

# FOE

AUTUMN 1999

# Newsletter

Friends  
of the  
Earth  
Fitzroy

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PP 318780/00010



## • WASTE DUMP CAMPAIGN GATHERS STRENGTH

*Big Spring, South Australia* photo: Michelle Matthews

this issue:

- RECLAIM THE STREETS
- GLOBAL NEWS
- KOORI - GREEN ALLIANCE IN  
WESTERN VICTORIA

### Friends of the Earth (Fitzroy) meeting times

Collective meetings are held at the FoE offices, and are open to all people. Please ring if you want extra information.

- \* anti uranium - every wednesday, at 6.30pm
  - \* bookshop - most thursdays, 2.30pm
  - \* food co-op - most wednesdays
  - \* forest network - every monday, 7pm
  - \* Indigenous solidarity - alternate thursdays, 6 pm
  - \* office - most thursday mornings
  - \* transport - alternate tuesdays, 7pm
  - \* water - monthly, ring for details
- At night, enter via Perry street.

Friends of the Earth (Fitzroy) is an autonomous, community-based organisation working towards an ecologically sustainable and socially equitable future. It is affiliated with FoE Australia, a network of 13 groups, which in turn is a member of FoE International, which has member groups in 59 countries. Collectively, the FoE network is the largest environmental federation in the world.

### NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is produced 4 times a year and we welcome input from community and environmental organisations and individuals. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of FoE Fitzroy. Articles from this newsletter may be reproduced. Please credit the source and send us a copy.

This newsletter was produced by Christy Mannion, Charlie Henry, Kate Chaos, Trevor Patrick & Cam Walker.

### MEMBERSHIP

If you have membership problems, please contact the FoE office. Please let us know about change of address.

### PUBLISHER

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## FoE news

### Welcome to Tristy!

Welcome to Tristy Fairfield, the new finance worker at FoE. Tristy is part of the editorial team who produces Chain Reaction, and is taking on co-ordination within the upstairs office. Its great to have you on deck!

### More farewells!

Luckily, these are just temporary. Firstly, to Sarojini Krishnapillai, long term uranium activist and all round campaigner. She is now working on marine issues for the Victorian National Parks Association. She is staying on as one of FoE's national liaison officers. Bruce Thompson has been banished to South Australia and now (thanks to some very generous support from Tree Pot Foundation) has a year to knock off the nuclear industry in that state. Good luck Bruce!

### Exxon report

On March 24, FoE Australia joined in launching the Exxon Files, an overview of the activities of Exxon. This was the 10th anniversary of the Exxon Valdez oil spill. We also received a copy of a report by the Alaska Wilderness League, which gives a grim picture of the state of King William Sound 10 years on. Copies of this report and the Exxon Files are available from the FoE office.

### Report to members

With this newsletter is a report to members and questionnaire. We would greatly appreciate your feedback and ideas. Please feel free to contact the office if you need further information.

### Email action list

We find that we are increasingly asked to act on environmental alerts from around Australia and the world. The FoE newsletter is not frequent enough to keep our members fully up-to-date on all our activities. So, we would like to start an email action alert list. It will cover - rallies, meetings and events (focussed on the Melbourne region); up-coming government enquiries and letter-writing campaigns; and reports and action alerts from FoE member groups around the world - in recent times these have been as diverse as Nigeria, Greece and Ecuador. To become active, just send an email to foefitzroy@peg.apc.org with 'action alert list' in the subject. For further information, contact Cam Walker at FoE.

### The war in Kosovo

The world has been outraged by all the aspects of the war - from ethnic cleansing of Kosovar people to increasingly indiscriminate bombing by NATO forces under the control of the USA. FoE Greece/ Nea Ecologica has started environmental monitoring of the impacts of the war, both on Serbia and the surrounding region. The reports they send will be put up on our homepage - paper copies are also available by sending 3 45c stamps to FoE. We also have substantial information available on the use of depleted uranium ammunition - which will have frightening long term effects on local communities.

# NUCLEAR FREE-WAYS PROJECT

The Anti-Uranium Campaign at FoE has devised a campaign initiative to knock out the proposed National Radioactive Waste dump and the approved new Sydney nuclear reactor.

Its called the Nuclear Free Ways Project.

We intend to focus on the issue of radioactive waste transport, necessitated by the remote disposal option pursued by the Federal government. Our intention is to network with communities en-route of the likely transports and engage them in a campaign to protect their cities and farms from accidental and incidental radioactive contamination or exposure.

Transport routes are the weak link in the nuclear chain running from waste production to disposal. It represents an additional risk to an already inherently high risk industry. Its also a weak link in the government's nuclear expansion agenda. Networking with communities and informing them of the dangers of radioactive waste transportation offers an opportunity for Nuclear Free campaigners to involve new constituencies in the

## anti uranium campaign

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One of the "tools" the Project seeks to use is a Mock Nuclear Waste Transport. This will be a to-scale (non-toxic) version of the real thing that will travel the likely transport routes and be a platform for informing and effectively engaging community action. This is not a new idea, but it is a good one. Mock Transports have been used to good campaign effect in the United States. Mary Olsen, a senior campaigner from the Nuclear Information Resource Service in the USA, was in Australia for the Symposium for Sanity hosted by Dr. Helen Caldicott in March. It gave FoE campaigners the opportunity to pick her brains and glean some wisdom from her experiences. In the US the campaign was known as "Mobile Chernobyl" and in the words of Mary, Mock N-Waste Transports are a "winner".

So, we've undertaken to design and budget for the project and are currently in fundraising mode!

If you are interested in the Project please let us know! There's a considerable amount of liaison and contact work to undertake as we begin to mobilise new constituencies in the campaign. We look forward to your participation.

For further details of the Nuclear Free Ways Project contact Daniel Voronoff, Anti-Uranium Co-ordinator.

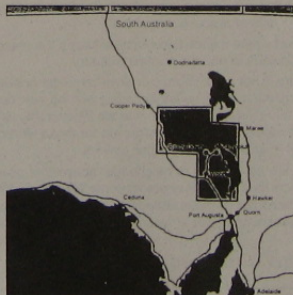
Daniel Voronoff

## South Australian Tour

# Nuclear Waste ~ REDUCE! Don't Re-use or Recycle

Members of the Billa Kalina Alliance, composed of Friends of the Earth, Australian Conservation Foundation and freelance activists, travelled to central South Australia over ten days in early April. The tour combined a series of aims focussed around developing campaigning on the proposed nuclear waste dump for the region. The trip provided an invaluable experience of the country and issues and an opportunity to meet and develop existing relationships.

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## South Australia tour.... continued

The group travelled through Adelaide, catching up with local activists then through to Coober Pedy passing by the Port Pirie tailings dam, Nurrungar and the Woomera testing area. The group met with the Kupa Pit Kunga Juta, the group representing senior women from Kokotha, Arabunna, Antikarinya and Yan Kunjatjara country. The women are staunchly opposed to a waste dump on their country and are actively campaigning against the proposal. The following day Coober Pedy came alive to the annual opal festival, including its very own float parade. We and the Kungas all participated, with banners and leaflets and an information stall. The group and issue were received very positively by the local community. The next day was spent travelling on country with the Kungas and sharing stories and culture, a very special day.

From Coober Pedy we travelled along the famed Oodnadatta track across to Lake Eyre South to meet members of the Arabunna community. The mound springs region, where the Great Artesian Basin rises to the surface, is under threat from borefields drawing water for the Roxby uranium mine. Kevin Buzzacott has held a protest camp on the shores of Lake Eyre amid other legal action taken against company and government representatives to draw attention to this. People met with long term FoE activists and toured the mound springs and spoke with other Arabunna in Marree. The tour was concluded with a very productive camp fire strategy in the Flinders Ranges.

The Billa Kalina Alliance meets on Tuesdays; please come along. Phone Friends of the Earth for more info.

Bruce Thompson

# Why No Dumps?

.....this ain't just any land fill

The best practice waste management strategy is to store radioactive wastes at or near the site of production or use, in above ground facilities capable of withstanding every possible climatic condition.

