

Chain Reaction

Friends of the Earth Australia

Number 72 \$4.00

- 
- Public relations flunkies and eco-tourism
 - Who are the woodchippers?
 - Native American—Green alliances
 - Nuclear weapons on trial

New supplement:
**ecofeminist
actions**

Environmentally Friendly Reading

Real Gorgeous

Kaz Cooke. Allen & Unwin, 1994, \$19.95

This informative, chatty book by feminist cartoonist and author Kaz Cooke provides an irreverent analysis of the multi-billion dollar diet, fashion and cosmetics industries. Kaz points out that as long as you're happy and healthy, there's no point in spending thousands of dollars to turn yourself into someone else – "you are not your buttocks".

Child's Dreaming

Poetry by Kevin Gilbert, photography by Eleanor Williams. Hyland House 1992 \$19.95

This beautifully presented book, illustrated with stunning portraits of the Australian bush and its creatures, is designed to introduce the wonderful diversity of Australia's land and animals to children. The underlying theme of the poetry and photographs is that "I'm part of every living thing and every living thing is part of me".

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World Information Service on Energy News Communique

The WISE News Communique is an invaluable source of news on energy developments, particularly relating to nuclear activities, and can be used for newsletters and research as well as being of interest to the general reader. The Communique is published in English 20 times per year by WISE-Amsterdam using articles from relays in 11 countries and a world-wide network of contacts. Selected articles are translated into Spanish, Japanese and Finnish. WISE was established in 1978 by safe energy activists as an international switchboard focussing on nuclear issues.

For subscription information:
World Information Service on Energy
PO Box 87, Glen Aplin, Queensland, 4381

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Letters

Environmental racism?

I've just finished reading the very interesting special issue on Aboriginal issues in Australia (*Chain Reaction* Number 71).

Reading the various articles, it seems that Captain Cook 'found' Australia (1788) about 300 years after Columbus (1492) and John Cabot (1497) made contact with the Americas. So the period of first contact is much closer for Australians.

Within the deep ecology philosophical movement Australians are very promi-

nent, yet a deep ecological perspective was absent in the special issue. Why was this?

It seems that, judging from this issue of *Chain Reaction*, in Australia, as in Canada and in the United States, some environmentalists and organizations who promote environmental/aboriginal alliances elevate indigenous-centered social justice over environmental justice, because they have a human-centered orientation to the natural world.

I believe that social justice must be accompanied by a deep ecology perspective. Otherwise, ultimately, any exploitation of the natural world for human purposes can be justified.

The special issue seemed to focus on a discussion of 'environmental racism'. Clearly, placing uranium or coal mines, coal burning plants or toxic waste dumps, etc. on top of aboriginals and other economically and so-

cially disadvantaged minority groups, can justifiably be argued as examples of environmental racism. Not to take up or lend support to such issues could be called environmental racism. Discriminating within environmental organizations on the basis of skin color or ethnic origin is racist behavior.

However, it is not 'racist' to want protected areas (national parks, wilderness areas) not subject to aboriginal and non-aboriginal hunting, fishing, or trapping. It is not 'racist' to believe that in conflicts between Nature and human interests, including aboriginal interests, generally human interests should give way. It is not 'racist' to be white and a 'middle class' environmentalist.

The fact that the environmental movement has a large social base whose class origins are middle class, is actually a criticism of the lack of environmental relevance of the Left, with its human-centered assumptions

of industrial/scientific 'progress' at the expense of the natural world and all its non-human species. 'Environmental racism' should be carefully defined and not used, as it often is, to silence nature-centered criticism of aboriginal viewpoints.

Traditional native thinking and its value system, which could be characterized as 'deep stewardship', in the past in Canada provided a ritualized, respectful interaction with the natural world which minimized environmental destruction. However, traditional native thought was ultimately human-centered. Today, aboriginal bargaining or negotiating positions typically assert 'ownership' of the natural world and a human-centered world view, with nature being seen as a 'resource'. (As some of the articles do in *Chain Reaction*.) This is a negative legacy of Euro-centered 'civilization' and industrial capitalism. An ecocentric deep ecology perspective subordinates human interests, including aboriginal interests, to the wellbeing of the Earth.

In Canada, as in Australia, there must be a commitment to social justice for aboriginals within contemporary society. Progressive people should support and help initiate whatever social changes are necessary for this to be achieved, as long as such changes are just to non-native Canadians/Australians, and do not negatively impact upon what remains of the natural world.

David Orton
Nova Scotia Canada



The painting featured on the front of the last issue of *Chain Reaction* (Number 71) is now available as a poster for \$15.00 including postage and handling. Available from: Mark Blackman, 3 Osman Place, Thebarton, SA, 5031 Ph: (08) 43 8674

All hearts on deck

I was upset by Ben McGuire's review of Frankie Seymour's *All Hearts On Deck* (*Chain Reaction* Number 71).

I found *All Hearts On Deck* one of the most inspiring books I have ever read. Not only is it beautifully written but it is also, a classic. It is the first book I have read which makes the case for animal rights on both the emotional and the intellectual level at once. I will go back to *All Hearts On Deck* again and again for the powerful poems, for the jaunty, irrepressible prose, and for the way Seymour explains the exact logic of her views.

The only explanation I can see for McGuire's reaction to *All Hearts On Deck* is that he must be very young. Three things lead me to this conclusion.

First, although Seymour takes a lot of trouble to argue all points of view, identifying her own, but not striving to give it greater credibility than others, McGuire's finds her book 'a frustrating sermon' full of 'subtle preaching'. Only a very young person who is insecure in his own views would find Seymour's approach frustrating - and only because he can't answer back. 'Threatening' would probably have been a more honest word for McGuire to

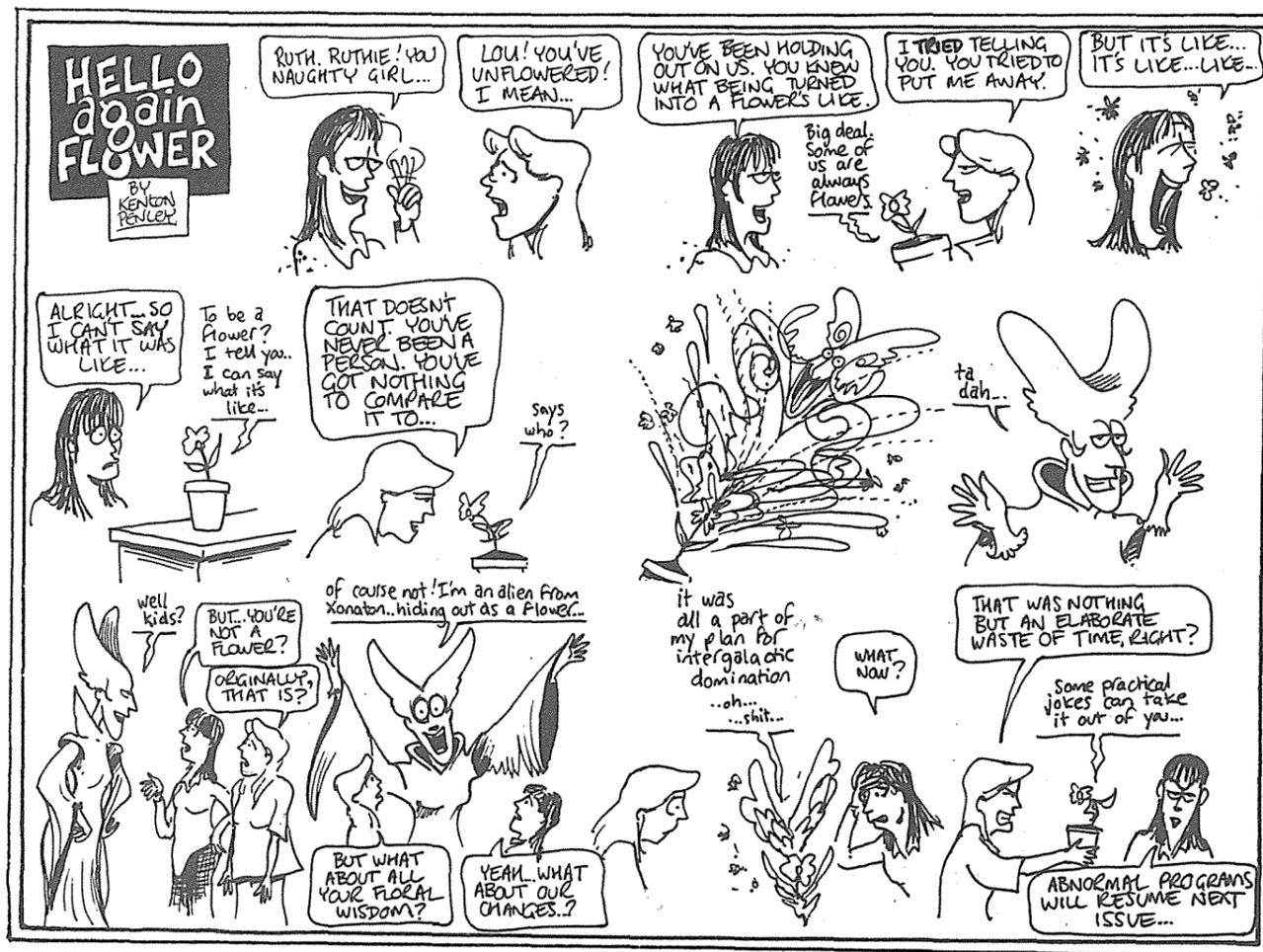
have used.

Secondly, McGuire is clearly a child of the 1980s. Brought up on TV superheroes, he expects all heroes to be able to save the world single-handed at least once a week. He obviously feels deeply disappointed that this 'epic' voyage achieved such negligible results.

Seymour has attempted a difficult thing in *All Hearts On Deck*. She has tried to show the romance, the heroism, the epic quality of daring when the most you can hope to achieve is a symbolic victory or to save the lives of a few individual animals. Obviously, for McGuire, she has failed in her attempt.

The final give away to McGuire's youth is the fact that he can talk about going into Soviet waters in 1981 three times and getting 'chased' by a Russian warship, as though it was nothing to write home about, let alone write a book about. Obviously Ben could not have been an adult in the 1960s or the 70s or the 80s. He does not remember the terror of the Cold War. Ben McGuire's review belittles, with the cynicism of one who has never dared anything, not only Seymour's book, but also the mission which inspired her to write it.

Gillian Lake
Canberra



Backstage

It's always a pleasure to finish an issue of *Chain Reaction* – get it to the printer, that is. There is then the fun of doing a mail-out which, of course, involves updating the mailing list beforehand, and thanks to all the people who helped with the last mailout.

But what's the point? Why go through the trouble of putting out a magazine on a voluntary basis when it all seems to be so much of a struggle?

There seems to be a few good rea-

sons. There is a bit of fun in there, but not enough to make it worthwhile. There is a lot of satisfaction about putting an issue out, and this is usually most noticeable weeks, months or even years later when looking back at an old issue and marvelling at its prescience (which didn't seem to be there at the time).

But perhaps the main reason that *Chain Reaction* keeps coming out is that it covers topics that are so important, and they are covered by writers who believe that something can and should be done about them. There is a sense of dynamism which involves us and helps us think we can do something.

This issue of *Chain Reaction* includes a new supplement – *ecofeminist actions*, which is produced by a collective from the Women's Environment

Education Centre. There are some details to be worked out, but we see this venture has a positive future. It expands the scope of *Chain Reaction* and hopefully will help the Centre to involve more women in its work.

We have also included a version of a very detailed fact sheet by the Native Forests Network, which relates to the woodchipping debate which is smouldering brightly as we go to press.

Bob Burton has again written an interesting article which provides some pointers to the future, and Cam Walker's articles also provide examples from which we might learn.

The next issue, in January-February 1995, has a guest editor and will focus on business and the environment.

Larry O'Loughlin and
Clare Henderson, co-editors.

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Earth News

Transport heats up

Throughout Melbourne, community groups are mobilising against new freeway developments and extensions. The government and the road building authority, VicRoads, continue to view freeways as the best solution to transport issues and traffic problems.

In May 1994, Friends of the Earth (FOE) Fitzroy joined with fourteen other environment, community and residents groups to oppose the proposal to extend the Eastern Freeway into the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne. The Coalition Against Freeway Extensions (CAFE) was formed after a transport seminar organised by FOE and Greenpeace.

The Eastern Freeway was originally built in the mid to late 1970s, and there were huge protests held in Collingwood in 1978, against an extension.

In August 1994, in a dawn raid that cost over \$60,000, VicRoads, backed by over 50 police, cut down a series of 90 year old trees as the first stage in the actual roadworks. Despite continual lobbying and public protest against the extension, road construction began in



A blockade against the freeway extension on Alexandra Parade in October 1994.

November. CAFE mobilised large numbers of residents in blockading the road works. Tactics were diverse and received considerable media attention for a period of weeks. Tactics included obstruction, night-time filling of holes dug by the contractor during the day, a caravan vigil and people locking themselves onto back hoes and other equipment. CAFE continues to put pressure on the government by maintaining protests on a daily basis – pushing up costs for the contractor – and is seeking

help from politicians at the federal level.

The ultimate aims of CAFE's campaign are to force the state government to consult with the community, carry out credible Environmental Effects Assessments of proposed projects, and to build the rail connection to Doncaster that was promised in the 1970s.

For more information:
CAFE c/o FOE (Fitzroy),
PO Box 222, Fitzroy, 3065.
Ph: (03) 419 8700.

Benzene trouble

A University of Technology, Sydney study has revealed that benzene (a carcinogen in petrol) levels over George Street in the CBD exceed 'safe' standards by up to 500 per cent. Council's response has been to recommend sealing lower floor windows.

Source: Green Left Weekly, 7 December 1994.

Wood reduction

An October 1994 US Rainforest Action Network Conference has set a goal of reducing US wood consumption by 75 per cent in ten years. Conference participants discussed a comprehensive stumps-to-dumps strategy, which would link forest work to protect trees with city work to promote recycling and stop new waste dumps.

Huibert Simons of Friends of the Earth Netherlands discussed his organisation's work on a 60 per cent wood-reduction campaign. Compared to the United States, the Dutch are starting with significantly lower per capita wood consumption and a much higher rate of recycling paper and wood. So a 75 per cent target was felt necessary in the United States.

Working groups from the conference are now preparing a detailed policy document, a 'How To' manual for activists and organisers, and an action plan.

For further information:
Rainforest Action Network
450 Sansome, Suite 700,
San Francisco, CA 94111,
United States.

Australian ALPS – World Heritage?

1994 saw the cause of an Australian Alps world heritage nomination move a significant step towards realisation.

In May 1994, the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC) released a report by Professor Jamie Kirkpatrick on *The International Conservation Significance of the Australian Alps*.

The report found not only that the Alps were likely to meet all four of the criteria for listing of natural World Heritage Convention properties, but that it scored ahead of several Australian sites already on the list – namely the Wet Tropics, the Central Eastern Rainforests, Shark Bay and Fraser Island. The report identified several areas where the Alps may have difficulty in meeting the Convention's integrity criteria. These are: logging and grazing in the Alpine National Park; the presence of resorts and hydro-electric power works, and; damage by pests and roading in wilderness areas. All of these problems are capable of being rectified.

The next step is for the preparation of a formal nomination for World Heritage status. This requires the New South Wales, Victorian and ACT Governments to decide whether the area should be nominated by the Commonwealth for World Heritage listing. Community support is necessary for this to happen.

Contact: Victorian National Parks Association,
10 Parliament Place
East Melbourne 3002
Ph: (03) 650 8296.



Genetic food – unlabelled

The October 1994 meeting of the Codex Alimentarius Commission – the UN-related body which sets voluntary world food standards – was presented with a US drafted proposal which will allow for genetically engineered foods and food products to be exempted globally from labelling rules. If adopted it could mean that any country which required labels identifying genetically engineered food would contravene the free trade provisions of the new GATT agreement. Industry proponents argue that food production processes (in this case, recombinant-DNA technology) are irrelevant, and that end products alone should be assessed for safety. Such technocratic assessments would exclude

environmental, social and ethical issues. Australia has not yet adopted a formal position and it is expected that the proposal will be decided in the next 18 months.

The Australian National Food Authority will issue a discussion standard on labelling for genetically engineered food, which is expected to reflect a non-labelling view.

Environment groups are calling for the pre-market testing and mandatory labelling of all genetically engineered foods arguing that every consumer has a right to know what's in their food and how it has been produced.

For more information:
Bob Phelps, Co-ordinator,
Gen-Ethics Network
c/- ACF 340 Gore Street,
Fitzroy 3065.
Ph: (03) 416 2222.

Food standards

The Australian National Food Authority has called for public comment on its discussion papers on functional foods (engineered foods which blur the distinction between food and medicines) and food irradiation. Comments are due for both in early 1995. Both these reports are available free from the National Food Authority.

Contact: National Food Authority Standards Liaison Officer, PO Box 7186
Canberra MC 2610 ACT
Ph: (06) 271 2219.

Boral AGM

Shareholders at Boral's Annual General Meeting in November 1994 were outraged at misleading statements made by the company in its 1994 annual report regarding Boral's native forest logging activities. The report claims that Boral 'supports proper forest management practices' yet most of Boral's wood in Northern NSW is sourced from native forests which have never been subject to an environmental impact assessment – despite logging of irreplaceable old growth and wilderness forests and in the habitats of endangered species.

Boral is the largest hardwood timber processor in Australia, although timber is only a small part of its activities.

Source: Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Media Release, 14 November 1994; Sydney Morning Herald 15 November 1994.

Attitudes to genetics

The Department of Industry, Science and Technology (DIST) has commissioned a survey exploring public attitudes to gene technology.

Undertaken as part of the larger annual National Social Science Survey, the gene technology survey will provide the first 'statistically' significant information about the level of public appreciation of the risks and benefits of the technology in Australia and the extent of consumer confidence in the regulatory arrangements.

Contact: Brian Delroy,
DIST Ph: (06) 276 1182

Pollutant Inventory

The National Pollutant Inventory (NPI – see *Chain Reaction 70*) Reference Group met for the first time on 8 November 1994. The community is represented by: Dr Kate Short, Peak Conservation Organisations; Matt Ruchel, Greenpeace; Colleen Hartland, HAZMAG; and Mariann Grinter, National Toxic Network.

Discussion items included the Report on the risks and benefits of the technology in Australia and the extent of consumer confidence in the regulatory arrangements. It is planned that the framework for the Inventory will be ready by June 1995 with legislation prepared over the subsequent twelve months.

