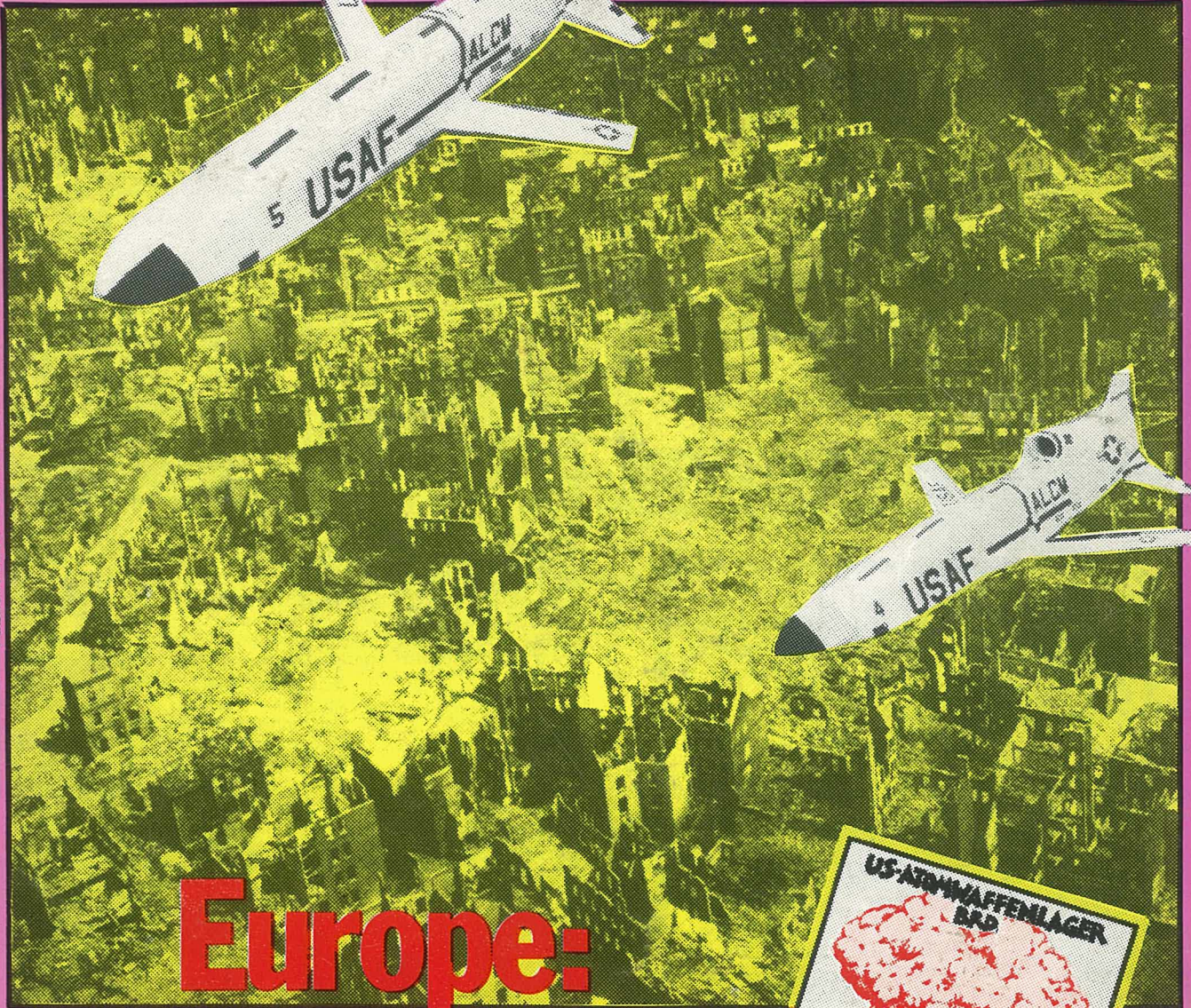


# Chain Reaction

Friends of the Earth Australia

Number 35 December 83 - January 84 \$2.00

Registered by Australia Post  
Publication Number VBO2034



**Europe:**  
**cruising** into  
**crisis**





## INTERNATIONAL BOOKSHOP



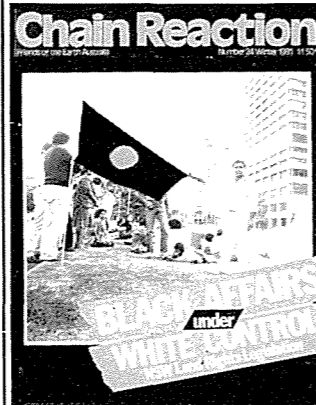
MARXISM HISTORY  
FEMINISM ECONOMICS  
POLITICS ENVIRONMENT  
PSYCHOLOGY EDUCATION  
GAY LIBERATION

2nd Floor, 17 Elizabeth St., Melbourne 3000  
Tel: 61-2859

## BACK COPIES

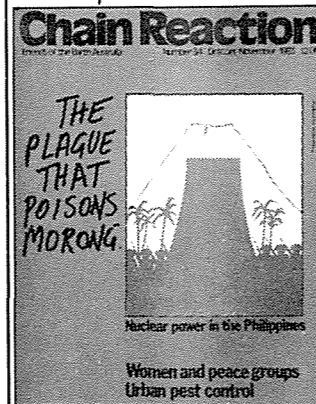
Twenty-nine back copies of *Chain Reaction* — all those published from autumn 1976 (except vol 2 no 3, of which we will supply a reprint of the major stories) — are available as a set for \$40. Add another \$2 to include this edition (no 35). Single copies or class sets of particular editions are also available. All post free.

Autumn 1983, no 31 — New communications technology, Breast milk contamination, NSW rainforest, Repetition injuries. \$2.00.

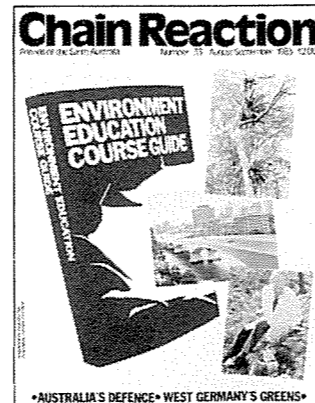
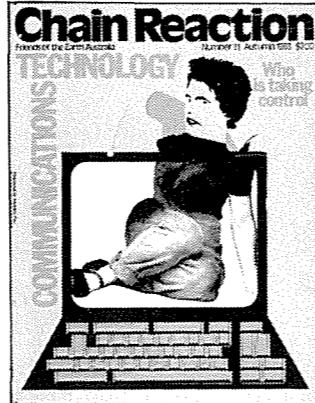


June-July 1983, no 32 — NSW land rights, Aboriginal housing in Victoria, Shell's move into coal, Community child care, Activist Contacts directory. \$2.00.

August-September 1983, no 33 — Australia's defence, Roxby Downs, Environment education guide, West German Greens, Wimmera River pollution. \$2.00.



October-November 1983, no 34 — Philippines nuclear reactor, Sydney pest control industry, womens actions for peace, hair dye dangers. \$2.00.



**SOLAR HOT WATER**  
High Efficiency Panels - Tanks  
Frost Protection

**STOVES**  
Slow Combustion Cooking - Heating  
Flues - Hot Water

**ALTERNATIVE ELECTRICITY**  
Solar, Wind, Hydro, Petrol  
Diesel, Battery-Inverter

**SURVIVAL TECHNOLOGY**  
66 Maroondah Hwy  
CROYDON Vic 3136  
Phone 03 7255550

Send orders to : *Chain Reaction* Room 14,  
Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne 3000.

## Chain Reaction

Established in 1975  
Number 35  
December 1983 — January 1984

Publisher  
Friends of the Earth Australia

Editorial Collective  
Isobel Attwood, Sharon Callahan, Mark Cole, Tim Darling, Peter Ellieffe, Eileen Goodfield, Jonathan Goodfield, Peter Gravier, Pauline Kennedy, Trish Luker, Fran Martin, Judy MacDougall, Susan Mueller, Rosemary Nichols, Merella Rankin, Brendan Rea, Keith Redgen, Bess Secomb, Linnell Secomb, Richard Shelton, Jill Taylor

Production  
Peter Cakroft, Ruth Ford, Nick Maclellan, Peter McMeel, Patty Mark, Linda Parlane, Owen Pearson, John Stone, Alexa Waller

Advertising  
Jonathan Goodfield Tel: (03) 63 5995 for rates and bookings

Distribution  
Richard Shelton

Subscriptions  
Isobel Attwood

Accountant  
Eileen Goodfield

Reviews  
Trish Luker (Sydney), Keith Redgen (Melbourne)

Earth News  
Susan Mueller

Coordinators  
Jonathan Goodfield, Susan Mueller, Richard Shelton

Sydney Collective  
Floor 2, 787 George Street,  
Sydney, NSW 2000, Tel: (02) 211 3953

Reprographics  
Melbourne Media Services

Typesetters  
Courier Typesetters,  
Kasia Graphics

Printing  
Waterwheel Press, High St.,  
Shepparton, Vic 3630

All correspondence and enquiries  
*Chain Reaction*, Room 14,  
Floor 4, 37 Swanston St,  
Melbourne, Vic 3000, Tel:  
(03) 63 5995, Telex: WILSOC  
35576

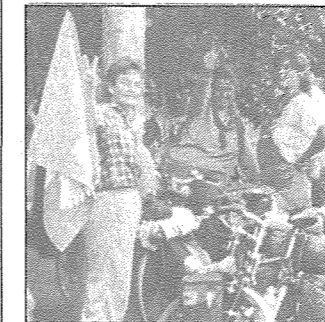
## CONTENTS

REACTIONS — EXILES FROM THE CHEMICAL SOCIETY  
Interview with Maureen Magee

'Our sensitivity to ordinary household objects may seem bizarre.' Living with severe allergies.

11

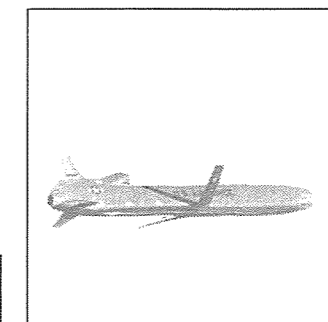
THE PEACE CYCLE  
By Paul Marshall



Australian cyclists deploy themselves in a strategic West German valley.

17

MILITARISM, SOCIALISM AND WORLD PEACE  
Interview with Dan Smith



A long-time British disarmament activist answers some probing questions from *Chain Reaction*.

20

K-K-KAKADU  
By Susan Mueller

Uranium mines or national park? Putting together the Kakadu jigsaw.

26

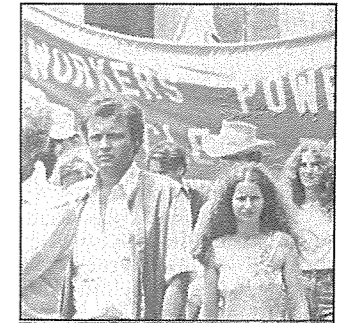
THE NATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL COURSES

By Phil Tighe

Beware! That course could be an old discipline dressed in a buzz word.

27

WORKING AGAINST YELLOWCAKE  
By Allan Rees



Trade unions and the fight against the mining and export of uranium

29

JOB PACKAGE FOUND IN RUBBISH

By Barbara Hutton and Richard Nankin

A change to returnable beverage containers would return many jobs. Why the repackaging industry is worried.

32

PENANG FLIPSIDE

By Linda Cawcutt

A glimpse at the problems of the Malaysian environment.

40

FOE PAGE

LETTERS

EARTH NEWS

SUB FORM

REVIEWS

2

3

5

9

35

Cover design: Peter Christoff

\*\$2.00 recommended retail price, ISSN 0312-1372. All material in *Chain Reaction* is copyright © *Chain Reaction* 1983. All rights reserved. For permission to reprint articles or graphics please write to the editors who will give all possible assistance. Views expressed by authors are not necessarily those of the publisher. Contributions to *Chain Reaction* are invited. Please try to send items typed, on one side of the page, double spaced and with wide margins. Keep a copy. We do not have sufficient resources and people to return manuscripts. These few guidelines help in bringing out the magazine better and faster. The first edition for 1984 will be published in mid-February. Deadline for feature articles is 6 January.

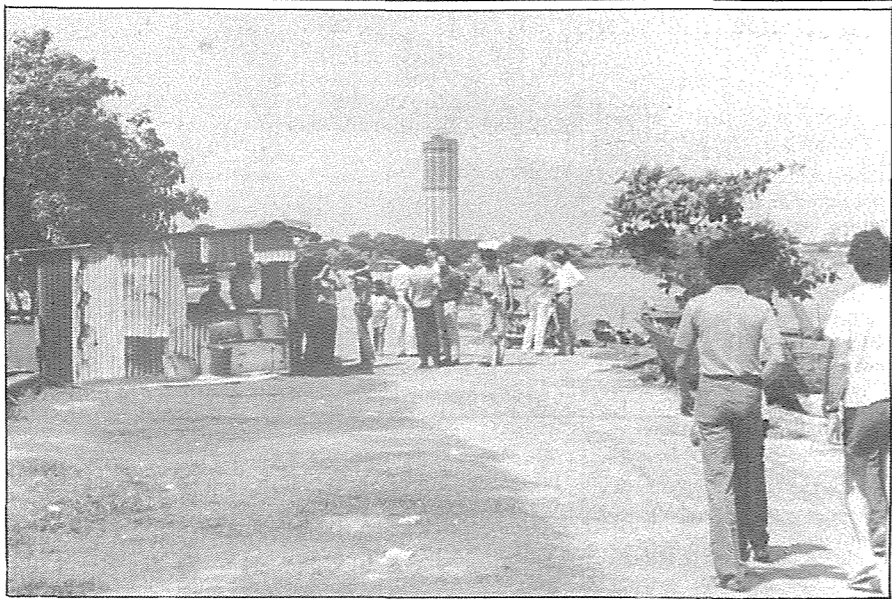
# FOE GROUPS

## Malaysia

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia) held its first regional environment seminar in Penang in October 1983. Delegates from environment and community groups in South East Asia and the Pacific met for four days of discussion on the problems of development, environment and natural resources in Asia.

The seminar was organised in response to the disastrous effects of development throughout the region. Countries like Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia face pollution of their air, water and land, rapid deforestation, depletion of non-renewable resources, soil erosion, and nuclear and toxic waste dumping. Add to this the population drift from rural areas to urban centres, the growth of squatter slums and the slow dying of traditional practices, lifestyles and culture.

In draft form the seminar resolutions call for: action to halt deforestation, industrial pollution and depletion of mineral, energy and marine resources; safer working conditions for employees in hazardous occupations, in particular chemical industry employees; emphasis



LINDA CAWCUTT

**Seminar delegates on a field trip around Penang. In the distance a new monument to Malaysia's development.**

on environmental education; and active co-operation between all environment groups within the region.

Sahabat Alam Malaysia will act as the focus for a regional network to be established among those groups represented. Special interest task force units will exchange information and work to solve particular environmental problems anywhere in the region. These task force units could act as environmental troubleshooters focusing on problems like toxic waste disposal.

Contact: Sahabat Alam Malaysia can be contacted at 37, Lorong Birch, Penang, Malaysia. Copies of their latest report, *The State of the Malaysian Environment 1983-84*, are available for M\$4.00 each plus postage, payable by bankdraft.

### Friends of the Earth groups

**ADELAIDE** 310 Angas St, Adelaide, SA 5000 (08) 223 6917, (08) 223 5155

**BLUE MOUNTAINS** 94 Waratah St, Katoomba, NSW 2780 (047) 82 2701

**BRISBANE** PO Box 667, South Brisbane, Qld 4101 (07) 44 1616 AH

**CANBERRA** PO Box 1875, Canberra City, ACT 2602; 116 Lewin St, Lyneham, ACT 2602 (062) 47 8868

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

**DARWIN** PO Box 2120, Darwin, NT 5794 (089) 81 6222

**ELTHAM** PO Box 295, Eltham, Vic 3095 (03) 435 9160

**HOBART** 102 Bathurst St, Hobart, Tas 7000 (002) 34 5566

**LA TROBE UNIVERSITY** c/- The SRC, La Trobe University, Bundoora, Vic 3083 (03) 479 2977

**MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY** Box 27, Level O, Union Building, Macquarie University, North Ryde, NSW 2113

**MONASH UNIVERSITY** Community Research Action Centre, Monash University, Clayton, Vic 3168 (03) 541 0811 ext 3141

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

**NORTHERN YORKIE PENINSULA**, c/- Valinor, 734 Moonta Mines, Moonta, SA 5558 (088) 25 2813

**OAKLEIGH** 6 Fellows St, Hughesdale, Vic 3166

**PERTH** 790 Hay St, Perth, WA 6000 (09) 321 5942

**PORT PIRIE** PO Box 7, Port Pirie, SA 5540 (086) 34 5269

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

**SYDNEY** Floor 2, 787 George St, Sydney, NSW 2000 (02) 211 3953

**UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND** c/- SRC, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2350

**UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA** Guild of Undergraduates, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009

**WHYALLA** 77 Meares St, Whyalla, SA 5600 (086) 45 2457

**CHAIN REACTION** Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic 3000 (03) 63 5995, and Floor 2, 787 George St, Sydney, NSW 2000 (02) 211 3953

**NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER** Nick Thieberger, c/- 790 Hay St, Perth, WA 6000 (09) 321 5942

## Dieback

Friends of the Earth are working on dieback disease in eucalypts in the New England area of New South Wales. Their program of replanting areas affected by dieback will first establish which sites are suitable. Local farmers will be consulted and local schools may be interested in the planting. The whole exercise should provide more support for FOE's activities, especially as a paper mill is proposed for the Armidale region.

The campaign aims to promote community awareness in relation to the severe dieback problem. Prior to the actual planting program, to begin in autumn next year (1984), social events are planned to encourage public participation. These include bush dances, seed-collecting days and potting days.

Action: For further information, contact Abel Whitten, Friends of the Earth, c/- SRC, University of New England, Armidale, NSW 2350.

## FRIENDS OF THE EARTH MEMBERSHIP FORM

Dear Friends of the Earth

Please find enclosed my membership fee of \$ . . . . . (as per rates below).

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .

Telephone . . . . .

Membership fees: NSW \$20 (\$10 concession); Vic \$24 (\$18); WA \$15 (\$7.50) or whatever you can afford; Qld \$15 (\$10); SA, NT, Tas, ACT \$10 or whatever you can afford. *Chain Reaction* is sent free to all members of Friends of the Earth and some groups also send members newsletters and provide discounts at their bookshops. Enquire from your local FOE group. Make cheques payable to Friends of the Earth and post to the group nearest you - see list above. Donations are very welcome. Contact us for details on how to make tax deductible donations to FOE.

2.Chain Reaction

## Campus Health and Safety

*This letter has been edited for space reasons.*

(In response to 'Environment Education Course Guide' in *Chain Reaction* 33 on environmental health courses at various tertiary institutions.)

It seems that universities which teach occupational health/environmental courses close their eyes to the problems within their own campus environment. This is probably best described by the overall lack of attention that, for example, the University of Sydney has given to this issue.

It has only been in the last three years and with a strong union interest that the University of Sydney has taken an active approach to problems of staff and student safety and health on campus. It is infuriating to think that during the prosperous years of the 60s and early 70s more money was not allocated to updating old buildings, providing education and raising general awareness of health and safety.

The lack of adequate training and education on safe working procedures is well illustrated by an incident in a departmental workshop where an employee put a piece of asbestos board through a circular band saw, not knowing the dangers associated with clouds of asbestos dust. There is no designated workshop facility for machining asbestos safely. Further more the worker was not told of dangers or correct safety procedures for handling asbestos. On union involvement on this issue we were treated as if we were over-reacting to a 'one-off' situation.

The Chemistry School is one area where both staff and students are in risk. The poor ventilation has been commented on for over ten years by people using the building. A joint union and university inspection this year has clarified problem areas, and it does now appear as though this situation will be rectified. But why wasn't it repaired ten years ago when funds were so much more adequate?

One student laboratory in

particular had stored two-litre bottles of organic solvents on the floor beside the benches; silica dust from chromatography plates was all over the laboratory; gas cylinders were unchained; and power points near water troughs had double adapters in use.

Research students in various departments have been found using various benzidine compounds without the standard precautions necessary for handling carcinogenic substances. The response ranges from one of, 'I don't care', to panic when the dangers are explained.

It must be pointed out that any toxic, carcinogenic or radioactive substance can be handled if the right procedures and safety equipment are available.

The University of Sydney is coming to the party. Its Safety Committee was reformed last year after a spate of absence, with senior staff as well as union representatives pushing for better safety and health for the campus. The biggest job is to convince the university that problems of occupational health and safety must be rectified now, not in ten years time.

Damaras Velkov  
Safety Officer, Technical  
and Scientific sub-branch  
of the Health and Research  
Employees Association  
*University of Sydney*

### Open discussion

Having been a regular reader for several years, at last I feel inspired to make a few comments. Contrary to the opinions expressed by some readers, I feel that a non-ideological activist magazine such as *Chain Reaction* ought to open social discussion on a fairly broad range of issues - whether they be 'purely' green type issues (eg uranium, rainforests, industrial pollution) or other issues such as housing, work conditions, prisons, Aboriginal and Third World issues, women's and gay's struggles, etc.

The latter group of issues may not be seen as directly relevant to the problems of the ecosystem by some environmentalists, but in the

end all social problems and issues can be defined as environmentally oriented. All of them happen to be relevant to the functioning or otherwise of our environment. Let's remember that it's the same power structures that create all of these environmental problems.

This brings me to Ally Fricker's comments on the West German Green Party. Here I'll express a few of my own opinions on issues that I think really need to be thought about and debated by all of us seeking meaningful social change. One of these is: can real change come about by parliamentary means or, at best, is it a waste of time, at worst, a path riddled with dangers? I unashamedly subscribe to the latter belief.

OK, disillusionment has set in with many of us in regards to the Labor Party (as in West Germany with the Social Democratic Party) and justifiably so. The electoral success (?) of the Greens in West Germany may tempt some activists here to think about developing a similar type of party. However, I can't help but feel that such a path of action, despite its initial well-meaning intentions, is futile! Grass roots activism in the community inevitably gets substituted for parliamentary debate (take the history of British and Australian Labor Parties).

So let's not hold any illusions about parliament, we can't afford to let our opposition become institutionalised and compromised. Let's work for change and people's power where it belongs - at a real community level.

Kim Brinkley  
*Mile End, SA*

### Minorities?

After having read the letters in *Chain Reaction* 34 by Ross Scott and Peter Myers I feel compelled to urge you not to submit to blackmailing by conservatives (not conservationists) who want to continue to suppress the voices of 'minorities' like women or gays within the 'green' movement. The exploitation of the Earth and of humans is closely connected, the very real

# LETTERS

prospect of nuclear war threatens to end human existence as well as the destruction of 'our environment' does. So continue writing about 'non-environmental' issues, please!

One criticism, however. M D Hayes article on 'Defending the Sunburnt Country' could only have been written in Australia, a country that has hardly ever experienced the disastrous effects of a bomb war on its own soil. Only under this perspective is it understandable, but not excusable, that he takes the purely speculative 'survivalist' position. Three-quarters will die instantly, the rest will live. In a contemporary nuclear war nuclear warheads will hit all Australian major cities within ten minutes from start; the geographical position has become irrelevant. Even in Australia the living will envy the dead after nuclear explosions.

In the last months I have also noticed an ever-increasing number of Australian letters to the editor, not only to *Chain Reaction*, claiming that nuclear power plants are necessary, economical and safe. Never did I read an article that explained the dangers and many unresolved problems of the nuclear cycle (like the final storage of waste), of which the plants themselves are only a part. Australia has no nuclear power and we have to fight so that it will never get it.

Having lived within 80 km of both nuclear plants and nuclear missile bases in Bavaria I feel very strongly about these issues and hope you will report on the movement in Europe against the stationing of new missiles with the same expertise as you did report about the Green Party.

More of the same.  
Bernhard Huber  
*Clovelly, NSW*



## LETTERS

### Acid remedies

This letter has been edited for space reasons

Regarding Arnold Spencer's letter in *Chain Reaction* 33: Acid rain is certainly a very serious problem but there is no need in desperation to turn to nuclear energy. There are two remedies.

One is a new method of burning coal in furnaces called fluidised bed combustion. 'Although new power stations are an obvious market for fluidised beds, they could also be fitted to existing power stations to replace oil or conventional coal burners.' (*New Scientist*, 30 June 1983, p 946).

Another method of removing sulphur compounds from the emissions from factories and power stations is to install scrubbers. The technology is available but the money is not.

To opt for nuclear energy is to adopt an appalling alternative. Every nuclear power station produces plutonium among other very dangerous substances. They do not exist in nature. A few millionths of a gram of plutonium absorbed or inhaled will cause cancer. It is probably the most dangerous substance in the world. A typical nuclear power station (1000 megawatts) produces over 400 pounds of plutonium per year.

It is true that plutonium gradually loses its potency but the key word is gradually. In 24 000 years only half the original plutonium remains. A quarter in 48 000 years and so on. Not much joy there.

What has happened to all the high-level waste from commercial power stations? Not a kilogram of it has been safely stored deep in the Earth's crust. What is more important, there are no

definite commitments by any company or government to begin storage by a given date. In fact in England the present proposal is to build a store where it can be kept for the next hundred years - above ground. Can anyone feel that such proposals are rational in view of what has happened in the last hundred years?

The whole story is one of incredible carelessness of the future of humankind and of heavy subsidies to the nuclear power industry. There is a very extensive literature on the dangers of nuclear energy. I suggest *Accidents Will Happen* by the Environmental Action Foundation (Harper and Row).

C A Short  
Ryde, NSW

### Deep ecology

Re your Environment Education course guide in *Chain Reaction* 33, and comments by P Tighe and R Taplin: Murdoch University in Western Australia offers the opportunity, through its School of Social Inquiry, for students to work in the field of Deep Ecology, and I have a friend who is at present completing his PhD in this area.