The advantages of this strategy are:

- The waste remains visible. Buried waste can be forgotten, with the possibility of exposing people who accidentally breach the repository to contamination at some stage in the next 250,000 years.
  - The waste remains dry. Buried waste could eventually contaminate groundwater systems which, in arid regions, is typically relied upon for daily water needs.
  - The waste remains accessible. If buried, leaked wastes and contaminated soils and water would be difficult to retrieve. Above ground storage permits easy access and regular monitoring. It is possible to repackage the waste and remove it to a new storage facility.
  - The risk of transport accidents and subsequent contamination is reduced. Remote burial means transportation across the continent which would put communities on-route at risk of accidental exposure and radioactive contamination. There is a hugely greater risk associated with the transport of nuclear material over sea.
  - To encourage waste minimisation. Remote burial would foster an "out of sight, out of mind" culture among producers of nuclear waste. On-site storage would encourage best practice waste minimisation strategies to be developed.
  - It would remain close to expert supervision. Remote burial renders nuclear waste difficult for experts to monitor the site. To keep waste safely isolated from the environment, expert monitoring must be in place for the entire duration of toxicity.
  - It would be stringently supervised for many generations. Accessible waste could be secured and supervised by experts for the whole time it remains toxic. Waste producers would be pre-occupied with scrupulous supervision to protect their environment.
  - A well resourced "guardianship" culture should be fostered to extend into future generations to ensure that waste is effectively managed. The only way to achieve this is by above-ground dry storage at or near the site of production and use.
  - A visible presence of waste adjacent to reactors keeps the pressure on politicians to end the nuclear industry.
- The nuclear industry is not an economic or environmental answer for future power generation. It is an industry in crisis with no new nuclear reactors being built in the US for 25 years. It is also inexorably linked to with the provision of weapons of mass destruction for those who consider themselves to be super powers.
- Both gas and wind are now known to be cheaper sources of power. In the US electricity generated by nuclear power costs \$3000 to \$4000 per kilowatt, whilst gas fired plants generate power at \$400-\$600 per kilowatt and wind generates power at less than \$1000 per kilowatt.

Text thanks to The Anti-Uranium Coalition of Western Australia

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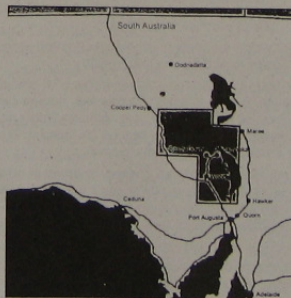
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Text thanks to The Anti-Uranium Coalition of Western Australia

## Transport campaign

# RECLAIM THE STREETS!

Reclaim the Streets 1999 showed that the Beastie Boys were right when they said that you got to fight... for your right.... to partee!

Reclaim the Streets is a party with a purpose, a celebratory taking back of the street space, normally off limits to anyone who values their safety. Large portions of our cities are devoted to cars; in Melbourne they take up one

third of the city. The omnipresent automobile fills the air with fumes and noise, fills our media with its propaganda, fills the pockets of the corporations with its hunger for resources, and fills a quarter of a million graves with its crash victims annually.

Unlike demonstrations or rallies, RTS is all about having fun. It is an experiment in what the world would be like without this all consuming presence. It is about emptying the street of cars and filling it with people celebrating.

Reclaim the Streets as we know it today started in England in the early nineties, but it grew with the anti Motorways movement there, spreading around the world. It came to Melbourne in 1998, when Streets for People organised the "opening" of Victoria Street in March, attended by around seven hundred people. This year the event was planned to be bigger than ever with two stages of Doof, live bands, skate ramps and DIY lounge areas.

Come the day it was looking promising. It was wonderful late summer day despite the dire weather forecasts, and a huge crowd had turned up in the Carlton Gardens to march to the secret site. Streamers, drums, jugglers and giant puppets led the march to Smith Street, a few blocks away from FoE Fitzroy, accompanied of course by dozens of police and horses.

At the end of Smith St a line of mounted police formed, blocking the march. Apparently the police were worried that the aim was to disrupt the Moomba parade, held on the same day. It didn't worry us too much, as we'd actually reached the party site, so work got underway to get it all going. That's when the cooperative attitude of the police vanished. Attempts to put up road blocks, banners,

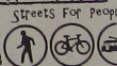
generators or skate ramps were met with threats of arrest and confiscation by the Police.

This didn't stop the party, only made it harder work. It took a lot of negotiation from the dedicated police liaison people, a bit of trickery from the organisers, but mostly it was people power that got the party started right. Crowds of people surrounded the generator used to run the sound stage, chanting "we want the music", sound gear was snuck in behind the police's backs, and finally the whole stage was up and pumping.

To some extent the drawn out negotiation to get the music started had drained the energy of the organisers, and of those who had just come along for a good time. The event had become something an us-versus-them struggle, of people versus police, rather than focussing on claiming back a piece of urban land for the enjoyment of all. But we had reclaimed the street and we'd had fun doing it. Streamers and ribbons adorned the street, people played hacky sack, juggled, skated, lounged on old couches and seats dragged out for the occasion, and of course danced late into the night.

At the end the feeling was clear. We had done most of what we wanted to do, and we would be back as soon as we could. Stay tuned for a creative streets for people action coming soon to a street near you.

Stephen Dixon



## Pangea plans come unstuck

Nuclear waste disposal company Pangea Resources Ltd was thrust into the public eye last November when FoE England revealed a promotional video outlining plans to make Australia the world's nuclear waste dump.

FoE Fitzroy played a major role locally to spread the news and draw links between Pangea's proposal and the Federal government plan to build a national radioactive waste dump to accept nuclear wastes produced here.

Although Pangea's preferred site for the international dump is in WA, the history of site selection processes for deep geological disposal shows that political intervention often compromises science.

If Australia has existing radioactive dumping infrastructure it makes it more likely that such a dump could be upgraded to suit the Pangea plan.

## Global food control becomes a reality

"Food is power; we use it to change behaviour. Some may call that bribery. We do not apologise".

Catherine Bertini, UN World Food Program Executive Director.

This statement has certainly been taken to heart by the Transnational Corporations (TNCs) involved with the development of Genetic Engineering. The "Genetic Treachery" currently being developed by these TNCs is a horror story in the making and will ultimately impact on every person on earth.

### Terminator Technology

About a year ago these companies began developing genetic traits that would force farmers to buy seeds from the company for subsequent planting as the seeds that were saved from this years crop would not germinate due to a new genetic trait. Dubbed "Terminator Technology", the technique's aim is to create crops that produce sterile seeds by programming the plants DNA to kill it's own embryos, thus creating crops with built-in obsolescence.

Even in the bizarre new world of biotechnology, this development really stands out as having absolutely no benefit for food safety, the environment, crop viability or consumer choice. So much for the cries from these companies about feeding the world. Not content with cornering the global seed market, these companies have now taken their next step towards total control.

### Traitor Technology

Some of the traits now being developed and patented allow the terminator and other traits to be reversed with a good soaking of proprietary chemicals held and supplied by the company. Farmers will be forced to bring the seeds that they have saved to the company to have them activated for germination and any other traits that the company has contracted the farmer to produce eg slow ripening tomatoes for processes or large red tomatoes for sale as fresh produce.

This technology not only locks the grower into a seed/chemical package; it also saves the company all of the costs associated with production, transport and sales. Farmers (those that are still able to afford it) will only buy new seeds when the company engineers a new variety. The incentive for innovation within plant varieties will be non-existent as there are no farmer owned seeds and no other local varieties available.

Bob Donovan

Sources: RAFI COMMUNIQUE January/February 1999, Simon Kearney article 6/8/98

## Global Control and Reality

The top 10 food and beverage corporations account for sales of over \$233 billion. This is thought to be about 16% of the total global market.

There are an estimated 828 million people globally who are chronically undernourished

### Pharmaceuticals

The top 10 pharmaceutical companies control 35% of the \$297 billion pharmaceutical market.

Their average profit margin is 30%

This market is growing at 7.8% p/a and is expected to be worth \$406 billion by 2002

One fifth of humanity has no access to public health services

### Pesticides

The top 10 agrochemical companies control 85% of the global pesticide market valued at \$31 billion p/a.

Up to 25 million agricultural workers may be poisoned each year by agrochemicals.

Hundreds of thousands die.

