australian construction industry, presumably the kind of corporation which would thrive in any MFP-type development programme. In a complementary essay in BAB, he situates the Adelaide MFP in relation to the emergent techno-belt which the Japanese State and such enterprises as the Mitsubishi Electric Corporation consider central to their global development strategy through into the 21st century. Finally by way of salutary analysis, Morris-Suzuki is also a contributor to both collections, each essay developing in different ways the same theme. Drawing on the experience of ekibentopia development projects in Japan, she argues that the most interesting thing about the MFP plan is perhaps the fact that so insub-



Paul James (ed.). Technocratic Dreaming: Of Very Fast Trains and Japanese Designer Cities, Left Book Club, \$15.50, 1990.



Gavan McCormack (ed.), Bonsai Australia Banzai: Multifunction Polis and the making of a special relationship with Japan, Pluto Press, \$16.95, 1991.

stantial a concept should have become the object of such inflated hopes and fear' (BAB p. 123).

This may be an important point. But if the concept is insubstantial, to those of us who reside in Adelaide the proposed investment of \$800 millionplus is emphatically becoming part of material reality. To this extent, what is especially disappointing about all four texts is the conspicuous absence of any sustained and coherent analysis of the economic, political and bureaucratic interests which are already embedded within the unfolding momentum of the

Put simply: whilst from these studies one learns a great deal about Japan's recent political economy, the role of leisure resorts as well as ekibentopia in Japan, and the supposedly special relationship between Japan and Australia, how the MFP is the product of particular political and economic forces inside Australian society is an issue scarcely addressed. Nor, more importantly, are we allowed even a down to the nature of the technocratic glimpse as to the composition of the MFP bureaucracy, how it is funded, how it stands in relation to other political and business élites, how it is internally organised, and indeed how it thinks - in other words, what its ideology looks like and how its power is being exercised.

Despite all the academic interest evidently generated by the MFP, what comes through quite clearly is that no one as yet has been able to penetrate, even in modest degree, the evidently tight-knit social and political network of politicians, business interests, and senior bureaucrats, both national and regional, who manage to keep the project in motion, despite the obstacles it repeatedly encounters. This analytical vacuum is all the more striking as leading Japanese interests now work conspicuously hard to put some distance between the MFP and themselves. The head of the most important Japanese mission to date was quoted, on his departure, as follows: 'No matter where the idea came from, this is an Australian project and the idea is that with specialist interests should be the ruling circles.

ones involved'. The Australian (6 December 1991) reported this under the page one banner headline 'Japan mission pulls plug on MFP investment', which is, as one might say, to put it mildly. Yet there is no way that this represents a fatal blow to the MFP, for there are, quite straightforwardly, too many varied and interdependent interests already built into it.

The important point to underscore is that the technocrats of the MFP have been singularly successful in sustaining a high level of secrecy about themselves, and of disseminating to the population at large relatively little information about a project which will, most likely, begin to impinge on and influence their life worlds within the relatively near future. Just about everyone who has written on the MFP, whether from right or left, has commented on this collective leaning to secrecy; and if anything, the tendency becomes the more pronounced as time passes.

To some degree, this has to be put

élite which gravitates towards such projects as the MFP. Their training, expertise, occupational status and social prestige, are such as to reinforce rather than challenge the taken-for-granted assumptions about progress, expansion and development which are built into such an enterprise. In similar fashion, it readily remains their collective assumption that what they consider to be appropriate for the future should be unproblematically accepted by the population at large. Under such circumstances there is no pressure from within to engage in open debate and the free exchange of ideas. But this is also surely symptomatic of how power is characteristically exercised in Australian society at large. For ruling élites do now routinely function as if the very principle of accountability is both redundant and inconsequential. Secrecy is not so much the exception as the order of the day: and it is perhaps only recently, through a succession of extraordinary scandals and disasters hard on the heels of one another, that we have come to realize the centrality Australian companies small and large of secrecy in the political culture of

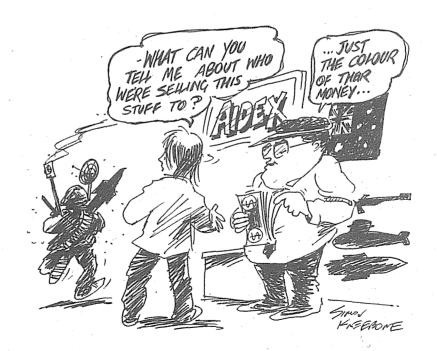
Under these circumstances, it is to be expected that, notwithstanding the continued reference to democratic consultation in the bundles of MFP publicity material, in practice its bureaucratic machinery displays minimal interest in such processes. More specifically, it inclines to exploit the ambiguities and anomalies which quickly surface when one asks what such democratic consultation might entail. For example, who specifically is to be consulted on a project of this scale? Residents in the Gillman area, residents in metropolitan Adelaide, all in South Australia: and who can say where the boundary should be drawn? Then again, consultation can only be properly described as such when all parties can equally access much the same body of essential information. But how could an ordinary urban resident possibly access, never mind take on board, even a fraction of the complex material which this project generates? Again, inasmuch as some representation is clearly essential, how is a complex urban population to be segmented into voting blocs in order to raise a peoples' voice? Last and by no means least, if democratic consultation is to have any meaning at all, then it should entail the right of veto. But how, and according to what criteria, could a veto possibly be raised vis-a-vis a project of the MFP's magnitude?

So we are back finally with the woman with the microphone in the Adelaide Town Hall asking how to put to flight the MFP technocrats. For the pertinent issue is whether the role of public opinion is of any consequence at all when politicians, senior bureaucrats, and industrialists, develop mammoth projects such as this, and then direct them in ways which best suit their collective interest? The course taken by the Adelaide MFP thus far suggests that public opinion is neither here nor there. If this is the position whilst it exists on paper only, how much more worrisome is that same prospect when in late 1993 the MFP takes physical shape over the flat terrain of Gillman?

Ade Peace teaches anthropology at the University of Adelaide.

How was ADEX?

The Australian International Defence Exhibition, held in Canberra in November 1991, was in the news not so much because it was in the business of selling 'defence equipment' as for the fact that there were people protesting against it. Louise MacDonald looks at some aspects of the protest and Bill Williams went into the exhibition itself.



ANY times since returning from the anti-AIDEX demonstration I have been asked: How was AIDEX? How do I answer a question like that? It wasn't enjoyable. I did not enjoy camping in a car park opposite an international arms trade fair. I did not enjoy the constant threat of brutality from police to myself or those around me. I did not enjoy having individuals control the demonstration because they had the power of the megaphone, the walkietalkie or the loudest voice. But having said that, I am glad to have been a part of the anti-AIDEX campaign. The impact of the demonstration was that AIDEX will probably not be held again in Canberra and Australia's involvement in militarism was put on the agenda in the media and in the minds of the public.

The picket line established at the main delivery gate and the blockading of the other gates of the National Exhibition Centre (NATEX), which were established in the first days of the protest, were effective in disrupting the setting up of the Australian International Defence Exhibition (AIDEX). The effectiveness of the blockade was enhanced by the use of tripods to block gates and street theatre to provoke and entertain. The publicity surrounding this part of the blockade was supportive of the anti-AIDEX campaign. The decline in attendance at the exhibition was due in part to the publicity generated by the protest.

The violence used by the police to pull the blockades apart was unprovoked and unjustifiable, since those who wanted to enter the NATEX site to set up their exhibits were able to do so through back gates or holes in the fence created by the police.

On Tuesday, the day the exhibition opened, police were bused in, (including police from plain clothes branches such as the drug offensive branch and the juvenile assistance branch). Many did not wear uniforms, most did not wear identification. Also present was the notorious Tactical Response Group, who seemed to take particular delight in brutalising demonstrators. The police quickly formed a line and by

8.30 am had pushed protesters to the far side of the road away from the NATEX site. From that point on any attempts to battle between police and protesters for the white line on the edge of the road. The ensuing confrontation between protesters and police ranged from the absurd and entertaining, with street theatre, singing and mockery aimed at the police, to the very brutal, with protesters being violently removed from the road by police.

At this point we protesters started police had been responding to our were focussing on the police, their brutality was ignored, violence being portrayed as the fault of the protesters.

The exhibition was now open but at a greatly reduced size and increased cost. The blockade had been successful. It was probably time for the demonstrators to change tactics. In an effort to maintain our focus on what

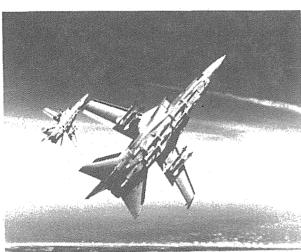
AIDEX meant, many people were questioning the desirability of getting into a televised battle with police. It was sugblockade AIDEX got no further than a gested that the protest continue with the original agenda of planned actions. This was not acceptable to some sections of the camp who could not remove their focus from police confrontation.

The International Socialists (IS) dominated the Tuesday night meeting, as with subsequent meetings by speaking loudest and longest. Attempts at facilitation were, at best, well intentioned but ineffective or, at worst, totalto lose the initiative. Previously, the ly biased towards the International Socialists. The IS were determined that protest focussed on AIDEX, now we the camp remain 'unified' and that everyone be involved in blockading. violence and their unswerving devotion They used tactics such as placing to keeping us off the bitumen. Also, the people through the crowd to make their media, particularly the Canberra Times, numbers seem stronger, stirring up the turned against the protest and police crowd and, when things went against them, creating a diversion so the whole group would go running towards perceived threats.