Secondly - although this falls outside the scope of your article which dealt with tertiary courses - I would like to make mention of an Higher School Certificate course in Victoria, Values and Human Ecology (VHE) (to be re-named Deep Ecology in 1985) which deals with the fundamental nature of the conservation and ecology movements, and directly challenges the anthropocentric, 'resource-management', and overly 'scientific' assumptions on which many of the environment courses in this country rest.

VHE examines the way in which Western thinking has channelled itself into a very restricted view of the world and its ecosystems; allows students to undertake a research project (with the emphasis on praxis); and finally, considers our relationship to Earth from an Eastern (Hindu, Buddhist, Taoist) and Aboriginal perspective.

Deep Ecology is not a

subject that may be confined within scientific discipline, nor does it lie within any field of educational theory. Its kernel is the metaphysical question of how we human beings relate to Earth, to Gaia Scientific understanding will help - to a point. So will multidisciplinary studies - to a point. But VHE argues that we must return to very simple and very philosophical questions that involve our deepest values before we can begin to untangle the mess we are in.

The course description of Values and Human Ecology is obtainable from VISE, 582 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne, Vic 3004 for \$2.00 (including postage).

John Martin  
Warracknabeal, Vic

### Platform?

Threats to the environment pay no heed to sex, politics, religion or race. Neither do I.

Your magazine should simply be a source of information for those who wish to retain a healthy living environment and not a platform for minority groups to sound off as to how they will change the world to suit their own needs.

Your contributors should present credentials for their expertise not receipts for their membership fees in various minority issue groups.

There are other forums for issues of feminism, homosexuality, race issues and politics. The environment is too big an issue to be threatened in such a way.

Les Denning  
Woy Woy, NSW

### Clean hands

This letter has been edited for space reasons.

Reading *Chain Reaction* again after a few years' break is exciting, but our new world movement still refuses to come together in the new society.

All politics and most social idealism today is crippled by marxism of the left and right - financial centralism. We still fail to see what actually went wrong at the dawn of the industrial revolution. The greatest idiocy has been the degradation of food-growing and bio-skills in favour of

slavery to money. The rural peasantry simply became the bored factory and office peasantry; and the education factory was invented to disguise the boredom, ignorance, and slave numbers.

We need three meals a day, not three homes a day, or three cars a day.

It is prestigious to not get the hands dirty, but it excludes adventure. Every child is a self-educating organism if always in a creative environment. People can be aggressively creative upon a survival-ecology base, and all should be more mobile, enriching civilisation worldwide.

Jobs are irrelevant. 'Employment' is slave terminology: we should be eliminating 'employment'. Every Australian is a millionaire because we overproduce everything.

The ACF seems to be mostly involved with the clean-hands brigade - money and paper - which is costing us trees.

I had many good friends at the Roxby blockade, but they agreed that all that organisation and energy would have been better used in establishing an energy-efficient village in the Adelaide hills. We should be converting cities and the whole earth into an eco-park, not guarding national parks with a special police force, for the sake of 'future generations'. Tomorrow never comes.

We can zero inflation and unemployment immediately by a policy that everyone would approve of, but no party could implement this, for we'd find that we don't need politicians. All orthodox economics is simply the rhetoric of consumerism, a vicious circle of idiotic abuses that will destroy all life on Earth.

John Fisher  
Quorn, SA

You are invited to write letters to *Chain Reaction* with your comments on the magazine or on other issues of interest. Letters should be kept within 300 words so that as many as possible may be published. Longer letters may be edited. Write today to *Chain Reaction*, Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic 3000, Australia.

## EARTH NEWS

### Life be in it!

The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Clyde Holding, has announced a federal inquiry into the operations of the James Hardie asbestos mine at Baryulgil near Grafton in northern New South Wales. The mine was in operation between 1944 and 1979. Most of the workers came from the Bundjalung Aboriginal community near the mine.

The Aboriginal Legal Service will testify that 70 of the 250 mineworkers have died from asbestos related diseases. The legal service says that the company knew of the dangers of asbestos over 15 years ago, but adequate steps were not taken to protect the workers or their families. The concentration of airborne asbestos was said to have sometimes reached 500 times the accepted safe level of 4 fibres per millilitre of air.

Cecil Patten of the James Hardie Asbestos Victims Association has said that the inquiry promises to be one of the most intensive into industrial disease and corporate practices ever undertaken in Australia. No compensation has been paid by the company despite the large sums of money it now spends promoting its image in arts, motor sport and the 'Life Be In It' campaign. Workers compensation practices have been shown to be inadequate, and Australian law does not provide for class actions which could allow affected workers as a group to seek redress through the courts.

Inhalation of asbestos has been associated with mesothelioma (a rare form of cancer) and asbestosis (an inflammation of the lungs which often leads to lung cancer).

Source: *Tribune*, 5 October, 1983.

### Uranium coalition

On Monday 7 October 1983, the federal government caucus reneged on its party's policy to phase out the mining of uranium in Australia and gave the go ahead for the giant Roxby Downs project and foreshadowed new contracts for Ranger and Nabarlek. Thirty-two groups, representing the peace and environment movement, the Australian Labor Party, the Australian Democrats, trade unions and church groups, met in Melbourne on Wednesday evening, 9 November to consider the decision.

The meeting issued the following statement:

A government elected to phase out the uranium industry has decided to expand the mining and export of uranium. By bowing to corporate pressures the government has shown its preference for political expediency. Promises to the electorate, solemn commitments to the environmental movement and the peace movement count for nothing.

The decision to mine and export uranium, if allowed to stand, makes Australia a direct contributor to an unending threat to the living environment and the human species. At a time of the greatest risk of nuclear war the export of Australia's uranium will directly fuel the nuclear arms race. The decision must be overturned as quickly as possible.

By portraying the conflict as one between Bob Hawke and the Left of the ALP, the government (and the media) has tried to hide the fact that millions of Australians continue to oppose uranium mining.

The continual pressure applied to the traditional owners of the land by uranium companies and pro-nuclear governments only serves to fragment fragile communities and further disenfranchise the Aboriginal people.

The promised economic benefits are an illusion. The market for uranium is declining in the face of world-wide rejection of the dangers and costs of

nuclear power. The very few post-construction jobs to be created in the uranium industry could be easily and more productively created in other industries.

The only principled course of action open to the government is to reconsider its position and adopt a policy which:

- prevents the opening of any new uranium mines, including Roxby Downs, potentially the world's largest uranium mine;
- repudiates any contracts from existing mines signed after July 1982; and
- announces a firm timetable for the rapid closure of the entire uranium industry.

The meeting resolved to establish an informal coalition of all interested groups and organisations to mount a concerted campaign in support of these demands. It also resolved to support and closely liaise with similar campaigns in other states.

The Victorian campaign will include:

- widespread dissemination of information through the distribution of thousands of leaflets throughout Victoria;
- continuing pressure on all branches of the Labor Party to ensure a return to an unequivocal anti-uranium policy and prompt implementation of such policy by a Labor government;
- discussions with trade unions and the ACTU to consider joint initiatives for a strong education campaign among trade unionists, and possible industrial action;
- non-violent acts of civil disobedience aimed at politicians who supported the mining of uranium, to convince them of the need to terminate Australia's involvement in the nuclear fuel cycle;
- encourage wide public support at all elections for parliamentary parties with an anti-uranium policy.

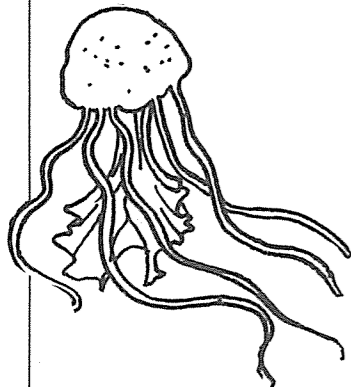
Contact: Movement Against Uranium Mining (Victoria), 285 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne, Vic 3000. Tel: (03) 663 1428, (03) 663 1561.



NICK GALES



## Reef park - bit by bit



Almost 99% of the Great Barrier Reef is now included in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, following the declaration of the far northern section in early September 1983 and the Townsville and inshore southern areas on 30 October, by the federal Minister for Conservation.

The Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest and most complex area of living coral reefs, and the new legislation has made it the largest marine conservation area in the world. Whilst Dr Geoff Mosley, the director of the Australian Conservation Foundation, commented that the initial extension to 80% was a 'quiet achievement of momentous importance', there is still some concern over the park's coastal boundaries. At present most of the park extends east of a boundary 5 kilometres from the shore. This gives the Queensland government control of coastal waters along much of the reef's length and land use developments along the coast (except for some areas considered of high ecological sensitivity, where the federal government regulations extend up to low water mark.)

Uncontrolled industrial or urban development could endanger wetland areas vital to the ecology of the reef, and

## Striking at Ranger

On 26 September 1983, all the staff at the Ranger uranium mine in the Northern Territory walked off the job for one week in protest against the contamination of the water system.

Due to a maintenance error in July a pipe was connected between the water system used in the operation of the mining plant, and the potable water system, causing the water used by the workers for washing and drinking to become contaminated. Workers were examined for radioactive contamination and the tests indicated there was no danger. When the contamination was discovered the system was flushed out.

However, a plumber later found residue containing the radioactive substance ammonium diuranate still in the pipes. The entire water drinking system had to be replaced.

The workers, who are members of the Miscellaneous

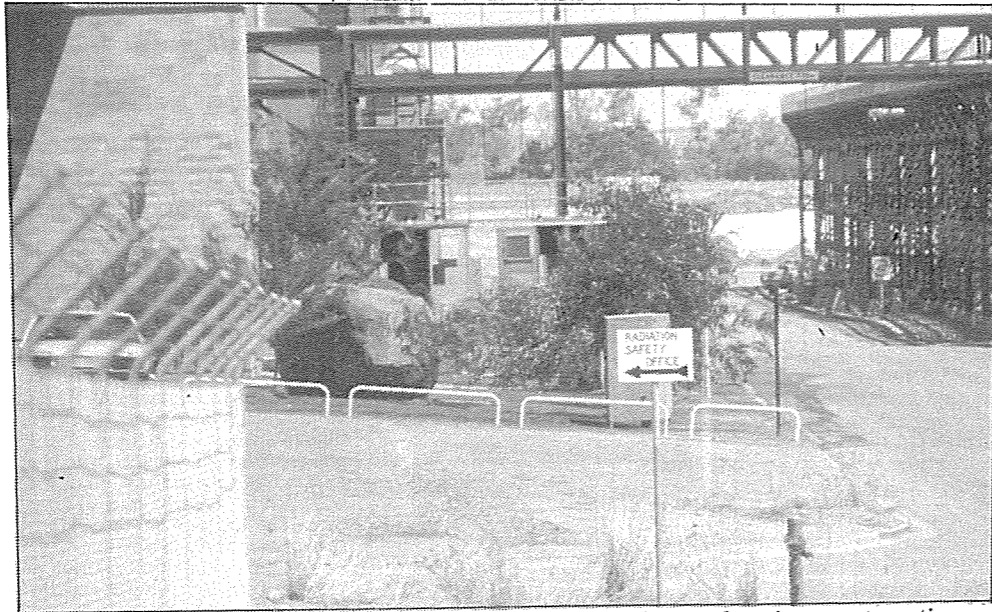
Workers Union, the Federated Clerks Union and the Australasian Society of Engineers went on strike in protest at this and a number of other safety issues. Several incidents which have occurred at Ranger have increased their concern about the safety aspects of uranium mining.

At the same time last year (1982) an accident occurred in which a worker was exposed to 3.5 rems of radiation. (The maximum permitted exposure for uranium miners in Australia is 5 rems each year although the maximum acceptable dose for the public is 0.175 rems each year.) The worker was taken off duties in radioactive areas and checks are apparently being made at regular intervals to monitor his health. According to Dr Cannon, of the office of the Supervising Scientist in the Territory, the worker was trying to clean a pipe a little too quickly and there was a

large release of radioactive dust. Dr Cannon says he was not sure if the worker was wearing a mask or if he lost it during the accident. According to Dr Cannon there are quite a few occasions when levels of radioactive dust at the mine exceeds derived safety limits.

Earlier this year a process worker fell into a bin of yellow cake and was buried up to his neck. The worker is reported to be extremely concerned and under considerable stress because he fears he has been contaminated.

Not surprisingly, it is not possible to gain this information through the commercial media. For their own reasons they refuse to publicise the health and environmental dangers of uranium mining. It is imperative that the media know there are people who do possess the facts and will not be fooled by arguments which claim uranium mining and nuclear energy are safe.



Ranger uranium mine: contamination of workers and environment continues.

conservationists have argued that regulations over coastal development are necessary to guarantee the safety of the reef. Submissions to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority over management plans for the new areas have been called. The marine park is a multi-use park and areas of it are allocated for particular purposes by the process of zoning, zoning

plans being required for each section of the park.

Conservations would like to see the management plan include both recreational and development activities but the Queensland government would prefer potential development areas left out of the park's plan of management.

The protection of the reef has also been strengthened by regulations which prohibit oil

drilling in the small areas of the reef region not included in the marine park. Previously some of these areas were under the Queensland *Marine Park Act (1982)* but this did not specifically exclude oil drilling.

Sources: *Tribune* 14 September 1983, *The Age* 31 October 1983, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority 1981.

CHRIS HARRIS

## 'Democracy' invades Grenada

USA troops invaded Grenada on the morning of Tuesday 25 October 1983 on the pretext of restoring democracy and freedom. Eighteen months before the invasion the Prime Minister of Grenada, Maurice Bishop, had this to say about American democracy:

We want to say to Reagan here and now that the kind of democracy that he practices - we in Grenada are not in the least bit interested in that kind of democracy: a democracy which fires 10 million workers, because that is the number of workers who are out of work today in the USA; a democracy which, in one blow, fires 14 000 air traffic controllers and then moves to decertify their union; a democracy which cuts the social benefits to the poorest people and the poorest workers in the USA; a democracy which closes down schools, a democracy which cuts back on Medicare; a democracy which cuts back on food stamps for the poor, a democracy which removes housing subsidies, a democracy which cuts farmer's subsidies; a democracy which is aimed at removing all the rights that the workers and the poor of the USA from the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidency have fought for, have struggled for, and have gained over the last 40 years. That brand of democracy is not a democracy which we are interested in.

Bishop recognised that the USA was seeking to undermine the Revolutionary Government which came to power on 13 March 1979. From the time the People's Revolutionary Government, led by the New Jewel Movement, came to power, the USA has used various tactics to destabilise the economy and security of Grenada.

Early in the Reagan adminis-

tration, the USA carried out a quite public effort to stop a co-financing conference of the European Economic Community to arrange assistance for the construction of Grenada's international airport. In March 1981, the USA director on the board of the International Monetary Fund successfully blocked a USA\$6.3 million loan for capital projects that had already been negotiated between Grenada and IMF officials.

Before the 19 October coup which involved the death of Maurice Bishop, there had been the threat of military intervention in Grenada. From 1 August to 15 October 1981, NATO forces (joined by Argentina, Colombia, Uruguay and Venezuela) conducted major naval manoeuvres code-named *Venture '81*. The manoeuvres - involving 250 ships, 1000 aircraft, and 120 000 troops - included a major phase of rehearsing for war with Cuba and Grenada, under the respective code names of 'Red' and 'Amber'.

It is of course not the first time the USA has used these sort of tactics to destabilise countries which the USA perceives to be unfriendly. Reagan's pretext for the invasion - 'restoring democracy and freedom' - is indefensible. The USA actively supports right-wing military dictatorships in South America. The invasion of Grenada is obviously meant as a message to other countries in the region, ie Nicaragua, that the USA is prepared to use military intervention to protect its perceived interests.

Source: *Forward Ever! Three years of the Grenadian Revolution*, speeches of Maurice Bishop, Pathfinder Press, Sydney, 1982.



USA marine in action, Central America.

CARE has identified eleven points which are to be the focus of 'the largest ever campaign against South African racism in Australia.' The campaign aims to:

- reduce the level of diplomatic representation between Australia and South Africa;
- stop the distribution of racist propaganda to Australian schools, media organisations and the community by the South African embassy;
- stop immediately the import and sale of South African kruggerands in Australia;
- stop trade promotion, terminate any government-funded support of trade missions, and close the Australian Trade Commission in Johannesburg;
- prohibit the import of South African coal and steel;
- allow immigration of refugees, draft resisters and other anti-racist South Africans;
- immediately provide at least 100 secondary and ter-

tiary scholarships for refugees from South Africa's racist education system;

- invite and assist the major South African exiled political party, the African National Congress, to establish representation in Canberra;
- redirect Australian economic support - especially trade and aid and development assistance - from South Africa to the neighbouring southern African 'front line' states, for example, Zimbabwe;
- re-establish Australia's good reputation in the Commonwealth and the Third World by reversing recent decisions to go soft on white South African sportspeople, and to give privileges to South African Airways; and
- provide funding for currently banned anti-apartheid education campaigns as endorsed in UNESCO forums.

Contact: Campaign Against Racial Exploitation, PO Box 51, Kensington Park, SA 5068. Tel: (08) 332 6474.

## Anti-apartheid campaign

The Campaign Against Racial Exploitation (CARE) is launching a national campaign to publicise the Australian government's support for apartheid in South Africa. Jim Gale, a spokesperson for CARE, said:

Apartheid rule could not continue without the cultural, economic, diplomatic and international sup-

port which Australia and other Western countries provide, for example, the 100% increase in Australian trade with the apartheid government over two years, encouraged by Australian government trade commissioners, and the sale of South African kruggerands in Australia from which revenue goes straight to the apartheid government to bolster South Africa's militarised economy.

HARPERS



## Thirty years later

The British Ministry of Defence announced in October 1983 detailed plans for checking cancer victims among the thousands of servicemen and civilians who took part in the British atmospheric nuclear weapons tests 30 years ago. It is expected that the program will take two years.

The checks to be undertaken by the National Radiological Protection Board will involve between 12 000 and 20 000 servicemen and civilians who took part in tests in the Pacific and Australia.

Mr Geoffrey Pattie, the Minister for Defence Procurement, said the government had commissioned the survey, costing UK£1 50 000, because of understandable public disquiet. But he was confident that the incidence of cancer among those involved in the tests would be no higher than in the rest of the population.

Source: *The Guardian Weekly*, 9 October 1983.

## Transitions

Association for International Cooperation and Disarmament (NSW) has changed its name to People for Nuclear Disarmament (NSW). Its postal address remains: PO Box A243, Sydney South, NSW 2001 — and it's located on Floor 7, 245 Castlereagh St, Sydney. Tel: (02) 29 4784.

Nuclear Free Pacific Coordinating Committee (NSW) has changed its telephone contacts to: (02) 267 2462 and (02) 30 3214. Its postal address remains: PO Box A243, Sydney South, NSW 2001.

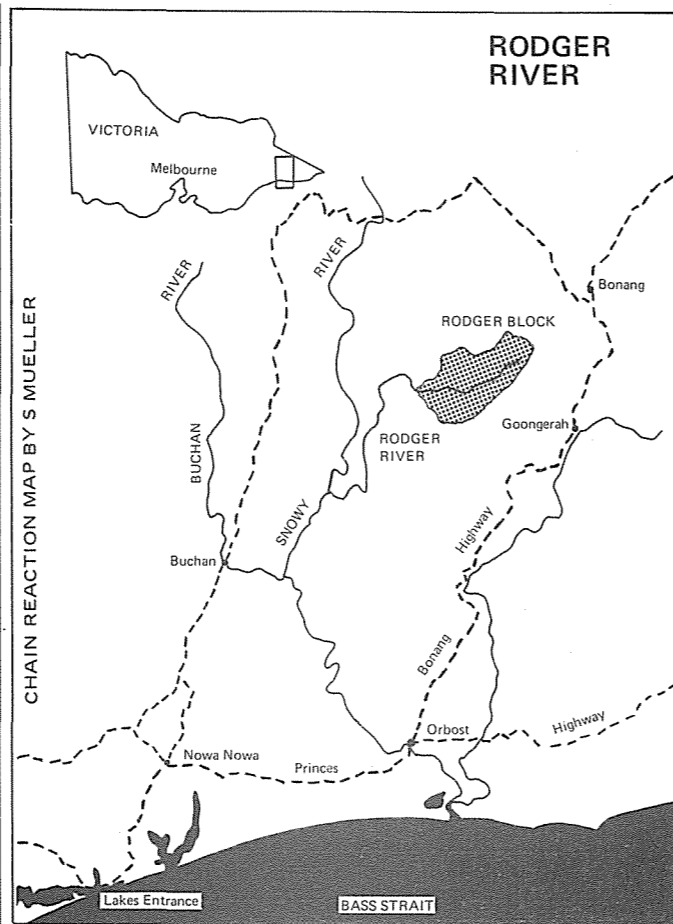
## Summer at Rodger River

Not for woodchips this time — but still the forests of East Gippsland in Victoria are falling. Mismanagement and a policy of 'taking the best and burning the rest' have meant that mills in the region have cut out their allocations and are looking for new forests. The timber industry, in its quest for every big tree in the state, will bring loggers to the Rodger River, in the isolated hills north of Orbost, this summer (1983-84).

The forests of the Rodger basin are wild and untouched. They are a living contradiction to claims that there is no forest wilderness left in Victoria. To the visitor there is an immediate feeling that here is something quite distinct from the 'managed' forests of the rest of the state. Here are huge trees of singular character, rainforest gullies, splashes of red waratah, echoes of birdsong — everywhere diversity and beauty.

The Forests Commission of Victoria (FCV) has been slowly preparing for an assault on the Rodger River. In July this year (1983) the \$80 000 Rodger River Kit was released. It was heralded as a new approach by the FCV, which offered the public an opportunity to be involved in land use decisions, taking environmental factors into account. The kit contains the results of a brief biological survey, a 'forest management plan' and a 'sawlog harvest proposal' for the Rodger River. One aim of the kit is to 'show those areas that will not be utilised'. A quick glance at the map in the kit shows that the whole area comes under 'areas planned for harvesting'. A small area is given the dubious protection of 'decision deferred for three years pending further investigation'.

This summer it is planned to build the network of roads needed for future logging and to cut in several locations scattered throughout the block. One site to be cut this year is a unique stand of mixed-aged mountain ash, a stand which has regenerated in a way that contradicts the theory propagated by the



timber industry that ash needs large-scale clearfelling and burning to ensure regrowth.

There is only one choice that can be made about these forests: either they remain wilderness or they become production forest. You can't do both.

The Minister for Forests, Rod MacKenzie, will make a decision on the Rodger River in December 1983. He is genuinely afraid for jobs in the timber industry, but seems overwhelmed by the FCV view of future options. What will happen in the next few years when all the big trees are gone? Woodchips? Or a diverse economy based on tourism and sustainable forestry?

Conservationists are asking for:

- declaration of national parks in the three major remaining tall wet forests of East Gippsland — Rodger River/Bowen Range, the Errinundra Plateau and

Mount Kaye;

- immediate investigation of employment alternatives in East Gippsland;
- an open, independent inquiry into the Victorian timber industry; and
- a stop to logging on other sites of biological significance until after the inquiry.

Action: The Native Forests Action Council (NFAC) and the Australian Conservation Foundation are providing the focus for a large public campaign on the issue. This summer NFAC will be organising exploratory trips to the Rodger River, which will involve stream surveys, photography and publicity of any logging activity.

If you are interested in any campaign activity for the Rodger River, or wish to donate to the campaign, contact: Rodger River Campaign, c/- NFAC, 285 Little Lonsdale St, Melbourne, Vic 3000. Tel: (03) 663 1561.

Letters can also be sent to the Minister for Forests and the Premier c/- Parliament House, Melbourne, asking why there are no significant tall wet forests in any East Gippsland national park.

## 1. My subscription

Please add me/us to Chain Reaction's subscription lists

for the next six editions — \$12 (individuals and non-profit groups) or \$30 (commercial organisations)

for the next twelve editions — \$24 (individuals and non-profit groups) or \$60 (commercial organisations)

## 2. Gift subscriptions

Please send Chain Reaction's next six editions, as a gift from me, to:

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Postcode) \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Multiple subscriptions

Please send me five copies of each of the next six editions of Chain Reaction — \$39 (schools, libraries . . . anyone).

## 4. Donation

I want to support Chain Reaction's work. Here is a \$ \_\_\_\_\_ donation.

# Rip out this page

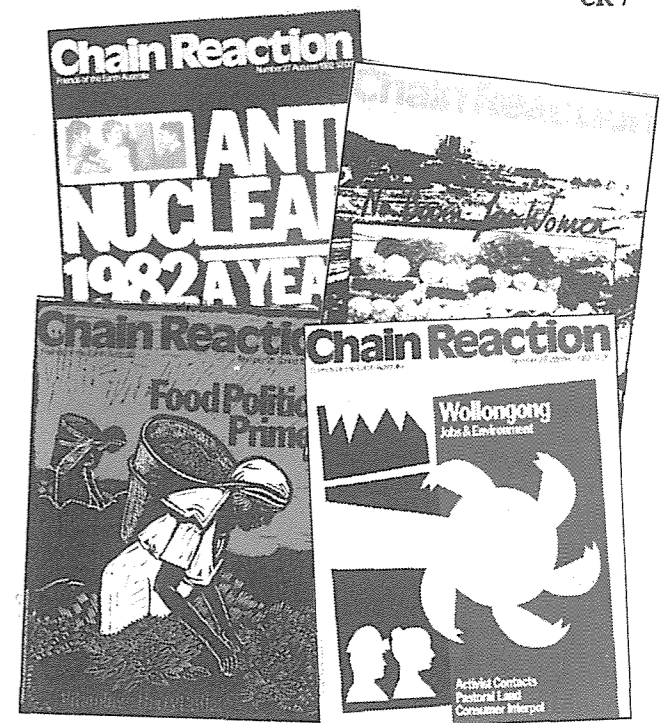
Post to: Chain Reaction, Room 14, Floor 4, 37 Swanston Street, Melbourne, Vic 3000.

Enclosed please find a cheque\*

(Name) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Postcode) \_\_\_\_\_

\*or pay by bankcard:  
(Bankcard no) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Expires) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature) \_\_\_\_\_

CR 7





# Water is life.

Pure water. It's very easy to take for granted.