### Seeds

The top 10 seed corporations control 32% of the global seed market valued at \$23 billion. Between 1987 and 1997, in the US the cost to farmers of seeds, agrochemicals and, fertilisers rose 86%

1.4 billion people currently depend on farmer saved seeds

### Animal Pharmaceuticals

The top 10 veterinary medical firms control 60% of the animal health industry market valued at \$17 billion

Domestic animal breeds are disappearing at the rate of 5% p/a or 6 breeds for month

The industry is in crisis with food safety issues and the links between over use of antibiotics and the rise of antibiotic resistance in humans.

Bob Donovan

## BEVERLEY: World's Worst Practice

anti uranium  
campaign

On Friday April 30 the Federal Government approved the Beverley uranium mine in South Australia. The Federal Resources Minister Senator Nick Minchin gave the go-ahead to the mine using the controversial acid-leach technique.

The technique involves pumping acid into the ground and drawing the leached uranium to the surface. The solution is processed with the waste being pumped back into the ground. To claim that the technique will not adversely affect ground water defies logic, science and the weight of international experience.

All independent technical assessment of the Beverley proposal has reported that there is insufficient information to determine whether contamination of the Beverley aquifer would affect ground water in the area. The Chair of the Great Artesian Basin Consultative Council has admitted that there was no guarantee that Beverley would not contaminate the Great Artesian Basin. Ground water is a vital resource in Australia's driest region.

The proponent of Beverley, Heathgate Resources, is a subsidiary of the U.S. Nuclear / Military giant General Atomics. The acid-leach technique is not

used in the United States on a commercial scale. In addition the company would not be allowed to pump radioactive waste back into the ground water in its own country. The technique has mainly been used in Eastern Europe, with a long history of contamination.

General Atomics is one of the U.S. Defence Department's biggest contractors and an international giant in the fields of nuclear energy and military technology. General Atomics was responsible for developing the unmanned bombing aircraft used in the Gulf War. Far from world's best practice, the Federal Government continues its adhoc approach to the nuclear industry. To grant such a company a licence to pollute our environment is far from the national interest and is the height of deceit to the Australian community.

Beverley sets an ugly precedent for the technique being used further in Australia. In-situ leach (ISL) mining is a cheap and dirty way to mine the world's most toxic mineral. Friends of the Earth will continue to actively campaign against this and other ISL projects.

Bruce Thompson

## MELBOURNE'S WATER CATCHMENTS LOGGED

**Photo:** Section of Armstrong West catchment, October 1998. It was cleared over the 1998 - 99 season. This area is on steep slopes and within a gazetted catchment for Melbourne's water supply.

Community groups including Friends of the Earth, Bay Rescue, and the Cleanwater Coalition examined this area last spring. Melbourne Water catchment officials admitted that no specific studies had been done in the West Armstrong to determine what the effects of clearfell logging would be on water quality and quantity. Around 70% of the timber taken from the catchment was for woodchips.

Research conducted by Melbourne Water in other catchments has shown that clearfell logging in mountain ash forest can cause severe water reductions in water quantity.

FoE will continue to monitor forestry operations in the Central Highlands.



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## forest network

# COBBOBOONNEE FOREST ACTIONS

*In early February, Aunty Betty King and Sandra Onus from the Kerrup Maria people of South West Victoria requested help from Friends of the Earth in order to stop the logging of native forest in their region.*

A base was soon established at Aunty Betty's bush camp at Lake Condah Mission and about 50 people arrived at the camp. The first actions were held in late February and included a protest outside the office of the local MP, Dennis Napthine. Mr Napthine was not present and his staff managed to flee the area before the majority of the protesters arrived. Protesters then converged on the local office of Department of Natural Resources and Environment. The protest made front page of the *Portland Observer*, as did the following three actions which took place in the Cobboboonee State Forest.

These actions all related to the destruction of native forest and the continuing genocide of Aboriginal people. The point was made very clearly that continuing destruction of the forests also means destruction of Aboriginal traditional hunting grounds. If Aboriginal people can't hunt traditionally then an important part of their culture is lost to them. Two actions inside the forest held up work. Protesters were interested in finding that workers were not local and the company carrying out the logging, Kawarren Logging, is owned by two New Zealanders based in the Otways. Following one of the actions a series of fires broke out in the surrounding forest leading to the arrest of a protester, whose charges were later dropped. 35 fire crew, two fire-fighting aircraft and a helicopter from Melbourne were sent in to fight the blaze. The protest camp lasted only a few more days.

Two weeks later in March, 90 people met at the Heywood Shire Office for discussion about the Regional Forest Agreement for the western region of the state. Aunty Betty and Sandra walked out of the meeting after letting the two RFA officials know that they regarded the whole process as a sham. A press release stating that RFA officials hung their heads in shame during the walk-out of Aboriginal Elders was published in the *Portland Observer* a few days later and at least 95% of the people in that meeting wanted logging stopped. In late April about 80 people attended an information night in Portland regarding the logging and woodchipping of the Cobboboonee. The meeting was organised by Friends of the Earth and Jennifer Guthrie from the region. At the meeting the Portland Field Naturalists

said that the Conservation Minister Marie Tehan had just put a moratorium on ringbarking and poisoning old growth Messmate and Stringybark in the area, until the RFA Agreement is signed. The Portland Field Nats regard this as a significant victory, but Aunty Betty stressed at the meeting that the only way to stop the logging is by blockading and urged all people attending the meeting to help organise forest blockades. She also requested that anyone wanting to help out with further blockades in the Cobboboonee should get in contact with Forest Network for further details.

## MIDWAYS UPDATE

*With woodchips from the Cobboboonee and forests around Victoria making their way to Midways Woodchip Mill in Geelong, it is worth - while finding out who is profiting from the destruction.*

Midways are a consortium of sawmillers from around the state. They formed in 1980. It appears that there has been somewhat of a 'corporate takeover' of Midways. The McCormack group of companies with 99816 shares are the largest shareholder in Midways. These companies are all registered at Pitcher Partners in Melbourne and are largely directed by Greg, Valerie and Ronald McCormack. The second largest shareholder in Midways are Chebmont Pty Ltd. All 97 800 Chebmont shares are owned by Pitcher Partner Nominees. Chebmont's directors are Peter Gunnensen, Ronald Pitcher, Thorald Gunnensen, Peter Koren and Nils Koren. The third largest shareholders of Midway with 53 159 shares are Marbut Pty Ltd (a sawmilling, kiln drying, wood moulding import company whose directors include Peter Koren, Thorald Gunnensen and Peter Gunnensen). If you add the combined shareholding of Chebmont and Marbut you come to 150 959 shares. If you add the shareholdings of Greg McCormack associated companies the share total comes to 245 224 shares or 51.6% of the 475 641 shares in Midway - over half the number required to control the shareholding interest. Therefore Midways are now dominated by Gunnensen, McCormack and Pitcher Partners.

## WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE?

In 1879 Gunner Gunnensen arrived in South Australia from Norway and created a sawmilling operation in South Australia. The business later expanded into Victoria where a partnership was created with the Alstergren, LeMessurier

and Nosworthy families. These families created a softwood business which was sold to CSR in 1988 for \$140 million. (CSR's timber assets were recently sold to American multi-national Weyerhaeuser) Apparently the Gunnensen's made about \$30 million profit from the 1988 deal. At about this time the Gunnensen's business interests began to come to the attention of conservationists fighting the importation of rainforest timber into Australia from Malaysia, a trade which was cut by 70% in 5 years (probably costing the Gunnensens a heap of moolah). The Gunnensen's are amongst the most wealthy families in Australia. Thorald Gunnensen is amongst other things, President of the World Forestry

Centre in Portland Oregon and the President of the National Association of Forest Industries (a woodchipping lobby group which has successfully lobbied the federal government to increase woodchipping from native forest and relax export controls on the exportation of woodchips). Thorald is the only director of NAFI that has been involved with the group since its inception in 1986.

Peter Gunnensen is an active director of the Victorian Association of Forest Industries (NAFI's Victorian counterpart) and has been a director of NAFI as has Greg McCormack who was VAFI's president in the early nineties. Pitcher Partners are an accounting, auditing and financial advice company who also specialise in Superannuation Services through Pitcher Superannuation Services.