In late 1994 and early 1995 it is envisaged that a series of 'trial inventories' will be conducted. These trials will help in developing a framework for getting meaningful information about the sources, types and amounts of substances emitted to the environment in particular regions.

Regional workshops will be conducted in early 1995 to allow the particular needs of a diverse range of communities to be addressed in designing the Inventory. It is planned that the framework for the Inventory will be ready by June 1995 with legislation prepared over the subsequent twelve months.

Source: National Toxic Network; Commonwealth EPA Fact Sheet, November 1994.



The Federal government is preparing legislative amendments to enable title to the Jervis Bay National Park and Botanic Gardens to be granted to the local Wreck Bay Aboriginal Community Council.

Under the proposal, to be based on the model applied to the Uluru and Kakadu National Parks in the Northern Territory, the Wreck Bay Community would lease the land back to the Commonwealth to allow it to continue to be a national park.

Source: Media release, 28 October 1994

Earth News

Industrial chemicals review

The National Industrial Chemical Notification and Assessment Scheme (NICNAS) is under review with decisions about its future to be made by March 1995. The reference group overseeing the review is heavily weighted towards industry with six chemical industry, seven government, one union, and two community representatives.

The confidentiality provisions within NICNAS are comparatively open and accessible and public reporting provisions allow good public input, and there may be an attempt by the chemical industry to water down the community focus and accessibility of NICNAS.

Contact: Dr Howard Gwynne, *Worksafe Australia*
Ph: (02) 565 9555.

Bob Brown – Senate candidate

Bob Brown, former State Green Independent in Tasmania, has announced that he will be standing for a position in the Senate at the next Federal election.

Source: Dr Bob Brown.

Green jobs

Two reports released in November 1994 highlight the potential for 'green' employment. The Australian Conservation Foundation with the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) finalised their report *Green Jobs in Industry*. The report is the first of a series of studies being undertaken by the two groups. The first study found that while total employment shrank between 1988 and 1993, green employment went against the recessionary trend, growing sharply by 38 per cent in almost all industries surveyed. Most employers confidently predicted further green jobs growth of 20 per cent in the short term.

In November the House of Representatives Standing Committee on the Environment *et al* released the findings of its 18 month inquiry into the potential of environment policies to stimulate employment growth. The report *Working with the Environment: Opportunities for Job Growth* highlighted the diverse range of policies and areas which would have beneficial environmental and employment outcomes. It was recommended that to fully utilise these advantages the national government would need to take a leadership role to incorporate all sectors of the potential Australian environment industry.

Both reports are available from AGPS bookshops.

Source: Australian Conservation Foundation, *Media Release*, 9 November 1994.

YES IT DOES LOOK LIKE A CLOUD BUT YOU CAN PRETEND YOU'RE STEERING AND IT KEEPS MOVING!



Greenhouse – hot air continues

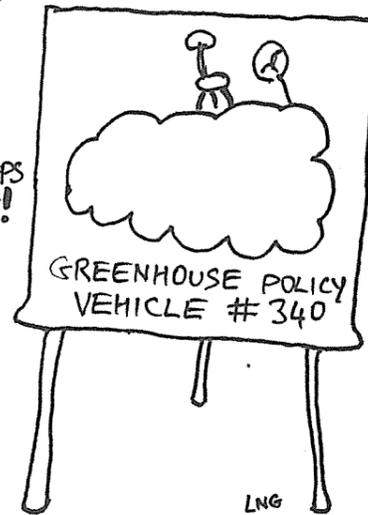
In early December 1994 the Federal Cabinet discussed a package of measures meant to take Australia closer to meeting our domestic and international greenhouse gas emissions targets.

A decision was deferred and the Cabinet asked Senator Faulkner, in consultation with other Ministers, to provide a further submission to Cabinet prior to the International Climate change Convention to be held in late March 1995.

The Australian Conservation Foundation welcomed the deferral of the decision stating that 'the options presented to Cabinet were, by all accounts, weak and narrowly focused which would have done little to address Australia's rapidly growing emission levels'.

Senator Faulkner said that 'Ministers had agreed on the importance of ensuring that greenhouse consequences are fully considered in the reform of the electricity and gas sectors'.

Industry sources are pushing strongly for the adoption of voluntary agree-



ments rather than a regulatory approach or the introduction of a carbon or environmental levy.

Greenpeace has called on the Federal Government to 'override states like Victoria, which are actively blocking the most basic national action on global warming ... It's time the Federal government took some leadership on this issue and forced Victoria to join the other states in implementing energy efficiency programs and developing renewable energy sources'.

Prior to the Cabinet discussion Greenpeace blocked coal deliveries from one of Australia's largest coal mines, the Morwell brown coal mine which delivers to the Yallourn W power station in Victoria. A banner displaying the message 'Coal Power Equals Climate Chaos' was also hung from the chimneys of the Yallourn power station.

Source: Senator John Faulkner *Media Release*, 8 December 1994; *Greenpeace News Release*, 5 December 1994; *Business Council of Australia Media Release*, December 1994.

Greening the Budget

In October 1994 the Peak Conservation Organisations met to discuss the 1995-96 Federal Budget with the Minister for the Environment, Senator John Faulkner.

The groups asked for a doubling of the current allocation to the Environment portfolio which at present is 0.15 per cent of the total budget. The proposals focused on the need for:

- an overall increase in national Government funding for environmental programs;
- greater integration of economic and ecological decision making across portfolios;
- an independent 'green budget report' released as part of the Budget process; and
- some specific budget proposals concentrating on; enhancing biodiversity;

arid lands management; protecting the coastal environment; and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. A range of community opinion surveys and polls over the last several years have consistently demonstrated a high level of community concern about the environment – with 70 per cent believing that economic growth should not compromise environmental protection. This concern is not reflected in current Commonwealth environment funding.

A study undertaken by the Economic Planning Advisory Commission and released in October 1994 also highlighted community support for a 115 per cent increase in environment spending.

Source: *Peak Conservation Organisations Press Release* 28 October 1994; *Australian Financial Review* 31 October 1994

Cape Tribulation clearcutting

Although much of the steep upland forest of north east Australia is protected as a World Heritage Area, two thirds of the irreplaceable lowland rainforests from Daintree to Cape Tribulation have been systematically excluded and are still open to clearcutting. This popular eco-tourist showplace has been subdivided into 1,100 lots slated for homes, a shopping centre, tourist accommodation and farming lots.

A proposed new land use plan puts no limits on clear cutting endangered trees or clearing critical habitat.

The Daintree-Cape Tribulation forest, in addition to its recreation value to over 200,000 tourists a year, is a natural museum, with the world's most ancient rainforest and most primitive plants. Called 'one of the sig-

nificant regional ecosystems in the world', this area was only one of only twelve in the world which met every category for World Heritage designation.

The proposed development area also includes much of the habitat for the region's last 54 endangered Cassowaries, a magnificent primitive bird up to two metres tall.

Write today to demand that the Queensland Government impose tree protection and forest clearing restrictions in the Daintree lowland rainforest. Threaten to boycott tourism in Queensland if protection is not imposed. Write to:

- The Honourable Paul Keating, Prime Minister, Canberra ACT 2600.
- The Honourable Ron Gibbs, MLA, Minister for Tourism c/o Parliament House GPO Box 354 Brisbane 4001.

Grease

McLibel

After several years of pre-trial hearings, the McDonalds libel case against two unwaged campaigners – who were allegedly involved in distribution in 1989-1990 of the London Greenpeace leaflet *What's Wrong With McDonalds* – finally began at the end of June 1994.

A total of approximately 170 UK and international witnesses will give evidence on the effects of the company's advertising and the impact of its operating practises and food products on the environment, farmed animals, human health, the Third World, and on McDonalds' own staff. They will include environmental and nutritional experts, trade unionists, McDonald's employees, customers and top executives.

McDonalds has claimed that wide-ranging criticisms of its operations, in a leaflet produced by London Greenpeace, have defamed it, so it has launched this libel action against two people (Dave Morris & Helen Steel) involved with the action.

Prior to the start of the case, McDonalds issued leaflets nation-wide calling its critics liars. So Helen and Dave themselves took out a counter-claim for libel against McDonald's which will run concurrently with McDonald's libel action.

Helen and Dave were denied their right to a jury trial, at McDonalds' request. And, with no right to Legal Aid in libel cases, they are forced to conduct their own defence against McDonald's team of top libel lawyers. The defence case includes witnesses who are specialists in nutrition, food and health, food promotion and food policy. The trial is set to run until at least March 1995.

Source: Pegasus October 20 1994

Earth News

Maralinga – testing ground again?

The Maralinga Tjarutja Aborigines have accepted an offer to settle claims against the Commonwealth Government concerning the former nuclear test sites at Maralinga.

The most highly contaminated material currently buried in shallow pits is to be subject to field trials in March 1995 to test the suitability of in situ vitrification (ISV) as a means of 'treating' highly contaminated wastes.

Source: Senator Bob Collins Media Release 2 December 1994; Department of Primary Industry Maralinga Rehabilitation Project, November 1994.

CleanAg Link

The National Clean Agriculture Working Party newsletter includes a range of interesting topics. If you want to be put on the free mailing list contact:

CleanAg Link
c/- Philippa Rowland
Bureau of Resource Sciences, PO Box E11
Queen Victoria Terrace
Parkes ACT 2600
Fax: (06) 272 4896.

Hole lot of problems

While the last few years have witnessed increased discussions on sustainable development, golf development is becoming one of the most unsustainable and damaging activities to people and the environment.

Land and water, vital resources for food production and the support of livelihoods, are being taken away from communities to build landscaped courses where the rich can conduct their leisure and business. The Food and Agricultural Organisation is warning of impending food and water crises in South-East Asia unless resources are used rationally and productive land is not turned to other uses, yet golf course construction, as part of the growing tourism industry, is peaking in several countries and is now entering Vietnam, Laos and Burma.

World-wide, reports of the environmental, economic and other social issues related to golf are increasing. Local people are being displaced from their land to make way for golf courses and tourist resorts, in addition to displacement caused by plantations, deforestation, construction of dams and other large-scale projects.

Golf started in Scotland, 500 years ago, on natural hilly pasture lands dotted with lakes and sandy hollows and watered by rain. With the commercialisation of the sport, a golf course now requires an average of 36 hectares. New courses, especially in Third World countries, are packaged with luxury homes, chalets or con-

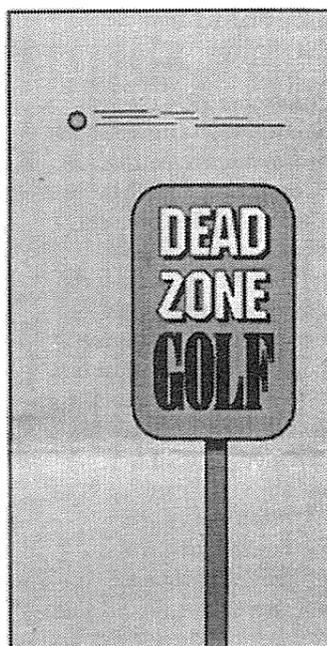
dominiums and other recreational facilities, and single projects usually take 200-300 hectares.

The golf craze, exported out of Japan in the mid-1980s due to land scarcity and exorbitant membership fees, has been spreading like wildfire throughout the world. Local communities of farmers, indigenous peoples and residents have so far been mainly affected in South-East Asia, Hawaii, India, Japan and Korea. Conflicts over land use and land rights have surfaced in Canada, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, the USA and Switzerland.

There were a few courses in South-East Asia in the early 1980s – there are now about 160 in Thailand, 155 in Malaysia, 90 in Indonesia, 80 in the Philippines with many more under planning or construction. Japan has 2,000 golf courses despite the suspension of several hundred caused by protesting local people and activists.

Of the 25,000 courses world-wide, 14,000 are located in the USA. Americans are becoming more aware of the impact of golf courses and are starting to protest against their construction in ecologically sensitive areas.

The first reported serious conflict due to displacement by golf course construction took place in the forested lands of the Mohawk tribe in Canada a few years ago. The confrontation between the indigenous tribes and the government became so severe that the Mohawks blocked the highway leading to their land and the government called in the army with



tanks and guns.

Violent confrontation has taken place over the last two years in Indonesia. The first case was that of a community leader sentenced to one year in prison for his actions in defending his community evicted by a golf course developer.

In Thailand, where large tracts of land, generally agricultural or forest areas, have been converted into golf courses during the golf boom between 1988 and 1993, the golf course business has contributed to growing landlessness among rural people.

On an island off the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia, one of the world's richest marine ecosystems has been disrupted by the construction of a controversial golf course.

Source: Chee Yoke Ling and Muhd Farhan Ferrari, Third World Network Features.

How to form a Friends of the Earth group

A five step guide on how to become active in one of the largest environment networks in the world

The FOE Australia network welcomes enquiries from groups which share a similar philosophy to the network and who wish to become active under the name 'Friends of the Earth'. Here are five basic steps for achieving this:

- 1** *Have a committed group of people willing to be active in your region on a grassroots level.*
- 2** *Contact the National Liaison Office of Friends of the Earth.*
- 3** *Draw up a constitution to circulate to current FOE groups for approval (the NLO will help).*
- 4** *Provide a profile or outline of proposed activities of your group.*
- 5** *A ballot will be put to current FOE groups and when the ballot procedures have been followed your group will be notified of the outcome.*

Become involved in Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth Groups

International Secretariat

PO Box 19199, 1000 GD
Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Ph: 0011 31 20 622 1369
Fax: 0011 31 20 639 2181
Email: foeint@hacktic.nl

National Liaison

PO Box 222
Fitzroy VIC 3065
Ph: (03) 4198700
Fax: (03) 416 2081
Email: foefitzroy@peg.pegasus.oz.au

Chain Reaction

PO Box 45
O'Connor ACT 2601
Ph and Fax: (06) 248 0289
Email: chain@peg.pegasus.oz.au

FOE Willunga

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

FOE Nouveau

PO Box 3231
Grenfell St, Adelaide SA 5000
Ph: (08) 223 1510

FOE Perth

PO Box 7375
Cloisters Square, Perth WA 6850
Ph: (09) 321 5942
Fax: (09) 322 3045

FOE Maitland

16 Banks St
East Maitland NSW 2323
Ph: (049) 331 307

FOE Adelaide University

c/o Clubs Association
GPO Box 498
Adelaide SA 5000

FOE Snowy Mountains

PO Box 31
Cooma NSW 2630

FOE Fitzroy

PO Box 222
Fitzroy VIC 3065
Ph: (03) 4198700
Fax: (03) 416 2081
Email: foefitzroy@peg.pegasus.oz.au
(312 Smith St, Collingwood 3066)

FOE Sydney

PO Box A474
Sydney South 2000
Ph: (02) 283 2004
Fax: (02) 283 2005
Email: foesydney@peg.pegasus.oz.au
(Suite 15, 104 Bathurst St Sydney 2000)

FOE Maryborough

393 Alice St
Maryborough QLD 4650
Ph and Fax: (071) 23 1895

Public relations flunkies and eco-terrorism

Sabotage, eco-terrorism and monkey-wrenching are often used to discredit environmental campaigns, yet do they actually occur as often as is claimed? Bob Burton has been chasing the hard evidence of the actual incidence of these events, and comes up with some revealing observations.

WHY DID A PUBLIC relations firm propose describing Greenpeace protesting outside supermarkets calling for a boycott as 'environmental terrorism'? Why did a local council, when confronted with evidence of raw sewage flowing onto beaches, argue that it was a result of sabotage? Why did police blame the massive explosion and two day \$20 million fire at Coode Island as the work of pro-environment saboteurs? If puppets only mouth the lines who are the puppeteers?

In the case of the Greenpeace boycott scenario the involvement of a public relations firm was exposed; in the other two, the sewerage discharge and Coode Island explosion, the origins of the strategy of calling 'sabotage' are obscured.

Other incidents have gone further. Who organised a hoax bomb on a railway line with a banner saying 'Save the Tark-

ine: Earth First' two days before the 1993 federal election when the Tasmanian Greens looked likely to win their first ever Senate seat in Tasmania? Who has sought to counter moves to protect Tasmania's forests with a series of hoax letters and tree spikings aimed at discrediting the environment movement? Who has undertaken attacks on logging machinery and power pylons in South East NSW which have been blamed on environmentalists? In all these the media has laid the blame at the door of conservationists despite a lack of evidence.

There has been a concerted attempt to tag environmentalists as terrorists. In recent years governments and industries have adopted a new approach to public relations. 'Crisis management' has become a major growth sector of the public relations industry. Environmental crisis management involves detailed planning

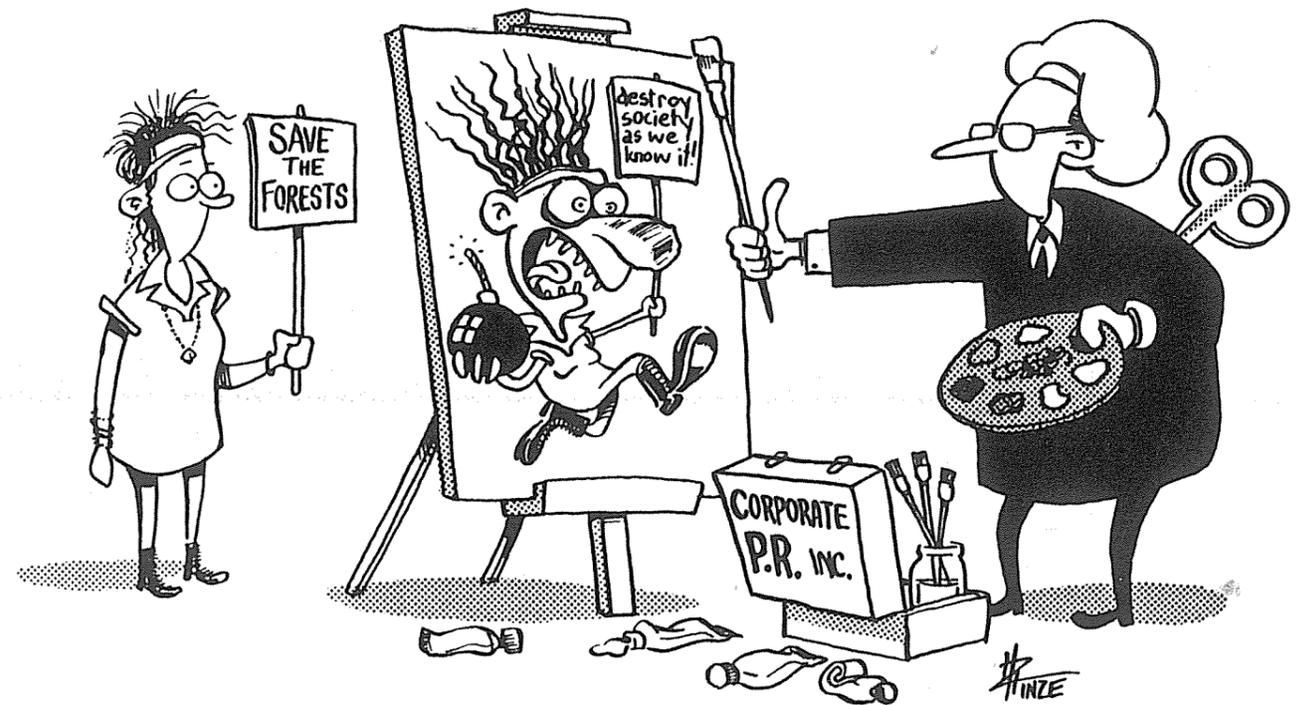
for all sorts of scenarios with specific emphasis on specialised anti-activist strategies. As US media critic Morris Wolfe observed: 'It is easier and less costly to change the way people think about reality than it is to change reality.'