You can turn on a tap and it's there - for most of us, a bountiful and never-ending supply.

However, for over half the world's people, pure water is rare, and as a consequence, life itself often hangs in the balance.

For many, just obtaining sufficient water for life's basic requirements may involve a 10 kilometre trek each day - a trek usually undertaken by women and children.

And often, this water proves a source of disease and illness. It has been estimated that water-related diseases alone claim as many as 25 million lives each year.

This year's Christmas Bowl Appeal will provide funds for drought-relief, the supply of safe drinking water and sanitation, and the development of irrigation for crops and livestock.

This Christmas we invite you to give water to the thirsty, food to the hungry, and hope to those who are poor and oppressed.



Christmas Bowl Appeal, Box C199 Clarence St. PO, NSW 2000

- I'd like to play my part and enclose a donation to the Christmas Bowl.  
 Please send me details of the Christmas Bowl's work.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

I need a receipt for tax purposes please.

## Have a wild Christmas

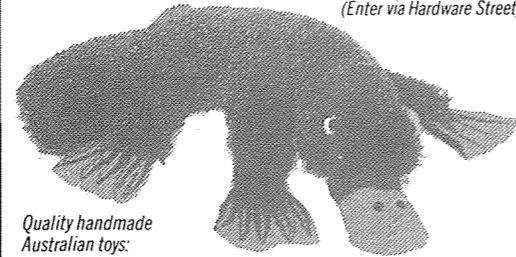
The Tasmanian Wilderness Calendar is now available for \$6.95.

We also have a new range of books, posters, T-shirts, cards and rafting gear.

Support **The Wilderness Society.**

Shop 8, 399 Lonsdale St, Melbourne. Ph: 67 5884

(Enter via Hardware Street)



Quality handmade Australian toys:  
Platypus: large \$31.00, small \$19.95

## Subscribers



if you have recently left your address please let us know.



# Reactions - exiles from the chemical society

Few people understand the seriousness of severe allergy illnesses. The conservative medical profession generally are ignorant of it or treat it unsympathetically. Yet some researchers estimate that up to 60% of ill people are affected by allergy disease in some way.

Linnell Secomb and Mark Cole, from *Chain Reaction*, talked to Maureen Magee and her daughter Jacinta, both of whom suffer from severe allergies, about their illnesses and how they have affected their lives.

The first time I saw Maureen I was helping her family move house from Moss Vale to Appin, 50 km inland from Wollongong in New South Wales. Their new home was an isolated old farm house, on top of a windy hill, surrounded by cleared farm land and patches of scrub. It was night, cold and raining, when Maureen and her kids arrived. It was clear that they were exhausted from a car journey of no more than an hour. They went straight into the house but within a few minutes had to all pile back into the car and be driven away down the hill with all the windows wound up. I hadn't noticed, but upwind on the next hill someone was burning off cleared trees, and the wood smoke had nearly caused Maureen and Jacinta to collapse.

Before Mark and I went to interview Maureen she asked us to wash ourselves and our hair thoroughly in Sunlight laundry soap (the only brand she and Jacinta aren't allergic to) and to wash out our clothes four to five times in plain water to get rid of the detergent in them. If we had been wearing make up, deodorant, hairspray, aftershave or perfume there would have been major problems as these linger in clothing for up to five years. She asked us to make sure we drove all the way with the windows wound up to avoid petrol fumes and not to stop at a petrol station on the way. In the end, because we hadn't had time to wash out our clothes, we borrowed some of Maureen's clothes and wore them while we were with her. Despite all this Maureen still began to react to something about us with aches and pains across her back and shoulders.

In November 1982, Maureen and her family left Wollongong in an attempt to find an unpolluted home and outdoor environment which wouldn't make her and Jacinta sick. At that stage Maureen weighed just 43 kilograms (and she was to get even thinner) could eat virtually no food and was surviving on a food-substitute drug. She couldn't walk and felt unable to make decisions about her future. She says now that she thought she was going to die.

I asked Maureen first to explain what allergies are and what their effects are. Maureen Well I suppose Jacinta and I are on the extreme end of the continuum of allergy problems. Our sensitivity to

ordinary household objects may seem bizarre. There is a huge middle ground of ordinary people who have poor health and don't know that it is caused by food and inhalant sensitivity; their doctors don't know how to diagnose that.

There's an enormous number of people who have unspecific illnesses that doctors label as psychosomatic. They feel really ill and they've got headaches or muscle pain and aches and sometimes arthritis, but with no swelling. They're tired all the time and they've often got visual disturbances and emotional disturbances as well. All these people have allergies to foods and some, like us, have inhalant allergies to chemicals and pollutants in the home and in the atmosphere. In these people, at some point, their immune systems have begun to react with increased sensitivity. And it seems to be caused by over-exposure to particular foods or chemicals over a period of time.

Linnell How many people would be affected by allergies in this way?

Maureen Dr Mackarness [who's written several books on allergies - see list] reckons that 40% of all sick people who go to the doctor have illnesses totally unrelated to allergy; 30% of all people who go inside any doctor's surgery are totally ill from allergy - inhalant or food or contact; and the other 30% are people with a lot of neurological diseases, some of the arthritic diseases, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, etc, people who are just partly allergic but there's other physical things going wrong as well. Well, most people just don't know





about all this and a lot of people, particularly women, are diagnosed as neurotic or as having various phobias and the like. Mackarness reckons that three out of four psychiatric patients are just the result of food and inhalant allergies. That's why they have such a low rate of success in treating psychiatric patients.

**Linnell** What are the symptoms? How do people with allergies or who are chemically sensitive react?

**Maureen** Part of the thing is that if you develop food allergy it comes on rather slowly, rather than a sudden drastic thing. Say you're developing an allergy to wheat, you'd eat wheat for breakfast and a couple of hours later you get a real sagging kind of feeling, or a feeling of unease or tension, and if you have a bit more wheat you'll get a pick-up feeling and you'll be fine. Another couple of hours later you'll get the same and you'll need it again. So it's rather like people and coffee, only just a bit stronger than that, and if you're really sick it's considerably stronger. So the foods you're allergic to turn out to be the ones you ate all day long and that you're addicted to. I used to eat fifteen slices of bread a day. People used to say, 'Gee you eat a lot for such a skinny person'. I thought 'Oh well, I've got a rapid metabolism or something'. So your allergy to the food is masked by an addiction which you really don't recognise until a certain point when the masking begins to break down.

People like me and Jacinta are basically chemically sensitive rather than food allergic. In fact it's the chemicals in the environment - particularly the domestic environment - that we react to. For example if you two were here wearing your clothes with detergent in them, Jacinta would be an absolute write-off with eczema all over her face and a mental functioning of practically zero. She would become very weak physically and tearful. I'd feel pretty sick, but as well, when we ate tea tonight we'd be really sick either straight after tea or the next time we ate that food we'd be violently ill and then we wouldn't be able to eat that food again for three months. So that if we are exposed to something we've got to fast because that's only one meal we'd miss rather than three months' meals. And also if we breathed in your detergent we'd then be more sensitive to every other chemical that we came across.

But the reactions really vary, with different people who have different levels of allergy to different things. There are physical reactions and psycho-



logical reactions - from hayfever pain or headache type reactions to hyperactive, anxious, aggressive, manic sort of reactions, to depressed, disoriented reactions and amnesia and coma.

**Mark** When did you first begin to realise that you were ill?

**Maureen** In July 1977, I cooked a meal and invited two friends, and there were Martin (my eldest son), Jacinta and me. After that Martin, Jacinta and I all got flu from which we've never really recovered. And one of my friends got flu too and she's never recovered and she's got severe allergies as well. And the other person didn't get anything at all - didn't get flu, and didn't get allergies. The virus affected our immune system and caused us to become more sensitive to chemicals in the environment and in food. This is one of the ways that people can become more sensitive to exposure to chemicals.

**Mark** Has this been around for centuries or is it getting more common with the new products and chemicals that are around? Is it a twentieth century disease?

**Maureen** Clinical ecologists don't like to make sweeping statements because they're so often accused of being unscientific. But Dr Mackarness definitely says that it's on the increase all the time and that it's the petrochemicals that are basically the problem. But it's really to do with turpines and they're present in most paints so that's why they're present in coal and oil and all such compounds. If a bit of wood smoke came our way I'd just fall unconscious on the ground and that's as old as the

world. But the problem is that the twentieth century lifestyle surrounds us with petrochemicals and their out-gassing in ever-increasing amounts, so that people are over-exposed to these chemicals.

**Linnell** You just mentioned clinical ecologists. Well, what do they do? How do they treat allergies?

**Maureen** What clinical ecologists do is fast patients for roughly five days in purified air and the symptoms disappear on the fast. Then they reintroduce foods. What they do is just give the foods and watch for reactions. If you've been suffering from severe headaches and disorientation say, they watch for those reactions - only much more severe than usual - when you're tested on suspected foods. If you're allergic to most foods they find a diet for you by testing you on foods starting with those least often or never eaten because they're the ones you're least likely to react to. Then they put you on a rotation diet, which means all the foods are divided up into families, and you eat so many families on one day and then you have to have a four-day gap before you eat any of those foods again. So there's four menus - day one, day two, day three, day four. This is so you don't eat any food often enough to develop allergic reactions to it. Then they test you for chemical sensitivity by controlled exposure to things like plastic, carpet, paint, etc.

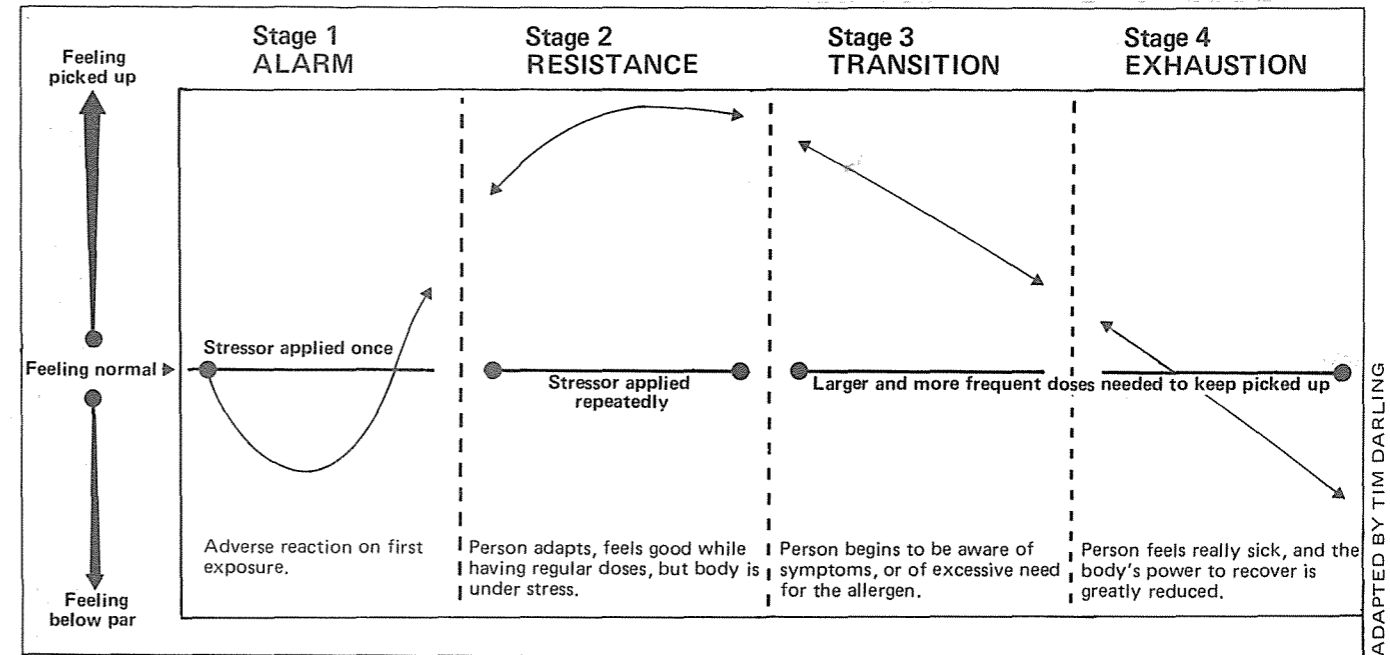
**Mark** After all three of you got flu that time in 1977, what medical treatment did you get?

**Maureen** I went to the GP because I had this terrible flu and I thought I was going to get bad asthma because I'd had a bit of an attack. He checked my chest and said, 'There's nothing wrong with you - it's as clear as a bell.' When I didn't get better I went back and I made him do tests. They were all clear except he said, 'Oh, this test for allergies shows high allergies - but you've got asthma and so on - that's probably what it is.' Finally I made him send me to a rheumatologist because I thought I had arthritis (though I didn't really know what it was then). He was very reluctant but I absolutely stood over him. He was trying to tell me I was neurotic! Well, I wouldn't take that from a doctor.

The rheumatologist who goes to Wollongong is actually not too bad at all. He tested me and said, 'Look, what you've got to do is go to bed for six months.' He said, 'Really you should be in hospital.' I said, 'I can't do that - I've got two children'. He said, 'Well, as



Typical development of allergic reaction to a food substance. Adapted from *Chemical Victims* by Dr R Mackarness.



long as you rest'. Well, I went to bed and felt worse and worse and worse. I thought 'How can I spend six months in bed, with my raging aches and pains, thinking about where this pain is and that pain is - nothing else to distract me? So I went back to work, which is the worst thing I could have ever done. The kids lay in bed for just about the whole term really, and they obviously had the same symptoms. They were only eight and ten then. I got sicker and sicker and the doctor said he thought my gall bladder was rotten so I had that out and I really deteriorated badly after that. The kids gradually got better and they went back to school, and they used to have bad patches, for a couple of weeks they'd be laid out. I just let them go to bed till they felt better. Martin's stayed just like that ever since but Cinta had a most drastic relapse . . . when was it . . . ?

**Jacinta** Just after I turned fourteen.

**Maureen** She's sixteen and a bit now and she hasn't been to school since.

Then I heard about an immunologist at Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney who might be able to help. So we tore up there. That was early 1982. We'd been in wheelchairs over November and December. I now realise that we'd had a box of chocolates, the whole family, every night the weeks leading up to Christmas. That's why we couldn't walk or stand up. Just after New Year I was

feeling much better and I drove up myself. I was pregnant then with Rosa.

In this program I reacted to every one of the challenges, which was a bit ominous really because I knew they represented huge food groups. Jacinta didn't react to much at all really. A really savage reaction to food colouring and we had already realised that we were allergic to carrots and that was about it. Well, just about all the foods disappeared from my menu at the end. I was a bit shocked but I was left with a wide range of meats, a few vegetables, and a couple of fruits. But they never supervised me onto an adequate diet, and they never checked what other allergies I had afterwards.

After I had the baby, I knew that was a critical time, I went and stayed in a rest home in Sydney. The place was a sea of chipboard, carpet, rubber - everything I can't tolerate. But I didn't know that then. We had additions to our house - we put down chipboard flooring, carpet, we bought a new rubber bed. We had furniture put in that was all full of chipboard and rubber foam and laminated and heavens knows what. Grouting in the bathroom. I couldn't walk into the room - in fact I was paralytic. We bought an oil heater - I never got out of bed while it was on. After ten days we turned it off and then I could sit up and stand up. But it was beginning to dawn on me that these things were making me sick.

When you unmask food allergies and stop eating all these things that are making you sick, you exacerbate in some way inhalant allergies that are already there. They become more marked and it's terribly important not to expose yourself. You've got to deal with both at once. I begin to become allergic to every single thing I put in my mouth and get massive reactions to everything. So in the end I could only eat two teaspoons of food a day without becoming violently ill. And I was starving, absolutely starving, but too frightened to eat.

If I went into a shop I became psychotically depressed and so damned confused. I knew I only had a couple of minutes before I became too confused to do a thing. I couldn't remember to take my change, I'd buy things I didn't want, I'd come home with all this junk.

Finally, I rang some people in New Zealand who were involved with a group working on allergies and other illnesses because I was desperate. I'd rung the doctor at Prince Alfred Hospital but he wasn't any help. Anyway the people rang me back from New Zealand and said, 'There's a Dr Little who's recommended to deal with really serious cases'. So I rang his surgery at the Bethesda Hospital in Melbourne, and got onto his nurse and she understood straight away and she knew that it was serious. She told me to stop drinking water out of





the tap and to drink mineral water and stop taking the vitamin C powder I'd been taking because it was the worst on the market and most allergic people react to it. She said, 'I'll send you recipes'. 'Recipes', I thought, 'You just haven't caught on to what I'm saying at all'. Anyway she sent me the recipes and a couple of them were things we could actually eat, just foods we hadn't thought of. There's really so many foods in the world that it's very difficult to be allergic to everything. Though it is possible, I assure you. I booked into his clinic as soon as it opened at the beginning of October. That was last year - 1982.

They made me fast for five days and I'd been eating just teaspoons of food for weeks before that. The fast nearly killed me. They started testing me on foods I knew I was allergic to, and then they couldn't find anything that I could eat. So then they really started looking for unusual and rare foods. In the end they sent me home with what they thought wasn't an adequate diet but it was just all they could find. I reacted severely to the chemical tests. They tested me for petrol fumes, because they had a desensitising drop to counter any reaction, to see if I could go back to work. Well I just fell unconscious. They tested me for plastic and I couldn't knit for three days after that, I was so spaced out. Everybody else was recovering in a much shorter period of time. They also tested me on different kinds of water. I was allergic to purified tap water. I was allergic to purified tap water boiled for seven minutes, which boils off the chlorine but concentrates the fluorides and other things in the water. And I was allergic to all mineral waters except Perrier and I could drink triple and double distilled water if it was very high quality distilling.

**Mark** So how did things go after you got home?

**Maureen** Well, I came home, and Peter, my husband, had got retrenched from the steel works and was on unemployment benefits. I was drinking nothing else but Perrier, at \$1.20 a bottle, and on a diet of rare and exotic foods. And in the first month I was at home I lost every one of those foods and it was really frightening because there wasn't anything else. We'd thrown away all our furniture, our mattress and bedding. The lounge room was bare. We had nothing in it except my beloved coffee table which had a plastic underside, which we'd forgotten all about, and the books in the bookshelf; I'm massively

allergic to print and the bookcovers. Oh and the television was in the same room as me as well. And the baby had been looked after by friends and when she came back all her clothes had detergent all through them - I used to just about collapse going through her clothes.

I was getting so thin and I was reacting to everything. I rang Dr Little and told him. Anyway Dr Little rang America and spoke to Dr Rea, who's an expert in clinical ecology, and he said the only thing to do was to go on this drug called Vivonex which is a high protein food substitute. The problem was that we were living on unemployment benefits and it costs \$30 a day! Actually the first problem was obtaining the damn stuff - we couldn't get it anywhere.

Finally in mid-November, things were so bad that we packed up everybody in the car, we packed all our food, and our Perrier, and our babies, and nappies and clothes, and set off. Peter said he thought we were really going to die if we didn't and looking back we really were very sick. I was past making a judgement then and I just went because he said to. We went everywhere looking for a place where we could live. We tried a commune that I knew about way up in the hills but the water supply had dried out in the drought and everyone had left.

**Jacinta** We lived in a tent and camped out in the open. We lived in a pigsty - a real pigsty!

**Maureen** Lots of people were helping us look for somewhere. We had to find a place that was old enough, cheap enough and away from other people because if someone started a lawnmower we two would just be finished. But I remember walking down a river bank and Peter went to sort of half carry me down and I said, 'It's alright I can walk by myself'. And I ran up it and he nearly fell over. We knew we'd done the right thing because I'd been in a wheelchair not so long before.

People helped us so much. About forty women from parent's centres and nursing mothers' groups had collected breast milk for Rosa because I wasn't allowed to nurse her any more because breast feeding made me worse. That really helped her a lot because she was allergic to cows' milk. I was really touched by all those women being so sisterly really when they're probably just the sort of women who'd say, 'Oh I don't believe in women's liberation'.

We lived in an old farm cottage near Moss Vale for a while but it got so cold

in winter and we didn't have any heating except a wood stove, and both of us are allergic to wood smoke. And then it kept flooding and our clothes were wet, and we were filthy and everything stank. Really it was as rough as guts living there. And then finally we found this place which still has lots of problems but it's heaps better.

**Linnell** So how are things now?

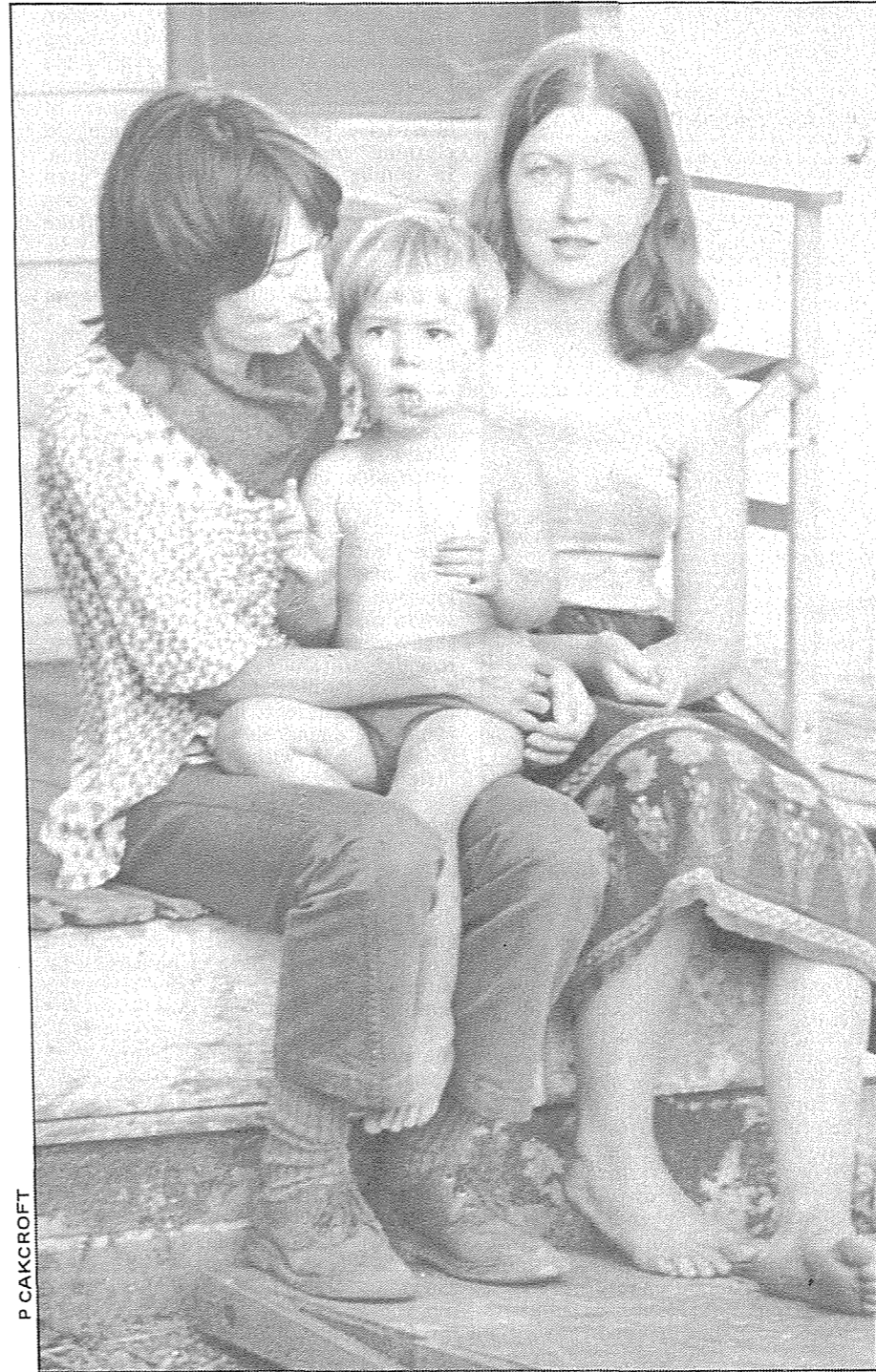
**Maureen** Well, we're obviously terribly dependent and need a terrible lot of looking after. That's terribly frustrating when you've been an independent person. That's what I really can't stand, that part of being allergic.

But the other thing that really gets me is that ordinary people have no way of knowing how they pollute their homes. You walk into a furniture shop and you choose something you can afford that you like. You have no idea that the television's made of chipboard that heats up and outgases formaldehyde fumes into your home. And your carpet, if it's wool, has been moth-proofed and that's outgassing into the home, and if it's synthetic the glue that it's stuck with outgases formaldehyde, and both have a rubber underlay that's outgassing. Well an enormous number of women are at home all day and they turn on a heater all winter and as you heat it up it gets even worse. There's all the plastic in your house - plastic insulation in your heater, in your electric blanket. And the rubber, particularly the foam rubber, that's in everybody's lounges is absolutely incredible. And an enormous number of people are sensitive to those things. And gas is another one - gas cooking is a nightmare for many people and they don't know. And how do you know? If you've got headaches, diarrhoea, aches and pains, weakness, nausea, asthma and hayfever - nobody tells you that these could be caused by allergy to these chemicals. I just feel that ordinary people have a right to know that there's a potential for all these chemicals to cause serious health problems.

For more information: Contact the Allergy Association, PO Box 298, Ringwood, Vic 3134. They will be able to give addresses for country groups in Victoria and groups in New South Wales and South Australia.

Further reading:

- Dr Richard Mackarness, *Not All in the Mind*, Pan Books, London, 1976.
- Dr Richard Mackarness, *Chemical Victims*, Pan Books, London, 1980.
- Theron G Randolph MD and Ralph W Moss PhD, *Allergies: Your Hidden Enemy*, Turnstone Press, UK, 1983.



Maureen, Jacinta and baby, Liam, photographed recently at home.