Pitcher Partners has 18 directors based in Melbourne and are the business address for several sawmills throughout Victoria, most notably Thomas P Clark group of companies and J.L. Gould sawmills based in Marysville and Alexandra. Ron Pitcher has been a director of J.L. Gould since 1957 - interestingly J.L. Gould's major shareholders are Acheron Investments, a company with co-directors listed as Thorry Gunnensen and Ronald Pitcher. Interestingly, Ronald Pitcher and Thorald Gunnensen

have been co-directors of some 18 businesses over the years.

These key individuals are profiting from the woodchipping of forest ecosystems throughout Victoria. They have been planning this outcome for many years and now with the Howard and Kennett Government's firmly entrenched in Canberra and Melbourne, these business men are now reaping their financial reward.

Write to;

• Ron Pitcher - c/o Pitcher Partners - Level 6, 161 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic, 3000.

• Thorry and Peter Gunnensen - c/o Marbut Pty Ltd - 112 Salmon Street, Port Melbourne, Vic, 3207.

• Midway Pty Ltd - 150 Corio Quay Road, North Shore, Vic, 3214.

## Anthony Amis

(Geraldine Ryan of Environment Victoria has also been working in the region for some time. Details of EV's current activities are outlined in EV News, No 57, March 1999. Contact Geraldine for more information; 03 - 9348 9044)



West Armstrong catchment, Central Highlands

## SOME GOOD NEWS

### UK company refuses jarrah from Wesfarmers Bunnings

Railtrack, the UK company that runs the railway lines in England, has been sourcing its timber from Wesfarmers Bunnings in Western Australia for many years. Jarrah from the threatened native forests of WA's south west is used for railway sleepers.

Railtrack was at a timber buyers meeting in Germany last week (mid April) when they met the environment group Global Witness and Leonie van der Maesen, who represents Friends of the Earth Australia on forest issues at the international level. They informed Railtrack of the call for a consumer boycott of Jarrah coming from environment groups in WA. Following some intense lobbying, Darren White, Environment Assistant for Railtrack met with Bunnings this week. Darren informed Bunnings that unless they were able to provide timber which was certified by the Forest Stewardship Council, they were no longer interested in buying their timber. As a result, the long running contract with Bunnings has been cancelled and Railtrack are now sourcing their timber from an FSC certified source in Bolivia.

source: Sarah Tyack, forest campaigner, Friends of the Earth (England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

## Indigenous solidarity

### Defenders of Native Title

DONT recently held its AGM and has a new lease of life with clear directions on its campaigns for the coming year. They are currently seeking new members phone 03 9419 3613. Their office is located at 124 Napier st, Fitzroy, 3065.

### Petition on Sovereignty

*"Land is the foundation and centre of our very being and sovereignty. Our law, lore, religion and economy are spiritually connected to land, sea and all creation, uniquely entwined in the social structure that governs us. Our sovereignty can never be extinguished except by the genocide of First Nations Peoples and destruction of the land. Our unique system has stood the test of time."*

Madjularbinna Nulyarimma, Elder,  
Gungalidda Nation.

FoE has taken on co-ordinating a petition calling on the Australian government to recognise Indigenous sovereignty. This was created by the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra and the Earth Repair Foundation, based in the Blue Mountains. Contact the Indigenous Solidarity Group at FoE for copies, or check the Tent Embassy homepage: [www.aboriginaltentembassy.com.au](http://www.aboriginaltentembassy.com.au) or email: [tentemb@cyberone.com.au](mailto:tentemb@cyberone.com.au)

### Federal legislation undermining Rights

Over the last year, there have been three very significant reviews of existing Commonwealth legislation which have the potential to have a huge impact on the rights of Indigenous people in Australia:

**Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976.** This has been covered in considerable detail in previous FoE newsletters. The findings of the Review, conducted by Darwin Lawyer John Reeves, has caused considerable alarm amongst the Indigenous community in the Northern Territory. On March 26 and 27, the Australian National University hosted a conference on "Evaluating the Reeves Report". The findings of this conference reinforced earlier opinions about the Review. The concerns included:

- significant problems with the economic analysis of the report (for instance, overvaluing the costs associated with the negotiation of access to Aboriginal land for exploration and mining);
- the fact that the Reeves report proposes to break up the large NT land councils (Central and Northern) into 18 small regional councils (this would reduce political independence of Indigenous people as each land council would have very limited resources and capacity to intervene in national or Territory-level debate);
- opinion that the anthropology is flawed;

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- the Reeves recommendations seem to breach the Australian Constitution, international law and natural justice.

During April and early May, a House of Representatives Committee has been holding hearings throughout the NT to hear public opinion to the Reeves Review. It will table it's report to the House of Representatives in August. It is expected that the Howard government dominated Committee's recommendations will be passed. However, any amendments will need to be passed by the Senate.

### Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Bill

Many environmental activists have been concerned about the EPBC Bill, which compresses at least eight existing Environment Acts into a single bill. While there are very significant environmental concerns (see the ACF homepage: [www.acfonline.org.au](http://www.acfonline.org.au)) many people will be unaware that there are also proposed amendments which will have impacts on Indigenous people.

The changes would see primary responsibility for environmental management and biodiversity handed over to the states and territories. The interests of traditional owners have been largely ignored in negotiation processes.

In addition, it makes important changes to the joint management arrangements at Uluru and Kakadu national parks. It effectively removes the role of the Director, and places the Board more directly under Ministerial control. Significantly, this involves the compulsory transfer of the lease from the Director to the Commonwealth without requiring the traditional owners' consent.

Secondly, despite existing legislative requirement for traditional owners' consent, it forces a Northern Territory representative onto jointly managed park Boards. Chairman of the Kakadu National Park Board of Management, Mr Mick Alderson, says the change from joint management to government management will reduce traditional owners to "Jacky-Jackys" sitting on the sideline. The NT government has an appalling record on the issue of Indigenous rights.

### The Heritage Protection Bill

Indigenous heritage protection is at a critical juncture because of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Bill 1998. The current legislation (1984) was meant to be a temporary measure pending the introduction of national land rights legislation. However, this legislation was never introduced. The new Bill, introduced to the House of Representatives in December 1998, represents a backwards step in heritage protection and Indigenous self-determination. The Bill further devolves responsibility for Indigenous affairs from the Commonwealth to the States/Territories and fails to adequately address the issue of Indigenous involvement in the identification and protection of places/objects of Indigenous cultural significance. The Bill is currently before the senate.

Sources: Land Rights News, March 1999 ([www.clc.org.au](http://www.clc.org.au)) and ATSI. Further information is also available from FoE.

## RECONCILIATION

### - A PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

As the process of reconciliation stalls at a Government level, many Australians have decided to continue the movement as a grass roots response to a new understanding about the issues facing Indigenous Australians.

To that end, Sorry Day, taking place on May 26, begins Reconciliation Week where hundreds of schools and community groups will commemorate this time by promoting activities that express solidarity with our Indigenous brothers and sisters.

To address the lack of teaching and learning resources to assist teachers and facilitators to plan their event, Fraynetwork Multimedia has developed some excellent kits that provide comprehensive insights into the issues of stolen generation and reconciliation.

The Sorry Kit contains informative and engaging material that can be incorporated into existing school curriculums. It assists all those committed to teaching and learning about that period of Australia's history and its effects on contemporary Aboriginal society.

The kit includes a video, a CD, print materials including lesson plans and a sample sorry ritual. It also suggests ideas for using the Bringing Them Home Report in classroom situations.

Desert Healing is a 25 minute video that tells the story of what took place when the people of the Kutjungka region, South East Kimberley (WA) gathered to recognise the deaths of their relatives in a massacre that occurred at Purruji (Sturt Creek Station) in 1922. The Indigenous and non-Indigenous community wanted to recognise this painful event which had been held in peoples memory for over 70 years. It is the hope of the people that by sharing their story, other communities around Australia will be encouraged to investigate their own local history and to take action to achieve a just and reconciled future.

This resource contains informative print materials produced by people from the region to assist in learning the purpose of the event; discovering brief details of the Purruji massacre; appreciating the significance of the ceremony and understanding the reactions and the responses of the many Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

Additional print materials have been compiled to assist education facilities to incorporate the video into their existing curriculums.

These kits are useful resources for anyone interested in the issues of reconciliation and the healing of painful memories. They demonstrate clearly that while events from the past cannot be undone, healing can indeed happen when people of goodwill work together.