In dealing with activist campaigns public relations advisers have urged clients to adopt the approach that the best form of defence is attack, and that the best attack is a pro-active one. In the 1990s the PR company's counter activist bag of tricks includes establishing 'grass roots' front groups, spying on activist groups and attempting to portray environmentalists, rather than industry supporters, as the violent ones. Some parts of this new anti-activist iceberg are visible but much remains hidden. As one commentator says 'the full effect of the corporate propaganda apparatus will never be fully known. It is most successful when the PR professional leave no tracks near the scene of a winning campaign'.¹ Would public relations firms go so far as having any involvement in high risk dirty tricks campaigns?

The Clorox scenario

In 1991 Greenpeace International was campaigning against the use of chlorine in the pulp and paper industries due to its toxic pollution problems. This campaign caused the huge US chlorine producer Clorox to develop a crisis management plan based on the assumption that Greenpeace would target the household use of chlorine. The Public Relations division of Ketchum Communications prepared a draft plan for Clorox which examined numerous worst case scenarios. However, as a Greenpeace spokesperson noted 'they failed to anticipate the worst of worst case scenarios that some conscientious person would obtain the plan and leak it to us'.²

In response to a newspaper column and Greenpeace pickets in front of supermarkets in ten major cities calling for a boycott of Clorox products a component of a suggested action plan was 'Industry association advertising campaign: *Stop Environmental Terrorism* calling on Greenpeace and the columnist to be more



responsible and less irrational in their approach'.³

What has a non-violent picket got to do with terrorism? Nothing of course, but an extensive advertising campaign could potentially succeed in changing the public perception of the campaign from a peaceful one to a violent one.

The plan also recommended threatening to sue newspaper columnists who advocate the use of non-toxic bleaches and cleaners for the home, dispatching 'independent' scientists on media tours and recruiting scientific ambassadors to tout the Clorox cause and call for further study.

'Terrorism' down under

In 1991 Greenpeace and the Soil and Health Association in New Zealand raised concerns about the possible importation of bananas contaminated with aldicarb pesticide residues. They called for a ban on bananas from Ecuador until tests had shown that they were safe. This call got little media coverage reportedly due to fears of legal action if the story was covered. This followed agreement by Latin American producers to test bananas being exported to the US.

Greenpeace and the Soil and Health Association commissioned residue tests by an independent laboratory and were verbally informed that the bananas tested contained aldicarb residues of about 0.09 parts per million (ppm) but were asked not to release this until further testing had been undertaken.

The Government health authorities undertook tests but only for levels above two ppm while in the US importers agreed to withhold from sale any bananas found to contain more than 0.05 ppm. The Health Department pronounced the bananas all clear stating that 'bananas in New Zealand do not contain the pesticide aldicarb'.

A few days later a *National Business Reporter* editorial 'Greenpeace—a bunch of banana terrorists' stated 'add commercial terrorism to the list of other unwelcome social ills from overseas. The Terrorists struck without warning, using a gullible media and exploiting a fearful public ... Like blackmail, acts of terrorism cannot be fought by giving in. It is time business stopped being a victim and stood up for its rights'.⁴

Where the 'terrorism' line originated is uncertain but one of the three major NZ banana importers, Chiquita, was using

US PR giant Hill and Knowlton during the banana controversy. Hill and Knowlton are ranked as number two behind Burson Marsteller in the US in the environmental public relations standings based on turnover. Another of Hill and Knowlton's public relations campaigns was the Gulf War on behalf of the US Government.

Coode Island explosion — negligence or sabotage?

In 1991 a huge explosion ripped through the Coode Island chemical terminal in Melbourne. For years nearby residents had been campaigning for its relocation due to the hazards associated with the plant. Two weeks after the explosion, Victoria Police claimed that they had 'conclusive' forensic evidence that the incident had been caused by sabotage. They claimed that damage to pipes in the plant had been the result of being cut by oxy-acetylene equipment and speculated that those behind the sabotage plot may have been trying to light a small fire as a protest and then extinguish the flames but the fire spread to a major storage tank which exploded.⁵ Eight months later the police report revealed that in fact the ex-

plosion was as a result of an accident.⁶ It was also revealed that all along the Department of Labor and Industry considered that the fractured pipes were caused by wear and tear rather than sabotage.

The forest industries

Julian Smith, Creative Director for public relations firm Ogilvy and Mather, recently described the existing brand personality statement for the forest industries when they started doing the public awareness campaign for the forest industries:

I am a blue singleted, tattooed, seventeen stone bully. I work in the forests and I can't stand these bludgers who come in here and chain themselves to bulldozers and trees, so I drag 'em out of the way and give 'em a bit of a biff to go on with. I make a living raping the forests and I don't care about the future of the mess I leave behind. I just make as much as I can out of chopping down trees because it's a good lurk with a big quid in it while it lasts.⁷

The image of violent loggers was indelibly etched in the mind of the Australian public after the assaults on conservationists at Farmhouse Creek in Tasmania in 1986. While police stood by, loggers directed by timber barons assaulted

Recommended reading

- David Helvarg, *The War Against the Greens*, Sierra Club Books, San Francisco, 1994. (\$US25)
- *Clorox Crisis Management Plan*. Copies available from the author if a large self addressed envelope is provided.
- *PR Watch*: Public Interest reporting on the Public Relations Industry, A subscription can be obtained from John Stauber 3318 Gregory Street, Madison, WI 53711 NGOs \$US60.

conservationists. The only charges were as a result of a private prosecution against timber boss Anthony Risby and three of his employees. They were found guilty, but no penalty was imposed.

In the years since, assaults on conservationists have escalated. In the eyes of some in the timber industry violence against environmentalists is forgivable. David Bills, a senior manager with North Forests and a Director of the National Association of Forest Industries wrote in 1993 that 'if violence does emerge, before passing judgement, we should take time to understand the perspective of somebody being driven to financial ruin'.⁸ From an industry public relations point of view the image of the logging industry as violent is as much a liability as images of clearfelled forests.

In the last few years there has been a concerted attempt by the forest industry to portray logging contractors as the victims of environmental violence. The industry-funded front group, the Forest Protection Society, has been at the forefront of this campaign seeking to attribute damage to logging machinery to 'eco-terrorists', even where there is no evidence to support its claims.

As part of its campaign the timber industry has sought the support of Police to legitimise their claims. In January 1993 Sergeant Terry Walsh from Victoria Police journeyed to Tasmania with Steve Guest from the Victorian Association of Forest Industries to brief timber industry leaders and Tasmania Police on the activities of the US based group Earth First! and 'eco-terrorism'. After the briefing the participants held a joint press conference expressing their alarm at the rise of 'eco-terrorism' even when none had occurred in Tasmania.⁹

Hoax alarms

In 1993, two days before the Federal election, a hoax bomb without detonators was discovered on a railway line in Tasmania with a banner attributing it to the radical US group Earth First! Gullible sub-editors had a wonderful time with headlines such as 'Railway bomb: Environment group linked'. The Tasmanian Greens

Senate candidate missed out on a seat by one per cent.

Months later, long after the ballots were counted, police cleared conservationists of any involvement. Journalists who had blamed conservationists were sheepish at having been manipulated. Who was involved in the hoax bomb remains a mystery. Following this Earth First! has disappeared from view in Tasmania as the favoured whipping boy.

In 1990 in the US a hoax Earth First! memo, calling for violence 'to fuck up the mega-machine' during the Redwood Summer of 1990, was distributed to the media by PR firm Hill and Knowlton, hired by the timber firm Pacific Lumber. Later, during part of a lawsuit, an internal memo revealed that Pacific Lumber was probably aware that the fliers were fakes when they were distributed to the media. Their memo stated: 'Also enclosed is an Earth First! logo, however as Daryl's name is misspelled, we are not to (sic) sure who put it out.'¹⁰

Early in March 1994 Tasmanian Police Assistant Commissioner Chugg attacked conservationists for being involved in damage to forest industry equipment but failed to produce any evidence or lay any charges.¹¹ His attack occurred on the very same day that North Forest Products made the announcement of the go-ahead of Australia's largest woodchip mill. (Months later following an internal police investigation Chugg and another senior police officer were found to have tracked the phone calls of the Deputy Commissioner of Police. They both subsequently left the force following a negotiated settlement).

In Tasmania in 1994 there has been a curious and unsolved sequence of 'tree spiking' hoaxes followed by several actual 'spikes' (6 inch galvanised nails). On March 21 a letter was widely distributed alleging that large areas of the southern forests had been 'spiked'. The high quality laser printed letter was written by a very experienced media person with sections mimicking media releases of conservation activists.¹² The letter arrived the very same day that the logging gangs moved into the controversial Jackeys Marsh Forests.

Another hoax letter was sent to Tasmanian Green MP Peg Putt who reported it to police. The following day they released details of the letter to the media. This happened to coincide with the release by the Tasmanian Greens of Forestry Commission data revealing a three year program of herbicide spraying in water catchment areas.

However, tree spiking hoaxes without spikes were wearing thin with the media. Hey presto! A few spikes were discovered in the southern forests on the very same morning that Shadow Minister Ian McLachlan visited the area. Subsequently nails started making their way to the mills where they allegedly shattered mill blades causing shrapnel to fly around. Some workers on site say otherwise. They say the mill blades shudder and break the tips off blade teeth when they hit the nails but claims of shrapnel are exaggerated. They also echo the local view that its local 'hoons' who are doing the spiking and not conservationists. Following conservationists commencing an investigation into the spiking it has all stopped. Those involved in these incidents remain unidentified.

Lack of evidence

Across Bass Strait Sergeant Walsh was back on the scene at a joint press conference in October 1994 with the Forest Protection Society in Parliament House Canberra stating: 'The acts of individuals engaged in eco-tage is no less than those of an environmental terrorist. More importantly it doesn't matter how dedicated to the environment these persons are, what they are doing is against the law, and the acts could eventually result in serious injury or loss of life.' When asked whether their claims were any more believable given that they didn't even claim to have the 'conclusive' forensic evidence they had for the wild Coode Island sabotage claims he refused to answer.

When pressed by journalists to show evidence that any environmentalist had undertaken any of these acts all the Victorian Police could do was point out that the damage to machinery was similar to that as set out in Earth First!'s *Monkey-*



wrenching Guide.

It is widely known in timber industry circles that damage to machinery can originate from a wide range of sources such as rivalry between contractors and instances of insurance fraud through to people who damage logging machinery instead of street lights. It is also widely known in police circles that there have been many violent attacks on environmentalists. Sergeant Walsh didn't mention either of these elements.¹³ So far no one has been charged with damaging forest equipment. Indeed the only people charged and convicted of violence in the forest debate in the last decade have been from the forest industry.

The move by public relations firms, industries and sections of the police to blame environmentalists for crimes without evidence is on the rise. In the game of public relations the only proof needed is a good headline and an element of plausibility. However, there is no reason to despair. Such tactics can be countered and exposed. Exposure will require a combination of awareness of what others have experienced and a willingness to investigate, document and share information on the tactics used. Hoping it will all go away will simply encourage the perpetrators to persist.

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- 8 David Bills, General Manager, North Forest Products, *The Examiner*, 18 January 1993.
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- 11 R Chugg, 'Forest Vandalism', *Tasmania Police Media Release*, 3 March 1994.
- 12 Evan Rolley Fan Club, 'Large scale tree spiking campaign in Tasmania's southern forests was announced today', Monday 21 March 1994.
- 13 Transcript of press conference, 20 October 1994.

Bob Burton is a researcher who lives and works in Tasmania.

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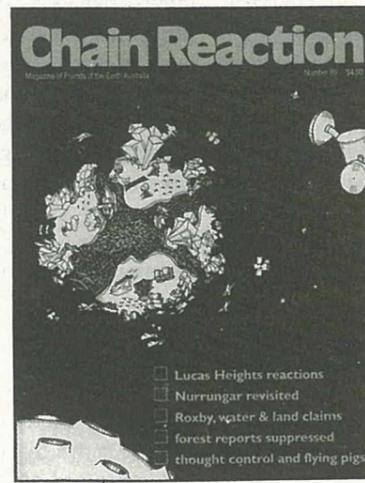
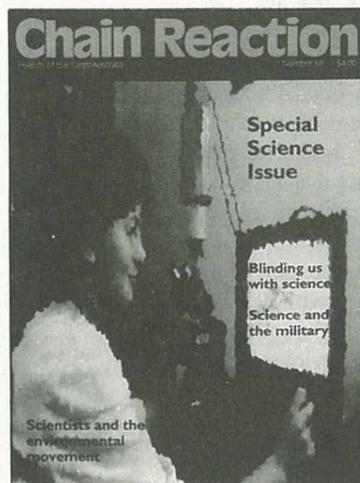
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NUMBER 68

Science special issue

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- environmental impact assesment
- Aboriginal science
- a feminist look at science
- science and the military
- public relations of science



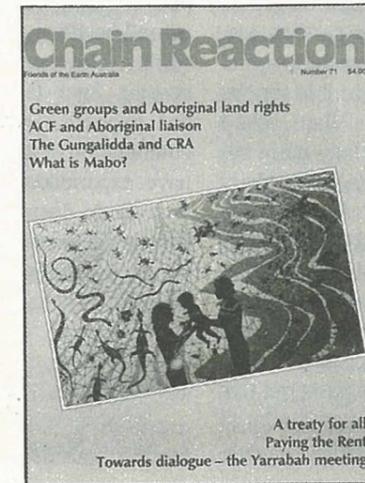
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Friends of the Earth special issue

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ecofeminist actions

This issue, **ecofeminist actions no. 15**, marks three and a half years of women's environmental education centre activities. We set out in 1990 with big ideas, no money and the blessing of Stella Cornelius who provided a city base for the experiment. Our agenda grew out of experiences in the peace, ecology and feminist movements, where we found there was a need for more feminist awareness among environmentalists, on the one hand, and more environmental awareness among feminists, on the other. We also saw women in the community as wise and committed caretakers of their neighbourhoods and hoped to affirm their activism by bringing a broader political understanding to it.

In this, we appealed to both liberal and socialist feminist preoccupations with 'equality' and to the radical feminist sense of 'difference'. From environmentalist men, we have simply hoped for a sense of fair play. We envisaged a **women's environmental education centre** run by women for women, with men welcome to join in a support role - and they have. We operate on a subscription basis; surviving, but without the paid coordinator or permanent office space that we would like.

Our ecofeminist reading circle meets monthly ranging from Plumwood's philosophical essays to the National Women's Consultative Council's report *A Question of Balance*; - a course on Women, Science and Society was offered in our first year and future fee paying courses on Women and Ecology are planned; we helped design the Gender Section at EcoPolitics V and the GenEthics Network conferences; made inputs at Prepcom IV preceding the Rio Earth Summit and brought a set of resolutions to CAPOW for the 1995 UN Women's Conference in Beijing; our members speak at schools, community and academic forums, such as a recent Green UTS event; we have been involved in local campaigns over pharmaceuticals; the nuclear reactor at Lucas Heights; and a bioengineered flood mitigation proposal in the Illawarra; as an ecofeminist lobby group we delivered a critical submission to the Senate Select Committee of Inquiry into Genetic Engineering; we are compiling a comprehensive bibliography of Australian ecofeminist publications and plan eventually to make these works available by post for a small sum; rain or shine our quarterly newsletter **ecofeminist actions** goes to post; and we continue networking with sisters internationally.

inside ...
what is ecofeminism?
women and transport
toxic trouble
activist profile
books & conferences



Women make up half the world's population, therefore we should have an equal say in what happens to it. Sounds simple, but it's something women have been fighting for for decades, even centuries, and it sure as hell hasn't caught on yet! This might sound like a statement of the obvious, especially in this newspaper, however I want to examine the relevance of this to the environment and the very nature of the destruction that is occurring.

What is Ecofeminism?

Ecofeminism is basically a way of looking at the environment and our relationship to it from a feminist perspective. As such ecofeminism covers many different viewpoints and ideas, in the same way as there are many views on what it means to be a 'greenie'. One of the fairly common themes is the idea of dualisms. While trying not to fall into jargon, dualisms are the separation of areas of thought and social structure etc. into two parts, usually giving one a more positive view. Many feminists see the basis of these separations as being the split between men and women, and this forms the basis for the rest of the splits, for example culture/nature, public/private, mind/body, and even good/evil. Guess which ones men are! An example of the way these splits work is the traditional way in which women have cared for the domestic areas, raising children, keeping the home and so on, while men have been occupied in the outside world, working and meeting, running governments, waging wars and stuff. Traditionally the areas in

which women have been, and still are, involved have not been valued as highly as traditionally 'male' areas. This is as evident in the functioning of the environment movement as in every other area, and is what ecofeminists seek to redress.

Traditionally, women are the nurturers in society, those who raise families, run households and generally keep the peace in the domestic sphere. This has led to particular ways in which women interact, approach problems and place value, however this is different to the traditional way in which male dominated society operates. Women generally see the interconnectedness of different issues, and take less confrontational approaches to resolving conflicts. The traditional nurturing qualities of women are evident in the number of women, compared to men, who are involved in the caring and service professions, for example the number of female nurses compared to male nurses. This is not to say that all women are nurturers and that all men fail to value or show these qualities, however it is something that is still predominantly the case.

Women also have a closer bond to nature traditionally than men, as it has been men who have for so long led the destruction of the environment in the pursuit of the domination of nature. Ecofeminism sees the subjugation of women by men as the basis of all oppression, including the destruction of the environment by men in the pursuit of 'culture'. Women also tend to have a closer bond to nature as it is generally women who are most affected by environmental degradation, especially in the developing world. If water supplies in a village in India are contaminated, it is the women who must then search for new supplies for the village, and then spend more time each day fetching this water.