The camp included such diverse groups as: Campaign Against Militarism, Renegade Activist Action Force, Pax Christi, unionists, Teachers for Peace, Doctors for the Prevention

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berra Campaign for Peace and numerous individuals not aligned with groups. The group's strength lay not in its ability to sit on a road and be beaten up, but in the power of so many people coming together from so many different backgrounds with the united goal of wanting to close down AIDEX and end Australia's export of militarism. Collec-

of War, Friends of the Earth, the Can-

tively the potential for so many different types of action all over Canberra was In earlier planning, Wednesday had been designated as the Women's Day, and had been planned as a focus for women to get together to highlight the

effect of war on women and to reach out to the community to educate and reveal the extent to which Australia is involved in the war machine. The women's action, like the environment action a day later, was attacked in meetings by the IS as being divisive, cowardly and irrelevant. Having taken part in both actions. I consider that they were the most powerful, positive and informative part of the anti-AIDEX campaign. The women's action, which started at the War Memorial with rituals and singing, moved through the streets of Canberra with dancing and singing to arrive at the Civic Centre where speeches were made. The action ended back at the NATEX site with a weaving in the fence, in the tradition of Greenham Common. After the women's action the focus did change, more people were wanting al-

The environment action, which became known as the non violent action, suffered, like the women's action the day before, from IS attempts to railroad it. The action was organised to be an information sharing event (something seriously lacking during the week). It was not organised to run in opposition to the blockade but as an integral part of the protest. That morning's general meeting was dominated by IS. It was facilitated by an IS member who made leading statements before and after speakers, giving preference to IS speakers (carefully placed around the

ternatives to the violence. Singing,

theatre and humour became more ap-

parent in people's attempts to break

down police lines.

The 'fire and forget' fair

HAT was the exhibition, then? Sir William Keys, State Department for not toeing the line. spokesperson for the exhibition, had made an offer in the Canberra Times to let (selected) people see the much maligned bazaar - so we took him up on it. Kevs cut an impressive figure - especially for those of us trained for the brotherhood of the Right and the Fair. Elderly, erudite and charming. The consummate well bred bulldog. Fought for his country twice and wounded once ...

'thugs and terrorists' he engaged us in discussion for something like an hour. Steadily the urge to vomit spread through me as, with due deference and decorum, this master of self-righteousness and fairplay demonstrated the well honed skills of the public school debater. I will attempt to do the argument justice(!).

1. Above all, no one - no one - is more committed to peace than we old soldiers and arms dealers. (I was to hear this line from various persons at least ten times in the next two hours.)

2. We need a vigorous home-grown arms industry: (a) for self defence; (b) to ensure us major power status in our region; (c) to benignly influence military-political developments therein.

3. We never, never, never, provide weapons or knowhow to repressive regimes. (Only to good folk like forget', right next to a display of a rocket launcher, one of the French - in Kanaky? Papua New Guinea - in Bougainville? British - in Northern Ireland? and the USA - almost everywhere).

4. When we do, (Whoops!) they assure us that they never use our goods and skills for repressive purposes (e.g. the ammunition we sold to Indonesia was only used for naval target practice ...)

Much weight was supposed to accrue to his case by the 'hypothetical': 'Let me put this to you. Ladies and Gentlemen – what would you propose should the Indonesians invade (wait for it ... guess who?) Papua New Guinea?'

The Indonesian bogey reigns supreme (hypothetically of course!), never mind that the Indonesians have already invaded West Papua and East Timor, and what did Australia do then?

This 'hypothetical' Indonesian invasion of Papua New Guinea is, of course, a front for the real cause celebre of Australian militarism - an Indonesian invasion of Australia. Though dismissed by serious defence analysts my product best way I know how. time and again in the last ten years, this bogey continues to shape our militarists' designs as evinced by the flagrant anti-Indonesian styling of Kangaroo 89.

donesian invasion is fear of incurring the wrath of the US Fair" by Bill Williams, (n.p.), 1992.

Intermittently one of our group would attempt to redirect the discussion towards the actual on-the-ground implications of the exhibits, but at the mention of words like 'death' or 'killing' Keys would interrupt and divert with the protestation that 'now you are using emotive language'. This would then be a signal for him to recite the catechism 'most of these items have civilian applications - are you suggesting that Australian manufacturers Having established that our small group contained no be prevented from advertising legitimate civil wares?'

> This was apparently an effective argument - particularly for people who didn't have the opportunity to see the exhibition. A few protesters I spoke to had obviously been left unsure about just what was in the exhibition, indeed it was a clever attempt as far as P.R. goes. There were numerous basically 'civilian' stalls - the biggest display of Sidchrome spanners I have ever seen, for example, Wattle Paints (who supplied sun hats to the police as a side line) and Price Waterhouse accounting systems. Then there were more ambiguous displays items like life rafts or radar systems which obviously have dual applicability. But the main hall was replete with stalls and displays, overloaded with machinery and systems with one purpose - killing people ... pardon my emotions!

> British Aerospace had a missile cutely labelled 'fire and whose practical features was 'environmental protection'. Numerous items were advertised in terms of their superior performance relative to competitors in the Falklands 'conflict' or the Gulf War. Rockwell International even had a sort of mock-up military man's cubby house: 'Command and control centre as used in Operation Desert Storm' - walk right in, sit right down, baby let your hair hang down. Even the smooth operators. Nobeltech of Sweden, did a beaut line in 'effective concepts in passive counter measures'. This was part of their display of one of their latest missiles; a full scale real life version of which sat at the front of their stall.

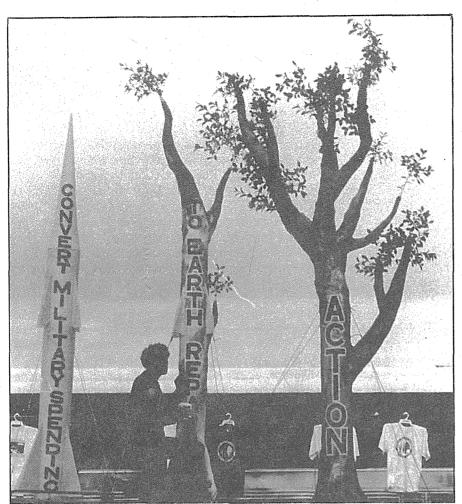
> I hesitantly approached the front man on a French stall flogging 'the communication system which outperforned the Americans in the Gulf', to ask whether he felt uneasy selling a product in terms of its ability to outkill competitors:

Response No. 1: 'Pardon?'.

Repeat question. Response No. 2: 'I am just selling

He's right of course: business is business and deaths makes us dollars.

It seems the only factor outweighing fear of In-



meeting) and refusing to give speaking rights to those opposing the IS line particularly those supporting the environment action. The meeting ended with those wanting to blockade marching off through the camp and the remaining people setting off to begin the environment action.

What began as a handful of people at the environment action quickly swelled to about three hundred. There were speakers on Australia's sale of arms to Malaysia and Indonesia and military spending in Australia, and the impact this has on the environment and indigenous populations. The protesters then started singing (with constant interruptions from IS people asking for quiet as they were holding a meeting ten metres from where the action was assembled). All those involved in the action then walked in single file, singing as they passed the police who lined the road to Northborne Avenue, where

the road past the exhibition. During the banner painting there was an open microphone which people used to speak on issues, including working conditions in the Philippines and Indonesia. The action ended with a discussion on where the \$20 million spent daily on the military in Australia could be better used.

Many people would have arrived in Canberra having read the book on AIDEX: End the Arms Trade, published by the Renegade Activist Action Force, which, along with much information on AIDEX outlined the program of events that the anti-AIDEX campaign was likely to follow. People would also have arrived expecting that they might get involved in arrestable activity. Also they may have been aware of the possibility of police violence, given the violence that occurred at lead-up actions around the country and at AIDEX 89.

banners were painted and hung along impossible to set up the infrastructure Melbourne.

to support the demonstration during its operation. People wanted to respond immediately to the police, rather than to cooperate in meetings. Things such as medical and legal support needed to be put into place before the action started and to have collectives maintaining and coordinating them during the week. Likewise, media liaison, whilst very well operated from the Canberra Peace Centre, was happening in a very ad hoc way at the AIDEX site. The lack of identifiable media liaison people at the AIDEX site made it easy for reporters to grab sensational comments from demonstraters or only talk to the police before filing their reports.

Similarly, while it is impossible to check everybody's commitment to antimilitarism, some form of vetting of the gung-ho boys on walkie-talkies, who seemed to have control of our own communications systems, would have helped people make accurate assessments of what was happening at the various parts of the demonstration. Reports such as: 'The police have just trashed the camp site and are throwing everyone out', being rung through to the peace centre were not at all helpful.

The decision making forums needed to follow some format and obviously needed to address the issue of the disruptive tactics of the IS. These meetings should also have had a greater emphasis on information sharing rather than being a forum for those in control of the megaphone or those best skilled in crowd manipulation. Because of this type of domination and the violent agenda being set by the police over the road it was impossible to have the necessary rational discussions about tactics and how to carry through actions that were proposed on the draft agenda.

A possible way of avoiding these problems would have been to have people organised in affinity groups, and ensuring structures were in place to enable easy access to information and decision making processes so that the group could have control of the agenda rather than it be controlled by individuals.

Under these circumstances it was Louise MacDonald is an activist from

On the border of peace



The events of the Gulf War were not just military activities, there were also peace initiatives such as that of the Gulf Peace Team. Liz Denham was with the Team at its camp on the border of Iraq and Saudi Arabia and reports on it and some of the lessons that could be learned.

HAT happens when peace activists, feminists, nonviolent action gurus and some fellow travellers with language, cultural and political differences and limited food and water are gathered together surrounded by mine fields and trenches in the middle of a desert in a foreign country waiting for World War III?

This was the scenario for the Gulf Peace Team, a group of seventy three people from sixteen nationalities camped on the border of Iraq and Saudi Arabia in January 1991.

No one could determine how, when or where the idea originated but it quickly gathered support from networks throughout the world. The organisation was carried out from London by an ad hoc committee and negotiations began with the governments of Iraq and Saudi Arabia. The Iraqi government was the only one to respond favourably. The negotiators were given a written assurance of minimal interference and the Border Camp officially began on Xmas eve.

The campers flew in from around the world to Amman in Jordan and travelled by bus to Baghdad, a journey of between twelve and twenty four hours. In Baghdad accommodation was arranged at a village complex a few kilometres from the centre of the city on the banks of the Tigris River. The stay in Baghdad gave an opportunity to organise any last minute details and gather personal items together before travelling to the border camp. The foreign media was still in Baghdad and there was plenty of interest in the campers' activities to be conveyed to the folks back home.