Look out also for Lore of the Land, an interactive CD ROM and web site that deals with the issues of Indigenous spirituality and their connection to country. Available from Fraynetwork Multimedia in July.

These resources are \$25 each including postage and handling. They are available by phoning or faxing your order to Fraynetwork Multimedia, telephone 03 9499 9172 or fax 03 9499 3897.

## the draft NATIONAL DECLARATION OF RECONCILIATION

produced by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation

1. Speaking with one voice, we the people of Australia, of many origins as we are, make a commitment to go on together recognising the gifts of one another's presence.

2. We celebrate the fact that Aboriginal culture is the oldest living continuous culture on the planet. That culture is still alive. It is sacred, spiritual and practical, a unique way of living in harmony with the land.

Through the land and its first peoples, newcomers to this country may taste that spirituality and rejoice in its grandeur.

3. We acknowledge that Australia was colonised without the consent of the original inhabitants.

4. Our nation must have the courage to own the truth and heal the wounds of its past so that we can move on together at peace with ourselves.

5. We hereby take this step: as one part of the nation expresses its sorrow and profoundly regrets the injustices of the past, so the other part accepts the apology and forgives.

6. Our new journey then begins. We must learn our shared history, walk together and grow together to enrich our understanding.

7. Until all Australians have an equal chance to achieve their aspirations, and an equal voice, we will be a diminished nation.

8. We pledge ourselves to stop the injustice and address the disadvantage that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face in their lives.

9. We respect the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to remain responsible for their own destinies.

10. We can stand proud as a united Australia that respects this land of ours, values the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage, and provides justice and equity for all.

The FoE food co-op is one of Australia's largest and longest running. It is open Monday to Friday from 10am - 6pm and Saturday from 9.30am - 2.30pm.

An information booklet, outlining the philosophy of the co-op and logistics of shopping at FoE, is available from the front counter.

The co-op is located at 312 Smith st, Collingwood.

### A big thankyou and goodbye to greta.

Greta oh Greta - exquisite creature of the mystical realms - how can we express how we will miss you. The fun and light that you brought to the co-op over the past three years is immeasurable. You have touched so many people with your pearls of a smile and gentle, quirky sense of humour. How could we also not comment on the fashion and style you have graced our floors with daily. Such a queen of glamour! A bloody big spunk in form and attitude, surpassed by none! (And we know that the competition is relatively tough in the drama queen centre of FoE - the food co-op.) Your culinary finesse in the old sanga bar has delighted hundreds of stomachs and taste buds. Your medicinal advice to all of those perpetual health queries was extraordinarily performed with patience, sincerity even during moments of complete exhaustion or stress. Basically

no-one in their right mind ever found you unapproachable or unhelpful and that's a damn good track record to have in a place that caters to and involves such a diversity of personalities. We loved having your beautiful energy about us daily and we already miss you terribly.

However, we don't want to stop you from following your dreams even though we would tie you up in the storeroom forever if we could. So have a wonderful trip overseas and learn many things and share your own wisdom and knowledge with the myriad of people you meet. Having done all of that come back to the fold one day. We'll be here waiting with open arms.

Thank you for your time, your energy, your commitment, your passion and your gorgeousness greta.

You are a gem and we love you very much sweet pea.

Leanne, for everyone at FoE.

## the foodies rave



Beth and Greta

## Many thanks to....

- The Mullum Trust for funding to support the re-printing of the Good Wood Guide
- Trepot Foundation for its very generous support for a fundraiser position for FoE Fitzroy and a uranium campaigner for South Australia.

## EARTHSHARE

A new way to support the environment movement.

FoE Australia is one of the founding members of Earthshare, a direct debit program for employees. The system works through employees agreeing to give an automatic donation to Earthshare at each pay. This can be directed to Earthshare, where it is then shared between the members, or directly to one of the members of the Earthshare alliance.

For more details, please contact either FoE or Earthshare (PO Box 227, Bangalow, NSW, 2479. Tel: 1300 720 205. www.earthshare.org.au

*These last few months have seen some very traumatic attacks on activists and communities in many parts of the world.*

In early March we heard of an assault by 300 Chilean police officers on an Indigenous community (Temulemu) where a number of people were attacked, arrested and injured. The police seemed to have been acting at the request of Mimimco Forestry Company, and during the raid, employees of the company seized property, damaged homes and attacked community members, including teenagers and elderly people. The guards were armed with firearms, sticks and used dogs against the villagers. The Mapuche community at Temulemu have a small scale timber mill, which is a vital income source. Considerable stocks of sawn timber were confiscated by the police during the raid. As the community stated "This raid and all the repression directed against our people is directly related to the complete support which the government affords to large industries, in this case Mimimco, to continue exploiting lands whose ownership is in dispute and to which our community has complete documentation over title deeds." (1)

In mid March, a pipe bomb was sent to an environmental group called Forest Guardians in Santa Fe, New Mexico (2). By remarkable luck, the bomb did not explode and Police bomb squads were able to detonate it. It had been loaded with ball bearings, meaning it was designed to kill.

The group had received numerous threats of violence in recent times.

A few days earlier came the announcement that a prominent Brazilian environmentalist had been murdered (3). According to Amigos da Terra/ FoE Brazil, "Alvaro Marques de Oliveira, a lawyer and the director of SERENA (the Ecological Society for the Recuperation of Nature) was shot dead in Angra dos Reis. It is known that Alvaro was planning to divulge a number of documents detailing environmental crimes in the region, and it is believed that his murder was motivated by his activities .... He had already escaped one assassination attempt last November which was reported to the authorities. No measures were ever taken."

Soon after the news of this death came the devastating announcement that three activists had been murdered in Colombia (4). Three North American activists, Terence Freitas, Ingrid Washinawatok, and Lahe'ena'e Gay had been working with the U'wa people against the operations by Occidental Petroleum. This area is highly militarised, with ongoing conflict between right-wing paramilitary groups and left-wing guerrillas. Following a period of confusion about who had abducted the activists, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia - Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) admitted that it had been responsible for their deaths. This was surprising, as it had originally been assumed that a right wing group had been involved - "the abductions occurred at a road block in Arauca, where right-wing paramilitary groups have been

waging a campaign of extermination among trade unionists, leftists, human rights activists and suspected rebel supporters." (the New York Times). The FARC subsequently expressed its regret, saying that an isolated unit had killed the activists, and would be tried by a FARC court.

Terence (24), Ingrid (41) and Lahe'ena'e (39) were seized on the U'wa reservation. The U'wa are known as the 'thinking people' or 'the people who speak well' because for thousands of years they were able to maintain peaceful relationships with surrounding tribes without the use of weapons of war. From 1940 to 1970, the Colombian government took away more than 85% of U'wa traditional territory. Since 1940, contact diseases, violence and loss of land have killed more than 18,000 U'wa. Two clans were completely exterminated. In 1992, Los Angeles based Occidental Petroleum was granted exploration rights to much of the traditional U'wa territory in a combined venture with Shell Oil and the Colombian government.

Ingrid was a member of the Menominee Nation of Wisconsin, Lahe'ena'e was director of the Hawaii-based Pacific Cultural Conservancy International. Their murders sent shock waves amongst the international activist community.

## International solidarity

Taken individually and collectively, these attacks and deaths are a frightening escalation in the on-going violence perpetrated against activists. As activists in a country like Australia, it is often hard to imagine the courage it takes to continue to work in situations where violence is used so freely to silence people working for justice and the environment. To hear this kind of news is depressing and often only serves to immobilise activity. But we need to face the fact that to be a campaigner in many places is to risk long terms of imprisonment, torture and death. Beyond this, we also need to accept the responsibility to do something about it. 'Solidarity activism', the notion of allocating at least some of our campaign time to supporting our counterparts elsewhere in the world, is something which is increasingly important. There is also the need to take strength from the remarkable capacity of people and communities to resist injustice.

- (1) source: Mapuche International Link, MAPULINK@aol.com, <http://members.aol.com/mapulink>
- (2) source: Earth First! media centre [[efmc@asis.com](mailto:efmc@asis.com)]

See also their homepage, which outlines the death of forest activist David Chan (killed in northern California by a tree which was felled in an area where environmental activists were involved in direct action on September 17, 1998). [[http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Vines/9901/death\\_david.html](http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Vines/9901/death_david.html)]

- (3) source: Friends of the Earth Brazil [[foebr@cpovo.net](mailto:foebr@cpovo.net)]
- (4) source: U'wa Defence Working Group.