If you are still not convinced that we need an ecofeminist perspective on the environment movement, think about the last time you heard someone talk about 'the raping of a virgin forest' or even 'mother nature'? These phrases reflect the domination of nature by men and the view that women have a closer bond to nature. These assumptions have to be addressed and we need to examine why they are held. If you still can't see that there's something very wrong with the way we view our relationship to nature and with each other, then think about what Australian women have to say about it. A survey of 3000 women

carried out by the National Women's Consultative Council on women and the environment found that women saw the two greatest dangers to their wellbeing as devaluing what women do and valuing only men's work. The survey findings state that "devaluing what women do makes their work for a sustainable environment invisible, under-rewarded and underpaid, and omitted from mainstream environmental decision making," and "Valuing only what men do excludes women's ideals and skills, rewards conflict and competition and reduces opportunities for cooperative problem-solving on environmental management." These were considered of greater danger to women than issues such as violence, social health and poverty, perhaps because many women can see that women's place in society is the root of these problems and need to be addressed to effect substantial change.

If the subjugation of women by men is the root of many of the problems in the world, including the destruction of the environment and the reasons why this occurs, then in order for fundamental change to occur women must gain true equality with men and their particular skills and values must be fully recognised. If only it were that easy! Women and nature are still considered to be subordinate to men and culture, or 'development'. Women suffer more from the effects of environmental degradation, for many reasons, and yet are still subordinated in environmental decision making, and our concerns for our health and the health of the planet are generally not taken seriously by the 'powers that be'. All over the planet women are concerned

about the environment, and are being directly affected by the destruction that is taking place around us. The same system that oppresses women and the environment, as well as people of the South, indigenous peoples and minority groups.

Women in the South

Women in the South, or developing nations, are becoming increasingly the victims of disastrous development policies by the North, or developed countries. Development as we perceive it is an idea of western nations in the post-World War II period. It was originally intended to destroy the bonds of colonialism, and was meant to benefit both the North and South. However, it has not worked out this way, as most of us know, with the South becoming poorer and environmentally degraded, while the North gets richer from this exploitation. It is western patriarchal capitalism which has created this situation, and the same system that exploits the people of the South, especially women, is also responsible for the massive environmental problems we are facing, a connection realised by ecofeminism.

At the same time as women are suffering the brunt of environmental degradation in the South, they are also being blamed for many of the problems. The overpopulation scare is an example of this. Many in the North would prefer us to believe that it is the increasing population of the South which is the cause of environmental problems, not the overconsumption of the North. When a North American consumes in a lifetime 250 times more than a Nigerian, we should be questioning our consumption and the



ARE YOU A WOMAN WORKING TO IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT? DO YOU WORK WITH OTHER WOMEN TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL CHANGE?

the women's environmental education centre would like to assist you in your work

write to us and tell us what you think of ...

- ❖ a green women support network?
- ❖ training & campaigning courses?
- ❖ any other ideas you have!

system that condones this, not the population of the South. We must recognise that the issue of population is being used as an oppressive tool toward women, and combat this.

Women in the North

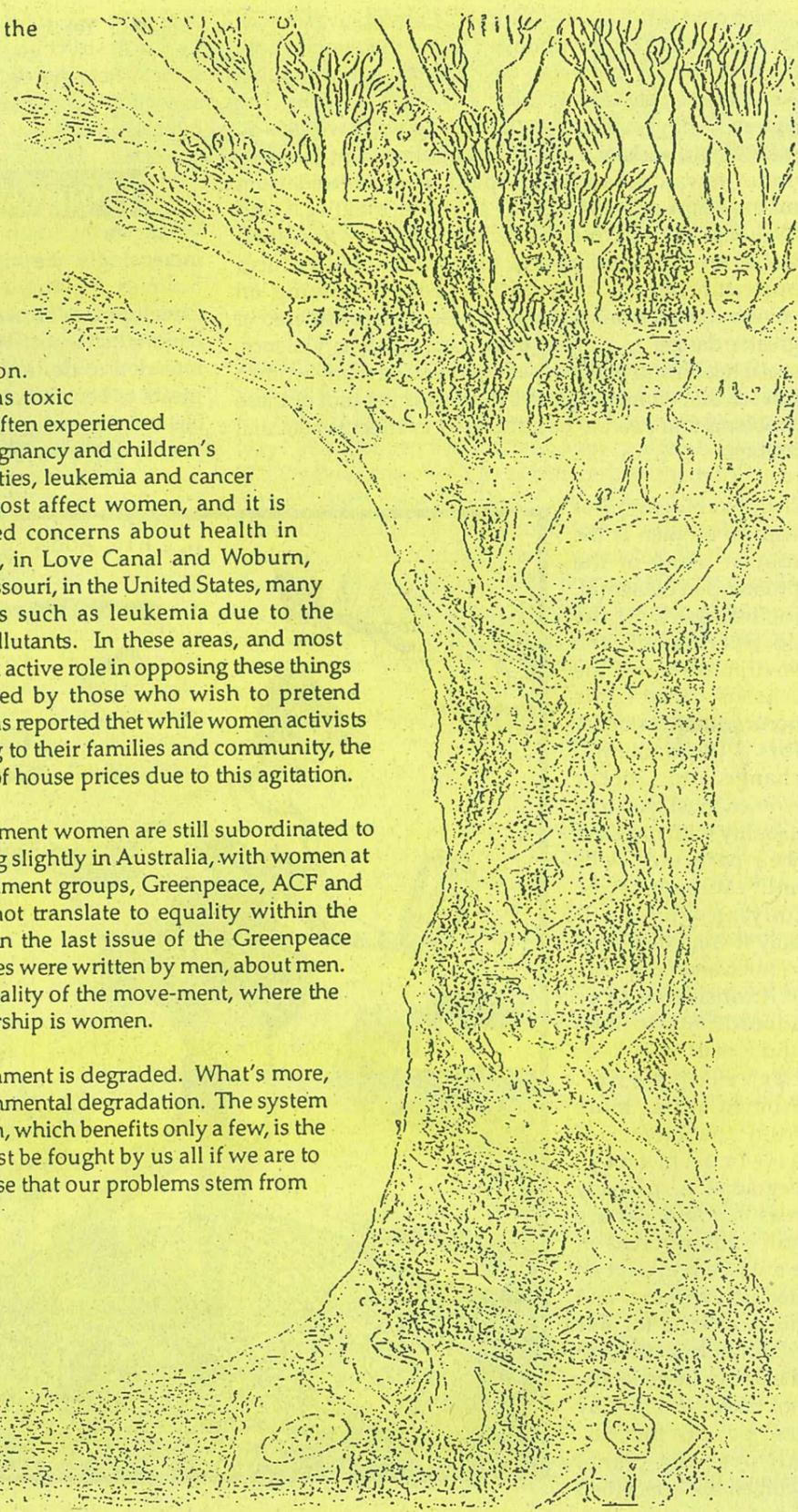
Women in the North are facing the brunt of the environmental problems caused by our overconsumption.

Problems caused by things such as toxic waste, radiation and lead are most often experienced by women, especially in terms of pregnancy and children's health. Miscarriages, child deformities, leukemia and cancer in children are problems which most affect women, and it is generally women who have raised concerns about health in contaminated areas. For example, in Love Canal and Woburn, Massachusetts and Times Beach, Missouri, in the United States, many children have picked up diseases such as leukemia due to the contamination of these areas by pollutants. In these areas, and most others where women have played an active role in opposing these things they have generally been dismissed by those who wish to pretend everything is fine. In Love Canal it was reported that while women activists were opposing what was happening to their families and community, the men were worried about lowering of house prices due to this agitation.

Even within the environment movement women are still subordinated to men. While the situation is changing slightly in Australia, with women at the head of the three major environment groups, Greenpeace, ACF and the Wilderness Society, this does not translate to equality within the movement overall. For example, in the last issue of the Greenpeace magazine, the vast majority of articles were written by men, about men. This situation does not reflect the reality of the movement, where the vast majority of grass roots membership is women.

Women are oppressed. The environment is degraded. What's more, women suffer the most from environmental degradation. The system of western patriarchy and capitalism, which benefits only a few, is the system responsible for this, and must be fought by us all if we are to have any success. We must recognise that our problems stem from the same source.

Kathryn Squires
student activist
Macquarie University



Women and Transport

Transport is about people. Efficient and ecological modes of transport are essential to leading a full and rewarding life. Safe, reliable and inexpensive transport is essential for every woman.

Cars and Air Pollution

British studies have shown that women make the majority of their journeys on foot or by bus. Yet these modes of transport are often neglected and marginalised by transport planners, both in Britain and Australia. The funding and planning of transport systems is weighted heavily towards cars.

The car is the largest air polluter in the world, using on third of the earth's non-renewable oil each year and producing one half of the world's air pollution. And the human health risks of this air pollution are becoming well documented.

Asthma in children

In one British school located next to an expressway, one child in four is an asthma sufferer. Recent studies have shown children's diseases like chest infections and respiratory illnesses to be increasing at an alarming rate. Children, who spend much of their time down at car level, and women, who make up the majority of pedestrians, continue to breathe in a pollutant cocktail containing carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, ozonic and lead.

Conflicting views

In Australia, one in four children is asthmatic. Two New South Wales studies carried out in 1993 showed huge increases in child asthma - over

the last ten years it appears to have doubled. Yet the New South Wales Health Department maintains there is no proven connection between air pollution and child asthma and the Environmental Protection Authority tells us that our air is getting cleaner. Community groups have claimed that Sydney's air pollution is at least five times worse than the Government will admit. What's going on?

Outdated standards

"The EPA doesn't measure 'hotspots' where air pollution is most concentrated," says Elizabeth O'Brien of the Total Environment Centre. "Their pollution monitors are placed somewhere between 100 and 300 metres from the roadside, and sometimes up quite high, closer to pigeons sitting on a building ledge than a child or pedestrian on the footpath."

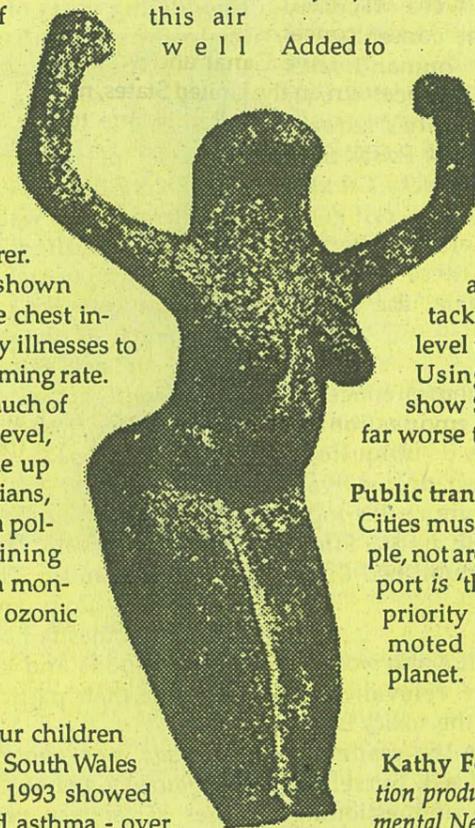
Added to

this, it appears that the NSW Government is using old air pollution standards. Health researchers recommend that ground-level ozone, for instance, (which has been linked to hospital admissions for asthma attacks) be measured at a lower level than is being used currently. Using these standards would show Sydney's air problems to be far worse than is currently admitted.

Public transport

Cities must be redesigned around people, not around cars. And public transport is 'the way to go'. It must be a priority - funded, planned and promoted for the sake of a healthy planet.

Kathy Fook - adapted from a publication produced by the Women's Environmental Network, London.



For more information call:

Elizabeth O'Brien, Total Environment Centre (02) 247 4714
Caron Morrison, Coalition For Urban Transport Sanity (02) 449 6797
Jenny Lewis, Coalition of Transport Action Groups (02) 869 1175
Christine Laurence, LinkUp (02) 665 7085

toxic trouble

Book Review.

Chemical Crisis: One Woman's Story. Humanity's future? by Diana Crumpler is published by Scribè Publications, RRP \$24.95. *Quick Poison Slow Poison* by Kate Short is published by Kate Short and typesetting by Envirobook, RRP \$24.95.

Two landmark books were recently published dealing with the consequences of synthetic chemicals on human health and the environment. *Chemical Crisis: One Woman's Story. Humanity's Future?* by Diana Crumpler, and *Quick Poison Slow Poison: Pesticide Risk in the Lucky Country* by Kate Short. The authors critically examine the scientific methods used to determine the 'safety' of these materials and independently reach the same conclusions.

Both books raise fundamental concerns about our civilisation's unquestioning acceptance of these ubiquitous chemicals into every aspect of our lives. They join a growing literature on the topic sparked by the prophetic book, *Silent Spring*, by Rachel Carson, published thirty two years ago.

While Crumpler and Short are also women, neither author raises the relevance of gender in their critique of the toxics issue, although, they do inspire the reader to peel away the layers and ask ourselves what really is behind this unquestioning acceptance of chemicals? Why do we have so much faith in the so called scientific process and just who are the experts and decision makers in the whole process? Are they men, or are they

women for example? Answers to these questions can ultimately be found with an understanding of 'science' as part of the modern face of patriarchy in our society.

Chemical Crisis is a personal account of Diana Crumpler's and her family's experiences as sufferers of Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), induced by exposure to pesticides/herbicides used near their Victorian farm. She recounts the many bewildering years of sickness spent being shunted from doctor to doctor, none of whom could offer any explanation other than to suggest stress-related psychological disorders as a possible cause.

"Those of us who have journeyed to hell and part-way back, by courtesy of toxins, find it incomprehensible that the medical mainstream can so vehemently deny the existence of environmental illness. There are some doctors who are aware of the environmental branch of medicine, but steadfastly refuse to believe that the tenets of the ecologists are factual. They claim much of the evidence - case studies like our own - is clinical or anecdotal, lacking 'real' proof. Yet these same doctors will accept unconditionally the contention that our problems are psychosomatic - a theory which offers no physical proof at all." (p172)

After reading the case history of another woman affected by pesticide exposure, Diana Crumpler realised her symptoms were remarkably similar. This revelation led her to a doctor specialising in clinical ecology and to the environmentally controlled unit (ECU) at Bethesda hospital, where patients are challenged with different foods and chemicals in a controlled environment, to determine their particular sensitivities.

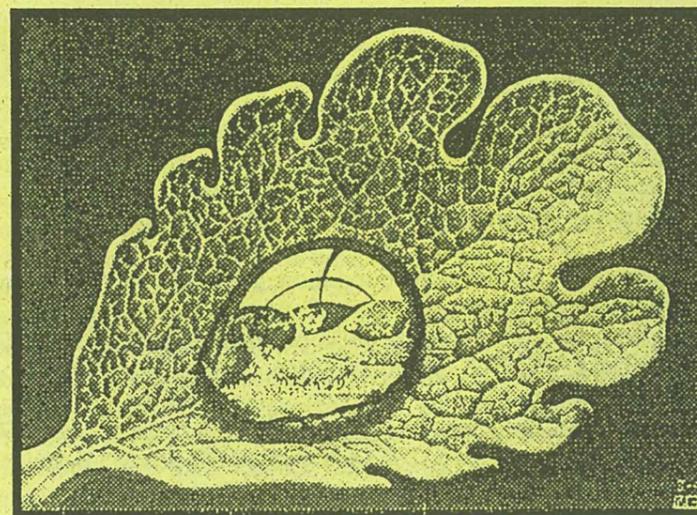
"Bethesda was another turning point, at once the end of a long journey and the beginning of a new one. The underlying causes of thirteen years of sorrows and hurts became clearer. We realised that every enigma of those hell-bound years, every symptom attributed to stress and nerves...was a manifestation of chemical intolerance." (p53)

Diane Crumpler is a truly remarkable person. Not only has she

managed to unravel her own devastating illness and dramatically adjust her life accordingly, she has also summoned up the strength and energy to extensively research and write *Chemical Crisis*. As the Victorian Co-ordinator of the Australian Chemical Trauma Alliance (ACTA), she also provides much needed support to other sufferers of chemically induced illness.

Diana Crumpler has a wonderful way of telling her potent story, drawing on her love of nature, art and poetry and managing to bring a sense of humour to the otherwise frightening reality of her illness.

Quick Poison Slow Poison is an equally informative and disturbing analysis of the pesticide issue. The book is a culmination of many years of research by Kate Short and the Total Environment Centre. The book identifies many inadequacies in the testing and registration of pesticides in Australia, amounting to what she calls a 'grand deceit'.



"Keeping corporate data confidential may be advantageous to the pesticide industry but it prevents public access to information about pesticide risk and prevents open review of corporate testing procedures. In recent years, these have been exposed as inadequate, and the results sometimes fraudulent, and it is now widely accepted that most pesticide assessments are incomplete." (p170)

To take it one step further, perhaps it is not really a 'grand deceit', but the logical outcome of a system where corporate managers and bureaucratic decision makers are primarily men. An ecofeminist analysis might have helped Kate Short account for this issue more fully.

The book also points out the haphazard approach to pesticide residue monitoring and the scant safety education available

to the users of the deadly products in Australia. Through case studies, the many sufferers of chemical injury tell their own stories. The diverse range of circumstances they present enable the reader to understand the many situations in which unsuspecting people become exposed to pesticides.

"Nathan Vance lives with his family in a small valley in northern NSW. One Saturday morning in January 1987, he rode his push bike to a friend's house. At that time a local farmer was spraying his bananas with the fungicide propiconazole. Nathan was doused by the chemical and became ill almost immediately..." (p127)

The final chapter of the book deals with the Politics of the Pesticide Risk. It discusses the legal, political and economic issues that have limited progress toward even the most basic reforms of pesticide use in Australia. The Agenda For Reform stress the need for public accountability and community right-to-know, a right fundamentally denied to Australians regarding pesticides. Kate Short provides a list of goals that are considered essential if reduction of the pesticide load is to be achieved, and calls for the adoption of the Precautionary Principle - immediately!

Quick Poison Slow Poison should be read by everyone who is concerned by the pesticide issue. The information is well researched and referenced and is an inspiration to all who are involved in the toxics campaign on any level.

Some sceptics may dismiss both books as nothing more than anecdotal sob-stories, offering no 'scientific proof' of the link between chemicals and environmental illness. Perhaps it is high time we took more notice of the proof of people becoming ill and less notice of corporate owned science? It is women's experience as caretakers of others that offers an antidote to intimidation by science; what we need is more women involved in scientific research and decision making reflecting life affirming values.