The negotiated site for the camp was an area used by pilgrims on the road from Baghdad to Mecca and Medina some six hundred kilometres south west of Baghdad. The camp consisted of a bitumened area of several acres with large hanger type buildings, shower and toilet blocks and large water tanks. It was also home to numerous stray dogs and cats. Outside the fenced area of the peace camp was a small military establishment with about fifty men whose main function seemed to be to keep the activists from wandering off into the desert but was in

fact the base for the border patrol. Apart from these border guards there were no local people in the area. The nearest major centre of Kerbala was several hundred kilometres to the north.

The desert scenery surrounding the camp did not resemble anything one would expect after seeing films such as Lawrence of Arabia or The Sheikh from Araby. It consisted of low rocky terrain with not a sandhill in sight. The weather also was not as some would have expected. It was consistently cool. There were some sunny days but mostly the temperature was in the vicinity of ten degrees Celsius with some nights the mercury getting down to zero. Heavy rain together with fairly fierce wind was not uncommon, and presented some difficulties as most of the buildings leaked.

The campers were mainly white western middle class people with twice as many men as women. Also there were Indonesians, Japanese and Indians. There were priests and nuns, a Buddhist monk, anarchists and conservatives, professors and poets. Ages ranged from 23 to 80, one or two were even disabled.

Some were long-time peace, social justice and human rights activists, such as members of the US Plowshares group with many years of non violent direct action experience and almost as many years of incarceration because of their beliefs. There were women who had taken part in the Women's Peace camp at Greenham Common. One camper from UK attempted to do a nonviolent action every two weeks. For some campers, this was their first experience out of their own country. For some it was their first experience of any involvement with peace issues. Some had never heard of consensus decision making processes or nonviolent philosophy. Some knew nothing and others cared little about gender politics. Some displayed breathtaking insensitivity and behaviour inappropriate in any cultural environment. Some should not have been there including those who incredibly had obviously not given sufficient thought to the potential personal danger of the situation.

Maintenance of the camp was organised by a volunteer roster system

and various committees. The food committee for instance had the responsibility of ensuring adequate supplies in stock. Food was trucked in from Baghdad and Kerbala until January 17 when bombing commenced. Just one of the problems this committee and the camp as a whole had to deal with was some campers helping themselves to scarce items with seemingly little regard to the welfare of other campers. After January 17 and the likelihood of no further supplies being available, rationing became essential although the situation never reached serious proportions.

The water committee monitored the supply and use of water and the availability of purification tablets for drinking water which was trucked in. There was water suitable for washing in plentiful supply from a nearby bore as long as the electricity supply from the army camp to the pump was maintained. The camp was situated in a river valley called a 'wadi'. It was dry at the time, the end of summer, but there was access to underground water of dubious quality.

The medical committee consisted of four doctors among the campers and an Iraqi doctor in the army camp who often came to visit. He assured the campers of a supply of medicines available for their use if the need arose. It is to the credit of these committees and the common sense of the campers that they suffered no major health problems. However there were the usual difficulties encountered by delicate Western digestive systems in a Third World environment.

The energy committee monitored the supply and use of kerosene which was the only source of cooking heat. Electricity from the army camp supplied lighting and power for the hot showers and heaters. Once the bombing commenced and the supply was cut off at dusk, lighting was by torchlight in emergency only and kerosene became the only source of heating during the cold nights. It was decided that with an uncertain supply of kerosene, heating be restricted to one heater at night for the whole camp.

A volunteer roster was set up for various daily tasks. The food was mostly

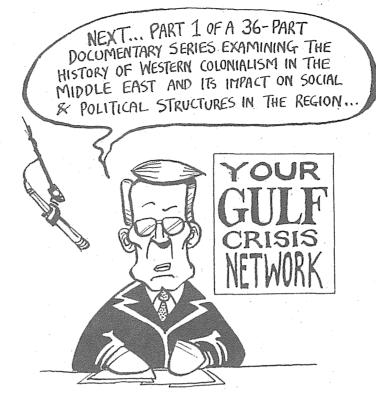
vegetarian and the standard and variety of the meals were amazing considering that all the cooking was done on small single burner kerosene stoves. With no fresh supplies after January 17 meals were reduced to two a day. Volunteers also took turns with cleaning the large common/meeting room as well as the showers and toilets. After January 17 a nightwatch roster was organised to prevent some panicking individual waking the whole camp for no reason. This did occur but happily not after the system of night watches was initiated.

A routine of camp meetings had been established by the early arrivals. They had decided on two a day, one in the morning to organise tasks and general running of the camp and one in the evening to discuss policy. As more people arrived this process, with large numbers, was no longer viable. Those who were long-time activists in the social change movement were amazed that this process was even attempted and struggled with for so long.

The large group meetings were acrimonious and exhausting. They gave most women and some men little space or opportunity to participate. They also allowed the most vocal, almost invariably males, to dominate with seemingly endless diatribes on political theory or in one case a refugee from the 60s hippie generation to lambast the group with such gems as 'Peace Man' and 'You're all fucked'.

These large meetings were constantly interrupted and disrupted, whether by design or by accident, on so many occasions that concerns began to be raised of deliberate actions to destroy the camp. Paranoia is a fairly constant phenomenon among peace activists with very good reasons. These disruptions and suspicions increased an already heightened state of tension along with the continual drone of bombers overhead, talk of bombings and evacuations, shortages of food, not to mention personal differences, etc.

It was finally agreed that the discussions and decisions would take place in affinity groups with a representative reporting to a Steering Committee. Affinity groups are small groups of usually ten or twelve people who have some-



HA HA... ONLY JOKING...

NO, IT'S ANOTHER HOUR OF JETS
TAKING OFF FROM AIRCRAFT CARRIERS
& TANKS ROLLING AROUND THE
DESERT...

COMING UP...

IMAGES
WITHOUT
CONTEXT

thing in common and feel they can work together. They were structured loosely according to nationalities. For example, the people from the UK formed the Rainbow Group and the Dutch called themselves the Infinity Affinity Group. There were a few problems with those not familiar with affinity groups. Some refused to join any group which meant they were excluded from the decision making process. A few of the vocal ones at the larger meetings were unhappy about participating in a small group for their own particular reasons. The refugee from Woodstock was particularly unhappy about the new process despite continually and loudly voicing his concern about our lack of achievements at the large meetings.

But for the majority these new arrangements were a very positive move. It meant that they had to take part in just one meeting a day at times decided by the affinity groups themselves. The representatives on the Steering Committee were rotated every few days to encourage participation and to give a varied perspective to the decisions affecting the camp.

The change in the morale of the campers was quite evident. Most now felt they were achieving some degree of cooperation and camaraderie despite the deteriorating situation in the outside world.

The larger amount of free time was spent in workshops learning or attempting to learn such things as basic Arabic. One women from London had brought along her sewing machine and enormous bundles of materials so banners were designed, stitched and displayed. Two olive trees had been planted at Xmas in a symbolic act of Peace. Now campers found time to prepare larger gardens. Future campers can look forward to fresh watercress, chick peas, pumpkins and a variety of salad vegetables.

Maintenance of the camp site improved. An old disused toilet block was investigated and found to be in working order so it was added to the camp facilities after a good clean out of mainly straw. A garbage collective was formed after interminable discussions about recycling and environmentally

The change in the morale of the sound methods of disposal. It was evenmpers was quite evident. Most now tually buried to provide material for they were achieving some degree of future gardens.

Friendly games of soccer and volleyball were organised for the Iraqi guards who seemed to welcome the distraction from the boredom of gate duty and anxious thoughts of families in Baghdad. A highly entertaining cultural night was organised with performances of varying degrees of professionalism to an appreciative if not discerning audience. Stories were told and books read by torchlight at night and the campers even found time to simply chat to one another. Birthdays were celebrated, friendships began and deepened and some just faded away.

After the bombing began at 3am on 17 January it became clear that the dynamics of the camp would once more alter considerably.

Some campers did not intend to stay in the camp after the January 15 deadline and had made travel arrangements to return home soon after. For these people it was a matter of some inconvenience to remain. The uncertainty of

any departure let alone a day in the understanding of the principles conforeseeable future was of great concern to them. For others there was a concern that the lack of communication with the various support groups at home was an indication of the lack of achievement of our efforts and an indication of the failure of the purpose of the camp.

Some felt a sense of frustration at the idea of being trapped by Iraqi 'hospitality'. In order to resolve this dilemma a small group volunteered to set up a camp another two kilometres in to 'No Person's Land' towards Saudi Arabia. This was not only to become independent but to act according to one of the principles of nonviolent philosophy by becoming a truly neutral presence. This proposal met with such hostility from other campers that it had to be abandoned to avoid conflict.

After numerous rumours the inevitable evacuation occurred. It did not come from US helicopters with guns ablazing as had been prophesised - just two rather ordinary buses and a truck. It was clear that for some this was the rescue mission for which they had hoped. For others it was the very thing the camp had been set up to resist and despite earlier commitments from the majority of the campers to remain it was left to a small group of fifteen to attempt to stay. They staged a sit-down protest and had to be physically carried on to the buses by the Iraqi officials to the delight of some of the campers already on the buses who obviously resented this unnecessary delay.

The now ex-campers were bused to Baghdad and 'interned' in El Rasheed Hotel for a few days where they were requested by their hosts to remain within the hotel grounds. The Iraqi government had offered a reward for pilots of shot down enemy aircraft so this warning was for the security of the ex-campers. This did not deter a few from travelling into the city and taking photos of bombed areas. Others were similarly not deterred by the Islam prohibition of alcohol from staging a noisy, boozy party during a bombing raid. The incredible situation of peace activists partying while the Iraqi people and their country were being destroyed was an indication of the lack of basic

sidered in the setting up of the Gulf Peace Team project.