## Allergies

The problem of allergies to common chemical exposures has received little attention by the medical profession. Allergy to chemicals has been recognised in the case of occupational exposure where the symptoms produced are striking. This may occur for example in the case of asthma in workers exposed to epoxy resins. Also drug allergy has been documented fairly extensively, at least where the manifestations are apparent. The main problems have arisen where allergies to chemicals are not obvious. **Dr Colin Little**, who operates a clinical ecology unit in Melbourne, looks at the problems in identification and treatment of these allergies.

The difficulty in recognising chemical allergies has a number of causes. Many of the allergic reactions to chemicals produce subtle effects such as disturbances in thought and mood, and such changes are not easily assessed in routine medical practice. Even more important is that the majority of the chemicals to which allergy can occur are encountered not in the work site but in the course of everyday life. For this very reason they can be readily overlooked. Common exposures like tobacco smoke, petroleum products and food additives are always with us and the symptoms they produce may often be attributed to other causes. For example flare-ups of asthma may be attributed to stress, or a child's behavioural abnormalities to a dislike of school, rather than to underlying allergy. Finally there is the problem of the multiplicity of chemical allergies. From our experience patients lose the ability to tolerate numerous low-level chemical exposures. (Perhaps the initial event is in fact a malfunction of the immune system.) The result is that when chemical allergy is developed, it is frequently against a wide range of everyday chemicals.

For the above reasons there is only a limited understanding of the importance of chemical allergies in our community. The attitude of the medical profession is still one of limited awareness.

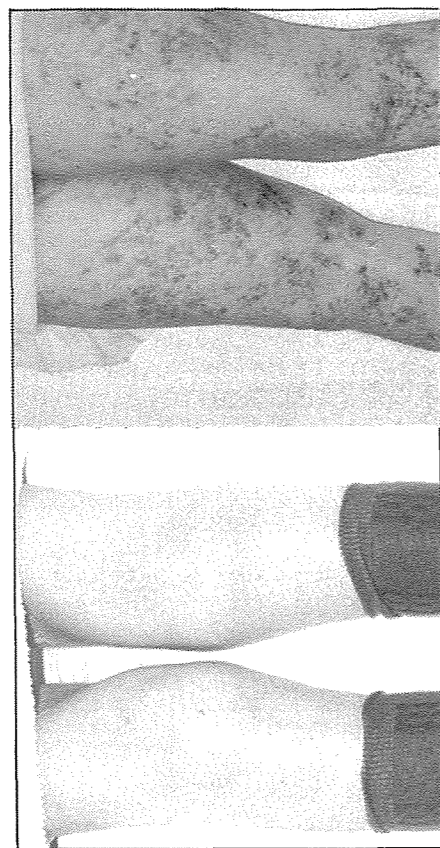




The profession seeks rigorous demonstrations of cause and effect associations between symptoms and chemical exposures. Such a demonstration is often made clinically but may be difficult to show using laboratory tests as none appropriate are yet available. Also we are as yet uncertain as to the importance of toxic effects and allergic reactions in affected individuals. Probably both processes are operating in some cases. Where the immune system is involved, the mechanisms are complex. Immunology is still undergoing a process of rapid development and has not yet reached the point where it can provide appropriate laboratory tests. It is envisaged that eventually such tests will become available. Many patients show reactions involving changes in thought processes and altered mood states. In such individuals an accurate assessment of a reaction is especially hard. In reactions such as asthma or eczema the effects are more clearly evident.

Bearing in mind such limitations of testing, in one or two locations facilities have been set up to perform provocation testing. Although cumbersome, this testing enables the identification of allergies, including those affecting the patient's behaviour. With an increasing awareness amongst workers in occupational health, and in the community at large, of the role of chemical allergy in illness, the need for such facilities is becoming more and more evident. Until diagnostic tests are available there will be reliance on this type of approach. Far too little is being done by hospitals to develop allergy clinics which test comprehensively for a wide range of exposures. At present the definition of allergy tends to be confined to such conditions as asthma and hayfever. It is hoped that over the next few years units will be set up in a number of public hospitals.

The common chemicals causing allergy are found in the air, food and water. In water the most important chemicals are contaminants such as chlorinated hydrocarbons produced by the processing of water. In the diet, food additives are taken daily, and the production of food may leave residues of herbicides and pesticides. Airborne chemical exposures include hydrocarbons from the combustion of motor vehicles, tobacco smoke, fumes from natural gas utilities, aerosols, perfumes and many other such chemicals encountered in everyday life. More subtle, but pervasive, exposures include low-level release of plasticisers from vinyl, components of polyesters and polyurethane foams, formaldehyde



Pustular legs and swollen joints: some of the physical symptoms observed with severe allergies. DR LITTLE

from chipboard and home insulation, and glues in the latex used in the manufacture of carpets.

Efforts to manage the problem of allergy to this battery of chemicals will begin with a documentation of the particular chemicals involved. Effective treatment requires a systematic approach to avoid those exposures causing reactions. In the case of providing a clean water supply, activated charcoal filters are helpful. Food additives can usually be evaded by simply eating foods in a relatively unprocessed form. Unfortunately the food industry has underestimated the extent and severity of reactions to food additives which include such diverse effects as asthma, joint pain and mood change. As public awareness on the question of additives has increased, there have already been a number of changes to improve labelling of foods and make available additive-free items such as fruit juices and breakfast foods. We do have a long way to go in this area however.

The management of problems pro-

duced by allergy to airborne chemicals is even more difficult. Many of the chemicals result from indoor pollution and effective measures include changes in the home design to allow more rapid turnover of air, the use of natural textiles in furnishings, and the provision of alternative preparations for household cleaning, pest control and laundering. In public life the problem is even harder. We are, however, witnessing moves to limit the freedom to smoke cigarettes in office sites and other public places.

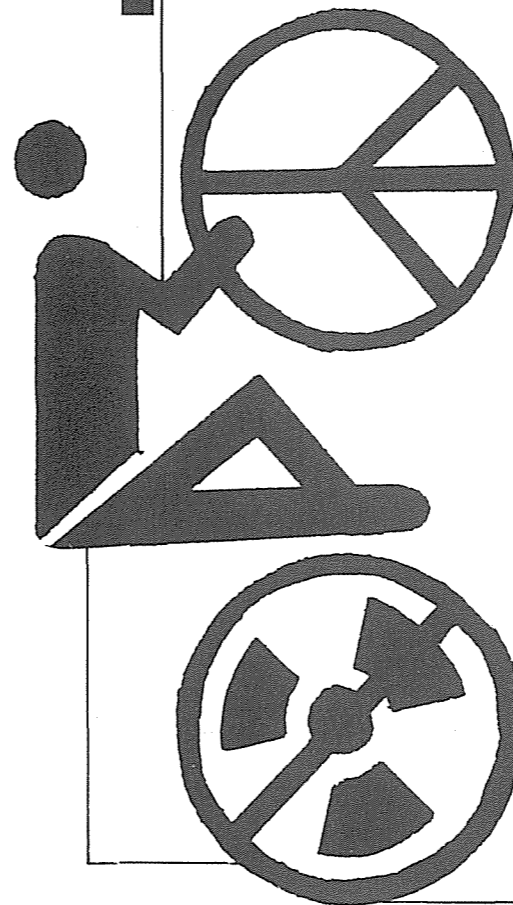
Measures to control emission from industries have been in effect over a number of years already. There are now also moves to improve the air quality of motor vehicle emissions. However these changes are just the beginning. A more complete documentation of chemical allergy is required to form a basis of much wider changes.

Many patients with extensive chemical allergies have to make major changes in lifestyle to achieve effective avoidance. This may involve a change in home location or even occupation, at least in severe cases. It has been our experience that severely affected patients have found it difficult to remain at work in any case. Pioneer efforts are being made to set up facilities to help affected people avoid the chemicals to which they are sensitive, but without public support little can be done to improve conditions in work sites and schools. Many people who have the problem are isolated and the basis for their problems is not adequately appreciated by others. Also many individuals have a more generalised disturbance of the immune system with allergies to foods as well as chemicals. Not only do they have to be careful regarding air quality, but they are often required to avoid common foods and follow a special diet. In occasional cases the problem has been so severe as to demand the use of a food substitute such as Vivonex. This preparation is expensive, and where the necessity for its use has arisen, there have been difficulties in obtaining it because of a lack of understanding of the whole problem of food and chemical allergy.

Overall it is clear that a more concerted effort is to be made to document the problem of chemical allergy to work out the immune and other mechanisms involved. As awareness grows of the effects that trace chemicals can have on health, there will be changes in practices such as architectural design, food packaging and food production. Much of the impetus for this will be required to come from the community at large.

## World Bike Ride

for peace, disarmament and a nuclear-free future



# The peace cycle

Preparations are all but complete in Western Europe for the first deployment since the 1960s of USA ground-launched, medium-range nuclear missiles capable of striking the USSR within minutes. The first of the 'new generation' Cruise and Pershing II missiles are likely to be deployed in Britain and West Germany at the end of 1983, with other North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries to follow in the next five years.

A group of Australian cyclists visited the Fulda Valley in West Germany where some of the missiles will be sited. Paul Marshall met many of the people living under the increasing threat of nuclear war, and reports on the anti-nuclear movement and the variety of protest in the region.

Imagine cycling, heavily laden, along a quiet German country road. There are twelve riders; four are local people from the town of Bad Hersfeld. It's a pleasure to have them with us since only the day before our two friends from the Berlin Green Cycles had returned home. Without these people, or the other Germans who joined along the road, we were reliant upon our sketchy knowledge of German and upon our leaflet. At first when we had cycled out of Braunschweig, the share of leaflets we each had taken seemed to burden our cramped panniers. But it wasn't long before we found their worth and appreciated even more the assistance we'd received in Berlin from the Alternative List (a forerunner to the Green Party) who had printed them for us.

We knew that any conversations begun with a leaflet could be joined by one of our friends from the local peace group. Many eventuated, and one fervent conversation which began with a stop in a small village to decide on our route

*Paul Marshall is a member of the World Bike Ride for Peace, Disarmament and a Nuclear Free Future.*

ended with well-wishes and a donation from a seventy-year-old man. He had been a spectator to a wedding procession and chose instead to test the views of our thirteen-year-old local companion. The two shared the knowledge that their homes were targeted with NATO nuclear weapons.

We were in the middle of Fulda Valley, which straddles the border with the south-west corner of East Germany. Here political geography has created a corridor along which the military mind imagines advancing troops. Many of the new generation missiles planned for deployment in West Germany will find their way to Fulda Valley. Certainly this was one occasion on which I wished that our itinerary was less tight and that we might have stayed longer in the area.

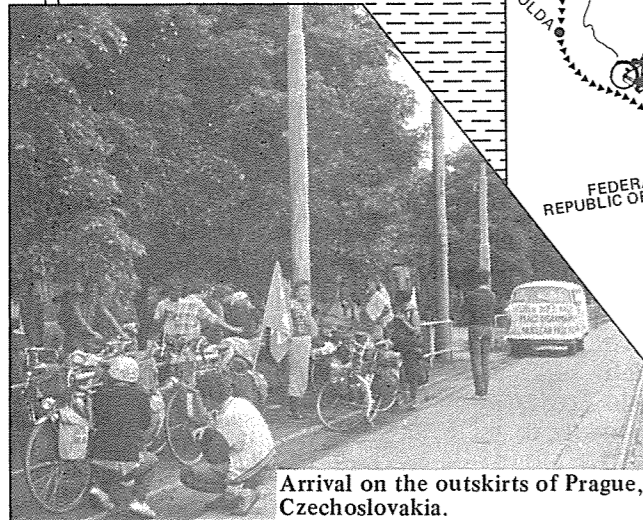
Most people have heard the phrase 'tactical nuclear warfare' but it takes actually living in a place like Fulda Valley to bring its implications home. There was a videotape shown to us by the Green Party in Lauterbach, a USA army production entitled *Fulda Gap* which portrays tactical nuclear armed units swinging into action. To the army film the Greens had added interviews with local people. They seemed not to favour even a localised nuclear war.

Of course, when the USA Pentagon changed its warfare philosophy from 'mutual assured destruction' to 'limited (tactical) nuclear warfare' this had to be put into administrative effect. A training manual was produced covering the procedures and policy for the unleashing of battlefield nuclear weapons. It outlines how a nuclear conflict should be escalated only in a step-by-step way, and in the first instance suggests that commanders of these weapons avoid targeting towns with more than 1000 inhabitants. This offers little restriction since the many villages scattered throughout the valley are generally smaller than that.

At cycling speed it is much easier to observe one's surroundings, and we found the examples of local opposition to the new missiles many and varied. We saw murals painted on the sides of buildings, stickers on windows and placards on trees. All of them carried reference to the NATO plan to clear out 'small pockets' in Germany's few remaining



The route travelled by the World Bike Ride from Berlin to Prague. Many of the oncoming Cruise and Pershing II missile deployments will take place in the Fulda Valley area.



Arrival on the outskirts of Prague, Czechoslovakia.

patches of forest to create hiding places for the mobile missile units. One mural uses a forest, a bulldozer, and a mushroom cloud to depict the scene 'yesterday, today, tomorrow?'

We had gone to Lauterbach, site this year of the annual Hessentag festival, at the invitation of the local branch of the Green Party. After arrival we learned that they had been refused permission to enter their float in the parade and that our participation was similarly restricted. That parade was routed through the old town, right past the three-storey building which hosted us. The residents were draft refusers and had already hung their banners out the windows - one was the household's coat of arms portraying a knight in armour breaking his sword. The other referred to NATO as the 'North Atlantic Terrorist Organisation'.

(Germany has a system of military conscription which requires all young men to serve 18 months in the army. They can if they wish work their way through a series of court hearings where they must demonstrate their pacifist principles, and thus win the right to serve two years on low pay in a social institution such as a hospital. They also have the choice of moving permanently to West Berlin where the military draft does not operate.)

It wasn't long before our colourful 'Disarmament, north, south, east, west' banner joined the other two. However, it seems that someone disapproved of the scene since the police came in the early hours of the parade morning and, using step-ladders, removed our banners. It took persistent visits to the police station before our banners were returned, but the 'Uranium: No thanks!' flag which disappeared from one of our bicycles the same morning was not returned. In response to our complaints the police inspector wrote to say that unless we could produce evidence the matter would be dropped.

By the time we left the town of Fulda and cycled out of Fulda Valley we had made some good contacts, shown our slides and the film *On Sacred Ground* several times, and given out many leaflets, fact sheets on Australia, and contact lists. Newspaper reports told of a group of Australians who had come a long way by bicycle to lend support to the nuclear free zones movement and to help build better international cooperation. Our thoughts had begun to turn to the details of our planned cycle to Prague, a precedent allowed by that city's hosting of the 'World Assembly for Life and Peace' and the associated 'Youth and Student Peace Village' to which we had been invited.

We had started our ride through

Germany two weeks earlier in Braunschweig, because cycling down the border between East and West Germany was the shortest way to Prague and because we knew it to be a highly militarised zone. After participating in the second European Nuclear Disarmament Conference in West Berlin, and receiving the invitation to the Prague event, we explored the possibility of cycling through East Germany. We discovered that the only road previously permitted for cyclists had been upgraded into an autobahn a year ago, thus restricting its use by cyclists. So we hitchhiked to Braunschweig, settled ourselves into the backroom of the Green Party's office, and finalised our plans. The Greens are very active in the Braunschweig area and have managed to put a woman into parliament, demonstrating the support they are winning in the area. Their office is a resource centre of environmental, peace, and women's literature, stickers, badges and posters. They regularly take parts of this centre into the street on a stall which folds out of a bicycle trailer, and we happily joined them in this activity. They arranged for us to meet with the mayor, arranged a newspaper interview, a talk at the high school, a film and slide night, and, from a bundle of photocopies taken from the information in our display folders, they started a file on Australia and the Pacific region.

To their north the Braunschweig Greens are lending support to the campaign to stop the building of a high-level nuclear waste repository at Gorleben. But they are more actively opposing the dumping of low- and intermediate-level waste in an old iron mine 15 km to their south. The authorities claim that the Shak Konrad mine is isolated from groundwater and thus presents no environmental problem, but the Greens contest this in an impressive booklet which outlines their many objections to the dumping program. The state government has rejected their call for a full inquiry.

Every town we visited has its own story. For instance, we found while in Göttingen that the anti-nuclear magazine *Atom Express*, which has its base there, suffered a recent police raid in which their files were seized and their collective intimidated. The police pointed to the previous issue of *Atom Express* in which an article encouraging more active opposition to nuclear power was printed beside an article which explained how easy it was for terrorists to build a crude nuclear bomb. They asserted that the magazine was inciting people to nuclear terrorism!

Before leaving West Germany for Czechoslovakia, we visited the border province town of Mitterteich. We knew that people here were opposing the storage of nuclear waste near their town but were surprised by the strength of their opposition campaign. We were first greeted by large billboards on the out-



skirts of the town expressing opposition to the waste-dumping plans. Our host there was the local petrol station operator who was happy for us to decorate his driveway with our flags and banners.

We were informed that some 40% of the people in the village were in some way involved in the campaign, but their voices seemed to be falling on deaf ears. Their immediate problem was the storage of low-level waste in a warehouse on the very outskirts of the village. Equally disturbing was the test drilling being conducted in a nearby granite deposit where the government wishes to dispose of high-level waste. Mitterteich is within the state of Bavaria, which could be described as Germany's Queensland, and where the law says that anyone arrested in a demonstration must, aside from any fine which may be levied, pay the costs of the police in being present at the demonstration, or a part thereof. In practice this has proven to be very costly for the parties concerned.

One could go on. We found a Germany with many ugly faces, but one where citizen action was truly inspiring, and one where many people offered us support and encouragement.

#### Contacts in West Germany

- Alternative List, Badensche Str 29, 1000 Berlin 31. Tel: +49 30 861 2914.
- Friends of the Earth, Mehringhof, Gneisenaustr 2, 1000 Berlin 61. Tel: +49 30 692 8779.
- Die Grunen (The Greens), Kreisverband Braunschweig, Kaiserstr 31, 3300 Braunschweig. Tel: +49 531 19 400.
- Gertrude Schilling (Greens parliamentarian in Hessen), Roderstr 16, 6479 Schotten-Einartshausen.
- *Atom Express*, Marianstr 10, 3400 Göttingen.
- Mitterteich Anti-nuclear Group, c/- Irmgard Kilian, Marktredwitzer Str 26, 8596 Mitterteich. Tel: +49 9633 34 05

Members of the World Bike Ride in front of a community-erected sign protesting against nuclear waste dumping, Mitterteich, West Germany.

#### Paul Marshall outlines the background to the World Bike Ride for Peace, Disarmament and a Nuclear Free Future.

The concept of our ride was born during the cold Canberra winter at the Atom Free Embassy which graced parliament house lawns from May to July 1981. Fifty people cycled off from those lawns in March 1982 after receiving a traditional message stick from Aboriginal elder Gaboo Ted Thomas, whose tribal lands once encompassed Canberra. In the civic centre the women at the International Womens Day rally presented us with a scroll symbolising the opposition of women to war and violence. Almost five months later, after a very eventful and sometimes controversial journey, forty-four of us cycled into Darwin. A forward party left immediately for Japan to attend the World Conference Against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs. Those who remained made their presence felt in the uranium province - protesting at the official opening of the Jabiru township, chaining themselves to the gates of the Fort Hill docks, thus blocking the first shipment of yellowcake to come out of the Ranger mine.

Altogether ten of us rode in Japan along a route that began in September in the northern island of Hokkaido and covered more than 3000 km to Nagasaki in the south and Matsuyama in the east. Along the way we were hosted by many peace and anti-nuclear groups, and had

the opportunity to talk with many of the Hibakusha, the atom bomb victims. The story of that ride is to be found in the pages of *Freewheeling* and elsewhere.

From Japan we had hoped to cycle in China, then to catch the train to Moscow, there to join the Scandinavian Bike for Peace as far as Oslo. As it turned out, the Chinese government declined our application to visit China, though was prepared to grant us transit visas. The Soviet Peace Committee issued us with a much delayed invitation, though it refused to acknowledge our application to cycle. We chose then to begin our European leg in Berlin, where we continued with our requests to cycle inside the USSR.

At the time of writing, the World Bike Ride has accommodated itself on 'Mother Earth' farm in southern Sweden, where work is underway on a newsletter and on the planning for the British leg. At least two members plan to spend the winter at 'Mother Earth' and to operate an Australian anti-nuclear/Aboriginal/environmental information centre from there. They would appreciate a broad contact with activist groups in Australia.

#### World Bike Ride contacts

- World Bike Ride: c/- Moder Jord Ko-op, Forshultsvagen 108, 290 10 Tollarp, Sweden. Tel: +46 450 20132
- European contact: Martin Jung, Konigsallee 82, 858 Bayreuth, West Germany. Tel: +49 921 92195
- Australian contact: c/- Friends of the Earth (Sydney), 787 George St, Sydney, NSW 2000. Tel: (02) 211 3953





# Militarism, socialism and world peace

The disarmament movement in Britain underwent an unprecedented resurgence at the end of 1979. For the first time since the early 60s it became a truly mass movement with considerable influence. The immediate cause of this new vitality and popularity was the announcement by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to base a new generation of nuclear missiles in Western Europe — the much discussed Cruise and Pershing IIs. That the majority of people in Western Europe understood the dangerous implications of this decision is demonstrated by the huge number who have become actively involved in opposing it.

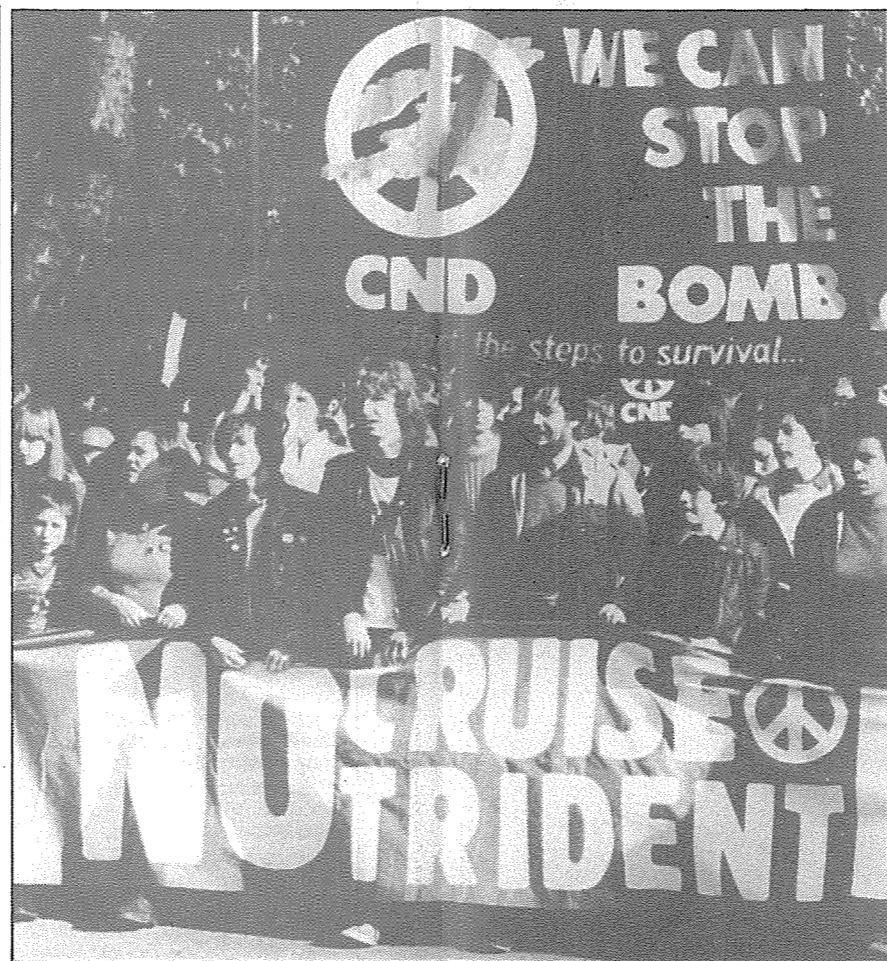
Those implications are two fold. On the one hand they make nuclear war more likely. The obvious use of these new weapons is to knock out the enemy's nuclear capability with very little warning, giving NATO the ability to commence a nuclear war and theoretically suffer relatively little damage itself. NATO now has an officially announced first strike policy; they are prepared to start a nuclear war if they believe the USSR is threatening to commence hostilities. What would count as a threat is never made clear.

At the same time, because these

new weapons are stationed in Western Europe and not in the USA, the nuclear war that is now officially 'thinkable' will be fought in Europe. The policy of the USA seems to be to have a war that would leave itself relatively undamaged at the price of devastation of Europe, East and West. Little wonder that a mass movement arose right across Europe to challenge this threat.

In Britain the organisational focus of the revived disarmament campaign has been the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and European Nuclear Disarmament (END). It has been largely through the efforts of these groups that the movement has been able to maintain its vitality and even grow stronger over the last four years. CND now has a staff of over 30.

Dan Smith has worked with them fulltime since 1972 and was until August this year (1983) chairperson of END. He has also written and collaborated on several major books and articles in the field, and was co-editor with E P Thompson of *Protest and Survive*, the seminal work of the revived disarmament campaign. He was recently in Australia on a speaking tour and talked with *Chain Reaction's* Keith Redgen in Melbourne.



## The danger of nuclear war

Is there a very great danger of nuclear war at the present time?

The nuclear weapons are there, the nuclear strategies are there and so the risks are always there. The image I always use is of a gunpowder barrel which a stray spark could set off. My favourite choice for that stray spark would be a relatively minor confrontation between USA and Soviet forces in which, in the initial stages, neither side would back down for fear of losing face.

What's especially dangerous about that is that the USA and the USSR have got a lot of experience in dealing with confrontations between their proxies but the last time they had a direct confrontation of their own forces was over the Cuban missile crisis in 1962, and that was saved because the Soviet Union backed down. This was seen in the Soviet leadership as a demonstration of weakness and was one of the reasons why Khrushchev was ousted, and one of the reasons that contributed to the Soviet nuclear arms build-up, so that they wouldn't have to back down in future.