For background info on the U'wa struggle, check: [www.moles.org](http://www.moles.org), [www.ran.org](http://www.ran.org)

### Reminder about FoE book

We are still seeking stories, photos, graphics and archives outlining people's involvement in FoE over the last 25 years. This book will be both a history of FoE and will take a look at the future of activism into the next century.

Please send any feedback to Cam Walker at FoE Fitzroy.

### Earth Alive! National Biodiversity Month, September 1999

The ongoing decline of Australia's species and ecosystems is probably our biggest environmental problem, but few people even know what biodiversity means. Help us turn this around, and promote what your community is doing to conserve our rich natural heritage. For a National Biodiversity Month information kit, that includes an order form for free promotional and educational materials, contact the Community Biodiversity Network on ph: (02) 9380 7629, email: [earthalive@cbn.org.au](mailto:earthalive@cbn.org.au) or website: [www.cbn.org.au](http://www.cbn.org.au)

The CBN needs people to put up Earth Alive! posters in their local shops and other public places in August. If you can help out please contact the CBN on the above details.

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## This issue we are focussing on forests and timber.

FoE has finally, gratefully, received funding to research and publish a revised and updated Good Wood Guide. It has been three years since the last edition and many new concerns have arisen over that time, while others have been laid to rest. The continued interest in this publication, and others, that have attempted to help concerned woodworkers, builders, architects, and other individuals and businesses to make informed decisions about sourcing sustainable materials, is always encouraging to FoE. We expect the new edition to be available from August or September 1999 - keep an ear out for the launching party! At this stage we are uncertain of the retail price, but most likely between \$20 - \$25. The Bookshop is now registering "Expressions of Interest" from individuals and trade orders from retail outlets by fax (03 9416 2081) or post. You will be kept informed of the book's progress and given priority as soon as it becomes available.

Another FoE publication to be revised within the next month will be The Genetic Engineering Action Group's "Colonising The Seed: Genetic Engineering and Techno-Industrial Agriculture" (Gyorgy Scrinis, 1995, last revised 1997). Genetic engineering continues to be an issue of great concern to the long term health of us all and the ecology, with some key decisions currently being made by our health ministers and ANZFA (food authority). Ensure you are informed! The Bookshop is now taking orders (as above) - expected to stay at the current RRP of \$5.

### Book reviews

## Timber in Context - a guide to sustainable use

Authors: Anne-Marie Willis, Cameron Tonkin  
Publisher: Construction Information Systems Australia Pty Ltd (Sydney) 1998  
Available @ FoE Bookshop \$45.00

"Timber in Context" is probably the most comprehensive and thoroughly researched book on timber products to have been published in Australia to date. It has specific information on timber types, production methods and applications and will be a valuable resource for professionals and amateurs seeking timber produced with minimal damage to the earth's natural systems.

Despite the good intentions and general success of the

## Bookshop update

authors one aspect of the book that may need to be reconsidered is the idea, and promotion of, plantations as a solution to environmental destruction.

Managed exotic monocultures such as pine plantation may produce cheap timbers but it must be remembered that they displace natural systems and reinforce the notion that we can supply unsustainable demand. Plantations are capital intensive, centralised and mechanised which means they are efficient but tend to be socially as well as environmentally disastrous. This is not to say that plantations and agroforests etc. are not useful in providing current alternatives to the logging of biologically significant forests but in working toward sustainable timber, pulp and paper industries the infestation that is pine plantations should, from this time forward, be replaced with native forests or at the very least mixed species of indigenous plantations. Harvesting of any forest, by any method is not usually advocated by environmentalists but if we are not moving toward intelligent and sensitive timber production that respects nature where are we going?

The acceptance of the plantation mentality by conservationists ultimately represents a compromise whereby certain "limbs" of the earth are sacrificed to appease western civilisation's insatiable appetite for resources. As long as we hold hands and skip down the yellow brick road to plantation land with companies like Boral, CSR, Amcor, North and many others we are merely continuing to shuffle deckchairs on the Titanic.

Martin Daly, Forest Network

## Forest Friendly Building Timbers

Authors: Alan Gray & Anne Hall  
Publisher: Earth Garden Magazine (Trentham, 1999)  
\$9.95

Firstly it must be said that Alan Gray is to be congratulated for stirring up controversy in the debate over the continued unsustainable logging of Australia's precious Native Forests. Over the past couple of years as Uranium mining at Jabibuka and other tremendously important issues of enormous concern to the environmental movement have hit the forefront of the Media, the debate over the horrendously destructive logging practices in Australia has seemed to hit the backseat.

Suddenly the media is talking Forests and Alan Gray's book is responsible. The release of this book combined with NAFI's rapid defensive response and BBC's subsequent hurried withdrawal of the book from their shelves has resulted in this book becoming a bestseller, and the debate is back on.

Forest Friendly Building Timbers is a guide for consumers

on how we can avoid utilising timber which has been unsustainably extracted from Australia's Native forests. This book also contains information on timbers from overseas which are also harvested in manners which have adverse impacts on indigenous populations.

This book is easy to read, is colourfully laid out and will appeal to the Owner Builder or the home handy-person who is concerned about Forest issues.

Unfortunately, we at the FoE Forest Network have several concerns about the simplistic way in which this book attempts to deal with what is a complex issue. FFBT appears to blanket endorse timber which has been sourced from Plantations around Australia as the answer to Australia's timber needs. We have several problems with this, many of which are listed in Marty Daly's review of 'Timbers in Context' (above). Indeed in the lively debate at the recent National Forest Summit, one wag suggested that the book could be aptly called "Water Course Unfriendly Timbers" due to the 5 million litres of Sinozine herbicide which are sprayed on Victorian plantations every year.

Levels of Consumption per capita in Australia are at an all time high. This is due to the current emphasis on economic growth which is foisted on us via media, corporate advertising and government policy. In this economic paradigm very little attention is paid to environmental sustainability. Unparalleled expansion in cities and the decline in rural populations have meant that unprecedented numbers of new homes are being built. The move to a highly skilled white collar workforce has generated a huge demand for paper product. Globalisation has intensified the demand from overseas for products sourced from our forests and the government's policy of Economic rationalism above all is rapidly depleting all of our Natural resources.

Friends of the Earth Fitzroy's policy is one of social ecology. We believe that the only way that we will achieve environmental sustainability is through social transformation. To suggest that to shift from one unsustainable resource to another is an answer to the environmental catastrophe which we face, without disclaiming or explaining the difficulties faced seems to me to be short sighted. It is true that we have sufficient mature plantations to service the needs of the Australian timber market. Utilisation of these resources would certainly ease the pressure on Native Forests. However we must not create such a market for Radiata Pine or other plantation timbers that it leads to huge tracts of land which should be reseeded to Bio-diverse forest, being turned into the environmental nightmare which is plantations.

Gareth Devenish, FoE Forest Network

## Grasslands grocery and info shop

### now open

We are a non profit enterprise aiming to fund innovative social projects through the sale of food, personal and household items and information which are ecologically sound, socially responsible and affordable.

205a Nicholson st, Footscray. Ph 9362 0830.

Open Fridays and Saturdays, 10am - 6pm.

FoE (Fitzroy)

## Inaugural Annual Raffle

As many of you know FoE has lost all government funding under the Coalition. As a method of Fundraising we have put together the first annual

### FoE Raffle

## We need your Help

We are asking all members of FoE to help us with ticket sales.

Please call Gareth or Tristy on 9419 8700

to pick up your booklet of tickets.

### GRAND PRIZES

2 nights, 2 people, in the award winning "Homestead" at the Australian Bush Settlement at the foot of the Cathedral Mountains includes a two hour horse ride up through the Rubicon Valley, a \$20 wine voucher from Swords Wines and \$75 food voucher from the FoE food Co-op (courtesy Australian Bush Settlement, Rubicon Valley Trail Rides, Swords Wines & FoE)

\$500 Mountain Bike (courtesy Ivanhoe Cycles and an anonymous donor)

### OTHER PRIZES

Dance lessons for two (courtesy of Rio Dance studios)

5 weeks yoga lessons for two (courtesy Einsteins Moon)

Fleecy Jacket (courtesy Kathmandu)

2 tickets to Universal Theatre + limited productions (courtesy Universal Theatre)

\$50 Tattoo or body piercing voucher (courtesy Golden Needles)

Bottle Swords House Wine (courtesy Swords Wine)

Dinner for 2 at the Veggie Bar (courtesy Veggie Bar)

FoE Bookshop Gift Hamper (courtesy FoE Bookshop)

12 months FoE membership + FoE T-shirt (courtesy FoE Office Collective)

Will be drawn on the 23rd July at the 'Wong side of the tracks' mid winter ball.