Jo Immig
toxic chemicals campaigner
Total Environment Centre

grand deceit or gender issue?

ecofeminists are coming out !

In mid September, Dai Qing came from Beijing to Sydney to talk about her struggle to stop the Three Gorges Dam, a project to be funded by the US Export/Import Bank. Dai Qing had not heard the word "ecofeminism" before meeting us, but she is surely an exemplar of this new breed.

A former electrical engineer working on China's Russian funded missile program, Dai was sent farming during the late 60s Cultural Revolution and later left this work altogether. As a young mother, she found no children's stories available in Maoist China, only propaganda tracts, so she decided to remedy that. Soon famous as a writer, she had opportunities to travel and mingle with intellectuals internationally. And this, in turn, led into another career that she did not wish to pursue - an official invitation to collect intelligence, especially on Eastern European thinkers.

Jailed for 10 months as a dissident following the Tian An Men Square uprising, Dai Qing was subsequently freed and went to the USA to study journalism and sociology at Harvard. Her work as an activist and translator continues, and she has recently won a prestigious Goldman Award for her work opposing the Three Gorges Dam.

Ariel Salleh
writer, community activist
Nature Conservation Council



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ecofeminist actions is published quarterly
by the women's environmental education centre,
PO Box 818, Glebe, NSW, 2037

some ecofeminist resources

Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, Ecofeminism.
London: Zed Press, 1993.

Greta Gaard (ed), Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature.
Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993.

Val Plumwood, Feminism and the Mastery of Nature.
London, Routledge, 1993.

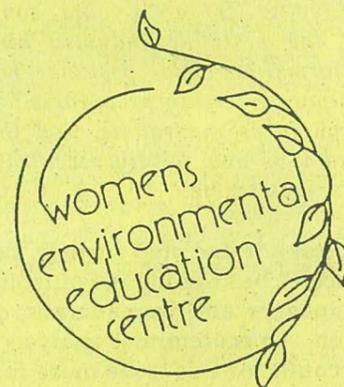
See also debates in the academic journals -
Environmental Ethics (US); Capitalism, Nature, Socialism (US)
Environmental Politics (UK); Environmental Values (UK)
and earlier issues of Chain Reaction (Aust); Island (Aust).

conferences

Ecofeminist Perspectives, University of Dayton, Ohio, March 31 -
April 1, 1995. Featured speakers include Carolyn Merchant and
Carol Adams. Information from Brian Lukes, Department of
Philosophy, University of Dayton, Dayton, OH, 45469-1546.

Australian Conservation Foundation, International Women and
Environment Conference, World Congress Centre, Flinders St,
Melbourne, 24-26th March 1995. Information from ACF, 340 Gore
St, Fitzroy, VIC 3065 - ph: (02)4161166.

Fourth UN Conference on Women, Beijing 4-15 September 1995.
Info Kit available from DAS Distribution, PO Box 655 Fyshwick
ACT 2609 - ph: (06)2025536.



editorial collective for this issue:

Kathy Fook
Jo Immig
Ariel Salleh
Kathryn Squires

Boycott woodchipping!

Concern about the environment usually includes concern about woodchipping, and the Native Forest Network has compiled details of the names, companies and places involved in woodchipping.

EVERY YEAR, over five million tonnes of woodchips - or two million mature trees - are exported to Japan to make throwaway paper products. Australia's precious natural forests, and the wide range of life forms they support, are being wantonly destroyed by an industry that costs money and jobs.

The world produces over one hundred million tonnes of paper every year. In Australia (which supplies about 50 per cent of Japan's hardwood woodchips) about 50,000 hectares of native forest are clearfelled and burnt with enormous environmental impacts - soil erosion, contamination of water supplies, habitat destruction and loss of wildlife. It has been estimated that 30 per cent of Australia's atmospheric carbon dioxide

pollution is the result of clearing and burning forests.

The pulping and paper making processes are also highly toxic. Most of Australia's pulp and paper products - such as disposable nappies and sanitary towels - are manufactured using the kraft chlorinated bleaching process. This process is hopelessly out of date, and is being phased out in the Scandinavian countries due to consumer demand. It is known that chlorine bleaching of wood fibre leads to the emission into the environment of poly-chlorinated biphenyls and dioxins - highly poisonous bio-accumulative toxins that build up in the food chain.

Plantations the way to go

Australia can have a viable forest industry - based on plantations. Yet while woodchipping companies have native forests handed to them on a plate there is no incentive to move into plantations. Amcor, Australia's largest manufacturer of paper products already has enough plantations to end native forest logging. By 2000 Tasmania could be exporting two million tonnes of plantation woodchips annually - if it wanted. In Victoria alone, processing mature plantations will provide 4,000 new jobs by the mid 1990s.

Other alternative fibres also exist to make paper including hemp, bagasse (sugar cane waste) and bamboo.

Woodchip export licences

Woodchip export licenses are approved or renewed and conditions are set by the Federal Resources Minister, David Beddall, who must take advice from the Minister for the Environment and three other Commonwealth agencies before deciding on renewals. The Minister for the Environment has recommended that no woodchips for export should come from old-growth and wilderness forests.

The ten woodchipping applications that must be determined by 26 December 1994 affect forests in NSW, Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria.



Photo: Andrew Ricketts

Forest Facts:

- Employment in export woodchip mills accounts for 1 per cent of jobs in the forest product industries;
- Since the arrival of woodchipping in Tasmania over 4,000 jobs have been lost in the forest industry;
- Woodchipping has contributed significantly to the \$5 billion debt run up by state forestry commissions.

The Who's Who of woodchipping

AMCOR

Australian multinational Amcor is rated as one of the world's top ten container, packaging and paper giants with total assets of \$5,006,141,000 and an operating income of \$5,170,898,000 for 1993. The company is grouped into Containers Packaging, Amcor Fibre Packaging, Amcor Paper Group and Amcor Trading, including 46 per cent-owned Spicers Paper. It also has a 50 per cent share of Kimberly Clark Australia, manufacturer of Huggies disposable nappies. The company comprises 156 controlled entities and 13 associated companies and has more than 19,000 employees at about 300 locations in 15 countries. Amcor boasts that 55 per cent of the materials of its fibrous raw materials are recycled (used for packaging production) and that it uses its own plantations, but its paper-making interests continue to consume native forests in Australia. After a series of corporate takeovers Amcor is the only domestic manufacturer of fine paper in Australia and also controls 80 per cent of

the distribution network, giving it almost total control of what products are manufactured, sold, imported and exported.

Amcor's APM Gippsland mills produced 383,000 tonnes of pulp and 374,000 tonnes of paper and paperboard in 1992-93. High conservation value forests in Tasmania and Victoria's Central Highlands are being logged to produce pulp for Amcor's paper mills, and for export. In 1993, APM Forests commenced genetically engineering projects to produce insect-resistant plantation eucalypts.

Australia currently consumes about 967,000 tonnes of printing and writing papers annually. About half of the fine paper consumed in Australia is manufactured here. Locally produced fine paper is made predominantly from native forest fibre (68 per cent). All native forest wood (765,000 tonnes) used for fine paper production could be replaced by plantation eucalypts now. Amcor's Maryvale/Latrobe Valley pulp and paper mill complex accounts for 20 per cent of Australian production alone. Due to extensive plantations, Amcor could source all its current wood requirements for its Maryvale production of printing and writing papers without the need to log native forests – yet it continues to log.

In September 1993 Amcor Paper Group, parent company of Australian Paper Manufacturers (APM), took over the paper-making division of Associated Pulp and Paper Mills (previously owned by Australian multinational North Broken Hill Peko Ltd), laying off 500 people nationally. The merged business interests are now called Australian Paper. Australian Paper has interests in paper mills in Victoria (Shoalhaven, Maryvale) and Tasmania (Burnie, Wesley Vale). In order to compete internationally, Amcor rationalised the product lines of its controlled entities, also with the intent of ensuring dominance in the Australian virgin fibre and recycled paper markets. The company withdrew APPM's Recycle 100 range, and downsized its production of Re-right. Launched in 1989, these two

lines had acquired 8 per cent of Australia's printing and writing papers market by 1993. The loss of Recycle 100 will be offset by a new product Regent, a bleached paper containing 20 per cent milk carton fibre and 80 per cent mill residue, which is normally returned to the vats anyway. It will include no post consumer waste. Amcor used to collect office waste to produce true 100 per cent unbleached recycled paper at Fairfield in Victoria, which has since closed.

Boral

Boral is a large Australia-wide and international company, well extended vertically and horizontally into the building products industry in Australia. Boral produces and sells timber, concrete, cement, bitumen, aluminium windows and doors, elevators, gas, oil – and much more. Boral controls 82 entities carrying on businesses in 18 countries and is extending its operations in the Asia Pacific area. In 1993, 80 per cent of its sales revenue came from inside Australia.

In NSW, the Boral company monopolises the harvest of New South Wales native forests. Eighty per cent of hardwood sawlog quotas in Northern NSW and fifty per cent of the hardwood sawlog quota in NSW is assigned to Boral.

Currently Boral and Harris Daishowa have 20 year wood supply agreements, which has effectively entrenched the use of native forests for their lowest value use, such as woodchips.

These agreements are based on a gross over estimation of resources. Over commitments to these companies has led to logging in environmentally significant areas, a withdrawal of resources from smaller mills, refusal to adopt enhanced environmental prescriptions for forest management, and failure to reduce quotas to sustainable levels. Boral's woodchip source region stretches from Newcastle to the Queensland border and includes seven identified Wilderness Areas.

Sawmillers Export Limited

Sawmillers Export Limited (SEPL), a subsidiary of Boral operates out of Newcastle NSW and has a Federal export licence of 500,000 tonnes per year, although it has never reached this level (320,000 tonnes in 1993). Japanese pulp and paper trading multinational, Itochu, is a minority shareholder. SEPL obtains all its woodchips from the native forests of the north coast of NSW. Although Boral does not directly own and log forests, it is estimated that it has control of 60 per cent of the timber industry in NE NSW. Claims that it only takes sawmill 'waste' have been proved to be false, and in 1992 Boral's timber operations manager Mr Gallagher admitted that the company was felling native forest – including old growth – solely for woodchips. SEPL plans to expand its operations to 400,000 tonnes per year. Earlier this year, SEPL obtained an interim extension to its current licence which was issued by Resources Minister David Beddall without seeking consent of the Commonwealth Environment Protection Agency, as obligated.

Forest Resources Property Limited

This trading company of Boral Timber operates out of Longreach, Tasmania, and has an export licence volume of 947,000 tonnes per annum, although it exported 760,000 tonnes in 1993. The company is active in north eastern and central Tasmania and obtains 60 per cent of its pulpwood from private property, with the rest coming from Crown forests.

Bunnings

Bunnings Forest Products is based in Bunbury, Western Australia. This company operates under the name of West Australian Chip and Pulp Company Property Limited (WACAP) and has a Federal export licence of 900,000, although in 1992 exports totalled 830,000 tonnes. The company has received active encouragement from WA's Liberal Govt to establish \$1.9 billion worth of plantation and native forest based pulp and paper projects in south west WA, includ-

ing two mills consuming a total of 690,000 tpy and two 200,000 tpy fine paper machines. The state government has indicated that it will introduce 'Resource Security' legislation to guarantee access to WA's forests if the company builds a pulp mill. Bunnings currently relies on forest resources made available through Conservation and Land Management (CALM), which is responsible for the clearfelling of 1,500 to 2,000 ha of Karri and Marri forest every year. It is estimated that less than 120,000 ha of these forests remain.

Bunnings had a sales revenue of \$517 million for 1992, is 47 per cent owned by the agro industrial mining giant Wesfarmers, and has a number of business interests including sawmilling, hardware, roofing and metal frames. Its sales revenue from its wood products division for 1993 totalled \$195.1 million. The company is now seeking to sell off the last of West Australia's Jarrah forests and has promoted its forest products in Sweden, Scandinavia, Holland, US and UK. In Japan, it has entered into a trade partnership with the multinational Mitsui to sell Jarrah for decking and bridges.

Gunns

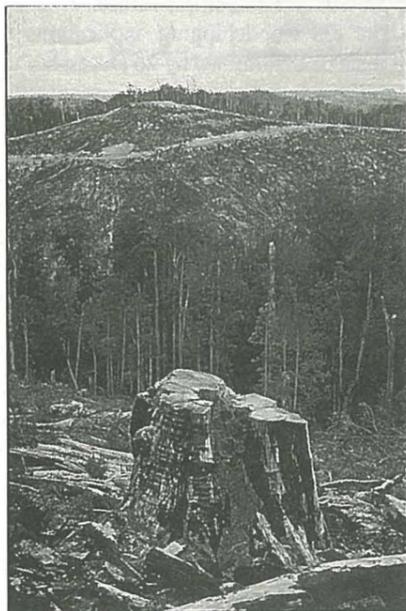
Gunns Kilndried Timbers is a Tasmanian

company with hardware outlets throughout the state, basing its timber supplies from logging operations across the island. Until recently North Broken Hill had a 40 per cent share in the company, but this has now declined to 5 per cent.

Gunns, along with North Forest Products, would be the main beneficiaries from the destruction of Australia's largest rainforest, the Tarkine, in Tasmania's north west. Recently the company obtained permission from Federal resources Minister David Beddall to export 200,000 tonnes of its 'sawmill residue' as woodchips to Japan, which may result in the construction of another chip mill in the north west. This was done without the production of an Environmental Impact Statement, overriding Environment Protection Agency requirements. Tasmanian conservation groups are undertaking to challenge the legality of Beddall's actions.

Harris Daishowa

This company is 100 per cent Japanese owned, and is split between the majority owner Daishowa Paper Manufacturing Company Limited, based Fuji City, Japan, and Itochu Corporation. In 1994 the company exported 893,521 tonnes of woodchips and reduced its federal export licence from 950,000 tonnes per year to



After cable logging in the Tarkine, Australia's largest remaining rainforest. (Photo: Andrew Ricketts)



Protest against logging in the Tarkine forest.

(Photo: Andrew Ricketts)

900,000, reflecting the current oversupply of pulp and paper in the Japanese market. The company exports 80 per cent of NSW woodchips. It also imports woodchips and pulp from Brazil, Chile, Canada, Finland, Portugal, Thailand, Russia and the US. In September 1993 its total assets stood at Y635.1 billion (AUS\$9 billion), its debts at Y478.9 billion (AUS\$6.8 billion).

Established in Eden in 1972, Harris Daishowa has been the driving force behind the logging of thousands of hectares of old growth and wilderness forests in SE NSW, and East Gippsland, Victoria. Areas of high conservation value logged on behalf of the company include the Coolangubra Wilderness, nominated in 1988 under the NSW Wilderness Act. Listed on the Australian Register of the National Estate. The area was deliberately cut in half by the infamous Wog Way. The NSW Chief Commissioner for Forests stated in a letter that the area should not be declared under the Act, commenting that 'road and logging will put the issue beyond doubt'. Daishowa's operations extend throughout SE NSW, and increasingly, into East Gippsland, Victoria, which has led to a 40 per cent increase in logging in the region, while jobs have declined by 40 per cent. The NSW Government recently entrenched this continued onslaught by Daishowa through "Resource Security" legislation, guaranteeing timber industry access to 59,000 cubic metres of sawlog and 504,000 tonnes of pulp wood annually.

Parent company Daishowa Paper Co. is a major player in forest destruction world wide and Japan's third largest user and producer of pulp and paper products.

Midway

Midway Forest Products exports eucalypt woodchips from Corio Bay in Geelong, Victoria. It sources its woodchips from over 80 sawmills throughout Victoria and Southern New South Wales (as far north as Tumut). Currently it has a federal export licence through the Department of Primary Resources to export 313,000 tonnes of woodchips per year

sourced only from 'sawlog residues and silvicultural thinnings'. This licence agreement does not stop Midway illegally chipping whole logs. Midway is also involved in plantation development.

The twenty or so shareholders of Midway are a who's who of the Victorian Timber Industry.

Midway has major expansion plans. Ideally it would like to supply a large pulp mill in Victoria and it is currently in the process of negotiating to build another export woodchip mill somewhere in Gippsland. It has also drastically increased its share quota.

The Otways were the major source of Midways timber during the 80s. But since 1989 with the establishment of Midland Logging Company the Wombat State Forest has been increasingly targeted. By 1994 it could be said that Midway has largely been responsible for the destruction of the Otways, whilst Midway and the multinational CSR, which has a Particle Board Plant at Bacchus Marsh, have helped strip the Wombat. Increasingly, timber from the Central Highlands and Gippsland is finding its way to Midway.

North Broken Hill

NBH's subsidiary North Forest Products is one of the world's largest exporters of hardwood chips, and holds a licence of 1,878,000 tonnes per annum, divided between North Forest Products Tamar, at Longreach, northern Tasmania (1,065,000 tpa) and North Forest Products Triabunna, at Triabunna, southern Tasmania (813,000 tpa). Almost all woodchips are exported to Japan to Nippon Paper Industries, New Oji and Mitsubishi. Other controlled entities include Australian Forest Holdings and Tasmanian Pulp and Forest Holdings (TPFH).

North Forest Products owns 125,000 ha of freehold across Tasmania. Its largest estate of 90,000 ha – euphemistically called a 'tree farm' – is located near New Hampshire, in the state's north west. The southern hemisphere's largest chip mill is currently under construction near New Hampshire, and will process native forest

extracted from North Forest Product's estate, as well as the Tarkine, Australia's largest rainforest (cool temperate).

Known to Tasmanian conservationists as 'North Broken Forests', NFP is responsible for the destruction of thousands of hectares of native forests in Tasmania every year. Areas of high conservation value being logged by or on behalf of the company include Tasmania's Southern Forests and the Great Western Tiers. Both areas are adjacent the existing Western Tasmania World Heritage Area, and are themselves subject to World Heritage proposals. The company is also currently active in the dry eucalypt forests of Reedy Marsh, near Deloraine. Here, over 95 per cent of the trees felled end up as woodchips.

Queensland Hardwoods

This Maryborough-based company, owned by Hyne and Son, previously operating on Fraser Island, is currently pushing for a licence to export some 140,000 tonnes of woodchips annually.

Whittakers

Based in Albany, WA Whittakers is a Malaysian-dominated sawmilling company that markets its "residual" woodchips through a subsidiary company, Southern Plantations Chip Company. It has a current federal export licence of 110,000 tpa, but there are plans for a new native forest based woodchip mill that will ultimately process 800,000 tonnes of woodchips a year. The source for these chips will be the ever-decreasing karri and marri forests of south west WA, 80 per cent coming from state forests, the rest from private land.