At the time the peace movement reemerged, was it true that nuclear war had become more likely?

I think that the situation became more

Top: The USA's controversial Cruise missile currently being deployed in Europe.

Left: Millions of people across Europe have protested en masse against Cruise.

dangerous at the end of the 1970s with the death of detente and the junking of the USA-Soviet Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) agreement, and also with the general shift in mood in the USA which did lead to some quite dramatic changes of policy towards a military build-up. But I don't think that created a dramatic increase in the danger of nuclear war.

A lot of people exaggerated the increase in the danger of nuclear war. One of the reasons why they did was a very personal thing, since either they hadn't seen the danger, or hadn't been doing anything about the danger. They wanted to say that it was a change in the situation rather than a change in their awareness of the situation. But I don't think international politics really works in a way that leads to these sudden massive changes in the nature of the situation — until you get the spark for an absolute catastrophe. Basically we've got a long-standing nuclear confrontation and as long as that goes on it's dangerous. Even in the period of detente it still remains dangerous, and one of the biggest dangers is that it will erode detente, which it did the last time.

And has the Soviet Union become more belligerent?

No, the invasion of Afghanistan was a major new development, because they were committing combat forces outside of the USSR and the satellite states for the first time. But that might have been a sign of an increased willingness to use armed force at a relatively low level. It wasn't a sign of greater belligerence towards say Western Europe or South Korea or Japan. In fact in



general terms, even including the invasion of Afghanistan, Soviet policy has changed a lot less than USA and Western policy.

### Was detente a myth?

Edward Thompson especially has argued that new weapons technologies were developed precisely in the period of detente. Was detente in fact a myth?

No it wasn't. It was a general improvement in relations and it was a period when arms control seemed more possible. For all its weaknesses the 1979 SALT agreement did actually involve removing some weapons, and that would have been a step in the right direction. It would have laid the basis for another one removing some more weapons later on. But detente was, in military terms, just never that effective.

Throughout the 70s there was this constant signing of communique. Political detente was being developed but we needed a military corollary and they never found one. That partly reflects an unwillingness to take on the military questions, and partly that political detente, though real, was not very profound.

So why the decision to deploy Cruise missiles?

Part of the wellspring for it was to re-strengthen detente by getting to grips, in the arms control arena, with the question of nuclear weapons in Europe. There was a feeling that this could only be done if the West was threatening to deploy new weapons. But with any military arms decision, there's a series of different motivations, and re-strengthening detente was not a dominant one, although I think it was a very strong one in the mind of Helmut Schmitt, the West German chancellor at the time.

Amongst the other wellsprings you've got simple technological determinism. Cruise missiles were being developed for air-launching and sea-launching. Ground-launching was the other possibility; the decision to go ahead with the required engineering development was taken in late 1976. It was clear that unless the targets were Mexicans, Canadians or fish, the missiles weren't going to be based in the USA. Therefore they had to be based abroad. NATO was beginning to get worried about the nuclear weapons balance in Europe, quite wrongly, but it was beginning to get worried, and Cruise missiles were available.

Another wellspring you can see for Pershing II is that the army has always wanted to be in on the strategic nuclear mission, defining strategic as the ability to attack the USSR, and Pershing II has got it.

There's all kinds of bits and pieces like that. So I don't think there is any way in which you can take one thing and say this explains why NATO decides to deploy Cruise and Pershing II.

### Peace movements - East and West

How's the peace movement going, especially in Eastern Europe?

Well in East Germany there's probably the

largest of the East European independent movements, which is mainly expressed through the Lutheran Church and amongst young people. One of its main focusses is the militarisation of East German society. Therefore a lot of it takes the form of a campaign about conscription and the right to conscientious objection.

In Hungary there's a movement, rather smaller, which calls itself the Peace Group for East-West Dialogue, and that name very much summarises what its goals are. In the USSR there is a series of small local committees with less of a presence in the Soviet Union than the movement has in Hungary.

What's particularly important, I think, is to understand that these are not dissident groups in the way that we're used to understanding in the West. They are not solely concerned with attacking and criticising their own governments. They are taking an independent approach to the problems of peace and security and it's very important for them that they don't get packed into a corner where they can only be dissident and therefore operate semi-clandestinely.

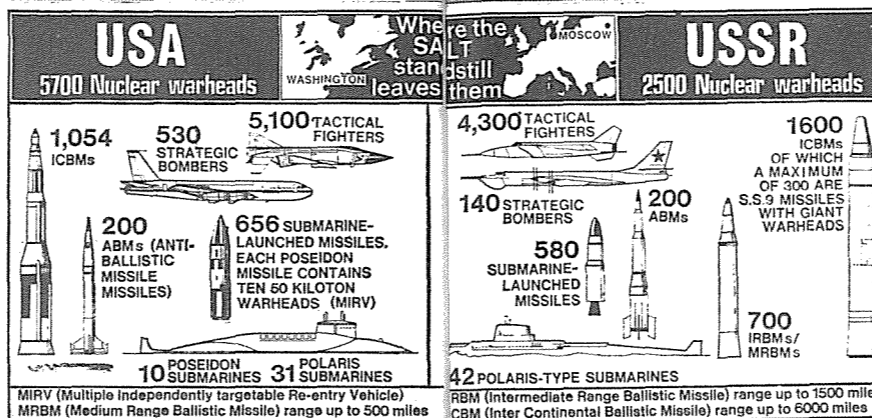
There has been some suggestion that the symmetries that should be looked for are between the peace movement in the West and the dissident movement in the East, especially Solidarity appearing to mirror what was going on in the peace movement in the West, and that some links should be formed. There was a lot of mistrust. How do you view that?

One of the problems with many dissidents in Eastern Europe is that they tend to regard their enemy's enemy as their friend, which turns out to mean being in favour of NATO and the USA and therefore in favour of the new Cruise missiles and so on. It's very difficult to make common cause. Secondly it would, in my view, be a complete misjudgement for the West European disarmament movements to become human rights organisations. Thirdly, I think it is simply wrong to look for any kind of public force in Eastern Europe which functions in anything like the way in which disarmament movements do in Western Europe.

So I think some of that kind of setting up of the supposed symmetries between disarmament movements in the West and dissident movements in the East is a complete misreading of Eastern Europe. Solidarity is very important, but it's very important in terms of Polish politics and the fabric of Polish people's lives and not particularly important in terms of combating militarism in Eastern Europe.

The point that East Europeans often see the enemy's enemy as their friend could also be levelled at the West European peace movement because a great number of them are reluctant to criticise the USSR.

Yes that's right. It's not difficult to figure out where you stand on the USSR, but it's often very difficult to figure out a way of making criticisms, where they're relevant, about the USSR in a way which doesn't play the Cold War game. I think that one of the things that we have managed to do



Top: Leonid Brezhnev and Richard Nixon on the right; leaders of the USSR and the USA respectively during the beginnings of the era of political detente.  
Above: The nuclear forces of the USSR and the USA at the time of the first SALT talks, in the early 70s.

Below: Peace rally in East Germany. East Germany also has the largest of the Eastern European independent peace movements.



with CND is precisely to carve out that new position, because non-alignment must mean non-aligned from both super-powers, and that position must partly be based on a criticism. It's a major challenge, it's very difficult because our culture of the last thirty years has been a culture which wants us to choose sides between East and West, and of course disarmament movements don't want to choose sides.

The only publicity given by the mass media here has been when there are major demonstrations of tens of thousands and the occasional mention of Greenham Common. Sometimes it seems as if the movement has almost disappeared after 1981. Has it in fact receded or has there been a change of emphasis and tactics?

The problem you're asking about is a problem in reportage in the mass media. The movement in Britain has, if anything, grown since our last major demonstration which was in June 1982. The things is that most of the events which we carry out in the meantime are not terribly 'newsworthy'. Some of them have been, especially the ones at Greenham Common.

The local branches of CND, numbering about a thousand, are active all the time. But of course what they're actively doing will be handing out leaflets or having market stalls or they sell literature. Several have opened up bookshops and peace centres. They will be arranging debates in local schools, getting into community centres, holding poetry readings, rock concerts, folk evenings, door to door canvassing. None of these things are going to make a splash. But they are all extremely important and you couldn't have the large demonstrations, at least not in Britain, without having a grassroots peace movement doing relatively invisible things.

### The economics of militarism

Your main published work has been in the area of the economics of militarism. How do you think an understanding of this helps us in peace activism?

In a number of different ways. Firstly, although it's right to focus on the most serious and most immediate problems that militarism throws up, that's to say on nuclear weapons and nuclear war, the political strategy which we develop has got to be informed by a wider understanding of the total problems. One of the dimensions of that problem is the economic one. Other dimensions are also very important, the social and psychological for example.

Secondly, one of the main arguments, though not in itself the most convincing argument against the international military order, is the economic argument. It diverts resources away from things which need to be done into things which don't need to be done and which are also extremely dangerous.

Thirdly there's always the argument faced by disarmament movements, that less military activity will create unemployment. That's a complete myth.

So I think that's basically why it's important to get to grips with the economics of militarism. To the best of our knowledge,

in Britain there are about six economists who do any work on military spending from any political perspective. It's something which has been left to one side, and that's a bit silly. It's also important for ordinary people to get a grasp of it and we wrote that book\* as a general introduction for ordinary readers to the economic dimensions of both the causes and the consequences of high military spending.

In *The Economics of Militarism* you have suggested the high military spending is economically dysfunctional and contributes to the crisis of capitalism. But if militarism has in fact become something like a new social formation, doesn't that make peace conversion and disarmament a far more difficult political ambition?

Yes it does. Precisely one of the problems we face is that the military establishments have put down social and political roots. They've put down those roots into people's basic psyches, and they play upon fear and they thrive on insecurity. So simply to show that it is economically damaging to spend a lot on the military, and that it would be economically beneficial to have disarmament and to convert the arms industry to other uses, is just one part of the argument.

There are other parts of the argument as well. We refer to the various obstacles there would be in the way of an economic program for disarmament as the politics of the economics of disarmament. The problem is that most people want a simple answer to a simple problem but there isn't a simple problem. The international military order poses a series of different kinds of problems and it is a very complex interlocking social and political system. Unfortunately, we in the disarmament movement have got to get to grips with that in order to be able to arrive at genuine solutions to the problems.

So who are the main enemies?

Everybody who's got a stake in the international military order. Politicians who believe they get power or prestige from it. The military who want to expand their military spending, who have a bureaucratic stake in continuing to be strong and wasteful. Arms industries, the arms corporations that benefit from the spending.

The workers themselves often call for higher military spending for new projects. That's the reason why it's so important to get work done on the conversion of arms industries to other uses, to show workers that they don't have a stake in the continuing international military order, that they can, when they're considering the question, forget that their jobs are in the arms industries, and remember the basic fact of their humanity.

Should we be looking to convince capitalists that their role as capitalists would be served by disarmament and peace conversion?

No, I don't think we're doing that essentially, although there are actually groups which are. I think that it does help to convince capitalists that military spending is bad for

\* *The Economics of Militarism*, Dan Smith and Ron Smith, Pluto Press, London, 1983.



capitalism. But it's more a question of simply deploying all the arguments and all the approaches, not just on economic questions, but the lot, which are needed in order to build up a major political force. Now if you find some of the big city barons supporting disarmament that's fine. I don't see that as being a problem at all. And if they see disarmament as being in their interests then that could easily be a rationalisation in economic terms of what they see as their human interests.

### Disarmament and socialism

Well then do you think that the peace movement doesn't have to be, and even shouldn't be socialist?

It's hard for me to say that because I am a socialist. But I think that unless the disarmament movement appeals to more people than just socialists, then it's going to make no ground whatsoever. That's why the appeal constantly has to be made at a broader and a more general level, and why it needs to be backed by a range of arguments.

There are many people who are not socialists but who are, when they're brought face to face with the problem, sickened by the waste of resources involved in high military spending and who do want to see something done about it. There are many other people who are also not socialists who understand that the risks of nuclear war are so great that something must be done about it. And there are many other people who are not socialists but who understand the logical flaws of Western nuclear strategy and see the dangers which are inherent there.

For me socialism is essentially about democracy and about people being able to control their destiny. From my personal perspective disarmament fits into that. It seems that the more militarised a society becomes, the less democratic it is. There's absolutely nothing at all democratic about nuclear war. You can't even choose to be a conscientious objector and go through hell, and come out the other end alive, but you can only choose to go through hell. What one is finding in politics in general is that the area for democratic accountability and democratic authority is being reduced and one of the factors that is reducing it is the international military order.

My active support for disarmament initiative and my socialism go together. For other people it works out completely differently. There's no coherent logic in the way that people take up political positions. Socialists who are in the disarmament movement have to recognise that, and to recognise that what they're active about at the moment is disarmament, not the question of capitalism as a system itself.

And yet, in *The Economics of Militarism*, when you describe the things involved in militarisation, it seems as if for them to disappear would be to fundamentally change the nature of contemporary capitalism. The peace conversion that you describe would be a social world of a far

different order from contemporary capitalism and something quite akin to socialism. Surely most people who read the book would see you calling for something like socialism.

Yes, they could well do that, but that's a book that I've written and not a policy that I'm calling upon the disarmament movement to express. I think there is a feasible, though not so attractive, capitalist economics of disarmament. I certainly don't think that to prevent Cruise missiles from coming to Western Europe mounts any kind of basic challenge to capitalism. That isn't to say that it's a bad thing or that it's therefore a good thing. The questions are related but not at the level of political campaigning.

And yes, I'd like to see everybody being both a good democratic socialist and an active supporter of disarmament initiatives, but the way to do that is not by forcing the disarmament movement into simply being a different expression of socialism.

### The British Labour Party

What's the situation in the British Labour Party now, especially with the new leader? Well the situation in the Labour Party for about two or three years has been absolutely disastrous. From the point of view of support for disarmament and CND, it has been very good. But the party has torn itself apart and gotten into a terribly weak state. I'm very hopeful, not simply about the effect of Neil Kinnock as Labour Party leader, but about the meaning of the vote for him. I think that it is a very positive sign of wanting to combine principles and pragmatism in policies which will change things, but which are understandable to people and which can get popular support. How it will pan out over the next few years I don't know. The fact that he has been elected is a good sign but it's not a solution to the problems of the Labour Party. They go much deeper than that.

In the brief glimpses that we got of his acceptance speech here he did actually mention disarmament.

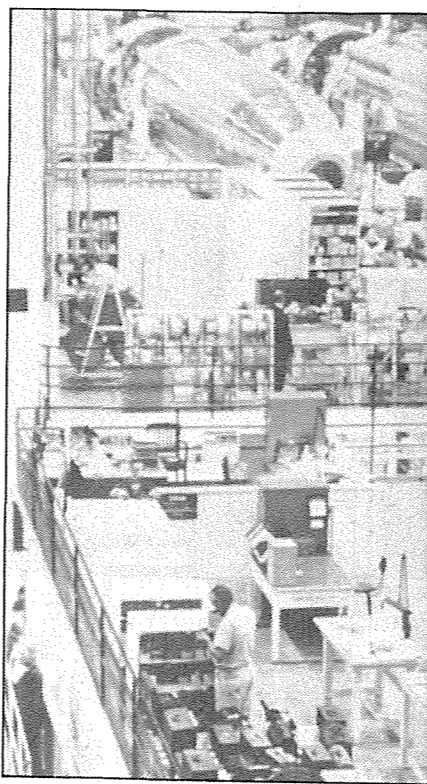
Yes that's right. He is a firmly committed supporter of CND and has been since before the revival of CND. I've never had any doubts about his personal commitment.

### Greenham Common

What do you think's likely to happen at Greenham Common when they try to put the Cruise missiles in?

They'll be able to put them in. A lot of people will try to stop them and will be arrested. That will make for a major propaganda battle and I think that the effects of that will be bad for the government, they'll ride through it.

I don't know the answer to this, but what I think is the important question is what the Greenham Common women will try to do after the deployment. They've got a very difficult decision, to stay or to go. They could move camp to Molesworth, the other base where Cruise missiles would go to. I'm not privy to their thinking so I



Above: The nuts and bolts of the nuclear arms race.



Below: Women dance on a Greenham Common Cruise missile silo in January 1983. The success of the women's protests at the Greenham Common military base has been a motivating force in peace movements worldwide.



don't know what their conclusion will be. The obvious risk is that if they go, it will be taken as a sign that the disarmament movement is packing up shop. On the other hand if they stay then the risk is that they will dribble into closing the camp at some later date. So it is a difficult decision.

And you'd say Greenham Common has been important for the disarmament campaign in England?

I think that from about October last year until about Easter this year it was the major thing which was giving the disarmament movement in Britain a real sense of direction, a real sense of thrust and energy. It had a very good image in the media and the two demonstrations, the one in December which was women only; and the one at Easter which was mixed and was organised with CND as well; were both extremely important. At the moment the media image of the Greenham Common women is falling. But that's not their fault - that's the media changing their handling of the subject.

### The international military order

In a talk you gave this afternoon you said that what the peace movement should do is move away from the issue of nuclear weapons to the issue of the international military order. How do you see that as developing?

I hope I didn't actually use those words. That's not what I meant. What I mean is that one of the things which the peace movement should do is use the issue of nuclear weapons as an introduction to the problem of the international military order. Nuclear weapons are only the most frightening and awesome appearance of the international military order. You can't simply lop off nuclear weapons and leave the rest untouched. First of all it's not feasible, and secondly, even if it were feasible, the beast is there and it will grow its nuclear head again.

I don't agree with people who say we should stop being CND, and become a campaign for disarmament in general, but I do think it's important to use people's interest and activity and concern about nuclear weapons as a way of introducing the wider problem. To mention the book\*, one of the major reasons why *The War Atlas* will sell is because people are very worried about nuclear war. But in fact, nuclear war is a relatively small presence in *The War Atlas*. We're also dealing with all the wars which are going on and the social, economic and political systems and decisions which underwrite the international military order, which create dangers that people are most worried about.

One of the things in *The War Atlas* which is possibly just as frightening as nuclear weapons, which doesn't have as much publicity are chemical and bacteriological weapons.

Right. The USA is on the verge of chemical

\* *The War Atlas: Armed conflict - Armed peace*, Michael Kidron and Dan Smith, Pan Books, London, 1983.

rearmament on a very large scale now. It has a very large stockpile and it's going to increase still further if the administration has its way. I can never say which I think is more dangerous more horrible. It's just generally awful.

### Alternative defence

What is CND doing about alternative defence strategy?

CND's not going to adopt a policy on non-nuclear defence except to say that it should be promoting debate. It does this anyway, simply by the very fact of its existence. It's really in the kind of plethora of activities around the disarmament movement that you find the developments going on now.

It is politically extremely valuable for disarmament movements to have a perspective on the kind of defence policy there could be that did not rely on the threat of mass murder or genocide. There is a very small number of people who are at all likely to make the shift into supporting a non-violent, non-military, approach to the defence of a country. We have to make headway even so, even within the limitations.

### Internationalism

Do you see the need for internationalism as being the need to form firm links or something more nebulous than that?

Not quite nebulous but different. What is required is to strengthen communication between disarmament groups in different countries and then to strengthen coordination so that as far as possible they're heading in a similar direction, even where they are in very different positions stronger communication makes it possible for there to be a certain amount of working together.

Also people must see that if you understand the problems of weapons and warfare in purely national terms then you are not seeing the problem at all. It has to be seen in an international perspective. For example I think it's very important in Europe to understand what is happening in the Pacific which is a part of the world we never really think about. Similarly I think that in Australia it is really quite important to get a grip in the question of what the USA is doing in the North Atlantic where it is developing enormously dangerous naval strategies.

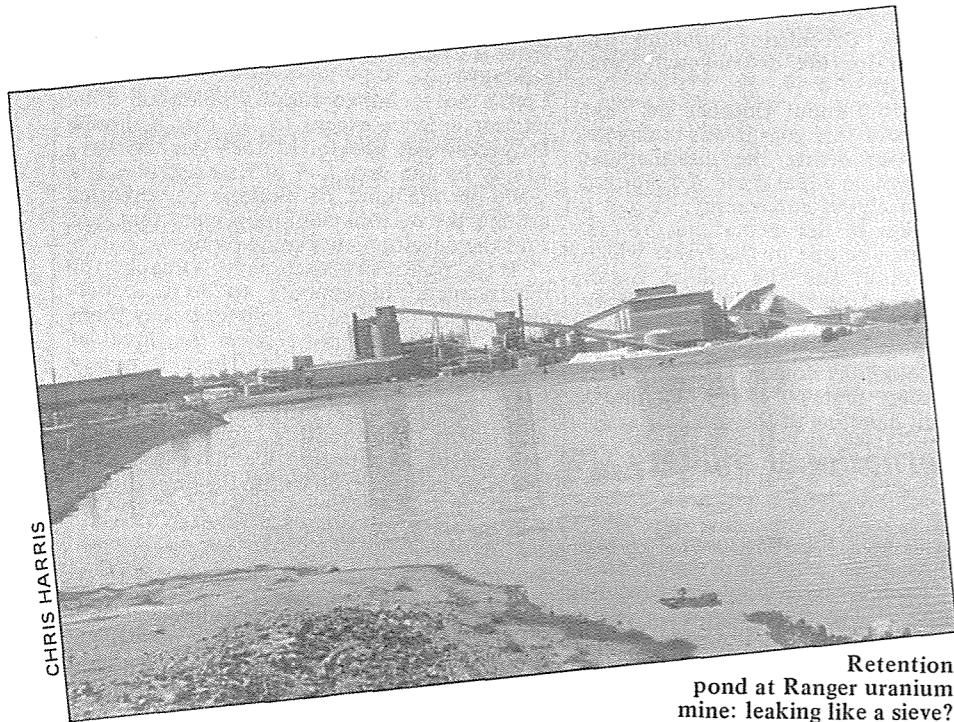
So it's a mixture of those two things - the promotion of internationalist philosophy amongst everybody and a promotion of an internationalist practice amongst the movements.

Action: As well as providing support for the nuclear disarmament campaigns in Europe, people in Australia can oppose the increasing nuclearisation of the Pacific and Indian Ocean region and Australia's involvement in the nuclear arms race. Contact the following People for Nuclear Disarmament groups for information on actions planned for 1984:

- Room 5C, 252 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic 3000. Tel: (03) 633 2846
- PO Box A243, Sydney South, NSW 2001. Tel: (02) 264 6831
- 306 Murray St, Perth, WA 6000. Tel: (09) 321 8309



# K-K-Kakadu



Retention pond at Ranger uranium mine: leaking like a sieve?

By Susan Mueller

The development of uranium mining in the Northern Territory has created an enormous threat to the environment and Aboriginal art and archaeological sites of the Arnhem Land Plateau. This region contains Kakadu National Park which extends from the coast of Van Dieman Gulf, through floodplains and lowlands to a sandstone escarpment and dissected plateau. Within Kakadu are some of Australia's most outstanding natural and cultural sites. Its rare fauna, and the antiquity and quality of Aboriginal cultural sites makes Kakadu a unique region.

The present federal Labor government has shown, since coming to office in March, that it too is willing to accommodate the uranium industry. The federal ALP caucus, on 7 November 1983, decided on a pro-uranium program despite strong objections from their membership and a policy to phase out uranium mining.

Stage 1 of Kakadu National Park was declared in June 1979. An area inside the park, Koongarra, was excised from the park, and the boundaries of the park were drawn in such a way as to leave the Ranger mine at Jabiru and the Pancontinental mining lease at Jabiluka outside Stage 1 of the park. On 15 November 1983, the federal government decided to

*Sue Mueller is a Chain Reaction collective member.*

26 Chain Reaction

declare Stage 2 of Kakadu National Park and recind the excision of Koongarra.

The declaration of Stage 2 and the reinclusion of Koongarra are to be welcomed. However the government is quite likely to use these measures as proof that they are working to phase out uranium mining. This claim would have to be met with a great deal of cynicism.

For example, the federal government, came to office with a policy declaring its intention of establishing Stage 2 of Kakadu National Park. But at one stage it had considered declaring the area a 'conservation zone', which would have allowed the development of Jabiluka and continued mining exploration.

The indication for some time has been that either the Roxby Downs project in South Australia or Jabiluka would go ahead, but not both. A variety of political and economic reasons have meant that Roxby Downs has got the go ahead, while Jabiluka will be incorporated into Kakadu Stage 2.

## KOONGARRA

The Koongarra deposit was originally discovered by the Canadian firm Noranda in 1972. Noranda, after dismissing suggestions that it might have difficulty selling uranium from the project, sold it to Denison Mines, the world's largest producer of uranium. Koongarra is located in the Nourlangie Creek catchment, upstream from the Woolwonga

Wildlife Sanctuary, the most ecologically sensitive area of the park.

The excision of the Koongarra Mining Reserve from Stage 1 of Kakadu had meant that mining would not technically be going on within a national park, and that the area would not be covered by the park's plan of management. The uranium mining lease was enlarged in 1981 by the Liberal government before it lost control of the federal Upper House.

## RANGER

The declaration of Stage 2 of Kakadu National Park means that the Energy Resources of Australia mine (Ranger) is now surrounded by the park. This mine will continue to produce and export uranium.

The number of accidents and structural faults at the Ranger mine continues to grow putting further pressure on the sensitive environment of the region. Provided below is a list, by no means comprehensive, of accidents and other incidents which have occurred at the Ranger mine over the years.

- In 1980 concrete used in the construction of the Ranger Tailings Dam was found to be faulty.

- In 1981, Ranger engineers deliberately breached the partly built dam, during a deluge where 400 millimetres of rain fell in three days, in order to avert structural damage. (The mine's tailing dam continues to regularly leak radioactive water beneath the retaining wall. Ground water has been rising, creating pressure in the dam and forcing water out underneath the dam wall. This is because the dam was not constructed down to bedrock.)

- In September 1981, 180 Ranger process workers went on strike for improved pay and also over issues of safety at the mine.

- In November 1981, islands appeared in the Ranger tailing dam. The mine was closed down for a breach of operating procedure. Regulations were changed so that a two-metre cover no longer applied.

- In September 1981, the first reports appear on problems with leakage from the tailings dam.