While in Baghdad the ex-campers witnessed the nightly bombing of the city where there was little food, no electricity, and water for an hour a day for the fortunate. On one occasion a meeting with a high ranking Iraqi official was interrupted by two explosions which shook the hotel and sent the excampers scurrying to the bomb shelters. The Iraqi official was in the process of advising the ex-campers of the country's eternal gratitude for their efforts. Their names would be writ in gold in the annals of Iraqi history, they were told. They would be welcome in Iraq at any time and were to regard it as their second home. During this time it was learned that the Iraqi military had in fact staged an offensive in the area of the Peace Camp. The doctors from the Peace Team were keen to provide any additional assistance at the hospitals. Whether the Iraqi authorities now felt the campers' usefulness had been exhausted; whether they were insulted by the behaviour of some of the excampers or for what ever reason, soon the campers were once more being bused, this time to the Iraq/Jordanian

In an uncharacteristic consensus, the ex-campers agreed that the Iraqi authorities and the Iraqi people had shown them unfailing courtesy and assistance at a time of extreme difficulty throughout the country.

The road to the border had been heavily bombed the night before. Several Jordanian truck drivers had been killed, and their lorries were still burning in the bomb craters together with the wreckage of several civilian cars. The situation at Rushid at the Iraq/Jordanian border was one of desperation and confusion. Many guest workers from Africa and Asia, also Palestinians leaving Kuwait in fear of their lives were attempting to cross the border into Jordan but lacked the necessary exit visas. These people were camped under bits of iron and cardboard boxes in freezing conditions and some had already died.

On the Jordanian side of the border

the ex-campers were met by members of the Gulf Peace Team who had remained in Amman and given fresh fruit, hot drinks and mail from home. Once back in Amman the ex-campers were greeted by more friends, more food, the first hot showers since leaving the border camp and the opportunity to contact loved ones, support groups and media at home.

For some, the Gulf Peace Team's task was completed. For others, another phase began which included negotiations to set up a Peace Centre in the Amman with the aim of establishing a Peace Camp in the Golan Heights area. Some were interested in organising humanitarian aid to Baghdad and several trucks with Gulf Peace Team members on board succeeded in taking much needed medicines into the area.

The Team members returning home reported keen media interest in their experiences and in hearing a perspective on the situation different from that of the international media networks. They also reported a high level of interest in their local communities about the camp and the campers throughout the period. This was in contrast to the view of a member of the Australian group expressed while in the border camp that the camp was a failure because of lack of media attention. This was a similar criticism by the same person of the Peace Camp at Nurrungar in 1989, despite evidence to the contrary.

The Border Camp in many ways resembled the world at large. There were political and cultural difficulties, gender and language differences. There were physical dangers, discomfort and emotional stresses. There were scarce resources together with suspicions of deliberate attempts to disrupt any resolution of conflicts. There were those who never accepted group decisions and there were those who worked hard and tirelessly to make the experience so enjoyable and worthwhile for themselves and for others. So it is clear that this particular camp could and should provide invaluable lessons for organisers and participants in any future activity of this type.

Liz Denham is an activist from Hobart.



WOULD like to explain how I came to be interested in the impact of television on children. For several years, I have been involved in Psychologists for the Prevention of War (PPOW), which is a Special Interest Group of the Australian Psychological Society, and comprises close to 900 psychologists Australia-wide. Initially our principal concern was with psychological aspects of the threat of nuclear war: we were trying to address, and reduce, the threat of that ultimate catastrophe, the potential eradication of the human species and of life on this little planet of ours through the grotesque absurdity of nuclear war.

That led to considering what are the conditions in society that lead to us (as a species) passively accepting this threat to ourselves and our planet; to us not saying 'No', to us not asserting unequivocally that it is unacceptable even to contemplate nuclear war ever as a possible solution, let alone to spend untold billions of dollars preparing for it, through the arms race. As Jonathon Schell so powerfully argued in The Fate of the Earth, such passive acceptance cannot be psychologically healthy, and has to be non-adaptive.

These considerations led me further to look at the conditions that lead us to accepting violent solutions to international conflicts at all, and from there on to our acceptance of violence at more local levels, in the society of which we are a part. How do we get to believe (or act as if we believe) that violent solutions to any problem are appropriate, are successful and are rewarded? And

how do we get to not having faith in other ways of solving problems?

And thinking about these things led me, of course, to television. Being a developmental psychologist, it was natural for me to look at the effects of TV, especially on children.

So the focus for me was clearly on how TV might be implicated in violence and aggression. There are many more potential effects, both positive and negative, of TV on children besides any influence on aggressiveness. But these days we are all coming to know that everything is interconnected - that there are links between what President Bush decides to do in the Middle East and how children behave in the playground, that the global threat of nuclear war is related to the values and attitudes inculcated in each of us, and that the problem of violence is linked to issues of gender, of power, of racism, of social injustice and of disempowerment. So we cannot address problems of violence without acknowledging these other issues, and whatever we learn about violence also has a bearing on them.

As I started on this interest in the influences of violence, the questions for me (being trained as an empirical scientist to be sceptical and to carefully weigh the evidence) were: is TV really an influence of any magnitude on children's behaviour and attitudes and values? And if so, what are the mechanisms by which TV has its effects - for example, is it simply a copying or modelling process, or something more complex? Whom does it affect, how and when? And how should we respond?

One thing that struck me as soon as I got involved in research on the effects of TV, and in the heated debate that surrounds it, was that many people seem to think there are two quite different types of television - there are educational programmes, and then there's entertainment.

People have no difficulty in believing that Sesame Street and Playschool are 'good' for children, that they learn things from them. And we avidly watch current affairs and documentary programmes in the hope and belief that we'll learn from them - that they'll

change us in some way (even if we have well-founded doubts about the accuracy and comprehensiveness of what is presented!)

And then on the other side there are the crime shows, soap operas, sporting programmes and cartoon shows. These are supposed to be simply entertaining - pleasant, relaxing, amusing time fillers with no effect on us at all. And, of course, it is these programmes which tend to be high in violence - an Australian survey in 1985 found 97 per cent of crime shows, 74 per cent of action adventure shows and 86 per cent of cartoons contain violence; and most show the aggression to be appropriate, effective and rewarded. The average Australian child is calculated to watch 15,000 murders on TV during her or his school years. But there are many who argue that all this is entirely irrelevant, without effects on the behaviour on attitudes of the viewer. I am often told, 'Look at me. I watched (Superman/Batman/Rambo, etc.) when I was a kid, and look at me, I'm alright!' Unfortunately, this is often said in a somewhat belligerent manner, which rather undercuts the force of the assertion!

Such a dichotomy, between educational and entertaining, is obviously false. We know that learning often occurs 'by mistake', unintentionally, unconsciously. Viewers, whether adults or children, do not make complex judgments about 'This is Sesame Street, I learn things from this' and 'This is Ninja Turtles, I don't learn from this'. Learning doesn't work that way.

There has been a huge amount of research on the effects of TV, ranging from short-term laboratory studies to longitudinal studies spanning 20 years and more. Here is not an appropriate place to review the research literature in detail; it is a difficult area to research, and the results are not absolutely clearcut. However, it has now been frequently confirmed that more aggressive people watch more violent television. And most researchers accept that this is a causal relationship - that viewing violent material causes an individual to be more aggressive, at least for some individuals in some situations.

How does this happen? Is it just Ninja Turtles.

copying? In the area of children's television, many in and around the TV industry have argued that all children might do is to copy what they see, and that meant that we didn't need to worry about cartoons, or fantasy programmes, because they 'weren't real' so children wouldn't copy them.

The latest research suggests that it's not as simple as this. The best explanation for the research findings seems to be that children (and adults) develop 'cognitive scripts' or mental models of appropriate ways of behaving. Whether a stimulus to which one is exposed (such as in a TV programme) gets encoded and stored in a mental script depends on a variety of factors such as how often you are exposed to the material, how you interpret it, how relevant it is to you, whether the observed behaviour is seen to 'work', and how often you can rehearse the script. So the outward 'realism' of the material is only one factor among many, and even if it is clearly 'not real', scripts reflecting it can be mentally coded, and called on and enacted when a situation arises which resembles the original one in some way.

This notion of cognitive scripts was supported in a study I did with an Honours student, Chris di Muccio, where we showed pre-school children episodes of Voltron (where robotic creatures engage in intergalactic warfare) and episodes of Gummibears (showing the harmless adventures of a group of cute little bears); the children then played with either Voltron or Gummibears toys. Both the cartoon type and the toy type affected the children's behaviour - they were more aggressive and less cooperative and less sharing after Voltron. What is more, the effects were strongest when children both saw the Voltron cartoon and played with the Voltron toys - so it appeared that the toys acted as retrieval cues to bring out the aggressive cognitive scripts encoded during watching the cartoon. This raises real concerns about the recent trend for cartoons to be used virtually as unpaid advertisements for a whole range of products (toys, T-shirts, etc.) associated with them - as, of course, has happened with



Just as aggression on TV tends to make at least some children more aggressive and more accepting of aggression as an appropriate response to situations, so we can expect other messages in programmes to have their efin Ninja Turtles? There has been so and children themselves. much exposure and discussion about this that I don't need to go into details, but will make just a few points. The Turtles are all males, and the female character is of secondary importance and is often mainly decorative - so are trivial and passive. The Turtles bethrough exposure to radiation - which dead or dying. And the same old forof slick witticisms to give it some novelly profitable cult. But the covert messages are not ones that most of us would want to encourage.

about so-called fact - news, documenraise just a few issues.

evidence on the effects of TV coverage hopes and fears. We saw some instanno carefully collected data on random samples of children, with comparison of them 'before the Gulf' and 'after the Gulf. What we do have is anecdotal fects. So what are the covert messages reports, from many parents, teachers

We know that some children got taken in by this new action-packed soap opera, 'the TV war', and said to each other, 'Did you watch the Gulf War last night?', as if it were just another soapie. The death and destruction seemed to males are active and important, females become as irrelevant and distant as in any other 'show'. This was facilitated by come big, strong and intelligent the 'linguistic detoxification' that we often see used to cover the true human actually makes you deformed, diseased, costs of warfare (the bomb which I'd be called a bully (or worse)'. I really devastated Hiroshima was called 'Little mula is pulled out time and again, of Boy', and the neutron bomb, which kills violent means justifying so-called people but leaves buildings intact, is 'good' ends, packaged under the cover called a 'clean' bomb), but raised here to new heights. So we saw the bombing ty. One has to admire it as a marketing of Baghdad referred to as a great exercise, the successful manipulation of fireworks show, and civilian deaths bethe market (us!) to create an enormous- came 'collateral damage' - a term which would be incomprehensible to most children anyway.