For a fully referenced and more detailed version of this list contact: The Native Forest Network 112 Emu Bay Rd, Deloraine Tasmania, 7304, Australia E-mail peg@cadwood.apc.org

Nuclear news

While the ALP National Conference upheld the existing three mines uranium policy, stopping an open slather expansion of uranium mining in the short term, the nuclear industry is still pinning its hopes on further expansion in Australia. Clare Henderson compiled this report.

THE MINING industry mounted a strong campaign around the September 1994 ALP National Conference to change the ALP's 'three mine' uranium policy. The basic argument was that a 'window of opportunity' existed from a boom in the uranium market in the late 1990s, based on projections of an expanded world-wide nuclear power generation program. This was argued despite previous economic projections not eventuating and the existing mines producing well below capacity.

The three mine policy has a controversial history – it was initially justified at the ALP's 1982 national conference and it has been described since as a phase-out policy. It allows uranium mining to occur at three specific mines: Ranger within the Kakadu National Park in the NT, Nabalek also in the Territory (and which has ceased production) and Roxby Downs in South Australia.

Although not formally on the 1994 conference agenda, the policy came to dominate proceedings as other issues such as privatisation were worked out behind closed doors. Early in the week it seemed that a policy change would not get up due to 'industrial' relations wrangling, but it remained in flux all week.

Some commentators, such as in *Green Left Weekly*, argue that there was no point in attending the conference to lobby delegates and that what was needed was action on the streets. I agree and I was slightly horrified to be at an ALP National conference trying to stop something within a forum which I hold to be deeply undemocratic and full of excrement. The question has to be asked, however, how many times does the community have to say NO? For almost 20 years people have demonstrated against uranium and still the ALP has not heard. The conference proved to be a focus as a place where a decision was going to be made, and the community input in those few short days made a difference. There also seemed to be some at the conference who were aware of the protests, and electoral fallout, that would occur if the policy changed. The answer to the question of where we put our energies may be that we work in and for the community on uranium, and every now and then we go and shake up the bastards and remind them that there's a lot of people watching them and what they're doing.

I also don't think we should pin our hopes on the ALP – the Liberals will do no better and we have to continue to put pressure on them, whether or not they ever do form a government.

While the ALP national conference maintained its current restriction on the number of uranium mines in Australia things are afoot on a number of fronts.

Western Mining Corporation is currently undertaking a feasibility study into a \$1 billion expansion at the Roxby Downs mine. The study is due to be completed in January 1996 and focuses on the world uranium market and water supply. However, this may not even have to face an Environmental Impact Statement unless the Minister, Bob Collins, feels that it is necessary, politically or otherwise. Roxby Downs had a very significant leak of one of its tailings dams in February 1994 and this is the subject of an inquiry in South Australia, and such events should induce the Federal Minister to investigate thoroughly before any expansion takes place.

The Ranger mine is also the site of activity as the current orebody is due for depletion in December 1994 although there may be five years worth of stockpile. Orebody three is due to open but it first needs approval of its environmental management plan. However, if the proposal differs significantly from the initial proposal to develop the orebody then a new EIS may be necessary. Also of concern is that the Office of the Supervising Scientist and ERA itself have outlined significant environmental concerns with the development.

ERA is still happily talking about the development of Jabiluka, which it is calling North Ranger as part of the process of establishing the mine in the Kakadu flood plain.

Other developments include: nuclear agreements with Indonesia; the Non-Proliferation Treaty; food irradiation; and low-level and high level nuclear waste disposal.

We need to remain vigilant on a number of fronts, but when it comes back to uranium mining we have to convert the community opposition to uranium mining into a campaign to build hurdles such as very open and strict assessments of each proposed mine development, and to also ensure that uranium mining in Australia is phased out and that the mines currently operating do so under safe conditions.

Clare Henderson is an editor of Chain Reaction.

Native American – environment group alliances

Finding common ground

Green groups and Indigenous Peoples' groups can have things in common but they sometimes differ on questions relating to land and resource use. Cam Walker looks at some examples of alliances in North America.

ANYONE ACTIVE in the Green movement in Australia will be aware of the broadly accepted perception that Indigenous Australians and environmentalists have a shared agenda of protecting the environment. While many do not take this further than supporting the notion of 'land rights' or wearing the land rights colours or generally deferring to or idealising Aboriginal/Islander culture, many other activist individuals and organisations are developing specific alliances with Aboriginal organisations.

There is fertile ground for fruitful and productive alliances between the two groups, although one of the basic problems is that many environmentalists see Aboriginal people as a homogenous group rather than as the diverse collection of groups and nations that they are, with very different relationships with the land and different reasons for caring about the environment than non-Aboriginal Australians.

As with much else that relates to the environment, there is potential to learn

from trends overseas. North America is often important because it is a 'first world' nation with a highly urbanised population that has similar environmental problems and movements to that which exist in Australia. There is much to learn from the alliances, both formal and haphazard, that exist between Native Americans and environmental and citizen groups.

We need to consider the situation of Native American people to see a context for what is happening in North America. After 502 years of resistance to European invasion, Native populations have been displaced from much of their land base in the most fertile regions. The areas remaining in Native hands (around four per cent of the USA) tend to be in arid or northern regions – basically the areas that were of little use to the invaders after the military operations subsided in the late nineteenth century.

As in Australia, Indigenous People exist on the lowest rungs of society. Unemployment on reservations is between

50 and 80 per cent, infant mortality rates are three times the national rate, and life expectancy for Native Americans is 47 years.¹ It is estimated that 4,400,000 Native people lived on the North American continent before 1492. That figure is now 2,540,000.² It is estimated that some 2,000 Native communities have vanished from the continent since European invasion, although around 700 remain in Alaska alone and several hundred around other parts of North America.³

The assault on Native communities continues on many fronts. Perhaps the single main threat comes from governments and transnational corporations coveting Native lands for resource development and incorporation into Western industrial markets.

Over two thirds of uranium in the US, and one third of all low sulphur coal, exists on Native reservations. Most uranium in Canada exists under Native land. The last remaining undeveloped stretch of Alaska's north slope, the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, is Gwich'in territory. The James Bay project – the largest single hydro-electric project in North America – is on Cree and Inuit lands in northern Canada.⁴ The long struggle occurring at Big Mountain is essentially about large corporations gaining access to Dine (Navajo) lands in Arizona for coal mining.

As industrial culture is searching out the last lands that have not been exploited it is Native lands that are being targeted.

There are hundreds of 'developments' that threaten Native land:

clearcutting throughout the conifer forests of the north (much of it on unceded Indian land), lack of respect for Native traditions (such as at Bear Butte, South Dakota, where the US Park Service allows intrusion by tourists upon Lakota and Cheyenne people conducting ceremony), developments on sacred sites (such as a proposed ski resort on Mount Shasta in California), hydro electric and mining projects and even residential developments. It is in this context, of industrial assault on Native lands, that the groundwork has been laid for alliances between Indigenous people and environmental groups.

Defending Native lands

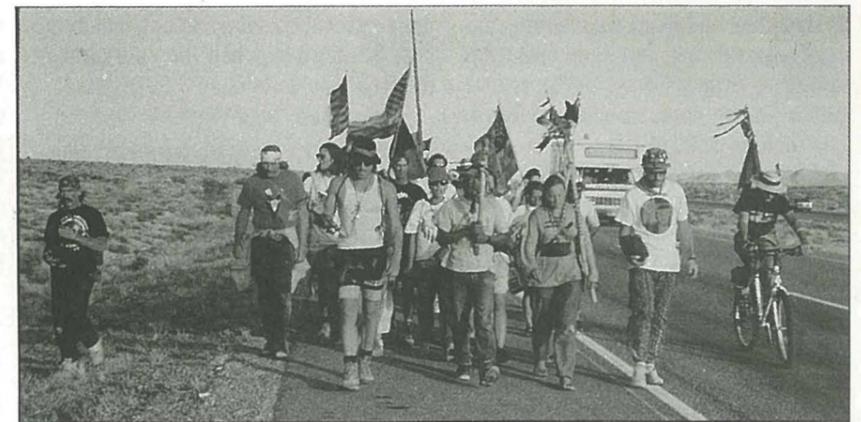
While there has been a determined defence of public lands by Western environmentalists, it is only in recent times that Native lands have become a focus for the environment movement. There is, however, a strong history of solidarity of Churches, community activists and political organisations for Native struggles for self determination.

Increasingly, Native peoples' resistance revolves around defending or reasserting their rights to their traditional land base and use of resources. This raises a significant issue for environmentalists with a preservationist perspective in regards to nature conservation.

Dennis Martinez, a land restorationist of Poma ancestry, summed up this attitude by explaining how Western people see themselves as being outside of nature:

Both preservationists and conservationists have their roots in the dominant mechanistic mode of Western thinking, while Native people see a need for interaction with natural systems. Plants need people as much as people need plants. This is the meaning of reciprocity. Instead of 'wilderness', the indigenous world lies fully within nature. There is no Indian word for wilderness, in the sense of people separate from nature.⁵

This difference in perception has led to conflict in Australia between Aboriginal people and some environment groups



Native Americans lead the 'Walk Across America' 1992 to bring attention to nuclear testing on Western Shoshone land and other issues affecting Native Americans.

who oppose hunting and other traditional practices in National Parks. A similar situation exists in North America, but is even more polarised because of the large number of Native communities involved in commercial resource extraction.

Native people have managed to live on the continent for many thousands of years without destroying natural ecosystems but have survived by utilising the natural resources of their traditional land base. This means exploitation of resources, and may run against environmental aspirations of simply preserving lands. As environmentalists we must come up with how to:

- ensure that Native people have real control over their lands (taking into account the history of the US government and large corporations whereby they have established Tribal Councils that will negotiate and/or approve industrial exploitation); and
- incorporate Indigenous knowledge into sustainable land management that includes high levels of human population and involvement in market-based (as opposed to self sufficient) use patterns.

As Al Gedicks has noted:

When I describe the emerging 'native-environmentalist' alliance in opposition to corporate resource extraction projects, I do not mean to suggest that all natives are environmentalists (or that all environmentalists are white). There are significant differences among native nations

as well as within native nations on the question of resource development. One cannot speak about the native response to corporate-initiated resource development any more than one can speak about the white response to such development.⁶

Working alliances

For an alliance to work, it needs to be a relationship between partners of equal power. Greens, like other Westerners, are prone to believe that they have the answers, and often enter relations with Native groups without considering their inbuilt racism. Perhaps the most important understanding here is to see that environmental issues cannot be separated from the need for social justice and real self determination for Native people. Not coming from a situation of being oppressed and marginalised, Greens may not understand the complexity of issues confronting Native people. Environmentalists do not have a monopoly on concern for the environment. This is pointed out by Winona La Duke, an Anishanabe activist who says there are many 'small groups, with names like Native Americans for a Clean Environment, the Kaibab Earthkeepers, Dine CARE, Native Action and Anishanabe Nijji ... who ... have successfully opposed huge waste dumps, multinational mining and lumber companies, and the US Office of the Nuclear Waste Negotiator'.⁷ In seeking alliances with Native people, it is important to

acknowledge, and listen to, existing Native organisations and concerns. An inability to listen is one of the greatest problems to be overcome, especially in the early days of an alliance.

Meeting needs

In the 'hierarchy of needs' world view, quality of life issues come after basic needs such as food, water, shelter, education, health care, etc. have been met. Environmental campaigns have often revolved around saving tracts of land for recreation and conservation of remnant ecosystems. The motivation for Native people in resisting environmental devastation often comes from the need to survive as individuals and communities. In many ways, the onus is on Western environmentalists to understand this differing position. All Native land is under attack, often from a variety of sources. In the past four years, there have been more than one hundred federal and industry proposals to dump waste on Indian land.

The Western Shoshone people have had more than 700 nuclear weapons tested on or under their traditional lands in Nevada, and continue to resist unsustainable grazing, nuclear waste facilities and large scale mining operations. By as early as 1973, uranium mining was affecting Ute, Apache, Hopi, Dine, Papago, Zuni and Acoma lands.

In the sense that Native people are fighting against direct environmental hazards that affect their very survival, they have more in common with poor Anglo, Chicano and Black communities fighting hazardous industry and waste dumps than they do with the predominantly Anglo Saxon 'mainstream' environment movement. It is estimated that around 60 per cent of African Americans and Hispanic Americans and 50 per cent of Native Americans live in communities with uncontrolled toxic waste sites.⁸ It is only in the last few years that the notion of 'environmental racism' has started to enter into the language of middle class environmentalists.

It is important to note that there are many working class organisations and movements in the USA that are essen-

tially 'green' movements but which are largely invisible when the environment movement is defined.

Restoration and direct action

Another area where alliances can form is in environmental restoration. Increasingly, there is a trend for diverse groups to work together to undertake environmental restoration. One example is the Sinkyone Intertribal Park Project. This is a coalition of tribes working with non-Natives and state and local governments to acquire a sizeable tract of land in the area once occupied by the To-cho-bekeah Sinkyone people in order to restore it to its pre-contact condition. This grew out of an earlier coalition (1985) of Natives and environmentalists who sued the California Department of Forestry and Georgia Pacific Corporation for their failure to consider the cumulative impacts of clear-cut logging and failure to protect Indian burial sites.⁹

If social justice and sustainability are the long term aims of alliances, there are, meanwhile, many battles being fought to defend ecosystems under threat. One of the first environmental groups to seek alliances with Native people was Earth First! In 1983, Earth First! activists joined with Native people to obstruct the building of a road through sacred sites in northern California. Since then, there have been many similar alliances with a variety of Native communities. One characteristic feature of many Earth First!ers is their analysis that Western lifestyles are leading to global environmental destruction. Many identify with Indigenous life ways, and have developed long-lived alliances with Native people. This is different to many of the more mainstream Green groups in North America, which focus on lobbying and have 'professional' relationships with organisations rather than day-to-day interaction with Native people.

Alliances have often taken the form of direct action. In 1990, Western activists and Native people resisted the destruction of old growth forests in Temagami in northern Ontario. Tactics included road blocks, burials in the road-

way, and locking on to forestry equipment. Prior to this, the Temagami Wilderness Society (TWS) had worked with local Natives in a 'loose and sometimes uneasy alliance'¹⁰ until 1988 when the Teme-augama people established a six month blockade of a road leading to an area about to be clear felled. Albert Little Bear commented:

The Teme-augama and TWS have a history of mutual wariness, despite the potential for a powerful alliance, due perhaps to mutual misunderstandings and different cultural norms. From the Native perspective, the pro-wilderness stance can easily be misconstrued. Historically, Anglos have co-opted Native rights and traditional sovereignty. Although TWS officially supports the Native people and made the wilderness proposal with the intention of saving land until the claim [by the Teme-augama, for their traditional lands] was resolved, they caused some confusion by publicly calling for the creation of a Temagami Wilderness Reserve that appealed to provincial rather than native authority. Eco-activists have been frustrated by the apparently slow pace of tribal consensus building. Some openly question to what extent a poor tribe, given control of great resource wealth, could resist economic pressures to sell-out to development interests.¹¹

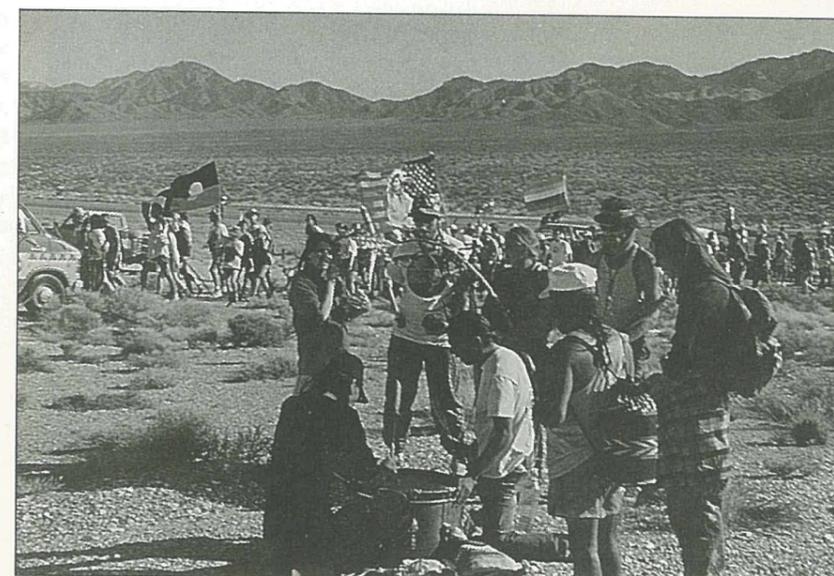
This raises another issue of great importance – many Native people are naturally distrustful of Western environmentalists using the rhetoric of 'land rights' while it suits them. However, if Greens are to support the notion of self determination, this has to be followed through all the way – including dealing with Native people using their land in ways of which the Greens disapprove. Sovereignty cannot be dependent on Native people doing what Greens expect of them. It has to truly include the ability to have absolute control over traditional lands that are subject to claim. Western environmentalists who attempt to co-operate with Native people in attaining sustainable land man-

agement after land has gone back into Native hands stand in the same position most Native people currently occupy – having attachment to land but no right of veto over what actually happens.

In 1992, the Abenaki people of Vermont formed an alliance with Earth First! The impetus behind this came during an Earth First! gathering that was held in the Green Mountains (part of traditional Abenaki lands). Earth First! activists visited the Tribal Council office to discuss a mini-hydro power project on the Missisquoi River, which was destined to destroy considerable areas of natural habitat as well as flooding Abenaki burial grounds. Perhaps this is another example of what makes for a successful alliance – enough "gain" for both sides to give a sense of solidity to the partnership – if only one group stands to gain from the alliance, it is likely to break more easily. At the initial meeting with the Tribal Council, the Earth First!ers were told that the Abenaki were not working with environmentalists because 'the only time any environmental groups came to them is when they needed something'.¹² Earth First! realised that they needed to act in solidarity with the Abenaki on all the issues confronting them, not just environmental ones. When the house of Chief St Francis, an outspoken advocate for Abenaki sovereignty, was burnt down in very suspicious circumstances, Earth First! immediately began publicly denouncing the act, and pledged support to the Abenaki, wherever it was needed.

Giving an interesting perspective on the relationship between the two groups, Abenaki Tribal Judge Michael Delaney said: 'when the Abenaki regain their sovereignty, Earth First! will be called on to help tear down the man-made dams that plague the Missisquoi River'.¹³

There are many other examples of Native-Green alliances in North America. The Native Forest Network is another organisation that has liaised closely with Native communities on environmental issues, in particular the campaign to stop an observatory from being built on Apache land in Arizona and the proposal by Hydro-Quebec to flood vast areas of Cree land in northern Quebec.