- In 1983, a process worker fell into a bin of yellowcake and was buried up to his neck.

- In July 1983, maintenance staff at Ranger connected a pipe between the water system used in the operation of the plant and the system for workers' washing and drinking. (See Earth News this edition).

The potential for further incidents at Ranger are enormous. The radium contamination levels in tailings material is twenty times higher than was anticipated. Retention Pond 1 is reported to be 'leaking like a sieve'. Contamination is already occurring in the river systems.

Contact: Penny Figgis, Australian Conservation Foundation, PO Box 1875, Canberra GPO, ACT 2601. Tel: (062) 47 3013.

# The nature of environment courses

Environmental studies, as a separate discipline in Australia, is now approximately ten years old. It is timely, therefore, to ask about the methods, problems and prospects of environmental education. This is a particularly relevant inquiry for the environment movement which is increasingly looking towards environmental education institutions for explanations and understandings of the many complex problems that Western industrial societies have created in their interaction with the environment. Phil Tighe looks at some of these questions.

The need for environmental education was originally perceived at a time when 'environment' was a trendy word. At this time, governments throughout Australia were capitalising on the new popular concern with the environment by creating environmental legislation, environmental policies and environmental agencies which were hailed as remedies for the perceived ecological crisis. In a sense this political embrace lent a respectability to environmental concerns, a respect which helped considerably with the establishment of institutions and courses concerned with environmental education.

The establishment of educational institutions and government instrumentalities suffered however from a lack

*Phil Tighe is a PhD student in the School of Australian Environmental Studies at Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland, working in the area of environmental politics.*

of specific guidelines. This was essentially a product of the nature of environmentalism with our society. Environmentalism is not narrowly defined and directed like other disciplinary pursuits such as economics, law or science. Educationally, this means that environmental studies has become somewhat of an umbrella term with a distinct quality of 'all things to all persons' about it. This quality is an inevitable result of the nature, complexity and depth of the environmental problem, the lack of a common environmental theory or framework, and the lack of clear definitions of subject matter. Despite the diffusiveness of environmental education, we have, more or less, successfully muddled through to date. This is fortunate because it is only with such struggling that the quality and integrity of environmental education can be improved and fashioned into an influential societal force for change.

The diffuse nature of environmental education has thus spawned a plethora of courses. A glance through the handbooks of Australian tertiary education institutions will confirm this, with such diverse areas of study as Occupational Health, Urban Planning, Environmental Control, Arid Lands Management, Environmental Design, Industrial Ergonomics, Ecology and so on being offered. So what exactly is going on here? Well, some of these courses are renamed versions of older disciplines, taking advantage of the buzz word quality of the environment mentioned earlier. For example, Occupational Health may be termed a branch of epidemiology while Arid Lands Management can be conveniently classified as a subunit of geography. Other areas of

environmental scholarship include new areas which have been formed by the combination of two or more traditional disciplines. This combination is then usually given an environmental focus or theme. For example, Ecology is an extension of zoology and botany to specifically focus on the way in which organisms react with their environments. Environmental Politics embraces the study of both public administration and governmental politics where these activities involve human political interaction and decision making at the environmental level. A course in Environmental Control, for example, may incorporate a combination of biology, chemistry and physics and also study in public administration, so that students gain an understanding of the technical and political aspects of pollution control.

These examples illustrate the broadness of the field and the ability of environmental studies to graft itself into traditional disciplines. It should be noted that courses with identical titles may be radically different in content. Again this reflects the lack of an agreed format or theory for environmental studies and the universal nature and complexity of the environmental problem. The situation is complicated by the fact that many of the disciplinary subunits which have been used to build up environmental education are themselves combinations of earlier disciplines. Thus, demarcation lines between disciplinary subunits are themselves not clear-cut.

## The Methods and Problems of Environmental Education

A course in environmental studies, therefore, involves an academic tour through



many disciplines. This situation has great advantages and disadvantages. On the positive side environmental studies crosses that age-old dividing line between 'the arts' and 'the sciences'; a line which educationalists have been urging educational institutions to cross for many years. Hopefully a person exposed to training in 'the social' as well as 'the technical' will be better equipped to understand the modern world, to make appropriate responses to the complex problems of the modern environment and be able to adjust to the inevitability of social change. The disadvantage for the student of such a generalist education is a structural one. The modern world tends to feed off professionals with a technical speciality — the so-called 'technocrats'. Unfortunately, as Western societies encounter more and more problems with maintaining economic growth, recession has cut deeper into job markets and students are consequently tending to go for the specialities that seem to offer the best job prospects. These are, increasingly, technical specialities rather than generalist lines of work although, in the long run, the student may be better equipped to deal with understanding the complexities of change with a generalist education.

For the teachers of environmental education there are rewards and difficulties as well. Faced with the dualism of the generalist/specialist world, the problem of what to teach is very relevant. Teachers of environmental courses in tertiary institutions are usually academics who have been educated in a traditional discipline and who have an academic commitment and/or interest in some aspect of environmentalism. Thus a political scientist may teach environmental politics and a zoologist, a course in ecology. Such academics hopefully fortify their respective courses with considerable environmental material taken from the environmental literature that has accumulated in academia over the last two to three decades. A school or institution may thus put together an environmental education course by drawing on the expertise and interest of many academics in various areas of traditional disciplinary study. Thus, whatever the problems of the students and teachers of environmental education, the distinguishing feature of environmental education is its 'cross-disciplinary' nature.

#### Environmental Research and Education

Environmental education is not only dependent on the provision of educational facilities and the commitment of those who teach the courses, it is ultimately reliant on an expanding base of knowledge and awareness about the environment that is refined and improved over time. Environmental research provides this expanding base of knowledge and must be seen as an important pre-

cursor to environmental education. Additionally, it is a form of education in itself, as environmental researchers learn through applying themselves to the complexities of 'finding out' about environmental problems. This article on environmental education would, therefore, be incomplete without an examination of this important area of environmental scholarship.

As noted previously, the hallmark of environmental education is its cross-disciplinary nature. This cross-disciplinary character, not surprisingly, also pervades environmental research. At the risk of being semantic, it is important to realise that cross-disciplinary research can be either 'multi-disciplinary' or 'inter-disciplinary'. The difference between these two approaches is primarily based on the degree of disciplinary integration that is achieved.

Inter-disciplinary research is extremely difficult to undertake because it calls for an almost total integration of the disciplinary inputs to produce a very broad problematic solution to a complex problem. This is, of course, a goal that many environmental scholars aspire to, but understandably such research is extremely rare given the general lack of inter-disciplinary theory. Examples of well-established inter-disciplinary work may be found in fields such as biochemistry and political economy.

Thus a multi-disciplinary approach has become the distinguishing feature of environmental education to date. Basically, there are two approaches to multi-disciplinary research. Firstly, an individual researcher can attempt to cover the expertise of several traditional disciplines in researching an environmental problem or issue. This approach is extremely difficult as most people have been trained in one discipline and shy away from tackling several new disciplines which may be a necessary part of a particular piece of environmental research. Again this is a structural problem of the education system and it is only with time that things will change.

The second method of multi-disciplinary environmental research involves pooling of experts into multi-disciplinary teams. This is a more common way of approaching the demands of multi-disciplinary environmental research. Such teams usually are formed because a group of individuals with various disciplinary skills share a mutual concern for a particular environmental problem. Unfortunately, the difficulties of getting such a team together and working harmoniously can be a major barrier to multi-disciplinary work. The potential members need to be aware of each others interests and to have the time to come together and work on their common concern — a complex environmental issue. Usually the prerequisites for such work are threefold. Firstly, the team members must get along, ie interpersonal relations are paramount! Thus, a successful team is

usually based as much on ties of friendship and mutual respect as it is on expertise. Secondly, they need to be geographically close to each other so that the research can proceed smoothly from day to day. Often the members of such an academic team gain considerably from being in the same university building. Thirdly, the members of a multi-disciplinary team need to be able and willing to invest considerably more time in their environmental research than they would in a straight disciplinary research task. Time is consumed by the need to more intensively interact within the team. This interaction is necessary because an environmental problem needs to be tackled from a broad perspective and the approach to such a problem can be complicated by the team participants themselves, who are usually compartmentalised in their knowledge of the environmental issues at hand. The School of Australian Environmental Studies at Griffith University in Brisbane is an excellent example of these principles occurring in practice. Considerable success in environmental research and teaching has resulted from a large collection of diverse academics with a common interest in the environment being housed in one school and interacting with each other on a daily basis. On a smaller scale the Centre for Environmental Studies at the University of Tasmania has also had considerable success in multi-disciplinary teamwork.

The career structure for academics in universities and other tertiary institutions can work against multi-disciplinary environmental work. Often membership of a multi-disciplinary team, because of the time and energy needed for interaction, means the deferral of short-term disciplinary efforts which can be more easily developed into university rewards of tenure and promotion. Despite this, membership in a multi-disciplinary team allows the chance of learning about the expertise of others and of broadening members' thinking about approaches to environmental problems and issues.

#### Some Final Advice

As can be seen from the above discussion, environmental education is very much a mixed bag. The variations in courses given are enormous and any two given courses that go by the same name could be poles apart. So if you are considering environmental education at a tertiary institution you would be best advised to talk to those who teach in the courses being considered and, perhaps more importantly, talk to students who are doing, or who have done, the courses you are considering.

**Author's note:** A more detailed treatment of aspects of cross-disciplinary research is Rickson, RE and Rickson, ST, 1982, 'Problems and Prospects of Cross-disciplinary Research', *Rural Sociologist*, Vol 2, No 2, pp 95-103.

# Working against yellowcake



TRIBUNE

Many trade unions with members involved in the mining and export of uranium have anti-uranium policies. In this article, Allan Rees looks at some recent actions by unionists to halt the export of uranium, which demonstrate both the strong 'shop-floor' support for these policies, and the many limitations facing unions attempting to implement them.

One of the first to condemn Hawke's overturning of Labor's anti-uranium policy was Cliff Dolan, the president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). Dolan said the ACTU executive would 'attempt to devolve some strategy to make life difficult for the Prime Minister and his mate Mr Parbo.' (Sir Arvi Parbo is the chairman of Western Mining, British Petroleum's partner in the Roxby Downs uranium mine.)

*Allan Rees is an active member of Movement Against Uranium Movement in Sydney and is involved in producing the weekly 2SER-FM program 'Radio fallout'.*

Dolan said that unions such as the Electrical Trades Union and the Amalgamated Metalworkers, Foundry and Shipwrights Union could be involved in a new effort against uranium mining. Both unions have taken action against members who work in uranium mines and in 1980 metal workers at Seargents/ANI and Evans Deakin in Brisbane refused to make equipment for the Ranger uranium mine.

Dave Northey, the assistant national secretary of the Australian Railways Union (ARU) said:

We can look at those industries that service the uranium industry, we can look at ways of diverting the stuff that comes out of the mines, we can block it, we can delay it and it will cost the industry itself and the supporting industries enormous amounts in time and money and in fall downs in their contractual obligations.

Northey hopes that the ARU will decide to take action against Roxby Downs by refusing to carry supplies or equipment for the mine or handling uranium from it. The nearest rail link for Roxby Downs is at Woomera, but the mine would probably be able to keep operating with road transport alone. While Roxby

*Pacific Sky picket, Darwin, November 1981. Waterside workers vote to return to work after assurances that the freighter would not accept yellowcake from the Ranger uranium mine.*

will be able to find non-union truck drivers, they may have trouble in the ports.

The most important actions against uranium by trade unionists took place in 1981. In Darwin a shipment of uranium from Ranger was halted for seven weeks at the wharf, and in Brisbane a campaign by several unions disrupted exports from Mary Kathleen. In both cases union action was overcome by threats of massive fines under section 45D, the secondary boycotts provision of the Fraser government's *Trade Practices Act*.

#### Darwin, 1981 ...

In March 1981 the Darwin branch of the Seamen's Union of Australia (SUA) voted unanimously to refuse to carry any more yellowcake. Earlier, SUA members had carried uranium on barges owned by V B Perkins. Perkins' local manager went off his brain when the ban was an-



nounced and gave dismissal notices to eighteen seamen from the barge *Warrender*. Federal officials of the SUA supported the crew and they kept their jobs.

The Darwin branch of the Waterside Workers' Federation (WWF) had decided not to carry yellowcake in August 1980, but shipments from Nabarlek had been loaded on barges by members of the Transport Workers Union (TWU), who load the barges while the wharfies load the ships. At that time the Federal Secretary of the WWF was Charlie Fitzgibbon who followed Hawke's line on uranium. WWF federal policy was to load uranium if it was delivered to the wharf by union labor, but not otherwise. Darwin wharfies felt isolated and under pressure not to give work to the TWU competition. The ban was lifted by the narrow margin of 39 votes to 37 in January 1981.

Darwin wharfies felt very strongly about uranium. They also had personal reasons - Ranger had brought sulphur into Darwin for yellowcake processing, and the sulphur was left on the wharf, blowing about and making wharfies sick.

Queensland Mines tried to get around the seamen's ban by booking space on a Papua New Guinea ship that regularly called at Darwin. The wharfies decided they would support the seamen by refusing to load uranium onto ships with foreign crews. On 19 October, the ship *Pacific Sky* sailed from Darwin leaving eighteen containers of yellowcake from Ranger sitting on the wharf.

Wharfies, seamen and transport workers mounted extra pickets on the wharf in case a last minute attempt was made to load the uranium with non-union labor. One newspaper reported that 'other waterside workers breathed a sigh of relief that they had not been manoeuvred into a position where they had to handle it, possibly at the direction of federal union officials'.

The union action was attacked by federal government Minister for Trade and Resources, Doug Anthony, and Industrial Relations Minister, Ian Viner, flew to Darwin to hold talks with the Northern Territory government. The Northern Territory Minister for Mines and Energy, Ian Tuxworth, claimed that pressure was building from the mine owners to charter planes to fly the uranium to Japan. There was speculation that the air force would be used to transport uranium and rumours that a new landing for barges would be built somewhere between Darwin and the uranium mines.

The Northern Territory government built a new barge landing on the east arm of Darwin harbour, together with a sealed road capable of carrying container trucks. Powerful lights were installed and the public was told that the work was for a new power station for Darwin. The anti-uranium unions decided that the landing was intended for yellowcake export and they put a picket there as

well as the main Darwin wharf.

By the end of November the picket had been going for six weeks and Queensland Mines brought containers of uranium to Darwin to join those from Ranger. In Sydney, Cliff Dolan chaired a meeting of the 26 unions which had a connection with the uranium industry; the meeting resolved to marshal broad support for the three Darwin unions and called on electricians, engineers and other unionists to withdraw their services from the uranium mines.

In Darwin, unionists agreed to the ACTU executive handling the dispute. Dolan and other union leaders flew to Darwin and met the Northern Territory Chief Minister, Paul Everingham, who had pledged to export uranium on barges using non-union labour. The ACTU warned the Darwin unionists that the mining companies were likely to take action under section 45D of the Trade Practices Act which provides for heavy fines against unions and officials.

At their next meeting in Melbourne, the ACTU executive voted by 17 to 7 to lift the Darwin bans. The move to lift the bans was led by Waterside Workers secretary Charlie Fitzgibbon. Dolan was not at the meeting. The Darwin unionists were assured that the ACTU would remain opposed to uranium mining even though, for tactical reasons, the bans were being lifted.

Margaret Gillespie of Friends of the Earth (Darwin) said the unionists were very disappointed.

I think they felt like the carpet had been pulled out from underneath them, no-one sits on a picket line for seven weeks unless they really believe in what they're doing.

Jamie Robertson of the SUA in Darwin: We were disappointed, but there were other factors. If they had set up a scab port it would have led us into a very long and difficult fight.

Dave Northey said:

There's a lot of division about this, but I think that if the ACTU and the parliamentary wing of the ALP had got together and leant all of their weight behind the people in Darwin, then we could have, if not defeated 45D, at least had it subjugated to the point where they wouldn't have been able to proceed because of the weight of opposition.

## Brisbane, 1981 ...

In Brisbane the first line of opposition to uranium exports was the railway workers who held up shipments in the Mayne Yard. As in Darwin the seamen refused to crew ships or provide tugs for ships with uranium.

Owen Pearson from Brisbane Campaign Against Nuclear Power said:

It was held up for six weeks and then another time for ten weeks. We had a good roll-up to the demonstration that we held, it was quite a good time because the issue was getting discussed, lots of people were supporting them and the debate went on in the papers.

In May WWF members loaded 12

containers of yellowcake on the *MV Parella*, but the Seamen's Union refused to supply tugs. The *Parella* managed to leave but was met with union bans on its arrival in Vancouver, Canada, and was unloaded by scab labour. Thousands of anti-uranium demonstrators blocked the train carrying this uranium across Canada.

The next confrontation took place when seven containers of uranium were loaded on the *ACT 4*; tug crews banned the ship and the Merchant Service Guild refused to supply a pilot. After being delayed a week, the shipping company offered to unload the uranium but the Fraser government intervened and threatened legal action against the company and the SUA. The SUA decided to lift the ban on the *ACT 4* and called on the ACTU to convene a meeting to discuss ways of enforcing the ACTU policy on uranium.

Shipping agents in Brisbane decided not to accept bookings from Mary Kathleen Uranium because of the actions of the tug crews. Mary Kathleen stopped trying to export uranium and took the SUA to court.

In November, a Federal Court judge ordered the seamen to allow the export of uranium from Mary Kathleen. Mr Justice Morling said that the mining company was contractually bound to supply large quantities of concentrates by 31 December for use in electricity generation in Japan, West Germany and the USA. If the uranium was not delivered by the due dates, the buyers would be entitled to cancel the contracts.

Having gained their court injunction, Mary Kathleen sent four containers of yellowcake to Brisbane to load on the *ACT 6*, but the ship sailed without the uranium. First the Waterside Workers Federation required certification that the cargo was not harmful to their members health; A government official arrived at the wharf at 3 pm, but the WWF delegate on duty said he wanted direct instructions from the Queensland branch secretary. Then the Foremen Stevedores Association went on strike at the new Brisbane container terminal over meal facilities.

For a time seamen working on the tugs placed a ban on the container terminals in support of a dispute about overtime arrangements. The *ACT 6* decided to leave Brisbane without the uranium rather than delay their other cargo any longer.

One unionist said, 'When you've got something as emotional and as volatile as the uranium issue, some workers are going to feel very strongly about it.'

Finally in December, Mary Kathleen was able to export 26 containers of yellowcake by trucking them to the prawning town of Karumba on the Gulf of Carpentaria. Non-union labour loaded the containers onto an ocean-going barge for the journey to Singapore.

## Section 45D ...

The ACTU wants the Labor government to repeal section 45D of the Trade Practices Act, which would create more room for unions to act against uranium, as well as in many other disputes.

Northey said:

I certainly don't think Hawke's about to repeal 45D, in fact his own ministers have said that while they're ready to repeal Fraser's anti-union legislation, they've said that 45D is a handy tool. I can only see that it's a handy tool against the worker, certainly it's not a handy tool against industry; it'll be aimed at the people who supported the Hawke government and support the ACTU. I think Hawke will be one of the first to use 45D or encourage its use if unions try to thwart his government's stand on uranium.

One union organiser said:

45D is something that certain unions live with all the time, I've been threatened on four or five occasions, I just say, 'Go for your life', there's no way they're going to get anywhere.

Northey believes that the anti-uranium unions could overcome the threat of 45D if there is a commitment to use their industrial strength against it.

## The mines ...

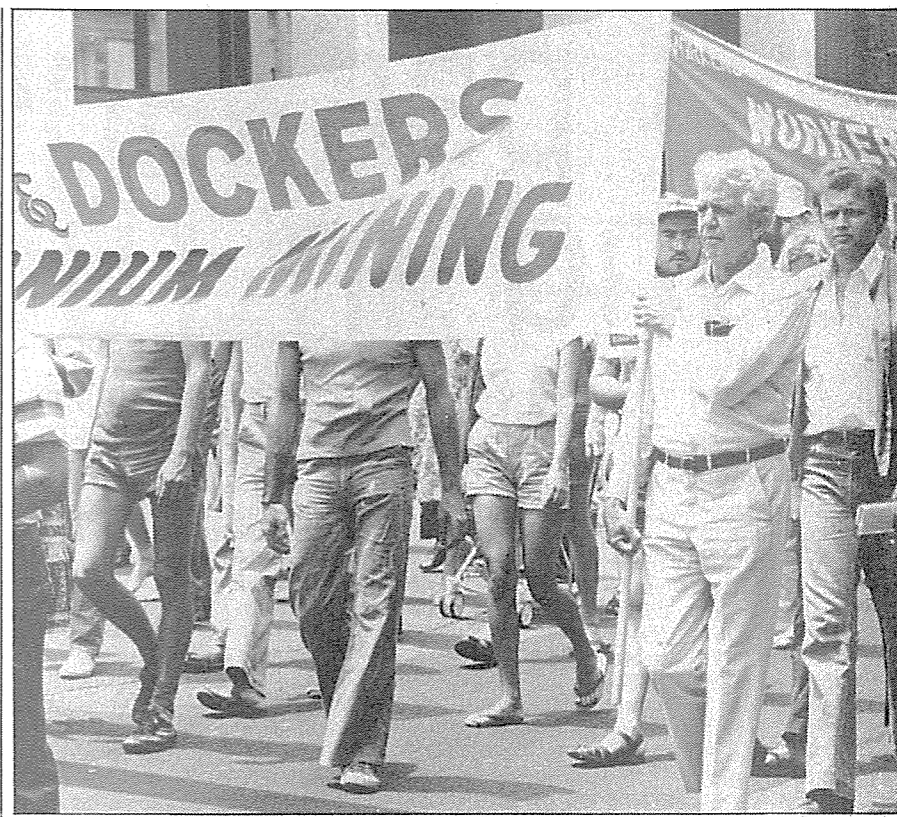
In 1980 the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) called on its members to refuse work in the uranium industry and threatened to exclude from the union members who ignored the call. A number of other unions, including the Metal Workers stopped servicing members who worked in the uranium industry. Dolan said that many ETU members rang the union offices to check first before accepting jobs in the Northern Territory, in case they were uranium jobs.

The mining companies have been able to get enough electricians and other workers to operate their mines. In the current economic climate it's hard for people to resist the high wages paid in the uranium industry.

There is also a lot of wishful thinking among people who work in uranium mines, that it won't be them who suffer the consequences of longterm exposure to low level radiation. Sister Rosalie Bertells and Dr Helen Caldicott have been to Mary Kathleen and addressed miners on the hazards they face in mining uranium. Some miners became very worried and a few left the mine, but most of them thought again about their pay cheques.

Early reports from the Ranger and Nabarlek mines suggested that there was a very casual attitude towards radiation safety. Jamie Robertson commented, 'Until people kicked up a stink about it, the workers used to have competitions to see who could get the highest reading.'

A worker at Ranger has had an accident in which he received 70% of his annual allowable radiation dose in one go. His health is now being monitored and he's near to a nervous breakdown. The accident occurred when two



Unionists take part in anti-uranium demonstration in Brisbane.

workers were clearing a blockage in a hopper used to load yellowcake into drums, they cleared the blockage with a broom and got covered with yellowcake dust.

Margaret Gillespie told of another accident:

A Spanish woman was employed out there who had little understanding of English. Through ignorance of the precautions she contaminated herself, some of the other workers realised this and she got worried about it. They advised her to go home and flush out her system with laxatives which was apparently what workers at Mary Kathleen used to do when they realised they'd had too much, so that when their next test came it wouldn't show up.

A spokesperson for the Miscellaneous Workers Union (MWU), which covers workers at the Ranger and Nabarlek mines, said:

There was a case of a woman in the packing area, the stuff's supposed to be kept wet and she managed to splash some upon herself. She wasn't aware that it was actually yellowcake because it wasn't yellow, it was a different colour.

The MWU has complained to the Ranger management about the training procedures that resulted in this accident.

Gillespie said:

The constant factor that applies in any industrial situation is that a lot of workers are frightened that if there's a matter of safety that they will be blamed themselves and lose their job.

Radiation dangers are inherent in uranium mining; all sorts of contamination can occur. At Ranger it was found that waste water from one part

of the plant was connected to the drinking water supplies; this and other safety issues caused a week-long strike at the time.

One MWU official said he thought the pipes had been connected that way as some sort of bizarre practical joke. An MWU spokesperson said:

Those people that drank the water had some tests done on them, but the trouble is that if you don't test them more or less straight away, then there's some question about how good the tests are. The National Safety Council did a survey at Ranger's request and they highlighted about 27 areas that were deficient, not just in radiation control procedures, but generally in the layout of the plant.

The MWU is trying to get onto the Alligator Rivers Coordinating Committee, which has representatives from Territory and federal governments and the mining companies and which oversees environmental, health and safety aspects of the mines.

Trade union action alone seems unlikely to be able to stop uranium mining, especially when some unions like the MWU and the Australian Workers Union are keen to cover uranium miners. The remoteness of the mines and the shortage of jobs makes it even harder to act effectively against them, but an ongoing trade union campaign against uranium will be very important to the anti-nuclear movement. Such a campaign shows the strength of opposition to uranium mining, disrupts the activities of the mining companies and encourages others to oppose them.



# Job package found in rubbish

By Barbara Hutton and Richard Nankin

The Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Beverage Containers is under heavy pressure from industry lobbyists to recommend against a deposit law for Victoria. The Inquiry, comprising three Labor, one National Party and two Liberal members, is expected to report in February next year (1984). It was set up to investigate the spread of 'throw-away' containers - non-refillable glass bottles, 'plasti-shield' aluminium and plastic-coated cardboard boxes, black-based plastic bottles, etc - which are rapidly replacing refillable bottles.

Only 16% of soft drinks are now sold in returnables and small soft drink companies are desperate for supplies of the bottles which are virtually unobtainable in Victoria. Australian Consolidated Industries (ACI), Victoria's monopoly glass manufacturer, also holds the Australian patent for polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastics, the black-based bottles, which it plans to introduce soon in a half-litre size. To ACI the decline of the returnable bottle has meant a sales boom. For every refillable bottle ACI can sell up to 30 one-way bottles (glass or plastic). ACI now embosses the words 'Not to be refilled' on all one-ways to prevent them being returned.