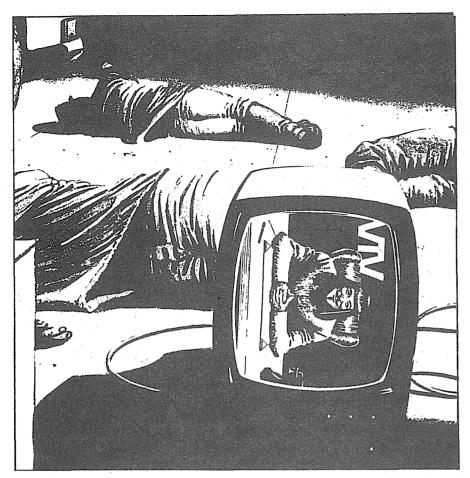
We know many children accepted So much for fiction on TV, what the one-dimensional image portrayed of Hussein as 'enemy', as 'evil', 'the new taries, current affairs, and, most recent- Hitler', and were not encouraged by ly, coverage of the Gulf War? I want to television coverage to try to see the whole multifaceted person (however Of course there is not hard research unpleasant), with complex motives and

of the Gulf War on children - there are ces of racist attitudes and behaviour towards Iraqi and other Muslim children. And we saw a rise in the purchase of war toys (which had previously been declining), and the enacting of war scenes in the playground.

> We also know that some children were scared, feared that bombs would fall on them, and couldn't judge the distance between the combat zone and themselves; and many had nightmares and other signs of anxiety.

> Other children expressed outrage, clearly seeing that what was being done in the Middle-East was diametrically opposed to how they had been taught to behave: 'If I did that in the playground, felt for those parents and teachers who are making a genuine effort to teach and practise non-violent resolution of conflicts and cooperative problemsolving at home and school, to have symbols of power and prestige (Bush, Hawke, the United Nations, etc.) behaving in quite the opposite way, and the media implicitly or explicitly approving of it, raising so few questions, presenting so few alternatives.

> In response to all this, the Victorian Community Council against Violence, with the help of groups such as PPOW, produced a resource kit called Bridging the Gulf to help parents, teachers and children find ways of dealing with the



conflict and all the issues it raised.

What is most obvious about this listing of children's reactions to media coverage of the Gulf War is their variability. Children showed a whole range of responses. And this brings me back to a point raised earlier, that not all children become more aggressive when exposed to aggressive TV.

Two of the important factors that seem to determine how affected children are by viewed material are:

- whether the viewed material matches what they already see and experience around them. If they are living in a family environment that is violent, or go to a punitive school, it is more likely that the violent messages seen on TV will be encoded into cognitive scripts and later towards violence.
- munication that takes place about the viewed material. Research has shown that the effects of viewing violence are much reduced if the child has an adult with whom to dis-

cuss the material, who can help the child to interpret and analyse what is being presented.

This leads to the topic of Media Education. I think there is an urgent need to make us (adults and kids) discriminating and expert consumers of the media, consumers who notice what is included and what is excluded, who perceive and 'read' the covert messages, and make them overt, so that a conscious choice can be made about whether to accept them or not; thus the messages are disempowered and the viewer is empowered. We also need to educate ourselves to express our views, to learn to make ourselves be heard, both with our brickbats and our bouquets, so that we do influence the media diet which is dished up to us.

Media education of this sort is the • the sort of discussion and com-responsibility of schools and others, but also of parents. I would say that if you want to protect your child from the negative effects of TV, the single most important thing you can do is to talk about what they watch. Monitor what

they watch, share what they watch, and discuss it - draw out the subtle messages, express your views, let them express theirs. Say: 'Did you notice how only the men did anything, and the women stood by?'; 'Do you think there might have been another way to solve that problem instead of fighting over it?'; 'They only showed us bad things about the (black/gay/poor ...) person; do you think s/he might have a better side?' - the possibilities are endless.

I attended a media conference organised by Senator Janet Powell on the eve of the UN deadline for Hussein's withdrawal from Kuwait. It was very well-attended, the room was packed. First we panellists had our say and expressed our view that it was unnecessary for the US/UN to use force at this point. We noted how the process that had been followed in the conflict was exactly that which we knew could be just about guaranteed to cause escalation of the conflict - the inflammatory talk, the taking of positions first as ambit claims, then getting entrenched in them and making them even more extreme, the development of the 'enemy' stereotype, etc. And we talked about the probable awful consequences of a war. After all this, the journalists asked in irritation, 'Why have you waited until now to say this? You should have been saying it months ago'.

A groan of exasperation rose from us speakers. We had all been desperately trying to get the media to pay attention to alternative points of view right from August 1990 - and noone had wanted to know.

It seemed that the journalists were honestly unaware of their power, that it was they (or their bosses) who chose what was news and newsworthy, and what wasn't. Perhaps we need media education for those in the media too.

Dr Ann Sanson is a Senior Lecturer with the Department of Psychology at the University of Melbourne and Convener of Psychologists for the Prevention of War. This article was first presented at the forum, The First Casualty organised by the Rainbow Alliance and the Australian Journalists Association in Melbourne in May 1991.

Reviews

The Pesticide Handbook: Profiles for Action

by Sarojini Rengam and Karen Snyder (Eds), IOCU and PAN. Malaysia, 3rd Revised Edition, 1991, 413pp, US\$24 for institutions and US\$12 for non-profit, public interest groups.

Reviewed by Richard Hindmarsh

The Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Consumer Unions (IOCU) have just released The Pesticide Handbook: *Profiles for Action*. This is timely as it coincides with Australian calls to ban outright the poisonous organochlorine group of pesticides, especially aldrin and dieldrin. The book provides easily accessible and useful information on problem pesticides and extremely relevant background information. The editors, Rengam and Snyder, have worked hard to ensure the book is well laid out and interesting to read. For anyone wishing to become more proficient in understanding pesticides and the industry this is a vital source book.

The first section acts as a 'pesticide dictionary' with revised information on the United Nations Food and Agriculfifty pesticides, including each ture Organization's (FAO) internationpesticide's common name, chemical group, chemical name, trade names, comprehensive list for further reading, hazard classification, lethal dose and a glossary of terms. All in all, the (LD50) values, hazard to human health, main use, regulatory controls internationally, incidences of known poisonings and other problems, and effects on the environment. A more comprehen- Richard Hindmarsh is an environmental sive section on possible hazards of pes-scientist at Griffith University.

ticides and their residues follows.

Section three, of eight concise and powerful background readings, introduces us to the global political economy of the pesticide treadmill, and focuses on a range of specific issues, including occupational safety, pesticide residues, the pesticide industry, alternatives to pesticides, and biotechnology. Such a balanced selection makes for an exciting contemporary understanding of the pesticide issue, at the same time providing insights into the existing problems and the International Organization of and the newer ones emerging with the biorevolution and genetic engineering. These insights are necessary in order to comprehend the broader picture and the enormity of the problem to which the agrochemical industry is subjecting us, and the planet. Such is the extent of this problem that Pat Mooney in his paper 'Beyond Biocides' charges that 'with biotechnology (coupled to the pesticide industry), the fight is for our

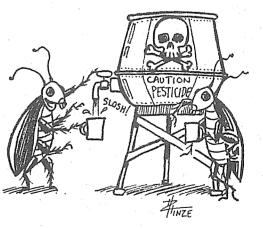
The final sections of the handbook complete this informative and grassroots network approach to tackling the pesticide problem. There is an overview of the Pesticide Action Network (and how to join), an account of al pesticide code and its weaknesses, a handbook is a worthwhile addition to the library of anyone concerned about pesticides.

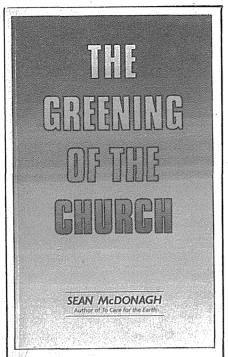




OH, I DON'T KNOW ... JUST A HUNCH ...







The greening of the church

by Sean McDonagh, The Canterbury Press, Scorseby, Victoria, 1990, 227 pp, \$15.95.

Reviewed by Andrew Dutney.

This book should be read in all Australian churches. To use an overused adjective, it really is 'prophetic'.

Sean McDonagh, an Irish Columban missionary with the Santa Cruz Mission in the Philippines, has a perspective on the global environmental crisis which is all too unusual in the churches. He sees things clearly. His vision is not obscured by his religion. Rather, his religion is informed by what he sees - and sees through - in the world around him. He begins with the experiences of the people among whom has worked for more than twenty years; the people of the island of Mindanao and (for the last ten years) the T'boli of South Cotabato in particular. He begins with their hunger, and wants to know why they have less and less to eat. His

questioning leads him into an analysis of international debt, population increase, and rainforest destruction. As he writes, he moves back and forth between the experiences of the people with whom he lives and the evidence of quantifiable deterioration in the global situation. He tells stories and he collates statistics. And he builds a vision of impending judgement on western greed which might well have begun with the words, 'Thus says the Lord ...'.