## campaign updates & events

### Koonung Mullum Forestway Association

The KMFA was formed by local residents in 1987 to bring together the numerous groups and individuals opposed to road projects threatening the Koonung Mullum Mullum Creek valleys. The KMFA works closely with Environment Victoria, Streets for People, Public Transport Users Association, Knox Environment Society and the Anti Ring Road Organisation.

The aims of the Association are:

- to preserve and enhance the Koonung and Mullum Mullum Valleys as public open space and, in particular, to promote development of the area as an urban forestway.
- to protect the valleys from roads or other uses that reduce or destroy their present and future value as public open space; and
- to actively support and liaise with groups which have similar interests and concerns in other areas.

KMFA meets fortnightly at the Victorian Field Naturalists Club, Blackburn, and welcomes the participation of all who share our aims. Please contact us on (03) 9898 2220 for meeting times. Individual membership of the Association costs \$10 annually.

KMFA, PO Box 243, Mitcham, VIC, 3132. Ph 03 9898 2220

### MITCHELL RIVER DAM PROPOSAL

Flowing out of the Victorian Alpine National Park down to the Gippsland Lakes, the Mitchell River is the core of the Mitchell River National Park and the states last major wild river, with its entire length listed under the Heritage Rivers Act for its significance to indigenous people.

New dam proposals for this site have been around since the mid 1960's. Subject to changes in government, the dam proposal was taken off the agenda, only to be recently resurrected by the Minister for Agriculture and Resources and Deputy Premier, Pat McNamara. Additional pressure is being applied by business heavyweight John Elliot who is seeking to expand his rice-growing enterprises into Gippsland.

Despite the Ministers public statements that feasibility studies would be completed by next year, inquiries to his Department and Southern Rural Water proved fruitless with staff responses of, "Dam? What dam?" The 'pre-feasibility study' on smaller dams they carried out last year concluded that a dam would be unnecessary and uneconomic.

A dam built on the northern edge of the National Park would flood at least 20KM upstream, drowning remote bush blocks. The Gippsland Lakes, where reduced water quality is already causing concern to fishing and

tourism interests, as well as environmentalists, would be further choked of fresh water by building a dam on the Mitchell.

source: Victorian National Parks Association. Contact Peter Barker at the VNPA for details.

### INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES LIVE AT THE EXPENSE OF POOR COUNTRIES

Friends of the Earth Finland have released a new study on environmental devastation caused by the Northern part of the country in their Southern region. According to *The Effects of the Production and Consumption Patterns of Industrialised Countries on the Environment in the South* industrialised countries owe the South an enormous environmental debt as the main stream of 'development aid' flows from the South to the North.

The study covers a range of issues pertaining to environmental burden on the South, by the North, and deals with many categories; effects on global commons, tourism, imports, exports, mass communications, transnational social structures, the flow of knowledge from and to the North as well as the dissemination of tourist mass consumption culture.

In all these fields, striking environmental injustice is found. According to the study, this imbalance is caused by existence of global social super structures including such institutions as the World Bank, the International Money Fund, World Trade Organisation and the G7.

The report reviews action plans which aim to balance environmental justice regarding North-South relations.

The report has been published on the internet and it can be read at web site [http://www.helsinki.fi/~otammile/north\\_south\\_environment.htm](http://www.helsinki.fi/~otammile/north_south_environment.htm)

### MEMBERSHIP FEES

After much deliberation, we have realised we need to increase the annual fees. The last increase was in September 1990. Please see page 20 for details. These will apply from June 1st, so renew early!

### Latin Fiesta ORCHESTRA DEL BARRIO

eleven piece salsa band

Saturday June 26th

North Melbourne Town Hall

Errol St (cnr Queensbury st)

North Melbourne, 7.30pm

Entry \$10 (or with dinner, \$15)

RSVP for dinner by 23rd June 9329 5808

Proceeds to the Chilean Indigenous and Popular Network

## campaign updates & events

### RESIDENTS RALLY TO PROTECT ROYAL PARK

FoE has joined with local residents to protect Royal Park. For two weeks, most mornings saw concerted action and blockading. After fences were built to prevent public access to the site, residents were forced to focus their attention on work vehicles entering the site.

On Saturday May 1st, a highly successful rally was held at the Park.

### GAMES PEOPLE PLAY IN ROYAL PARK

Angela Munro, Convenor, Royal Park Protection Group

A costly and inexplicable 'review' of the 1987 Royal Park Master Plan has been used, (surprise, surprise), to legitimise the inclusion of a corporate hockey, grid iron and netball stadium for the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Royal Park. An entertainment complex, it also includes headquarters for the administration of the respective sports. Contrary to the recent government glossy, not only was there no opportunity for community consultation on the matter, it was explicitly ruled out by the hired facilitators of two public meetings, stage-managed by an intimidated Council.

So, at the end of 1998, the Minister for Planning declared himself the Responsible Authority and amended the Planning Scheme to allow the 3-storey stadium on the Western wall of the Zoo to proceed. It was a Project of State Significance and therefore (perversely) required no public information or involvement. An Environmental Impact Assessment, being discretionary, was dispensed with.

Finding that in Victoria there is now, by law, apparently no such thing as a Park, the Royal Park Protection Group has forged an alliance with unions and environmentalists, notably the forest campaigners of Friends of the Earth. We are challenging and publicising denial of access and the gutting and commercialisation of a public parkland permanently reserved since the mid nineteenth century. We are calling for an assessment of environmental impacts and of alternative, readily available 'brown' sites.

Having signed the contract in mid March (on the eve of the closure of the poll for the City of Melbourne election) Multiplex (of Sydney Harbour toast-rack fame) fenced a 4.5 hectare construction site. The fence was repeatedly

dismantled by protesters, but completed by Monday 19th March, when the carnage of clear-felling a largely indigenous woodland began.

A private security guard fended off park users (with undue force), explaining that this was 'private property'. Sixteen protesters gained access to the site (some secured in trees), and refused to leave, rejecting the charge that they were breaching the peace by impeding work or that they were illegally occupying parkland. Work was suspended on grounds of safety and discussions held with CFMEU Secretary and ASU Organiser. These Unions, unlike the ETU, indicated that they would not respect a community picket, accepting the developer's word that there would be not net loss in parkland or trees and that the project was merely an upgrade of facilities.

The question of the legal basis for the development and our exclusion was one that baffled all concerned-police and Multiplex employees included. Prior to our bodily removal by police, one by one, a member of the new Committee of Management (an employee of the Major Projects Unit) read from a prepared script-supposedly regulations relating to trespass. It claimed to 'revoke our license' to use the Park, under regulations of the City of Melbourne whose powers over the site had specifically been removed!

We are under no illusions about the subversion of democracy in Victoria and the resulting deprivation of rights (and parkland) which we believed, to quote Premier Kennett's preamble to the Constitution, to be 'inviolable'. But the alliance we have struck has produced a remarkable chemistry of skills, information, ages and backgrounds. The jackboot may win in the short-term, but 'we shall overcome'.



photo: Tristy Fairfield

Offers of ideas, energy, help in staffing the picket and for further information:

Angela 9347 6560, Julianne 9347 6953 or FoE 9419 8700. Take a look at the construction site, Brens Drive, Royal Park-Melways 2A, 29 & 43, near tramstop 24 on the Zoo Tramline and Royal park/Zoo Station on the Upfield Line.