Not everyone believes these bottles are 'not refillable'. Bottle merchants are carrying on a brisk, unpublicised trade in these one-ways, which are being washed and sold back to the smaller fillers. But the new packages - PET plastic, plasti-shield, cartons, etc - cannot be reused and are not economically recyclable.

One option open to the Inquiry is to recommend a compulsory deposit on all beverage containers. A similar system, limited to soft drinks and beer cans, was introduced in 1977 in South Australia. Every container carries a minimum 5c deposit, refundable at supermarkets, shops or bottle merchants. Drink manufacturers are required to take their

*Barbara Hutton is a journalist and environmentalist who worked with the Friends of the Earth Recycling Campaign. Richard Nankin is coordinator of the campaign.*

bottles back. The result has been the disappearance of non-refillable soft drink bottles. PET plastic bottles are still available, though they are less common than in Victoria. There is a very high return rate for bottles and cans - over 95% are refilled or recycled. Soft drinks and beer are cheaper in South Australia than any other state. The deposit system has overwhelming popular support. Several hundred jobs have been created in recycling as a result of the South Australian legislation, and the state is remarkably free of litter, especially on beaches and roadsides.

## The industry lobby

The packaging industry has an entrenched fear of deposit legislation. It lobbies directly, and exerts pressure on other organisations to lobby against deposits. The packaging industry has considerable leverage over beverage companies (who depend on it for supplies of containers), recycling firms (who supply scrap metals and glass), and organisations such as Keep Australia Beautiful (which depends heavily on the industry for funding).

The Glassworkers Union has a small membership, almost entirely dependent on ACI in Victoria for jobs. This union has lobbied within the union movement, putting forward the same arguments as the Packaging Council of Australia (PCA), the packaging industry lobby group. These arguments have been summarised in a glossy brochure sent to all state and federal members of parliament. The PCA claims:

- Deposits will increase prices and reduce sales. Consumers will see the deposit as a price rise and will be put off buying beverages.
- There will be a loss of jobs. Any jobs gained will be unskilled and inferior.
- Beverage containers make up only a tiny fraction of litter (7%, they claim) so deposits will not solve the litter problem.

The argument hinges on the belief that prices would rise and sales drop under a deposit system. Both these claims are demonstrably untrue. Soft drink and beer in South Australia are remarkably cheap. Soft drink sales did drop after the introduction of deposits, but this was a national trend. They

dropped even further in New South Wales and have not recovered there.

Beverage companies such as the South Australian Brewery and Coca Cola Bottlers in South Australia are flourishing. Small companies (like Leo's Cool Drinks in Adelaide) are strong supporters of the legislation. Per capita soft drink consumption in Adelaide is higher than the national average.

## Rubbish

The PCA's arguments on litter are also unconvincing. Anyone who has visited South Australia will have noticed the clean beaches, the lack of broken glass, the litter-free highways. Bodies such as Keep Australia Beautiful (Victoria) and the NSW State Pollution Control Commission would have us believe that this is only a 'subjective impression'. They have developed complex mathematical models to show that despite our faulty perception, their scientific tests show 'objective' litter in states which have deposit laws.

If anyone finds that hard to swallow, a second line of defence is that the reduction of litter in South Australia is solely due to the work of Keep South Australia Beautiful (KESAB) and deposits have nothing to do with it. KESAB itself does not make this claim. It supports the deposit law.

But the crux of the issue is employment. South Australia is in the grip of a severe recession. It has been for several years. During this time approximately 700 jobs have been created in supermarkets, bottle merchants, can-recycling works and transport as a direct result of the deposit legislation. There is no evidence that any jobs have been lost because of it. Gadsdens, the can makers, claim that they shut down their steel can plant in Adelaide because of it, sacking 48 people. The Commercial Banking Corporation of Sydney carried out a study into the viability of the can industry in 1977. It found the industry was over-extended and heading for a crash and that Gadsdens would be hit hard. Gadsdens may have used the Beverage Containers Act as a scapegoat to cover up its own poor planning. South Australia now uses aluminium



cans, a trend which is becoming worldwide, and Victorian and Western Australian markets will also be changing to aluminium shortly.

Increased jobs as a result of deposit legislation, as occurred in South Australia, is not an isolated case. The same thing has been observed in every USA state which has introduced deposits. Michigan is an industrialised state, like Victoria, which had almost entirely gone over to one-ways when its deposit law was introduced. Michigan gained 4600 jobs because of the law - 20 for every one lost. While most of the jobs were for unskilled workers, some, such as drivers, managers of bottle depots, and operators at can-crushing plants, are skilled.

The number of collection depots in South Australia has nearly doubled since the introduction of deposits. There has of course been a corresponding increase in the number of skilled management and administrative jobs created as a direct result of these laws. Although much of the work in bottle and can collection is manual and 'unskilled', the work does also involve operating machinery such as glass crushers and bottle-washing equipment, as well as driving forklifts and other vehicles within the collection depot. Most of the people we have spoken to who work in these places claim their work is physically hard, but not boring, and often quite rewarding, largely because they perceive it as being socially and environmentally useful.

## One-way to unemployment

It is a myth that one-way packaging has created jobs. Over the past ten years the workforce in the Australian soft drink industry has declined from about 10 000 to 6000, a drop of 40%. The loss of employment is largely due to one-way containers. They can be filled faster, workers are not required for sorting and washing, there is no need for transport of returned bottles.

Apart from 4000 jobs in the beverage industry, jobs have been lost in retailing. Supermarkets will not stock refillable containers because they do not want to have to pay staff to handle the returns. Many small fillers, especially in country areas, have already gone to the wall

because of one-ways. Refillable bottles are a cheap but labour-intensive system suited to local distribution (because of the need to transport bottles back to the filler). With one-ways, large fillers are able to undercut the small country companies. One filler told us how he went to the supermarket one day and saw full bottles of Tarax on sale for less than he paid for the empty bottles. He gave up in despair. Some companies have survived by doing home delivery. Others have become local fillers for the big companies. Once that happens they are utterly dependent and can be closed down at the big company's whim.

If the move to half-litre PET plastic bottles goes ahead, even more jobs will be lost, this time jobs in the Glassworkers Union. Labour requirements to produce PET bottles are minimal - the main costs are the machinery and the PET resin itself. Just 60 workers, in

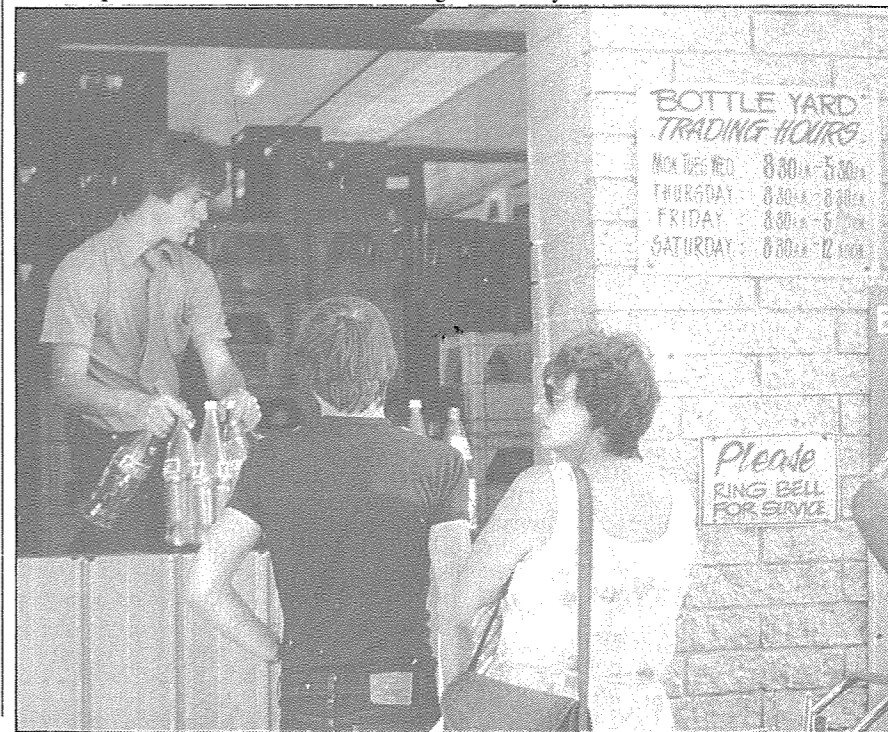
Sydney, make Victoria's entire supply of plastic soft drink bottles.

Finally, the cost to the economy of disposables must be mentioned. Aluminium requires huge amounts of energy to produce, which is usually subsidised by state governments. Aluminium cans are fully recyclable. With deposits they are recycled, more than at present, and the energy saving is impressive.

Many of the materials used in throw-away packaging are imported and generally they are not recycled. Imported materials include the cardboard used in milk cartons (from Finland and Japan), the extremely expensive PET resin used in soft drink bottles, and soda ash, used in glass making. The vast majority of one-way glass bottles are not recycled.

One-way packaging is a drain on our economy, destroys jobs and causes disposal problems which are a cost to the whole community. The public pays for

Workers in Adelaide, South Australia, whose jobs were created as the result of bottle deposit legislation in that state. Above: Woman receiving returned bottles in Coles supermarket. Below: Man working in bottle yard.





waste disposal and litter clean-up through local government rates and taxes to fund bodies such as the Road Construction Authority (Victoria) which cleans up highways. Local governments in Victoria are overwhelmingly in support of deposit legislation.

Consumer groups strongly support deposits for price reasons. Conservation groups have given strong endorsement to the deposit proposal. The Friends of the Earth Recycling Campaign has collected 15 000 signatures from members of the public calling for a 'Bottle Bill' in Victoria. There is clear public support for action on throwaway containers. States which have introduced legislation (South Australia and in the USA) have found that once the system is introduced the popular support for it becomes so strong that it cannot be repealed, even by conservative governments.

#### Recycling Campaign Contacts

If the recycling campaign in Victoria is successful in its call for beverage container deposit legislation, it will provide the impetus for the adoption of similar policies in other states, and for further waste-recycling and waste-reduction initiatives. For further information contact the people in your state.

#### Australian Capital Territory

• Annie Vavanagh  
c/- Jobless Action  
PO Box 401  
Civic Square, ACT 2608  
Tel: (062) 47 9001

#### New South Wales

• Joe Wachter  
Friends of the Earth (Sydney)  
787 George St  
Sydney, NSW 2000  
Tel: (02) 211 3953  
• Maynard Rye  
c/- Australian Consumers Association  
28-30 Queens St  
Chippendale, NSW 2008  
Tel: (02) 698 9200

#### Queensland

• Liz Bourne  
c/- Queensland Conservation Council  
PO Box 238  
North Quay, Qld 4000

#### Tasmania

• Dr Gerry Bates  
Recycling Campaign  
c/- Tasmanian Conservation Trust  
102 Bathurst St  
Hobart, Tas 7001  
Tel: (002) 34 3552

#### Victoria

• Richard Nankin  
Recycling Campaign  
Friends of the Earth (Collingwood)  
366 Smith St  
Collingwood, Vic 3066  
Tel: (03) 419 8700

#### Western Australia

• Bruce Muley  
Recycling Campaign  
Friends of the Earth (Perth)  
790 Hay St  
Perth, WA 6000  
Tel: (09) 321 5942

# Packaging wrapped up

By Richard Nankin

Australia's packaging manufacturing industry is highly centralised and monopoly controlled. Competition and fair trade seldom operate within this industry. There are numerous cases of vertical integration - most of the largest consumers of packaging products have interests in the companies which supply them, and vice versa.

Packaging manufacturers in Australia, and worldwide, have been amongst the top 'performers' on the share markets over the past decade. This reflects a rapid shift over this period from re-useable and re-fillable containers to throw-away and single-use containers, combined with a huge growth in the types of packaging forms available. Many new products have been developed to make use of these new packaging forms. The Fruit Box type of long-life container and the plastic-coated cardboard carton are but two examples of this.

The rapid growth in this area of manufacturing has meant not only large profits and turnover, but also a fair degree of risk and venture capital involved in the changeover to the new packaging forms. There has been severe dislocation associated with the sudden obsolescence facing such products as the steel drink can, the brown-paper supermarket bag, cardboard egg cartons and packing boxes. Most of the new packaging forms utilise much less labour in their manufacture and filling, this being replaced by capital and resource-intensive new technology.

The rapid changes and growth taking place in the packaging industry have been accompanied by many takeovers, amalgamations, bids and counter-bids, both on the share markets and 'behind the scenes'.

The packaging companies, both individually and through their lobbying groups (such as the Packaging Council of Australia) are amongst the staunchest opponents of environmental controls and strong environmental legislation. Many of the companies involved in Australia's packaging industry can be classed amongst our top polluters, and have close links with the mining and extractive industries.

The Australian public deserves a better deal than we presently receive from the packaging industry. Anti-trust laws with real teeth would be a good start.

#### Glass

Australian Consolidated Industries (ACI) is Australia's biggest packaging manufacturer, and has an almost total monopoly in glass manufacturing. It controls 90% of the glass market in Australia. Its only competition is from Smorgon Consolidated Industries, which owns a glass manufacturing plant in Sydney.

#### Plastics

ACI, Hoechst (German owned) and ICI (British owned) together control most of the Australian plastics packaging industry. ACI also controls the Australian market for PET plastic soft drink bottles.

#### Paper

The paper market is dominated by two local manufacturers, Australian Paper Manufacturers (APM) and Australian Pulp & Paper Mills (APPM). Their virtual monopolies in newsprint and writing paper are now being challenged by Smorgons, which is running a large (and very smelly) pulp mill in Melbourne. The only other manufacturer of any significance is Fibre Containers Ltd, which is owned by the USA-based Amatil.

#### Steel

Broken Hill Proprietary Co Ltd (BHP) is the monopoly here, selling most of its can plate to the two large fabricating companies, Gadsens and Containers Ltd. Australia's rate of steel recycling is abysmally low by world standards, although the situation may improve with the arrival of our old friend, Smorgons, which is currently building a small but very modern steel mill designed with the use of secondhand metal in mind. BHP, of course, is not pleased.

#### Aluminium

Alcoa (USA owned) and Comalco (Canadian owned) share the market in aluminium smelting, and sell almost all their can-plate production to either Containers Ltd or Gadsens. Carlton & United Breweries, the country's largest brewer, recently took over ACI's 22% holding in Gadsens. Gadsens in turn controls a large slice of the milk and fruit juice industry, through its holdings in Pure-Pak, which makes the cardboard carton.

## REVIEWS

### Film

**For Love or Money**, by Megan McMurphy, Margot Nash, Margot Oliver and Jeni Thornley. Music by Elizabeth Drake. 16mm, colour, 120 minutes. Available from Sydney Filmmakers Co-operative. Tel: (02) 33 0721.  
Reviewed by Linnell Secomb and Trish Luker.

*For Love or Money* is a feature-length compilation film which tells the story of working women's lives in Australia. It draws on many media, taking pictorial images from old feature films, newsreels and documentaries, still photographs, rock paintings, advertisements and cartoons with radio, diaries, popular songs, poems and interviews. Five years after its inception at the Women and Labour Conference in 1978, the film has now emerged as an exciting, powerful and at times funny account of Australian working women's history.

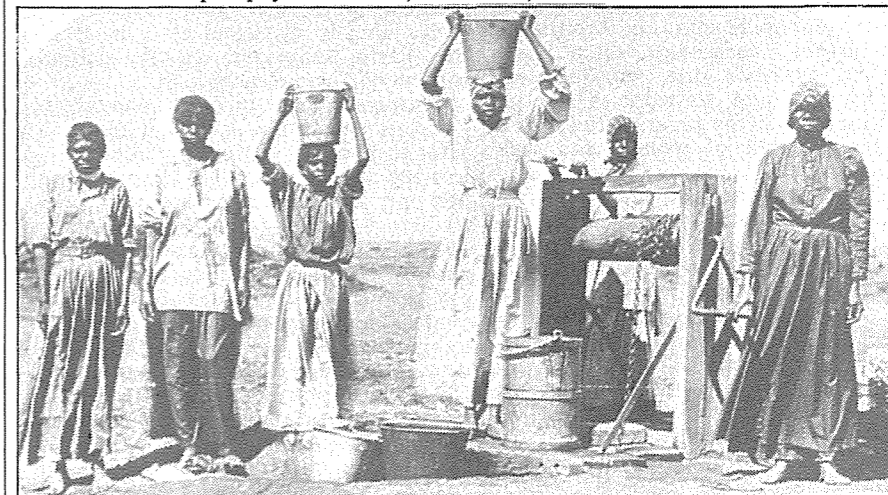
The film has been designed to be accessible to a wide audience, and was released in October in conjunction with a book of the same name (published by Penguin), a study-guide for school students, still photograph postcards, musical sound track and a tea-towel. The filmmakers have hopes for its use on television as well.

An enormous amount of research has gone into the making of this film, some stages of which were funded by the Australian Film Commission (Creative Development Branch) and the Women's Film Fund (Project Development Branch) as well as other finance from groups, unions and individuals. Although a number of women have been involved in the film at various stages, the four filmmakers and musical director have devoted the majority of time to its production.

One of the most important themes is that of Australia as a divided society. This is a country of two cultures - Aboriginal and coloniser. The work of Aboriginal women for love and occasionally for a pittance is set within a description of the real and vile history of white colonisation and with an understanding that land rights are a prerequisite for Aboriginal women's economic and cultural survival. The filmmakers have devoted some time



'All we want is equal pay.' Barmaids, Newcastle, 1962.



Aboriginal domestic servants, Mundabullangana Station, Western Australia, 1898. From the film *For Love or Money*.

in the film to describing the context of Aboriginal women's work knowing that the white viewer has little understanding or knowledge of Aboriginal life and history (see *Girls Own*, no 13, November-December 1983, p 9).

The film is both a 'history', and a story of women's lives and work. The traditional and personalised form of story-telling is an important aspect of its presentation. To achieve the depth and insight that story-telling gives, the filmmakers have taken some licence. For example, footage of 1950s migrant factory workers is used in conjunction

with a voice-over from recent interviews with migrant women about how they feel about their work. They have integrated the feelings of women into the 'facts' of history.

The film both challenges and subverts the concept of duality on which most of our thinking about the world is based. In particular, the duality of subjective/objective forms is overcome by intertwining these two forms throughout the film. The film is an 'objective' documentary, but more importantly, it is a presentation of women's personal 'subjective' experiences. The subjective



## REVIEWS

form is introduced in a variety of ways, including the fairly conventional and well-explored personal interview format. More unusual techniques are also used such as the narrator using 'we' rather than 'they' when talking about women, like, for example, in the thematic phrase 'We are the daughters of the mothers who serve.' This 'we' is used in different contexts, at times meaning we, the filmmakers, and at others we, Aboriginal women, or we, all women.

As viewers, one of us found the use of a subjective style within the documentary form strengthened the film and made it more accessible. The other of us found the intermeshing of this socially constructed duality difficult to understand and accept and in some ways, alienating.

The overcoming of dualities is centrally important to the themes and dynamics presented on several levels. For example the work of women for love and for money is integrated within the film. Consequently the film is not an ordinary labour history. It does not present a simple chronological listing of events and trade union and Arbitration Commission decisions which have effected women's pay, working conditions and right to work. These are mentioned, but the focus of the film is on the strength of women and their struggle.

The construction of the film often challenges accepted notions of documentary style, and makes use of a number of techniques which explore particular themes and historical analyses. The use of repetition is a striking aspect of the film's form - visual, narrative and musical sequences are repeated at times to link themes from different historical periods.

There's a certain beauty and poetry in the film too, which is particularly powerful in visual segments which have been slowed down. This, the filmmakers claim, was a conscious attempt to challenge traditional approaches to women's domestic work - the work of loving - and to present it in a positive and valued way.

The music is fantastic; Elizabeth Drake has used both archival sound tracks and arranged new pieces for particular periods. It is as much a part of the narration as the dialogue, and serves to structurally link particular themes which recur at different times. The use of synthesizer rhythms is very effective, evoking anger and revolt, particularly with scenes of Aboriginal people.

The last part of the film - Work of Value - presents some of the crucial and well-known political campaigns of the 70s and 80s, including clips from land-rights rallies, International Women's Day marches and the struggle of women to get work in the steel mills in Wollongong. This activism emerges as a result of earlier movements giving sense of historical continuity. While acknowledging the differences between women, the film also presents solidarity.

Linnell Secomb and Trish Luker are both members of the Chain Reaction Sydney collective.

## Periodical

**Outrage: a magazine for lesbians and gay men.** Published by Gay Publications Co-operative, PO Box 21, Carlton South, Vic 3053. Eleven issues per annum, \$1.50 each.

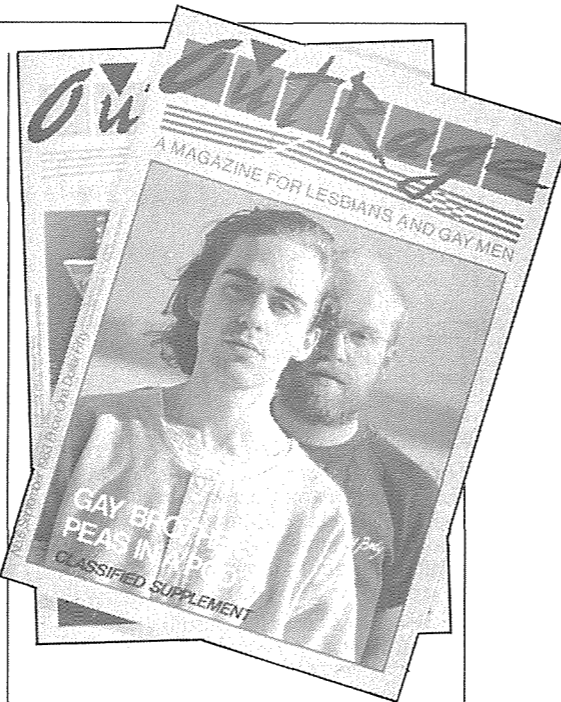
Reviewed by Kimberly O'Sullivan

If anyone had told me twelve months ago that I would be subscribing to a mixed gay magazine I would not have believed them. I now subscribe to *Outrage*, but not without reservations.

I want to preface any criticism of *Outrage* with concern at the ugly anti-feminist, anti-lesbian and anti-gay prejudice already displayed by Friends of the Earth supporters in the letters column of *Chain Reaction* 34.

*Outrage's* major problem, one which I feel is unsolvable, is that it seeks to cater to two very different audiences - lesbians and gay men. Our interests are not only different, they are often contradictory. Coming out as a lesbian in 1983 is still a sharper break with the expected, traditional female role than a gay identity necessitates for men. I confess here to being one of those lesbian-feminists described in *Outrage 6* who reacts negatively to what the boys feel is 'an erotic depiction of the male body - especially the penis'. But I deny (as they go on to accuse us of) that this reaction has no political analysis. I am constantly assaulted by 'erotic' images of the male body in the straight world and am not interested in seeing more of them in a magazine which claims in its banner to be for me - 'a magazine for lesbians and gay men'. I see no difference between a gay male's 'need' for depiction of erotic material and a heterosexual male's 'need' for the same material. In fact such a need suspiciously sounds not like a particularly gay demand but a particularly male one.

I read *Outrage* for the type of lesbian news and dyke views which I do not get anywhere else. I also read it for critiques of our popular culture which I also do not read anywhere else, eg Mitch Cleary's 'Dyke Heroines at Wimbledon' and



Sheril Berkovitch's review of *Flashdance*.

The general standard of interviews and articles is high and special mention should go to Mitch Cleary's articles which are crisp, sharp and very witty. I immensely enjoy *Outrage's* regular columns, their reviews and their fiction all of which I feel is missing from lesbian and feminist publications.

One of *Outrage's* strengths is that it writes critically and constructively of gay subculture, structures and institutions. This ranges from an attack on the machismo of the gay bar, *Midnight Shift (Outrage 6 and 7)* to a questioning of the continued relevance of general homosexual conferences to the gay community (*Outrage 7*). This is something which lesbian and feminist publications could do well to emulate.

*Outrage's* production: the layout, covers, design, graphics and photography are superb. It does not just look good, it visually outclasses any other magazine on the left. It is refreshing to see a publication which is so visually attractive on our side. *Outrage* however still reads like a gay male magazine which runs stories on lesbians wedged between the rest of the 'real' news. Remaining unconvinced of the need for wimmin to work politically with men, I wondered early on what was happening with the wimmin involved in *Outrage*. I wondered how long it would be before these wimmin felt the need to meet autonomously to challenge gay male power, which is still male power after all. By issue 6 it had happened: 'Women Involved In *Outrage*' has called for structural equality within the Gay Publications Co-Op and were arranging a women's caucus around their specific grievances. In their printed statement they addressed my earlier point about a contradictory readership and hence an uneven 'mood' in the magazine. I do not know the result of the

caucus, there was no mention of it in *Outrage 7*.

How do I feel about *Outrage*? Cautious. My indecisiveness is showing, right? Like Dr Dolittle's push me - pull you animal, I feel that my excitement at the form and potential of *Outrage* is tempered by a suspicion of the men involved. How long can they be trusted? (Wishing *Outrage* to be wonderful, doesn't of course make it so.) Nothing in my previous experience lets me feel that gay men are anymore trustworthy than heterosexual men. So I am loath to support a magazine like *Outrage* on faith alone.

I remain unconvinced by *Outrage* that the interests of lesbians and gay men are compatible or even reconcilable. Working together for a common cause is different to working together for a mutual end and *Outrage* does not persuade me of the necessity of either.

Despite all these reservations I enjoy *Outrage* - I can't help myself! And I will continue my subscription, put a 'Maintain Your *Outrage*' sticker on my car and this summer I may even buy an *Outrage* T-Shirt. My support of *Outrage* remains a contradiction in my life, but one which I feel at this stage does not need resolution.

Kimberly O'Sullivan is a lesbian-feminist from Sydney who has read every issue of *Outrage*.