'This book', McDonagh says in the introduction, 'argues that myopic worldwide economic policies are impoverishing people and destroying the natural world of South Cotabato, the Philippines and the earth itself. It invites people to take stock of what is happening and to plan a new way of living in the context of our common solidarity for survival. If the natural world of South Cotabato cannot support tribal peoples in this decade, within another decade or two it will not support the lowland Filipino settler either, and in a few short decades beyond then, current policies could make the earth uninhabitable for any human society'. (pp 34)

As it describes the complex of economic, political and cultural conditions which intermesh in the global environmental crisis, Part One makes disturbing reading for Christians, but Part Two is even more disturbing. There Sean McDonagh describes biblical and historical understandings of the earth as God's creation. Against this background he goes on to discuss the painfully slow process through which the churches have begun to acknowledge the environmental crisis as an issue for Christian faith. He focuses on the Catholic Church, to which he belongs, but Protestants will cringe too. What he has to say concerns the Western tradition as a whole.

So one reviewer of *The Greening of the Church* said: 'the book confirms the view ... that Christianity has proved to be one of the most militaristic and destructive of all the great world faiths'. The reviewer then asks, 'Why has the church (and all the mainstream churches come under the same criticism) so often been far behind those who have in

the end been shown to have been farsighted and who have had a keener sense of right and wrong?'. (*The Ex*pository Times Vol. 102, 1990, p 3)

Sean McDonagh's book forces his Christian readers to seriously re-examine their faith, and to reorganise their lives. That is a productive thing in itself. But it is a vital thing in the context of the present global situation.

I do have some complaints about the book. I found the continual resort to statistics irritating. Perhaps it's a personal thing, but after a while numbers cease to mean very much to me; especially those horribly large numbers with which we have become familiar in this context. I also suspect that Western confidence in 'calculation' is part of the cultural basis of the crisis, and not an obvious candidate for its solution.

I have some reservations about Part Two. The theological discussion is rather superficial. Perhaps that is inevitable in a book which covers so much material. But there is evidence that Sean McDonagh has not fully integrated the wide variety of sources on which he draws. For example, his discussion of ecofeminism (pp 155-157), although a very welcome inclusion. does not seem to be accompanied by any close consideration of its links with feminist theology. The seriousness of that omission lies in the fact that much of the theological reconstruction for which he argues has already taken place in feminist theologies.

However, having said that his theological analysis, though fair enough in its own terms, is far from the last word on the subject, I have not said anything that Sean McDonagh would not say himself! He has outlined far more carefully his theological proposals already; in his classic book To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology (Geoffrey Chapman/Bear & Co, 1986). But even there it is clear that his intention is primarily to open up discussion and encourage theological reflection in the light of the environmental crisis. He is not the kind of theologian who wants to tell his reader 'what's what'. And that's the kind of theologian who I am glad to recommend.

At the same time, there is some real

theological interest in *The Greening of the Church*, especially for a Protestant. His discussion of population control makes fascinating reading. The moderate language which he uses belies the fundamental challenge which he poses to established Catholic instruction. I hope he is successful in stimulating a fresh discussion, and has not simply earned himself a reprimand.

His description and analysis of the development of Catholic teaching on the environment is very helpful too. He shows himself to be a first rate interpreter of official theology (which certainly needs interpretation if it is to be of any use to Christians, or others).

This book is directed at Christian readers, but it will be of interest to others too. With increasing numbers of Christians becoming active in environmental groups and actions, it provides helpful insights and useful information for those who would welcome the new recruits. Understanding each other is important.

The possibilities opening up for cooperation between environmental groups and churches will also be taken up more constructively when there is some measure of mutual understanding. This book is an excellent resource in that respect.

The Greening of the Church is a challenging book. It has the potential to change the way its reader thinks and lives; for the sake of the earth. And for that reason, I hope it has many, many readers.

Andrew Dutney is lecturer in systematic theology at Parkin Wesley Theological College, Adelaide.

All of the books reviewed in Chain Reaction are available or can be ordered through the Friends of the Earth Bookshop.

222 Brunswick St, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065. Ph: (03) 419 8700 Fax: (03) 416 2081.

The Vanishing Continent: Australia's Degraded Environment

by Bob Beale and Peter Fray, Hodder and Stoughton Australia, 1990, 196pp, (hb), \$29.95.

Reviewed by Mark Wilkins

Take one of the great 'megadiverse' regions of the world, clear 20 billion trees, over-cultivate, over-graze and misunderstand, and what do you get? 'The vanishing continent' — Australia.

In a little over two centuries, Australians have squandered the most precious resource available to any nation — soil and water — to the extent that more than half of Australia is in need of soil conservation works.

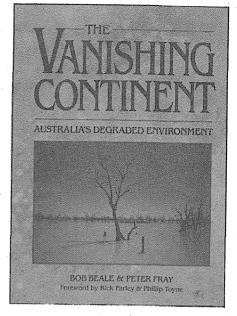
In a country with the world's oldest. most fragile, poorest soils, conventional farming practices have increased erosion rates up to 1000 the base rate. With one third of the trees removed, there is still little or no regulation of clearing in some parts of Australia. Over the last four years 15,400 square kilometres of land have been cleared around Charters Towers, Queensland. Yet CSIRO research indicates that over the next four years Queensland cattle farmers in just two shires will have cut down one billion trees - the same amount of trees as promised in Hawke's 1989 'World's Greatest Environment Statement'.

The authors are correct in their assertion that land degradation is Australia's costliest yet least publicised environmental problem. Issues such as rainforest logging, mining in national parks and the 'soft and furries' receive more attention. However, the ACF has been working for a number of years on the 'brown issues', committing itself to extending constructive relations with the rural sector.

So who is to blame? Beale and Fray assert that it is too simplistic to merely point the finger at the landholders.

Professor John Holmes of Queensland University has identified the following Government policies:

• tax incentives to clear land, not rescinded until 1983.



- subsidies to use artificial fertilisers causing high nutrient run-off.
- artificially low irrigation water charges
- drought relief subsidies allowing for unrealistically high stocking rates and totally reactive approach to a drought.

ACF's Phillip Toyne and NFF's Rick Farley both wrote forewords to this book. Both highlight the need to bridge the gap between urban and rural communities. The solution is to treat the issue of land degradation as a problem for the whole community.

Whilst the book describes the many facets of land degradation beyond the popular picture of 'soil erosion', and makes commendable efforts to place the problem into its proper historical context, perhaps insufficient attempt is made by the authors to draw together the solutions required into one section.

Well produced and laid out, the book contains excellent photographs, a comprehensive bibliography and glossary.

Due to the serious implications of the problem, this book should be a standard school text and I believe compulsory reading for all Australians.

Mark Wilkins works for the ACF in South Australia as Rural Liaison Officer.

Reviews



Radiation Exposures

by Les Dalton, Scribe Publications, Melbourne, 1991, 288pp, \$19.95.

Reviewed by Dennis Matthews

At a time when the radiation burden on the planet and its inhabitants is inexorably and invisibly growing, authoritative and wide-ranging books such as Radiation Exposures are sorely needed.

Les Dalton is one of a small but growing group of scientists who not only care about such problems but are doing something about them and trying to alert the general public to the dangers posed by radiation. To understand the highly technical and multidisciplinary problem is a major task. Communicating this understanding to the general public is even more daunting. To his credit, Les Dalton has succeeded in both.

The book is divided into three parts.

Part I is about non-nuclear sources of radiation, such as X-rays, microwaves and extra-low-frequency (ELF) radiation. Part II is about nuclear sources of radiation, all of which, like X-rays, are ionising (in nature). The last part looks at the human health issues, the research findings and their interpretations.

In only two centuries human beings have managed to do what few other species have been able to do. Besides making this planet uninhabitable for thousands of others we are rapidly making it uninhabitable for ourselves. For an 'intelligent' species this is quite an achievement.

Slowly, very slowly, the general public is becoming aware of chemical, visual and noise pollution, but pollution from invisible, unfelt and unheard radiation has yet to be recognised.

There is the beginning of an appreciation of the problem. We are aware of the dangers from solar radiation (for example, skin cancer) and the world has taken the first tentative steps in stopping the degradation of the protective ozone layer to limit our exposure to ultra-violet radiation. But the full extent of the dangers of ionising and electromagnetic radiation has yet to be generally appreciated.

It is ironic that we have come to accept the possibility of a Greenhouse gas induced climate change, but we ignore the statistical certainty of radiation induced changes to health. As both ionising and non-ionising radiation become more pervasive we increase the risk to health. These effects are both local and global.

Nuclear weapons tests and nuclear reactor accidents are as global in their effects as Greenhouse gas emissions or acid rain. Radioactive products such as uranium and thorium are exported around the world as are the by-products and wastes of the nuclear industry. The mining and processing of uranium and rare earths ensures that more and more radioactivity is mobilized into the environment and therefore the background radiation doses are increasingw.

Power lines straddle the world, emitting electromagnetic radiation whose health effects are suspect. Our

homes are bathed in radiation from TV screens, computer monitors, microwave ovens, electric radiators and hair dryers. Our medical and dental practitioners are X-ray trigger happy, radiology is a booming business, mammography screening is the in-thing.

Radiation Exposures is rigorous without losing contact with the real world and real people. Well documented technical detail is included in a way which does not interrupt the flow of more readily digestible information, and occasional snippets of history, sociology and biography ensure that the reader is not snowed under with tech-

The nett result is an authoritative, forthright and readable account of issues about which many will have thought but few could claim to understand and expound as well as Les Dalton.

Dennis Matthews is a lecturer in Chemistry and Physics at Flinders University and is a former member of the South Australian Radiation Protection Committee,

Green Political Thought: An Introduction

by Andrew Dobson, Harper Collins, London, 1990, 224pp, \$27.95

Reviewed by Phil Shannon

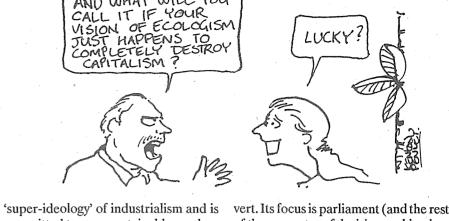
Green politics is a relatively new player on a political field which has long been dominated by the various shades of red (left) and blue (right) politics (with the multi-hued feminists doing surprising things to all of them). Green politics comes in different shades, too. Radical Green politics is about 'fundamental changes in our present values and patterns of production and consumption'. writes British politics lecturer Andrew Dobson in Green Political Thought. He contrasts this with light green reform environmentalism which is about managing the environment in the context of present political and economic practices'.