Demonstration against nuclear testing on Native land in Nevada organised by the Western Shoshone Defense Project and non-Native peace and environment groups.

There appears to be a series of factors which result in successful alliances:

- An acknowledgement of there being different world views, and an onus on Western environmentalists to listen to, and respect, Native opinions and knowledge;
 - A need for Western people to accept the need to support Native people in all their struggles, not just those that relate directly to the environment;
 - A long term commitment to working with Native people, not just a temporary relationship on a specific issue;
 - The need to ensure that the partners of the alliance enter as equals in terms of decision-making and resources; and
 - The potential for gain for both parties.
- Western environmentalists need an understanding of history to ensure they do not become just one more wave in the ongoing process of 'dispossession of Native people. Governments and corporations will attempt to subvert or destroy successful alliances, or use Western environmentalists against Native people by offering National Parks and other reserves on traditional lands at the expense of the Native people.

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7. Winona La Duke 'Native Environmentalism' *Earth Island Journal* Summer 1993.
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10. Albert Little Bear 'Temagami, Activists and Indians Defend Ontario's Largest Old Growth' *Earth First! Journal* Vol X, No IV, p1 & 5, 1990.
11. *ibid* p7.
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Cam Walker is a National Liaison Officer of Friends of the Earth.

Nuclear weapons and the World Court Project

The legality of nuclear weapons has never been tested, but Thomas Weber describes the process which is under way which will give nuclear weapons their day in court.

THE COLD WAR MAY have ended but nuclear proliferation has not. There are now four former Soviet states with nuclear weapons; Israel, Pakistan and North Korea may have them; South Africa developed them in secret (but got rid of them before Black majority rule); and, we can only guess how far Iraq and Iran have progressed down the nuclear development track.

This proliferation cannot be stopped by force and the only alternative seems to be some form of control through the United Nations (UN). And many peace activists have thought that the first step in this process is to have nuclear weapons explicitly outlawed in the same way as biological and chemical weapons have been.

The question of whether nuclear weapons are legal or not should have come up in August 1945 following the bombing of

Hiroshima. However, it seems to have been first mooted in 1959 by international lawyer Nagendra Singh in *Nuclear Weapons and International Law*.

He argued that nuclear weapons were illegal by analogy to the most well established principle of weapons and war:

- the prohibition against the use of poison;
- because they infringed the rights of neutral states;
- the effects of nuclear explosions are uncontrollable;
- because of the prohibition against causing unnecessary suffering;
- because they violate the Genocide Convention; and,
- because they contravene the Hague Convention of 1907 and Geneva Conventions of 1949 – by not distinguishing between legally permis-

sible objects of destruction and belligerents on the one hand, and innocent neutrals or civilians on the other.

It has been estimated that nuclear weapons violate at least 14 treaties and 35 articles of international law.¹

Each year since 1961 the UN votes on a resolution, routinely put up by India, stating that nuclear weapons contravene existing UN treaties which make certain action unacceptable in war. It is always passed by a majority (excluding most nuclear powers and some others who either vote against it or abstain, positions taken at various times by both Australia and New Zealand). Even Russia and China have voted for the resolution.

There is a counter claim that nuclear weapons are quite legal under international law. This was pushed heavily by the British Solicitor General in 1990 when it looked like the World Court Project, aimed at having nuclear weapons declared illegal in international law, might be getting somewhere. He stated that, as there is no specific treaty outlawing the weapons, there is no general prohibition. However, international law is based on far broader sources than treaties. It also comes from 'usage established among civilised peoples, from the laws of humanity, and the dictates of the public conscience'.

It was also argued that in some way the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Partial Test Ban Treaty demonstrated the legality of nuclear weapons. The question is whether if nuclear weapons were illegal before, did the treaties somehow bestow legality on them? The short answer is no – treaties merely recognise the possession of the weapons, not their legality.

The Solicitor General went on to argue that the legality of using nuclear weapons would have to be judged in light of the circumstances in which they are actually used. But not all other weapons usage is judged in this *ex post facto* way. In the case of chemical and bacteriological weapons any use is criminal.

Edward St. John, international lawyer, judge, ex-Liberal Federal politician, and leading Australian supporter of the

Project, observed that if nuclear weapons had been first developed and used by Japan or Germany, but the Allied powers had still won the Second World War, there would have been a very different history of these weapons. The leaders who had authorised their use would probably have been charged with war crimes under existing rules of international law.

The World Court

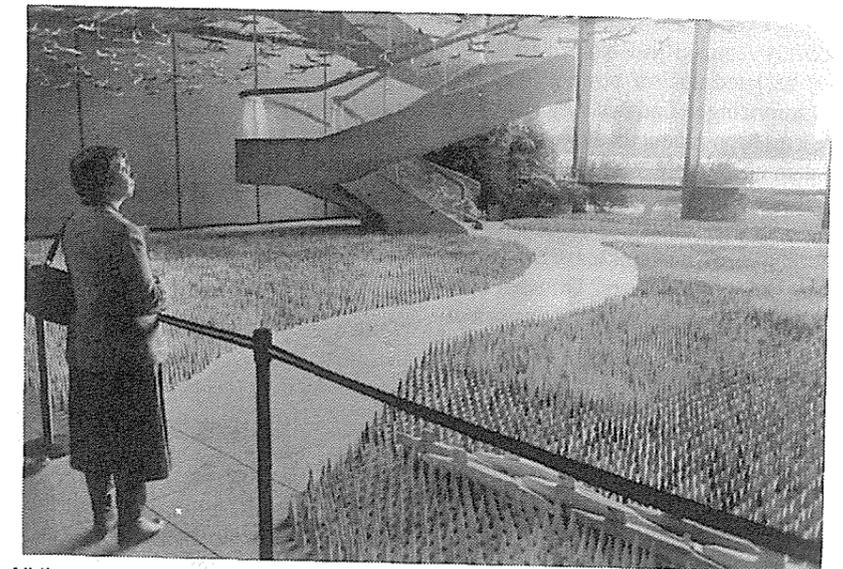
The International Court of Justice (ICJ), headquartered in Le Hague, is the principal judicial organ of the UN. Since 1946 the ICJ (the World Court) has dealt with contentious cases where essentially countries sue each other, and advisory opinions given in response to requests by other UN bodies.

In this latter category the General Assembly or the Security Council may request the ICJ to give an advisory opinion on any legal question, or a UN organ or specialised agency, which has been so authorised by the General Assembly, to request an advisory opinion of the Court on legal questions arising within the scope of their activities.

The ICJ is composed of fifteen full-time judges who take an oath to serve impartially and conscientiously. Their salaries, pensions and diplomatic immunity are guaranteed by the UN and a judge can only be removed by a unanimous vote of the others. One of the current judges is Sri Lankan Christie Weeramantry who was a professor of law at Monash University and who has written extensively on the illegality of nuclear weapons.

The seeds were sown for a World Court challenge to have nuclear weapons declared illegal during a 1986 lecture tour in New Zealand by the eminent international lawyer, Professor Richard Falk of Princeton University. Falk suggested that New Zealand should test its anti-nuclear ship legislation and the US response to it in the World Court. Later Harold Evans, a retired New Zealand magistrate, and other NZ peace activists, set about trying to turn an expanded version of the idea into reality.

In 1987 Evans presented the case for the World Court giving an opinion on the



All the warheads in the US nuclear arsenal are represented by this field of ceramic nose-cones. The estimate in 1985 was that the US had a total of 25,000 warheads. (Photo: Robert Del Tredici from 'At Work in the Fields of the Bomb', Harrap, London, 1987)

legality or otherwise of nuclear weapons in an open letter to the Prime Ministers of New Zealand and Australia. The letter was mainly a compilation of fully argued opinions from six eminent and experienced jurists of world standing (including Falk, Weeramantry and St. John) making the case that nuclear weapons were illegal in international law. A few months later the letter was sent to every UN member country having representation in NZ or Australia (a total of 71 countries). The Project also received strong support from the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War at both the national and international level.

The NZ Minister for Foreign Affairs was equivocal in his response. He claimed that the case could go the way of actually recognising the legitimacy of nuclear weapons – resulting in a major setback to the anti-nuclear cause, and might hurt NZ's international reputation. Further, he added, even if the opinion went against the legality of nuclear weapons it would have no effect in practical terms and would be ignored by nuclear weapons states. In short the NZ foreign affairs establishment was tending to oppose taking the matter further. (It should be noted that if the Court was to hold the use of nuclear weapons legal in some

instances – e.g. 'in a manner proportional to the attack' – it would only mean legal as a response to an attack by nuclear weapons. This would still be a great step forward as it would outlaw a policy of first use, a policy that the US and NATO still maintain.)

In mid-1989, Evans wrote another detailed open letter, this time addressed only to the NZ Prime Minister. Australia had more or less stated that it wanted to have little to do with the Project – and may even have been ready to pressure NZ not to take it up. As a response to the first letter, Prime Minister Hawke had claimed that deterrence was important and that the way to proceed was through negotiations between the US and Russian rather than via the path of legal opinion. He declared that Australia could not give the Project 'a high priority'.

Professor Weeramantry, not yet a World Court judge, informed Evans towards the end of 1988 that he believed 'the majority of states are ... ready in principle to vote for such a move but are reluctant to be its sponsors'.

In October 1993 the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM – 110 of the 187 countries represented at the UN) decided to sponsor the UN resolution calling on the ICJ to declare nuclear weapons illegal.

The five permanent members of the UN Security Council just happen to be the five declared nuclear powers. And it is not surprising to find that they have been the least happy about the Project. The US, Britain and France are extremely sensitive about the question of the legality of nuclear weapons. If they were declared illegal where would this leave Britain and France as world powers? On what basis could they keep their positions as permanent members? Surely Japan and Germany would have a more legitimate claims to membership.

Britain maintains that legality must be judged in each given circumstance of use (a little late perhaps) and that 'therefore it would be wrong to burden the ICJ with this hypothetical question'.

Mexico's disarmament counsellor, in the heat of battle over the case, declared that 'the nuclear powers are scared shitless', and the Canadian disarmament ambassador noted that 'hysteria is not too strong a word to describe the nuclear weapons states' point of view'.

Under 'incredible pressure' from Western nuclear powers (according to a Latin American UN delegate), apparently including threats to individual NAM countries that trade and aid would be at stake if they pressed ahead, Resolution L25, the request by the UN General Assembly to the ICJ to advise if the threat or use of nuclear weapons in any circumstances is permitted under international law, was dropped late 1993. Within the NAM a small group of countries with ties to Washington, London and Paris (including Indonesia - very heavily pressured by the US - Ghana and Benin) blocked the consensus necessary to bring a NAM resolution to the floor for a vote. Although 80 per cent of the global population seemed to want the resolution to go through, (Russia and China played no significant role - probably they did not want to alienate their allies in the Third World) it will now not be put to the vote. A senior American arms expert declared that:

we are shooting ourselves in the foot. We are refusing to accept as illegal what 98 per cent of the world is being asked to accept as illegal -

an elite view that we are the only ones who can hold on to nuclear weapons ... It makes us look like a double-faced nuclear power, talking one game and playing another. It plays into the hands of the North Koreans' efforts to obtain nuclear weapons, and countries like the Ukraine's efforts to hold on to them.

If nuclear weapons are legal how is it that North Korean weapons are illegal, or, put the other way, if nuclear weapons are illegal why does this not include those of the US? What the US wants is an indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which would preserve the *status quo* - the current powers could keep their nuclear weapons but others cannot acquire any. And this important debate has received almost no press in the US (or here).

This, however, was not the end of the Project. While the straightforward challenge to the legality of nuclear may have failed, another indirect one, the Project's fallback position, may yet succeed. An advisory opinion, asking if the use of nuclear weapons would be a breach of international law, including the constitution of WHO (the World Health Organisation) is still being considered. That resolution, preceding the one in the General Assembly by a year, was launched by the International Peace Bureau and the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War as well as the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms. It, too, was strongly opposed by the three Western nuclear nations, and was postponed later in the year following a large number of abstentions due (it seems) to the efforts of the nuclear powers. However, in May 1993, it was finally passed by a significant majority (73 for to 40 against - including all the nuclear states, with 10 abstentions - including Australia and NZ) in the governing body of the WHO (the World Health Assembly). In short, currently the question of threat is no longer a live legal issue and use is only being considered on health and environmental grounds. But even this is causing deep concern among the powers, and the US State Department has reportedly set

aside \$1 million to challenge the submission of the question to the ICJ by pressuring the medical profession and threatening to withhold funds from WHO if the Project proceeds.

The proponents of the Project realise that a ruling by the ICJ is advisory only, without any power of enforcement. Many argue that the nuclear powers will ignore a judgement going against them, or that disarmament is governed by reality not legality and that laws are useless unless they can be enforced. But the fact appears to be that the recognition of criminality has preceded agreements prohibiting the use or possession of arms, rather than the other way around.

And if the doomsayers are right, why is the US trying so hard to block the World Court Project? An advisory opinion from the ICJ would be of great symbolic value and a major milestone in ridding the planet of nuclear weapons. It would give encouragement to peace movements, and strengthen the legal case of those taking direct action in the anti-nuclear cause. It would highlight the inconsistency of nuclear states which claim to abide by international law and would help to strengthen the moves towards nuclear non-proliferation. And not least, the entire history of the World Court Project demonstrates the strength of committed grass-roots activism.

Notes

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Thomas Weber works with the School of Law and Legal Studies/Institute for Peace Research at La Trobe University. He would like to thank Edward St. John and Katie Boanas-Dewes for their assistance in preparing this article.

Reviews

Whose Common Future?: Reclaiming the Commons

by The Ecologist
Earthscan, 1993, 216 p., \$27.95

Ecofeminism

by Maria Mies & Vandana Shiva
Spinifex, 1993, 328 p., \$29.95.

Reviewed by Gyorgy Scrinis

These two impressive books take up the themes of environmental degradation and the exploitation and disempowerment of the peoples of the First and Third Worlds. Both examine the over-industrialised First World's dependence on massive amounts of cheap resources to support their affluent lifestyles, and the consequent colonisation and exploitation of the Third World, women, and nature. Although dealing with similar issues, these two books are structured around different concepts and emphases.

In *Whose Common Future?* these relations of domination and exploitation are defined in terms of the enclosure of the commons. In *Ecofeminism*, the concepts that frame the analysis are those of the colonisation of subsistence activities and ways of life. *Ecofeminism* also more explicitly links the disempowerment of women to other forms of domination.

The authors of *Whose Common Future?* broadly define the 'commons' as that which provides sustenance, security and independence, and is collectively controlled by the communities that depend upon them. It can refer to land, a river, clean air, silence, the street, knowledge, biodiversity, or the seed.

'Enclosure' refers broadly to such processes as invasion, dispossession, commodification, and expert management, whereby individuals and communities lose control of the means with which to shape the character of the various spheres of their lives.

Ecofeminism is a collection of short essays by Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies respectively. This is to me a more challenging and passionate work, with essays on such themes as the colonisation of women and of the seed; critiques of modern science, genetic engineering, reproductive technologies, population control, development, and over-consumption; and reflections of indigenous knowledge systems, self-determination, and of contemporary experiences of 'homelessness' in its various forms.

Neither of these two books posit any simple and clear-cut distinction between, say, the pre-capitalist and capitalist eras, or the pre-colonial and colonial eras. Instead they emphasise the progressive colonisation and commodification of ever-more aspects of work and leisure, production and consumption, in both the First and Third Worlds. For example, in the case of agricultural production, small farmers may have retained the ownership of their land, but at the same time can lose ever more dimensions of their independence as they become increasingly dependent upon, and controlled by, the global market and the corporations that supply them with seeds and inputs.

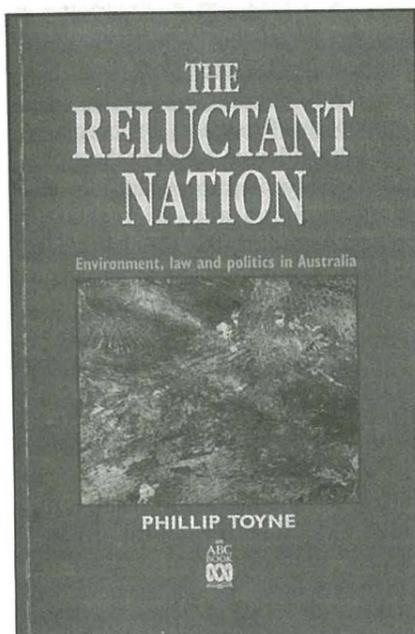
These books also more or less share a common notion of the kind of politics and strategies that arise out of such critiques. In *Whose Common Future?* the authors discuss the movements that are resisting the web of enclosure, and are struggling

to reclaim the political and cultural space for the commons. The emerging political vision which is identified and articulated in *Ecofeminism* is named the 'subsistence perspective', with some of its main characteristics being: reducing our consumption of resources and becoming more self-sufficient; resisting the global market; and participatory/grass-roots democracy. Shiva and Mies tend to spell-out more explicitly the character of the knowledge and practices that we in the First World need to embrace.

In her review of *Ecofeminism* in *Chain Reaction* (Number 71), Phoebe Thorndyke dismisses this book for only offering what she curiously interprets as the 'tired hippy alternative of the seventies', an alternative which she believes is unlikely to 'lure the young business executive away from her fast car and lacy knickers'. Perhaps not, but so what? The need to disengage or unplug ourselves from the industrial-capitalist megamachine, and to create co-operative organisations and forms of production, and low resource-dependent lifestyles, remains more pressing than ever. Such a politics of creating alternatives now outside of, but alongside, the mainstream continues to be ignored by those who emphasise only oppositional forms of politics, or hope for all-or-nothing transformations of the whole societies or of the world order. While it may be convenient for Thorndyke to dismiss such a politics as 'so seventies', these two books are an indication that some alternative visions, lifestyles and movements just don't go out of fashion.

Gyorgy Scrinis is a member of the FOE Fitzroy anti-genetics campaign.

Reviews



The Reluctant Nation: Environment, Law and Politics in Australia

by Phillip Toyne ABC Books 1994, 228 pages, \$16.95.

reviewed by **Clare Henderson**

I liked this book but not as an analysis of Federalism and the environment – although it was promoted as such. As a series of chapters on major environment issues during the last two decades it is fascinating and absorbing. It covers the campaigns for: Fraser Island; the Franklin Dam; Uluru National Park; the Wet Tropics of north Queensland; Lemonthyme and the Southern for-

ests; and against the Wesley Vale Pulp Mill; Coronation Hill; and the McArthur River mine.