## Books

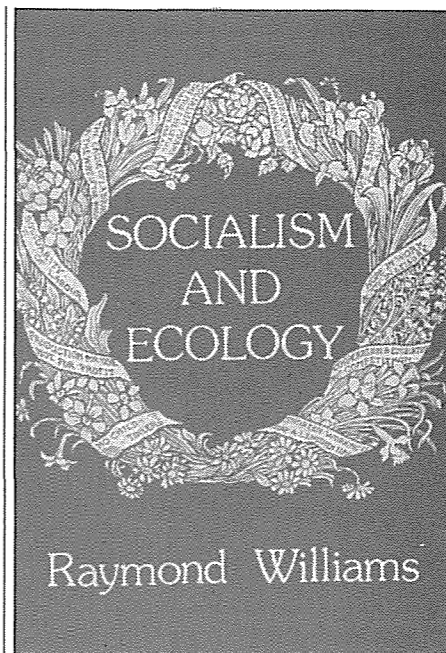
**Socialism and Ecology** by Raymond Williams, Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA), London, 20 pages, \$2.25 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Peter Ormonde

If you're feeling a bit flat watching the antics in Canberra over uranium or just find yourself running out of steam, I've found a terrific tonic and there isn't even a hangover. At least not yet. It's a tiny pamphlet by Raymond Williams called *Socialism and Ecology*. And before you screw up your nose, I should mention that it's not just another one of those rather tedious raves about how capitalism is indescribably evil and how 'Socialism is the Only Answer.' This book actually asks: But what's the question?

Raymond Williams is an English academic better known for his studies of culture and ideas than his environmental concern. He's written about television, language, literature, history and much more. The pamphlet was published after Williams delivered a talk to the Socialist Environment and Resources Association (SERA), of which he is vice-president.

Williams has the happy knack of being able to convey a great many ideas in a few words. Actually, he



triggers ideas rather than lays down blueprints - he sparks the imagination and suggests directions, and lets his audience's momentum take over from there.

Williams argues that since the middle of the last century socialist thinking has been infatuated with economic growth - with *homo economicus* and increased productivity as a solution to poverty. The zeal of the industrial revolution spread contagiously into the ranks of socialists. They, like the machines they worked, were steamed up to conquer nature, while their capitalist owners were conquering the colonies. This enthusiasm for 'progress' was reinforced by writers like Marx and Engels - although both at various times made genuflections towards the limitations of nature and the costs of industrialisation; Engels' book *The Condition of the Working Class in England* is one of the most impassioned and incisive attacks on the consequences of the machine age I've ever read.

But socialists saw themselves as the heralds of a future age - 'the cutting edge' of social change, as Barry Jones might put it. Looking back to pastures lost, to the 'idiocy of rural life', was, innately conservative, feudal, and futile. While recognising that industrialisation saw living conditions deteriorate for many workers, it was these very machines which promised to resolve this dilemma - simply get rid of the excessive wastes of the capitalist class and the wastefulness of the system - and there's enough for everyone. It's a distributional problem, you see?

Well, no, not quite. Energy shortages, pollution on a global scale, just the sheer physical limits of the planet we live on have undermined this confidence for many socialists. Unfortunately, for most countries where they actually have

some sort of 'non-capitalist state' - I still can't work out a suitable term - there's a general undying faith in Man's [*sic*] ability to transcend the limits of this Nature business. Technology *uber alles*. Under Socialism, comrades, even the atom is safe. Hmmm? This faith in the technological fix often masquerades as the 'scientific' end of Scientific Socialism. To some extent it undoubtedly reflects the immense power of technocrats and managerial bureaucrats in these countries.

You also have to go back to the roots - where, facing a starving population in 1917, Lenin embraced the ideas of Henry Ford and Frederick Taylor, who completed the brutalisation of the work process through time and motion studies. But you can find the seeds of this techno-socialism in Marx himself and in others, well before Lenin and 1917. That just sealed the fate of the technological orthodoxy.

In this pamphlet Williams resurrects some of the 'utopian' socialists - William Morris and the German Haeckel, who actually 'invented' ecology - and casts some light on a socialist tradition that has been buried under the weight of five-year plans and productivity statistics. Morris was an English socialist who was concerned with the quality of life, with questions of beauty, usefulness, value and social needs. Many of the questions he was preoccupied with have only just started being re-asked by a new generation of radicals. Williams argues that these are the real questions thrown up by our 'ecological crisis'; that years of blindly increasing productivity has done little to alleviate poverty and has often led to a decline in real living standards other than increasing our ability to consume too much food, too much energy and too much space. He claims that by allowing themselves to be tied to the growth mania of industrialisation, workers have sacrificed long-term interests for the immediate securities of their jobs and material possessions.

Now this is the nub of the question: we saw it with the Franklin dam where a bunch of 'middle-class greenies' were 'holding the jobs of decent honest working folk to ransom'. We'll see it again when the hard-working uranium miners queue up at the gates to get their hands on the huge safety bonuses. But aren't we also seeing it with car workers facing the sack, demanding the right to produce more cars that we really don't need, more televisions, more packets of Krispies? Is it enough to simply crank up the old machinery again, get everyone eating more, buying more, throwing away more, slap some new paint on it all and call it a 'recovery'? As the dissident East German ecologist Rudolf Bahro put it: 'Like the utopian socialists and communists whom Marx sought to dispense with, we must once again take the



## REVIEWS

species interest as our fundamental point of reference.'

This is not an easy nut to crack. There have been several good go's though: the Lucas Aerospace experiment in Britain, Environmentalists for Full Employment in the USA and here, the Green Bans, and more recently some moves in the Government Aircraft Factory in Victoria to set up alternative production for more socially useful products. It's doing this sort of thing - linking the immediate interest of workers to protect their jobs with their longer term interests as inhabitants of this planet - that Williams sees as the role for socialists.

Williams has a bit of a blast at 'non-political environmentalism' - you know the stuff - 'Oh we couldn't do that it's too y'know... antagonistic' or the 'We'll be OK - we've got 5 acres, man'. Both those views are political policy statements, and their politics stink to high heaven. But that's not to say Williams is narrow or intolerant of differing views or doesn't have any regard for the need to maintain the broadest possible connections between both radical ecologists and traditionally 'conservative' conservationists. To do otherwise is simply political suicide.

Fortunately, the Franklin and the uranium debate have moved the Australian movement past this rather infantile phase and hopefully we don't need to go through all that again. Everyone pretty well recognises that we've arrived as a political force. At last. But the tenuous and at times antagonistic links between ecologists and trade unionists should be a serious cause of concern - for both sides. Perhaps it's about time to start looking at those sorts of problems again - towards making sure that this bloody 'recovery' we're all supposed to be hatching doesn't turn out to be an ecological omelette, if I can scramble my metaphors. We can, and must argue, that without us - without ecological and environmental principles - there will be no 'recovery'. Things will just get worse, faster. It won't be easy, but it's essential. It will take new ideas, new methods, and lots of imagination, and perhaps new organisations.

Well, like I said, this pamphlet really gets the adrenalin pumping along. After I read it I photocopied about ten copies and mailed them off to friends - highly illegal I know and I could barely sleep with worrying about all that entropy via the copy machine. But Williams'

booklet carries seeds from which better things could grow and it should be read by more people. So get yourself a copy, or write to me while I've still got a few copies left.

Peter Ormonde works as a journalist for Tribune newspaper in Sydney.

**Does Khaki Become You? The Militarisation of Women's Lives** by Cynthia Enloe, Pluto Press, London, 1983, 262 pages, \$12.95 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Susan Mueller

Cynthia Enloe, in *Does Khaki Become You? The Militarisation of Women's Lives*, describes in detail the military's dependence on patriarchal structures for its continued functioning. The military trivialises its need for women but women provide both the motivation and support for the continuation of militarism. Cynthia Enloe contends that therefore it is in the military's interest to reinforce the role of women as mother, prostitute, wife and nurse.

Militaries need women - but they need women to behave as the gender 'women'. This always requires the exercise of control. Military officials and allies in civilian elites have wielded their power to perpetuate those gendered processes that guarantee the military its manpower. That is what is strikingly revealed in the experience of women who have been used as the military's prostitutes, rape victims, wives, widows, social workers, nurses, soldiers, defence workers and mothers.

Cynthia Enloe traces the lives of militarised women from the Crimea to present-day military bases at Subic Bay in the Philippines and Portsmouth in England. She identifies the way in which women have always been used by the military whether as unpaid nurses and laundresses in the Crimea and American Civil War or as underpaid workers in the electronic factories in the Philippines.

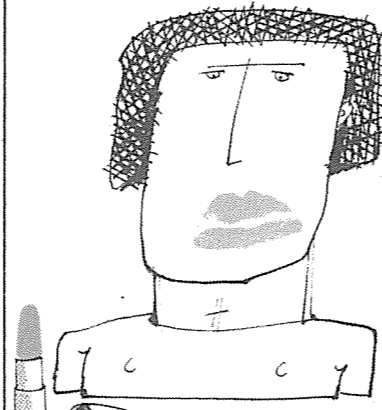
An area which has special significance concerns the women who work in the Export Processing Zones (EPZs) in Third World countries. Industrial manufacturers are attracted to EPZs by the promise of cheap, docile female labour. Most of the firms attracted to the EPZs are electronics manufacturers - many of which are involved in weapons production. They care little about the social and physical well being of the women who work for them. These women, according to Cynthia Enloe, are 'not merely militarised, they are triply militarised'.

Their labour is exploited so that their governments can go on buying foreign police and military equipment. They live in societies which are made repressive by militarised governments unwilling to confront deep-seated inequities, preferring to rely instead on coercive force and the aid of friendly powers, such as the USA, to whom they give military bases. They work on products which themselves either have direct military application or are part of a larger corporate profits formula in which defence contracting plays a central part.

Cynthia Enloe

DOES KHAKI BECOME YOU?

The Militarisation of Women's Lives



Pluto Press

In the Philippines where 40 000 people work in microelectronics, 95% of workers will develop severe eye trouble.

Most women electronics workers, after as few as three years, will have to quit their jobs because of deteriorating eyesight... These then are some of the real costs of a Trident missile or Chieftan tank that remain invisible if we stare fixedly only at government defence budgets or weapons company balance sheets: a spreading international sex division of labour; the reinforcement of sexist racism which portrays certain women as especially 'nimble-fingered'; the thousands of work lives cut short by headaches and chemical infection and deteriorating eyesight.

This leads Cynthia Enloe to suggest that an economic-technological analysis of militarism, although having advantages, is not an adequate tool for combating patriarchal military institutions. Cutting military budgets still leaves the military's basic value structure intact. 'Militarism disarmed is militarism still.'

Another approach used to look at militarism is to examine the supporting social institutions which are intrinsically patriarchal.

Such an approach has real value, and it would be a mistake to underestimate it. It insists that military ideologies and coercive manoeuvres be discussed not simply in terms of technology and economics, but in terms of the sexist structure of the social order. Militarism depends on distorted government budgets, but it also depends on the public denial or trivialisation of wife battering, rape and pornography.

Cynthia Enloe suggests that this approach is useful as it alerts women to the changes which need to occur if women are to eliminate the 'military capacity to shape public priorities in any society.' The problem with this approach however, is that it 'implies that only transformation so basic as to alter

the very character of men as men can effectively curtail the military invasion of ordinary women's lives'. This says Cynthia Enloe can be demoralising and even paralysing.

The approach which Cynthia Enloe supports is that which looks at observable processes. According to Enloe, by focussing on process, power is put into context. It 'presumes that decisions are made by someone, that there were and still are choices; but some are taken, while others are rejected, and those exercises of power derive from someone's calculation of interest and benefit.'

Decisions which bring about the militarisation of women can be discovered and acted upon. Increasingly women are rejecting the military's attempts to use them for military purposes. However, the 'military policy makers will not give up their control of women - they cannot afford to. Instead they will try to increase their capacity to control women. Ultimately such controls are intended to keep women in the role of camp followers - usable, dispensable, replaceable with other women.'

*Does Khaki Become You?* is a splendid book which gives a thought-provoking analysis of the effects of patriarchal militarism on women's lives. It is, I believe, a valuable analysis as it provides both a historical and social understanding of militarism and the framework for future action.

Sue Mueller is a Chain Reaction collective member.

**Allergies: Your Hidden Enemy** by Theron Randolph, Turnstone Press, Northamptonshire, UK, 1981, 270 pages, \$8.95 (soft cover).

Reviewed by Maureen Magee

In affluent Western societies, the national health bill for hospital and medical care grows astronomically from year to year. Life expectancy is no longer rising; ill health is on the increase; and the consumption of pain-killers, sedatives and anti-depressants is growing steadily. General ill health that doctors cannot diagnose or treat has led many people to try alternative medicine - often with an equal lack of success.

In *Allergies: Your Hidden Enemy*, Theron Randolph describes the damage to human health caused by the effects of chemical and industrial pollution. The book describes an area of medicine called clinical ecology and its approach to illness caused by allergies to food and environmental chemicals.

We all know of allergies to rarely eaten foods - strawberries, shellfish, peanuts etc. Allergies to commonly eaten foods and inhaled chemicals are much harder to detect. For example, 'X' may develop an allergy to cows' milk early in life - causing symptoms such as nappy rash

## Allergies

Your Hidden Enemy

How the new field of Clinical Ecology can unravel the environmental causes of mental and physical illness

Theron G. Randolph M.D.  
and Ralph W. Moss Ph.D.

Foreword by Dr Richard Mackarness



and sniffles. If not recognised as allergic reactions they seem to disappear, but may return in the form of more generalised symptoms later in life: headaches, arthritis, general fatigue or a chronic disease. It never occurs to X and is not likely to occur to X's doctor that the daily dose of milk is the cause. The phenomenon of 'masking' compounds this: X's symptoms are worst when X hasn't had milk and improve after ingesting milk in some form. A feeling of well-being lasts a short while and then the symptoms increase again. This process can be the underlying problem in obesity, where the person sneaks back for doses of, say, wheat or chocolate at regular intervals, even during the night.

During clinical ecology diagnosis, the patient fasts on spring water in a controlled air environment until symptoms disappear (usually five to seven days). Foods and chemical inhalants are then tested singly and those which bring on the symptoms again are identified as the culprits. The diagnosis is based on observation and blood tests. Clinical ecology does not offer a standard mass-applicable diet - each patient's particular sensitivities are worked out individually. There is only one unit in Australia where these tests are carried out.

The role of indoor air pollution in ill health documented by Randolph comes as a great shock. Many of us are being poisoned by the 'out-gassing' from common objects in our homes, for example, foam rubber, carpet, glues, print, plastic, detergents, cleaning agents, chipboard, natural gas, oil heating etc. Air pollution in our homes is increasing rapidly. Cigarette smoke and car exhaust emissions can also be a serious problem

for many people.

The whole population would experience a tremendous increase in well-being if food and chemical susceptibility were routinely considered in every case of chronic disease in the same way that infection is. Microbial infections were not known until the microscope was invented. In the same way, food and chemical intolerance wasn't known until methods were developed to unmask it in the last twenty years.

Randolph's contribution to medicine has been to show that what twentieth century industrialisation has done, and is doing, to food, drink and air is the cause of 30% of all illnesses currently presented to doctors. Why, then, has mainstream medicine not taken up clinical ecology?

Clinical ecology requires time-consuming diagnosis and an avoidance of drugs. It is a holistic approach - it looks at patients in their total environment. Conventional medicine is body centred, seeing the person as a collection of separate organs. Specialisation is of course a convenient and lucrative way of dividing medicine. Most physicians have neglected synthesising approaches like clinical ecology, which does not fit into the orthodox system.

Conventional allergists are overwhelmed by the number of sufferers of hayfever and asthma. Treatments for inhalant illnesses, such as those caused by pollen, mould and dust, work reasonably well, so there has been no real incentive to investigate the use of clinical ecology.

Clinical ecology is conspicuously independent of industrial influence. It uses few or no drugs - there is nothing to be gained by the multinational pharmaceutical industry. Treatment involves avoidance or limited consumption of foods most common in our society - foods which form the basis of huge industries and commercial interests.

Workers and trade unions are fighting battles in the workplace against chemical hazards. Some chemicals, like formaldehyde, have been acknowledged as toxic to humans. But formalin is also present in plastics, new clothing, plywood panelling, chipboard, latex paint and home insulation. The levels of formaldehyde outgassing into the home are on the increase and yet there is no public information available on the dangers of domestic air pollution.

This book, however, is a good start. I recommend it for all people suffering from chronic ill health, particularly women and those with young children who spend a great deal of time inside the home - perhaps the commonest victims of domestic air pollution. It will also be of interest to those who are concerned with chemical pollution in the workplace.

Maureen Magee has been a long-term sufferer of environmentally induced illness.



# Penang flipside

Members of Friends of the Earth and the Consumers Association of Penang took delegates attending a recent seminar on the Malaysian environment on a tour of the island of Penang. Apart from the obvious Westernisation of Penang — the 'Miami Beach' tourist complex, the 'Hollywood' restaurant — there are less obvious signs of the rush to 'develop'. *Linda Cawcutt*, a journalist with the Food Justice Centre in Melbourne reports.

This is a glimpse of the other side of paradise. It's Penang, the pearl of the Orient, but it's not the Penang you will see in the Malaysian Airways in-flight magazine or any travel brochure.

It's the Penang where a school was built in the shadow of the airport then abandoned because one accident could have meant disaster for the children.

It's the Penang of a half-finished concrete fly-over linking nothing with nowhere. Built, according to the locals, to impress overseas visitors en route from the airport.

And it's the Penang of a new bridge and coastal highway development that will displace thousands of fisher people and their families and duplicate the existing ferry service to the mainland.

In 1980 the first phase of the coastal highway was built. It was a rough 'bund' lying between the sea and fishing villages. The bund has cut off the



The organised chaos of the boat yards.

villages from easy access to the water and caused the water around their villages to stagnate.

Fisherman Ramli Ismail said his fish catch had dropped dramatically since the road went through. 'We can still eat, but the catch gets less and less', he said.

The traditional fishing villages are doomed by the coastal highway. Their watery surrounds will be filled in and residents will be housed in two-bedroom flats, removed from their livelihood, their heritage. Residents have formed themselves into associations to fight the highway but their chances of success are slim.

The government shelved the coastal highway project earlier this year because funds had run out. Observers say it will be dusted off and put into action again as soon as money is available. In the meantime the villagers live with stagnant water and the rubbish that builds up by the banks of stage one of the coastal highway.

Further down the road is a settlement of boat builders. Like the fishermen they will lose access to their livelihood when the highway goes through.

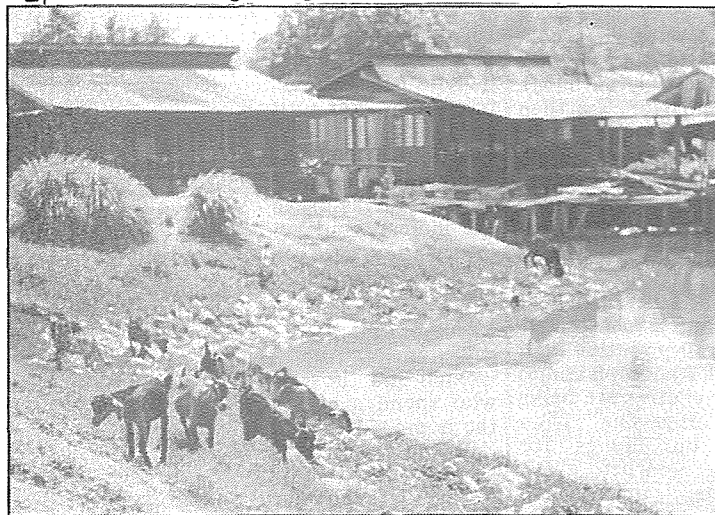
South west of Penang another fishing village is under threat, this time from government inaction. About 10 years ago the government moved a community of pig farmers to the village from a site near the proposed airport. The air strip was going ahead; the pig farmers had to go.

There was no existing waste disposal system for the pig farmers at the village. They discharged the waste into the ocean. Ten years later the bubbling, gaseous river leading from the pig farms to the sea gives off a nauseating stench that envelops the village from dawn to dusk. The 70 Muslims at Gertak Sanggul find the pig stench particularly odious. There is friction between the farmers and other villagers.

The village used to be renowned for its prawns; not any more. Fisherpeople complain that the white wood of their boats is black with slime after one day's fishing.

LINDA CAWCUTT

LINDA CAWCUTT



Goats eat the garbage that builds up around the banks of the coastal highway bund.

## 1983 MAIL ORDER BOOK CATALOGUE



ENERGY ★ HOMESTEADING ★ ENERGY-EFFICIENT HOUSE ★ NATURAL HEALTH ★ WHOLEFOOD BUILDING ★ LIVESTOCK ★ AUTONOMOUS HOUSE ★ TOOLS ★ ENVIRONMENT/ALTERNATIVES ★ CRAFTS GREENHOUSES ★ WATER ★ FARMING AND GARDENING ★ DO-IT-YOURSELF ★ STOCKING UP

28 Pages packed with alternative literature. Over 400 titles personally selected and each one reviewed. Send \$2 in stamps, cheque or money order.

### SELF SUFFICIENCY SUPPLIES PTY. LTD.

256 DARBY STREET,  
NEWCASTLE, N.S.W. 2300,  
AUSTRALIA.

Phone :  
(049) 2 2515

## WOMEN'S LIBERATION CALENDAR 1984

IMAGES OF THE MELBOURNE WOMEN'S LIBERATION MOVEMENT : 1969-1973

published by Melbourne WL Archives Group and Sybylla Cooperative Press

available mid-November

Orders and Sales: Sybylla,  
193 Smith Street, Fitzroy, 3065.  
Phone: 417 1388  
Postage & Handling \$1.50 single copy.

420mm x 297mm  
spiral bound  
\$7.00 retail  
\$4.50 wholesale



ACTING the part of kindergarten children, Box Hill housewives from left, Mrs Jan Bucknell, Mrs Jan Cornell, Mrs Fay Miller, Mrs Jane Clifton and Mrs Amanda Pearce got the biggest laughs at the demonstration yesterday.

**Some Recreational Vehicles cost the Earth . . .**

**OURS DON'T**

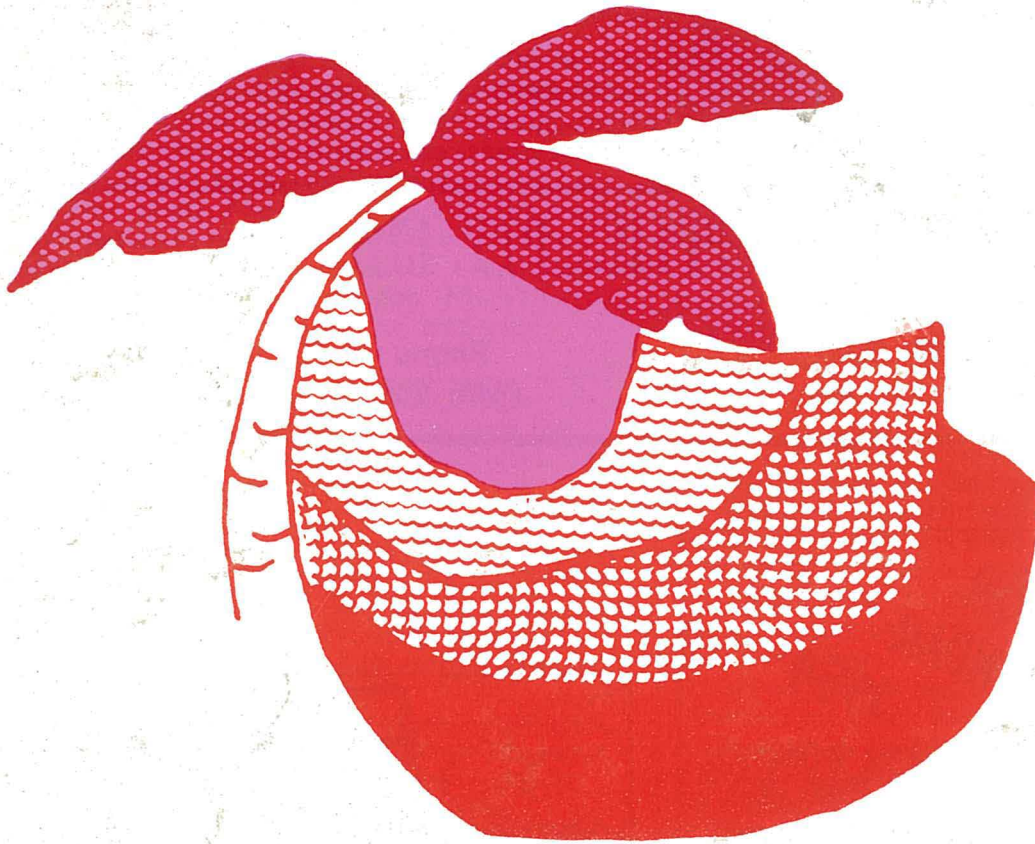
**Inner City Cycles**

CUSTOM BUILT BIKES  
COMPETENT REPAIRS  
TOURING SPECIALISTS

31 GLEBE POINT ROAD  
2037 (02) 660 6605



# why not join us!



## Why not join us?

The Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Coordinating Committee in New South Wales is seeking individuals, small groups and organisations to affiliate as sponsors.

NFIP issues include: French nuclear weapon testing; radioactive waste dumping; militarisation and nuclearisation of the Pacific; independence movements and self-determination for indigenous peoples.

Individuals are welcome to join task groups, to develop and maintain a resource centre, to work on a bimonthly newsletter and to plan and coordinate an educational program.

Meetings are held at the NFIP Resource Centre, 5th Floor, 262 Pitt St, Sydney.

Tel: (02) 267 2462 (bh), (02) 30 3214 (ah).

Sponsorship fees: \$30 organisations; \$15 small groups and individuals; \$10 concession. Subscription to the newsletter is included in the fee.

Other NFIP groups can be contacted on; (03) 376 1993 (Melbourne); (07) 229 8585 (Brisbane); (08) 267 2125 (Adelaide); and (003) 31 8406 (Launceston).