'Ecologism', as Dobson dubs revolutionary Green politics, 'is a political ideology in its own right', unable to be accommodated within other ideologies in the way that liberalism or socialism can subsume the light greens, producing the stop-gap, damage-control, non-holistic, business-prettymuch-as-usual green politics of 'CO2-scrubbers on industrial chimneys. CFC-free aerosols, and car exhausts fitted with catalytic converters'.

Radical Greens, on the other hand, seek to 'decentre the human being' from the Natural world and to question the very existence of industrial chimneys, aerosols and cars because they believe that the 'project of material affluence is neither desirable nor sustainable'. The fundamental desiderata of radical Greens is a belief in the 'natural limits to economic and population), productive capacity (for resources) and absorbent capacity (pollution)'.

Dobson's portrayal is accurate. Somehow the point of Green ideas seems to get lost when the radical thrust of a David Suzuki, for example, is channelled into the stifling world of ESD and RAC bureaucracies, and when buying new Earth-friendly Sudso from the supermarket is accepted as enough to save the planet. Dobson, too, believes that green shopping is not sufficient the radical Green project is 'not to get people to consume soundly but less'. If Green politics merely 'improves The Body Shop's annual turnover' is it worth 'Yes!' (if they could) but the general merely 'immunise the consumer against the reality of an unsustainable industrial order'.

Dobson argues convincingly that ecologism is fundamentally antagonistic to capitalism. But it is not only the consumer culture of capitalism that can't digest its greens. Ecologism, he argues, although having 'points of contact' with its nearest anti-capitalist neighbour – socialism – is not identical with it for as long as socialists reject the



committed to an unsustainable productive growth and material abundance. In the words of one such Green critic, orthodox socialism will offer but 'fair population growth' arising from the shares in extinction' as long as there is Earth's 'limited carrying capacity (for no ecological priority given to its program of wealth redistribution and economic justice.

AND WHAT WILL YOU

Again, there is much accuracy in this depiction of socialism. Despite the (quite genuine) green bits of Marx and Engels, there persists a tenacious socialist faith in the technical fix (genetic engineering, nuclear fusion, the Green revolution, etc.) and the ability of the 'limitless resource' of the human brain to overcome the limits of Nature. Dobson possesses a (faint) hope that Red and Green may converge after a 'friendly exchange of mutually compatible and regenerative information' but the gap may be unbridgable so long as – and this is the it? A few million animals would say important qualifier - the dialogue is driven by a struggle for possession of point about the considerate consumer the hegemonic territory of progressive strategy is taken - it will ultimately politics, with parody, caricature and straw men in heavy deployment.

Dobson believes that some elements of socialist politics should be taken on board by Greens to overcome the tension between the radical Green vision and its 'reliance on traditional liberal-democratic means of bringing it about'. Ecologism is, he says, 'an ideology that lacks an adequate program for social and political transformation'. It wants our anthropocentric, materially profligate world turned upside down notion of Nature's limits. Orthodox yet much of its practice consists of writsocialism, Dobson says, is seen by ing submissions to the 'suits in charge' Greens as sharing with capitalism the of running the system they want to sub-

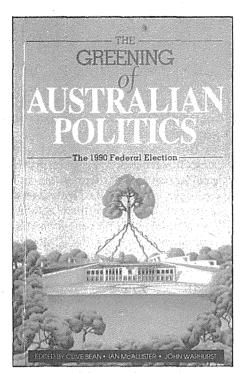
of the apparatus of decision-making in a bourgeois democracy), its means 'the pressure group' and lobbying.

This practice, argues Dobson, assumes that the decision-making process and the economic structures 'are sufficiently open to allow the Green agenda to be fulfilled through them'. Dobson doesn't think so. Many others who have been demoralised by the gastropodpaced progress down the 'proper channels', continually grounding on the sand bars of vested interests and institutional power, feel the same. A weakness of ecologism, says Dobson, is that it doesn't confront the structural political reasons for this thwarting of radical Green hope and vision.

A profusion of issues are raised in Dobson's book, including a stimulating discussion of the uneasy coalition between ecologism and feminism, with Dobson noting a number of feminists' concerns about the tendency for ecofeminism to lapse into a conservative biology-as-destiny stand in its efforts to link women's 'true nature' to Nature. As an introductory text it does not explore particular issues in depth but it tantalisingly opens up the Green map, pointing out the different shades of green and how they relate to the other ideological communities in the political eco-system, and it charts the political hazards, the potential swamps of radical Green thinking. For all that, Dobson is clearly excited by the subversive dynamism of Green political thought, and his book is well worth the green consumer's dollar.

Phil Shannon reads books and writes crosswords.

Reviews



The Greening of Australian Politics: the 1990 Federal Election

by Clive Bean, Ian McAllister and John Warhurst (eds) Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1990, 229pp. (pb) \$22.95

Reviewed by Tony Smith

At the special sitting Parliament called to discuss the Gulf War, 21 January 1991, Senator Janet Powell received vocal support from the young protesters in the Public Gallery when she attacked the tired old major parties for their attitude to the conflict. This was a clear demonstration that The Greening of Australian Politics examines an important development of the early nineties.

of 'green' issues for the future direc-

tions of Australian politics, the contributors to this excellent election portrait concentrate on the idea that there may be emerging a 'new politics'. Elim Papadakis provides a lucid analysis of how 'minor' parties may have benefited from a re-alignment away from the traditional ALP-versus-theconservatives contest. In particular he examines the way in which green preferences were of such vital importance in the outcome of the contest, and how the Coalition seems to be lagging on environmental issues.

David Gow provides a more critical perspective on the influence of 'postmaterialism'. One of the books strengths is that the election data is scrutinised in comparison with 'The 1990 Australian Election Study'. This survey compiled particularly valuable data on voter partisanship and strength of influence of various issues. Interestingly, respondents tended to rate the Coalition's policies as being closer to their own on the economic issues, but Labor's as closer to their own on quality of life issues. Gow concludes that the election result owed more to the Coalition's failure to attract economically aggrieved voters than to any demonstrable change in the nature of politics.

This study is a very professional account of the 1990 election and sets new standards for election studies. It will be invaluable for overseas observers because John Warhurst supplies detailed 'blow-by-blow' accounts both of political developments between the 1987 and 1990 elections and of the 1990 election campaign. These chapters cover the political background, including intervening state elections, institutional changes such as by-elections and Senate vacancies which may have altered the balance, and the main intraparty events, such as the Peacock-Howard leadership contests. The flavour of the campaign is captured well, with extensive quotes from the media commentators whose influence created the general images of the alternative governments.

Clem Lloyd's analysis of the In seeking to explain the importance policies, the campaign launches, the great debate, political advertising and

the reporting of the campaign is particularly readable as he refers to 'constipated national campaigns' and to the beauty of the imagery with which the environment was exploited' as the abiding impression of the media coverage.

Always healthily sceptical about the efficiency and effectiveness of the 'measure of the pulse of democracy', Murray Goot looks at 'the forest, the trees and the polls'. He discovers considerable discrepancy between pollsters as to which were the most appropriate questions, a lack of sophistication in assessing the importance of the environment as an issue, and a deal of good luck in their ability to predict the overall result. He concludes that public opinion is not independent of the polls but is created by the pollsters as they attempt to measure it.

McAllister and Bean in 'explaining Labor's victory' suggest that there has been no fundamental change in party allegiances and caution against any prediction of the various parties' electoral prospects for the nineties. They attribute the result to 'several interconnected factors', including the failure of the Coalition on economic factors and the electorate's preference for Labor's environmental policies on a major party 'head to head' basis. Most importantly, Labor presented 'a positive popular image, with a united, competent governing team lead by a popular and capable Prime Minister'.

Of course, no book should be criticised for what it is not, but it is important to understand the perspective of The Greening of Australian Politics. It is primarily an election study, and is not an examination of the green movement. Questions of environmental ideology are not raised, even where they seem to be relevant. For example, the tension over the pragmatic approach of contesting elections or even endorsing candidates was a problem during the campaign. Major umbrella groups like the Australian Conservation Foundation rate a mention, but they exist almost as constructions of a Government need for sources of influence.

Lacking any grass roots perspective, Bean et al's discussion of green politics is confined to the election arena, where

it appears as object rather than subject. The study provides implicit endorsement of a corporate view of pressure group politics, but clearly contradicts Senator Walsh's alarm that élites have By Article 19, Article 19, 146pp, £3.95. become too powerful. Indeed, they seem to lack initiative and are rather Reviewed by Brian Martin acted upon than acting.

While this is not a handbook for Censorship and famine are two things I activists and largely ignores the internal dynamics of the environmental movement, post mortem and tactical debates within the movement should be illuminated by the assessment it provides. If this was a green election, how did it manage to unseat Haines, Dunn and Sanders? How has the Hawke Government managed to lose its green sheen so quickly? Why did the electorate show greater interest in State administrations than in national issues?

Just as interesting as the reactions of environmental groups will be those of female commentators, who did not have a voice in the collection. Feminist critics might well place the book in a valuable perspective, because they have been able to formulate some principles for the feminisation of politics. If the 'greening of Australian politics' has any genuine meaning, then it should be possible to point to some evidence that the practice of politics has itself been affected by environmental concerns.

In other words, green politics must One feature of the Hawke period which has gone largely unchallenged is the manner in which change has been reduced to a marginal activity, and reform has been substituted for revoluavoid breaking.

The Greening of Australian Politics should be read by all students and scholars, party strategists and environmentalists. It sets new standards for the study of elections, and provides some stimulating analysis. While firmly rooted in established methodologies, the book presents some intriguing hypotheses and poses many challenges.

Tony Smith is a regular reviewer for Chain Reaction.

Starving in Silence: A Report on Famine and Censorship

had never particularly connected with each other until reading this book. Its basic argument is that major famine in the modern world cannot occur if there is open communication of information.