Underlying each of these case studies there is supposedly a thread of State-Commonwealth relations in managing the environment. There is, but it seems disjointed and fragmented. The case by case approach makes it much harder to see the 'big picture'. Toyne uses the case studies to demonstrate that the Commonwealth does have the power to intervene in development decisions, however, what also comes across is that it doesn't do this in a systemic way but rather on a case-by case basis depending on the extent of lobbying by the environment movement.

Such an approach isn't always successful as *The Reluctant Nation* demonstrates, one example being that the payback for the environmental 'win' of Coronation Hill was the fast track at the McArthur River mine.

The Reluctant Nation also highlights the weaknesses in the negotiation and final agreement of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Environment and the newly established National Environmental Protection Agency.

All the way through the book I was looking for the answers to two questions. Firstly how do we avoid these high political dramas relating to particular developments? Exciting as they may be – it's a gamble and while there are gains, more than a few fish get through the nets. Secondly how to increase the emphasis of the importance of the institutional arrangements such as the IGAE, the NEPA, and the EIA mechanism so that procedures are put in place to ensure that intervention is not done in an *ad hoc* and 'politically' dictated manner.

Toyne acknowledges that 'there remains to be found the approach which avoids the bitter confrontation generated by unilateral intervention by the Commonwealth, but abandons the "lowest common denominator" of the consensus approach to achieving national objectives in environmental protection'.

Maybe it is an unfair critique but I was hoping for a clearer analysis of these issues within the case studies, and the books promotional material led me to expect one.

Another obvious gap was the lack of

coverage of 'brown' environmental issues – while Wesley Vale is used as a case study – the focus on the proposal is as a destroyer of native forests rather than as a polluting industrial development. This distinction is important as it was the need for standards for the waste water at the mill not the destruction of native forests that halted that development.

That aside, if you would like to get an inside view of a number of major campaigns; across a range of issues still relevant in 'newer' more current environmental issues, such as Hinchinbrook, then *The Reluctant Nation* is a worthwhile read.

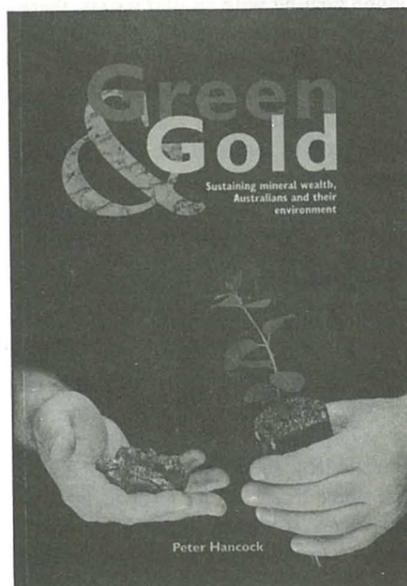
Clare Henderson is co-editor of Chain Reaction.

Green and Gold: Sustaining Mineral Wealth, Australians and their Environment

by Peter Hancock, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University, 1993, 277 pages, \$25.00.

Reviewed by **Bob Burton**

This book is a part of the new genre of mining literature which would have you believe that rather than being arrogant



and uncaring the mining industry really do want to see the environment protected and are desperately concerned about the economic well being of the country. The book pretends to seek out a win-win solution for the environment and the industry and rather predictably comes out imitating the Australian Mining Industry Council rhetoric, from why mining in National Parks is OK to getting the good word into the schools. Hancock pins his hopes for his preferred outcome on an alliance between 'reasonable' conservationists and industry. All pretty predictable stuff.

You can look hard but won't find any reference to Ok Tedi, the anti-land rights campaign, tailings dams that burst, workers sacked on a day's notice or defamation threats against University students who dare to do a PhD on pollution from mining tailings. On a technical note the book is irritating for its lack of

an index.

If you want to understand the 1990s strategy of the mining industry trying to portray itself as responsible this book is worth reading. If you want to really find out what is going on in the mining industry you will have to look elsewhere and the two following works would be good places to start.

John E Young's *Mining the Earth*, (available from the Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Ave NW Washington DC 20036-1904 \$5) in an excellent 44 page overview of how metals are inequitably produced and consumed, the impacts created in the production of them, the subsidies so common with politically powerful industries and some interesting trends in reduction in use and recycling. This is the best overview of mining available.

If you are interested in a little more local content and a little more detail the

recently released Australian Conservation Foundation paper *Mining and Ecologically Sustainable Development: a discussion paper*, (available from ACF, 340 Gore St, Fitzroy, Victoria, 3065 for approximately \$20) is worth getting hold of. It addresses many of the issues that *Green and Gold* shies away from such as the impacts – from both mining and exploration – on Aboriginal people and land, employment trends in the industry, royalties (including the \$2 billion worth of gold given away free in Western Australia each year) the issue of Australian companies' operations overseas, the use of 'fast track' legislation and patterns of consumption and production.

If you read the last two publications first you will appreciate *Green and Gold* for what it is.

Bob Burton is a researcher living in Tasmania.

Carfree

How feasible is it for us to live in an Australian city without a car? Seventeen people share their experience

Edited by Ashley Campbell and Sandor Horvath. \$5.00 Available from 31 Addison Rd, Black Forest 5035.

Reviewed by **Steve Broadbent**

Tired of the noise, fumes and the sheer hell of our car-based city life? Well, if you live in the city, you don't have to move to the country – maybe you can't or would prefer not to. There are things you can do right here in the city.

Car-Free is not a magic grand-scale blueprint to solve all our transport woes overnight and make life pleasant again – can we remember when it was? Although no doubt all seventeen writers have their dreams of an integrated transport system not built around the private car, each story is personal. And that's the book's strength. Personal testimony is more compelling than technical blueprints.

The people in the story vary from those in their early 20s through to one couple in their late 70s, who have eight children and have never owned a car. There are single parents living in the Adelaide Hills commuting to Adelaide; single parents in the city; people who cycle everywhere no matter the weather; those who use public transport and the odd taxi; those who walk and those who use a mix of all three.

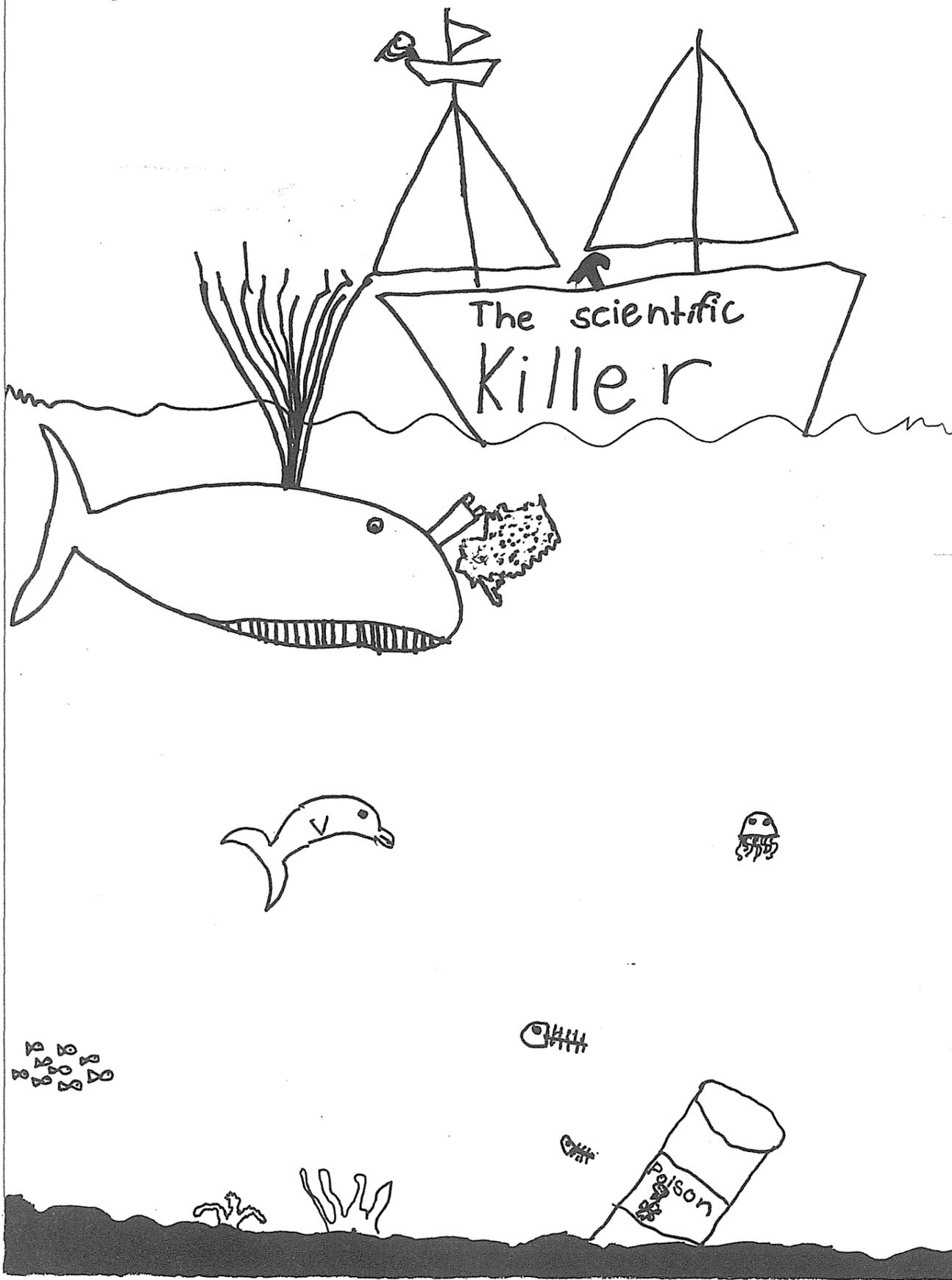
It's not all smooth sailing, of course. If it were, more would choose not to use cars. Each story is a mix of the joys and triumphs as well as the trials and tribulations. There are inconsiderate drivers, insufficient cycle paths and inadequate public transport.

But the pluses come out well and truly on top. There's less worry, less pollution, more free time, less time working (because you don't have to buy, run and maintain a car) and a feeling that you are contributing in your own way to creating a better, cleaner world. As Gabrielle Hill, one of the writers puts it: 'Cars are units of isolation. Stand at the side of a car-clogged road and watch the faces at the wheel: sad, silent; grim, aggressive, lonely, isolated. Cars absorb people, become part of the ego, they imprison, separate us, drive us away from each other, they steal our conservation, they cause fights, they kill. Cars make us reinvent time. Speeded it up so that we can rush from A to B, consuming rapidly, too busy to stop and consider why. The catchphrase "living life in the fast lane" says a lot about how cars affect our quality of life'.

Car-Free is a good one-sitting read. If all that's stopping you giving up the car is a little encouragement, this could be it.

Steve Broadbent is Co-editor of Third Opinion the quarterly journal of the Movement Against Uranium Mining.

by Darcy Henderson



GREENPEACE

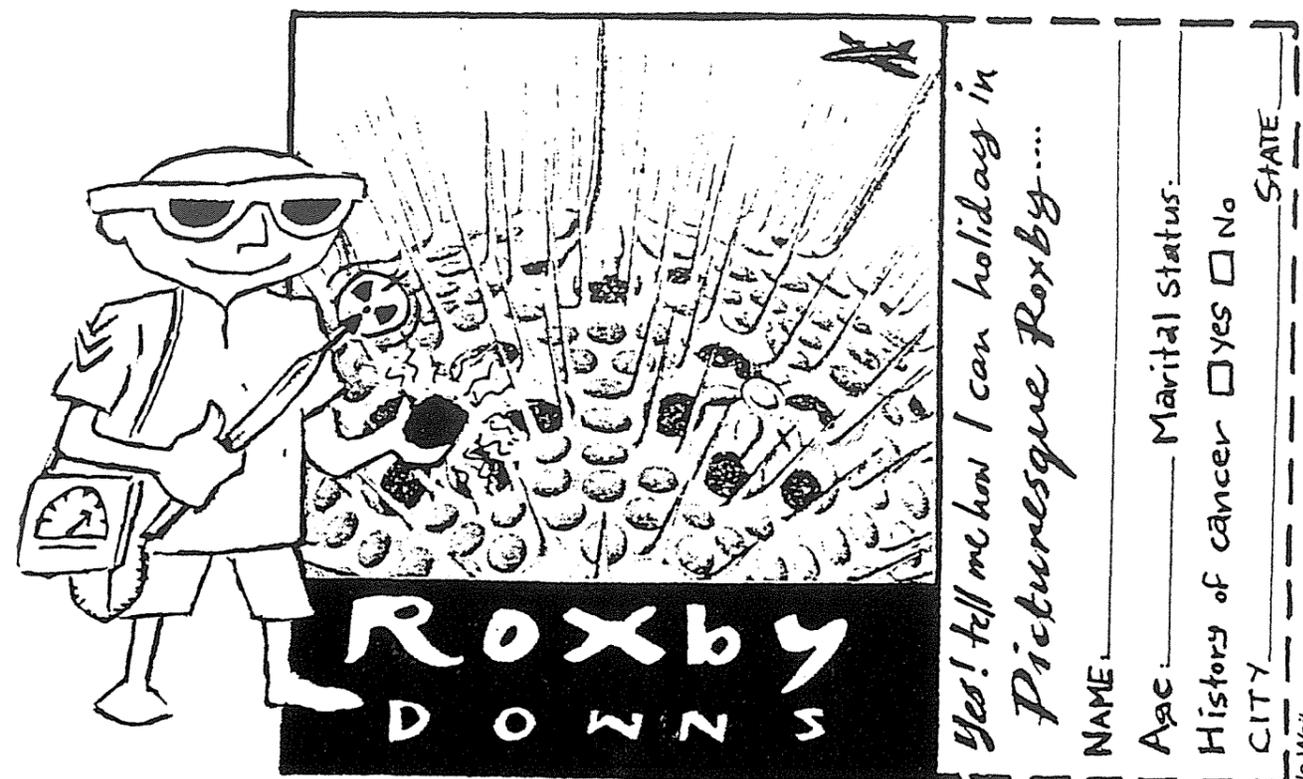
250 Reasons

Australia's involvement in the nuclear industry

Greenpeace is giving away copies of this up-to-the-minute compendium of Australia's role in the nuclear industry. It is an invaluable resource for activists, schools and libraries. *250 Reasons* includes coverage of Australian consent to nuclear proliferation, the myth of export restrictions on Australian uranium, Australia's promotion of nuclear power and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

And what are the 250 good reasons to question Australia's role in the nuclear industry? You'll have to get a copy of *250 Reasons* from:

Public Information Unit
Greenpeace Australia
41 Holt Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010
Phone: (02) 211 4066; Fax: (02) 211 4123.



Yes! tell me how I can holiday in Picturesque Roxby....

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Jo Waite

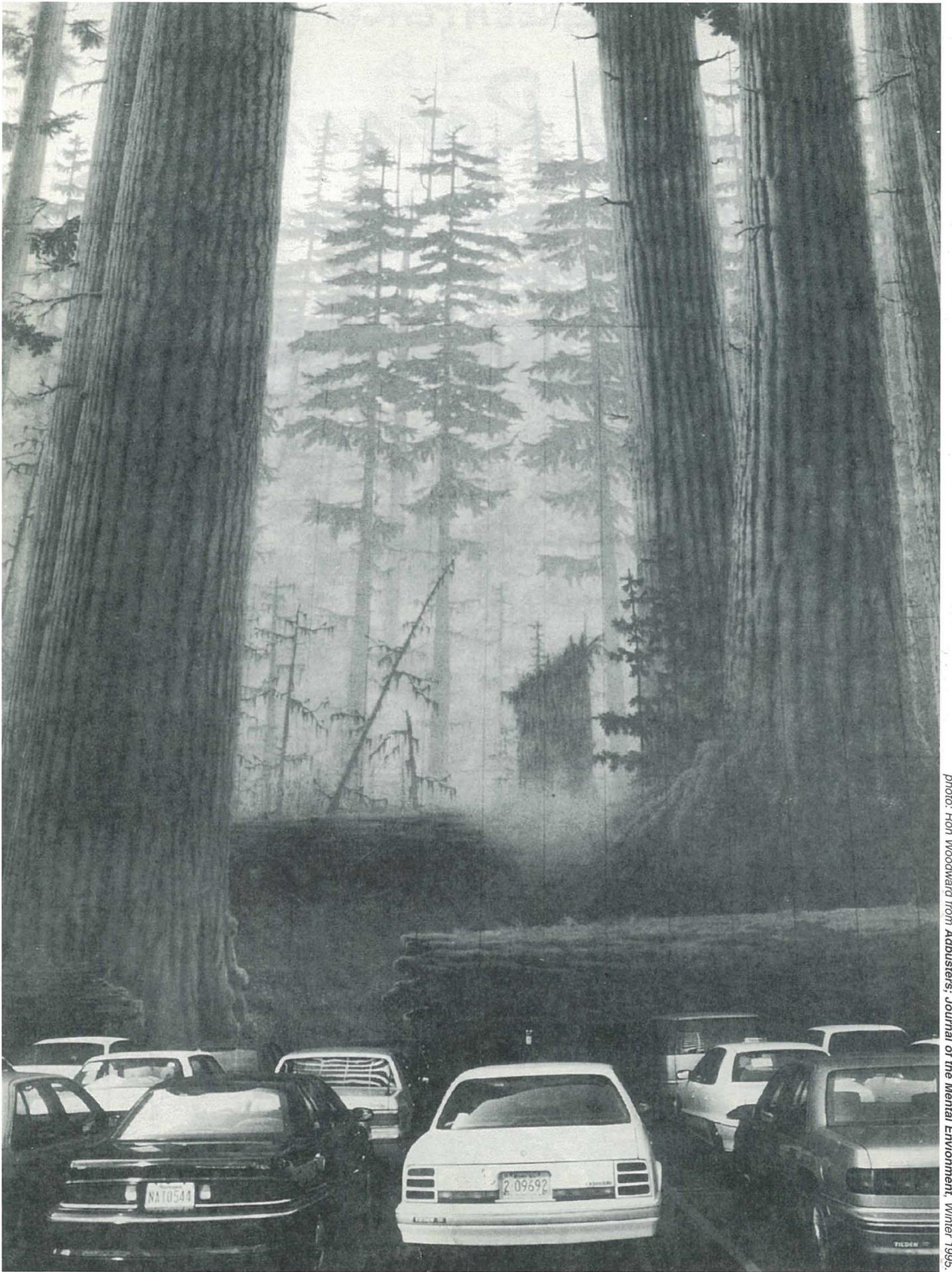


photo: Ron Woodward from *Adbusters: Journal of the Mental Environment*, Winter 1995.