## Face the Facts!

### How the Global Economy Harms People and the Environment

Friends of the Earth US has launched a series of facts sheets aimed at policy makers on global economic systems and their impacts on both the environment and humanity. The 10 series kit and a proposal for global economic reform is available by sending 3 45c stamps to FoE Fitzroy. We can also forward the fact sheets via email. Here's the first edition:

#### Face the Facts #1

### Public Opposition to Globalisation Mounting

- According to recent polls, the public rejects the main argument for globalisation: that trade leads to economic benefits. In a Wall Street Journal poll, 58 percent of Americans said that foreign trade actually hurts the economy.
- Consumers want a global economy which reflects public values on labour, human rights and environmental protection:
- 79 percent of those polled would avoid shopping at a retailer that sold garments made in sweatshops.
- 87 percent of the public believes trade agreements should protect the environment.
- Increasing public concern has begun to derail legislation and negotiations relating to the global economy.
- The U.S. Congress twice rejected "Fast Track" trade negotiating authority in 1997 & '98.
- Negotiations for a Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) collapsed at the end of 1998.
- Corporations and International Financial Institutions are on the defensive and resorting to public relations campaigns.
- The Business Roundtable is planning a \$5 million lobbying and education campaign to promote free trade.
- Following criticism of its role in last year's financial crisis, the International Monetary Fund recently hired a public relations firm to help with the Fund's poor image in the United States.

## FoE International

### NEW WAVE OF HARASSMENT IN NIGERIA

*"Those who think there is an atmosphere of freedom here are in for some rethink. The crack down is still on. Citizens are still being clamped into detention centres and unhealthy cells for no just cause".*

- FoE Nigeria.

"On March 20, three environmental activists were arrested and are being held in police detention. They are: Mr Sagbama Owei Okpo (from Sagbama, Bayelsa State), Mr Akpobarelo Didiya (from Sagbama, Bayelsa State), Mr Sea Mum Kuku (from Ondo State).

Both Didiya and Kuku were riding on a motorbike with Mr Okpo when they were accosted by a 60-man team of men of the notorious Nigerian Military Police.

Their offence? Being found with PUBLIC DOCUMENTS. The documents were copies of OGELE, the Newsletter of the Jjaw Youth Council.

All three were subjected to severe torture and humiliation. All sustained injuries in this unprovoked display of naked power.

Recently an ERA/FoE volunteer was arrested and detained for being found with a copy of ERACTION, our journal!

They are being held in solitary confinement in the cells of the State Investigation and Interrogation Bureau (SIIB) at Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. Access to family, friends or medical assistance is denied. Their health situation is deteriorating."

ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS ACTION/ FRIENDS OF THE EARTH (FoE, Nigeria) + OILWATCH AFRICA

#214, Useju-Lagos Road, P. O. Box 10577, Benin City, Nigeria. Tel/Fax: + 234 52 600165 Email: eraction@infoweb.abs.net

### Brazil revokes Amazon clearing ban

BRASILIA, April 15 (Reuters) - Brazil on Thursday lifted a blanket ban on clearing land in the Amazon after loggers and landowners agreed to a measure aimed at slowing the rate of destruction of the world's largest rain forest.

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## campaign updates & events

### Brazil - continued

dented talks during which all parties involved agreed to new guidelines.

"This is the first time that there is a commitment involving non-governmental organisations, lawmakers, loggers and all sectors. The government considers this a great victory," said a ministry spokesman.

Authorities applied the moratorium in February following the publication of data showing that an area more than half the size of Belgium — 6,500 square miles (16,800 square km) — had been cleared in 1998.

This figure represented a 27 percent jump from 1997 — when the equivalent of 5,000 soccer fields of jungle were lost every day, according to one estimate.

The agreement reduces the maximum limits for land-clearing by small farmers and promises large landowners faster handling of their clearing applications, the ministry spokesman said. Loggers, farmers and others who make their living from the rain forest also pledged to make better use of areas already degraded and limit the use of fire to clear new areas.

Environmentalists welcomed the move but cautioned that the success of the new guidelines depended on the vigilance of the government's Environmental Agency (Ibama), which has been plagued by allegations of corruption.

"We think it was good to revoke this ban because it generated a lot of misunderstanding and conflict," said Roberto Smeraldi, of Project Amazon (Friends of the Earth). Smeraldi said that during a trip last week to Mato Grosso state, where illegal mahogany logging is rife, he saw deforestation had increased despite the ban.

"Out in the field this ban simply has no effect whatsoever," he said. "The problem which remains for any guidelines is the state's lack of capacity to implement them."

By Joelle Diderich

source: FoE Amazonia Program <foeamaz@ibm.net>

### Going Solar's 1999 Seminar Program

Seminars are held throughout the year at the Nth Melbourne store from 12 noon-2pm on the second Saturday of each month. The cost is \$5. Please ring to ensure a place.

Going Solar, 322 Victoria st, Nth Melbourne 3051 ph: 03 9328 4123 [www.green.net.au/goingsolar](http://www.green.net.au/goingsolar)

### MAY 22nd SAT 1999

### International Day of Solidarity for Freedom in Indonesia and East Timor.

For venue and time phone 03 9329 1277

### JUNE 18TH 1999 A day of protest, action and carnival in financial centres across the globe.

<http://www.gn.apc.org/june18>

### Beth & Cam turn 10!

Beth Cameron and Cam Walker will be celebrating their 10 years of working at FoE on Saturday 19th June, 8pm onwards (at FoE). Stirring speeches, frenetic dancing....

### Access News EMERGENCY APPEAL

Since the inception of Channel 31, Access News has been broadcasting a weekly programme which covers a wide range of issues relating to social justice and matters environment. Stories have included Jabiluka and the nuclear industry in general, land rights, East Timorese independence, the attacks on the MUA, destruction of old growth forests and much more.

Access News is now facing the very real and immediate threat of extinction.

Unless Channel 31, the station which broadcasts Access News, can find at least 1000 people to pledge \$200 in the next week, the station and Access News will go off air, leaving the way open for privatisation of the frequency.

This situation has come about 3 major reasons. Loss of sponsorship, particularly from the harness racing, costs of a court case and associated lawyers fees and extraordinary transmitter costs.

If you or your organisation can help to keep alive this voice on independent media by pledging \$200 or more please call us. Donations are tax deductible.

PH 9663 6976



# campaign updates & events

## RALLY AGAINST THE WAR

End the bombing  
World Environment Day - sunday June the 6th  
Southgate Walk Bridge  
Coalition to Stop the Bombing  
Further info: 9639 7699

**3CR - Victoria's  
Uncensored Voice**



**RADIOTHON 7-20 JUNE '99**

To donate phone

**9419 8377**

DONATIONS OVER \$2 TAX DEDUCTIBLE

*Progressive news, views & entertainment*

## Stop Jabiluka mine

weekend conference

*Educate and activate*

speakers and discussion on Land Rights, the nuclear industry, activism in Australia.  
World environment day - sat 5th - sun 6th June  
Melbourne Uni, student union building  
11am - 5pm. Cost: \$7.50 per day (workers) donation (others)

conference sessions include: an overview of Australia's role in the nuclear fuel cycle (Dave Sweeney, FoE/ACF), the Yorta Yorta native title claim (Monica Morgan & Wayne Atkinson, Yorta Yorta Nation); radiation levels and safety; trade unions, land rights & the environment movement (Verity Burgmann); radioactive waste dumps in Australia (Daniel Voronoff, FoE); principles of non violent action (Anthony Kelly, Pt Chang); history of the anti-nuclear movement in Australia; and lots more!

Quarry Action Group

**Needs your help!**

**BUILDING THE BARRICADES**

to protect our families and Spring Gully Reserve!

Saturday 22nd May, 11am.

Building the first section of the barricade.

Together we will work! Together we will win!

For more info ring 9379 1185

Authorised by Quarry Action Group inc, PO Box 122, Niddrie, 3042

## Join FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

Membership includes this newsletter, membership of the FoE food co-op, and the national magazine, *Chain Reaction*.

Annual membership fees:

\$25 Low Income

\$50 Households

\$40 Waged person

\$70 Organisation

\$100 Supporting member

Donation (please send receipt)

Is this a renewal? \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, have you changed your address? (old suburb \_\_\_\_\_)

Name .....

Address .....

Postcode .....

Phone (.....) .....

Date .....

Friends of the Earth (Fitzroy) has the following collectives and working groups which you may wish to join: anti uranium, bookshop, food campaign, Indigenous solidarity, forest network, arid lands, office, water.

Write, call, or drop in for details.

return to: FoE, Box 222, Fitzroy, 3065.