Starving in Silence includes two major case studies. The first is the censorship of the famine in China 1959-61 which claimed some twenty million lives. Poor harvests played a role in this massive disaster, but the primary culprit was the Chinese government's push to create communes (part of the 'Great Leap Forward') and its refusal to accept information contrary to its belief in dramatically increasing productivity and abundance. While peasants were slaughtering their draft animals rather than lose them to communal pools, and being forced into inefficient 'back-yard' steel production, the government was deluding itself about massive increases in yields.

The famine would not have occurred had there been a free press with active dialogue about what was happeninvolve more than a drive to have some ing and why. The Chinese rulers hid the 'green' candidates elected to office. truth from the rest of the world as well as from themselves. The famine remains a taboo subject today.

This part of the report was written by a Chinese scholar who remains anonymous because of his frequent tion. The ALP has learnt how to bend to trips to China. His analysis is based on recent publications and on contact with many individuals within China. It is an eye-opening story.

> As well the basic insight about censorship and famine, there are a number of fascinating side points taken up. For example, the famine, rather than leading to a slowing of population growth as might be thought, actually triggered a massive increase in the birth rate. Only later, when a stable, adequate diet was provided, did birth control measures begin to work effectively.

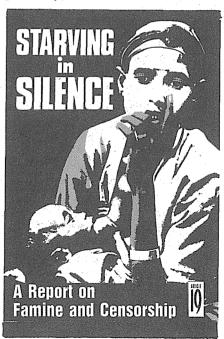
The second half of the book deals

with famines in Ethiopia and Sudan in the 1980s. The story here is more complex. In short, while the world was being alerted to certain famines in Ethiopia through massive media attention, there were other famines - for example in northern Ethiopia in 1982-85 and southern Sudan in 1986-89 - that were allowed to happen because of censorship by the governments of Ethiopia and Sudan. The roles of war, government repression and censorship, Western official indifference, and the world media are all crucial in this analysis by Alex de Waal that deserves close study.

Many of the insights in Starving in Silence can be applied to environmental issues. Where there is persistent censorship or lack of a real dialogue, incredibly bad environmental practices can persist, as in Eastern Europe. The mass media are crucial in publicising environmental problems, but unless there is in-depth analysis of underlying causes, the result may be superficial, as in the present promotion of 'green' products.

Article 19, the publishers of Starving in Silence, can be contacted at 90 Borough High Street, London SE11 1LL, United Kingdom.

Brian Martin has a special interest in suppression of dissent on environmental issues.



Reviews

Plunder

by Roger Moody and PARTIZANS, PARTIZANS, London, 1991, 195pp, \$12.50

Reviewed by Minewatcher.

This monumental work draws together all the strands of the vast operation of Rio Tinto Zinc (RTZ). The author, Roger Moody, is the béte noire of RTZ. His inquiries have probed and dissected the giant, culminating in this book, the product of industrial activisim and research.

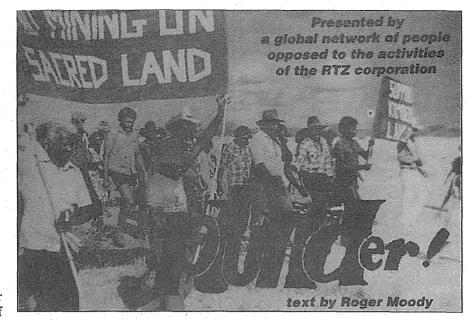
RTZ now operate 52 mines in 40 countries, and many smelting and processing plants. This is a multinational corporation par excellence, the naked face of capitalism. Who said Marx was outdated?

Its mining operations encompass nearly all the non-ferrous metals and iron ore, with moves into energy to embrace coal and uranium, and now diamonds. RTZ covers from A to Z aluminium to zinc.

Not all products are successful, not all operations make booming profits; commodity prices are quite cyclic; they have their troughs. But when iron ore is doing poorly, aluminium will be booming, or vice versa. The philosophy of exploitation is to restrict an operation when profits are low, and go for broke when prices are buoyant, even if this saturates the market.

The only continents and areas that RTZ has not muscled into are the Antarctic, the former Soviet Union, India and the sea bed. Now the countries of eastern Europe and the Soviet Union are ripe for exploitation.

RTZ explores regions, not minerals. The Australian arm, CRA, has wisely



domain. It is the awaking giant. China is high-tech uses, so RTZ will move into the colossus; Indonesia is untapped.

But to return to the beginning. RTZ derives its name from, and had its beginning in, the Rio Tinto copper mine in Spain over 100 years ago. Eventually the tentacles began to spread. Next was the copper belt in Northern Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe.

The book demonstrates how RTZ influences governments, opposes rights for indigenous peoples, sets up cartels and is prepared to sink quite a lot of money into public relations to improve its image, for example, the Save the Kakapo campaign in New Zealand.

Moody considers that 20 to 30 multinationals control the sources of minerals. Six have a dominant position: RTZ is one of these. They will compete with each other when it suits them, or they will cooperate if it suits, to control production and prices.

One new venture is the giant Escondida copper mine in northern Chile. Here CRA has a 30 per cent interest and BHP controls the project. It suits the thieves to combine in this case.

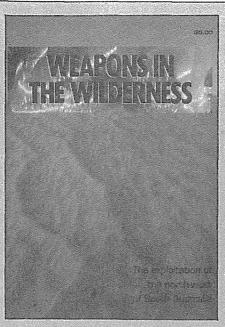
Close to home, there is the mineral sands deposit near Horsham, Victoria. CRA is about to mine and process this deposit. This will be another jewel in the crown, no matter that the thorium by-product is radioactive. Mineral sands, when processed, yield the rare earth minerals. These are becoming Minewatcher is an active watchdog on seen Asia as a new giant trading highly important for electronic and mining activities around the world.

this field.

However, RTZ is meeting opposition from indigenous people. You will all know of Bouganville and the rebellion. There are other areas where people oppose RTZ - from Indians in Wisconsin, USA, and to Guaymi in Panama opposing the Cerro Colarado copper mine. The book does not say too much of what may happen to Rossing uranium mine in Namibia, now that the heroic SWAPO struggle has gained independence for the country. The book has a substantial chapter on the Rossing mine and the clandestine sales of its uranium oxide. RTZ has made Namibia so dependent on Rossing that it is difficult to see how a new third world government, even of a revolutionary nature, could phase out the RTZ operation. But we await details of what gains SWAPO may be able to extract from RTZ in terms of working conditions for black and coloured workers.

RTZ would have as its credo - we are not in business to make aluminium (or zinc, or lead, or copper), or to mine for uranium or diamonds or coal, we are in the business to make money!

This book is highly recommended for a detailed, but very readable, insight into a huge multinational mining company. It is like a course in geography and geology!



Weapons in the Wilderness Anti-Bases Campaign, SA, 1991, 56

pages; \$5. This booklet describes and makes the connections between the military facilities and the impacts of nuclear technology within the north-west of South Australia, such as the US base at Nurrungar, the Roxby Downs uranium mine, the Woomera Rocket Range, and the still contaminated 1950s nuclear bomb test site, Maralinga. Particularly attention is paid to the effect and impact of these facilities and events on the environment and on the Aborigines of the area.

Available from: Anti-Bases Campaign, GPO Box 1025, Adelaide 5001.

Say Yes to Peace: Directions for the 1990s

Dale Hess (ed.), Victorian Association for Peace studies, 15 pages, \$2. Say Yes to Peace provides seven perspectives on directions the peace movement should take in the 1990s. These include consideration of our role in Asia-Pacific and new approaches to self- determination. Available from: Peace Dossier, GPO Box 1274L, Melbourne, Victoria, 3001.

Legal Organisation for Non-violent Action

Environmental Defenders Office, New South Wales, 1991, \$10. The handbook developed out of the experiences of those involved in legal organisation of the campaign to protect the South East Forests of New South Wales. It is designed to provide both a framework for organisations, as well as, detailed information to individuals.

The book follows the course of interaction between NVA and the law including, planning for Nonviolent Action, major players in the criminal justice game, organisation before and after arrest, local courts and appeals.

The handbook has appendices which cover New South Wales and Commonwealth legislation relevant to NVA, standard forms for use by legal organisers and a guide to local court trials.

Available from: Environmental Defenders' Office, Suite 82, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000.

On the Water Front

by John Archer, Pure water Press, 96 pages, \$11.95

It's easy to take your water supply for granted - it's simply a matter of turning on the tap. But is your water safe to drink? On the Water Front presents a revealing perspective on this vital subject.

Available from: Pure Water Press, PO Box 85 Brunswick Heads, 2483,

Green Pages 1991/92 Edition

Australian Conservation Foundation, 1991, \$19.95, plus \$3.50 for post. A comprehensive directory of Austrlian environment groups, It covers more than 700 national and state groups, with each listing including contact person, postal address plus phone, fax, membership numbers, meeting times and publications. Available from: ACF Books, 340 Gore St, Fitzroy, 3065.

Resources

1991 Directory of Assistance Schemes for Trees on Farms and **Rural Vegetation**

Greening Australia and Bureau of Rural Resources, 1991, \$14.95 This Directory summarises 74 schemes that provide assistance and advice on tree growing and retention. It lists where to find grants, cheap seedlings, free literature, information about what species grow where, or assistance with planting, management and marketing. Each scheme entry has a standard format, one to each page. Contact numbers and basic information are provided to allow readers to follow up the most relevant scheme, and to make easy comparisons. The Directory will be updated annually.

Available from: GPO Box 9868, Canberra, ACT 2601.

Genetic Engineering Education Resource Kit

Australian Conservation Foundation, 1992, \$60

This timely kit focuses on the requirements of Victorian VCE science and biology students but is also suitable for other students and anyone with an interest in genetic engineering. It contains items from magazines, news reports, Hansard, as well as case studies and illustrations. It aims to assist readers to identify and assess the risks and benefits to society of genetic engineering, with a particular emphasis on ethical issues. Available from: Austrlian Genethics Network, ACF, 340 Gore St, Fitzrov, 3065.





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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.

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